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mation showing that the principle advocated above is the basis of school administration in the important province of Quebec. The statement is that "any persons sending their children to such separate schools, or supporting the same by subscribing thereto annually an amount equal to the sum at which, if such separate school did not exist, they must have been rated, in order to obtain the annual school grant, are exempt from the payment of all rates imposed for the support of the public schools." Thus in Quebec the "separate" schools correspond to our "voluntary," the "public schools" to our Board Schools; and whoso subscribes to the former is exempt from being rated to the latter. The proposal made above is to exempt him either *in toto* or *pro tanto*. But that is a question of detail, the principle being clearly identical with that practised in Quebec. This forms a sufficient answer to all objections of impossibility or practical difficulty, such as the official mind is prone to urge against any change of system, however founded in justice.



ART. V.—THE INTERMEDIATE STATE OF THE BLESSED DEAD.

THE subject I am about to deal with is, without gainsaying, interesting, but also somewhat speculative. The materials out of which we have to construct a theory are scanty. The purpose of Divine revelation is, not so much to satisfy our intellectual curiosity with regard to the next stage of our life, as to attract our attention and concentrate our love upon the Lord Jesus, so that for all the future that lies before us, visible and invisible, we are in a way impelled to go on trusting in Him exclusively for guidance, direction, and spiritual satisfaction at our journey's end. The veil which hides the invisible world is drawn aside only partially, and for this practical purpose; and it is only indirectly and, as it were, casually, while in the pursuit of this purpose, that a stray gleam of light falls upon the enveloping darkness and dimly illuminates it.

Gathering up, then, such hints as Scripture thus affords us, and adopting the only possible method of argument open to us—the analogy of our present spiritual life and experiences—I propose to consider, as briefly as is consistent with lucidity, what opinions in harmony with the tenor of Christian revelation we may reasonably entertain (1) with regard to the mode of existence of, and (2) the modifying causes which will probably be operative upon, the blessed dead in the intermediate stage of their existence.

Now this phrase, "intermediate state," implies two *termini*. There is the state at the point of departure, and there is the state at the point of arrival. A brief consideration of the diverse conditions of the blessed dead at these two points of their existence will to some extent make clear what the problem is which lies before us, and may also perhaps suggest some clue towards its probable solution.

Our sources of knowledge of the first—the point of departure—are two: (1) The intuitive knowledge, as far as it goes, which every Christian has (who knows anything of the spiritual life and its ideal) of the workings of his own heart; and (2) the intimations which are given in the Bible of the actual condition in the sight of God, the Searcher of all hearts, of every believer, however immature, and however developed. As regards the point of arrival, we are exclusively dependent upon the announcements of God's Word.

As regards the point of departure, it will scarcely be denied by anyone that even the most holy and heavenly-minded Christian leaves this stage of his existence an imperfect, unfinished, sin-tainted creature.

And they who fain would serve Thee best
Are conscious most of sin within.

To the external observer, the lives of such saints may appear to be faultless; to themselves, who are conscious of evil imaginations and sinful propensities, which, however repressed, still start up to trouble them, it is far otherwise. This is one extreme of the possible condition of Christian life at the point of departure. Let us consider the other extreme.

Conversion to God, so far as we know, is possible as long as breath lasts. The conversion may be sudden, practically instantaneous, and yet real. It may come about at any period of this earthly life. It may conceivably occur on the death-bed, at the last gasp, as it were. Now, the subject of such a conversion all his life long may have been acting on principles opposed to God's truth, and in consequence may have acquired evil habits, rooted in his nature and personality, deep-seated and firmly-established through life-long practice, and in this spiritual condition may pass away to the invisible world.

Between these two extremes of the Christian life, believers in every possible varying degree of holy character die; but one and all are marred by sin.

Then, again, there is this material organism in which the spiritual life is enshrouded. It is an organism admirably adapted to the requirements of the animal nature, of which we all partake, but strangely unfitted to, out of harmony with, rebellious against, the ends of the true higher life. These

organic propensities, poisoned as they are by the virus of sin, ever craving or imperiously demanding gratification, own no allegiance to the motions of the Holy Spirit, and as long as life lasts thwart and clog its influence, never reduced to unre-sisting obedience, much less to helpful ministration. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon this subject. We are all, alas! unhappily too familiar with the unspiritual tendencies of this body of our humiliation not to be able to fill in the detail for ourselves.

And such as the organism is, such is its environment. The world around us is ever demanding our sole attention and concern, sometimes indeed legitimately. But, without doubt, the unbroken influence of the environment is to reduce us to a state of voluntary slavery, to the exclusive pursuit of the things of sight and sense. The set of the stream of the world is unquestionably against God and a godly life. This is the conditions of things on departure.

On reaching the destination—the resurrection state—we believe, on the testimony of God's Word, that harmony has been established between the material and immaterial constituents of our complex nature. This harmony is based on the higher principle of devotion to God, with the reduction to subservience and helpfulness of the organism, to that devotion. The body is now, whatever it was before, the ideal of an organ of the spirit, an indestructible, potent, spirit-governed body. And, again, such as the body is, such is its environment. The risen saint lives in an atmosphere of holiness, and all the higher dominant principles of the spiritual nature are now governing *de facto* as well as *de jure*, and in proportionate harmony with that environment.

The problem before us is now, I think, more clearly defined. What explanation can we afford as to this marvellous transformation? How are we to bridge over this interval with some explanation consistent with Scripture and analogous to our present experience? What probable theory can we advance as to the causes of this process going on in the intermediate state, by which believers attain to the *τέλος* of their creation, so that, on their arrival at the end of it, they are like Christ, *τετελειωμένοι*, satisfying the ideal which God had in the original creation?

One view of the condition of the blessed dead in the intermediate stage of their existence has been advanced, which, I submit, must at the outset be put aside. It has been supposed that at death the human being passes into a condition of utter absolute unconsciousness. There is thus an annihilation of all consciousness of duration. The consciousness at the moment of death, and the consciousness at the moment of resurrection,

though millions of years may conceivably intervene, will be as immediately successive as any two successive mental states now. Doubtless, on this hypothesis, the fact that there will be no consciousness of any interval will be as now stated. But it is no answer to the question before us. It affords no explanation whatever of the process of complete sanctification and complete development. Arguing, as we only can argue, from the analogy of our present experience, as to the *modus operandi* of Christian sanctification, we must conclude that it is a process of influencing the affections by the presentation of rational motives through the conscious acceptance of Divine truth. The inspiration of the Holy Ghost, supernatural though it be, works on these lines, in harmony with the laws of our mental structure. We can conceive of the formation of a moral character in no other way. The saint dies with infirmities, to say the least, of temper and affections. If he were to wake up with all these eliminated, and a character of perfect holiness substituted, the process could be compared only, but very imperfectly, to those remarkable surgical operations of recent times, which have become possible through the discovery of anæsthetics. The notion that in this condition of utter unconsciousness a rooted sinful mental habit could be excised, and an established holy mental habit inserted, seems to be very like an inconceivable absurdity. The Divine universal process, and by us the only conceivable rational process, of the formation of the Christian character is by the exercise of those moral principles which make up that character. On this theory, the command, "mortify your members which are upon the earth," becomes altogether superfluous. The battle with corrupt and worldly desires, so trying, so humiliating, may be abandoned at once. While in a state of unconsciousness we shall undergo an operation, and when we wake up we shall be morally transformed!

But, again, Sir William Hamilton, in his "Metaphysics"¹—and he is supported by very nearly all modern psychologists—advances good reasons for concluding that the mind during the whole period of its existence, even in the profoundest sleep, never altogether ceases its activity, and is never wholly unconscious, though may be with feebler energy.

The supposition, then, I am now considering is to be dismissed. It is marked by two defects, each of which is fatal to any scientific hypothesis: (1) It is extremely probable that, as a fact, it is false in itself: and (2) even if it were true, it would not account for the phenomena which it professes to explain. Surely it goes without saying that the spiritual

¹ Vol. i., lect. xvii.

life of the Christian is a history, a process of growth, consisting of successive stages, each of which normally prepares for and leads on to the next, and so on to the ultimate development.

Still guided by the lamp of Holy Scripture, and the analogy of our present experience, we may now proceed to inquire whether we may not discern in this intermediate state traces of conditions and efficient causes which may account for this perfecting process leading to the perfection of human nature. It may conduce to clearness of exposition if I arrange these *conditions* and *causes* in two classes: (1) negative, and then (2) positive.

(1) Negative in the removal of hindrances, in the substitution of favourable for unfavourable conditions.

The present scene is one of incessant distraction and seductive forcible temptation. The world has its legitimate interests and just claims upon our attention, who doubts? But does it stop at the boundary of its righteous prerogatives? It appeals to us with fascinating charms through every inlet of our organism, and throughout the whole period of our waking existence it obtrusively and clamorously demands our sole devotion. With a force like gravitation it drags us down from the thinking and pursuit of higher things. The holiest of men are most conscious of this clogging, thwarting force, ever pulling them away from the eternal realities of their faith.

Now all this set and rush of the tide of worldly influence will be done away with. The thief on the cross would be that day with Christ in Paradise; and where Christ is, there is true full-flowing life and unchecked liberty. The believer is introduced to a scene where all the circumstances, surroundings, and society will be favourable to the onward course of the redeemed soul. Pleasures and pains, and probation arising out of them, as a means to development of character, will, I think, still exist:—probation—because growth in holiness is conceivably only achievable by trial, discipline, and exercise; pains—because the departed believer is still imperfectly holy, still sin-tainted, and the consciousness of that taint (as consciousness there must be) can never be pleasant. But they both—pains and probation—will be robbed of that over-mastering disproportionate force which they now wield.

Again, in this world, it is to a great extent true that the body serves the soul, only that the soul may more effectually serve the body—as if the brute within us were the lord, and the rational soul its slave. The propensities of our animal organism, however innocent in themselves, are every moment in danger of being inflamed into excess, and therefore to sinful gratification. These propensities are blind to all considera-

tions of prudence, of virtue, of religion. They know nothing of proportion or fitness. Such provocation to forbidden excess Adam was liable to in the Garden of Eden, and, through voluntarily yielding, fell. How much more when this animal body is the handmaid, source, and seat of sensual cravings, wicked passions, and turbulent lust? Well might St. Paul speak of it as "the body of this death." The body tainted with the virus of sin in every fibre so thwarted him that he could not do the things that he would.

This tremendous obstacle will be cleared away—at least, enormously diminished. For example, the appetites and passions essential to preservation and reproduction, so distracting, so efficient for evil (I need not stop to explain how), will totally disappear.

What the organism will be in this intermediate state cannot be positively stated; but in order to insure the identity of the risen with the present body, a bodily organism of some sort must, as I think, continue to exist. How are we to conceive of the ultimate development to the complete control of the spirit over the organism if there is no organism for it to influence? How is this transformation of this earthly organism into the *πνευματικὸν σῶμα* to be effected except by a process of development—a process accomplished by exercise and trial? Probation, in this sense of exercise and trial, as the agency for the establishment and manifestation of character, is the divinely-appointed means of all development, of all activities of human nature, corporeal, intellectual, and spiritual. We can argue only from the analogy of our present experience. And why should not the process of sanctification and development be effected by essentially the same kind of agency, though under indefinitely more favourable conditions, as it is now?

In the intermediate state, then, the body, identically the same with the present, will no longer be the seat and source, lever and fulcrum, of ungodly passions and inducements; and the environment will be correspondingly and proportionately favourable to spiritual progress and development.

(2) Turning now to the positive side, the existence of efficient causes, I admit at once that so far no real advance has been made in the endeavour to causally account for the result described in 1 Cor. xv. The hindrances have been removed; the situation is auspicious. But neither favourable situations nor removals of hindrances will ever be the cause of anything. The burglary, or, to speak with technical correctness, the robbery, would not have been committed if the door had not been left unlocked. True; but no amount of unlocked doors will ever cause a robbery. The condition of unlocked

doors permitted the introduction of the cause, and gave it scope to operate. A reasonable explanation consistent with Scripture of the marvellous change from the condition at the point of departure to that at the point of arrival is still to seek. That resurrection-state is an effect for which we constitutionally ask for a cause.

Now universally, in the kingdoms both of nature and grace, the Divine method of reaching results of any sort is by the adoption of means and ends. Is it not reasonable to conclude that this law obtains also in the unseen world in the intermediate state? Holding still the clue of the analogy of our earthly spiritual life, I think I can discern two efficient causes actually in operation, and adequate, in the conditions already mentioned, to produce the effect. These are: (1) A rectified will; (2) the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

I admit that it is beyond our power to analyse and disintegrate the action of our own personality, whatever it may be, into these two constituents. Our own volition and Divine influence mysteriously co-operate. But, all the same, our actions are our very own, the outcome of our own personality, although some of them would not take place apart from Divine help. It is, therefore, only for clearness of thought and logical presentation that I speak separately of these two efficient causes. As a matter of fact, they indissolubly combine in the production of the homogeneous effect.

(1) A rectified will.

Kant begins his immortal work on the "Metaphysic of Ethics" with this sentence: "There is nothing in the world which can be termed absolutely and altogether good—a good will alone excepted." Now, spiritual conversion is conversion of the will. In the extensive realm of human nature the will is the executive. That executive, that will, in the case of the converted man, no longer works as before in the direction of self, but, with more or less steadiness, in the direction of God. The central leading tendency of the regenerated man is to live to God.

A magnet may have its waverings and vibrations through collateral attractions and repulsions, but there is no room for doubt as to the direction of its tendency. The hinge on which it turns may be choked, or it may be kept back by foreign physical force, but the tendency of the magnet is there all the same. The hindrances are accidental, the tendency is essential. Remove the former, and the magnet with accelerative force springs forward, according to its inherent, though concealed, tendency.

Or another illustration. You have a spiral spring coiled up. If it is choked with dirt and clay it will remain stationary,

but the essential tendency of that spiral, though masked, is still there. Let the choking clay be dissolved, and the spring flies to its normal condition.

The point and application of these illustrations are obvious to us all. The essential dominant tendency of the dying believer, when the accidental hindrances have been cleared away, will have full swing and free play.

I now pass to another point. The springs of human activity are the desires, emotions, passions, affections, sentiments. A creature endowed with intellect and will, if he had no desires would never move—would never do anything. These desires are the constitutional motors of our volitions.

But in this present earthly phase of our existence, these springs of activity, these emotions, have not, and cannot be granted, full play. And yet the characteristic of all emotions is their tendency to accelerated intensity. This is matter of almost every-day experience. But now the possible potency of our emotions with this tendency to rapid enhancement is far larger than the strength of this organism to sustain. The force of the passions is much greater proportionately than the strength of the organism. Full permission and unchecked play cannot be allowed, simply because the physical power to sustain this uncontrolled gratification does not exist, and the organic machinery soon breaks down. If a condition of torpor does not intervene, there arises great peril of insanity; and indeed, in almost all cases, the imperious demands of earthly existence impose a bar. Thus, the present physical organism is a hindrance to and a limitation of the capacity of these emotions and of their causal efficacy.

But let this limiting obstructive body with its animal appetites be swept away, and a congenial, untiring organism replace it—is it not obvious that, with more extensive and intensive powers of perception, with clearer and broader views of Divine truth, with more intimate and deeper knowledge of the Saviour, the ruling passion of love for Him will be immeasurably intensified? Is it not obvious that this emotion of love, this essential tendency of the regenerated soul, will reign supreme, unthwarted, unlimited, and will exert an increasingly transforming force, of which any conception we may entertain can scarcely be exaggerated? The love of the redeemed soul for its Saviour will then be indefinitely more enhanced, more uniform, more efficient, inciting to the highest activity every faculty, corporeal, intellectual, volitional, with which we are endowed. The process of sanctification will no longer be limping and halting, as it is now with the best of us, but will proceed at a rate past calculation, flying, as it were on eagle's wings, right and straight to its central goal, complete and perfect conformity to the will of God.

(2) The influence of the Holy Ghost.

The account of this second concurrent efficient cause needs no elaboration. The mode of action of the Divine Spirit upon our nature cannot be stated in intelligible terms, because it is incomprehensible and inconceivable. Nor, indeed, for the matter of that, can we understand the mode of action of our own will upon our own physical organism. Physiologists can tell us accurately what the nexus and mutual actions of the components of the corporeal machine are, but they can give no answer to the question, How does the immaterial mind act in the first place on the machinery at all? We simply know the fact that it does act. On the testimony of Holy Scripture and of our own experience of the effect, we are assured of the fact of this Divine influence; and that is enough. The Holy Ghost enlightens the understanding, excites the emotions, fortifies the will, and all in order to the production of one result—the sanctification of the whole man.

We may reasonably conclude that this Divine causal influence will go on, at the other side, beyond the veil. The influence will be the same in kind, immeasurably higher in degree; and that just so far as (1) the ungodly provocations of this earthly scene are no longer present, and (2) the receptivity of the human soul is indefinitely enlarged. Who shall measure the transforming force which the Divine Spirit may not exert then?

Now, the course and direction of this transmuting conquering force invariably follows one rule, obeys one law. The sanctifying operation of the Holy Ghost is always from the centre to the periphery. The action of the Spirit is first at the centre, the governing principle in man, the will. He then extends His rule over the adjacent spheres, and so onwards until at last He reaches and transforms the organism, so that it finally becomes the perfect organ of the perfect will.

Still keeping within the terms of Scripture revelation and the conditions of analogical argument, I will now, if I may be allowed, hazard a speculation as to a possible mode of reconstructing this sinful body into the resurrection body, the conditions and causes of which, I think, are supplied by the phenomena of the intermediate state. I do not profess to explain how actually the transformation *will* be effected, but to state a theory how it *may* possibly be effected—a theory to which, as far as I know, physical science offers no ground of objection.

First of all, it is of primary importance to hold as an indisputable truth the identity of the resurrection body with the present organism. This fact is incontrovertible. It is established by the terms used by St. Paul in contrasting the diverse

qualifications and capacities of both. In his antithetically-compacted sentences what I wish to draw attention to is, (1) the unity of the subject throughout, and (2) the diversity of the predicates. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."¹ That very body, which we speak of as dead and buried, is that identical body which is raised. To ensure the identity of the body in the interim between death and the resurrection, I infer that an organism of some kind must continue in existence. If our present body is utterly dissolved and dissipated, so that no atom of matter, however infinitesimally small, is retained in living union with the immortal spirit, there may be a creation of a new body, but there cannot be, as far as I can see, (1) a *resurrection* of the body, nor (2) an *identity* of that resurrection body with our present body.

The next emergent question (wherein there consists the identity of the human body) admits of an easy negative answer, and that may guide us in some sort to the positive. Let us turn to the analogical lessons which our present experience of corporeal existence teaches us. A man during the whole period of his existence in this world has the same body. But this same body in the two stages of infancy and maturity does not consist (1) of the same *number* of material particles, nor (2) of the *same* particles. The constituent particles of our present organism are changing from moment to moment in both respects. The identity of the living human organism is quite independent of these considerations, and might continue entirely unaffected by the quantity or quality of the material atoms of which it is composed. So long as the living principle retains the power of rejecting, of appropriating, of assimilating and vitalizing, foreign matter, the organism continues the same, quite irrespective of the amount or sameness of the foreign matter provisionally appropriated. The body would retain its identity if the living principle within it were vitally united with millions of particles of the coarsest texture, or if connected with only one of the most refined quality, or if connected at different periods with both. If, as is conceivably possible, the living principle were united with one material particle only (not necessarily the same particle throughout), that atom might be absolutely invisible to our perceptions, also absolutely indestructible by any or all of the forces of Nature. In this way the identity of the body would be secured, the process of sanctification would go on until the conditions of

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 45.

the realization of the resurrection-body were satisfied. That resurrection-body and the present sin-tainted body would be the same throughout.

I am not aware that scientists have any ground from their knowledge of nature to assert that this is impossible. For, consider what they tell us about *ether*. Now, ether is matter. It possesses the essential properties; it occupies space; it has *vis inertiae*; it is ultimately incompressible. This ether, by its undulatory motion, gives us the sensations of light. And they quietly inform us of this astounding fact. In order that we may have the sensation and perception of violet light, this ether must impinge on the retina, *in one second*, 831,479,000,000,000—*i.e.*, 831 billions 479 thousand millions of times. And yet, ether is matter.

Let us study, as the Apostle bids us, the process of growth in a planted seed. Of this organism we can inspect the history from beginning to end. We can examine it during life, and at death, in the grave, beyond and through the intermediate state, and on to its glorious resurrection. The present organism is the seed, the resurrection-organism is the developed plant. The identity of the plant remains, and yet how diverse!

This analogical illustration is imperfect necessarily, and, of course, because the plant is devoid of that dignifying property with which we are endowed, the spontaneity of choice, the inherent force of our own free volition upon our own organism. It is a power which, in a limited degree, we possess now, and, as is most likely, shall retain in the next life in an intensified degree. Surely this inherent force, the rectified will, illuminated and fortified by the Divine influence of the Holy Ghost, is adequate in the conditions I have described to transmute the body of this humiliation into the *πνευματικὸν σῶμα*. It is, let us remember, the kernel which makes the shell, not the shell the kernel.

In addition to this analogical reasoning in support of this theory of the historical development of the blessed dead in the intermediate state, I think we may appeal to the express statements of God's Word. The resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the resurrection of His true followers, redeemed saints, are, on the testimony of Holy Writ, exactly similar and parallel events, results of one and the same law of development, products of the same efficient cause. Jesus during His earthly life had not a vitiated recalcitrant body. His organism never thwarted, was ever open to, the influences of the Spirit. His whole human nature, body and soul, was interpenetrated and animated by the breath of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, in His case the process of normal development extended to and

covered, in His earthly life, the corporeal element. Prior to death He was *τετελειωμένος*. Though His body, being an organism, was, from the very nature of its machinery, liable to demolition by external violence, yet it could not be "holden of death." Perfectly sanctified in every department of His human nature, what could the consequence be but a resurrection with a resurrection-body to be perfected into a *πνευματικὸν σῶμα*? This, I take it, is the meaning of these words of the Apostle: "Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was declared [established, constituted] powerfully as the Son of God, by the resurrection of the dead, *in accordance with the Spirit of Holiness*."² Now, the resurrection of the believer is essentially the same process, effected by the same agency, but, of course, hindered in this earthly state of existence by the rebelliousness of this sinful *ψυχικὸν σῶμα*, and therefore standing over to be accomplished in the intermediate state, when the efficient causes, now in operation, will have full and free scope to work out their complete and ultimate effect, in the sanctification of the soul and reconstruction of the body. I appeal to the express words of Scripture: "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies *through His Spirit that dwells in you*."³ The Holy Ghost, commencing the exercise of His transforming causal energy in this life, will continue to put forth that energy beyond the grave, and thereby shall ultimately effect the resurrection of those mortal bodies—*i.e.*, the animal-governed body shall become the spirit-governed body.⁴

I have been endeavouring to trace a history (and the life of the redeemed saint, surely, *is* a history), pointing out the successive stages in the development of that history and their causes. But at this point a query may be started. The saints who are alive on the resurrection morn will not pass through the portals of death, but, in a moment, will be changed. What that change will be, whether a hastening of the process I have sketched, which may be possible, or something altogether inconceivable to us now, I cannot say; nor am I required to make any statement on the point, for the question does not come within the scope of my paper, *viz.*, the intermediate state

¹ Rom. i. 3.

² *Vide Godet in loco.*

³ Rom. viii. 11.

⁴ The difference of reading here—*διὰ* with the genitive being the Revised Text, and *διὰ* with the accusative being the Revised Text Margin—will make no difference as regards the fact I am stating. *Διὰ* with the genitive points to the efficient cause, *by which*; *διὰ* with the accusative points to the normal state, *in consequence of which*. Both are effects of the Holy Ghost's influence, and they imply each other.

of the blessed *dead*, not the state of the blessed alive at the coming of the Lord.¹

Taking a firm stand on the fact of the universal adoption of means and ends in God's government, shall we not infer with great probability that this realized perfection of human nature shall be in order to the employment and exercise on a loftier and grander scale of these perfected capabilities? "God's people shall do Him service,"² and that without the wearying conditions and sin-poisoned imperfections of this earthly service. Will not the character of that service which His redeemed saints shall render Him be commensurate—not merely correspondent to the blissful surroundings—but commensurate with the enhanced faculties of all kinds with which they then shall be equipped? It is a feeble and frivolous conception, to be sure, that the state of the perfected saints will be one of inert unbroken repose.³ Or, is it any advance to imagine that they will be reclining on bright clouds and playing on golden harps; or to suppose, quoting the words of a favourite hymn, that this will satisfy the ideal of perfected human nature:

What rapture will it be
Prostrate before Thy throne to lie,
And gaze and gaze on Thee!

In the boundless universe of God's creation may there not be vast intricate fields of inquiry, undertakings of great pith and moment, responsibilities to be discharged, which shall evoke unto the highest activity every holy God-centred affection, every capacity of intellectual insight, all the intensified energy of the sanctified will, and that assisted and furthered by a congenial ideally perfected organism? Do not the words of our Saviour, when contemplated in the light of the resurrection-state, suggest such ideas? "Well done, thou good servant: because thou wast found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities."⁴ "I will set thee over many things."⁵

S. DYSON, D.D.

¹ There are several other questions which might, with more or less relevance, be started, for the subject is bristling with questions, but I have deliberately put them all aside, and confined myself strictly within the scope of the inquiry indicated by the title.

² Rev. xxii. 3.

³ Rev. xiv. 13, "That they may rest from their (*wearying toilsome*) labour."

⁴ Luke xix. 17.

⁵ Matt. xxv. 23.

