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I M M O R T A L I T Y
I N
R E C E N T P H I L O S O P H I E S

A Thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in Candidacy for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of Philosophy

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by

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June 1936

P R E F A C E

The problem of immortality has challenged mankind from the earliest dawn of civilization. A belief in some sort of immortality has had, with but few exceptions, a universal adherence. Even modern man, having the knowledge of multitudinous contributions of preceding generations concerning immortality, continues to ponder over the problem as much as ever. Much discussion has concerned itself with a life beyond death, and the diverse beliefs ensuing indicate that the problem is truly a riddle of immense depth and complexity. It has aroused the thought of both great and small men; it has challenged their way of living, enabling them to live better lives in fulfilling its requirements. The hope of a future life has brought happy anticipations to many, and in others it has invoked indifferent attitudes. The latter have sought various substitutes for personal survival. On the other hand, many have abandoned a belief in future life because of a naturalistic approach to life. Nevertheless, the problem of immortality has not tired the thinking of man, and it continues to occupy its place among the foremost problems of mankind.

In dealing with *Immortality In Recent Philosophies*, the following attempt will be made: (1) to show the rise of a belief in future life in Animistic thought, (2) to trace the conception of the soul from Plato to Kant, and thus seek

grounds for its immortality, (3) to present the various concepts of immortality in recent times, (4) to indicate the purpose of the Society for Psychical Research, and the attempt at an empirical support for immortality, (5) to present a critical review.

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PART I

IMMORTALITY IDEAS BASED ON THE CONCEPTION OF THE SOUL

1. The Rise Of The Belief In Future Life

A belief in future life was common to most primitive peoples. In its earliest form the belief was taken for granted because man thought of himself as living on indefinitely in his earthly life. It was only after primitive man began to look upon death as the depriver of his natural immortality that his thoughts were turned to understand it. There was no knowledge of the physical cycle of life, its growth and decay, and when death did take away a life, it was considered to be the effect of witchcraft. Death, then, was an unnatural event as well as the depriver of man's immortality

Turning to a higher stage in primitive thought, it is evident that death becomes a serious problem. Indeed, death was seen to be common to all men, and not some unnatural occurrence due to the arts of sorcery. Thus became apparent the need for knowing the origin of death, and why it came into the world at all. Around this desire to know the why and how of death grew many myths. Some of these are connected with the phenomena of the waxing and waning moon. On the last day of the waning moon men died and came to life three days later as if awakening from a refreshing slumber. But an evil spirit contrived that those who were sleeping the sleep of death should wake no more. Another story was based on the observance of such animals as serpents and lizards that periodically shed

their skins. These animals, thought primitive man, have natural immortality. If man, too, could shed his old skin he would also renew his life perennially like the animals. The destiny of man is immortality, but due to the stupidity or malice of the messenger to whom the immortality of man was entrusted, all men became subject to death. "The feather-brained messenger who turns the message upside down, or the messenger who lingers to refresh himself by the way, and so allows himself to be forestalled by his fellow who delivers the message in a precisely contrary sense, is a frequent figure in these stories."¹ Thus although man was destined to be immortal, he lost the chance of a continued existence by a perverted messenger of the beneficent creator.

Another step forward finds primitive man acknowledging death as the natural cessation of life. Recognizing death as such does not, however, effect his belief in the persistence of life. This is possible by the animism which is so characteristic of primitive mind. The distinction between body and soul is the first real reflection of early man, and upon it he attempted to explain all natural phenomena. Natural events were explained in terms of personal agencies of swarming multitudes of spirits or ghosts. These personal agencies were based upon, and inferred from, man's own acts of will. Thus when primitive man sought causal explanations of his experiences, such explanations were not of truth based upon physical causes and laws, but upon spirits which were friendly

¹ Quoted in A. Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea Of Immortality*, p6, from Sir James Frazer, *op. cit.*, Lecture III, *Myths of the Origin of Death*.

or unfriendly. Thus the notion of souls or spirits was the foundation of primitive man for explaining certain features of his experience.

The idea of soul or spirit of primitive man was based upon his experience of sleep. During sleep he had dreams, and upon awakening he was able to recall those dreams. In them he had travelled great distances and had met many people known to him whom he had not seen in many a year. Often times he dreamed of his friends who had died many years ago. He knew that during sleep he had been motionless, the truth of which his own friends verified. The natural conclusion for him to make was to attribute such phenomena to a second self or double self which had left the body for a time and then returned. From himself primitive man inferred a double self in animals as well. The point of interest to him was the way his soul was able to communicate with the souls of dead friends and kin. Since the figures seen in dreams appeared in the garbs familiar in waking experience, primitive man ascribed similar garbs to the dead living in the life beyond. Thus upon death all the clothes and ornaments of the deceased were buried with him. These were not used by the body of the dead, but by the shadow self in the spirit-land. Food served the same purpose; it was not used in a bodily way, but spiritually. This conception of the soul of primitive man, then, interprets it as an ethereal image of the body, and, as Lamont¹ says, "reproduced more or less exactly the same features that marked them at the moment

¹ Corliss Lamont, *The Illusion of Immortality*, p39

of death."

This primitive idea of the soul surviving bodily death also carried with it consciousness and volition just as in earthly life. It was able to visit its pleasure or displeasure upon the living by producing effects in the physical world. Hence various measures were necessary to prevent capricious ghosts or souls from returning to their former abodes. Often times the ghost of a dead man found its way back to the house occupied by the once living man, and promptly thereafter every possible precaution was taken to prevent another visit. Much ceremony was observed during the time of burial to appease the souls of the departed, the intention being to afford no opportunity for offense between the dead and the living.

Concerning the nature of the life beyond, and the locality of such a life, these vary a good deal with the different primitive peoples. It is generally accepted that between the time of death and burial, the soul remains in the neighborhood of the body. Hence if a body is left unburied, it is condemned to wander aimlessly and miserably upon the earth. Others believe that even after the burial the soul remains in the vicinity of the grave. This seems to be the reason for the food placed upon the grave, especially where pipes have been sunk into the grave to convey food. Other primitives believe the spirits of the dead continue to hound their native land, especially in the striking features of the landscape. It may be in a pool of water, in the hills, in a tree, or in a great rock that affords a shady place. Spirits lurk in these

frequented places and lie in wait for women into whom they enter and in due time are born into infants. A step from this rather crude conception is the belief that spirits go on a journey to a distant land in which are found other spirits. This spirit-land seems to be located some-where in the sky, but most often it is referred to as being in the regions under the earth. Life in this spirit-land, wherever it may be located, is a ghostly continuation of the life on the earth. There is no change of character, no greater outlook, no change of feeling. Just as on earth, old activities are pursued and the same interests continued. With tribal primitives and their distinctions of social rank, the life beyond carries a projection of similar distinctions, so that a chief here will be a chief in that life.

Such conceptions of a life beyond death played an important role in the thinking of primitive man. Much of his earthly activity was centered around the belief in ghosts or spirits. To evaluate the primitive belief in future life, it must be said that such immortality did not carry the idea of endless existence. The idea of endless living was beyond the grasp of primitive man. He could not stretch his memory backward beyond one or two generations with which he has had no personal contact, nor could his thought embrace an equally wider future. Having lived only in the present in both body and mind, the primitive future life was essentially a life embracing one or two generations of time. Such a future life is indeed only the land of the dead, or "the land of memory, the inhabitants of which awaken to life and consciousness only when the thoughts

of the living turn towards them in love."¹

2. PRE-EXISTENCE AND IMMORTALITY

Plato

Primitive man considered his soul as the shadow-double of his body and as such capable of continuing life in a spirit-land. To Plato, however, the soul is more than a shadowy aspect of man; it is the real self, that self which is at work in all ordinary knowledge and actions. In the *Laws*² Plato says, "Of all the things which a man has, next to the gods, his soul is the most divine and most truly his own...and in our opinion he ought to honor her as second only to the gods...We must believe the legislator when he tells us that the soul is in all respects superior to the body, and that, even in life, what makes each of us to be what we are is only the soul." Plato inverts the animistic conception of the soul as the shadowy or ghostly double of the body, and makes the body instead a shadow of the soul. Thus, in the first place, Plato has foremost in mind the priority of the soul to the body.

In the second place, Plato considers the soul to be of heavenly origin and pre-existent. An account of this is given in *Phaedrus*.³ "The soul is immortal, because its very idea and essence is the self-moved and self-moving, that

1 A. Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of Immortality*, p12

2 *Laws*, B. Jowett, trans. *The Dialogues of Plato*, Vol. IV, p424

3 *Phaedrus*, B. Jowett, trans. *The Works of Plato*, Vol. I, p550

which is the fountain and beginning of motion to all that moves besides. A body which is moved from without is soulless, but that which is moved from within has a soul." Plato thinks that the movement of heavenly bodies is due to souls that dwell within them, and thus considers their motions as eternal. On the contrary things which do not possess souls and are moved by other forces, have a beginning and end. In addition to heavenly souls, there are souls intended to be souls of mortal beings which are no longer pure as before. But all souls, according to Plato, were originally enjoying a bodiless existence in the heavenly regions in the midst of eternal beauty, truth and goodness. Reason is the essence of souls, and those in human form also possess lower appetites and functions. The soul of man seeks to return to its heavenly place by incarnating itself from one body into another, each incarnation being determined by the preceding life, until the eternal truth is envisioned.

In the third place, the soul in seeking the absolute and eternal truth, goodness and beauty, is said to be itself eternal and therefore immortal. While it is embodied the soul only touches the fringe of the eternal, and only after its series of incarnations in which it has penetrated deeper and deeper into the eternal, has it at last become one with the eternal truth.

Thus, to summarize, the soul is immortal because of its priority to the body, it being the real self; it is immortal because of its heavenly origin and the cause of all motion; it is immortal because it strives and becomes one with the eternal.

It must be pointed out that Plato's belief permits the soul and body to belong to two different worlds. Herein lies the dualism of Plato. The soul in each case of transmigration is only a temporary inmate of a particular body. It depends on the ordinary avenues of sensation, and is subject to the contaminations and desires of the body. Yet the soul by its intrinsic nature belongs to another sphere, and so by Plato is considered as having a separate existence. This dualistic approach became later evident in the orthodox Christian tradition which insisted, as Plato did, that the soul is a true self, there being no inherent relation between it and the body. Plato's idea of the soul and its immortality had great influence upon medieval thought, as will presently be seen, and in some respects Platonic influence can still be felt in modern times.

3. MIND AND BODY RELATION

Aristotle

Unlike Plato, Aristotle sought the nature of the soul from a study of living organisms. As a result of the study, he was led to conclude that plants, animals and men possessed souls, but of different types. The plant possesses a plant soul, and has the principle of nutrition; the animal possesses the animal soul, and has the principle of sensation and voluntary motion; and man in addition to these possesses reason, or a rational soul. Each of these successive stages appears as a development from the one preceding, and in man

is found the highest development.

Aristotle's definition of the soul is based on the distinction between matter and form, or the potential and actual. The material, or the body of a living organism, is the potential, and the soul is the actualization of that body or potentiality. The body acts only as a set of conditions for the expression of the soul. Aristotle calls the soul the Entelechy, or fulfilment of the body, the end for which the body exists. Both being indispensable to each other, Aristotle was led to establish a close body-soul relation, the inseparableness of body and soul. He criticized Plato's pre-existent soul for the reason that each body had its own soul, and therefore any soul could not inhabit every body.

In considering the immortality of man's soul, it was necessary for Aristotle to rationalize the separable aspect of Reason. Thus he distinguished between the Active Reason and the Passive, or the potential from the actual principles of Nous, man's rational soul. It is evident that if Aristotle was to find any ground for the soul's immortality which he claimed inseparable from the body, he must find such ground in the rational soul. This is precisely what he proceeded to do. The Reason, or soul of man, he argues, has the capacity of rational knowledge, but, adds Pringle-Pattison in this interpretation, "in order that this capacity (potentiality) be made actual, there is needed the operation of an active principle. And this intelligence---Nous in this sense---is separable and impassive and unmixed, being in its essential

nature an activity."¹ This element of the human soul is impersonal and eternal, not the soul itself as a conscious existence, a personal being, but only the impersonal reason. This means the immortality of the Active Reason in man, and not, therefore, a personal immortality.

4. AUGUSTINE AND AQUINAS

Both Plato and Aristotle exerted a great influence upon the thought of their successors who dealt with the soul and its immortality. Plato was especially felt during the first century of the Christian era by those Christians who believed in a spiritual immortality. In the fourth century A.D. St. Augustine carried Plato's spirit into the discussion of Christian doctrines. As with Plato, the idea of the good, or God, is the highest of ideas and the most complete form of being, comprehending in itself all others and crowning all. Augustine's God is the *summa essentia*, eternal and unchangeable. He describes the soul as immaterial and therefore immortal, having the faculties of memory, intellect and will. The soul partakes of immortality by virtue of its union with the eternal reason and the divine life. Plato's ideas later asserted themselves during the period of the Renaissance, especially in the works of Marsilio Ficino's, "*Theologia Platonica de Immortalitate Animarum*."

Aristotle likewise influenced immortality ideas. His philosophy, however, had first to be purged because, as

Kruger¹ notes, "Aristotle came first to be learned in the adulterated form which it had assumed in passing through the minds of such men as Avicenna and Averroes." The way in which these Arabian commentators dealt with the immortality of the soul did not appeal to the Church and the leading schoolmen. Thomas Aquinas, however, interpreted Aristotle in the true sense; he applied the Aristotelian doctrines to those of the Church.

With Aquinas, as with Aristotle, the supreme end of life is knowledge, especially the knowledge of God. The universal exists in the individual, not independently, and only by the mental process of abstraction is it separated from the individual. In the divine mind also exists the universal, as the thought of God before he creates, but not independently do ideas exist either in the divine mind or elsewhere. Like Aristotle, Aquinas treats the soul including the intellect and all its faculties, as immaterial, also not as pre-existent, not having any innate conceptions.

5. DESCARTES

There were various problems confronting those who taught the immortality of the soul as is evidenced by the different beliefs. The greatest of these problems seems to be in the nature of the soul and its relation or non-relation

¹ Gustav Kruger, *The Immortality of Man*, p8

to the body. In Animism the soul is represented as a ghostly double of the body which leaves it at death, thus living on continually in a fashion. Such a soul is essentially a substance, being spiritual and having an existence of its own. Plato's soul is also a substance, it, too, having an existence in its own right, and not an attribute or quality of the body. The same may be said for the soul of Augustine. Aristotle, on the other hand, maintained the inseparability of body and soul: the fate of the soul was bound up with the fate of the body. But, as was seen, Aristotle managed to rationalize an immortality for that part of the soul called the Active Reason. In the period of the Renaissance, scientific studies had the tendency to question the soul as a unitary simple being---a substance---, and thus undermine the beliefs in its immortality, but on the whole the Platonic view of the substantive soul persisted.

The scholastics, among them Descartes, proceeded to argue the soul as a unity and simple substance, and as such indestructible, imperishable and hence immortal. Taking up this dualistic position in the form of a defence, Descartes sought to establish the relation between an immaterial soul and a material body on the basis of interaction, thereby attempting to show that a substantive soul can act upon a physical body.

In showing how the mind can act upon and control its body, Descartes assigned to the soul a definite place in

the pineal gland of the brain. From this point the soul was able to deflect and alter bodily directions in one way or another. But it must be remembered that Descartes believed the soul to be immaterial, so that when he placed the soul in the brain, he at once made the soul a spatial thing. His primary motive was to defend the soul as substantive, and at the same time indicate how such a soul could interact with a material body. Needless to say, his argument was not convincing. It remained for the Occasionalists to make another attempt. The point Descartes actually sought to make was to defend the soul as an independent entity wholly different from the body, and thus confirm the soul's immortality as such.

The Occasionalists, likewise, were not very successful in explaining the interaction between a spiritual soul and its material body. They fell back on the omnipotence of God as the cause of the interaction. No power of the human mind, so they thought, could alter, or in any way influence, the physical world. What occurred between the mind and body was a direct act of God. In speaking of the Occasionalists, Rogers¹ says, "A particular exertion of the will does not move the body, but on occasion of this act of will God intervenes, and changes the direction of the body in a way to secure the same result. There is thus no need of any influence passing between the two unlike substances." God as the ultimate reality was capable of producing the interaction between a substantive soul and

1 A. K. Rogers, Student's History of Philosophy, p277

a material body. But this explanation of interaction between two unlike substances failed to convince thinkers, especially Spinoza.

6. SPINOZA AND HEGEL

Spinoza sought a more intimate connection between soul and body by recognizing the unity of things, with God as the central core of that unity, and not apart from the world as Decartes had believed. He interpreted God as the one substance from which all things, including mind and matter, are reducible. Mind and matter, then, are merely attributes of God. Thought and extension, likewise, are attributes of God, being understood only in reference to God. Hence these are not two separate things, but only aspects of the same thing, namely God. Thus the mind cannot interfere with, nor interact with, the body. Now the relationship between mind and matter is that of parallelism, i. e., that for every thought there is a corresponding act since they are both attributes of the same substance. What appears to be a physical fact in one instance will, in another instance, be a fact of thought. The two run along side of each other, never influencing or interacting.

Since Spinoza considered God as the infinite substance and every thing else as a mode of his substance, then every thought and act is a manifestation of God. Both mind and bodily activity spring from, and are united in, God. Herein lies the unity of all things through which Spinoza sought to

explain the relation of mind and body---a unity of all finite things having their existence and their motions in the eternal, infinite God.

It was upon this unity of God and finite things that Spinoza based his idea of immortality. But, as in the beliefs of Aristotle and Aquinas, this immortality is not interpreted as personal immortality. In his own words, Spinoza¹ says, "The mind can imagine nothing, nor can it recollect anything that is past, except while the body exists," yet "in God, nevertheless exists an idea which expresses the essence of this or that human body under the form of eternity." Therefore "the human mind cannot be absolutely destroyed with the body, but something of it remains which is eternal...Eternity cannot be defined by time, or have any relationship to it. Nevertheless, we feel and know by experience that we are eternal. For the mind is no less sensible of those things which it conceives through intelligence than of those which it remembers... We feel that our mind, in so far as it involves the essence of the body under the form of eternity, is eternal, and that this existence of the mind cannot be limited by time nor manifested through duration." Here Spinoza hints at Ideal Immortality, a discussion of which appears in Part Two. Holding this belief in immortality, it is obvious that Spinoza does not need to allude to rewards and punishments as was so characteristic of the immortalists of his time.

¹ Quoted in C. Lamont, *The Illusion of Immortality*, p219, from Benedict Spinoza, *Ethic*, Fifth Part, Props. XXI-XXIII.

In this connection there are close resemblances between Spinoza and Hegel. Hegel's God is also not a person, but the Absolute which is total Personality as realized in every individual mind. Thought, then, is God: pure logic, the very process in which the Absolute, or God, consists. Subject and object, thought and existence are absolutely identical, and in the mutual relation of these consists the only reality. As with Spinoza, then, Hegel's conception of the soul's immortality lies not in a personal future life, but in the eternal nature of the mind of man.

7. BERKELEY AND LEIBNITZ

A thorough-going position in regard to the priority of mind was taken by Bishop Berkeley, the Idealist. Berkeley denied the reality of anything external to the mind itself. The only thing we know, thinks Berkeley, is ideas in, and impressions on, the mind. Material things are unthinkable. But the reality of our own ideas is not the only reality man possesses. In addition to ideas, we know ourselves, or spirits which are the true substance. According to Berkeley, it is this active spirit which perceives ideas and exercises over them the acts of willing, imagining and memory. This spirit or soul in us, thinks Berkeley, is not capable of being perceived, but we do have a notion of it. Now the cause of ideas, since no corporeal thing can cause them, is God whose Will determines our sensations and the order of our ideas in that they are what they are, and not what we would like them to be. Thus

for Berkeley there is no problem between the soul and body since he denies that which is material. Upon the basis of the spirit in us as a true substance lies immortality, since God is the true substance, and man's soul His soul, eternal and imperishable.

That mind and matter do not influence each other was also the contention of Leibnitz. In particular was he opposed to the idea of matter as extension, especially as conceived by Spinoza and the Cartesians. Leibnitz attempted to show in his opposition that one substance cannot receive from any other substance the power of acting, but that the whole force is pre-existent in itself.

The characteristics of matter, thought Leibnitz, are movement, change and development, and the power or activity causing these is the monad which is immaterial, unextended, and indivisible. This monad is subject to no external or foreign influence, and whatever change takes place in it, takes place in consequence of an inherent energy in the monad itself. These monads differ in quality from each other. They are indissoluble and therefore imperishable. Leibnitz lists four distinct types of monads among which is the monad composing the soul of man. The original monad is God, the eternal monad.

Leibnitz interprets the monads as energies or activities which are centers of consciousness, the highest of which is found in God. Different monads do not influence each other, but the internal changes of each monad is such as to agree with the corresponding changes in the monads with

which it is immediately connected. This is effected by the divine wisdom of God. Thus the monads of mind and matter do not influence each other, but due to the divine power and skill in so constituting and arranging them, they work together in complete unison. This harmony between monads is pre-established. The soul of man being a simple monad or substance, and affected by the pre-established wisdom of the divine Being, is eternal and therefore immortal.

8. KANT

Kant who credits Hume with awakening him from dogmatic slumber, was not willing to make dogmatic assumptions regarding God and immortality. To Kant the immortality of the soul and the existence of God are not capable of proof from reason, but both are to be known only from the consciousness of man's own moral nature. Thus Kant claims that the soul, its immortality, and God are realities as sure and positive as any part of consciousness because it is consciousness that attests the reality of man's moral nature. Kant did not believe that the goal of holiness was altogether attainable in this life; it is only possible through an infinite progress towards harmony with the moral law. Hence the best man can do is to approximate the moral law with which immortality is inseparably bound up.

Kant's moral argument for immortality reduces itself to man's moral aspirations which are of such high quality that there must be an immortality permitting the greater fulfillment of them. Complete justice to man's moral

striving can be done only if he is given the opportunity for greater development. This, according to Kant, requires a limitless time. Thus Kant infers an immortality based upon an infinite progress that leads toward the fulfillment of man's moral qualities already inherent within him.

9. REVIEW OF IMMORTALITY IDEAS

1 In Animism the soul is an ethereal image of the body, having consciousness and volition, and being more or less a reproduction of the body. As a substance the soul is immortal.

2 Plato based the immortality of the soul on its priority to body, its capacity for self-movement, and its groping for the eternal truth.

3 Augustine described the soul as immortal by virtue of its union with the divine life of God.

4 Descartes in defending the soul as a substance showed the utter difference between it and the material body. The soul as pure spirit is eternal and immortal.

5 Berkeley showed the soul as a true substance, and thus eternal and immortal.

6 Leibnitz claimed the soul to be a simple monad or substance, and as such immortal.

7 Aristotle implied an impersonal but individual immortality based on The Active Eternal Reason of Man.

8 Aquinas accorded the soul a personal immortality based on the eternal reason of man.

9 Spinoza upholds an immortality in the midst of time rather than an immortality of infinite existence. He emphasizes a life of quality in the midst of timeless values.

10 Hegel implies immortality by virtue of the Absolute Mind of which all finite minds are one with the infinite Mind of God.

11 Kant infers immortality by reason of man's moral aspirations which are more fully realized only in an infinite progress towards harmony with moral law.

PART II

1. THE CONCEPTIONS OF IMMORTALITY

Future existence has been thought of in various ways. Among the most prevalent is the belief in personal immortality, or the survival of the individual personality or consciousness with its memory and awareness of self-identity intact. Immortality has also meant the attainment here and now of a certain eternal quality in life and thought, with eternal meaning independent of time and existence. This has frequently been called Ideal Immortality. Sometimes Ideal Immortality is united with the primary meaning of actual personal survival. Immortality also signifies the survival of an impersonal psychic entity which is absorbed into the "All" or "Absolute God." Somewhat along the same lines is "material" or "chemical" immortality through the reabsorption by nature of the elements of the body. Then there is "historical" immortality through the irreversibility of the past and permanent place that every life necessarily has in the simple truth and succession of existence. Also "biological" or "plasmic" immortality through one's children and descendants. Again, there is "social" or "influential" immortality through enduring fame or the unending effect of a life on the minds and acts of succeeding generations.

In eastern religions immortality is incorporated

in the doctrine of reincarnation. This doctrine is often referred to as metempsychosis or transmigration, and involves a pre-existence as well as an after-existence on this earth in future human or other living forms.

One other idea of immortality needs mention although it is the least known of all the beliefs. It is the "eternal recurrence" theory revived by Nietzsche. According to this belief, all things return over and over again in their precise detail.

It is apparent that most people desire some kind of immortality. The thought of complete extinction after death is appalling. Thomas Huxley¹ who had no faith in immortality said at the close of his life in writing to his friend Morley, "It is a curious thing that I find my dislike to the thought of extinction increasing as I grow older and nearer the goal. It flashes across me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more what is going on than I did in 1800. I had sooner be in hell a good deal...at any rate in some of the upper circles, where the climate and company are not too trying." Many take a similar position in regard to extinction; they desire to be active even though extinct. Wherever there has been the difficulty of accepting an immortality of personal survival, many have sought solace in substitutes rather than face the thought of complete extinction after death.

¹ Thomas Huxley, Life And Letters, Vol. II, p67

2. PERSONAL IMMORTALITY

Personal immortality is more commonly defined as the literal survival of one's personality or consciousness for an indefinite period of time after death with memory and self-identity intact. One will awaken in that life in very much the same way as one awakens here on every new day. Just as in this life, there will be new activities in the midst of friends and family; memory will provide a definite sense of identity and continuity. This is important, for a personality that has no conscious links between the past, present and future would be another personality. An immortality without recollection would be useless as Leibnitz indicates in this illustration: "What good, sir, would it do you to become a king of China, on condition that you forgot what you have been? Would it not be the same as if God, at the moment he destroyed you, were to create a king in China?"¹

a. Survival of Soul and Body

The survival of both soul and body is the Christian idea of personal immortality. In traditional Christianity personal survival was associated with a spiritual body. There are countless numbers of Christians who hold this view today, and who base their idea of immortality upon it. Patterson Smyth² attempts to show how the spiritual body of the future

¹ Quoted in A. Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of Immortality*, p125, from Leibnitz, *Philosophische Schriften*, IV, p300.

² Patterson Smyth, *The Gospel of The Hereafter*, p201.

life embodies the survived personality. Keeping in mind the natural body of this life, he says, "Not the poor body, certainly, which rotted in the grave...but a glorified body, and yet having some strange mysterious connection with the earthly body...As the oak is the resurrection body of the acorn...so also is the resurrection of the dead." To such as hold this belief, a body of some sort is necessary in the life hereafter for the same reason as the soul needs a body in this life.

In opposition to the view of a spiritual body embodying the survived personality, was the view held by another group of Christians that the natural body would survive in all its deformities and superfluities. This view, however, was not generally accepted, and today it has a very small appeal.

Both groups, however, stress the importance of rewards and punishments in the future life. The good life reaps the reward of eternal joy and bliss; the unrighteous life reaps eternal torment. It was this emphasis upon rewards and punishments wherein the two groups found reason to differ. The natural body could be conceived of as partaking in the eternal life since it would have the benefit of its attendant sensations, and thus live in the hereafter as in this life. The

spiritual body, on the other hand, could not be thought of by any earthly or natural conception as possessing those mediums or sensations with which to carry on its activities. However, in both groups the conception of the eternal life was based on an unending existence. It was this idea of an immortal life---of endless joy, or endless torment---that led many away from this belief.

The thought of endless existence, however, was not the only reason which led many to reinterpret the idea of immortality. There is also the verdict of science which seems to point to the inseparability of soul from body. (This latter point will later be discussed more fully.) Hence if immortality means an endless existence, it is evident that opinion differs as to its desirability. In quoting what he calls a homely utterance, Pringle-Pattison says, "Is it never to end? The thought appals. I, little I, to live a million years---and another million---and another."¹ Thus, in the main, an immortality of unending life has created objections in those whose imagination falters at the thought of living endlessly. Hence personal survival, if it is to mean an endless joy, or an endless torment, is promptly dismissed by some immortalists, "for it is a progress which leads nowhere, which has no goal, seeing that, after ages of forward movement, you are precisely as distant from the imagined end as when you started."²

1 A. Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of Immortality*, pl33

2 *ibid.* pl33

b. Survival Of The Soul In The Absolute

Personal immortality is also interpreted as the survival of the soul in the Absolute, or God, and in such survival a body is unnecessary. In speaking of this belief, Clark¹ says, "That is all we mean by immortality; not the immortality of the vehicle by which we function, but the immortality of the 'we' or the 'self'." Thus the mind losing itself by consciously uniting with its "Larger Self" knows what it previously thought. To become one with the "Larger Consciousness" or as Royce calls it "Absolute Life" or God, is to realize eternity. In that Life, thinks Royce² "the various and genuine individuality which we are now loyally meaning to express gets, from the Absolute point of view, its final and conscious expression in a life that, like all life such as Idealism recognizes, is conscious, and that its meaning, although not at all necessarily in time or in space, is continuous with the fragmentary and flickering existence wherein we now see through a glass darkly our relations to God and to the final truth." Bosanquet, to whom the Absolute is non-personal however, also speaks of this Absolute as using finite individuals as forms or modes of its self-expression. The brief existence of individuals is but a temporal appearance of some character of the Absolute. While the individual lives, the Absolute lives in him, and when the Absolute demands the individual no longer, he is blended into it. But this sadly falls short of any spiritual com-

1 E. S. R. Clark, The Meaning of Immortality, p106

2 Josiah Royce, The Conception of Immortality, p79

munion between individuals and the Absolute.

Royce takes an entirely opposite view of the relationship between individuals and the Absolute. He says, "I know only that our various meanings consciously come to what we individually, and God in whom alone we are individuals, shall together regard as the attainment of our unique place, and our true relationships both to other individuals and to the All-inclusive Individual, God Himself."¹

Clark points to the significant features of this belief in immortality in these words: "Inasmuch as the highest human thought conclusively proves the lasting goodness of its Cause, since the first Cause being responsible for values, must of necessity be valuable itself, it follows that this first Cause must be eternal" and by postulating the unity of the Cause with the Effect, he continues, "This Effect is the application by us of the eternal values of that Cause and this requires that we also shall be of an eternal character."² Thus personal survival in the Absolute is realized by the individual mind by virtue of its being a part in the greater whole, or Larger Self.

c. Survival of Soul Without Body

There are some thinkers who interpret immortality in the sense that the soul, being immaterial or spiritual and therefore a substance, is by its very nature immortal. This recalls Plato and Descartes who emphasized the complete

¹ Josiah Royce, *The Conception of Immortality*, p80

² E. S. R. Clark, *The Meaning of Immortality*, pl06

difference between the nature of the soul and the nature of the body. The soul, being a changeless unit and having an existence strictly its own, uses the body merely as a tool, but in no sense is the soul dependent on the body. This sharp dualism between soul and body is the fundamental basis for the belief in the soul's immortality, since the soul is the true and only reality and in its nature indestructible.

Death brings a happy termination between the soul and the body, and sets the soul free to pursue its essentially noble and spiritual life. It is this final liberation that gives to immortality its chief worth and meaning. Throughout its existence the soul is characterized by unity and continuity, so that its self-identity is intact. Thus a resurrection of the body or any other body which may embody the survived soul is unnecessary. The soul being rid of its partnership with the body, continues its noble spiritual life.

3. IDEAL IMMORTALITY

In the discussion of the orthodox Christian immortality of personal bodily survival, it was seen that eternal life was described as an endless existence. In opposing this view, theologians and philosophers were led to interpret eternal life, not as something in the future--- a continuance of life after death---, but as a state of being in the "abiding Now." Thus Ideal Immortality is the

view of a state of existence in the here and now. This is precisely what Schleiermacher had in mind when he said, "The goal and character of religious life is not the immortality desired and believed in by many...it is not the immortality that is outside of time, behind it, or rather after it, and which still is in time. It is the immortality which we can have now in this temporal life. In the midst of finitude to be one with the infinite, and in every moment to be eternal, that is the immortality of religion."¹ This opinion of Schleiermacher negates both eternal existence in the future and personal survival.

Ideal immortality has gained momentum especially in modern times, and it is mostly held by artists, mystics and thinkers who have experienced ecstatic flashes which seem above and beyond time, where the sense of duration is lost, and a feeling of infinity comes over the soul. This view of immortality was also held by Spinoza who, as was seen, believed that eternity could not be defined by time, or have any relationship to it. It seems that this sort of immortality can come to every man whether good or bad, stupid or intelligent. However, one may make more of his mind eternal than another by coming in greater contact with eternal things, or by pursuing more intently what Spinoza called "The intellectual Love of God." Spinoza's influence transformed immortality "from something temporal and problematic, an endless continued existence, into something timeless and intrinsic, a quality

¹ Quoted in J. S. Bixler, *Immortality And The Present Mood*, p45

of life."¹

In more recent times Bixler also emphasizes the character of eternity as an "abiding now." Bixler thinks that immortality is concerned with transcending survival itself. In art, truth and righteousness are found a sense of timeless meanings of temporal experiences. "Through the 'Dasein' or existent thing man can find the 'Sosein' or timeless quality which it embodies."² All that matters to individuals is to find the unity of their inmost lives in appreciation of aesthetic experiences, and thus feel themselves in a timeless state. E.R. Clark who expresses the position of Ideal Immortality, clinches the idea in these words, "To once seize hold of immortality, by recognizing the lasting reality of permanent values, is to be in eternity, since immortality does not stand for unending existence, but for the realization in mortal life of that by which mortality is itself transcended."³

In the field of religion this same point of view interprets the New Testament usage of "eternal life" as meaning a quality of existence on this earth. Among the foremost in this field is Pringle-Pattison, the English philosopher and writer of the book, "The Idea of Immortality." It will be well to give a fuller account of his position since the thought is quite prevalent in modern times.

¹ Quoted in C. Lamont, *The Illusions of Immortality*, p219, from George Santyana, "Introduction" to *The Ethics of Spinoza*.

² J. S. Bixler, *Immortality and the Present Mood*, p49

³ E. S. R. Clark, *The Meaning of Immortality*, p104

According to Pringle-Pattison, the term "eternal life" as used in the New Testament designates a "frame of mind or a spiritual attitude which is intended to be realized here and now."¹ The Hebrews who were slow in conceiving of a doctrine of future life, finally associated it with the Messianic Kingdom. This kingdom, they thought, was to be established on the earth, and was to last for ever. All those who had died previous to the coming of the kingdom were to be raised from the grave to take part in it. But this hope was soon given up, for the earth seemed unfit to be the place of the eternal kingdom. Thus the kingdom was conceived of as being a spiritual realm. Christ himself "made the inheritance of this kingdom dependent on purely spiritual conditions. He taught not simply, like John the Baptist or the prophets before him that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, but that it was already a present fact---'in their midst' or 'within them'...and the gospel he proclaimed was not a promise for certain rewards concerning beliefs about himself, but, as every genuine Christian message must be, a gospel of deliverance, a message of present salvation."²

The salvation of the soul according to Pringle-Pattison, is a new inward life, a changed attitude. Referring to the words of St. Paul: "To be spiritually minded is life and peace," Pringle-Pattison says, "This, then, is the salvation of the soul...as the Platonic Socrates had

¹ Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of Immortality*, p139

² *ibid*, p141-142.

already so impressively insisted: and when Jesus says 'a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth', or 'what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his soul?', the words life and soul are clearly used in the Platonic sense and not in the eschatological reference. Hence we have the antithesis of 'life' and 'death', so recurrent in the New Testament, both terms being used to signify a present spiritual state."¹

It is apparent, then, that if eternal life is an all-satisfying present experience, nothing follows death. This eternal life is living in the eternal God, experiencing those values which are not in time, but in eternity. Thus Fringle-Pattison is led to conclude "This is eternal life in the midst of time which is claimed by the saints, one which can neither increase nor diminish, one to which considerations of time are, in fact, indifferent because we are at rest in the present."²

This view of the Christian "eternal life" to be enjoyed in the midst of present experiences, leads many to reinterpret the resurrection of Christ in allegorical terms. The death and resurrection of Christ are symbolic meanings, so the argument goes, of the death and birth of the individual self. Hence the resurrection of Christ does not mean the assurance of a future life in some body natural or

¹ Fringle-Pattison, pl42-143

² ibid, pl45

spiritual, but symbolisms of the death of the old self, and the birth of the new self. Thus those who hold this view, and Pringle-Pattison is one who does, speak of the "birth of the new self", the "rebirth" of the soul, and "twice-born" men. This new birth of self comes about through a sudden awakening to some great new insight, or to the desirability of an entirely new way of life which takes place during the lives of many. Something of this experience, it is urged, takes place within the lives of most individuals. Thus it is that the death of the old Paul and the birth or resurrection of his new life took place on the road to Damascus. And to substantiate this allegorical interpretation of the resurrection, St. Paul's own words are used: "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." This view of immortality, then, interprets birth, life, and death as signifying the spiritual rather than the biological states. Thus Ideal Immortality with its emphasis upon the timeless qualities of life is not an immortality in future time, but is an immortality by which mortality is itself transcended.

4. IDEAL IMMORTALITY AND PERSONAL SURVIVAL

Combining the concept of Ideal Immortality with a belief in the literal "post-mortem" survival of the personality, is another tendency in modern thought. In this respect, quality of life counts not only in this life, but in the life that is to follow death. In fact, the manner in

which the life on the earth is lived will , in a way, determine the future life. Dr. Lyman Abbott in his book "The Other Room" says, "Living forever is not immortality. Immortality is living the life that cannot die, because it is the life of the spirit. If we wish to believe in such life as a life hereafter, we must believe in it as the life worth living here; if we wish to possess it hereafter we must wish to possess it here. If we live here and now the immortal life, then, if we are mistaken and there is no life after the grave, still we shall have been immortal. It were better to live an immortal life and be robbed of the immortality hereafter by some supernal power than to live the mortal, fleshly animal life, and live it endlessly." In a similar vein, and distinguishing between immortality and eternal life, Dr. Fosdick in an Easter sermon said, "Note the meaning of that phrase 'eternal life'. It does not primarily denote something after death. It primarily denotes a kind of life which we may live now. 'This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.' But to know God and Christ is something that a man can begin now. Eternal life is not simply post-mortem: it is also a present possession. Always distinguish, therefore, between immortality and eternal life."

5. RACE IMMORTALITY

It was seen that the allegorical interpretation of the resurrection of Christ is symbolic of the new life

in the individual. Likewise, Race Immortality is interpreted as the new life characteristic of old and new nations. In an Easter sermon, Dr. Albert E. Ribourg said, "We are always dying and being born again into better and larger spheres, always failing that we may succeed, always submitting that we may conquer. Every living life is a continuous resurrection. The power of resurrection is not only seen in the individual life, but also in the life of the human race. The progress of the race is not a continuous ascent, but a decay and a resurrection. The history of the last nineteen centuries has been a history of successive eras of resurrections. Dead nations have awakened, new things have come out of the graves of the old, and it is more so than ever."

Affirming the symbolism of the death and resurrection of Christ, Rabbi Wise says in a similar manner, "The crucifixion and resurrection are not single or singular events which befell one Jew 1900 years ago. They are symbols of the life and hope of the human race in its upward march forever." Turning to a wider social meaning of the resurrection, Dr. G. Stanley Hall says, "It left as its far more precious and perennial result a futuristic attitude of soul inspired by hope for both the individual and the race. The resurrection is truer than fact because, set free from specific date and place and given the world-wide scope that belongs to it, it

is the most precious and pregnant symbolization of the eternal and inevitable resurgence of the good and true after their opposites have done their worst." "This allegorical interpretations of the resurrection both for the individual and the race, thus accounts for the mystic death of that which is old, and equally mystic rebirth of that which is the new.

6. IMMORTALITY AND THE BIOLOGICAL CONQUEST OF DEATH

There are those who believe that immortality can be obtained by conquering biological death. Life, so the argument goes, is potentially immortal. According to Dr. Pearl, an eminent biologist, death is due to abnormal function. He says,¹ "Unicellular animals are, and always have been, immortal...The reason why this is so, and why in consequence death results in the metazoa, is that, in such organisms the specialization of structure and function necessarily makes the several parts of the body mutually dependent for their life upon each other. If one organ or group, for any accidental reason begins to function abnormally and finally breaks down, the balance of the whole is upset, and death eventually follows. But the individual cells, themselves, could go on living indefinitely, if they were freed, as they are in cultures, of the necessity of depending upon the proper functioning of other cells for their food, oxygen, etc. So

¹ Quoted in A. C. Bill, The Conquest of Death, p25, from Pearl's, The Biology of Death, pp223-224

then we see emerging, as our first general result, the fact that natural death is not a necessary or inevitable consequence of life. It is not an attribute of the cell..." Thus if death is to be conquered there must be a regulatory process that will correct the defects of a breaking-down or poorly functioning cells. According to this view, this is immortality.

This belief is somewhat analogous to Natural Immortality held so long ago by primitive man. He looked upon death as a natural intruder, believing himself to be naturally immortal. In this connection, then, human beings would be immortal were it not for the intervention of the arch-enemy, death. According to Bill, it is in the power of man's mental capacity to overcome those death-producing conditions in the body. When once this is accomplished, man will have a natural immortality. "Therefore" says Bill, "individual man's ability to control and continue organic action is decided by his conscious effort."¹ Thus, like the primitive man, those who hold this view think themselves naturally immortal, and by conquering death, the intruder, their natural immortality is assured.

7. SOCIAL IMMORTALITY

This conception of immortality is mostly held by those who hold a naturalistic view of life. Maldane says,

¹ A. C. Bill, The Conquest of Death, p43

"I am a part of nature, and, like other natural objects, from a lightning flash to a mountain range, I shall last out my time and finish. This prospect does not worry me, because some of my work will not die when I do."¹ As Haldane indicates, it is an out and out denial of any life after death. The only thing that survives is the causes men espouse, and to which their deeds and consequences contribute. These causes outlast the individuals who serve them, and although the individuals die, the causes continue to live indefinitely. This type of immortality is also called influential immortality, and is often closely associated with Ideal Immortality except that no personality survives its fame, per se. Smiles² adds this thought to Social Immortality: "Books possess an essence of immortality...temples crumble into ruin; pictures and statues decay; but books survive...The great and good do not die, even in this world. Embalmed in their books, their spirits walk abroad. The book is a living voice. It is an intellect to which one still listens." Thus Social Immortality through enduring fame and unending effect of one's life on the minds and acts of succeeding generations, seeks to carry on human affairs though the particular individuals have ceased to exist.

Dr. Montague bears a criticism against this view which is worth noting. "The great causes...are themselves

¹ Quoted in E. H. Clark, *This world And The Next*, p203, from J.B.S. Haldane's contribution in "Living Philosophies"
² Samuel Smiles, *Character*, pp291-292

all mortal---not certainly mortal as we are supposed to be, but quite certainly mortal. Art, science, industry, the technical mastery of nature, and all the monuments of culture, ---social institutions and organizations, past, present and Utopian,---the human race itself and every form of earthly life, are doomed to perish:...sooner or later there will be an end---the earth will burn or freeze or crash, and human life with all its causes to which it is dedicated and all its works of culture will utterly end."¹ Judging from the criticism of Dr. Montague, an immortality based on social influence is really no immortality at all, since value depend on the survival of other individuals who are to carry on the posterity of their predecessors.

8. NIRVANA

This type of future existence, if such it can be called, is the belief of Eastern peoples, particularly of the Buddhists and Hindus. There is some disagreement among the adherents of this belief as to the exact meaning of Nirvana. One sect claims that the ultimate goal of Nirvana means complete extinction or absorption of the individual personality. Another group thinks it a state of conscious bliss somewhat comparable to the Christian beatific vision of God. Regardless of the true interpretation, there are countless numbers who rely on successive reincarnations, on the round of rebirths for the perfection of their soul. With

¹ W. P. Montague, *The Chances of Surviving Death*, p8

regard to the exact meaning of Nirvana, Clark¹ says, "... there was much theological and philosophical dispute as to how Nirvana was to be defined. In early Buddhism Nirvana was an inconceivable and inexpressible eternal state. It might be reached and experienced by the saint, but could not be defined in terms of any worldly categories."

At the end of the round of rebirths, the perfected saint becomes extinct by being absorbed into Nirvana. That appears to be the natural insight he has gained into the root of all evil and the way of deliverance. Even Buddha would not answer yes or no to the question whether the man who has won deliverance from earthly desires will exist or not after death. Buddha thought that this was a matter which did not make for things needful to salvation, nor that which concerns a holy life. He only thought that the cause of suffering, and the path which leads to its end must be overcome. Thus the reference is not to any future event after death, but to the insight on which the ultimate deliverance may be realized.

Nirvana originally meant the deliverance from all earthly passions and cares which renunciation brings with it, "a state of mind to be attained here and now, a peace which the world can neither give nor take away, and which is the supreme and only blessedness. 'There is no spot, East, South, West, or North, above, below, or beyond, where Nirvana

is situated, and yet Nirvana is, and he who orders his life aright...may realize it, whether he live in Greece, in China, in Alexandria or Kosala."¹

In modern Hinduism there are three main elements.

(1) The dharma, or "duty" which are the traditional customs and modes of conduct. "The performance of good works generates merit which results in a heavenly existence of some sort and later rebirth in a higher status."² (2) The bhakti, or devotion to a personal god. The emphasis is placed more on the devotion rather than on the personality of the god. Worshippers of a personal god may, through devotion, completely identify themselves with him. One may merge into God as an individual drop of water merges into the ocean."³ (3) The jnana, or "knowledge". Here again the emphasis is not on knowledge as objective, or for its own sake, "but to slip over into a mystical, immediate, intuitive, knowledge. Indian thought realizes the utter impossibility to know the ultimate reality, and so resorts to the mystical and intuitive sort of knowledge.

The goal of Nirvana is that state of being in which all the passions, cares, and desires of earthly life have been completely overcome, and from which the emancipated soul of the saint passes into absolute oblivion. In more recent Indian thought there is an attempt on the part of the individual to identify himself with a personal God thru which salvation

1 Quoted in A. Fringle-Pattison, *The Idea of Immortality*, p146, from Mrs. Rhys Davids, op. cit., p232

2 W. E. Clark, *Indian Conceptions of Immortality*, p30

3 *ibid*, p31

can be worked out. But in spite of this more advanced outlook, salvation is dependent on the round of rebirths, and only he who has perfected his life through duty, devotion, and knowledge at each successive stage of reincarnation, is conscious of a bliss.

9. IMMORTALITY AND EMERGENCE

Montague and Mathews

In recent times Dr. Montague seeks to construct a belief in immortality on the basis of a substantive soul. However, to Montague the old notion of a substantive soul that has its own laws, and is incommensurable and unconnected with the laws of the material body, is ruled out. Instead he reconceives the soul as a "form of energy related physically and quantitatively to the atoms and their motions."¹ Unlike the old soul, this new soul is "interpretable in physical and quantitative terms...such a soul would no longer be an alien intruder in the system of natural processes, but like the electric and magnetic fields to which it is akin, it could give and take the energies of its environment."² Thus the soul is describable in physical terms as a field of forces or potential energies which pervade the whole structure of the organism by imposing patterns of self-transcending meaning and purposeful action upon the sensory contents that come into the mind. Montague des-

1 W. P. Montague, *The Chances of Surviving Death*, p67

2 *ibid*, p73

cribes the soul as being the highest field of potential energy, it having emerged from three preceding stages, viz., (1) the inorganic, or lowest field, (2) the vital, (3) the sensory. In the evolutionary ascent the forms of energy that constitute the mind have become "more and more different in quality from the matter and motion of their bodily matrices, and therefore more and more likely to survive the dissolution of those matrices."¹

The fact that the personal or mind stage of evolution is of such a momentous difference from what preceded it, there is an indication of still greater possibilities in the process. "The personal or rational stage of evolution brings with it not only increased opportunities for life's enrichment" notes Montague, "but increased responsibility for using them...in short, the simple goodness which men can acquire may be the main determiner of whether life continues after death; or at least of whether such continuance would hold that promise of unending progress lacking which eternity would pall."²

Montague offers three prospects for immortality, (1) the lowest---"mere continuance in existence of the memory-system." However, this is hardly more than everlasting sleep. (2) "That life continues not merely in existence as something that has been, but really awake and quick as now it is, and with that power of ever further growth that seems all but definitive of life's essence." (3) "That personal life, at

1 *ibid*, p90

2 *ibid*, p96

least, not only goes on growing but wins to some great mystic union with that greater Life in which it has its little being."¹

Shailer Mathews, it seems, can be interpreted in somewhat the same way. Cosmic activities form different levels of combinations. The physicist deals with one of these combinations in the field which is roughly called the organic. (The word "roughly" is used in this connection due to the interpretation new physics gives to matter, i.e., activity.) The biologist deals with another combination as it is expressed in some living form, although not as involving thought and choice. The psychologist deals with it as it is found in consciousness with its attendant intellectual, emotional and volitional expressions. The sociologist deals with it as it involves the adjustment of personalities. Mathews thinks that the activities of the universe which have formed these combinations will continue to emerge still greater combinations in the form of higher personalities. "As original cosmic activity has become concrete in the chemical, the chemical in the vital, and the vital in the personal, it is at least a logical conjecture that in its personal stage it may still further develop its implicit potentialities into the more completely personal."²

Mathews chooses to call these personality-producing activities of the cosmos God with whom as human beings we are organically connected, and with whom as environment

¹ Ibid, p98

² Shailer Mathews, Immortality And The Cosmic Process, p37

we are in dynamic relation. Thus the soul of man is not an independent entity, "but living matter developing new personal characteristics as determined by organic relationships with the cosmic activities. And these environing activities are the stuff of the universe."¹ They seek to develop new possibilities already potentially within those from which personality has emerged.

According to Mathews, personality grows by seeking adjustments in social relations that are more personal, by overcoming physical urges in the interest of those things which are timeless. Only by such an effort can the personality come in harmony with the eternal personality-producing activities. "As in all aspects of the evolutionary process" says Mathews, "self-realization involves the possibilities of transcending present states."²

Two hypotheses are put forth by Mathews as possibilities for immortality. (1) "that the new personal development will be in progeny rather than in the individual personality itself."³ This means that the newly empowered cell might be the seed of a race in the future more personal than our own. (2) "that the personality-producing process carries on in the individual. It may take this form: the cells of the body from which have emerged such personal qualities as the individual possesses carry other unrealized potentialities which are not subject to the disintegra-

1 *ibid*, p40

2 *ibid*, p48

3 *ibid*, p42

tion such as death produces. Such possibility would be assumed as implicit in physiological matter as life was implicit in inorganic combinations."¹

Both Montague and Mathews regard the factor of emergent evolution in producing personality. They agree that the growth of the personality is unlimited, and that still greater possibilities may be expected, providing the same general tendency in the evolutionary process is maintained. Montague would agree with Mathews that the personality becomes a greater personality by properly adjusting itself to the higher and timeless values of life. Both offer more than one prospect for immortality, but in the main all prospects for immortality are similar. For Mathews, as for Montague, there is no necessity for recourse to rewards and punishments.

10. IMMORTALITY BASED ON THE NATURE OF VALUES

Fenn and Falconer

Immortality is often based on the belief that life and the values towards which it strives is worth perpetuating. This life is too short a time in which the ultimate realization of values can be reached. This position is adopted by Falconer² who states, "Individual immortality is therefore based upon this, that there is some life worth perpetuation beyond physical death; that there are values

¹ Shailer Mathews, *Immortality And The Cosmic Process*, p42
² R. A. Falconer, *Immortality And Civilization*, p45

in the experience of the individual so intrinsically excellent, that they demand a far wider exercise for their existence than the few short years of even the longest life on the earth." Similarly Fenn¹ basing his belief in a faith in God and the rationality of the world says, "A rationally significant world requires that these values" (moral, aesthetic and religious) "shall continue to exist, if not here, then elsewhere, but that means immortality." Thus, as for Kant's moral argument for immortality, man cannot attain the perfection of values in this life, and so his aspirations for them can only be justified in another life.

Fenn bases his belief in immortality on a rational, moral, aesthetic, and religious world. These values have emerged and are still growing. Marvelous as this process has been, thinks Fenn, the same process will forbid their continuance here because at some time human life will perish. But the whole process, although rational as it is, will be utterly irrational if values and life will not continue to exist elsewhere. Speaking of ideals or values, Fenn says, "It is in God's purpose that man's ideal shall eventually become actual, but this seldom, if ever, occurs, perhaps indeed it never can occur, in the earthly life of an individual; hence if man's ideals are a part of his reality,

¹ W. W. Fenn, *Immortality And Theism*, p27

immortality alone suffices for that full self-realization which the purpose of God intends."¹ Thus the ideals or values which man can never fully realize on earth, are in themselves an ever advancing goal, but God's purpose, so to speak, carries over the physical experience, and man keeps on forever.

Similarly basing his argument for immortality, Falconer also sees in the world an irrational significance if truthfulness, goodness, love and beauty were to perish with mankind. If the earth and mankind are going to perish, and Falconer as well as Fenn thinks so, then all that is intrinsically valuable to man will also perish, for, says Falconer, "if and when the human race should disappear, not only the qualities but the ideas would perish, for ideas are nothing apart from man."²

Thus if values and ideals are to continue, they must continue in another realm as must also mankind. Through an idealism of this sort immortality is assured for the sake of ideals and values which are indestructible, and, inasmuch as they cannot be destroyed, neither can man through whom they find expression. These values being infinite in nature, require eternity for their ultimate attainment, and man who merely approximates these values, must continue his progress in an immortal life.

1 W. W. Fenn, *Immortality And Theism*, p32

2 R. A. Falconer, *Immortality And Civilization*, p50

11. THE ATTEMPT AT AN EMPIRICAL SUPPORT FOR IMMORTALITY

In recent years an attempt has been made to strip immortality of its metaphysical makeup and subject it to empirical observation. For this purpose there was formed in 1882 the Society For Psychical Research. Its membership was composed of some of the most eminent men of science, literature and religion. Among many of its outstanding members were Lord Raleigh, Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, William James, Bergson, Hyslop, and the French astronomer Camille Flammarion.

The aim of the Society was to make a scientific study of the alleged communications with the dead, with the object of explaining such phenomena, and particularly of estimating these communications as evidence for the life after death. Immortality is, and always has been, the subject of great controversy and speculation, and no direct observation has ever been forthcoming that would prove to the empirical mind whether there is, or is not, a life after death. There have been countless reports of the dead appearing in person and holding conversations with living friends. These communications are said to have been unsolicited and unexpected. To record scientifically all such reports, with a view of weighing them critically, and if warranted to establish evidence for a future life, was the chief business of the Society.

There seems to be some doubt as to the conclusions reached by the Society. F. W. H. Meyers, however, is led to think that the Society demonstrated three things:

1. "The survival of the human personality after death.
2. The existence of an avenue of communication between the spiritual and material world.
3. And evidence that the surviving spirit retains in a certain measure the memories and loves of the earth."¹

Among the members of the Society, however, there is general agreement concerning a world to which souls pass at death. According to the data, this world is a spatial thing; it has days, nights, water, sun and other objects similar to those on the earth. Sir Oliver Lodge has this to say: "Concerning the substance of the communications received from the other side, perhaps the most difficult portion is the account given of the similarity of the conditions as described 'over there' to the conditions existing on the earth; and it is asked, How can that be possible? I reply, In all probability because of the identity of the observer. Surely the external world, as we perceive it, is largely dependent on our powers of perception and interpretation...I admit it is a difficult proposition---but the evidence is fairly consistent...It looks almost as if that world were an ethereal counterpart of this: or else as if we were all really in one world all the time, only they see the ethereal aspect and we see the material."²

¹ Quoted in F. C. Spurr, *The Life Hereafter*, p72

² Quoted in F.A.M. Spencer, *The Future Life*, p209, from G. D. Thomas, *Life Beyond Death With Evidence*, pl26

Sir Arthur Canon Doyle's observation of the communications of the dead reports that the people in the life beyond live on different planes or spheres which are spatially one above the other. They are the earth-plane, inhabited by the "earthbound who have exchanged their mortal for their etheric bodies, but are held on or near the surface of this world by the grossness of their nature or by the intensity of their worldly interests; a punitive region below this, inhabited by the worst of mankind, a whole great cloaca of souls, into which the psychic sewage of the world constantly pours, grey waiting-rooms---hospitals for diseased souls---where the chastening experience is intended to bring the sufferers back to health and happiness;" and third, "heavenly regions---in particular a plane called 'Summerland' from which the messages just quoted profess to emanate."¹

The communications do not disclose a hell for those who have led wicked lives. There is unanimity in declaring, however, that the lower and astral and mental planes are only temporary abodes of souls, that penance and purgation is undergone there, after which the souls rise to higher spheres, or are reincarnated on the earth.

On the whole the Society has been reluctant in drawing any hypothesis upon these and other communications

¹ Quoted in F.A.M. Spencer, The Future Life, p210, from Sir A. C. Doyle, The History of Spiritualism, Vol. II, pl63

for or against a life after death. Even such data as the Society investigated was not conclusive evidence to some of the members as warranting scientific considerations. In most cases the room in which the communications were conducted was dimly lighted. Questionable mediums were used to obtain the proper results, and the whole atmosphere was clouded in mystery. The least that can be said for the efforts of the Society is that it has made some valuable contributions to the field of abnormal psychology. Ghosts, clairvoyance, telepathy, conversations with apparitions, and many other supernormal occurrences do not constitute scientific material in the sense that a general hypothesis can be formulated. At least many of the members of the Society take this position, and thus fail to establish any empirical support for a life after death.

There are those who believe that spiritism such as the Society has been investigating, does not belong to this day and age. Spiritism was prevalent in primitive times when the spirits of the dead were said to have inhabited every object both natural and human. But in this modern age, it is pointed out, spiritism runs counter to genuine scientific observations. What appears to be the working of a mind in a dead body may be a faintly surviving personality. To science a dead body is devoid of all activity. The fact that all communications describe the other world in spatial

terms seems to indicate the lingering of a mental activity such as was evident in this life. C. D. Broad¹ believes that "there may be a persistence after death of a 'psychic factor' formerly an element in the living personality of the deceased. This 'mindkin' may be temporarily united with the organism of an entranced medium." Communications with the dead and their description of a place or environment in which they live, does not prove their being in that environment mentally or physically. This is the contention of Haldane. He says, "Even if we accept the view of the spiritualist, that a medium can somehow get into communication with the mind of the dead man, what would this prove? If we accept spiritualism we must certainly accept telepathy. Now, I can see little more difficulty in two minds communicating across time than across space. If I can transmit thoughts to a friend in Australia today, that does not prove that my mind is in Australia. If I give information to a medium in the year 1990, ten years after my death, that will not prove that my mind will still be in existence in 1990. To prove the survival of the mind or soul as something living and active, we should need evidence that it is still developing, thinking, and willing; spiritualism does not give us this evidence."²

According to these comments on spiritualism, it seems that nothing convincing can be drawn from them in

¹ Quoted in C. Lamont, *The Illusions of Immortality*, p136, from Broad, op. cit., p540

² *ibid*, pp137-138, from J.B.S. Haldane, *Possible Worlds*, pp218-219

support of future life. Perhaps the problem of immortality must continue to be based on metaphysical arguments rather than on evidence such as the Society investigated. The truth is that few people would desire the kind of future life described in the records of the Society. Thus, on the whole, there is still lacking any empirical support for immortality, and, perhaps, the truth of a future life must be left to the dissertations of the metaphysicians. However, there are others who do not take the evidence as lightly as this. "One might suppose" says Brown¹ "that the policy of ridicule or of sullen silence on the part of the dogmatic materialist would not avail; and that sooner or later he will be forced to face the evidence and to offer some coherent, intelligible and acceptable interpretation of it. It is only just to listen with open minds...; and no one would speak lightly of the comfort and assurance which many people have undoubtedly received in this way." Thus there may come a time when more advanced psychological investigation will steadily clear up many of the puzzling phenomena now held by the spiritualists as proofs of a future life. Until that time comes, "The hope of a continued existence beyond the grave must still be a venture of faith."²

1 C. R. Brown, Living Again, p15

2 ibid, p22

PART III

PERSONAL REVIEW

It has been rightly said that an immortality which does not mean personal survival with self-identity intact is really no immortality at all. Other types of immortality are merely substitutes. There are those who think that an alternative belief for personal immortality is better than a complete rejection of any belief in immortality. To this, one nods assent; for although substitute beliefs may be looked upon as the brighter side of an otherwise dark and depreciative attitude of man, in the last analysis they are no answer to one's own personal survival after death.

In Christian thought, as we have seen, there are three distinct beliefs in immortality. One deals with the soul of man surviving bodily death and being embodied in a spiritual body. In regard to this, there has always been the difficulty of conceiving things of a spiritual nature. When one speaks of spiritual bodies, the reference can only be made in physical terms, and this immediately violates the definition of a spiritual thing. The whole question of spiritual bodies seems to be whether in the light of reason one can lay any claim to spiritual things. Surely any belief in them must be founded in religious faith. In regard to the belief that natural bodies survive, this, too, must be based on faith. All living things when

once they become dead are subject to decomposition and disintegration, and nothing known to man except a supernatural power can bring together the dust and ashes of a once living organism.

The second belief in immortality held by some thinkers, but never accepted by orthodox Christians, deals with the soul's survival in God or the Absolute. This is the absorption of the personality or soul of man into the Being of God. This means that the individual personality no longer exists, but that it becomes one with the Absolute. All the values, then, that have been worked out in the lives of individuals would seem to disappear, for values do not exist apart from individuals. Bell¹ drives home the criticism when he says, "Individuals, it has been urged, are the bearers of values, and their passing were also the passing of all that the world has won of joy and hope, of achieved character, and of tempered courage. It is selves, not abstractions, that are valuable to God."

The third belief in immortality has it that souls exist as pure souls apart from God and apart from body. There are moments in one's life in which the mind seems completely absorbed in rapturous reverie or deep concentration, so that for the moment there is no conscious awareness of body. In such an experience the soul is said to exist alone. Hence it is conceivably possible for the soul to live alone

¹ W. C. Bell, *If A Man Die*, p105

after death has separated it from the body. But one or two questions might be asked: Where will the soul exist? in the ether somewhere? or will it be a ghost of some sort? Perhaps these questions are not in order, for it may be that the same fallacy of inquiry is evident in this regard as it was concerning spiritual bodies. The truth is that in this belief, as in the preceding two, the soul is defined as a "substance", a term which has its natural and original application to material things. Hence it is difficult to be rid of spatial and material considerations concerning things of the spirit or soul.

In passing to the substitute beliefs for personal immortality, one final word is necessary. Certain conceptions of the self render a faith in immortality positively irrational. A naturalistic approach with its emphasis upon bodily activity as thought, does not afford the self of man any chance for immortality. It is this approach that leads Alexander¹ to say, "Should the extension of mind beyond the limits of the bodily life be verified..." his naturalistic attitude, he claims, would have to be modified or abandoned. Likewise Sellars is led to say, "To me with my view of the identity of mind and brain, spirits are impossible."² Thus any treatment which regards the mental and spiritual nature of man as purely bodily processes, leads inevitably to an out and out denial of immortality.

1 S. Alexander, Space, Time And Deity, Vol. II, p424

2 Quoted in E. W. Lyman, The Meaning of Selfhood, p7

In spite of this, it is apparent that if the soul's immortality is to be based on its substantive nature, one must reinterpret, so to speak, the verdict of modern science. Nineteenth century materialism and modern psychology point to the fact that the soul and the body are intimately bound up together, and that the fate of one is the fate of the other. From a strictly scientific viewpoint this verdict does not seem incredible. The mind, it is pointed out, is subject to, and affected by, various physical conditions. Thus a blow on the head renders unconsciousness; the effects of stimulants and narcotics produce corresponding effects on the mind. Such evidence as this and many others, show the necessary dependence of mind on body, so that it is said they are inseparably inter-related. Upon such conclusions, then, is postulated the theory that the mind or soul cannot exist without its counterpart the body.

In contrast to this view is the position that the mental and spiritual nature of man---his selfhood---is more than physical; it is super-physical. Naturalism may point to the evidence of bodily conditions affecting mental activity, but it is equally true that mental activity affects bodily function. Emphasizing the super-physical quality of man's selfhood, Lyman¹ says, "The self is being increasingly conceived as the center of originality, of initiative, of

¹ E. W. Lyman, The meaning of Selfhood, pp9-10

creativity...The conception of the self as being simply a compound of heredity and environment is not a very satisfactory explanation of the physicist when he achieves television...This self does not always echo and copy; on occasion it creates." It is upon a basis of such consideration that the super-physical nature of man is not subject to the verdict of science.

It has been seen that a belief in personal immortality must be founded on religious faith. Knowledge based on faith, however, is something most critical people are not willing to concede. Thus all notions of personal immortality are promptly dismissed. Nevertheless, eternity has been set in their hearts, as Mathews says, and attempts are being made to interpret immortality without personal survival.

This brings on the discussion of Ideal Immortality, one of the substitutes for immortality of personal survival. Ideal Immortality, as was seen, interprets the Christian "eternal life" as the "abiding now," or a state of being to be enjoyed here on earth. Its main emphasis is on the timeless values of life. Human experience, it is pointed out, is at times absorbed in works of art, love, music, and truth as well as God. These are above and beyond time; devotion to them means the complete loss of the sense of duration. This sort of immortality comes to every individual who seeks the

eternal things of life, or as Spinoza put it, "The intellectual love of God." Thus immortality is transformed from something temporal into something timeless and intrinsic---a quality of life.

This idea of immortality, as is true of all substitutes, does not need to deal with what is beyond death. Usually the argument goes that if there is something beyond the grave, a life of quality will be sure to partake of it. This is stated somewhat doubtfully by those who include in Ideal Immortality the hope of a personal survival. But both these positions are tainted with doubt, for if immortality should mean anything, it certainly ought to mean a positive belief. A life of quality is truly a life worth while, but there is the feeling that such values as create a sense of the eternal, ought to be carried over into another life in which the sense of the eternal is permanent. Immortality limited to this life seems to deprive the soul of a more lasting intimacy with eternal values. Why, might it be asked, should timeless values be limited to this life only? Why could there not be the prospects of a Larger Life of unlimited absorption in timeless and eternal values?

It is difficult to judge whether immortalists who combine Ideal Immortality and personal survival truly believe in the Larger Life following earthly life. Let me refer again to the words of Lyman Abbott, who says, "If we live here and

now the immortal life, then, if we are mistaken, and there is no life after the grave, still we shall have been immortal", there seems to be some degree of doubt as to whether or not there is a life beyond death. The truth is that people who find it difficult to believe in a future life, feel that at least there is some valuable moral truth expressed in immortality ideas, and so are reluctant to give up the use of the term immortality.

This same thought may express the criticism against Race Immortality, also that immortality which is interpreted to mean the "rebirth" of the individual. Referring to the "rebirth" idea, the Christian would agree that every life ought to have a rebirth, but he would also go on to say that rebirth qualifies the individual for the future life. In regard to Race Immortality, it may be said that the term immortality in this connection is an unnecessary term. To say that dead nations have awakened is to beg the question of immortality. Certainly all dead nations have not awakened, and immortality ought not include some to the exclusion of others; immortality takes in all.

In regard to Social Immortality, the criticism of Dr. Montague was noted. If we are to assume that the end of the world is to come at some time, then all the works and deeds of mankind will perish. Again it may be emphasized that this is not immortality, for there is, strictly speaking, no time limit to immortality. If on the other hand a less

discouraging view of the earth's future is taken, what guarantee is there that man's posthumous works will be immortal? Indeed the memory of mankind is short and crowded. As in the case of Race Immortality, Social Immortality also limits itself to the few who have contributed something of creativity to mankind. Not all men, nay, too few can ever create such works as become immortal. Such an immortality has no meaning to the majority of mankind.

Before considering Nirvana it might be well to select those emphases from substitute beliefs in so-called immortality to which the Christian who believes in personal survival would agree, and which, in fact, make up his own belief in immortality. The Christian would agree to quality of life and the absorption of the individual in timeless values. Here the Ideal immortalist stops, but the Christian goes a step further and includes personal survival. In the combination of Ideal Immortality and personal survival the Christian again agrees, but unlike the immortalist who holds this belief, the Christian states it positively and with utmost certainty. In individual immortality the Christian believes in the death of the old self and the birth of the new self, but he does not limit this new self to the life here on earth; the new self prepares the individual for the life after death. In Social Immortality the Christian sanctions creative life, a life of works and deeds, but as in the case of all substitutes, the Christian projects a life of value

beyond the limitations of this earth. The main difference, then, between the Christian immortalist and those immortalists who limit immortality to this life is, that to the Christian the soul is not bound to the fate of its body, whereas to the others the soul's destiny is the destiny of the body. Thus, the whole question of immortality depends wholly on the conception of the soul's nature as to whether the immortalist accepts or rejects the belief in personal immortality.

Regarding Nirvana, it may be said that this belief never has had any particular appeal to western minds. Nirvana, as was seen, has two meanings. The first meaning of complete extinction of the individual personality, is regarded as the reward of the saintly life. After having gone through the round of rebirths by which the individual is said to have become completely emancipated from earthly desires, the goal is extinction. Nothing is more repelling to the average mind than such a conception of life and its reward of annihilation. Evidently the futility of this idea of Nirvana has slowly crept into the minds of the more serious minded, so that in more recent times Nirvana is conceived as a state of conscious bliss somewhat like the Christian idea of eternal life. This is an attempt, at least, to interpret the idea of immortality as the goal of a future life worth striving for, and one that will justify the round of rebirths.

Returning to recent ideas of immortality, it is impossible to say whether most people accept the idea of personal immortality or resort to some form of substitute. The tendency, it seems, is to assume an agnostic position in regard to the soul's substantive nature. The influx of modern psychology with its emphasis upon the inseparability of soul and body, seems to influence vast numbers of people. It is a "respectable" attitude for critically minded people to adopt the scientific method, and disregard anything based on faith. Thus, men like Montague attempt to describe the soul, not as something wholly different from a physical thing, but as having laws commensurable with the physical body of which it is a counterpart. Such a soul can be conceived as still capable of the definition of substance, and thus immortal in the same sense as Decartes' soul. This new interpretation of the soul is wholly in alignment with the scientific method, and undoubtedly will go a long way in aiding the belief in personal immortality. Others like Mathews and Lyman think the soul is potentially immortal, and that due to cosmic activities its immortality is emerging. According to Mathews such possibility can be assumed on the same basis as when personality emerged out of physiological matter. Emergent evolution, it might be said, is one convenient way to account for what has taken place in the individual. It is a more "respectable" explanation; the emerging

consciousness and super-physical qualities in man are at least accounted for by a scientific method, and not left to supernatural powers. But all this only brings out the point that only such knowledge is acceptable regarding the soul's immortality as is scientifically respectable. Does Montague by describing the soul as a "field" akin to the magnetic field substantiate the soul's immortality, and, if so, does he do it any better than did Plato or Decartes? Obviously no; it is only a question of approach that differs simply because the demand for knowledge differs in the respective periods. The import of the same question applies to the theory of emergence.

Some people have been led to the belief in future life by alleged communications with the dead. Data which has been assembled by the Society for Psychical Research tells of many of these communications and quotes descriptions of the future life. But, as was seen, the Society as a whole could not formulate any hypothesis concerning the life after death upon such evidence. Apparently a lingering consciousness accounted for the communications of the dead. For a time there were many who thought that these communications established once and for all the truth of the soul's indestructibility. But here again, if the scientific method is to be used, and it has been attempted by the Society, no definite knowledge can be established concerning the life of the soul after death. Thus, on the whole, an empirical attempt fails to disclose the truth of the life beyond.

Personal immortality cannot be firmly established on the verdict of modern psychology; it teaches the inseparability of soul and body. Likewise metaphysical dissertations cannot convincingly argue for personal survival. Personal immortality can only be made intelligible through religious faith. Immortality cannot be thought of apart from God. This world has a moral, aesthetic, rational and religious significance. Through moral values man suffers for the sake of righteousness, refuses no burden or toil in sympathetic love for his fellowmen. In lifting his eyes to the ideals of truth, goodness and beauty he has an aesthetic significance, and thus lifts himself and others from the lower levels of life to the higher planes. Everywhere can be seen the rationality of the universe---in its organization, in its operation, in man himself. Through religion man comes into communion with God in whom are the eternal values. By entering into a mystic relationship with him, man catches glimpses of their eternal significance. Through this medium man becomes a co-worker with God, revealing his purpose in the world---the attainment of the highest realization of the eternal values.

Man is continually growing in the knowledge of God. From the first beginnings of life, mans achievements of values has been a painful and slow progress, and, as Lyman put it so well, "not to see progress in such a transition

would be disloyalty to the pioneers, prophets, poets, and saints of the earth and to everything in history."¹ It is this ever-onward struggle to manifest the true nature of God that has distinguished man as a super-physical being. Surely, the struggle for ideals has been accomplished at the cost of the purely physical urges that continually seek to destroy within man those divine qualities he possesses. Man will not regress from that which is most high, but will continue in a forward progress until his objectives in God are reached.

Man can affirm his individuality only in relation to a community of other individuals like himself. His best thoughts and moods are developed and expressed in a larger body of individuals, so that together mankind seeks God. In the community of the individuals, each individual effort is recognized and inspired, origination and creativity encouraged, and each mutually conditioning the other. The advance in the community toward the ideals of God is dependent on the part each individual comes to bear. Thus it is that each personality is an end in itself, and the society a realm of those ends. In that society, spirit engenders spirit, faith evokes faith, love begets love. Religion by bringing man into communion with God enables him to know the inward experience of creative love which he seeks to make dominant in the society as a whole. It is the law of this love that overcomes any self-defeating element tending to destroy the onward progress of man and his society. Hence through God, man and the group

1 E. W. Lyman, The Meaning of Selfhood, p36

to which he belongs seek together in harmonious relation the goal of the Larger Community in which ultimately will be realized the eternal values of God.

Needless to say, this Community exists only in a fragmentary way. The effort to reach that Larger Community has been difficult and at times brought to a standstill. Nevertheless the divine urge in man guarantees the realization of that goal, for God's divine purpose in which individuals share a definite part, cannot be defeated; the divine purpose is the Larger Community, the kingdom of God.

Man's immortality is assured by every divine effort and contribution made toward the lifting of mankind on the higher levels of God-realization. Having in himself the divine eternal God through whom God is able to become manifest, man is a shareholder of the eternal values. Death does not dissolve this partnership, but carries it into the eternal God from whence it came, and to which it must go. Thus immortality does not only mean an active part in the Larger Community, manifesting the eternal truths of God, but a union of that finite divinity of man with the infinite God with which it is identified in all its stages.

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