

From the great facts which have characterized nearly all the religions of the earth, it is beyond doubt that the sense of guilt and the closely associated idea of atonement by sacrifice has been as permanent as it is universal. Passing over the conscious need of mankind for an authoritative standard of life and morals, the feeling that the Supreme may be approached by man in prayer, the widespread want of some explanation for the painful mysteries which surround our existence and our world; the despairing and bitter cry for something more than human consolations in the times of life's sore calamities, sorrows and pains; we notice more particularly the deep, imperishable intuitional anticipations of a state of existence other and more lasting than the one in which we now are found. Presensé, in an article on the "Royalty of Man," has remarked that "not only does man struggle after some knowledge of and communion with the Divine, his soul also beats with its wings against its earthly prison in the endeavor to rise higher than life, towards that mysterious region where he thinks he ought to live again. The instinct or presentiment of immortality is as powerful with him as are the moral and religious sentiments." Sir Thomas Brown has said that, "It is the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man, to be told that he is at the end of his being."

"I do not comprehend," says the great German Chancellor, himself at the summit of fame, and surrounded by many possessions and conditions highly prized by the world at large, "how a man can endure this life unless he believes in another and better one."

We are also told that Wundt, in his "Logic," regarded by authorities in some respects as the most complete work ever written on that subject, makes this significant declaration: "The thought that a world of hoping and aspiring human beings is doomed to annihilation, through which all past thinking and striving will prove itself to be in vain, has always been, and ever will be, intolerable to man."

But why is the thought or prospect of total extinction intolerable, if man is simply the outcome of blind evolutionary forces working in nature, and if all possible progress is merely