

We only know what state of things must exist *at death*—a comprehension of a chain of dependent relations. But let us grant that there is an immortal state, (for it is easier to believe that the soul is immortal than to believe that there can be an annihilation of the recognition of dependent relations,) and let us see how we can possibly modify it and further what are our responsibilities concerning it.

In the first place, the only evidence of our will is that we have power to effect the quality of impressions and perceptions. This power is coextensive with the dignity of our being, hence it is limited. This constitutes our choice of relations. It is plain however that our choice is not unlimited. There is always a choice, but often a forced choice; for often we come front to front with the broad sea of circumstances and the tide so hostile to our own will in defiance rolls its rising waves about our feet and we must change our minds, hence the limit of our responsibility.

Again, all must concede that our immortality is modified by our life. The number of such modifications can only extend to death, yet *at death* the soul is thus the result of every act and thought through life, for no act or thought can be so small but that it may have an influence. Hence the soul, on its departure from the body, looks back and perceives every relation it has chosen, every perception or impression. No one is so minute but that it has had a being, and from this fact it must be recognized, and also because such recognitions are simply the conditions of self-knowledge.

And as the soul thus points to every one of its acts, so, on the other hand, every act must point to some qualification of the soul. Each perception, each impression, each choice and every known relation has its prospective purpose, a purpose for moulding the soul that is proportionate to its own influence. It is plain then that during life we become the detectives of our own future existence. Step by step, mark

by mark, here by some sign or supposed characteristic, there by some calculated relation between the thing seen and the thing unseen, on this side attending to some word of advice, on that spurring any attempt to thwart us, through long, dark, gloomy alleys, through dismal dens as well as through the temples of the counterfeit, we track through the world our future self. Nor is it until death, that reveals the real object of our search, which has so long eluded us, do we come face to face and front to front with our real future conditions. As one, who has long been on the search for one whom he has never seen, yet knows him by a few unquestionable indications, is somewhat surprised when he does see him, because he perhaps has a hundred other characteristics, which were not known, so will we be surprised when we come face to face with our future self, because it will be something of which we have not enough characteristics to form an adequate idea. Whatever it may be, we know it must be the resultant of all the acts of our lives. It is then the common purpose of each and every thought or deed. This is what we must look forward to, and this we trace out by the relations which we ourselves choose. As we have said, as each relation points to the final purpose, so the final purpose will point back to each relation. And since this is of our own selection, let us now inquire, What should be its prime conditions? In the first place, all will willingly concede that it should be something possessing absolute purity. If there is not the slightest stain, the least possible error, so much greater will be the happiness; so much greater will be the satisfaction. In order that this purity may be one of the conditions of immortality, there must be absolute purity in life. We of course are prone to adopt such a conclusion, through we are driven to it by the above premises, for we know that, at our present advancement, it is impossible for us to live a perfect life. How the greatest purity may be attained to, is a question