

outside of the Bible, there is to be found no proof of the immortality of the soul.

Whether such proof may be found within the Bible I will not assume to say, but leave the subject to theologians and controversialists, who have doubtless trodden and retrodden every portion of the ground.

I shall certainly make no attempt to prove that which in the beginning I acknowledge does not admit of proof, but content myself with saying, if the immortality of the soul be not susceptible of proof, neither is it susceptible of disproof. And yet while we can neither prove nor disprove, we may adduce such testimony for or against, as shall appear to us worthy of consideration.

I have apprehended there are few persons of thoughtful, reflective natures with whom these questions have not arisen in substance if not in exact form. What is, whence comes and whither goes the immortal mind? Unmistakably there exists to-day a wide prevailing spirit of inquiry regarding them, in all their various bearings and relationships.

With respect to the human soul one of two things must of necessity be true either it is pre-existent and from all eternity or it has a beginning in time. I am prepared to unite with a sentiment expressed, I think by F. W. Robinson, viz.: Every soul is a new creation fresh from the hand of God.

In treating of a subject it is proper, in the first place, to define it. I would give, as definition of the human soul, this: A spiritual existence in the image of the Creator, and like him, immortal in its nature, but unlike him, finite in capacity. By way of further illustration, I cannot do better than to make an extract of a letter written a few years ago to a friend with whom I was in correspondence upon the subject. Extract as follows: Thou writes it has given thee occasion for much thought, as to where the distinction between man's mental powers and spiritual life

may be drawn, if man is a three-fold being. It was the difficulty found in scanning this very point, that led me into the train of reflection which resulted in the partial conclusion that his nature is but two fold.

Having closely considered the suggestion dropped by thee, I can now understand the soul to be a birth, so to term it, of the breathing of the spirit of God into the intelligence of man—a new individual existence uniting the varied propensities and powers of the one with the immortal spiritual nature of the other.

As illustrative of the view, I would refer to the subordinate grades of animated nature. In the classification of these into orders and species, that one is higher than another when it involves in its structure and nature all that is possessed by the other, and something more. Man, as the highest order, embraces in his physical organization all that is possessed by all the others, and much more. All the lower orders in their free native state are gifted with the means of providing for their own peculiar necessities, many of them laying up stores for future use. Man's higher organization giving rise to wants of a higher nature, he is correspondingly gifted with ability to supply those wants involving the various powers, propensities and dispositions of the creature life below him, and very much more; a very much higher development of the reasoning faculties. For evidently the higher orders of animal life do possess the power of reasoning in varying degrees, some less and some greater, yet none to a sufficient extent to qualify them to become recipients of the inbreathing of the divine spirit, and they are thus free from all moral responsibility.

Following still the analogy, the soul, as higher, possesses all the varied faculties of the natural mind, and exceedingly much more, involving in its own superior existence the different propensities and dispositions found in different forms of creation and the