CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

FACULTIES PECULIAR TO CERTAIN CHILDREN, APTITUDES AND VOCATIONS AMONG MEN, ARE ADDITIONAL PROOFS OF RE-IN-CARNATIONS.—EXPLANATION OF PHRENOLOGY.—DESCARTES' INNATE IDEAS, AND DUGALD STEWART'S PRINCIPLE OF CAUSALITY CAN ONLY BE EXPLAINED BY THE PLURALITY OF LIVES.—VAGUE RECOLLECTIONS OF OUR ANTERIOR EXISTENCES.

If there are no re-incarnations, if our actual existence is, as modern philosophy and the ordinary creeds maintain it to be, a solitary fact, not to be repeated, it follows that the soul must be formed at the same time as the body, and that at each birth of a human being, a new soul must be created, to animate this body. We would ask, then, why are not all these souls of the same type? Why, when all human bodies are alike, is there so great a diversity in souls, that is to say, in the intellectual and moral faculties which constitute them? We would ask why natural tendencies are so diverse and so strongly marked, that they frequently resist all the efforts of education to reform, or repress them, or to direct them into any other line? Whence come those instincts of vice and virtue which are to be observed in children, those instincts of
pride or of baseness, which are often seen in such striking contrast with the social position of their families? Why do some children delight in the contemplation of pain, and take pleasure in torturing animals, while others are vehemently moved, turn pale, and tremble at the sight or even the thought of a living creature’s pain? Why, if the soul in all men be cast in the same mould, does not education produce an identical effect upon young people? Two brothers follow the same classes at the same school, they have the same masters, and the same examples are before their eyes. Nevertheless, the one profits to the utmost by the lessons which he receives, and in manners, education, and conduct, he is irreproachable. His brother, on the contrary, remains ignorant and uncouth. If the same seed sown in these two soils has produced such different fruit, must it not be that the soil which has received the seed, i.e., the soul, is different in the case of each?

Natural dispositions, vocations, manifest themselves from the earliest period of life. This extreme diversity in natural aptitudes would not exist if souls were all created of the same type. The bodies of animals, the human body, the leaves of trees, are fabricated after the same type, because we can observe but few and slight differences among them. The skeleton of one man is always like the skeleton of another man; the heart, the stomach, the ribs, the intestines are formed alike in every man. It is otherwise with souls; they differ considerably in individuals. We hear it said every day that such an one’s child has a taste for arithmetic, a second for music, a third for drawing. In the case of others
evil, violent, even criminal instincts are remarked, and these
dispositions break out in the earliest years of life.

That these natural aptitudes are carried to a very high
degree and unusual extent, we have celebrated examples
recorded in history, and frequently cited. We have Pascal,
at twelve years old, discovering the greater portion of plane
geometry, and without having been taught anything whatever
of arithmetic, drawing all the figures of the first book of
Euclid's geometry on the floor of his room, exactly estimating
the mathematical relations of all these figures to each other;
that is to say, constructing descriptive geometry for himself.
We have the shepherd, Mangiamelo, calculating as an arith-
metical machine, at five years old. We have Mozart execut-
ing a sonata with his four-years-old fingers, and composing an
opera at eight. We have Theresa Milanollo playing the
violin with such art and skill, at four years old, that Baillot
said she must have played the violin before she was born.
We have Rembrandt drawing like a master of the art, before
he could read. Etc., etc.

Every one remembers these examples, but it must be borne
in mind that they do not constitute exceptions. They only
represent a general fact, which in these particular cases was
so prominent as to attract public attention. They are valu-
able as exponents to the public of a fundamental law of
nature, the diversity of natural faculties and aptitudes, and
the predominance of particular faculties among certain chil-
dren. Children endowed with these extraordinary and pre-
cocious vocations are called little prodigies. This qualification
is sometimes used in a depreciatory sense, for the little prodi-
gies are accused of failing to carry out the promises of their childhood; it is observed that the brilliant abilities of their early years have not been guarantees of extraordinary success in their careers as grown men. A child, whose drawings were wonderful at four years old, has become a wretched dauber, as an established artist. A musician, who enchanted his audience at eight years old, has grown up a very mediocre performer.

This remark is just, and the fact is explicable thus: If the little prodigies have not become great men, it is because they have not cultivated their faculties; because they have allowed sloth and disuse to extinguish their talents. It does not suffice to possess natural abilities for a science, or an art, work and study must strengthen and develop them. Little prodigies are outstripped in their career by hard workers, as is natural. They have come upon earth with remarkable faculties which they had acquired during a previous life, but they have done nothing to develop those faculties, which have remained as they were at the moment of terrestrial birth. The man of genius is the man who unceasingly cultivates and perfects such great natural aptitudes and faculties as he has been endowed with at his birth.

The predominance of particular faculties in certain children is not to be explained according to the common philosophy which discerns the creation of a new soul in the birth of every infant. They are, on the contrary, easily explicable according to the doctrine of re-incarnations, indeed they are no more than a corollary of that doctrine. Everything is comprehensible if a life, anterior to the present, be admitted. The individual
brings to his life here, the intuition which is the result of the knowledge he has acquired during his first existence. Men are of more or less advanced intelligence and morality, according to the life which they have led before they come into this world to play the parts which we can see. This is self-evident in the case of a man who recommences his life. This man had acquired certain faculties during his first, which are profitable to him in his second existence. Perhaps he does not possess all the faculties with which his first life was endowed, in their full and perfect integrity, but he has what mathematicians call the resultant of those faculties, and this resultant is a special aptitude, it is vocation. He is a calculator, a painter, or a musician by vocation, because, in his former human career he has had the faculty of calculation, drawing, or music. We believe that it is impossible to find any other explanation of our natural aptitudes. It will be objected to this, that it is strange that aptitude and faculties should be the resultant of a prior existence, of which we have, nevertheless, no recollection. We reply to this objection that it is quite possible to lose all remembrance of events which have happened, and yet to preserve certain faculties of the soul which are independent of particular and concrete facts, especially when those faculties are powerful. We constantly see old men who have lost all recollection of the events of their life, who no longer know anything of the history of their time, nor indeed, of their own history, but who, nevertheless, have not lost their faculties, or aptitudes. Linnaeus, in his old age, took pleasure in reading his own works, but forgot that he was their author, and frequently
exclaimed: "How interesting! How beautiful! I wish I had written that!"

There is no reason to doubt that a child, after its re-incarnation, may preserve the aptitudes of its previous existence, though it has entirely lost the remembrance of the facts which took place and which it witnessed during that period. These faculties reappear and become active in the child, just as the half-extinguished flame of a fire is rekindled by the breath of the wind. The breath which fans the smouldering flame of human faculties is that of a second existence.

The absence of memory may be urged as an objection to re-incarnations in the body of a child, but this argument does not apply to the incarnation of the soul of an animal in a human body. The animal, being almost without the faculty of memory, it is easy to understand that its aptitudes only pass into the condition of man. The good or evil, gentle or fierce instincts which human souls manifest so early, are explained by the species of the animal through which the soul has been transmitted. A child who has a faculty for music may have received the soul of a nightingale, the sweet songster of our woods. A child who is an architect by vocation may have inherited the soul of a beaver, the architect of the woods and waters.

In short, the various aptitudes, the natural faculties, the vocations of human beings, are easily explained by the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. If we reject this system, we must charge God with injustice, because we must believe that He has granted to certain men useful faculties which He has refused to others, and made an unequal distri-
bution of intelligence and morality, these foundations of the
cconduct and direction of life.

This reasoning appears to us to be beyond attack, for it does
not rest upon an hypothesis, but upon a fact: namely, the
inequality of the faculties among men, and of their intelli-
gence and morality. This fact, inexplicable by any theory of
any received philosophy, is only to be explained by the do-
ctrine of re-incarnations, and forms the basis of our reasoning.

Discussion for and against phrenology has been plentiful,
and has ended in the abandonment of the inquiry, because
the ideas of ordinary philosophy do not supply a sound theory
on the subject. It has been found more convenient to ignore
the labours of Gall than to endeavour to explain them. The
truth is, that Gall has committed some errors of detail, which
is always the case with every founder of a new doctrine, who
cannot bring an unprecedented work to perfection by himself
alone; but his successors have rectified the errors of the
system, and we are now obliged to acknowledge that Gall's
theory is correct. It is indeed simply composed of observations
which everyone may repeat for himself.

When Gall's theory, or phrenology, is applied to animals,
the evidence in its favour is astonishing. In the case of
man the facts are almost always confirmatory of the theory.
It is certain that the skull of an assassin does exhibit
the abnormal developments indicated by Gall, and that, ac-
cording to the doctrine of the German anatomist, the senti-
ments of affection, love, cupidity, discernment, &c., may be
recognised externally by the bumps in the human skull. It
rarely happens that the phrenologist, on examining the skull
of a Troppmann, or a Papavoine, fails to trace the hideous indications of evil passions and brutality.

Unfortunately, many of our moralists find themselves seriously embarrassed by philosophy, because their views are limited by the commonplace philosophy of the day. Classic moralists ask themselves whether a man with the bump of murder in his skull is responsible for his crime, whether he is a free agent, whether he is so guilty as he is held to be, when he yields to the cruel instincts with which nature, in his case a wicked step-mother, has endowed him. Is it just to be pitiless towards a man who has only obeyed his physical conformation, almost as a madman obeys the impulses of his diseased mind? It would seem that the punishment of assassination is an injustice, and men ask themselves whether the criminal courts and the scaffold ought not to be abolished, and whether the judge who condemns to death an individual, who is not responsible for his actions, is not the real criminal?

The same reasoning, the same uncertainty apply to virtuous deeds. Is much commendation due to the man who fulfils his duties exactly, to the conscientious and faithful citizen, the honest and kindly individual, if his wise and respectable conduct be simply obedience to the good impulses communicated to him by his physical organization?

These results of phrenology were, it is evident, very embarrassing, and almost immoral. Barbarity on the part of society which punishes the guilty;—absence of merit in the well-behaved man! these consequences were difficult and painful to admit, so the world got out of the difficulty by rejecting phrenology.
It is quite unnecessary to reject phrenology; we may retain it, and congratulate ourselves on a fresh conquest in the sphere of the sciences of observation, if we hold the doctrine of previous existences. Phrenology is most naturally explained, in fact, by that doctrine. When it enters on the occupation of a human body, the soul lends to the cerebral matter, which is the seat of thought, a certain modification, a predominance in harmony with the faculties which that soul possesses at the period of its birth, and which it has acquired in an anterior animal or human existence. The brain is moulded by the soul into conformity with its proper aptitudes, its acquired faculties; then the bony covering of the skull, which moulds itself upon the cerebral substance within its cavity, reproduces and gives expression to our predominant faculties. The ancients who said, Corpus cordis opus (the body is the work of the soul, or the soul makes its body), expressed this same idea with energetic conciseness.

There is, therefore, no need to excuse a murderer, there is no need to deny his free will, there is no need to spare him the just chastisement of his crime. It is not because there are certain protuberances on his skull that the murderer dips his hands in the blood of his victims. These protuberances are only the external indications of the evil and vicious propensities with which he was born, by which he might have been warned and corrected, and which he might have conquered by the strength of his will, by a real and ardent desire to restore his deformed and vicious soul to rectitude. It is always possible, by adequate effort, to surmount the evil inclinations of one's nature; every one of us can resist
pride, idleness, and envy. The man who has not corrected these bad impulses is guilty, and nothing can render a crime committed in all the plenitude of his free will excusable. Thus, neither God nor society is implicated in this question, if we accept the doctrine of the plurality of existences.

Descartes and Leibnitz have demonstrated that the human understanding possesses ideas called innate, that is to say, ideas which we bring with us to our birth. This fact is certain. In our time, the Scotch philosopher, Dugald Stewart, has put Descartes' theory into a more precise form, by proving that the only real innate idea, that which has universal existence in the human mind after birth, is the idea, or the principle of causality, a principle which makes us say and think that there is no effect without cause, which is the beginning of reason. In France, Laromiguère and Damiron have popularized this discovery of the Scotch philosopher. Thus the classics of philosophy record this proposition as a truth beyond the reach of doubt. We unreservedly admit the principle of causality as the innate idea par excellence, and we take account of the fact. But we ask the fashionable philosophy how it can explain it? In our minds there are innate ideas, as Descartes has said; and the principle of causality, which invincibly obliges us to refer from the effect to the cause, is the most evident of those ideas which seem to make a part of ourselves; but why have we innate ideas, where do they come from, and how did they get into our minds? The classical philosophy, the philosophy of Descartes, which reigns in France, at the Normal School, and among the professors of the University of Paris, cannot teach us that. It will be said, perhaps, to
use the favourite argument of Descartes, that we have innate ideas because it is the will of God, who has created the soul. But such a reply is at once commonplace and arbitrary, it may be used on all occasions—it is so used in fact—and it is not a logical argument.

Innate ideas and the principle of causality are explained very simply by the doctrine of the plurality of existences; they are, indeed, merely deductions from that doctrine. A man's soul, having already existed, either in the body of an animal or that of another man, has preserved the trace of the impressions received during that existence. It has lost, it is true, the recollection of actions performed during its first incarnation; but the abstract principle of causality, being independent of the particular facts, being only the general result of the practice of life, must remain in the soul at its second incarnation.

Thus, the principle of causality, of which French philosophy cannot offer any satisfactory theory, is explained in the simplest possible manner, by the hypothesis of re-incarnations and of the plurality of existences.

We have previously alluded to memory, and explained its relation to re-incarnations, and the reasons why we are born without any consciousness of a previous life. We have said, that if we come from an animal, we have no memory, because the animal has none, or has very little. We must now add, that if we come from a human soul, reopening to the light of life, we are destitute of memory, because it would disturb the trial of our terrestrial life, and even render it impossible, as it is the intention of nature that we should recommence the expe-
rience of existence without any trace, present to our minds, of previous actions which might limit or embarrass our free will.

We cannot pass from this portion of our subject without calling attention to the fact that the remembrance of a previous existence is not always absolutely wanting to us. Who is there, who, in his hours of solitary contemplation, has not seen a hidden world come forth before his eyes from the far distance of a mysterious past? When, wrapped in profound reverie, we let ourselves float on the stream of imagination, into the ocean of the vague, and the infinite, do we not see magic pictures which are not absolutely unknown to our eyes? do we not hear celestial harmonics which have already enchanted our ears? These secret imaginings, these involuntary contemplations, to which each of us can testify, are they not the real recollections of an existence anterior to our life here below?

Might we not also attribute to a vague remembrance, to an unconscious sympathy, the real and profound pleasure which we derive from the mere sight of plants, flowers, and vegetation? The aspect of a forest, of a beautiful meadow, of green hills, touches us, moves us, sometimes even to tears. Great masses of verdure, and the humble field daisy, alike speak to our hearts. Each of us has a favourite plant, the flower whose perfume he loves to inhale, or the tree whose shade he prefers. Rousseau was moved by the sight of a yew tree, and Alfred de Musset loved the willows so much, that he expressed a wish, piously fulfilled, that a willow might overshadow his grave.

This love of the vegetable world has a mysterious root in
our hearts. May we not recognize in so natural a sentiment, a sort of vague remembrance of our original country, a secret and involuntary evocation of the scene in which the germ of our soul was first loosed to the light of the sun, the powerful promoter of life?

Besides the undecided and dim remembrance of pictures which seem to belong to our anterior existences upon the globe, we sometimes feel keen aspirations towards a kinder and calmer destiny than that which is allotted to us here below. No doubt coarse beings, entirely attached to material appetites and interests, do not feel these secret longings for an unknown and happier destiny, but poetical and tender souls, those who suffer from the wretched conditions of which human nature is the slave and the martyr, take a vague pleasure in such melancholy aspirations. In the radiant infinite they foresee celestial dwellings, where they shall one day reside, and they are impatient to break the ties which bind them to earth. Read the episode in Goethe's Mignon, in which Mignon, wandering and exiled, pours out her young soul in aspirations to heaven, in sublime longings for an unknown and blessed future, which she feels drawing her towards itself, and ask yourself whether the beautiful verses of the great poet, who was also a great naturalist, do not interpret a truth of nature, i.e., the new life which awaits us in the plains of ether. Why do all men, among all peoples, raise their eyes to heaven in solemn moments, in the impulses of passion, and the anguish of grief or pain? Does any one, under such circumstances, contemplate the earth on which he stands? Our eyes and our hearts turn towards the skies.
The dying raise their fallen orbs to heaven, and we look towards the celestial spaces in those vague reveries which we have been describing. It is permitted to us to believe that this universal tendency is an intuition of that which awaits us after our terrestrial life, a natural revelation of the domain which shall be ours one day, and which extends over the celestial empyrean, to the bosom of ethereal space.
CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

A SUMMARY OF THE SYSTEM OF THE PLURALITY OF LIVES.

We propose now to collect, within a few summary propositions, the principal features of the system of nature which we have defined.

1. The sun is the primary agent of life and organization.

2. In the primitive time of our globe, life began to appear in aquatic and aerial plants, as well as in zoophytes. The same order reproduces itself at present, in the point of departure, and in the development of life and of souls. The solar rays, falling on the earth, and into the waters, produce the formation of plants and that of zoophytes. The rays of the sun by depositing in the waters and on the earth, animated germs, emanating from the spiritualized beings who inhabit the sun, bring about the birth of plants and zoophytes.

3. Plants and zoophytes are endowed with sensation. They enclose an animal germ, just as a seed encloses an embryo.

4. The animal germ contained in the plant and in the zoophyte, passes, at the death of each animal, into the body of the animal which comes next to it in the ascending scale of organic perfection. From the zoophyte the animated germ
passes into the mollusc, from thence into the articulated animal, the fish, or the reptile. From the body of the reptile, it passes into that of the bird, and then into the mammifers.

In the inferior beings, for instance zoophytes, several animated germs may be united to form the soul of a single being of a superior order.

5. In passing through the entire series of animals, this rudimentary soul becomes perfected and acquires the beginnings of faculties. Conscience, will, and judgment succeed to sensation. When the soul has attained the body of a mammifer, it has acquired a certain number of faculties. In addition to feeling, it has the basis of reason, i.e., the principle of causation. From the body of a mammiferous animal belonging to the superior species, the soul passes into the body of a newly-born infant.

6. The child is born without memory, like the superior animal whence it has proceeded. At a year old it acquires this faculty, and gradually obtains others; imagination and thought develop themselves, reason grows strong, memory becomes firm and extensive.

7. If the child dies before the age of twelve months, his soul, still very imperfect, and devoid of active faculties, passes into the body of another newly-born child, and recommences a new existence.

8. When a man dies, his body remains upon the earth, his soul rises through the atmosphere to the ether which surrounds all the planets, and enters into the body of the angel, or superhuman being.
9. If, during its sojourn upon the earth, the soul has not undergone a sufficient amount of purification and ennobling, it recommences a second existence, passing into the body of a newly-born child, and losing the remembrance of its first life. Only when the soul has attained the suitable degree of perfection, and, after having been re-incarnate once, or many times, is empowered to leave our globe, to assume a new body in the bosom of the ethereal plains, and thus become a superhuman being, can it recover the recollection of its past existences.

10. That which occurs upon the Earth also takes place in the other planets of our solar system. "In these planets vegetables, or beings analogous to vegetables are produced by the action of the sun. By means of his rays animated germs are carried into these globes, and plants and inferior animals are produced. Then these animated germs contained in the plants and inferior animals, passing successively through the whole series of animals, end by producing a being, superior, in intelligence and sensibility, to all the other living creatures. This superior being, the analogue of the human being, we call planetary man.

11. The planetary man, who inhabits Mercury, Mars, Venus, &c., being dead, his material form remains upon the planetary globe, and his soul, provided it has acquired the necessary degree of purity, passes into the surrounding ether, is incarnate in a new body, and produces a superhuman being.

12. Phalanxes of these superhuman beings float in the planetary ether. It witnesses the reunion of all the purified souls which have come from our globe and from the other
planets. The organic types of these beings is the same, whatever may be their planetary abode.

13. The superhuman being is provided with special attributes, he is endowed with mighty faculties which raise him to a height infinitely above terrestrial or planetary humanity. In this being, matter, in comparison with the spiritual principle, is reduced to a much smaller proportion than in man. His body is light and vaporous. He possesses senses which are unknown to us, and the senses which he possesses in common with us, are prodigiously intensified, subtilised, and perfected. He can transport himself, in a short space of time, to any distance, he can travel, without fatigue, from one point in space to another. His vision is of immeasurable extent. He has intuitive knowledge of many facts of nature which are hidden by an impenetrable veil from feeble human perception.

14. The superhuman being who comes from the earth can place himself in communication with men who are worthy of the privilege. He directs their conduct, watches over their actions, enlightens their understanding, inspires their hearts. When, in their turn, they too reach the celestial dwellings, he receives them on the threshold of their new abode, and initiates them into the life of blessedness beyond the tomb.

15. The superhuman being is mortal. When he has terminated the normal course of his existence in the ethereal spaces, he dies, and his spiritual principle enters into a new body; that of the archangel, or arch-human being, in whom the proportion of spiritual principle predominates still more strongly, in proportion to matter.
16. These re-incarnations, in the depths of the ethereal spaces, are reproduced more frequently than can be defined, and give us a series of creatures of ever-increasing activity and power of thought and action. At each promotion in the hierarchy of space these sublime beings find the energy of their moral and intellectual faculties, their power of feeling, and of loving, and their induction into the most profound mysteries of the Universe, undergoing augmentation.

17. When he has arrived at the highest degree of the celestial hierarchy, the spiritualized being is absolutely perfect; in strength and in intelligence. He is entirely freed from all material alloy; he has no longer a body, he is a pure spirit. In this condition he passes into the sun.

18. The sun, the king-star, is then the final and common sojourn of all the spiritualized beings who have come from the other planets, after having passed through the long series of existences which have rolled away in the plains of ether.

19. The spiritualized beings gathered together in the sun, send down upon the earth and upon the planets emanations from their essence, that is to say, animated germs. These animated germs are carried by the sunbeams, which distribute organization, feeling, and life over all the planets, at the same time that they preside at all the great physical and mechanical operations which take place on the earth, and on the other planets of our solar world.

20. The formation of the aërial and aquatic plants, and the birth of inferior animals or zoophytes, are, as we have said, the result of the action of the sun’s rays on our globe. Then commence the series of the transmigrations of souls through
the bodies of various animals, which results in man, in the superhuman being, and in all the succession of celestial metempsychoses, whose ultimate term is the spiritualized being or the dweller in the sun.

Thus does the great chain of nature close and complete itself;—that uninterrupted chain of vital activity, which has neither beginning nor end, and which links all created beings into one family, the universal family of the worlds.

Nature is not a straight line, but a circle, and we cannot say where this wonderful circle begins or ends. The wisdom of the Egyptians, which represented the world as a serpent coiled around itself, was the symbol of a great truth which the science of our time has once more brought to light.
CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

REPLIES TO SOME OBJECTIONS.—FIRST: THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL, WHICH IS THE BASIS OF THIS SYSTEM, IS NOT DEMONSTRATED.—SECOND: WE HAVE NOT ANY RECOLLECTION OF ANTERIOR EXISTENCES.—THIRD: THIS SYSTEM IS NO OTHER THAN THE METEMPSYCHOSIS OF THE ANCIENTS.—FOURTH: THIS SYSTEM IS CONFOUNDED WITH DARWINISM.

HAVING brought into relief, by the preceding summary, the entire doctrine of successive lives and of re-incarnations, we must now meet some objections which will have been provoked by these propositions, and reply to them in a way which has the advantage of still more distinctly explaining our ideas on several points.

First objection. It will be said: The existence of an immortal soul in man forms the basis of all this reasoning. Now, the fact of the existence of an immortal soul is not demonstrated in the course of this work, and, besides, it could not be demonstrated.

The following is our reply to this first objection.

We are composed of two elements, or of two substances; one which thinks—the soul, or the immaterial substance; the other, which does not think—the body, or the material substance. This truth is self-evident. Thought is a fact,
certain in itself; and it is another fact, equally certain, that
my arms, my nails or beard, do not think. Here, then, is
the proof of the immortality of the soul, or thinking principle.

Matter does not perish; observation and science prove that
material bodies are never annihilated, that they merely change
their condition, their form, and their place; but are always to
be found somewhere intact as to their substance. Our bodies
decompose, and are dissolved, but the matter of which they
were formed is never destroyed, it is dispersed in the air,
the fire, and the water, in which it produces new material
combinations, but it is not destroyed for all that. Now, if
matter does not perish, but only becomes transformed, all the
more certainly must the soul be indestructible and imperish-
able. Like matter, it must be transformed, without being
destroyed.

Descartes has said, I think, therefore I am. This reasoning,
so much admired in the schools, has always appeared to us
rather weak. To give force to the syllogism, he should have
said, I think, therefore I am immortal. My soul is immortal,
because it exists, and it does exist since I think. Thus the
fact of the immortality of the spiritual principle which we
bear within us is self-evident, and we do not need any of the
demonstrations which abound in philosophical works, and
have been put forth from antiquity until our own time; we
need no Treatises on the Soul to establish its existence.

The difficulty does not consist in proving that a spiritual
principle exists within us, that is to say, a principle which
resists death, because, in order to contest the existence of this
principle, it would be necessary to contest thought. The real
problem is to find out whether this spiritual and immortal principle which we bear within us, is to live again, after our death, in ourselves or in others. The question is, whether the immortal soul will be born again in the same individual, physically transformed, in the same person, in the ego, or whether it will pass into the possession of a being strange to that person.

We may remark here that on this all the interest of the question for us turns. It would be of very little importance to us, in reality, whether the soul were immortal or not, if the soul of each of us, being really indestructible and immortal, should pass to another than ourselves, or if, reviving in us, it did not possess the memory of our past existence. The resurrection of the soul without the memory of the past would be a real annihilation, this would be the nothingness of the materialists. It must be, then, that the soul lives again after our death, in ourselves, and that this soul, then, has clear remembrance of all the actions which took place in its previous existences. It behoves us, in short, to know, not whether our souls are immortal—that fact is self-evident—but whether they will belong to us in the other life, whether, after our death, we shall have identity, individuality, personality. It is to the study of this question that the present work is devoted. We are endeavouring to prove that the soul of the man remains always the same, in spite of its numerous peregrinations, notwithstanding the variety of form of the bodies in which it is successively lodged, when it passes from the animal to the man, from the man to the superhuman being, and from the superhuman being, after other celestial transmi-
THE DAY AFTER DEATH.

grations, to the spiritualized being who inhabits the sun. We are endeavouring to establish that the soul, notwithstanding all its journeys, in the midst of its incarnations and various metamorphoses, remains always identical with itself, doing nothing more in each metempsychosis, in each metamorphosis of the exterior being, than perfect and purify itself, growing in power and in intellectual grasp. We are endeavouring to prove, that, notwithstanding the shadows of death, our individuality is never destroyed, and that we shall be born again in the heavens, with the same moral personality which was ours here below; in other words, that the human person is imperishable. It is for the reader to say whether we have attained our object, whether we have established the truth of this doctrine conformably with the laws of reasoning and the facts of science.

If an absolute demonstration of the existence of an immaterial principle in us be insisted upon, we must reply, that philosophy, like geometry, has its axioms, that is to say, its self-evident truths, which need not, or, if we choose to say so, which cannot be mathematically demonstrated. The existence of the soul is one of those axioms of philosophy. Diogenes answered a rhetorician who denied movement by walking in his presence. By expressing any thought, by saying “yes,” or “no,” we may prove the existence of the immortal soul to the sophists who would attempt to contest it.

We have just said that geometry has its axioms. Let us remember that an entire school of geometricians amused themselves by disputing the axioms, under the pretext that it was impossible to demonstrate them. We were present, in Decem-
ber, 1866, at a curious sitting of the Institute, during which M. Lionville, a celebrated mathematician, and professor at the Sorbonne, explained this strange polemic with great skill.

In attempting to demonstrate the propositions of geometry, certain axioms, *i.e.*, self-evident truths, must be admitted in the first place. Otherwise, the primary reasoning will have no basis. But, among the numerous propositions of this kind which present themselves to the mind, and which result from the admission of one of their number, which is the most evident? That depends on the nature of the mind of each of us, and therefore it is that there is not, and that there never will be, an argument on this question.

There is a school of geometry which pretends to demonstrate everything. There is another, the true and good school, which, recognizing that the human mind has limits, and that everything is not accessible by our thoughts, lays down, under the name of axioms, certain truths which do not require proof, or, which is often the same thing, are incapable of proof.

Among the number of self-evident truths, or truths difficult of demonstration, we find the question of parallel lines. What are two parallels? Two lines which never meet each other. But how can we prove this property of two lines by reasoning? That is not, exactly speaking, possible, since the notion of the infinite is not admitted, or not understood by everybody, and cannot, therefore, serve as the basis of an absolutely rigorous argument.

It was for this reason that Euclid, the founder of geometry in ancient times, laid down this truth as a simple axiom, requiring (hence the *postulates* of Euclid, from the Latin verb
postulare, to demand), that the truth of this principle, which he acknowledged himself unable to prove by logical demonstration, should be granted.

A hundred geometricians, since Euclid, who renounced the attempt to demonstrate it, have tried to prove this theory of parallels, but not one has succeeded. It was on the occasion of a fresh attempt at demonstration by a mathematician in the provinces, that M. Lionville spoke before the Academy, to recall the principles almost unanimously professed by geometricians on this subject.

The question is, in reality, thoroughly understood; it is treated on all works on geometry, and has been for a long time a settled matter. But certain minds are tempted by the subtlety of certain subjects, and the question of the postulatum turns up periodically before the learned societies, as it does in the conversations between the teachers of mathematics.

M. Lionville reminded his audience that many demonstrations of this celebrated proposition had been attempted, but had not succeeded, because there are limits within which human reason ceases to be accepted by all. M. Lionville even proposed that the question of the postulatum should be classed among those whose examination is interdicted by the Academy, such as the quadrature of the circle, and the trisection of the angle. On this point M. Lionville quoted an anecdote relative to Lagrange. That great mathematician, believing that he had found an absolute solution of the postulatum, went to the Academy to read his demonstration, but on reflection, he changed his mind, and decided that it would be better not to publish it. He put his manuscript in his pocket, and it never came out.
Several geometricians spoke on this occasion, and confirmed the views of M. Lionville; and when the demonstration submitted by the professor was examined, it was found to be false. We must therefore recognize and proclaim that, in geometry, the axioms cannot be demonstrated.

Many people endeavour to derive an argument from that discussion against the certainty of geometry. Among them is M. Bouillaud, a learned physician and member of the Institute, who declared that he could not get over his astonishment at hearing it said that there were several geometries, and that even the bases of that science were doubtful. Reassure yourself, great and good physician, geometry has nothing to lose and nothing to hide, and the certainty of its methods is not imperilled in this question. That which really was at stake was the methodical, classical teaching of geometry. That which was discussed was the best means of instilling the principles of science into the mind. But, as to the truths of geometry, as to the facts themselves, they are secure from all uncertainty, all these disputes upon the truth which must be recognized as axioms, or demonstrated as theorems, are only fancies of the rhetoricians, as vain as they are subtle. No trace of them remains when they are transported into the practice of facts and of mathematical deductions. Ask the astronomers who calculate the orbit of the stars, who fix the moment of an eclipse with unerring precision, ask those who have calculated the parallaxes, whether they trouble themselves by inquiring how it may be demonstrated that the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. All the scholastic subtleties are gotten rid of in the course of practical work.
THE DAY AFTER DEATH.

If we may lay aside, without occupying ourselves with them, the mathematicians who amuse themselves by disputing the axioms of geometry, we may do the same with the few sophists who desire to dispute the axioms of philosophy and reason, and especially the principle of the existence of an immortal soul in man. Let us leave them to their disputations, and go on our way.

Second objection:—We have no recollection of having existed prior to our entrance into this world.

This is, we acknowledge the greatest and most serious argument against our system. But we must hasten to add, that if this difficulty did not exist, if the remembrance of a life anterior to our present existence were always before us, the doctrine of plurality of lives would need no reinforcement from the proofs for which we appeal to argument, to the facts of observation, and to logical induction. It would be plain before our eyes, it would be self-evident. All our merit, all our task in this work, is to endeavour to procure admission of the plurality of existences, though we have no remembrance of our past lives.

We have already treated this question incidentally, and we will now summarize all that has been advanced in former chapters to explain the absence of recollection of our past existences.

The soul in its first human incarnation, if it proceeds from a superior animal, could not possess memory, because in animals that faculty has a small range, and brief duration. If a second or third human incarnation is in question, the difficulty is serious, because it implies that the man who has lived and who is born again, has forgotten his previous life.
But, in the first place, this forgetfulness is not absolute. We have remarked before that in the human soul certain results of impressions received prior to the terrestrial life always linger. Natural aptitudes, special faculties, vocations, are the traces of impressions formerly received, of knowledge already acquired, and, being revealed from the cradle, cannot be explained otherwise than by a life gone by. We have lost the remembrance of the facts, but there remains the moral consequence, the resultant, the philosophy, so to speak, and thus the innate ideas indicated by Descartes, which exist in the soul from its birth, and also the principle of causality, which teaches us that every effect has a cause, are explained. This principle can only be derived from facts, because an abstraction can only be based upon concrete facts, upon accomplished events, and this abstraction, or this metaphysical idea, which we have from our birth, implies anterior facts, which must belong to a past life.

We have already said that when the soul gives free course to reverie, it beholds mysterious and undefined spectacles, which seem to belong to worlds which are not quite unknown to us, but in no wise resembling this earth. In this vague contemplation there is something like a confused remembrance of an anterior life. The love which we bear to flowers, plants, and all vegetation, may be as we have already pointed out, a grateful recollection of our first origin.

If, however, these considerations be not accepted as valid, there is another, which, to our mind, perfectly explains the absence of a remembrance of our former existences. It is we believe, by a premeditated decree of nature, that the
memory of our past lives is denied to us while we are on the earth. M. André Pezzani, the author of an excellent book called "Pluralité des existences de l'âme," replies to the argument of oblivion, thus:

"Our terrestrial sojourn is only a new trial, as Dupont de Nemours, that wonderful writer of the eighteenth century, who outstripped all modern beliefs, has said. If this be so, can we not perceive that the remembrance of past lives would embarrass these trials by removing the greater part of their difficulties, and, in proportion, of their merit, and destroying their spontaneity? We live in a world in which free-will is all powerful, the inviolable law of the advancement and the progressive initiation of men. If past existences were known, the soul would know the meaning and the bearing of the trials reserved for it here below; indolent and idle, it would harden itself against the designs of Providence, and would be either paralyzed by its despair of overcoming them, or, if better disposed and more virile, it would accept and accomplish them unfailingly. But neither one nor the other of these positions is fitting. Our efforts must be free, voluntary, sheltered from the influences of the past; the field of strife must be seemingly untrodden, so that the athlete shall show and exercise his virtue. Previously gained experience, the energies which he has acquired, help him in the new strife, but in a latent way of which he is unconscious, for the imperfect soul undergoes these re-incarnations, in order to develop its previously manifested qualities, and to strip itself of those vices and defects which oppose themselves to the law of its ascension. What would happen if all men remembered their previous lives? The order of the earth would be overturned, or at least, it would not remain in its present condition. Létèh, like free-will, is a law of the world as it is."*

*From "La Pluralité des existences de l'âme," Paris, p. 480. 16
To this it will be objected that there is destruction of identity where memory does not exist, and that expiation, in order to be profitable to the guilty soul, must co-exist with the remembrance of faults committed in the previous existence, for the man is not punished who does not know that he is punished. We may remark here that we do not use the word "expiation" precisely as theologians employ it, but rather as a new dwelling conferred on the soul, in order that it may resume the interrupted course of its advance towards perfection. We believe that the remembrance of our previous life, forbidden to us during our terrestrial sojourn, will come back when we shall have attained the happy realms of ether, in which we shall pass through the existences which are to succeed our life on earth. Among the number of the perfections and moral faculties forming the attributes of the superhuman being, the memory of his anterior lives will be included. Identity will be born again for him. Having suffered a momentary collapse, his individuality will be restored to him, with his conscience and his liberty.

Let us hearken awhile to Jean Reynaud, as he tells us in his fine book, *Terre et Ciel*, the marvels of that memory which shall be restored to man after his being shall have undergone a series of changes.

"The integral restitution of our recollections," says Jean Reynaud, "seems to us one of the inherent principal conditions of our future happiness. We cannot fully enjoy life, until we become, like Janus, kings of time, until we know how to concentrate in us, not only the sentiment of the present, but that of the future and the past. Then, if perfect life be only day given to us, perfect memory must also be given
to us. And now, let us try to think of the infinite treasures of a mind enriched by the recollections of an innumerable series of existences, entirely different from each other, and yet admirably linked together by a continual dependence. To this marvellous garland of metempsychoses, encircling the universe, let us add, if the perspective seem worthy of our ambition, a clear perception of the particular influence of our life upon the ulterior changes of each of the worlds which we shall have successively inhabited; let us aggrandize our life in immortalizing it, and wed our history grandly with the history of the heavens. Let us confidently collect together every material of happiness, since thus the all-powerful bounty of the Creator wills it, and let us construct the existence which the future reserves for virtuous souls; let us plunge into the past by our faith, while we are waiting for more light, even as by our faith we plunge into the future. Let us banish the idea of disorder from the earth, by opening the gates of time beyond our birth, as we have banished the idea of injustice by opening other gates beyond the tomb; let us stretch duration in every direction, and, notwithstanding the obscurity which rests upon our two horizons, let us glorify the Creator in glorifying ourselves, who are God's ministers on earth, let us remember, with pious pride, that we are the younger brethren of the angels."

Under what condition does the soul regain the remembrance of its entire past? Jean Reynaud specifies two periods. 1. That which is fulfilled, as the Druids hold, in the world of journeys and trials, of which the earth forms a part. 2. The period during which the soul, set free from the miseries and vicissitudes of the terrestrial life, pursues its destinies in the ever widening and progressive circle of happiness; a period which passes outside of the earth. In the first period there
is an eclipse of the memory at each passage into a new sphere; in the second period, whatever may be the displacements and transfigurations of the person, the memory is preserved full and entire. This theory of Reynaud’s is admitted by M. Pezzani.

With the exception of that *eclipse of the memory at each passage into a new sphere*, which seems to us incomprehensible and useless, we think, with Jean Reynaud, that the complete remembrance of our previous existences will return to the soul when it shall inhabit the ethereal regions, the sojourn of the superhuman being. In this manner only, in our opinion, can the defect of man’s memory, concerning his previous existences, be explained. Thus, the argument from that defect of memory does not remain without reply. Writers who have preceded us, and have meditated on this question, had already found the solution which we offer. This objection is not, then, of a nature to throw doubt on the doctrine of plurality of existences. Let us conclude, with M. Pezzani, that it is by a design of nature, that man, during this life, loses the remembrance of what he formerly was. If we retained the recollection of our anterior existences, if we had, before our eyes, as if seen in a mirror, all that we had done during our former lives, we should be much troubled by the remembrance, which would harass the greater part of our actions, and deprive us of our complete free will.

Why is an invincible dread of death common to all men? Death is not, in reality, very dreadful, since it is not a termination, but a simple change of condition. If man feels terror of death to such an extent, we may be sure that nature imposes that sentiment upon him, in the interests of the pre-
vation of his species. Thus, in our belief, the fear of death and the absence of memory of our former lives are referable to the same cause. The first is a salutary illusion imposed by God upon the weakness of humanity; the second is a means of securing to man full liberty of action.

Another objection will be made to our doctrine. It will be said: The re-incarnation of souls is not a new idea; it is, on the contrary, an idea as old as humanity itself. It is the metempsychosis, which from the Indians passed to the Egyptians, from the Egyptians to the Greeks, and which was afterwards professed by the Druids.

The metempsychosis is, in fact, the most ancient of philosophical conceptions; it is the first theory imagined by men, in order to explain the origin and the destiny of our race. We do not recognize an argument against our system of nature in this remark, but rather indeed a confirmation of it. An idea does not pass down from age to age, and find acceptance during five or six centuries, by the picked men of successive generations, unless it rests upon some serious foundation. We are not called upon to defend ourselves because our opinions harmonize with the philosophical ideas which date from the most distant time in the history of the peoples. The first observers, and the oriental philosophers in particular, who are the most ancient thinkers of all whose writings we possess, had not, like us, their minds warped, prejudiced, turned aside by routine, or trammelled by the words of teachers. They were placed very close to nature, and they beheld its realities, without any preconceived ideas, derived from education in particular schools. We cannot, therefore, but applaud our-
selves when we find that the logical deduction of our ideas has led us back to the antique conception of Indian wisdom.

There is, however, a profound difference between our system of the plurality of lives, and the oriental dogma of the metempsychosis. The Indian philosophers, the Egyptians, and the Greeks, who inherited the maxims of Pythagoras, admitted that the soul, on leaving a human body, enters into that of an animal, to undergo punishment. We entirely reject this useless step backward. Our metempsychosis is upward and onward, it never steps down, or back.

A brief sketch of the dogma of the animal metempsychosis, such as it was professed by the different philosophical sects of antiquity will not be out of place here. We shall explain in what particulars the oriental dogma differs from our system, and show, at the same time, how popular the metempsychosis was among the peoples of antiquity, in Europe as well as in Asia.

The most ancient known book is that of the Védas, which contains the religious principles of the Indians or Hindoos. In this code of the primary religions of Asia is found the general dogma of the final absorption of souls in God. But, before it reaches its final fusion with the great All, it is necessary that the human soul should have traversed all the active orders of life. The soul, therefore, performed a series of transmigrations and journeys, in various places, in different worlds, and passed through the bodies of several different animals. Men who had not done good works went into the moon or the sun; or else they came back to the earth, and assumed the bodies of certain animals, such as dogs, butter-
flies, adders, &c. There were also intermediary places between the earth and the sun, whither souls who had only been partly faulty, went to pass a period of expiation. We find the following in the Vedas:—

"If a man has done works which lead to the world of the sun, his soul repairs to the world of the sun; if he has done works which lead to the world of the Creator, his soul goes to the world of the Creator."

The book of the Vedas says, very distinctly, that the animal, as well as the man, has the right of passing to other worlds, as a recompense for his good works. The oriental wisdom felt none of that uncalled-for contempt for animals which is characteristic of modern philosophy and religion.

"All animals, according to the degree of knowledge and intelligence which they have had in this world, go into other worlds. The man whose object was the recompense of his good works, being dead, goes into the world of the moon. There he is at the service of the overseers of the half of the moon in its crescent. They welcome him joyfully, but he is not tranquil, he is not happy; all his recompense is to have attained for a while to the world of the moon. On the expiration of this time, the servant of the overseers of the moon descends again into hell; and is born as a worm, a butterfly, lion, fish, dog, or under any other form (even under a human form)."

"At the last stages of his descent, if one asks, who are you? he replies: I come from the world of the moon, the wages of the deeds done during my life merely for the sake of reward. I am again invested with a body; I have suffered in the womb.

of my mother, and in leaving it; I hope finally to acquire the knowledge of Him who is all things, to enter into the right way of worship and of meditation without any consideration of reward.

"In the world of the moon, one receives the reward of good works which are done without renunciation of their fruits, of their merits; but this reward has only a fixed time, after which one is born again in an inferior world, a wicked world, a world which is the recompense of evil.

"By the renunciation of all pleasure, and of all reward by seeking God only, with unshaken faith, we reach the sun which has no end, the great world, whence we return no more to a world which is the recompense of evil."*

The Egyptians, having borrowed this doctrine from the Hindoos, made it the basis of their religious worship. Herodotus informs us,† that, according to the Egyptians, the human soul, on issuing from a completely decomposed body, enters into that of some animal. The soul takes three thousand years to pass from this body through a series of others, and at the conclusion of this interval, the same soul returns to the human species, entering the form of a newly-born infant.

The Egyptians employed excessive caution in the preservation of human bodies. They embalmed the corpses of their relatives or of personages of importance to the state, and thus prepared the mummmies which are to be seen in all our museums. The universal practice of embalming was not

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† "Hiéraires," Vol. II. ch. cxxiii. (translated by M. Larcher.)
intended, as has been supposed, to keep the human body ready to receive the soul, returning at the end of three thousand years, to seek its primitive abode. It had another object. It was supposed that the soul did not commence its migrations after the death of the human body, while any portion of the corpse remained entire. Hence the efforts made by the Egyptians, to retard the moment of separation by the preservation of the corpse as long as possible. Servius says:

"The Egyptians, renowned for their wisdom, prolonged the duration of corpses, that the existence of the soul, attached to that of the body, might be preserved, and might not pass away quickly to others. The Romans, on the contrary, burn corpses, so that the soul, resuming its liberty, might immediately re-enter nature."

The most ancient and remarkable of the Greek philosophers, Pythagoras, found out the doctrine of the metempsychosis, in his travels in Egypt. He adopted it in his school, and the whole of the Greek philosophy held, with Pythagoras, that the souls of the wicked pass into the bodies of animals. Hence the abstinence from flesh meat, prescribed by Pythagoras to his disciples, a precept which he also derived from Egypt, where respect for animals was due to the general persuasion that the bodies of beasts were tenanted by human souls, and, consequently, that by ill-treating animals, one ran the risk of injuring one’s own ancestors. Empedocles, the philosopher, adopted the Pythagorean system. He says, in lines quoted by Clement of Alexandria:

"I, too, have been a young maiden,  
A tree, a bird, a mute fish in the seas."
Plato, the most illustrious of the philosophers of Greece, accords a large place to the views of Pythagoras, even amid his most sublime conceptions of the soul, and of immortality. He held that the human soul passes into the body of animals, in expiation of its crimes. Plato said that on earth we remember what we have done during our previous existences, and that to learn is to remember one's self.

"Cowards," he says, "are changed into women, vain and frivolous men into birds, the ignorant into wild beasts, lower in kind and crawling upon the earth, in proportion as their idleness has been more degrading; stained and corrupt souls animate fishes and aquatic reptiles." Again, he says: "Those who have abandoned themselves to intemperance and gluttony enter into the bodies of animals with like propensities. They who have loved injustice, cruelty, and rapine assume the bodies of wolves, hawks, and falcons. The destiny of souls has relation to the lives which they have led."

Plato held that the soul took only one thousand years to complete its journey through the bodies of animals; but he believed that this journey repeated itself ten times over, which gives a total of 10,000 years for the completion of the entire circle of existences. Between each of these periods the soul made a brief sojourn in Hades. During this sojourn it drank of the waters of the river Lethe, in order to lose the recollection of its previous existence, before re-commencing its new life.

Plato exalted the dogma of the animal metempsychosis by his grand views upon spiritual immortality and the liberty of man, ideas which even at the present time are quoted with admiration, but for whose recapitulation we have not space.
The metempsychosis holds less rank in the Platonic doctrine than in the Pythagorean and Egyptian systems. All its importance was resumed among the philosophers of the Alexandrian school, who continued, in Egypt, the traditions of the Platonic philosophy, and revived the days of the schools of Athens on the soil of the Pharaohs. Plotinus, the commentator of Plato, says, concerning the doctrine of the transmigration of souls:

"It is a dogma recognized from the utmost antiquity, that if the soul commits errors, it is condemned to expiate them by undergoing punishment in the Shades, and then it passes into new bodies to begin its trials over again."

This passage proves that the ancients held the sojourn of the soul in hell to be only temporary, and that it was always followed by fresh trials, terrible and painful in proportion to the errors which were to be repaired.

"When," says Plotinus, "we have gone astray in the multiplicity of our corporal passions, we are punished, first by the straying itself, and afterwards, when we resume a body, by finding ourselves in worse conditions. The soul, on leaving the body, becomes that power which it has most developed. Let us, then, fly from base things here below, and raise ourselves to the intelligent world, so that we may not fall into the purely sensational life, by following images which are merely of the senses, or into the vegetative life, by indulging in mere physical pleasure and gluttony; let us raise ourselves to the intelligent world, to intelligence, to God.

"Those who have exercised human faculties are born again as men. Those who have used their senses only pass into the bodies of brutes, and especially into the bodies of wild beasts, if they have been accustomed to yield to violent impulses of..."
anger; so that the different bodies which they animate are conformable to their various propensities. Those who have done nothing but indulge their appetites pass into the bodies of luxurious and gluttonous animals. Others, who, instead of indulging concupiscence or anger, have degraded their senses by sloth, are reduced to vegetate in the plants, because in their previous existences they have exercised nothing but vegetative power, and have only worked to become trees. Those who have loved the enjoyment of music over much, but have led lives otherwise pure, pass into the bodies of melodious birds. Those who have governed tyrannically, but have no other vice, become eagles. Those who have spoken lightly of celestial things are changed into birds which fly towards the higher regions of the air. He who has acquired civil virtues becomes a man again, but if he does not possess these virtues to a sufficient extent, he is transformed into a sociable creature, such as the bee, or some other being of that species."

Every one knows that among our own ancestors, and the Druids or high-priests of the Gauls, the metempsychosis was held almost in the same sense as among the Egyptians and the Greeks. It is, so to speak, a national faith to us, for it has been held in honour, its dogmas have flourished, in the same countries in which we now dwell. We have recalled these facts, and collected these passages from ancient writers, only in order to define the manner in which the Egyptians, as well as the Greeks, and, in later times, the Gauls, understood the metempsychosis. Our system differs from the old oriental conception, which was embraced by the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Druids, in our denial that the human soul can ever return to the body of an animal. We believe that the human soul has already passed through this
probation, and that it never can be renewed. In nature, in fact, the animal has a part inferior to that of man; it is below our species in its degree of intelligence, and it cannot have either merit or demerit. Its faculties do not invest it with the entire responsibility of its actions. It is but an intermediate link between the plant and man; it has certain faculties, but we cannot pretend that those faculties assimilate it to moral man.

Thus, we reject this doctrine of the return of the human soul to conditions through which it has already passed. Retrogression has no place in our system. The soul, in its progressive march, may pause for an instant, but it never turns back. We admit that man is condemned to re-commence an ill-fulfilled existence, but this new experience is made in a human body, in a new covering of the same living type, and not in the form of an inferior being. The oriental dogma of the metempsychosis misapprehended the great law of progress, which is, on the contrary, the foundation of our doctrine.

Fourth objection. It will be said to us: You maintain that our souls have already existed in the bodies of animals; do you, then, share the belief of those naturalists who derive man from the monkey?

No, certainly not. The French and German naturalists, who, applying Darwin's theory of the transformation of species to man, have declared man to be derived from the monkey, rely entirely on anatomical considerations. Vogt, Bruchner, Huxley, and Broca compare the skeleton of the monkey with that of primitive man; they study the form of the skull of each respectively, they measure the width and the prominence
of the jaws, &c.; &c. From the results, they draw the conclu-
sion that man is anatomically derived from a species of
quadrumane. The soul is not taken into any consideration
by these men of science, who argue precisely as if nothing of
the thinking kind existed in the anatomical cavities which
they explore and measure. It is, on the contrary, by com-
paring the faculties of the human soul with the faculties of
animals that we arrive at our conclusion. The animal forms
signify nothing to us; the spirit, in its various manifesta-
tions, is our chief object. Why, indeed, should we seek to derive
man from the monkey, rather than from any other mam-
miferous animal, rather than from the wolf, or the fox? Is
there much difference between the skeleton of the monkey
and that of the wolf, the fox, or any other carnivorous beast?
Put three or four of those skeletons together, and you will not
find it easy to distinguish one from the other, if, instead
of selecting a monkey of a superior species, you take an in-
ferior quadrumane, a striated monkey, a lemur, or a macaco.

Interrogate the physiological functions of the monkey. You
will find them, and the organs which serve those functions,
perfectly similar in all animals, and those organs identical in
their structure. Why, then, should you derive man from the
monkey, rather than from the wolf or the fox? Is it be-
because the monkeys in our menageries have a distant resem-
blance to man, in their occasional vertical attitude, and in
certain features which are caricatures of those of the human face?
How many of the species among the immense simial family of
the two hemispheres present this resemblance? Hardly five or
six. All the others have the bestial snout in its fullest develo-
ment, and are very inferior in intelligence to most of the other mammals. If it be from the organic point of view that you derive man from the monkey, because certain species of quadrumanes are caricatures of men in their physiognomy, why may he not be derived as reasonably from the parrot, which emits articulate sounds, the caricature of the human voice, or even the nightingale, because that melodious songster of the woods modulates his notes like our singers?

The consideration of animal forms is of very little importance in our estimation, when the matter in hand is to determine the place occupied by a living being in the scale of creation, for these forms are similar in type among all the superior animals, the body varying very slightly in structure in all the great class of mammals; and also because the physiological functions are discharged in a similar manner by all. The basis on which we ground our researches is quite different, it is the spiritual basis; we ask the faculties of the mind to supply our materials of comparison.

It must not be supposed, therefore, that we espouse the doctrines of Darwin and those who agree with him, because we hold that the soul has a previous dwelling in the bodies of several animals, before it reaches the human body; because we admit that the spiritual principle begins in the germ of plants, and that this germ grows and develops itself in passing through the bodies of a progressive series of animal species, to issue at length in man, the end of its elaboration and perfection. The Darwinists take into consideration only the anatomical structure, and put aside the soul. We consider its faculties only. We are guided, not by the materialistic idea
which directs and inspires these men of science, but on the contrary, on a reasoned-out spiritualism.

Our system of nature may be criticised, or rejected. We offer it merely as a personal view, and would not impose it on any reader. The merit of this philosophical and scientific conception, if it has any, consists in the vast synthesis by which it binds together all the living creatures which people the solar world, from the minute plant in which the germ of organization first appears, to the animal; from the animal to the man; and from the man to the series of superhuman and archhuman beings who inhabit the ethereal spheres; and finally, from them to the radiant dwellers in the solar star. In collecting together, on the one hand, all that modern chemistry has learned of the composition of plants, and the physical phenomena of their respiration, and on the other hand, everything which is known of the physical and chemical properties of solar light, the idea struck us that the rays of the sun form the vehicle by whose means the animated germs are placed in the plants. While meditating upon what has been written by the philosophers Charles Bonnet, Dupont de Nemours, and Jean Reynaud, upon the physical condition of resuscitated human beings, and dwelling upon the destiny of men beyond the formidable barrier of the tomb, in short, while drinking at the most various springs of philosophical and scientific knowledge, we have composed this attempt at a new philosophy of the universe.

This system may be erroneous, and another, more logical and more learned, may be substituted for it. But there will remain, we may hope, the synthesis which we have established
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from all the facts of the physical and moral order which we have collected together, the links by which we attach all the beings of creation one to another, which comprehends both the moral and organic attributes of these beings;—a vast ladder of nature, on whose steps we place everything that has life; the endless circle, in which we link all the rings of the chain of living beings. The theoretic explanation of all these facts, thus grouped, may not perhaps be accepted, but we believe that they are correctly placed in juxtaposition, and that any theory which pretends to explain the universe must be established upon the basis of that grouping. If our explanation be contested, we hope that our synthesis of facts will remain.

Besides it is only thus, i.e., by creating a system, that the sciences, exact as well as moral, are made to progress. Chemistry was not, as some have pretended, created by Lavoisier; it was founded by Stahl, it was not the pneumatic theory of Lavoisier, but really the system of phlogiston devised by Stahl, which instituted chemistry in the last century. Stahl, it is well known, had the immense merit of collecting all the facts known up to his time, into a general theoretical explanation of composing a summary of them, and of creating the system of phlogiston. This system was, undeniably, incorrect, but the facts which had been collected towards its construction had been perfectly well selected, and included every useful element of information or research. Thus, when ten years later than Stahl, came Lavoisier, he had only, so to speak, to turn the system of his predecessor inside out, as one turns a coat. For phlogiston Lavoisier substituted oxygen;
he preserved all the facts, and changed only the explanation. Thus chemistry was founded.

A well constructed synthesis must necessarily precede every theory of nature. Descartes, when working out his system of whirlwinds, formulated a conception which was certainly very inexact; but the facts upon which this theory rested were so well selected, they responded so exactly to the requirements of science, that when Newton came, with his system of attraction, it only remained to apply the new hypothesis to the facts collected by Descartes for his whirlwinds, and there was real astronomy, the true physics. When Linnaeus created his system of botany, he made an undeniably artificial distribution of the vegetables, and Linnaeus himself perfectly understood the defects of his system. But, owing to this artificial method, he succeeded in grouping all the plants into a methodical catalogue. If the principle of classification was bad, the service rendered to botany by this catalogue was immense. It was not, in fact, until after Linnaeus' time that the immense mass of facts which he collected could be put in order, and the study of the vegetable world made to progress from those data. Botany dates from the publication of the systema naturae of the immortal botanist of Upsal.

We do not pretend to put forward an irreproachable theory of the universe in this work, but simply to collect together and methodically group the facts upon which such a theory ought to rest, facts physical, metaphysical, and moral.
CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

SEQUEL TO OBJECTIONS.—IT IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE HOW THE RAYS OF THE SUN, BEING MATERIAL SUBSTANCES, CAN BE THE GERMS OF SOULS, WHICH ARE IMMATERIAL SUBSTANCES.

Our system of nature may be met with the following final objection. It will be said, how can the rays of the sun, being material bodies, convey animated germs which are immaterial substances? These terms exclude each other.

We find, in the Scriptures, a magnificent comparison, of which we shall avail ourselves in order to answer this objection, or rather, this question.

Saint Matthew speaks of a grain of mustard seed, that is to say, of a tree germ, which, cast into the earth, produces a herbaceous plant, then a tree with majestic branches, and he is astonished to behold the imposing lord of the forests, which, laden with flowers and fruit, towers aloft in majestic beauty, and gives shelter under its shadow to the weary birds, springing from a humble little seed. Not only, says the evangelist, is there no resemblance between the tree and its original seed, but there does not exist in the tree a single atom of the matter of which the seed was primarily com-
To our mind, this grain of mustard-seed is an image of the sun, which, falling upon the earth, sows animated germs in its bosom, which produce plants that afterwards give birth to animals, and later still to man, and thus to the entire series of creatures, invisible to us, which succeed him in the domain of the heavens.

The little cold, colourless, scentless seed is nothing to look at, nothing distinguishes it apparently from the neighbouring dust. Nevertheless, it contains that mysterious leaven, that sacred being, so to speak, which we call a germ. And what wonderful things are to be born from that sacred being! In the obscurity of the cold, damp earth the germ transforms itself, it becomes a new body without any resemblance to the seed which contained it. It produces a plantlet, a subterranean, but perfectly organized creature, possessing a root which fastens itself into the soil, and a stalk which takes the opposite direction. Between the two portions lies the seed, split, gutted, having allowed the germ to escape, its part in the matter ended.

The subterranean plantlet is a new being; it has no longer anything in common with the seed from whence it came. The plantlet is dull and colourless, but it breathes, it has channels, in which liquids and gases are circulating.

In a little while the plantlet comes up above the earth, it greets the daylight, it appears to our eyes, and then it is a very different being from the subterranean creature. The new-born vegetable is no longer as it was when in the bosom of the earth, dull and grey; it is green, it breathes like other vegetables, producing oxygen under the influence of life,
whereas in the bosom of the earth it gave out carbonic acid. Instead of the dull and sombre subterranean plantlet, you have a green and tender shoot, provided with special organs. Where is the grain of mustard seed?

Presently our shoot grows, and becomes a young plant. It is still weak and hidden under the grass, but nevertheless the young plant has its complete individuality. It resembles neither the shoot nor the plantlet, its subterranean ancestor.

The shoot grows, and becomes a twig, that is to say, the adolescent of the vegetable kingdom, with the ardour and the energy of the young among herbaceous creatures.

In this state the plant has already renewed its substance several times, and nothing remains of the organic and mineral elements which existed in the different beings that have preceded it on the same little corner of the earth which have witnessed the changing phases of its curious metamorphoses. Wait a while, and you will see the twig growing long and large. Its respiration becomes active, its leaves spread out, and vigorously exhale the carbonic acid gas of the air. The exhalation of watery vapour over all the surface takes place, and a young and vigorous tree is there, which day by day grows more robust and more beautiful.

During this growth, during this transition from the shrub to the young tree, with a separate and upright stem, a new being has been formed. Organs which it had not have come to it, and have made it a separate individual. It has flowers, it has branches, it has new vessels for the circulation of the sap, and the juices which were not previously elaborated. The structure of the surface of its leaves has been
changed, so that absorption may be more successfully accom-
plished.

Where is the shoot, from which our vigorous young shrub
sprung? What relation, what resemblance is there between
these two beings? We can only discern differences. One
individual has succeeded to another individual. The vege-
table has been renewed, not only in matter, which is changed,
but in the form of its organs. A series of new forms have
succeeded each other in the shrub, since it was a simple shoot,
just peeping above the soil.

It is still the history of change, when the young tree has
become adult, when, in the progress of years, its trunk has
grown hard, and become incrusted with layers of accumulated
bark, when its branches have multiplied, and flowering and
fruitage have modified all its internal and external parts. It
is then a grand cedar tree, whose majestic and imposing shade
covers a considerable extent of the soil; or a superb oak,
whose robust and gnarled branches spread far and wide; or a
flexible chestnut, which flings about its polished and shining
arms. The organs of these luxuriant vegetables, the pride of
our forests, have no relation to those which belonged to them
in the first years of their life. Their flowery crowns in spring-
tide, the fruits which succeed to them, the seeds shut up in
the protecting shelter of those fruits, these are all peculiarities
of organization, belonging to these noble trees, without any
analogy in nature.

Where is the grain of mustard seed which formerly sucked
the juice of the earth in darkness? Everything is changed;
the place of habitation, which is no longer the earth, but the
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air; the form, and the physiological functions. Not only has all this changed, but it has changed a great number of times. Not only does nothing remain of the matter of which the tree was composed in the earlier stages of its life, but nothing has been retained of the organic forms which were proper to the infancy of the vegetable.

Nevertheless, O great mystery of Nature, in the midst of all these changes, notwithstanding this continual succession of beings, which mutually replace each other, there is something which remains immovable, which has never changed, which has preserved a constant individuality,—it is the secret force which produced all these changes, which presided over all these organic mutations. In our belief, this force is the animated germ which the young plant has received from the seed, whence it has proceeded. In the midst of all the transformations which the vegetable creature has undergone, in spite of the numerous phases through which it has passed, and which have produced a series of different beings succeeding each other in its material substance, the spiritual principle, cause and agent of all this long activity, has remained the same. This animated germ which now exists in the adult vegetable is the same which was there during its growth, the same which was there when it was a shoot, the same which slept in the seed which was thrown into the bosom of the cold and humid earth. In that majestic tree which, coming forth from an imperceptibly minute seed, has had a whole genealogy of successive beings, replacing each other, differing in form and size, and has preserved, throughout its incessant development, the sole and immutable principle
of its activity, we behold the faithful image of the persistent, indestructible soul, in the midst of the beings or different bodies which it has animated in succession. Issuing from a germ, it has never ceased to grow, to develop, to become amplified, still remaining itself.

The grain of mustard seed, or the seed of the tree, is according to us, the plant or inferior animal into which the sun has thrown the animated germ. The subterranean plantlet corresponds to the animal whose mission it is to perfect the germ transmitted by the plant, and which develops and amplifies this germ; for example, to the fish or the reptile, perfecting the spiritual principle which they have received from the zoophyte or the mollusc. The shoot which, having burst out of the earth, grows in the shade of the grass, and tries its air organs, corresponds to the animal somewhat more elevated in the organic scale, such as the bird, in which the animating principle—derived from the reptile or the fish—increases in intellectual power. The young vegetable, arrived at the condition of the twig, which lives a completely aërial life, corresponds to the mammifer. The tree, grown tall, and pushing out its young boughs, corresponds to man, perfecting the soul which he has received from a mammifer. Finally, the powerful and vigorous forest lord, overtopping all the neighbouring trees in size and majesty, with mighty girth of stem, and noble crest, with wide-spreading branches and splendid flowers, this grand creature corresponds to the superhuman being who lives in the bosom of the ethereal fluid, and who is himself destined to be replaced by a series of superior creatures, who shall climb from stage to
stage, from height to height, even to the radiant kingdom of the sun, where those absolutely spiritual beings, whose essence is entire and perfect immateriality are enthroned.

Thus, the animating principle remains immutable and identical with itself, during all the transformations undergone by the beings who are successively charged to receive this precious deposit. From the vegetable, in which it had its first domicile as a germ, and through the whole series of living creatures, from the plant and the zoophyte to the man and the superhuman being, the same spiritual principle is preserved in its identity, perfecting and amplifying itself without cessation.

Let us complete the comparison. When the forest tree has ripened its fruits, the fruits burst open, the seeds escape from it, and fall into the soil, or are dispersed by the caprice of the winds. If the seeds fall into damp earth, they germinate, and, according to the laws of nature, young vegetables are produced, as we have previously explained. Multitudes of similar vegetables are produced by a single oak, a single cedar, a single chestnut tree. Just as the majestic adult tree lets fall from its thousand branches upon the soil the countless seeds which are to germinate there, so the spiritualized beings who dwell in the sun shed their emanations, their animated germs, upon all the planets. These germs, carried to the earth by the sunbeams, and falling upon our globe, produce the vegetables which afterwards give birth to the various animals, by the effect of the successive transmigrations of the same soul into the bodies of these creatures.

We can now reply to the objection which we have placed
at the beginning of this chapter: "How can the solar rays, being material substances, convey animated germs, which are immaterial substances?

When the physicists professed Newton's theory of the nature of light, in the theory of *emission*, it was necessary to regard light, and, consequently the solar rays, which produce it, as material bodies.

But science has now rejected this theory, and replaced it by the theory of *undulation*, founded by Malus, Fresnel, Ampère, and all the constellation of great physicists and mathematicians of the commencement of this century. Facts, collected on every side, prove that the solar rays are not matter which transports itself from the sun to the earth, but that light, like heat, results from a primitive disturbance produced by the sun upon the ether, which is spread over all space. This disturbance communicates itself from molecule to molecule, from the planetary ether down to us, and produces the phenomena of light and heat. We cannot here develop at greater length, or explain more scientifically, the theory of undulations, which will be found sufficiently demonstrated in works on physics. We merely desire to prove that, according to the principles of modern science, the solar rays are not material bodies, but that they result from a simple vibration of the planetary ether. If, then, the rays of the sun are not material substances, there can be no difficulty in admitting that these rays (immaterial substance) are the bearers of the animated germs, which are immaterial substance.

If we be driven to a closer definition of the problem, if we be asked to explain with greater precision how these immaterial...
germs journey through space, we reply that we must guard against the mania for insisting on everything being explained. Absolute explanation is forbidden to the limit of our intelligence. We are forced to confess our powerlessness whenever we try to explain the phenomena of nature rigorously. What is the true cause of the fall of bodies, of the gravitation of the stars, of electricity, of heat? What is the cause of the circulation of our blood, of the beating of our hearts? The deepest obscurity veils the primary causes of these phenomena, which we all behold every day; and the more earnestly we desire to penetrate the secret essence, the more the darkness deepens in our minds. Since the time of Newton, the physicists have laid down a wise and excellent principle. They have agreed to study the laws of physical phenomena with sedulous care, to measure with exactness the effects of heat, weight, electricity, or light, but, also, never to disquiet themselves by researches into the causes of these phenomena. The more we learn, the further we advance in the knowledge of the universe and its laws, the more we become convinced that man knows absolutely nothing about first causes, that he ought to esteem himself happy in knowing the laws according to which the effects of these first causes manifest themselves; that is to say, the physical and vital actions which are visible to us, but that he ought, in the interests of his own peace of mind, to lay down a rule that he would never seek to know the wherefore of things. Pliny, speaking of first causes, said: "Latent in majestate mundi," ("They are hidden in the majesty of the world.") The thought is as fine as the phrase is eloquent. Let us, then, leave to nature her secrets, and, if we are led to
believe that the sun sheds animated germs upon the earth and the planets, let us not try to penetrate further into the essence of this mysterious phenomenon. Let us not ask of the earth why she turns, the stone why it falls, the tree why it grows, our hearts why they beat—nor the rays of the sun why they produce life on earth, and immortality in the heavens.
CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

PRACTICAL RULES RESULTING FROM THE FACTS AND PRINCIPLES DEVELOPED IN THIS WORK.—THE ENnobLING OF THE SOUL BY THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUE, BY SEEKING TO KNOW, THROUGH SCIENCE, NATURE AND ITS LAWS.—THE RENDERING OF PUBLIC WORSHIP TO THE DIVINITY.—THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD TO BE RETAINED.—WE OUGHT NOT TO FEAR DEATH.—DEATH IS ONLY AN UNFELT TRANSITION FROM ONE STATE TO ANOTHER, IT IS NOT A TERMINATION, BUT A METAMORPHOSIS.—THE IMPRESSIONS OF THE DYING.—THEY WHOM THE GODS LOVE DIE YOUNG.—REUNION WITH THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE.

We will conclude our work by laying down certain practical rules which result from the facts and the principles that have been explained in its course.

Since man can raise himself to the range of a superhuman being only when his soul has acquired the necessary degree of purification in this life, it is evidently his interest to apply himself to the culture of his soul, to preserve it from every stain, to keep it from falling. Be good, generous, and compassionate; grateful for benefits, accessible to the suffering, the friend of the oppressed. Console those who suffer and
who weep. Practise every form of charity. Endeavour to raise your thoughts above terrestrial things. Strive against those material instincts, which are the stigmata of human existence. Aspire to the good and the beautiful. Live in the most elevated spheres, those which are the least bound to lower things. It is only thus that you can elevate and ennoble your soul, and render it fit to enjoy the higher existence which awaits it in the ethereal spheres. For, if your soul be vicious and corrupt, if, during all your terrestrial life, you have been sunk in material interests, exclusively given up to purely physical occupations and enjoyments, which make you the fellow of the animals; if your heart has been hard, your conscience dumb, your instincts low and evil, you will be condemned to recommence a second existence on the earth. Once, or many times again you will have to bear the burden of life on this disinherited globe, where physical suffering and moral evil have taken up their abode, where happiness is unknown, and unhappiness is the universal law.

There is another motive for our careful cultivation of the faculties of the soul, and for our constantly purifying ourselves by the practice of good. Noble and generous persons, elect souls, are, as we have said, the only ones capable of communicating with the dead, with the beloved beings whom they have lost. If, therefore, we be stained with moral evil, we shall not receive any communication, any succour from the beings who have left us, and whom we loved. This is a powerful motive for our constant striving towards perfection.

One of the most effectual means of perfecting and ennobling the soul, of raising it above terrestrial conditions, and bringing
it near the higher spheres, is science. Study, labour to learn of nature, to comprehend the plans and the phenomena which surround you, to explain to yourselves the universe of which you form a portion, and your soul will grow in strength and wisdom. It is very sad to contemplate the shameful ignorance in which almost all humanity is sunk. The population of our globe numbers 1,300,000,000, and of all this multitude hardly 10,000,000 can be said to have studied the sciences, and really cultivated their minds. All the rest of mankind are abandoned to an intellectual passiveness, which almost reduces them to the level of the animals. The earth is but a vast field of ignorance. As far as knowledge is concerned, almost all men die as they were born, they have not added a single idea, a single branch of knowledge to those which their parents—their own—have inculcated in their youth. Nevertheless, thanks to the labours of some few men of uncommon mind and energy, the knowledge we possess at the present time is immense, we have made great progress in the study of nature and its laws.

We understand the mechanism and the regulation of the universe, we have learned to reject the fallacious testimony of our senses, we have discerned the courses of the different stars, which look so much alike, when they shine in the firmament by night. We know that the sun is motionless in the centre of our world, and that a company of planets, among which the earth figures, revolve around him, in an orbit whose mathematical curve has been precisely fixed. We know the cause of the days and nights, as well as that of the seasons; we can predict almost to a second the return of the
stars to a certain point of their orbit, their meetings, eclipses, and occultations. The globe which we inhabit has been surveyed and explored with care which has hardly missed a nook of it. We know the causes of the winds and of the rains, we can point out the exact course of the sea-currents, and foretell the hour and the height of the tides all over the globe. We know why glaciers exist at the northern and southern extremities of the earth, and why other glaciers crown the great mountain heights. The movements of the earth, which formerly produced chains of mountains, and which at present occasion volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, are quite comprehensible to us. The composition of all the bodies which exist on the surface, or are hidden in the depths of the earth, has been fixed with certainty.

We know what air contains, and what water is composed of. There is not a mineral, not a particle of earth to which we cannot assign its composition. More than that, we can tell what is the composition of the soil of the planets, and of their satellites, those stars which roll at incalculable distances above our heads, and which we can reach only with our eyes. Science has performed this miracle, the chemical analysis of bodies which it cannot touch, and which it can only see across millions of miles in space.

We have studied, classified, demonstrated all the living beings, animals and plants which people the earth. There is not an insect hidden in the grass of the fields which has not been described, which has not had its just place in creation assigned to it; there is not a blade of grass which has not been reproduced by the pencil of the naturalist.
Beyond all this, science has penetrated far beyond the reach of our vision. It has invented a marvellous instrument which has unveiled an entire world to our astonished gaze, a world whose existence we never should have suspected without its aid. The world thus revealed to us is that of infinitely little things. We know that myriads of living creatures, both animals and plants, exist in a drop of water; that those creatures, in all their prodigious littleness, have a complete existence, and are as well organized as those of great size which are analogous to them, and that the physiological functions of all these imperceptible beings are fulfilled as perfectly as our own.

Just as we have penetrated into the life of infinite littleness, so we have pierced the depths of celestial space, and scrutinized with our eyes the magnified image of the stars which revolve at an incalculable distance above us. The telescope shows us the surface of the moon, the depths of its ravines, and the rough serrated edges of its enormous mountains, furrowed with deep circular crevasses. We can cast our eyes over the lunar disc as if it were a distant landscape of our own globe. We can even, thanks to the magnifying powers of the telescope, form an idea of the aspect of the surfaces of those planets which are almost lost in the infinite distances of the heavens.

After this faint and incomplete sketch of that which human science has been able to accomplish, it might be supposed that every inhabitant of the earth is impatient to make all this knowledge his own, that every one must desire to fill his mind with its treasures. Alas! the great majority of the
human species is ignorant of even the elements of all this. Take away the ten millions of individuals to whom we have already alluded, and who, numerically, are hardly to be counted in considering the population of the globe, all people imagine that the earth is a flat surface which extends to the limits of the horizon, and is covered with a blue cupola, called heaven. If you assert that the earth revolves, they laugh, and point to the motionless earth, and the sun which rises on the right hand and sets on the left, a manifest proof that the sun comes and goes. The poets will have it that the sun rises from his bed in the morning, and returns to it in the evening. People believe that the stars which shine by night, in the celestial vault, are simply ornaments, an agreeable spectacle, made to please our eyes, and that the moon is a beacon. Nobody inquires into the causes of the rain or fine weather, of heat or cold, of the winds or the tides. Every one shuts his eyes to natural phenomena, so as to avoid the trouble of explaining them. Nature is a shut book for the majority of mankind, who live in the midst of the most curious and various phenomena, but who occupy themselves in eating and drinking, and trying to harm their fellows.

It is a sorrowful spectacle to behold humanity thus preoccupied by its more material necessities, and utterly without interest in any mental exertion, and one grieves to think that such is the condition of almost all the inhabitants of the globe. How far is he superior to the great mass of his fellows, who has cultivated his mind, enriched it with various and useful ideas, and appropriated to himself at least one branch of the varied tree of the exact sciences. What breadth
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and power must be acquired by a mind thus fortified! Strive, O my reader, to study and to learn. Initiate yourself into the secrets of nature, try to understand all that surrounds you, the universe and its infinite productions, admire the power of God in learning the wonders of His works. Then shall you not approach the tomb with your soul void as on the day of your birth. At the supreme hour of death you will be wise, instructed, and, finding yourself nearer to the sublime essence of superhuman beings, you will be eager to follow them into the ethereal spheres.

In order to elevate and perfect the soul, it is not sufficient only to apply ourselves to the practice of moral virtues and to learning; we must also endeavour to understand God, the Author of the universe. Therefore, let men enter into the temples, and prostrate themselves before God according to the forms and rites of worship in which they have been reared. All religions are good, and ought to be respected, because they permit us to pay the homage of gratitude and heartfelt submission to the Author of nature.

The Christian religion is good, because it is a religion. The religion of Mahomet is good, because it is a religion. For the same reason Buddhism and Judaism are good, and the religion of the wild Indians who worship the sun in the depths of their forests.

The fourth practical rule which we derive from the principles and theories which we have laid down, is that the remembrance and commemoration of the dead should be preserved. Let us not efface from our hearts the memory of those whom death has snatched from us. To forget them is
to cause them the most cruel anguish, and to deprive ourselves of the aid and guidance which they can give us here below.

The ancients sedulously kept up the memory of the dead. They did not put the idea of death away from them with terror, like the modern peoples; on the contrary, they loved to invoke it. Among the Greeks and Romans the cemeteries were places of meeting, used for festivals and promenades. The Orientals of our days preserve this ancient tradition. Their cemeteries are perfectly kept gardens, whither festive crowds resort on festal occasions. They visit the relatives and friends who are buried in the shrubberies and the flower-beds, and revel in the pleasures of life amid the pretty dwelling-places of the dead.

In Europe we know nothing of this wholesome philosophy. But we may remark, that peasants, unlike dwellers in cities, who are not brought into familiar daily contact with nature, are far from shunning the idea of death, or avoiding the cemeteries where their relatives and friends rest. They recall the remembrance of their dead, they speak to them, they question them, they consult them, as though they were still seated by the family fireside.

The custom of funeral repasts, which dates from the time of primitive man, is still observed in several countries. On returning from the cemetery the company seat themselves before a well-spread table, in the house of the deceased, and wish him a happy journey to the land of shadows. In our cities, it is "the people" who hold it a duty to carry flowers to the graves of their relatives. Among the higher classes of
society people hold themselves exempt, in general, from this pious care, and they are wrong. Piety towards the dead, and reverent commemoration of them, are prescribed by the laws of nature.

Finally, we would impress upon the reader, as a consequence and a practical rule resulting from all that has gone before, that he ought not to fear death. Let him regard with firm heart and tranquil eye that moment which all men dread so much. We have said that death is not a conclusion, but a change, we do not perish, we are transformed. The grub which seems to die, enclosed within a cold shell, does not die, but is born again, a brilliant butterfly, to flutter joyously in the air. Thus it shall be with us. Though our miserable frames remain on earth, and restore their elements to the common reservoir of universal matter, our souls shall not perish. They shall be born again, brilliant creatures of the celestial ether. They shall leave a world in which pain and evil are the constant law, for a blessed domain where every condition of happiness shall be realized. Why, then, should we dread death? If we do not desire it, we ought at least to await it with hope and tranquillity. Death must unite us to those beings whom we have loved, whom we do love, and whom we shall love for ever. What an immense source of consolation during the remainder of our life! What a store of courage for the terrible moment of our own end! The beloved dead, who have never ceased to be present to our memory, have done us the sad, supreme service of softening the anguish of death to us. The sadness of our last moments will be calmed by the thought that they are awaiting
our coming, that they are ready to receive us on the threshold of the other life, that they are gone before to lead us into the new domain of existence beyond the tomb!

The fear of death, which is so prevalent among men generally, loses its intensity when the last hour has come. Those who are accustomed to witness death know that the last agony is rarely severe. He who dies after a long and honourable existence knows at that solemn moment that he is going to a new and better world. He is happy, and his words and looks express happiness. The only thought which makes him sorrowful is the grief which his loss must occasion to those whom he loves and is about to leave.

The observations which follow have been made by persons accustomed to observe the dying. But deaths occasioned by maladies which destroy consciousness, or reason, or speech, must not be included in these observations. In order to judge of the thoughts which occupy the dying we must consider those who preserve the integrity of their intellectual faculties until their latest breath. They always die calmly. Consumptive patients, the wounded, those who die from an affection of the stomach or of the intestinal tube, of those slow fevers which consume the strength without impairing the intellectual faculties, these generally remain in the full possession of their intelligence to the last, and die with great tranquillity, even satisfaction. In almost all these cases death is preceded by a gradual decline of strength and sensation, so that the individual has hardly any consciousness of the change he is about to undergo, and looks forward to the moment of death with perfect indifference.
THE DAY AFTER DEATH.

There is a period, which frequently lasts for several hours, during which, life having completely left the body, it is already a corpse which is under the eyes of the spectators, and yet that corpse still moves and speaks. But the soul which survives in the body, really dead, is not the soul of the terrestrial man, but of the superhuman being. The dying person has the consciousness, and perhaps even the provision of the ineffable happiness which awaits him in that new world upon whose threshold he is standing, and he expresses his happiness by his words and looks. In a sigh of supreme joy he exhales his last breath. This extraordinary state, in which the dying are partly on earth, and partly in the new world to which they are destined, explains the touching eloquence, the sublime words which sometimes come from their feeble lips. An uneducated poor man will express himself upon his death-bed with eloquence incomprehensible to those who are listening to him. It also explains the prophecies, justified by subsequent events, which have been uttered by the dying. They have a knowledge of things of which, in their ordinary condition as belonging to the human species, they could not possibly have had any notion. Therefore, we ought to treasure up their last words with pious care, and scrupulously fulfil the wishes which they express.

In Moldavia, when a peasant has escaped death in a severe illness, after having been on the brink of the grave, his friends press around his bed to ask him what he had seen in the other world, and what news he has for them from their dead relatives. Then the poor invalid interprets his visions for them as well as he can.
A modern writer, who has left some small books on spiritualist philosophy, M. Constant Savy, relates in his "Pensées et Méditations," an extraordinary dream which he had when he was, apparently, at the point of death. We transcribe this curious and interesting document from M. Pezzani's work:—

"I felt very ill," writes Constant Savy, "I had no strength, it seemed to me that my life was making efforts to resist death, but in vain, and that it was about to escape. My soul detached itself little by little from the matter spread all over my frame; I felt it retiring from all, those parts with which it is so intimately united, and, as it were, concentrating itself upon one single point, the heart, and a thousand obscure, cloudy thoughts about my future life occupied me. Little by little nature faded from before me, taking irregular and strange forms, I almost lost the faculty of thinking, I only retained that of feeling, and this feeling was all love, love of God and of the beings whom I had most cherished in Him, but I could not manifest this love; my soul, withdrawn to one single point in my body, had almost ceased to have any relation with it, and could no longer command it. My soul experienced some distractions still, caused by the pain of the body, and the grief of those who surrounded me, but these distractions were slight, like the pains and the perceptions which caused them. My life was now attached to matter by one only of the thousand links which had formerly bound it, and I was about to expire.

"Suddenly, no doubt to mark the passage from this life to the other, there came a thick darkness, to which succeeded a brilliant light. Then, O my God! I saw Thy day, that daylight I had so much desired! I saw them, all assembled together, those beings whom I had so dearly loved, who had inspired me during my life in this world after they had left me, and who had seemed to me to dwell in my soul, or float
about me. They were all there, full of joy and happiness. They were waiting for me, they welcomed me with delight. It seemed to me that I completed their life and that they completed mine! But what a difference was there in the happiness I now felt from the sensations of the world I left! I cannot describe them! They were penetrating without being impetuous; they were mild, calm, full, unmixed, and yet they admitted the hope of a yet greater happiness!

"I did not see Thee, my God! Who can see Thee? But I loved Thee more than I had loved Thee in this world! I comprehended Thee better, felt Thee more strongly, the traces of Thee which are everywhere, and on everything, appeared more plain and bright to me, I experienced such admiration and astonishment as I had never hitherto known, I saw more distinctly a portion of the wonders of Thy creation. The bowels of the earth hid no more secrets from me, I saw their depths, I saw the insects and other creatures which dwell in them, the mines known to men, and undiscovered by them, the secret ways and channels of the earth. I reckoned its age in its bosom as one counts that of a tree in the heart of its trunk; I saw all the water-courses which feed the seas; I saw the reflux of these waters, and it was like the motion of the blood in a man's body; from the heart to the extremities, from the extremities to the heart; I saw the depths of the volcanoes; I understood the motions of the earth and its relations with the stars, and, just as if the earth had been turned round before my eyes that I might be made to admire Thy greatness, O my God! I saw all countries with their various inhabitants, and their different customs, I saw every variety of my species, and a voice said to me: 'Like thyself, all these men are the image of the Creator; like thyself, they are ever journeying towards God, and conscious of their progress!' The thickness of the forests, the depth of the seas could not hide anything from my eyes; I had power
to see everything, to admire all, and I was happy in my happiness, in the happiness of the dear objects of my tender love. Our joys were in common. We felt ourselves united by our former affections which had now become much more deep, and by the love of God: we drew happiness from one and the same source; we were but one, we each and all enjoyed this happiness, which was far too great to be expressed. I am silent now, that I may feel it more deeply."*

It is easy for us to verify to ourselves the fact that men who are condemned by nature to a premature death, are endowed with a great serenity of mind. This moral condition is, in our opinion, an indication that they have the presentiment or even the anticipated possession of the new life which awaits them after death. Why are consumptive people so gentle and sensitive? We believe it is because, being already half out of this world, they are partially endowed with the moral attributes of superhuman beings. They are, as it is well known, always confident in their destinies, they make projects of happiness, and for the future, when their last hour is striking, they feel hope and joy when the bystanders are thinking of their burial. It is customary to explain this anomaly by saying that persons in consumption do not understand the gravity of their illness, but we believe that they have, on the contrary, a confused notion of their state, that nature reveals to them the approach of an existence of cloudless happiness, and that it is this secret conviction which gives them hope and confidence in the future. The future which they foresee is not of this world, but the

* Quoted by M. Pessani, in his "Pluralité des Existences de l'âme," pp. 261—263.
future of the heavens. This applies not to consumptive persons only. Every man destined to die young seems to be marked with that inner stamp of the soul which lends him now a gentle and charming melancholy, anon vivacity or sensibility which his parents admire, and which is too often only an indication that he is not to remain with them. The charming qualities of many young people are often only the precursors of their death.

"When they have so much intellect, children have brief lives," says Casimir Delavigne. "Whom the gods love, die young," said the Greeks.

Let us, then, not fear death; but await it, not as the end of our existence, but as its transformation. Let us learn by the purity of our life, by our virtues, by the culture of our faculties, by our knowledge, by the exercise of the religion of our ancestors, to prepare ourselves for the critical moment of that natural revolution which shall usher us into a blessed sojourn in the ethereal spheres on the day after death.