

**SCIENCE AND IMMORTALITY:
THE CHRISTIAN
REGISTER SYMPOSIUM,
REVISED AND ENLARGED**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649698776

Science and Immortality: The Christian Register Symposium, Revised and Enlarged by Samuel J. Barrows

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

SAMUEL J. BARROWS

**SCIENCE AND IMMORTALITY:
THE CHRISTIAN
REGISTER SYMPOSIUM,
REVISED AND ENLARGED**

SCIENCE AND IMMORTALITY.

The Christian Register Symposium,

REVISED AND ENLARGED.

EDITED AND REVIEWED

BY

SAMUEL J. BARROWS.

BOSTON:

GEO. H. ELLIS, 141 FRANKLIN STREET.

1887.

PREFACE.

THE major part of the discussion which follows was published in the *Christian Register* of April 7, 1887. It attracted wide attention, and a desire has been expressed to have the "symposium" in a more permanent form.

In reprinting it for the present volume, the contributions have all been submitted to their authors for revision; and the work has been much enriched by additional contributions from Prof. A. Graham Bell, Gen. A. W. Greely, of the United States Signal Service, Prof. Joseph Le Conte, of the University of California, Prof. Ira Remsen, of Johns Hopkins University, and Prof. Edward C. Pickering, of Harvard Observatory. These new contributions give a fresh interest to the book.

In the "Notes on the Testimony" following the symposium, the converging and diverging lines of debate are indicated.

Interest in the discussion will be increased by the biographical notes which follow it, giving a brief outline of the scientific career of the writers of this volume.

S. J. D.

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. CHARLES A. YOUNG	10
II. JAMES D. DANA	13
III. ASA GRAY	14
IV. JOSEPH LEIDY	15
V. SIMON NEWCOMB	17
VI. J. P. LESLEY	20
VII. LESTER F. WARD	24
VIII. EDWARD S. MORSE	28
IX. JOSIAH PARSONS COOKE	31
X. EDWARD D. COPE	32
XI. SIR J. WILLIAM DAWSON	42
XII. T. STERRY HUNT	47
XIII. WILLIAM JAMES	48
XIV. BENJAMIN APTHORP GOULD	49
XV. ALFRED R. WALLACE	53
XVI. REV. THOMAS HILL	59
XVII. ASAPH HALL	62
XVIII. ELLIOTT COUES	66

	PAGE
XIX. HERBERT SPENCER	68
XX. CHARLES S. PEIRCE	69
XXI. DANIEL COIT GILMAN	76
XXII. T. H. HUXLEY	78
XXIII. A. W. GREELY	79
XXIV. JOSEPH LE CONTE	80
XXV. EDWARD C. PICKERING	91
XXVI. IRA REMSEN	92
XXVII. ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL	94
XXVIII. F. A. P. BARNARD	100
<hr/>	
NOTES ON THE TESTIMONY	101
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	119

SCIENCE AND IMMORTALITY.

WISHING to obtain the opinions of some of the most prominent scientific men in this country concerning the relation of science to the question of immortality, the editor of the *Christian Register* submitted to them the following questions :—

1. Are there any facts in the possession of modern science which make it difficult to believe in the immortality of the personal consciousness?
2. Is there anything in such discoveries to support or strengthen a belief in immortality?
3. Or do you consider the question out of the pale of science altogether?

These questions are asked, not too strictly to limit the scope of reply, but to indicate the directions in which testimony is desired.

The answers to these questions are given in the interesting and important communications which follow.

I.

CHARLES A. YOUNG, LL.D.,

PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY IN PRINCETON COLLEGE,
NEW JERSEY.

I understand that what is wanted is simply a brief statement of personal opinion upon the bearing of science on the credibility of the doctrine of immortality, without any extended discussion of the grounds for this opinion,—merely a juryman's verdict.

As to the first point raised in the editor's letter, I think it must be frankly admitted that what is known about the functions of the brain and nervous system does, to a certain extent, tend to "make it difficult to believe in the immortality of the personal consciousness." The apparent dependence of this consciousness upon the health and integrity of a material structure like the brain renders it, *a priori*, more or less probable that consciousness could not survive the destruction of that organism. But this difficulty is only the same it always has been from the beginning, and I cannot see that the newest