

our future existence—the existence of soul as well as body—depends entirely on the resurrection. We, however, believe there is a body-life and a soul-life, and that the death of the former by no means involves the death of the latter. The cessation of the animal or body-life functions do not involve the cessation of the spiritual or soul-life functions. A very little reflection will serve to show that even in the present arrangement of things, the body occupies but a very subordinate position to the soul. It is only the instrument in our material condition for accomplishing the designs of the thinking immaterial nature. By it we mould and modify the material world, and make its hard, stiff elements bend to our purpose and suit our designs. The life of the soul is not crushed with the death of the body. It is a well-known physiological fact that our body is renewed every seven years. We thus die daily. Particle after particle flies off with every pulse beat, but in a healthy state, organization keeps regular pace with disorganization. Our proper personality suffers no change whatever by this perpetual pulling down and building up. It has been well said:—

“ This frame compacted with transcendent skill,
Of moving joints, obedient to my will ;
Nursed from the fruitful globe like yonder tree,
Waxes and wastes—I call it mine, not me.
New matter still the mouldering mass sustains,
The mansion changed, the tenant still remains.”

If the soul's consciousness, personality, and life are not affected by a gradual decay, is it reasonable to suppose that they are destroyed by sudden and total dissolution? A Roman poet has said, “ I shall not all die.” We adopt the sentiment in a higher sense than that in which it was employed by him. We believe the soul survives and outlives the dissolution of the body, that all which constitutes us, thoughtful feeling and acting beings remains. The living soul, the identical person, comes not under the domain of death and the grave, but is clothed with immortality in the separate and unseen state. “ God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

The intermediate state is one of consciousness and activity. We do not suppose that death can destroy the powers of the soul any more than it can destroy that soul itself. We have known those who held the idea which was entertained by the late Archbishop Whately, of Dublin, that after death there was something like a sleep of the soul. They maintain that the state of the soul between death and the resurrection is one of unconsciousness and inactivity, that it sinks into a deep and unbroken slumber, in which nothing is known, felt or done. It enters, it is supposed, into a state something like that of the butterfly in the chrysalis, previous to its coming forth to flutter in the sunbeam. We will not be so dogmatic as to pronounce such a state impossible, nor shall we speak of those who entertain such views as “ sceptics,” “ heretics,” or “ infidels,” for it happens that a considerable number of unquestionably Evangelical ministers do entertain such views; but instead of there being anything to make us believe that this will ever be the soul's condition, there is everything, we think, to induce a contrary faith. The results of a careful study of the nature of spirit would all tell against rather than in favour of such an opinion.