

manent properties of our nature. Memory will be plainly essential for the holy purposes of grateful adoration; for gratitude is, in its very nature, a sentiment inspired by memory. It will be essential to enable us to perceive the rectitude of the final judgment. Suppose the memory of human actions to be lost, the judgment of our race will appear to be a mere act of sovereign despotism. It will also be essential to the existence of conscious identity or continuous being. That memory is a permanent property of our nature is therefore certain. Now, as our friends are closely identified with ourselves, and their words and acts constitute a great part, and sometimes are among the most important parts of our own history, if we remember our own history, if we remember our own past selves, *we must remember our friends* in heaven.

A second property of our lives which we know will be permanent, is *holy love*. There needs no proof that our moral affections will be continued. The present graces of piety will be the graces of heaven. They will go with us wherever we go, and form the temper and felicity of our existence. "Love is God, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." "Charity never faileth."—Against this there is no law to condemn it to death. We have seen that our present companions in Christ must always be remembered; we also see that *they must always be loved*; and, in heaven as on earth, it is the nature of love to seek intercourse with its object.

Another established fact that will guide us in this enquiry, is the *perfection* of the heavenly state. It is true that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be," but we know that we shall not be less perfect than we now are. In our instrumental existence, as well as in our character, we "shall be made perfect."—When Paul writes, "Whether there be tongues they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away," his plain meaning is, that the present *imperfections* of our communication and acquirement of knowledge shall vanish. Our knowledge of *individuals* as well as of things and truths will no longer be defective, in consequence of an imperfect medium of perception. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known." Do not these words imply a perfection of means and facilities for the attainment of all that knowledge which tends to the promotion of holy happiness—the knowledge not only of God, but of his glorified creatures?

The glimpses of the society of the blessed afforded by Scripture tend to the same conclusion: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are

asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." "Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "And these shall go away into life eternal." "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Paul anticipates in his converts his "joy and crown." "Every man shall be presented perfect in Christ Jesus," by him who "warned and taught him in all wisdom." In anticipation of Christ's appearance, the most touching appeal of Christian affection is, "By our gathering together unto him." Each of these passages supplies a beautiful social image; with each of them the notion of non-recognition is at least very discordant, while that of recognition agrees with all. Why is the hope held out to us of joint recognition, joint abode, and mutual social delights, if we are to be alike "unknowing and unknown?" Recognition of some kind is implied in all these instances; and can it be a merely *collective* recognition? Where, then, would be the consoling force of the language?

Before these fixed lights of fact and truth, difficulties fade almost to nothing. The difficulty, for instance, arising from the difference of rewards amongst those who were the nearest friends when on earth—we cannot conceive it to have any other effect than frequent separation. It may possibly impede the constancy of their intercourse, but not by any means totally prevent it. * * * I am fully convinced, by long and large meditations upon it, that, notwithstanding its transcendent superiority and happiness, the society of heaven will, in its social arrangements and conduct, bear a much nearer resemblance to that of the present world than is generally imagined. Suppose that of two friends who are now most closely united, and wishing to be so for ever, one shall be greatly