CAN WE BELIEVE IN IMMORTALITY?

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649257669

Can we believe in immortality? by James H. Snowden

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd. Cover @ 2017

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JAMES H. SNOWDEN

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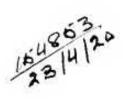
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BY

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Author of "The World a Spiritual System: An Outline of Metaphysics," "The Basal Beliefs of Christianity," "The Psychology of Religion," etc.



New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1919

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Set up and electrotyped. Published, February, 1918

To

MY SON

ROY ROSS SNOWDEN, M.D.

WHO IS NOW DOING HIS BIT SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE



If a man die, shall he live again?
I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And that he will stand up at the last upon the earth:
And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed,
Then without my flesh shall I see God;
Whom I, even I, shall see for myself,
And my eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger.

— Job.

The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres; but godlike, even my Father's.

On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the everlasting vea, wherein all contradiction is solved; wherein whose walks and works, it is well with him.

— Carlyle.

The heart has reasons which the reason does not know. It is the heart that feels God, not the reason. The primary truths are not demonstrable, and yet our knowledge of them is none the less certain. Principles are felt, propositions are proved. Truths may be above reason, and yet not contrary to reason.

— PASCAL.

If e'er when faith had fallen asleep
I heard a voice, "Believe no more,"
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the godless deep,

A warmth within the breast would melt The freezing reason's colder part, And like a man in wrath, the heart Stood up and answered, "I have felt."

- TENNYSON.

For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hards, eternal in the heavens.

— PAUL.



PREFACE

The literature on the subject of immortality is enormous. The question of a future life is one of the oldest and most fundamental in the history of human thought and goes back to the beginning. One of the most ancient books in existence is the Egyptian Book of the Dead, and one of the oldest books in the Bible, Job, deals with this problem. All the bibles and literatures of the world are full of it. The library shelves loaded with these books run back through the centuries and are lost in the mists of antiquity. William R. Alger's work entitled The Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life has appended to it Ezra Abbot's well-known bibilography of the literature of this subject and it contains nearly five thousand titles in eleven languages; and if it were brought up to date there would doubtless be added to it a thousand titles more.

Are not these enough? Why any more? For the same reason that last year's leaves in the forest are not enough and it must put forth new leaves every year. Every subject is constantly advancing and must be continually written up to date. We cannot express our