

**THE BELIEF IN  
IMMORTALITY  
ON PURELY  
LOGICAL PRINCIPLES**

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The Belief in Immortality on Purely Logical Principles by J. B. Gross

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**J. B. GROSS**

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# THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

ON

PURELY LOGICAL PRINCIPLES.

*Joseph* BY  
REV. J. B. GROSS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HEATHEN RELIGION IN ITS POPULAR AND SYMBOLICAL DEVELOPMENT;" OF "THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, AS SET FORTH IN THE BOOK OF CONCORD, CRITICALLY EXAMINED AND ITS FALLACY DEMONSTRATED;" OF "THE TEACHINGS OF PROVIDENCE, OR NEW LESSONS ON OLD SUBJECTS;" OF "THE PARSON ON DANCING, AS IT IS TAUGHT IN THE BIBLE, AND WAS PRACTICED AMONG THE ANCIENT GREEKS AND ROMANS;" OF "THOUGHTS FOR THE FIRESIDE AND THE SCHOOL;" OF "THOUGHTS FOR THE FIRESIDE AND THE SCHOOL, SECOND SERIES;" OF "OLD FAITH AND NEW THOUGHTS," &c., &c.

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"If a man die, shall he live again?"—Job, xiv. 14.

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1882.

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## DEDICATION.

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If there are any persons, who take a profound interest in a future life, and are willing to allow some weight to purely logical arguments in proof of it; if, again, there are any persons, whose souls cannot contemplate the dread idea of annihilation without a shudder; and if, finally, there are any persons, who consider that—by its inherent capacities, the human mind is not only competent to attain, more or less clearly, to the conception and belief of a future life, but that the history of all barbarous and civilized peoples, proves that *heathens* are, by no means, left a prey to doubts and anxieties on a subject of paramount importance to the enjoyment of a tranquil and happy life, *to them*, the following pages are respectfully inscribed by their friend,

THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE.

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ACCORDING to orthodox creeds and a commonly entertained prejudice, the vastly greater part of mankind, have never been blessed with what is technically termed a *Revelation*, and it is, hence, generally believed that the heathens: the peoples who are unprovided with a supernatural revelation, can know nothing that is reliable of a future life, and that, accordingly, they must either pine in dreary hopelessness, or fret in blank despair! Such—I am bold to say, is far from being the case. For the heathens possess a source of knowledge inherent in human nature, which—in a manner similar to the revelation claimed for the Bible, is designed at once to guide our present, and to foreshadow: if not actually demonstrate, our future life.

It would not only be exceedingly strange, but appear as an irreconcilable trait in the Divine character, if the Creator had doomed innumer-

able multitudes of heathens—all too his children, to grovel in the dark on this subject so pre-eminently essential to the fundamental conditions of a consistent and harmonious human destiny, and left at last to die, like the beasts, without aspiration or fond expectation of a continuous conscious existence beyond the grave! No, no; instead of so disheartening and appalling a fate, the heathen, though not supernaturally taught, yet has a comfortable hope: anticipating a higher destiny and an ever progressive life! How far I shall be able to verify and illustrate this view of the subject—at once so gratifying and encouraging, the sequel must show, when ample proof will be adduced that God—in the sensible language of the Apostle, is the God “also of the Gentiles,” not only caring for them generally, but vouchsafing to impart to their souls that child-like trust, which can be derived only from a greater or less certainty of a predestination to an heirship of everlasting life!

In the 2 Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy, the apostle writes that Christ “hath brought life and immortality to light”: an assertion which—taken literally, seems to imply that mankind—without Gospel-influences, cannot acquire a proper idea

of a future life. If such is the meaning, it is clearly and emphatically erroneous. I will charitably assume, therefore, that the sacred writer simply means to exalt the merits of the Savior in behoof of this important doctrine, and thus to postulate the greater certainty and, therefore, the greater cogency of his mode of inculcating the belief in a future life, compared with that which grounds the belief in immortality on purely logical inferences, or on principles, which are the natural and unaided outgrowths of the soul!

WILKES-BARRE, PA., October, 1881.