The religious thought of J.S. Mill:  
What did the Theology of Hope add to the Religion of Humanity?

HASEGAWA Etsuhiro

The idea has been generally accepted that Positivism in the Nineteenth Century has shifted the immortality of an individual to the memory of the human race. In fact, Auguste Comte, in his earlier thought, insisted that our tendency to the eternity is satisfied by the human as a biological species. However, in his Religion of Humanity, he proposes the individual immortality, that is to say, the subjective immortality which is achieved by our incorporation with the Great Being and whose state of affairs is called ontological. While accepting the Great Being in general, J.S. Mill appeals to the concept of mankind concerning the problem of the immortality, because he regards the individual immortality by Comte as having a character of mere idea. As a result, he rejects the individual immortality virtually, but never gives up the idea of the hope of our reunion with the dead after earthly life. In the end, J.S. Mill admits the possibility of a kind of the immortality and proposes his own concept of that. This new concept, which is characterized by two features, continuity and homogeneity between a present and future life in our spiritual life, is in accord with his empiricist position. This concept giving the dead its proper region, the Theology of Hope has something to add to his Religion of Humanity.