

## THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

decay? Or will he return to an earlier stage of development? If the immortal souls in Olympus are to live in a condition of rejuvenescence and perfectness, then both the stimulus to the formation of, and the interest in, personality disappear for them.

Not less impossible, in the light of pure reason, do we find the anthropistic myth of the "last judgment," and the separation of the souls of men into two great groups, of which one is destined for the eternal joys of Paradise and the other for the eternal torments of hell—and that from a personal God who is called the "Father of Love"! And it is this "Universal Father" who has himself created the conditions of heredity and adaptation, in virtue of which the elect, on the one side, were *bound* to pursue the path towards eternal bliss, and the luckless poor and miserable, on the other hand, were *driven* into the paths of the damned?

A critical comparison of the countless and manifold fantasies which belief in immortality has produced during the last few thousand years in the different races and religions yields a most remarkable picture. An intensely interesting presentation of it, based on most extensive original research, may be found in Adalbert Svoboda's distinguished works, *The Illusion of the Soul* and *Forms of Faith*. However absurd and inconsistent with modern knowledge most of these myths seem to be, they still play an important part, and, as "postulates of practical reason," they exercise a powerful influence on the opinions of individuals and on the destiny of races.

The idealist and spiritualist philosophy of the day will freely grant that these prevalent materialistic forms of belief in immortality are untenable; it will say that the refined idea of an immaterial soul, a Pla-