

**SELF-SACRIFICE  
VICTORIOUS: RAYS OF  
DIVINE LIGHT ON  
THE FUTURE OF MANKIND**

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Self-sacrifice victorious: Rays of divine light on the future of mankind by John Cooper

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**JOHN COOPER**

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# CHRISTIAN EVOLUTION;

OR,

## The Divine Process in Human Redemption

By the Rev. JOHN COOPER.

EDINBURGH: MACNIVEN & WALLACE.

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### EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS.

#### *THE DAILY TELEGRAPH.*

"To such a task Mr Cooper addresses himself in his work 'Christian Evolution.' Upon a system of induction truly Baconian he collects and arranges all his facts, and then seeks the principles involved in their very essence. In the first chapter he grasps the great truth, that while heredity is a principle in all Nature's operations, breaks in the continuity evidence themselves in the development of law. From this he rises by logical analogy to the statement of the proposition that regeneration is a break in the order of sinful life, and that through Atonement or regeneration sinful man is raised to the loftiest possible condition of existence. The second chapter deals with Divine Action direct and indirect with special application to the Christian doctrine of sin, which chapter with the succeeding one upon 'Reconciliation,' we especially welcome as a conclusive answer to Principal Tulloch's Baird Lecture upon this vital subject. . . . The style of the work is clear, forcible, and graphic, the thinking is logical and profound, and the conclusion arrived at is one that will meet with the assent of every earnest truth seeker."

#### *THE WORLD.*

"The nature of the work prevents us from reviewing it; but we may state that a perusal of it impresses us with the conviction that it is a specimen of singularly clear reasoning conveyed in a lucid English style."

#### *THE VICTORIAN REVIEW.*

"His region of thought is quite as elevated as that occupied by, for example, Chalmers; and in respect of the power of sustained, logical, original thinking he is, in the opinion of the present writer at least, not a whit inferior to the author of the celebrated 'Astronomical Discourses.' His scheme of reasoned Christian Philosophy is certainly more complete than that which Chalmers has bequeathed to the world. It is a scheme which brings all the main Christian facts and principles within the limits, not merely of probability, but of certainty. It presents, moreover, the most complete reconciliation of Christian theology with pure philosophy known

## EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS—*continued.*

to the present writer. . . . Hence his argument is unassailable by any shafts of mocking unbelief or atheistic ridicule. He finds that Christianity lies within the order of the universe, is necessary to the explanation of the universe as known to man, and forms the only intelligent and reasonable explanation that can be given of the 'mighty sum of things.' His system may be expressed in the words, 'The Philosophy of Christianity.' . . . It is not needful, nor would it be appropriate, to give in this place a full explanation of the system these works contain. It will suffice to say that it is thoroughly Christian and soundly orthodox, and pervaded by a spirit of the most earnest love both to God and man. No safer guide than John Cooper could any student in the field of Christian Philosophy choose for himself."

### *THE HERALD.*

"This portion of the volume presents many great and important truths in a condensed form. We give two weighty utterances as specimens of the striking way in which truths, the unfolding of which might fill a goodly volume, are here set forth. 'The Incarnation was the Infinite coming down into the conditions of humanity, in order to confront all the results of the creation of free agency.' 'The principle of conquest in the salvation of man is the principle of self-sacrifice in the Godhead.'

"In the second section of the volume the subject discussed is 'Divine Action Direct and Indirect,' and very clearly the writer deals with the difficult question of the freedom of the human will. He defines 'will' as the movement of personality, and adds, 'In the finite personality it is the action of the moment; in the infinite personality the action is eternal.' There is much in this section that is worthy of thoughtful consideration. We most heartfully agree with the closing sentence, 'that the self-will of the sinner coming in between the will of God and its operations, is the sole cause of evil in the universe.'"

### *CHRISTIAN RECORD.*

"The book is peculiar in one respect, though saturated with Christian sentiment: there is only one quotation ostensibly made from scripture, that, viz., at the commencement, and even in that case the reference is not given. We will not hazard an opinion as to whether this is or is not as it ought to be. We may safely say, however, that the book is a thoughtful and earnest attempt to set forth the central truths of Christianity in a rational manner. A good deal is assumed throughout the book; but this is accounted for by the fact that, as the author says in his preface, the book is supplementary to what he has already written. But apart from this there is nothing assumed in the book which we do not heartily admit."

# SELF-SACRIFICE VICTORIOUS:

*RAYS OF DIVINE LIGHT*

ON THE

*FUTURE OF MANKIND.*

BY THE

REV. JOHN COOPER,

AUTHOR OF "SCIENCE OF SPIRITUAL LIFE," "PROVINCE OF LAW," "CHRIST'S MODE  
OF PRESENTING HIMSELF," "SELF SACRIFICE," "CHRISTIAN EVOLUTION,"

ETC., ETC.

EDINBURGH:  
MACNIVEN AND WALLACE.

1884.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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DURING the last eighteen years, at intervals of time, I have ventured to give to the world, in a series of volumes, the result of much thought and enquiry on some questions of grave and undying interest. These questions bear intimately on God's plan of government and man's position and destiny. I have a profound conviction that I have found in the self-sacrifice of the Supreme and Uncreated One a key to some at least of the grand mysteries which, as yet, are but faintly revealed to the human intellect. One of these mysteries has exercised, often with a very agony of thought, some of the keenest intellects of our age. I mean the ultimate destiny of man,—not of a few men, but of *all* men. This question has been forcing itself more and more on the attention of thinkers in our day. I have looked at self-sacrifice as bearing on the creative plans of God; and when I see the perfection that runs through these plans, down even to the minutest creature or object of which we can take cognisance, the thought is awakened, is it possible that man, the noblest of all God's works in this mundane



sphere, can in one solitary instance fail ultimately and hopelessly in reaching the original divine ideal? I have looked at self-sacrifice as bearing on the government of God, and as I see the plan of that government (in as far as it is cognizable by the finite intellect), so far-reaching, so all-embracing, that there is nothing in the universe, or in time, or in eternity, that can possibly be left outside its operations; and as I contemplate the *modus* of its working, moulding all things "from harmony to harmony" into one complete whole, under a wisdom whose grasp is wide as space and as lasting as time, and a Power, moreover, which never has been and never can be baffled; the question forces itself upon me, is it possible that this Divine order of government can fail to bring man—all men—at some epoch yet in the future, into perfect harmony and accord with its glorious Author? I have looked at self-sacrifice as bearing on the work of human redemption; and as I stand before the Cross, awed, melted, and overwhelmed by the grandeur of its revealings; and specially as I contemplate the expenditure of pity, condescension, love, and agony of which it is the exponent; the thought presses home upon me, can it be possible that a remedial scheme involving such wealth of self-sacrifice can contemplate anything short of the final home-bringing to the Divine fold of every poor wanderer?

And so in like manner, when I look at this grand idea as bearing on evolution in all the plans and processes of the Supreme Intelligence, on His past dealings with Nations, on the prophetic teachings of His Messengers, on the law of progress manifest alike in nature and in grace, on the underlying principles of all moral government, and on the capacities and possibilities of man's own being, I am ever and again brought face to face with the thought, can it be that this brief span constitutes the whole of its probation to a deathless nature.

I have subscribed to the "Westminster Standards." I must frankly admit, that according to the belief of the Church *generally*, these Standards teach that death closes man's probationary career. But considerable latitude of view is permitted, and I think wisely, on questions in these Standards which are regarded as not essential to a genuine Christian faith. To me this seems to be one of these questions—of deep and awful interest I grant—yet not essential to a soul's salvation. I feel therefore that I am at liberty to throw out some of my thoughts upon it. I do not mean to speak dogmatically as though the doctrine were established beyond question. The light which I think I have got, I give, and I am in search of more. Hence these pages.

The suggestions here thrown out are published with the hope that anxieties felt in

many hearts regarding the grave problems discussed may be set at rest, and that they may help to arrest the withdrawal of not a few from the communion of the Church.

The doctrine defended is not Universalism, nor Annihilation, nor Conditional Immortality, nor Purgatory; but a reasoned statement of the probable future of those who pass out of this life in an unconverted state. And it is advanced with no purpose of undermining the Standards of the Church, but with the intention of removing certain doctrinal angularities of the Confession of Faith, which mar its beauty, impede its usefulness, and hinder its reception by many who are anxious to remain in the Church of their fathers.

There is a strong necessity for the doctrines of Grace being stripped of the human additions which prevent their being clearly seen, correctly understood, and cordially embraced. To the defence and illustration of the grand truth of "Grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life" the following pages are consecrated.