

10. Seventeenth-Century Voices Augment Conditionalist Witness

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Sharp debate over the nature and destiny of man continued to characterize the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, along with bitter antagonism against those contending for Conditionalism. This milder reaction replaced the cruel persecution formerly visited upon its proponents during the previous century. "Innumerable" tracts and books, as one contemporary described them, were issued. There was avid interest, and the battle line of pens swayed back and forth with a slow but definite gain for the advocates of Conditionalism.

-Most of the lesser voices were, of course, merely echoes, or restatements, of what had been set forth many times before.

Nevertheless, the question continued under constant debate, covering its many angles and championed by stalwarts on both sides. We will survey a few of the more prominent penmen, and allude to lesser lights who were likewise avowed Conditionalists. Let us first turn to the Continent for an early seventeenth-century Conditionalist there.

I. Stegmann of Germany—Dead Restored to Life Through Resurrection

In 1628 a Capuchin friar, writing under the name of Valerian Magni, published a work at Prague on the consciousness of the soul in death. It was entitled *De A Catholicorum regula credendi* ("Concerning the rule of believing of non Catholics"). [1] This was answered on the Continent by JOACHIM STEGMANN (fl. 1630), German scholar and publisher of Brandenburg, and author of some sixty tractates, who had previously produced a new translation of the Greek New Testament into German. [2] So again we see the calibre of some of the Continental Conditionalists. Stegmann's reply to the friar, written under the pen name of Alesius, was called *Brevis Disquisitio*. [3] First published in 1628, it had three editions by 1651, with an English translation by Biddle in 1653.

The English title reads *Brevis Disquisitio: or, a brief Inquiry touching a better way than is commonly made use of, to refute Papists, and reduce Protestants to Certainty and Unity in Religion*. Fortunately, this translation is preserved in *The Phoenix* (1708), Vol. II, No. XXII. For a time it was thought to have been written by the learned Canon John Hales of Eton. [4] But Historian Blackburne declares that to be a "mistake." It was assuredly by Stegmann, and bears the confirmatory date of the Biddle translation.

The purpose of Stegmann's tractate was to show that Protestants, by adhering to fallacies in the "peculiar systems of Luther, Calvin," et cetera, had in many instances offered weak and ineffective arguments against the positions of the Papacy, which "laid them under needless difficulties." Stegmann's specific counsel was to "discard all human authority, and stick to the Scripture only, as explained and understood by right reason, without having any regard to tradition, or the authority of the Fathers, Councils, &c." [5] Dr. Samuel Ward, in a letter to Archbishop Ussher, referred to *Brevis Disquisitio* as stating that "souls do not live till the resurrection." [6] Bayle had contended that Stegmann's treatise tended to "disparage the reputation" of the early Reformers by "breaking in upon their 'several systems.'" But the learned Archdeacon Blackburne asked: "Could more seasonable or whole some advice be given to Protestants? Was this not the very method afterwards adopted by our incomparable Chillingworth" (that the Bible and the Bible only is the religion of Protestants)? the weighty effects of which contention were felt by the Papacy. And Blackburne adds, "Chillingworth's method will remain an impregnable bulwark" against all papal fallacies. [7]

II. Cumulative Argument on Unconscious State of Dead

The heart of Stegmann's contribution, coming from the Continent, is found in his chapter eight, "Whether the Dead properly live," from which liberal quotations are here made because of its Continental origin, again indicating that Conditionalism was spread over various countries. First, Stegmann asserts that those who hold the papal fallacies retained in Protestantism "cannot solidly refute the Papists." In illustrating this point, Stegmann selected one point on which most Protestants retained one of the great errors "that are amongst the Papists"—the "opinion wherein they hold that the dead live."

1 *Peter Bayle, Critical and Historical Dictionary* (1728), vol. 5, p. 741.

2 *Das Neue Testament . . . aus dem Griechischen ins Teutsche versetzt*.

3 *Blackburne, A Short Historical View*, pp. 37, 38.

4 The temporary assignment of Brevis Disquisitio to Canon John Hales (1584-1656) was not so much meant to disparage the work as to express "orthodox" concern that such an "English scholar and Arminian divine," as well as Oxford graduate, who was canon of Windsor and representative at Dort, should have written it.

5 Blackburne, op. cit., p. 37.

6 Richard Parr, Life of Ussher, p. 473.

1. THE IMMORTAL-SOULIST POSITION.

Stegmann first declares this to be "very absurd, yet they believe it." Then he continues:

"For they suppose that the Souls of Man, in that very moment wherein they are parted from their Bodies by Death, are carried either to Heaven, and do there feel heavenly Joy, and possess all kinds of Happiness, which God hath promised to his People; or to Hell, and are there tormented, and excruciated with unquenchable Fire. And this, as was said before, they attribute to the mere Souls separated from the Bodies, even before the Resurrection of the Men themselves, that is to say, while they are yet dead." [8]

7 Blackburne, op. cit., p. 22[38].

8 Joachim Stegmann, Brems Disquisitio, in The Phenix (1708), Vol. II, No. XXII, p. 333.

2. CONSCIOUSNESS IN DEATH FOUNDATION OF PURGATORY.

This argument Stegmann immediately counters, logically, in these cogent words:

"But those things cannot happen to any thing which is not alive; for that which doth not live doth not feel, and consequently neither enjoyed Pleasure nor endures Pain. Wherefore they believe in effect, that the Dead live: namely, in the same manner that they affirm Peter, Paul, and other dead Men to live in Heaven. Now this is the Foundation not only of Purgatory, but also of that horrible Idolatry practised amongst the Papists, whilst they invoke the Saints that are dead. Take this away, and there will be no place left for the others. To what purpose is the Fire of Purgatory, if Souls separated from the Bodies feel nothing? to what purpose are Prayers to the Virgin Mary, to Peter, and Paul, and other dead Men, if they can neither hear Prayers, nor intercede for you? On the contrary, if you admit this, you cannot easily overthrow the Invocation of Saints." [9]

3. RECALLED TO LIFE AT RESURRECTION.

Stegmann then declares that the contrary thereof is set down in Scripture, and is in conflict with the widespread popular concept. Thus:

"The Argument of Christ, wherein he proves the future Resurrection of the Dead from thence. That God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living whence he concludes, that they live to God, that is, shall be recalled to Life by God, that he may manifest himself to be their God, or Benefactor. This Argument would be altogether fallacious, if before the Resurrection they felt heavenly Joy. For then God would be their God, or Benefactor, namely, according to their Souls, although their Bodies should never rise again." [10]

4. WAS THE APOSTLE PAUL IN ERROR?

Next Stegmann turns to St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, offering this observation:

"In like manner, the Reasoning of the Apostle would be fallacious, 1 Cor. 15.30, 31, 32. wherein he proves the Resurrection by that Argument: Because—Otherwise those that believe in Christ would in vain run hazards every hour; in vain suffer so many Calamities for Christ; which he teaches by his own Example. Again, because otherwise it would be better to sing the Song of the Epicureans, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die. In short, of all men Christians would be most miserable. Certainly this would be false, if the Godly presently after death did in their Souls enjoy celestial Happiness, and the Wicked feel Torment.

For they would not in vain suffer Calamities, nor these follow the Pleasures of the Flesh scot-free; and the Godly would be far happier than the Wicked." [11]

9 Ibid., pp. 333, 334.

10 Ibid., p. 334.

11 Ibid.

5. ABSURD TO HOLD CHRIST AND APOSTLES IN ERROR.

On the basis of these two inerrant authorities, to which he also adds .-St. Peter, Stegmann says:

"Since therefore it is the absurd thing in the world, to say that Christ and the Apostle Paul did not argue rightly; is it not clear that the Doctrine is false, which being granted, so great an Absurdity would be charged on Christ and the Apostle Paul? Furthermore, why should Peter defer the Salvation of Souls to the last day? 1 Pet. 1.5. Who are kept by the Power of God thro Faith unto Salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time: And Paul the Crown of Righteousness to the Day of Judgment; 2 Tim. 4.8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give to me at that day, etc.

To what purpose should the Judgment be appointed? How could it be said of the Godly under the old Covenant, that they received not the Promise, God providing some better things for us, that they might not without us be made perfect, Heb. 11.40. if the Soul of everyone presently after death, even without the Body, felt celestial Happiness?" [12]

6. DISEMBODIED SOULS HAVE No CONSCIOUSNESS.

Stegmann then makes his fundamental deduction—that souls apart from the body do not live in death, and have no feeling. And he declares concerning the nature of man:

"But the very Nature of the thing itself refutes it. Is not Living, Dying, Feeling, Hearing, Acting, proper to the whole Man, or the Compound of Soul and Body? Is not the Body the Instrument of the Soul, without which it cannot perform her Functions? as an Artist knows indeed the Art of working, but unless he have Instruments at hand, he cannot produce any Effect. Let the Eye be shut, the Soul will not see, the Power of Seeing be not taken away from it. For as soon as you shall restore the Instrument, a man will presently see. Wherefore Souls separated from Bodies are neither dead nor live, and consequently enjoy no Pleasure, and feel no Pain; for those things are proper to the whole Compound." [13]

7. BODY AND SPIRIT REJOINED AT RESURRECTION.

Then follows Stegmann's conclusion that "the Dead are not" until the resurrection:

"But the Scripture saith, that the Dead are not, that the Spirit return- eth to him that gave it; and of the Spirits of the Godly, that they are in the hand of God, but at the Resurrection they shall be joined with the Bodies.

And then having gotten Instruments, they will put forth their Operations." [14]

12 Ibid., pp. 334, 335.

13 Ibid., p. 335.

14 Ibid.

Such is the close reasoning of the Conditionalist Stegmann of Germany. Such men had a clear Biblical reason for their faith, and expressed it succinctly wherever they lived.

III. Puritan Nathaniel Homes Stresses Resurrection

Returning now to England, we find that increasing emphasis appeared at this time on the literal resurrection of the righteous dead, to occur at the second advent of Christ—a teaching that always accompanies a clear Conditionalist emphasis.

An example can be seen in the 1641 treatise by DR. NATHANIEL HOMES, or Holmes (1599-1678), scholarly Puritan divine. He was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and at Exeter, where he received the successive degrees of B.A., M.A., B.D., and D.D. He was highly skilled in Hebrew. And as a Calvinist he first served as rector of St. Mary Staining, thereafter ministering to several Independent congregations.

Homes was an ardent premillennialist, his most noted work being *The Resurrection Revealed: or the Dawning of the Day-Star* (1641). This unique treatise stresses the millennium as still future, thus opposing the Augustinian position.

He avers that it is to be introduced by the literal resurrection of the sleeping saints and the change, or translation, of the living saints at the Second Advent—which transcendent event, he held, will also bring about the destruction of the world by fire, together with Antichrist, the archenemy of truth. In this work, Oliver Cromwell's chaplain, Peter Sterry, wrote the significant and descriptive introduction concerning this rising "Morning Star":

"Like a piece of rich coin, it hath been long buried in the earth, but of late days dug up again; it begins to grow bright with handling, and to passe current with great numbers of Saints, and learned men of great Authority. As the same Star at several seasons is the Evening-star, setting immediately after the Sun, and the Morning-star shining immediately before it; So was this Truth the Evening-star to the first coming of Christ, and giving of the Spirit, setting together with the glory of that Day, in a night

of Ani-Christianisme: Now it appears again in our Times, as a Morning star, to that blessed Day of the second effusion of the Spirit, and the second appearance of our Saviour in the glory of the Father."

SIGNIFICANCE OF PETER STERRY'S ENDORSEMENT.

The significance of Sterry's introduction is caught only by noting the character and calibre of the man himself. PETER STERRY (1613-1672), eminent Independent divine, was educated at Puritan Emmanuel College, Cambridge University. This was at a time when the forces in the university were seeking to reinterpret Christianity in the light of Platonic philosophy. Sterry was a profound thinker, with strong religious convictions. He was trained in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Italian. He might have remained as a teacher at Cambridge, but left because he was out of harmony with its religious emphasis.

Sterry was the personal friend and chaplain of Oliver Cromwell, and a strong supporter of the Protectorate. He was likewise a congenial friend of Conditionalist John Milton, joining him in championing toleration and assisting him when the latter was going blind. He was also a friend of the despised Quakers. Sterry was marked for high office and was appointed preacher to the Council of State. He was noted for his poetic eloquence, and frequently preached before each of the Houses of Parliament. He was also responsible for certifying the fitness of ministers. He pleaded against depending upon forms, ordinances, and peculiar ways of worship.

He was also one of the clergymen chosen by the House of Lords for the Westminster Assembly [15] to reorganize the Church of England on a Puritan basis. But after the execution of Charles I, the Westminster Assembly held its last meeting.

Any predominance of the Presbyterian cause in England was thus lost.

15 The Westminster Assembly, originally appointed by Parliament in 1643, with the purpose of reforming the English church, comprised 151 members, laymen, and ecclesiastics. These included Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, and Erastrians. They attempted to revise the Thirty-Nine Articles. But instead, the Westminster Confession, the Directory of Public Worship, and the two Westminster Catechisms resulted.

Sterry's support of Dr. Homes' Resurrection treatise and its basic implications indicates the permeation of the structural principles of Conditionalism and its corollaries into high places at this time. This again attests that during this period certain clerics of prominence held various aspects of this unpopular view of man and his destiny without being ostracized and without forfeiting their clerical posts. In previous times cruel persecution was visited upon its proponents. Thus the pendulum swung back and forth between toleration and ostracism.

IV. Baptist Richardson Opposes Eternal Torment Dogma

About the same time SAMUEL RICHARDSON (fl. 1633-1646), controversialist and former army preacher, was pastor of the first Particular (Calvinistic) Baptist church to be established in London, in 1633. [16] It was one of the seven Baptist churches of the metropolis. Though biographical data is meagre, he was known to be author of eleven works, including a rather remarkable treatise for the time entitled *Of the Torments of Hell: the Foundations thereof discovered, searched, shaken and removed. With Many Infallible Proofs that there is not to be a Punishment after this Life for any to endure that shall never end.* By Samuel Richardson, London, 1658 [17]—with four reprints between 1660 and 1754. [18] This topic was, of course, different from, though related to, the more constantly agitated sleep of the soul in death.

As with many books of the time, the thesis of the volume was really compacted into its extended title. In the Introduction, Richardson says that "the love of truth, and desire to learn, drew me into this search, and caused me to dissent, not for contention, but for truth sake." He asserts that we ought to "seek and embrace" and if necessary to "suffer" for, truth.

"The manifestation of light and love," he observes, "hath overthrown many brave inventions and doctrines of men." After most earnest "seeking" and "diligent search," Richardson was "fully and confidently persuaded" that he was pleading for "truth" on the fate of the wicked in his presentation.

16 His name appears with that of John Spilsbury as signatories to the three editions of the Confession of Faith of the seven London (Particular) Baptist churches, in 1643, 1644, 1646.

17 Attempt has been made to cast doubt on Richardson as author. But historian A. J. Mills personally examined the first edition and attests: "The first edition with title-page intact, has revealed his [Richardson's] name, in Roman capitals, printed across the page. There is thus no doubt as to the authorship of this important work."—Earlier Life-Truth Exponents, p. 26.

18 William A. Shaw, "Samuel Richardson," Dictionary of National Biography, vol. 16, p. 1129; see also Mills, Earlier Life-Truth Exponents, p. 26.

First, inquiring into Christ's "descending into Hell," as the creed of orthodoxy puts it, he refers to Bucer's understanding that this referred to Christ's burial. Richardson contends that sheol and hades refer to the grave, while Gehenna connotes Hellfire. The limitations of "everlasting", are also pointed out. Even if the fire be "everlasting," he insists that that-which is cast therein is destroyed, being likened in Scripture to chaff and stubble.

In this way Richardson "shakes" the Eternal-Torment School of teaching of his day, while facetiously suggesting, as an aside, that water is not so scarce in Hell as his opponents would contend—seeing that where there is such weeping there are tears, and where there are tears, there is water! But, in a most serious vein he shows how the "seven pillars of Hell" are "shaken and removed." Here they are in condensed form:

- (1) The Greek Fathers, through ignorance of Hebrew, gave wrong interpretations;
- (2) Hebrew and Greek copyists made obvious mistakes, there being now no originals to consult;
- (3) expositors misinterpreted sheol for Hell-torment;
- (4) consent of preachers and blind belief of the people;
- (5) wresting scriptures from their plain meaning;
- (6) false arguments and reasons; and
- (7) preaching "Hell-torment" as a means of "persuasion to a Holy Life." [19]

Richardson "removes" these "pillars" with a heavy hand.

Then, turning from the negative to the positive, he gives twenty pointed "Infallible Proofs" for his position on the ultimate destruction of the wicked. Proof XVIII reads:

"God, He is just, therefore He will not do anything but that which is just and right: the greatest punishment of the breach of His law is death; e will not inflict another, much less a worsor punishment than He hath pressed in His law." [20] Richardson's treatise is a pertinent example of a mid seventeenth-century Conditionalist presentation by an out spoken pastor. Discussion of the issue was widespread, as is evidenced by the fact that the treatise was many times re printed, even as late as 1833 in the United States, and was translated into several Continental languages as well—twice into French, in 1769 and even in 1823.

19 Quoted in Mill, Earlier Life-Truth Exponents, p. 26

20 Ibid.

Richardson's treatise, it should be remarked, did not pass unchallenged. A sharp rejoinder was forthcoming in 1678, as John Brandon wrote Everlasting Fire no Fancy. Being an Answer to a late Pestilent Pamphlet [by S. Richardson]; entitled The Foundations of Hell-Torments shaken and removed.

And even in 1720 John Lewis offered another answer to Richardson's tractate, which he named The Nature of Hell, the Reality of Hell-Fire, and the Eternity of Hell-Torments explained and vindicated. [21] So the battle raged.

V. Professor Isaac Barrow—Temporal Offenders Not Punished -Eternally

In the growing list of notable exponents of the various aspects of Conditionalism, we come to DR. ISAAC BARROW (1630-1677), distinguished English theologian, classical scholar, linguist, mathematician, and Cambridge professor. Educated at Charterhouse and Trinity College, he travelled widely on the Continent, then took Anglican orders. He was first made professor of geometry, then professor of Greek, and finally of mathematics, at Cambridge. This high post he resigned in favour of his noted pupil Sir Isaac Newton, who succeeded him in the professorship in 1669, and who was said to have likewise been a Conditionalist, though not writing on the subject. (Newton was likewise succeeded by a Conditionalist—William Whiston, to be noted later.)

Barrow was then chaplain to Charles II, and became Master of Trinity College in 1672. He was further reputed to be one of the greatest scholars and Arminian preachers of the Church of England in his day. As to his competency in Biblical exposition, Barrow was recognized as one of the finest Greek scholars of his generation. And among his writings was the unique Two Dissertations on the Duration of Future Punishment, a scholarly contribution to Life Only in Christ and contingent truths.

21 Cf. Abbot, The Literature of the Doctrine of a Future Life, nos. 3784, 3989, 4160, 4227, also 3792, 3857.

Maintaining that immortality is conditional, and holding to the utter destruction of the wicked, Barrow says such a concept comports with the justice of God—it being inconceivable 'that .He would punish temporal offenses with eternal torments.

Here is a key statement:

"Besides these arguments from express scripture, it may be considered whether this opinion [destruction of the wicked] do not better agree with the justice of God, especially with the great attribute of His mercy, so much magnified in scripture; for sure it is a hard question, never well resolved to the satisfaction of human understanding, how such temporal offences as are committed by men in this world, under so many temptations and infirmities of nature, not generally relieved by a sufficiency of auxiliary grace, as the common opinion is, should be justly punishable with eternity of extreme torments." [22]

22 Sermons and Fragments attributed to Isaac Barrow, D.D. to which are added, Two Dissertations on the Duration of Future Punishment, and on Dissenters. Now first collected and edited from the MSS. in the University and Trinity College Library, Cambridge. By the Rev. J. P. Lee, M.A., pp. 209, 210. (Of the Two Dissertations Lee says, "It only remains to say, that they are unquestionably in the handwriting of Barrow.")

Commenting on such a course of unending torture, for which some contend, Barrow calls it "a severity of justice far above all examples of repeated cruelty in the worst of men, there being no man presumably so prodigiously cruel or hard hearted, that could endure to see the worst of men, that had been guilty of the worst crimes imaginable, and the greatest injustice and despite to himself, suffer perpetually in an actual extremity of torment: but would in time be moved to deliver him at last by destruction of his being." [23] "According to the words of our Saviour, 'Fear not them which kill the body, fear Him who hath power to destroy both body and soul in Hell.' And sure no man doth doubt, but that God is able to destroy the soul as well as the body; and to say He can but will not do it, is a begging of the question, and a seeming contradiction of our Saviour's words." [24] Such were the convictions of the scholarly predecessor of Sir Isaac Newton at Cambridge University. They also show that the holding and publishing of such teachings was not, at the time, considered inconsistent with major responsibility in churchly and educational ranks.

VI. Philosopher John Locke — Bold Stand Against Innate Immortality

As we have seen, men of learning in various walks of life were now adherents to the principle of Conditionalism—clerics, physicians, educators, barristers, scientists, and philosophers.

Among the latter was J.OHN LOCKE (1632-1704), renowned Christian philosopher and foremost defender of free inquiry of the seventeenth century. He was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford, where he distinguished himself by his talents and attainments. After receiving his M.A. degree, he applied himself to the study of medicine — primarily for the knowledge he would gain, rather than for its practice as a profession. For a time Locke taught Greek, rhetoric, and moral philosophy at Oxford. He also held several political posts, being sent on certain missions of state to the Continent. He was even asked to serve as an envoy to a foreign court, but declined. He was, however, secretary for the Board of Trade and Commissioner of Appeals, and was a friend of many distinguished men of his time.

23 Ibid., p. 210.

24 Ibid., p. 231.

Locke was author of numerous works, several of which exerted a marked influence on subsequent British and American thought. The purpose in all his writings was the advancement of mankind in knowledge, freedom, and virtue. He pleaded for toleration, though personally he held to a severe Puritan morality. His controversial writings, which often became a battle-cry, were marked by clear and cogent arguments, but by fairness and respect toward all opponents. His entire life, in fact, was a warfare against the enemies of freedom of thought and worship. Though he has been lauded by certain freethinkers, he was an earnest Christian, and regarded Holy Scripture with profound reverence, declaring: "It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter."

His famous *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, begun in 1671, was seventeen years in the making. It attacked Platonism, and was directed against various "innate conceptions or intuitions." He, on the other hand, was an Empiricist, believing in the pursuit of knowledge by experiment and observation. He dwelt on how the mind works, its limitations, and the tabula rasa concept. Education owes much to him for the liberalizing engendered by his teachings.

-During the political upheaval Locke fled to Holland for security reasons, and there finished his *Essay*, returning to the homeland in 1689. In his controversial works he sought to remove objections and clear away misapprehensions regarding his fundamental tenets. The Reasonableness of Christianity was his last work, written in 1695, late in life. This brought him into conflict with certain rectors and bishops eager to preserve "orthodoxy."

Locke rejected all theological dogmas that rested upon mere ecclesiastical authority. Thus he took a clear and bold stand against the doctrine of the Innate Immortality and immateriality of the soul, delivering telling blows against such "heathenish fables." as he called them, and thus revealing his thorough acquaintance with their historical origins in the philosophies of Platonism.

1. WICKED Do "Not LIVE FOREVER."

Locke was equally forthright in his opposition to the dogma of the eternal torment of the incorrigible. This appears in various works. To him the punishment for sin is actual death, not eternal life in misery.

Thus, in his Latin treatise *Resurrectio et quae sequuntur*, he says:

"St. Paul. speaking of the Resurrection, [1 Cor. 15] . . . never comes to the resurrection of the wicked . . . ; so that from verse 27 to the end of the chapter is a description only of the resurrection of the just. . . .

First, that which he here speaks of as raised, is raised in glory, v. 43; but the wicked are not raised in glory. 2dly, He say, we shall bear the image of the heavenly Adam, v. 49 which cannot belong to the wicked. 3rd. We shall all be changed, that, by putting on incorruptibility and immortality, death may be swallowed up in victory v. 51, 52, 53, 54, 57, which cannot likewise belong to the damned. ... I think nobody will say that the wicked have victory over death. . . .

"Two things are plainly declared in Scripture concerning them [the wicked].

"1st. That they shall be cast into hell fire to be tormented there, is so express, and so often mentioned in Scripture, that there can be no doubt about it. Matt. 25.41, 46; 13.42. 50; 18.8.

"2nd. That they shall not live for ever." [25]

2. DEATH NOT "ETERNAL LIFE IN MISERY."

In his celebrated treatise, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Locke began his defence of Christianity by protesting the doctrine of immortal death with this searching question:

"By death, some men understand endless torments in hell fire; but it seems a strange way understanding a law, which requires the plainest and very direct of words, that by death should be meant eternal life in misery. Can anyone be supposed to intend by a law which says, 'For felony thou shalt surely DIE,' not that he should lose his life, but be kept alive in exquisite and perpetual torments? And would anyone think himself fairly dealt with that was so used?" [26]

3. ETERNAL LIFE RESTS ON PROMISES OF GOD.

Locke's renowned controversy with Edward Stillingfleet, "Bishop of Worcester, appears in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Stillingfleet held that the common faith in an afterlife would be endangered if the "philosophic proof" (Platonic) of immortality were abandoned. Locke's reply was that our hope of eternal life rests on the revelation and promises of God, not on the subtleties of men. The reply was approved by Jean Le Clerc, celebrated French divine. Locke was not at all impressed by the stock argument of the "majority view," and wisely countered with the statement:

"An error is not the better for being common, nor truth the worse for having lain neglected: and if it were put to the vote anywhere in the world, I doubt, as things are managed, whether truth would have the I majority." [27]

25 English translation in Lord King, Life of Locke, vol. 2. pp. 139-146.

26 John Locke, The Reasonableness of Christianity, in Richard Watson, A Collection of Theological Tracts in Six Volumes, vol. 6, p. 3.

27 John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, book iv, chap. iii, sec. vi., note, p. 465.

VII. Terse Excerpts From Locke's Arguments

Here are typical extracts from *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, which exhibit Locke's line of reasoning on Conditionalism:

LOSS.—"By this fall he [Adam] lost paradise, wherein were tranquillity and the tree of life, i.e. he lost bliss and immortality." [28]
EXCLUSION.—"An exclusion from paradise and loss of. immortality, is the portion of sinners." [29] Of the death threatened in Genesis 2:17, Locke says:

CESSATION.—"I must confess, by death here, I can understand nothing but a ceasing to be, (the losing of all actions of life and sense)." [30]

STRANGE.—"But it seems a strange-way of understanding a law which requires the plainest and direct words, that by 'death' should be meant eternal life in misery." [31]

DUST.—"But when man was turned out [of Paradise], he was exposed to the toil, anxiety, and frailties of this mortal life, which should end in dust, out of which he was made, and to which he should return; and then have life no more life or sense than the

dust had." [32] To Locke, the philosopher and defender of free inquiry, the resurrection is the only gateway to life and immortality.

VIII. Archbishop Tillotson Undercuts Dogma of Eternal -Torment

JOHN TILLOTSON (1630-1694), Archbishop of Canterbury was of nonconformist background. Educated at Cambridge, he was profoundly influenced by the works of the great Protestant apologist, William Chillingworth, with their basic theme, "The Bible only is the faith of Protestants." Submitting to the Act of Conformity in 1662, he served first as an Anglican curate, then in the rectory of Kiddington. He next became lecturer at St. Laurence's, in the Jewry, where he came to be recognized as such a distinguished preacher that many of the clergy modelled their sermons after his. (Pictured on page 188.)

28 *Watson, op. cit., p. 2.*

29 *Ibid., p. 9.*

30 *Ibid., p. 3.*

31 *Ibid.*

32 *Ibid.*

In 1670 Tillotson became prebendary of Canterbury, and in 1689 dean of St. Pauls. He was also a member of the commission to revise the Book of Common Prayer. He held the Zwinglian view concerning the Eucharist, and preached strongly against Popery and Purgatory. Then in 1691 Tillotson was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury, and set about reforming the abuses among the clergy. His hope was to include all Protestant Dissenters, other than Unitarians, in the Church of England.

1. DECLARES INNATE-IMMORTALITY ASSUMED, NOT "REVEALED."

On March 7, 1690, Archbishop Tillotson preached a revolutionary sermon dealing with the "Eternity of Hell Torments," based on Matthew 25:46—one that created great commotion in the theological world. In it he maintained that though God had threatened impenitent sinners with eternal punishment, yet He kept the right of punishing in His own hand, and may remit the penalty. [33] This was recognized as virtually abandoning the traditional certainty of the doctrine of invariable eternal torment for the impenitent, and was so construed.

It was not an open break, but a crack—a noteworthy breach in the solid wall of established "orthodoxy" as to the fate of the damned. It was clearly a denial of the indefeasible immortality of all souls and the universality of eternal punishing for all the wicked. It was the first time an Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, had so declared. More than that, he openly confessed that the dogma of Innate Immortality is based not on Scripture but on tradition. That too was an epochal confession. Other archbishops would follow, in time, who would make the break complete, as history attests. These will be noted in their chronological sequence. Coming from so high a dignitary, the statement created consternation among the advocates of endless torment in Hell.

33 *Abbot, op. cit., no. 3796.*

Widespread discussion ensued. Tillotson's position was defended by the French Arminian theologian, Jean Le Clerc, [34] and condemned by William Lupton, [35] and others. But what disturbed most was Tillotson's admission that the doctrine of the "immortality of the soul was rather supposed, or taken for granted, than expressly revealed in the Bible" [36] Such were the disruptive statements uttered by this prominent prelate near the close of the seventeenth century.

2. SIMILAR CONTINENTAL DENIAL BY VON STOSCH.

It should be added that about the same time, over on the Continent, FRIEDRICH WILHELM VON STOSCH published a work openly denying the doctrine of endless punishment—*Concordia Rationis, et Fidei* . . . (1692), [37] which caused the author much trouble. The book was suppressed by the government and drew a rebuttal from Johann H. von Elswich. [38] Revolt against eternal torment was on, and was destined to increase.

IX. Physician William Coward Denies Separate Entity of Soul

WILLIAM COWARD, M.D. (c. 1656-1725), practicing physician, theologian, and writer, came of good family background, his uncle being principal and professor of history of Hart Hall, Oxford. William received his training at Wadham College, and then Merton, Oxford, receiving both the M.A. and the M.D. degree. [39] He practiced medicine in Northampton and London, and was a member of the College of Surgeons from 1695 until his death. He wrote four medical and four theological works.

But Dr. Coward had strong theological convictions and was a Biblical scholar in his own right. Becoming intensely -interested in the question of the nature of man, he wrote *Second Thoughts concerning Human Soul*, demonstrating the Notion of Human Soul, as believed to be a Spiritual and Immortal Substance, united to Human Body, to be plain Heathenish Invention, and not consonant to the Principles of Philosophy, Reason or Religion (London, 1702). The title page bears the text: "Man lieth down, and rise not till the Heavens be no more: They shall not awake, or be raised out of their Sleep. Job 14:12."

34 *Ibid.*, no. 3734n; also no. 3823n.

35 *Ibid.*, no. 3832n.

36 John Tillotson, *Works* (1817 ed.), vol. 1, p. 749; *Sermons* 100, 166. Elsewhere, the identical thought is stated in other words: "I do not find that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is anywhere expressly advanced in Scripture, but taken for granted."

37 Abbot, *op. cit.*, no. 3797n.

38 *Ibid.*, no. 104.

39 Leslie Stephen, "William Coward," *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 4, pp. 1298, 1299; Mills, *Earlier Life-Truth Exponents*, pp. 35, 36.

Coward published this treatise under a pen name Estibius Psychalethes, and dedicated it to the clergy of the Church of England. In this he denied the postulate of the consciousness of the human soul independent of the human body, but contended that the whole man will receive immortal life at the resurrection. He referred to the independent soul theory as the "ground" of "many absurd and superstitious opinions." Coward affirmed that the death of all animal life consists in "privation of life," but the righteous man "will be raised to life again, and be made partaker of eternal happiness in the world to come."

An enlarged second edition was issued in 1704, in which the term "Immortal Substance," in the title, was changed to "Immaterial Substance."

Much opposition was aroused by the publication of Coward's convictions, and printed attacks began to appear, one by a noted Baptist minister, Benjamin Reach, an ardent Immortal-Soulist. There were also caustic replies by Le Wright, Staalkopf, and later by Kahler and Fleming. These attacks led Coward to issue a second volume, *Further Thoughts Concerning the Human Soul*, in Defence of *Second Thoughts* (1703).

His strictures in this book against the foibles of philosophy drew ridicule from John Locke, and further rejoinders were soon forthcoming.

In rebuttal Coward published, in 1704, *The Grand Essay: or A Vindication of Reason, and Religion, against Impostures of Philosophy, etc.* On March 10, 1704, soon after its publication, complaint was lodged in the House of Commons, and an inquiry instituted before which Coward was summoned to testify. As a result, his books were ordered burned by the Common Hangman as offensive doctrine. The resultant notoriety caused the intrepid doctor to issue a fourth volume, *The Just Scrutiny; or a Serious Inquiry into the Modern Notions of the Soul. . . . Considered as Breath of Life, or a Power (not Immaterial Substance) united to Body according to Holy Scriptures. . . . With a Comparative Disquisition between the Scriptural and Philosophic State of the Dead* (1706). A defence of Coward, by Evan Lloyd, also appeared in 1707, while Henry Layton, noted next, answered several of Coward's critics.

Coward insisted that the "main stress of arguments" must be drawn from the only authoritative "credentials of true and orthodox divinity"—the "holy scriptures." But notwithstanding his unwavering attachment to the Christian Scripture, opponents sought to discredit him by listing him indiscriminately with such detractors of the Bible as Toland, Tindal, and Collins—"the most rancorous and determined adversaries of Christianity." [40] Using the Bible, Coward refuted the popular contention that "contiguity" of life precludes any intervening period of "sleep" or inactivity, and the contention that upon death the soul is "immediately and instantly clothed with the resurrection body." Such held that "no intervening moments can be admitted. Contiguity admits not a separation either in time or space."

Still another Coward volume, in similar vein, appeared in 1706—*Ophthalmoiatria*—in which he ridiculed the Cartesian notion of an immaterial soul residing in the pineal gland.

Henry Dodwell's *Epistolary Discourse* appeared in the same year, which drew Samuel Clarke and Anthony Collins into the conflict. But Coward distinguished his own position from that of Dodwell, and attacked Clarke. Thus the battle of pens continued over the nature and destiny of man.

40 *Blackburne, op. cit., pp. 71-74.*

X. Rejects Immortal-Soulism Because of Pagan Origin

In the dedication of *Second Thoughts*, Coward denies that he was raising a mere "cavil," and like Luther declares he was ready—to "recant" any "error" in his position if it could be shown to be such on the "Authority of the Holy Scriptures.

But his thesis was that "this Life will to the Righteous be changed into Life Everlasting at the Day of the general Resurrection." [41] Then he proceeds to show that the immortality of the soul postulate springs from pagan philosophy, and offers detailed proof (chap. v), -Coward contends that the "Human Soul will cease to be when the Body dies, and consequently it cannot be a Substantial Immortal Spirit" (chap. vi). He maintains that "Human Soul and Life are the same thing, and consequently the Notion of a Spiritual Immortal Substance in Man is Erroneous, and according to the Common Course of Providence, Man's Immortality begins not until the Resurrection" (chap. vii). In chapter nine Coward discusses "Purgatory, Prayers for the Dead, Invocation of Saints, Mens going immediately after Death to Heaven or Hell," and "Ghosts," as springing from natural-immortalism.

1. WICKED NOT YET IN TORMENT, NOR RIGHTEOUS IN HEAVEN.

In chapter ten, on the "History" of the soul question, Coward declares:

"After Death the Damned will not be in a full State of Misery, but that their utmost Misery will begin after Condemnation at the General Judgment, when Soul and Body are united again (as the Phrase is) as will also the Initial Happiness of the Soul, immediately after Death, and the Perfect Happiness of it after the Day of Judgment." [42]

2. IMMORTAL-SOULISM DERIVED FROM HEATHEN PHILOSOPHERS.

Coward then charges that the papists "invented a Purgatory, out of which the Souls of the Deceased hereafter will be delivered from Punishment." Then he asks pointedly:

41 *William Coward, Second Thoughts Concerning Human Soul, "Epistle Dedicatory," sixteenth page.*

42 *Ibid., p. 266.*

"What can there be more evident than that from these Heathen Philosophers we have imbibed as it were, sucked with our Breast-Milk the Notion of a Spiritual Substance united to the Body, called the Soul of Man? And yet upon Examination we find upon what weak Foundation, unsatisfactory Grounds, and trifling Reasons they build their Notion on, which. Posterity has so greedily devoured." [43]

3. THE CONTENTION OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

Turning to the Grecian philosophers—Pythagoras, Socrates, Hereclitus, Pindar, et cetera—Coward shows in terse phrases how they taught that "the Body being compounded is dissolvable by death." "The Soul being simple passes into another Life, in capable of Corruption." "The Souls of Men are Divine, to whom, when they go out of the Body, the way to Heaven is open," according to Thales and Pythagoras. "The Souls of the Good after Death are in an happy Estate, united to God in a Blessed inaccessible Place; The Bad in convenient Places suffer condign Punishment"; and "Death to resemble Absolute Annihilation of Soul and Body, making us insensible of Pain and Pleasure." [44]

4. PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY INTERWOVEN INTO EARLY CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

Asserting that Plato's philosophy is essentially the same as that of his master, Socrates, and having traced the "Doctrine of the Nature of Immortality of a Human Soul" from ancient times down to the philosophers, Coward makes the connection between the philosophers and the Christian Church:

"I proceed to show how, Plato gave a final and undeniable Stamp to this Doctrine; insomuch, that from him it was delivered down to Posterity interwoven in the Doctrine of Christianity." [45]

5. CREPT INTO CHURCH THROUGH PLATONIC FATHERS.

Reaffirming that Plato derived his philosophy of the soul from Socrates, and he in turn from Egypt. Coward next sought to blend it into Old Testament positions. The "first fathers of the Church . . . were almost all Platonic," he continues— Justin, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Cyril, Basil, et cetera.

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid., pp. 267-271.*

45 *Ibid., p. 271.*

Thus it is "demonstrably plain" — "that this Notion of Human Soul, conceived to be a Spirit united to the Body, crept into the Church by the means of the first Fathers thereof, so heartily espousing the Platonic. Such was the "first foundation of the belief" as found in the "Primitive Fathers," [47] with "Threats of Damnation to the Souls of the Wicked, and the Promise of Salvation to the Souls of the righteous." [48] So such a conception of the soul was derived "Originally and Chiefly from Plato a Pagan or heathen," who held that "God created the Soul of Man, and made it Immortal." [49] Aristotle, on the other hand, says nothing of creation, but asserts man to be mortal. Plato held that men would rise again from the dead, while Aristotle held that "life once lost can never be renewed or recovered again." [50] So there was sharp conflict and contradiction in pagan philosophy, especially over the resurrection.

6. LIFE INTERRUPTED BY DEATH RESTORED AT RESURRECTION.

After listing the primitive Christian Fathers, Coward asserts that their teachings concerning the human soul are "pure principles of Platonism," and these in turn were adopted by the Papacy as the "ground" of its "base Practices and Cheats it became the dominant power of the Middle Ages. Coward concludes his position in this summarizing paragraph:

"Lastly, and to conclude this Treatise. Why I have made use of the Words, Cease to be, rather than Corrupt, I have already told you; and why I call it, the renewing of Life in Man, rather than Quickening a Man again, as some perhaps would call it; I do it, as near as I can, to signify my meaning by such Scriptural Phrases and Expressions, because from them I have taken the Grounds of my Definition of the Soul, and not from Philosophy, as may give the best Light I can to the understanding and comprehending my Opinion. Thus Ps. 104.9. Thou hides thy Face, and they are troubled; thou takes away their Breath, and they die. Thus far it is explained how by the Power of God Life ceased to be, and Man . the Subject in which it is, dies, like motion in the thing moved, or Re-projected when it obtains its End or Centre. But when God is pleased Man shall live again, like Motion reconveyed to the thing moved by a second Agent. Thus Ps. 104.30. Thou sends forth thy Spirit, [Breath of Life] they are created, and thou renews the Face of the Earth again. So that as it were by a long Chain, whose Link for some time was broken or interrupted, the present Life is then united, or rather converted by the omnipotent Power of God, in whom it centred, unto Life eternal." [51]

46 *Ibid.*, p. 272.

47 *Ibid.*

48 *Ibid.*, p. 273.

49 *Ibid.*, pp. 274, 275.

50 *Ibid* p. 275.

In his Grand Essay : . . Against Impostures of Philosophy (1704), Coward emblazons on the title page that the concept of "the Existence of any Immaterial Substance is a Philosophic Imposture." And in his Preface he says, "Now is the Axe laid to the Root of the Tree." [52]

XI. Lawyer Layton Produces Succession of Conditionalist -Treatises

As previously noted, the latter part of the seventeenth century witnessed a sharp rise in the tempo of the controversy that raged in England over the issue of Innate or Conditional Immortality and the condition of man in the inter mediate state. Numerous works appeared in opposition to the "sleep of the soul" teaching, many merely repeating what had been denounced "a hundred times before." But as many defenders appear.

Doubtless the most voluminous champion of the Conditionalist position, at the time, was HENRY LAYTON (c. 1622- 1705), learned barrister, theological writer, controversialist, and author of twelve books sustaining Conditionalism. He too came of a distinguished and well-to-do family, his father being "one of the masters of the jewel-house" under Charles I and II. [53] Henry was educated at Oxford, then at Grays-Inn, where he studied law, and was "called to the Bar."

-Pursuant to the terms of his father's will, he built a chapel at Rawdon. There he also printed tractates on various subjects.

51 *Ibid.*, pp. 340, 341.

52 *This third treatise is plainly credited to "William Coward, M.D., C.M., L.C."*

53 Alexander Gordon, "Henry Layton," *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 11, pp. 747, 748; see also Blackburne and Mills.

He then became intrigued in investigating the popular contention of the "separate existence" of the soul. According to the scholarly Blackburne, he delved into the question with "utmost avidity," with the one purpose of "coming at the truth, examining everything he could meet with, ancient and modern, on the subject." He engaged in prolonged research.

As a result, he came to reject the "separate existence" position, and "made no scruple of opposing the sentiments" of some of the chief proponents of Innate Immortality of his time. [54]

Against these he wrote twelve "long and laborious disquisitions"—all in the ponderous style of the day.

He had corresponded with several leading clergymen and educators, putting his arguments into manuscript form. Encountering difficulty over getting a publisher to assume the responsibility for printing and promoting his first manuscript taking the unpopular side, Layton put it away in a box, labelling it, "Treatise . . . Concerning the Humane Soul." Finally he printed it at his own expense. It was promptly challenged.

He then began a series of searching analyses of books championing Innate Immortality, his replies continuing to issue periodically from his pen until the very year of his death.

Since his books were not published under the patronage of a regular bookseller, his works are not so well known nor so extensively circulated as some. Nevertheless, they exerted a strong influence. [55] Dr. William Coward's *Second Thoughts*—charging the popular view of the soul as "plain heathenish invention," "not consonant to the principles of philosophy, reason, or religion," and "derogatory in general to truest Christianity"—had created a furore. Various Immortal-Soulists, such as Manlove, Wadsworth, Nicholl, Broughton, Sherlock, and Turner, sprang to the defence of "orthodoxy." Coward did not bother to answer them, but Layton took on one challenger after another, answering in the characteristically heavy but devastating style of the times.

54 Blackburne, op. cit., p. 75.

55 Ibid., pp. 75, 76.

Over a spread of thirty-six years (from 1670 to 1706), he produced these twelve volumes. In his very first treatise Layton set forth this short but comprehensive thesis—a position from which he never deviated: "During life, we live and move in Him; and when we die, we rest and sleep in Him, in expectation to be raised at His Second Coming." [56]

XII. Scope of Writing Revealed by Twelve Titles -

The bare listing of Layton's twelve titles indicates the range and intensity of the debate that surged back and forth, both theological and philosophical, as it involved Layton. The climax of his writing activities was the production of a major two-volume work, *A Search After Souls: or, The Immortality of a Human Soul, Theologically, Philosophically, and Rationally Considered, with the Opinions of Ancient and Modern Authors*. It was simply signed, "By a Lover of Truth." But it was written by Layton, and received highly favourable comments from Bishop Edmund Law and Archdeacon Blackburne, both of them stalwart Conditionalists. Note the progressive series:

1. Observations upon Mr. Wadsworth's Book of the Soul's Immortality, and his Confutation of the Soul's Inactivity to the Time of the General Resurrection (London: 1670). Wadsworth's treatise was, "Antipsuchothanasia: or The Immortality of the Soul Explained and Proved by Scriptures and Reason. A Confutation of that Irrational and Irreligious opinion of the Soul's Dying with the Body, and Interruption of its Communion with God from Death, Until the Day of Judgment."

2. Observations on Dr. Charlton's Treatise, intituled, The Immortality of the Humane Soul, Demonstrated by the Light of Nature (London: 1670?). In this Layton simply continues his previous arguments.

3. Observations upon a Sermon intituled, A Confutation of Atheism from the Faculties of the Soul by way of Refutation (London? 1692?).

Richard Bentley's treatise was on, *Matter and Motion Cannot Think: or, a Confutation of Atheism from the Faculties of the Soul*.

4. Observations upon a Short Treatise written by Mr. Timothy Manlove: intituled, The Immortality of the Soul asserted (London: 1697).

Layton here avers that "the certainty of a resurrection, and last judgments, rests not upon the behalf of the soul's immortality, but upon the strong current and agreement of the gospel."

56 Henry Layton, *Observations on Mr. Wadsworth's Book on the Soul's Immortality, quoted in Mills, Earlier Life-Truth Exponents, p. 31.*

5. An Argument concerning the Human Soul's Separate Subsistence (London: 1699). In answer to a pamphlet called Spira Respirans.

6. Observations upon a Treatise intituled, A Vindication of the Separate Existence of the Soul (1702). An answer to John Turner's "A Brief Vindication of the Separate Existence and Immortality of the Soul" written in opposition to Dr. Coward's Second Thoughts.

7. Observations on a Treatise intituled, Vindiciae Mentis (London: 1703). Vindiciae Mentis was an anonymous work, "Clearing all Doubts concerning the Life and Immortality of our Souls" (London: 1702).

8. Arguments and Replies in a Dispute concerning the Nature of the Humane Soul, viz. Whether the same be Immaterial, separately subsisting and Intelligent; or be Material, Unintelligent, and Extinguishable at the Death of the Person (London: 1703).

9. Observations upon Dr. Nicholl's Book, intituled, A Conference with a Theist (London: 1703). Nicholl's book was allegedly Proof of the Immortality of the Soul, written against Coward.

10. Observations upon a Treatise intituled Psychologia. Written by John Broughton (London: 1703). Broughton's book was toward "establishing the received Doctrine of an Immaterial and consequently Immortal Substance, United to Human Body," likewise against Coward.

11. Observations Upon a Treatise intituled, A Discourse concerning the Happiness of Good Men in the Next World, by Dr. Sherlock (London: 1704). Sherlock's work on the immortality of the soul also dealt with the eternal punishment of the wicked in the next world, and had French, German, and Dutch translations.

12. A Search After Souls: or, The Immortality of a Humane Soul, Theologically, Philosophically, and Rationally considered, with the Opinions of Ancient and Modern Authors. By a Lover of Truth (2 vols., of 278 and 188 pages, London? 1706).

These—treatises, it might be added, are in the British Museum, Harvard, and the Library of Congress, and are accurately listed in Ezra Abbot's Literature of the Doctrine of a Future, Life, or Catalogue of Works.

XIII. Witnesses Span Centuries: Opponents Invoke Same -Arguments

It should be observed that in all this Layton was not defending Coward, with whose works he had little acquaintance, but was expressing his own convictions and conclusions on the counterargument projected by Coward's opponents. He seriously "answers every argument that had then been advanced in behalf of the immortality of the soul, at full length," including the constantly recurring objection that Conditional-ism is "bold, singular, and heretical." When he started writing, in 1670, Layton felt somewhat like Elijah—that he alone held the true view, but he soon found that there were "seven thou sand" others of similar belief of whom he had been unaware.

As to the charge of being "heretical" Layton says:

"The passing an intermediate time between death and judgment, (which time to the dead is nothing) doth no way enfeeble the certainty of, future rewards and punishments; but places the expectation of them upon a right and a firm foot or foundation, maintained by a concurrent testimony throughout the scripture, and fortified by the articles of our several Creeds." [57]

And as to the novelty of Conditionalism, he contends truthfully and significantly that -"there have been testimonies all along in the church against the separate subsistence of souls, except in the 600 years wherein the thick darkness of popish ignorance overspread the Christian world, viz., from An. 600 till An. 1200." [58] And he further observes that use was then being made of the same arguments to meet him as were employed against the unpopular Reformers by the papists in the infamy of the Reformation." These were: "The authority of the church, the imputation of heresy, and even of Atheism, the promoting of vice [evil], by taking away the fear of purgatorial pains, etc." [59] This, he said pointedly, is "remarkable," for -"the separate existence of the soul, is one of these doctrines which popery borrowed from paganism, and is so necessary to the support of the better half of the popish superstitions, that it is not a little marvellous the re formers should think so little of removing the ground work, when they were so zealously bent upon demolishing what was built upon it." [60] His was a remarkable polemical defence of Conditionalism. He was a notable champion.

57 Quoted in Blackburne, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

58 Layton, *A Search After Souls, part ii, pp. 21-23, quoted in Blackburne, op. cit. pp. 79, 80.*

59 *Ibid.*, p. 80.

60 *Ibid.*

Summary Of Conditionalism During The Seventeenth Century.

Conditionalism in the seventeenth century opens, just as the sixteenth closed, with cruel persecution, even unto death—as with Legatt and Wightman. This was followed by the widely attested Baptist Confession of Faith, "owned and approved" by more than 20,000. Then follows a succession of prominent Conditionalist witnesses, chiefly in England but with Stegmann and von Stosch in Germany.

The British witnesses are about equally divided between Baptists and Anglicans, but also include Puritan, Independent, and even Unitarian adherents.

No Jews are noted. In spread of professional and official proponents, they now embrace preachers, teachers, physicians, poets, writers, statesmen, publishers, philosophers, and barristers—with even an Anglican archbishop. So Conditionalism was not confined preponderantly to any one group or religious persuasion.

In doctrinal emphasis it was distributed rather evenly over the three main points of (1) the mortality of man, (2) the unconscious sleep of the soul between death and the resurrection, and (3) the ultimate and utter destruction of the impenitently wicked. And it must not be forgotten that those who held to the final destruction of the wicked thereby automatically held that not all souls are innately immortal—else such could not ultimately cease to be.

There is now a still slow but steady augmenting of Conditionalist ranks and a diminishing of persecution, so that in the latter half of the century op position is virtually confined to oral and printed attack—with attendant ostracism. Nevertheless, the credibility of Conditionalism is increasingly recognized, as shown by the calibre and growing number of its conspicuous proponents.

-Such is the status of Conditionalism during the seventeenth century.

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