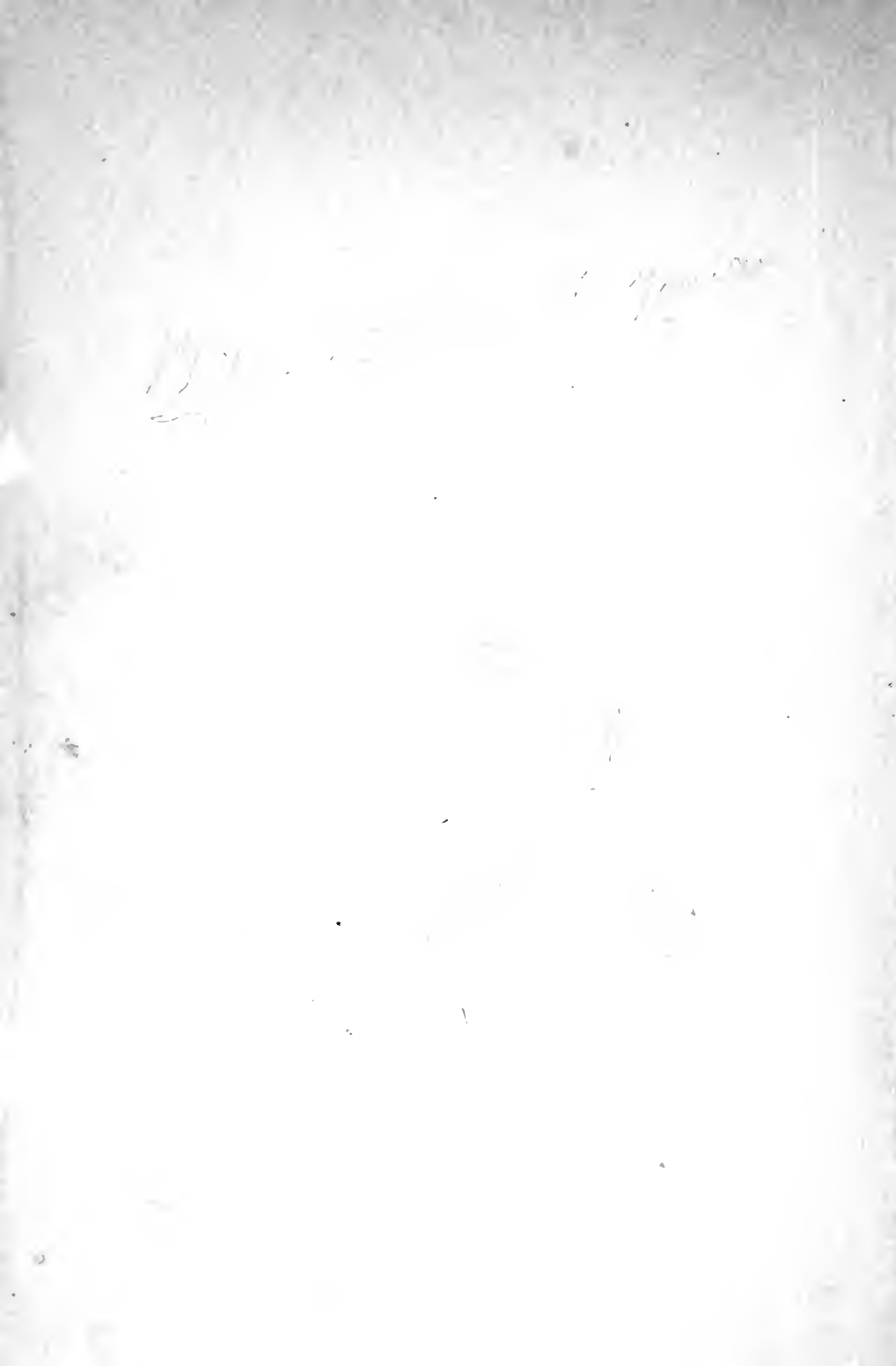




FUTURE PUNISHMENT

DOES DEATH
EMPROBATIO





Mr. William F. Tompkins

Quincy Town
Ontario

1/2 Larnia,
Ontario

Nov 4th 1893.

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Miss Mary Jane Snake

Mr Solomon Snake

Miss Mary Jane Snake



Mr. W. W. F. Tomlin's

From

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at - [unclear] to on

date

By R. J. [unclear]

London

11



Very truly Yours
Wm. Cochrane

theol. c.

FUTURE PUNISHMENT;

— OR —

DOES DEATH END PROBATION?

MATERIALISM, IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL;
CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY OR ANNIHILATIONISM;
UNIVERSALISM OR RESTORATIONISM;
OPTIMISM OR ETERNAL HOPE;
PROBATIONISM AND PURGATORY.

BY THE REV'D WILLIAM GOGHRANE, D. D.,

(Ex-Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.)

AUTHOR OF "THE HEAVENLY VISION;" "CHRIST AND CHRISTIAN LIFE;"
"WARNING AND WELCOME;" ETC

With Illustrative Notes from the Writings of Eminent British and
American Scientists and Theologians

— ALSO —

Additional papers prepared especially for this Book, by the Rev.
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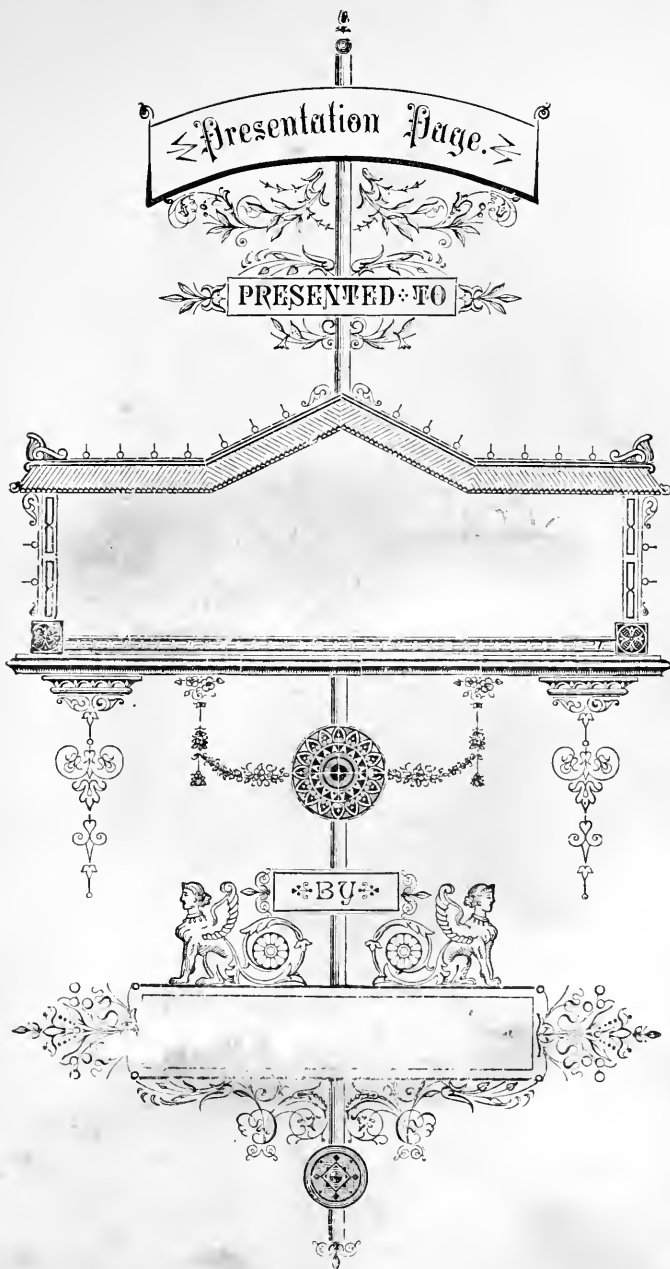
FROM DANTE'S "INFERNO" AND "PURGATORY AND PARADISE."

BRANTFORD, ONT., ST. JOHN, N. B., MELBOURNE AND
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PREFACE

THE Doctrine of Future Punishment has for many years engaged the attention of thinking minds, on both sides the Atlantic. Notable departures from the old faith have but stimulated enquiry, and led to greater study of those portions of God's word which treat of this all-important truth. The result cannot be otherwise than beneficial. Although in the somewhat severe conflict of opinions, the discussion may not always seem profitable or promotive of Christian charity, yet in the end it must lead to a more intelligent conception of the truth, and a deeper reverence for the Volume of inspiration.

This treatise has been written and compiled at the request of the Publishers, to meet a felt want in many Christian homes. Volumes by specialists in Science and Theology abound, but these for the most part are beyond the capacity and comprehension of the ordinary reader, and only treat of some one phase of the question, with which the writer is specially concerned. An attempt has been made in the present work to discuss, however cursorily, nearly all the leading views held regarding the future punishment of the wicked, in the simplest possible language, and at the same time to include in the Notes and separate papers, the more scholarly and abstruse discussions of thoughtful minds, both in the old world and the new. To students, therefore, as well as to the general reader, it is hoped that the volume may at least be helpful, if not exhaustive.

Instead of proceeding at once to discuss the doctrine of Universalism, as opposed to the orthodox view held by Evangelical

churches, the teachings of Materialism are first considered. For, if as is alleged by Materialists, there is no immortality for man, it is useless to discuss the different opinions held as to the nature or duration of punishment, in a state which has no existence. Is there a future state? Is the present the precursor of an endless existence? •Is man an accountable being? or is the grave an eternal sleep, and heaven and hell mere speculations, without anything approaching reality? Such questions meet us on the very threshold of the subject, and demand consideration before all others.

Following this and closely connected with the main question, several chapters have been devoted to a consideration of "Conditional Immortality," "Optimism," Probationism, Purgatory and Agnosticism; until finally, and at greater length, the old orthodox view of Eternal Punishment is discussed, as opposed to modern rationalism and restorationism;—theories—which if we rightly judge, undermine all faith worthy of the name, and rob the Almighty of His holiest and most glorious attributes.

Those who expect to find in this Volume, a mere "symposium" of the different opinions held regarding Future Punishment, will be disappointed. While an earnest endeavor has been made, not to misrepresent the views held by those who are at variance with the Evangelical Creed, no uncertain sound is given as to the opinions held by the several writers. I know that it is said by some, that old-fashioned doctrinal preaching is dying out: that old doctrines have sunk into oblivion: that future retribution is now only alluded to: that eternal punishment is never taught in the pulpit of to-day; and that in the few instances where the orthodox creed is held, the prosperity of the church is blighted, the pulpit loses its power over the masses, vital religion dies out, sanctuaries are deserted, and educated men become infidels! Those who speak thus, wilfully misrepresent facts. In Canada and the United States, the pulpit was never more definite and outspoken regarding the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment than at the present moment; orthodox congrega-

tions were never more numerous and aggressive, and contributions to missions never more liberal.

To those of my brethren in the different churches, who have so kindly aided me in the preparation of this Volume, my best thanks are due. Without their contributions, the discussion of this momentous question would have been far less valuable than it is.

I trust that the Publishers, who have undertaken the responsibility of issuing the Volume, and all who may promote its circulation, may feel, that apart from any monetary return, they have aided in the defence of "the faith, once delivered to the saints."

Finally, and in the words of another: "Whatever, be the fate of human speculations on this tremendous topic, be it ours to cultivate the simplicity of faith which is independent of them. Even though in its vastness and mystery it continue to rebuke our feeble reason, let it stand in the naked simplicity of fact; a truth great, and terrible and certain; planted deep in the nature of God's attributes, and, therefore, unfathomable as all things that are of Him; but withal addressing itself to the simplest and strongest feelings of man, his dread of pain, his horror of shame, and misery, and death; meeting him at every turn to evil, and casting a fearful shadow across those pleasures that are not of God, and those glories where God's glory is forgotten; meeting him at the first fatal step upon that course which ends in the abyss of woe it denounces, and warning him at once to flee the bondage of seductions which grow as they are obliged, and strengthen with every victory; warning him that all the temporal results of sin—are but shadows of the overwhelming penalty it brings, when the mercy, which still restrains to these limits the fulness of divine vengeance shall have ceased; and the sin and the punishment which are now but temporary, passing together into the world of eternity, and still, as ever, bound in inseparable links, shall become themselves alike eternal."

WILLIAM COCHRANE.

BRANTFORD, ONTARIO,



LIST OF AUTHORITIES.

NOTE.—The following Authors, among others, have been consulted or quoted, in the preparation of this volume :

- | | |
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UNIVERSALISM, OR RESTORATIONISM.—The word used in two senses. Summary of what Universalists believe in common with other Christians and what they reject. The Orthodox or Evangelical view of future punishment, as opposed to Universalism. Universalists seldom confine themselves to the question at issue, but misrepresent the orthodox creed. Jonathan Edward's writings often quoted for this purpose. Such criticism unfair. Makes no allowance for the rhetoric of impassioned preachers. Quotations from other theologians, Pusey, Archer Butler, Professor Mansel and Spurgeon. Drs. Hodge, Phelps, and Bartlett on the Metaphors

and Symbols of Scripture. While often too literally pressed, they represents dreadful realities. Universalists admit that sins committed and unpardoned in the present life must be dealt with in the next. After death, however, the worst specimens of human beings shall be reclaimed. Sin is misfortune without guilt. God cannot consistently doom men to endless retribution. The orthodox view is that sin perpetuates itself—that with no remedial influences it increases in heinousness, from one degree of wickedness to another, without possibility of change. Quotations from the writings of Swedenborg, Joseph Cook, Dr. Albert Barnes, Andrew Jukes, Professors Watts and Phelps. The objection considered, that eternal punishment is against the justice and benevolence of God. Arguments from Scripture considered. The true meanings of the words “Aeon,” “Aionios,” and “Aionial.” The conclusions arrived at regarding them by Professor Moses Stuart and others. The broad thinkers of the day not, as alleged, Universalists. Views of Charles Kingsley, F. W. Robertson, Norman McLeod, and others. Summary of the arguments advanced in behalf of the orthodox creed. Positive objections to Universalism. Antagonistic to the teachings of God’s Word. Leads to utter rejection of the fundamental truths of Christianity. Universalism tested by the number of its adherents and its actual results, gives no cause for alarm. Few unhesitatingly accept it as a ground of trust. Growth of the sect marvellously slow, compared with that of other churches. Does little for the good of society or the amelioration of present wrongs ; with Notes and Additional papers on Future Punishment, by Rev. Principal Cairns, D. D., Rev. Francis L. Patton, D. D., LL. D., Princeton, N. J., Rev. James Saurin, Rev. Stuart Robinson, D. D., Rev. Wm. J. Shaw, M. A., LL. B., Methodist Theological College, Montreal ; Rev. Wm. Stewart, D. D., Baptist Church, Cheltenham ; Rev. A. Carman, D. D., General Superintendent of Missions, Canada Methodist Church ; and Archbishop Lynch, Toronto.

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INTRODUCTORY.

BEFORE discussing the question of the "Eternity of future punishment," let us briefly indicate the different views held as to a future state. Next to the question of the being of a God, no inquiry is more natural for every individual to make and settle, than this: "Is my existence limited by time, or shall I continue to live throughout the endless ages of eternity?" Upon our belief or rejection of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, much of our happiness depends, even on this side the grave.

The different theories held as to a future state are these :

THE MATERIALISTIC.—Man is nothing but a material organism, whose conscious existence is terminated at death. Materialism is indeed but the old Sadducean disbelief in immortality—no resurrection, no future life, no heaven, no hell : let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die.

THE ANNIHILATIONIST.—The soul is not naturally immortal, and can only be made immortal by union with the Saviour. The incorrigibly wicked shall therefore sooner or later cease to exist, for there is no future for any but believers in Christ.

THE OPTIMISTIC.—Affirming neither the Universalist nor Restorationist nor Agnostic theories, it indulges in an eternal hope. Canon Farrar, who occupies this position, says, that although he cannot preach the certainty of Universalism, he must yet lift up, behind the darkness in the background, the hope that every winter will turn to spring.

THE PROBATIONIST.—Not that all men will be saved, but that those who die impenitent will have a second chance, and that those who do not improve it, will fall into eternal sin, and go into eternal punishment. Men may thus secure the pardon after death, which they failed to secure while they lived on earth.

THE ROMISH.—There is a hell, and there reprobate angels and lost men are eternally punished. While not teaching authoritatively that future punishment will be physical, it asserts that it is dangerous to deny that it will be so.

THE DANTEAN.—There is a hell, and its punishment is physical and real. Such descriptions of future torment as “the lake of fire and brimstone” are not figurative, but literal and actual representations of the awful future in store for impenitent souls.

THE AGNOSTIC.—We know nothing whatever about the future state. Nature throws no light upon the question, and the Bible reveals nothing of a definite character to solve the mystery. No one has ever come back to tell us anything in regard to his welfare beyond the grave. We are therefore at liberty to think as we please. There may be, and there may not be, a future world. When a man dies, that may be the end of him, or he may enter some fair land, to be forever free from the ills of the present life!

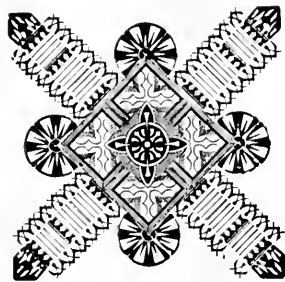
THE UNIVERSALIST OR RESTORATIONIST.—All men will be ultimately saved and restored to the favor of God. Sooner or later all will reach heaven. The Universalist Creed is as follows: “We believe that there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of grace, who will finally

restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness." One of our best known poets, expressing this hope of final restoration, says :

"Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill ;
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt and taints of blood :

That nothing walks with aimless feet,
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete."

THE ORTHODOX.—Future punishment is everlasting. At death the state is fixed for eternity. No man who dies impenitent will, after death, change his character and obtain pardon. Sin is self-propagating. Where sin continues punishment will continue. Reform in another state of existence is not supposable. Men who persevere in sin from the beginning to the end of life, will persevere in sin forever, and such as refuse forgiveness here will never obtain it hereafter. It is appointed unto men once to die, and afterwards there comes—not probation—not the offer of mercy—but the judgment.



MATERIALISM.

“What am I, whence produced, and for what end?
Whence drew I being, to what period tend?
Am I the abandoned orphan of blind chance,
Dropp'd by wild atoms in disordered dance?
Or from an endless chain of causes wrought,
And of unthinking substance, born with thought,
Am I but what I seem, mere flesh and blood,
A branching channel, with a mazy flood?”

“Eternal life is Nature's ardent wish :
What ardently we wish, we soon believe :
Thy tardy faith declares that wish destroyed :
What has destroyed it? Shall I tell thee what?
When fear'd the future, 'tis no longer wish'd ;
And when unwish'd, we strive to disbelieve.
Thus infidelity our guilt betrays.”

MATERIALISM.

IN CONSIDERING the different theories held regarding "Eternal punishment," the question arises, is the soul of man immortal? "If a man die, shall he live again?" If according to Materialists there is no hereafter, and man's existence ends in the grave, there can be neither misery or happiness beyond the present.

It is held by some, that man is nothing but a material organism, whose conscious existence is terminated at death. Although this theory is now prominently and zealously discussed by a certain class of scientists, as a new and better solution of creation than the first chapter of the book of Genesis affords, Materialism, in some form or other, has been advocated for thousands of years. It is indeed impossible to say when and where Materialism began. In China, three hundred years before the Christian era, it was prevalent. Quotations from the writings of that period might with very little change be accepted as the creed of the Materialists in the present age. Says one of these Chinese philosophers: "Wherein people differ, is the matter of life; wherein they agree, is death. While they are alive, we have the distinctions of intelligence and stupidity, honourableness and meanness; when they are dead, we have so much rottenness decaying away;—this is the common lot.

All are born, and all die. At ten years old some die, at a hundred years old some die. The virtuous and the sage die: the ruffian and the fool also die. Alive they may be the most virtuous of men; dead, they are so much rotten bone. When about to die, therefore, let us treat the thing with indifference and endure it, and so ABANDON OURSELVES TO ANNIHILATION!"

Materialism, according to its principal exponents, teaches that matter is endued with life; that every particle of matter, besides its physical properties, has a principle of life in itself, which precludes the necessity of assuming any other cause for the phenomena of life exhibited in the world. It ignores the common distinction made between matter and mind, and refers the phenomena of the world, whether physical, vital or mental, to the functions of matter. The Universe always has existed, and must continue to exist for ever. As defined by one of themselves: "The Materialistic theory is that there is but ONE EXISTENCE, the UNIVERSE, and that it is eternal—without beginning or end—that the matter of the Universe never could have been created, for *ex nihilo nihil fit* (from nothing nothing can come), and that it contains within itself the potency adequate to the production of all phenomena. This we think to be more conceivable and intelligent than the Christian theory that there are two existences—God and the Universe—and that there was a time when there was but one existence, God, and that after an indefinite period of quiescence and "masterly inactivity," He finally created a Universe either out of Himself or out of nothing—either one of which propositions is philosophically absurd." The soul is thus material, and ceases to exist when the body dies. Death is the cessation, not only of the vital but also of the intellectual functions of the individual. The atoms of which the man is composed, with the forces which belong to him continue to exist, and may enter into the composition of other men. But the man AS AN INDIVIDUAL CEASES TO EXIST. From this it follows, that as there is neither mind or spirit, there is no God and no moral law, and no future

state of existence for man. "Every great man (says Comte) has two forms of existence : one conscious before death, the other after death—UNCONSCIOUS—IN THE HEARTS AND INTELLECTS OF OTHER MEN."

All existence is thus traced to mere matter. The best known and most widely read materialistic text books teach, that matter is eternal and independent of Almighty will ; that nothing exists, or can exist, that is not material ; that matter and force are inseparable, eternal and indestructible ; that inorganic and organic forms are simply the result of different accidental combinations of matter ; that life is a particular combination of matter, taking place under favorable circumstances ; that the soul is a function of material organization, and thought a movement of matter. The physical universe is the one self-existent necessary eternal being : all sentient, and each part performing its appropriate function. The world was uncaused, and exists solely of itself. Since matter is, **MATTER MUST ALWAYS HAVE BEEN.** It cannot be destroyed, and consequently cannot be created. **IT IS WITHOUT END, AND THEREFORE WITHOUT BEGINNING.** It is the basis of all life, and **ALL LIVING FORMS ARE FUNDAMENTALLY OF ONE CHARACTER.** The matter of life is composed and built up of ordinary matter, differing from it only in the manner in which its atoms are aggregated. It is again resolved into ordinary matter, when its work is done. Under whatever disguise it takes refuge, **WHETHER WORM OR MAN, THE LIVING MATTER DIES, AND IS RESOLVED INTO ITS MINERAL AND LIFELESS CONSTITUENTS.**

It follows from this, that immateriality and spirituality are meaningless words. Feeling, thought and will, are only modifications of the nerves of the brain. Belief in a future life is a dream and a delusion. The grave receives the whole of man. In a literal sense, the poet's words fitly express such a creed :

"Thou art safe !

The sleep of death protects thee, and secures
From all the unnumbered woes of mortal life."

Upon this materialistic theory, consciousness, intelligence, thought and moral sense, are but the highest development of the faculty, "by which the lichen draws nutriment from the air or the rock." The conscious, intelligent, thinking moral being, is as much a material substance as the lichen. Its intellectuality is due to the organisation to which it has attained, that is, to a certain combination of its material elements and the forces with which they are endowed. Consequently, when in each particular instance or product, the organisation ceases to act, the combination is dissolved, and the separate individual intelligence,—what we call mind and soul,—vanishes entirely. What we call a spiritual essence is only a developed animal nature, the difference between man and beasts being not one of kind, but of degree. Humanity is only a higher degree of Animality. We have no right, according to materialism, to suppose or expect a personal immortality. Men may indeed be said to live after death in the memory of their fellow men, but OTHER DEATHLESS EXISTENCE THERE IS NONE. If all mental acts and states are of the brain, when the body dies, the man ceases to exist. The brain is, according to this atheistic theory, the soul—the part of the body which thinks—which is endowed with fibres of thinking, just as the legs have muscles of motion. Death, which destroys the rest of the body, destroys the brain, the so-called soul. When death comes the farce of human life is played out!

There is, therefore, according to this hypothesis, no ground for expecting in a future life reward or punishment. The only immortality is that when the body is disintegrated it will enrich the earth, nourish plants, and feed other generations of men. Death is an eternal sleep. The mind cannot exist apart from the body, as it cannot come into existence without the body. What is dissolved at death is devoid of sensation, and therefore death is simply an escape from the ills of life. There is no God, no fate, no other world, no recompense for acts. Prosperity is heaven, and adversity is hell, and there is no other heaven or hell. Entire human disso-

lution is coincident with death. Life is only a phenomenon, and death joins us to the unreturning past. All that is good of us IS ABSORBED INTO GENERAL AND GENERIC HUMANITY! The race we have served is our sepulchre. "The man of overwrought brain, used up, worn-out feelings: the distempered dreamer: the reckless worker of wrongs: the disappointed striver for an earthly crown, all shall have a common slumber, unconscious, impervious, unbroken. The opiate comes at last—oblivion! An overshadowing that covers all."

"Cessation is true rest
And sleep for them oppres't,
And not to be—is blest.

Annihilation is
A better state than this;
Better than woe or bliss.

The name is dread: the thing
Is death without a sting:
An overshadowing!"

Thus materialism looks down the gulf of annihilation, and amid the troubles of a godless existence, feels something like a morbid satisfaction in the thought, that the present scene is the whole of man. Such a system is essentially atheistic. It denies the existence and necessity of a God, and the immortality of the soul. Professor Huxley, after delineating the leading features of his philosophy, says: "In accepting these conclusions, you are placing your feet on the first rung of a ladder, which in most people's estimation is the reverse of Jacob's, and leads us to the antipodes of heaven. I should not wonder if "gross and brutal materialism" were the mildest phrase applied to them in certain quarters. Most undoubtedly the terms of the propositions are **DISTINCTLY MATERIALISTIC**. Nevertheless I can discover no logical halting place between admitting, that the matter of the animal and the thoughts to which I give utterance, are **SIMPLY CHANGES IN THAT MATTER OF LIFE**, which is the source of vital phenomena."

Materialists are, however, by no means agreed, as to the value of the conclusions arrived at. Some of them disown the name by which they are known, although it is of their own choosing. While Professor Hæckel says, "that materialism is now established on evidence which places it beyond dispute, and that the time has come to teach it to children in the form of a catechism". Professor Huxley retorts by saying: "I am no materialist, but on the contrary, believe materialism to involve grave philosophical error. The materialistic position, that there is nothing in the world but matter, force and necessity, is as utterly devoid of justification, as the most baseless of theological dogmas. All who are competent to express an opinion (upon the mode of creation) agree, that the manifold varieties of animal and vegetable form, have not come into existence by chance, nor result from capricious exertions of creative power; but that they have taken place in a definite order, the statement of which order is what men of science term natural law. The plastic matter out of which the smallest animal is formed, undergoes changes so steady and purpose-like in their succession, that one can only compare them to those operated by a skilled modeler upon a formless lump of clay. One is almost possessed by the notion that some more subtle aid to vision than an achromatic would show the hidden artist with his plan before him, striving with skilful manipulation to perfect his work." And in his article on Biology, contributed by Professor Huxley to the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, he says: "The fact is that at the present moment there is not a shadow of trustworthy direct evidence that abiogenesis (life from the lifeless) does take place, or has taken place within the period during which the existence of life on the globe is recorded. But it need hardly be pointed out that the fact does not in the slightest degree interfere with any conclusions that may be arrived at deductively from other considerations, that at some time or other abiogenesis must have taken place." Yet strange to say, while rejecting the materialistic creed, and expressing his

abhorrence of any theory that teaches that mind is matter, thought nothing but a movement of matter, and the soul material,—all his philosophical and psychological enquiries proceed on the supposition, that such propositions are true—that life and thought are the product of a certain disposition of and changes in material molecules! And finally, Professor Tyndall admits that while materialism presents itself as an intelligible theory of the universe, IT HAS NEVER YET SUCCEEDED IN EXPLAINING A SINGLE FACT in the world of consciousness. It hopes some day to be able to show us future Shakespeares, “potential in the fires of the sun,” but as yet cannot find the faintest sensations of the meanest insect.

While we think there can be no dispute in any candid mind that materialism is atheistic, it is not asserted that all so-called Materialists are Atheists. Some admit the being of a God, to whom they refer the creation of the world, although the number of such illogical materialists is small. And in order to reconcile their views with belief in the Almighty, they substitute the Development theory, or Evolution, which in recent years has been discussed in the “Vestiges of the Creation,” and the voluminous writings of Charles Darwin, the eminent naturalist.

EVOLUTION.

Wherein this theory differs from materialism, and wherein it equally fails to satisfy the demands of science and religion, is worthy of consideration. It does not do away with the necessity of a Creator. The method of his working is simply on such a supposition changed, but the fact of his existence remains. Whence came matter, with its marvellous adaptations and development? “So far from superseding an intelligent agent, the Development theory only exalts our conceptions of the ultimate skill and power, that could comprehend such an infinity of future uses, under future systems, in the original groundwork of creation.” God might have

originated the species by a law of development, just as he continues this world and all that it contains, by the constancy of law. The necessity of a first great cause is as consistent and compatible with the one scheme as the other. But as has been observed, mere belief in the existence of a God, without belief in the immortality of the soul and in the scheme of salvation by a Mediator and Redeemer, is of as little ethical value as a belief in the existence of the great sea serpent.

Among other things, so far as we can gather its leading principles from its numerous advocates, Evolution holds that the present course of nature is a development of original and infinitely early laws, primarily due to matter : the nebulous became the solid : the solid distinguished and separated : the inanimate by imperceptible degrees became animate, and so on into more perfect forms and nobler instincts. All the forms and processes of nature are evolved from the operation of certain laws, inherent in nature itself, working in the way of gradual progression and improvement, each class or order of existing creatures containing in itself all that is essential to the class or order above it. The primary basis of vegetable and animal life consists of a globule of matter, from which by the operation of chemical causes, a generative germ is produced. This germ, after passing through a formative process, gradually assumes the shape of a plant. This plant improves in structure, and gives birth to a new order of plants, of a higher and better type than itself, and they in turn repeat the same process. Thus by a course of transformation and development, one class of vegetable productions rises above another, according to a regularly graduated scale, until at last we reach animated nature. From the point of junction of vegetable and animal life, the different grades of living creatures steadily advance in structural development, each grade surpassing the last in complexity and completeness of organization, until the crowning work is reached in man, in whom the best features of the whole are combined.

If this is the position of man in the scale of creation, it makes him the legitimate offspring of the bestial race, by a line of ascending gradation, but at the same time of unbroken succession : a line which leads him down through the beast, the bird, the reptile, the fish, the mollusc and the worm, until he finds his origin in a chemical lump of matter. As a materialist expresses it, "the chemic lump arrives at the plant, and grows : arrives at the quadruped, and walks : arrives at man, and thinks." That is, the chemic lump, by its own inherent energies, moves on towards those different steps of promotion. It is the same lump that shapes itself into the goodly proportions of the human form, and there seated as on a throne within the recesses of the human brain, assumes a spiritual character and thinks."

Such a theory, it would seem, needs only to be stated to carry with it its own refutation. Its baselessness on scientific grounds, and its unreasonableness or absurdity on moral grounds, have repeatedly been shown. To expose all the fallacies and assumptions that underlie it, is beyond the immediate purpose of this volume, and would tax unduly the patience of the general reader. Suffice it, that we present the following condensed summary of one of the earliest replies made to the theory, as indicating how vulnerable it is, when critically examined. The late Rev. Walter McGilvray, D. D., in his treatise entitled "The Sadducees of Science," thus writes :

"To make such a theory credible, there are many assertions and assumptions that have yet to be proved. Among these may be mentioned the statement, regarding the gradual procession of the different races of creatures, from each other. 'Like produces like,' has hitherto been regarded as the established law of nature, nor has anything yet been brought forward by the advocates of "Evolution" to a contrary conclusion. Not a single example has been given of the operation of a different law. Countless myriads of seeds are daily germinating, yet it has never been found that the

seed borne by any one plant has produced a species different from its parent. Individual varieties of the same species may be, and have been frequently propagated, but no example of transmutation from one generic class to another. This holds true, also, of the animal kingdom. Experiments have been made without number to effect a change of species, but without success, so that the theory of spontaneous generation, and progressive transition, is a theory that yet remains without a shadow of proof. Nor does the likeness traced between the physical construction of the human race, and that of the inferior creatures, afford any foundation for the theory of Evolution. Comparative anatomy proves beyond a doubt, that the organic productions of nature all proceed upon the same fundamental plan, but this resemblance is only an example of that beautiful unity of design which pervades the work of creation: which binds its various points together into one connected system, bespeaking the skill of a Supreme directing Intelligence, in the precise adjustment of its complicated elements, and their harmonious co-operation to the production of a common end. Can we suppose, that the power which has brought into existence such a mass of magnificent materials, and built them up into a fabric so symmetrical and sublime in its proportions as the human frame itself, is a mere property of matter, the simple, natural development of a chemic lump—that a particle of dust has been converted into the mind of a Milton and the heavenly soul of a Paul?

“But even supposing that there is a physiological connection between the lower animals and man, this is not sufficient evidence that they derive their different measures of intelligence from the same source. That mind is the product of matter is the assumption of materialists, and the more complete the organisation, the greater the sagacity manifested. The brain, they say, is the organ of the mind, and the size and finish of this organ is in proportion to the structural advancement of the creatures, and determines the measure of intelligence with which they are severally endowed. And

yet the ant and the "busy bee," two animals down near the very bottom of the scale of organisation, and that can hardly be said to possess a particle of brain at all, manifest more intelligence in their operations than any other class of the lower creatures that we are acquainted with ; and the beaver, whose brain is not more complicated than the sheep (which is regarded as the very type of stupidity) shows such a marvellous degree of constructive skill, that it is regarded as one of the wonders of natural history. These facts show how little dependence is to be placed on the theory of evolution, which so utterly breaks down at so many important points.

"Still more fatal to such a theory is the fact, that the capacities with which man is endowed are not only different in degree, but different in their nature and working from those of the inferior creatures. The lower animals carry on their operations under the controlling power of a fixed and inevitable law. Their instincts work perfectly from the first, and uniformly to the last. They are but little, if anything, indebted to experience for the skill they display. It is born with them, and they begin to show it from the moment they begin to move. Neither are they indebted to experience for any alteration or improvement in the exercise of their functions. They follow the same mechanical processes of action and construction, without the slightest deviation from the particular pattern or type, according to which they carry on their work. This certainly is not the intelligence of man. But even the instinct of the lower animal is perfect of its kind, and works under the direction and control of a higher Power than itself—a Power that fits it for its own particular ends, that foresees its particular wants, and that causes it to fulfil the one and provide for the other, in a way that can never be accounted for by the laws of organisation, or the general principles of Materialism.

If, then, neither the instinct of the brute, nor the intelligence of the man, proceed from any combination of material substances, the falsity of evolution and the truth of scripture is established beyond

cavil. Man, as to his physical form, was the crowning act of the material universe, while in respect to the spirit that was in him, he was made in the likeness of God. Intellectual and moral qualities were conferred upon him, which raised him entirely out of the rank of the inferior creatures, connecting him immediately with the spiritual world, and giving him a name and a place but 'a little lower than the angels.' He was far more in reality than the Poet imagines, when he declares him to be—'half dust, half divinity.' His dust was not common dust, but dust so fearfully compounded, and so wonderfully organised, that it represented all the constituent elements of the world which he inhabited, and 'all the constructive principles that were spread over the innumerable kingdoms of living nature ; so that, while he had a part with God, the meanest worm that crawls upon the ground had a part in him."

The materialism of the present day is very different from what went under the same name in the days of such philosophers as DesCartes. They never went about to build up a world out of mere passive bulk and sluggish matter, without the guidance of a higher principle. They concluded it the greatest impudence or madness, to assert that living animals were the sole product of matter. Their system recognized an incorporeal substance, of which God was the head. That thought was the result of matter they regarded as the prodigious paradox of Atheists. They acknowledged the necessity of Divine organization and preservation—the existence and agency of a spiritual principle distinct from matter and motion. Newton denied that matter possessed any inherent capacity of action. He ascribed the formation to the act of God, and everywhere in his writings recognized the necessity of a Divine Being, as the original cause and continued supporter of all things as they are. Nothing was independent of the will and action of God. His philosophical creed, in substance as follows, strongly contrasts with the materialism of our day : "This admirably beautiful structure of sun, planets, and comets, could not

have originated, except in the wisdom and sovereignty of an intelligent and powerful Being. He rules all things, not as the soul of the world, but as the Lord of all. He is eternal and infinite, omnipotent and omniscient ; that is, His duration is from eternity to eternity, and His presence from infinity to infinity. He governs all things, and has knowledge of all things that are done or can be done. He is not eternity and infinity, but eternal and infinite. He is not duration and space, but He is ever, and is present everywhere. We know Him only by means of his properties and attributes, and by means of the supremely wise and infinite constructions of the world, and their final causes : we admire Him for His perfection ; we venerate and worship Him for His sovereignty. For we worship Him as His servants ; and a God without sovereignty, providence, and final causes is nothing else than fate and nature. From a blind metaphysical necessity which, of course, is the same always and everywhere, no variety could originate. The whole diversity of created things in regard to places and times could have its origin only in the ideas and the will of a necessarily existing Being."

Sir David Brewster, also, in later days, while admitting that gravitation might put the planets in motion, maintained that without the Divine power it could never give them such a circulating motion as they have about the sun, and hence he was compelled to ascribe the frame of the solar system to an intelligent agent. Young, the Christian poet, expresses this same idea when he says :

" But miracles apart, who sees Him not—
 Nature's controller, author, guide and end !
 Who turns his eye on nature's midnight face,
 But must inquire what hand behind the scene,
 What arm Almighty put these wheeling globes
 In motion, and wound up the vast machine ?
 Who rounded in his hand these spacious orbs—
 Who bowled them flaming through the dark profound,
 Numerous as glittering gems of morning dew,
 Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze :
 And set the bosom of old night on fire,
 Peopled her desert, and made horror smile ?"

In view of this brief discussion, we are now in a position to answer the question : By what power was the human race begun on earth? There are but two explanations—either the first verse of the Bible, which says : “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” is true, or it is false. The soul is either the result of the innate labor of the natural forces of matter, or it is the work of a supernatural power. There is no middle ground between spontaneous generation and creation. The material substances of the body may be necessary to life, but they do not constitute or produce life. Existence and thought cannot be a product of matter. The soul protests against such an origin, and the denial of immortality which it includes :

“To lie in cold abstraction, and to rot,
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod,”

is hostile to man’s better instincts. He can never believe that his spirit has been developed by the brain, and that with the brain must be dissolved. Life can only come from life.

In thus opposing Materialism and evolution as unscriptural and unreasonable, we make no charge against the morality and integrity of many leading scientists, who in studying the mysteries of nature, are led to conclusions, which in the opinion of all christian men and women, undermine the foundations of faith in a Divine Being. Somewhat restive under such charges, Professor Tyndall says :—

“It may comfort some to know that there are amongst us many whom the gladiators of the pulpit would call Atheists and Materialists, whose lives, nevertheless, as tested by an accessible standard of morality, would contrast more than favorably with the lives of those who seek to stamp them with this offensive brand. When I say ‘offensive’ I refer simply to the intention of those who use such terms, and not because Atheism or Materialism, when compared with many of the notions ventilated in the columns of religious

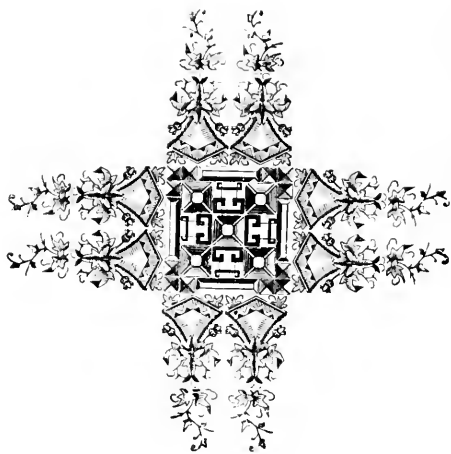
newspapers, have any particular offensiveness to me. If I wished to find men who are scrupulous in their adherence to engagements, whose words are their bond, and to whom moral shiftiness of any kind is subjectively unknown ; if I wanted a loving father, a faithful husband, an honorable neighbor, and a just citizen, I would seek him among the band of Atheists to which I refer. I have known some of the most pronounced amongst them, not only in life, but in death—seen them approach with open eyes the inexorable goal, with no dread of a ‘hangman’s whip,’ with no hope of a heavenly crown, and still as mindful of their duties, and as faithful in the discharge of them, as if their eternal future depended on their latest deeds.”

This may be all true, still the fact remains that without belief in a Divine Being, men have little incentive to holy living. According to a man’s creed is his practice. Materialism furnishes no grounds for noble endeavor after a blameless life, for it takes away all hope of immortality beyond. Its aim is to exterminate God from the universe. An old legend represents a king shooting an arrow heavenward, and mistaking the blood that came from a bird accidentally wounded, for that of the Deity. Such is the aim of those who substitute Materialism for creative power.

“Once, in long perished ages, a vain king
 Shot toward heaven an arrow plumed and broad ;
 It fell to earth blood-tinged in shaft and wing.
 “Behold” (quoth he), “MY power has slaughtered God !”
 What atheist-archers heavenward launch, to-day,
 THEIR arrowy malice, while, with mocking nods
 And scornful smiles, these bold blasphemers say,
 “Your God is slain ! Behold, we now are gods !”



NOTES
ON
MATERIALISM.



NOTES ON MATERIALISM.



FOR such of our readers as may wish to prosecute this subject further, we append a few extracts from well known Scientists and Theologians, in confirmation of the opinions advanced in the previous pages :

“There is not an existing stratum in the body of the earth, which geology has laid bare, which cannot be traced back to a time when it was not ; and there is not an existing species of plants or animals which cannot be referred to a time when it had no place in the world. Their beginnings are discoverable, in succeeding cycles of time. It can be demonstrated that man also had a beginning, and all the species contemporary with him, and that therefore, the present state of the organised world has not been sustained from eternity.”—PROFESSOR LYELL, (the well-known Geologist.)

“If a material element, or a combination of a thousand material elements in an atom of matter, are alike unconscious, it is impossible for us to believe that the mere addition of one, two, or a thousand other material elements to form a more complex atom, could in any way tend to produce a self-conscious existence. To say that mind is a product or function of matter, or of its changes, is to use words

to which we can attach no clear conception. You cannot have in the whole, what does not exist in any of the parts. EITHER ALL MATTER IS CONSCIOUS, OR CONSCIOUSNESS IS SOMETHING DISTINCT FROM MATTER : and in the latter case, its presence in material forms is a proof of the existence of conscious beings, outside of and independent of what we term matter.”—ALFRED RUSSELL WALLACE, (friend and associate of Darwin.)

“The body is but the machine we employ, which furnished with power and all the appliances for its use, enables us to execute the intentions of our intelligence, to gratify our moral natures, and to commune with our fellow beings. This view of the nature of the body is the farthest removed from materialism : it requires a separate thinking principle. A locomotive may be equipped with steam, water and fuel ; in short, with the potential energy necessary to the exhibition of immense mechanical power, but the whole remains in a state of dynamic equilibrium, without motion or signs of life or intelligence. Let the engineer now open a valve, which is so poised as to move with the slightest touch, and almost without a volition to let on the power to the piston,—the machine then awakes as it were into life. It rushes forward with tremendous power : it stops instantly, and returns again at the command of the master of the train ; in short, it exhibits signs of life and intelligence. Its power is now controlled by mind ; it has, as it were, a soul within it. The intellect which controls the engine is not in it, nor is it affected by its changes. And in the body, as well as in the engine, THE CONTROLLING INTELLECT IS EQUALLY DISTINCT FROM THE PHYSICAL FORCE, which both so wonderfully exhibit.”—PROFESSOR JOSEPH HENRY SMITH, (Smithsonian Institute, Washington.)

“The advocates of Materialism say that the world made itself, and that mind is but a development of matter. According to this theory matter is eternal, and the statement contained in the first verse of the Bible—‘in the beginning God made the heavens and the earth’—is false. ‘The world never had a beginning nor a creator.’ In

support of this theory the sayings of scientific men are quoted, who affirm 'that matter is naturally indestructible by any human power. You may boil water into steam, but it is all there in the steam ; or burn coal into gas, ashes and tar, but it is all in the gas, ashes and tar : you may change the outward form as much as you please, but you cannot destroy the substance of anything.' Therefore it is argued, as matter is indestructible, it must also be eternal.

"In reply to such assumptions, we deny that there is any general agreement among scientists and philosophers as to the indestructibility of matter, for the very good reason, that few of them pretend to say what matter in its own nature is. All that they assert is, 'that matter is indestructible by any operation to which it can be subjected in the ordinary course of circumstances, observed at the surface of the globe.' That is, 'human power cannot destroy matter : ' and if so, it is just as reasonable to say, 'HUMAN POWER DID NOT CREATE IT.' But to say that matter is eternal, because man cannot destroy it, is as foolish as if a child should try to beat the cylinder of a steam engine to pieces, and failing in the attempt should say, 'I am sure this cylinder existed from all eternity, because I am unable to destroy it.' But even if matter were eternal, it does not account for the formation of the world, and the creation of man. What we call matter, is not one, but a vast number of material substances in combination. How did they come together in their different shapes, in clouds, atmosphere, rocks and rivers? In what way did the fifty-seven primary elements of matter resolve themselves into the present glorious and beautiful world, with its variety of flowers and trees, and birds and beasts and fishes? If, as is generally believed, every home must have a builder, and every machine a maker, can we accept the teachings of materialism, that this universe, which is the greatest of all compounds, is eternal, and the result of chance combinations of matter?

"In order to meet this objection, the materialist refers (a) to the law of gravitation, which extends through space, and which has; he

alleges, operated eternally; by which the separate parts of our earth have been drawn together, and under whose influence the orbs of heaven steadily and harmoniously revolve. But the law of gravitation presupposes intelligence in its beginning and continuance, for without some power of resistance to the law of gravitation, all things in the universe would be drawn steadily towards the centre of gravity. The centripetal and centrifugal forces, that keep the motions of the planetary world adjusted, are evidence of design, and of a power that is not in matter. (b) Nor does the theory of the fire mist, which the materialist says has existed from all eternity, and from which, under certain conditions, this earth and all living creatures has sprung, remove the difficulty. Millions of years ago, says the materialist, the world existed 'as a vast cloud of fire,' which after a long time cooled down into granite, and the granite by dint of earthquakes, got broken up on the surface, and washed with rain into clay and soil, whence plants sprang up of their own accord, and the plants gradually grew into various animals, and some of the animals grew into monkeys, and finally the monkeys into men.' This is what is now known as *EVOLUTION, OR THE DEVELOPMENT THEORY*,—in itself, not necessarily Atheistic, but in its tendency and logical results decidedly so. Whether it is easier to believe that matter is eternal, or that nothing evolved something outside of itself, by some unknown law of nature, and that man with all his powers of reason, is but matter, destitute of immortality, or that the words of inspiration—'and God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,'—are true, may confidently be left to the judgment of every candid mind. If man is simply a material organism, then the doctrine of a future existence is false, and consciousness terminates at death."—REV. R. PATTERSON, D. D., (author of "Fables of Infidelity.")

"Materialism teaches—I. That from matter can be deduced all the powers and forces of nature, such as magnetism, light, gravity, or that matter eventuates in these forces.

"2. That the principle of life is also a modification of matter.

"3. That the soul, with all its faculties, is a product of matter, as also all that the soul produces.

"4. That all knowledge, all truth, all ideas, are simple inductions from material facts and phenomena, and all knowledge a modification of sensation.

"5. That the material world has the ground and end of its existence in itself—that there is no power above it, producing it, and no end for which it was made—and that irrational power is sufficient to produce all there is in the world.

"6. That the moral law is nothing more than a modification of the sequence of phenomena, and not a binding law given from above.

"7. That God is merely a name for matter, and that there is really no God.

"MATERIALISM CANNOT ESTABLISH THESE PROPOSITIONS. It cannot explain the phenomena of life, neither the animal organism, nor the life which results from it. It cannot explain an organic body—not even the humblest plant. One life runs through all its parts. There is something more in it than atoms and general forces of nature. It cannot prove the soul to be a modification of matter. If the soul is material, it is the brain acting. But the brain is an aggregate of organs, to which strict unity does not belong. But strict unity does belong to the soul, as is seen in the consciousness of personal identity. Hence the soul cannot be derived from the brain. Thought and feeling cannot be explained as secretions of the brain, or as products of it, in any way. Still less can will or choice be derived from brain; for in choice we are conscious of powers above the material world. If there be any final or efficient causes, materialism cannot be true. A final cause supposes a wise author of the world. An efficient cause supposes a power above that which it produces. Organisation shows final cause, and the efficient cause is necessary to satisfy the reason. If there be any

absolute right, materialism cannot be true. Any law of duty is quite inconsistent with materialism. Materialism must deny any ultimate cause or end of the universe, out of itself. If the universe indicates a source lying behind it, and a goal before it, materialism is a failure.”—REV. HENRY B. SMITH, D. D., (Union Seminary, New York.)

“As materialism, in its modern form, in all that is essential to the theory, is the same that it was a thousand years ago the old arguments against it are as available now as they ever were. Its fundamental affirmation is, that all the phenomena of the universe, physical, vital, mental, are to be referred to unintelligent physical forces ; and its fundamental negation is, that there is no such thing as mind or spirit, apart from matter. There are two methods of combatting any such theory. The one is the scientific, which calls in question the accuracy of the completeness of the data on which it is founded, or the validity of the inferences adduced from them. The other is the shorter and easier method, of the *reductio ad absurdum*. The latter is just as legitimate and valid as the former. The facts on which Materialists insist may, for the most part at least, be acknowledged ; while the sweeping inferences which they draw from them, in the eye of reason may not be worth a straw. All such inferences must be rejected whenever they conflict with any well established truth, whether of intuition, experience, or of divine revelation :

“ 1. Materialism contradicts the Facts of Consciousness. The knowledge of self must be assumed. Unless we ARE we cannot know. This knowledge of self is a knowledge that we are something : a real existence, not merely a state or mode of something else. It is not only knowledge that we are a substance, but that we are individual substances, which think, feel, and will. This implies mind—an individual, intelligent, and voluntary agent. The body is not the man. It is intimately and even vitally united to the real self : it is simply the organ which the soul uses, in com-

munion with the external world. The Materialist cannot think or speak or write, without assuming the existence of mind, as distinct from matter, any more than the Idealist can live and act, without assuming the existence of the eternal world.

“2. Materialism denies the fact of free agency. Consciousness attests that men have the power of self-determination. Every man knows this to be true as regards himself and his fellow men. This conviction no obduracy of conscience, and no sophistry of argument, can permanently obliterate from the human mind. But materialism denies free agency, and refers all mental action to physical forces.

“3. Materialism contradicts the facts of our moral and religious consciousness. No man can free himself from a sense of accountability. These moral convictions necessitate belief in a God, to whom we must give account. But Materialism, in banishing all mind in man, leaves nothing to be accountable; and in banishing all mind from the universe, leaves no being to whom an account can be rendered. To substitute for an intelligent, extra-mundane, personal God, mere matter (or ‘inscrutable force,’) is a mockery and an insult. It cannot be true, unless our whole nature be a lie, To call upon men to worship gravitation, and sing hallelujahs to the whirlwind, is to call upon them to derationalize themselves. The attempt is as idle, as it is foolish and wicked.

“The fact is, that if we have no trustworthy evidence of the existence of mind, we have no valid evidence of the existence of matter; and there is no universe, no God. All is nothing. Happily men cannot emancipate themselves from the laws of their nature. They cannot help believing the testimony of consciousness as to their personal identity, and as to the existence of the soul, as the source of their thoughts, feelings and volitions. As no man can refuse to believe that he has a body, so no man can refuse to believe that he has a soul, and that the two are radically distinct.”—REV. CHARLES HODGE, D. D., (Princeton Seminary, N. J.)

“I have never thought that any true theory of development or of growth was in the least degree inconsistent with divine purpose and design. But this must be development properly understood, and with all its facts clearly ascertained. My own strong impression is, that there are many scientific men in the world who are a great deal more ‘Darwinian,’ than Darwin himself is. I have seen some letters published in scientific journals, in which it is quite obvious that the writer rejoiced in Darwin, simply because he thought that Darwin had dispensed with God, and had discovered some process entirely independent of design, which eliminated altogether the idea of a personal Creator from the universe. Now, it so happened that I had some means of knowing, that that was not the attitude of Mr. Darwin’s own mind. In the last year of his life, Mr. Darwin did me the honor of calling upon me at my house in London, and I then had a long and very interesting conversation with that distinguished observer of nature. Mr. Darwin was above all things an observer. He did not profess to be a theologian, or a metaphysician. It was his work in the world to record facts, as far as he could see them, faithfully and honestly, and to connect them with theories and hypotheses, which were constructed at all events for a temporary convenience, (as all hypotheses in science must be,) before proof came. In the course of that conversation, I said to Mr. Darwin, in reference to some of his remarkable works on the fertilisation of orchids, upon earth worms, and various other observations he had made of the wonderful contrivances for certain purposes in nature, that it was impossible to look at these, without seeing that they were the effect and the expression of mind. I can never forget Mr. Darwin’s answer. Mr. Darwin looked at me very hard, and said: ‘Well, it often comes over me with overpowering force, but at other times’—and he shook his head vaguely—‘it seems to go.’”—THE DUKE OF ARGYLE.

“The so-called literary and scientific classes in England, now proudly give themselves up to Materialism, Origin of the Species,

and the like, to prove that God did not build the universe. I have known three generations of the Darwins—grandfather, father and son—Atheists all. The brother of the present famous naturalist, a quiet man, told me that among his grandfather's effects he found a seal, engraven with this legend, "Omnia ex conchis"—EVERYTHING FROM A CLAM SHELL! I saw the naturalist not many months ago: told him I had read his 'Origin of Species,' and other books: that he had by no means satisfied me that men were descended from monkeys, but had gone far towards persuading me that he and his so-called scientific brethren, had brought the present generation of Englishmen very near to monkeys. Ah! it is a sad and terrible thing, to see nigh a whole generation of men and women, professing to be cultivated, looking around in a purblind fashion, and finding no God in the universe. The older I grow—and I now stand upon the brink of eternity—the more comes back to me the sentence in the catechism which I learned when a child, and the fuller and deeper its meaning becomes: 'What is the chief end of man?' 'To glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.' No gospel teaching, that men have descended from frogs through monkeys, can ever set that aside."—THOMAS CARLYLE.

"There is certainly evolution, that is, one thing coming out of another, in our world, especially in what we are here concerned with—the operations of physical nature. I know no scientific naturalist, under thirty years of age, in any country of the world, who does not believe that there is such a process. It is highly inexpedient in religious people to set themselves against it; they will thereby only injure among young men the cause which they mean to benefit. Evolution is involved in the very nature of the causation acting in the whole physical world. Our physical world consists of an innumerable large number of bodies created by God, and endowed by Him with specific properties. The bodies act upon each other according to their properties. All educated people do now acknowledge, that these mundane actions proceed according to the principle

of cause and effect. If this be so, there must be evolution. All the operations of nature are regulated by law. By the collocation of the causal agencies, orderly results are produced, or we may say developed, and these may also be called laws. The development is especially seen in the organic kingdoms. All plants and animals proceed from a seed or germ. Now in all this there is evolution, of which, therefore, every one has experience in his own person, and notices all around him in every department of nature, but especially in those living beings he is so closely connected with.

“There is a general progression. According to the theory of Laplace, commonly adopted by scientific men, the earth was at one time in a state of vapor, which as it rotated, became condensed into successive planets, and finally into a central sun. All this is consistent with scripture, which represents the world as without form and void, at first, and then of a specific form, and plerished with living beings. In all this there is nothing Atheistic, nothing irreligious in any way. It leaves every argument for the divine existence and the divine benevolence where it was before, only adding new examples of order and design. As the law of gravitation binds the whole of contemporaneous nature in one grand sphere, so the law of development makes all successive nature flow in one grand stream, bearing the riches of all past ages into the future, possibly to the end of time. There is development in scripture. God created plants and animals at first, and gave them endowments by which they continue their kind throughout the ages. In the first chapter of Genesis such passages as these occur and re-occur : “And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit whose seed was in itself after his kind, and God saw that it was good.” In all this there is evolution. There is also development and growth in the whole dispensation of grace enfolded in scripture. Looking to these things, the defenders of religion should be cautious and discriminating in their attacks on evolution ; and when they assail it they should always explain

what it is that they are opposing. I regard the things evolved as not the less the work of God, because they have been evolved in an orderly and beneficent manner from other works of God.

“But evolution, like every other operation of God, has been turned to evil purposes. It has been used to expel God from His works, and to degrade man to the rank of an upper brute. So I now turn to the question—“Is the Darwinian theory of evolution reconcilable with the Bible?” While holding by evolution, which I see everywhere in nature, I do not therefore concur in all the theories that have been formed on the subject, or approve of the uses to which it has been turned by such men as Huxley, Spencer and Haeckel; on the contrary, I regard it as of vast importance to rescue a natural, and therefore a divinely ordained process, from the abuse which has been made of it by carrying it too far, and by a wrong interpretation of it by men who have not been made infidels by evolution, but have illegitimately used evolution to support their infidelity.

“Darwin is an eminent naturalist. He may be trusted in his statement of facts. But, while a careful observer, I do not regard him as a great philosopher; and he was not trained in early life, or in any college course, to observe the facts of the mental and spiritual world, quite as certain and important as those of the physical world. In arguing with him, the question turns around two points:

“1. Can development evolve new species of plants and animals? This is by no means settled, as many naturalists, on the one hand, and many theologians, on the other, suppose. We have no direct proof of any new species of plant or animal being produced by development. There is no such process going on visibly at the present time, and we have no report of any one perceiving it in the past. The first monkey that became a man has left us no autobiography to tell us that he was once a monkey.

"2. Is man developed from the lower animals? I believe in development, and that it can accomplish much, but it cannot do everything. It did not create matter at first; evolution implies something to evolve from. It could not give to matter its power of evolution, that is, it has not created itself. Not only so, but it cannot evolve the higher powers, such as that of consciousness, intelligence, and moral discernment, from the lower, the material, or mere animal properties. There is no known power in dead matter to produce living matter. There is no potency in matter to produce consciousness, or the intelligence which devises means to secure an end.

"We are entitled to ask, specially, whence that higher reason and moral perception which makes us like unto God. I believe we have to seek for this, not in material or animal nature, but in a being himself possessed of the attributes he imparts. It will be seen under what limitations I hold the doctrine of Evolution. I stand by it on the understanding that the whole process is the work of God—and that there are higher manifestations of God's power which cannot thus be accounted for."—REV. JAMES McCOSH, D. D., (President, Princeton College, N. J.)

"It is a remarkable fact, that the first verse of the Hebrew sacred writings speaks of the material universe as a whole, and as originating in a power outside of itself. The universe, then, in the conception of this ancient writer, is not eternal. It had a beginning, but that beginning in the indefinite, and by us unmeasured past. It did not originate fortuitously, or by any merely accidental conflict of self-existent material atoms, but by an act—an act of will on the part of a Being, designated by that name which among all the Semitic peoples represented the ultimate, eternal, inscrutable source of power and object of awe and veneration. With the simplicity and child-like faith of an archaic age, the writer makes no attempt to combat any objections or difficulties, with which this great fundamental truth may be assailed. He feels its axiomatic

force, as the basis of all true religion and sound philosophy, and the ultimate fact which must ever bar our further progress, in the investigation of the origin of things—the production from non-existence of the material universe, by the eternal self-existent God.

“If any one should say, ‘In the beginning was nothing;’ yes, says Genesis, there was, it is true, nothing of the present matter and arrangement of nature. Yet all was present potentially in the will of the Creator.

“‘In the beginning were atoms,’ says another. Yes, says Genesis, but THEY WERE CREATED; and so says modern science, and must say, of ultimate particles determined by weight and measure, and incapable of modification in their essential properties.

“‘In the beginning were forces,’ says yet another. True, says Genesis; but all forces are one in origin—they represent merely THE FIAT OF THE ETERNAL AND SELF-EXISTENT. Force must in the ultimate resort be an ‘expression of Will.’

“‘In the beginning was ELOHIM,’ adds our old Semitic authority, and in him are the absolute and eternal thought and will, the Creator from whom and by whom and in whom are all things.

“Thus the simple familiar words, ‘In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,’ answer all possible questions as to the origin of all things, and include all under the conception of theism.

“The term ‘evolution,’ need not in itself be a bugbear on theological grounds. The Bible writers would, I presume, have no objection to it if understood to mean the development of the plans of the Creator in nature. That kind of evolution to which they would object, and to which enlightened reason also objects, is the spontaneous evolution of nothing into atoms and force, and of these into all the wonderful and complicated plan of nature, without any guiding mind. Biological and palaeontological science, as well as the Bible, object to the derivation of living things from dead matter, by purely natural means, because this cannot be proved to be possible, and to the production of the series of organic forms found as

fossils in the rocks of the earth, by the process of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, because this does not suffice to account for the complex phenomena presented by this succession. * * * The origin and history of life cannot, any more than the origin and determination of matter and force, be explained on purely material grounds, but involve the consideration of power referable to the unseen world. * * * When Evolutionists, in their zeal to get rid of creative intervention, trace all things to the interaction of insensate causes, they fall into the absurdity of believing in absolute unmitigated chance, as the cause of perfect order."—SIR J. W. DAWSON, (Principal, McGill University, Montreal.)

We cannot better close these notes than by the following lines, representing the progress of Creation from chaos up through the varied grades of animal life to man, the last but grandest work of God :

“ In darkness of the visionary night
 This I beheld : Stark space and therein God,
 God in dual nature doth abide—
 Love, and Loved One, Power and Beauty's self.
 And forth from God did come, with dreadful thrill,
 Creation, boundless, to the eye unformed,
 And white with trembling fire and light intense,
 And outward pulsings like the boreal flame ;
 One mighty cloud it seemed, nor star nor earth,
 Or like some nameless growth of the under seas :
 Creation dumb, unconscious, yet alive
 With swift, concentric, never ceasing urge
 Resolving gradual to one disk of fire.

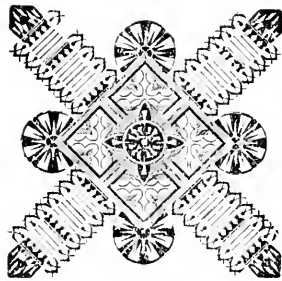
And as I looked, behold the flying rim
 Grew separate from the centre, this again
 Divided, and the whole still swift revolved,
 Ring within ring and fiery wheel in wheel,
 Till, sudden or slow as chanced, the utmost edge
 Whirled into fragments, each a separate sun,

With lesser globes attendant on its flight,
 These while I gazed turned dark with smouldering fire
 And, slow contracting, grew to solid orbs.

Then knew I that this planetary world,
 Cradled in light and curtained with the dawn
 And starry eve, was born ; though in itself
 Complete and perfect all, yet but a part
 And atom of the living universe.

II

Unconscious still the child of the conscious God,—
 Creation, born of Beauty and Love,
 Beauty the womb and mother of all worlds.
 But soon with silent speed the new-made earth
 Swept near me where I watched the birth of things.
 Its greatening bulk eclipsing, star by star,
 Half the bright heavens. Then I beheld crawl forth
 Upon the earth's cool crust most wondrous forms
 Wherein were hid, in transmutation strange,
 Sparks of the ancient, never-ceasing fire ;
 Shapes moved not solely by exterior law
 But having will and motion of their own,—
 First sluggish and minute, then by degrees
 Horrible, monstrous and enorm, without
 Intelligence. Then other forms more fine
 Streamed ceaseless on my sight, until at last
 Rising and turning its slow gaze about
 Across the abysmal void the mighty child
 Of the supreme, divine Omnipotence—
 Creation, born of God, by Him begot,
 Conscious in Man, no longer blind and dumb,
 Beheld and knew its Father and its God."



THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD ?

WHERE are the mighty ones of ages past,
Who o'er the world their inspiration cast,
Whose memories stir our spirits like a blast?—
Where are the dead ?

Did they all die when did their bodies die,
Like the brute dead passing forever by ?
Then wherefore was their intellect so high—
The mighty dead ?

Why was it not confined to earthly sphere,
To earthly wants ? If it must perish here,
Why did they languish for a bliss more dear—
The blessed dead ?

All things in nature are proportionate
Is man alone in an imperfect state,
He who doth all things rule and regulate?—
Then where the dead ?

If here they perished, where their beings germ,—
Here were their thoughts', their hopes', their wishes' term—
Why should a giant's strength propel a worm?—
The dead ! the dead !

There are no dead ! The forms, indeed, did die,
That cased the ethereal beings now on high ;
'T is but the outward covering is thrown by :
This is the dead !

The spirits of the lost, of whom we sing,
Have perished not ; they have but taken wing,
Changing an earthly for a heavenly spring :
These are the dead !

Thus is all nature perfect. Harmony
Pervades the whole, by His all-wise decree,
With whom are those, to vast infinity,
We misname dead.

“ But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth.”

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

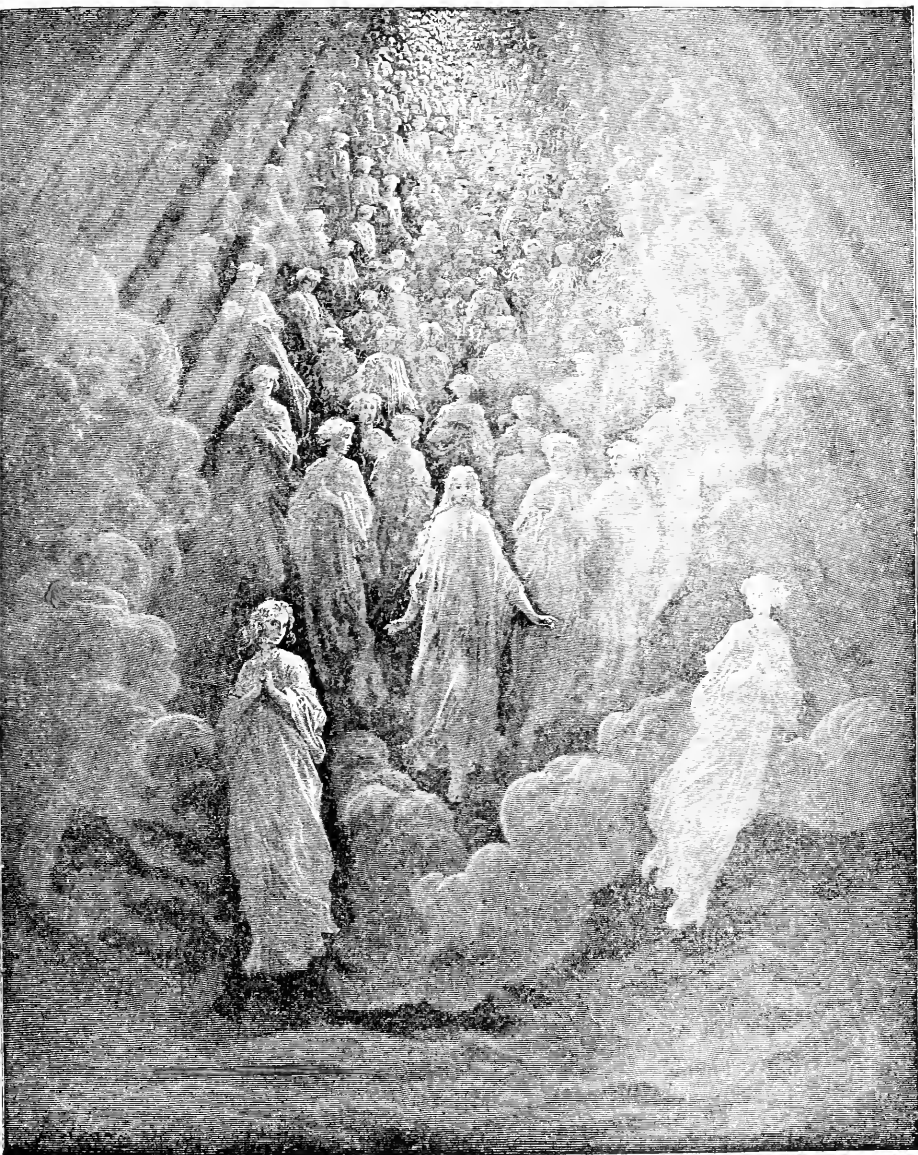


THE arguments in favor of the immortality of the soul are drawn from: (a) The almost universal belief of mankind. (b) The analogy of nature. (c) Reason, and (d) Revelation.

It is a striking fact that the doctrine of a future state has almost universal belief among all nations. This may not be conclusive proof of the soul's immortality, but it certainly is worthy of consideration. On this question there is entire unity of sentiment, while on almost every other of doctrine or morals, wide differences of opinion have, and do still exist. To whatever this universal belief in a future state is to be traced—whether we regard it as a mere traditionary legend, or a belief originally impressed upon the heart of man by the Almighty, or as a divine revelation handed down from generation to generation—it certainly forms a strong presumption in its favor. Greek and Roman Mythology, Chinese, African and Hindoo worship, recognize existence beyond the grave. All the ancient funeral rites, especially the Egyptian modes of sepulture, were based upon the belief of the soul's immortality. The writings of the more celebrated Greeks and Romans, are pervaded and possessed by the same idea, though certainly vague and indefinite, in comparison with the works of modern thinkers. Nor is it denied that many of the ancient

nations entertained notions regarding the future, bordering upon absurdity ; but admitting this, at the foundation of every ancient system of religion, there lay the belief in the soul's conscious existence after death.

To be more explicit, the Scythians believed death to be a mere change of habitation. The Magi, who were scattered over Assyria and Persia, universally admitted the necessity of a future state of rewards and punishments. Socrates and Plato, and many other Greek philosophers, held the doctrine. Plato represents Socrates shortly before his death as saying : " When the dead are arrived at the rendezvous of departed souls, whither their angel conducts them, they are all judged. Those who have passed their lives in a manner neither entirely criminal nor absolutely innocent, are sent into a place where they suffer pains proportioned to their faults, till being purged and cleansed of their guilt and afterwards restored to liberty, they receive the reward by the good actions they have done in the body ;" and after annexing a specific punishment to each grade of crime, he adds : " Those who have passed through life with peculiar sanctity of manners, are received on high into a pure region, where they live with their bodies to all eternity in a series of joys and delights which cannot be described." Holding such sentiments, we are told the philosopher drank the poisonous draught with amazing tranquility, and with the aspect of one about to exchange a short and wretched life, for a blessed and eternal existence. Homer again gives us a description of the descent of Ulysses into the shades of death, and Minos administering justice to the dead, as they stand around his dread tribunal to receive sentence according to their past vices or virtues. Ovid and Virgil taught the same doctrine. The Mahommedan creed gives special prominence to a future existence after death. The followers of the false prophet, to this day, entertain the belief of a state of luxurious and sensual blessedness beyond human conception. The paradise of the Mussulman is a rude copy of an earthly garden of pleasure. The ultimate and glo-



The multitude of bright Spirits, offering to satisfy the poet of anything he desires to know.
—The Vision of Paradise, Canto v.



rious destiny of the believer and the blessed—the warrior who has shed his blood in the cause of God, and the prophet, and the dervis, whose body has fallen under the discipline of abstinence and continual penance, is a condition of existence where all are eternally happy and undecaying, amid verdant groves, bright with unclouded sunshine, and moistened with streams containing a beverage more delicious than the juice of the choicest grape. Thus we find that the most civilized nations of antiquity, alike with the savage hordes of heathen lands, held the doctrine of immortality. As Pope says :

“Even the poor Indian, whose untutored mind,
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind ;
Whose soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way :
Yet simpler nature to his hope has given
Behind the cloud-topt hill an humbler heaven :
Some safer world in depths of wood embraced,
Some happier island in the watery waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no christians thirst for gold,
And thinks admitted to yon equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.”

Leaving the argument for the immortality of the soul, based upon the almost universal belief of mankind, we find nothing in nature opposed to such a doctrine, but very much that assures us it is true.

If we look to the state of man at his entrance upon life, and contrast the helplessness and dependence of infancy with the strength of manhood, we can deduce this general law, that the same creatures may exist at different periods, with varied degrees of perception and sensation, and capacities of action, enjoyment and suffering. This law holds good in many departments of animal life. The worm becomes the fly, and the insect bursts its shell. The butterfly, casting aside its chrysalis shape, rises on its silver-tinged wings into the summer sunbeam. Other illustrations might be given of a fact patent to every intelligent observer, favoring the

supposition, that we shall exist after death in a state different from the present, but analogous to a law of nature now in operation, only more fully developed and in keeping with the nobler destiny of rational and immortal beings.

In our present condition of existence, we have capacities for action, enjoyment and suffering. The very possession of these before death, is a strong presumption that we shall retain them in, and after death. It is in accordance with all true logical argument, to hold by the continuance of any attribute or function of existence, whether in mind or matter, until we see adequate cause for its destruction. We have an illustration of this in the case of sleep. During the period of slumber, or when a person is in a swoon, all the faculties of the mind exist, although not in active exercise. No one doubts that all the mental powers are possessed as truly in sleep as when awake, and that they are only for the time being unexercised. The heat of fire is in the flint before it is struck by the flint, only latent. By the collision of the two elements, the fire is ejected, and turned to practical purposes. And thus in like manner, man retains during sleep all the faculties and powers of mind and imagination, although for the time latent; when sleep is over and consciousness has returned, and he is brought back again into contact with the external world, reason and intellect reassert their sway.

There is nothing, then, so far as we can discern, to suggest the idea that living beings will ever cease to live. We cannot of course trace the experience of the soul, through and after death. All that we can do is to reason from analogy. Death destroys the sensible proof, that after this great change we retain possession of the powers of thought and action, but it furnishes no reason for supposing that we are then deprived of them, and that the grave puts an end to all the aspirations of life. So far from this gloomy and foreboding thought, the fact that we retain these powers up to that moment, is a strong presumption, that we shall retain them beyond

We may lose our limbs or certain of the organs of sense, and yet we remain the same beings. The amputation of a limb or an arm, is never regarded as proof of a corresponding diminution in the activity of the mind. Many gifted men have deformed bodies, while others who are deaf or dumb or blind, are marvels of intellectual acumen. According to the established order of things our bodies are constantly wearing away, so that in the course of a few years we lose the greater part of the material and physical, but in spite of this change, we remain the same living agent. The thinking principle remains unaltered—the real man is unaffected by the decay of the outer. If this is so during the present existence, why not so after death, when the tabernacle of clay has been dissolved and has returned to dust?

It follows, then, that the separation or destruction of the active bodily organs, does not in any way affect the moving agent. The different senses are but mediums, by which we conduct our observations. Active power is not diminished by the loss of a limb. Although the external moving instrument is destroyed, the primary cause of action remains. The withdrawal of one or any of the bodily organs, does not prove the annihilation of what is vital in man's nature. It is true that the powers of sensation depend wholly upon the bodily organs, but not so the powers of mind and reflection. These operate in a different way, and through entirely different channels. When the senses convey ideas of external nature to the mind, we are capable of reflecting and experiencing either pleasure or pain, without any assistance, so far as we know, from that body which is destroyed at death. Thence we argue, that if in our present state of being the soul can exercise its functions, uninfluenced by the body,—if it derives the greater part of its happiness and enjoyment from inward operations, altogether independent of external influences, we have a right to believe that after death it will continue to act in a similar method. In opposition to what I have advanced, it is said by Materialists that death is the end of

all existence, that the mortal shall never put on immortality, that so soon as the organs of the body are subjected to the laws of inanimate matter, sensation, perception and apprehension are at an end. If indeed it held universally true, that simultaneously with the approach of death the powers of the mind became weakened and disorganized, it might shake our confidence to some extent in the argument drawn from the analogy of nature. But experience testifies that mortal diseases often leave the reflecting powers unimpaired, and that so far from becoming feeble and inoperative, they often reach their highest vigor the moment before dissolution. If it is asked, how are the ideas acquired by sensation to be supplied when the soul is separated from the body? our only answer is, He who originally framed and moulded into harmony the wonderful mechanism of soul and body, can after death supply other means of communication, to compensate for the absence of the bodily organs. And finally, if we are asked, why deny to the brute creation the same immortality we claim for man? our reply is, that the more we examine the instincts and dispositions of the lower animals, the stronger is the conclusion that they were designed for this world, and this world alone, made in subjection to and for the use of man, who occupies a place but a little lower than the angels, and has been crowned with glory and honor. The insignificance of man, as compared with the immensity and grandeur of the universe, is no longer used as an argument against his immortality. On the contrary, the condescension manifested in God's mindfulness of man, throws around the character of the Deity a richer halo of glory, and bears testimony to the unselfishness and perfection of His love. "Man is one world and hath another to attend him." As the great dramatist says: "What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a God!" It is not here upon this little earth that he is to play his better part, but yonder.

“ All, all on earth is shadow—all beyond is substance.
 This is the bud of being, the vestibule .
 Strong death alone can heave the massy bar
 This gross impediment of clay remove,
 And make us, embryos of existence free,
 Embryos we must be, till we burst the shell,
 Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life and reach it there,
 Where seraphs gather immortality.”

Nature's analogies never belie her maker. She teaches no such doctrine, as would represent the Almighty making man designedly to perish with the body, or as incapable of bestowing upon him immortality. Had she a voice, she would protest against such gross materialism, for as the poet well says :

“ Know'st thou the value of a soul immortal ?
 Behold the midnight glory, worlds on worlds !
 Amazing pomp ! Redouble the amaze :
 Ten thousand add, and twice ten thousand more,
 Then weigh the whole, one soul outweighs them all.”

Having briefly considered the arguments from the almost universal belief of all nations in the immortality of the soul, and from the analogies of nature, we are now prepared to appeal to reason—what says the soul itself?

It will be admitted that there is within the breast of every one a strong and resistless yearning after future existence. The mind is ever seeking for new objects of interest, and more satisfying pleasures than the present affords.

“ The soul uneasy and confined from home,
 Rests and expatiates on a life to come.”

The intense thirst after knowledge also, which is common to the race, points to a time when we shall no longer see through a glass darkly, but face to face ; when we shall no longer know but in part, but shall know as we are known. For this keen desire after greater intellectual attainments does not weaken as life advances and the term of man's mortal pilgrimage draws nearer its close. On the contrary, it is almost invariably the case that the longer man lives

the stronger it becomes. We cannot suppose that the Creator should have implanted in man these unsatisfied longings, only to be extinguished after a few years probation here, and often when the mind is entering upon its greatest discoveries and conquests. Even in the short space allotted man on earth, how grand are his achievements! Heights of fancy and imagination have been reached, and discoveries in science proved, that indicate the wonderful possibilities of the human mind. The immensity of the stellar world, and the motions of mighty orbs and planets that revolve in space, and the myriads of microscopic beings that live their little hour in a single drop of water, have all been proved to a demonstration, so that of man it may almost be said, and that in no mere figurative sense, "He weighs the hills in scales, and the mountains in a balance." He explores the dark caves of earth, ransacks the sepulchre of ocean, and classifies the innumerable productions of the deep. He analyses the elementary principles of the invisible atmosphere, discourses on the nature of the thunder peal, arrests the lightning flash, and chains it to his chariot wheel. No wonder that a heathen philosopher said: "When I consider the wonderful activity of the mind: so great a memory of the past, and such a capacity of penetrating what is future: when I behold such a number of arts and sciences and such a multitude of discoveries, I am firmly persuaded that a nature which contains so many things within itself, cannot be mortal."

"Say, can a soul possessed
Of such extensive, deep tremendous powers,
Enlarging still, be but a finer breath
Of spirits dancing through their tubes a while,
And then forever lost in vacant air?"

Such a melancholy conclusion, no unprejudiced mind can for a moment entertain, but on the contrary feel that there are the strongest grounds for the conviction that man's rational powers, instead of being quenched at death, shall attain greater strength, and enjoy full fruition in another world. We may recognize the beatings of

the soul against the bars of its clayey tenement, and gather from the mortal impediments that confound and baffle it, assurance, that it is winged to soar in an ampler and diviner atmosphere, than invests this earthly pilgrimage.

As connected with this part of our argument, and forming a special proof for the immortality of the soul, we may mention that general law of adaptation, which has been so ably discussed by Dr. Chalmers in his celebrated Bridgewater treatise, from which we quote :—"There is one special proof for the immortality of the soul founded on adaptation. The argument is this: For every desire or faculty, whether in man or the inferior animals, there seems to be a counterpart in external nature. Let it be either an appetite or a power, and let it reside either in the intellectual or in the moral economy, still there exists a something that is altogether suited to it, and which seems to be expressly provided for its gratification. There is light for the eye ; air for the lungs ; food for the ever-recurring appetite ; society for the lone ; whether of fame or fellowship ; there is a boundless field in all the objects of all the sciences, for the exercise of curiosity ; in a word, there seems not one of the affections of the living creature, which is not met by a counterpart and a congenial object in the surrounding creation. But there are also prospective contrivances in which are unfolded to us other adaptations. They consist of embryo arrangements or parts not for immediate use, but for use eventually ; preparations going on in the animal economy, whereof the full benefit is not to be realized till some future, and often considerably distant, development shall have taken place—such as the teeth buried in their sockets that would be inconvenient during the first months of infancy, and other instances where this law is seen to operate in the material world. We may perceive in this, he goes on to say, the glimpse of an argument for the soul's immortality. What inference shall we draw from this remarkable law in nature? That there is nothing waste, and nothing meaningless in the feelings and

faculties, wherewith living creatures are endowed. For each desire there is a counterpart object—for each faculty there is room and opportunity of exercise, either in the present or in the coming futurity. But for the doctrine of immortality, man would be an exception to this law. He would stand forth as an anomaly in nature ; with aspirations in his heart for which the universe had no antitype to offer ; with capacities of understanding and thought, that never were to be followed by objects of corresponding greatness, through the whole history of his being. This were a violence to the harmony of things whereof no other example can be given. It were a reflection on one of the conceived, if not one of the ascertained, attributes of the Godhead. And unless there be new circumstances awaiting man in a more advanced state of being, he, the noblest of nature's products here below, would turn out to be the greatest of her failures."

The last consideration which reason suggests for a future state, is founded upon the present condition of the world, and the unequal distributions of rewards and punishments. In accordance with the moral government of the Divine Being, we believe there must be a future existence.

The miseries of the present life are tasted by all, and did each man suffer in proportion to his sins and shortcomings, there might be less reason for assuming the fact of another existence. But very different is the case. Often the good suffer, not directly for personal wrong-doing, but from the injustice and violence of others. Looking upon the face of society we see oftentimes oppression triumphant, might sovereign over right, the innocent punished, while the guilty escape. Such inequality of fortune, furnishes no mean argument for the immortality of the soul. Who can conceive that a God of spotless equity and impartiality, will leave unsettled such seeming inconsistencies, or doubt but that a time is coming, when not only the grievances and injuries committed between man and man shall be adjusted, but when there shall be a final balancing of

accounts between man and his Maker? The history of humanity is stained by wholesale atrocities and cold-blooded murders. The dark places of the earth are still the habitations of horrid cruelty. What of the terrible slaughter of the Waldenses, among the Alpine mountains, the suffering of the Protestants of France in the reign of the despotic Louis XIV., the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, the fires of Smithfield and the Grassmarket, and the long and bloody persecution of the Covenanters? In many instances, the abettors of such atrocities have escaped human retribution. Surely there must be a day, when the cry of the saints under the altar shall be heard, and justice meted out to the enemies of the Most High. If, as has been said, the present is the only state of punishment and rewards; if when the body ceases to move, and the tongue to speak, there is a complete end of all appertaining to humanity, on what grounds can we vindicate or maintain the rectitude of the Almighty in these dispensations of his providence?

And, now, leaving the considerations in favor of the immortality of the soul, drawn from the almost universal belief of nations, the analogies of nature and the testimony of reason, all that remains for us is to glance, in a few sentences, at the witness of the spirit in the volume of inspiration. Every man who has read the Bible to any extent, be he Materialist, Skeptic or Christian, must acknowledge that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is taught more or less explicitly in every part of the Book. Without it, indeed, revelation is an unmeaning mockery and a mass of contradictions. For the present we assume, that God's word is the foundation of all our knowledge regarding the future, and the source of all the hope that irradiates the gloomy passage of the grave.

It is a common saying, but a true one, that nature and revelation are harmonious. It is so as regards the question under discussion. What reason infers and nature symbolises, the Christian revelation clearly declares. Life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel. The doctrine of the immortality of the

soul is taught at the birth of the Jewish nation, as well as at the close of the New Testament scriptures. It was held long before the advent of Christ by many uncivilized tribes, and was the received opinion of most, if not all, among the Oriental nations. Christ gave to the doctrine an authoritative sanction, and exemplified and embodied it in his own resurrection. We know that this is denied. Some good men, who believe in the evangelical doctrines of the gospel, cannot discover in the Old Testament Scriptures, any definite evidence that the Jews had any better faith than their neighbors. They admit that they had some hope of a life after death, some vague, shadowy presentiment, that the evanescent breath did not end all, and that in the occasional ecstatic moments which the keenest sorrow and the supremest joy sometimes bring to the spiritual soul, they uttered the words of anticipation, into which we may easily read a Christian assurance which they did not possess—that to David in the hour of his great sorrow, at the grave of his infant child, there came the half hope, half despair, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me," and that to Job in his bewilderment of grief there came a gleam like the flash of an aurora in a winter's cheerless night, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." But these, they argue, are only "the reactions and protests of souls well-nigh bewildered by their own grief, against its intolerable tyranny. There is no revelation of immortality; no," thus saith the Lord, "no rock rolled away from the tomb, and disclosure of angels sitting there; no clear, sweet-toned, triumphant song in the night—no eastern morn." The Old Testament, according to this view, "is one long, unbroken Good Friday, while hope and love, like the two Marys, sit over against the tomb, and wail and weep and frame their wishes into hopes, that die in the very utterance." We cannot come to such a conclusion. It was indeed impossible for the Jews—so intimately associated with the Egyptians—a people that recognized the doctrine of immortality—not to be believers in the survival of the soul after the death of the body. Nor

can we imagine that God would conceal such an important fundamental truth, from the knowledge of his own chosen people. On the contrary, we should expect that in types, and symbols, and and communications of His will, made to them from time to time, plain reference would be made to the life beyond the grave. Such is the case. The language of the Old Testament pre-supposes the immortality of the soul. Patriarch after patriarch rejoiced in the hope. The translation of Enoch and Elijah, "and the gathering to his people," of one aged saint after another, indicates a universal belief in life after death. Abraham expected "a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker was God." Moses endured "as seeing Him who is invisible, for he had respect to the recompense of the reward." David said: "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness. Thou wilt show me the path of life; in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." Isaiah says: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Solomon declares his belief in the doctrine, in the well known words of Ecclesiastes: "Rejoice, O, young man, in thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes, but know that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Similar testimony might be given from the later, and minor prophets, demonstrating conclusively that the doctrine of the soul's immortality was not only taught by Old Testament writers, and sung of by every Bible bard from creation downwards, but also believed in and appropriated in all the changing circumstances of their lives.

When we come to the New Testament Scriptures, the doctrine, as might be expected, is still more clearly enunciated. It is there treated not as an abstract theory, but as a consequent of Christ's death and resurrection. The immortality of the soul and the conditions of souls in the future state, are spoken of together. Paul speaks of "the eternal weight of glory" laid up in Heaven—of

“a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Peter in glowing language, describes the lively hope, begotten in believers by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, “to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away;” and the beloved John, in giving the assured and glorious prospect of exchanging this poor mortal life for a changeless existence, but unable to describe it, says : “It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

For those of our readers, who desire to study out more fully the testimony of the Hebrew scriptures to the immortality of the soul, the able lecture of Professor J. M. Hirschfelder, of the University of Toronto, entitled, “A critical investigation of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as set forth in the Old Testament,” is to be highly commended. His accurate knowledge of the Oriental languages and literature, and the candor and impartiality manifested in all his writings, entitle his conclusions to the utmost respect. His argument in a condensed form is somewhat as follows : The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, must necessarily have its foundation in the creation of man. If Adam, our first parent, was created an immortal being, then the immortality of the soul can no longer be questioned. A glance at the language used by the sacred writer, in the narrative of the creation of man, shows at the very outset his superior dignity and preeminence above all the other creatures, and the great solemnity and importance which scripture attaches to this creative act. All the other creatures were called into existence by the simple fiat of God, but here, God is first represented as taking counsel with himself—“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” “So God created the man in his own image, in the image, of God created He him.” If it is asked, in what sense man bears the image and likeness of God, the answer is, not in so far as the bodily form is concerned. In the creation of man, two distinct acts are mentioned. “The Lord God formed the

man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils, the spirit or breath of life, and he became a living creature." So far, then, as the body is concerned, it is merely dust, but "the breathing into his nostrils the spirit of life, by which man became a living creature," shows that man has a life, which has nothing in common with the dust, or as it has been said: "The body is nothing but a scabbard of a sword, in which the soul is put up." The word "breath," employed by the inspired penman, really denotes "God's own spirit." It is only applied in the Hebrew to God and man, and indicates the close affinity of man with his creator. It is the possession of this spirit which so immeasurably exalts man above all other creatures, and makes him "but a little lower than the angels." The breath of God became the soul of man: the soul of man, therefore, is nothing but the breath of God. The rest of the world exists through the word of God: man through His peculiar breath, which is the seal and pledge of his relation to God. That Adam was created an immortal being, is also implied in the sentence that was to follow his disobedience. The words, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," have no meaning whatever, if man was not destined to immortality. If he was born mortal and should remain mortal, the threat of death is useless.

The translation of Enoch, who passed from earth to heaven without tasting death or seeing corruption, is another proof of the immortality of the soul. At the time of his translation, he was only three hundred and sixty-five years old, which in these days was not half of the ordinary life allotted to man. The "taking away" of Enoch, therefore, at so early an age, as a reward for his great piety, can only find its explanation in God as a loving father, having taken him to His eternal home, there to enjoy greater and never-ending bliss; he and Elijah being exempted from the common lot of humanity. To explain the passage, "God took him," as merely meaning the removing from earth by the common process of disease and death, as some writers have most absurdly done, would

rather have been a punishment than a reward for his piety, and is altogether inconsistent with the representation, which pervades the Old Testament Scriptures, where length of days is spoken of as the reward of the present life. Dr. Kitto, the well-known Bible commentator, says: "As a reward of his extraordinary sanctity, he was translated into heaven, without the experience of death. Elijah was in like manner translated, and thus was the doctrine of immortality PALPABLY taught under the present dispensation." Delitzsch, the German Theologian, says: "Enoch and Elijah were translated into eternal life with God, without disease, death and corruption, for the consolation of believers, and to awaken the hope of a life after death." Indeed the most eminent German and English critics, regard the "taking away" of Enoch, as one of the strongest proofs of the belief in a future state, prevailing among the Hebrews. Without this belief, the history of Enoch is a perfect mystery, "a hieroglyph without a clue, a commencement without an end."

In the prediction made of Abraham's death, the immortality of the soul is also distinctly stated: "Thou shalt come to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age." This can mean nothing else, than that he should meet his fathers in the blessed abode of departed spirits. If the existence of his fathers terminated with their returning to dust in the grave, the words are entirely meaningless. In the account also given of his death, it is said: "And Abraham expired, and died in a good old age, and full of years, and he was gathered to his people." His people evidently existed somewhere. Not certainly in the grave, but in the abode of departed spirits. The expression, "he was gathered to his people," cannot mean he was buried with his people, for Abraham's sons buried him in the cave of Macpelah, in the field of Ephron, in the land of Canaan, whilst all his fathers died, and were buried in Mesopotamia.

Once more, and to close our quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures, the passage found in the Book of Job, chap. 19, v. 25-27,

passage. It may refer to God, as the vindicator of Job's character from the false slanders and accusations of his friends ; or to God, as his vindicator at the resurrection ; or to Christ, as the future Messiah and Redeemer. Nor need the words, "he shall stand upon the dust," be referred exclusively to the resurrection. As argued by certain scholars, it may simply imply that at some future period—it might be at the last day, or at some subsequent stage in the present life, and long prior to the resurrection,—God would appear as his friend. Of one thing Job was well assured, that however great and long protracted his sufferings might be, the time was coming when Jehovah would stand upon the dust, and free him from all unjust aspersions. Now he seems as one unconcerned, but then he will come forth in vengeance. After his skin has been destroyed, and out of his flesh, he shall see God. The words, "worms" and "body," have no place in the original. The idea intended is exceedingly obscure. The work of decay and dissolution was steadily going on in his body. It was covered with sores and ulcers, and soon his frame would be washed away. But even in this miserable condition, he believes God would appear. He shall see him, NOT IN the flesh, as in our translation, but OUT OF his flesh ; meaning either, when the body is so reduced and wasted that no flesh remains, or in a renewed and glorified body, after he awakes from the dust. He shall see him on his side, and hear his decision in his favor. He will not be to him as a stranger or as an enemy, but as a friend and advocate. And it is worthy of remark that Job's strong assurance of seeing God was realised. In the 38th chapter, we are told God answered him out of the whirlwind and in the 42nd, under the manifestation of God's glory, the Patriarch says : "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear ; but now mine eye seeth thee : wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

In favor of the view, that PRIMARILY the passage does not teach the doctrine of a resurrection, but that at some time in the future

either before or after his death, God would vindicate and assert his innocence, the following considerations are advanced: (a) The language literally and fairly interpreted, does not necessarily teach the doctrine of a resurrection and a coming Messiah. (b) The doctrine of a resurrection, if here, is nowhere else in the book DEFINITELY announced, while at times the language seems to teach the very opposite. (See chap. 7, v. 21: 10, v. 21, 22: 16, v. 22). It is not affirmed that the Patriarch had no knowledge of a resurrection, but it is argued that if he held it so firmly as is commonly inferred from this passage, he would frequently have referred to it, and never would have used language that seemed to throw the least shadow of doubt upon it. (c) The doctrine is never referred to by either of his three friends, nor even by God himself, when in reply to Job and his accusers, he clears up the mystery of his afflictions. (d) The whole structure of the book, and the circumstances in which the Patriarch was placed, seem to favor another interpretation. Job's former and present condition is contrasted. His character is described in the highest possible terms: a man perfect and upright: one that feared God and eschewed evil. His worldly and family prosperity were marvellous. He was the greatest of all the men of the East. Then came sudden, severe, and repeated afflictions. His family, his wealth, his health, are taken away. In such a situation, his three friends come to console him. They are silent in presence of his misery for a time, but afterwards accuse him of great sin, for which he is being punished. They had no idea of anything beyond penal suffering, and measure the greatness of his wickedness by the extent of the calamity. In this they erred, and the grand design of the book is to show their error. Job was disciplined by trial, not for any special act of wrong doing, but to strengthen his faith. As soon as the suffering has accomplished its end, it is removed. And the lesson taught is, that men must confide in God, and expect to meet with many things that transcend their understanding. Job suffers long, under the unjust suspicions of his friends, and is almost

tempted to challenge the dealings of the Almighty. But at last he begins to realise the meaning of God's chastisements. The cloud parts, and light arises in his soul. The struggle is over, and he regains his confidence in the wisdom of the Almighty. He is assured that his vindicator—his friend—his kinsman, will eventually make known to his friends why he has been so afflicted, and make plain his integrity and innocence. "I know," he says, "that my Redeemer, or vindicator, liveth." He knew God before in general—now he knows him in the special. He is brought near to him as a personal friend. Formerly he had seen God's hand, in the afflictions of others; now he sees it in his own, and realises the comfort that flows from the divine presence. The doctrine of a personal, vindicating, and avenging God, is no longer a matter of speculation. He is my kinsman, says Job. I may not live to remove the unjust suspicions of my friends, but He will do it. He is bound to do it, in virtue of the close bond that exists between us.

Whatever may be the value attached to such an interpretation of the passage, those who hold that it goes much further can accept it as at least a reasonable theory, and a valuable contribution to the solution of a long debated question. It has certainly much more to commend it than the theory, which sees nothing more in Job's language than a confident hope of restoration to health and prosperity. The language used by the Patriarch throughout, implies that the disease under which he is laboring was incurable, and that he had no expectation of relief, unless by miraculous interposition. "He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone—my hope has been torn up like a tree." There was no escape from his present trouble, but in the grave.

If then the language implies entire dissolution, are we not compelled to fall back upon the commonly accepted interpretation, that the doctrine of a future state is implied, when the wrongs of life shall be righted?—that the soul is immortal and never dies? Many Old Testament predictions have a twofold application, a near and

a more remote. The Prophets and Seers of old did not in every case fully understand the sweep and comprehensiveness of their visions and utterances. In this case, to Job, there was a partial fulfilment at least in the present life, but to every saint of God there is none the less a Kinsman Redeemer from sin and the grave. Very beautifully, in accordance with such a view of the passage, has it been paraphrased by Thomas Scott :

“ I know, that He whose years can ne'er decay
Will from the grave redeem my sleeping clay,
When the last rolling sun shall leave the skies.
He will survive, and o'er the dust arise :
Then shall this mangled skin new form assume,
This flesh then flourish in immortal bloom :
My raptured eyes the judging God shall see,
Estranged no more, but friendly then to me.
How does the lofty hope my soul inspire !
I burn, I faint with vehement desire.”

In favor of the commonly accepted interpretation, the following among other arguments are weighty : (a) The language is such as describes the resurrection and judgment that follows every immortal soul in a future life, even allowing that the old version does not give us a correct translation of the original. (b) As far back as the time of Job, belief in a coming Messiah was held by the inhabitants of Arabia. If so, what more natural than that this book should make allusion to the hope of Old Testament saints? (c) Afflicted as Job was, such a belief in a Redeemer and resurrection to eternal life, was admirably adapted to give the consolation needed. (d) The solemn manner in which the words of the text are introduced ; his desiring to have them engraven upon the rock, that future generations might know the grounds of his faith, seems to point to this, as the real meaning intended.

It is worthy of remark, that many who do not adopt this line of reasoning in support of the doctrine of the soul's immortality, nevertheless accept it as true on other grounds. Greg, in his “ Creed of Christendom,” a work that assails the fundamental truths of the

Christian religion, while believing in the soul's immortality, regards such arguments as we have advanced as deplorably weak and inconclusive. In his opinion, nature throws no light on the subject ; the phenomena we observe could never have suggested the idea of a renewed existence beyond the grave ; appearances all testify to the reality and permanence of death ; after death, all that we have ever known of a man is gone ; all that we have ever seen is dissolved into its component elements ; it does not leave us at liberty to imagine that it may have gone to exist elsewhere, but is actually used up as material for other purposes. The decay and dissolution we observe, are to all appearance those of the mind as well as the body. We see the mind, the affections, the soul sympathising in all the permanent changes of the body, diseased with its diseases, enfeebled by its weakness, wearied as the body ages, and gradually sinking into imbecility as the body dies away in helplessness. The argument drawn from the general belief of mankind, he regards as a fond, tender, self-deceptive weakness, the natural result of universal love of life, and horror of destruction. That which is based on its immateriality, and which makes the soul of necessity immortal, seems to him mere assertion, or a matter of which we know absolutely nothing—the convulsive flounderings of intellects beyond their depth. To say that a future life is needed to redress the inequalities of the present, assumes that the Deity is bound to allot an equal portion of good to all his creatures, and that human lots are in reality unequal in point of happiness and earthly good. And finally, in replying to the argument that man possesses faculties which attain no adequate development on earth, and do not ripen till the approach of death, and therefore require a future scene for their perfection, he holds that the powers of the mind generally attain their height in middle life, and weaken and decay as age creeps over the frame. And yet while characterising such arguments, as only “proofs of man's determination to hold the doctrine, and not of the truth of the doctrine,” he believes in it as firmly as

the most orthodox member of any evangelical church. It is, he maintains, a matter of intuition, not of inference; the soul itself perpetually reveals it: the intellect may imagine it, but could never have discovered it, and can never prove it. Apart from the spiritual sense, there is no solution of the question. Belief in the immortality of the soul is anterior to reasoning, independent of reasoning, unprovable by reasoning; and yet, as no logic can demonstrate its unsoundness, he holds it with a simplicity, a tenacity, and an undoubting faith, which is never granted to the conclusions of the understanding. Man is not dependent on the tardy, imperfect, fallible and halting processes of logic, for any convictions necessary either to happiness or action. These are all instinctive, primary, intuitive. Reason examines them, combines them, confirms them, questions them; but there they remain, heedless alike of her hostility, "asking no leave to shine of our terrestrial star." Indeed, whatever be their creed, and however much men may dissent from the generally accepted truths of christianity, in but few save where the grossest materialism has debased the mind, do we find unhesitating, unqualified denial of the soul's immortality. In spite of the transcendental Pantheism of Ralph Waldo Emerson, he seems to have held fast to a conscious future existence, notwithstanding the assertions of sceptics to the contrary. When he left the pulpit in 1832 for literature, he said in his farewell address to his people: "I commend you to the Divine Providence. May he multiply to your families and to your persons every genuine blessing; and whatever discipline may be appointed to you in this world, may the blessed hope of the resurrection, which he has planted in the constitution of the human soul, and confirmed and manifested in Jesus Christ, be made good to you beyond the grave!" And in his last essay given to the world, which, strange to say, was on "Immortality," we find these sentences: "Everything is prospective, and man is to live hereafter. That the world is for his education, is the only sane solution of the enigma. The implant-

ing of a desire indicates that the gratification of that desire is in the constitution of the creature that feels it. The Creator keeps his word with us. All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen." Lord Byron said: "I feel my immortality oversweep all pains, all tears, all fears, and peal like the eternal thunders of the deep into my ears the truth—"Thou livest for ever." Such utterances from men, whose conclusions proceed from other premises than those generally held by orthodox christians, prove an almost universal and ineradicable belief in the immortality of the soul. They warrant us in using the beautiful and well-known lines of Martin Tupper:

"Gird up thy mind to contemplation, trembling habitant of the earth:
 Tenant of a hovel for a day, thou art heir of the universe for ever!
 For neither the congealing of the grave, nor gulging waters of the firmament,
 Nor expansive airs of Heaven, nor dissipative fires of Gehenna,
 Nor rust of rest, nor wear, nor waste, nor loss, nor chance, nor change,
 Shall avail to quench or overwhelm the spark of soul within thee!
 Thou art an imperishable leaf on the evergreen bay-tree of existence;
 A word from Wisdom's mouth, that cannot be unspoken;
 A ray of Love's own light; a drop in Mercy's sea;
 A creation, marvellous and fearful, begotten by the fiat of Omnipotence.
 I that speak in weakness, and ve, that hear in charity,
 Shall not cease to live and feel, though flesh may see corruption;
 For the prison gates of matter shall be broken, and the shackled soul go free."

And now, in closing this part of the subject, I ask, can any candid man, in view of what has been advanced, comfortably cherish the thought that there is no existence beyond death? Is not such a prospect gloomy—unspeakably dark and dreary? What is there in Materialism to sustain under trial—to nerve to effort—to brighten the shadows of old age? The dead Florentines, we are told, are carried to their last resting place at night, for no one must be

shocked during the day, while in the midst of sunshine and light and gayety, by the thought that some day there will be no sunshine or gayety for him in the bright world. Fitting obsequies for the man who denies the existence of a better life to come, but not for him whose instincts point to immortality, as surely as the instinct of the bird points to the southern clime ! Strange indeed, but true, that in this cultured 19th century, there are to be found men who disbelieve everything except their own infallibility ; who are never happy, save when they are ploughing up the very foundations of revelation. Leaders in the world of thought and knowledge, their very souls are materialised. They believe in the mechanics and chemistry, which they see going on in the forces and visible agencies of the universe ; they believe in reptiles and inert matter, but believe neither in God nor the soul's immortality. With them the question is not how to save the soul, but is there a soul : not how to prepare for a final judgment, but whether there is any future existence at all : not how to be at peace with God, but whether there be a God ! The question of the soul's immortality has been settled long ago by Him who cannot lie, when He says : "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?" This implies that there is a soul, different from the body in essence and duration ; that it shall live on forever ; that it may be lost, and that its salvation depends upon the free will of the man himself. When Galileo was forced to recant his belief in the motion of the earth round the sun, he could not repress the better convictions of his judgment, and muttered audibly, "It does move for all that !" And so, notwithstanding the blasphemies of Materialists, and the subtile teachings of a refined Agnosticism, down in the depths of man's consciousness there is the feeling, that death does not end all. Cato, sitting with Plato's book on the immortality of the soul, in his hand, and a drawn sword on the table by him, thus soliloquizes :

" It must be so—Plato thou reasonest well,
 Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
 This longing after immortality?
 Or whence this secret dread and inward horror
 Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
 Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
 'T is the divinity that stirs within us,
 'T is Heaven itself, that points out a hereafter,
 And intimates eternity to man
 I shall never die—
 The soul secured in her existence, smiles
 At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
 The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
 Grow dim with age and nature sink in years
 But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
 Unhurt amid the war of elements,
 The wreck of matter and the crash of worlds."

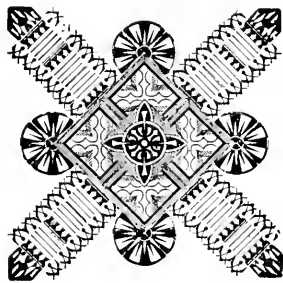
Whatever then may be our views regarding the nature of a future state, and the eternity of future punishment, let us start out with the firm conviction that the immortality of the soul is not a mere hypothesis. If man's physical organism is of the dust, and returns to dust, his spirit is the inspiration of the Almighty. He is more than the poet says: "Half dust, half deity." While it is true that the meanest worm that crawls upon the ground has a part in him, it is not less true that he is a joint-heir with Christ, and destined to share the enduring honors of eternity, that are beyond the reach of mortals in the present life. As one of our own Canadian poetesses says:

" Through life's long winter there falleth many a ray,
 Strayed from the eternal summer, to glorify the day;
 And we were duller than cattle if we could not recognize
 The presence of life that liveth beyond our earthly skies."

It is strange that any number of men should be prepared to welcome this humiliating and debasing doctrine of Materialism, assimilating man to the brute creation, and attempting to prove that he is but the creature of sense, and unfitted for anything

beyond animal enjoyments. Stranger still, in some respects, is it to find so many, utterly indifferent and unconcerned as to whether they shall live or not after death. Said a minister once to a leading citizen, who never went inside a church except on funeral occasions, and then only as a token of respect for the dead, "I judge that your ideas of God, the Bible, and Immortality are very different from those which I have been accustomed to entertain. You must have thought much on these problems. Is there a God? Has He even spoken to us? Is there a future after death? If so, what shall we do to prepare for it? I wish you would give me the result of your thinking." "Oh, I don't know," was the reply; "sometimes I think one thing, sometimes I think another—to tell the truth, I don't think much about it." The rush of business and carnal pleasure drown all thought of personal accountability, while at the same time conscience,—

"In leaves more durable than leaves of brass,
Writes our whole history which death shall read
In every pale delinquent's private ear;
And judgment publish—publish to more worlds than this—
And endless age in groans resound."



NOTES ON THE
IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.



NOTES ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

THE account which the Scriptures give us of the immortality of man, is very exact. They inform us that man was created by God and placed in a condition which insured to him, if he had retained that condition, both a blessed and an immortal existence : that by his own fault he lost that condition, and with it the blessedness of immortality, and as a result became subject to temporal, spiritual and eternal death.

But even this eternal death involves the idea of an eternal being. In the meantime, it pleased God not to leave man in this wretched condition, but to deliver him from it, by bestowing upon him an immortal existence of blessedness, after his body had risen from the grave and been united to his soul.

This gives us, then, the distinct conception of the positive immortality of man : the immortality of each one of us, soul and body, personally and absolutely ; so that we shall continue to be in eternity, the very being that each one of us was here on earth. The preservation of our personal identity throughout our future conscious existence, is an indispensable condition to every conception of an immortality, that shall be for us either a reward or a punishment, either a good or evil. But that preservation immortally of our personal identity and conscious existence is impossible, except we be immortal both in soul and body. An immortality that has no moral quality, or in which no distinctions exist, or in which moral

qualities are confounded and moral distinctions disregarded, is contradictory to the nature of God as a moral ruler, incompatible with the nature of man as a moral and accountable creature, and therefore impossible and absurd.

It is immaterial how many mutations the soul and the body may pass through : or how long or how often they may be united or separated, in passing through those mutations. The real question is only as to the final and eternal state. It is also immaterial what that final and eternal state may be, as a state of woe or bliss, only that it be the just result, and to the very same person, whose conscious and identical existence is thus eternally continued. The great point is that man, created, fallen, redeemed, dead, risen and saved or lost, with a soul and body, is immortal, and will be eternally wretched or eternally blessed.

There is no means by which we could arrive at the certainty of the annihilation of that soul, except by a divine revelation, and there is no such revelation. But except by annihilation, there is no means known to us by which an immaterial soul, any more than a particle of matter, could cease to exist. Therefore no soul will cease to exist, but all of them will live for ever. Nor is there any way in which we can conceive of the annihilation of the human body, any more than of an immaterial soul (the indestructibility of matter and the resurrection of the body being granted), except by a direct act of God's omnipotent power, which is incapable of belief; except upon his own declaration, and he has made no such declaration. Therefore every human body shall exist for ever. In virtue, therefore, of the nature of man's existence, the union of a reasonable soul with a material body, there remains no method of preventing the personal and continued self-conscious existence of each individual man, except by separating eternally his soul from his body, and thus destroying his continued, identical existence.

Even upon the supposition of Atheism itself, it is not possible to prove that man is not immortal ; nor even to render probable

that he is not. For, even supposing that there is no God, it is still certain that we exist, and if we exist here, and as we are, without any God, there is no reason why we may not exist hereafter also, without any God. If man be supposed to have an independent existence, without means exterior to himself, then the end and the means of his existence are in and from himself, and his annihilation is impossible in the very nature of the case. It is no answer to this to say, that death puts an end to his existence ; for there are thousands of creatures around us, all inferior to ourselves, to whose existence death appears to put an end, and yet after a while we behold them revive in new forms, and pass through various mutations, and at length recur again as they were before their death. Nor is it any answer to say, that as yet we have not seen this occur with man. For, we do not know except by Revelation, what may have occurred to the souls of the dead, and therefore to say they are extinct is the very silliest thing we could say. If then, upon the very strongest hypothesis that favors the annihilation of man, his immortality can be shown to be not only probable, but apparently inevitable ; it follows, that as soon as the hypothesis is robbed of its whole force, the force of truth, which it was destined to subvert (the immortality of the soul), becomes proportionately greater and more certain.

Let us settle it, therefore, in our hearts that we have, and will eternally have, a personal, separate, self-conscious, identical existence of soul and body ; the very soul which this day lives and struggles within the very body is to be united with it to all eternity ; there is for us a proper immortality, inconceivably glorious or shameful, the first steps of which we are already treading, and the whole complexion of which will be irrevocably determined, as we shall run and finish this first and briefest portion of our course, with sorrow or with joy."—REV. ROBERT J. BRECKENRIDGE, D. D., L. L. D., (Kentucky, U. S.)

"We do not argue immortality from our physical constitution. On the other hand, this in itself and in its affinities is strictly mortal,

giving no promise beyond the present. Nor can we any more shape a rational expectation of future life from anything which we are pleased to term the essence of the human soul. Our ignorance here is too profound to give our thought any footing. We infer immortality from our rational constitution, taken with the character of God. If there is no spirit in man, if it is not the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth man understanding, then assuredly he will perish like the flowers, and no beauty will be any protection to him. Negatively, however, science has nothing of any moment to say against immortality. It finds, it is true, no proof for it in its own field, but from the very nature of the case it should not. Nor is there any rational presumption against immortality, save to those who make human experience a test of all possibilities. Its conditions, indeed, are inconceivable, but the reason of this is obvious. A life unlike our present life has no common terms in experience with it, and hence is inconceivable. The mystery of that future life, when it shall become a fact, will not be greater than of this life. Existence then will be somewhat less strange than existence now, for it will have an explanatory term back of it, which this life lacks.

1. The first support for the doctrine of immortality is found in our spiritual constitution. The life of man, when it is brought to an end in death, is manifestly not exhausted in its intellectual and spiritual resources. The life of the animal is so rounded in by physical conditions as to wax and wane with them. Man's higher powers, on the other hand, are capable of indefinite growth. These faculties of man are profoundly fitted for a further unfolding, and so indicate an intellectual purpose, and raise a moral demand in reference to it. Here are germs to which a future life is a correlative opportunity of development. The spiritual unrest of man is a fruit of the range of unsatisfied powers. He will not, in his hopes and aims, readily settle down into the narrow circuit of his physical life, and so far as he does this he is injured by the concession. All his lifting forces look toward immortality; an irrepressible migra-

tory impulse is in him, the product of his combined powers. In spite of physical decay, it is often manifest that life closes at a maximum of spiritual energy. Thus, as Ranke says: "In every great life there comes a moment when the soul feels that it no longer lives in the present world, and draws back from it." This feeling does not arise from the decay of life, but from its weariness with conditions that are too slow for it, and which, in their exciting form, it has relatively exhausted.

The whole object of evolution, the consummated labor of a life, will be lost without immortality. None of us are willing to take the present as the best term in evolution. If the rational fruits of the world are to be ripened they must be ripened in another life. Such a life is the out-door garden of this our conservatory. Who, either in his thought or feeling, can say there is no other air, no higher heavens, in which these plants can blossom; nothing save this stifled air and this glass within reach of my hand! Nor is the protest less profoundly rational, less deeply based in our constitution, because it is deeply emotional.

2. The moral law is an unsuitable law for the guidance of a simply mortal life. It is one of self-sacrifice, it is one of protracted struggle, one of constant concession of pleasure to duty, of the present to the future. Now, if there is no future life, such a law is out of sorts. No man can well accept the moral law as one of spiritual insight, and not feel at once that the years of eternity must be given to it, in which to clear itself; that a long day of fulfilment and peace is to follow and level up the end with the beginning. If this future drops them into oblivion, what then? They have played the part, on the highest stage of the world, of a moral maniac.

Those who most staunchly hold fast to immortality, do it by virtue of the force of their spiritual powers. It is easy to ridicule this argument, as if it involved the assertion that the existence of a belief and the strength of a belief prove its truth. The universality and force of a belief do imply some occasion for it. Beliefs

are facts, are effects, and have causes. The only proof we have of any truth, is in ultimate analysis, this same universality and pertinacity of conviction. The impulse toward immortality, and the impulse in turn received from it, are very general in our race. But this impulse in men exists in its strongest, clearest form as they enlarge their spiritual powers, and in turn expands and nourishes those powers.

3. This leads us to our last argument, and one which, in a measure, includes all the others. Immortality is the third word in the vocabulary of belief: Spirit, God, Immortality. A spirit, an Infinite Spirit, an eternal fellowship of spirits, this is the rational relation of ideas. A belief in immortality is the second highest expression of faith, and faith is the force of our spiritual life.

We believe that the plan of God requires this completion of immortality. The present confusion and discord of the world in its moral facts are very plain. Immortality can plainly bring new light, new breadth, new fitness to these cramped and distorted moral facts. The truthfulness of God, the imperturbable support of faith, calls for immortality. The wise and kind parent is careful not to allow any deep, earnest desire, any pregnant hope, to be awakened in the mind of the child, which cannot find fulfilment. The love of God toward man leads to the same conclusion. Man seems spiritually capable of future life; he covets it, he shapes his action in reference to it; he is lifted by this hope; he is restrained from evil and united to virtue. What other result can divine love grant, then, save this of immortality? The love of God for man would lose all high quality, would be like that which we have for the flowers of a single season, if the years are to sweep him quickly away, and that, too, before he has reached his flowering. Nor can man on these terms be properly called into any communion with God. We must ever stand as passing strangers about the threshold of the temple, or in its outer courts. That God having embraced man in this fellowship of love, should relax his hold, is a moral

contradiction. Having begun such a work as this, he must needs carry it on to perfection. Having commenced a discipline, he will not arrest it; having drawn forth love, he will not fling it away; having bestowed love, he will not withdraw it. The pledge of the 'Divine nature,' in his full spiritual force, is set as a seal to the immortality of the good—that 'where I am there ye may be also.' Death must remain the most melancholy fact conceivable in its spiritual bearings, if no life follows after it. There is no pallor like the pallor of the grave, no knell like the knell of the tomb, when affection buries its dead. Death stands as a victor over life; light ends in darkness; and the shadows of vanished pleasures only swell the sad retinue whose voice is a dirge. Whatever we may seem to make of the world under the 'divine wisdom' in it, the fact of death still fills it with fear and silence; for every spirit that has tasted life must take its solitary way back again to the regions of night. One word alters all, explains all, illuminates all, and that word is Immortality.—PRESIDENT JOHN BASCOM, (University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.)

The apparent futility that has attended all efforts to prove the immortality of man, springs largely from the fact that a sense of immortality is an achievement in morals, and not an inference drawn by logical processes from the nature of things. It is not a demonstration to, or by, the reason, but a conviction gained through the spirit in the process of human life. All truth is an achievement. If you would have truth at its full value, go win it. If there is any truth whose value lies in a moral process, it must be sought by that process. Other avenues will prove hard and uncertain, and will stop short of the goal. Eternal wisdom seems to say: If you would find immortal life, seek it in human life; look neither into the heavens nor the earth, but into your own heart as it fulfils the duty of present existence. We are not mere minds for seeing and hearing truth, but beings set in a real world to achieve it. This is the secret of creation.

But its demonstration cannot yield a full sense of immortality, it does not follow that discussion and evidence are without value. Mind is auxiliary to spirit, and intellectual conviction may help moral belief. Doubts may be so heavy as to cease to be incentives, and become burdens. If there are any hints of immortality in the world or in the nature of man, we may welcome them. If there are denials of it that lose their force under inspection, we may clear our minds of them, for so we shall be freer to work out the only demonstration that will satisfy us.

How did the idea of immortality come into the world? It cannot be linked with the early superstitions that sprang out of the childhood of the race,—with fetichism and polytheism and image-worship; nor is it akin to the early thought that personified and dramatized the forces of nature, and so built up the great mythologies. These were the first rude efforts of men to find a cause of things, and to connect it with themselves in ways of worship and propitiation. But the idea of immortality had no such genesis. Men worshiped and propitiated long before they attained to a clear conception of a future life. A forecasting shadow of it may have hung over the early races; a voice not fully articulate may have uttered some syllable of it, but the doctrine of personal immortality belongs to a later age. It grew into the consciousness of the world with the growth of man, and marked in its advent the stage of human history, when man began to recognize the dignity of his nature. It does not belong to the childhood of the race, nor can it be classed with the dreams and guesses in which ignorance sought refuge, nor with the superstitions through which men strove to ally themselves with nature and its powers. It came with the full consciousness of selfhood, and is the product of man's full and ripe thought; it is not only not allied with the early superstitions, but is the reversal of them. These, in their last analysis, confessed man's subjection to nature and its powers, and shaped themselves into forms of expiation and propitiation; they implied a low and

feeble sense of his nature, and turned on his condition rather than on his nature—on a sense of the external world, and not on a perception of himself. But the assertion of immortality is a triumph over nature—a denial of its forces. Man marches to the head and says: “I too am to be considered; I also am a power; I may be under the gods, but I claim for myself their destiny; I am allied to nature, but I am its head, and will no longer confess myself to be its slave.” The fact of such an origin should not only separate it from the superstitions, where of late there has been a tendency to rank it, but secure for it a large and generous place in the world of speculative thought. We should hesitate before we contradict the convictions of any age that wear these double signs of development and resistance; nor should we treat lightly any lofty assertions that man may make of himself, especially when those assertions link themselves with truths of well-being and evident duty.

The idea of immortality, thus achieved, naturally allies itself to religion, for a high conception of humanity is in itself religious. It built itself into the foundations of Christianity. It is of one substance with Christianity—having the same conception of man; it runs along with every duty and doctrine, tallying at every point; it is the inspiration of the system; each names itself by one synonym—life. Lodged thus in the conviction of the civilized world, the doctrine of immortality met with no serious resistance until it encountered modern science. When modern science—led by the principle of induction—transferred the thought of men from speculation to the physical world, and said, “Let us get at the facts; let us find out what our five senses reveal to us,” then immortality came under question simply because science could find no data for it. Science, as such, deals only with gases, fluids and solids, with length breadth and thickness. In such a domain, and amongst such phenomena no hint even of future existence can be found, and science could only say, “I find no report of it.”

We do not to-day regret that science held itself so rigidly to its field and its principles of induction—that it refused to leap chasms.

and to let in guesses for the sake of morals. But science has its phases and its progress. It held itself to its prescribed task of searching matter until it eluded its touch in the form of simple force—leaving it, so to speak, empty-handed. It had got a little deeper into the heavens with its lenses, and gone a little farther into matter with its retorts, but it had come no nearer the nature of things than it was at the outset, no nearer to an answer of those imperative questions which the human mind will ask until they are answered—Whence? How? For what? Not what I shall eat and how I shall be clothed, but what is the meaning of the world? explain me to myself; tell me what sort of a being I am—how I came to be here, and for what end. Such are the questions that men are forever repeating to themselves, and casting upon the wise for a possible answer. When chemistry put the key of the physical universe into the hand of science, it was well enough to give up a century to the dazzling picture it revealed. A century of concentrated and universal gaze at the world out of whose dust we are made, and whose forces play in the throbs of our hearts, is not too much; but after having sat so long before the brilliant play of elemental flames, and seen ourselves reduced to simple gas and force under laws for whose strength adamant is no measure, we have become a little restive and take up again the old questions. Science has not explained us to ourselves, nor compassed us in its retort, nor measured us in its law of continuity. You have shown me of what I am made, how put together, and linked my action to the invariable energy of the universe; now tell me what I am; explain to me consciousness, will, thought, desire, love, veneration. I confess myself to be all you say, but I know myself to be more; tell me what that more is. Science, in its early and wisely narrow sense, could not respond to these demands. But it has enlarged its vocation under two impulses. It has pushed its researches until it has reached verges beyond which it cannot go, yet sees forces and phenomena that it cannot explain nor even speak of without using

the nomenclature of metaphysics. Physical science has yielded to the necessity of allying itself with other sciences. All sciences are parts of one universal science. The chemist sits down by the metaphysician and says, Tell me what you know about consciousness ; and the theologian listens eagerly to the story of evolution. Unless we greatly misread the temper of recent science, it is ready to pass over certain phenomena it has discovered and questions it has raised to theology, and is ready to accept a report from any who can aid it in its exalted studies. This comity between the sciences insures a recognition of each other's conclusions. Whatever is true in one must be true in all. Whatever is necessary to the perfection of one cannot be ruled out of another. No true physiologist will define the physical man so as to exclude the social man ; nor will he so define the social and political man as to shut out the spiritual man ; nor will he so define the common humanity as to exclude personality. He will leave a margin for other sciences whose claims are as valid as those of his own. If, for example, immortality is a necessary coordinate of man's moral nature,—an evident part of its content,—the chemist and physiologist will not set it aside because they find no report of it in their fields. If it is a part of spiritual and moral science, it cannot be rejected because it is not found in physical science. * * * * *

But this negative attitude of natural science toward immortality does not by any means describe its relation to the great doctrine. While it has taught us to distrust immortality, because it could show us no appearance of it, it has provided us with a broader principle that undoes its work,—namely, the principle of reversing appearances. Once men said, This is as it appears ; to-day they say, The reality is not according to the first appearance, but is probably the reverse. The sky seems solid ; the sun seems to move ; the earth seems to be at rest, and to be flat. Science has reversed these appearances and beliefs. Matter seems to be solid and at rest ; it is shown to be the contrary. The energy of an active agent

seems to end with disorganization, but it really passes into another form. So it is throughout. The appearance in nature is nearly always, not false, but illusive, and our first interpretations of natural phenomena usually are the reverse of the reality. Of course this must be so ; it is the wisdom of creation—the secret of the world ; else knowledge would be immediate and without process, and a man a mere eye for seeing. Nature puts the reality at a distance and hides it behind a veil, and it is the office of mind in its relation to matter to penetrate the distance and get behind the veil ; and to make the process valuable in the highest degree, this feature of contrariety is put into nature. The human mind tends to rest in the first appearance ; science—more than any other teacher—tells it that it may not. But it is this premature confidence in first appearance that induces skepticism of immortality. No one wishes to doubt it ; our inmost souls plead for it ; our higher nature disdains a denial of it as ignoble. No poet, no lofty thinker suffers the eclipse of it to fall upon his page, but many a poet and thinker is—nay, are we not all?—tormented by a horrible uncertainty cast by the appearance of dissolving nature, and reenforced by the black silence of science? The heavens are empty ; the earth is resolving back to fire-mist ; what theater is there for living man? Brought together out of nature, sinking back into nature,—has man any other history? What, also, is so absolute in its appearance as death? How silent are the generations behind us. How fast locked is the door of the grave. How speechless the speaking lips ; how sightless the seeing eye ; how still the moving form. Touch the cold hand ; cry to the ear ; crown the brow with weed or with flower—they are alike to it. It is an awful appearance ; is it absolute—final? Say what we will, here is the source of the dread misgiving that haunts the mind of the age. Science has helped to create it, but it also has discovered its antidote. The minister of faith stands by this horrible appearance and says : “Not here, but risen.” He might well be joined by the priest of science with words

like these: "My vocation is to wrest truth out of illusive appearances. I do not find what you claim; I find, instead, an appearance of the contrary; but on that very principle you may be right; the truth is generally the reverse of the appearance." To break away from the appearance of death—this is the imperative need; and whatever science may say in detail, its larger work and also its method justify us in the effort. Hence the need of the imaginative eye and of noble thought. Men of lofty imagination are seldom deceived by death, surmounting more easily the illusions of sense. Victor Hugo probably knows far less of science than do Buchner and Vogt, but he knows a thousand things they have not dreamed of, which invest their science like an atmosphere, and turn its rays in directions unknown to them.

Are we to be limited in our thought and belief by the dicta of natural science? In accounting for all things, are we shut up to matter and force and their phenomena? Science as positivism says: Yes, because matter and force are all we know, or can know. Another school says boldly: Matter and force account for all things—thought, and will, and consciousness; a position denied by still another school, which admits the existence of something else, but claims that it is unknowable. If any one of these positions is admitted, the question we are considering is an idle one, so far as demonstration is concerned; it is even decided in the negative. The antagonist to these positions is metaphysics. Faith may surmount, but it cannot confute them without the aid of philosophy. Science is speechless before several fundamental questions that itself has put into the mouth of Philosophy. Science begins with matter in a homogeneous state of diffusion,—that is, at rest and without action, either eternally so, or as the result of exhausted force. Now, whence comes force? Science has no answer except such as is couched under the phrase "an unknowable cause," which is a contradiction of terms, since a cause with a visible result is so far forth known. Again, there are mathematical formulæ, or thought, in the

stars, and in matter, as in crystallization. The law or thought of gravitation necessarily goes before its action. What is the origin of this law as it begins to act?—and why does it begin to act in matter at rest?—a double question, to which science renders no answer. Again, Evolution, as interpreted by all the better schools of science, admits teleology, or an end in view ; and the end is humanity. But the teleological end was present when the nebulous matter first began to move. In what did this purpose then reside?—in the nebulous matter, or in some mind outside of matter and capable of the conception of man? Again, how do you pass from functional action of the brain to consciousness? Science does not undertake to answer, but confesses that the chasm is impassable from its side. What, then, shall we do with the fact and phenomena of consciousness? Again, what right has science, knowing nothing of the origin of force, and therefore not understanding its full nature,—what right has it to limit its action and its potentiality to the functional play of an organism? As science it can, of course, go no farther ; you test and measure matter by mind ; but if matter is inclusive of mind, how can matter be tested and measured by it? It is one clod or crystal analyzing another ; it is getting into the scales along with the thing you would weigh.

These are specimens of the questions that philosophy puts to science. These questions are universal and imperative. No further word of denial or assertion can be spoken until they are answered. And as science does not answer them, philosophy undertakes to do so, and its answer is—Theism. The universe requires a creating mind ; it rests on mind and power. Metaphysics holds the field, and on its triumphant banner is the name of God. Science might also be pressed into close quarters as to the nature of this thing that it calls MATTER, which it thinks it can see and feel ; and how it sees and feels it, it does not know. Science itself has led up to a point where matter, and not God, becomes the unknowable. A little further struggle through this tangle of matter, and we may

stand on a "peak of Darien" in "wild surmise" before the ocean of the Spirit.

The final word which the philosophical man within us addresses to our scientific man is this: Stop when you come to what seems to you to be an end of man; and for this imperative reason, namely, you do not claim that you have compassed him; you find in him that which you cannot explain—something that lies back of energy and function, and is the cause or ground of the play of function. You admit consciousness; you admit that while thought depends upon tissue, it is not tissue nor the action of tissue, and therefore may have some other ground of action; you admit an impassable chasm between brain-action and consciousness. What right has science as science to leap that chasm with a negative in his hand? And why should science object to attempts to bridge the chasm from the other side? Physical science has left unexplained phenomena; may no other science take them up? Science has left an entity—a something that it has felt but could not grasp, just as it has felt but could not grasp the ether. May not the science that gave to physics the ether try its hand at this unexplained remainder? Let us have, then, no negative assertions; this is the bigotry of science. But a generous-minded science will pass over this mystery to psychology, or to metaphysics, or to theology. If it is a substance, it has laws. If it is a force or a life, it has an environment and a correspondence. If it is mind and spirit, it has a mental and spiritual environment; and if the correspondence is perfect and the environment ample enough, this mind and spirit may have a commensurate history. This is logical, and also probable, even on the ground of science, for all its analogies indicate and sustain it. My conclusion is this: Until natural science can answer these questions put by other sciences, it has no right to assume the solution of the problem of immortality, because this question lies within the domain of the unanswered questions.

But has science no positive word to offer? The seeming antagonist of immortality during its earlier studies of evolution, it now

seems, in its later studies, about to become an ally. It suddenly discovered that man was in the category of the brutes and of the whole previous order of development. It is now more than suspecting that, although in that order, he stands in a relation to it that forbids his being merged in it, and exempts him from a full action of its laws, and therefore presumably from its destinies. It has discovered that because man is the end of development he is not wholly in it—the product of a process, and for that very reason cut off from the process. What thing is there that is made by man, or by nature after a plan and for an end, that is not separated from the process when it is finished, set in entirely different relations and put to different uses? When a child is born, the first thing done is to sever the cord that binds it to its origin and through which it became what it is. The embryotic condition and processes and laws are left behind, and man walks forth under the heavens—the child of the stars and of the earth, born of their long travail, their perfect and only offspring. Now he has new conditions, new laws, new methods and ends of his own. Now we have the image of the creating God—the child of the begetting Spirit. It is to such conclusions that recent science is leading. Man is the end or product that nature had in view during the whole process of evolution; when he is produced, the process ceases, and its laws either end at once or gradually, or take on a form supplementary to other laws, or are actually reversed. So freed, we have man as mind and spirit, evolved or created out of nature, but no longer correlated to its methods, face to face with laws and forces hitherto unknown or but dimly shadowed, moving steadily in a direction opposite to that in which he was produced.

Receiving man thus at the hands of science, what shall we do with him but pass him over into the world to the verge of which science has brought him—the world of mind and spirit? From cosmic dust he has become a true person. What now? What remains? What, indeed, but flight, if man be found to have wings?

Or does he stand for a moment on the summit, exulting in his emergence from nature, only to roll back into the dust at its base? There is a reason why the reptile should become a mammal: it is more life. Is there no like reason for man? Shall he not have more life? If not, then to be a reptile is better than to be a man, for it can be more than itself; and man, instead of being the head of nature, goes to its foot. The dream of pessimism becomes a reality, justifying the remark that consciousness is the mistake and malady of nature. If man becomes no more than he now is, the whole process of gain and advance by which he has become what he is turns on itself and reverses its order. The benevolent purpose, seen at every stage as it yields to the next, stops its action, dies out, and goes no farther. The ever-swelling bubble of existence, that has grown and distended till it reflects the light of heaven in all its glorious tints, bursts on the instant into nothingness.

Proceeding now under theistic conceptions, I am confident that our scientific self goes along with our reasoning self when I claim that the process of evolution at every step and in every moment rests on God, and draws its energy from God. The relation, doubtless, is organic, but no less are its processes conscious, voluntary, creative acts. Life was crowded into the process as fast as the plan admitted; it was life and more life till the process culminated in man—the end towards which it had been steadily pressing. We have in this process the surest possible ground of expectation that God will crown his continuous gift of life with immortal life. When, at last, he has produced a being who is the image of himself, who has full consciousness and the creative will, who can act in righteousness, who can adore and love and commune with his Creator, there is a reason—and if there is a reason there will be found a method—why the gift of immortal life should be conferred. God has at last secured in man the image of himself—an end and solution of the whole process. Will he not set man in permanent and perfect relations? Having elaborated his jewel till it reflects him-

self, does he gaze upon it for a briefer moment than he spent in producing it, and then cast it back into elemental chaos? Science itself forces upon us the imperious question, and to science also are we indebted for a hopeful answer—teaching us at last that we are not bound to think of man as under the conditions and laws that produced him,—the END of the creative process, and therefore not OF it. Such is the logic of Evolution, and we could not well do without it. But we must follow it to its conclusions. Receiving at its hands a Creating Mind working by a teleological process toward man as the final product, we are bound to think consistently of these factors; nor may we stop in our thought and leave them in confusion. If immortality seems a difficult problem, the denial or doubt of it casts upon us one more difficult. We have an intelligent Creator starting with such elements as cosmic dust, and proceeding in an orderly process that may be indicated under Darwin's five laws, or Wallace's more pronounced theism, or Argyll's or Naudin's theory of constant creative energy,—it matters not which be followed,—developing the solid globe; then orders of life that hardly escape matter; then other orders that simply eat and move and procreate; and so on to higher forms, but always aiming at man, for “the clod must think,” the crystal must reason, and the fire must love,—all pressing steadily toward man, for whom the process has gone on and in whom it ends, because he—being what he is—turns on these very laws that produced him and reverses their action. The instincts have died out; for necessity there is freedom; for desire there is conscience; natural selection is lost in intelligence; the struggle for existence is checked and actually reversed under the moral nature, so that the weak live and the strong perish unless they protect the weak. A being who puts a contrast on all the ravening creation behind him, and lifts his face toward the heavens in adoration, and throws the arm of his saving love around all living things, and so falls into sympathetic affinity with God himself and becomes a conscious creator of what is good

and true and beautiful—such is man. What will God do with this being after spending countless eons in creating him? what will God do with his own image? is the piercing question put to reason. I speak of ideal man—the man that has been and shall be; of the meek who inherit the earth and rule over it in the sovereign power of love and goodness. How much of time, what field of existence and action, will God grant to this being? The pulses of his heart wear out in less than a hundred years. Ten years are required for intelligence to replace the loss of instinct, so that relatively his full life is briefer than that of the higher animals. A quarter of his years is required for physical and mental development; a half—perchance a little more—is left for work and achievement, and the rest for dying. And he dies saying: I am the product of eternity, and I can return into eternity; I have lived under the inspiration of eternal life, and I may claim it; I have loved my God, my child, my brother man, and I know that love is an eternal thing. It has so announced itself to me, and I pass into its perfect and eternal realization. Measure this being thus, and then ask reason, ask God himself, if the pitiful three score and ten is a reasonable existence. There is no proportion between the production of man and the length of his life; it is like spending a thousand years in building a pyrotechnic piece that burns against the sky for one moment and leaves the blackness of a night never again to be lighted. Such a destiny can be correlated to no possible conception of God nor of the world except that of pessimism—the philosophy of chaos—the logic that assumes order to prove disorder—that uses consciousness to prove that it is a disease. But any rational conception of God forces us to the conclusion that he will hold on to the final product of his long creative struggle. If man were simply a value, a fruit of use, an actor of intelligence, a creator of good, he would be worth preserving; but if God loves man and man loves God, and so together they realize the ultimate and highest conception of being and destiny, it is impossible to believe that the knife of Omnipot-

tence will cut the cords of that love and suffer man to fall back into elemental flames ; for, if we do not live when we die, we pass into the hands of oxygen. Perhaps it is our destiny—it must be under some theories ; but it is not yet necessary under any accredited theory of science or philosophy to conceive of God as a Moloch burning his children in his fiery arms, nor as a Saturn devouring his own offspring.

I am well aware that just here a distinction is made that takes off the edge of these horrible conclusions,—namely, that humanity survives though the individual perishes. This theory, which is not recent, had its origin in that phase of nature which showed a constant disregard of the individual and a steady care for the type or class. It found its way from science into literature, where it took on the form of lofty sentiment and became almost a religion. It is a product of the too hasty theory that we may carry the analogies of nature over into the world of man, and lay them down squarely and without qualification as though they compassed him. Science no longer does this, but the blunder lives on in literature and the every-day thought of the world. But suppose it were true that the individual perishes and humanity survives, how much relief does it afford to thought ? It simply lengthens the day that must end in horrible doom. For the question recurs, how long will humanity continue ? How long will the earth entertain that golden era when the individual shall peacefully live out his allotted years, and yield up the store of his life to the general fund of humanity, in the utter content of perfect negation ? I might perhaps make a total sacrifice for an eternal good, but I will sit down with the pessimists sooner than sacrifice myself for a temporary good ; the total cannot be correlated to the temporary. If such sacrifice is ever made, it is the insanity of self-estimate, or rather is the outcome of an unconscious sense of a continuous life. How long do I live on in humanity ? Only till the crust of the earth becomes a little thicker, and days and nights grow longer, and the earth sucks the

air into its "interlunar caves"—now a sister to the moon. Chaos does not lie behind this world, but ahead. The picture of the evolution of man through "dragons of the prime" is not so dreadful as that foreshadowed when the world shall have grown old, and environment no longer favors full life. Humanity may mount high, but it must go down and reverse the steps of its ascent. Its lofty altruism will die out under hard conditions; the struggle for existence will again resume its sway, and hungry hordes will fish in shallowing seas, and roam in the blasted forests of a dying world, breathing a thin atmosphere under which man shrinks towards an inevitable extinction. Science paints the picture, but reason disdains it as the probable outcome of humanity. The future of this world as the abode of humanity is a mystery, though not wholly an unlighted one; but under no possible conception can the world be regarded as the theater of the total history of the race.

This altruism that assumes for itself a loftier morality in its willingness to part with personality and live on simply as influence and force, sweetening human life and deepening the blue of heaven,—a view that colors the pages of George Eliot and also some unfortunate pages of science,—is one of those theories that contains within itself its own refutation. It regards personality almost as an immorality: lose yourself in the general good; it is but selfish to claim existence for self. It may be, indeed, but not if personality has attained to the law of love and service. Personality may not only reverse the law of selfishness, but it is the only condition under which it can be wholly reversed. If I can remain a person I can love and serve,—I may be a perpetual generator of love and service; but if I cease to exist, I cease to create them, and leave a mere echo or trailing influence thinning out into an unmeaning universe. Such an altruism limits the use and force of character to the small opportunity of human life; it is so much and no more, however long it may continue to act; but the altruism of ideal and enduring personality continues to act forever, and possibly on an

increasing scale. This altruism of benevolent annihilation cuts away the basis of its action. It pauperizes itself by one act of giving,—breaks its bank in the generosity of its issue. It is one thing to see the difficulties in the way of immortality, but quite another thing to erect annihilation into morality; and it is simply a blunder in logic to claim for such morality a superiority over that of those who hope to live on, wearing the crown of personality that struggling nature has placed on their heads, and serving its Author for ever and ever. The simple desire to live is neither moral nor immoral, but the desire to live for service and love is the highest morality and the only true altruism.

I shall not follow the subject into those fields of human life and spiritual experience—it being a beaten path—where the assurances of immortality mount into clear vision, my aim having been to lessen the weight of the physical world as it hangs upon us in our upward flight. We cannot cut the bond that binds us to the world by pious assertion, nor cast it off by ecstatic struggles of the spirit, nor unbind it by any half-way processes of logic, nor by turning our back upon ascertained knowledge. We must have a clear path behind us if we would have a possible one before us.

There are three chief realities, no one of which can be left out in attempts to solve the problem of destiny: man, the world, and God. We must think of them in an orderly and consistent way. One reality cannot destroy nor lessen the force of another. If there has been apparent conflict in the past, it now seems to be drawing to a close; the world agrees with theism, and matter no longer denies spirit. If, at one time, matter threatened to possess the universe and include it under its laws, it has withdrawn its claim, and even finds itself driven to mind and to spirit as the larger factors of its own problems. Mind now has full liberty to think consistently of itself and of God, and, with such liberty, it finds itself driven to the conclusion of immortality by every consideration of its nature

and by every fact of its condition,—its only refuge against hopeless mental confusion.

Not from consciousness only,—knowing ourselves to be what we are,—but out of the mystery of ourselves, may we draw this sublime hope ; for we are correlated not only to the known, but to the unknown. The spirit transcends the visible, and by dream, by vision, by inextinguishable desire, by the unceasing cry of the conscious creature for the Creator, by the aspiration after perfection, by the pressure of evil and by the weight of sorrow, penetrates the the realms beyond, knowing there must be meaning and purpose and end for the mystery that it is.—REV T. T. MUNGER. (Condensed from “The Century” Magazine, May, 1885.)



CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY ;

OR,

ANNIHILATIONISM.

“The good and evil, in a moment, all
Were changed, corruptible to incorrupt,
And mortal to immortal :
Her loud, uncircumcised, tempestuous crew,
How ill-prepared to meet their God ! were changed.”

“In no system which disposes of the wicked by annihilation will it be long possible to maintain faith in the immortality of the good. If human souls enjoy no exemption from the lot which ordains that all things eventually become the prey of death, it is hard to believe that self-love is not deceiving us, when we flatter ourselves that we can escape the doom which overhangs not only all other created things, but also multitudes of our fellowmen.”

CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY.

HAVING endeavored in previous chapters, to show the unreasonableness of Materialism in its different forms, and the certainty of Immortality, we now proceed to consider the doctrine of Conditional Immortality, or the Annihilation of the Wicked.

Stated concisely, and in the words of those who teach it, Conditional Immortality, or Annihilationism, is as follows: Eternal life or immortality is not the natural, unconditional, and indefeasible endowment of every human being born into the world, Christian and heathen, saint and sinner, infant and patriarch, sage and idiot, alike; but the gift of God, bestowed only upon the true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by virtue of his vital union with him, who is at once the author and the Prince of life. The Bible nowhere teaches an inherent immortality, but teaches that it is the object of redemption to impart it. It shows that the communication of it requires a regeneration of man by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and a resurrection of the dead. It declares that those who will not return to God will die, and perish everlastingly. That in the exercise of His matchless love, God is pleased to bestow immortality upon mortals who receive His son, Jesus Christ our Lord. That the object of Christ's work is to restore to man the two things which he has lost, holiness and immortality; that the actual enjoyment of these blessings by any human being depends upon his acceptance of the gospel, and those who refuse to do so.

remain under the original sentence of death, but liable to additional stripes in the execution of it, which is called destruction, and is represented, literally or figuratively, by the most terrible of all destructive agencies, fire ; that some men will to the last receive the grace of God in vain, and consequently perish for ever.

In the more recent publications of such men as White, Constable Petengell, and R. W. Dale (successor of John Angel James, Birmingham), who may be regarded as the representatives of this theory in England and America, such passages as the following occur :

The idea that God has bestowed upon men, or upon any part of human nature, an inalienable immortality finds no sanction in the scriptures. In vain do men, bent on sustaining a human figment, ransack scripture for some expressions, which may be tortured into giving it an apparent support. Immortality was given to man at creation, but it was alienable. It might be parted with : it might be thrown away : it might be lost. This immortality was alienated : this priceless gift was thrown away and lost. Man sinned, and lost immortality. Sinful man is not by nature immortal, but mortal. He has lowered himself to the level of the beasts that perish. If immortality is to be his again, it must be as a gift restored, and not inherited. It must become his by virtue of some new provision of grace, which reinstates him in the place he lost. This is the gospel of Christ, which gives back to man the eternal life which he had forfeited. God was manifested in human form for the renewal of eternal life. Christ has not bestowed this priceless gift upon all ; but on some only of the fallen race. It is the believer only who can say, "He redeemeth my life from destruction." * * * Apart from Christ, the natural man has no possible ground of hope of immortality or eternal life. Immortality is only assured to every regenerated soul, through the death and resurrection of Christ. It is only by a new birth and a resurrection from the dead THROUGH CHRIST, that any child of Adam

can possess this imperishable life. * * * Unless man can be recovered from the doom of death, to which sin when it is finished inevitably leads, and reunited to God in holiness and love, he can have no fitness for this endless life, nor hope of attaining it. Man's natural life, LIKE THAT OF ALL OTHER LIVING CREATURES, ends with death ; nor can there be any hope of a second life for any man, without a Divine supernatural interposition to raise him up again. * * * Punishment is eternal, but it consists in eternal death—that is, the loss of eternal life or existence. This death is attended and produced by such various degrees of pain, as God in his justice and wisdom thinks fit to inflict. The attendant pain, with its issue in death, are not two distinct punishments, but are one punishment, varying in degree of suffering according to the guilt of the object. The eternal state of the lost will not consist in an eternal life spent in pain of body or remorse of mind, but a state of utter death and destruction, which will abide for ever. The length of time which this process of dissolution may take, and the degrees of bodily or mental pain which may produce it, are questions which we must leave to that providence of God, which will rule in hell as in heaven. Scope is thus provided for that great variety of punishment, which the reprobate will suffer hereafter, from that which in its justice is terrible to the sufferer, to that which with equal justice, is by him scarcely felt at all.

The proofs adduced from the Old Testament in favor of the annihilation of the wicked, are such as these : Death was the penalty which God originally pronounced against human sin. Adam knew what death was in one sense only—the loss of being or existence. He did not understand death to mean an eternal existence of agony, but simply that the penalty of disobedience was that he would become like the beasts that perish. It was not an eternal existence in pain, but the withdrawal of a life, whose true aim and object had been lost. The Old Testament Scriptures describe the end of the ungodly, as the resolution of organised substance into

its original parts, its reduction to that condition in which it is, as though it had never been called into being, "The destruction of the transgressors and of sinners shall be together: they are prepared for the day of slaughter: God shall destroy them: They shall be consumed, cut off, rooted out of the land of the living; blotted out of the Book of Life. The candle of the wicked shall be put out: as wax melteth before the fire, so shall the wicked perish at the presence of God: the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God—they shall be as though they had not been." From such passages Annihilationists argue, that the punishment of the wicked consists not in life, but in the loss of life; not in their continuance in that organised form which constitutes man, but in its dissolution: its resolution into its original parts, its becoming as though it never had been called into existence. While the redeemed are to know a life which knows no end, the lost are to be reduced to a death which knows of no awakening for ever and ever.

Passing on to the New Testament, the following texts are cited in support of the doctrine: "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life: If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: The wages of sin is death: Sin, when finished, bringeth forth death: The end of these things (fleshly lusts) is death: Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire: If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." The Greek noun "Apoleia," rendered "destruction" by the sacred writers, and the Greek verb "Apollumi," when speaking of future punishment, it is held, mean utter loss of existence, as when the Apostle says, that the ungodly are "vessels fitted to destruction."

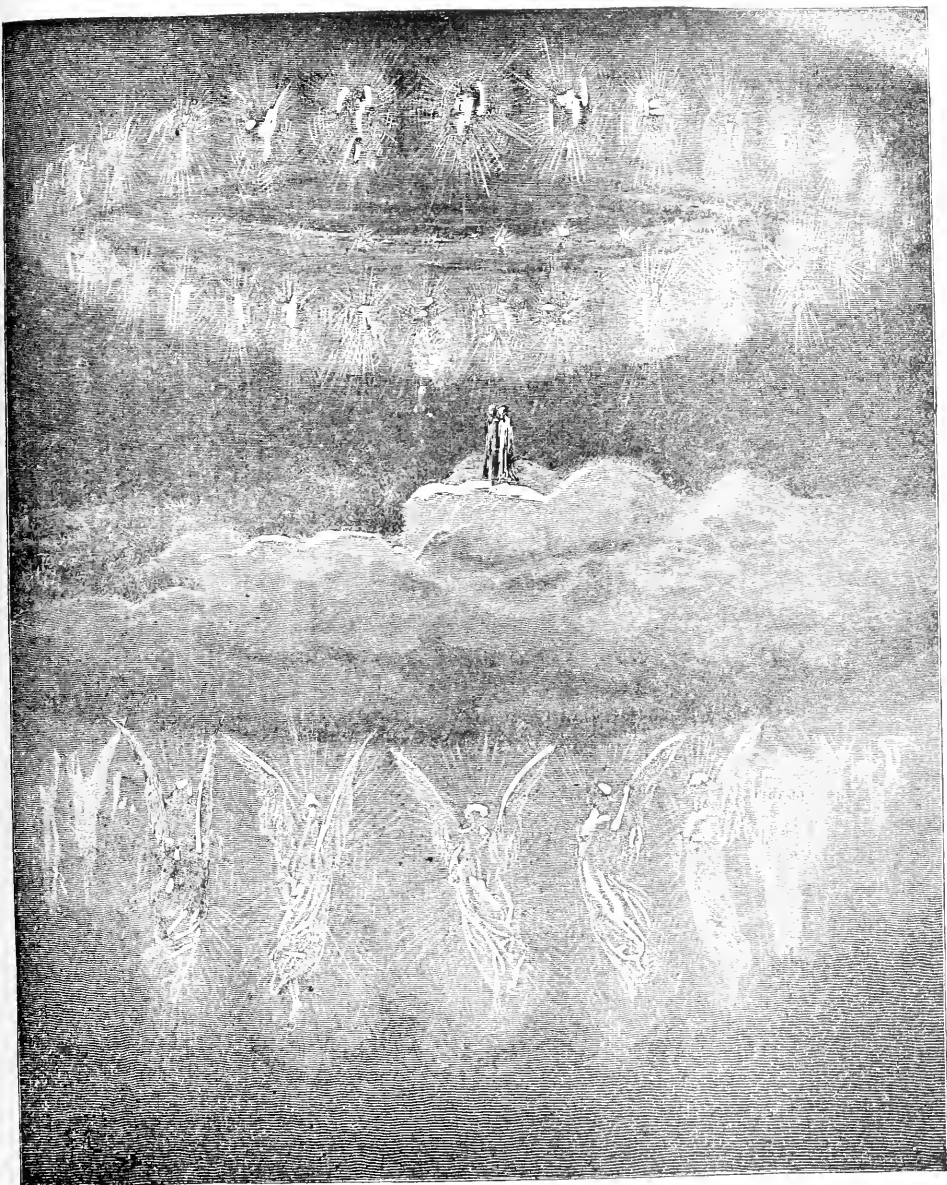
The illustrations of scripture also imply, it is argued by Annihilationists, that the wicked will come to an end, and cease to exist in hell. "They shall be dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel: they shall be like beasts that perish: like a whirlwind that passes away:

like a waterless garden scorched by an Eastern sun : like garments consumed by the moth : like a dream which flies away : they shall be silent in darkness : shall be consumed like the fat of lambs in the fire—like smoke : like thorns : shall melt like wax, and burn like the tow—shall vanish away like exhausted waters. They shall be like wood cast into unquenchable flames : like chaff burned up : like tares consumed : like a dry branch reduced to ashes.”

Annihilationists, AS A CLASS, do not deny the resurrection of the wicked. They believe that all men shall rise in their bodies, to give an account of their deeds. But between the resurrection of the wicked and the just, there is a fundamental and essential difference. The one is raised to pain and shame : the other to joy and glory. The one is raised to die a second time : the other to die no more. The bodies of the just are changed at the resurrection, putting on incorruption and immortality ; while those of the wicked are raised unchanged, not putting on at resurrection either incorruption or immortality, but still natural bodies as they are sown, resuming with their old life their old mortality, subject to pain, and sure to yield to that of which pain is the symptom and precursor—physical death and dissolution. The notion of two everlasting kingdoms, running parallel with each other, the one a kingdom of purity and blessedness, the other a kingdom of sin and sorrow ; the one to resound with the praises and joyful songs of redeemed men and angels, and the other with the groans and blasphemies of lost sinners and devils to all eternity, is, they maintain, not a doctrine of the Bible, but a relic of Persian dualism and pagan superstition.

Those who hold the doctrine of conditional immortality and the final annihilation of the wicked, of necessity regard the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians as simply intended to show the intimate connection between Christ and his people, in virtue of which they rise from the grave. That the Apostle does not discuss in the abstract the fact of the resurrection, but has special reference to the bearing of Christ's rising from the dead upon the believer's spiritual

and eternal life, all commentators hold ; but that the resurrection of Christ and belief in a general resurrection are inseparably connected, is none the less admitted by every candid critic. The object of the apostle is not to argue the resurrection against certain sceptics who denied a future life, but rather to show the inconsistency of certain professed believers, who attempted to acknowledge Christ as the Messiah, while denying a future existence. As Dr. John Brown says : "The whole of the apostle's statements and reasonings refer solely to the resurrection of the just, of those who are Christ's—who stand to him in a relation similar to that in which all men stand to Adam—the family of which Jesus is the elder brother, the first born,—the full harvest, of which he is the first fruits : NOT THAT PAUL MEANS TO DENY, WHAT HE ELSEWHERE SO EXPLICITLY AFFIRMS, THAT "THERE SHALL BE A RESURRECTION OF THE UNJUST AS WELL AS THE JUST," nor that some of his arguments have not a bearing on that resurrection to condemnation as well as the resurrection to life ; but that the subject of his discourse being the resurrection to life, as a glorious privilege secured by Christ to his people, did not naturally lead him to speak of the resurrection to condemnation, which forms an important part of the just retributive punishment that awaits the impenitent and unbelieving." The resurrection of Christ and the general resurrection are indeed so related to one another, that they stand or fall together. "If Christ is risen, then the dead rise. If the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised." As Dr. Candlish shows in his able work, "Life in a risen Saviour," the question of the continued existence of man after death, is not raised in the argument, BUT IS EVERYWHERE IMPLIED. "We sh^l not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump," is a statement that, taken in connection with other passages of scripture, CANNOT REFER EXCLUSIVELY TO THE JUST. Those who hold the theory of conditional immortality, and the ultimate destruction or annihilation of the impenitent wicked, equally with those who deny



Circles of Glorified Souls, described as "Garlands of never failing roses."
—The Vision of Paradise, Canto xii.



the latter, can agree in this—that Christ is the first fruits of his sleeping saints, and that as he rose they shall also rise. The doctrine of the Reformed Church is, that their bodies, still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection. It is not the soul, but the body, that sleeps in Jesus.

“The Fathers are in dust, yet live to God,
 So says the Truth: as if the motionless clay
 Still held the seeds of life beneath the sod,
 Smouldering and struggling till the judgment day.
 Sophist may urge his cunning test, and deem
 That they are earth; but they are heavenly shrines.”

But none the less true are the words of the apostle: “If there be no resurrection, then is Christ not risen: if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised.” To say that the resurrection of the wicked is simply an act of power and judgment, and is no part of redemption, does not satisfactorily answer the question,—why are the impenitent dead raised at all? If for judgment, is it a judgment which is but the prelude to annihilation? If so, whence the necessity of judgment—of torturing the resurrected body for a longer or shorter time, when death of both soul and body is so near? The absurdity of such a doctrine led such a man as Theodore Parker to say: “I believe that Jesus Christ taught eternal torment. When the stiffened body goes down to the tomb, sad, silent, remorseless—I feel that there is no death for the man. That clod which yonder dust shall cover, is not my brother. The dust goes to his place, man to his own. It is then, I feel immortality. I look through the grave into heaven. I ask no miracle, no proof, no reasoning. I am conscious of eternal life.” Christ in his conversation with the sisters of Bethany, after the death of their brother Lazarus, shows most conclusively the life which believers have in a risen Saviour, and the close relation in which he stands to his people. Whether, as alleged by those whose creed we are now discussing, Mary had no thought that Christ had anything in especial to do with resurrection, and

had a mere general belief in a resurrection of the good and bad alike at the last day, is immaterial. Christ clearly teaches her, that the resurrection of believers is assured in virtue of their union to their Head. "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Mary doubtless was thinking of the last day, when in company with all the hosts of the world's dead, her brother would rise again, a truth which the Saviour never once objected to, but frequently impressed upon the minds of his hearers. But in addition, he shows that apart from himself, there is no comfort in the prospect of a resurrection. He does not imply that there is no life in the future for the impenitent dead, or that such a life is only limited and of short duration; but he shows that union between Christ and his people ensures victory over death and the grave, and eternal life and blessedness beyond the present. Christ and his people are one. His death is their death. By his sufferings and death he has satisfied the claims of divine justice—freed his people from condemnation, and raised them to the favor and fellowship of God. They are thus, as the apostle elsewhere expresses it, "quickened together with Christ, raised up together with Him, and made to sit with Him in heavenly places." Or, to use the very language of Annihilationists, "Christ is the cause and source of his people's resurrection: without Him they could have no resurrection: in Him, through Him, from Him and Him alone, their resurrection is to spring."

But this is no new doctrine. It was not left to Annihilationists to proclaim for the first time to the world. It has been the belief for centuries of the Christian Church. Says the Prophet Isaiah, chapter 26, v. 19: "Thy dead men shall live: together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." This passage, as well as that contained in Ezekiel's prophecies, chapter 37, descriptive of the dry bones in the Valley of Vision,

has doubtless a primary reference to the desolations sent upon the Jewish nation for its sins. Notwithstanding their past sad history, they are still beloved for their fathers' sake. In spite of their dispersion among the nations of the earth, they shall again be gathered together, when their wanderings shall cease, their unbelief end, and when in point of privilege they shall become the joy and glory and envy of the world. These despised, degraded, downtrodden Jews, shall again be quickened into national and spiritual life, and realise a happier condition than under Solomon's reign. "Thy dead men shall live." When the set time to favor Zion comes, the walls shall be built, and the desolations and breaches repaired. Nor can any student of history fail to perceive, how marvellously the signs of the times, and the shakings of the nations, are hastening on this blessed consummation. Kingdoms are being rent in pieces, and thrones demolished. New sovereignties and alliances are springing up, and empires being established on the soil where but recently civilisation has made her first conquests. Embattled hosts are going forward to deadly struggles for the maintenance of national honor, the removal of real or fancied wrongs, and the help of the oppressed. Such things in themselves may seem comparatively insignificant, but they are working out grand results, underneath the surface of society, such as the ingathering of the Jews and the evangelisation of the Gentiles. It is not simply that the scales of unbelief shall be taken from eyes of the Jews, enabling them to recognise Christ as the promised Messiah of Old Testament times, but along with their conversion shall come the latter day glory. When Israel has been reinstated, we shall see the downfall of hoary systems of superstition, that for centuries have enslaved the human mind.

But the passage has a direct bearing on the subject under discussion. It intimates, in common with New Testament texts already quoted, that the resurrection of believers is intimately connected with the resurrection of Christ. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Elsewhere we read :

“When he who is your life shall appear, ye also shall appear with him in glory.” “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout : with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” What then do we mean by saying, that believers rise with Christ? What is the nature of that union between Christ and his people, that involves and ensures such a consequence? It may be admitted at once, that the scriptures nowhere represent the resurrection OF ALL THE DEAD, as the direct result of the resurrection of Christ. It need not be assumed, in combatting the views of Annihilationists, that the death and resurrection of Christ has secured the resurrection of all who now sleep in their graves, saints and sinners indiscriminately. A resurrection of the body is a necessity, in order that men may receive sentence according to their lives in the flesh. In the case of believers, more than the mere fact of resurrection is guaranteed—instead of being one to dishonor and condemnation, it is one to life and immortality. It is a glorious awakening, and the enjoyment of perfect and endless felicity in the world to come.

There is, then, vast meaning in the words, “TOGETHER WITH MY DEAD BODY shall they arise.” Most vividly is the preciousness of union to a crucified Saviour revealed. Faith not only ensures to the believer all present spiritual blessings, but makes him an actual sharer in the future destiny of his risen Lord. Christ has died—that is a comforting truth : but if he has not risen, the believer's redemption is incomplete. But Christ has risen. His sacrifice has been accepted. The believer's sins are no longer imputed to him. When he dies, it is not IN his sins and under the condemnation of the law, but he falls asleep in Jesus. He enters the grave, and for a brief season is subject to the last enemy, that like his Master, he may at last conspicuously conquer him. There is such an intimate union between Christ and the believer, that it is not until he rises from the grave that the great purposes of Christ's death and resurrection are complete, “Christ's body still lies in the tomb, where

his buried saints are laid. It is His body that lies unburied on the plain, and in the deep, where the bones of His unburied saints are scattered." And not until the final results of redemption are disclosed at His second coming, shall it be known, how intimate is the union between Christ and His people. In the resurrection of the body of His saints, shall be the completion of His own.

But none the less does this passage, taken in connection with the whole analogy of scripture, teach that ALL shall rise from their graves, not for annihilation near or more remote, but for judgment, to be followed by an eternity of weal or woe. Whether the grave has been the bed of ocean, where no friendly footstep has ever trod : or the battle field, where undistinguished amid the countless dead, there lies the stiffened corpse of beloved son or cherished lover, whose last fond cry no fond ear heard, and whose dying agonies no kindly hand of affection lightened : or the quiet village churchyard, where amid flowers and cypresses and kindred the body rests peacefully ;—wherever our last resting place may be, the graves shall cast forth their dead at the command of Christ.

There is, indeed, something grand in the thought of resurrection ! Nature revolts at the thought of annihilation. Who can bear to think of death as the everlasting destruction of these poor bodies, far less of the immortal spirits which inhabit them ? During the long winter months, when the external world lies dormant, and nature seems asleep under her icy covering, is it not the knowledge of coming spring, when birds sing and flowers bloom, and streams and rivers murmur to the song of the husbandman, as he turns up the furrows and sows his seed, that fills the heart with hope, and revives our drooping energies ? Spring is indeed the earnest and harbinger of resurrection. The grasp of winter relaxes ; barrenness, bleakness and chilliness, give place to beauty, fragrance and fertility ; crocuses, snowdrops and violets peer through the melting snow ; trees that formerly echoed the sighings of the wind, regain their foliage ; the seed long buried under the earth bursts its sepul-

chre, and nature throughout her wide domain swells with the hymn of gladness. And so when we lay our dead in the narrow house appointed for all the living, is it not the firm belief that death is the way to life—that these natural bodies shall put on supernatural and spiritual bodies, that prevents us following the example of the poor despairing Hindoo, who casts his body on the funereal pile of his departed friend, glad to end an existence that promises nothing at its close but misery and annihilation ?

But the fact of a general resurrection, followed by an endless life, has a dark side as well as a bright one. There is a resurrection to life, but there is also a resurrection to damnation. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Is it not this solemn consideration that inclines so many to deny *IN TOTO* the doctrine of a resurrection, and oppose the plain declarations of scripture by the novelties and negations of science and the doctrine of annihilation. The moment the doctrine of a resurrection is admitted, we are shut up to the fact of a judgment that follows, whose sentences demand an eternity for their execution. What a terrible prospect this holds out for the ungodly ? Better indeed that the grave were their eternal abiding place—that the soul perished with the dissolution of the body ; better far they had never lived, than die unpardoned ! The remark was once made, that a man should leave life as cheerfully as a visitor who has examined an antiquary's cabinet sees the curtain drawn again, and makes way to admit fresh pilgrims to the show. "Yes," replied Johnson, "if he is sure he is to be well after he goes out of it. But if he is to grow blind after he goes out of the show-room, and never to see anything again, or if he does not know whither he is to go next, a man will not go cheerfully out of a show-room. No wise man will be contented to die if he thinks he is to go into a state of punishment. Nay, no wise man will be contented to die, if he thinks he is to fall into annihilation, for however unhappy any man's existence

may be, he would rather have it than not exist at all. No ; there is no rational principle by which a man can die contented, but a trust in the mercy of God, through the merits of Jesus Christ."

Let us now briefly examine a few passages, in which the advocates of conditional immortality profess to find the doctrine of Annihilation taught. For a fuller discussion of such texts, we refer the reader to the lectures of the Rev. George Rogers, Theological Tutor in Spurgeon's College, and the elaborate paper by the Rev. Professor McLaren, at the close of this chapter.

Second Thessalonians, 1, v. 9—"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." In this word destruction (Gr. *olethros*), it is maintained "annihilation" is implied. Destruction, says Mr. White, means destruction and nothing else. But if destruction means annihilation, why should it be styled everlasting? The phrase everlasting annihilation is without meaning, contradictory and absurd. If intended to teach the death of the wicked, body and soul, "annihilation" alone would convey the meaning. Rightly interpreted, it means, "everlastingly being punished and destroyed."

First Thessalonians, 5, v. 3—"When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction (Gr. *olethros*) cometh upon them, and they shall not escape." Destruction is here opposed to peace and safety, from which there is no escape, but annihilation would certainly be a way of escape!

First Timothy, 6, v. 9—"They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction (Gr. *olethros*) and in perdition." According to the forced interpretation put upon it, this means drowned first in annihilation, and then in perdition!

Upon the Greek word, "*apollumi*," says Mr. Rogers, great confidence is placed in support of the annihilation theory. Authorities are quoted to show that when applied to the living it always signifies to destroy life ; that is, of course, annihilation, for it is in

defence of this alone that it is adduced. In relation to other objects we are told it has the sense of loss ; when applied to men, of annihilation. An instance is given in a literal translation of 1 Cor. xv, 17, 18, " But if Christ has not been raised from the dead your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins, and as a consequence, those who fell asleep in Christ were annihilated (apolonto)." Let us see how the same apostle uses the same word elsewhere in the same epistle. In 1 Cor. i, 18, we read, " The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness ; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." This in both instances is a reference to men in this life. The one were then saved and the other were then perishing, but not being annihilated. We have the same word in 2 Cor. iv. 3, " But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are ANNIHILATED." 1 Cor. viii. 11, " Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish (BE ANNIHILATED), for whom Christ died?" 1 Cor. x. 9, 10, " Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed (ANNIHILATED) of serpents (apolonto). Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer," annihilated (apolonto) by the annihilator. This last word is a derivative of the term previously considered. In Matt. iv. 38, we have the disciples waking their Master in the ship by saying, according to the INVARIABLE RENDERING WHEN APPLIED TO THE LIFE OF MAN, " Master, carest thou not that we are ANNIHILATED?" Matt. x. 6, " Go rather to the lost (THE ANNIHILATED) sheep of the house of Israel." In Luke xv. 24, the Father, by the new translation is made to say of his restored prodigal, " This my son was dead, and is alive again, was ANNIHILATED and is found." In all these instances we have strictly adhered to the rule of the object of the verb being living men. Whether therefore, in every such instance it has but one meaning, and that meaning is annihilation, judge ye. Supposing even it could be shown to have but the one meaning of annihilation, it says nothing of its being preceded by a long period of suffering. As to the

figures employed as illustrative of future punishment, chaff burned up with unquenchable fire, tares bound up in bundles to be burned, a stone grinding to powder, a tree cut down and cast into the fire, it is admitted that in these cases chaff as chaff is annihilated, and so of the tares and trees ; but what evidence is there that this was the point of comparison intended ? There was no design surely to teach that men were chaff, and tares, and trees, and that their end would be the same ! These figures are obviously intended to show how easily God can avenge himself of his adversaries.

One or two texts in direct opposition to the doctrine of annihilation, may fitly conclude this portion of our subject :

The first of these is in Matt. xxv. 46 : " These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous unto life eternal." The same word is here used in the original, both for everlasting and eternal. The same eternity is affirmed of the punishment of the wicked as of the life of the righteous. They are the words of Christ, and if it were not so, he would have told us. There is no qualification in the one case, as there should have been if the eternities were not the same. If the word for eternal means temporary duration in the one proposition, it does so in the other ; if real eternity in the one, it means real eternity in the other. It is in vain to say, " that which is eternal is not always everlasting," and so endeavor to discriminate between everlasting judging and the eternal effect of a judgment, since it would equally apply to the righteous and the wicked. It is in vain to speak of annihilation as part of eternal punishment, since it is no punishment to the tormented, and to speak of punishment extending beyond existence is absurd ; and annihilation might just as much be eternal happiness to the righteous as eternal punishment to the wicked. It is in vain, too, to go back to other expressions in Matthew's writings which are supposed to be in opposition to this one. They are chiefly figurative, and amount not altogether to a single proposition like the one

before us ; and should, therefore, be interpreted by it, and, in fact, are in harmony with it.

The second text is in Mark ix. 44, 46, 48, where the same words occur thrice, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Here is something that dieth not, and something that is not quenched, and both spoken of in reference to the punishment of the wicked. Upon the supposition of annihilation after suffering, the "worm," whatever it might be, of the wicked must die, and the fire of their torment be quenched. We do not want to know what meaning such words might have in the writings of Isaiah, but what is the interpretation which Christ put upon them, and the impression they were calculated to produce in the minds of those to whom he addressed them? They are not certainly such words as he would have used if he had not intended to produce in them the fear of everlasting torments. "For every one shall be salted with fire," which immediately follows this declaration, Mr. White says, "perhaps signifies that the dead bodies of the wicked, LIKE THAT OF LOT'S WIFE, will be preserved as an abiding memorial of their awful punishment in hell, but not necessarily for an absolute eternity." This is a comment upon Isaiah, "And they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the transgressors!" What next? It has the credit at least of keeping to the literal sense.

For these and other reasons, we must still hold to the immortality of the righteous and wicked alike. This has been the universal belief of the christian church since the days of the apostles, nor did Christ ever say one word against this so-called "dangerous heresy." Greater theologians than the Annihilationists of the present age, such as Turretin, Owen, Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield, have held it and preached it. The doctrine of the endless misery of unregenerate men is in fact a consequent of the other accepted doctrines of revelation—if not endless, our estimate of the grace of God in redemption must be materially changed !

As a further reason for holding this doctrine (apart from the texts of scripture quoted), the advocates of annihilationism or conditional immortality use very much the same language as Universalists do, when urging for the ultimate restoration of all men to the favor of God. That countless millions of the human race should be tormented forever, without either the hope of death or deliverance, is, they say, too awful for thought. The attempt to conceive it agonises the heart, staggers the understanding, and exceeds the capacity of belief. Such an amazing infliction of woe must not be attributed to the merciful and glorious God, unless He expressly declared it in so many words. But he has not done so. A hell of eternal misery is the most frightful delusion that was ever presented to the mind. The Judge of all the earth does right, but this would be wrong.

Our answer to this is, if an eternity of misery be supposed to be contrary to both the justice and the mercy of God, much more may this be affirmed of temporary punishment and subsequent annihilation. Admit the immortality of the human race to have been essential, either by necessity or decree, at its first origin, that eternity was a foregone conclusion before man had done good or evil, and that the consequences on either side must be eternal, and the eternity of punishment becomes inevitable. ADMIT THAT IMMORTALITY WAS A GIFT WHICH GOD COULD RECALL, THEN HE HOLDS CREATURES IN EXISTENCE SOLELY TO TORTURE THEM. In the one case, the immortality was given for bliss which they have perverted to suffering; in the other, God continues them in being that he may take vengeance upon them before he annihilates them.

As to the moment when annihilation takes place, and as to the nature, duration and severity of suffering, which the finally impenitent must undergo before the last moment of their existence, and as to the means by which they will be put out of existence, they tell us nothing. Difficulties connected with such matters of detail as to how much this or that person should suffer, they leave unsolved,

being confident that God will at least justify all his proceedings to the entire satisfaction of the intelligent universe. This much, however, they are assured of, that neither love, justice, nor anything else, requires the Creator to continue to a creature the highest trust that can be committed to him, that of life, if he persistently abuses it.

While, then, we do not put Annihilationists, or those who believe in conditional immortality, in the same category with Materialists, it is very evident they have much in common. Both deny that the soul in its essence is imperishable. If pure spirit, it cannot be subject to decay or decomposition. To evade this difficulty, by calling the soul "a spiritual substance," capable of annihilation, is to announce a theory that is simply self-contradictory and incomprehensible.

In brief, then, Annihilationists maintain that evil, natural and moral, must come to an end. According to the government of a perfect being it cannot be eternal. This end will be brought about, not by all being restored to God's favor, as is taught by Universalists, but by the destruction of the wicked. The penalty of sin, according to this theory, is death—the return of man, body and soul, to the earth from which he came. This punishment of annihilation is, however, to be regarded as a merciful arrangement received at the hands of God, whose mercy is co-equal with His judgment, and who will suffer them to go back to their original elements and cease from existence, as entitled to neither name nor place in all the universe of God. It need not be accompanied by conscious pain. It is simply excision—a cutting off from life—eternal privation of being.

Instead of taking up and examining passages of scripture, as we have done, if we can show a single instance in which the immortality of the wicked is taught side by side with that of the righteous, the folly and falsity of Annihilationism will be shown. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is of such a class. There, if anywhere.

it is taught that the dead are conscious, that the souls of all men are immortal, and that on leaving this world all men go at once into a state of blessedness or joy, or of torment that is absolutely unchangeable and eternal. It contrasts the condition of men, here and hereafter, who live for self-indulgence. It shows the result of reckless abuse of God's temporal gifts; indifference to the claims of the poor, and forgetfulness of a future existence, where men shall be rewarded or punished, according to the deeds done in the body. Some give to it an allegorical interpretation, as setting forth the relations between Jews and Gentiles. The rich man, according to this theory, represents the Jewish nation. His being clad in purple and fine linen, indicates the abundant blessings, material and spiritual, which they enjoyed above others. Lazarus, the beggar, represents the Gentile world. His sores are the sins of the Pagan world, spoken of in Romans i. 23, 32. The hard-heartedness of the rich man toward the beggar refers to the stolid indifference of the Jews toward the perishing heathen, who regarded themselves as alone included in the covenant of promise. The death and punishment of the rich man illustrates the final issue of the Jewish economy, and the dispersion of the Jews for their blindness and unbelief. The death of Lazarus and his reception into Abraham's bosom, marks the entrance of the Gentile world upon the possession of gospel privileges; and the five brethren are all who, like the Jewish nation in later days, refuse salvation on the plea of want of evidence, and abuse God's compassion and long suffering by continuance in sin. Now some of these applications may be true, but Christ in this parable teaches far more practical lessons for nominal professors of Christianity in modern times. "He places an ordinary world scene in such a focus, that the monotonous buzz and din and commonplace of the life that is, comes echoed back in terrific thunder tones from the endless vista of the life to come, showing how the mortal humanity reaches onward and becomes the immortal humanity, inhabiting eternity;" that if men will live merely for the gratifica-

tion of the senses, regardless of the claims of others, and making no provision for eternity, they shall reap the bitter fruit of their unbelief in a world of endless woe.

The question of an intermediate state need not now be argued, although much may be said in favor of it, from the language of the parable. What it does emphatically teach is the eternal existence of the wicked equally with the good. The rich man having died and been buried, "in hell, or hades, lifted up his eyes, being in torment." Now while the word "hades" literally means the "unseen," and might be translated the spirit world, without regard to the character of those who inhabit it, it is only used to indicate death or the grave on the one hand, or the abode of the lost on the other. Hades is the abode of the ungodly after death. Nowhere are believers said to be in this place. If we suppose that the scene is laid in the middle state, between death and the judgment, it teaches that the impenitent live on and suffer. Between the place of torment and paradise "a great gulf is fixed"—fixed for eternity. So that if even in "hades" before the resurrection and judgment, all help and hope is so utterly excluded, what must it be in GEHENNA, the final doom of lost souls, after the resurrection of the body, the resurrection of damnation, "and the final judgment?"

In the light of these preliminary remarks, let us look at the parable.

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." He was no miser. He did not hoard up the blessings of heaven, but lived in jovial splendor. He was dressed in the purple of kings, and in linen that was worth its weight in gold. The fact of his being rich is not, however, charged against him as a sin, nor his gorgeous raiment, nor his generous hospitality. No moral accusation or crime is laid to his charge. So far as we know he had got his money honestly—not by robbing the poor, nor by unjust merchandise, nor profitable bankruptcies, but by honorable industry. What, then, was

his sin? "There was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores." Nothing is said of the former history of this beggar. Probably he was laid at the gate of the rich man by friends whose ability longer to support him was exhausted. The rich man's indifference to the beggar cannot be excused. Lazarus was at his gate, within sight and reach. He was not only poor, but sorely afflicted with a loathsome disease, probably produced or aggravated by hunger and want. His demands were not great. He did not seek admission to the rich man's dwelling, nor a place at his table. He merely asked the crumbs that fell from his table. Yet this was denied him. No kind word was spoken, and no hand of mercy stretched out to the dying beggar. The dogs licked his sores, while his brother man refused him pity. There he lay day after day, patiently suffering, and waiting release from the ills of life. "It came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Providence mercifully interposed and shortened his days of misery. Nothing is said regarding the circumstances of his death. Says a living preacher: "I think I see the picture. The ulcers had eaten deep into the vitals, and the soft tongues of the dogs could not probe to the root of the disease; the eyes became more sunken, and the cheeks more hollow, and the fingers of death set their mark on every limb and look. The servants perhaps noticed the change, feeling thankful that they would soon be delivered from such an odious bundle of rags and sores. At last the hour came. Very likely there was high feasting within, and the guests congratulated each other and praised their host, while the music streamed through the open doors to the ears of the dying beggar. Hunger was gnawing at the roots of life, and the sores were giving their last stings. There was no cool, friendly hand laid upon his brow—no draught to still the pain—no soft kiss of affection to mitigate the final encounter with the king of terrors.

The pulse gets weaker and the breath longer drawn, and the stones which serve as a pillow seem harder than before, a little longer the spirit struggles, one more convulsive throb, the chin falls on the breast, and Lazarus is dead." The "Pauper's Deathbed" of Southey vividly describes the scene :

"Tread softly ! bow the head
 In reverent silence now !
 No passing bell doth toll ;
 Yet an immortal soul
 Is passing now.

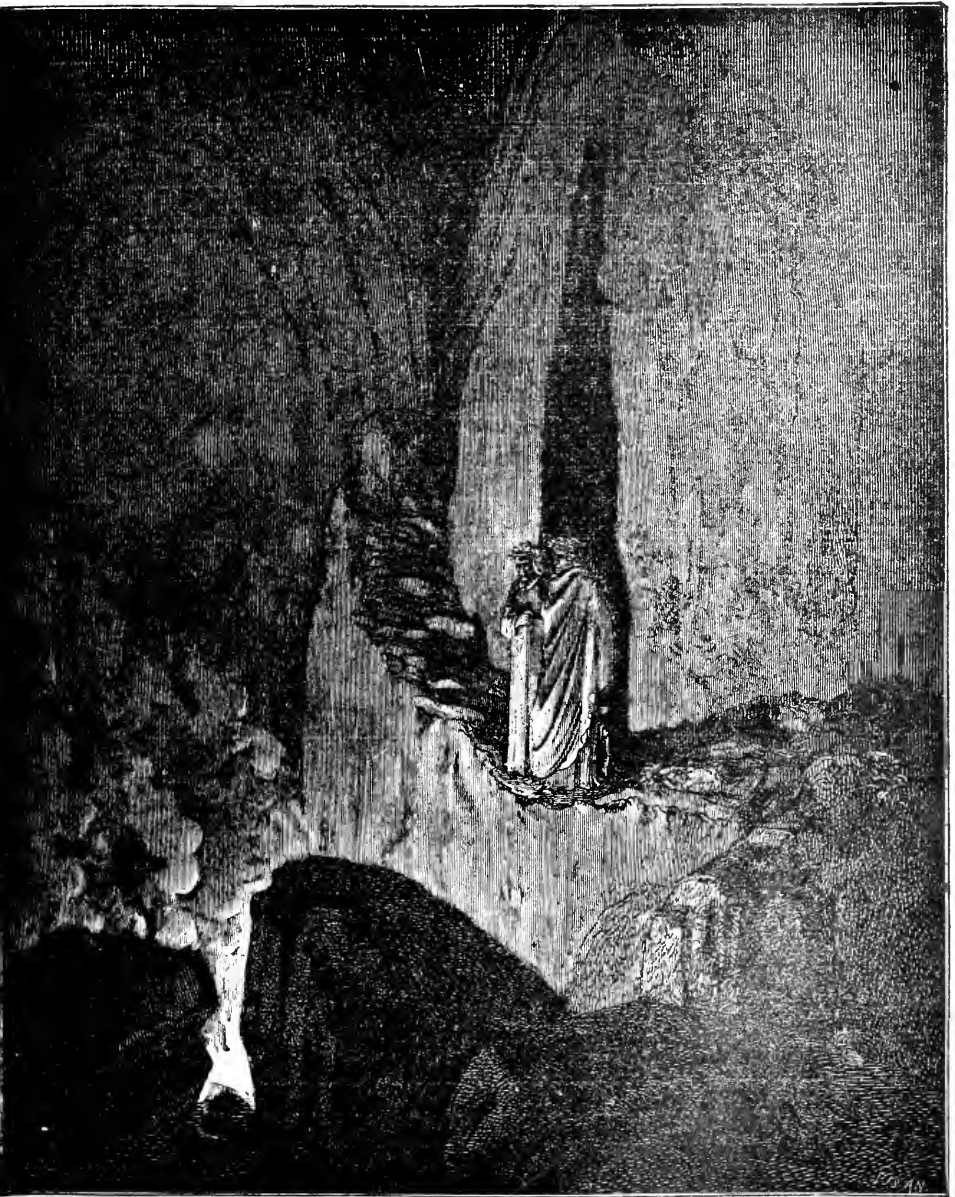
That pavement damp and cold
 No smiling courtiers tread :
 One silent woman stands,
 Lifting with meagre hands,
 A dying head.

O ! change, O ! wondrous change !
 Burst are the prison bars !
 This moment there, so low
 So agonised—and now
 Beyond the stars !"

He had doubtless the usual pauper's burial, analagous to that of modern times.

"Rattle his bones, over the stones,
 It's only a pauper, whom nobody owns ;"

but what mattered it, for "the new immortality waked with God." "The rich man also died, and was buried." His wealth did not secure him a perpetual lease of existence ; whether when too late he awoke to realise his condition, or remained skeptical of a future world, we are not informed. Doubtless his death was deeply regretted among a certain class. The body was laid out in state, and was followed to the grave by a long cortege of mourners, who rent their garments and lamented in Oriental fashion. Dust to dust and ashes to ashes, and the scene now changes. "In hell or hades, he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off,



The Punishment allotted to evil counsellors and those who have abused their talents.
—The Inferno Canto xxvi



and Lazarus in his bosom." While this language does not probably refer to the sufferings of the impenitent dead, after the resurrection and final judgment, it seems clearly to teach that so soon as the soul passes from time to eternity, there begins that soul anguish, for which there is no alleviation. No consolation can be deduced from such a passage in favor of the doctrine of annihilation. Whatever opinion may be entertained of the nature of the sufferings that await the impenitent sinner—whether the accusations of an accusing and maddened conscience or otherwise, the parable teaches that punishment of some kind begins immediately after death, and that this is inflicted upon the disembodied spirit prior to the resurrection.

The rich man now fully realises his position. The misery and agony that he now experiences, is in fearful contrast to his life of pleasure and gayety. In hell and in torments he cries : " Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." Paradise, according to a Jewish tradition, is removed from hell only by a hairbreadth, so that one could see from one to the other. We trust this is only tradition, for the sights would be anything but pleasing to the saints. The request of the rich man, though small was denied. There is no hope now for mercy. In his life he had shown none. " Thou in thy life received good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented." Not only so, continued Abraham, but " between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they that would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from you." Finally there comes the request for his brethren (v. 27, 31). He feels his own condition hopeless ; it is blank despair, without one ray of hope. His brethren are Sadducees, as he was himself. They believed in no future existence nor day of reckoning. If Lazarus cannot cross the impassable gulf between paradise and hades, he may return to earth

and testify of what he has seen in the world of woe. Abraham's reply is reasonable, but decided. Salvation is an utter impossibility unless through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a saving reception of the gospel. "They have Moses and the prophets." These were sufficient, they were the appointed means for the conversion of the world. Miracles never were intended, and never could of themselves produce a saving change of mind. So far from repenting, says Abraham, by a visit of one from the dead, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Such in brief is the picture presented of the conscious existence of an impenitent soul beyond death. But you say, "It is a parable." Supposing it is. What then? All of Christ's parables are natural, and based upon actual facts. Regarded thus, the parable teaches clearly, that God will deal with the two great classes of men in the world according to the portion of the parties named in the parable. The experiences of the rich man and Lazarus are what shall be the respective condition of the good and the bad. There is a dividing line, here and hereafter. The space between them shall remain the same, but the bad will go down, and the good will go up. Those who are happy here in the enjoyment of carnal pleasures, will be unhappy there. The parable, if it is only such, teaches substantially this truth,—that the wicked shall live on forever in conscious misery. If the unbelieving and unsaved are annihilated at or after death, the parable has no meaning whatever. Christ would then be leading his hearers to believe in a state of things after death that was unreal—a presumption that it is impossible for any christian or candid mind to entertain.

But we object to this narrative being called a parable, in the ordinary sense of the word. A parable, according to the most approved definition, is a placing beside, or together, a comparing. But there is no comparison of any kind here, and to attempt to

form comparisons, as we have seen, is unwarranted. Surely when the rich man says, "I am tormented," it is more than fancy? And when Abraham says: "There is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence," he cannot mean that a change of state or annihilation of existence is possible? If such a mode of interpretation is allowable, Christ's teachings are of no value whatever, and the Bible utterly unworthy of belief regarding a future world. But if we regard it as giving us under parabolic form the real experience of God's poor and Satan's rich ones, here and hereafter, the whole is consistent and harmonious. Our Lord nowhere describes it as a parable, but as an actual occurrence; the punishment is more than allegory, and the parties are represented as real men. It would seem as if the Holy Spirit had taken these precautions to guard against the glosses and falsehoods of Annihilationism and Restorationism alike.

Let us then practically regard this parable as teaching that reckless licentiousness, disregard of the sufferings and wants of others, and disbelief in the existence of the soul after death, cannot change the inflexible decrees of God. Nor are we to judge of a man's condition in the future from what he suffers in the present. Poverty, bodily ailments and cruel treatment are frequently the heritage of heirs of glory. Riches, honors and sensual gratification are often the present possession of the ungodly and profane. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." And finally, the memory of a wasted and unthankful life must add immeasurably to the torments of the lost. God's mercy cannot triumph over his justice. Praying to saints, either here or in hell, is of no avail—nay, not even though our appeals could reach the Saviour's ears. Thomas Hood, in his poem, "The Lady's Dream," in which she imagines herself dead, and reviews her unfeeling and selfish life face to face with "the pleading looks" of those she formerly despised, puts these verses in her mouth:

“ No need of sulphureous lake,
No need of fiery coal ;
But only that crowd of human kind
Who wanted pity and dole—
In everlasting retrospect—
Will wring my sinful soul !

I drank the richest draughts ;
And ate whatever is good—
Fish, and flesh, and fowl, and fruit,
Supplied my hungry mood ;
But I never remembered the wretched ones
That starve for want of food !

I dressed as the nobles dress,
In cloth of silver and gold ;
With silk, and satin, and costly furs
In many an ample fold,
But I never remembered the naked limbs
That froze with winter's cold.

Alas ! I have walked through life,
Too heedless where I trod ;
Nay, helping to trample my fellow worm,
And fill the burial sod ;
Forgetting that even the sparrow falls,
Not unmarked of God !”

CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY.

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THERE are few topics of importance upon which the Christian Church has spoken with greater decision than on the eternity of future punishments. In all its leading sections, it has taught that those dying in their sins shall endure unending penal sufferings, varying in degree, according to the measure of their personal ill-desert. In all its branches, Latin and Greek, Lutheran and Reformed, Calvinistic and Arminian, it has uttered one voice. This unanimity cannot be regarded as due to the unthinking reception of a dogma handed down from the past. The interests involved are too momentous, and come too closely home to every heart, to admit of such an explanation. It is, moreover, certain that the leading views now embraced by those who reject the eternity of future punishments, were presented to the Church, before the close of the third century, by authors of sufficient reputation to secure for their sentiments careful attention. Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and a few others, taught the final restoration of all free agents to holiness and the favor of God. And Arnobius, a little later, maintained the annihilation of the wicked. This distinguished convert from heathenism was a disciple of Lucretius, and he appears to have brought his master's materialistic philosophy with him into the Christian

church. But while both these views were so early set forth with ability, the faith of the Church remained unchanged.

In our own day, marked attention has been directed to the final destiny of the wicked. The immemorial doctrine of the Church has been assailed from opposite sides, by Restorationists and Annihilationists, with a vehemence of assertion which their mutually contradictory interpretations of scripture do not seem to abate. We purpose examining the views of those who hold the annihilation of the wicked, or, as they generally prefer to call it, the doctrine of Conditional Immortality.

This doctrine assumes various phases. Some maintain that the souls of the wicked cease to exist at death, and that no resurrection awaits those who die out of Christ. This view, however, contradicts so clearly what the scriptures teach respecting the punishment of sin, the state of the soul after death, and the resurrection of the body, that the number who embrace it is comparatively small. It may in some respects be more consistent with the views generally enunciated by Annihilationists, than that which they more commonly accept, but its antagonism to scripture is so obvious, that few seem prepared to avow their belief in it. The more ordinary form of the doctrine, to which we shall confine our attention, is that embraced by such writers as the Rev. Edward White, Samuel Minton, and Henry Constable, in England, and C. F. Hudson and others, in America. These writers, while differing from each other on minor matters, agree on maintaining the following positions, viz. :

1st. That the death threatened to man in Eden, on account of sin, is the extinction of his being. When man dies he ceases to exist. They suppose that his entire being was naturally mortal, but might have become immortal by obedience, and the consequent participation of the tree of life.

2nd. That the righteous are through the incarnation and the work of Christ, rendered immortal. Hence they speak of CONDI-

TIONAL IMMORTALITY, by which they mean that eternal existence, in the case of man, is *CONDITIONED* on his union to Christ. All who reject Christ, or come short of an interest in him, are blotted out of existence.

3rd. That there shall be a general resurrection and judgment of the whole human race, and the wicked, having been raised up, shall have inflicted on them such punishment as will issue in their annihilation, or in the final extinction of their being. Some suppose that this issue will likely occur immediately after the general judgment, and others that it will be reached only after a period of sufferings, protracted, it may be, for "ages of ages."

The importance of this discussion is apparent at the first glance, and a careful study of the relation which one part of the system of truth sustains to another, deepens our sense of its vital nature. Edward White repudiates the notion that the agitation, which he is aiding, deals merely with the "simple question of the retribution of sin." "It is a movement," he says, "for the reconstruction of anthropology and theology from one end to the other."—Vide Report of Conference, page 31.

In this discussion we shall appeal, not to philosophy, but to Divine Revelation. There can be no doubt, however, that the doctrine of "Conditional Immortality" is linked so closely in the minds of its advocates, with a peculiar philosophy of human nature, that they seem unable to read the Scriptures, save through the glass which their philosophy supplies.

There are two views of human nature, radically distinct, on which the Scriptures cast some light, and which cannot but influence the manner in which we regard the points raised in this discussion.

The common view of mankind, and of the Christian church, is that two distinct substances, mind and matter, or soul and body, are united in man. And while the personality resides in the higher

nature, which we speak of as the soul or spirit, the properties of each nature are predicated of the person, so that we recognize them as peculiarly our own. If this view of the nature of man is correct, physical death may be nothing but the result of the separation of soul and body. And the dissolution of the body, consequent upon this separation, supplies no presumption that the soul, which consciousness reveals as one and indivisible, is subject either to decay or dissolution.

The second view is that presented by Materialism, which ignores or denies the distinction between mind and matter. This philosophy regards the soul as a function of the body, and views thought as the product of highly organized matter. Those who embrace this system necessarily believe that when the body is dissolved by death, the soul ceases to exist. The elements, which combined make up the organism called man, are at death separated, and enter into new combinations, and go to make up other organisms.

Adam was as much non-existent after his death as before his creation. The elements out of which he was formed alone remained. White and Hudson avoid committing themselves definitely to Materialism, but the drift of their statements and reasonings is unmistakable. Hudson speaks of "the prevalence of a materialistic philosophy which has frequently attended the doctrine which we maintain," and he states it as his opinion, "that speculative Materialism is not to be for itself condemned."—*Debt and Grace*, pages 243, 246. But this Materialistic view of man's nature, even where it is not openly avowed, underlies the doctrine of "Conditional Immortality," and rules the interpretations of Scripture given by its advocates.

In this paper, passing over matters of subsidiary importance, I shall confine attention to one or two central points, on which the whole discussion chiefly turns. The controversy hinges largely upon the meaning which the advocates of Conditional Immortality

attach to DEATH, as threatened in Eden, and spoken of in scripture generally as the penalty of sin. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,"—Genesis ii. 17. Rev. Samuel Minton, who speaks with some degree of authority for Annihilationists, says: "Most of us would be willing to stake our whole case on the natural and prima facie meanings of the words Life and Death, Immortality and Destruction. These and their cognates are the key words of the controversy."—Report of Conference, page 14. We have no objection to the issue thus raised, provided all the evidence bearing upon it is fairly examined, and the confident assertions of Annihilationists are not substituted for proofs. According to the common judgment of christendom, the THREATENING included death temporal, spiritual and eternal, or to state the matter in another way, death is penal evil inflicted, according to the righteous measure of the Great Judge, upon man's complex nature. According to Annihilationists, man who came from the dust returns, at death, to dust. He is resolved, as one of their writers has it, "into his elemental atoms." Minton assures us that "Adam must have understood the death penalty to mean the entire deprivation of being."—Report of Conference, page 12. Another writes, "The first man is out of the earth, and the final destiny of man, as a man and a sinner, is to return unto the earth, and to become as though he had not been."—Quest. of Ages, page 135. White intimates that Adam learned the meaning of the threatening from his observation of death among the lower animals, and he informs us that at death "the animals, as individual beings, utterly and wholly cease to be."—Life in Christ, page 23.

The question which we have to decide is whether, when the Scriptures speak of death as the penalty of sin, or when they use the word in its ordinary and primary sense in reference to man, they mean "his entire deprivation of being";—whether, when they speak of him as dead, they mean that he "has utterly and wholly

ceased to be". How then shall we determine the meaning of the threatening in Genesis ii. 17? The natural way would seem to be to examine the record in which the threatening occurs, and to ascertain what light is thus thrown upon it; and then seek to discover the manner in which the Scriptures elsewhere employ the word DEATH, and its correlative LIFE. This course does not seem to commend itself to the advocates of Conditional Immortality.

They suggest various ways of determining the force of the threatening, which labor under the serious infirmity of assuming as certain what requires to be proved, and what sometimes, moreover, admits of no proof.

White assures us, and Constable agrees with him, that Adam must have understood the word Death, as he was accustomed to employ it, "in his short use of language in relation to the animal system around him"—page 112. In other words, he must have understood death to be the same to a rational and moral being that it is to irrational creatures. And as White affirms that at death animals "as individual beings, utterly and wholly cease to be,"—page 23—death to man must be the extinction of his being. This reasoning implies: 1st. That Adam, before he received this threatening, had witnessed death among the lower animals, which is quite uncertain. 2nd. That what he knew of the import of the threatening was gathered from the words recorded in Genesis, and from what he had observed in the animal system around him, which is also quite uncertain; and 3rd, That Adam knew that death is the termination of existence to the lower animals. If he knew this, he had learned what Bishop Butler, long after, had not discovered. That profound thinker, in his Analogy, writes: "Nor can we find any thing throughout the whole analogy of Nature to afford us even the slightest presumption that animals ever lose their living powers, much less, if it were possible, that they lose them by death, for we have no faculties wherewith to trace any beyond, or through it, so

as to see what becomes of them."—Page 17. If Adam knew that the lower animals cease to exist at death, he knew what no process of observation could teach him, and which we ourselves do not know, unless it be through revelation made long subsequent to the time of Adam. And if he had a revelation, of which there is no record, to teach him that the beasts cease to exist at death, may he not have had a revelation of an opposite kind in reference to himself and his posterity? If he was informed that the spirit of the beast goeth downward, may he not at the same time have been taught that the spirit of man goeth upward? Ecclesiastes iii., 21.

So far as observation goes, what takes place, when a good man and when a beast dies, is the same. All signs of life and activity disappear, and physical decay sets in. If this proves that the brutes cease to exist, it proves the same in reference to good men; yet Annihilationists, like White and Hudson, maintain that good men, in virtue of their union to Christ, do not entirely cease to be at death. And if it must be admitted that what is observed proves nothing in regard to the continued existence, or non-existence of men or of beasts, it is only candid to say so. We are reminded, however, that there are reasons why death does not end the being of those who are in Christ, which do not apply to the lower animals. We reply (1), that these reasons could not be learned from observation of what transpires in the animal system around us, and (2), that there are reasons in the very constitution of man as a moral, intelligent and responsible free agent, which bespeak for the race an endless existence, reasons which cannot be supposed in the case of the lower animals.

This mode of determining the meaning of the threatening ignores the important distinction between man and the lower animals recognized in the record of creation, and assumes that Adam learned from observation what no observation could teach.

But White and Constable support their views of the threatening by an assumption, which they probably mistake for reasoning, viz : that Adam must have understood the threatening to mean the extinction of his being for ever, or death in its primary meaning, as he had learned it from the animal system around him, otherwise it would have been unjust in God to inflict the penalty. This is begging the question, and something worse. What requires to be proved is, that death in the primary and ordinary sense of the word is the cessation of existence. This we have seen could not have been learned from observation. And if a revelation was necessary to make Adam know that the penalty threatened is "the entire deprivation of being," what but a tacit assumption of what requires to be proved, prevents these writers from perceiving that the same method of instruction was equally suited to inform him that death is to be understood in the pregnant sense, required in many parts of Scripture, and even by the narrative in Genesis.

But we deny absolutely that a penalty must be known, or understood, before it can be justly inflicted. The justice of the punishment depends on the law being known, and on the penalty being proportioned to the offence, but not on the penalty being known. Constable, replying to Professor Bartlett on this point, says : "If this Professor of Theology had consulted a Professor of Jurisprudence, he would have been informed, that when a man is incapable of knowing the nature of a penalty, he cannot be subjected to it." —*Nat. and Dur. of Future Punishment*, page 30. This is an artful representation, by which one thing is adroitly substituted for another, in a way not very worthy of an honest man. Human law views a man, who from mental imbecility or disease, is incapable of understanding the law or its penalty, as not responsible for his actions. But this has nothing to do with the case on hand, where the law was known and understood, and only the penalty is supposed to have been not fully comprehended.

According to the teaching of White and Constable, where God forbids a sin, and does not publish a penalty, no penalty can be inflicted. Were this precious morality accepted, the members of a community, which had the Decalogue revealed from Heaven as their moral code, might deem themselves licensed, so far as exemption from penalty could license them, to murder, steal, and commit adultery, because the precepts forbidding these sins have no penalties attached to them. White tells us that even the "Chinese government considers itself obliged to read to the people periodically the Criminal Code."—Page 113. If so, it may be assumed that it has wisdom to do it, to make them familiar with the law, rather than merely to acquaint them with the penalty. We think it is manifest that neither of these modes of determining the meaning of the threatening given in Eden can satisfy any thoughtful and unbiased mind.

We shall now advance a step, and give some reasons why we cannot accept the view of death on which the doctrine of Conditional Immortality is based. We reject the doctrine.

1. Because it is based on an unfounded assumption, viz: that the primary and ordinary meaning of death is the cessation of existence, or the extinction of being. This notion pervades the reasonings of Annihilationists, and it is essential to the theory that this should be recognized as the primary meaning of the word. For only in this way can they hope to fasten such a meaning on death, as the threatened penalty of sin. We venture, however, to assert that it is a pure assumption, in support of which not one relevant fact can be adduced, and in opposition to which almost numberless facts array themselves.

Constable, with his usual boldness, claims the testimony of the dictionaries of all languages to the assertion. "that the primary and ordinary meaning of death is the extinction of being." He writes: "Every dictionary of every language of the earth is our witness of

this."—Page 75. It is difficult to imagine a statement more unfounded, made by an intelligent man, who considers himself under obligations to speak the truth.

The word "DEATH" has, no doubt, a primary, and various secondary meanings, but it is not true that, in any language with which we are acquainted, or in any respectable dictionary,, its primary meaning is the extinction of being, or that the word primarily implies that the being who has died has "utterly and wholly ceased to be." It is a word which points primarily to certain familiar physical phenomena, which occur once in the history of every man, but it gives no explanation of the causes or results of these phenomena. The Imperial dictionary gives as the meaning of the word death: "The state of a being, animal or vegetable, but more particularly of an animal, in which there is a total and permanent cessation of all the vital functions, when the organs have not only ceased to act, but have lost the susceptibility of renewed action." In this definition, there is nothing inconsistent with the continued existence of the soul after death. Of course, if Materialism is true, the cessation of these vital functions in the disorganised material mechanism, carries with it the extinction of mental and spiritual action, and of the soul itself, which is merely a function of the body. The entire man is resolved into his "elemental atoms," and ceases to be. But this conclusion is not reached from the primary force of the word DEATH, but from the teachings of a base philosophy. And even if Materialism were proved true, it would not follow that mankind, in speaking of an occurrence so familiar as death, has any thought of pronouncing it true. Sunrise and sunset are due to the revolution of the earth on its axis, but neither the learned nor the unlearned, in using these words, ever dream that they are enunciating that truth. Bishop Butler has well remarked: "We do not know at all what death is in itself, but only some of its effects, such as the dissolution of the flesh, skin and bones. And

these effects do in no wise appear to imply the destruction of a living agent."—Analogy, page 16. If our vital functions are due to the union of the soul and body, then their total and permanent cessation in the body, which is the thing observed in death, may be due to the termination of that union, and does not imply the extinction of the soul, or that it has ceased to be active or conscious. It is only when the teaching of a Materialistic philosophy is adroitly transfused into the word DEATH, that it can be made to speak the language of Annihilationism.

If Constable's reckless assertions were true, whenever a man says a neighbor has died, he intends to affirm that he has "utterly and wholly ceased to be." The prevalence, well nigh universal, of a belief in the immortality of the soul, is a sufficient refutation of this preposterous assertion. The truth is that neither Materialists nor Annihilationists have ever been sufficiently numerous to mould the language of any people. Neither Hebrews, Greeks nor Romans, when they spoke of the death of their friends, in the ordinary and primary sense of that word, ever dreamed of asserting that the departed had ceased to be; and with the exception of a few who had become corrupted by a Materialistic philosophy, they did not believe it. It is notorious that the Jews, in the time of our Lord, with the exception of the Sadducees, who never were a numerous class, believed in the immortality of the soul. Of this the New Testament and Josephus supply ample evidence. And if we can trust poets, philosophers and historians, it is no less certain that the mass of the Greeks and Romans did the same. Their superstitions make this belief palpable. Their Gods were nearly all departed heroes. Tartarus and the underworld were peopled with those who had laid aside the body in death. Necromancy, which prevailed extensively, is a recognition of the survival of souls separated from the body. And if the popular religion provided for the departed a ferryman at the river, and judges for the nether world, it surely is

sufficient evidence that when they spoke of death in its primary sense, they did not intend to affirm that the dead had "utterly and wholly ceased to be."

Another point requires to be noticed in connection with this word. What Annihilationists assert is the primary meaning of death is a purely SECONDARY MEANING, of which there are occasional examples in classic, and even in theological Greek. But it is only the perverting influence of a Materialistic philosophy, which in view of the facts we have adduced, could ever lead any one to mistake it for the primary sense of the word. Like nearly all our terms, which represent abstract ideas, the word DEATH passes from what falls under the senses to what, in a higher department, is supposed to be analogous. Between those familiar sensible phenomena, which the word primarily represents, analogies are easily traced in a higher region, out of which spring secondary meanings of the word death. To illustrate; When a living creature dies, the body is dissolved into its elements. Following this analogy, a writer may affirm or deny the death of the soul, when he wishes to assert or repudiate the notion of its continued existence. In the one case, he designs to affirm that the soul cannot or will not be resolved into simpler elements, and thus pass away; while in the other he makes the opposite assertion. But this is a purely secondary meaning of the word, which became necessary, when men began to indulge in abstract speculations. Again, when a living creature dies, physical decay sets in, and putrefaction, with all its loathsome accompaniments, follows. Pursuing this analogy, death when applied to the soul, represents the decay of moral principle or character, and all the loathsomeness of a depraved heart and life; in one word, moral and spiritual death. But this is not more certainly a secondary meaning of the word death than the other.

But we might very well object to have the biblical sense of the word death determined by an appeal to its usage in heathen writers, or indeed in extra scriptural writers of any kind. The only safe way to reach the meaning of the word in the Bible, is to examine carefully the passages in which it occurs. Supernatural revelation had to engraft an entirely new circle of ideas upon languages which had been before employed merely as the vehicle of heathen thought. It was therefore often compelled, as the context shows, to use words in a much higher sense than that in which they were employed among the heathen. To insist that the usage of classic Greek is to rule the interpretation of the New Testament is really to keep Christianity down to the dead level of heathen ideas. What, we may say, was Paul's entire speech on Mars' Hill, but an attempt to engraft on the word GOD a circle of ideas, as much higher than that which the Athenians connected with it, as the God of the Bible is higher and purer than those monsters of vice, whom the heathen often honored as their Deities?

II. We cannot regard the death threatened as equivalent to the cessation of being, because that view does not agree with the intimations of the record in Genesis, respecting the nature of man and the execution of the penalty. There are four things in the record which we require to observe:

1st. That the creation of man is introduced with much greater solemnity than that of the lower animals. His creation is not referred to merely as that of a member of the animal kingdom, with powers and capacities somewhat higher than those of his fellows, but as that of a being largely *SUI GENERIS*, an animal no doubt, but one quite unique in his nature. When the lower animals are introduced, God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly, the moving creature that hath life," or "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind."—Genesis i. 20 and 24. The language looks as if their origin were wholly earthly, but when we come to the crea-

tion of man, the Godhead is represented as taking counsel. "And God said, let us make man," &c. This is language, surely, which might prepare us to look for a being of a very different nature from the other denizens of earth. This expectation is fulfilled; for the record next asserts,—

2nd. That man was created in the image of God. We are often reminded, by those who regard man as entirely of earthly origin, that in Genesis ii. 7, God is said to have formed man out of the dust of the ground; but it should not be forgotten that there are two accounts of man's creation given in Genesis i. 26, 27, and ii. 7—the later supplying some details omitted by the earlier—but what is stated first, as announcing that which is most distinctive of man, and that in reference to which the Godhead takes counsel, is that man was made in the image of God. In what, then, does the image of God consist? The scriptures warrant us in answering, that it consists in two things, distinct, yet related. (1) A likeness of nature to God, which was not lost by the fall—Genesis ix. 9, James iii. 9, and 1st Cor. xi. 7. And (2) a likeness in moral character to God, which was lost by sin, and may be restored by grace. Paul tells us to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness,"—Ephesians iv. 24. And again he describes Christians as those who "have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him,"—Col. iii. 10, and 2nd Cor. iii. 18. These passages teach, (1), That the new man, which we put on, when we become living followers of Christ, is the re-establishment of the divine image, in which man was originally created. (2) That the distinguishing features of that image are knowledge, righteousness and holiness, or moral excellence viewed from its intellectual and ethical sides. (3). That these features of the Divine image were created in man. If we ask ourselves, in what do such qualities as knowledge, righteousness and holiness inhere? The answer must be, in man's spiritual na-

ture. or in that element of the Divine image which sin has not obliterated.

God is a spirit, and when He made man in His image, He made him a spirit. It is from CONSCIOUSNESS we get the idea of spirit as something distinct from matter. Through the senses, we come to the knowledge of matter, as found in the body and in the external world. It is recognized as that which has certain properties, such as extension, weight, color and divisibility. By consciousness I become acquainted with something which I call myself, or my soul, which thinks, feels, wills, makes moral discriminations, and is one and indivisible. None of the known properties of matter can be ascribed to the soul or self, as made known by consciousness. And none of the known properties of the soul can be predicated of matter. We thus reach a knowledge of soul or spirit as essentially distinct from matter. When everything which discovers to us the existence of soul and of matter, reveals them as distinct, it would surely be gratuitous folly to attempt to identify them with each other. But while we can predicate none of the properties of the self or soul of matter, we are constrained both by reason and revelation to ascribe to God, in infinite measure, all the distinguishing properties of the soul, and to deny to him all the properties of matter. To Him we ascribe personality, feeling, intelligence, will, moral character, and indivisible unity—the very characteristics of the human soul revealed by consciousness. And when we affirm that human soul is spirit, and that God is a spirit, we only employ a verbal symbol to express what we had before discovered is common to man and to his Creator. If we had not discovered through consciousness what spirit is, the assertion, that God is a spirit, would mean as little to us as a description of colors to a man born blind, or of sound to a man who has been always deaf. Language cannot convey simple ideas which are not already in the mind. A belief, therefore, in the spirituality of the human soul, and in the spirituality of God, logically stand or fall together.

But it may be asked, what is the connection between the spirituality of the soul and its survival after death? The attitude of both friends and foes is good evidence that the connection is real. Nor is the reason far to seek. Were the soul material, or the result of highly organized matter, we would naturally expect that when the body returned to dust, the soul would vanish and become as though it had not been. But if the soul is spirit, a substance which is essentially diverse from matter, if it is not liable to decay or dissolution, and if consciousness reveals it as one and indivisible, then the changes which dissolve the body into its elements, cannot affect the soul. No doubt God can blot the soul of man out of existence, although the fact that He made it in His image may be regarded as an intimation of an opposite intention, but we cannot suppose even the Almighty to divide it, or to resolve it, into simpler elements. In the very structure of the soul, therefore, which was made in the image of God,¹ we discern the fore-gleams of immortality.

3rd. The record of man's creation indicates very clearly the DUALITY of his nature. "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—Genesis ii. 7.

The force of the argument here does not depend on the statement that man became a living soul—NEPHESH HAYAH—terms which are expressly applied to the lower animals, but rather upon the indication which we have here of a twofold nature in man, one part drawn from the dust, and the other the product of the in-breathing of the Almighty. The place which man is here recognized as holding in the animal kingdom, is due to the union of soul and body. Bring together all the elements of man's nature which are drawn from the ground, and arrange them in the exact order in which they are found in living men, and let the Spirit be a wanting, and man is not NEPHESH HAYAH, a living soul, or animal; he

is a carcase or corpse. But add to what comes from the dust what is due to the inbreathing of God, and he becomes a living soul, a creature having life, and takes his place in the animal kingdom. No fair handling of the record can keep out of view the indications which it gives of a twofold nature in man. It distinguishes between the vital principle, or soul, and the material organism, and points to the former as more directly from God, and "akin to Him than the latter." And the inference deduced from the marks of dualism apparent on the record of man's creation, becomes more powerful when the record is read in the light of the inspired comment, given in Ecclesiastes xii. 7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth, as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it;" and still more clear, as practically interpreted by the prayer of the dying Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."—Acts vii. 59.

4th. But the record in Genesis gives not only indications of the nature of man, but also of the execution of the curse threatened; from which it appears that the penalty fell more directly on the soul. Disobedience was to be followed by immediate punishment: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The narrative shows that the first fruit of sin was reaped in the souls of our first parents. The sense of shame, the dread of God's displeasure, and a consciousness of a baleful change in their relations to God, are the things which are first experienced by the transgressors. It is not the extinction of being, but of conscious well being, which appears. Is this no intimation to us of the real meaning of the threatening? We are informed by Annihilationists that but for the intervention of Christ, the cessation of being would have followed man's sin instantly. This, however, is a pure assumption, to which the Scriptures give no countenance. It is never safe to regulate our views of Scripture by unproved assumptions. What we here observe is penal evils, which are spoken of elsewhere in Scripture as death, coming upon our first parents as soon as they sinned,

and these we regard as included in the threatening. This is God's interpretation of his own words.

III. We cannot accept the Annihilationist view of death, because the scriptures show that the soul of man retains a conscious existence after death.

Those who embrace the doctrine of Conditional Immortality with which we are dealing, while insisting that death means primarily the extinction of being, admit that as a result of the intervention of Christ, men do not cease to be until after the general judgment. White says, "The Hades state is for good and bad, one of the miraculous results of a new probation."—Page 106. But writers of this class uniformly deny, and in order to give their admission a semblance of consistency with their view of death, it is necessary that they should deny to man a conscious existence between death and the resurrection. We cannot regard the consistency as real. They appear, however, to think that if they assign to man a condition so near to non-existence, that it may be mistaken for it, it will be forgotten that they have defined death to be "the entire deprivation of being." Do the scriptures, then, warrant us in ascribing to man, between death and the resurrection, an unconscious state? Turn to that evangelical narrative in Luke xvi, 19-31, which Annihilationists always speak of as a parable. Its doctrinal value will, however, in no way be lessened, if we view it as a parable; for a parable always presents a case which might have happened. You will observe that the passage asserts three things, viz.: (1.) That Lazarus and the rich man died. What the scriptures recognize as death in its primary and obvious sense, befel both of them. (2.) Both passed, at once, into a state of conscious existence, the one comforted in Abraham's bosom, and the other lifting up his eyes in Hades, being in torments. (3.) That this was their condition during the lifetime of the five brethren of the rich

man, whose advent he dreaded, or in other words, during the very period elapsing between his death and the resurrection.

This one passage subverts the entire scheme of Annihilationists. But it does not stand alone. The dying malefactor was comforted with the assurance that he should be that day with Christ in paradise.—Luke xxiii. 43. Paul expected, when his earthly tabernacle was dissolved, to be received, in his abiding personality, into an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and when he was absent from the body to be present with the Lord.—2nd Corinthians v. 1-8. We learn, also, that the Apostle of the Gentiles deemed it far better to depart, and be with Christ, than to remain in the flesh. To him death was gain, not a state of unconsciousness. Moses, who had been many centuries dead, appeared in glory along with Elias, and talked with Christ concerning the decess which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem.—Luke ix. 30, 31. This certainly is something very unlike slumbering on in unconsciousness until the resurrection.

The Sadducean doctrine was based on the same materialistic philosophy which we have seen underlies the theory of Conditional Immortality. And Christ in refuting the denial of the resurrection by the former, refutes also the denial of consciousness to those who have died, as held by the latter. Our Lord met the cavils of the Sadducees by showing that the words addressed to Moses at the bush, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," implied that these patriarchs were still living, and in covenant relations with God. What Annihilationists inform us is a state of entire unconsciousness, He pronounces to be a state of life. "For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living ; for all live unto Him."—Luke xx. 38. The testimony of Christ, therefore, is explicit that death, in the ordinary sense of that word, does not exclude the continued life of the soul apart from the body.

IV. We reject the Annihilationist view of the threatening in Eden, because it is not in harmony with the New Testament usage of the words LIFE and DEATH, particularly when they are associated with the mission of Christ. He is represented as coming to deliver us from death, and to impart to us life ; and it will not be questioned that the death from which He frees us is the curse entailed by sin, and the life He bestows is the opposite. That life, in the New Testament, is used to signify not merely conscious existence, but man's NORMAL EXISTENCE, a blessed life in fellowship with God, where all the fruits of His favor are enjoyed, is, we think, undeniable. Death, on the other hand, frequently stands for the opposite, AN ABNORMAL EXISTENCE OF ALIENATION FROM GOD, subject to all the penal evils which follow such an existence in this world and in the world to come.

When Christ says, " Let the dead bury their dead," Matt. viii. 22 it needs surely no proof that the dead who were capable of burying their dead, were not persons who had either laid aside the body, or who had ceased to be, but men who by reason of their abnormal state of alienation from God, were viewed as spiritually dead. It is equally apparent that it is in the same sense the word is applied to the church in Sardis, which had a name to live, and was dead,—Revelations iii. 1. John affirms, " he that loveth not his brother abideth in death," but he does not mean to say either that his earthly career was over, or that he had ceased to exist. The Apostle Paul expressly declares that " to be carnally minded is death,"—Romans viii. 6—and the reason which he gives for the assertion is not that it leads on, at some future time, to " the entire deprivation of being," but that it involves alienation of heart and life from God ; for in the next verse he adds, " Because the carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." This is what Paul regards as death. He even predicates death and life of the same person, at the same time,—" she that

liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth,"—1st Tim. 5, 6. That life is spoken of as imparted, in a sense exactly corresponding, is sufficiently evident from the statement, "To be spiritually minded is life and peace,"—Romans viii. 6; or from the declaration, "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins,"—Ephesians ii. 1.

It is important to observe that in many of the passages in the New Testament, where LIFE denotes a normal state of being in the fellowship, likeness, and enjoyment of God, it is directly associated with the mission of Christ, and the imparting of life, in this high sense, is set forth as the special object of His work. A few illustrations must suffice. John xvii. 23: "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou has given Him. And this is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou has sent." Observe here (1) That the end for which Christ was granted all power was that He might give eternal life to as many as were given Him. This life must be the opposite of the death which was introduced by sin. For Christ "came to destroy the works of the devil."—1st John iii. 8, and 1st John iv. 9. (2) That this life, in what Christ regards as its most essential aspect, is to know the only true God, and His Son, Jesus Christ. The life which our Redeemer came to impart, as defined by Himself, is not mere conscious being, but a normal state of being in communion with God, whose real glory is spiritually apprehended. It is to know God, and His Son, Jesus Christ.

John iii. 36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Observe here, (1) everlasting life is the present possession of the believer. He hath it. The present tense is used. It is not something bestowed merely at the resurrection. (2) The unbeliever shall not see life. If life here means a normal existence in the fellowship and enjoyment of God, the statement is

intelligible, but if it means mere existence, or conscious being, the assertion palpably contradicts facts. It may be imagined that, at some future period, the unbeliever shall cease to be, but that he now exists is as certain as any fact to which our senses bear witness. (3) But the nature of the death in which the unbeliever abides, and out of which he shall not pass, is explained by the last clause of the verse, "But the wrath of God abideth on him." He is in other words, subject to such penal evil as the divine displeasure may inflict. The death which is here implied is not the extinction of being, but an abnormal state of being, where man, estranged from God, abides under his frown. According to the Annihilationist interpretation of the various clauses of this verse, the whole may be fairly paraphrased, as follows: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting conscious existence, he that believeth not the Son shall not see conscious existence, but the wrath of God abideth on that which has "utterly and wholly ceased to be"!!! A theory which reduces such a text to nonsense is not of God.

The usage of the words life and death, to which we have adverted, pervades the New Testament, vide John v. 24; John vi. 47-51; Rom. vii. 9-13; Rom. vii. 24-15; Rom. viii. 6; Eph. ii. 1-6; Eph. iv. 18-19; Col. ii. 12-13; 1st John iii. 14.

V. We cannot accept the Annihilationists' view of the death threatened in Eden, because they do not themselves adhere to it, and cannot adhere to it, without coming into direct conflict with what they acknowledge to be the teaching of Scripture.

Those who embrace the phase of the doctrine of Conditional Immortality with which we are dealing, maintain (1) that the death threatened in Eden, and death in the primary and obvious sense of the word, are one and the same; and both imply the extinction of being. Those who have died have "utterly and wholly ceased to be." (2) That there shall be a resurrection of the entire race, and a general Judgment, where the wicked shall have such punishment inflicted on them, as will issue in their final annihilation.

It must be evident to any one who reflects that these positions are mutually destructive. We turn to Gen. v. 5, and we read, "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years : and he died." This is certainly death in its plain and obvious, in its primary sense. Then, of course, according to Mr. White, he "utterly and wholly ceased to be." He was, as another writer has it, resolved into his "elemental atoms." These existed before he was created, and they exist after he is dead, but, if death is the cessation of being, in no other sense did Adam exist after he died, than he existed before his creation. And, as "it has been appointed unto men oncc to die," it follows that all who have passed away from this earthly scene, have ceased to be : "they have returned to the earth, and have become as though they had not been."

But what has ceased to be cannot be raised up again. The rain drops of this year are not a resurrection of the rain drops of last year. The sounds which issue from the tolling bell to-day are no resurrection of the tones which came from it yesterday. A resurrection implies continuity of being. If Adam ceased to be, when he died, he cannot be raised up again. Another man may be created in his likeness, but the original Adam is gone for ever. When a great teacher, to whom Annihilationists pay some respect, would establish the resurrection of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and of the dead generally, he did so by proving that these patriarchs continued to live long after they were, in the primary sense of the word, dead. Math. xxii. 23-32. He knew that a creation is one thing, and a resurrection another.

But when we press Annihilationists with the consideration that, if death is the extinction of being, a resurrection is impossible, they meet us with the statement that, owing to the remedial system introduced by Christ, none of the human race will be annihilated, until after the General Judgment. White says "Hence there will be a resurrection of the unjust to give an account of the deeds done in the body ; and in order to permit of the reconstitution of the

identical transgressor, we hold that his spirit is preserved in its individuality from dissipation in the death of the man, to be conjoined again to the body at the day of Judgment." *Life in Christ* P. 130. Hudson informs us that "the soul is an entity not destroyed by the death of the body, however dependent it may be on embodiment for the purposes of active existence." *Debt and Grace*. P. 261.

This no doubt secures continuity of being, and renders a resurrection possible. But what becomes of death as the cessation of existence? What has befallen the primary meaning of death, the plain and obvious meaning, the meaning to which all dictionaries of all the languages in the world bear witness? What has become of that meaning which Adam gathered from observation of the animal system around him? It has surely been resolved into its elemental atoms, and has "become as though it had not been"!! The possibility of a resurrection is preserved, but it is by renouncing what we have been told, with wearisome reiteration, is the plain and obvious meaning of death, as the extinction of being.

It turns out that, although the Bible says Adam died, he is not dead. Abraham did not die. The rich man did not die, before he lifted up his eyes in Hades, being in torments. Lazarus did not die, before angels carried him to Abraham's bosom. And Jesus Christ did not die on Calvary. For not one of these, "utterly and wholly ceased to be."

Nay, we must go farther: we are forced to accept two remarkable generalizations, viz., (1) that from the beginning of the world down to our own day, not one human being has died, in the plain and obvious, in the primary sense of the word, and not one human being shall die, until after the General Judgment, and (2) that while the Bible speaks familiarly, on almost every page, of death, in what mankind regard as its ordinary and primary meaning, in no single instance, when speaking of man, does it use the word, Annihilationists themselves being witness, in the sense which they

assign to it in the threatening in Eden!! We are asked to believe that what the Bible everywhere calls death is in reality not death, in its plain and obvious meaning; and this too by men who insist that we must always follow the simple and primary meaning of the word!

The doctrine of Conditional Immortality is an attempt to unite incompatible elements, and the result is that the theory will harmonize neither with the Scriptures, nor with itself. If the annihilationist retains his definition of death, he must abandon, like the ancient Sadducees, the hope of a resurrection. And, if he retains the Christian hope of a resurrection, he must forsake his Sadducean view of death, as the cessation of being. The doctrine is self-destructive. For, if the dead have ceased to be, they cannot be raised up, and if they have not ceased to be, then, according to Annihilationists, they are not dead.

The time which we may occupy with one lecture, will not permit us to touch on many points raised in connection with the discussion of Conditional Immortality. Nor can I suppose it necessary. Those who have followed the discussion, must have seen that the points we have handled are so central that the whole question turns upon them; and that if the positions we have taken have been sustained, the doctrine of Conditional Immortality cannot be regarded as either true, or Scriptural. Our discussion has turned on the question whether death, as threatened in Eden, and spoken of throughout the Scriptures as the penalty of sin, is the extinction of being. After testing the methods by which it has been attempted to fasten this sense upon the threatening, and discovering their fallacious character, we have seen good cause to reject the annihilationist view of death. (a) Because it is based on an unfounded assumption, viz., that the primary and obvious sense of death is the cessation of existence. We have seen that this notion of death is not due to the primary force of the word, but to a materialistic philosophy, and that neither Hebrews, Greeks nor Romans, when

they spoke of those who had died, ever dreamed of asserting that they had ceased to be. (b) We have seen reason to reject this view of death, because it does not agree with the intimations in the record of the creation and fall, respecting the nature of man and the execution of the penalty. We have seen that when God made man, the record shows that he made him in his image: he gave him a spiritual nature like his own, a nature beyond the reach of the causes which produce decay and dissolution in the body, and fitted from its very character for an endless existence. The record also shows that man's being was twofold, the lower portion drawn from the dust, and the higher which bore the divine image, due to the inbreathing of the Almighty, and that it was the union of these two which constituted man a living soul, or a living creature. We have seen also that when the penalty fell on man, its first effects were seen in his higher nature, and the penalty, read in the light of the record, is not the extinction of being, but of conscious well-being.

(c) We have seen reason to reject the Annihilationist view of death, because the Scriptures teach that the soul retains a conscious existence after death. The existence of an unconscious entity will not meet the facts. A state of conscious happiness, or misery is required.

(d) We have seen that the view upon which we have been adverting, is not in harmony with the New Testament usage of the words LIFE and DEATH, particularly when they are associated with the mission of Christ. We have seen ample evidence that life signifies, not merely conscious existence, but man's NORMAL EXISTENCE, a blessed life in fellowship with God, where all the fruits of his favour are enjoyed, and DEATH stands for the opposite, an ABNORMAL EXISTENCE OF ALIENATION from God, subject to all the penal evils, which such alienation entails here, or hereafter. And we have seen that this is the life Christ declares he came to impart, and the death from which he delivers us.

(e) We have seen that the doctrine of Conditional Immortality is self destructive, and that we are compelled either to abandon the hope of a resurrection, or to renounce the assumption that death is the extinction of being. It is surely quite unnecessary to pursue any of the other converging lines of Scriptural evidence which go to show that Conditional Immortality has no foundation in the Word of God.

We are, however, frequently reminded, as if it were decisive of the whole question, that the Scriptures assert that "God only hath immortality." But those who urge this argument, should remember two things, viz., (1) that when these words are taken without restriction, they exclude Conditional Immortality, as truly as a natural immortality, bestowed by God on the entire race at creation, and continued to them in accordance with his unchanging purpose, and (2) when the words are taken with the Scriptural limitation, which would make them consistent with the doctrine of Conditional Immortality, they are equally in harmony with the ordinary doctrine of the Christian Church. All they teach is the unquestionable, but most important fact, that God has immortality IN AND OF HIMSELF. His is underived and independent, while that of the creature is derived and dependent. God's being, his wisdom, his holiness and all his perfections, belong to him in a way that nothing can possibly belong to the creature. Ex. iii. 14, Rom. xvi. 27, Rev. xv. 4 and 1st Tim. vi. 16. And from the beginning, the Christian Church has been careful to ascribe no immortality to man which is not derived from God, and dependent on his sustaining power.

We are also sometimes asked, whether it is not an abuse of language to force such words as "destroy" and "perish" to mean endless conscious misery. Those who remember that Christ came to save the LOST (Gr. destroyed) will not allow this question to shut them up to annihilation. Those who ask it, probably do not mean to impose on their readers. Through mental confusion, they

have only imposed on themselves. They do not perceive that two things may be inseparable, and quite consistent with each other, which are nevertheless not convertible. Light and heat are inseparable in a sun-beam, but it would be an abuse of language to make light mean heat. Sin and misery are inseparable in this world and in the next, yet it would be an abuse of language to make sin mean misery. And so, while the words "destroy and "perish," may not be terms convertible with endless conscious misery, they may be perfectly consistent with it, if the destruction referred to is of that which renders existence godlike, noble, useful, and desirable.

But those who teach that the wicked shall be annihilated through sufferings, which may be protracted for "ages of ages," should not forget that it is equally an abuse of language to make the words "perish" and "destroy" mean conscious misery for "ages of ages."

I cannot conclude, without expressing the conviction that the doctrine of Conditional Immortality degrades the entire conception of Christianity, to an extent that few who have embraced it, understand fully. If the penalty threatened on account of sin is the extinction of being, the life which Christ bestows is the opposite. It is the imparting to men endless conscious existence. Only this, and nothing more. Holiness of heart and life, cannot enter into the end. It may be a means to the end, or a condition, without which the end cannot be secured, but the end is mere conscious existence. When we open our New Testaments, we read that believers were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world that they should be holy. (Eph. i. 4.) We are told that our Redeemer is called Jesus, not because he saves his people from extinction of being, but because he saves them from their sins. (Matt. i. 21.) We are informed that he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (Tit. ii. 14.) We are assured that Christ loved the

Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it. (Eph. v. 25-26.) If there is one fact respecting redemption, which stands forth more prominently in the New Testament than another, it is that the grand end which Christ had in view, in subordination to the glory of God, was the holiness of his people, their complete restoration to the moral and spiritual image of God. But now we are asked to believe, that the grand end was that men might be preserved in existence. And to this holiness itself must be subordinated. This is a revolution and a degradation. The man who values a painting, not for the touches of the artist's skill and genius, which have made it instinct with thought and character, but for the square yards of its surface, has done in art, what will be effected for Christianity, when for that holiness of heart and life, which is the grand end of Christ's redeeming work, men shall learn to substitute the conscious existence of Conditional Immortality.



OPTIMISM.


CANON FARRAR'S "ETERNAL HOPE."

“The hypocrite’s hope shall perish—whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider’s web. When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth.”

“The righteous hath hope in his death.”

“Heavenly hope is all serene,
But earthly hope, how bright soe’er,
Still fluctuates o’er this changing scene,
As false and fleeting as ’tis fair.”

OPTIMISM.

HE "Eternal Hope"* of Canon Farrar has received much greater consideration than it deserves, chiefly on account of the prominent position of its author, and the important services he has rendered Christian literature, and the fact that such sentiments and opinions are tolerated in men of the highest standing, within the pale of the Church of England. Brilliant, impassioned and eloquent as all his writings are, a man who has no definite belief or convictions regarding the duration of future punishment, should be less lavish in hurling anathemas at others who are as sincere in their belief as Canon Farrar is in his doubts. Indeed it may be said with good reason, that the man who has nothing but a hope, and shrinks from accepting or rejecting the teachings of universalism on the one hand, and orthodoxy on the other hand, is not in the best position to brand those who differ from him as hard-hearted, cruel and revengeful. It has ever been found that those who accept without cavilling the teachings of Scripture regarding everlasting punishment, are those who, with tender pity and agonizing cries, bend over and beseech men to be reconciled to God. As

* "Eternal Hope — Five sermons preached in Westminster Abbey, November and December 1877, by the Rev. Frederick W. Farrar D. D., F. R. S., Canon of Westminster, Chaplain in ordinary to the Queen &c, &c.

Professor Phelps truly says : " Unbelievers in the doctrine of future punishment are never, on any very large scale, efficient supporters of missions. Why is this? Simply because they do not believe, as others do, that this is a lost world. Not believing this elementary fact of the situation, they unconsciously lower the whole redemptive work of Christ to the level and to the temperature of that negative."

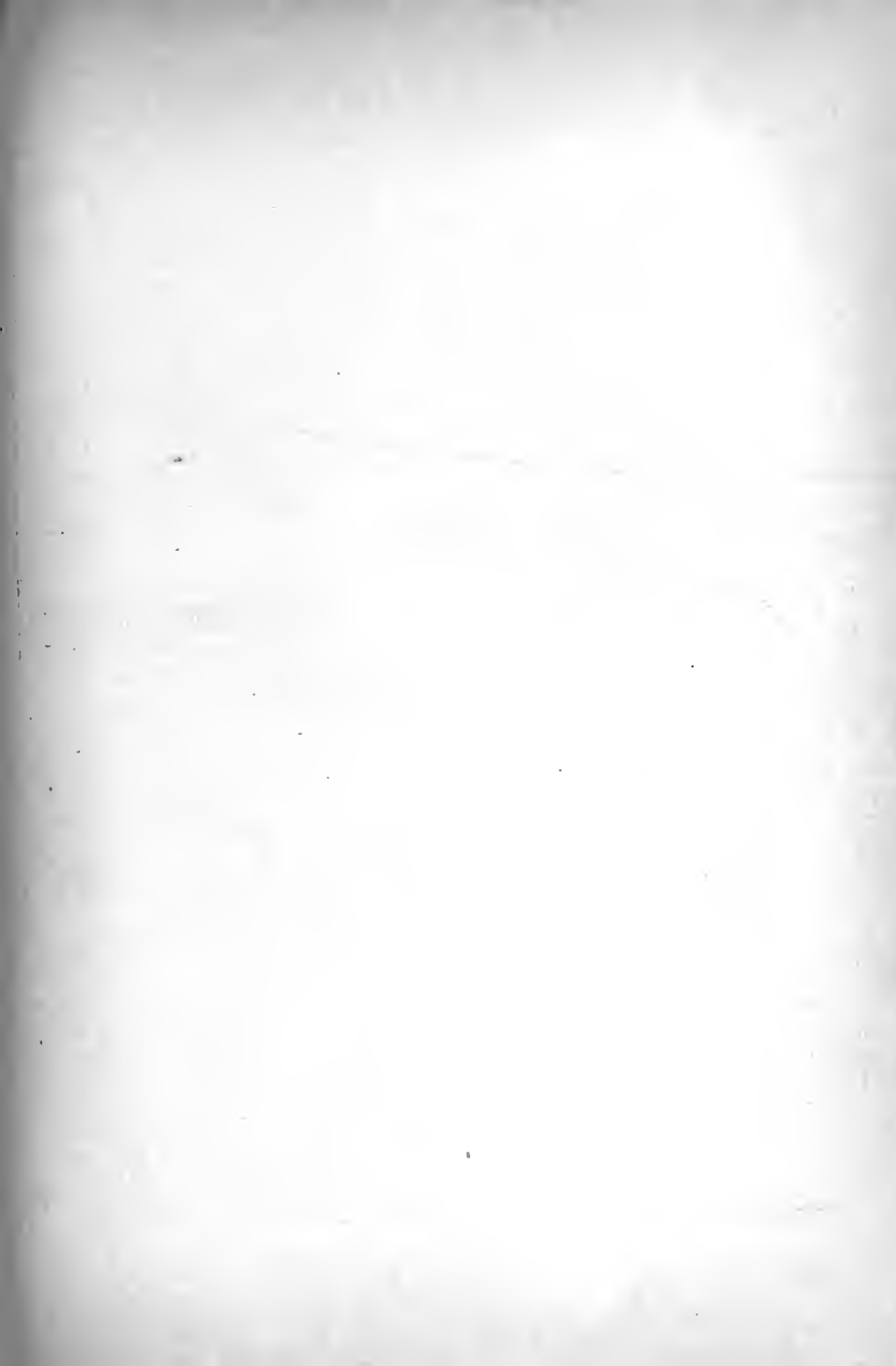
The views held by Canon Farrar have already been summarised ; affirming neither the universalist nor agnostic theories, he indulges in an eternal hope, and lifts up behind the darkness in the back ground, the hope that every winter will turn to spring.

In justice to such a distinguished man, it is only fair that they should be given, in his own words, and at greater length.

Universalism, which teaches that the infinite love of God cannot punish the creature throughout eternity, he cannot accept, inasmuch as however deeply he desires such to be the will of God, and thinks it in accord with mercy and justice that sinners should ultimately be restored and forgiven, it is not clearly revealed to us, and no one can estimate the power of the human will to reject the love of God.

Conditional Immortality or annihilationism he rejects, as having little basis in God's word. The almost universal and instinctive belief in the immortality of the soul, which is found in every age, is against it, and it leaves us with the awful conclusion, that God raises up the wicked from death, only that they may be tormented and finally destroyed.

Purgatory, which the Roman Catholic Church describes, as a fire, where the souls of the righteous are purified by punishment of some fixed period, that entrance may be given them into their eternal home, he rejects, not because he is averse to the acceptance of the truth which the word purgatory involves ; but because it is mixed up with a number of views, in which he cannot believe.





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As regards the evangelical and commonly received doctrines of everlasting punishment, he does not deny the doctrine of future retribution ; he believes that sin cannot be forgiven until it is repented of and forsaken, and that the doom of sin is both merciful and just. Thus far he agrees with the teachings of the church. But he rejects, (a) Physical torments (in which it need hardly be said, he does not stand alone) ; (b) The doctrine that future punishment is necessarily endless ; (c) That the vast mass of mankind will suffer such ; and (d) That this doom is passed irrevocably at the moment of death, upon all who die in a state of sin. (Only the second and fourth of these particulars are fundamental beliefs in the Protestant creed, as Canon Farrar well knows.)

Canon Farrar's condemnation of all who differ from him, is sadly inconsistent with the liberty accorded himself as a dignitary of the Church of England. He cannot see how any man who has a heart of pity can believe in the eternal duration of punishment ; he charges his ministerial brethren of the orthodox faith with evasion and endless modifications and sophistries, to get rid of teaching what they do not believe, although solemnly subscribed to in the confessions of their church. He ascribes the prevalence of infidelity to the revolt of an indignant conscience against the teaching of everlasting punishment as an essential part of the gospel, while at the same time he subscribes to the agnostic creed of "in memoriam" :—

" Behold, we know not anything,
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last to all,
And every winter turn to spring."

"The complacency of ignorance that takes itself for knowledge," he says, "may be ready with glaring and abhorrent pictures of fire and brimstone, and dilate upon the awfulness of the sufferings of the damned ; but those whose faith must have a broader basis than the halting reconciliation of ambiguous and opposing texts ; who grieve at the dark shadows flung by human theologians

athwart God's light ; who believe that reason, and conscience, and experience, as well as Scripture, are books of God, which must have a direct voice in those great decisions, will not be so ready to snatch God's thunder into their own wretched and feeble hands, and undeterred by the base and feeble notion that virtue would be impossible without the horrors of an endless hell, will declare their hope and trust that even after death, through the infinite mercy of God, many of the dead shall be alive again, and the lost be found." Finally he insinuates that those who believe in the final restitution of all things, and the ingathering of both wicked and good into heaven, are the most God-like :—

“ The wish that, of the living whole,
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have,
The likest God within the soul.”

Canon Farrar, in his eagerness to show the awful cruelty of those who believe in eternal punishment, draws pictures of hell, and uses language, which he knows well are never used at the present day, and which belong to an age when the modes of thought and speech were radically different from that of modern times. The conception of hell, as held by orthodox Christians, he describes as “ a vast and burning prison, in which the souls of millions and millions writhe and shriek forever, tormented in a flame that never will be quenched ”—as “ a great lake or liquid globe of fire, in which the wicked shall be overwhelmed, which shall always be in tempest in which they shall be tossed to and fro, having no rest day nor night, vast billows of fire continually rolling over their heads, of which they shall ever be full of a quick sense, within and without, their eyes, their tongues, their hands, their feet, their loins, and their vitals shall forever be full of a glowing, melting fire, enough to melt the very rocks and elements—all this not for ten millions of ages, but for ever and ever, without end at all.” That such language has been used, all conversant with the literature of this sub-

ject will admit, but that any number have "exulted in such views of everlasting punishment," and not rather mourned, what seemed to them the fatal necessity for believing them, is a statement wholly unsupported by facts. It is not after such a manner that the great Nonconformist divines have held and taught it, nor has it ever been held as he describes it by the highest class of theologians in the Church of England, and even these frightful pictures of everlasting punishment by Tertullian and others, quoted by Canon Farrar, are not one whit more vivid and repellant than his own, when describing the horrors of delirium tremens in the drunkard. "Have you ever seen—if not, may you never see—a young man suffering from delirium tremens? Have you ever heard him describe its horrors—horrors such as not even Dante imagined in the most harrowing scenes of his "Inferno"—the blood red suffusion of the eyes quenched suddenly in darkness—the myriads of burning, whirling rings of concentric fire—millions of foul insects seeming to weave their damp, soft webs about the face—the bloated, hideous, ever changing faces of their visions—the feeling as if a man were falling, falling, falling endlessly, into a fathomless abyss. This is the goal to which intemperance leads—as thou lovest thine own soul, it is better for thee to enter into life blind and maimed rather than cast thyself into this Gehenna of Aeonian fire—this depth of disgrace and of corruption, where the worm of the drunkard dieth not, and his fire is not quenched." Now, no one finds fault with Canon Farrar in using such methods, to deter men from the terrible results of intemperance. If one drunkard can be reclaimed by the use of such dark coloring, it is fully warranted. But why should Canon Farrar rebuke earnest men, who in the very same manner seek to reclaim their fellows from eternal misery, towards which intemperance is one of the many gateways? The Scriptures indulge in no such "ghastly" modes of warning men to flee from the wrath to come. "Their warnings are the more impressive because the words are few and simple, severe in their calm grandeur of earnest

caution ; outer darkness, weeping, mourning and gnashing of teeth." Surely it were more seemly and more befitting the dignity of the scholar, for him to prove that the punishment of the wicked is not eternal, without regard to the varied coloring given to such punishment, from age to age!

What then does Canon Farrar's optimistic theory amount to? To the question, what shall be the condition of the impenitent dead, what does he reply? Absolutely nothing. He indulges a hope, but he gives no valid scriptural grounds for his hope. While repudiating controversy, he does all he can to teach men to reject and even detest, one of the fundamental articles of Christian belief. He argues as if the universe ought to have been governed on the principle, that its ruler never would inflict pain upon any creature of his hand, and that eternal punishment is antagonistic to the mercy and justice of God. Surely one who denies with such bitterness the teachings of Christendom, and casts dishonor upon good men, who present the torments of Hell in terms uncouth to ears polite, should be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in him. Endless punishment he cannot find in Scripture ; he thinks it may mean an intermediate, a remedial, a metaphorical, a terminable retribution ; he shakes off the hideous incubus of atrocious conceptions, attached to the commonly received doctrines of future misery. But what positive teaching does he give us? He dare not dogmatize as to forgiveness beyond the grave ; he cannot believe in purgatory, or conditional immortality, or universalism, although he speaks of the latter with approval. He affirms that God has given us no clear and decisive revelation, as to the final condition of those who die in sin, and only hopes that the vast majority of the lost may be found. Souls that in this world have failed to secure forgiveness " may entertain hope, though they may have to be purified beyond the grave." His creed may be summed up in these words ; "The destruction of the work of the devil in the universe by the hand of God ; sin withered under the curse of the

souls that were once its victims, the devil spoiled of his dark dominion by the hand of omnipotent love ; Hell destroyed and Christ triumphant, gathering the spoils of his cross and passion here and in all worlds."

That there are certain popular preachers and theologians, who sympathize with Canon Farrar is well known. In no case, however, do they give us anything more explicit, than that of the sermons under review. The assertion of "The hope," is indeed so qualified, as to indicate the baselessness of the theory alike as regards reason and Scripture. A recent candidate appearing before a New England congregational council for examination, qualifies his acceptance of the orthodox creed in the following terms:—(1) The Judge of all the earth will do right. (2) No soul will be saved except on the basis of conversion and regeneration, (3) No soul will be lost until all the resources of divine love consistent with human freedom have been exhausted. He said unqualifiedly that he had no hope to extend to any sinner beyond the moment that salvation was offered him. While he declined to make any dogmatic statement concerning whether any opportunity might be offered of repentance after death, he distinctly and emphatically said that he had no hope to offer to any of such an opportunity, and that he preached the duty of immediate repentance, under peril of being eternally lost. Dr. Donald McLeod, Editor of "Good Words," writing on the future destiny of the wicked, says he has no difficulty in rejecting the popular conception of the future punishment which represents infinite and eternal torment, as the penalty fixed by God for some definite act or acts done in this life. But the real difficulty, he adds, refers not to the eternity of punishment but to the continuance of sin. We see the sinner growing worse in this world, in spite of every deterring influence. Is it not conceivable that such a career may continue? Having resisted God for so long, he may do so for ever. In this world we are met by too many terrible facts to warrant our constructing, on merely an-

tecedent reasoning, the vision of an absolutely happy universe. Nevertheless, while recognizing the difficulties that beset the subject, Dr. Macleod thinks we are permitted to fall back with reverent hearts on the "larger hope" of "restitution of all things." At the same time, he feels that assertions are made on this dark question which betray great lack of thoughtfulness. "The difficulties that surround it cannot, unfortunately, be swept away at the bidding of mere generous sentiment."

In much stronger terms, as might be expected, but still less satisfactory, Mr. Beecher, speaking of the myriads of men who are living without God, and without hope in the world, thus delivers himself:

"If, now, you tell me, that this great mass of men, because they had not the knowledge of God, went to heaven, I say that the inroad of such a vast amount of mud swept into heaven would be destructive of its purity; I cannot accept that view. If, on the other hand, you say that they went to hell, then you make an infidel of me; for I do swear, by the Lord Jesus Christ, by his groans, by his tears, and by the wounds in his hands and in his side, that I will never let go of the truth, that the nature of God is to suffer for others, rather than to make them suffer. If I lose everything else, I will stand on the sovereign idea that God so loved the world that he gave his own Son to die for it rather than it should die. Tell me that back of Christ there is a God, who for unnumbered centuries has gone on creating men and sweeping them like dead flies—nay, like living ones—into hell, is to ask me to worship a being as much worse than the conception of any mediæval devil as can be imagined; but I will not worship the devil, though he should come dressed in royal robes, and sit on the throne of Jehovah. But it is not true—the Scripture does not teach it, and the whole sense of human justice revolts at it—that for the myriads who have been swept out of this life without the light and knowledge of the divine love there is reserved an eternity of suffering. In that mystery of

the divine will and work of which the apostle speaks, in the far-off dispensation of the fullness of time, there is some other solution than this nightmare of a mediæval theology. But has not God justice also? And is he not of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? Yes. And the distinction between right and wrong are as eternal as God himself. The relation between sin and retribution belongs not to the mere temporal condition of things; it inheres in the divine constitution, and is for all eternity. THE PROSPECT FOR ANY MAN WHO GOES OUT OF THIS LIFE RESOLUTE IN SIN MAY WELL MAKE HIM TREMBLE FOR HIMSELF, AND MAY WELL MAKE US TREMBLE FOR HIM!"

"Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing," may fitly be applied to such declamation. It is not only entirely unsatisfactory, but is entirely out of place when discussing such a momentous theme.

It is not wonderful, then, that the most learned and pious divines in Europe have denounced such endeavors to unsettle men's minds, without giving them anything like presumptive evidence of the theory enunciated. As has been well said, it is not wise to leave huge vacant spaces, like the wastes within the walls of Rome and Constantinople, in men's minds, where once some definite notions as to one of the most momentous topics which can exercise thought, were held. But this is what Canon Farrar has done. There is no difficulty in understanding what he denies, but it is hard to discover what he asserts or believes. He ridicules the poetry and parables and metaphors of Scripture, when used in support of the doctrine of everlasting punishment, but when isolated texts can be wrenched from their plain contextual meaning, and when tradition favors his views, he has no scruples to use them. His teaching is destructive—to pull down—to undermine faith in the most tremendous realities of the future. It may not be Universalism in so many words, but for all practical purposes the difference is so little, it may be regarded as essentially the same.

Now let us ask, what is the benefit of such a vague eternal hope, when the minister of religion leaves his pulpit, and stands face to face with some anxious soul, which is soon to appear before its Maker? When the mind, "diseased with sin's hot fever," cries out piteously for something solid to rest upon, apart from the mere conjectures of any living man—whether is it wiser to hold up before the vision of the dying man this fond dream of universal blessedness, or rather—while not holding back, nor toning down "the terrors of the Lord"—to press home the question—"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation," affirming at the same time—that ere we leave the world, the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse from all sin, that he that believeth is not condemned, and that even the would-be-suicide and murderer, who accepts a Saviour, shall be saved?

In regard to the old fashioned method of presenting the doctrine of eternal punishment, which Canon Farrar so severely denounces, we in the main agree with him. While no man dare rashly say what kind of torment is in store for the impenitent—for this is one of the secrets which belong to God—it is not well to present pictures to the imagination that are not fully warranted by Scripture. God's Word, while clearly teaching the indestructibility of the soul, as against the teachings of Materialism and Annihilationism, and giving, as we think, little ground for believing that men who despise mercy here, shall repent and be saved hereafter, does not certainly seek to drive men, without the consent of their reason and will, to a change of conduct. The obedience of love is much more noble than anything that is extorted by mere terror. As has been well said, to paralyze a man's mind with fear at impending danger is not the best way of enabling him to avoid it, and to draw tragic pictures of hell is not the best way to keep men from falling into it.

In his reply to the many pungent criticisms that followed the publication of "Eternal hope," Canon Farrar attempts to justify his position. We look in vain, however, for anything more satisfactory or positive than in the original work. He complains

that the circumstances under which his book was published have been overlooked or ignored. It did not profess to be a formal treatise. "The main part of it consisted of sermons, written under the difficulty of interrupted leisure and uninterrupted anxieties ; written a day or two before they were delivered ; written to be addressed to large miscellaneous audiences ; written lastly under the influence of emotions which had been deeply stirred by circumstances, and had taken the strongest possible hold of my imagination and memory. While I was musing, the fire burned, and it was only at the last that I spake with my tongue. It is not thus that I should have addressed a small audience of learned theologians. It is not thus that I should have addressed ANY audience but one which for the time being I could regard as my own. Expressing the same convictions I should have formulated them with more deliberate completeness."

But it was not the setting of the sermons, so much as the recklessness and daring, with which the profoundest convictions of the Christian world were assailed, that startled and shocked the religious feelings. Nor is there any necessity for excusing his first and hurried preparations, if after the lapse of years, in the calm leisure of his study, he still maintains his theory without qualification, against the views of others. His more recent utterances are these :

"I am NOT a Universalist. I do not mean that I condemn the doctrine as heretical or untenable ; or that I do not feel (can there be such a wretch as not to feel?) a longing, yearning DESIRE that it might be true. But I dare not say that it MUST be true, because, as I intimated in my book, no man has ever explained the present existence of evil, and no man has ever sounded or can know the abysmal deeps of personality or 'the marvel of the everlasting will.'"

I have advocated the ancient and Scriptural doctrine of an interval between death and doom, during which state—whether it be regarded as purgatorial, as disciplinary, as probational, or as retri-

butive—whether the æon to which it belongs be long or short—we see no Scriptural or other reason to deny the possible continuance of God's gracious work of redemption and santification for the souls of men ; and I have added that I can find nothing in Scripture or elsewhere, to prove that the ways of God's salvation necessarily terminate with earthly life. I have never denied—nay, I have endeavored to support and illustrate—the doctrine of Retribution, both in this life and the life to come. I have never said—as I am slanderously reported to have said—that there is no “Hell,” but only (and surely this should have been regarded as a self-evident proposition) that “Hell” must mean what those words mean of which it is the professed translation ; and that those words—Hades, Gehenna, Tartarus—mean something much less inconceivable, much less horribly hopeless, than what “Hell” originally meant, and than what it has come to connote in current religious teaching. I have not maintained Universalism, in spite of much apparent sanction for such a hope in the unlimited language of St. Paul, because I did not wish to dogmatize respecting things uncertain, and because I wished to give full weight to every serious consideration which may be urged against the acceptance of such a hope. I have earnestly maintained that no soul can be saved while it continues in sin, or saved by any means except the efficacy of Christ's redemption. So far from derogating from the necessity of that awful sacrifice—as has been so often and so strangely asserted—I know of literally nothing which is so infinitely calculated to enhance our sense of its blessedness, or our love to Him who made it, as the hope that its power will be unexhausted even beyond the grave.

Seeing that repentance is always possible in life—seeing that so long as life lasts any man MAY become good—the Law of Continuity was one of the very grounds on which I based the doctrine of Eternal Hope. If the greatness of God's mercies lasts till the grave, the Law of Continuity strengthens our hope that it will not be for

ever cut short by the accident of death. If the efficacy of Christ's atonement lasts till death, the Law of Continuity helps to strengthen our conviction, that the love of God cannot be the one Divine power in the universe which, for man at any rate, is paralyzed by the hand of death."

Among the many able and scholarly replies to Canon Farrar, by English divines, that of Dr. Allon, of London, is worthy of condensation. It is as follows :—

"The accretions which ignorant literalism, poets and painters, and above all, perhaps, priestcraft, have clustered around the root-idea of the retribution of sin in the future life, may be pulverized by a more spiritual conception ; and yet it may remain true that the retributive sequences of sin are irreversible, and even unending. The argument which is to decide the question must deal not so much with the ignorant and popular perversion, nor with the imaginative forms of the painter, the poet and the rhetorician, nor with the metaphorical forms of Scripture representation even, but with the root idea of retribution, and with the exact evidence that revelation, the moral sense, philosophy, and experience may furnish.

Thus reduced, it will hardly be maintained that the subjective consciousness of a man, however elevated and refined by pure religious feeling, is competent to demonstrate—(1) Whether the sequences of sin will in the future life be reversible? (2) Whether, if they are not, they are terminable? For all information concerning the facts and the characteristics of the life hereafter, whether affecting the saved or the lost, we are necessarily dependent upon the testimony of revelation, whatever the verifying functions of our own reason and moral faculty. Naturally, therefore, our first inquiry is concerning the testimony of Christ, who hath "brought life and immortality to light."

That the conception of God as an Almighty being, inflicting eternal torment upon his creatures by acts of material punishment, such as the mediæval Church represented, contradicts such

elementary feelings, is fully conceded. Good men have had forcibly to subdue this feeling, to reason it down by logic, or to determine to believe in spite of it, because they deemed it authoritatively taught. Almost by common consent, however, men are renouncing traditional beliefs in the material interpretations put upon the Scripture symbolism of retribution, and are inquiring concerning the moral ideas and processes which these represent.

Is there, then, in our moral nature, when purest and most devout, anything to which the idea of finality, as we have suggested it, is in moral contradiction?

So far as equity goes, accepting the law of retribution as graduated by the Apostle, in Romans ii.—viz., that men's responsibility, and therefore, their culpability, is limited by their light and their personal ability, their opportunity and their circumstances—the moral sense cannot object. It is a rule of equity universally applicable.

Looking at our Lord's sayings broadly and popularly, and with such a degree of deference to possible meanings of words as popular teaching may admit, I cannot resist the conclusion that in the most absolute manner He affirmed and intended to affirm the finality of religious conditions after death. It would do violence to common sense, to intellectual respect, and to moral feeling, to suppose that his words conveyed a meaning diametrically opposite to that which he intended—that when He meant to say that retribution was terminable, He was understood to mean that it was unending. He would surely have corrected a misapprehension so false, on such a subject. Undeveloped meanings there necessarily were, but these are vastly different from contradictory meanings.

Due allowance being made for rhetoric and poetry in certain passages, no authority can be drawn from Apostolic writings for any theory of Universalism or of a second probation.

Notwithstanding, therefore, the strongest predisposition to optimist views concerning this great and fearful problem, I feel com-

elled to the conclusion that the testimony both of Scripture and of the moral judgment is in favor of the finality of moral condition after death. From neither does the theory of a second probation in another life, under other and more favorable conditions, derive any support. Against the theory that the ultimate issue in the conflict between good and evil will be the necessary salvation of every individual moral being, the presumption seems immense. It is contrary to all experience and to all analogy, it puts unauthorized limits upon human freedom, and it restricts unwarrantably the ways and issues of God's holy love."

Those who have read Canon Farrar's "Life of Christ," cannot fail to observe how materially he has changed his views since he wrote that fascinating volume. In chapter 44 of that work, alluding to the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, he says: "This constant reference to life as a time of probation, and to the great judgment, when the one word, 'Come' or 'Depart,' as uttered by the Judge, should decide all controversies and all questions forever, naturally turned the thoughts of many listeners to these solemn subjects." Again in speaking of Christ's answer to the question, "Are there few that be saved?" He says: "Since the efforts, the woeful efforts, the erring efforts, (to enter the straight gate) of many fail; since the day will come when the door shall be shut, and it shall be forever too late to enter there; since no impassioned appeal shall then admit; since some of those who, in their spiritual pride, thought that they best knew the Lord, shall hear the awful repudiation, 'I know you not'—strive ye to be of those who enter in." Again, speaking of Christ's second coming, he says: "For though till then all the various fellowships of toil or friendliness should continue, that night would be one of fearful and final separations!" And he adds: "The disciples were startled and terrified by words of such solemnity."

To close these remarks on Canon Farrar's views, surely in a matter fraught with such tremendous consequences of weal or woe

to the human race, it is not by passionate unreasonable appeals to men's feelings, or the use of florid rhetoric that holds up to scorn, what has been the faith of christendom for centuries, that truth is to be reached and such a question settled? To dwell upon the love of God exclusively, without regard to His holiness and justice is to make a false representation of the Deity.

“A God all mercy, is a God unjust.”

No reader of history, but must acknowledge that God in past ages has by terrible doings punished evil. What he will do with sin in the future, it is not for man to predict. Those who flippantly assert that God cannot exact the penalty of sin throughout all eternity, ought to be able as easily to explain why evil exists at all. The origin of sin and its permission for so long a time is the mystery of the universe. All that we know concerning it is found in the word of God, where alone are to be found any statements concerning the future condition of the unsaved. Appeals to reason or moral sense leave us in utter uncertainty. Those who are transgressors of the law whether human or divine, are not the best judges of the justice of the decrees that condemn them. To set the human creature above his Maker, and question His right to punish, is to reverse the order of things—dethrone the Almighty, and deny His sovereign right to the correction and control of His creatures as he sees fit. “Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast Thou made me thus? What if God is willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that he might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He had afore prepared unto glory.”

Canon Farrar seeks to throw contempt on the generally received opinion of Christians by adding to their creed, what I trust very few believe, that the vast majority of mankind shall be lost. How

the heathen are to be dealt with, in view of their ignorance of the Gospel of Christ, is a question that has never yet been categorically answered by the deepest thinkers of the age. This much we know, that merciful allowance will be made for such as have not enjoyed the light of christianity—that according to privilege and opportunity shall be their accountability and deserts. “He that knew not his Lord’s will and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes.” It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for nominal Christians who reject the truth.

Belief in the doctrine of endless punishment by no means consigns the majority of our race to eternal death. On the contrary, the generally accepted opinion of the Christian Church, favors the ultimate salvation of a very large proportion of the human family. While there seems to be no hope held out for such as despise offered mercy, there are many reasons in harmony with revelation, that lead us to conclude that a number that no man can number, shall at last be gathered into heaven. When we think of the many generations who lived and died before the advent, and the partial diffusion of the gospel since ; and still further, that those who die in infancy or who are not gifted with ordinary capacity are saved without any instrumentality on the part of man ; “we dare not fix any definite amount of knowledge and profession as indispensable to salvation, or pronounce that the area of salvation is co-extensive with those portions of the globe where knowledge has been enjoyed, and where the truth of God has taken effect upon the heart.” Rather we may hope that large numbers of souls, beyond all human calculation, shall be drawn to Christ. Assuredly the Judge of all the earth shall do right. His justice shall be amply vindicated in that day, when he turns the wisdom of men into foolishness, and confounds the vain imagination of their hearts. No mere hope then, in the mercy of God, shall stay the pronouncing of sentence and the infliction of doom.

If there be any readers of these pages, who have nothing more than "a hope" that God will in some way condone unforgiven iniquity in the future world, I beg them to seek some better opiate to soothe the unrestful and persistent demands of the soul after peace. Conjectures, surmises, speculations, as to what may be, or might be, ought never to be preached. We dare not preach a gospel which says in effect—no matter what you do now, surely God, in his infinite mercy, will, at some time future, rectify all mistakes. For if men are in no danger of being lost for ever, they do not need a Saviour. If there is a hope, however slender, that God will relax the penalties of his moral government, and that at last, independent of present conduct, the good and bad alike shall be restored to His image, we may as well give up the whole scheme of redemption as an idle fable and nothing more. The mass of men need no excuse for continuing in sin.

Every utterance from the pulpit that weakens the sanctions of virtue, and leads men to continue lives of sensuality, profligacy and dishonesty in the hope of future pardon, and escape from consequences in some intermediate state beyond the grave, is eagerly read. If there is the least doubt as to the certainty of punishment they will take advantage of it. Better far then that we persuaded men to dread sin, more than the penalty. Had they correct views of the heinousness and guilt of sin, they would not cry out against endless punishment, or characterize the doctrine as inconsistent with the justice of God. Instead of vain efforts to believe what conscience denies, they would accept with glad and simple faith, the all sufficient remedy provided for sin. If the Bible contains condemnatory language, it is no less replete with appeals and entreaties. "In Christ incarnate, the crucified, risen and glorified one, we see God lifting the red thunderbolt of His wrath, and holding it before men and angels, transformed into the blazing sun of His love." As the well known hymn says:

"Not to condemn the sons of men ;
 The son of God appeared,
 No weapons in his hand are seen,
 Nor voice of terror heard.

 He came to raise our fallen state,
 And our lost hopes restore,
 Faith leads us to the mercy seat,
 And bids us fear no more."

This is our "eternal hope," that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked and wills not that any should perish. Believing this, we live forever. In the words of the poet :

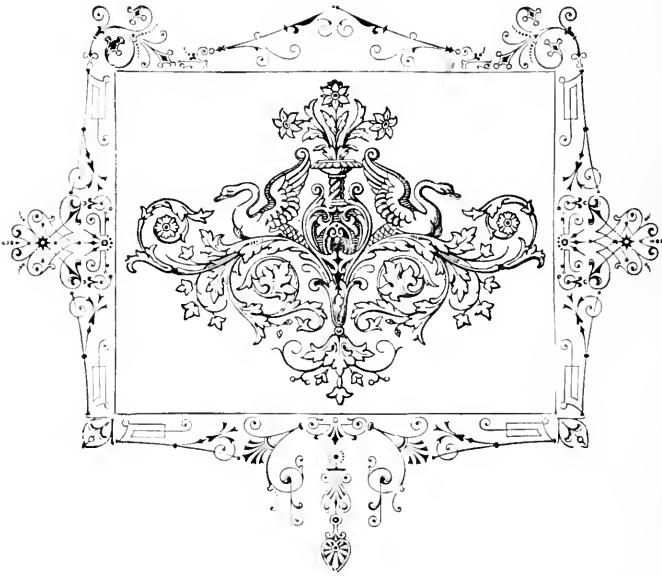
"We would be melted by the heat of love,
 By flames far fiercer than are blown to prove,
 And purge the silver ore adulterate."

W. W. F. Tomigo

Minneapolis, Minn.

Got married on Sept-23rd 1893
 By Rev Jas. P. Ball.

London




THE CERTAINTY OF ENDLESS PUNISHMENT,
(With special reference to the views of CANON FARRAR,)

BY THE

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 HE chief objections to the doctrine of endless punishment are not Biblical but speculative. The great majority of students and exegetes find the tenet in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. Davidson, the most learned of English rationalistic critics, explicitly acknowledges that "if a specific sense be attached to words, never-ending misery is enunciated in the Bible. On the presumption that one doctrine is taught, it is the eternity of hell torments. Bad exegesis may attempt to banish it from the New Testament Scriptures, but it is still there, and expositors who wish to get rid of it, as Canon Farrar does, injure the cause they have in view by misrepresentation. It must be allowed that the New Testament record not only makes Christ assert everlasting punishment, but Paul and John. But the question should be looked at from a larger platform than single texts—in the light of God's attributes, and the nature of the soul. The destination of man, and the Creator's infinite goodness, conflicting as they do with everlasting punishment, remove it from the sphere of rational belief. If provision be

not made in revelation for a change of moral character after death, it is made in reason. Philosophical considerations must not be set aside even by Scripture." (Last Things, pp. 133, 136, 151.)

So long, then, as the controversy is carried on by an appeal to the Bible, the defender of endless retribution has comparatively an easy task. But when the appeal is made to human feeling and sentiment, or to ratiocination, the demonstration requires more effort. And yet the doctrine is not only Biblical but rational. It is defensible on the basis of sound ethics and pure reason. Nothing is requisite for its maintenance but the admission of three cardinal truths of theism, namely, that there is a just God; that man has free will; and that sin is voluntary action. If these are denied, there can be no defence of endless punishment—or of any other doctrine, except atheism and its corollaries.

The Bible and all the creeds of Christendom affirm man's free agency in sinning against God. The transgression which is to receive the endless punishment is voluntary. Sin, whether it be inward inclination or outward act, is unforced human agency. This is the uniform premise of Christian theologians of all schools. Endless punishment supposes the liberty of the human will, and is impossible without it. Could a man prove that he is necessitated in his murderous hate and his murderous act, he would prove, in this very proof, that he ought not to be punished for it, either in time or eternity. Could Satan really convince himself that his moral character is not his own work, but that of God, or of nature, his remorse would cease, and his punishment would end. Self-determination runs parallel with hell.

Guilt, then, is what is punished, and not misfortune. Free and not forced agency is what feels the stroke of justice. What, now, is this stroke? Everything depends upon the right answer to this question. The fallacies and errors of Universalism find their nest and hiding place at this point. The true definition of punishment detects and excludes them,

Punishment is neither chastisement nor calamity. Men suffer calamity, says Christ, not because they or their parents have sinned, "but that the works of God should be made manifest in them." John ix. 3. Chastisement is inflicted in order to develop a good but imperfect character already formed. "The Lord loveth whom he chasteneth," and "what son is he whom the earthly father chasteneth not?" Hebrews xii. 6, 7. Punishment, on the other hand, is retribution, and is not intended to do the work of either calamity or chastisement, but a work of its own. And this work is to vindicate law, to satisfy justice. Punishment, therefore, is wholly retrospective in its primary aim. It looks back at what has been done in the past. Its first and great object is requital. A man is hung for murder, principally and before all other reasons because he has voluntarily transgressed the law forbidding murder. He is not hung from a prospective aim, such as his own moral improvement, or for the purpose of deterring others from committing murder. The remark of the English judge to the horse-thief, in the days when such theft was capitally punished, "You are not hung because you have stolen a horse, but that horses may not be stolen," has never been regarded as eminently judicial. It is true that personal improvement may be one consequence of the infliction of penalty. But the consequence must not be confounded with the purpose. CUM HOC NON ERGO PROPTER HOC. The criminal may come to see and confess that his crime deserves its punishment, and in genuine unselfish penitence may take sides with the law, approve its retribution, and go into the presence of the Final Judge, relying upon that great atonement which satisfies eternal justice for sin; but even this, the greatest personal benefit of all, is not what is aimed at in man's punishment of the crime of murder. For should there be no such personal benefit as this attending the infliction of the human penalty, the one sufficient reason for inflicting it still holds good, namely, the fact that the law has been violated, and demands the death of the offender for this reason simply and

only. "The notion of ill-desert and punishableness," says Kant (*Praktische Vernunft*, 151. Ed. Rosenkranz), "is necessarily implied in the idea of voluntary transgression ; and the idea of punishment excludes that of happiness in all its forms. For though he who inflicts punishment may, it is true, also have a benevolent purpose, to produce by the punishment some good effect upon the criminal, yet the punishment must be justified, first of all, as pure and simple requital and retribution : that is, as a kind of suffering that is demanded by the law without any reference to its prospective beneficial consequences ; so that even if no moral improvement and no personal advantage should subsequently accrue to the criminal, he must acknowledge that justice has been done to him, and his experience is exactly conformed to his conduct. In every instance of punishment, properly so called, justice is the very first thing, and constitutes the essence of it. A benevolent purpose and a happy effect, it is true, may be conjoined with punishment ; but the criminal cannot claim this as his due, and he has no right to reckon upon it. All that he deserves is punishment, and this is all that he can expect from the law which he has transgressed." These are the words of as penetrating and ethical a thinker as ever lived.

Neither is it true, that the first and principal aim of punishment is the protection of society and the public good. This, like the personal benefit in the preceding case, is only secondary and incidental. The public good is not a sufficient reason for putting a man to death ; but the satisfaction of law is. This view of penalty is most disastrous in its influence, as well as false in its ethics. For if the good of the public is the true reason and object of punishment, the amount of it may be fixed by the end in view. The criminal may be made to suffer more than his crime deserves, if the public welfare, in suppressing this particular kind of crime, requires it. His personal desert and responsibility not being the one sufficient reason for his suffering, he may be made to suffer as much as the public safety requires. It was this theory of penalty that

led to the multiplication of capital offenses. The prevention of forgery, it was once claimed in England, required that the forger should forfeit his life, and upon the principle that punishment is for the public protection, and not for strict and exact justice, an offence against human property was expiated by human life. Contrary to the Noachic statute, which punishes only murder with death, this statute weighed out man's life-blood against pounds, shillings, and pence. On this theory, the number of capital offenses became very numerous and the criminal code very bloody. So that, in the long run, nothing is kinder than exact justice. It prevents extremes in either direction—either that of indulgence or that of cruelty.

This theory breaks down, from whatever point it be looked at. Suppose that there were but one person in the universe. If he should transgress the law of God, then, upon the principle of expediency as the ground of penalty, this solitary subject of moral government could not be punished—that is, visited with a suffering that is purely retributive, and not exemplary or corrective. His act has not injured the public, for there is no public. There is no need of his suffering as an example to deter others, for there are no others. But upon the principle of justice, in distinction from expediency, this solitary subject of moral government could be punished.

The vicious ethics of this theory of penalty expresses itself in the demoralizing maxim, "It is better that ten guilty men should escape than that one innocent man should suffer." But this is no more true than the converse, "It is better that ten innocent men should suffer than that one guilty man should escape." It is a choice of equal evil and equal injustice. In either case alike, justice is trampled down. In the first supposed case, there are eleven instances of injustice and wrong; and in the last supposed case, there are likewise eleven instances of injustice and wrong. Unpunished guilt is precisely the same species of evil with punished

innocence. To say, therefore, that it is better that ten guilty persons should escape than that one innocent man should suffer, is to say that it is better that there should be ten wrongs than one wrong against justice.

The theory that punishment is retributive, honors human nature, but the theory that it is merely expedient and useful degrades it. If justice be the true ground of penalty, man is treated as a person; but if the public good is the ground, he is treated as a chattel or a thing. When suffering is judicially inflicted because of the intrinsic gravity and real demerit of crime, man's free will and responsibility are recognized and put in the foreground; and these are his highest and distinguishing attributes. The sufficient reason for his suffering is found wholly within his own person, in the exercise of self-determination. He is not seized by the magistrate and made to suffer for a reason extraneous to his own agency, and for the sake of something lying wholly outside of himself—namely, the safety and happiness of others—but because of his own act. He is not handled like a brute or an inanimate thing that may be put to good use; but he is recognized as a free and voluntary person, who is punished not because punishment is expedient and useful, but because it is just and right; not because the public safety requires it, but because he owes it. The dignity of the man himself, founded in his lofty but hazardous endowment of free will, is acknowledged.

Supposing it, now, to be conceded, that future punishment is retributive in its essential nature, it follows that it must be endless from the nature of the case. For suffering must continue as long as the reason for it continues. In this respect, it is like law, which lasts as long as its reason lasts: *RATIONE CESSANTE, CESSAT IPSA LEX*. Suffering that is educational and corrective may come to an end, because moral infirmity, and not guilt, is the reason for its infliction; and moral infirmity may cease to exist. But suffering that is penal can never come to an end, because guilt is the reason

for its infliction, and guilt once incurred never ceases to be. The lapse of time does not convert guilt into innocence, as it converts moral infirmity into moral strength; and therefore no time can ever arrive when the guilt of the criminal will cease to deserve and demand its retribution. The reason for retribution to-day is a reason forever. Hence, when God disciplines and educates his children, he causes only a temporary suffering. In this case, "He will not keep his anger forever." Ps. ciii. 9. But when, as the Supreme Judge, he punishes rebellious and guilty subjects of his government, he causes an endless suffering. In this case, "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark ix. 48.

The real question therefore, is, whether God ever punishes. That he chastises, is not disputed. But does he ever inflict a suffering that is not intended to reform the transgressor, and does not reform him, but is intended simply and only to vindicate law, and satisfy justice, by requiting him for his transgression? Revelation teaches that he does. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Rom. xii. 19. Retribution is here asserted to be a function of the Supreme Being, and his alone. The creature has no right to punish, except as he is authorized by the Infinite Ruler. "The powers that be are ordained of God. The ruler is the minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Rom. xiii. 1, 4. The power which civil government has to punish crime—the private person having no such power—is only a delegated right from the Source of retribution. Natural religion, as well as revealed, teaches that God inflicts upon the voluntary transgressor of law a suffering that is purely vindicative of law. The pagan sages enunciate the doctrine, and it is mortised into the moral constitution of man, as is proved by his universal fear of retribution. The objection, that a suffering not intended to reform but to satisfy justice, is cruel and unworthy of God, is refuted by the question of St. Paul: "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? God forbid: for how then shall God judge the world?"

Rom. iii. 5, 6. It is impossible either to found or administer a government, in heaven or upon earth, unless the power to punish crime is conceded.

The endlessness of future punishment, then, is implied in the endlessness of guilt and condemnation. When a crime is condemned, it is absurd to ask, "How long is it condemned?" The verdict "Guilty for ten days" was Hibernian. Damnation means absolute and everlasting damnation. All suffering in the next life, therefore, of which the sufficient and justifying reason is guilt, must continue as long as the reason continues; and the reason is everlasting. If it be righteous to-day, in God's retributive justice, to smite the transgressor because he violated the law yesterday, it is righteous to do the same thing to-morrow, and the next day, and so on AD INFINITUM; because the state of the case AD INFINITUM remains unaltered. The guilt incurred yesterday is a standing and endless fact. What, therefore, guilt legitimates this instant, it legitimates every instant, and forever.

It may be objected that, though the guilt and damnation of a crime be endless, it does not follow that the suffering inflicted on account of it must be endless also, even though it be retributive and not reformatory in its intent. A human judge pronounces a theft to be endlessly a theft, and a thief to be endlessly a thief, but he does not sentence the thief to an endless suffering, though he sentences him to a penal suffering. But this objection overlooks the fact that human punishment is only approximate and imperfect, not absolute and perfect like the Divine. It is not adjusted exactly and precisely to the whole guilt of the offense, but is more or less modified, first, by not considering its relation to God's honor and majesty; secondly, by human ignorance of the inward motives; and, thirdly, by social expediency. Earthly courts and judges look at the transgression of law with reference only to man's temporal relations, not his eternal. They punish an offense as a crime against the State, not as a sin against God. Neither do they look

into the human heart, and estimate crime in its absolute and intrinsic nature, as does the Searcher of Hearts and the Omniscient Judge.

A human tribunal punishes mayhem, we will say, with six months' imprisonment, because it does not take into consideration either the malicious and wicked anger that prompted the maiming, or the dishonor done to the Supreme Being by the transgression of his commandment. But Christ, in the final assize, punishes this offense endlessly, because his All-seeing view includes the sum-total of guilt in the case ; namely, the inward wrath, the outward act, and the relation of both to the infinite perfection and adorable majesty of God. The human tribunal does not punish the inward anger at all ; the Divine tribunal punishes it with hell fire : " For whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, is in danger of hell fire." Matt. v. 22. The human tribunal punishes seduction with a pecuniary fine, because it does not take cognizance of the selfish and heartless lust that prompted it, or of the affront offered to that Immaculate Holiness which from Sinai proclaimed. " Thou shalt not commit adultery." But the Divine tribunal punishes seduction with an infinite suffering, because of its more comprehensive and truthful view of the whole transaction.

Again, human punishment, unlike the Divine, is variable and inexact, because it is to a considerable extent reformatory and protective. Human government is not intended to do the work of the Supreme Ruler. The sentence of an earthly judge is not a substitute for that of the last day. Consequently, human punishment need not be marked, even if this were possible, with all that absoluteness and exactness of justice which characterizes the Divine. Justice in the human sphere may be relaxed by expediency. The retributive element must, indeed, enter into human punishment ; for no man may be punished by a human tribunal unless he deserves punishment—unless he is a criminal. But retribution is not the sole element when man punishes. Man, while not over-

looking the guilt in the case, has some reference to the reformation of the offender, and still more to the protection of society. Civil expediency and social utility modify exact and strict retribution. For the sake of reforming the criminal, the judge sometimes inflicts a penalty that is less than the real guilt of the offense. For the sake of protecting society, the court sometimes sentences the criminal to a suffering greater than his crime deserves. Human tribunals, also, vary the punishment for the same offense—sometimes punishing forgery capitally, and sometimes not; sometimes sentencing those guilty of the same kind of theft to one year's imprisonment, and sometimes to two.

But the Divine tribunal, in the last great day, is invariably and exactly just, because it is neither reformatory nor protective. Hell is not a penitentiary. It is righteous retribution, pure and simple, unmodified by considerations either of utility to the criminal, or of safety to the universe. Christ, in the day of final account, will not punish wicked men and devils (for the two receive the same sentence, and go to the same place, Matt. xxv. 41), either for the sake of reforming them, or of protecting the righteous from the wicked. His punishment at that time will be nothing but retribution. The redeemer of men is also the Eternal Judge; the Lamb of God is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah; and his righteous word to wicked and hardened Satan, to wicked and hardened Judas, to wicked and hardened Pope Alexander VI., will be: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay. Depart from me, ye cursed, that work iniquity." Rom. xii. 19; Matt. xxv. 41; vii. 23. The wicked will reap according as they have sown. The suffering will be unerringly adjusted to the intrinsic guilt: no greater and no less than the sin deserves. "That servant which knew his lord's will (clearly), and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not (clearly), and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. As many as have sinned without (written) law, shall also perish without (written) law; and

as many as have sinned under (written) law, shall be judged by the (written) law." Luke xii. 47, 48 ; Rom. ii. 12.

It is because the human court, by reason of its ignorance both of the human heart and the true nature of sin against a spiritual law and a holy God, cannot do the perfect work of the Divine tribunal, that human laws and penalties are only provisional, and not final. Earthly magistrates are permitted to modify and relax penalty, and pass a sentence which, though adapted to man's earthly circumstances, is not absolute and perfect, and is finally to be revised and made right by the omniscient accuracy of God. The human penalty that approaches nearest to the Divine is capital punishment. There is more of the purely retributive element in this than in any other. The reformatory element is wanting. And this punishment has a kind of endlessness. Death is a finality. It forever separates the murderer from earthly society, even as future punishment separates forever from the society of God and heaven.

The argument thus far goes to prove that retribution in distinction from correction, or punishment in distinction from chastisement, is endless from the nature of the case. We pass, now, to prove that it is also rational and right.

1. Endless punishment is rational, in the first place, because it is supported by the human conscience. The sinner's own conscience will "bear witness" and approve of the condemning sentence, "in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." Rom. ii. 16. Dives, in the parable, when reminded of the justice of his suffering, is silent. Accordingly, all the evangelical creeds say with the Westminster (Larger Catechism, 89) that "the wicked, upon clear evidence and full conviction of their own consciences, shall have the just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them." If in the great day there are any innocent men who have no accusing consciences, they will escape hell. We may accommodate St. Paul's words, Rom. xiii. 3, 4, and say : "The final judgment is not a terror to good works but to evil. Wilt thou, then, not be

afraid of the final judgment? Keep the law of God perfectly, without a single slip or failure, inwardly or outwardly, and thou shalt have praise of the same. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid." But a sentence that is justified by the highest and best part of the human constitution must be founded in reason, justice, and truth. It is absurd to object to a judicial decision that is confirmed by the man's own immediate consciousness of its righteousness. And, as matter of fact, the opponent of endless retribution does not draw his arguments from the impartial conscience, but from the bias of self-love and desire for happiness. His objections are not ethical, but sentimental. They are not seen in the dry light of pure truth and reason, but through the colored medium of self-indulgence and love of ease and sin.

Again: a guilty conscience expects endless punishment. There is in it what the Scripture denominates "the fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" of God. Hebrew x. 27. This is the awful apprehension of an evil that is to last forever; otherwise, it would not be so "fearful." The knowledge that future suffering will one day cease would immediately relieve the awful apprehension of the sinner. A guilty conscience is in its very nature hopeless. Impenitent men, in their remorse, "sorrow as those who have no hope," 1st Thess. iv. 13; "having no hope, and without God in the world." Eph. ii. 12. "The hope of the wicked shall be as the giving up of the ghost." Job xi. 20. "The hypocrite's hope shall perish." Job viii. 13. Consequently, the great and distinguishing element in hell-torment is despair, a feeling that is simply impossible in any man or fallen angel who knows that he is finally to be happy forever. Despair results from the endlessness of retribution. No endlessness, no despair. Natural religion, as well as revealed, teaches the despair of some men in the future life. Plato (*Gorgias* 525), Pindar (*Olympia* II.), Plutarch (*De sera vindicta*), describe the punishment of the incorrigibly wicked as eternal and hopeless.

In Scripture, there is no such thing as eternal hope. Hope is a characteristic of earth and time only. Here in this life, all men may hope for forgiveness. ‘Turn, ye prisoners of hope.’ Zech. ix. 2. “Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.” 2 Cor. vi. 2. But in the next world there is no hope of any kind, because there is either fruition or despair. The Christian’s hope is converted into its realization: “For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it?” Rom. viii. 24. And the impenitent sinner’s hope of heaven is converted into despair. Canon Farrar’s phrase “eternal hope” is derived from Pandora’s box, not from the Bible. Dante’s legend over the portal of hell is the truth: “All hope abandon, ye who enter here.”

That conscience supports endless retribution, is also evinced by the universality and steadiness of the dread of it. Mankind believe in hell, as they believe in the Divine Existence, by reason of their moral sense. Notwithstanding all the attack made upon the tenet in every generation, by a fraction of every generation, men do not get rid of their fear of future punishment. Skeptics themselves are sometimes distressed by it. But a permanent and general fear among mankind cannot be produced by a mere chimera, or a pure figment of the imagination. Men have no fear of Rhadamanthus, nor can they be made to fear him, because they know that there is no such being. “An idol is nothing in the world.” 1 Cor. viii. 4. But men have “the fearful looking-for of judgment” from the lips of God, ever and always. If the Biblical hell were as much a non-entity as the heathen Atlantis, no one would waste his time in endeavoring to prove its non-existence. What man would seriously construct an argument to demonstrate that there is no such being as Jupiter Ammon, or such an animal as the centaur? The very denial of endless retribution evinces by its spasmodic eagerness and effort to disprove the tenet, the firmness with which it is entrenched in man’s moral constitution. If there really were no hell, absolute indifference toward the notion would long since have been the

mood of all mankind, and no arguments, either for or against it, would be constructed.

And finally, the demand, even here upon earth, for the punishment of the intensely and incorrigibly wicked proves that retribution is grounded in the human conscience. When abominable and satanic sin is temporarily triumphant, as it sometimes has been in the history of the world, men cry out to God for his vengeance to come down. "If there were no God, we should be compelled to invent one," is now a familiar sentiment. "If there were no hell, we should be compelled to invent one," is equally true. When examples of great depravity occur, man cries: "How long, O Lord, how long?" The non-infliction of retribution upon hardened villainy and successful cruelty causes anguish in the moral sense. For the expression of it, read the imprecatory psalms and Milton's sonnet on the massacre in Piedmont.

2. In the second place, endless punishment is rational, because of the endlessness of sin. If the preceding view of the relation of penalty to guilt be correct, endless punishment is just, without bringing the sin of the future world into the account. Man incurs everlasting punishment for "the things done in his body." Cor. v. 10. Christ sentences men to perdition, not for what they are going to do in eternity, but for what they have already done in time. It is not necessary that a man should commit all kinds of sin, or that he should sin a very long time, in order to be a sinner. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James ii. 10. One sin makes guilt, and guilt makes hell.

But while this is so, it is a fact to be observed, that sin is actually being added to sin, in the future life, and the amount of guilt is accumulating. The lost spirit is "treasuring up wrath." Rom. ii. 5. Hence, there are degrees in the intensity of endless suffering. The difference in the grade arises from the greater resoluteness of the wicked self-determination, and the greater degree of light that was

enjoyed upon earth. He who sins against the moral law as it is drawn out in the Sermon on the Mount, sins more determinedly and desperately than the pagan who sins against the light of nature. There are probably no men in paganism who sin so wilfully and devilishly as some men in Christendom. Profanity, or the blaspheming of God, is a Christian and not a Heathen characteristic. There are degrees in future suffering, because it is infinite in duration only. In intensity, it is finite. Consequently, the lost do not all suffer precisely alike, though all suffer the same length of time. A thing may be infinite in one respect and finite in others. A line may be infinite in length, and not in breadth and depth. A surface may be infinite in length and breadth, and not in depth. And two persons may suffer infinitely in the sense of endlessly, and yet one experience more pain than the other.

The endlessness of sin results, first, from the nature and energy of sinful self-determination. Sin is the creature's act solely. God does not work in the human will when it wills antagonistically to him. Consequently, self-determination to evil is an extremely vehement activity of the will. There is no will so wilful as a wicked will. Sin is stubborn and obstinate in its nature, because it is enmity and rebellion. Hence, wicked will intensifies itself perpetually. Pride, left to itself, increases and never diminishes. Enmity and hatred become more and more satanic. "Sin," says South, "is the only perpetual motion which has yet been found out, and needs nothing but a beginning to keep it incessantly going on." Upon this important point, Aristotle, in the seventh book of his *Ethics*, reasons with great truth and impressiveness. He distinguishes between strong will to wickedness and weak self-indulgence. The former is viciousness from deliberation and preference, and implies an intense determination to evil in the man. He goes wrong, not so much from the pull of appetite and passion, as purposely, knowingly, and energetically. He has great strength of will, and he puts it all forth in resolute wickedness. The latter quality is more

the absence than the presence of will ; it is the weakness and irresolution of a man who has no powerful self-determination of any kind. The condition of the former of these two men, Aristotle regarded as worse than that of the latter. He considered it to be desperate and hopeless. The evil is incurable. Repentance and reformation are impossible to this man ; for the wickedness in this instance is not mere appetite ; it is a principle ; it is cold-blooded and total depravity.

Another reason for the endlessness of sin is the bondage of the sinful will. In the very act of transgressing the law of God, there is a reflex action of the human will upon itself, whereby it becomes unable to perfectly keep that law. Sin is the suicidal action of the human will. A man is not forced to kill himself, but if he does, he cannot bring himself to life again. And a man is not forced to sin, but if he does, he cannot of himself get back where he was before sinning. He cannot get back to innocency, nor can he get back to holiness of heart. The effect of vicious habit in diminishing a man's ability to resist temptation is proverbial. An old and hardened debauchee, like Tiberius or Louis XV., just going into the presence of Infinite Purity, has not so much power of active resistance against the sin that has now ruined him, as the youth has who is just beginning to run that awful career. The truth and fact is, that sin, in and by its own nature and operation, tends to destroy all virtuous force, all holy energy, in any moral being. The excess of will to sin is the same thing as defect of will to holiness. The human will cannot be forced and ruined from without. But if we watch the influence of the will upon itself ; the influence of its own wrong decisions, and its own yielding to temptations ; we shall find that the voluntary faculty may be ruined from within—may surrender itself with such an absorbing vehemence and totality to appetite, passion, and selfishness, that it becomes unable to reverse itself and overcome its own inclination and self-determination. And yet, from beginning to end, there is no compulsion in this

process. The transgressor follows himself alone. He has his own way, and does as he likes. Neither God, nor the world, nor Satan forces him either to be, or to do, evil. Sin is the most spontaneous of self-motion. But self-motion has consequences as much as any other motion. And moral bondage is one of them. "Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin," says Christ. John viii. 34.

The culmination of this bondage is seen in the next life. The sinful propensity, being allowed to develop unresisted and unchecked, slowly but surely eats out all virtuous force as rust eats out a steel spring, until in the awful end the will becomes all habit, all lust, and all sin. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James i. 15. In the final stage of this process, which commonly is not reached until death, when "the spirit returns unto God who gave it," the guilty free agent reaches that dreadful condition where resistance to evil ceases altogether, and surrender to evil becomes demoniacal. The cravings and hankerings of long-indulged and unresisted sin become organic, and drag the man; and "he goeth after them as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks—till a dart strike through his liver." Prov. vii. 22, 23. For though the will to resist may die out of a man, the conscience to condemn it never can. This remains eternally. And when the process is complete; when the responsible creature in the abuse of free agency has perfected his moral ruin; when his will to good is all gone; there remain these two in his immortal spirit—sin and conscience, "brimstone and fire." Rev. xxi. 8.

Still another reason for the endlessness of sin is the fact that rebellious enmity toward law and its Source is not diminished, but increased, by the righteous punishment experienced by the impenitent transgressor. Penal suffering is beneficial only when it is humbly accepted, is acknowledged to be deserved, and is penitently submitted to; when the transgressor says: "Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of

thy hired servants;" Luke xv. 18, 19; when, with the penitent thief, he says: "We are in this condemnation justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds." Luke xxiii. 41. But when in this life retribution is denied and jeered at; and when in the next life it is complained of and resisted, and the arm of hate and defiance is raised against the tribunal, penalty hardens and exasperates. This is impenitence. Such is the temper of Satan; and such is the temper of all who finally become his associates. This explains why there is no repentance in hell, and no meek submission to the Supreme Judge. This is the reason why Dives, the impenitent sensualist, is informed that there is no possible passage from Hades to Paradise, by reason of the "great gulf fixed" between the two; and this is the reason why he asks that Lazarus may be sent to warn his five brethren, "lest they also come into this place of torment," where the request for "a drop of water,"—a mitigation of punishment—is solemnly refused by the Eternal Arbitrator. A state of existence in which there is not the slightest relaxing of penal suffering, is no state of probation.

3. In the third place, endless punishment is rational, because sin is an infinite evil; infinite not because committed by an infinite being, but against one. We reason invariably upon this principle. To torture a dumb beast is a crime; to torture a man is a greater crime. The person who transgresses is the same in each instance; but the different worth and dignity of the objects upon whom his action terminates makes the difference in the gravity of the two offenses. David's adultery was a finite evil in reference to Uriah, but an infinite evil in reference to God. "Against thee only have I sinned," was the feeling of the sinner in this case. Had the patriarch Joseph yielded, he would have sinned against Pharaoh. But the greatness of the sin as related to the fellow-creature is lost in its enormity as related to the Creator, and his only question is: "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Gen. xxxix. 9.

The incarnation and vicarious satisfaction for sin by one of the persons of the Godhead demonstrates the infinity of the evil. It is incredible that the Eternal Trinity should have submitted to such a stupendous self-sacrifice, to remove a merely finite and temporal evil. The doctrine of Christ's vicarious atonement, logically, stands or falls with that of endless punishment. Historically, it has stood or fallen with it. The incarnation of Almighty God, in order to make the remission of sin possible, is one of the strongest arguments for the eternity and infinity of penal suffering.

The objection that an offence committed in a finite time cannot be an infinite evil, and deserve an infinite suffering, implies that crime must be measured by the time that was consumed in its perpetration. But even in human punishment, no reference is had to the length of time occupied in the commission of the offense. Murder is committed in an instant, and theft sometimes requires hours. But the former is the greater crime, and receives the greater punishment.

4. That endless punishment is reasonable is proved by the preference of the wicked themselves. The unsubmitive, rebellious, defiant, and impenitent spirit prefers hell to heaven. Milton correctly represents Satan as saying: "All good to me becomes bane, and in heaven much worse would be my state"; and, also, as declaring that "it is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven." This agrees with the Scripture representation, that Judas went "to his own place." Acts i. 25.

The lost spirits are not forced into a sphere that is unsuited to them. There is no other abode in the universe which they would prefer to that to which they are assigned, because the only other abode is heaven. The meekness, lowliness, sweet submission to God, and love of him, that characterize heaven, are more hateful to Lucifer and his angels than even the sufferings of hell. The wicked would be no happier in heaven than in hell. The burden and an-

guish of a guilty conscience, says South, is so insupportable that some "have done violence to their own lives, and so fled to hell as a sanctuary, and chose damnation as a release." This is illustrated by facts in human life. The thoroughly vicious and ungodly man prefers the license and freedom to sin which he finds in the haunts of vice to the restraints and purity of Christian society. There is hunger, disease, and wretchedness in one circle; and there is plenty, health, and happiness in the other. But he prefers the former. He would rather be in the gambling-house and brothel than in the Christian home.

The finally lost are not to be conceived of as having faint desires and aspirations for a holy and heavenly state and as feebly but really inclined to sorrow for their sin, but are kept in hell contrary to their yearning and petition. They are sometimes so described by the opponent of the doctrine, or at least so thought of. There is not a single throb of godly sorrow or a single pulsation of holy desire in the lost spirit. The temper toward God in the lost is angry and defiant. "They hate both me and my Father," says the Son of God, "without a cause." John xv. 24, 25. Satan and his followers "love darkness rather than light," hell rather than heaven, "because their deeds are evil." John iii. 19. Sin ultimately assumes a fiendish form and degree. It is pure wickedness without regret or sorrow, and with a delight in evil for evil's sake. There are some men who reach this state of depravity even before they die. They are seen in the callous and cruel voluptuaries portrayed by Tacitus, and the heaven-defying atheists described by St. Simon. They are also depicted in Shakespeare's Iago. The reader knows that Iago is past saving, and deserves everlasting damnation. Impulsively, he cries out with Lodovico: "Where is that viper? bring the villain forth." And then Othello's calmer but deeper feeling becomes his own: "I look down towards his feet—but that's a fable: If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee." The punishment is remitted to the retribution of God.

5. That endless punishment is rational, is proved by the history of morals. In the history of human civilization and morality, it is found that that age which is most reckless of law, and most vicious in practice, is the age that has the loosest conception of penalty, and is the most inimical to the doctrine of endless retribution. A virtuous and religious generation adopts sound ethics, and reverently believes that "the Judge of all the earth will do right," Gen. xviii. 25 ; that God will not "call evil good, and good evil, nor put darkness for light and light for darkness," Isa. v. 20 ; and that it is a deadly error to assert with the sated and worn-out sensualist ; "All things come alike to all ; there is one event to the righteous and the wicked." Eccl. ix. 2.

The French people, at the close of the last century, were a very demoralized and vicious generation, and there was a very general disbelief and denial of the doctrines of the Divine existence, the immortality of the soul, the freedom of the will, and future retribution. And upon a smaller scale, the same fact is continually repeating itself. Any little circle of business men who are known to deny future rewards and punishments are shunned by those who desire safe investments. The recent uncommon energy of opposition to endless punishment, which started about ten years ago in this country, synchronized with great defalcations and breaches of trust, uncommon corruption in mercantile and political life, and great distrust between man and man. Luxury deadens the moral sense, and luxurious populations are not apt to have the fear of God before their eyes. Hence luxurious ages are immoral.

One remark remains to be made respecting the extent and scope of hell. It is only a spot in the universe of God. Compared with heaven, hell is narrow and limited. The kingdom of Satan is insignificant in contrast with the kingdom of Christ. In the immense range of God's dominion, good is the rule, and evil is the exception. Sin is a speck upon the infinite azure of eternity ; a spot on the sun. Hell is only a corner of the universe. The Gothic etymon

denotes a covered-up hole. In Scripture, hell is a "pit," a "lake;" not an ocean. It is "bottomless," but not boundless.

The Gnostic and Dualistic theories, which make God and Satan or the Demiurge nearly equal in power and dominion, find no support in Revelation. The Bible teaches that there will always be some sin and some death in the universe. Some angels and men will forever be the enemies of God. But their number, compared with that of unfallen angels and redeemed men, is small. They are not described in the glowing language and metaphors by which the immensity of the holy and blessed is delineated. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, and thousands of angels." Ps. lxxviii. 17. "The Lord came from Sinai, and shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of his saints." Deut. xxxii. 2. "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all." Ps. ciii. 21. "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." Matt. vi. 13. The Lord Christ "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." 1 Cor. xv. 25. St. John "heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder." Rev. xiv. 1. The New Jerusalem "lieth four square, the length is as large as the breadth; the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; the kings of the earth do bring their honor into it." Rev. xxi. 16, 24, 25. The number of the lost spirits is never thus emphasized and enlarged upon. The brief, stern statement is that "the fearful and unbelieving shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." Rev. xxi. 8. No metaphors and amplifications are added to make the impression of an immense "multitude which no man can number."

We have thus briefly presented the rational defense of the most severe and unwelcome of all the tenets of the Christian religion. It must have a foothold in the human reason, or it could not have maintained itself against all the recoil and opposition which it elicits from the human heart. Founded in ethics, in law, and in judicial

reason, as well as unquestionably taught by the Author of Christianity, it is no wonder that the doctrine of eternal retribution, in spite of selfish prejudices and appeals to human sentiment, has always been a belief of Christendom. From theology and philosophy it has passed into human literature, and is wrought into its finest structures. It makes the solemn substance of the Iliad and the Greek Drama. It pours a somber light into the brightness and grace of the *Æneid*. It is the theme of the *Inferno*, and is presupposed by both of the other parts of the *Divine Comedy*. The epic of Milton derives from it its awful grandeur. And the greatest of the Shakespearcan tragedies sound and stir the depths of the human soul by their delineation of guilt intrinsic and eternal.

In this discussion, we have purposely brought into view only the righteousness of Almighty God, as related to the voluntary and responsible action of man. We have set holy justice and disobedient free-will face to face, and drawn the conclusions. This is all that the defender of the doctrine of retribution is strictly concerned with. If he can demonstrate that the principles of eternal rectitude are not in the least degree infringed upon, but are fully maintained, when sin is endlessly punished, he has done all that his problem requires. Whatever is just is beyond all rational attack.

But with the Christian Gospel in his hands, the defender of the Divine justice finds it difficult to be entirely reticent and say not a word concerning the Divine mercy. Over against God's infinite antagonism and righteous severity toward moral evil there stands God's infinite pity and desire to forgive. This is realized, not by the high-handed and unprincipled method of pardoning without legal satisfaction of any kind, but by the strange and stupendous method of putting the Eternal Judge in the place of the human criminal; of substituting God's satisfaction for that due from man. In this vicarious atonement for sin, the Triune God relinquishes no claims of law, and waives no rights to justice. The sinner's Divine

Substitute, in his hour of voluntary agony and death, drinks the cup of punitive and inexorable justice to the dregs. Any man who, in penitent faith, avails himself of this vicarious method of setting himself right with the Eternal Nemesis, will find that it succeeds ; but he who rejects it must through endless cycles grapple with the dread problem of human guilt in his own person, and alone.—(NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, February, 1885.)



PROBATIONISM.

PURGATORY.

THE DANTEAN THEORY OF PHYSICAL SUFFERING.

“It is appointed unto men once to die, but after that the judgment.”

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still ; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still ; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”

“The life which is, and that which is to come,
Suspended hang in such nice equipoise,
A breath disturbs the balance ; and that scale
In which we throw our hearts preponderates.”

PROBATIONISM.

THE theory of Probationists, as already briefly defined, is as follows: Not that all men will be saved, but that those who die impenitent will have a second chance, and that those who do not improve it will fall into eternal sin and go into eternal punishment. Men may thus secure the pardon after death which they failed to secure while they lived on earth.

This theory differs from the Optimistic—the view held by such men as Canon Farrar—which gives no opinion whatever as to the ultimate fate of impenitent sinners, beyond indulging in the hope that in some way they shall at last be freed from the punishment due their sins. The Probationists on the other hand hold that being in utter ignorance whether any soul has gone too far for recovery, and whether chastisement continued for a longer or shorter period may not force the most incorrigible to yield, we ought not to restrict repentance and pardon to the present existence, but that if this second chance be not improved the everlasting destruction of such sinners is certain. It agrees with the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory, in so far as it believes in a purifying and disciplining process after death, but it differs in this important point, that Purgatory is only reserved for such as die in peace, but not in that perfect condition which makes them meet for heaven.

Purgatory is a condition of suffering and the commonly received traditional doctrine is, that the suffering is of the nature of material fire. The design is expiation of sin and purification of soul. The

intensity and duration of purgatorial pains are proportioned to the degree of guilt of the individual sufferers. The soul may remain in this state for a few hours, or for a thousand years—the only limit being the day of judgment. The sufferings of the departed may however, be alleviated, and their duration shortened by the prayers of saints and the sacrifice of the mass : and it is within the power of the church, through her authorized clergy, to remit entirely or partially the penalty of sins under which souls are suffering. Many eminent Roman Catholic writers make no mention whatever of positive suffering, or of the commonly received idea that purgatory consists in bodily torment, and represent it simply “as a state of gradual preparation of the imperfectly sanctified for admission into heaven.”

Probationists differ as to when probation is to end. The majority leave the question as insoluble, while others fix the limit of probation by the second coming of the Lord and the final judgment. The last named view has been recently set forth by the Rev. Dr. Clement Clemance of Camberwell, London, in his little volume on Future Punishment. He rejects the theory of universal restoration, as entirely against scripture ;—of annihilation, as a distortion of scripture ;—of the absolute endlessness of suffering and sin, as going beyond scripture ; and endeavors to show that the doctrine of human probation, ending with the second coming of Christ, is the most reasonable and scriptural of all. The following extracts will show his train of thought :—“ Every soul of man will sooner or later be brought into contact with Christ for acceptance or rejection, before His second coming. No human probation can be finished, until the man knows of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over the destinies of human souls. If God’s equity requires it, the probation of some men may be extended beyond the moment of their crossing the boundary line, which divides this state of being from the next. There is a period, called “the day of salvation,” in which mercy may be obtained,” but that day or period has its limit. The “day

of salvation," for the human race as a whole, will last till the second coming of the Son of God. The phrase is applied by Paul to the present gospel day. The time of gospel blessing commenced on the day of Pentecost, and reaches on to "the great and terrible day of the Lord." Meanwhile, "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." The wheat and tares are to grow together till the harvest, and the harvest is the end of the world. The mediatorial dominion of Christ over the whole human race, will last till the time of his reappearing. But that government of His is much more elsewhere than here. He is Lord both of the dead and of the living. The millions now dwelling on earth are but a fraction, a tiny fraction, of those under HIS sway. Of every soul that is gone hence, from Adam till now, "Jesus Christ is Lord," and each part of this double realm of HIS, He is governing with a view to the judgment day. That is the great decisive day for all mankind. The gospel news will then have resounded through both realms, and through both realms the "trumpet shall sound." Then "the day of salvation" will have reached its close. Ere then, every soul will have heard of Christ; but it may be that even up to the last moment, human spirits will be brought into existence, and up to the very close of the gospel "day," mercy's door will stand open for each new-born child of man!

There is no principle developed more clearly in the word of God than this—that individuals are on probation. But who can tell how long the probation of the individual will last? It is quite possible that the probation of the individual may close before the termination of his natural life! Judas is a typical example of such a case. He had been, surely as much as every man could be, in close contact with the Lord Jesus, and yet before he had committed his deed of treachery, our Lord used concerning him the words, "Good were it for that man if he had not been born." Here then, was a man who ere the natural life had ceased in death, was "twice dead." He had sold himself to evil, sold himself away from Christ;

his day was over. A man's state may thus be fixed long before death—it is reached when the state of fixedness in sin is reached. Sin has its stages. Each stage of sin is marked by greater hardness and insensibility. The final stage of sin is hopelessly incurable. That stage marks probation's end. The man is then practically unreachable, as far as any means or agencies known to us are concerned. He has fixed his own state, in an immovable obstinacy of resistance to the divine. It is not that God's springs of mercy are dry, but he has sinned so long and so grossly, that no appeals from God can call forth any penitential tears! When such hopeless incurableness is reached, any further prolongation of probation is not asked for by the Great Intercessor. Under the administration of our Great Intercessor, sinners are spared long—but a time may come when sparing mercy avails not, and when not even the tenderest pleader could ask for any arrest of judgment.

Thus does the word of God bring into view the divine forbearance and equity. The limit of probation is not arbitrary. It is a limit of character, reached by the sinner himself in the spontaneous course of sin. It may or it may not coincide with the moment of death. It may, perchance, be reached afterwards. It certainly may be reached before. It is a spiritual limit rather than a temporal one; a bound fixed not according to the ticks of a dial, but according to the state of a soul. When this limit will be reached by anyone, God only knows; and it would be worse than madness for any one to make so perilous an experiment as to try how near he can reach it without overstepping it. So far from holding out to those who continue to resist the appeals of divine love any warrant for supposing that their probation will continue indefinitely beyond death, we see far more reason to fear it will not last till then. What warrant have we for supposing the law of inveterate habitude reversed on the other side the grave? Where any man longs for more light, and follows what light he has, we are forbidden to think that the light for which he yearns will gleam in the

invisible world, even if denied him in this ; but where a man refuses the light God sends him, he has not an atom of warrant for supposing that death will alter the habitudes of the soul."

Our objections to Probationism hold equally good whether an indefinite period be given, or a limit fixed by the second coming of Christ, for the repentance and restoration of the sinner. It is not necessary to give in detail the arguments of evangelical christians against a future state of probation, which are similar to those against Universalism, to be considered hereafter. Suffice it to say that neither probationism or purgatory are taught in the word of God nor formed any part of Christs teachings or that of his apostles. On the contrary, both seem directly opposed to the entire spirit of Christianity, which makes salvation simply and entirely the result of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ without future probation—without the good works or prayers of saints, and without any amount of purgatorial suffering after death. Indeed, Cardinal Wiseman himself admits this as fully as any Protestant when he says : "No fastings, no prayers, no alms deeds, no works that we can conceive to be done by man, however protracted, however expensive or rigorous they may be, can, according to the Catholic doctrine have the most infinitesimal weight for obtaining the remission of sin," although he adds, in justification of penance, that after God has forgiven sin, a certain degree of inferior or temporary punishment must be inflicted, according to the guilt of the individual transgressor, before full satisfaction is made to God

It is also worthy of remark, that wherever men have been taught to believe, that there is the hope of probation and purification, by purgatorial fires or otherwise, they have become reckless and licentious. When Greek and Roman philosophy taught, that "the Gods do not punish," gross outbreaks of sin ocured, to an extent unheard of before. Disastrous results followed to morality and religion, which lasted for centuries. History tells us that no subsequent efforts could ever succeed in awakening a fear of divine pun-

ishment, and the result was the deplorable degeneracy of the Roman Empire. "Truth and faith ceased, chastity became contemptible, perjury was practised without shame, and every species of excess and cruelty was indulged in." The sale of indulgences after the time of the crusades, led men to believe that exemption from the consequences and penalties of sin might be purchased. The result of rationalistic teachings during the reign of Charles II. in England, in emancipating the minds of the masses from all fear of future punishment was of a similar character. Immorality, impurity, lawlessness and practical atheism prevailed. The writings of Voltaire, Diderot and others in France, and afterwards in Germany, produced the same effects upon society, until humanity was shocked by the hideous excesses of the age, sanctioned and enforced by the teachings of a deified but brutalised reason. Just as surely as men are taught that there is probation and purification of any kind after death, for sins committed in this body, will life be upon the lowest plane. "Once in the end of the world, NOT AFTER, has Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." At the very best, the probationist is resting upon a painful uncertainty. He cannot be sure—no man can be sure—that there is opportunity after death for repentance, or that he could then use it to his own case with advantage. On the other hand, if it be even probable that death may end probation, surely the supreme dictate of wisdom is to repent now? Nay further, if reason indicates that death will in all likelihood end probation, and the Scriptures teach emphatically that it shall, surely the day of salvation and the accepted time should be improved! The poison of sin cannot be eradicated by tears and sighs and the anguish of remorse.

History tells us that Khaibar, a Jewish captive serving at the table of Mohammed, bore the false prophet a cup, in which was a mixture of deadly poison. Mohammed put the chalice to his lips, but tasting the poison dashed the deadly cup to the floor. But with that one sip, enough of the poison had entered his veins to

affect him for life. Long after, at his death, he exclaimed, "The veins of my heart are throbbing with the poison of Khaibar." And so, the poison of sin once throbbing in the spiritual life leaves not that life more easily, than did the poison of Khaibar that coursed in the very life blood of Mohammed. A new nature alone can expel the old. "Ye must be born again," says Christ, and experience as well as sanctified reason coincides with the words of inspiration.

A good deal of the poetry of the age is as we have already seen, flavored with the idea of repentance beyond the grave. No poet is more frequently quoted than Whittier on moral and religious questions, who in 1867, wrote his now famous poem on "The Eternal Goodness :"

" I know not where His islands lift
 Their fronded palms in air ·
 I only know I cannot drift
 Beyond His love and care
 And so beside the silent sea
 I wait the muffled oar ;
 No harm from Him can come to me,
 On ocean or on shore."

Whittier adds :

" O brothers ! if my faith is vain,
 If hopes like these betray,
 Pray for me that my feet may gain
 The sure and safer way."

So he sang ; but it is significant that when we turn on a year, in the mellowing ripeness of this poet's wisdom, we find a later production which is as yet only rarely quoted, but which seems to be the deepest voice of his final philosophy :

"Though God be good and free be Heaven,
 No force divine can love compel ;
 And though the song of sins forgiven
 May sound through lowest hell.

The sweet persuasion of His voice
 Respects thy sanctity of will ;
 He giveth day : thou hast thy choice
 To walk in darkness still.

No word of doom may shut thee out,
 No wind of wrath may downward whirl
 No swords of fire keep watch about
 The open gates of pearl.

A tenderer light than moon or sun,
 Than song of earth a sweeter hymn,
 May shine and sound forever on,
 And thou be deaf and dim.

Forever round the Mercy-seat
 The guiding lights of love shall burn :
 But what if, habit-bound, thy feet
 Shall lack the will to turn ?

What if thine eye refuse to see,
 Thine ear of Heaven's free welcome fail,
 And thou a willing captive be,
 Thyself thy own dark jail ?"

That is just what the scriptures teach of the doctrine of future retribution. God's finger does not light the fires of hell ; every sinner makes his own hell. Remorse may scourge the soul, but all to no purpose :

“ Shall I kill myself ?
 What help in that ? I cannot kill my sin,
 If soul be soul ; nor can I kill my shame ;
 No, nor by living can I live it down.
 The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months,
 The months will add themselves and make the years,
 The years will roll into the centuries,
 And mine will ever be a name of scorn.”

PURGATORY.

INCIDENTALLY, in discussing Probationism, we have referred to the teachings of the Church of Rome concerning Purgatory. Although the object of this treatise is not to refute such views, but rather to establish the doctrine of Eternal Punishment as against Universalism, a statement of what the doctrine of Purgatory is, with the arguments used for and against it, may not be considered out of place by many of our readers.

The Romish doctrine of endless retribution is very much what is held by the majority of evangelical churches:—that there is a hell, and there reprobate angels and lost men are eternally punished. While not teaching authoritatively that future punishment will be physical, it inclines towards such a view, and asserts that it is dangerous to deny that it will be so. Absolutely to deny or to assert physical suffering, transcends our means of knowledge. In the present life pain of the soul wears on the body, so that the whole man is affected. In the future life, we cannot tell what may or may not be the reciprocal relation of the soul, and its non-material and indestructible body, so that physical suffering is by no means impossible.*

PURGATORY is a preparatory state for the enjoyment of heaven, where the souls of the righteous who have died in a state of grace,

* For an authoritative statement of the views held by the Roman Catholic Church regarding "Eternal Punishment," the reader is referred to the statement of Archbishop Lynch, to be found near the close of the volume.

are purified and made meet for everlasting bliss. As defined by Catholic writers :—It is a place or state, where souls departing this life, with remission of their sins, as to the guilt and eternal pain, but yet liable to some temporal punishment still remaining due ; or not perfectly freed from the blemish of some defects which we call venial sins, are purged before their admittance into heaven, where nothing that is defiled can enter. It is further held, that such souls so detained in Purgatory, being the living members of Christ Jesus, are relieved by the prayers and suffrages of their fellow-members here on earth. But where this place may be—of what nature or quality the pain may be—how long souls may be there detained—in what manner the suffrages made on their behalf may be applied—whether by way of satisfaction or intercession, are questions superfluous and impertinent as to faith. In the “Orphan’s Friend,” a Catholic periodical published in Boston, U. S., for October, 1884, there is the following appeal for Holy Souls in Purgatory :

“November, the month of the Holy Souls, is at hand. We trust our readers will do all they can during this month to solace these poor souls. It is in the power of all to help these spouses of Christ and open for them the doors of Heaven. Let those who have means have numerous masses offered for their relief, first, for their own friends and relatives, second, for the millions who have no one to pray for them or who have been forgotten by those most indebted to them, (the money thus spent will be returned a hundredfold). Let those who are poor in this world’s goods give according to their means, and let all join prayer and the practice of good works to their alms. We especially recommend to the charitable prayers of our readers, the souls of deceased members, that they may soon reach the eternal rest they so ardently sigh for, and that once in Heaven, they may intercede for us.”

“In suffering, there is something sadder than suffering itself—abandonment. To suffer and find some one to sympathize, to be interested, to compassionate,—this is not the saddest suffering ; but

to suffer and realize that no one shares our suffering by a sentiment, a thought, or a tear—to suffer and find no consolation—this is torture multiplied by torture. And this it is that gives the sorrows of Purgatory a sovereign interest and the most legitimate compassion; their sorrows are the most forsaken of all sorrows; they can truly say, in the terrible reality of their abandonment: ‘They have heard the voice of my groaning, and among them there is no one to console me.’”

This is accompanied by certain verses, addressed to the Queen of Purgatory, in which the doctrine is set forth in poetic form:

“O turn to Jesus, Mother! turn
 And call Him by His tenderest names;
 Pray for the Holy Souls that burn
 This hour amid the cleansing flames.

Oh! they have fought a gallant fight!
 In death’s cold arms they persevered;
 And, after life’s uncheery night,
 The harbor of their rest is neared.

In pains beyond all earthly pains,
 Favorites of Jesus! there they lie,
 Letting the fire wear out their stains,
 And worshipping God’s purity.

Spouses of Christ they are, for He
 Was wedded to them by His blood;
 And Angels o’er their destiny
 In wondering adoration brood.

They are children of thy tears;
 Then hasten, Mother! to their aid
 In pity think each hour appears
 An Age while glory is delayed.

See, how they bound amid their fires,
 While pain and love their spirits fill;
 Then with self-crucified desires
 Utter sweet murmurs, and lie still.

The doctrine of a purgatory it is only fair to add, is also held to be a necessity by such men as Canon Farrar, who says ; " I believe that man's destiny stops not at the grave, and that many who knew not Christ here will know him there. I believe that hereafter—whether by means of the almost sacrament of death," or in others ways unknown to us, God's mercy may reach many who to all earthly appearance, might seem to us to die in a lost and unregenerate state. I believe that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison, and I see reason to hope, that since the Gospel was thus once preached "to them that were dead," the offers of God's mercy may in some form be extended to the soul, even after death. I believe as Christ has said, that all manner of sin shall be forgiven unto men, and their blasphemies however greatly they shall blaspheme, and that as there is but one sin of which he said, that it should not be forgiven neither in this world nor the next, there must be some sins, which will be forgiven in the next as well as this. Men do not pass direct from life to hell or heaven, but to a place in which God's merciful dealings with them are not yet necessarily finished, where his mercy may still reach them in the form, if not of probation, yet of preparation. As even Saints are not perfect, but are still sinners, so even sinners are very rarely—perhaps never fixed, finished and incurable in sin, when seized by their mortal sickness." The only difference between the purgatory of Canon Farrar and that of the Church of Rome is, that the former is for impenitent sinners, the latter for saints, who are saved yet so as by fire. Their salvation is not without pain. They undergo the pain of fire and are thus purified.

The arguments adduced in favor of Purgatory are chiefly taken from the Fathers, the Councils, and the Liturgies of the Church, the Apocryphal writings, and certain passages of Scripture. It is only with the latter that we can briefly deal at present.

Acts, chap. 2nd, v. 27 : " Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy one to see corruption."

This, it is maintained, proves the existence of Purgatory, and is descriptive of the intermediate state where Christ sojourned for a time after his death upon the cross. But Christ's own language before he died—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit"—and the words spoken to the dying malefactor, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," are certainly, whatever they may mean, not applicable to Purgatorial fires.

1st Corinthians, chap. 3rd, v. 11-15: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." That men are saved through fire, it is argued, proves the doctrine of Purgatory. But the Apostle, it should be observed, says the fire shall TRY EVERY MAN'S WORK. Purgatory is not for testing or trying, but for purifying, and that only for such as die in a state of grace. The fire spoken of is not a state preceding the judgment, but the judgment itself: it is that fire in the midst of which Jesus Christ is to appear. If the material used by any builder does not stand the test of that day, he will suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. "Just as a man escapes with his life, from a burning building, so his salvation will not only be affected with difficulty, but be attended with great loss. He will occupy a lower place in the kingdom of heaven than he would have done." "Saved so as by fire," is a figurative expression, analogous to that found in Zechariah, where Joshua is represented as a brand plucked out of the burning. In order to make such a passage teach the doctrine of Purgatory, we must contend that Joshua was literally a brand, and plucked out of the pains and fires of Purgatory!

Ephesians chap. 4th, v. 9. "Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower part of the earth." The fact that the soul of Christ was in the unseen world, between death and resurrection, even admitting this to be the meaning of the Apostle, is surely a slender basis upon which to rest the doctrine of purgatory. But it is very doubtful, if this is what the Apostle means by the phrase "the lower parts of the earth." The language is as often used simply for the earth in opposition to heaven, as it is for Hades, or the invisible world. To suppose that the reference is to Christ's descending into hell, is not in accordance with the passage, of which the verse quoted forms a part. The descent of which the verse speaks is contrasted with the ascent into heaven. The form of expression used is found in other parts of Scripture, with no reference whatever to the invisible world; as for example in John 3. v. 13, "No man hath ascended to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." The language used by the Apostle, "the lower parts of the earth" just means "the earth." He that descended to the earth, and became Man, is the same who has ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

1st Peter, chap. 3rd, v. 18-20. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison: which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God, waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls were saved by water." This passage is confessedly difficult of interpretation, but it is only by an exceedingly forced one, that it can give countenance to the doctrine of purgatory, and purification after death. Those who died in the days of Noah were guilty of mortal sins; but purgatory is for venial, not for mortal sins, and therefore whatever the passage teaches, it cannot give countenance to such a place. For the dif-

ferent opinions held concerning the Apostle's language, we refer the reader to the notes appended to this chapter, with this simple remark, that the interpretation given by commentators of the last century seems to us quite as reasonable as those of more modern theologians of the orthodox school. The view taken by Archbishop Leighton and by Bishop Pearson (in his work on the Creed) was, that the preaching spoken of was not by the Lord's own spirit, but by the Holy Spirit, referred to in the 18th verse, as the author of the new life. All the preaching of divine mercy is represented as being the preaching of Christ by his Holy Spirit, even that which the antedeluvians enjoyed through Noah: and the spirits of those who were then disobedient to the call of grace are represented as now, after the lapse of so long a time in prison. If such a view be correct, it puts an end to the assumption that Christ descended into hell and preached to the lost spirits.

With one passage more we close this discussion of Purgatory :

Matthew, chap. 12, v. 31-32 : "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men : but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him : but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Cardinal Wiseman and other Romish writers cite this, as teaching the doctrine in question : that the sin against the Holy Spirit shall never be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come, but argue that it implies that there are sins not forgiven in this life WHICH MAY BE FORGIVEN HEREAFTER, and therefore the dead, or at least a part of the dead, are not past forgiveness when they die. But surely, as has been conclusively shown by Dr. Hodge in his *Theology*, this is a slender thread on which to hang so great a weight. The words of Christ contain no such implication. Christ simply says, that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost can never be

forgiven. Such a presumptuous and daring sin can under no possible circumstances be pardoned here or hereafter.

In regard, then, to all such pleadings for some kind of Purgatory, whether held by the Romish Church or by certain professedly Protestant writers, we conclude : that our Lord's language gives no countenance to any intermediate state, where men may be purified from sins committed in the body and unpardoned at death : that the Scriptures are silent in regard to such a state between death and the judgment : that while certain inferences may be drawn from isolated texts, there is nothing to warrant such a doctrine : and finally, that it is in direct antagonism to the fundamental beliefs of the Christian Church. Pardon and sanctification are everywhere stated in the word of God, as the work of grace. Perfection is attained at death, and not due to purgatorial fires. As has been well said by Mr. Cheyne Brady, in a recent tract on Repentance :

“The Neapolitan preacher, who, five times over in the course of his sermon, flagellates himself with handfuls of iron chains ; the crowds who periodically scourge themselves with knotted thongs in the darkened chapels in Italy ; the Irish peasant who makes his weary pilgrimage to the supposed holy well ; the monk who emaciates himself with penitential fasting ; the Mahomedan who painfully observes the rigorous Ramadan ; the Hindoo who drags himself on hands and knees, or walks on spiked sandals hundreds of miles ; as well as the Protestant, who prescribes to himself a certain round of prayers and fastings, and penitential tears, with a view of expiating his sin ; all alike confound repentance with penance, set up salvation by human WORKS and human SUFFERINGS, in place of salvation by GRACE ; ignore the enormity of the guilt of sin, and the awful truth that everlasting destruction is its ONLY due reward ; and deny their need of a substitute as well as the atoning power of the Cross of Christ.”

But what, it may be asked, is the SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST ? Certain commentators insist that it is not the Holy Ghost

as the third person of the Trinity that is referred to in the last passage quoted, but the DIVINE NATURE IN CHRIST, and that the antithesis is between contemptuous disparagement of Christ as he appeared in his humiliation, and the same treatment of him when his character and mission were attested by the Holy Ghost. To say a word against him when his Godhead was veiled, and as it were in abeyance, was a very different offense from speaking with contempt and malice of the Holy Ghost in his clearest manifestations, especially those furnished by the words and works of Christ.

But are there not good reasons, taking the language in its ordinary acceptance, why the sin against the Holy Ghost is said to be unpardonable? In order to answer the question, we must first consider the special work of the Holy Spirit, then try to understand in what this heinous sin consists, and who are in danger of committing it.

The personality of the Holy Ghost is held by all evangelical churches. The Bible is full of proofs.

(a) All the elements of personality are ascribed to him—intelligence, will, action.

(b) Personal acts are ascribed to him. He is Teacher, Witness, Revealer and Ruler.

(c) The personal pronoun is always ascribed to him in scripture.

(d) The same titles are always given him, as are given to God

(e) Perfections, inseparable from personality, are ascribed to him—such as omnipotence and omniscience.

In the form of baptism, he is associated with the Father and the Son as distinct persons. We are baptized in his name, and brought into such relationship with him as implies personality. In the Apostolic benediction he is associated with the Father and the Son. He is the object of prayer, and we enjoy fellowship with him. It is only, indeed, by admitting the personality of the Holy Spirit, that we can rationally interpret scripture. Everywhere we are

represented as dealing with a person—not an indefinable shadowy effluence, but a being possessed of feelings and emotions, not altogether like, but analogous to ours.

(a) He is the source of all life, and the efficient of the Godhead. He created the world and garnished the heavens.

(b) He is the source of all spiritual life. He quickens those that are dead in trespasses and sins. He applies Christ's redemption to our souls, and makes it effectual for salvation.

(c) He is a Teacher. He takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto us. He sanctifies through the truth. He instructs in the things of the Kingdom—shows us our own character, and reveals to us God's infinite goodness and grace.

(d) He is the author of all holy thoughts—the inspirer of all effective prayer. He helps our infirmities, with groanings which cannot be uttered.

(e) He is the source of all consolation—The Comforter who comforteth us in all our tribulations.

(f) He is to raise this fallen tabernacle at the last day—change it into a glorified body, and animate it with a sinless soul.

Such in brief is the work of the Holy Spirit. We cannot explain his operations. We only know that he operates powerfully on the world within, and the world without. He incites to good and restrains from evil. He helps to form and carry out good resolutions. He inspires with devotional feelings—imparts childlike graces—frees from the bondage of sin, and delivers into the glorious liberty of the children of God. He strengthens believers in their earthly pilgrimage, by glowing anticipations of heaven, when his work shall be completed, and believers shall be presented faultless before the Father's throne.

Many persons suffer great anguish of mind, lest they have committed the unpardonable sin, or the sin against the Holy Ghost.

Sometimes the fear becomes a perfect mania, and leads to the most terrible forms of insanity. It is well, therefore, that we should understand, if at all possible, in what the sin against the Holy Ghost consists.

The general opinion entertained regarding it is, that it consists in some one flagrant act of wickedness. "I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation."

From this it would appear, that a single sin committed in a single instant of time, may be so heinous in its character, and so infinite in its character, as to place a man beyond the possibility of repentance or salvation. But while this has been the popular opinion, no religious teacher or commentator has ever been able definitely to say in what the sin consists. Much has been written upon the subject by learned men of every age, but their conclusions are so widely different, that the theological world and the public mind have as yet come to no precise understanding, as to what is meant by the sin against the Holy Ghost. And yet there is almost unanimity of sentiment regarding this truth, that a man may pass into a condition of soul, when pardon and restoration to God's favor are impossible.

Without pretending to be wise above what is written, there are those who hold that the sin against the Holy Ghost consists, not in any one flagrant act of transgression, but that it is the final development of a long course of resistance, and stubborn impenitence. It is a state of heart, which produces conduct unpardonable in the sight of God. The Bible nowhere speaks of any single action of a spiritual nature, that blasts men's hopes for eternity; but just as there are chronic diseases of the body, that after years of growth become incurable and produce death, so the entire mental and emo-

tional forces of the mind may become so perverted and poisoned by sinful courses, and repeated acts of wrong-doing, as to make repentance impossible.

The Holy Spirit strives with all men, but his strivings do not last for ever. There is a limit to his longsuffering and forbearance. He waits long, but He does not promise to remain waiting forever.

“God’s spirit will not always strive
With hardened self-destroying man ;
Ye who persist His love to grieve,
May never hear His voice again.
Sinner, perhaps this very day
Thy last accepted time may be ;
Oh, should’st thou grieve Him now away,
Then hope may never beam on thee.”

Now in the case of men who have committed the unpardonable sin, according to this theory, there is, First, a grieving of the Holy Spirit. His gracious invitations and solicitations come to all men at some period of life—either through the ordinary channels of grace, or the religious training of pious parents, or special providences which arrest attention and compel reflection. When these are despised or unheeded, the first stage is passed that leads to the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

Then Secondly, there is a resisting of the Holy Spirit. This is an advance on the former. Stronger means are now used to awaken the sinner to a sense of his sin, but the heart becomes more obdurate, in proportion to the efforts put forth to lead him to repentance. It is now easier to resist than to grieve. Conscience sleeps peacefully, although all the thunders of Sinai played around it. And this marks the second stage of insensibility, that leads to the unpardonable sin.

Then Thirdly, there is quenching of the Holy Spirit, which is not mere passive apathy and indifference, but positive hatred. The evil powers within the man’s soul now combine. There is an up-



tormented souls in fiery tombs, left open 'till after the Last Judgment.



rising—a strong united effort,—not merely to resist holy influences and good impressions, but to conquer every conviction, and so wound and foil the Holy Spirit in all his gracious overtures, that he shall not trouble the man again. And when the Holy Spirit is thus quenched—stifled—overborne, the third stage is reached towards the unpardonable sin.

Then Fourthly, and finally, the sin against the Holy Ghost is reached. It was of this crime that Christ accused the Jews. In their case, as in the case of every unregenerate man, the last stage in wickedness was reached by degrees. They first rejected Christ, and refused the evidence of his Messiahship. But this sin, terrible though it was, might have been forgiven. But after his ascension, the Holy Spirit was vouchsafed, ratifying all his claims to divinity, and proving by Apostolic miracles that indeed he was the Christ. All this, however, did not in the least change the feeling and conduct of the Jews. Instead of relenting, they blasphemed the Holy Ghost, and ascribed his wonderful manifestations to the Devil, until growing harder and harder in heart, they were finally given up by the Almighty to believe a lie, and sealed their own condemnation. This was the sin against the Holy Ghost ;—not secret profanation of his name, nor indifference towards his gracious invitations, but blasphemy against that being, without whose agency salvation is impossible.

Such, it is held by many, is the nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost. A malicious ascription of the Spirit's agency to Satan—a resisting of the truth, known to be the truth—and a voluntary surrender of the heart, soul and life, to these evil passions, which, unobstructed, lead straight to hell.

Why is the Holy Spirit, it may be asked, so singled out from the other persons of the Godhead, as that being, against whom a man may so sin as to ensure his final damnation? Perhaps, as has been said, that “as He is the last of the three persons in the Godhead, he who sins past the Holy Ghost, has sinned past the

Godhead. If we sin against the Father, we may be caught in the arms of the Son. If we still sin against the Son, the Spirit may possibly interpose for our rescue. But if we sin against this last, there remains behind no other, upon whose mercy and power we may fall back. Or it may be, because the scheme of redemption is assigned to the Spirit in its final stage, when it comes to be applied. He that sins against the Father, sins against grace in its inception : he that sins against the Son, sins against grace in its execution ; but he that sins against the Holy Spirit, sins against grace in its application. He has exhausted all the provisions of mercy, and has shot clean past the only grace through which he can be saved." When the Holy Spirit has been alienated by successive resistings and quenchings, there is no power nor inclination to repent. Repentance is the gift of God, through the working of the Spirit. No sin would be unpardonable could it be repented of, but sin against the Holy Ghost is unpardonable, because it is His work to move us to repentance. When, therefore, He has retired from further striving with us, there is no motive whatever to repentance.

God's children may grieve the Holy Spirit, but can never be guilty of the unpardonable sin. Many, however, are troubled, lest they have been guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost. But the very fact that they are afraid and alarmed, lest they have placed themselves beyond the reach of mercy, is evidence that they are not abandoned. The sure sign that a man has committed the unpardonable sin, is when there is no feeling and no anxiety—when the soul is perfectly careless and unconcerned as to the future. When men are bowed down with grief and sorrow by reason of their sins and imperfections, and are daily reaching after a condition of life that seems almost hopeless, the more desperate their endeavors,—there need be no concern regarding this matter. Men who have offended God beyond hope of pardon, are reckless and defiant. If, like Saul, they have calm moments, when they feel that "God has departed from them," it is only the prelude to greater and more awful deeds of wickedness.

THE DANTEAN THEORY OF PHYSICAL SUFFERING.

THE theory of bodily suffering throughout eternal ages, for sins committed during the present life, may be said to have originated with Dante. As few, if any, evangelical Christians now retain it as an article of belief, it is needless by lengthened argument to refute it. The Church of Rome, as we have seen, while tacitly approving of purgatorial fires, does not commit itself to such a view of everlasting punishment. It simply says, There is a Hell, and there reprobate angels and lost men are eternally punished. Instead of teaching authoritatively that future punishment will be physical, it merely asserts that it is dangerous to deny that it will be so. On the other hand, the Hell of Dante is a place, where punishment is physical and real. His descriptions of future torment as "the lake of fire and brimstone," are not figurative, but literal and actual representations, of the awful future in store for impenitent souls. A brief sketch of his life and writings, condensed from recent biographies, is all that seems necessary to complete this part of our subject :

Dante, or Durante Alighieri, was born at Florence, in May, 1265. By a familiar contraction of his Christian name, Durante, he was called Dante, by which name he has become generally known.

Dante's father died while he was but a child. By the advice, however, of his surviving relations, and with the assistance of an able preceptor, Brunetto Latini, he applied himself closely to polite literature and other liberal studies, at the same time that he omitted no pursuit necessary for the accomplishment of a manly character, and mixed with the youth of his age in all honorable and noble exercises.

"His education," says Mr. Carlyle, "was the best then going: much school divinity, Aristotelian logic, some Latin classes, no inconsiderable insight into certain provinces of things; and Dante, with his earnest, intelligent nature, learned better than most all that was learnable. He had a clear, cultivated understanding, and of great subtlety; this best fruit of education he had contrived to realize from these scholastics. He knows accurately and well what lies close to him; but, in such a time, without printed books or free intercourse, he could not well know what was distant; the small, clear light, most luminous for what is near, breaks itself into singular chiaroscuro striking on what is far off. This was Dante's learning from the schools."

The first remarkable event of the poet's life, and one which served to color the whole of his future existence, was his falling in love with Beatrice Portinari, of an illustrious family of Florence. This attachment served to purify his sentiments; the lady herself died about 1290, when Dante was about twenty-five years of age, but he continued to cherish her memory, if we are to judge from his poems, to the latest period of his life.

"There is not one word," remarks Mrs. Oliphant, "to imply that Dante ever had the courage to speak of love to Beatrice herself, or to aspire to any return of it from one whom he felt to be far above him. She knew it, as women still, in less romantic days, know now and then of the silent devotion of some man, too young, or too poor, or too humble, even to approach them more nearly.



The gate leading to the confines of the lost, over which these dreadful words are written : "All hope abandon ye, who enter here."
—The Inferno Canto iii



The sentiment is not obsolete, though it has never produced another *Vita Nuova*. It is love in its highest and most beautiful sense, but it is incompatible with any idea of marrying or asking in marriage ; and even the pang with which the lover sees his lady another man's bride, is rather a wounded sense of some lessening of her perfection thereby, than the ordinary pangs of jealousy. This is, of course, a sentiment incomprehensible to many minds, but it is not the less a real one on that account."

His political life in that troublous age and the prominent part he took in public affairs : his exile and return to Florence, are matters foreign to our purpose. His earlier works " *The Vita Nuova* " in which he gives an account of his youthful attachment to Beatrice, and " *The Convito*," a sort of hand-book of universal knowledge and philosophy, composed as a means of consolation to his soul, after the death of Beatrice, are now but little known, compared with " *The Divine Commedia* " comprising " *The Inferno* " " *The Purgatorio* " and " *The Paradiso*." The time of the action of the poem is strictly confined to the end of March and the beginning of April, 1300. It is likely that it was begun shortly after this date. In the *INFERNO*, xix. 79, allusion is made to the decease of Pope Clement V., an event which happened in 1314. This probably marks the date of the completion of this cantica. The *PURGATORIO* was finished before 1318, at which date the *PARADISO* had yet to be written. The last cantos of the *PARADISO* were probably not completed till just before the poet's death.

There are numerous translations in English of the *DIVINE COMEDY*. Perhaps the best known, and the one which has most steadily held its ground, is that of Carey, which, though somewhat turgid in its long strain of blank verse, and giving no idea of the triple rhyme of the original, is in the main good and faithful. Other translations, each with its excellent points, have been made by Messrs. Wright, Cayley, Rossetti, and recently by Longfellow

and Mrs. Ramsay. Most striking of all is the literal prose translation of Dr. Carlyle, who unfortunately did not get beyond the *INFERNO*.

Dante's *DIVINA COMMEDIA* is one of the few works of imagination which have stood the test of ages, and which will pass down to the remotest generations. It resembles no other poem ; it is not an epic ; it consists of descriptions, dialogues, and didactic precepts. It is a vision of the realms of eternal punishment, of expiation, and of bliss, in the invisible world beyond death. Its beauties are scattered about with a lavish hand in the form of episodes, similitudes, vivid descriptions, and, above all, sketches of the deep workings of the human heart.

It is especially in this last department of poetic painting that Dante excels, whether he describes the harrowed feelings of the wretched father, or the self-devotedness of the lover, or the melting influence of the sound of the evening bell on the mariners and the pilgrim ; whether he paints the despair of the reprobate souls gathered together on the banks of Acheron, cursing God and the authors of their being, or the milder sorrow of the repentant, chanting the "Miserere" along their wearisome way through the regions of purgatory, he displays his mastery over the human feelings, and his knowledge of those chords that vibrate deepest in the heart of man. No other writer except Shakspeare can be compared to Dante in this respect. His touches are few, but they all tell.

Dante was a sincere Catholic ; in his poem he places the heretics in hell, and Dominic in Paradise, and manifestly shows everywhere his belief in the dogmas of the Romish Church ; but he attacks its discipline, or rather, the relaxation of its discipline. He urges, like Petrarch and other Catholic writers of that and the following ages, the necessity of a reform, and above all of a total separation of the spiritual from the temporal authority, things generally confounded by the Roman canonists.





Heretics punished in tombs burning with intense fire.

— The Inferno Canto

THE INFERNO

In the opening of the Inferno, the poet imagines himself at the gates of hell, about to explore its untold terrors. Through the intercession of Beatrice, his glorified mistress, he has been allowed this unusual privilege. The poet Virgil has been selected as his attendant and protector. And thus, in Easter-week of the year 1300, the modern Orpheus approaches the mouth of the yawning pit, which is entered by a single door. Above the entrance are written the ominous words :

“Through me you pass into the city of woe :
 Through me you pass into eternal pain :
 Through me among the people lost for aye.
 * * * * *

All hope abandon ye, who enter here.”

The Inferno is painted by the poet as a vast cone or pit which penetrates to the centre of the earth. It is divided into seven circles or spheres, the lowest being the abodes of the most guilty, and the scene of the most fearful punishments. In the deepest circle, at the centre of the earth, is seen Satan, half buried in a sea of ice, and flapping his six terrible wings in his vain efforts to escape from eternal woe. But there is no hope for the lost. Despair sits upon every countenance ; sighs, lamentations, moans, resound through the horrible abode. A crash of thunder strikes Dante insensible as he enters ; but the memory of Beatrice and the encouragement of Virgil enables him persist in his design. In vain the wild demons rush upon him to tear him to pieces, in vain the flames rise around him or the sulphurous smoke ascends, so long as Beatrice is his protector. In the different circles he meets many of his former friends or foes, who recognize his Tuscan accent, and ask for news from the upper world, or explain to him for what crimes they have been condemned to endless woe. The various punishments of the lost imagined by the poet are wonderful examples of his originality. The guilty are enclosed in blazing tombs, bitten by poisonous ser-

pents, scorched by fiery rain ; are compelled to gnaw and devour each other ; are plunged in pools of blood, half suffocated, and are then suddenly withdrawn ; are pierced by the darts of centaurs, or chained to eternal icebergs.

One or two specimens taken almost at random from "The Inferno," will give the reader some faint idea of the ghastly pictures drawn by Dante, of the lost in hell :

"Here sighs with lamentations and loud moans,
Resounded through the air pierced by no star,
That e'en I wept at entering, various tongues,
Horrible languages, outcries of woe,
Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,
With hands together smote that swell'd the sounds,
Made up a tumult, that forever whirls
Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd,
Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies."

"Woe to you, wicked spirits! hope not
Ever to see the sky again. I come
To take you to the other shore across
Into eternal darkness, there to dwell
In fierce heat and ice."

"O'er all the sand, fell slowly wafting down
Dilated flakes of fire, as flakes of snow
On Alpine summit, when the wind is hushed.
As, in torrid Indian clime, the son
Of Ammon saw, upon his warrior band
Descending, solid flames, that to the ground
Came down ; * * *
So fell the eternal fiery flood, wherewith
The marle glow'd underneath, as under stove
The viands, doubly to augment the pain.
Unceasing was the play of wretched hands,
Now this, now that way glancing, to shake off
The heat, still falling fresh."

"Amid this dread exuberance of woe,
Ran naked spirits wing'd with horrid fear,
Nor hope had they of crevice where to hide.
With serpents were their hands behind them bound,

Which through their veins infix'd the tail and head
 Twisted in folds before. And, lo! on one
 Near to our side, darted an adder up,
 And, where the neck is on the shoulders tied,
 Transpierced him. Far more quickly than e'en pen
 Wrote O or I, he kindled, burn'd, and chang'd
 To ashes all, pour'd out upon the earth.
 When there dissolved he lay, the dust again
 Uproll'd spontaneous, and the selfsame form
 Instant resumed. So mighty sages tell,
 The Arabian Phœnix, when five hundred years
 Have well nigh circled, dies, and springs forthwith
 Renascent :"

* * * * *

"As one that falls,
 He knows not how, by force demoniac dragg'd
 To earth, or through obstruction fettering up
 In chains invisible to the powers of man,
 Who, risen from his trance, gazeth around.
 Bewildered with the monstrous agony
 He hath indured, and wildly staring sighs :
 So stood aghast the sinner when he rose.
 Oh ! how severe God's judgment, that deals out,
 Such blows in stormy vengeance !"

Dore has lately given to the world his illustration of the Inferno, but even that inventive artist has failed to reproduce the wonderful variety of Dante, and his pictures seem almost tame and commonplace compared to the profuse novelty of the original.

THE PURGATORIO.

The Purgatorio, which follows the Inferno, is less vigorous, but still wonderfully poetical. Dante escapes through a passage that leads from the lowest sphere into Purgatory. As the Inferno was represented as a conical pit penetrating into the centre of the earth, Purgatory is painted as a tall mountain whose top ascends towards heaven. Its interior is divided into many spheres, and as the period of purgation passes, the spirits of the elect rise upward, and are led by angels to the celestial world above. When it is announced by the angels that a soul has escaped to heaven, all Pur-

gatory rings with exclamations of joy. The characteristic trait of hell was despair, that of Purgatory is hope. The torments of Purgatory resemble those of the Inferno, but they are borne with patience, because they lead to eternal bliss. Angelic resignation sits on every countenance, and a throng of elect, slowly purging their sins away in the ages of contrition, meets the poet's eye as he ascends from sphere to sphere.

THE PARADISO.

At last the prospect of heaven opens upon him. Led by Beatrice, he views the thrones of the Immortals and the seats of perpetual bliss. Paradise, too has its ascending spheres, rising from the moon to the limits of the stars and the centre of the universe. Dante rises upward amidst the songs of rejoicing spirits and scenes of endless joy. There he sees the martyred saints who have suffered on earth, now clad in their robes of triumph; there are meek women and lowly men, who on earth were forgotten, now raised above kings and princes; there are holy anchorites and faithful monks, who on earth fed on herbs and roots, and were clothed in coarse attire, now radiant with the gems of the New Jerusalem, and fed with the viands of Paradise; there are St Mark, St. Peter, St. John, and all the holy band of the apostles, who by serving the Master so faithfully on earth have become the princes and rulers of heaven. And there at length, in the highest sphere, Dante is permitted to gaze upon the Almighty Creator, the source of love and purity, the mind by which all things are moved, the radiant centre of light, the ineffable Divine, the ruler of the heart, the victor of the skies, whose fallen foe the poet had not long ago beheld flapping his vulture wings in the icy fetters of the Inferno.

THE CHARACTER OF DANTE'S GENIUS.

The character of Dante's genius has been well described by Mr. Oscar Browning, in the ninth edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica." "Dante," says Mr. Browning, "may be said to have con-



Beatrice, transfigured and glorified descending from heaven appears to the Poet, after he has passed through the cleansing fire of purgatory. —The Vision of Purgatory, Canto xxx.



centrated in himself the spirit of the middle ages. Whatever there was of piety, of philosophy, of poetry, of love of nature, and of love of knowledge in those times, is drawn to a focus in his writings. He is the first great name in literature after the night of the dark ages.

“The Italian language, in all its purity and sweetness, in its aptness for the tenderness of love and the violence of passion, or the clearness of philosophical arguments, sprang fully grown and fully armed from his brain. His metre is as pliable and flexible to every mood of emotion; his diction as plaintive and as sonorous. Like him, he can immortalize, by a simple expression, a person, a place, or a phase of nature. Dante is even truer in description than Virgil, whether he paints the snow falling in the Alps, or the homeward flight of birds, or the swelling of an angry torrent. But under this gorgeous pageantry of poetry there lies a unity of conception, a power of philosophic grasp and earnestness of religion, which to the Roman poet were entirely unknown.

“Still more striking is the similarity between Dante and Milton. This may be said to lie rather in the kindred nature of their subjects, and in the parallel development of their minds, than in any mere external resemblance. In both, the man was greater than the poet, the souls of both were ‘like a star’ and dwelt apart.’ Both were academically trained in the deepest studies of their age; the labor which made Dante lean made Milton blind. ‘On evil days, though fallen, and evil tongues,’ they gathered the concentrated experience of their lives into one immortal work, the quintessence of their hopes, their knowledge, and their sufferings.

“Looked at outwardly, the life of Dante seems to have been an utter and disastrous failure. What its inward satisfaction must have been, we, with *Paradiso* open before us, can form some conception. To him, longing with an intensity which only the word DANTESQUE will express, to realize an ideal upon earth, and con-

tinually baffled and misunderstood, the far greater part of his mature life must have been labor and sorrow."

THE POET'S DEATH.

In 1317-18, Dante appears to have been still wandering about Italy. In 1319, he repaired again to Guido da Polenta, lord of Ravenna, by whom he was hospitably received, and with whom he appears to have remained till his death. There he was seized by an illness which terminated fatally either in July or September, 1321.

Scarce was Dante at rest in his grave when Italy felt instinctively that this was her great man.

In 1350, the republic of Florence voted the sum of ten golden florins, to be paid by the hands of Messrs. Giovanni Bocaccio to Dante's daughter Beatrice, a nun in the convent of Santa Chiara at Ravenna.

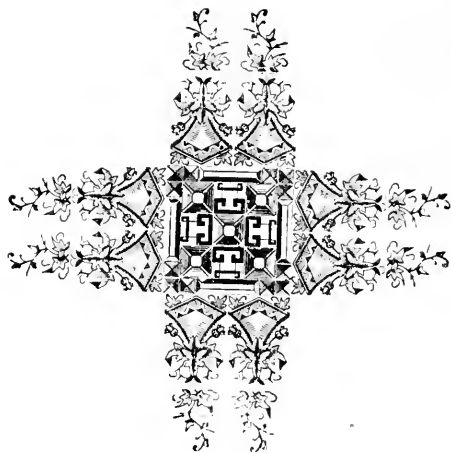
In 1396, Florence voted a monument, and begged in vain for the metaphorical ashes of the man of whom she had threatened to make literal cinders if she could catch him alive. In 1429, she begged again, but Ravenna, a dead city, was tenacious of the dead poet. In 1519, Michael Angelo would have built the monument, but Leo X. refused to allow the sacred dust to be removed.

Finally, in 1829, five hundred and eight years after the death of Dante, Florence got a cenotaph fairly built in Santa Croce (by Ricci), ugly even beyond the usual lot of such, with three colossal figures on it, Dante in the middle, with Italy on one side, and Poesy on the other.

The tomb at Ravenna, built originally in 1483, was restored in 1692, and finally rebuilt in its present form in 1780. It is a little shrine, covered with a dome, not unlike the tomb of a Mohammedan saint, and is now the chief magnet which draws foreigners and their gold to Ravenna. The VALET DE PLACE says that Dante is not buried under it, but beneath the pavement of the street in front of it.

NOTES ON

PROBATIONISM & PURGATORY.



NOTES ON PROBATIONISM AND PURGATORY.

FUTURE Probation, is the phrase which is commonly used to denote the doctrine that after this life is ended, men will still have opportunity for faith and repentance. It may not be amiss to remark, that this doctrine has no necessary logical connection with a belief in the final restoration of all rational creatures to the favor of God. While it is plain, in view of the manifest fact that a large part of the human race die in sin, that one who believes in final universal salvation, must either believe in a regeneration and sanctification accomplished in the article of death, or else, with the great majority of restorationists, in a faith and repentance in the life to come ; yet, on the other hand, it is no less clear that a man may believe that the offer of salvation will not be restricted to this life, while yet sincerely accepting the Scripture testimony that many will be lost forever.

Again, it is of consequence to observe, that the doctrine of the continuance of the Gospel offer after death is held in various forms. Those who maintain this differ among themselves, (1) as to the DURATION of future probation, and (2) as to its EXTENT. There are those who hold that to all eternity it will be possible, upon the condition of repenting of sin, and believing upon Christ as Saviour, for any soul to be saved from sin and woe. Others, again, maintain that, although the possibility of salvation does not end with death, yet there is a ~~time~~ time for every one, if not here, then hereafter,

after which it will be forever too late to be saved. The most of those who hold this view, as many evangelical theologians of Europe, maintain that this point is or will be reached for each person, whensoever and wheresoever Christ shall be definitely and intelligibly offered, and consciously and deliberately rejected. It seems to be the common opinion with such, however, that before the final judgment, Christ will have been thus offered to every human being who has ever lived, either before death or after. Thus we may distinguish, in a general way, different views regarding the duration of future probation, as the belief is an everlasting probation, and the belief in a probation terminated, at the farthest, by the day of judgment.

We have also to distinguish two opinions as to the extent of the future offer of salvation. There are those who believe that all who die impenitent, will still, for a time, limited or unlimited, after death, have the opportunity of salvation ; a large number restrict this privilege to those who, like the most of men in heathen lands, and not a few in so-called Christian countries, have not had in their lifetime any opportunity of hearing about Christ in any intelligible way, and so have never intelligently rejected him.

It is not easy to exaggerate the practical importance of this question. If the offer of salvation will be continued after death to some or to all who die impenitent, then it should be most clearly shown. We need the consolation which the knowledge of this would give, so often are our hearts overburdened with the inscrutable mystery of permitted sin. But if, on the other hand, the almost universal belief of the Church in all ages to the contrary, be indeed founded on the teachings of God's word, then do we need to know this with assurance. Life is serious enough, in any view of the case ; but what shall be said of the awful solemnity of living, if, on the decisions of three score years and ten, really turns the question whether we shall be holy and happy, or sinful and miserable forever and ever? or what, again, shall be said of the responsibility which

rests upon the Church of Christ, if, although the offer of salvation be for this life only, she is anything less than most intensely earnest in carrying the tidings of the great salvation to those who are sitting in darkness?

As to how our hearts would have this question answered, with the light we have, there can be no doubt. From many a soul would a heavy burden be lifted, could the assurance be given from God's word, that for all or any who had died impenitent, there was still room for hope. Especially is this the case with regard to the heathen world. We do not greatly wonder that so many believe in a future preaching of the gospel, to these at least, if to no others. And while we would be far from calling in question the sincerity and piety of many, who confidently hold to the extension of the gospel offer after death, we cannot resist the conviction forced upon us by many of the arguments one hears, that with very many such, these inward desires and longings of the heart, as well as the intellectual difficulties which render so inscrutable the permission of sin by God, and the apparent inequality of his dealings, have often had—no doubt unconsciously to the individual—a decisive influence on the interpretation of God's word.

Considering this doctrine now under each of the forms under which it is presented, we ask, first, whether there is reason to believe that the offer of salvation will ALWAYS stand open, so that it will never be too late for any one to be saved? The theory which maintains this, as commonly held, seems to us to rest upon an erroneous view as to the nature of free agency. It is conceived that in order to free agency, man must ever have plenary power to choose for God. Hence is inferred an eternal possibility of repentance. It is apart from the scope of this argument to go into a full discussion of this question. We can only say that the theory of freedom to which we refer, seems to us to stand in direct contradiction to undisputed facts of experience. If any man has doubt on this subject, and thinks that because he is free, he can by voli-

tion reverse at pleasure the current of his love or hate, let him at once, by all means, try the experiment, and so test his theory. Let the man who is conscious of hating his enemy, will to begin to love him heartily and sincerely from a certain definite hour.

Moreover, it must not be overlooked that if this argument be assumed to prove the continuance of the possibility of salvation for ever, by logical necessity this involves the perpetual possibility of apostasy from God among the saved—a doctrine which finds few advocates! On the other hand, if the certainty that a man will never sin,—a certainty which we all believe will be attained by the saved hereafter,—is compatible with freedom, then plainly a certainty that a man will never stop sinning, may be no less compatible with freedom.

But even if this conception of free agency were not false, still the conclusion would not follow, that there could never be a time too late to be delivered from the punishment of sin. For mere repentance and forsaking of sin does not of itself bring deliverance from penal evil. That it does this, in the case of the christian, is due, not to anything in the nature of faith and repentance, but solely to the Grace of God, through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. In order, therefore, to prove that there can never be a time when salvation shall not be attainable, it must be shown, not only that an irreversible fixedness of character is impossible, but also that there never will be a time when God, who is now ready to save from the penal consequences of sin, on condition of faith and repentance, will be willing no longer. It must be shown from the Scriptures,—the only possible source of knowledge on such a subject,—that it is not possible for a sinner to exhaust the patience and long-suffering of God.

Again, this theory of an eternal possibility of salvation overlooks patent facts of observation and experience. For is it not plain that the will ever tends to set itself, to all appearance changelessly, with the most astonishing rapidity, especially in evil? Is it

not the fact that very rarely do we see a man turn to God who is past fifty? Are there many who turn even at forty? Is it not clear that moral character instead of never becoming unchangeably fixed in evil, in multitudes of cases appears to be already settled here in this life, for this side of death? And if practically this fixity of character is often reached here on the earth within so short a time as fifty years, what is the probability that a man who has successfully resisted the Gospel for centuries,—supposing it to be offered for so long,—will yet accept it,—say, after a thousand years?

But others, assuming now a different view of human freedom, argue that there is hope yet even in such a case from the almighty power of God. To this we answer that the question is not as to what God can do, but as to what he has revealed that he has determined to do. What the answer to that question must be, does not, with regard to this life, admit of dispute. Although it is true that God is almighty, and although, as we believe, regeneration is an act of his almighty power, yet it is evident that he gives this grace, as a general rule, not without regard to the laws of habit. It is a fact that God very rarely renews any who are past middle life. This is a most significant fact in its bearing on the present controversy. The will rapidly tends to set and harden, as the result of repeated acts of choice, and, so far as all appearances go, with multitudes has already taken an irreversible set against God and holiness, even before life is half gone. It is a fact that God, in the bestowal of his regenerating grace, commonly regards this law. This does not look like an everlasting possibility of salvation.

Finally, against this theory of a probation without limit stand all the representations of the Scriptures as to the issues of the day of judgment. In every instance they represent those issues as final and irreversible. It was the Lord Jesus who declared to many he would yet speak those awful words, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" As to rejoinders based upon other interpretations of the word AIONIOS,

it may, we think, be fairly said that the New Testament usage of that term has been finally settled by the highest lexical authority, as denoting endless duration.

Whatever opinion, then, any may hold as to the precise time when for each one probation ends, if anything is plain from the Scriptures it is this, that it will not continue for ever. It will certainly not last beyond the day of judgment. The issues of that day are final. The great burden of all the Divine expostulations is ever just this,—the coming of a time when it shall be forever too late. Thus, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, we read: “To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the days of the temptation in the wilderness. * * * To whom I swear in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest.” Of what force such words as these, if there shall never be a time when it shall be too late to repent?

But this is so clear that the most of those who deny a universal restoration, and yet affirm a doctrine of future probation, are careful to say that this probation will yet have a limit. We are told that in no case will it last beyond the intermediate state; while for many, through their free self-decision against Christ, or the sin against the Holy Ghost, it may end much sooner, even in this life. Among those who hold that in the intermediate state, salvation will still be offered, we may, however, distinguish, as above remarked, two classes. There are those who hold that this side of the day of judgment the offer of salvation will be absolutely closed for none, except for those who have been guilty of the sin against the Holy Spirit; while others, probably a much larger number, think that the future offer of salvation will be restricted to those who had not in this life the opportunity of deciding for or against Christ. We have first to consider the view of the former class.

As to these, in the first place, no one pretends to have discovered a single formal statement in the Scriptures teaching that those who reject Christ when offered to them here, will have the opportunity

to reverse their decision hereafter. If this be not decisive against the supposed doctrine, yet the absence of such statement is certainly of ominous significance

In the second place, against this theory stands the fact already noted, that the Scriptures attach such transcendent importance to this earthly life. If all, with the exception of the one small class already noted, shall have the opportunity to believe on Christ hereafter, how explain the burning urgency of the apostle Paul, for example,—his more than willingness, his intense eagerness to become anything, or do anything, so that he “might by all means save some.”

However painful the conclusion, and however dark the mystery which veils the judgment of God, the more that we study the Scriptures, the more are we constrained to hold with steadfastness to the teaching of the church catholic upon this subject, that if the Scriptures are to be allowed to decide the question, then we must believe that for all at least who hear the Gospel and reject it, the opportunity of salvation ends with death. For all such we feel compelled to believe that if there be any meaning in words, then the intermediate state is not a state of continued probation, but the beginning of a woe which is endless.

But is it also this for all? This brings us to the consideration of the other form in which a doctrine of probation between death and judgment is maintained. Granting that for all who here have the opportunity of accepting Christ as Saviour and reject him, the intermediate state will offer no chance to reverse their decision and retrieve their error, may we not, with many, suppose that for those who, through no fault of their own, have never heard of Christ on earth, the opportunity to know his gospel and accept it will be given after death, so that at last to every human being, either in this life or the next, before the final day of judgment, Christ will have been clearly offered, to be accepted or rejected?

This question must not be confounded, as it sometimes is, with the perfectly distinct question, whether it be permitted to suppose that possibly the Spirit of God may, in exceptional cases here in this world, renew the hearts of men who have never heard of a Christ, thus leading them to true repentance and holy living without the knowledge of a Saviour. Whether this be true, indeed, we greatly doubt ; never among the heathen have we met or heard of one meeting any person who gave evidence of being born again, before that they had heard the Gospel. But whether true or not, this is not the question now before us. What it really is, may be stated again in the words of Prof. Dorner, who advocates this view.

He says : "The absoluteness of Christianity demands that no one be judged before Christianity has been made acceptable and brought near to him. But that is not the case in this life with millions of human beings. Nay, even within the Church there are periods and circles where the Gospel does not really approach men as that which it is. Moreover, those dying in childhood have not been able to decide personally for Christianity."

In regard to this question we have to remark, first, as to infants : their case does not oblige us to suppose that because they have not yet been able to believe, therefore they must enter on the intermediate state with their spiritual condition undecided. For as many as believe in the possibility and the fact of infant regeneration, it should be plain that it is quite possible for God, by his almighty power, without interfering with human freedom, by his regenerating grace to make the future free decisions of all such absolutely certain before they leave this world. For infants, therefore, while we must as Prof. Dorner suggests, admit that their first conscious personal choice of Christ as Lord and Saviour must be made in the future life, yet it by no means follows, as he and others have assumed, that for this reason their regeneration must also take place in the intermediate state. In such a first free choice of Christ one need only see the assured result of a regenerating change

which passed upon them while yet in this present life. Where God, however, has revealed so little, we shall do well that our own words be few.

The chief interest of the question before us, centres in the case of the heathen. Does the word of God warrant the belief that to all those to whom, through no fault of their own, the Gospel has not in their lifetime been preached, it will be preached, bringing them the offer of salvation, in the world of the dead? Gladly, indeed, would one welcome such a doctrine. We do not wonder that so many have eagerly caught at such a hope. Such a truth, if a truth, would lift from the heart of many a thoughtful Christian a very heavy burden. Nevertheless we are compelled to say for our part, we are able to find in the word of God no warrant for such a cheering hope, but on the contrary much that seems to be very clear against it.

In the first place, the Scriptures uniformly assume that what is done for the salvation of the heathen must be done in this life. This seems to be suggested, for example, if not distinctly implied, in the account which they give of the missionary labors of the apostle Paul.

Again, in Rom. x. 9-17, Paul first lays down the necessity of faith,—of calling on the name of the Lord—in order to salvation. To this necessity he makes no exceptions, suggests no qualifications whatever. But then he reminds us that men cannot “call upon him of whom they have not heard”; that “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”; and argues that, again, it is impossible for men to hear without preaching, and for any to preach, “except they be sent.”

From these words, as from the apostle's own actions, the natural inference is that he believed that if the heathen are to be saved, they must hear of Christ from the living preacher. Will any one venture to say that Paul in this language had in mind also a preaching of the Gospel to the dead? Surely his words must refer to the

sending of the Gospel by the living Church to unevangelized lands—as to Africa, China, and India—and not to missionary work in Hades!

Most explicit of all, however, are the words of the same apostle in Rom. ii. 12, where we read, “As many as have sinned without law”—what? shall have a chance to hear the law in the next life, and so to repent and be saved? That is far enough from being what he says, for the words are, “As many as have sinned without law, SHALL ALSO PERISH without law.” No words could be more categorical or all-inclusive in their scope. “As MANY AS have sinned without law, SHALL ALSO PERISH without law”! This single passage seems to us to stand like a wall, forbidding to all who acknowledge the inspired authority of the apostle any further speculation on the matter.

To these strictly Scriptural arguments we do not feel that it should be necessary to add anything else. Where the Holy Spirit has spoken, it befits us to be silent.

But it is right that we should hear what is argued on the other side of this question.

In the first place, then, from the dogmatic point of view, the doctrine of a future probation, for at least the heathen, is argued from the nature of God as infinitely good and just. For if we are to believe that God has provided a salvation sufficient for all, and that yet multitudes, through no fault of their own, are in the providence of God precluded from any chance of hearing of Christ in this life, and because of this are helplessly lost, and that forever, then, it is said, it is quite impossible to vindicate the goodness and justice of God.

That, assuming this to be the real state of the case, we find ourselves confronting a dark and most painful mystery, no one will deny. And yet a very little reflection should make it clear to any one that arguments such as this, from the justice and goodness of God, to what God will do or will not do, cannot be always pressed

with much confidence, plausible as they seem at first hearing. For, as already remarked, it will not do to ignore the fact that although God is infinite in justice, goodness and mercy, yet sin and pain are here. And where is there anything in this common argument from the goodness and justice of God as demanding a future probation for the heathen, which would not have applied, *A FORTIORI*, against the permission of sin and misery at all? It is here that the real mystery lies; and not in fixing a certain limit to probation, or in denying the offer of pardon to many of the sinful sons of men. Surely the fact that sin is here, notwithstanding the moral perfection of God, should make us more cautious and less confident than some are in the inference, that the nature of God ensures to any or all among the heathen an offer of salvation after death.

In the second place, now that sin has mysteriously come into the world, it is at least quite conceivable, that the universal limitation of the offer of salvation to the present life, may be just the best way that infinite wisdom could devise for restraining the evils of sin within the narrowest possible limits. Certain it is that no man living knows enough of the divine government to be able to show that this may not indeed be so.

Again, the argument assumes a low and false estimate of the moral intelligence and consequent guilt of the heathen. When it is asked whether the heathen can justly be punished for their sin, the answer turns upon the question, whether they have any valid excuse for their sin. If they neither know, nor by any possible effort could know, what the holy God requires of man, then indeed we must confess that to punish them would be unjust, and that a future revelation would be necessary before they could be justly condemned. But we must insist that the moral ignorance of the heathen, by thinkers of this class is very often grossly exaggerated. The plain teaching of the Holy Scriptures is, that while the heathen have not from the light of nature light enough to save them, they do have enough to condemn them. As regards the

revelation of God in external nature we read, that "the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,—so that they are without excuse, because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." In like manner as regards the revelation of God's will in the heart,—the law which is written on the natural conscience,—we read again, that these which have not the law, are yet "a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another." That the heathen are so totally and helplessly ignorant that they could not be justly punished for their sin, is in these passages formally denied.

And the argument of the apostle is confirmed by the testimony of the heathen themselves in numberless instances. Evil as their life is, they know, or, at least, if they but stop and think, they may know that it is evil. This is shown, for example, by the fact that among idolatrous peoples, again and again, have thoughtful individuals seen the folly and the sin of idol worship, and, led by the light of nature only, have condemned and forsaken it. And the stern charge of God's Word is the more acknowledged in the multitude of testimonies which we have from heathen in every part of the world—testimonies at once to their knowledge of the right and the wrong, and their consciousness of guilt and ill-desert.

But it is rejoined that still, although the heathen may for their sins deserve to be punished, as indeed do we all; yet, since God has offered salvation to many, he must therefore in justice offer it to all, and at least give all an equal chance to accept or reject the salvation, else he were become partial and unjust. Hence it is inferred with great confidence, that since, beyond doubt, the Gospel is not offered to all in this life, it will certainly be offered after death, before the final judgment, to all who could not hear the Gospel while in this present life. To this argument one might

answer, that it is contradicted even by the voice of human reason as expressed in human government. For, in the case of a revolt among men, who would venture to maintain that in the event of an amnesty being offered to some, the Government could not do less in justice than offer amnesty to all whose guilt was similar? Can any one deny that in such a case a human government may reserve, and righteously reserve, its rights of sovereignty? Where in the history of our race was the theory ever propounded or acted on, that in such cases amnesty must be offered to all under the same circumstances, if offered to any?

But this argument derives its whole force from the tacit assumption already mentioned, that man has some claim on God for saving mercy. For if he has not, what basis then for the assumption that those to whom the Gospel is not offered in this life, MUST have it offered after death? But to assume such a claim of man on God is to assume what is contradicted by the plainest declarations of the Scriptures. Everywhere and always they insist that man's salvation is "ALL OF GRACE;" whereas this argument assumes that the heathen somehow have a claim in righteousness on God for the offer of the Gospel, so that the Gospel is therefore not ALL of grace, but in part, at least, of debt!

Last of all, whether any man like it or not, the fact remains and cannot be explained away, that God actually claims and uses this absolute sovereignty in the dispensations of his mercy. Are all men treated alike in the general providential government of God? Neither, according to the Scripture. will they be in his redemptive administrations. For it is written, "He saith, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy."

What then? Must we conclude that, as far as man can see, there must be injustice with God, if the heathen, many of them, have not here or hereafter the offer of salvation? How shall this be? Injustice to whom? Not surely to those who hear the Gospel, believe and are saved; they are saved righteously by the expiating

lood. Not surely to those who hear the Gospel in this life, and reject it ; they have acted freely in rejecting Christ and suffer justly, and cannot complain or justly demand a second probation. Is there then injustice toward the heathen who never hear the Gospel, and so perish in their sins ? Neither can this be. For in the first place, they did not deserve to be saved any more than others ; in the second place, because they will not be punished for not believing on him of whom they never heard nor could hear, but only for not living up to the light that they either had or could have had ; and lastly, because God, as he tells us, will in the final judgment take full account of all the disadvantages under which any have lived. "He that knew his Master's will and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, and he that knew not his Master's will and did it not, shall be beaten with few stripes." —PROFESSOR S. H. KELLOGG, D. D., (*Presbyterian Review*, April, 1885.)

1ST PETER 3, v. 18-20.* The Apostle has been led through what seemed at first a train of ethical counsels, to the example of the meekness and patience of Christ. But he cannot rest in the thought of his Lord's passion as being only an example, and so he passes on to speak of its redeeming power. It was a sacrifice for sins ; in some mysterious, transcendent way, vicarious. Its purpose was nothing less than to bring mankind to God. But then the thought rose up before him that the work looked backward as well as forward ; that those who had fallen asleep in past ages, even under conditions that seemed most hopeless, were not shut out from hope. Starting either from a wide-spread belief among the Jews as to the extent of the Messiah's work ; or from the direct teaching of his Master after that resurrection ; or from one of those flashes of truth which were revealed to him not by flesh and blood, but by his Father in heaven, he speaks of that wider work. The Lord was

* This is the view of those who hold, that this much disputed passage teaches the possibility of repentance after death. We deem it only fair to place it before the reader, along with the more generally accepted interpretations that follow.

“put to death in the flesh,” but was “quicken in the spirit.” That cry, “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit,” was the beginning of a new activity. He passed into the world of the dead to be the herald of His own victory. As our Lord in speaking of God’s judgments in the past, had taken the days of Noah and the destruction of Tyre and Sidon, and the Cities of the Plain, as representative instances of what was true of countless others, so does Peter. The spirits of whom he thought as hearing that message were those who had been unbelieving, disobedient, corrupt, ungodly; but who had not hardened themselves in the one irremediable antagonism to good which has never forgiveness.

The words, taken by themselves, might leave us in doubt as to the nature and effect of the proclamation. But it is surely altogether monstrous to think, as some have thought, that He who a short time before had breathed the prayer, “Father, for they know not what they do;” who had welcomed, with a marvellous tenderness, the cravings of the repentant robber; who had felt, though but for a moment, the agony of abandonment, as other children of God have felt it without ceasing to be children—should pass into the world of the unseen only to tell the souls of the lost of a kingdom from which they are excluded, a blessedness in which they had neither part nor lot; to mock with the proclamation of a victory those who were only to be crushed under the chariot wheels of the conqueror. We have not so learnt Christ as to think of that as possible.

But whatever doubt might linger round the words is removed by the reiterated assertion of the same truth a few verses further on (1st Peter iv. 6.) That which was “preached also to them that are dead,” was nothing else but a gospel—the good news of the redeeming love of Christ. And it was published to them, not to exempt them from the penalty, but that they having been judged, in all that belonged to the relations of their human life, with a true and righteous judgment, should yet. in all that affected their rela-

tion to God, "live in the spirit." Death came upon them, and they accepted their punishment as awarded by the loving and righteous Judge, and so ceased from the sin to which they had before been slaves, and thus it became to them the gate of life. So, the Apostle says to his disciples, it should be with them in times of calamity and persecution. They were to arm themselves with that thought, and so to cease from sin, as those who were sharers in the sufferings and death of Christ, crucified, buried, risen again with Him, accepting pain, privation, ignominy, as working out a like purification in this present life. * * The words of the Apostle lead us to the belief of a capacity for repentance, faith, love—for growth, discipline, education in those who have passed away. We have no sufficient grounds for limiting the work on which they dwell to the representative instance or the time—boundaries, of which they speak.—E. H. PLUMPTRE, D. D., Dean of Wells.

The doctrine of the Church of Rome respecting the state of departed souls is, that the saints do not immediately pass into glory, but first go into a place called purgatory, where they are purified by fire from the stains of sin, which had not been washed out, during the present life. This doctrine, Protestants affirm, was unknown to the Church till the days of Gregory the Great, about the end of the sixth or the beginning of the seventh century; but the way seems to have been prepared for it by certain opinions, which prevailed prior to that period, as we learn from the writings of the Fathers. A strange notion was entertained by some respecting the fire which will burn up the earth and its works; that all should pass through it, that it would completely purify the bodies of those who were to be glorified, and that the more holy any person had been, he should feel the less pain from this process. With regard to the souls of the righteous they believed, that they were in a place of rest and enjoyment, but that they should not be admitted to the beatific vision till the resurrection was past. Hence arose the practice of praying for the dead. Conceiving that they had not yet



Antaeus, one of the giants of the pit, taking Dante and Virgil in his arms, places them at the bottom of the circle or shore, which is tormented with giants.



attained full felicity, the Ancients thought that they might be benefited by their prayers, which would procure to them a greater degree of enjoyment. Although these opinions were fit material for fancy and superstition to work up into a still more extravagant form, they were widely different from the doctrine afterwards established by the Church of Rome as an article of faith.

The prototype of Purgatory is to be found in heathenism, from which have been borrowed the cumbersome apparatus of ceremonies, and many of the religious opinions held by the Church of Rome. The existence of a purgatory is plainly taught in the writings of both poets and philosophers. In the sixth book of the *Æneid*, Anchises explains to his son, who had visited him in the Shades, the process which souls were doomed to undergo, before they could be admitted into the Elysian fields, that they might be freed from the stains of sin which adhered to them at death (*Æneid* VI. 739- 740). Some he says, are stretched out to the winds; others are purified by being plunged into an immense whirlpool or lake; and others are subjected to the operation of fire, (*Æneid* VI. 743). In his dialogue entitled *Phædro*, Plato informs us that when men enter into the invisible state, they are judged. Those who are neither truly virtuous, nor consummately wicked, are carried away to the Acherusian lake, where, having suffered the punishment of their unjust deeds, they are dismissed, and then receive the reward of their good actions. Those who on account of the greatness of their sins, are incurable, are cast into Tartarus, from which they shall never escape. Those who have committed curable sins and have repented, must fall into Tartarus, but after a certain period they will be delivered from it.

In both these passages, we have a very exact description of Purgatory; and as there is no trace of it in the Bible, we conclude that this is the source from which it has been derived. The resemblance appears more striking, if we reflect, that in both cases it rests

precisely upon the same foundation, the curable and incurable sins of Plato, answering exactly to the venial and mortal sins of Roman Catholics. By mortal sins, they understand those which alienate men entirely from God, and are worthy of eternal death ; and they may be compared to those bodily wounds, which, by their own nature, cause the destruction of life. Venial sins do not turn away the sinner entirely from God, although they impede his approach to him ; and they may be expiated, because their nature is so light that they do not exclude a person from grace, or render him an enemy to God. Mortal sins are few, and even these are so explained away, that scarcely one is left upon the list. All others are venial, or pardonable. They are expiated partly by penances in this life, and partly by the pains of purgatory, the place appointed for completing the atonement.

Another distinction is made, with a view to support the doctrine concerning satisfaction for sin in the future state. The pardon of sin we understand to consist in the full remission of guilt or of the obligation to punishment, so that to the pardoned man there is no condemnation. Those who hold the doctrine of purgatory, take a different view. They affirm that there are two kinds of guilt, the guilt of the fault, and the guilt of the punishment. The former is remitted, and the latter is retained ; or in other words, the penitent sinner is absolved from the sentence of eternal death, but is still subject to temporal punishment. Thus speaks the Council of Trent : " If any man shall say, that after justification the fault is so remitted to a penitent sinner, or the guilt of eternal punishment is so blotted out, that there remains no guilt of temporal punishment to be endured, in this life or in the future life in purgatory, before he can be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven ; let him be accursed." Now, purgatory is of the nature of a great penitentiary, into which the half-pardoned culprits are sent, that they may undergo the painful but wholesome discipline, by which they will be glorified for full restoration to the favor of God.

The notion of purgatory seems so gross, that the common sense of every man rejects it, unless perverted and overpowered by authority and prejudice. Can a person have any idea in his mind, when he talks of souls being purified by fire? Might he not, with equal propriety, speak of a spirit being nourished with bread and wine? The soul is supposed on this theory to be a material substance, upon which fire can act, contrary to the belief even of the abettors of purgatory, who admit the spirituality of its essence. The whole fabric must therefore tumble to the ground. Purgatory is physically impossible.—DR. JOHN DICK, (Lectures on Theology.)

There can be no doubt that there does appear something very unnatural in introducing our Lord, in the midst of what is plainly a description of the results of his atoning sufferings, as having in the Spirit, by which he was quickened after he had been put to death, gone many centuries before, in the antediluvian age, to preach to an ungodly world; and there is just as little doubt that the only meaning that the words will bear, without violence being done them, is, that it was when he had been put to death in the flesh and quickened in the Spirit, or by the Spirit, whatever that may mean, he went and preached; and that “the Spirits,” whoever they may be, were “in prison,” whatever that may mean, when he preached to them.

Interpreters holding in common that our Lord went down to Hades, are considerably divided as to what was his object in going there, as described or hinted at in the passage before us; one class holding that he went to hell (Gehenna), the place of torment, to proclaim to fallen angels, who are kept there under chains of darkness, as the spirits in prison—(though how they could be said to be disobedient in the days of Noah does not appear, and besides these spirits seem plainly to belong to the same class of beings as “the souls” that were saved, verse 20)—to proclaim throughout that dismal region his triumph over them and their apostate chief; another class holding that he went to this place of torment to announce his

triumph over the powers of darkness, and to offer salvation through his death to those human spirits who had died in their sins ; a third class holding that he went to purgatory to release those who had been sufficiently improved by their disciplinary sufferings, and to remove them to paradise ; and a fourth class who translate "the spirits in prison," "the spirits in safe keeping," holding that he went to paradise, the residence of the separate spirits of good men, to announce to them the glad tidings, that the great salvation, which had been the object of their faith and hope, was now completed.

Each of these varieties of interpretation is attended with its own difficulties, which appear to me insuperable. Some of them go upon principles obviously and demonstratively false ; and all of them attempt to bring much out of the words which plainly is not in them. It seems incredible, if such events as are darkly hinted at, rather than distinctly described in these words thus interpreted, had taken place, that we should have no account of them, indeed, no certain allusion to them in any other part of Scripture. It seems quite unaccountable why the separate spirits of those who had lived in the days of Noah, and perished in the deluge, are specially mentioned, as those among the inhabitants of the unseen world, to whom the quickened Redeemer went and preached, the much greater multitude who, before that time and since that time, had gone down to the land of darkness, being passed by without notice. And what will weigh much with a judicious student of Scripture is, that it is impossible to perceive how these events, supposing them to have taken place, were, as they are represented by the construction of the language to be, the effects of Christ's suffering for sins in the room of sinners, and how these statements at all serve to promote the apostle's practical object, which was to persuade persecuted Christians patiently and cheerfully to submit to sufferings for righteousness sake, from the consideration, exemplified in the case of our Lord, that suffering in a good cause, and in a right spirit, however severe, was calculated to lead to the happiest results. No

interpretation, we apprehend, can be the right one, which does not correspond with the obvious construction of the passage, and with the avowed design of the writer. Keeping these general principles steadily in view, I proceed now to state, as briefly, and as plainly as I can what appears to me the probable meaning of this difficult passage, "a passage" as Leighton says "somewhat obscure in itself" but as it usually falls, made more so by the various fancies and contests of interpreters aiming or pretending to clear it."

The first consequence of those penal, vicarious expiatory sufferings which Christ, the just One, endured by the appointment of his Father, the righteous Judge, for sins in the room of the unjust, noticed here is, that he "was put to death in the flesh." But his becoming thus bodily dead and powerless was not more certainly the effect of his penal, vicarious, expiatory, sufferings, than the second circumstance here mentioned, his "being quickened in the Spirit."

The spiritual life, and power conferred on the Saviour as the reward of his disinterested labors in the cause of God's honor and man's salvation, were illustriously manifested in that wonderful quickening of his apostles by the communication of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost; and in communicating through the instrumentality of their ministry spiritual life, and all its concomitant and following blessings, to multitudes of souls dead in sins.

It is to this, I apprehend, that the Apostle refers, when he says, "by which," or "whereby;" by this spiritual quickening, or "wherefor" being thus spiritually quickened, "he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who beforetime were disobedient." If our general scheme of interpretation is well founded, there can be no doubt as to who those "spirits in prison" are. They are not human spirits, confined in bodies like so many prisons, as a punishment for sin in some previous state of being; that is a heathenish doctrine, to which Scripture, rightly interpreted, gives no sanction; but sinful men righteously condemned, the slaves and captives of Satan, shackled

with the fetters of sin. These are the captives to whom the Messiah, "anointed by the spirit of the Lord," that is, just in other words, "quickened in the spirit," was to proclaim liberty, the bound ones to whom he was to announce the opening of the prison.

It is not unnatural, then, that guilty and depraved men should be represented as captives in prison; but the phrase, "spirits in prison," seems a strange one for spiritually captive men. It is so; but the use of it, rather than the word "men" in prison, or prisoners, seems to have grown out of the previous phrase, "quickened in spirit." He who was quickened in the spirit had to do with the spirits of men, with men as spiritual beings. This seems to have given a color to the whole passage; the eight persons saved from the deluge are termed eight "souls." But then it seems as if the spirits in prison, to whom our Lord, quickened in spirit, is represented as coming and preaching, were the unbelieving generation who lived before the flood, "the spirits in prison, who aforetime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah."

This difficulty is not a formidable one. This stumbling block may easily be removed. "Spirits in prison," is a phrase characteristic of men in all ages. We see nothing perplexing in the statement, "God sent the gospel to the Britons, who in the days of Cæsar were painted savages;" the persons to whom God sent the gospel, were not the same individuals who were painted savages in the days of Cæsar, but they belonged to the same race. Neither should we find anything perplexing in the statement, Jesus Christ came, and preached to spiritually captive men, who were hard to be convinced in former times, especially in the days of Noah. The reason why there is reference to the disobedience of men in former times and especially in the days of Noah, will probably come out in the course of our future illustrations.

Having endeavored to dispose of these verbal difficulties, let us now attend to the sentiment contained in the words "Jesus Christ,

spiritually quickened, came and preached to the spirits in prison, who in time past were disobedient." The coming and preaching describe not what our Lord did "bodily," but what he did spiritually, not what he did personally, but what he did by the instrumentality of others. Thus then, is Christ, quickened in consequence of his suffering, the just one in the room of the unjust, going and preaching to the spirits in prison.

There are two subsidiary ideas in reference to this preaching of Christ quickened in the spirit, to the spirits in prison, that are suggested by the words of the apostle, and these are: the success of his preaching, and the extent of that success. These spirits in prison had "aforetime been disobedient." Christ had preached to them not only by Noah, but by all the prophets, for the spirits in the prophets was "the spirit of Christ;" but he had preached in a great measure in vain. But now, Jesus Christ being quickened by the spirit, and quickening others by the spirit, the consequence was, "the disobedient were turned to the wisdom of the just," and "the spirits in prison" appeared a people made ready, prepared, for the Lord. The word attended by the spirit, in consequence of the shedding of the blood of the covenant, had free course, and was glorified, and "the prisoners were sent forth out of the pit wherein there was no water." The prey was taken from the mighty, the captive of the terrible one was delivered.

The sealed among the tribes of Israel were a hundred forty and four thousand, and the converted from among the nations, the people taken out from among the Gentiles, to the name of Jehovah, formed an innumerable company, "a multitude which no man could number, out of every kindred, and people, and tribe and nation." It was not then, "as in the days of Noah, when few, that is, eight souls were saved"—multitudes heard and knew the joyful sound; the shackles dropped from their limbs, and they walked at liberty, keeping God's commandments. And still does the fountain

of life spring up in the quickened Redeemer's heart, and well forth giving life to the world. Still does the great Deliverer prosecute his glorious work of spiritual emancipation. Still is he going and preaching to the "spirits in prison;" and though all have not obeyed, yet many already have obeyed, many are obeying, many more will yet obey.—DR. JOHN BROWN. (Expository discourses on first Peter.)

The difficult passage, 1st Peter 3, v. 18-19, however it may be interpreted, proves nothing against the Protestant doctrine, that the souls of believers do at death immediately pass into glory. What happens to ordinary men, happened to Christ when He died. His cold and lifeless body was laid in the tomb. His human soul passed into the invisible world. This is all that the creed, commonly called the Apostle's, means, when it says Christ was buried, and descended into Hell, or Hades, the unseen world. This is all that the passage in question clearly teaches. Men may doubt and differ as to what Christ did during the three days of his sojourn in the invisible world. They may differ as to who the spirits were to whom he preached, or rather made proclamation: whether they were the Antediluvians; or the souls of the people of God detained in Sheol; or the mass of the dead of all antecedent generations and of all nations, which is the favorite hypothosis of modern interpreters. They may differ also as to what the proclamation was which Christ made to those imprisoned spirits: whether it was the gospel; or his own triumph; or deliverance from Sheol; or the coming judgment. However these subordinate questions may be decided, all that remains certain is that Christ, after his death upon the cross, entered the invisible world, and there, in some way, made proclamation of what He had done on earth. All this is very far from teaching the doctrine of a "Limbus Patrum," as taught by the Jews, the Fathers, or the Romanists.—DR. CHARLES HODGE, (Theology, vol. 3, p. 736.)

Those verses read, in the revised version, as follows: "Christ also suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing."

Of these words Prof. Dorner says, that what is here said of our Lord is to be regarded as the application of the benefit of his atonement, as seems to be intimated by "the preaching" among the departed. The same conclusion from the words is also drawn by Dean Alford, and by many others. Prof. Dorner adds that this descent into Hades, expresses the universality of Christ's significance, also for former generations and for the entire kingdom of the dead. The distinction between earlier and later generations, between the time of ignorance and the time of knowledge of himself is done away by Christ. * * The future world, like the present, is the scene of his activity."

All this is exceedingly plausible, but still we cannot see that these words really prove a possible offer of Christ to the departed heathen or to any others. Many, as is well known, have doubted whether these words really refer to any descent of Christ into Hades, and not rather to a work done by Christ by his spirit, in the days of Noah. With such we do not agree, but only remark in passing that if these interpreters after all should be right, then plainly this passage drops from the list of those which can by any possibility be referred to the case before us. We assume, however, that these words do really describe a work of Christ during the three days of his existence after his crucifixion in the intermediate state, as the majority of modern evangelical exegetes maintain. But that the conclusion which is drawn therefrom, in favor of the doctrine of a future offer of Christ to those who have died in sin,

follows from this interpretation—this we must certainly deny, and that on the following grounds.

In the first place, it must be observed that at present we have to do with those who refer us to this passage, in proof that the gospel will be preached to all the heathen, who have never heard of Christ in this life, while they yet profess to believe that it will not be thus offered hereafter, to those who have had the offer of salvation in the present life.

As thus applied, we answer that this passage cannot be thus restricted in its application. If it teach an offer of salvation to any, it must teach it for ALL the impenitent. For those who are particularly mentioned as the objects of this preaching of Christ, are not those who had not the offer of salvation in this life. They are explicitly said to be those, "who were aforetime disobedient in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." They were persons therefore, to whom Noah, the preacher of righteousness, had already in their lifetime faithfully made known the saving truth of God, and who had rejected it. The obvious conclusion from this, according to the principles of Prof. Dorner and others, is not merely that the Gospel will be preached after death to men who did not in this life hear the Gospel, but that it will be preached also to those who did here have the Gospel offered and rejected it. But this interpretation would bring the passage into direct contradiction with the words in Luke xvi. 26, which so plainly tell us that those who, like the rich man, have in this life the revelation of God, and reject it to live a worldly life, are at their death separated from those who are saved, by a gulf so deep and broad that no man can cross it. If, then, the words of Peter cannot be taken to teach a possibility of salvation after death, for those who in this life have the Gospel and reject it, what right has any one to make it teach this for the other class who had not the Gospel, to whom there is no allusion in these verses?

In the second place, it is assumed by Prof. Dorner and others, that the word "to proclaim," which is here employed, must refer to a proclamation of the Gospel. This meaning of the word is essential to their argument. If thus standing by itself, it cannot be proved to mean the preaching of the Gospel, then future probation cannot be proved from these verses. But for this assumption neither the context nor the usage of this verb in the New Testament affords any warrant. The passage simply states that there was a proclamation made by Christ to the persons named; that it was a proclamation of mercy, offered for the salvation of those who heard it, is not so much as hinted in the text. Nor does the word in the New Testament, when standing by itself, as here, ever denote the preaching of the Gospel, but only proclamation in general. The only exceptions are in those cases where the Gospel, as the subject of the proclamation, can be supplied from the context. This can be seen by any one in a Concordance. To assume, then, that this word here, without anything in the context which should supply the idea of the Gospel, should yet by itself denote the preaching of the Gospel, is in contradiction to the usage of the word. The issue is quite too serious to base an argument upon an unproved exception to general usage.

Yet again, even if we waive this argument also, and admit that as a solitary exception to the ordinary usage of the word, this verb here denotes a proclamation of the Gospel, still the doctrine of a possible salvation of any after death will not yet be established. For though we should grant that the proclamation made to those antediluvian sinners was a proclamation of our Lord's redemptive work, yet it would not follow that such proclamation MUST have been made with a view to their salvation. This is not true of all preaching of the Gospel, even in this present life. We are told in so many words, for example, that this was not the purpose of the preaching of the word of God by Ezekiel. For it is written that the Lord said unto him, "Go, get thee unto the house

of Israel, and speak with my words unto them : but they will not hearken unto thee : for they will not hearken unto me." If a proclamation of the great work of redemption was really made by our Lord between his death and resurrection in the world of lost spirits, God may easily have had therein good and sufficient reasons, other than the salvation of those who when living had chosen to please themselves rather than to please him.

But it is argued that the words in the sixth verse of the next chapter teach, that the preaching was in order to the salvation of those who heard it. That verse reads in the revised version : "For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit." In this verse, we are told, the reference is still to the antediluvian sinners, mentioned in the previous chapter, and that the proclamation of the previous chapter is here more precisely defined as a proclamation of the Gospel ; and that this preaching of the Gospel, moreover, is there plainly said to be, "that they might live according to God in the spirit." Whence, it is argued, this makes it perfectly clear that the Gospel was preached by our Lord after he was put to death in the flesh and quickened in the spirit in the world of the dead, to the antediluvian sinners. and that this was done for their salvation ; whence, again, it is inferred that this life does not end the opportunity for salvation.

In considering this verse it is of importance to observe, that it is not said in this passage nor in the context that the dead of this verse are the dead antediluvians spoken of in chap. 3rd. This is merely an inference of expositors. That such a reference is in itself possible, need not be denied, but it will not do to assume it without proof. When we look for proof of this, it is not easy to find. On the contrary, there is much that points to an entirely different reference of the words. The very terms of the passage seem to forbid us to apply them to the dead of the days of Noah. For it will not do to take only the last half of the final clause,—“that they might

be judged according to men in the flesh." This last-mentioned clause is in the same grammatical construction with the latter clause of the verse. It states no less than that clause, a part of the purpose of the preaching here mentioned. The Gospel, we are herein told, was preached to the dead, NOT ONLY in order that they might live according to God in the spirit, BUT ALSO that they might be judged according to men in the flesh,—for the latter purpose, as much as for the former. But what possible meaning can we attach to the former half of the final clause, if we apply it to the case of those who were destroyed in the days of Noah? If the "judgment according to men" be assumed, as it commonly is, to be the fleshly judgment of the deluge, then what is meant by calling that judgment a judgment "according to men?" And, again, assuming that that is the meaning, then what can be meant by saying, as this makes the passage say, that Christ in his three days in the world of the dead preached the Gospel to those dead antediluvians in order "that they might be destroyed in the deluge," which deluge or "judgment according to men" occurred more than two thousand years before the preaching which is supposed to be the subject of discourse?

Last of all, if we assume this interpretation, what bearing can it be shown to have on the argument of the context in which the verse occurs? The purport of that argument is to encourage the Christians of that time to arm themselves with the martyr spirit, in view of "the fiery trial which was to try some of them," wherein they would be called upon to suffer for Christ's sake. What could a preaching of the Gospel to the dead antediluvians have to do with that?

For these reasons, even though we should grant that the passage in chapter iii. refers to a proclamation of the Gospel made by Christ to those who perished in the deluge, we should still be compelled to deny that these words in chapter iv. could refer to the same event. Let the adjective dead, be referred to those who had

already suffered martyrdom for Christ's sake, and all these difficulties disappear. In the first place, as we have seen, the preaching must have preceded in time the judgment according to men in the flesh, because it is said to have been IN ORDER TO that judgment in the flesh. It must therefore have been a preaching to persons who were dead in deed at the time Peter was writing, but who at the time of the preaching here mentioned were alive. For how could they have been judged in the flesh after they were dead? The passage thus states, as we understand it, that the Gospel was preached to certain persons who had already suffered martyrdom for Christ's sake and were now numbered with the dead, in order that they might by a human judgment be condemned, and thus by suffering glorify their Master, in thus becoming conformed to him in suffering and death. But to continue the paraphrase—God had yet another purpose in causing his Gospel to be preached to these persons; it was no less in order that they might also live according to God in the spirit; that is, that their death might be followed by the same glorious result as the death upon the cross of the Lord Jesus,—a making alive in the spirit, and that unto glory everlasting.

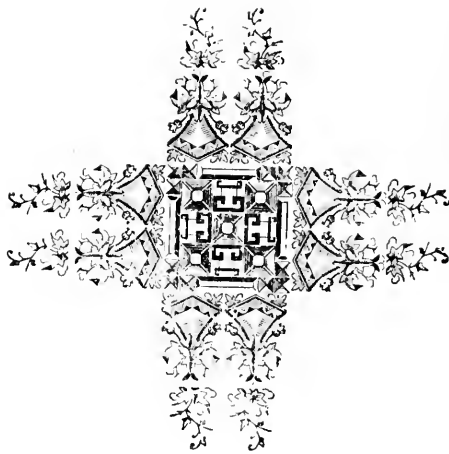
Thus interpreted, the words form an argument of the greatest pertinence to the object that the apostle has before him in the context. For what greater encouragement to them to suffer with joyful faith and courage a martyr's death, than to remind them of those who had already fallen in like manner, and who, although thus judged and condemned in the flesh by a human judgment, had entered into a higher life according to God in the spirit, therein in death and life becoming more closely conformed to the Lord Jesus.

Finally, while to our own mind these considerations seem quite decisive against the interpretation which makes Peter teach that the Gospel was preached on the occasion mentioned to the dead for their salvation; yet even if all thus far said be set aside as inconclusive, still the inference of a future offer of salvation to the heathen or to all will not yet be justified. For even though we

should admit what the text does not say, that the Gospel was preached by Christ during his three days in Hades to the antediluvian sinners, and that some or all were saved by it, which also the text does not say ; still this would not give us any adequate warrant for the inference that the Gospel will be preached in the intermediate state to any others, or at any other time. It has indeed been urged that there is no mention of this work of preaching to the dead having ceased, and therefore we may rightly infer that it has not ceased. But surely it were much more reasonable to argue that as there is no indication that this proclamation, whatever it was, continued for a longer time than the three days that our Lord remained in the disembodied state, therefore we have no right to assume that it continued longer. For the conditions under which the Gospel was offered to those souls at that time—assuming, contrary to fact, as we believe, that it was offered—were absolutely unique. Never had there been an occasion like that of the descent of the disembodied soul of the incarnate Son of God into Hades, and, in the nature of the case, there never will be such an occasion again.

Looking at the practical aspect of the question, must we not say, with abundant reason, that in the face of such clear words as those of Christ concerning that impassable gulf between the righteous and the wicked in the other world, the man who on any such considerations as we have reviewed, neglects to make sure of his salvation in this present life, is what the Bible so often calls the sinner, a "fool"? Again, what must we say to those who on the ground of any such arguments, venture to hold forth to sinners the hope of a second chance after death to repent and accept Christ? And what, of any who for like reasons excuse themselves from the most earnest efforts to carry or send the gospel to the unevangelized? Is there not great reason to fear that such will find themselves in the last day with the blood of souls upon their skirts?

PROFESSOR S. H. KELLOGG. (*Presbyterian Review*, April 1885.)



AGNOSTICISM.

“One Christmas Eve, in mediæval times,
Philip Von Sternberg, one who strove to know
The enigma of the worlds of Fact and Thought,
Sat in the midnight, while his lamp burned dim,
Like his own unfed spirit. To the east
A window, frosted, in the wintry night,
With ghosts of plummy flowers and tropic ferns
Seemed, of a sudden, lighted by a beam
Which was not dawn or moonlight, but a star
Unseen before ; and, gliding through the glass,
An angel stood, more radiant than the morn.
“ Surely this is Athene,” thought the sage
In his mute wonder. “ Will she give to me
The key to unlock the secret of the world ?”
Lowly he bowed his head, and waited there
The word divine philosophers of old
Gave their life’s strength to hear, but never heard.
“ Philip”—the Presence seemed to say to him—
Seek not to solve the riddle of the world,
Shut in thy labyrinth of circling thought.
Life, life alone, in deeds of use and love,
Can free thee from the dungeon of thy thoughts.
He knoweth the truth who doth the Master’s will.”

“Thenceforth, the scholar, self-involved, was lost ;
Philip, the working saint, appeared—and lived
A life which was a steady train of light,
Whose radiance drowned the darting swarms of doubts
As the sun drowns the meteors’ earthward fires.”

“The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead ; so that they are without excuse.”

AGNOSTICISM.

BEFORE concentrating our attention upon Universalism, pure and simple, all that now remains is to refer to the Agnostic theory, which we have already defined as follows : " We know nothing whatever of the future state. Nature throws no light upon the question, and the Bible reveals nothing of a definite character to solve the mystery. No one has ever come back to tell us anything in regard to his welfare beyond the grave. We are, therefore, at liberty to think as we please. There may be, and there may not be, a future world. When man dies that may be the end of him, or he may enter some fair land, to be forever free from the ills of the present life."

It is to be remarked that the term Agnosticism embraces every shade of atheistic and infidel opinion. It has never, indeed, been authoritatively defined. Like the Athenians, it is "an unknown God" that Agnostics worship, if they worship a god at all, and so varied are the shades of belief held by its advocates, and so much do they differ as to a creed, that no specific definition can be given as to their real views.

As Dr. Robert Watts, of Belfast, however, remarks, Agnosticism goes far beyond its Athenian prototype. The altar which Paul found at Athens was dedicated "to an unknown God." The Athenians simply confessed a present ignorance of God : the Agnostics add to this nescient creed an article couched in the language of

eternal despair, which places between moral intelligence of whatsoever order, and the source whence it is admitted they and all things proceed, a gulf which is absolutely impassable. While the Athenian motto was "IGNORAMUS," we are ignorant, that of the Agnostics is "IGNORAMIBUS," we shall be ignorant.

In the second century we find "the Gnostics"—the men who know : in the nineteenth the Agnostics," the men who do not know, and who boast of their ignorance. The Gnostics held that man could know something beyond the present ;—that God is made known to particular men, or to men at particular times, but only in virtue of a specially imparted power of vision. The Agnostics hold that beyond the testimony of the senses, and the range of experience, he knows and can know nothing. "The vision of God which he sees is but his own shadow : the sight of heaven which he beholds is but his own dream ;"—that the existence of any faculty for knowing God is a delusion ; and that of all that transcends the data furnished by observation and consciousness, there is nothing but total and hopeless ignorance. The Gnostics held that man possessed a faculty, which far transcended the natural reason, and by which he had knowledge of the supernatural. The Agnostic denies to man all knowledge of the infinite and supernatural. The future world is shrouded in impenetrable mystery. Agnostics refuse to believe in the cardinal doctrines of the Christian creed, such as the existence of God and a future state, because as they allege, the human mind is inherently and constitutionally incapable of ascertaining anything concerning such things, and of deciding what may be true and what may be false. While David Hume, the atheistical Scotch philosopher, regarded the soul as neither material or spiritual, on the theory that we know nothing either of matter or spirit except as momentary impressions, the Agnostic says : "I believe neither in mind nor matter, nor in a God."

Agnosticism is not a new heresy, but has been held more or less in every age, although now more prominently avowed. Call it

by its older names, Nescience or Nihilism or its newer appellation it is the same—it affirms we know nothing. While Atheists deny the existence of a God possessing the attributes of omnipotence, intelligence and will, Agnostics say, that the nature of, or existence of any God, is unknowable. That there may or must be, some kind of first cause to account for the existence and order of the universe, Agnostics seem to admit. But instead of the language of Scripture, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” they say, “an infinite and eternal energy by which all things are created and sustained,” or according to the latest Agnostic creed, “An infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed.” The Agnostic creed is as follows :

“We believe in the conservation of the physical forces, in the law of evolution, and in the dissipation of energy. We believe in such other results of science as are known to us. But beyond this, nothing as to the powers in the world is clear to us. We know nothing about individual immortality ; nothing about any endless future progress of our species ; nothing about the certainty that what men call from without goodness, must empirically triumph just here in this little world about us. All that is dark.

“We confine ourselves to what we know : we do not venture into the unknowable. We do not ask about the first cause of the world, or whether it has a final end. We do not busy ourselves with the beginning of the universe, if the universe had a beginning, nor yet with what happens to living things, plants, animals or men after their death. We do not deny that there may be a God : we only deny the existence of such a one as the Bible sets forth. We attack only the gods whom barbarous peoples have fashioned in their own imaginations and set up for our worship, and not any high or noble conception of a Deity. We fully admit the existence of a great and mysterious power or force in the universe which we cannot understand or comprehend. We believe in the great UNKNOWN and UNKNOWABLE, and have no attack to make upon this power,

no word of ridicule, no blasphemy ; but stand in its presence with reverence and awe, acknowledging our ignorance. While, however, acknowledging this unseen Power, we decline to anthropomorphise it—to call it a PERSON or BEING, and invest it with mental and moral functions similar to our own, differing only in degree not in kind.

“Beyond this universe, all knowledge is a blank. We know nothing as to what set this vast moving mechanism in motion ; it may have moved from all eternity : it may go on moving everlastingly, or it may wear itself out.”

The Marquis of Queensberry, who was rejected by the British House of Lords because he was an avowed Agnostic, in replying recently to Monsignor Capel, the distinguished Roman Catholic lecturer, gives the following, as the latest definition of the Agnostic creed : “The Agnostic has never said there is no divine, almighty inscrutable power, which, to the orthodox mind, would amount to the same thing as saying, “There is no God.” He may object to the word God. He does so, in fact, when he perceives how many different impressions the word conveys in its attempted definition of an unknown power. Not because he denies the existence of some almighty, inscrutable power, but because he objects to the giving a name, such as God is, to that which he believes to be undefinable—aye, unthinkable of—by man. And in doing this he conveys the wrong impression to the orthodox mind—viz. : that he is denying the possibility of the existence of any such power that may be unknown. The question then, really, between the orthodox thinker and the Agnostic is not a question of the denial of the possible existence of an inscrutable power, but a squabble over the right of attempting to define it.”

Thus the Agnostic, unlike the Atheist who boldly says “there is no God,” tries to keep his mind in this suspended state of doubt, yielding neither to the evidences that God is, nor to the theories which would account for the universe without a God. A century

ago men were more positive, in their convictions and avowals. The revolutionary Atheists of France, issued a decree prohibiting the worship of God, dethroning him from His supremacy, and in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame knelt before a new deity of their own selection, the Goddess of Reason, personified by a degraded woman. In the language of Coleridge depicting the blasphemy of that age :

“Forth from his dark and lonely hiding-place,
 (Portentous sight!) the owlet Atheism,
 Sailing on obscene wings, athwart the noon,
 Drops his blue-fringed lids and holds them close,
 And hooting at the glorious sun in heaven cries out,
 ‘Where is it?’”

But Agnosticism stops short of such an honest declaration of its creed. It falls back upon the ignorance of man as to what lies back of the outward appearance of things. It acknowledges the facts and forces of the universe, but denies that we can go behind them and affirm anything positive of their origin. “Every house is built by some man,” says the Theist. “Yes,” replies the Agnostic, “but as to who or what built all things we do not know, for we were not there.”

Yet such men deny that they are Atheists. They only ignore God. Belief in a supreme Being was perhaps a useful hypothesis, in the ages prior to civilization and culture, but the better judgment of men now sees in nature, sufficient to account for all the material and moral changes in the world. Belief in a personality that survives the grave, is now an exploded dogma, and trust in a God of omnipotent power and infinite wisdom, is no longer regarded as a requisite to man’s happiness. Like the prayer said to have been offered by a soldier on the eve of battle, the Agnostic says: “O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul!” Agnostics reject all forms of religion, yet claim to be religious. They cannot worship in a Christian church, but they can bow the head before that Great Unknown of which they are assured only that IT IS. They

look on with pitying eye at men limiting themselves by their creeds, and hindering the day of their emancipation, but anticipate hopefully a time when culture shall have taken the place of ignorance, and men will reverence more and more the phenomenal and the unknown NOUMENAL behind it, and gradually the one creed that will rise on the ruins of all others will be, that "amid all the mysteries, which become more mysterious the more they are thought about, there will remain the one absolute certainty, that man is ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed."

One is amazed to understand how intelligent men, far less such as profess a profound knowledge of the advanced science and philosophy of the age, can subscribe to such a creed, and endeavor to urge its acceptance upon others. "Hopeless, because Godless," in the language of the apostle, is its characteristic. Hitherto ignorance of God has been regarded as a calamity or a sin. Now it is taught to be a necessity of reason. Agnosticism is formulated as a Philosophy, defended as a Theology, and hallowed as a Religion. It is not to be denied as Dr. McCosh remarks, that Mr. Herbert Spencer, one of the prominent apostles of this system, has advanced certain bold generalizations, that may in the end be established as the profoundest laws of the knowable universe. "But starting with the unknown and unknowable, he sets agoing a mechanical development out of physical data, in which there is no requirement of moral law and no free will, the whole ending in a conflagration, having as the ashes only the unknown and unknowable with which it started." Principal Caird of the University of Glasgow says:

"If this philosophy be true, it is the apothecosis of zero, its highest type of religion would be sheer vacuity of mind, and of all human beings the idiot would be the most devout. The God of whom it proves us to be ignorant is not the God either of reason or of revelation—nor our infinitely wise, holy, loving, gracious Father in the Heavens, who has manifested Himself, His very nature and being,

in the perfect manhood of Christ—but a mere metaphysical abstraction, loveless, lifeless, inane, of whom you can neither affirm anything nor deny anything ; who may, therefore, be just as likely foolish as wise, malignant as benign, evil as good. Who cares to be told that we labor under an inherent incapacity of knowing such a God ? These teachers come to us with an air of humility ; their philosophy is vaunted as the suppressor of all pride of reason. “ Vain man would be wise,” say they ; “ but, henceforth, let intellectual arrogance hide its head. Let not human reason presume to erect itself into the criterion of truth, or to scan the being and ways of the Infinite !” But there is no real lesson of humility in such teaching. It IS a humiliating acknowledgment that through indolence or moral obliquity we lack a knowledge which we might have possessed, but there is no humility in confessing a necessary and involuntary ignorance. It does not imply any great meekness of spirit in a man to admit that he cannot fly, or walk on the sea, or that he does not possess a 7th, or 10th, or 20th sense—for all these are natural incapacities which distinguish no one man from his neighbors. And so it is not humiliating to acknowledge, with our philosophers, that we do not know that which no mortal, no finite being, by any conceivable effort could ever know.”

It is not indeed difficult to summarize certain consequences that must follow the acceptance of such a creed. To deny that God is a person, naturally and logically leads to the denial of man's personality. “ He is only a highly-developed set of phenomena flowering out from a hidden root—the unknowable unknown.” Next, the denial of a God must, to be consistent, be followed by the denial of a future state. Agnosticism teaches that of another life there are no tidings and few suggestions—a possibility, or perhaps a probability, but no hope. Even this possibility is denied by many, and the probability against such a life argued as a certainty. All the analogies of nature are interpreted to prove the extinction of man's being at the moment of death. No God, or none that can be

known, or worshipped, or loved ; no soul, nothing but a succession of experiences proceeding under an inevitable law ; no immortality ; nothing but a future influence as useless as our lives, since it proceeds from shadows, and only shadows are to be influenced by it ; no eternal laws of right and wrong ; no blame for guilt, or praise for patient, self-denying service ; no religion, and no true, high and hopeful life, for either the here or the hereafter—this is the creed of the creedless Agnostic, the belief of unbelievers, for which we are asked to give up the faith and worship of our fathers.

It is true that all Agnostics do not hold all the articles of this creed of unbelief. Perhaps very few do. But that is because they are not logical. He who accepts the premises—no power in me to perceive the invisible—cannot logically stop short of the conclusion : no God, no soul, no immortal future, no right and wrong, for these are all invisible. When we have thrown faith away, logic can give us for a God only a hypothetical IT ; for a conscious personality, a succession of phantasmagoria ; for a triumphant immortality, Nirvana ; and for Right and Wrong, eternal and immutable, a supreme allegiance of conscience (if there be a conscience) to the community. There is, in a word, no true resting place between the full faith of the Christian in the Christian's Father-God, and the absolute negation of all faith, the sorrowful contentment of a mind which has emptied itself of all hope, and is at rest only because it has ceased to strive against a fate which is as inexorable as it is cruel.

In perfect consistency then, Agnostics teach that another life would be of no value, that it is weak and ignoble to expect it, and that an ideal existence in the lives of others by the continuance of our thoughts and activities, is all that is necessary to complete and perfect man's destiny. In an account given of a funeral service in New York City conducted by Professor Felix Adler, an apostle of this new philosophy, these words occur : " I am here in the name of you all, to pronounce the last words of farewell : Friends, I say the

last word—a long, sweet good night"! And more recently when Dr. Damrosch the great musician died, and the coffin lay before the vast audience which filled the Metropolitan Opera House from floor to dome, and he is called upon to speak to the solemn and sorrowing hearts in that vast assembly, this is all his message: "I have come to lay upon this bier three wreaths. The wreath of success: he had just grasped it when death paralyzed his arm, and it dropped from his helpless hand. I pick it up and lay it on his bier. The wreath of fame: his name we will cherish though he is gone; he is no more, but the memory of his honored life lives on. The wreath of an earthly immortality: we may not see his face again, but his influence survives him, and shall reproduce his spirit in our earthly lives." What a barren consolation beside the promise, "In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, that where I am, there ye may be also;" or beside the triumphant welcome to a death no longer grim: "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

It is freely admitted that there are many things, matters of divine revelation, which must be accepted by faith, or not at all, which the human mind cannot understand or grasp. We see them but through a glass darkly, and only know them in part. Such doctrines as the Trinity, the origin of evil, the method of the Spirit's operations upon the soul, embracing God's sovereignty and man's free agency—the state of the disembodied between death and the resurrection, the nature of the resurrection body, the manner and time of the Lord's return to earth, the heavenly state and the nature of future punishment—these are only outlined to human conception, a dark veil prevents us entering the holy shrine, where such things belong; "they are placed behind a crystal banner, transparent but strong," so that however reverently we may study them, we cannot handle them and examine them on every side.

“But to know that we know nothing, is already to have reached a fact of knowledge. When a man says, that the Power which rules the universe is inscrutable to him, he is not merely making a statement that he knows nothing about it—he is making a positive and not a negative statement: he is declaring that the Power which rules the universe has awakened within him a sense of mystery, and has caused him to become conscious of a barrier to his own consciousness. To feel that the primal force of the universe is inscrutable is to be conscious of our own ignorance, and to be one step removed from absolute ignorance, is to know something of God. To know something of God, is to have something of God in us. The life which perceives its human limitation has already in some sense surmounted its limits; and it can only have surmounted its limits by having received into some phase of its being, a portion of that illimitable force whose presence has created within a vision of the illimitable.”

“For surely there is hope to find,
Wherever there is power to seek;
And we could never think or speak
Of light, had we from birth been blind.”

But this is very different from the allegations of Agnostics, who teach that nothing can be known of God and the future; that to ascribe personality to the Supreme Being is unphilosophical; that the affirmation of theology, regarding the incomprehensible God, is unjustifiable; that there can be no knowledge of supersensual objects; that the mind cannot be perceptive beyond the impressions received through the senses, and that we cannot even say whether there is a being outside of and controlling this visible world. Regarding the more important and fundamental doctrines of the Christian creed, Agnosticism says they cannot be known, and no one can make an honest profession of knowing them; the mind is inherently and constitutionally incapable of ascertaining anything regarding such themes; the powers bestowed upon the creature by the

Creator are not trustworthy, and cannot be relied upon ; religion and revelation must therefore be rejected as presenting only credentials which the human mind is incapable of testing, and therefore there can be no real objective knowledge of God and divine things. Agnosticism does not say that there is no God, no immortality, no future state of rewards and punishments, no heaven and no hell, but it says no one can predicate with perfect assurance that such a being and such things exist. It is blank infidelity as regards all that concerns man in his present relations to his Maker and his future condition in the world to come—death, in the language of the Agnostic, is after all a leap in the dark.

Spurgeon's description of such a creed is perhaps as good as any that can be found. Speaking of such men he says : " They are as a rolling thing before the whirlwind, having no fixed basis, no abiding foundation of belief. They set themselves as industriously to breed doubt as if salvation came by it. Doubt and be saved is their Gospel. Such uncertainty suits me not. I must know something or I cannot live. I must be sure of something, or I have no motive from which to act. God never meant us to live in perpetual questioning. His revelation is not, and cannot be that shapeless cloud, which certain philosophic divines make it out to be. There must be something true, and Christ must have come into the world to teach us something saving and reliable. There is assuredly some ascertainable, infallible, revealed truth for common people, something sure to rest upon. Until the preacher knows the Gospel in his own heart as the power of God unto salvation, let him sit on the penitent form, and ask to be prayed for, but never enter a pulpit." How different from the negative, halting, uncertain attitude of certain teachers in our day, who speak of the Bible as only an uncertain and progressive revelation, are the clear ringing words of the late Dr. Candlish, when he says : " I avow it as my sole aim, to advocate as best I may, that, not only is the word of God in the Bible, but that the Bible is itself in the strictest

and fullest sense, in every particular of its contents, and in every expression which it uses, the infallible word of the only living and true God."

Now in opposition to Agnosticism, we hold that God is not unknowable. "If there are some who know Him not, it is because they have determined before hand that He is unknowable; if they see Him not, it is because they have raised a cloud before their eyes; if they hear Him not, it is because they scorn to hearken. It is because they consider Him a problem of Euclid to be demonstrated, and approach Him with the intellect, and leave the heart behind." If unknowable, to all practical purposes, he ceases to exist, and as to loving a God of whom we know nothing, and of whose very existence we are in doubt, the thing is impossible. We believe that God has given us an infallible revelation—we believe in the fact of human depravity—we believe in the incarnation, death, and the resurrection of Christ—we believe in the testimony of Scripture, that atonement is necessary for the remission of sin, and believing that those who avail themselves of the salvation offered by Christ shall be saved, and those who reject it shall be lost, we must come to certain conclusions as to a future existence, and cannot if we would, treat such momentous questions with indifference.

That men can avow such absolute and abject ignorance; that they should not only be contented with such a negative creed, but compass sea and land to make new disciples, is marvellous in an age, when the deepest problems of philosophy, are being solved, and new evidence discovered, not only of the being of a God, but of a far-reaching and unending future, when He shall reveal Himself still more clearly to the gaze of perfected humanity. No man, it seems to me, can be an agnostic with the convictions of conscience within him, apart altogether from the teaching of the Bible. The old Hebrew patriarchs saw God everywhere, not as an object of superstitious devotion, but as the sublime ruler of the universe. The

globe was not materialized as it is to-day, and deified. God was associated in their minds with everything in external nature, and so it should be to-day, with the increased acuteness of mind, that characterizes civilized and christian lands. The beauty and grandeur and wise adaptations of nature, should call forth the intelligent adoration of every reflecting mind. "Insects as well as angels, the flowers that spangle the meadow, as well as the stars that spangle the sky, the lamp of the glow-worm as well as the light of the sun, the lark that sings in the air and the saint that is singing in Paradise, the still, small voice of conscience as well as the thunders that rend the clouds, or the trump that shall rend the tomb, these and all things else reveal God's attributes and proclaim His praise."

The men who advocate Agnostic principles, are not generally examples of humility, but are boastful of their intellectual powers. It is not an honest consciousness, and frank acknowledgment of the littleness of the creature, compared with the Creator, that makes them profess such utter helplessness in arriving at some distinct idea, of the nature of that shoreless eternity upon which we are soon to enter. It is rather the pride of human reason, that challenges the need of a superior being. Vain conceited man would in the language of Pope :

"Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Rejudge his justice, be the God of God."

Schiller, whose muse was conscience, well says :

"God hides himself behind eternal laws,
Which, and not Him, the skeptic seeing, exclaims,
There is no God ;
And never did a Christian's adoration
So praise Him as this skeptic's blasphemy."

Augustine spent many years, in a vain endeavor to grasp the doctrine of the Trinity in its full significance. He rushed one day with burning brow, to seek the breezes of the seaside. He found

there a child who had scooped away the sand, and was pouring water into the hole he had made. With boyish glee the youth told the grey-haired saint, in answer to his question, that he would dip all the waters of the ocean and pour them into the sand. "No, no," replied Augustine, "your hollow will not hold the ocean, and can I, a creature, comprehend the Creator?" Theology is indeed, as Lyman Beecher says, a mighty deep. It has its calms and storms, its joys and dangers. Weak souls, and some strong ones also, may be wrecked if they venture too far without taking their proper bearings. But this is very different from saying that there is nothing certain in the whole circle of Christian doctrine, and that we have no fuller knowledge of God than the agnosticism of the old Athenian altar. There are certain revealed truths that we are as assured of as we are of our own existence. Should we hold our peace concerning them, the very stones would cry out against us and rebuke our infidelity.

The story is told us of a young German Countess who lived about a hundred years ago—a noted unbeliever, and especially opposed to the doctrine of the resurrection. She died when about thirty years of age, and before her death gave orders that her grave should be covered with a solid slab of granite; that around it should be placed a square block of stone, and that the corners should be fastened to each other and to the granite slab by heavy iron clamps. Upon the covering this inscription was placed: "This burial place, purchased to all eternity, must never be opened." All that human power could do to prevent any change in that grave was done, but a little seed sprouted, and the tiny shoot found its way between the side stone and the upper slab, and grew there slowly but steadily, forcing its way until the iron clamps were torn asunder and the granite lid was raised, and is now resting upon the trunk of the tree, which is large and flourishing. Thus does nature silently foreshadow the unfoldings of the future with its resurrection to damnation or eternal life.

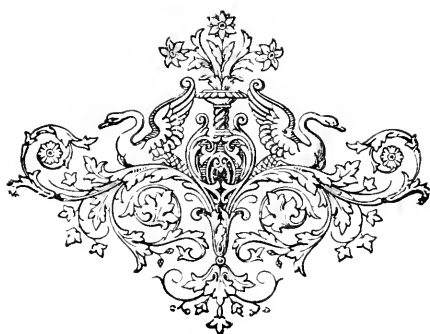
Agnosticism it has well been said, can never become the creed of the great body of any people ; but should it ever be taught by the science and philosophy of the day, its influence on the youths who might be led not to amuse themselves with it, but by faith to receive it, would be that they would find some of the hindrances to vice removed, and perhaps some of the incentives to evil encouraged. Under its blighting influences, humanity would retrograde and repeat the barbarism of the dark ages. It fails to satisfy the yearnings of the soul ; it takes from man, all those consolations that sustain in the hour of trial : it affords no help to bear patiently, the burdens of the present life : it gives no promise of a future, for which this is but a preparation, and sheds no light upon the grave. Frederick Harrison the Apostle of Humanitarianism, as against Herbert Spencer's Agnosticism (although both systems are essentially Atheistic) with merciless sarcasm, thus shows the falsity and futility of the latter. A child looks up in the wise and meditative face of the Agnostic philosopher and says : Oh ! wise and great master, what is religion ? He tells that child, it is the presence of the unknowable. But what asks the child am I to believe about it ? BELIEVE THAT YOU CAN NEVER KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT ! And a mother wrung with agony for the loss of her child, or the wife crushed by the death of her children's father, or the helpless and the oppressed, the poor and the needy, men, women and children, in sorrow, doubt, and want, longing for something to comfort them and to guide them, something to believe in, to hope for, to love and to worship—they come to the philosopher and they say, Your men of science have routed our priests and have silenced our old teachers. What religious faith do you give us in its place ? And the philosopher replies (his full heart bleeding for them) "Think on the Unknowable !"

If such a theory can never be accepted by the masses, much less can it ever become the creed of a sound philosophy. The remark that a really great man cannot be a Materialist is founded

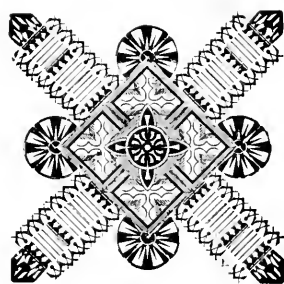
on reason. He is conscious of something within him superior to the subtlest forms and forces of matter. Neither can he be an Agnostic, for he finds the image of God's attributes and the echo of God's voice in his soul. This consciousness of immortality which is inseparable from true genius, is beautifully expressed by the late Victor Hugo when he says :

“There are no occult forces, there are only luminous forces. Occult force is chaos, the luminous force is God. Man is an infinitely little copy of God ; this is glory enough for man. I am a man, an invisible atom, a drop in the ocean, a grain of sand on the shore. Little as I am, I feel the God in me, because I can also bring form out of my chaos. I make books which are creations. I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest which has been more than once cut down—the new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds. You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul the more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, and eternal spring is in my heart. There I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilies, the violets, and the roses, as at twenty years ago. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvellous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history. For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and verse—history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode, and song—I have tried all. But I feel I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others, “I have finished my day's work,” but I cannot say “I have finished my life.” My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley ; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight to open with the dawn.”

To ask men to give up the stable truths of Revelation for such a baseless system, is presumptuous folly : to ask them to worship an unknown and unknowable divinity, instead of a living, personal, almighty and all-wise God, is an insult to man's judgment. And yet this is what Agnosticism vainly seeks after. On the principle that ignorance is the mother of devotion, Agnostics put forth high claims for their theory, because of the reverence and awe which this unknown essence is fitted to inspire. "But there can be no true reverence or affection cherished towards anything that is unknown. The mind does not experience the emotion of the beautiful, or the grand, or the sublime, when the objects necessary to awaken it are absent, or kept in abeyance. The same is true of the moral emotions. They can have no existence, where there have not been presented to the moral agent the materials for a moral judgment. We experience the emotion of awe toward nothing which does not impress us by the manifestations of awe-inspiring attributes. And when these emotions of awe and reverence rise into the sublime rapture of genuine adoration, their elevation is due not to cessation of thought, but to the apprehended glory of Him, before whose presence the seraphims veil their vision with their wings. Agnosticism, despite its pretensions, must be adjudged unphilosophic, unscientific, and irreligious."



NOTES ON AGNOSTICISM.



NOTES ON AGNOSTICISM.

IF MAN is naturally ungodly and ungrateful, he is not naturally an atheist. Mankind are disposed to believe in a being, or at least a power, above this world, regulating it, and making it bestow those gifts which we are constantly receiving. I am not inclined to maintain that this belief is gendered by some separate instinct, or God consciousness, as the German theologian, Schleiermacher, calls it. It is the product simply of the ordinary operating powers of the mind, as men observe the world above and around them, and the still more wonderful world within. We have as clear proof of the being of God as we have of the existence of our fellow creatures. I am conscious of my own soul ; and it is a very easy and a very logical argument which leads me to be sure that my fellow men also have souls. I discover intelligent acts, and I conclude that there must be intelligent actors. On the same principle, on discovering the adaptation of one thing to another, and the wonderful provision made for the protection and preservation of sentient creatures, I argue a designing mind. In the exercise of my intelligence I discover intelligence, and benevolence as well, everywhere around me. I must absolutely abnegate my own intelligence if I am not allowed to perceive intelligence in that plant, in that animal, in these goodly frames of ours, and in the bounties daily received by us. There thus comes a voice from without us, re-echoed in the depths of our own hearts, proclaiming a power to be revered and loved.

As observing these things, as feeling in this way, there is an impulse prompting every man to acknowledge this superior power or being, and in a sense to worship it—the worship all the while, in consequence of the weakness and ungodliness of our nature, being so far an ignorant one. When special favors are bestowed, man's natural propensity is to give thanks—it may be, to an unknown God. When, on the other hand, sudden calamity comes, he is tempted to rebel against the power which has prostrated him, but quite as frequently the prayer will burst from him, "O God help me!" When man is in perplexity, and knows not whither to turn, he feels relief in appealing to One, who from a greater height, sees farther than he himself does. When we have wandered, we look anxiously round for some one to show us the right path. When we are sinking in the waves, we cry for a hand to lift us up. These spontaneous impulses and acts of the heart are the homage which mankind unconsciously pay to God and to religion.

The leading philosophic and religious error of this day is not Unitarianism, which, in fact, is dead and laid out for decent burial. It is not Rationalism, for thinking men now see that human reason cannot construct a religion. It is not exactly Atheism. Few are so bold as to assert or argue that there is no God. They claim: "We do not deny the existence of God, we are not so presumptuous as this; we make no denials, we simply maintain that we have no evidence." The most influential error of the day, the one underlying every other, is what is called "Agnosticism." The founder of it in modern times is David Hume, usually called the Skeptic; he would be called in the present day an Agnostic. According to this system we do not know things, we simply know appearances; and we know not and cannot know whether there is any reality beyond, or, if there be, what the reality is. Its supporters virtually affirm that truth cannot be found. When thoroughly and conscientiously carried out, it means that we cannot know anything. More frequently it means that we cannot discover

any truth beyond what the senses reveal, that we can have no certainty of spiritual truth, or indeed of moral truth, except as utility, or the power of imparting pleasure.

This want of creed, or rather sentiment, is lowering the moral tone and religious faith of educated young men. It is bred in the damps of the earth; it rises up and is in the air; it covers the heavens from the view, and we breathe it as malaria. It is easy to show that it is suicidal. It is contradictory to maintain that we know, that we can know nothing. But when we have done this, we have not destroyed the error any more than we have killed a specter by thrusting a sword into it. For the strength of its defense, is, that supposed truth is contradictory, and therefore not to be believed. The only way to meet it is to stand firm, and to point to truth which we know as being self evident, and which we are constrained to believe.

What we have to do with those who favor the system is to set the truth before them and let it shine in its own light. We know that we exist, we know that others exist. Proceeding on in the same way, we find that God exists, that we are capable of knowing the distinction between right and wrong, and that we are responsible to God for the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good, or whether they have been evil. We have as strong evidence of the higher and spiritual truths as we have of the lower. I have evidence that I exist, but I have also proof that God exists, the Author of my being. These men would accept the lower truths, what can be seen and felt in pleasure and in pain, in what they eat, and what they drink, in meat and in money, and some are anxious to secure as many earthly goods as possible. Their Agnosticism, practically, and in fact, consists simply in their affirming and trying to persuade others, especially young men, that we know nothing of the higher truths, of moral and spiritual truth, of God, of immortality, and a judgment day. This is the deadly influence of the system. It is seeking to kill the germs of spiritual life, which are

deep down in our nature, so as to keep them from germinating. It is undermining the faith of the rising generation, and holding back all the aspirations of the soul, which lead to high ideals, and to deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice. It is filling the air with doubts, difficulties, uncertainties, and perplexities.

It can be shown that we have good and valid proofs of these higher truths of morality and religion, even as we have of the lower ones of sense and sight. If we neglect either kind of truth, evil consequences must follow. If we do not eat and drink, we must die. If we refuse to believe in ethical and spiritual truth, we offend God and must suffer the penalties of a broken law, and live without the grand belief and hopes that elevate and cheer the mind. God is declared in His works. "The heavens declare the glory of God," the whole earth is full of His praise. It is the declared doctrine of Paul, and, I may add, of the highest philosophy which ever carries us up to this high region. "The invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood from the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."—REV. JAMES MCCOSH, D. D., President, Princeton College, N. J.

AGNOSTICISM.

BY THE

REV'D JOHN BURTON, B. D.,
TORONTO.



THE late Sir William Hamilton, in his discussions on mental philosophy, wrote: "The last and highest consecration of all true religion must be an altar AGNOSTO THEO, to the unknown and unknowable God."

Agnostic is a word anglicised during the latter half of this nineteenth century. Worcester's large dictionary of 1864 does not contain it. It has fallen to the lot of this present generation, to erect in the midst of our Christian civilization and thought, the Athenian altar anew, to worship the unknown and the unknowable.

There has been much conjecture as to the occasion of such an altar being erected as Paul found in Athens. There is a story of a pestilence being stayed by Epimenides taking white and black sheep to the Areopagus, letting them go, and commanding those who followed to sacrifice them when they stopped, to the god to whom these things pertained. Thus, it is said, the custom began of dedicating altars to Gods unknown.

To us the suggestion has greater probability, that the Athenian altar was an outcome of schools of philosophy, which, very much after that Sir Wm. Hamilton followed, taught the hopelessness of

man seeking to know the Infinite. We know such teachings prevailed, the cry of impotence, the evasion of responsibility. Among the rich treasures of the past in the Vatican at Rome, is an altar tablet dug up at Ostia, on which is inscribed "Signum indeprehensibilis dei"—The sign of the incomprehensible God. At Sais, a sacred city of Lower Egypt, over the veil of the presiding deity Isis, there is said to have been the inscription: "I am all that has been, and all that is, and all that shall be, and no mortal hath lifted my veil." It will be seen therefore that the "Unknown" and the "Unknowable" God, is not a mere conception of modern thought,—that humility of philosophy which would thus belittle man's powers, the old world had. There is little new in human thought, therefore, we propose no novelty in meeting the Agnostic position, that God cannot be known. Nor shall I attempt a philosophical treatise, only in so far as metaphysics meet us in its more popular form, will any effort be made to make manifest its subtleties.

Any conception we may have of God must be of an infinite being, at least thus have we been taught; but says Agnosticism, the finite cannot know the infinite, therefore God cannot with certainty be known. Speaking in general terms, there exists a belief, primitive or evolved it matters not, in infinity. Is this belief a mere negation? a conviction simply of ignorance? That we can form no picture of the infinite is confessed, that it surpasses knowledge is true; but did Paul write nonsense when he wrote of "knowing that which passeth knowledge?" Eph. iii. 19. We can form no image of boundless space or of endless existence, and yet if on morning wings we fly to the outmost bound of visible creation, we are irresistibly carried on in thought to the beyond, and death compels the conviction of an "AFTER death." The conceptions may not be grasped in their vastness, but they are real conceptions, and matters of irresistible conviction. What being is we may not be able to divine; that IT IS, we are constrained to confess, let reason do its worst or its best. Our knowledge may be bounded within

the bounds we know ; but the consciousness of a bound is not merely negative, it carries with it the irresistible conviction of a beyond. When then the Agnostic speaks to me of God as "the Eternal Why, to which no man has replied ; the Infinite Enigma, which no Sphinx has solved," I can only say the Why exists, the Enigma remains ; and my entire spiritual nature rebels against the negative creed : from its impotence, and from the compelled ambiguity of terms, I turn, and I say, the Why must be answered, the Enigma must be read.

What do men mean when they say they know ? Plainly we do not know the fragrance of spring flowers as we know the hardness of stone ; the latter gives a sense of resistance to our touch, the other brings simply a pleasurable sensation ; in popular speech, we have a knowledge of both. What do we know of the social relations of life ? Can a child prove his relationship to father, brother, or relatives ? And yet society rests securely on this knowledge of faith. The child accepts the relationship first as a simple matter of surroundings, then, experience confirming, the faith of childhood grows into the assurance of manhood ; and this article of faith possesses more practical strength than many beliefs logically demonstrated. I readily admit it to be an easy matter to raise doubts about this or anything, but I suspect we should listen somewhat impatiently to a demand that every man should prove his parentage, upon the same principle that would satisfy an engineer that a bridge was safe. The piano tuner does not adjust the strings by the same faculty a mason employs in building his wall perpendicular ; and a man may know perfectly that a line of posts is straight, yet be utterly unable to discern the shade of a picture. To ask that we should know God, who is spirit, as we know even an electric shock, would therefore seem to be an absurdity. Before we accept Agnostic helplessness as our *ULTIMA THULE*, we may justly enquire whether there may not be an overlooked faculty, by means of which we may discern a God.

An old and skeptical surgeon is reported to have said, that he had dissected many bodies and cut into many a living frame without finding any trace of a soul. I have examined many vegetable cells under the microscope, without finding any trace of that life which causes to bud and bloom. I never expect to see life by means of a lens. Is life the less a reality, because neither surgeon's knife or optician's glass discern it? Nor can science lay bare the living God to the heart of man. We must search for God in that region where his presence is to be found, and not speak of an unknowable, because a God-discerning faculty has been neglected or overlooked, or because other senses have failed to see. When Paul wrote, "the world through its wisdom knew not God," (1 Cor. i. 21), he wrote not merely a fact in history, but also one of the most profound of philosophic truths. God is not to be discovered by the teaching of the schools, nor to be worked out as a problem in mathematics. That does not, however, declare him to be either unknown or unknowable. Paul's declaration still stands that the truth of God may be known: "because that which may be known of God is manifested in them. For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity." Rom. i. 19-20.

The Christ taught: "The pure in heart shall see God." Matt. v. 8. If this be true—it is at least reasonable—we need not rise on fancy's wing, or search through infinite space, nor walk along lines of intricate reasoning. God is known to the humble heart, revealed to the contrite spirit, the pure in heart—they see Him. Let but the eyes of such an heart be opened, and like the servant of Elisha of old, we shall find ourselves environed by His glory. "There are sanctities of life and of duty, of home and affection, of sympathy and of helpfulness, of penitence and of prayer, which daily speak of him to those who will lend an ear. Let these be neglected or profaned, and we do not wonder if earth loses its consecration, and

speaks no more of God. Let them be revered, and wherever in the history of mankind, or among our fellows, we observe lives moved by high aspiration, cherishing loyalty to duty, and that reverence for goodness and truth, which speaks of the great destiny to be revealed, we must also acknowledge the revelation of the Most High." This is the truth of Isaiah lvii. 17. The evil heart is the hiding from us, of the light of God's countenance. No man need expect a revelation of God, as he follows after covetousness. Surely the sordid spirit is not the sense by which to perceive the God of mercy, nor the ways of sin the means to discern the Lord of righteousness and truth. The old prophets taught true philosophy in such verses as Isaiah lxvi. 1-2.

Here the rejoinder is ready, that this is simply the heart making its own God. Let us examine this a moment. Is the multiplication table a fiction because man has formulated it, and the mind needs culture to comprehend it? Is the difference between notes unreal, because the practised ear alone can nicely adjust them? Men do not take a stunted flower or a deformed animal to describe a class or a species. Why take the distorted life, or the faculties of the lower plane to discern and to verify the true relation sustained to the infinite? It is not to an imperfect telescope the astronomer looks for his discoveries, nor to the ill constructed model, the mechanic, whereby his invention may be tested. True discoveries have been made with the aid of poor instruments, and mechanisms tested by inferior models. So the poor Indian with untutored mind, may see God in clouds, and hear Him in the wind. Nevertheless we desire keener spiritual sight, whereby to discern the King in His beauty, and the land that is afar off.

It is a great thing to be a conscientious man. We must respect, even with fear, a man who orders himself by the sense of duty. What is duty if it be not a sense of relationship to a moral power, not ourselves? And what moral power can there be without personality? Evolution would account for conscience and for its moral

destinctions, by the accumulated experience of the race finding certain lines of action to be in the main such as give pleasure. Yet herein is the marvel. There is a special course of action which ultimately prevails, which is exactly the position of the writer of Ecclesiastes: "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and prolong his days, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God." Ecclesiastes viii. 12-13. Only the Bible makes the Evolutionists course of nature the way of God, which at least has the virtue of simplicity.

How are we to get gold from a vault if it has not been put there? An empty pocket is helpless in the world's exchange. How is evolution to take place where involution has not been? Whence came the possibility of that evolved sense of responsibility? My conscience brings me into the very presence of a Being who searches the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men. I cannot evade the conviction; and when the gospel proclaims the way of access to God to be by faith, and faith to be gained by obedience: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine," I cannot say God is unknowable until I have endeavored in that way. He that is of the truth heareth my voice, saith the Christ, to understand which, even though we cannot at first embrace, we must be at least willing to "enter in."

Leaving out of question the character of the Bible as a direct revelation from God, it is at least a wonderful record of human experience, and it speaks of a knowledge some at least have gained. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God, for God is love." The record of the life that found not God in THIS way of seeking, has yet to be written, has yet to be found.

Reader, your life, what is it? A sacrifice upon an altar to an unknown God? or a consecrated service to the God of love? The spirit of the age may say, "where is thy God?" Nevertheless God has written His witness on every heart that waiteth for Him; and

the man who enters teachably the school of Christ, will learn with an assurance not to be gainsaid, "He that hath seen the Christ hath seen the Father."

Agnosticism is Pessimism. We do not need it. Christianity sings :

"O hearts of love ! O souls that turn,
Like sunflowers, to the pure and best !
To you the truth is manifest,
For they the mind of God discern
Who lean, like John, on Jesus' breast."





UNIVERSALISM.

“And is there in God’s world so drear a place
Where the loud bitter cry is raised in vain?
Where tears of penance come too late for grace,
As on th’ uprooted flower the genial rain?”

“Tis even so : the sovereign Lord of souls,
Stores in the dungeon of his boundless realm,
Each bolt, that o’er the sinner vainly rolls,
With gather’d wrath the reprobate to whelm.”

“These shall go away into everlasting punishment ; but the righteous into life eternal.” “If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book : And if any man take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city.”

UNIVERSALISM.

THE word Universalism is used in two senses: as the common appellation of a whole system of faith, and as the name of a single distinctive doctrine. Universalists profess to believe and teach the authenticity, genuineness and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, in the same manner as they are held by Christians generally. They believe that the Old and New Testaments contain the revealed will of God; and, with all Protestants, they maintain that the Bible is the only and sufficient rule of faith and practise. They believe and teach the existence of the one living and true God, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all worlds, beings, and things. They believe that God is self-existent, independent and eternal: omniscient and omnipotent: infinite in wisdom, goodness and power: in justice, mercy and truth. They believe that to manifest his love for the human race, God sent his son Jesus Christ into the world, to reveal more perfectly the divine character and purposes, and finally, through death and the resurrection, to bring life and immortality to light. They believe in the Holy Spirit, whose fruits in the believing soul are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, &c.; in the necessity of repentance, and reformation of heart and life: in the new birth, or change of heart, effected in the soul by a cordial belief of gospel truth, and accompanied by the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit: in the importance of good works, not to purchase salvation or gain the love of God—for salvation is of free grace

alone—but as the natural fruits of the gospel cordially received, the evidences of indwelling grace, and because they are good and profitable to men.

They believe in the universal resurrection of the dead : in a life and immortality for the human race beyond the grave, where the mortal shall put on immortality, and where men can die no more, but shall be as the angels, and be children of God.

They reject the doctrine of vicarious atonement, and assert the fundamental truth that every transgressor must suffer the punishment of his own sins, either here or hereafter.

They teach the forgiveness or removal of sin, but not of punishment.

They deny the doctrine of total depravity and original sin, and assert the natural goodness of the human heart.

They teach that salvation is not deliverance from the torments of an endless hell, but from the bondage of sin ; that it is inward and spiritual, and not from any outward evil.

They teach the necessity of repentance and regeneration as the equivalent of salvation ; that there can be no salvation without these, since without them there can be no abandonment of sin.

They teach that all punishment, whether here or hereafter, is corrective, and must, therefore, come to an end.

And finally, that through the agencies of His infinite wisdom and love, God will reconcile and restore all souls to himself.

Briefly stated the Universalist creed is as follows : “ That there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ by one holy spirit of grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.” Or, quoting the language of a prominent minister of the denomination, who has written largely in defence of the doctrine, it may be expressed in the following terms : “ All nations who ever have, do now, or will hereafter exist on earth, all whom God has made, or ever will make in our world, shall in due time be brought into a condition of mind

and heart to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. It is God's will, His purpose, His determination that all men shall be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth."

It ought in fairness to be added, that Universalists are not fully agreed upon all points of doctrine. They differ in their views regarding the freedom of the will, some adopting the theory of Edwards, and others that of his opponents, and also as to the place and duration of punishment, some believing in limited punishment in the future state, and others not. In these points, however, they are all agreed: 1st. That a being of infinite wisdom, power and benevolence, never would bring into existence creatures to be eternally miserable. 2nd. That the eternal existence of sin is incompatible with the holiness of God. 3rd. That the sins of finite creatures never can merit eternal punishment. 4th. That inasmuch as every benevolent man desires the salvation of the race, it is not to be supposed that God is less benevolent than His creatures.

The orthodox or evangelical view of future punishment as opposed to Universalism is as already stated: Future punishment is everlasting. At death the state is fixed for eternity. No man who dies impenitent will after death change his character and obtain pardon. Sin is self propagating. Where sin continues punishment will continue. Reform in another state of existence is not supposable. Men who persevere in sin from the beginning to the end of life will persevere in sin forever, and such as refuse forgiveness here will never obtain it hereafter. It is appointed unto men once to die, and afterwards there comes—not probation—not the offer of mercy, but the judgment.

Thus far we have seen that the doctrine of eternal punishment is attacked on all sides. Some teach that there is no future existence after death; others that there is no hell; others again, that it matters little, whether they suffer or not. Universalists, who formerly denied all future punishment, on the grounds that it would be

evidence of the cruelty of God, now believe in a punishment that comes to an end. It is not now taught that nobody goes in, but that everybody gets out. That has an end, of which they said formerly, it had no beginning. Hell is now said to be on the way to heaven—a sort of training school,—as against the old doctrine, that it was the final portion of such as refused heaven. This much however is certain, that belief in some kind of future punishment is increasing, although, the almost universal belief as to its nature and duration, may be changing. Indeed, save in the case of materialists, who deny the immortality of the soul, the fact of future punishment is conceded. We need not then perplex ourselves so much about its nature, if we believe that the sinner shall assuredly suffer the full penalty of his sin. Is it possible for sin to exhaust power in a being who dies impenitent? Is there anything in God's word, or in the divine character, that gives reasonable hope of future restoration to the favor and friendship of God? This, more than the nature of future retribution, is the all important question we have to solve—and that not so much by the teachings of nature, and the conflicting opinions of reason, as by the testimony of God's word.

Every one knows, however, that Universalists have not confined themselves to this simple question, but have endeavored to bias simple minds by asserting that the generally accepted creed of the Christian Church declares punishment to be not only endless, but consisting of physical torture. The writings of Jonathan Edwards have been largely quoted in support of this view. And in such sermons as "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," if we make no allowance for the age in which he lived, the mode of preaching then adopted, and the fervent spirit of the man himself, it is possible to give the color of truth to such a belief. But even had Jonathan Edwards taught explicitly, the bodily torment of the impenitent wicked, it would after all be simply the opinion of one man, and not the sentiment of the Christian world. Not only so, but his language, which has been greatly exaggerated and misconstrued, to

serve a purpose, may with very little abatement, be used in every evangelical pulpit at the present day. His opinions on the subject, in a somewhat condensed form, are as follows: "There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God. There is no want of power in God to cast wicked men into hell at any moment. Men's hands cannot be strong when God rises up. The strongest have no power to resist him, nor can any deliver out of his hands. It is not, therefore, because God is unmindful of their wickedness that he does not resent it—that he does not let loose his hand and cut them off. God is not altogether such an one as themselves, though they may imagine Him to be so. The wrath of God burns against them, their damnation does not slumber; the pit is prepared; the fire is made ready; the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them; the flames do now rage and glow. The glittering sword is whetted and held over them, and the pit hath opened its mouth under them. They deserve to be cast into hell; justice never stands in the way, it makes no objection against God's using his power at any moment to destroy them. Yea, on the contrary, justice calls aloud for an infinite punishment of their sins. They are already under a sentence of condemnation to hell. They do not only justly deserve to be cast down thither, but the sentence of the law of God is gone out against them, and stands against them, so that they are bound over already to hell. The bow of God's wrath is bent and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice directs the arrow to your heart and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood. He will crush you under his feet without mercy, and your blood shall be sprinkled on his garments, so as to stain all his raiment." See, says the Universalist, after reading such sentences, what a revolting image—God treating the sinner like the insect, swollen with loathsome and venomous juices, which in a moment

of hate a man crushes under his foot? Now we submit, such criticism is unfair. It makes no allowance for the rhetoric and verbal drapery, which impassioned and godly preachers were wont to use in addressing large masses of unconverted men, on whom persuasion and tender words had no effect ; it imputes to them a doctrine which they did not in many cases hold, and having put a false construction upon their language, it makes it the creed of the Christian world.

Other Theologians eminent for their scholarship, have used strong language in depicting the state of woe. Dr Pusey says : " Gather in your mind an assembly of all those men and women, from whom, whether in history or fiction your memory shrinks, (no fiction can reach the reality of sin) gather in mind all which is most loathsome, most revolting, the most treacherous, malicious, coarse, brutal, invective, fiendish cruelty, unsoftened by any remains of human feeling, such as thou couldst not endure for a single hour : conceive the fierce fiery eyes of hate, spite, frenzied rage, ever fixed on thee, looking through and through with hate, sleepless in their horrible gaze : felt, if not seen : never turning from thee, never to be turned from, except to quail under the piercing sight of hate. Hear those yells of blasphemy and concentrated hate, as they echo along the lurid vaults of hell ; every one hating every one, and venting that hate unceasingly, with every inconceivable expression of malignity : conceive all this, multiplied, intensified, reflected on all around on every side : and amid it, the special hatred of any one whose sins thou sharest, whom thou did'st thoughtlessly encourage in sin, or teach some sin unknown before,—a deathlessness of hate were in itself everlasting misery. A fixedness in that state in which the hardened, malignant sinner lies, involves without any future retribution from God, endless misery." Archer Butler says : " The punishments of hell are but the perpetual vengeance that accompanies the sins of hell. An eternity of wickedness brings with it an eternity of woe. The sinner is to suffer for everlasting :

but it is because the sin itself is as everlasting as the suffering." Professor Mansel says: "In that mysterious condition of the depraved will, compelled and yet free: the slave of sinful habit, yet responsible for every act of sin, and gathering deeper condemnation as the power of amendment grows less and less; may we not see some possible foreshadowing of the yet deeper guilt and the yet more hopeless misery of the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched." Spurgeon in one of his leading sermons says: "Only conceive the poor wretch in flames. See how his tongue hangs from between his blistered lips! How it excoriates and burns the roof of his mouth, as if it were a firebrand! Behold him crying for a drop of water. I will not picture the scene, suffice it for me to say that the hell of hells will be to thee, poor sinner, the thought that it is to be FOREVER. Thou wilt look up there on the throne of God—and on it shall be written FOREVER; when the damned jingle the burning irons of their torments they shall say FOREVER.

" 'Forever' is written on their racks,
 'Forever' on their chains:
 'Forever' burneth in the fire,
 'Forever' ever reigns."

We are sometimes accused of using language too harsh, too ghastly, too alarming, with regard to the world to come. But if we could speak thunderbolts, and our every look were a lightning flash, and our eyes dropped blood, instead of tears, no tones, words or gestures or similitudes of dread could exaggerate the awful condition of a soul, which has refused the Gospel, and is delivered over to justice. When thou diest, O sinner, thy soul will be tormented alone: that will be a hell for it: but at the day of judgment thy body will join thy soul, and then thou shalt have twin hells, thy soul sweating drops of blood, and thy body suffused with agony. In fire exactly like that which we have on earth, thy body will lie,

asbestos-like, forever unconsumed, all thy veins, roads for the feet of pain to travel on, every nerve a string on which the devil shall play his diabolical tune of hell's unutterable lament."! Such language Universalists well know, is but seldom heard in evangelical pulpits at the present day. Speaking on this point, Dr. Charles Hodge, who is generally regarded as representing the most rigidly orthodox school of theology at the present day, says on this point, "There seems to be no more reason for supposing that the fire spoken of in Scripture is to be literal fire than that the worm that never dies is literally a worm. The devil and his angels who are to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, and whose doom the finally impenitent are to share, have no material bodies to be acted upon by elemental fire. As there are to be degrees in the glory and blessedness of heaven, so there will be differences as to degree in the sufferings of the lost; some will be beaten with few stripes, some with many."

To the same purport also Professor Phelps of Andover Seminary says: "The use so often made of the Biblical symbol of FIRE, to make the retributive idea odious and hideous, seems to me unworthy of manly and cultured controversy. We must expect it from ignorant and passionate thinkers; but as argument it is very shallow. You and I know that that symbol is not a dogmatic form of truth. In common speech we use the same and similar ideas. We speak of "burning passages," of "fiery lusts," of "flaming anger." We tell of a man who frothed at the mouth or ground his teeth in impotent rage. Our Saviour takes similar liberties with figurative and dramatic speech. Suppose, now, that some one should report us as affirming that we saw a man roasting over a slow fire in his lusts, or showing signs of hydrophobia in his wrath. Would that be ARGUMENT? He might raise a ripple of inane laughter at his own conceit; but would he discredit our story?

"So I take all attempts of men to render odious the doctrine of endless punishment, by putting the symbol of fire to a use for which

it was never employed by Him who originated it. In His lips it meant the most solemn and appalling reality in the history of the universe, so far as it is known to us—that guilt at its climax of fixed and finished character involves in its own nature a spiritual misery which literal speech cannot portray, and of which no other material emblem can give us so truthful an impression as that of a surging sea of flame. This, if it BE a reality, of which some who walk our streets and give us daily greeting may be in peril, is too terrible a reality to be set in the frame of burlesque.”

In replying to the question, Is the future punishment of the wicked material or mental, Dr. Bartlett, of Dartmouth College, U. S., says :

“From the necessity of the case, the sufferings of the lost and the blessedness of the saved are set forth by material imagery, the one quite as much as the other. But as heaven is no literal wedding, feasting with Abraham, reclining on his bosom, wearing of palm branches and crowns, and playing on harps, so we do not understand the sensuous imagery concerning the condition of the lost in a literal sense, but as accumulated pictures of horror. We are also warned off from a literal interpretation by the variety and incompatibility of the images, sometimes even in the same sentence : the worm and the fire ; cutting asunder, and yet receiving a ‘portion ;’ outer darkness, and the like. These images have often been too literally pressed. Metaphors and symbols, however, represent a REALITY and are images of dread and dreadful reality. When we inquire for the exact mode of suffering, it is left much in the same manner as the enjoyments of heaven, certain but undescribed. One reason probably is, that in our present state it could not be fully made known to us ; another, that no directly practical object, such as the Scriptures always seek, would be accomplished by it. Still, we naturally suppose that to a being pre-eminently spiritual, the prime suffering will be that of the spirit. The intensity of such suffering in this life has tasked the novelist and dramatist to des-

cribe. Knowing, as we do, something of the agonies of envy, hatred, baffled malignity, remorse, and even of perpetual disappointment here, we should be dull indeed not to recognize their probable power and stringency there."

Is our imagination, says a recent writer, so poor and barren, that we can conceive of no adequate and ample form of punishment, without having recourse to the figures of the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched? A future world in itself must bring with it dreadful retribution to the wicked. In the mere fact of their cleared perceptions, in the realization of their low position, in seeing themselves as they really are, in beholding all those they loved and venerated far before them,—away from them, fading in the bright distance, may be a torture, a purifying fire, in comparison with which the representations of Dante and Milton shrivel into tameness and inadequacy.

Because a certain sect holds the doctrine of a purgatory for children, it surely is grossly unjust to argue, as Universalists do, "that a large section of the Christian Church still believe in the damnation of infants who die unbaptized!" In a book lately published by a prominent clergyman of the broad church school, the following extract is given from a Roman Catholic book published in England by the Rev. J. Furniss, in which he describes the purgatorial fires prepared for infants: "The fourth dungeon is 'the boiling kettle.' Listen, there is a sound like that of a kettle boiling. Is it really a kettle which is boiling? No. Then what is it? Hear what it is. The blood is boiling in the scalded veins of that boy, the brain is boiling and bubbling in his head, the marrow is boiling in his bones. The fifth dungeon is 'the red hot oven,' in which is a little child. Hear how it screams to come out; see how it turns and twists itself about in the fire; it beats its head against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet on the floor of the oven. To this child God was very good. Very likely God saw

that this child would get worse and worse and would never repent, and so would have to be punished much more in hell. So God in His mercy called it out of the world in its early childhood." Now this may be the writer's belief, and that of the Church to which he belongs, but the Churches of Christendom, as a whole, cannot be committed to such a doctrine. Such a style of argument is revolting to every candid mind, and surely ought never to be used by men who boast so much of their reason, in judging of Scripture. It is not the literal language used by Christ, in speaking of future punishment, that constitutes the essential idea of the Christian faith, but the fact of a final separation between the good and the bad. Sin in this life brings its just recompense in the next. The punishment continues as long as the sin continues, which for all that now appears, is for ever. If our Saviour and his apostles did not teach this doctrine—which indeed underlies and pervades the whole of their ethical utterances—nothing can be learned of the matter in dispute. The New Testament then becomes practically useless, so far as giving us any reliable information regarding a future state. And certainly if Christ taught the doctrine of universal restitution and restoration, he did it so indistinctly and obscurely, that his hearers and disciples failed to apprehend it. To the English reader of the Bible, the plainest and most obvious doctrine concerning the destruction of the wicked, is banishment from the presence of the Lord, and unending punishment.

In opposition to this, Universalists hold that by a course of severe discipline and chastisement, continued no one knows how long, the worst specimens of human beings may be—nay, will be—reclaimed and saved. Man according to such a theory, is not responsible for the actions of the life. He is the creature of circumstances, and not a free agent. Sin is misfortune, without guilt. It is due to ignorance and not wilful. This will be taken into account by a merciful God, who cannot consistently doom men to endless retribution.

Before examining certain texts of Scripture, which are differently interpreted by Universalists and orthodox Christians, let us start in our enquiry from what is common ground to both disputants, namely: that sins committed in the present life, shall unquestionably be dealt with in some way in the next. There is no difference of opinion regarding this. What we sow now we shall reap hereafter. "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." "They that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same." "By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed." "They that sow the wind, shall reap the whirlwind."

Sin perpetuates itself. Left to itself, with no remedial influences from without, it increases in heinousness. Crimes never sink to foibles. Passions never subside into innocent eccentricities or venial sins. Once a sinner always a sinner, is the law of moral being, no external power interposing. "Where the tree falleth it lies, not by fatality, but by the self-perpetuating force of moral choice. "A sinner incorrigible in guilt and matured in depravity, makes his own hell. No damnation can surpass that which a malign being inflicts upon himself. Swedenborg says, that "God never thrusts a man into hell: he thrusts himself in—he goes of his own accord." His whole nature gravitates thither. If this is so, it follows that punishment will last as long as sin lasts, and he who remains incorrigible remains under the just condemnation of God. No one can tell what awful depths of wickedness a man may reach, for wickedness possesses no elements of exhaustion. If it makes a hell upon earth, why may it not make a hell in the future as everlasting as itself?

If the seeds of sin remain in man at death, what presumptive evidence have we that they do not continue to exist in an intensified degree in the future life? The wicked are driven away in their wickedness. The seeds of evil rankle in the soul. When dust returns to dust, they do not cease to germinate. They bear fruit in the

immortal nature, which apart from the renewing grace of God, must go on from one degree of wickedness to another without possibility of change. Character is thus fixed at death. The habits, lusts and passions, contracted by a long life of sin cannot afterwards be destroyed, but, on the contrary, have unlimited room for development without remedial agency. This has been admirably illustrated by Joseph Cook in his Monday lectures, when he says: Under the physical laws of gravitation a ship may careen to the right or left, and only a remedial effect be produced. The danger may make men wise, and teach the crew seamanship. Thus the penalty of violating up to a certain point, the physical law, is remedied in its tendency. But let the ship careen beyond a certain line, and it capsizes. If it be of iron it remains at the bottom of the sea and hundreds of hundreds of years of suffering of that penalty, has no tendency to bring it back. Under the physical laws of nature, plainly, there is such a thing as being too late to mend. There is a distinction between penalty that has no immediate remedial tendency, and a penalty that has no remedial tendency at all. Under the organic law, the tropical tree, gashed at a certain point, may throw forth its gums, and even have greater strength than before; but gashed beyond the centre, cut through, the organic law is so far violated, that the tree falls. After a thousand years that tree cannot escape from the dominion of the law, which enforces such a penalty." And so it is, in matters affecting man's moral and spiritual condition beyond the grave. Sin grows by what it feeds on. The essential tendency of evil, when left to itself, is to intensify, accumulate, and perpetuate its own misery. Repentance is not possible in such circumstances, for there is no will or power, to cause repentance. Life and death, blessing and cursing, having been set before the sinner, and death and cursing having been voluntarily chosen, what hope can there be of change? Esau found no place of repentance, after he sold his birthright, though he sought it carefully with tears. The condition of such a soul is graphically described in the poet's words, when he says:

“Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
In one self-place ; but where we are is hell ;
And where hell is there we must ever be.
And to be short, when all this world dissolves,
And every creature shall be purified,
All places shall be hell which are not heaven.”

And again :

“Which way I fly is hell, myself am hell,
And in the lowest deep, a lower deep
Still gaping to devour me, opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.”

That numerous passages in the word of God affirm this fact is not denied. There is a general agreement among all, who believe in the authority of the Bible and acknowledge the unequivocal testimony of conscience, that death does not end moral accountability, and that for the man who has given no evidence of a change of heart and life here, there is reckoning and retribution in the world to come. But while Universalists hold such views, honesty compels us to say, that their teaching leads many criminals to believe that heaven's gates are opened at, or after death, to every one. “What is the good of my striving so hard to keep from sin and temptation, if my neighbor who gives himself up to the world, the flesh and the devil, after this life, gets to heaven? Is it not best to go my own way and take my chances of life to come?” Such language is not uncommon, nor is it so unreasonable, viewed from a Universalist standpoint. The greatest villains and murderers that expiate their crimes on the scaffold, feel assured that they are about to enter paradise. Absolution received at the eleventh hour, without the least apparent change of mind and a mechanical acquiescence in, and acceptance of, the mercy of God, makes a mockery of a judgment to come, and deludes souls with the hope of salvation that cannot be realized, if God is a God of holiness, and sin unrepented of deserves his wrath.

I freely grant that Universalism is a doctrine which men would most naturally accept, and towards which many good men would gravitate, were it not for the difficulty of reconciling it with Scripture. Sympathetic and tender natures who mourn over human imperfections, and who at the same time are conscious of their own sad violation of God's law, recoil from the idea of endless punishment.

Dr. Albert Barnes, the well known Commentator, although a consistent believer in the doctrine of Eternal Punishment, had such feelings. Speaking on this subject on one occasion to his congregation, he said: "A hundred difficulties meet the mind when we think upon it; and they meet us when we endeavor to urge our fellow sinners to be reconciled to God, and to put confidence in Him. I confess for one that I feel these, and feel them more sensibly and powerfully the more I look at them, and the longer I live. I do not know that I have a ray of light on this subject, which I had not when it first flashed across my soul. I have read to some extent what wise and good men have written. I have looked at their theories and explanations. I have endeavored to weigh their arguments, for my whole soul pants for light and relief on these questions. But I get neither; and in the distress and anguish of my own spirit, I confess that I see no light whatever. I see not one ray to disclose to me the reason why sin came into the world; why the earth is strewed with the dying and the dead; and why man must suffer to all eternity!" But this question is not to be settled by the moral feeling, or by what is called the subjective consciousness, nor by ascribing to the Almighty a course of conduct at variance with the principles of His government.

Those who reject the doctrine of Eternal Punishment, and embrace Universalism, are generally persons in whom "the sentimental is largely in excess of the judicial," and who shudder at the thought of eternal misery for any number of their fellow men. The doctrine they argue is repugnant to the moral constitution of man,

and must of necessity be repugnant to the moral character of God. It attributes to God, they say, an imperfect and cruel character, and makes him more malignant and cruel than the most malignant and cruel of men, who would not thus treat their worst enemies. According to such reasoning, the moral constitution of man is the ultimate standard of appeal, by which God's dealings with his creatures are to be judged. As a general rule, it may be admitted, that whatever contradicts man's moral intuitions cannot be received as just and true, but care must be taken, that what we call our moral intuitions are genuine, and not mere individual prejudice. "In granting that there are certain primary, necessary, universal moral truths, which a divine revelation cannot contravene, a license is not given to every man who may have a particular theory to maintain, to make out just such a list of propositions as may serve his purpose, and claim for them the authority of ultimate moral intuitions, from which there is no appeal."

In saying, again, that the doctrine of Eternal Punishment is opposed to the justice and benevolence of God, the objector grapples with questions that are to a great extent beyond the power of mortals to decide. "Justice in God and justice in the creature are not governed by the same rules;" nor is His benevolence to be judged by ours. Of one thing we may be certain, that there is no contradiction between the love and justice of the Almighty, and that eternal punishment will at last be seen to be not more the effect of justice than of love. Juke, in his book on the restitution of all things, writes as follows :

"When I think of God's justice, which it is said inflicts not only millions of years of pain for each thought, or word, or act of sin during this short life of seventy years—not even millions of ages only for every such act, but a punishment which when millions of ages of judgment have been inflicted for every moment man has lived on earth, is no nearer its end than when it first commenced ; and all this for twenty, forty, or seventy years of sin in a world

which is itself a vale of sorrow ; when I think of this and then of man, his nature, his weakness, all the circumstances of his brief sojourn and trial in this world ; with temptations without and a foolish heart within : with his judgment weak, his passions strong, his conscience judging, not helping him : with a tempter always near, with this world to hide a better ; when I remember that this creature, though fallen, was once God's child, and that God is not just only, but loving and longsuffering ;—I cannot conclude, that this creature, failing to avail itself of the mercy of God offered by a Saviour, shall therefore find no mercy any more, but be punished with never-ending torment. Natural conscience protests against any such awful misrepresentation of Him."

In the same strain, another Universalist says : " The assertion that endless torments will be inflicted upon a creature by the Being of infinite love, involves a contradiction in terms. I can no more admit the love of God to cease, than I can admit his life or intelligence to cease. There is an essential contradiction between the two conceptions—the infinite torment of a creature, and the infinite love of God."

In both these quotations, and indeed by all Universalist writers, the generally accepted doctrine of the Church is misrepresented. That doctrine is, that punishment shall be meted out according to the deeds of the individual sinner, and with reference to the light enjoyed by each—those who sinned without law perishing without law, and those who sinned under the law being judged by the law, some being beaten with few, and others with many stripes, and not that in every instance the torment shall be infinite and the agony unutterable. Shall not the Judge of all do right? Freed from all misconceptions and misrepresentations, the question at issue is simply this,—Is it consistent with the love of God to inflict upon transgressors sufferings, varying in degree according to their individual merits, which shall continue for ever ?

In reply to this question, we condense from the writings of Dr. Watt of Belfast, and Professor Phelps of Andover. The former says: "In so far as the subjects of the infliction are concerned, love has nothing whatever to do with punishment. If the question were, How long, or in what measure a Being of love would chastise? there would be some show of propriety in urging it: for chastisement is at once the offspring and instrument of love. Such a question bears upon its face the impress of propriety, and suggests its own answer; for as the object of chastisement is the reformation of the subject of it, love will not inflict a single stroke, or extract a single sigh or tear, beyond what is necessary to the attainment of that end. Very different, however, is the end aimed at in punishment. The chief end of punishment is the satisfaction of justice; and whatever collateral ends the infliction of it may subserve, it is not for these, as the supreme end, it is inflicted.

There is, indeed, one way in which the duration or measure of punishment may involve the question of love, or, at least, of benevolence. The question may arise, "How long, and in what measure, is it necessary to punish sin so as to secure the interests of the moral universe?" This is like the question, "How long, and in what measure, is it necessary to punish a band of rebels so as to secure the interests and welfare of the nation at large?" The answer, of course, would be, "Just as long as the rebels persist in their rebellion." If they continue to speak treason and plot insurrection, and manifest their hatred of the existing authority, then, apart from the question of justice altogether, it were at variance with benevolence to open the prison gates and let such despisers of law and government loose upon society. Under this aspect of it, punishment may be regarded as correlative to benevolence; for it would be not only unrighteous but unkind to remove the restraints whereby these fomenters of social discord are withheld from subverting the pillars which sustain the commonwealth. Nor is the principle involved different when the government is that exercised by God

over His moral intelligences, and the subjects of punitive inflictions, rebels against His authority.

If human governments may, without violating the claims of benevolence, erect a prison for rebels, surely the Divine government may prepare a prison for those who defy its authority : and if it would be unkind, as well as impolitic, for the admistrator of law among men to amnesty avowed rebels, surely it is not unbenevolent for the sovereign of the universe to restrain fallen angels and wicked men, from disturbing the harmony and marring the beauty of His empire, so long as their moral estate as rebels remains unchanged. Perpetual treason demands, even on the score of benevolence, perpetual imprisonment. Eternal rebellion against the Divine government must carry with it eternal punishment, if the governor have regard for the interests of his loyal subjects. Punishment therefore, and those upon whom it is inflicted, lie outside the pale of benevolence : and it is simply a confusion of attributes, which are as regards their objects and spheres fundamentally distinct and diverse, to represent the Judge of all the earth, as acting under the impulses of love in the infliction of penal suffering upon his enemies.

If the principle of the objection in question be valid, God cannot PUNISH sin at all ; for if we are warranted in arguing against infinite punishment from the infinite love of God, it must be on the assumption that love is, in its nature, opposed to PUNISHMENT. On this assumption alone can love furnish any argument against penal suffering. But if love be, in its nature, opposed to punishment, perfect love must be absolutely opposed to punishment, that is, must be opposed to the infliction of punishment altogether ; and as infinite love is perfect, it must, on the principle of the objection, be obvious, that a Being possessing such an attribute must, by virtue of His very nature, not only abstain from, but stand infinitely opposed to the infliction of penal suffering upon His creatures.

Professor Phelps in meeting these questions : Is endless punishment unjust? Is it inconsistent with the character of God? writes as follows : " We do not know that the prevention of sin under moral government IS POSSIBLE TO THE POWER OF GOD. In the constitution of things some contingencies involve contradictions. God cannot execute absurdities. He cannot so change the mathematical relations of numbers that, to the human mind, twice five shall be more or less than ten.

These are changes which God is as powerless to effect as man. They involve absurdities. They bear no relation to omnipotent power. For aught that we know, this same principle may pervade the moral universe. We live under moral government. Our chief distinction is the possession of a moral nature. Within the limits prescribed to moral freedom, a moral being, be he man or angel, is as imperial in his autocracy as God is in the infinite range of his being. This, God has himself ordained. Man's supreme endowment is his ability to be what he wills to be, to do what he chooses to do, to become what he elects to become in his growth of ages.

We do not know that the prevention of sin, under a moral government, IS POSSIBLE TO THE WISDOM OF GOD. The infinite and eternal expediences of the moral universe may forbid it. We do not know the infinite complications of any act of God. A sublime unity characterizes all God's ways. His government is imperial. One aim, one plan, one animus, rules the whole. Speaking in the dialect of human government, one policy sways the universe. We do not know, therefore, the remote consequences of a policy chosen for the administration of one world. It has invisible convolutions and reticulations in the history of other worlds. To have chosen the policy of prevention in the regulation of sin here might have necessitated changes in government elsewhere, which would have been revolutionary in their working. Convulsions in consequence might have shaken the foundations of moral government everywhere. True, we cannot affirm it, but neither can we deny it.

If it may not be possible to divine power, and if it may not be possible to divine wisdom, to prevent sin in the government of God, then we affirm, further, that it MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO DIVINE BENEVOLENCE. A benevolent God can do only practicable things. He can do only wise things. He can do only that which infinite power can do, under the direction of infinite wisdom.

The non-prevention of sin, therefore, in this world of ours may have been the best thing which, under the conditions here existing, benevolence could plan for. Speaking after the analogy of human governments, the policy of non-interference may, in many instances of human guilt, have been the policy of love. To let sin alone in some cases may be the dictate of benevolence. To leave it in the awful extremity of evil developed and matured, to which it naturally drifts by the force of its own momentum, may be the first and last and best decree of that watchful love which notes the fall of a sparrow. True, again, we cannot, reasoning from the nature of the case, affirm that it is so, but we must prove that it is not so, before we can hold God unworthy in his treatment of endless sin by the infliction of endless pains.

Why God should CREATE beings, who will slowly but surely weave around themselves the endless curse, is the mystery which I do not pretend to solve. On that problem I profess no belief. But that some men should go to Hell, being what they are, is no mystery. Where else can they go in a spiritual universe? That there should be a Hell, sin and sinners at their climax of moral growth being what they are, is no mystery. What other place is in moral affinity with them? Such a world is inevitable in the nature of things in a universe where sin has any impregnable lodgment. But the reasons of God for creating such beings and permitting the deathless ravages of such an evil are beyond my conception.

Must I, therefore, refuse my faith to the fact of their creation and their doom? If I withhold faith from everything in God's doings for which I do not know the reasons, my creed must be told

in few words, and its chief dogma must be: "What a monument of unutterable folly I am!"

The sentences in the above quotation—"That some men should go to Hell, being what they are is no mystery: where else can they go in a spiritual universe? What other place is in moral affinity with them?"—are deserving of special notice. While these pages are passing through the press, the Christian world has been startled by fearful revelations of crime, in the great metropolis of England, and righteous indignation expressed at the abettors of such wickedness. One of our religious weeklies pertinently asks the question: Do our Universalist friends still think that the Creator could make a perfect moral universe, without providing a hell? If the crimes of the London debauchees so inflame the righteous indignation of every just man, how must such crimes effect a God of infinite purity and of infinite pity for the victims of these criminals? Imagine such villains, who boast of destroying innocents, coming before the great white throne. Would any right minded man find any "moral difficulty" in saying "Amen" to the sentence "Depart, ye cursed." In 1850 when the vigilance committee in the city of San Francisco had done its needed work of expurgation, Dr. Bushnell, who chanced to be a witness of the crimes there perpetrated, preached a sermon suggested by the alarming condition of society, in which he said: "What kind of heaven would it make to move off bodily into the eternal future, this same people just as they are? Just as good as it makes here, and no better. These revenges, frauds, bribes, perjuries and deeds of blood, these abuses of power, these factions, fears and tumults, all that makes you toss in throes of troubled apprehension, represents a character, as shadows do their substances. Who can imagine that out of such a material is to come order, love, ideal harmony, and the golden concert of a common joy before God? Why the irruption there of such a company would scare the angels from their songs, and extinguish the fires that light up the faces of the seraphim. When the Scriptures, therefore, declare,

that such shall not be admitted, what dignity of reason is there in the decree? And when it is published in solemn specification— ‘Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revelers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.’ Who is there even of those that are consciously named in the catalogue, that will not now, in this day of public misery, admit the necessary reason of the decree, and that even Eternal Goodness could not frame it otherwise?”

Common sense requires what the Scriptures teach, that there will be a discrimination in the future state, between the condition of the righteous and the wicked, corresponding to the difference of their characters here.

Can any man in his sober senses believe, that on that awful day, intended for the manifestation of Divine justice, there will be no distinction made between the righteous and the wicked: that abandoned sinners, who by the immediate vengeance of heaven, were cut off by dreadful judgment, shall go directly to the regions of heavenly bliss; that it will fare as well with the rebellious sinner, as with the man who has served his God?

The story is told of a certain Universalist preacher who was telling his little son the story of the “Babes in the wood.” The boy asked “what became of the poor little children?” “They went to heaven,” replied the father. “And what became of the wicked old uncle?” “He went to heaven too.” “Won’t he kill them again, father?” asked the boy. The child’s question opened up to the father the absurdity of his doctrine of universal and indiscriminate salvation, and led him to renounce his belief in it.

In his little volume, entitled “Love and Penalty,” or Eternal Punishment consistent with the Fatherhood of God, the late Dr. Joseph P. Thomson, of the Broadway Tabernacle, New York, meets the objection founded upon the justice and benevolence of the Divine Being, under the following propositions:

I. Our own nature, which is appealed to as refusing to recognize the attribute of primitive justice in a God of love, in fact demands this attribute as essential to the moral perfection of the Deity—an attribute without which He could not command the confidence and homage of his intelligent creatures.

II. The retributive forces continually at work in the natural world, and the primitive dealings of Providence with men, compel us either to admit that punitive justice in the Divine Being is consistent with paternal love, or regard the Head of creation and of providence as a tyrant.

III. The history of Israel, the chosen people of God, to whom he revealed himself as a father, abounds in visitations upon them for their sins. If God has punished transgression in those to whom he was expressly revealed as a Father, he may punish the wicked hereafter, though he is a Father.

IV. Christ, who has so fully revealed God as a Father, teaches that God will punish the wicked in the future world; and we cannot claim his testimony upon the first point, unless we receive his testimony on the second also.

V. The high and sacred Fatherhood which the Gospel reveals, is a Fatherhood in Christ toward those who love Him; and not a general Fatherhood of indiscriminate love and blessing to the race. God is not the Father of those who have made themselves the children of the devil, in any sense which would exempt them from Christ's anticipative sentence, "Ye shall die in your sins."

VI. The demerit of sin demands that God should punish the sinner, if he would demonstrate his love for his intelligent creatures, and his care for the highest welfare of the moral universe; and no punishment equal to the demerit of sin is, or can be, inflicted in the present life.

VII. Since this desert of punishment to the sinner arises from that endowment of the agency which is essential to the attainment of that peculiar blessedness, which is only within the reach of a

moral being, and since the means of recovery from sin and of deliverance from condemnation can be made available only in the use of that same free agency of the sinner ; and since the love of God has made the most ample provision of pardon, and has proffered this to the sinner with Divine compassion and importunity, but only in vain ;—there remains no conceivable mode, as there is no revealed promise, by which the Fatherhood of God can make one dying in impenitence and unbelief, holy and blessed in the future world.

VIII. The DURATION of the future punishment of the wicked, cannot in any wise be limited by the mere fact of God's Fatherhood as made known in Christ ; but must be determined by the element of sin of which God alone can judge, and ascertained by us from the declarations of the Scriptures, which reason can interpret. The question of degrees of punishment is altogether secondary to the fact that, "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

It is indeed admitted by everyone, that the severest punishments with which God visits men on earth are perfectly consistent with His goodness and benevolence, and where these cease to have a disciplinary effect, who shall dare to say that God is unjust when He puts upon them the seal of His final condemnation of sin in eternal banishment from His presence ? The facts of the present life are all against the teachings of Universalism, and it is only by these and the word of God that we can judge of the future. If men can resist the pleadings of Divine love here—obstinate persistence in evil can resist law and repel God's mercy there, even were new influences for good brought to bear upon the soul in another state.

Such truths are not relished by the mass of men. "Ye shall not surely die," is eagerly listened to, rather than God's declaration, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Nor is this surprising. The very thought of eternal woe becoming the portion of any number of the human family, is enough to overwhelm

the soul. We do not love to preach such terrible truths, if men could be otherwise led to realize the evil of sin, and be persuaded by the tenderer manifestations of Calvary. But as the servants of the Most High, no part of the message committed to us dare be kept back. "O son of man," said God to the Prophet Ezekiel, "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore, thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood shall I require at thine hand."

Christ himself preached such doctrine. Loving-hearted and compassionate beyond all human conception, He never taught that there was pardon or probation after death. The tares were not transplanted and transformed into wheat, but burned up, with no promise of resurrection from their ashes. The barren branches of the vine were not cut off, laid away for a season, and then reunited to the parent tree. The door was never opened to the foolish virgins. In the descriptions given of the dread transactions of the day of judgment, the idea of finality appears not in single words or phrases only, but in the power and vividness of the pictures, taken as a whole. The images made use of represent a closing scene—"It is the last great act in the drama of human existence—the settlement or reckoning of the world when God demands again the ages fled." Even were it otherwise and the question of restoration or no restoration left indeterminate, and men allowed to "faintly trust the larger hope," it ought only to be faintly, for the solemn silence of Scripture would be ominous of doom!

If then we have but one probationary life to live, how careful ought we be to spend it seriously, not in rioting and drunkenness, nor in chambering and wantonness, not as children of the night and darkness, but as children of the day and the light.

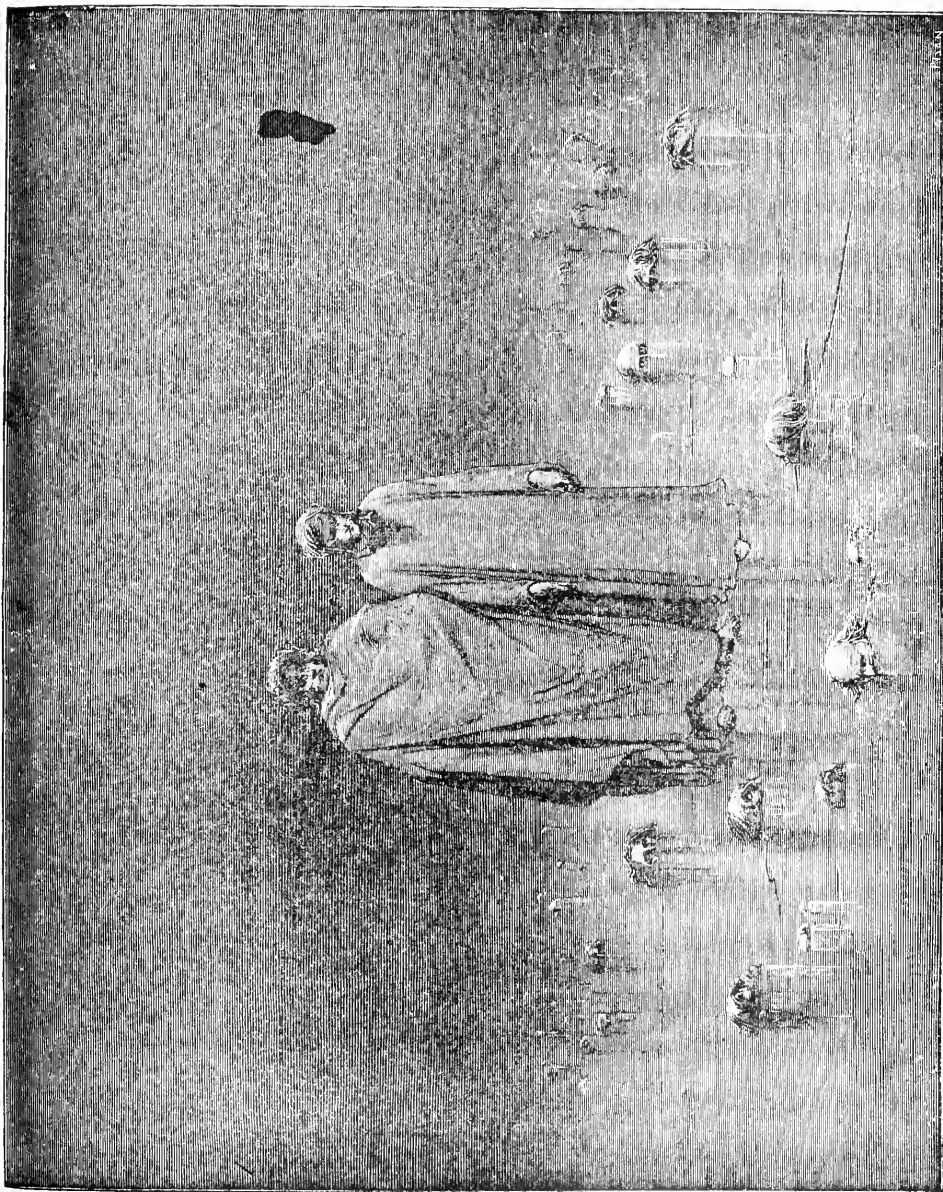
"Nothing is worth a thought beneath,
But how we may escape the death
That never, never dies."

Victor Hugo, in his famous book "Les Miserables," draws the tragic picture of a man sinking in the quicksand and unable to regain the solid earth. It serves to give us some faint idea of the wretchedness of a lost soul when it begins to realize the fixedness of its destiny for eternity :

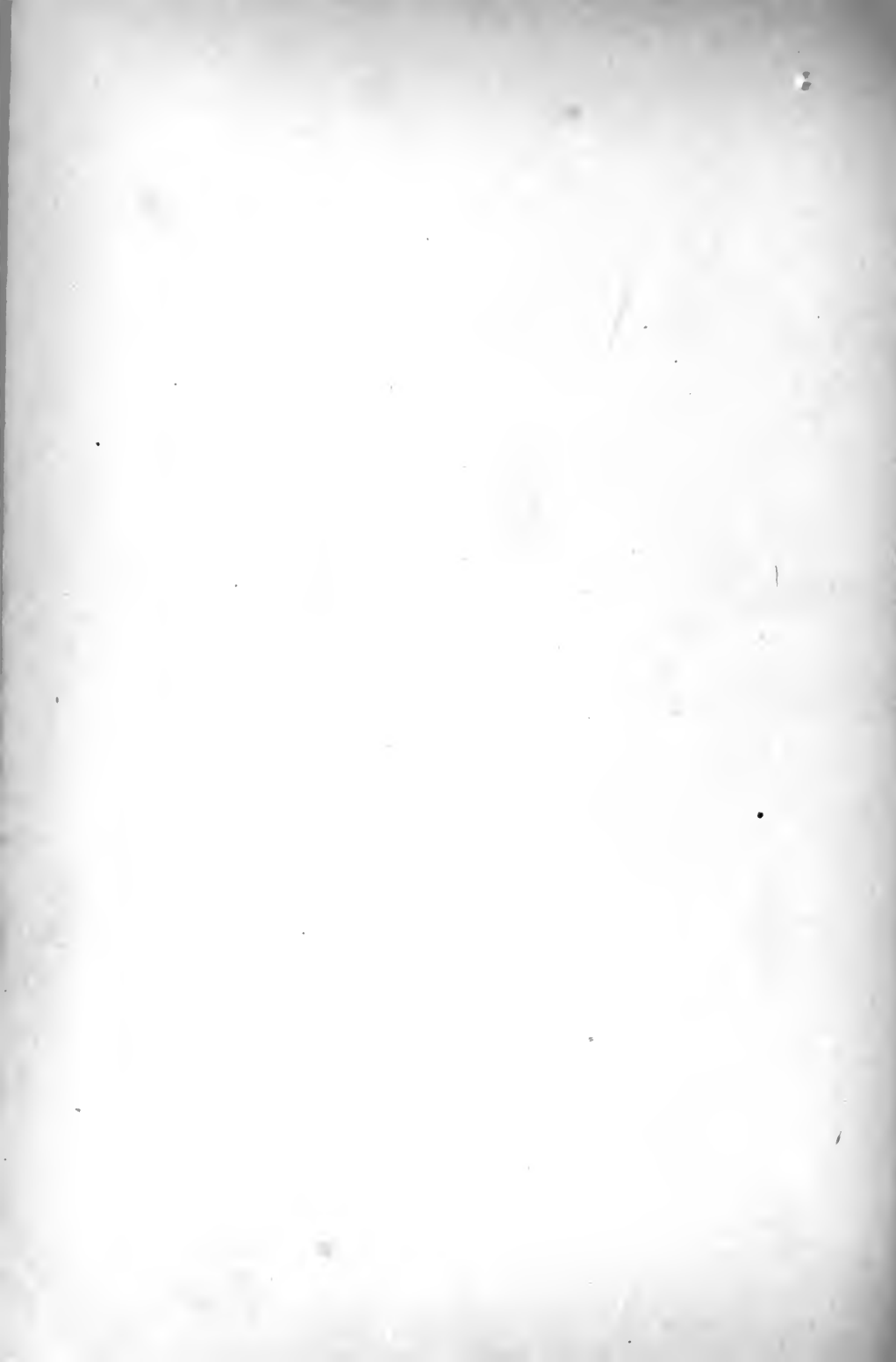
"It sometimes happens, on certain coasts of Brittany or Scotland, that a man, traveller, or fisherman, walking on the beach at low tide, far from the bank, suddenly notices that for several minutes he has been walking with some difficulty. The strand beneath his feet is like pitch ; his soles stick to it ; it is sand no longer, it is glue. The beach is perfectly dry, but at every step he takes, as soon as he lifts his foot, the print which it leaves fills with water. The eye, however, has noticed no change ; the immense strand is smooth and tranquil, all the sand has the same appearance, nothing distinguishes the surface which is solid from the surface which is no longer so. * * * Suddenly he sinks in. He sinks in two or three inches. Decidedly he is not on the right road. He stops to take his bearings. All at once he looks at his feet. His feet have disappeared. The sand covers them. He draws his feet out of the sand ; he will retrace his steps, he turns back, he sinks in deeper. The sand comes up to his ankles ; he pulls himself out and throws himself to the left—the sand is half-leg deep ; he throws himself to the right—the sand comes up to his shins. Then he recognizes, with unspeakable terror, that he is caught in quicksand, and that he has beneath him the fearful medium, in which man can no more walk than the fish can swim. He throws off his load, if he has one ; he lightens himself like a ship in distress ; it is already too late—the sand is above his knees. He calls, he waves hat or handkerchief ; the sand gains on him more and more ; if the beach is deserted, if the land is too far off, if the sand-

bank is too ill of repute, if there is no hero in sight, it is all over—he is condemned to enslavement. He is condemned to that appalling interment, long, infallible, implacable, impossible to slacken or hasten, which endures for hours, which will not end, seizes you erect, free, and in full health, which draws you by the feet ; which, at every effort that you attempt, at every shout you utter, drags you a little deeper ; which appears to punish you for your resistance by a redoubling of its grasp, which sinks the man slowly into the earth, while it leaves him all the time to look at the horizon, the trees, the green fields, the smoke of the villages in the plain, the sails of the ships upon the sea, the birds flying and singing, the sunshine, the sky, the grave become a tide and rising from the depths of the earth towards a living man ; each minute is an inexorable enshrouding. The victim attempts to sit down, to lie down, to creep ; every movement he makes interests him ; he straightens up : he sinks in, he feels that he is being swallowed up, he howls, cries to the clouds, wrings his hands, despairs ; behold him waist deep in the sand, the sand reaches his breast, he is now only a bust. He raises his arms, utters furious groans, clutches the beach with his nails would hold by that straw, leans on his elbow to pull himself out of this soft sheath, sobs frenziedly ; the sand rises. The sand reaches his shoulders, the sand reaches his neck, the face alone is visible now. The mouth cries, the sand fills it—silence. The eyes still gaze, the sand shuts them—night. Then the forehead decreases, a little hair flutters above the sand, a hand protrudes, comes through the surface of the beach, moves and shakes, and disappears.”

Terrible as is the fate of a human being thus suddenly and helplessly engulfed, and indescribable as must be his feelings in the closing moments of mortal existence, it is overshadowed by the despair of the man who retains throughout eternity the consciousness of having sinned away his day of grace. In the account given of the exploration of the Amazon, mention is made of the peculiar notes of a bird heard by night on the shores of the river. The



The frozen circle in the world of woe.



Indian guides call it "The cry of a lost soul," and many of them believe it to be so.

"In that black forest, where, when day is done,
 With a snake's stillness glides the Amazon,
 Darkly from sunset to the rising sun
 A cry, as if the pained heart of the wood—
 The long despairing moan of solitude—
 Startles the traveller with a sound so drear,
 His heart stands still and listens like his ear.
 The guide, as if he heard a dead-bell toll,
 Starts, crosses himself, and whispers—"A lost soul."
 Poor fool, with hope still mocking his despair,
 He wanders, shrieking on the midnight air,
 For human pity and for Christian prayer.
 Saints, strike him dumb!
 No prayer for him, who sinning unto death,
 Burns always in the furnace of God's wrath."

The Indian superstition is alas, not all fancy. That there are lost souls, who can doubt. Nor dare any man plead honestly that his creed led him astray; that he was taught to believe that salvation was coextensive with the entire human family. Any creed that conflicts with the manifest spirit of the Bible ought not to be trusted or tolerated. That which appeals to the passions and panders to the baser appetites of sense, and offers indulgence for vice, must be regarded with suspicion, and rejected as blasphemous. Men need not be imposed upon. Universalism subverts the entire scheme of redemption, and leaves no middle ground between simple faith and open infidelity. A man may not all at once let go his hold of the other doctrines of Christianity, but of necessity he must ultimately ignore the whole circle of revelation. Every day we read of vessels stranded on the coast, and hundreds of souls perishing within sight of land. Why such loss of life? For the most part they were well officered, manned by gallant crews, and strongly framed of oak and iron. But because one proper signal light was missing, or a mistake made as to the light and its distance from

the shore, the vessels were put off their course and became total wrecks. Ah! there are many souls sailing on the ocean of life towards eternity that are misled by false lights that glimmer along the way and lure to destruction. Presuming that the rocks are twenty miles distant, when they are only one, does not prevent the total loss of ship and passengers. The excuse that the fog was so dense, does not bring back life to the dead who lie in the bed of the ocean. Nor will a false hope in the mercy of God, at the expense of His justice and holiness, ameliorate the sufferings of the man who trifles with sin and mocks at a day of judgment!

Leaving the domain of human reason and feeling, the Scriptures, it will be admitted, are the only reliable source of information regarding the future condition of the impenitent and the righteous alike. The inner sense or conscience may afford presumptive evidence in favor of one view as against another, but after all, our appeal must be made to the judge of all the earth, whose revelation alone decides the destiny of souls beyond the grave. It is Christ who has brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. To the law and to the testimony, if we speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in us.

Universalists say that the testimony of Scripture is at first sight contradictory, and apparently irreconcilable. That it is to them exceedingly perplexing is evident, for in spite of considerable ingenuity and lengthened reasoning, it is difficult for the most prominent apologists of Restorationism to explain away direct passages of Scripture that assert the unchanging moral condition of immortal beings beyond the grave. It is by analogy more than by direct argument that the doctrine of Universalism is supported—by attempting to show that in certain other passages of Scripture the words used by Christ in speaking of the punishment of the wicked, mean something else. It is a process of reasoning, that may be

congenial to scholars, but is utterly repugnant to the plain unsophisticated men and women, who imagine the Bible to be written in a form easily understood and level to the comprehension of the humblest reader, without any hidden or covert interpretation which would completely subvert its apparent meaning.

The texts of Scripture cited by Universalists to show that God will save all men, independent of character in the present world, are such as these: "In Abraham's seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." "The times of the restitution of all things." "God hath purposed in Himself, according to His good pleasure, to reconcile unto Himself, in and by Christ, all things, whether they be things in heaven or things on the earth." "Creation, which now groans and travails in pain, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." "Christ took our flesh and blood, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." "As by one offence, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift comes on all, unto justification of life." "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "The end shall not come, till all are subject to Him, that God may be all in all, and hath put all His enemies under His feet." "He shall gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth." "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord." "God sent not His son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world by Him might be saved." "Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world." "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, shall draw all men unto me,"

From such passages Universalists argue, that not only believers, who are the first fruits, but those who miss the glory of the first-born, shall be saved; the one being gathered in spring, the other in autumn; the latter harvest needing a greater heat than the first

fruits ; that in the world to come, the curses pronounced upon the ungodly here shall be turned into blessings, and that those who are now turning blessings into curses, will find that God can make even these curses, blessings ; that such phrases as the second death, the lake of fire, and the resurrection to judgment or condemnation, are parts of God's redemptive plan for the universe, and the method of freeing those who in no other way can be delivered from the power of sin ; and that it is through this very death that the power of the devil is to be destroyed and swallowed up in victory.

In reply to such arguments, we remark that it is not denied that certain texts of scripture say that Christ died for all. Evangelical Christians of the most rigid type can accept the statement. But these passages do not say that all will be saved. The way of salvation is open, but to walk in it is a different thing.

But still further. In regard to those texts of scripture that speak of the purpose of God to reconcile all things unto Himself (Ephesians 1st, v. 10 ; Colossians 1st, v. 10), until we have determined who and what are the "all" who are to be reconciled to God, we can base no argument upon them for the doctrine of Universalism. Isolated texts of scripture ought never to be taken to support any important article of faith. Clearly the "all things" spoken of cannot mean everything in nature, for the material universe is not susceptible of reconciliation to God. Nor can they refer to irrational animals, who need no reconciliation, their life being limited to the present. Nor can they refer to all rational beings, for in Hebrews ii. 16, it is taught, that Christ did not die to redeem fallen angels, although this is disputed by certain Universalists. Nor can they mean all men, for the Scriptures teach that all men are not reconciled to God. The only legitimate meaning of such a phrase, is to apply it to such as are saved by faith—the people of God of every communion and every clime, who have redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace.

In reference to the passages in Romans 5th, v. 18, and 1st Cor. 15th, v. 22, "As by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life;" "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,"—the "all" must again be limited by the context, and the analogy of scripture. If the scriptures teach elsewhere that all men are saved, then Universalism is true, but if they teach the contrary, then these passages give no countenance whatever to such a doctrine. Texts of such a character standing alone decide nothing.

Take only two additional texts: 1st Corinthians, 15, v. 25, and 1st Timothy, 2, v. 4, "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet,"—"who will have all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth." The former may mean that Christ must reign until all sin and misery are banished from the universe, but not necessarily, for Satan and wicked men may be subdued without either being converted or annihilated, while the latter passage depends for its correct interpretation on the meaning of the word "will." If it means to purpose or decree, then it favors Universalism, but if it means as numerous other passages, to have complacency in, it simply teaches what all the Scriptures do, that God has no pleasure in the death of sinners, but rather desires their salvation.

Turning now to the positive tests of Scripture in favor of endless punishment, it is to be remarked that the doctrine is taught in the Old as well as the New Testament, not perhaps so clearly or prominently in such a preparatory and shadowy dispensation, but sufficient to deter men from pursuing a course of wickedness in the false hope of pardon and restoration to the favor of God. In Isaiah xxxiii. 14, we read, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" In verse 24, of the 66th chapter of the same book, it is said of those who are to be excluded from the new heavens and

the new earth, that their worm shall not die. neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh, while in Daniel xii. 2, it is said of the wicked that they "shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt." Our Lord's own teaching is still more definite and emphatic: "I say unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more power that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. I say unto you, fear him." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." "The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment." "He shall say unto them on the left hand, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels "They that have done evil, shall come forth from their graves unto the resurrection of damnation." "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

The language of the apostles is equally strong. Paul says "some" are saved by the Gospel, while others perish, that "many walk whose end is destruction;" "that the Lord Jesus shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord;" that "to such as sin wilfully there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries—to whom God is a consuming fire." St. Peter asks, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear?" And teaches, that wicked men bring upon themselves swift destruction, and shall, like the cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah, utterly perish in their own corruption. St. John uses words to the same effect: "The fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and

brimstone, which is the second death." "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still : and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still ; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still ; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

Now regarding such passages of Scripture, Universalists say, we cannot explain them—their meaning is open to question, but they do not teach the doctrine of eternal punishment—if not, then we ask what do they teach? The reply differs, according to the shade of Universalist belief. Some answer, that those who on earth reject the Gospel, do by their present rejection of Christ lose a glory, which if now lost, is lost forever, and bring upon themselves a judgment of darkness and anguish unspeakable, but not eternal, while others do not pretend to have any definite idea of what the Bible teaches on the subject. They, indeed, are eloquent in their passionate disclaimers of the orthodox doctrines of hell, but give us no positive or consistent interpretation of such passages. Surely we have a right to demand of men, who hold up to scorn the torment of the lost, as inconsistent with the character of God—to tell us what the Bible means to convey by such pictures? It is easy to purchase a cheap, but not enviable, notoriety by exaggerating and denouncing the orthodox doctrine of future punishment, but it is quite another thing to face the awful declarations of Scripture, and explain them to the satisfaction of candid minds.

To go over in detail certain passages, which the Universalists have grappled with, and give in detail the meanings put upon them, would not only be wearisome, but confusing to the ordinary reader. One or two instances will indicate the mode of argument adopted. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." The words "everlasting" and "eternal" are the same in the original. Hence we surely have a right to argue that whatever may be the meaning in the case of the lost, it must be the same in the case of the saved. If the endless punishment of the wicked is uncertain, so must be the everlasting life of

the blessed. But we are assured of the absolute endlessness of the life of believers in Christ, for "because he lives they shall live hereafter." It follows then, that everlasting death, whatever that means, is the portion of the wicked. If heaven is endless, why not hell?—the two states or conditions of being are presented in parallel language, and indicate the same duration.

To this it is replied: The word everlasting or eternal is in certain other passages of Scripture, applied to what is not eternal, and therefore we have a right to believe that it does not mean "eternal" here. The word punishment also in its primary sense means simply pruning, or corrective discipline, for the benefit of him who suffers it, therefore the passage only teaches that so far from the godless being lost forever, they only miss the first resurrection to eternal life, but are eventually saved by means of this everlasting discipline!

Such a style of reasoning is not satisfactory, as can be shown by selecting three passages of Scripture where the same word is used with reference to the punishment of Satan, the endless worship of the redeemed, and the portion of the wicked. The first passage is found in Revelation xx. 10, "The devil that deceived was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever"—"for æons and æons." The second passage is found in Revelation v. 13-14, "Blessing and honor, and glory, and power, unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever—for æons and æons—and the four-and-twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever—for æons and æons." The third passage is found in Mathew xxv. 41, "Depart from Me, ye accursed, into everlasting 'aionial' fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Now the first passage teaches that the punishment of the devil and his allies will continue for ever and ever—for æons and æons. The second teaches that God lives during æons of æons—for ever and ever—and that the praises also of God and the Lamb will continue during æons of æons—for ever

and ever. The third teaches that at the last great day, the Judge will send away those who are cursed, or adjudged worthy of punishment, into the everlasting, or "aionial," fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Now, the "aionial," or everlasting fire, predicted in the last passage, is one and the same with the fires of Aion, predicted in the first, and the duration predicted in the first, is the same as that specified in the second, and the duration predicted in the last is equal to that of the first, therefore, the duration of punishment of those who shall be adjudged worthy of such at the last day, will be equal to the duration of the praises of God and the Lamb, which will continue as long as God liveth.

As further illustrations of how the Scriptures are wrested, to support the views of Universalists, take two other well known passages of the word of God. In Matthew xxii. 31-32, we find these words, referring to the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men : but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him ; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." This text, says the Universalist, does not teach never-ending punishment, for sin here or hereafter. It simply teaches that the sin against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven here or in the coming age, but says nothing of those ages to come, elsewhere revealed in Scripture. In another age, even the sin against the Holy Ghost shall be forgiven, and the possibilities of Divine mercy be gloriously manifested.

In Mark ix. 43-48 : "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off ; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched ; and if thy foot offend thee, cut it off ; it is better for thee to enter halt into life than hav-

ing two feet to be cast into hell, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched ; and if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out ; it is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." These last words, " the fire not quenched," says the Universalist, refers to the fire for the burnt offering, which was kept continually burning on the altar, and not to never-ending punishment. It simply indicates the means by which men are fitted for a state of acceptance with God ! Finally, as for the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, to which we have already referred, it is chiefly parabolic, teaching that despite of special privileges in this world, the Jew may suffer in the next, while the outcast Gentile will be first saved ; and specially that the great gulf fixed between Dives and Lazarus, although impassible to man, can be traversed by Christ, who can bring the last prisoner out of hell ! Morley Punshon, lately gone to his rest and reward, gives a different and truer meaning to the parable. After remarking that even if the spirit of perdition could return to earth, with the thunder scar of the Eternal on his brow, and his heart writhing under the blasted immortality of hell, to tell the secrets of his prison house, men would not repent, he describes the closing scene in a life of song and wine and beauty, by saying : " The rich man died and was buried, and in hell lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom, he cried and said—the only prayer that I know of, the whole Bible through, to a saint or angel, and that by a damned spirit, and never answered— " I pray thee, father Abraham, that thou wouldst send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." Listen to it, the song of the lost worldling in hell. Who will set it to music ? Which heart is tuning for it now ? Sinner, is it thine ? Oh, surely the bare possibility of such a doom ought to arrest the most reckless and defiant. As the poet says :

“Sad world indeed, ah! who can bear
 Forever there to dwell,
 Forever sinking in despair,
 In all the pains of hell:

The breath of God, His angry breath
 Supplies and fans the fire ;
 There sinners taste the second death,
 And would, but can't, expire.

Conscience, the never-dying worm,
 With torture gnaws the heart ;
 And woe and wrath in every form,
 Is now the sinner's part.

There yet remains for us to show that the words “aeon,” “aionios,” and “aional” mean in by far the largest number of instances in the New Testament, endless duration. The truth or falsity of Universalism, so far as the mere literal interpretation is concerned, must be settled by enquiring into the meaning of these words, commonly translated “forever,” “ever,” “eternal,” and “everlasting.” In classical use, these words are rendered long continuing, eternal, unlimited, and everlasting, just as they are used in scripture. Passing over, then, the use of the word “aion” in the New Testament, as applied to God or Christ, and also to the happiness of the good in the future world—which is not disputed by any who believe in a future state and the immortality of the soul—we find that in fifty-five instances in the New Testament it means an unlimited period of duration, either past or future, apart altogether from those passages—five in number, where it is clearly used in respect to future punishment, and if we add these cases, and those which refer to the dominion of Messiah, there are sixty-four cases out of ninety-four in all, where it means unlimited, boundless duration. From a most minute examination of every instance where the word is used in the New Testament indicating time, the highest

scholarship concludes, that it means indefinite, unlimited time—a future period that has no bounds or limits.

Coming to the word "aionios," derived from "aion," in classic use it means long continued, eternal, everlasting; substantially agreeing with the word "aion," when used in relation to time. In the New Testament, it generally signifies perpetual, never-ending, eternal, and is always so employed, with reference to the happiness of the righteous and the abode prepared for the glorified in the future life. The word is used sixty-six times in the New Testament. In fifty-one instances it refers to the happiness of the righteous, in two instances to God or the glory of God, in six instances with different meanings, and in seven instances to future punishment. Leaving out the seven instances, in which the word is used respecting future punishment, the conclusion reached by the ablest theologians is, that if the rest have not the meaning of endless duration, "then the scriptures do not decide that God is eternal, not that the happiness of the righteous is without end, nor that his covenant of grace will always remain, a conclusion that would forever blast the hopes of Christians and shroud in more than midnight darkness all the glories of the gospel." If in seven instances the word signifying endless duration is applied to the future of the wicked, who dare say that the inspired penman wrote the word in some fifty-eight other passages with the clear and accepted meaning of unlimited duration, and left it seven times with the liberty to understand it in the very opposite sense! By what authority can we translate it eternal, everlasting, unending, when applied to life and glory, Christ and the Holy Spirit, and God, and the condition of the saved in heaven, and give to it the meaning of limited duration when applied to the future punishment of the ungodly? Whatever meaning we put upon the word in the one case, we are bound to put in the other. If not, then we must conclude that all the statements concerning the place of torment contained in the Bible are merely Oriental hyperboles; that they were merely intended as a merciful

deterrent to the Jews in their low state of piety, culture and civilization, an adaptation to the hardness of their hearts, or a needful concession to a prevailing superstition !”

To sum up, and here I adopt the conclusions arrived at by Moses Stuart of Andover, if I do not always use his language—who, after a searching scrutiny of the meaning of the words, both in Hebrew, the Septuagint, and New Testament Scriptures, applies his results to the questions of endless punishment. As future punishment must belong to future time, so the word “aion,” when spoken of in connection with punishment, must have a like meaning with that which it has, when applied to things belonging to a future world, and which are yet to take place. In such cases where glory and praise are ascribed to God for ever, or forever and ever, a definite period of time cannot be meant. When God is called eternal, and when the things of the heavenly world are spoken of, eternity in the proper sense of the word is intended. In such cases where “aion” and “aionios” are applied to the happiness of the righteous in another world, there can be no room to doubt that a happiness without end is intended. It follows then, that in the instances where “aion” is applied to the future punishment of the wicked, and “aionios” is applied to the same subject, the same meaning is intended. The laws of interpretation demand this. The words “aion” and “aionios” are applied sixty times in the New Testament to designate the continuance of the future happiness of the righteous and twelve times to designate the continuance of the future misery of the wicked. By what principles of interpreting language is it possible to avoid the conclusion that they have the same sense in both cases? If life eternal is promised on one side, and death eternal is promised on the other, is it not to be supposed that the word eternal, which qualifies life, is of equal force with the word eternal which qualifies death? If then the Scriptures have not asserted the endless punishment of the wicked, neither have they asserted the endless happiness of the righteous.

The one is equally certain with the other. Both are laid in the same balance ; both must be tried by the same tests, and if we give up the one we must, to be consistent, give up the other also.

“I have long searched,” says Moses Stuart, “with anxious solicitude for a text in the Bible, which would even seem to favor the idea of a future probation. I cannot find it. If others have been more successful in their researches, let them show us the proof. When this shall be done in accordance with the simple laws of interpretation, and without the application of A PRIORI theology to the Bible, then I promise to renounce my feelings and views in regard to the whole subject before me. But till then, I must hold the endless punishment of the wicked, or give up the endless happiness of the righteous. Further, if Universalists are in the right, we who believe in a doctrine very different to theirs, are nevertheless, just as safe as they. We need not concern ourselves to examine whether we are in the right or wrong as to opinion, since there can be no difference in the result. But if we are in the right, and they mistake fundamentally the meaning of God’s word, and mistake it through the spirit of unbelief, and through desire to live without that self control and self denial which the Gospel demands on penalty of everlasting death, then what is to be the end of all this?”

There are other considerations still in favor of the commonly received interpretation. We have already referred to the classic use of “aion” and “aionios,” as the same as that in the New Testament. On referring to such writers as Aristotle, we find the words always used as indicating unending duration, whether as applied to eternal punishment or eternal happiness. But even supposing that the word everlasting should occasionally be found denoting a period less than absolute eternity, such as where the inspired and profane writers speak of “the everlasting hills,” in such instances the word when applied to future time, always denotes the longest duration of which the subject is capable. “Everlasting hills” are those which shall continue to the end of the world. “He

shall serve forever," means during the longest period of which he is capable. Hannah devoted Samuel to the Lord "forever" (1st Samuel i. 22), that is, he was never to return to private life. "An ordinance for ever," is one which lasts through the longest possible time—the whole dispensation, of which it was a part. Such cases, which are after all but few in number, do not contravene in spirit the numerous instances in which the word signifies absolute eternity, which is indeed the original meaning of the term.

It is also worthy of remark, in the settlement of such an important doctrine, that all Christian Churches, since the Apostolic age, have understood the Bible to teach the everlasting punishment of the wicked. Why is this? Not because such a doctrine is it all congenial to the human mind, but because it is found in a divine revelation it cannot be rejected. If we acknowledge the Bible to be from God, it must be accepted in its entirety, promises of pardon and threatenings of vengeance alike. Nor can we account for the almost universal acceptance of the doctrine by saying that it was imposed upon the Christian world by the authority of the Church, for it was received as true long before any sect had presumed to dictate what truths should be believed, and it continued to be accepted after the Reformation, when the authority of the Church in matters of faith and practice was rejected, and the Scriptures alone recognized as the only infallible guide.

It is often asserted that the strong, vigorous thinkers of the day are all agreed in denouncing the dogma of endless punishment; that the conception of a God who should condemn immortal beings to eternal misery is now left to the non-progressive, uncultured and violent demagogues and revivalists, who have neither the ability nor the courage to examine the teachings of the word of God. Is it so? It is freely admitted that the doctrine of Universalism has always had defenders. Even during the dark ages and among schoolmen such names as Scotus Erigena and the Abbot Raynaldus are found supporting the theory. But the great mass of scholars of

that period, such as Thomas Aquinas, opposed it strenuously, not only on account of its unscriptural character, but also because it was mixed up with Socinianism and free-thinking of every shade of opinion. At the present day comparatively few eminent men, either in Great Britain or in America, hold the doctrine, or if they do, they carefully conceal their belief.

Charles Kingsley, who has been reckoned among the number who held and taught the doctrine of Universalism, in his late years not only modified his views, but preached the reasonableness and probability of future punishment. He hardly ever indeed preached Restorationism to his church at Eversley. Any one reading his "Village Sermons" would conclude that he taught no other doctrine to sinners than that of eternal punishment and retribution, and that he preached the doctrine with great plainness and energy. Repudiating the idea of material bodily torture, he was a stout upholder of the Athanasian creed, which in his early manhood he had repudiated with intense dislike. The change in his views arose from a deepening sense of man's moral individuality and accountability to his Maker: "of his power to make or mar his fortunes, to determine his own future, and mould his own destiny, in this world and the world to come." Hence he wrote to the Guardian newspaper, in a letter explaining his later views as to the Athanasian creed, these words: "I do not deny endless punishment. On the contrary, I believe it is possible for me and other Christian men, by loss of God's grace, to commit sins against light and knowledge, which would plunge us into endless abysses of probably increasing sin, and therefore, of probably increasing and endless punishment."

Frederick Robertson of Brighton, a man of exquisitely tender and sensitive soul, who was accused of the greatest latitudinarianism, says: "My only difficulty is, how not to believe in everlasting punishment." Speaking of the man who having sown to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, he says: "This is ruin of soul. He shall reap the harvest of disappointment, of bitter useless re-

morse. He shall have the worm that gnaws, and the fire that is not quenched. He shall reap the fruit of long indulged desires, which has become tyrannous at last, and constitute him his own tormentor. His harvest is a soul in flames, and the tongue that no drop can cool. Passions that burn, and appetites that crave, when the power of enjoyment is gone."

Norman McLeod says: "If a new period of probation be possible for those whose lives as a whole are expressed, in having 'preferred darkness to light,' no hint of such is given by Him who is to be the judge, but on the contrary, warnings and declarations are given, implying the reverse. And though Scripture were silent altogether, or even though it stated that new opportunities would be afforded, where is the hope from experience that those in the future would have a different result from those in the past?" Such men certainly are not to be classed with those who say:

"The gloomy caverns, and the burning lakes,
And all the vain infernal trumpery,
They neither are nor were, nor e'er can be."

Even Henry Ward Beecher, whose theological creed is certainly expansive enough to suit the tastes of the most revolutionary, and who never misses an opportunity of attacking the commonly accepted doctrine of eternal punishment (in language unparalleled for severity and biting invective), never advocates Universalism, as a certain belief. In his sermon entitled, "The background of mystery," he goes no further than express a strong hope that in some way wicked men shall at last regain lost purity. His words are these: "The distinction between right and wrong is as eternal as God himself. The relation between sin and retribution belongs not to the temporal condition of things, it inheres in the divine constitution, and is for eternity. The prospect for any man who goes out of this life, resolute in sin, may well make him tremble for himself, and may well make us tremble for him." The same is also true in

regard to recent declarations of belief made by candidates for ordination or installation in New England Congregational churches, where if anywhere a man with impunity might hold such a doctrine without fear of discipline. At a recent council held in the city of Boston, for the examination of a minister, while many of the older and more conservative members regretted indefiniteness of expression, and uncertainty as to the state after death, no avowal of Universalism was made. These are the statements referred to :

“ On the dark and difficult topic of retribution a few things are clear to me. These I will state as plainly and as frankly as I can. They relate to the nature of retribution, to the duration of it, to a possible crisis in sinful experience, and to my own mental attitude with reference to the whole subject.

‘ First—What is the nature of the divine retributions? The nature of sin makes this evident. Sin consists in wrong spiritual relations. It is a denial of the claims of God and of man upon the individual spirit. It is practical atheism and inhumanity. It is moral disorder. It is a bad spiritual state, and the consciousness which accompanies that state is its punishment. Sin and punishment are linked together as cause and effect. The cause is a moral cause, the effect is a moral effect. The retributions of God are therefore moral retributions. The words eternal life and eternal punishment, I am fully persuaded, refer primarily to a certain kind, to a certain quality of being.

“ But the question of duration cannot be suppressed. Therefore, the next point to be met is, whether eternal punishment is also endless. I answer without reservation, that it may be so. A soul may sin forever, and so may be in a state of moral death forever. This I maintain as a clear possibility. It is a possibility to which all sinners are liable. They become more and more liable to it the longer they persist in wrong-doing. I assert, then, the possibility of everlasting punishment as a consequence of the possibility of everlasting sin. Whether there will be, as a matter of fact, any

who sin forever, whether the possibility will be converted into a reality, is a question which I have no means of deciding. The one I can answer, the other I can not.

“ I hold the same view in reference to the possibility of a crisis in the sinner’s experience. If there is such a thing as the possible possession of an assured Christian character, the attainment of a fixed position in the divine righteousness, it is clear to me that there must be also a limit in the sinner’s experience beyond which he will remain steadfast in sin. This would be my conception of the final judgment. Moral life and moral death declare themselves in their final form. The processes of moral life and moral death are thus summed up and set forth.

“ To the question, whether this world is the only place where human beings can leave unrighteousness for righteousness, the fellowship of devils for the fellowship of God and his Son, I can give no answer whatever. I do not know enough about the world to come to decide whether those who are impenitent at death remain so forever, or ultimately, through the discipline of woe, become partakers of Christ’s life. I will say, however, that where men have steadfastly resisted light here, we have no reason to believe that they will not resist there ; that in view of our ignorance, all men should be led to feel that the question of eternal life and eternal death, in point of duration, no less than in quality of being, may be forever settled by the choice of the present hour.

To the further question, as to what influence the fact of physical death may have upon the destiny of the sinful soul, I return no answer. It may have much. It may have none at all.”

Professor F. D. Maurice of England, who is frequently quoted as an opponent of the “ Doctrine of Eternal Punishment,” as excluding the notion of DURATION from the word “ Eternal,” and as maintaining that the three-score years and ten of man’s life, do not absolutely limit the compassion of the Father of spirits, only gives a very half-hearted AGNOSTIC concurrence in Universalism. In

order to show that he did not hold such a theory, nor that of Annihilationism, but merely that God's punishments of evil are both retributive and reformatory, and that after death it was only possible for souls under punishment to turn from darkness to light, and from death to life,—he published the following statement of his views :

“ My duty I feel is this :

1. To assert that which I know, that which God has revealed, His absolute universal love in all possible ways, and without limitation.
2. To tell myself and all men, that to know this love and to be moulded by it, is the blessing we are to seek.
3. To say that this is eternal life.
4. To say that the want of it is death.
5. To say that if they believe in the Son of God, they have eternal life.
6. To say that if they have not the Son of God, they have not life.
7. NOT to say who has the Son of God, because I do not know.
8. NOT to say how long any one may remain in eternal death, because I do not know.
9. NOT to say that all will be necessarily raised out of eternal death, because I do not know.
10. NOT to judge any before the time, or to judge other men at all because Christ has said, “ judge not, that ye be not judged.”
11. NOT to play with Scripture by quoting passages which have not the slightest connection with the subject, such as, “ where the tree falleth it shall lie.”
12. NOT to invent a scheme of purgatory, and so take upon myself the office of the Divine Judge.
13. NOT to deny God a right of using punishment at any time or any where for the reformation of His creatures.

14. NOT to contradict Christ's words : " These shall be beaten with few, these with many stripes," for the sake of maintaining a theory of the equality of sins.

15. NOT to think any punishment of God's so great as the saying, " Let them alone."

The Council of Queen's College, London, while not formulating any statement of the doctrines they condemned in the teachings of Professor Maurice, regarded his opinions and doubts as to certain points of belief, on the punishment of the wicked and the final issues of the day of judgment, as of dangerous tendency, and calculated to unsettle the minds of the theological students. Mr. Gladstone, the Prime Minister of England, then made a proposal for an enquiry by competent theologians, as to how far the writings of Professor Maurice were conformable to, or at variance with, the formularies of the Church of England. This having been refused, Bishop Wilberforce submitted a formula to Professor Maurice, which was accepted by him without hesitation, unreservedly and entirely, and is as follows :

I cannot but think that in contending for a truth, you have been led into an exaggeration of its proportions. Will you, then, suffer me to try whether I can aid you to make that truth more plain?

I. What, then, I understand to be charged against you is this : That you teach that the revelation of God's love given to us in the Gospel is incompatible with His permitting any of the creatures He has loved, to be consigned to never ending torment, and that you therefore do, with more or less clearness, revive the old doctrine of the Universalists, that after some unknown period of torments, all such must be restored. Now I do not understand you to intend to advocate any such views. What I do understand you to say is this : That to represent God as revenging upon His creatures, by torments through never ending extensions of time, their sinful acts committed here, is (1) unwarrantably to transfer to the eternal world

the conditions of this world ; and that eternity is not time prolonged, but rather time abolished, and that it is therefore, logically incorrect to substitute in the Scriptural proposition for "eternal death" "punishment extended through a never-ending duration of time;" and (2) as this is unwarranted, so it is dangerous : (a) because by transferring our earthly notions of such prolonged vengeance to God, it misrepresents His character ; (b) because as men recoil from applying to themselves or others, such a sentence, it leads to the introduction of unwarranted palliatives which practically explain away the true evil, and fatal consequences of sin. What I understand you to mean affirmatively to teach is this :

(a) That the happiness of the creature consists in his will being brought into harmony with the will of God. (b) That we are here under a Divine system, in which God, through the Mediator and by the Spirit, acts on the will of the creature to bring it into harmony with His own will. (c) That we see in this world the creature, in defiance of the love of his Creator, able to resist His merciful will, and to harden himself in opposition to it, and that misery in body and soul is the result of that opposition. (d) That it is revealed to us that our state in this world is, so to speak, the seminal principle of what it is to be in its full development in that world which is to come, and that therefore a will hardened against His must be the extremest misery to the creature both in body and soul ; that this hardened separation from God, with its consequent torments, is the 'death eternal' spoken of in Scripture—the lake of fire, 'where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,' &c., of which we know no limits, and from which we know of no escape ; concerning which, therefore, it is unsafe to dogmatize as if it was subject to earthly conditions ; and that in any contemplation of its horrors we must always contemplate God's exceeding love, and remember that He is striving through the Gospel to deliver every sinner from it, who against his own sin will appeal to Him through Christ. (e) Finally, that to conclude that after a certain period of

such suffering God's vengeance would be satisfied and the lost forgiven future suffering, would be one phase of the error against which you write, and therefore as remote as possible from your teaching."

These quotations will serve to show how very uncertain and unsatisfactory are the views of that class of theologians, who are undecided regarding this most important doctrine. There is indeed no halting place between the orthodox doctrine of Eternal Punishment, and that of unlimited and unconditional Universalism.

Nor can we conclude that Universalism is spreading, because occasionally individual opinions of ministers in rigidly orthodox churches, conflict with the confessions they have subscribed. The very infrequency of such instances gives the men a notoriety altogether out of proportion to their importance and opinions. Neither Universalist or Unitarian Churches are making any progress in Christendom, despite of the boastful assertions of free thinkers.

An American Unitarian clergyman, who lately passed over to the Episcopal pulpit, says Unitarianism was a constant disappointment to him. He labored to build up "decaying and almost hopeless churches," but everywhere had seen "the Unitarian cause steadily declining. Of fifteen churches in the New York and Hudson River conferences, six had died outright during the past twelve years; no new ones had been planted; and those remaining, with three or four exceptions, are just alive and that is all. The same is true all over America, and England too. This was what caused me to turn my studies and thoughts in the direction of the older Churches and faith."

The editor of a well known religious monthly not long ago, sent the following questions to leading clergymen in the United States and Great Britain. (1) Do you find among the laity an increasing skepticism touching the doctrine of eternal punishment? (2) Do you find that this skepticism makes it more difficult to awaken and sustain an interest in religion among the masses? Among the replies sent we select the following:

REV'D C. H. SPURGEON :

“I cannot but believe that doubts upon endless punishment aid, with other things, to render men less concerned about their future state ; but I conceive that, if they were not hardened by this, they would come under some other form of deadening influence. Where the Spirit of God works upon men's hearts with almighty power, they are awakened, and come to Jesus ; but apart from this, they slumber upon one pillow or another. I am amazed that, after the continual efforts to introduce modern views, so very few of our earnest Christian people have been removed from the old faith. I know some who embraced the new views, but soon left them, as they found themselves hindered in their work among the degraded. If some men were as anxious to save souls as they are to make us think lightly of their ruin, it would be better for themselves.”

REV'D DR. SPRECHER, San Francisco :

“There is a change taking place in the form in which the doctrine of eternal punishment is held. There is no doubt a growing belief among the laity in a probation after death for some, but also a growing conviction that there is such a thing as being “guilty of an eternal sin,” and that eternal punishment will accompany eternal sin as its natural and necessary consequence. Let the preacher take for his text before a popular assembly those words of our Saviour, regarding everlasting punishment, and he will find that no truth of Christianity meets with more general assent and conviction. I cannot perceive that it is more difficult to awaken and sustain religious interest among the masses than in former years. Here in California it is generally remarked that the churches are attended better, and the additions on profession of faith are larger within the last five or six years than ever before in the history of the State. The membership of our churches is increasing much more rapidly than the population.

“Twenty years ago, there was but one church member to every one hundred and twenty-five of the population ; now there is one

Protestant church member to every twenty-nine of the population. Membership in our Protestant churches has increased in the last twenty years four times as fast as the population. Our mission schools are more flourishing every year, and I have never known so many laymen, in proportion to church membership, engaged in Christian work. There is a change in the tone or manifestations of religious interest among the masses. We cannot produce the old-time excitements, but the results in conversions and additions to our churches are, at least in California, greater than ever.

REV'D DR. WM. TAYLOR, Broadway Tabernacle, New York :

"Among the laymen with whom I have had the privilege of coming into contact, I have not found skepticism on the doctrine of everlasting punishment. There is a change among many in the way in which the doctrine is held, as compared with the manner in which it was taught and maintained in former generations. Thus, it is now generally recognized that the "fire" is a material figure of a spiritual reality, and more prominence is given to the idea of natural consequences than to that of judicial infliction in the matter of the punishment. But I do not meet with many who deny or disbelieve the doctrine. Personally, I find few subjects as to which my people are more responsive than the duty of working for the evangelization of the occupants of our tenement houses, the education and christianization of the freedmen, and the making of provision for the religious instruction of the immigrants who are filling up so rapidly our Western States and Territories."

REV'D DR. MOSES HOGE, Richmond, Virginia :

"At one time there were indications of a growing incredulity among our people as to the truth of the doctrine in question. This was occasioned by the publication of the sermons of some celebrated divines in England and the United States, and by certain magazine articles assailing the doctrine of eternal punishment in an incisive and popular manner. But these were successfully answered, and the tendency "to increasing skepticism" very evidently checked,

if not arrested. There is generally a drift in public sentiment in that direction ; but just now there are indications of a reaction against the tendency in question. The attempt has frequently been made to establish a Universalist Church in Richmond, but it has always failed. The irreligion of our people is rather the irreligion of inconsideration, or of mere worldliness, than of infidelity, or of any defined system of unbelief."

REV'D DR. ROBERT PATERSON, San Francisco :

"I do not observe an increase of skepticism among the laity of my acquaintance touching the doctrine of eternal punishment ; nor do I believe that there is here, in San Francisco, a widespread skepticism upon the subject among the masses. I have two reasons for this belief : The first is, the decay of the Unitarian and Universalist congregations here and in Oakland. One has been obliged to curtail its expenses ; another was not long ago sold for debt ; and none are crowded. The most unpolished Irish priest who lifts a wooden crucifix before his hearers on Good Friday will have a larger audience than the most cultured Universalist preacher. Or, if you judge by the common talk of the crowds along the wharves, and at the depots, you will not be allowed to forget the existence of hell and damnation. My second reason for asserting that the masses are not Universalists is, that the most popular public speakers who visit this coast, are those whose preaching is full of warnings to flee from the wrath to come."

REV'D DR. B. M. PALMER, New Orleans :

"I do not find speculative doubts as to the eternal duration of future punishment cherished to any extent. The sense of justice in the human soul, answering to the justice that is in God, demands the vindication of the divine law through the infliction of the penalty. There would be little theoretic difficulty on this subject among the masses if they were only left undisturbed by the unlicensed speculations of flighty theologians. Some of these, like John Foster, through a morbid sentiment, shrink from the contem-

plation of what is unspeakably painful ; others seek personal popularity, by adjusting religion to the weaknesses and vices of men ; whilst others still are unconsciously led, by over-refinements of criticism, to eliminate from the Scriptures what has always been deemed essential to the integrity of the Christian faith. But as respects the masses of men, their robust morality easily accepts the penalty as a necessary feature of the law.

“ There is, however, great practical insensibility to this awful truth, even where little speculative denial of it exists. It is a part of the religion which men are seeking to construct for themselves to hope that the imperfection of their works will be overlooked through the clemency of the Judge ; and that some mode of deliverance will be discovered at the last, by which to escape the full pressure of divine wrath. This latent unbelief of the carnal heart is not the skepticism named in these questions. It prevaricates with truth, rather than openly denies it. It is more the expression of dread than the consciousness of security. It is the indulgence of a vague and aimless hope, rather than a well-reasoned and clearly formulated conviction of the judgment. Fearful as this insensibility to the evil of sin may be, it does not so completely debauch the conscience as the consolidated skepticism which overturns all law and explodes the very conception of justice.”

These extracts serve to show that—“ The old theological beliefs are not crumbling around us,” notwithstanding the insidious and unscrupulous efforts of a few, who seek to undermine every article of faith and give a new reading to the word of God. In none of the leading denominations is there any relaxing of creeds, nor do their representative men give forth an uncertain sound. The preaching of the present day may have changed somewhat in manner and style compared with that of the seventeenth century, but the old doctrines of Scripture are held with a no less tenacious grasp. Charles Spurgeon, whose words we have already quoted—than whom no living man, since the days of the Apostles, has been

seized more fully with the truth of God—may be regarded as voicing the opinions of the vast majority of Christians, when he says in his own frank, impassioned, and vigorous Anglo Saxon: “As for me, I believe in the colossal; a need as deep as hell, and a grace high as heaven. I believe in a pit that is bottomless, and a heaven that is topless. I believe in an infinite God, and an infinite atonement, infinite love and mercy; an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, of which the substance and reality is an infinite Christ.”

It now only remains, that we should summarize the arguments which have been advanced, and that are generally held in behalf of the orthodox view, as against Universalism.

The impression produced upon the mind by a candid perusal of the Scriptures, is that the punishment of the wicked is eternal.

Belief in endless punishment corresponds with belief in the immortality of the soul.

The Church in all ages has accepted the doctrine.

The best scholarship of every age and land, has asserted endless punishment to be the true teachings of the word of God.

Many who deny the authority of the New Testament on other points, affirm the eternity of future punishment.

The eternity of future punishment corresponds with the painful effects of sin in the present life. Crimes and sins of brief duration leave consequences for life. Thoughtless acts involve grave disasters. The wrong doer often would not retrieve himself if he could. The longer he continues, the surer is the tendency to fix- edness of character, until all moral feeling becomes extinct. Evil passions carry in themselves the germs of wickedness, and attain greater strength, until change of disposition is hopeless.

The doctrine is in harmony with all the teachings of the word of God. It justifies the fact and the necessity of a revelation, and shows the need of divine interposition to save man from eternal

misery. It accords with the revealed character of God, as holy and hating sin, while willing on condition of repentance, to grant a full and free pardon. It accords with the scriptural view of the awful nature of sin, as an evil of immeasurable magnitude, malignity and persistency. It accords with the extraordinary character of the remedy proposed—atonement through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

By diminishing the evil of man's fallen state, and denying the punishment due to sin, we diminish the remedy.

The Scriptures offer saving agencies only for this life.

The offers of salvation here are made on conditions, which exclude hope, if rejected.

The danger of absolute loss under present means of grace is constantly implied and asserted.

There is no declaration in Scripture of the limited duration of future punishment.

The small minority of Christendom who deny that the doctrine of Eternal Punishment is in the New Testament are in irreconcilable conflict what to find in its place. One class find (1) "age long" punishment; another (2) immediate blessedness; another (3) utter extinction; another (4) punishment outside of time, wholly "dropping the idea of duration;" and another (5) and the latest class, profess "utter ignorance," and find total darkness brooding over the subject, whether it be restitution, extinction, or everlasting punishment.

The difficulties of belief in endless punishment of sin are immensely less than those of unbelief. The doctrine is so obvious and pervasive in the scriptures, that the rejection of this one involves rejection of all the others.

The following positive objections to Universalism are worthy of mention:

The Christian Church has with very great unanimity condemned the doctrine.

It militates against the doctrine of the atonement, for if all men shall ultimately be saved, where the necessity for the sacrifice of God's own Son.

It is directly opposed to divine justice, for if all are saved there is no difference between saint and sinner.

If sinners in hell are to be restored, they must be dealt with as moral and responsible beings. They must have the Gospel preached to them and the offer of pardon revealed. If preached to, why not prayed for? But Scripture teaches us that the lost are beyond the reach of prayer and the appeals of the Gospel.

Any termination or abatement of the sufferings of the lost, supposes their sufferings to be of an expiatory kind. If liberated from punishment after a term of years, they must be considered to have had all the sufferings due their sins.

If, as admitted by Universalists, suffering does not change the heart, it may be reasonably conceived that sufferings after death will but awaken a more deadly enormity against God.

If the lost are still the objects of God's love, as they must be if he means to save them, is it just or right to subject them to everlasting suffering, or for a period that may be called so, before he brings them to repentance?

Finally, the doctrine of Universalism is inconsistent with itself, for on the one hand it maintains that sin does not deserve eternal punishment, and therefore there was no need of a Redeemer to save sinners, as in the course of time they would come out by discharging their own debt; but on the other hand, it teaches that men are delivered from sin and hell by the death of Christ, which supposes that they could not be delivered without his mediation. These things are irreconcilable. Are sinners saved from hell, by the operation of justice, or mercy? If the former, then the death of Christ was unnecessary, and the damned are saved without being under any obligation to Christ, and all men might have been saved in the same way. If the latter, then eternal punishment is consistent with

justice and all the divine attributes. Is the reason why sinners are released from hell, because they have satisfied justice by their sufferings, or because Christ has atoned for their sins? Or again, does the sinner in hell suffer all the penalty threatened in the divine law, or is he released from that penalty by the atonement of Christ? If the former, then certainly he is saved without dependence on Christ; if the latter, how long must he have suffered, if a mediator had not interposed? If only for some longer time, then Christ by his death, does no more than shorten the period of his punishment, which would have come to an end without a Mediator's interposition.

We object then, to the doctrine of Universalism, not simply because we believe it to be utterly antagonistic to the teachings of God's word, but because we believe, that when carried out to its legitimate and logical results, it leads to utter rejection of all the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. If all men are to be saved, whence the need of atonement? Are the life, sufferings, and death of Christ a myth? Are the New Testament accounts of the divine tragedy of Calvary allegorical? Are the statements both of the Old and New Testament false, that without the shedding of blood and the remission of sins in the present life, a blessed immortality is impossible? Was Christ divine or human? The Scriptures say divine—the Universalist says it matters not, for apart from the efficacy of atonement, all men at last equally share the honors of heaven. The sacrifice of Christ was not designed to save men from endless punishment, says the Universalist, nor were His sufferings in any sense expiatory. Each man must suffer in his own person for his sins. Christ endured ignominy and privation in behalf of mankind, and not in their stead. He labored and died for us as one friend or brother should suffer for another, for our benefit, our spiritual improvement, our permanent happiness, but beyond this there was no saving efficacy in His death more than that of any other man. He was a martyr and nothing more. Unitarians who deny the divinity of Christ, join hands with Universa-

ists in such statements. Belsham and Priestly, noted Unitarians, say in their writings that the sufferings of the future life, however intense, or however permanent, will be effectual to purify the sinner from his moral stains, and qualify him for ultimate happiness. All men may therefore keep themselves perfectly easy about the matter—that they will be happy at last—since God has created us for happiness, and we need not fear misery. The only difference is that some will go to eternal happiness more directly than others. And when we find a noted Free-thinker in Boston, supplementing such views by saying: “I wish there were a God; I wish I could find some evidence of his existence, but I cannot. The universe is not governed as I would govern it, and it seems to me there is nothing upon the throne,” is it too much to say that Universalism—unconsciously, perhaps, to many of its advocates, but not less really—leads to a denial of all that is worthy of the name of religion, and ends in blank infidelity and Materialism? Were such opinions to become general, what hope would there be for our world? But they never can. As Benjamin Franklin once wrote to Thomas Paine, when he meditated the publication of an athiestic book, so we may remonstrate with propagators of such errors. “You will not succeed, so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on the subject of religion and the consequence of printing this piece will be mischief to you and no benefit to others. I would advise you therefore, not to attempt unchaining the tiger. If men are so wicked with religion, what would they do without it!”

Those who greedily embrace Universalism as a rule, are not the truly pious, who endeavor to live in obedience to the gospel, but men of corrupt lives who seek indulgence of sin. A few apparently devout christians may favor the doctrine, and among Universalists there are found men of high moral character, but those who glory in the belief, that the righteous and the wicked shall alike enjoy eternal happiness, are the most profligate in every community. The influence of such a doctrine upon the mind, in times of strong temp-

tation, can easily be conjectured, If there is no future punishment, or if hell is but a temporary resting place on the way to heaven, why should the vilest be restrained from indulgence in the greatest crimes? "Convince men that there is no hell awaiting those who spend an earthly life in wrong-doing, and what legitimate results follow? Crush out of souls the forebodings of distant and certain accountability and punishment; convert communities into the belief that the Scriptures mean the Valley of Hinnom when they speak of hell; annihilate generally the emotions of fear as to the outcome of life that ever and anon rise like ghastly spectres in human souls, and the race, already desperately wicked under potent and manifold restraints, will give full license to the deadliest passions, that slumber like torpid serpents in human breasts."

If, then, Universalism is not only unscriptural, but if such be its character and tendencies, should we not be more than ever confirmed in the truth of God's word, which teaches:

That there are two conditions of existence in another life.

That one of them is a conscious state of unutterable joy, and that this state is endless; and the other condition a state of unutterable suffering, and that is endless.

That there is as much reason to doubt the state of unutterable and endless joy as there is to doubt the state of unutterable and endless suffering.

That the design of Christ in the work of his redemption is to recover those who are fearfully exposed to a state of unutterable and endless suffering, and to secure to them a state of unutterable joy.

That the state of unutterable and endless joy in the untried future will be entirely the result of a certain manner of living on earth.

That the state of unutterable and endless suffering in the untried future will be entirely the result of a certain manner of living on earth.

That the present life is of God the only state of probation, and the destiny of each person is then forever fixed of him.

In closing this brief review of the prevalent theories concerning a future state, I have but two remarks to make. If we test Universalism and kindred faiths, by the number of their adherents and their actual results, there is nothing to cause alarm among those who hold fast to the old doctrines of Scripture. Although Universalism appeals to much in human nature, that eagerly grasps at the possibility of escape from the consequences of sin, there are but few who confidentially and unhesitatingly accept it as a satisfactory ground of trust. Its growth has been marvellously slow, compared with that of other systems of religion, whose creeds are regarded as far more severe and uncongenial to the mass of men. If again, we test it by what it does for the amelioration of the present wrongs and the general good of society at large, the actual results will be found meagre and unimportant compared with that of the orthodox churches. The benevolent and charitable institutions of this land and the United States, depend largely, if not almost exclusively, for their support upon the members of evangelical churches, while as regards the christianizing of the world, universalists, and such as hold similar views, take little interest in, have no sympathy with, and do nothing towards the spread of Gospel truth. Nor is this surprising, for a religion that teaches that all men will eventually be saved, takes away all stimulus to bring men out of a state of condemnation into that of pardon in the present world. Many of the members of such churches undoubtedly do engage in deeds of charity and missions of mercy, and give for the extension of the truth, but not so much because of, as in despite of their creed.

Those who have to any extent been unsettled in their convictions, as to the certainty of future and endless punishment by the teachings of Universalism and Rationalism, ought seriously to ask themselves, why they are so ready to exchange what they have so long regarded as the truth, for what is at the best but a hope.

Is not a present heaven more attractive than one gained after a long period of pain and purification? But even this is not merely uncertain, but as we have seen, most improbable. Forgiveness may be had now. God makes offer of it. He welcomes the prodigal sinner back to the home he has forsaken, and the love he has despised. Now is the accepted time: Now is the day of salvation.

“Come home! come home!
 You are weary at heart,
 For the way has been dark
 And so lonely and wild.
 Come home! come home!
 From the sorrow and blame,
 From the sin and the shame,
 And the tempter that smiled.
 O Prodigal child,
 Come home. oh, come home.”

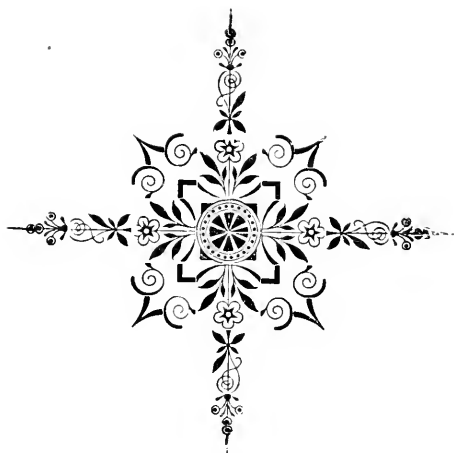
“Died with a straw in his hand,” is the heading of a paragraph in one of our religious monthlies, when describing the sad fate of a poor man, who had fallen over a steep embankment, near a railway station in England. In one hand there was a straw, which he had evidently grasped as he fell, in his last and vain endeavor to save himself. It was only a straw, and was of no avail. There he lay dead, “with a straw in his hand.” How strikingly illustrative of the tens of thousands, who are clinging to some false hope of restoration to God’s favor after death; holding on tenaciously to the negative guesses of Purgatory, Probationism, Annihilationism and Universalism, instead of at once accepting the offer of pardon, and resting securely upon the Rock of Ages. To err on such an important question, as to the condition of the soul beyond the grave, is dangerous. If Universalists are right in the belief that all men will at once or eventually be saved, those who deny the doctrine lose nothing; for whatever becomes of the wicked, the dead in Christ are certain of salvation and eternal happiness. But if Universalism is not true, what of those who make it the foundation of

their hope? If the misery of impenitent sinners is eternal, how great their surprise and how inexpressible their loss!

It is quite possible to awake too late to a knowledge of our future condition, and anticipate the remorse of eternity while in the body. Tallyrand, the prince of French diplomatists, long denied the doctrine of deathless retribution as the result of a life of sin, but as he confronted death, he said to his friend Louis Philippe, "Sire, I suffer already the pangs of the damned." Francis Newport, the brilliant English infidel of the seventeenth century, realized, when too late, the truth of God's word as to the endlessness of future punishment, and in his last illness cried out, "Oh! that I was to lie on the fire that never is quenched a thousand years to purchase the favor of God, and be reconciled to him again! But it is a fruitless wish. Millions of millions of years will bring me no nearer to the end of my torture than one poor hour." Voltaire, the Goliath of French infidels, as he has been called, laughed to scorn the idea of punishment after death. But at last remorse seized him, and turning to Dr. Trochin, who stood by his bedside, he said, "I shall go to hell, Sir, and you will go with me." These sad utterances, which might be indefinitely multiplied, show how effectually the greatest scoffers are abandoned to despair, and find no comfort in the hopeless teachings of Universalism when face to face with the King of Terrors. In the well-known lines of the Paraphrase :


"When, like the whirlwind o'er the deep,
Comes desolation's blast ;
Prayers then extorted shall be vain,
The hour of mercy past."

NOTES AND ADDITIONAL PAPERS
ON
FUTURE PUNISHMENT.



RESTORATIONISM.

IN THE LIGHT OF GENERAL CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

HE theories of Future Punishment which have lately attracted so much attention are ultimately to be judged by Scripture in its direct utterances on the question. The topic is confessedly so high and wide-reaching that no independent light of reason can satisfactorily settle the points that arise under it, and only the clear expression of the mind of God brought home to the minds of Christians by fair interpretation can be expected to give such rest as is attainable in such a matter. I, for one, am persuaded that the direct testimonies of Scripture are sufficient to settle these points as they have been generally held in our received theology; and whatever difficulties may surround these conclusions, I desire to leave them with the Judge of all the earth, who will do right. But in addition to the direct testimonies of Scripture on these points, there is that indirect but most important testimony of Scripture which lies in the texture of Christian theology as a whole, and which is called by theologians the Analogy of Faith. The doctrines of Scripture are not insulated but symmetrical; and the soundness of our conclusions as to each in detail is to be tested by its harmony with all the rest. It is in this light that I shall endeavor to raise and to examine this question, so as to inquire how far Restorationism agrees with the Bible Theology as a whole.

The theory of Restoration, logically, ought to include all fallen moral beings, but those who hold it, in many cases, hesitate to follow it to this extreme, so that it might be asked of me first to discuss human Restoration, and then to remark upon Restoration in its widest possible aspect. I find it, however, beyond my power to separate the two questions; but I shall endeavor to respect, as far as may be, the actual differences of position, while tracing logical consequences to their limit. I shall consider Restoration not only in the light of the doctrine of sin, and that also of atonement, but in the light of the doctrines of grace and free-will, and those of the Church and the means of salvation.

1. Taking together the doctrines of Sin and of Atonement, I think it might be conceded, that if Scripture distinctly connected the alleged prospect of recovery after death or judgment, with a provision for full expiation, and that provision, the atonement of Christ; and if there were nothing of hope cherished by Restorationists, and on general restoration principles, where atonement did not accompany it, then whatever difficulty or impossibility lay in their making good their particular proof-texts, there were nothing in the general doctrines of sin or of atonement to bar their theories. For Restorationism does not, like Annihilationism, profess to be an exhaustion of penalty by the creature, which then ceases. It professes to be a return to God in faith and submission, which avails, after the commonly-received day of grace is past, by virtue of the Saviour's yet unexhausted death and sacrifice. I cannot at all accept the proof-texts which the Restorationists allege, nor set aside the opposite. I only grant here, that there is not the same collision with the doctrine of sin and of atonement in their general aspects, as on the Annihilation system; and if human recovery could be looked at by itself—however, as I think, excluded by light of revelation bearing on the matter—that recovery as based upon expiation would not subvert the general doctrine of sin and of sacrifice. But the case is, I think, entirely changed, when human recov-

ery is seen in relation to the fallen angels and their destiny. The doctrine of Restoration so tends to include them ; their recovery is resisted with such difficulty by those who hold the doctrine in any form ; and so many of the pressing motives drawn from the alleged character of God, and the necessity of final unity in the universe, urge with redoubled force when human restoration is granted, that it is hardly, if at all, possible to consider the doctrine of sin and atonement as restricted to man's ultimate salvation. But where is the scheme of Christian theology that connects the Bible remedy for sin with the fallen angels ? It lies not only outside of particular texts, but of the whole of Scripture and of the theology founded upon it : insomuch that if the salvation of higher fallen beings is believed in, it is really on the basis of exhaustion of penalty, or on other grounds unknown or adverse to Scripture ; and this not only involves the schemes of restorationism that admit this consequence, but those even that conceal or reject it, in the greatest difficulties ; for the restoration of fallen angels is either rejected against the genius of the system, or the atonement of Christ is accepted merely as one of two equal alternatives in restoring to God. I hold, therefore, the tendencies of the restoration scheme in the actual circumstances of the case, to be highly unfavorable to strict views of the demerit of sin and of the need of atonement ; and my fear is, that sincere reverence for these positions, such as may still linger in those who have entered upon this new path, must more and more encounter subversive influences before which it will, ere long, vanish away.

2. When we advance from Sin and Atonement to Free-will and Grace, and test the theories of Restoration by these doctrines, the issue does not seem more hopeful. Where free-will predominates in Christian theology, there may seem to all eternity the abstract possibility of return in the inherent power of the will. But it is to be remembered that according to one section of theologians who belong to this school, evil has entered by free-will, in spite of every effort of God to exclude it, while still more of them hold, that it has

continued in spite of every effort, not destructive of the will, to recover from it ; and hence anything like a scheme of restoration, other than partial, and entirely dependent for its decisive impulse on the will of the sinful creature, is not to be contended for. It seems also very hard on this high doctrine of inalienable self-determining will to exclude the view of Origen, as to the equal power of falling from future blessedness, so as to balance recovery, however far it might go. Let it be added, that the reliance sometimes expressed upon the influences connected with the solemn scenes of the life to come, is hardly borne out by the experiences of earth, in so far as they approach in impressiveness to those that lie behind the veil : and here again the case of the fallen angels comes in to check any such confidence, since no series of conversions have from age to age marked their history, though passed amidst the light of the world to us unknown, such as the theories of restoration project into the future, if not in their instance, in that of other moral beings, who at length not only believe and tremble, but believe and repent. It cannot, I think, but be felt, that so extraordinary a power of free-will, exerted after the utmost hardening, and even, to be logically complete, taking in the fallen spirits themselves, is really a discord even in those schemes which exalt the element of freedom rather than of grace, in so far as they still hold to serious and earnest Christian theology.

If now, we turn to that type of Christian theology which exalts grace, and to which not only Calvinists but a multitude of Armenians, who hold in spirit with them are attached, we find, no doubt, a power in the abstract, which, so far as we see, could work changes ; but then on this ground the first principles of a large school of Restorationists must be wholly given up, and others so greatly modified as practically to be surrendered. The adherents of grace and the expectants of its exercise, with one consent, hold that the sinful creature has forfeited all claim, that his sentence, however dread, is just, and that he has no right whatever to ask any remis-

sion or transition by inward saving operations from one state to another. To demand sovereign influence, as so many Restorationists do, as an unpaid debt, as something without which God would be unrighteous and cruel, is to forget the ground of gracious dealing to which professedly they have come over; and if it were granted it would make the saved after judgment differ from the saved in time, in tracing their salvation to something else than free and absolute mercy. The moment that the idea of grace in the full sense is realized, there is room for limitation of times and opportunities; and though no theologian of this school holds that God is arbitrary, or suffers a soul to be lost where His love, acting in harmony with righteousness and wisdom, could save it, yet the path of His love and grace is no longer a question for mere abstract power to decide, but must be decided by the whole of God's character; and the issue, though it be not universal salvation in the end, or an ever-recurring salvation, irrespective of a day of grace, must be adored and acquiesced in, however mysterious, as giving the largest scope to God's saving attributes, and to the sinner's co-operation in any availing sense, that was rationally possible. Those who believe in grace, believe that God saves to the uttermost, though that uttermost be not absolute. There is no heartless limitation or arrest in their creed, as is sometimes unjustly charged. But that naked and unconditioned universality which Restorationists assert to be the only form that grace can assume, is illogically urged. For the idea of grace throws the matter back upon God Himself, and what His arbitrament and consequent working in a case so peculiar and unexampled may be, we know far too little of the history and meaning of evil in the universe to affirm, and ought rather to say, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth unto Him good."

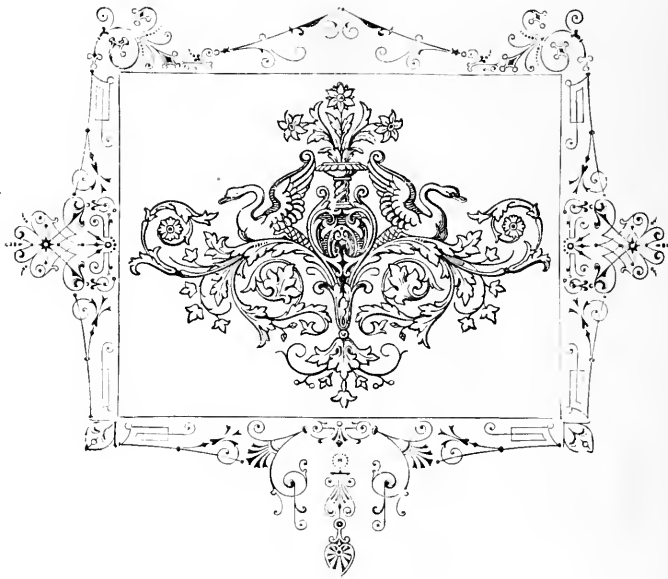
3. The only other topics in theology, whereby it is here proposed to test the Restorationist scheme, are those of the Church and the Means of Salvation. So far as restoration, expected either before the judgment or after it, is concerned, there seems a very wide sev-

erance between it and any such agencies as the Church is constituted and upheld in order to supply. The whole look of things, so far as the direction of the great stream of salvation in Scripture is concerned, contemplates the operation of a visible Church in the world, which makes known the Gospel, and sets up its ordinances, and thus beseeches men to be reconciled to God, and helps believers, by order and fellowship, in the way to heaven. All historical Churches, as sections of the great visible Church, have laid stress on this work of theirs, and have thus responded in their theology to the strain of unspeakable earnestness with which Scripture exalts its own use and value, and urges men at once to receive it and make it known to others, as the power of God unto salvation.

It is certainly anything but the first impression of things, as drawn from Scripture, that there should be a great unrevealed and independent system of grace, working in total detachment from this scheme of visible salvation, running parallel to it in time, stretching beyond it into eternity, and at length gathering up, so far as appears, without the employment of any of its means and instrumentalities, the unreclaimed members of the human, and it may be of another fallen race, into the kingdom of God. The clearest additional revelation would have been necessary to counteract this strong impression; nor can any reason be assigned why this revelation has been withheld. If the glory of God would be equally manifested in this alternative system of salvation, why is it left in such shade and darkness, while around the historical and visible Church, as bringing men to faith and repentance, the interest alike of men and angels is concentrated, and all things seem to move for its extension and victory? If it be said that a fuller revelation of salvation, outside of and beyond the scope of the visible Church, would have interfered with its work, and made men less anxious to realize a present salvation, and extend it to others, is not this to confess a danger in the scheme of Restoration which is real and formidable, and which is not likely to attend a divine

counsel certain to harmonize with all God's other ways? It is not meant to be argued, that in no exceptional way whatever can the unfathomable wisdom of God bring about any salvation, as in the case of infants and the heathen, save in the line and through the instrumentalities of the visible Church in its ordinary working. But a salvation like that of Restorationism, so wide, far-reaching, indiscriminate, succeeding where the visible Church has failed, and transcending all her marvels of grace and redeeming energy, cannot, I think, be believed in without throwing the ordinary dispensation of the Spirit into secondariness and shadow, and making the visible coming and presence of Christ's kingdom on earth different from what it is in Holy Scripture.

In closing these observations, it is to be carefully remembered that these are not the proper evidences in reply to Restoration, they are only side-lights and corroborations. But the proper way to judge of their value is to ask, if as various and important collateral evidence can be produced in favor of the theory that has thus been adversely criticized. If there be such, it must be possible to bring it forward. Till this is done, the balance of General Christian doctrine must be held to be upon the side which, however often and eagerly opposed, has still kept its ground, and which with all its difficulties, is not likely to be displaced by a scheme that gives what relief it offers by a wide disturbance of the equilibrium of Christian theology.—REV'D PRINCIPAL CAIRNS, D. D., Edinburgh.



DIVINE RETRIBUTION.

IS ETERNAL punishment consistent with the infinite justice of God? Is it compatible with His infinite goodness? Is it in keeping with His design in the creation of the world? The objections which are suggested by these questions are the most formidable ones with which the advocate of the orthodox doctrine of Retribution has to contend.

I. RETRIBUTION AND THE DIVINE JUSTICE.

Orthodox writers sometimes dismiss the Universalist's objection based on this attribute of God, saying that since the Bible teaches eternal punishment, this doctrine must be compatible with God's justice. But this is hardly a fair way of dealing with the subject, for it might be rejoined: "Whether (or no) the Bible teaches the doctrine, is the issue in dispute. We claim that it does not teach it; that the language alleged to teach it does not sustain the inferences based upon it; that the contrary doctrine is implied in other passages of Scripture, and we are confirmed, moreover, in the belief that our exegesis is correct, by the view which we entertain respecting God as a just and good Being." There can be no valid objection to this reply, for it is plain that the doctrine of Retribution and the attributes of God being factors in the inquiry, it is possible for men to reason to opposite conclusions according as they regard one or the other as the known quantity. It is possible to argue that since God is a being of infinite justice, it is not likely that the

Scriptures contain the doctrine of endless punishment—that doctrine being as some suppose, in conflict with this attribute, and it is possible to argue that it must be just for God to punish men eternally, since the Scriptures represent him as intending to inflict this penalty.

A strong exegetical argument to the effect that endless punishment is taught in the Bible ought, it is true, to force the Universalist to give up his "a priori" objections; but it would be better and fairer to grapple with the objection by showing that it proceeds upon false assumptions. Besides, it will be easier to show that the Scriptures do teach the doctrine under discussion, if it can be shown that there is no antecedent objection to it in the admitted justice and goodness of God.

Now when it is said that the endless punishment of sinners would be an act of injustice, the question emerges, "What is justice?" It is doing right; but it is more than that. It is doing right in reference to another. It contemplates two parties; one the subject of the just feeling, the other the object of the just act. Justice is doing right, where doing wrong would be an injury to another. What is the measure of Justice? It is law. Justice, then, is doing to another what law ("Jus") says must be done. Justice, as an attribute of God's nature, is a word which affirms that he acts according to law in his dealings with moral beings. The Scriptures are careful to tell us that God is just; he is not arbitrary or capricious. Whatever he does is done in accordance with law, and when it is said that God acts in accordance with law, it is meant that he acts in accordance with his own law. And God's law cannot be unjust, for there is no higher law by which it can be compared. If, then, as a matter of fact, God does punish men eternally, it is folly to say that God is unjust on that account; for he never acts capriciously, but in accordance with law; and if the law of God calls for the punishment of the wicked, it is folly to say that it is an unjust law, for by what

higher law is it to be judged? It would seem like presumption to suggest an amendment to a Divine enactment. The only modest way of stating the objection under discussion would be to say that the law of God, or what is the same thing, the nature of God, does not call for the endless punishment of the wicked; on the contrary, it is repugnant to it. Stating the case thus, the Universalist does not undertake to say that if eternal punishment were true, God would be unjust—a blasphemous and absurd form of expression; he simply says, “The doctrine is not true, and I know it is not true.” This, however, implies great familiarity with the Divine mind, and it is interesting to inquire whence this information is obtained. It cannot come from the Bible, for the very point in dispute is whether the Bible does or does not teach the doctrine of eternal punishment, and the Universalist is by hypothesis arguing that it cannot teach it; for such a doctrine would be abhorrent to God’s nature; so that the information he has is, after all, the testimony of his own reason. The argument is purely subjective, and when written in plain words amounts simply to the statement that the doctrine of eternal punishment is untrue, because eternal punishment seems to him unjust. If this is a safe method of reasoning, we may abandon our dependence on a Divine revelation, and Pope may well challenge us to

“Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Rejudge his justice, be the God of God.”

Men must have sound reasons for saying that the doctrine of eternal punishment is repugnant to the nature of God, and is contradicted by his justice. What are they? It is difficult to imagine more than two. It may be urged that the disadvantages under which men come into the world, are such that it would be wrong to punish them eternally; and it may be said that the sins of which men are guilty, do not assume a gravity which calls for such a penalty; in other words, that endless punishment is excessive punishment. These arguments deserve separate consideration.

(1.) It is easy to imagine a man giving expression to his objection in some such way as this: "I came into the world of sin by no choice of mine; was born of sinful parents; by sheer force of circumstances was led into sin long before I knew the evil of it, and I am told that for sins which I could not otherwise than commit, I am liable to eternal punishment. Is this right?" It must appear at a glance that if these disadvantageous circumstances are a valid argument against eternal punishment, they are an equally valid argument against any punishment whatever; for they are an argument against eternal punishment, only by being an argument against responsibility. "We could not help ourselves; therefore, we are not responsible; therefore, we ought not to be punished eternally;" therefore we ought not to be punished at all it might with equal propriety be added. But men are punished; punishment in this world is palpable, and even those who deny the eternity of punishment, allow that some punishment will be inflicted in the next world.

(2.) The next objection which might be urged, and which, indeed, is urged by Universalist writers, is that punishment would be excessive if it were endless. To this it may be replied that, being criminals themselves, it is not strange that men should take this view of the sentence pronounced upon them. Moreover, it is a noteworthy fact, that those who say that eternal punishment would be excessive, are not able to say what punishment would suffice. They allow (many do) that the punishments of the next world may be indefinitely protracted, and that they may last for years, or centuries, or cycles; the only thing which they venture to affirm with confidence in regard to them is, that they will not last forever. But when men confess so plainly that they do not know how much punishment sin deserves, how can they be so confident that it does not deserve endless punishment? They may say, of course, that punishment is disciplinary in design, and that, however long it lasts, the subject of it must be made happy in the end; when they say

this, however, they are not saying that endless punishment would be unjust, but that punishment being designed to make the subject of it ultimately happy, it cannot be inflicted so as to make him endlessly miserable. That eternal punishment is not necessarily unjust, may appear from another argument. It must be evident, that if any sin deserves eternal punishment, every sin does,—if a particular sin does not merit endless punishment, no sin merits this punishment.

Let it be assumed, then, that the greatest sin a man has been or can be guilty of is deserving only of a definite punishment in time—a punishment measured by so many years or cycles. Then it follows that sin against God, even the greatest sin which a man can commit, is not the worst thing conceivable, for it is an evil, the exact measure of which can be computed in the figures of arithmetic. Let that punishment be protracted as long as you please, yet the moment the mind reaches in thought the time when the punishment expires, it will instinctively say, men might have done worse; they might have deserved a still greater and more protracted punishment than that which they had deserved for sinning against God. This process of reflection is not an argument in proof of eternal punishment; but it is enough to show that so far as God's attribute of justice is concerned, the antecedent, and "a priori" difficulty is greater when punishment is regarded as finite than when it is considered as endless.

There is another consideration which should be urged at this point, and that is the self-perpetuating power of sin. The operation of this law in human life does not ordinarily provoke complaint. Men see the victims of immoral life go down to lower and yet lower levels. They say, "This is the law of nature;" but it never occurs to them to call in question the justice of the law. Arguing now on the basis of this self-perpetuating power of sin, it is not difficult to see that punishment would not necessarily be unjust if it were eternal. For when the progress of the soul in sin and suffering in this world

awakens in us no disposition to reproach the Author of our being, it would be unreasonable for us to raise the cry of injustice when the continuity of the souls life is contemplated ; and if the soul should go into the other world under the operation of this self-perpetuating law, the difficulty which the mind would encounter, would not be that of supposing this state of things to continue for ever ; it would be the difficulty of supposing that this law should ever spend its force and become powerless.

2. RETRIBUTION AND THE DIVINE GOODNESS.

The reverential scepticism of a man like John Foster, who while admitting that the language of Scripture is formidably strong in favor of the doctrine of eternal punishment, nevertheless acknowledges that he is not convinced of the orthodox doctrine, is not only worthy of respect, but it is a scepticism of which more than one orthodox believer has at times been the subject, when he thinks of the infinite goodness of God. In no spirit of controversy, therefore, with no desire to champion a foregone conclusion, should a question which bears so terribly on the destiny of men be approached. It would be easy to quote passages which would show how Universalists are in the habit of stating the objection under consideration ; it is hoped, however, that no injustice will be done if their arguments are presented in our own words. This in substance is what they say : "Some men it matters not how many, are doomed, you say, to eternal misery. God could have prevented the dawn of life ; he could have placed them in circumstances more favorable to the reception of truth, but as the case stands, their unfavorable circumstances work their ruin. God has saved some ; you make a great deal of that to illustrate his goodness ; but what would you think of the man who would save two men on a sinking vessel, and, with abundant means at his command should leave the rest to perish ? Yet this is virtually what you ask me to believe concerning God, and, believing this to regard him as my Father, and to

feel assured that all we know of parental love is true of God, since he is the great Prototype of Fatherhood.

“Would I deal thus with my own child? Can I imagine the fountain of parental affections to be so dry that no responsive tears would follow the piteous cry of a suffering child? No! love would overleap all barriers; it would let nothing stand in the way, and God, because he is love, will not allow his children to bear the torments of an endless penalty.”

To the objections founded on God's goodness, the reply may be made:

1st. That in the exercise of benevolence, God acts according to his own good pleasure.

2nd. That the area of benevolence must be limited by the demands of justice.

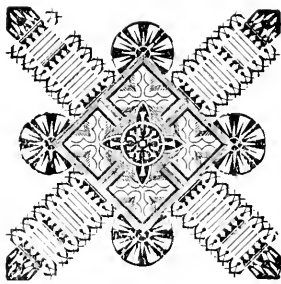
If now it is allowed that in the exercise of his benevolence, God acts according to his own good pleasure, one has no right to say how benevolent God will be, except on the authority of some special information. The bare epithet “benevolent” does not carry with it the exclusive significance which pertains to the word “just.” In order to affirm with propriety that God wills the highest happiness of all his creatures because he is benevolent, it is necessary to add to the epithet “benevolent” another qualifying term; accordingly, men who believe in the Universalist faith, are in the habit of saying, that since God is infinitely benevolent he must will the happiness of all his creatures. God is benevolent in electing some, they allow; but would he not have been more benevolent had he elected all; and can that be infinite benevolence which shows itself in such a partial and discriminating manner? God they say, has chosen some to eternal life for no other reason than that he was benevolent; can he, however, be infinitely benevolent when he chose some, and not all? Would he not have been more benevolent if he had chosen a greater number? The objection is clearly to the effect that a being of infinite benevolence must give expres-

sion to a benevolence which is infinite ; or in other words, that a being of infinite benevolence must be as benevolent as he can be. But what are the facts? The number of sentient beings in the universe is finite. God is not as benevolent as he can be so far as the number of those enjoying his goodness is concerned, for he could double that number. The benevolence of which sentient beings are the subjects is of various degrees. The benevolence of God might be manifested on a larger scale by bringing the lower grades of happiness up to the level of the highest. If infinite benevolence is that which cannot be increased, it is incompatible with gradations of happiness, and a dead level would be the logical outcome. The objects of God's benevolence differ in their capacities. A wide interval separates the "foraminifera from the mollusk, the mollusk from the Mastodon, the Mastodon from man, man from his Maker." But if infinite benevolence must be so exercised as to forbid the question whether God might not have been more benevolent, are men not bound to say, and is not the Universalist forced to allow, that God is not infinitely benevolent? Again, if a limited capacity hold only a limited goodness, will the aggregate of limited capacities yield more than a finite quantity? And if what is finite is able to manifest only a goodness that is finite, is there any way for God to manifest, that is, to actualize, infinite goodness, except by making an infinite being. So that the objections that God must be as good as he can be in order that he may be a being of infinite goodness, really means that God must manifest or actualize a goodness which is incapable of being increased—that is to say, infinite goodness ; and this leads to the absurdity of saying that God must make an infinite being as the sphere in whom infinite goodness can be actualized before God is entitled to be called a being of infinite goodness. The objections that God cannot be infinitely good or benevolent if he is discriminatingly and partially benevolent, must be given up, because it leads to absurd conclusions. In other words, men must treat God's goodness as they do

his power, and regard it as an infinite potentiality in him, and not an infinity actualized in the universe.

So regarding it, however, the difficulty vanishes, and the objection falls to the ground. There is enough in the universe to suggest the thought that God is infinite in goodness. It is not difficult to believe that God has resources enough in his nature to make glad a universe of sentient beings ; that the pulsations of his heart are felt in Orion and the Pleiades ; and that, after all, he could build another universe, and sow the seeds of a wider harvest of happiness. If reflecting only on his goodness to themselves, when account has been taken of the correspondence between man's corporal nature and the external world ; when it is considered how his senses are made tributary to his enjoyment ; when he has reflected on the capacities for increasing happiness with which he is furnished in his mortal structure ; when he remembers that God has endowed him with immortality, has provided for the happiness of that immortal life by the sacrifice of his Son ; when he remembers that his life is to continue without stagnation through all time, and that God's goodness is a fountain from which he is to draw eternal joy,—it would not be strange if, under the inspiration of these great facts, he should fall down upon his knees and thank God for his infinite goodness. Nay, though he were the only object of this goodness in the wide universe, he should still thank him for his infinite love, and it would not occur to him to challenge the accuracy of the epithet because on reflection he discovered that God had not been as good to others as he had been to him.

A line may be conceived as infinite without implying that it fills all space. The ocean may be fathomless, though its waters are walled in by the shores of two continents. And men, when they have dropped the sounding line of their experience into the ocean of God's love, shall not be deterred from proclaiming that it has no bottom, because the waters of that ocean break against the beetling coast line of the Divine decrees.—F. L. PATTON, D. D., LL. D., Princeton, N. J. (Condensed from Princeton Review, Jan., 1878.)



THE DIVINE TRAGEDY IN EARTH, HEAVEN AND HELL.

“And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments.”

THERE are large numbers who, affecting great admiration for the amiable teachings of Jesus, shrink back declaring, “this is a hard saying, who can hear it?” The chief of these objecters may be classified into three: those who deny that the Scriptures mean to teach a retributive torment; those who deem such a doctrine inconsistent with other fundamental truths of revealed theology; and those who reject alike, the inspiration of the Scriptures and the retribution.

As to the first of these classes, who profess to accept the Scriptures as of inspired authority, and yet deny that they teach the doctrine of a hell, it must be confessed there is nothing to encourage an argument with such. For if the acknowledging of the Scriptures, in the plain common sense meaning of their words, does not settle the question, it is difficult to conceive how such a truth can be expressed in human language at all. We need not stand upon the terms “hell,” and “fire,” and “Tophet.” If these are offensive to “ears polite,” then find smoother terms if you please. The question is not of words, but of ideas and principles. Whether this scene is properly named “Hell,” or “Hades,” or “Sheol,” still it is a place where a soul is in “torment,” afar off from Abraham’s state

of bliss, and crying out in anguish. So that the idea of a place of intense unhappiness, separate from the place of bliss after a man dies, and this growing out of something that had existed before death, is still left, though your criticisms have utterly rooted out the term "hell," or substituted for it the smoothest and most delightful of euphemisms. Nor does it affect in the least the principle, whether the parable is taken as narrating a real or a fictitious case; since Jesus Christ, whose "truth is stranger than fiction," would employ to illustrate his doctrines only that fiction which is truer than truth, in the sense of having been specially created for the exhibition of some great principle.

The real objection to the modern method of first applying a patent critical machinery to the words of inspiration, to squeeze out of them, before using, everything offensive or contrary to some new theory of theology, ethics, or philanthropy that has been first constructed outside the sphere of inspired ideas, and then brought to the Bible to be "underpinned" with texts, is not so much that it overthrows this or that doctrine of the gospel, as that it accustoms the people to trifling with the divinely inspired rule of faith. When the people are taught by one biblical critic that "hell" does not mean "hell," but some poetic fiction; by another, that "Holy Ghost" does not mean "Holy Ghost," but a metaphysical figure of speech; by another, that "wine" does not mean wine, but water filtered through grape sauce; by another, that "slave" does not mean slave, but an apprentice or a hireling; by another, that the saying, "All scripture is God-inspired," does not mean inspired in any sense that guarantees the scriptures against absurd, mistaken or legendary statements,—how shall they do otherwise than conclude that, from the uncertainties of its meaning, the Bible is utterly worthless as an infallible rule of faith?

Besides, it seems utterly useless, if one had a taste for it, to argue the reality of future retribution with such as profess to accept the inspired Scriptures, and yet deny this doctrine. For even after

we have reasoned from indubitable premises, with mathematical certainty, to our conclusion that there is a hell, that conclusion must be expressed in language ; and it is beyond the ingenuity of man to find language more definite and less subject to perversion by criticism, than that in which Scripture has already expressed the same conclusion.

But they say the Scriptures do not mean that, though they say it. So these amiable theologians and critics might just as properly turn to the audience, to which we have demonstrated that—

“There is a death whose pang
Outlasts this fleeting breath ;
And O eternal horrors hang
Around this second death”

and gravely caution them against alarm at our conclusion ; that we did not mean what we “seem” to mean, that after the death of the body the soul may be unhappy ; that manifestly we used poetic figures of speech, and allowance must be made for poetic license ! In what language could we express the future retribution for sin ; or in what greater variety of method and connection, than Jesus and his inspired agents have already done ? And if these critics may say that Jesus and his inspired agents did not mean what they said, but something else—why not also say that, when we thus express in language the conclusions to which the most inexorable logic may drive us, we do not mean what our language conveys, but something entirely the reverse ?

Of that very amiable class of theologians who deny retribution on the ground that such an idea is utterly repulsive to their conceptions of the love of God, as every where declared in the Gospel, there is space now only to say that their conception of the gospel is simply a caricature of the gospel ; less rude, it may be, but not less wide of the truth than the fierce and wrathful gospel of the most malignant fanatic.

The gospel preached by Jesus, is no monotone of "love," "love!" It is no cradle song of lullaby to soothe a babe to sleep with. It is no strain for the compass only of the gentle rebec, or "lute," or "soft recorder." It is a many-sided, many-voiced strain to fill the mighty compass of that great organ, the human soul; to sweep its infinite diapason, and awaken, alike, the deep thunder tones of an accusing conscience; the loud wails of penitential sorrow; the subdued tones of loving but trembling faith; and the lofty notes of the holy ecstasy of "joy unspeakable and full of glory!" It is Jesus Christ who wept over sinners, saying "O that thou hadst known!" who proclaims "the terrors of the Lord and flings the arrows of the Almighty." Remember it is the same Jesus who spake the parables of the lost sheep, the lost treasure, and the father yearning after his poor prodigal, that speaks the parable of the rich man in hell lifting up his eyes in torment.

"And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence."

Aside from the judicial view of the matter, there is a reason, in the natural order and eternal constitution of things, why the rich man and Lazarus cannot spend their eternity together. While the Bible holds forth Heaven and Hell in the forensic aspect of the awards of a judgment, it no less clearly exhibits them as the natural and necessary results of the life on earth. So that were there no coming of "the Son of Man in his glory;" no setting up of his throne of judgment; no trial and award; no inquest into the deeds of the present life, heaven and hell must follow nevertheless. For those two estates in the future stand to the present in the relation simply of a natural separation of the evil from the good, which in this present state are "unnaturally" mingled together.

Hell began on earth when sin began; but, in virtue of the great mediatorial enterprise of Christ to gather out of the doomed race a body for himself, the hand of Infinite Mercy suppresses the out-

bursting of its fires to give time and opportunity for Christ to "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." Hence the Apostle speaks of our universe as simply "kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." And, since the work of redemption is finished, they speak of all the period that follows as the "last time," indicating that at any time now, the period may arrive when the Mediator, having no further use for it, the original sentence may be executed, and the "unnatural" give way to the "natural" order—of the good to itself, and the evil to itself. In accordance with this theory of the race, as a race, is all the teaching concerning the case of the individuals of it. "He that believeth not," saith Christ, "is condemned already," and the wrath of God abideth on him. On the other hand, "He that believeth, hath everlasting life;" the estate of heaven is already begun in his soul. Every man carries within him here the germs of his heaven or hell. The grace of God nurtures the one, keeping it alive to the day of deliverance; the mercy of God restrains the other from bursting forth until the day of doom. The gospel theory leaves, really, no place for the cavils against the injustice of punishing a man eternally for the sin of a few days on earth. For, according to this theory, the sinner remaining unchanged by the grace of God, and without the new life, goes on into eternity just as he is, to sin on, and therefore to suffer on forever. He suffers here because he is a sinner, though on account of the restraining mercy of God, he only partially suffers the consequences of his sin. He goes on a sinner, and, therefore, to suffer in an estate where mercy ceases to interpose, but where the full consequences of his sin follow it forever. Hence it is represented as the decree, after the present estate, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Thus, also, the relation of the present to the future life is set forth by the Apostle as the natural relation of seed time and harvest. "What a man soweth that shall he also reap. He that sow-

eth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; and he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." By the same law, therefore, under which kind produces kind, and by which he that soweth wheat shall reap wheat, and he that soweth tares reaps tares,—shall he that soweth sin, during the present seed time, reap the harvest of sin throughout eternity.

Bear in mind this very solemn view of the life here, as simply the elements of heaven and hell commingling ; the heaven suppressed by the antagonist workings of sin in the members ; the hell suppressed by the hand of God's mercy restraining it. Remember too, that the condition natural is that of condemnation, and the new life in the soul the beginning of the everlasting life. Let not the fact of the junction of the two estates of life and death under the social conditions of the present life, deceive you into the belief that there is little difference between "him that believeth" and "him that believeth not." When, of God's grace, that intimate friend of yours is led to believe in Jesus, leaving you in unbelief, then, and there, this separation begins. A narrow chasm at first perhaps ; you still join the hand of friendship across it. But it will go on widening and widening, till, after death, it spreads "a great gulf, fixed" infinite and bridgeless !

It is on the ground of this second argument, in the response of heaven, that we meet the class of scoffers at the scriptural doctrine of retribution before mentioned. We will set aside that view if you please ; or even admit, for the sake of argument, the validity of your reasoning against the justice of eternal retribution. But "besides all this" independent of the question of the justice of the thing—by the natural and necessary order of the universe there is a "great gulf fixed between the evil and the good in the future state." And what though you have overthrown the judgment seat of Christ in the gospel, and scoffed the whole theory of reward and punishment out of the faith and the memory of the world—wherein will you have bettered your condition ? The evil nature within

you still exists, and unless you are to perish as the brute, must continue to exist for ever. If you scoff at the gospel theory of a change of nature by a divine regeneration here, as absurd and unphilosophical, it is equally unphilosophical to conceive of any such change there. So that, on your showing, here is a nature full of passions; and evil passions at that, passing on, stripped of all that held the passions in check on earth, into Eternity, an inextinguishable, intelligent, conscious being.

Now what else can follow than some such estate as Jesus describes by these tremendous types? Follow, in idea, the men that surround you here, embodied in the flesh, as they pass into that existence, and tell us wherein the gospel exaggerates the picture of what be their future estate. Follow this sensualist, whose only notion of enjoyment, or capacity for it, is of that happiness which he has in common with the brutes, that comes through gratified sensations. But now the link is rusted away which bound his spirit to the flesh, and thereby furnished that channel of pleasure through the senses from a material world; and he rushes, a naked, shivering spirit into a realm where there are no longer any senses to minister, or objects of sense to furnish pleasure! Follow this Shylock, whose only conception of happiness is of gold hoarded up, and to whom a loss by some speculation or accident brings the pangs of hell even here on earth—follow him as his spirit dashes into eternity, stripped of all his wealth, to wander an immortal beggar! Follow this creature of envy and jealousy, whose spirit burns with the smouldering fires of hell, if a rival gets the start of him in popular esteem, as he passes on to an eternal state in which the infinite gulf is fixed between the good and the evil; across which he must gaze for ever at the crowned victors in the race for true glory! Follow these, or any one of a score of characters that might be cited, into their immortality, and tell us what fitter figures Jesus could have used to describe it, than the eternal “wailing and gnashing of teeth!”

Yet this is not all ; for it presents the mere negations of pleasure. And, moreover, it takes into the account only the self action of each individual. But conceive of these spirits now all existing together. To aid the conception, imagine the vile, depraved and reckless of the earth, even as they are in the flesh, all gathered to themselves. Empty out upon some island of the sea, all your prisons, with all the "hells" of your populous cities ; all the haunts of licentiousness and crime ; all the dens for the plotting of dishonesty. Let there be no virtuous men to move among them. Let it be the place where law with its threats comes not ; where the usages of respectable life, with their restraints, come not ; and death comes not, nor the fear of retribution after death. Let all the fierce wickedness that is in them work itself out in a carnival of every lust and revelry of every passion ! See you not that these figures of the Scriptures for such a state of existence, instead of being rhetorical exaggerations, are but the feeblest approximations of finite language to the expression of infinite ideas of terror.

Here is the fundamental fallacy of all those scoffs at the gospel theology, as if it were responsible for the existence of the hell from which Jesus comes to redeem men. Hell is, in idea, altogether anterior to the gospel theology. It would have flamed none the less fiercely though Jesus had never come with the gospel remedy. Whether the gospel be trustworthy or not, there can be no doubt that the germinal fires of hell do exist already in the nature of man. And though the scoffers of these "last days" should triumph, and crush out of the world's thought every conception of a gospel, still these passions are alive in the human soul, and this depravity, with its inevitable sorrow ; and so long as the soul exists, must exist with it, save by some divine interposition such as they scoff at. Will men never learn that scoffing at the proposed remedy does not stay the disease ? What though you demonstrate the quackery of the panacea that claims to be a sure antidote for cholera ? That stays not the still tread "of the pestilence that walketh in darkness!"





The punishment of wanton sinners tossed about ceaselessly in the dark air, by the most furious winds. —The Inferno, Cant. 10

What though you loathe the remedy which science has compounded for your sick bed, and cast it from you? That gives no ease to your aching joints, or fevered brain! What though in your peevishness, you strike down the arm of your physician, as he comes to hold over you the shield of his skill and ward off the thick-flying arrows of death? That checks not the advance of the King of Terrors to lay his cold hand upon you and claim you as his prey! Now the Gospel is simply a remedy, and Jesus Christ the Great Physician, whom you must accept, or else let the disease of your soul work out the agonies of the second death.—REV'D STUART ROBINSON, D. D. (Louisville, Kentucky.)

HELL.

Violent diseases require violent remedies. This is an incontestable maxim in the science of the human body, and is equally true in religion, the science that regards the soul. If a wound be deep, it is in vain to heal the surface, the malady would become the more dangerous, because it would spread inwardly, gain the nobler parts, consume the vitals, and so become incurable—such a wound must be cleansed, probed, cut, and cauterized; and softening the most terrible pains by exciting in the patient a hope of being healed, he must be persuaded to endure a momentary pain in order to obtain a future firm established health. Thus in religion, when vice has gained the heart, and subdued all the faculties of the soul, in vain do we place before the sinner a few ideas of equity; in vain do we display the magnificence of the heavens, the beauties of the church, and the charms of virtue; “the arrows of the Almighty,” must be fastened in him, Job vi. 4; “terrors, as in a solemn day, must be called round about him,” Sam. ii. 22, and “knowing the terrors of the Lord,” “we” must “persuade” the man, as the holy Scriptures express it.

We affirm, there is a hell, punishments finite in degree, but infinite in duration. We do not intend to establish here in a vague manner, that there is a state of future rewards and punishments, by laying before you the many weighty arguments taken from the sentiments of conscience, the declarations of Scripture, the confusions of society, the unanimous consent of mankind, and the attributes of God himself; arguments which placing in the clearest light the truth of a judgment to come, and a future state, ought forever to confound the unbelievers and libertines, who glory in doubting both. We are going to address ourselves more immediately to another sort of people, who do not deny the truth of future punishments: but who diminish the duration of them; who either in regard to the attributes of God, or in favor of their own indolence, endeavor to persuade themselves, that if there be any punishments after death, they will neither be so general, nor so long, nor so terrible, as people imagine. Of this sort was ORIGEN, in the primitive church, who was so famous for the extent of his genius, and at the same time for the extravagance of it; admired on the one hand for attacking and refuting the errors of the enemies of religion, and blamed on the other for injuring the very religion that he defended, by mixing with it errors monstrous in their kind, and almost infinite in their number. He affirmed, that eternal punishments were incompatible both with the perfection of God, and that instability, which is the essential character of creatures; and mixing some chimeras with his errors, he added, that spirits, after they had been purified by the fire of hell, would return to the bosom of God; that at length they would detach themselves from him, and that God to punish their inconstancy would lodge them again in new bodies, and that thus eternity would be nothing but periodical revolutions of time.

Such also were some Jewish Rabbis, who acknowledge, in general, that there is a hell: but add, there is no place in it for Israelites, not even for the most criminal of them, excepting only

those who abjure Judaism ; and even these, they think, after they have suffered for one year, will be absolutely annihilated. Others say that the souls of all men, good and bad, pass into a state of insensibility at death, with this difference only, that the wicked cease to be, and are absolutely annihilated ; whereas the righteous will rise again into a sensibility in a future period, and will be united to a glorious body ; those wicked persons, who shall be alive, when Jesus Christ shall come to judge the world, will be the only persons, who will appear in judgment to receive their condemnation there ; and these, after they shall have been absorbed in the general conflagration, which they say, is the "gehenna," or "hell fire," of which Scripture speaks, "Matt. v. 22," will be annihilated with the devils and the fires of hell ; so, that, according to them, nothing will remain in nature but the abode of happy spirits.

Such are the suppositions of those, who oppose the doctrine we are going to establish. Let us endeavor to refute them.

Scripture gives no countenance to this absurd opinion, that the wicked shall have no part in the resurrection and judgment. What could St. Paul mean by these words, "Despisest thou the riches of the goodness of God? After thy hardness and impenitent heart, dost thou treasure up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?" Rom. 2, 5. What does he mean by these words : "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor, 5, 10. What does St. John intend by these words : "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and they were judged (every man) according to their works ; and whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20, 12-13-15. What meant Jesus Christ, when he said : "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth ; they that have done good

unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5 ; 28, 29.

Anything may be glossed over and varnished ; but was ever gloss more absurd than that of some, who pretend that the "resurrection" spoken of in the last quoted words is not to be understood of a literal proper resurrection, but of sanctification, which is often called a resurrection in scripture ? Does sanctification, then, raise some unto a "resurrection of life," and others unto a "resurrection of damnation?" Scripture clearly affirms, that the punishment of the damned shall not consist of annihilation, but of real and sensible pain. This appears by divers passages. Our Saviour, speaking of Judas, said, "It would have been good for that man if he had not been born," Matt. 26, 24. Hence we infer, a state worse than annihilation was reserved for this miserable traitor ; for had the punishment of his crime consisted in annihilation only, Judas, having already enjoyed many pleasures in this life, would have been happier to have been than not to have been. Again, Jesus Christ says, "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee." Matt. 11, 24. Hence we infer again, there are some punishments worse than annihilation ; for if Sodom and Capernaum were both annihilated, it would not be true that the one would be in a "more tolerable" state than the other.

Scripture images of hell, which are many, will not allow us to confine future punishment to annihilation. It is a "worm," a "fire," a "darkness ;" there are "chains," "weeping," "wailing, and gnashing of teeth." Accordingly, the disciples of the head of the sect just now mentioned, and whose system we oppose, have renounced these two parts of their Masters doctrine, and, neither denying the generality of these punishments, nor the reality of them, are content to oppose their eternity.

But it appears by Scripture, that future punishment will be eternal. The holy Scripture represents another life as a state, in which there will be no room for repentance and mercy, and where

the wicked shall know nothing but torment and despair. It compares the duration of the misery of the damned with the duration of the felicity of the blessed. Future punishment is always said to be eternal, and there is not the least hint given of its coming to an end. "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, Mark ix. 44. "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to be cast into everlasting fire." Matt. xviii. 8. "The devil, that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever," Rev. xx. 10. Again, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." These declarations are formal and express.

But the man who opposes our doctrine, reasons in this manner. Which way so ever I consider a being supremely perfect, I cannot persuade myself, that he will expose his creatures to eternal torments. All his perfections secure me from such terrors as this doctrine seems to inspire. If I consider the Deity as a being perfectly free, it should seem, although he has denounced sentences of condemnation, yet he retains a right of revoking, or of executing them to the utmost rigor; whence I infer, that no man can determine what use he will make of his liberty. When I consider God as a good being, I cannot make eternal punishment agree with infinite mercy: "bowels of compassion" seem incongruous with "devouring flames," the titles "merciful and gracious" seem incompatible with the execution of this sentence "depart ye cursed into everlasting fire," Matt. xxv. 41. In short, when I consider God under the idea of an equitable legislator, I cannot comprehend how sins committed in a finite period can deserve an infinite punishment. Let us suppose a life the most long and criminal that ever was; let the vices of all mankind be assembled, if possible, in one man; let the duration of his depravity be extended from the be-

ginning of the world to the dissolution of it : even in this case sin would be finite, and infinite, everlasting punishment would far exceed the demerit of finite transgression, and consequently, the doctrine of everlasting punishment is inconsistent with divine justice.

Some Christian divines, in zeal for the glory of God, have yielded to these objections ; and under pretence of having met with timorous people, whom the doctrine of eternal punishment had terrified into doubts concerning the divine perfections, they thought it their duty to remove this stumbling block. They have ventured to presume, that the idea which God has given of eternal punishment was only intended to alarm the impenitent, and that it was very probable God would at last relax the vigorous sentence. But if it were allowed that God had no other design in denouncing eternal punishments than that of alarming sinners, would it become us to oppose his wise purpose, and with our unhallowed hands to throw down the batteries, which he had erected against sin? Let us preach the gospel as God has revealed it. God did not think the doctrine of everlasting punishment injurious to the holiness of his attributes. Let us not pretend to think it will injure them. None of these reflections remove the difficulty. We proceed, then, to open four sources of solutions.

1st. Observe this general truth. It is not probable God would threaten mankind with a punishment, the infliction of which would be incompatible with his perfections. If the reality of such a hell as the Scriptures describe be inconsistent with the perfections of the Creator, such a hell ought not to have been affirmed, yea, it could not have been revealed. The eminence of the holiness of God will not allow him to terrify his creatures with the idea of a punishment which he cannot inflict without injustice ; and considering the weakness of our reason, and the narrow limits of our knowledge, we ought not to say such a thing is unjust, therefore it

is not revealed ; but, on the contrary, we should rather say, such a thing is revealed, therefore it is just.

2nd. Take each part of the objection drawn from the attributes of God, and said to destroy our doctrine, and consider it separately.

The argument taken from the liberty of God would carry us from error to error, and from one absurdity to another. For, if God be free to relax any part of the punishment denounced, he is equally free to relax the whole. If we may infer that he will certainly release the sufferer from a part, because he is at liberty to do so, we have an equal right to presume he will release from the whole, and there would be no absurdity in affirming the one after we had allowed the other. If there be no absurdity in presuming that God will release the whole punishment denounced against the impenitent, behold ! all systems of conscience, providence, and religion, fall of themselves ; and, if these systems fall, what, pray, become of all these perfections of God, which you pretend to defend ?

The difficulty taken from the goodness of God vanishes, when we rectify popular notions of this excellence of the divine nature. Goodness in men is a virtue of constitution, which makes them suffer, when they see their fellow creatures in misery. and which excites them to relieve them. In God it is a perfection independent in its origin, free in its execution and always restrained by laws of inviolable equity, and exact severity.

Justice is not incompatible with eternal punishment. It is not to be granted, that a sin committed in a limited time ought not to be punished through an infinite duration. It is not the length of time employed in committing a crime, that determines the degree and the duration of its punishment, it is the turpitude and atrociousness of it. The justice of God, far from opposing the punishment of the impenitent, requires it.

3rd. The doctrine of degrees of punishment affords us a third. I have observed with astonishment the little use, that Christians in general make of this article, since the doctrine itself is taught in

Scripture in the clearest manner. When we speak of future punishment, we call it all hell indifferently, and without distinction. We conceive of all the wicked as precipitated into the same gulf, loaded with the same chains, devoured by the same worm. We do not seem to think, there will be as much difference in their state as there had been in their natural capacities, their exterior means of obtaining knowledge, and their various aids to assist them in their pursuit of it. We do not recollect, that, as perhaps there may not be two men in the world, who alike partake the gifts of Heaven, so probably there will not be two wicked spirits in hell enduring an equal degree of punishment. There is an extreme difference between a heathen and a Jew; there is an extreme distance between a Jew and a Christian; and a greater still between a Christian and a heathen. The gospel rule is, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required," Luke xii. 48. There must, therefore, be as great a difference in the other life between the punishment of a Jew and that of a pagan, between that of a pagan and that of a Jew, between that of a pagan and that of a Christian, as there is between the states in which God has placed them on earth. Moreover, there is a very great difference between one Jew and another, between pagan and pagan, Christian and Christian. Each has in his own economy more or less of talents. There must therefore, be a like difference between the punishment of one Christian and that of another, the punishment of one Jew and that of another Jew, the suffering of one pagan and that of another, and consequently, when we say, a pagan wise according to his own economy, and a Christian foolish according to his, are both in hell, we speak in a very vague and equivocal manner.

To how many difficulties have men submitted by not attending to this doctrine of degrees of punishment! Of what use, for example, might it have been to answer objections concerning the destiny of pagans! As eternal punishment has been considered under images, that excite all the most excruciating pains, it could

not be imagined how God should condemn the wise heathens to a state that seemed suited only to monsters, who disfigure nature and subvert society. Some, therefore to get rid of this difficulty, have widened the gate of heaven, and allowed other ways of arriving there, besides that "whereby we must be saved" Acts iv. 12. Cato, Socrates, and Aristides, have been mixed with the "multitude redeemed to God out of every people, and nation" Rev. v. 9. Had the doctrine of diversity of punishments been properly attended to, the condemnation of the heathens would not have appeared inconsistent with the perfections of God, provided it had been considered only as a punishment proportional to what was defective in their state, and criminal in their life. For no one has a right to tax God with injustice for punishing pagans, unless he could prove that the degree of their pain exceeded that of their sin; and as no one is able to make this combination, because Scripture positively assures us, God will observe this proportion, so none can murmur against his conduct without being guilty of blasphemy.

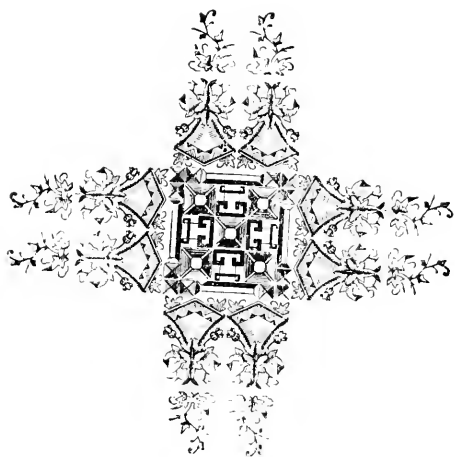
The fourth source of solutions we wish particularly to inculcate among those, who extend the operations of reason too far in matters of religion. Our maxim is this. We know indeed, in general, what are the attributes of God; but we are extremely ignorant of their sphere, we cannot determine how far they extend. We know in general, God is free, he is just, he is merciful; but we are too ignorant to determine how far these perfections must go, because the infinity of them absorbs the capacity of our minds. An example may render our meaning plain. Suppose two philosophers, subsisting before the creation of this world, and conversing together on the plan of the world, which God was about to create. Suppose the first of these philosophers affirming,—God is going to create intelligent creatures—he could communicate such a degree of knowledge to them as would necessarily conduct them to supreme happiness—but he intends to give them a reason, which may be abused, and may conduct them from ignorance to vice, and from vice to

misery. Moreover, God is going to create a world, in which virtue will be almost always in Irons, and vice on a Throne. Tyrants will be crowned, and pious people confounded. Suppose the first of our philosophers to maintain these theses, how think you? Would not the second have reasoned against this plan? Would he not, in all appearance, have had a right to affirm,—It is impossible that God, being full of goodness, should create men, whose existence would be fatal to their happiness. It is impossible that a Being, supremely holy, should suffer sin to enter the world. Yet, how plausible soever the reasons of this philosopher might then have appeared, the event has since justified the truth of the first plan. It is certain God has created the world on the plan of the first; and it is also as certain, that this world has nothing incompatible with the perfections of God, how difficult soever we may find it to answer objections. It is our diminutiveness, the narrowness of our minds, and the immensity of the Deity, which prevent our knowing how far his attributes can go. Apply this to our subject. The idea of hell seems to you repugnant to the attributes of God; you cannot comprehend how a just God can punish finite sins with infinite pain; how a merciful God can abandon his creature to eternal miseries. Your difficulties have some probability, I grant; your reasons, I allow, seem well grounded. But dost thou remember, the attributes of God are infinite? Remember, thy knowledge is finite. Remember the two philosophers disputing on the plan of the world. Remember the event has discarded the difficulties of the last, and justified the plan of the first. Now, the revelation of future punishments in our system is equal to event in that of the first philosopher. They are revealed. You think future punishment inconsistent with the attributes of God: but your notion of inconsistency ought to vanish at the appearance of Scripture light.

Observe once more the quality, and the duration of the punishments of hell. The quality is expressed in these words, "smoke," "torment." The metaphorical terms include five ideas: Privation


of heavenly happiness—sensation of pain—remorse of conscience—horror of society—increase of crime. These are the punishments of condemned souls. It remains only that we consider the length and duration of them. But by what means, my brethren, shall we describe these profound articles of contemplation? Can we number the innumerable, and measure that which is beyond all mensuration? Can we make you comprehend the incomprehensible? And shall we amuse you, with our imaginations?

One night passed in a burning fever, or in struggling in the waves of the seas between life and death, appears of an immense length! It seems to the sufferer as if the sun had forgot its course, and as if all the laws of nature itself were subverted. What, then, will be the state of those miserable victims to divine displeasure, who, after they shall have passed through the ages, which we have been describing, will be obliged to make this overwhelming reflection. All this is only an atom of our misery! What will their despair be, when they shall be forced to say to themselves, again we must revolve through these enormous periods; again we must suffer a privation of celestial happiness; devouring flames again; cruel remorse again; crimes and blasphemes over and over again! "Forever! forever!" How severe is this word even in this life! How great is a misfortune when it is incapable of relief! How insupportable, when we are obliged to add forever to it! These irons forever! these chains forever! this prison forever! this universal contempt forever! this domestic trouble forever! Poor mortals! how short sighted are you to call sorrows eternal, which end with your lives! What! this life! this life, that passes with the rapacity of a "weaver's shuttle" Job vii. 6, this life, which vanishes "like a sleep" Ps. xc. 5, is this what you call forever! Ah! absorbing periods of Eternity, accumulated myriads of ages; these, if I may be allowed to speak so, these will be the For Ever of the damned—
REV'D JAMES SAURIN. (Translated from the French.)



FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

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HE subject which engages our attention is a very solemn one. It is one, on which, were a minister of the Gospel to consult simply his own feelings, he would seldom speak at all. But if he wishes to say, like Paul, "I am free from the blood of all men," he must also be able to affirm with the same great apostle, "I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God." Of course our appeal on this, as on every other theme connected with revealed religion, must be, "to the law and the testimony." If men speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Merely human speculation as to what it is right and proper for God to do with the impenitent hereafter, must never be heeded for a single moment. It is the supremacy of God's word, not the supremacy of men's devices and desires, which must ever be recognized. To calm and careful reasoning from Holy Scripture we are bound to give the deepest attention. Our business in this inquiry concerning future punishment is only with "what is written in the Scripture of Truth." We are shut up to one question, and only one. What saith the Lord? It is the duty of every man to whom the Word of God comes, to ascertain the truth which it teaches, and to

maintain that truth at all hazard. Indeed, the Book itself requires us to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good;" while its own testimony concerning every one of its statements is this, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Let me examine with all candor and reverence the solemn declarations of sacred Scripture regarding the future state of the impenitent. My aim is to present the truth in its plain and simple teachings, and with such feelings of tenderness as the awful subject demands; and my prayer is, that the discussion may awaken neither resentment against God, nor resistance to His testimony but a true repentance unto life, and a timely fleeing from the wrath to come.

Two different theories are advanced by those who deny the doctrine of "everlasting punishment," as held by evangelical christians. The one theory is that of the Restorationists, who maintain that after certain suffering hereafter, the wicked are in some unexplained way to be restored to the favor and enjoyment of God in heaven. This is the view which is creating some little stir in Great Britain at the present day, and which is advanced by certain semi-philosophical and semi-poetical dreamers, with whom the wish is father to the thought, that somehow :

"Good will be the final goal of ill."

The other theory is that of the destructionists, who also allow that there will be certain sufferings hereafter; but as the result of these, the wicked will be annihilated, or blotted out of being. Both of these theories we regard as utterly unscriptural, and we hope to prove them so; although our present examination will be chiefly confined to the latter of the two. Proceeding then to a careful induction of Scripture testimony, we regard the Bible as teaching :

I. THAT THE FUTURE STATE OF THE UNSAVED WILL BE ONE OF MISERY AND SUFFERING. In Matt. xxv. 46, it is called, "punish-

ment" by the Faithful and True Witness. "These shall go away into everlasting PUNISHMENT." Now the Greek word (KOLASIN*) here translated "punishment," is found in the New Testament, (1 John iv. 18,) and is there rendered "torment." "Fear hath torment;" that is, dread of God brings conscious, painful suffering to every mind that experiences it. Accordingly, since the word is translated "torment" in the one passage and can have no other meaning, it might with equal propriety and force have been translated "torment" in the other. Indeed, that this is the only correct meaning of the word may be further seen from the 41st verse of the above chapter, Matthew xxv. 49, where we learn that the "everlasting punishment" into which the unsaved go away, is "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Surely that is torment; that is the very place where according to the 20th chapter of Revelation, they "shall be TORMENTED day and night forever and ever." So that if the words of the Bible are to be taken in their plain and natural sense, it seems clear that the future state of the impenitent is to be one of pain and suffering, of wretchedness and misery. In the Epistle to the Romans (chapter ii. 8-9) we read that "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," will be the portion of "every soul of man that doeth evil." Would any one be bold enough to deny that "indignation and wrath" necessarily involve the idea of conscious misery? Think, moreover, of the words of Jesus, recorded no fewer than seven times in the Gospels: "There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Could language be found to prove more conclusively that the sufferings of the lost are to be intense in their character? Add to this mass of Scripture testimony, the representations which are found scattered throughout the New Testament of a "lake of fire," "a lake that burned with fire and brimstone," a place "where the worm dieth

*The cognate verb is also found in two passages in the original, Acts iv. 21, 2 Peter ii. 9, in both of which an English reader will readily gather that its meaning is, to CHASTISE, TO PUNISH.

not, and the fire is not quenched ;” and it must appear to any one not warped by prejudice, that whatever these physical representations may mean, they plainly teach that the suffering of the unsaved will be at once conscious and severe.

That there will be degrees of punishment hereafter, just as there are degrees of guilt here, is readily admitted. Stripes, few or many, according to desert, is what the Saviour teaches, (Luke xii. 47.) The same measure of punishment will not be meted out to all. From Luke x. 13, and Matt. x. 15, we learn that it will be “more tolerable” for some than for others in the day of judgment. The sentences may probably range from little else than the blank negation of blessedness on to the uttermost intensity of woe. In proportion to privileges, and opportunities, and advantages, will be the awarded punishment. Those who had for guidance the law written in the Holy Scripture, will be judged according to Holy Scripture. If, like the inhabitants of Sidon, men have seen only the ordinary works of God, for ordinary privileges will they be held responsible ; but if, like the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida, they have witnessed marvels of grace and miracles of mercy, for extraordinary privileges they will be held responsible. In every individual case there will either be mitigation or aggravation : the aggravation according to what a man hath ; the mitigation according to what he hath not. Plain and palpable will be the proof that there is no unrighteousness with God, and that “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

This, then, is our first position, that the sacred writers invariably speak of future punishment in terms which suggest the idea of suffering, or pain, or misery. I might refer to other expressions employed, such as “woe,” “wrath to come,” “shame and everlasting contempt.” Whatever may be the language used, whatever may be the representation, given, future punishment is always something that may be FELT. The whole tenor of the teaching is inconsistent with the notion of annihilation. In short, we are driven to adopt

one or other of two alternatives:—either the words of the Bible descriptive of the future state of the ungodly are to be understood in their plain and common acceptation, or else the Book sorely deceives, when it threatens the impenitent with a doom of which they will never be conscious. Which of these alternatives shall we accept? Need I ask the question? Must not every sincere inquirer say: “Let God be true, but every man,” speaking in opposition to Him, “a liar.”

But the Bible teaches,

II. THAT THE FUTURE STATE OF THE UNSAVED WILL BE ONE OF ENDLESS MISERY AND SUFFERING. In Matthew xxv. 46, two different words are employed to teach the duration of the two different destinies. “These shall go away into EVERLASTING punishment, but the righteous into life ETERNAL.” “Everlasting” and “Eternal” are two words in our English New Testament; but in the original Greek the two clauses have one and the self-same word. In both members of the text it is found in the same form, and with precisely the same accompaniments. This verse alone, therefore, ought to put the question beyond the range of fair discussion. If the wicked may look forward to a close of their “everlasting” misery, then the righteous, on the same principle, may expect the close of their “eternal” life. As it will be with the one in duration, so will it be with the other. Indeed, I hesitate not to affirm, that not one single instance can be found in the Greek New Testament, where the word (AIONIOS) expresses any other idea than that of endless duration. It occurs no fewer than seventy-one times in the original, and a careful collocation of all the passages will show that it is used forty-two times of the life which God gives through Jesus Christ; fourteen times of salvation and its issue; three times of duration as measured by the ages of a past eternity; twice of Jesus Christ as the “Eternal Life;” once of the “Everlasting God;” once of the “Eternal Spirit;” and once of the “power everlasting” ascribed to the blessed and only Potentate.

There remain seven other solemn passages in which the word is used of future woe :—twice (Matt. xviii. 8 : xxv. 41), of “everlasting fire,” as the portion of the wicked, both angels and men ; once, of “everlasting punishment ;” once (2 Thess. i. 9,) of “everlasting destruction ;” once (Heb. vi. 2,) of “eternal judgment ;” once (Mark iii. 29,) of “eternal damnation ;” and once (Jude 7,) of that “vengeance of eternal fire,” which fell on the doomed inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha. Is not the conclusion irresistible that the future felicity of the righteous and the future misery of the wicked are alike and absolutely endless? When we read in the New Testament that the “life,” and the “habitations,” and the “glory,” and the “inheritance,” and the “kingdom,” and the “salvation,” of God’s children are all represented as “everlasting,” we never for a moment dream that the happiness of heaven will be insecure, that the laurel will ever be withered, or the harp unstrung in that better land. And if the very same term (a word which is confessedly the strongest afforded by the Greek language,) is employed to indicate the condition of the unsaved after the resurrection and the judgment, on what principle of either sound interpretation or common sense, can we conclude that there will be any change of their state or limit to their punishment? I take it that the teaching of the Scriptures requires me to warn men to “flee from the wrath to come,” on the ground that the threatened wrath will be both intense in its character and endless in its duration.

But we do not build our belief on merely one isolated passage of God’s word. To the same conclusion the repeated testimony of Scripture invariably leads. Is the condition of the lost hereafter represented as “darkness,” a figure which is always employed in the Bible to indicate a condition of ignorance, and wickedness, and wretchedness? Then that “darkness” is both dense and unrelieved,—it is the “blackness of darkness forever.” (Jude 13.) Does coming woe, like a “worm,” prey upon the very vitals of their being? Then three times over (Mark ix. 44, 46, 48) the loving Saviour tells

us that "their worm dieth not." Is the punishment of the impenitent symbolized by "fire?" Then it is set forth in the Scripture as at once "eternal" (Jude 7) and "unquenchable," (Matt. iii. 12). Is the awful abode of the lost described as a "lake of fire and brimstone," where the devil and deceivers have their portion? Then we are taught (Rev. xx. 10) that there they "shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Is the future doom of the lost designated as "destruction" or ruin? Then it is an "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power," (2 Thess. i. 9). Is the constant employment of the living creatures round about God's throne in heaven set forth by the phrase, (Rev. iv. 8) "they rest not day and night?" Then by the same phrase, and in precisely the same words in the original Greek, (Rev. xiv. 11) is the severe and ceaseless torment of the unsaved described. Do we read, (Mark iii. 29) that he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost "is in danger of eternal damnation?" Then it is affirmed, (Matt. xii. 31, 32) that this same sinner shall not be forgiven, "neither in this world nor in the world to come." Is the phrase that teaches the eternity of God's glory, and the endlessness of Christ's throne, and the perpetuity of the saint's reign, confessedly the strongest employed in Scripture to designate duration? Then by the same phrase, "forever end ever,"* is the endlessness of future torment represented. Surely every one must see that language so strong, and forms of expression so unvarying in their meaning WOULD not and COULD not have been used in a revelation from God, unless the doom of the wicked is to be one of endless misery.

One or two other passages may be referred to which set the doctrine, if possible, in yet stronger light. In Mark xiv. 21, our

* It has been well said that if the Greek phrase, *eis tous aionias ton aionon*, does not convey the idea of eternity, then "it would not have been possible to express the idea in human language." It is found in twenty passages in the New Testament, in not one of which has it ever a limited meaning. The translation, "until the ages of the ages," is so absurd and meaningless, that the merest tyro in Greek would blush to advocate it. It is "unto," "for," or "during the ages of the ages." See Liddell and Scott on both *eis* and *aion*.

Lord pronounces a "woe" upon Judas, and adds, "good were it for that man if he had never been born." Would not these words be meaningless, if they did not teach that to the "woe" or punishment of the betrayer, there can come no ultimate relief. Suppose suffering as severe as you will, but admit that there is a point somewhere in the distant future, where it is to terminate, then as there would still be an eternity beyond that free from suffering, it could not be said of any individual, that it would be good for him if he had never been born. If Judas is to be blotted out of existence, it would then be the same with him as if he never had been born. But the thing is beyond a doubt. Judas will never cease to suffer; for the Saviour's solemn saying continues uncanceled, "good were it for that man if he had never been born."

From another point of view, also, we may look at the question for a single moment. The ungodly man goes away into everlasting punishment. He enters into that state, that prison house of the lost, an unrepentant, unforgiven sinner, and he sins all the time he continues there. If, to use the Saviour's language, in one of his parables in the 18th chapter of Matthew, he owed ten thousand talents when his punishment commenced, will not the debt be ever increasing? The culprit cannot pay that debt; Christ will not pay it; and if the debtor is to be put out of existence, it will never be paid at all. How absurd the conclusion! And how utterly opposed to what the Saviour himself teaches, (Matt. v. 26) that no one shall depart from that prison till he "has paid the uttermost farthing!" Could language teach more plainly, that he is liable to a penalty which he can never fully pay, and handed over to a doom which will never come to an end? Indeed the whole testimony of Scripture on the eternity of future punishment corresponds, and coheres, and culminates. It gathers together into a mass of evidence, and weight of proof, which leaves nothing to be desired, is perfectly irresistible.

We might finish at this point, convinced as we are that we have taught, and established, and vindicated the truth of God on this solemn subject. But there remain certain specious and sophistical objections, which, because they have led away the unstable and unwary, seem to call for some consideration. The inquiry may be made. Does not the preacher know something on the other side of the question? Are there not certain passages in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, which modify or explain the passages already quoted and examined? My answer is, as seeing Him who is invisible, I do not know a single verse, which, fairly interpreted, teaches anything contrary to these plain declarations. I cannot find within the boards of the Bible, a passage which proves that the punishment of the lost will be temporary. We may be referred to verses, where we read that the ungodly are to die, to perish, to be cut off, to lose life, to be consumed, to be destroyed, to be burned up, to be as though they had not been, to be blotted out of a book, and so on. My reply is that many of these passages refer to earthly judgments, and not to the final state of the impenitent dead. They are wrested from their connection, and made to teach what the Holy Spirit never intended that they should teach. It is somewhat remarkable that the majority of them are found in the Old Testament. Why should men ignore or overlook the plain teachings of the New Testament, and grope for light about the future in the midst of comparative darkness? Has not Jesus Christ "brought life and INCORRUPTION to light THROUGH THE GOSPEL?" Besides, the meaning assigned to those terms, which are so much quoted by the upholders of the Annihilationist theory, is one which they will not bear. Their system of interpretation makes sad havoc alike of Scripture and of common sense. They affirm that to "die" means to "go out of existence." Did Adam certainly "go out of existence" in the day he ate the forbidden fruit? Is that the meaning of Gen. ii. 17? Is the woman who liveth in pleasure "annihilated" (1 Tim. v. 6,) while she liveth?

When Christ said, (Matt. viii. 22,) "Let the dead bury their dead," did He give the absurd command that those who have ceased to exist were to bury those who have ceased to exist? Equally erroneous is the meaning attached to the other terms on which the destructionist theory is based. Was the land of Egypt blotted out of being, when Pharaoh said, (Exodus x. 7,) that it was "destroyed" by reason of the plagues? Twice in the course of one prophetic book, (Hosea xiii. 9; iv. 6,) are God's people told by Him that they were "destroyed;" and yet they had not ceased to exist, for God still continued to warn and exhort them by His prophet. So of the other terms: "the righteous perisheth," (Isa. lvii. 1,) and "the land perisheth," (Jer. ix. 12;) Jacob was "consumed" (Gen. xxxi. 40,) and Christ was "eaten up" (or consumed, for the word in the original is the same,) by the zeal of God's house (Psalm lxix. 9;) Enoch "was not," (Gen. v. 24;) Messiah was "cut off" (Daniel ix. 16,) "was cut off out of the land of the living," (Isa. liii. 8.) Would anyone be bold and blasphemous enough to assert that the words in these passages teach the extinction of the persons of whom they are predicted? Indeed we could take the book of Job alone, and on the theory of interpretation adopted by the destructionists, we could show by numerous quotations from the mouth of the old patriarch of Uz, that he ought to have been blotted out of being more than twenty times over before we reach the end of the thirtieth chapter. Ought not this fact alone to convince any one of the folly of this interpretation, and the utter fallacy and futility of the Annihilationist argument.

We cannot close without some reference to the tendencies and results of the theory we have been examining. In its fully developed form it leads to the grossest kind of materialism. Denying the immortality of the soul, it makes the body the whole of man; it tells the Christian mother that the infant whom God took, and whom she expects to meet again, will have no future existence; it says to those who are mourning the loss of loved ones who have

died in the Lord, that the spirits of the departed are NOT "with Christ, which is far better," that to be "absent from the body" is NOT to be "present with the Lord," that the souls of believers do NOT immediately pass into paradise, but are consigned to a condition of unconscious slumber. With such a prospect before him, instead of it being "gain" for the Christian to die, it would be loss, immediate and immense. Oh it is a dreary dismal creed, against which I would solemnly warn. It cannot be found in the Bible, and no Christian Church of any name has ever held it. We learn from history that for the first three centuries of the Christian era, it was never once heard of, till a rhetorician named Arnobius began to teach it. Of this man the Church historian, Mosheim, says that he was "superficial in his knowledge of Christian doctrines, and commingled error with important truths." That is still the characteristic of those who uphold the annihilation dogma. When will men learn that their own speculations are unprofitable, and that it is best for them to abide by the "law and the testimony."

Over thirty years ago a good but erratic man, called William Miller, aroused public attention in some parts of the United States and Canada to the subject of Christ's speedy coming and personal reign. He ventured to fix the precise date of the advent, and when the day passed and the Bridegroom still tarried, hundreds of his followers, disappointed in their hopes, fell back into avowed infidelity. Hundreds more, carrying out the system of interpretation adopted by Miller, reached conclusions regarding the condition of the impenitent dead similar to those we have been examining, and which their leader would have rejected as unscriptural. Moreover, in its direct results this theory cannot fail to strengthen the hands of the impenitent and encourage them in their sins. Could we assure the wicked of non-existence hereafter, many of them would adopt the old Epicurean mottoes: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," "A short life and a merry one." Could we tell the unsaved that if they do not repent and believe in Jesus, they

will be blotted out of existence ; would that consideration either stop him in his rebellious career, or lead him in penitence to the Saviour's feet? Assuredly not. Annihilation is the very thing they wished for, but hardly dared to believe it. The history of the French Revolution of 1799 furnishes fearful corroboration of the moral, or rather immoral, tendency of the dogma. "My abode will soon be in annihilation," said Danton, one of the chief actors in that terrible tragedy. Steeled and stupified by the thought, he condemned hundreds to the guillotine without one pang of remorse. "Death is an eternal sleep," they said in those days, and so they pursued their plunderings, and debaucheries, and massacres, with infernal glee. Can we wonder at it? Did not the system produce its legitimate results? The Saviour has given us the test by which all false teachers and their doctrines are to be tried: "By their fruits ye shall know them." Materialistic and even sensual in its tendencies—we might well expect that this belief would, in process of time, degrade men to the level of the beasts, whose destinies they claim.

If the reader has followed our examination of the Word, he can only come to the conclusion, that when the wicked are driven away in their wickedness, they enter a condition of conscious suffering and of endless woe. Men of God strove to pluck them as "brands from the burning," but they refused their help and rushed on to their eternal ruin. As we think of what that ruin is, as we know these "terrors of the Lord," we would persuade sinners to "flee from the wrath to come." We would point out to them the Lamb of God, and press for serious and saving solution the unanswered and unanswerable question: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" We would remind them of that other awful question, proposed to the impenitent by the lowly and loving One of Nazareth himself: "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" If the deep, dark gulf of despair have any terrors, remember that Christ died to save from it ; and that none shall hereafter know the "outer darkness," except as they refuse the "light of life."

Men may speculate as they please, but sin is an infinite evil, and demands either an infinite satisfaction or an infinite punishment. That could be no light doom which the sacrifice of God's only-beloved Son alone could avert, which Jesus wept to think of, which Jesus died to save from. Ponder well, these words of the Saviour: "everlasting punishment," "eternal damnation," "undying worm," "unquenchable fire." They breathe a terrible meaning and point to a tremendous reality. They should settle the matter. Flee from the wrath to come. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—Mark the language "ABIDETH on him,"

"While life, or thought, or being last,
Or immortality endures."





ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

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IT IS a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," yet "the Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." Again, "Sodom and Gomorrha are set forth as examples suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," yet "God retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy." How to reconcile these apparently conflicting declarations is a problem it would be extreme narrowness to ignore. The enigma of existence gathers most of its difficulties from the mysterious blending of light and darkness, joy and sorrow, happiness and pain. The grim spectres of sin and suffering flit among the phantoms of our earthly joys, and it is not strange that, wondering at times what can be the source of evil, we say with Dante :

"The world, indeed, is even so forlorn
Of all good, as Thou speakest it, and so swarms
With every evil. Yet, beseech thee, point
The cause out to me, that myself may see
And unto others shew it ; for in heaven
One place it, and one on earth below."

One thing is clear, we are in a world of evil. However it is to be accounted for, the mystery of suffering confronts us on every hand. "It is appointed unto men once to die;" that is an article common to all creeds. If we can agree nowhere else, we find at the grave a place where Atheist, Agnostic, Polytheist, Deist and Christian are united in their assent to this universal truth. The Christian is no more obliged to explain this truth than his strange companions by that open sepulchre. Any one could state the problem, how came death and its concomitant sufferings? and as this strange group would consider it, one would be as much responsible for its solution as another. The dark fact of human suffering still stands all the same, whatever solution of the problem of its existence we may offer. But, passing the bounds of mere physical suffering, we discover that we are only on the confines of the gloomy domain of moral evil—a great dark empire of death reaching out so vast we feel certain it stretches away beyond the limits of time, and so blasts by its torments and ruins the victim of despair, that we feel the force of Pollock's description :

"A being that had burned
Half an eternity, and was to burn
For evermore, he looked."

But such tortures confront us even here and now. And their sulphurous fumes we recognize amid the scenes of earth's crimes and cruelties, the reek of alcohol, the debasement of virtue, the oaths of torments already begun, the outrages of malice, the crushing of innocence, and the glowing hate of self, and of all beside. In all such scenes we find distinctly expressed three ideas: God, and justice, and hell. Were there no ray of hope piercing the gloom in this world; were there no Star of Bethlehem leading to light, and love, and purity; were there no revelation from the Creator of His Gracious will, we would feel spell-bound by the bird of evil omen which the Poet of Despair has described :

“Ghastly, grim, and ancient Raven, wandering from the nightly shore,
 And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that is dreaming,
 And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor,
 And my soul from out that shadow, that lies floating on the floor,
 Shall be lifted,—Nevermore.”

But the mind, wearied and worried by the great problem of the existence of evil, finds satisfaction and rest at last in the sure word of prophecy which God has given us, and finds satisfaction nowhere else. I take my stand on the foundation of a few central truths thus divinely revealed, which I do not intend to discuss: 1st. God is. 2nd. The Bible is the only perfect mirror of His nature.

“Here the whole Deity is known.”

3rd. The Divine nature is equally marked in relation to man by goodness and severity, love and justice, compassion and indignation. The Bible is a stereoscope to blend these in perfect harmony. Look at them without the proper use of revelation, and you have the confused outlines of two pictures—a very distorted conception of God. But look with both eyes, with both mind and heart, through both lenses of Sinai and Calvary at both pictures, and you see God as He is, infinite in mercy and inflexible in justice. 4th. Sin or a violation of God’s laws is sure to be punished. Taking our stand, then, upon the basis of these certain truths, we propose for our study, as far as our brief time will allow: 1st. The doctrine of the punishment of sin, more especially as to the eternal duration of punishment. 2nd. Historical development of the doctrine of Retribution. 3rd. The objections urged against the teachings of the Bible on this subject.

I. THE DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION.

(1) A serious and intelligent man is not to be found to-day who will claim, as did the early Universalists, that sin and virtue are equitably punished and rewarded in this life. The fact that men

of putrid character and vilest lives live in worldly ease and plenty, while the most virtuous noblemen of heaven have to struggle with want and adversity and indescribable tribulation, is a fact that even a very limited observation of human experience will readily recognize. The oldest writer of the Bible, from the depths of his desolation, was constrained to ask: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old; yea are mighty in power? Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them." The Psalmist Asaph tells us that the study of this problem was too painful for him, until, he says, he went into the Sanctuary of God, and understood the destiny of the wicked. Eternity needs to be taken into the account to perfect the equation. Neglecting to go into the sanctuary of serious and prayerful thought and of Divine teaching, we are in danger of adopting Dryden's words.

"Yet sure the gods are good; I would think so,
If they would give me leave;
But virtue in distress and vice in triumph
Make atheists of mankind."

Our present life is manifestly not the scene of perfected rewards and punishments. Whatever views may be entertained on this subject, all men are beginning to protest against the unreformed villain and his innocent victim entering the same heaven, and are demanding that the former, in some place and in some way, be purified from his wickedness before he can be admitted to the abode of the blessed. Paint as you may, in darkest colors, the sorrows of the wicked here; represent them as the troubled waves which cannot rest; be as eloquent as possible in depicting the gnawings of remorse, and their being pursued through all the mazes of pleasure by the horrid spectre of guilt; still, when you have made the picture as black as possible, one fact yet stands which overthrows the flimsy structure of Universalism—the fact that the innocent here suffer with the guilty, and often more than the guilty. If God be just, there must be compensation for this inequality in another world.

(2) Again, I believe that the impenitent soul passes at death into a state of torture in Hades, from which it will pass at judgment into the torments of Gehenna. By Hades, as the derivation implies, I simply mean the invisible world or intermediate state occupied under different conditions respectively by saved and unsaved until the general judgment, for "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world." With this intermediate state I do not mean to associate any purgatorial or disciplinary agency to any of the respective degrees represented by Dorner, Farrar, Pusey, or the Roman Catholics. That there is implied, on the part of the lost, a consciousness of suffering in Hades, in opposition to the error of Psychopannychy, or sleep of the soul, is manifest from the case of Dives, whose torment must be regarded as anterior to the general judgment; for his brothers, for whom he is solicitous, are represented by Christ as yet in a state of probation.

(3) Again, I believe that the material elements of sulphur and fire, and all the concomitants of intensest physical agony in Gehenna, are to be understood in a figurative sense, even as in the the apocalyptic description of the celestial state there are used the highest types of joy and splendour, harp and song, and crown and gold, and emblazoned jewellery. This interpretation was adopted by Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and John of Damascus. I have all respect for many wise and good men who have interpreted these things literally, but I think I am not mistaken when I say that a figurative interpretation is the one seriously entertained by the great majority of Protestant ministers to-day. Even the Roman Catholic theologian, Perrone, notwithstanding the materializing interpretation so common in his Church, says: "This alone is matter of faith, that there is a hell. All the rest, as to the place or nature of the punishment, are not matters of faith. For, as Petau says judiciously after Vasquez, 'By no decree of the Church, nor in any Synod, has it been defined, viz, either that the fire is corporeal, or that there is a place under the earth where the demons and the

lost are tormented.' ” By this method of interpretation I do not think there is implied any mitigation of the sufferings of the lost. On the contrary, as symbols are always less than the things signified, if the agony of physical burning be so intense—the most acute we know of—how much more intense will the reality be, as represented by “the worm that dieth not and the fire that cannot be quenched?”

(4) Again, I believe that every lost soul is in a state of confirmed enmity to God and opposition to His law. The doctrine of universal tendency to permanence of character is not new with Joseph Cook; for, as far back as 1702, Archbishop King, in his “Origin of Evil,” reasons that “as our limbs, when distorted, become incapable of their normal action, so by persistency in sin we become utterly incapable of reformation.” This doctrine is not without some serious difficulties. Only this point in it we observe at present, viz., that with the cessation of probationary privileges and influences, the soul, whether previously confirmed in sin or not, now of necessity is helplessly under its sway. Of course, this view implies a complete rejection of the Pelagian idea that the human will in the lost has the power of submitting to God and of originating, when unaided, holy volitions. To my judgment, the Scriptural doctrine commends itself of the moral impotency of man. It follows that if the supernatural aids provided for all by a universal atonement are withdrawn, the soul reaches the point mentioned of confirmed and irreversible antagonism to God and to all that is good.

Everything then hinges upon the question, do these supernatural aids terminate at death? That they do is clearly manifest from the fact that this is made the whole ground of appeal to the sinner, so far as his peril is concerned. Says the Wise Man, “There is no work, nor device, nor wisdom in the grave wither thou goest,” and therefore he appeals to us, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” This seems like the cry of desperation, as if

'the chance of rescue were so brief that the one opportunity now offering were the only one; and so, as with terrific earnestness, Paul calls to our careless world, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." There would be no sense nor honesty in this mode of appeal were it not for this solemn consideration, "They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth." The Apocalypse, whenever written, and whatever interpretation we may give to its mysterious predictions, most certainly refers in ITS closing chapter to the consumation of all things, when "they that have right to the tree of life shall enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs (i. e., spiritual Gentiles, the uncircumcised in heart,) and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Like the awful knell of the darkest doom to men responsible, guilty, and lost, even this gospel of mercy, in its closing passages, has to say, "He that is unjust let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy let him be filthy still." The gulf that separates the lost from the redeemed is described by the Saviour as a "great gulf fixed," and equally fixed are the characters on each side of it. That this impassable gulf will at some future age be bridged, there is not in Scripture the slightest ray of hope. If such should ever be done, the prophet of Nazareth might indeed be suspected of decidedly misleading, by his teachings, an immense number of the most honest and competent enquirers after truth. Both Hades and Gehenna I regard, with reference to the finally impenitent, as a state of confirmed enmity to God.

(5) Again. I consider that in Gehenna there are constant violations of the divine law, which themselves merit their consequent retribution. I accept the statement of an able English Universalist, Mr. Vidler—"A rational creature cannot be without law either in heaven, earth, or hell." Sin is sin as much in hell as on earth, as much a million years hence as to-day; and the "cursed" that will be driven at the day of judgment "into everlasting fire" are such

because they are sinners deliberately committing themselves to an eternal career of sin. Christ refers to them in His declaration, "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but shall be in danger of eternal sin," (Mark iii. 29). This reading, it is well known, is sustained by the leading uncial and many cursive MSS. and versions, and implies that to "quench the Spirit" and persist to the last in opposing the gracious influences of heaven's rescuing mercy, is to abandon one's self to an eternal rebellion against God. I know not how such a condition of antagonism to God's law can escape the righteous indignation of the Most High. Nemesis, the daughter of Night, silent and swift of foot, hovers upon the track of the wrong-doer, pursuing him with certain vengeance, whether it be in the fall of the angels, the sins of earth, or the crimes of hell. Canon Farrar, in his sermon on "The Consequences of Sin," depicts most faithfully and forcibly the certain punishment of the transgressor. I think this law will operate eternally.

(6) Again, I believe that the statement, though plausible, is misleading, that sin is its own hell. Marlowe, in his *Faustus*, expresses it :

"Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
In one self place ; but where we are is hell ;
And where hell is, there we must ever be."

I admit that sinners are punished in part by sin as well as for sin ; but to maintain that sin is its own and only punishment, is to ignore the clearest operations of punitive justice both in God and man, and to deny simple facts. If sin brings its own punishment, how is it that the more a man sins the less really he is punished ? Scripture makes frequent reference to those having their conscience seared with a hot iron, "who being past feeling, give themselves over to work all uncleanness ;" whom "God gives over to a reprobate mind, and sends them a strong delusion that they should

believe a lie." The principle we are opposing, so dear to Latitudinarians, and inspiring much of their eloquence, is simply absurd. Parents, masters, and rulers, all reject it. Society does not say of a villainous murderer, Poor fellow! he has had punishment enough in the ever-haunting spectre of that white face of his innocent victim and in the lashings of his tormenting conscience. No! Society demands that, being convicted, he should be judicially punished, and he is hanged! I regard hell as a state of punishment as well as of remorse; and punishment implies legal process, the sentence of law executed by legal authority whether the culprit's conscience be seared or tender. The terms employed in Scripture to represent the sufferings of the lost, imply something positive and objective to their remorse. They are "cast into it," they are "tormented in it." "It is the furnace of fire," "the lake of fire." These are allusions quite foreign to the self-acting of the soul. "The stripes," "the horrible tempest," "the taking vengeance," "the tormentors," "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." This all means suffering from without. This penalty is not personal revenge on the part of God in the sense of vindictiveness, but it is the necessary operation of divine law, the cessation of which means that God ceases to be. Paul tells us that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, who shall be PUNISHED with everlasting destruction" (1 Thess. i. 9); and Peter tells us that the unjust are reserved "unto the day of judgment, to be punished" (2 Peter ii. 9). The Gnostic view of the third century, represented by the school of Valentinus, held that divine justice simply means righteousness or integrity and that the idea of punitive justice is directly opposed to divine benevolence. This idea was revived by the Sozzini in the sixteenth century, and among many of their followers to-day it is held in high favor. Only one alternative is possible on the acceptance of this view, and that is the rejection of the authority of the Scriptures; for the wildest and most reckless exegesis cannot elim-

inate from them the awful utterance, "Vengeance is mine ; I will repay, saith the Lord." Indeed, it is not clear which is the more terrific, nature or the Bible, in its utterance that violation of law must invariably be punished.

(7) Again, I believe that the number of the lost will be small in comparison with the number of the saved. Canon Farrar's works, "Eternal Hope" and "Mercy and Judgment," in my opinion, owe nine-tenths of their popularity and destructive influence to attributing to the orthodox three views that are for the most part monstrous, and are doomed to universal rejection by the Church. One of these is the doctrine of reprobation ; another, is the possible damnation of infants ; and the third, is the view which he perpetually attributes to defenders of the Scriptural doctrine of retribution, more especially in his sermon on "Are there few that be saved?" viz., that but a small company, an elect few, constitute the redeemed, while hell is teeming with an immense majority of the human race enduring the most intense agony of corporeal suffering. I reject and spurn these monstrous errors as a blot upon God's character and a disgrace to Historical Theology ; and I am persuaded that I am not alone here. I think I know where at least 35,000 ministers may be found, leaders in the most aggressive form of Christianity the world has known, who resent with contempt the imputation of any of these views ; and, in my opinion, the great majority of Protestant ministers outside of Methodism, are equally agreed in their rejection. Referring now to the third of them, I hold that the disposition of the Church is not to represent the redeemed as a favored coterie about the divine throne, an oasis in the great desert of moral ruin in the universe. "The Church," it has been beautifully said by Dr. Pusey, "has its long list of saints ; it has not inserted one name in the catalogue of the damned." Many go so far as to hold that the lost, including men and angels, will be in proportion to the saved, as incarcerated criminals are to law-abiding citizens in our community. Without committing

myself to what this last comparison implies, I am satisfied that the great majority of our race will be found among the redeemed.

I have thus stated seven elements of the doctrine of the punishment of sin, as they commend themselves to my judgment: 1st. It must reach beyond this life; 2nd. Its tortures begin at death, in Hades or the Intermediate State; 3rd. It does not necessarily imply corporeal sufferings; 4th. It implies confirmed antagonism to God; 5th. It implies in the other world a career of sin, itself meriting corresponding punishment; 6th. It is more than remorse—it is a positive and judicial infliction of punitive suffering; 7th. Only a minority of the race will be consigned to such torment.

(8) The great question still remains, in case the above views be accepted, What Scripture evidence is there of the eternal continuance of this punishment? If the admission of an opponent could settle this question, it is closed at once with the statements by Theodore Parker, in his published sermons: "I believe that Jesus Christ taught eternal torment; I do not accept it on his authority." The candour of these words is only surpassed by their impious boldness.

Without repetition of what I have said in another connection, the eternity of the torments of hell, I remark, is evidenced by the cessation at death of all probationary opportunities of salvation. This is implied in the exhortation, "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear," "Redeeming the time," "Lay hold on eternal life," "Seek the Lord while He may be found," "While it is said, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." After death comes what? the judgment. This we know with certainty, but of a POST MORTEM probation we know nothing, absolutely nothing, from either nature or the Bible. The remark of Baxter, in his treatise on the Christian Religion, is here very appropriate: "How foolish a thing it is to go from the light of a plain revelation and scripture, and argue from our dark uncertainties."

Again, all Scripture that represents the Atonement of Christ as the only means of the restoration of the sinner, absolutely precludes any efficacy attaching to a supposed POST MORTEM discipline which does not belong to the power of the Cross. In other words, this view I have mentioned, if correct, supersedes entirely the necessity of an atonement, and the whole scheme of grace. It makes the restoration of the lost a matter of personal merit, and the greatest blunder in the government of the universe was when the divine Christ went, unnecessarily, through the agonies of His passion, to save those who can as well be saved by a brief period of discipline in hell. Heaven itself would be amazed at the appearance, after some period relatively brief, among the ransomed throng, of those who have served out their time in torment, and who now come, not "with their robes washed in the blood of the Lamb," but with the smell of purgatorial fires upon them; who, poor objects, have been conquered, not by love, but by that oft abused consideration, the fear of torment. How startling to all such dreams and delusions comes the word, like a thunder crash, from Jehovah's lips: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."

It may seem strange to some that the tender, loving, gentle Saviour is the great announcer of the solemn truth of man's danger of eternal ruin. Says the Rev. Dr. Hamilton, in his very able Congregational Lecture in England, in 1847: "It cannot escape our notice, it cannot but awaken our surprise to find more terrible descriptions of future punishment in the teachings of Christ than in the former dispensations, where they might seem more appropriate. We are prepared for the blasts of the trumpet, which ring out from the precipices of Sinai; for its 'blackness, and darkness, and tempest.' We are prepared for the curses of Ebal. But when we enter this dispensation, we await the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

We expect an infinite tenderness, and we find it. He pleads to weeping, He agonizes to blood. Yet what voice ever told so much of hell? He reiterates illustration after illustration, He heaps image upon image, He adds warning to warning. Like successive and loudening thunder-peals these repetitions roll along until startled sinners are made to realize the terrors of the place 'Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.' These last words are quoted by Christ from Isaiah lxvi. 24, where they manifestly refer to the ungodly, as also in the apocryphal book of Judith, xvi. 21. "For he will give fire and worms into their flesh, that they may burn and feel for ever, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

The torments referred to by Isaiah are associated with the Valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna. The fires of this valley were first kindled for idolatry; afterwards, to debase the scene of moral pollution, the refuse of the city of Jerusalem was heaped there and burnt; and so, says Isaiah, at the very end of his prophecies, after describing the new heavens and the new earth, "They shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." At the time of Christ, this geographical term, with its terrible associations, was used to represent the eternal torments of the wicked. For a full statement of this point, and discussions as to the evidence of the Targums and Jewish testimony in general, I can confidently refer to Bishop Merrill's "New Testament Idea of Hell," chapters x.-xiii., and to Dr. Pusey's "What is Faith?" pp. 47-96. He, indeed, would be a "Son of Thunder" who would preach the terrors of the law as fully and as faithfully as did Christ. In His merciful incarnation He thus appealed to the obdurate: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" In His judicial glory He declares He will say to them, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." The entire Bible harmonizes with such teachings: "The smoke of the torment of

the wicked ascendeth up for ever." "They have no rest day nor night." "The wicked shall dwell with everlasting burnings." "The beast and false prophet shall be cast into a lake of fire, and shall be tormented for ever and ever." And just here notice the significant words of Jesus, "the Lord who weigheth the spirits," relative to Judas, "It had been good for that man if he had never been born." Nay, Divine Teacher, we cannot believe Thee, if Restorationism be true, for if, after the lapse of ages, heaven be gained, it would be "good for that man" that he ever saw the light. His would be later but, after all, eternal glory that would counterpoise any conditions, that would repay the torments of the lowest depths of hell. But, alas! to the wicked is reserved "the mist of darkness for ever," and "the blackness of darkness for ever," "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." "They shall be tormented day and night for ever." Anticipating these fuller revelations of the New Testament, from the Old there come the significant words, "They that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," harmonizing with Christ's words, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into everlasting life."

I know the interpretation that Restorationists have given to the word KOLASIS here as if it meant only disciplinary suffering, but I also know that the same word may be consistently used as a synonym for TIMORIA or punitive suffering in the only three other places, where it occurs in the New Testament, and forty times in the LXX., is the word so used. Among classical writers so employing the word there may be mentioned, E. G., Plutarch, who was born in the apostolic period, and fifty times does he use the words KOLOZO or KOLASIS, as involving TIMORIA or the judicial sufferings of the wicked. Prof. Sophocles, recently deceased, a Greek lexicographer and distinguished Professor at Yale College, in his Glossary of later and Byzantine Greek defines KOLASIS as "punishment, torment, and damnation," referring for his authorities to the New Testament, to

the apostolic institutions, and the Greek Fathers. It is interesting to enquire just here what disciplinary design, in any case, can appear in this KOLASIS or punishment that awaits the wicked if it be everlasting.

This leads me to the enquiry as to the meaning of the adjective AIONIOS or its equivalents, found in so many of the passages I have quoted relative to the eternity of perdition. There is a general readiness to recognize the adjective AIDIOS as being derived from AEI, ever, but the contention of some Restorationists is that AIONIOS is not so derived. It would be a convenience if they would tell us what is its derivation. Aristotle is probably a competent witness here. He says, DE CÆLO i. 9: "The boundary that incloses and comprehends all time and space is AION, a continuous existence immortal and divine, deriving its name from AEI EINAL. I think we may safely challenge any opponent to show cause why AIONIOS should not be rendered EVERLASTING. But Canon Farrar defines AION as simply "something above and beyond time," "an age, an indefinite period, long or short." That is because it is not said when it will end or that it positively will last for ever, therefore it will not last for ever. In other words, because it has no end, therefore it must have an end.

I really cannot discover from searching the views of various Restorationists on this critical point, that their argument has any more validity than what I have indicated. I know how we are reminded of our frequent use of such expressions, eternal rocks, mountains, etc., and the Poet Laureate has befriended the Restorationists by stamping his authority upon the newly-coined word aeonian, as he speaks of "the aeonian hills." With reference to all such uses of the word AIONIOS, I think the view of Moses Stuart, in his discussion on Future Punishment, is incontestable, viz., that this adjective implies such a perpetuity of existence as is possible in the nature of the subject; that eternal hills means, for example, hills that will last as long as it is possible for hills to last, and "eternal

punishment" means punishment that will last as long as the immortal soul being punished can last, that is, for ever. I have not time to apply this to the various instances cited from classical writers in which these words AION and AIONIOS occur, but I think the principle stated will stand the test of such an examination. In the New Testament the word AION is used ninety-five times, and always in harmony with this principle; sixteen times in praise of God; five, relative to the divine existence; four, the kingdom of Christ; one, God's word; eighteen, as "ever," with the negative "never;" seven, an indefinite period in the past; twenty-nine, in the sense of age or world, either present or future, Jewish or Christian; nine, future happiness of the righteous; and five, future punishment of the wicked, viz., Mark iii. 29; 2 Peter ii. 17; Jude 13; Rev. xiv. 11, xix. 3, xx. 10. A similar analysis, showing the use of the adjective AIONIOS in the sixty-six passages in which it occurs, strongly establishes the view that has been stated, fifty-one instances having reference to the everlasting benefits of the atonement, and six to the endless perdition of the lost, viz., Matt xix. 8, xxv. 41-46; Mark iii. 29; 2 Thess. i. 9; and Jude 7. Dörner, in the 3rd Part of his ESCHATOLOGY, admits that AION or AIONIOS, in the very nature of the case, in reference to the eternal life of believers, signifies "endless duration." I know not why it should signify less concerning the lost.

Canon Farrar confidently asks, why, if punishment be everlasting, was not some more certain word than AIONIOS used to describe it, EG. GR., ATELENTETOS, endless, or AKATALUTOS or APERANTOS, interminable? Let us see how these would serve. Paul uses this last word in one place (1 Tim. i. 4), and what is the instance? Just this, endless—GENEALOGIES! Had punishment been generally described as APERANTOS, perhaps Canon Farrar would have held more orthodox views; but some one would be assailing him with the question, how could APERANTOS mean everlasting, when Paul applies this very word with a necessarily limited sense, to "genea-

logies?" Principal Bartlett, of Dartmouth College, has clearly shown that the words used by the Holy Spirit are (a) appropriate, (b) well known, and (c) apprehensible modes of expressing the eternity of perdition, and that the very words suggested by Canon Farrar are (a) infrequent in classic Greek, and almost unknown in the Hellenistic, two of them never appearing in the LXX., and the third but once, and (b) not so decisive as the words employed.

I began the discussion of this point with the admission of Theodore Parker; I close it with the following admission, made two years ago by Dr. Ellis, a distinguished Unitarian teacher in the United States, in the presence of a numerous assembly at Boston: "Fifty years of study, reflection, and reading, devoted chiefly to the Bible and literature relating to it, have brought me to the conclusion that it, as a whole, is an orthodox book. It teaches what is called orthodoxy. The immense majority of its readers, by following the natural sense of the book, by taking it literally, by keeping to the impressions made by its principal texts, find orthodoxy in it. It is only by means of forced explanations, and by skilful distinctions that we liberals come to find in it anything else. The sects called Evangelical are evidently in the right when they maintain that their views of the Bible and of its doctrine establish a profound distinction between their faith and ours." I know of no logical alternative but to accept the doctrine I have stated, or reject with it the authority of Holy Scriptures.

II. HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE.

I very much regret that limit of time deprives me of the pleasure of tracing the history of the doctrine of Retribution. I must simply be contented with stating its modifications.

1. Restorationism, originating in the third century in the school of Alexandria, represented by Clement, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzum, Schliermacher, Neander, F. W. Maurice, Farrar, Kingsley, Dale, Brown, Parker, and Allen. In here citing

Farrar's name, I do not forget that in his *Mercy and Judgment* he disowns being a Restorationist, and says, while claiming to be in substantial agreement with Dr. Pusey and Cardinal Newman, "I expressly stated my belief that there was a hell, and that I could not teach that all would ultimately be delivered from it." This disclaimer illustrates the honesty of the man, and at the same time is an illustration of the illogical nature of much of his work. As Restorationism seems to be defended by a strong array of names, it is necessary to observe that, on the very clear showing of Dr. Pusey, Origenism was specifically condemned by the 5th Ecumenical Council; and Hagenbach classes it among heresies in his remarks (vol. ii. p. 376): "This doctrine made its appearance only in connection with OTHER HERETICAL notions, and especially with the otherwise anti-Origenistic Millenarianism." Philip Schaff, in an able article on *Studies in Eschatology*, in the last October number of the "*Presbyterian Review*," says: "Since the middle of the sixth century the doctrine of the final salvation of all men has been regarded as a heresy by all except by the Universalists."

2. The Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, originating with Augustine, and established as a dogma by Gregory I., in the sixth century.

3. The Anglo-Catholic view of the intermediate state, represented by Dr. Pusey in his sermons and in his very valuable work on "*What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?*" and which looks somewhat to the Romanist view in associating with the intermediate state the moral improvement of believers as preparatory to their entrance into eternal glory.

4. The Reformed Theology expressed in the Westminster Confession which, in its opposition to Romanism, goes so far as to reject the whole doctrine of the intermediate state, even in the form in which it is held by Evangelical Anglicans and Methodists.

5. The views of Dorner as to a POST MORTEM probation when all the departed heathen, and others comparatively irresponsible

here, shall have definite opportunity of accepting or rejecting Christ.

6. Universalism in America, in its earlier, more serious, and Calvinistic form, in which the sovereignty of God and the irresistibility of grace were associated with the doctrine of the universality of the atonement, represented before 1790, by Rely and Murray.

7. Universalism in its later and looser form.

8. The view of the Annihilation of the wicked, and with this the doctrines of Psychopannychy, or Sleep of the Soul, and Conditional Immortality, represented by John Locke, Rothe, and Archbishop Whately.

9. The peculiar view of Rev. G. W. Olver, in the Fernley Lecture, in England, in 1878, that the lost spirits will have no bodies, and will have no fellowship with any being, but each incorporeal spirit will spend eternity in solitude and despair.

10. The thought of Joseph Cook, in 1882, that in the case of multitudes who die without seeming to reach any permanence of character, either bad or good, the experience of death so quickens their mental and moral powers, that they fully realize the vast importance of the issues before them, and, in most instances, submit themselves, he thinks, to God, and trust in Christ; or else they abandon themselves to confirmed opposition to God. This view is designed to give some reply to the objection against the doctrine of permanence of character, that in by far the most instances, to all appearance, there is no permanence of character reached in this life. (See very able answer to Cook, by Dr. Buckley, in the New York "Christian Advocate.")

11. The view of Bishop Martensen, a Lutheran bishop of Denmark, recently deceased, that the words of Scripture relating to punishment clearly favor the doctrine of its being everlasting; but that there is in revelation what he called an antinomy, or theological paradox, similar to that between divine sovereignty and human freedom, in the solution of which he tended to Restorationism.

12. The view of Archbishop Tillotson, that, though God threatens to punish eternally, He does not intend to carry out the threat. To this Bledsoe well replies: "We shall only say that if the Almighty really undertook to deceive the world for its own good, it is a pity He did not take the precaution to prevent the Archbishop from detecting the cheat, and that He suffered the secret to get into the possession of one who has so indiscreetly published it to the whole world."

As we are only now in the formative period of dogma in the department of Eschatology, it is hoped that where so many good men differ, some Athanasius or Augustine or Anselm may appear to aid us in reaching more uniformity of view out of all these discordant elements. In the meantime we will do wisely, as believers did before Athanasius, to cling to the simple teachings of Scripture, and this will determine the scientific form of the dogma when it is formulated.

III. OBJECTIONS.

In stating, as I will try to state impartially, the objections to the Scriptural doctrine which I have presented, I must premise that to very much that is contained in revelation, both the mind and heart of the unrenewed man is directly opposed. This especially relates to the enormity of sin and the justice of God, and appears in the first objection I specify, viz.:

(1) That there is no equitable proportion between the sinner's transgression and his eternal punishment; that as John Quincy Adams is reported to have expressed it, "It is impossible for a man to commit sin enough in this life to deserve eternal damnation." The objection is otherwise stated that, at the worst, life in most instances is but a series of blunders, into which men inadvertently fall, and it is contended very plausibly that between a moralist and imperfect Christian, between a good sinner and a bad saint, there is not enough difference to justify their diverging destinies in eter-

nity. Underlying this objection, thus variously presented, there is a manifest misconception of the nature of sin. The demerit of sin, in the first place, is not to be measured by the time spent in its commission. One man may condense into a moment's execution more infernal malice, more of the quintessence of vice than another man exhibits in the sinful career of a lifetime. What Gregory XVI. said, in condemning a liberal work of the priest Lamennais in 1834: "It is small in compass but enormous in wickedness," is true indeed of every sin. Suppose a man pulls up but one rail from a track just before the express train is due, and then retires to witness the crash, does he not deserve to be hanged as a villain as much as if he spent hours in tearing up the whole track?

The measure of the desert of sin is not mathematical, but moral. Sin is necessarily momentary, but its consequences are vast; not, given so many years of sin there shall be so many years of penalty; but given the offence of high treason against God, the highest possible crime known in the universe; of setting at defiance the law of the Supreme Being, and of insulting and rejecting the divine Saviour, the representative of the majesty of that law, who, with His hands dripping with His own life-blood, offers us a free pardon so dearly bought. For such a one there is forgiveness neither in this world nor the world to come. Of such the Saviour said, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." As to the mere "moralist," compared with the dying and penitent criminal, I think there is an infinite difference in favor of the latter. He at last grounds his weapons of rebellion. The other, on the supposition before us, does not. He illustrates what our guilty, despairing world so much needs to know, that "whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall find mercy." The other, in the circumstances supposed, is guilty of the great crime against God before described. If he is not, then there is, of course, hope in his death, and all the more hope because of his morality. I decline, however, to test the doctrine before us by applying it in

any judicial way to individuals, for who made us to be judges of human destiny, or to deal judicially with individual cases? It has been said, "This is too sacred a region for the vulgar tread of a mere human curiosity, or the idle play of a mere human sympathy." This one thing settles my mind calmly and satisfactorily, with reference to the seeming mystery of human destiny, "The Judge of all the earth will do right." I am certain no one will go to hell by whom its torments are not deserved.

(2) Again, to the Scriptural doctrine of Retribution there is the objection based upon a defective view of divine benevolence; and it is said that any father that would make such a use of his power over his children as God makes of His omnipotence, in the eternal punishment of the wicked, would be regarded by men as a monster. It is just here to be observed, that God is now doing, and has been doing ever since the creation of man, what no earthly father would do, and what no earthly government would allow him to do, even if he had the disposition. What father would drown his children as God drowned the old world? What father would burn his children as God burned His in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? What father would make his children suffer from such woes and sickness and pain and death, as beset our world? And yet God is good, indeed so good, says the opponent, that "God is love," and nothing else.

What is thought to be a crucial test here is thrust upon us by Farrar, with a skilful ARGUMENTUM AD HOMINEM, thus: Would it not really give us some satisfaction to find out in eternity that we were mistaken as to the scope of divine mercy, and that the punishment of sin is not everlasting? I reply, that anything I find with certainty concerning God, at any time, whatever it is, gives me satisfaction; and, therefore, I depend upon His perfect justice, wisdom, and mercy, as I receive from His word the doctrine of eternal punishment, so clearly and certainly revealed. Does a child, in a well-regulated household, derive satisfaction in discovering that

his delinquent brother is not punished as threatened? Possibly he does; but if so, it is because he fails to realize the importance of discipline. If he is old enough, and competent to realize the importance of this, he feels that order, and therefore happiness, in that home are most seriously imperilled. As a child of God, depending in my weakness upon His wisdom and goodness, I tell you I derive no satisfaction from man contradicting God when He says, "The transgressor shall be destroyed forever, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs." On the contrary, I feel that in the burning fury of the Almighty against sin, there is a guarantee of order in the universe, which is one of the best pledges of divine goodness for the welfare of His creatures. But, it is said, is not God so merciful, that if a sinner repent in hell God would receive him? In the abstract I believe that for the sake of Christ He would; but the sinner will not repent that he might have life, and that is just why he is there; and the certainty that he will not, is becoming greater through successive ages of eternity. To suppose, however, that a lost soul repents, is to suppose that he is not in hell at all; for, as we have already seen, hell is a state of confirmed antagonism to God and to good. But, persists the objector, the only object of punishment is reformation, and an excess of punishment above this is unjust. It is what Jeremy Bentham has called "so much suffering in waste." The objector may be just a little confused here. Does he mean the reformation of the offender only, or the moral improvement of society in general? If he means the former, he is manifestly forgetting that penalties are very often inflicted, in human law, which can have no reformatory design upon the criminal. The culprit who is hanged, I suppose, is not very much reformed as a member of society.

If the thought be as to the welfare of the universe, who can say that the eternal punishment of the wicked is not a necessity; and that this little planet, favored as probably no other province in the great empire of God has been, by the incarnation of His Son, should

not supply to the universe the spectacle of a minority of our guilty race with devils suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, as a warning and as a proof that it is "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." But is it so, that when punishment ceases to be corrective it ceases to be just? Then it follows that men with a seared conscience, and with hands dyed in human blood, should go free, for they are too inveterate to be reformed, and all punishment that does not reform is cruel. Criminals, too far gone to be redeemed, should suffer nothing at the hands of God or man, for no punishment will reform them, and all punishment that does not reform is cruel. There is no encouraging evidence that the devil and his angels are being reformed, for "the devil sinneth from the beginning." If they are irrecoverably lost, their sufferings are unjust, for all punishment that does not reform is cruel. In the apocalyptic vision we read that when the fifth angel poured out his vial of wrath, the wicked "gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of Heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." This harmonizes with the verdict of history, that punishment, in most instances, does not reform but harden. Yet it is just and necessary. The whole objection before us, based on the divine benevolence, simply loses sight of other attributes of God which are of equal importance. The world needs to be told that God is good; but to-day it needs more to be told that God is just, and to be made to

"Feel how awful goodness is."

"Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God;" or, as it is in the Genevan Bible, and Cranmer's, and Tyndale's, "the kindness and rigorousness of God." This clause contains the substance of the gospel.

(3) Again, it is objected that if hell be a state of confirmed sinfulness, it makes sin there a necessity, and consequently it loses its criminality. The objector seeks to betray us into necessitarianism,

which we, of course, reject. God dooms no man to sin, either here or hereafter. It is not so much that the soul will sin forever because it is consigned to hell, but rather it is consigned to hell because, in its own freedom, it wills to sin forever. Adam's offence entails corruption upon the human race, but the human race is in no wise responsible for Adam's offence, and therefore not for the inherited corruption; but the doomed spirit entails upon himself in eternity a state of confirmed antagonism to God by his own choice in life. The choice is his own, not Adam's, not the Almighty's, but his own, and here is surely a sufficient basis for his perpetual responsibility to God for the consequences of his choice. This state of confirmed sinfulness is sometimes reached even in this world; still, it is not a state of absolutely necessary sinfulness, for it might have been avoided. Sin ceases to be sin when it is necessitated. Jerry McAuley's testimony, in the Water Street Mission, is very wise and relevant. He says: "I used to ask, Why had God made me a thief and a rascal, while He gave other people money and fun? And then it came across me that He hadn't done one o' these things. It was me that brought myself to what I was."

(4) The next objection I notice is based on the social relationships that may have subsisted between the saved and the lost in this life, an objection which, I confess, seems at first sight very serious. Says the objector, "Do you tell me that a father is going to be perfectly happy, singing psalms in heaven, when he knows that his son is enduring the torments of eternal damnation?" I readily admit—I glory in the fact—that no religion condemns and abhors like the Christian religion those who are "without natural affection," but the ground I take is, that the same divine book contains these three things: Due regard for the bonds of kindred, the unalloyed happiness of the redeemed, and the eternal sufferings of the lost. Reconcile them as we may, they are all there. I have no more right to reject the last than the first. I presume that the redeemed spirit is so completely in harmony with God that he finds

perfect satisfaction in all that God does. To say that I so love my sovereign that I would indignantly resist any attempt made upon her life or her authority, though the regicide were my own child, is to suppose a circumstance by no means remarkable. Now, if the Sovereign opposed be the Supreme Ruler, the fountain of all good, I can conceive it possible that the redeemed spirit may be so lost in God, as to regard with perfect satisfaction the execution of His judgments, whomsoever they may crush. This very faith makes me the more earnest here, that my child be not among those upon whom shall descend like an avalanche the terrors of those judgments. But let us look into the matter a little further. Are the angels perfectly happy? Yes. But how can that be, when, according to the Restorationist, for a thousand or a million of years their lost friends are in torment? The thought that these torments shall terminate may affect the degree of distress for the lost, if such the saved at all have, but assuredly cannot remove the distress itself on the supposition of the objector. But just here I wish to ask again, does any earthly parent love his offspring more than God loves His creatures? Yet God is perfectly and infinitely happy in His own self-existent glory and goodness; and withal He witnesses "the whole creation groaning and travailing together in pain," and His intelligent creatures suffering indescribable anguish, in many instances, too, when they are innocent. If the great Father God can witness such sufferings, I am confident that in some way He will enable His ransomed ones to regard with perfect contentment every exercise of His high prerogative, whether in wrath or mercy, that their language may be: "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord, but let them that love thee be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might."

(5) Again, it is objected that the perpetuity of sin and its punishment in hell will forever detract from the divine glory. I do not think so. I believe the glory and majesty of Queen Victoria's rule are as much displayed in our prisons as among law-abiding subjects.

The objector falls into the palpable error of Voltaire, who tries to thrust us into a dilemma by saying, "Your God is either unable or unwilling to put an end to sin. He seems to be opposed to sin. He cannot, therefore, be omnipotent." As if the natural omnipotence of God determined the moral character of His creatures. Is virtue a matter of mechanics? Is goodness produced by physical force? Can electricity or gravitation or any other of the great natural forces, which are God's fingers, clutch a sinner and lift him up into purity and obedience? The objector is simply forgetting that in the discussion before us we are in the realm of the moral, not of the physical. If the perpetuity of sin seems mysterious, it is certainly much less so than its origin. Archbishop Whately said very appropriately, "I will undertake to explain the final condition of the wicked, when some one will explain the existence of the wicked." But most startling and shocking of all would be an attempted violent termination of sin by physical force. When it is objected that it is not in harmony with our sentiments and with the fitness of things that sin should be eternal, I reply that it is not in harmony with our sentiments that sin should exist at all. But in the manifestation of our vanity in opposition to certain facts in the divine government, do we not deserve the reproof of Butler, when he says, "We make very free, by our sentiments, if I mistake not, with the divine goodness by our speculations," or the sterner reproof of revelation, "Moreover, the Lord answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it." We may depend upon it, God will look after the fitness of things without our instructing Him how to rule a universe.

I have now tried to answer all the objections I can think of against the Scriptural doctrine of Retribution. In conclusion, I submit that, as ministers, we need to regard this doctrine as a most vital one in revealed religion. I think the minister is making a

most serious error, who, with a spurious catholicity, slights this truth, and either says nothing about it, or speaks very unambiguously. If this be not a vital doctrine I know not what is. But, says the objector, "May not a Restorationist get to heaven?" I answer, by reminding the objector, especially if he be an Arminian, that he may take the whole round of Christian doctrine, and, according to the test he is trying to apply here, he will find none about which there have not been held erroneous views by very good men. I think that Channing, a Unitarian; and Molinos, a Roman Catholic; and Socrates, altogether without revealed religion, are in heaven: but, if they are, does that prove that the doctrines they failed to receive are not vital? That a doctrine is vital is not disproved by the fact that there have been good men who have not received it. If that be the test, I defy you to name a single specific doctrine of the Christian system that is vital? No! Doctrines are vital really in proportion to their practical bearing upon human destiny, and in this respect the truth before us is one of the most vital parts of the message divinely committed to us. A man may hold erroneous views concerning retribution as concerning many other things, and be saved; but depend upon it, if this doctrine be generally abandoned, so also will be the authority of Scripture, which is so unequivocally in its favor, and with the Bible will be abandoned the whole system of Christian truth, and with Christian dogma will soon go Christian morals, and with Christian morals Christian civilization. We may rest assured if we import any latitudinarianism here, we are imperilling our spiritual and moral force over men's lives and characters. Our revival aggressiveness is paralyzed; our missionary enterprise is dead and gone, when laxity of faith prevails here. Do you think the gallant lifeboat service, amid the surf and storm of the British coast, would maintain its heroism if, by some strange infatuation, its members were led to think that drowning men disappear for a time in the dark, cold waters, but they will come to life again after some months and re-appear

among men? The inspiration of their heroism is the thought that the shipwrecked must be rescued at once, or they are hopelessly lost. This doctrine is so vital, I think we should regard with approval the action of the Southern Baptist Missionary Board in the United States two years ago, when it refused to send to China two missionaries previously selected and equipped, because at the last moment it was discovered that they did not hold the orthodox view of Retribution. Some one has said, "He who has but a small abhorrence of evil has but a feeble allegiance to good." I do not say that, in the case of able and earnest men like Neander, Tholuck, and Farrar, but in the case of multitudes of unconverted men, who are finding solace in the destructive error of Restorationism, and in the case of hundreds of formal Church members, who are drifting in this direction, the whole tendency is explained by laxness concerning the enormity of sin and its terrific consequences as revealed in the Sacred Scriptures. Such are they to whom God speaks by Ezekiel xiii. 22: "With lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life."

Let us hold the truth of Christ in the spirit of Christ. If cold, hard dogmatism is anywhere out of place, it is in the presentation to the people of the awful truths which have just engaged our attention. No man should preach on hell without a very rich baptism of the spirit of love and tenderest sympathy. "Knowing therefore the TERRORS of the Lord, we PERSUADE men." Whatever Canon Farrar sometimes illiberally says to the contrary, they who have believed in the eternal punishment of sin are they who have done most to save men from sin. Have John Howe, Alleine, Baxter, Wesley, Whitfield, Jonathan Edwards, Fletcher, Chalmers, and the great evangelists of all the Churches, been less marked by tender sympathy for men than the representatives of the various forms of error in Eschatology? Is it Universalists and Restorationists that have gone with the love of Christ constraining them to compel men

to come in from their want and peril to the benefits offered by Christ? Nay, verily, the Church and the world cannot afford to forget what is due to the mighty men of God who, with glowing zeal, and yearning pity, and tenderest sympathy, have labored to snatch men as brands from the eternal burnings of perdition! May God baptize every Christian minister with this spirit, that the world may see that we are more concerned in saving souls than in saving our creeds.



ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

BY THE REV'D A. CARMAN, D. D.,
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THERE is no doubt the able author of the book, for which by request this subsidiary paper is written, will fully treat the scriptural argument upon the awful theme we have in hand. It may be better for me to confine myself to some exterior and supplementary considerations; not by any means independent of the Holy Scriptures, any more than the state of the air is independent of the sun on a cloudy day; but which are better displayed by the light of Scripture, and come more fully into view, as the great fundamental and constitutional facts of our moral being. Indeed for the knowledge we have of the doctrines of what we call Natural Religion, we are mainly, though unconsciously, indebted to the clearer light of Revelation and Inspiration. The millions of the human family who, destitute of the sacred Scriptures, are living under the requirements of natural religion, are by no means the races of men that are most fully acquainted with the doctrines and demands of that very economy under which they act, and under whose provisions they shall be judged. This is one of the sad defects of the religion of human experience and reason, that it cannot make known and felt its teachings and sanctions to the restraint of evil, the security of the

good, the enlightenment of the mind, and the comfort of the heart. The facts and relations are the same without the Bible, but the Bible is required to bring them clearly into the light.

All around the globe the movements of the air, the rivers in the seas, and the currents of the oceans are dependent on the sun, and yet there are regions that do not see the sun for many months, In the gorges, and deep valleys amid the mountains the direct solar ray scarcely penetrates. Many good things and beautiful visions are lacking, that the direct solar ray would supply. And yet, there is light enough to live and to sustain many forms of life, and make human life not only possible but even enjoyable. So the solar ray, oblique, or reflective, or obscured or even diffracted and distorted may support an existence or disclose facts and phenomena that in utter darkness would be impossible or inappreciable. Thus without question to Divine Revelation, we owe vastly more than men ordinarily give it credit for. While it does not make natural religion so called, or constitute or appoint our moral and religious relations, it does throw a vast amount of light on them, once constituted and appointed.

Wherefore in a discussion of religious matters we may not wholly divest ourselves of the influence of revelation, even though we adduce our considerations from reason and the evident constitution of things. Men make a grave mistake when they imagine the Bible makes religion. The Bible makes religion no more than the grammar or the dictionary makes language ; no more than the arithmetic or the geometry makes mathematics ; or chronicles and history makes events. The grammar and the dictionary reveal the power and use of language ; the arithmetic and the geometry lead onward and upward in the mathematics ; and chronicles and history show the philosophic succession of events, and often indicate how disaster may be averted and success achieved. But there was language before grammars ; calculations before arithmetics ; and actions before records. So there were moral relations and religious

duties before even the most venerable of the sacred books ; and it is these relations and their consequent duties with which we have to do in religion. In fact they make, they are the religion. The Bible makes them clear, and universally and decisively authoritative ; but does not constitute them. The lighthouse does not make the ocean, the ship, nor the cargo ; but it enables the storm tossed mariner on the dangerous coast to bring his vessel with its priceless cargo into a good haven. So the Holy Scriptures shed light on the way we are going. In many regards indeed they are as the sun, high in the heavens shedding down fulness of light, upon our origin, relations, duties and destiny. For the full argument and conclusive declarations upon such a subject as Eternal Punishment, we must then of course turn to the Holy writ in infinite condescension and love given us ; but Holy Writ will have its undoubted and indubitable credentials in the nature and acts of God and the nature of man.

Before we reach the Divine Scriptures we have large and rich volumes of instruction, if we but knew how to read them. If men by departure from God had not lost this knowledge, even natural religion had taught many truths that now come to us only by Revelation. We have, intended of God as great instructors, our moral instincts, the constitution and course of nature, the political and social laws of our being, and the providential government of the world. And when men deny any scriptural doctrine, it is by no means an irrational or irreligious mental process, to inquire what is the voice of these other oracles of God upon the question. It is not asking too much of men to require that the same principles of common justice, common prudence, common right, and common sense, that govern them in their views and decisions of other matters, should be operative and decisive also in religion.

Bishop Butler takes rational ground when he argues from natural to revealed religion ; and Archbishop Whately is on logical and reasonable premises, when he urges that the ordinary objections

against Christianity lie with equal cogency against the constitution and course of nature, and the proceedings of every day life as everywhere accepted by men. So comprehensive and direct are these great revealers of the mind of God and teachers of the human race, that when it is the existence of religion or the fact of human accountability that is in question, their utterances are plain and emphatic : that God and men are bound together in moral relations, which of course is religion ; and that the natural sequence of creation, preservation, and moral constitution and endowment, is that God justly holds man responsible, which of course is human accountability. So that for religion, per se, in its obligations of worship, gratitude, love and obedience, the Bible might not be required ; nor for the knowledge that every man shall give account of himself to God. But it is a very different question when we want to know the right religion, the true God, the kind of worship, the character of the obedience, the degree of gratitude and love, and the nature, extent and consequences of the accountability. The Bible, a revelation from God, is therefore utterly indispensable to men ; and, with divine credentials, is absolutely authoritative over them, What it determines, it determines peremptorily, supremely, decisively, alone and forever. Once established as the word of God, there is no question, no modification, no appeal ; and on such a subject as the nature and duration of the future punishment of wicked men, which is of course immediately connected with human accountability, it must give the full and final utterance. Yet Holy Writ itself clearly recognizes the knowledge of God prior to itself, and the knowledge of duties, and of the consequences of their observance and disregard. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are

made, even His eternal power and Godhead ; so that they are without excuse ; because that when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."

Having so far justified the right and the ability of natural religion to speak to its extent upon even so weighty a subject as the future punishment of the wicked, our next business is to seek the declarations and even the intimations of those venerable instructors, universal through time and place, to our human race ; and even to-day, after so long a time of inspired oracles, the guide of more millions of the family of man, than the voice of the Holy Apostles and Prophets and of the Son of God Himself. Their utterances, had they been heeded and cherished, treasured and obeyed, would have been to-day in the accumulated wisdom of the centuries a code of morals and a voice of authority and power, harmonious with inspired truth, and second only to it in majesty, excellence and grace.

While we cannot estimate the Bible too highly, too keenly feel our dependence upon it, or to be too deeply grateful for the plane of light and power to which it has lifted us, it is certain we set too little store by the sources of religious knowledge God has ordained outside of the Scriptures, and we might say antecedent to the Scriptures : sources of knowledge that have opened up different dispensations and economies in the divine government of the world.

It ought not to escape our notice that inside the Bible itself there are different dispensations, so they might well be expected in the broader field of deductive and inductive religion. And as John the Revelator, in heaven's effulgence saw four creatures giving glory and honor and thanks to Him that sat on the throne who liveth for ever and ever, and joining in creation's song, before one was found to open the seven fold sealed book and send forth redemption's chorus ; so may I be permitted in reason's dimmer ray to enquire in all humility of four ancient teachers of the human race, hoary

with years and reverend in wisdom ; viz., The moral sentiments and instincts of men ; the constitution and course of nature ; the principles and laws of human society, and the providential government of the world. Our first inquiry then is what do the moral sentiments and instincts of the human race, say upon the eternal punishment of the wicked? The natural unbiased unperverted instinct is a safe guide. And why not? For it is the voice of God. Instinct, says Dr. Paley, is an impulse prior to knowledge and independent of reason.

Such is natural instinct whereby the brute chooses its food, the wild beast pursues its game, the bird builds its nest, the spider weaves its web, the beaver constructs his dam and the bee his cells. The impulse is all there is of it, the intelligence, the judgment being supplied by another—a superior being. In the case of man, a moral being, the moral sentiment is attached to the instinct, so that while there is the unerring impulse, there is also, removed backward a step, the moral sentiment ; which again when unbiased, unperverted, is a safe guide ; for it is the judgment, the conclusion of a reasoning process, which reasoning process is so to speak done by another, a higher being, and the judgment, the conclusion only furnished to the mind, or as we say, it is the first flash of intelligence in the uncolored native light of reason. And with this first flash of intelligence, is joined unerringly and irresistibly the right and proper feeling in the just and due degree ; which feeling gives to that stage of the moral activity the name sentiment rather than judgment, or conclusion, though it is a native judgment attended by, and inseparable from, the virgin feeling, out of whose happy union comes the heaven born impulse we call moral instinct. Any one will see that in the consideration of these sentiments and instincts we must keep them clear of the tangled and uncertain processes of reasoning. Reasoning may in the end reach the same point, as do sentiment and instinct, but the latter come to the point by one leap in a clear light, while the former feels its way often

through crooked paths and with much hesitancy. Nor must we allow the inconsistencies and irregularities of human action to color or hinder our vision on this matter. What we want is, to come at what are really moral sentiments and instincts, and then learn the lessons they teach. Let us have no pretenders or deceivers urged upon us, but catch the clear light in the free action of the soul. We are dealing with verities, with the first and most substantial verities, and with those that in a good sense are fundamental to all other verities, so we need not fear the tests. The common language of men and the common conduct of mankind will aid us in our discrimination, so that we may readily lay out of our thought such sentiments and impulses as are not simultaneous with reasons primal ray.

Thinking upon these subjects you will have observed that a moral action, like the general of an army, has both an advance guard and a retinue, and it has also an army of mighty troops following.

For present purposes we have only to do with what occurs in the man himself and is known to the man himself, that is, with the facts of moral consciousness. When an action is proposed—that is, when it is proposed to do or not to do a certain thing, for not doing, as well as doing, is a moral act, which is to say, not doing is doing, morally considered ;—when an action is proposed, there at once arises the question in its moral relations—is it right? Possessing a conscience, we cannot avoid this question. We cannot thrust it aside, crowd it down, or push it away. It forces itself upon us and will be answered, by the decisive yea for the right ; the decisive nay for the wrong ; or doubt as to the moral quality of the action, and action under such doubt is wrong.

Doubt as to the expediency of an action is one thing ; as to its right or wrong, is quite another, Doubt as to expediency may lead to quick decisions and prompt measures, but doubt as to right enforces careful examination, and quickly reaches a basis of action

safe for the individual, and hence at length for society, even if it be to give conscience the benefit of the doubt. The determination as to right or wrong, comes from comparison with some external law or standard, but come it must. Then having decided it right, we feel impelled to do it; wrong, impelled not to do it. We may go contrary to the impulse, but the impulse is with the sense of right, nevertheless. In doing and when done, if right, there is a satisfaction, a pleasure—virtue is its own reward—but if wrong there is a burden, a pain, a grief, a condemnation. The impulse is the instinct, and the feeling has more to do with the sentiment. Again, when we have done right, especially if at risk and cost, we feel we have a claim upon some one for acknowledgment, aye even for reward: and if this is withheld we are deeply conscious that a wrong, an injustice, is done us.

This is the sentiment of merit. On the other hand, if we have done wrong and are conscious of it, we feel guilty, and know and keenly feel we deserve punishment. The criminal true to his instincts and sentiments, calls down justice upon his own head. His only relief is in suffering the punishment due his misdeeds and offences. His soul within him, if honest, cries out for punishment. The moral nature combines with the moral law, to utter thunders deeper, louder, longer, than covered Sinai's trembling summit with mystery and majesty. These are undeniably the facts of our moral constitution. They do not depend on the Bible and Revelation. They depend on the nature of God and the nature of man. Had we no other book to read, it is written here in our consciousness in unmistakable characters that transgression of law, wrong-doing, sin must be punished. Punishment is as much a part of the moral economy under which we live, as the law of God or the conscience of man.

Punishment and reward are co-extensive and stand or fall together. They are both in the human consciousness, the soul's honest claim of reward, the soul's honest call for punishment. With

our perverted nature we clamor for OTHER'S PUNISHMENT and for OUR OWN REWARD, but what we have to do with is not the soul's struggles out of the bogs and through the mists of selfishness and sin, but the primal and honest leaps of instinct and sentiment in their native air and light.

It will be observed that the cry of the moral instinct and sentiment is for punishment ; and there can be no satisfaction or rest till the punishment is fully meted out, or some substitute found. And when we say, "some substitute found," it will be seen at once we are borrowing light from Revelation. Guilt is a personal matter, and punishment is equally personal and direct. No innocent man can be punished for the guilty man's transgression ; every man must bear his own burden. The guilty alone can be punished. But an innocent man may endure a chastisement, a pain, which on the other hand the government may accept for the chastisement, punishment and pain of the guilty. It is so that the Scriptures say, "The chastisement," not the punishment, "of our peace was upon Him," Christ. Christ was not punished for us, but chastened for us ; and the relations of the chastised substitute and the guilty actual transgressor are thereby something new in the moral universe. When it comes to meting out punishment, considerations arise that instinct and sentiment cannot settle. If we are to judge as to the severity, continuity, or endurance of punishment, we must know something of the law-giver, his empire, the law and the subject. And that something must be not a little, but a great deal. And here not only sentiment and instinct, but reason and reasoning also fail. Reason and reasoning may attain to some idea of the vastness of the empire, the majesty of law, the importance of obedience ; to perhaps enough of an idea to leave the conscious transgressor in doubt as to whether he has been punished at all or punished inadequately ; and, because he cannot know the measure of the guilt and the measure of the satisfactory punishment, he is ever left to uncertainties and tormenting fears, and precipitated ulti-

mately into moral indifference or unutterable despair. And whether it be indifference or despair, the unhappy culprit plunges further downward into darkness, wickedness and wretchedness. What is this but the history of Paganism? What mean the fears, the superstitions, the subterfuges, the toilsome pilgrimages, the exhaustive worships, the ever increasing self-imposed pains and penalties, the self-inflicted tortures, privations and insatiable sacrifices of the whole heathen world, ancient and modern? And the more the religion and the greater the sacrifices, the more and the greater the sinfulness and the shamelessness, as deep after deep of crime and ruin is opened and wallowed through to vaster, gloomier, horrider abysses below. The man sins; he knows his guilt; his guilt impels him to sacrificial satisfaction and self-punishment.

With all his soul endeavoring to effect these, and with all his resources laboring to preserve the commensurateness of his guilt and punishment, he falls, he plunges further into sin; which of course, so rising and closing over and above him, an ever increasing burden, crushes him under its overwhelming weight. It is worse than the stone of Sisyphus, which by incessant labor he could keep on the hillside; for this tremendous weight of guilt presses the poor victim farther and farther down forever. And so it even corrupts the life fountains, and poisons the hereditary streams to the undoing—the moral desolations of whole nations of men.

Ignorance, then, of the majesty of the law, the glory of the ruler, and the obligation of the subject, will not keep guilt and punishment commensurate or equal paced in the race. Universal human conscience calls down punishment upon the transgressor, and the sharpest, severest punishment under the heavens is when a man, the conscious culprit, really sets about punishing himself; then the lashes are thongs of steel, and the barbs are fangs of scorpions. Self-inflicted punishment is the most insatiable punishment in the universe; simply because the man does not know where to stop; and when the work is well begun and his heart is set upon it, he will not stop till he has made a certain end and found rest.

All this clearly points to the fact that the nature of the law, the claims of the ruler, the dignity and the majesty of the government and the capabilities and obligations of the governed must come into the account, and that they do come into the account to the consciousness and the conscience, to the sentiments and to the instincts, though the guilty man knows not what the trouble is, or what is the terrific ruin and overthrow in which he is engulfed.

Then let us look for a moment as best we can, at what these things are that come so mightily, yet so imperceptibly into human experience, human history, human consciousness, and human character. What are these awful facts of nature we know so little about, and yet without which we cannot for a moment explain, the moral phenomena and religious transactions of the world? Take the majesty of the law as appointed for the sinless, upright, unfallen man. And the moral law in its majesty is like the mathematics, the same to the sinful, fallen, and the sinless unfallen man. And once more this moral law in its majesty and not any accomodating or supplementary economy like the Jewish, is that with which the sentiments and instincts have to do. Slow reasoning or slower instruction may adapt itself to subsidiary or secondary moral or legal arrangements, but instinct and sentiment leap at a bound in the pure primal light to the heights of pristine excellence, and primitive and supreme moral demand, and catch their approbations and condemnations amid the radiance and splendors of original and eternal glory. Hence men feel guilty when other men and fallacious systems would reason away, doubt away, explain away, sympathize away their guilt. But their guilt will not away, for it is under the quick inner spiritual eye in the primal light. Hence again men claim respect, honor and reward even, while the multitudes hiss and execrate, nor can the screams of execration drown the sturdy, steady voice within. Posterity restores with plaudits what the contemporary generation denies with hisses and groans.

Why this is all true and a thousand times repeated in the history of our wicked wilful world, finds explanation in the loftiness, purity and glory of that law proclaimed from the eternal throne, and whose light flashes upon the conscience stirring the inmost soul with Heaven's own ray. We all set more store by the County law than that of the Township, more by the Provincial than the Municipal, more by the Dominional than the Provincial, and more by the Imperial than the Colonial. The Warden of the County is more than the Reeve of the Township, the Lieutenant Governor of the Province more than the Warden of a County, the Governor General of the Dominion of more dignity and power than the Lieut.-Governors, and Her Majesty the Queen greater in authority, dignity and power than any Governor or Viceroy of any dependency of the Empire. The County Council is greater than the Township Council ; the Provincial Parliament than the County Council ; the Parliament of the Dominion than the Legislature of the Province ; and the Imperial Parliament, the Commons and the Lords of the Empire, of greater weight, resources, power and glory than the Parliament of the Dominion.

The law rises with the majesty of the court and the government ; with the interests to be guarded ; the rights to be protected and cherished ; immunities and privileges to be secured ; opportunities to be opened up, and possessions maintained. And so the risks, hazards, ills, losses, and disasters, increase, multiply and intensify with the growing majesty of the law, the excellence of the rising sovereignty, the broadening and extending of the possessions and interests, and the capabilities of higher and higher attainments by more and more people in greater and greater security through broader and remoter generations, in ever enlarging felicity and peace. Also the penalties rise with the law, the courts and parliaments to extreme punishment by supreme authority for highest crimes and misdemeanors. The township penalty is not equal to the county fine ; the county penalty is not so severe as the provin-

cial ; nor the provincial as the imperial. Men can sin all the way from light fines and brief imprisonments to the penitentiary for life and the gallows ; all the way from contempt of a magistrate's court to defiance of the crown, rebellion and treason.

Forfeitures may grade all the way from a dime to life long liberty ; from a dollar to all the possibilities of our earthly existence. All men say all this thing is right. What shall we then say to the majesty of that law, that has to do not only with the subjects of the British Empire, but also with all the people of all the generations of earth, with all men of all times and climes ? That law that has to guard not only some civic and municipal rights and possessions, but all rights and all possessions of all people of all the times and the eternities ? That law that not only must keep and save all things that other laws keep and save, but must also keep and save the laws themselves ? That law that is the life power, purifier and guardian of all other laws ? If so august be British Royal prerogative, and so sublime, mighty and far-reaching be the sovereignty of this Empire, what shall we say of the prerogative of the King of Kings, of the law that goeth forth out of His mouth, not only to the outer ear and hand of the men of the kingdom of a day, but to the hearts and consciences of all moral beings in heaven and in earth through all time ; and what of the sovereignty, high and lifted up above all dominions, principalities and powers, above all kingdoms and empires ; and which is not like a Roman or a British empire for a few centuries over a part of the populations of the earth, but from everlasting to everlasting over all ranks of intelligent beings of all worlds, countless and glorious ? If the little disorder of the violation of a Township law must be met with a penalty, and all men approve, and the more serious disorder of the violation of a Provincial law must be met with a severer penalty, even sometimes death itself—and again all men approve—and rebellion, treason, against our constituted authorities must be met with the death of many, the nearest we can bring

the offending multitudes to eternal banishment and punishment—for surely we would punish more severely if we could—and all men approve, what rational objection can these approving men raise to such a declaration of supreme displeasure and wrath against the violation of supreme law, and defiance of supreme authority? If we are to carry out our principles, that a township sin must have a township punishment to the extent of the township power; and a county sin a county's punishment to the limit of the county's power; and the sin against the empire, the empire's punishment to the very extremity of Imperial power, what shall be the punishment when there is no limit to the purity of the law, the glory of the sovereignty that maintains it, and the majesty of the power that enforces it? If we inflict the nearest punishment we can to eternal death for the transgression of a temporary, transient and fallible enactment, how can we object to the idea of eternal punishment for the wilful and persistent transgression of eternal, immutable and infallible laws, the unchanged and unchangeable principles of righteousness and truth in the universe of the great God? If we inflict the nearest punishment we can to eternal death, for the transgression of a law that effects comparatively a few of our human family, and that for the brief continuance of a few generations or centuries at most, what have we to object to the idea of eternal punishment for the transgression of a law that governs angels through measureless cycles, and men through all their generations and centuries; yea, all intelligent beings through all stages of their existence: a law that is the ever active moral energy of the divine mind in the maintenance of eternal order, through all ranks of subjects in universal empire? How shall we that bring down upon treason quick and sharp all the ignominy and penalty we can put into capital punishment, and visit upon the children the iniquities of the fathers unto the third and fourth generations, object to the everlasting banishment of rebels and traitors from the benefits of the government they resisted and of the authority they despised—the government

established in everlasting righteousness, and the authority maintained in perfect and eternal equity and truth? You may cut off a branch from a tree and you do not kill the tree; but tear it up by the roots, and its life is gone. You may violate a human law, and not very much disturb the moral universe of the great God. You may violate the law of one country, and not interfere thereby with the authority or government of another country. Indeed, so superficial, temporary, and time-serving are these human laws, for transgression of which we take away men's property and men's lives, that we may keep them and transgress the law of God, in their observance; and we may violate them and keep the law of God in this violation. Eternal, fundamental laws, are at once the offspring and safeguard of eternal rectitude. The penalty must be commensurate with the law, the authority, the government, the primal and eternal sovereignty. Man, an immortal being, has a conscience, can appreciate the situation, can take in quite fully the idea of the penalty. What reasonable, natural course, then, is there but eternal punishment for the violation of eternal law, especially when that violation becomes persistent and eternal?

It would appear, then, quite clear that our moral instincts and sentiments declare plainly for the eternal punishment of the wicked. Considering what and who God is, what and who man is, what the dignity and majesty of the government and law; what the nature and consequences of transgression, apart from the transgressor himself, that is the effect on others and on the universe of God; considering that such ideas as guilt, satisfaction or atonement, punishment and reward, merit and demerit, condemnation and approbation, praise and blame, happiness and misery, are eternal. How can it be, if government is eternal, that its rewards should not be eternal, and its punishments eternal, when once it has decided and declared such a doom? For who will say guilt is not eternal, once it is incurred? Who will say merit is not eternal, once it is achieved? Given an immortal man, an eternal God, a supreme law, a discern-

ing and impelling conscience, a governing will, and a wilful transgression, and what or who shall turn aside the eternity of guilt ?

If God in infinite wisdom and love discovers and reveals a plan and way of pardon, all right. But certain it is, with the indisputable facts of our moral being in us and upon us, we could find out no way of pardon, or reconciliation of the offended sovereign and the rebel offender. We could find no help or atonement. Outside of Revelation, guilt is eternal, and violation of supreme law irreparable. No wonder at all that heathen and natural systems have gone to balancing merits over against transgressions and guilt. For merit is also eternal, and in its degree effective, if there is some way of bringing the merit to the recognition of the Sovereign. But the trouble is, as in a human government in a state of rebellion, the Sovereign cannot, dares not, look upon merits, deeds of daring and renown. To the rebel, the transgressor, the only merit is submission, obedience ; even in civil and political affairs this cannot make atonement for past rebellion, repair its damages, or change the mind and affection of the rebel. How much less, then, in spiritual matters !

But here we refrain ; for in such a statement we push on close to the outer confines of Revelation. Merit is eternal. It is an eternal claim, unless foreclosed, till recognized and satisfied. And so is happiness susceptible of eternity. And in the moral order, to a moral being rightly constituted or properly restored, perpetual rectitude brings, must bring, perpetual and eternal happiness : eternal, when that moral being is endued with immortality. And if on these conditions the happiness can be eternal, surely the privation, the want of it, can be eternal. But privation is punishment.

Just retribution may add in greater or lesser degrees pains and penalties ; for there are degrees of wickedness—admittedly so even here—that mere privation will not meet. So among our primal moral ideas, there is that of eternal punishment. He that runs may read. What heightens this idea and brings it out prominently in

human experience and human history, outside of and prior to revelation, is the terrible fact that there may be a continuity, an eternity of sin as well as of punishment. It is this continuity and cumulative energy of sin, of transgression and rebellion, that develops the fearful vices and superstitions of the heathen world. It is this that plunges humanity downward from deep to deep in darkness and crime ; so that a man is constrained to say, If there is not an eternal hell, there ought to be. If there is no restraint, confinement, and punishment of wickedness, there ought to be. With the transgressor confirmed in his transgressions, established in his rebellion, perpetually and eternally regardless of all law and defiant of all authority, why should there not be eternal banishment and punishment, or what else could meet the case? What we as moral and accountable beings are choosing day by day, is not so much this particular sin or that sin ; but it is the habit, the character of sin. The moral character, for good or evil, fast becomes a fixture. Acts and tendencies soon incrustate, ossify, petrify into fixedness of purpose, and irresistibility of impulse, direction and aim. They soon make destiny, fate. Experience, observation, and all human history combine to attest that sin, mobile and pliable enough at first, precipitates into rocky ridges and granite walls and towers. Easily broken as a spider's web at the beginning, and as easily blown off as thistle down, it comes at length to be chains of iron and spikes and barbs of steel. Rejected at a toss in its first advances, it soon marches, with conquering squadrons and irresistible weapons, among the generations of men, gathering momentum by the tremendous energy of hereditary descent and the laws of propagation. Socially and nationally, as well as individually, it forms character, closes up the avenues of virtue and excellence, poisons remedial streams of healing waters at their fountains ; and pours over the multitudes devouring and death-dealing floods. What can arrest its progress? What stay its course? The succeeding generations become worse and worse, and the character of the individual man

formed in deeper darkness and grosser crime, but heightens the intensity of iniquity, and revels in greater enormities of corruption, wrong, violence and blood. Such transgressors not only do wrong, but they take delight in them that do it. So far past resisting evil, they have even forgotten to condemn iniquity in others. Truly the graphic, historic picture given by Paul is by no means overdrawn ; not less historic or philosophic because in a letter from an inspired missionary to the ancient Romans.

What hope is there for humanity plunged to such a depth? There is no self-recovering, self-reinstating power here. Character is fixed. Tendencies, impulses, desires, habits, thoughts, aims and purposes, are all in one direction. Sin, consuming sin, gnaws away at the vitals of the race, and the vitals grow as fast as eaten. Even reproductive sin, under an economy of spirituality and immortality multiplies what it destroys. In exacting its penalties and inflicting its punishments, it fosters its terrible brood of pain and misery rebellion, strife and crime ; bringing on severer chastisements, greater wretchedness, more wicked rebellion, fiercer hate, new monsters of violence and new tragedies of crime.

How then, with a character so formed and fixed, with this awful bent to eternal sinning, and the ceaseless tread in the enlarging round of increasing transgression ; how are we to have anything but eternal punishment? What else would be right or meet the case. We are not now dealing with the self-denying, heroic choice that makes the good man, or the grand remedial agencies and opportunities that justify the government of the Great God. But we are dealing with man's own moral sentiments, instincts and capabilities, and with the laws we find written in unmistakable characters upon the human soul ; laws that are verified in universal human experience, and in the history of the human race. Surely there is no voice within us in the depths of our rational and moral nature, that cries out against the eternal punishment of the wicked. On the other hand, our rational and moral instincts, the

basis of natural religion, give at least a decidedly favorable "a priori" to the Biblical doctrine on this momentous question.

Indeed, if men had been true to their religious instincts, they had found the doctrine, awful as it is, uttered in their own consciences, affirmed in reason, sentiment and instinct, and but reiterated and confirmed when the Son of God came down from Heaven, with the voice from out the counsels of eternity, and the light from the unfailing splendors of the everlasting throne and the ever-blessed dominions of the King of kings. We have said that there is no voice in our rational or moral nature that cries out against the justice of eternal punishment, and we think we have demonstrated that the oracles of God within us call down upon offenders, under all natural and merely rational schemes of Divine government and administration, all that is implied in everlasting punishment, and vindicate the divine justice, wisdom and goodness in the proclamation and execution of such penalties.

Indeed, on any natural or merely rational scheme we cannot discover, how there should be anything else but everlasting punishment for the transgressor of the law of God. Instead of the burden of the proof being on the Holy Scriptures, and the doctrine of everlasting punishment restated and reaffirmed therein, the burden of proof is on the man that denies the doctrine of the Holy Writ. For the utterances of conscience and primal reason are so clear there is no need of any man mistaking them. The violation of the law brings guilt and sin—sin and guilt bring greater sin and deeper guilt—and where is the stopping place and where the remedy? Simple conscience and pure reason have none to offer. Whatever may come from other sources, they speak only of augmenting guilt and eternal punishment as in a mathematical discrepancy, the further you carry it the worse it gets, the more products you combine it with, the farther you are from accuracy and the more uncertain and unsatisfactory your results, one error corrupting all previous calculations; so in a moral delinquency, nature has no recuperative or

restorative power, and the further it proceeds in action and the more it is mingled with purposes and results, the wider the divergence from rectitude, the more terrific the disasters in the great enterprises of moral government, the more difficult to gain solid standing ground for resistance, or energy for recovery and renovation, and the deeper the guilt and the heavier the punishment of the first and the fast following crimes and offences. But men do speak against the doctrine everlasting punishment, and there is a voice raised against it. Whence does that voice come? Some think they hear it sounding up from the depths within. They say it is repugnant to their feelings and shocking to their sympathies and sensibilities. "It cannot be that God will condemn a man to eternal punishment for some little sin." "Surely God is not worse than men; and men would not do so horrid a thing." And it is very easy to caricature the place of eternal banishment and punishment, and to deride and ridicule the heathen outgrowths of that idea—which, by the way, prove the idea and the principles on which it rests, while they do not commend the misrepresentations of it—and with the unthinking to turn it into caricature and ridicule against the doctrine itself. But wounding a sympathy or shocking a sensibility on such a question does not pass for much. Sympathies and sensibilities are not native instincts and primal sentiments. Sympathies and sensibilities are mainly matters of education, and play on the surface of our human nature. They go out with the desires and often with the passions, right or wrong, and are much influenced and controlled by public taste and opinion. Everything depends on what stirs the sympathy, on what arouses the sensibility. If the moral being has a perfect moral constitution, so that his sympathies are always with the right, the law and the decisions of a good conscience, all well! If the sensibilities are always in harmony with the native sentiment, always aroused by the wrong, as they ought to be, and repugnant to it; always happy in the right, as they ought to be, and exciting thereto, all well, again! But if a man has no just appreciation of

the right, and cares not for it, what then? If he is dull and slow to recognize authority, rule, law, order, righteousness and duty, what then? If his sympathies are with the bad and the vicious, and his sensibilities are easily aroused to selfish and wicked gratification, what then? Sympathies and sensibilities, oft perverted as they are, are by no means the trustworthy voices of God in the human soul. One may sympathize with an evil doer, and think it a terrible thing to punish him. One may dread pain, and think pain worse than sin;—a little personal physical suffering worse than the disturbance of the eternal moral order. When men have no adequate comprehension of the government of God, of His sovereignty and dignity; no appreciation of the height, glory and universality of His dominion and law; no understanding of the nature of transgression, its enormity and consequences; no eyes to behold the depth and darkness of that gulf into which iniquity has plunged us, how are they on the feeling arising out of such ignorance, or on the pain of an hour to determine interests and issues. And surely truth, righteousness and justice are eternal, if there is eternity in the universe of God. Often the very men that would push their penalties for a personal wrong beyond a just eternal punishment, cry out against the idea of eternal punishment, when it is the effort of the all-wise, all-good, Governor of the universe to maintain the public order, security and peace of all ranks of His subjects in all places of His dominion forever. Not in a vindictive spirit, not in a revengeful or retaliatory spirit, not for personal satisfaction or gratification, is the supreme and extreme penalty of eternal punishment pronounced; but as the voices within us, in harmony with inspired revelation proclaim, to uphold righteous authority, government and law, to make final and full separation between good and evil, between the just and the unjust, and to set forth a clear light through the eternal ages, the triumphs of righteousness and the reign of justice, truth and peace.

Four books were mentioned as bearing on this question before we reach the Bible, viz.: our rational and moral instincts ; the divine providential government of the world ; the course of nature, and the principles and law of human society.

In this paper we have turned up but some of the leaves of the book first mentioned, and this must now suffice. The first book declares unmistakably for eternal punishment ; the others are not less decisive in their utterances on this solemn truth so fully re-affirmed in the revelation of Jesus Christ.



VIEWS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
ON
ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

BY ARCHBISHOP LYNCH, OF TORONTO.

HELL.



THE Catholic Church holds that there is a hell, and that hell is ETERNAL.

II. God being infinitely just, must punish sinners. He cannot be indifferent to vice and virtue—the just and the unjust. Men have a choice before them—eternal happiness or eternal misery. The unjust practically choose eternal misery. God gives to all free will, with which he does not interfere.

The universal belief of all nations affirms that there is a hell, and the Scriptures are most emphatic on that point.

“Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner ; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Matt. iii. 12 ; Luke iii. 17.

“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off : it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands go into hell, into

the fire that never shall be quenched ; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark ix. 43-44.

" And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ;

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2nd Thess. i. 7-8-9.

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Jude 6-7.

" And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Rev. xx. 10.

" The sinners in Zion are afraid ; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites ; who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire ? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings." Isaiah xxxiii. 14.

HELL IS ETERNAL.

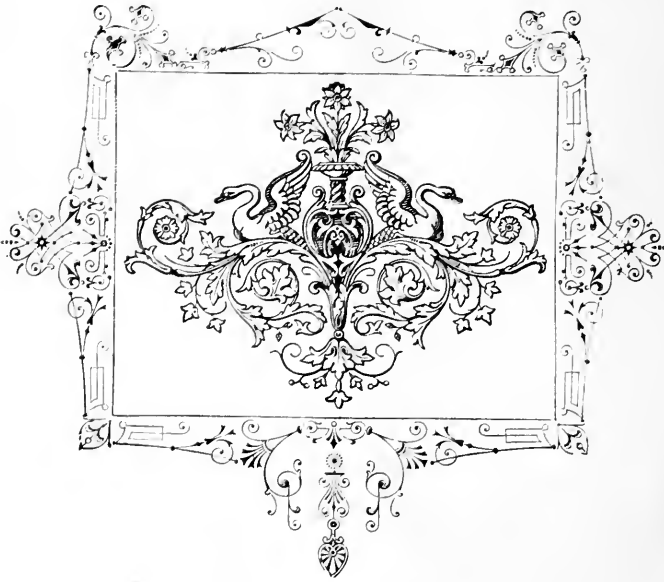
III. (a) The wicked shall go into everlasting punishment, the just into life everlasting. " And these shall go away into everlasting punishment ; but the righteous into life eternal."—Matt. xxv. 46. EVERLASTING, from its use and position in the text, has the same meaning attached to it in the case of the wicked as in that of the just. Hence, if the glory of the just is eternal, so is the punishment of the wicked.

(b) It is true sin is committed in a moment, but its gravity is not measured according to the length or duration of its commission, exactly. Murder may be committed in a moment ; a whole city fired in a single instant.

(c) God is infinitely just. His punishment will accord with strict justice. God cannot pardon without true repentance, but there is no true repentance without the free will of the sinner, which he enjoyed during life, but not after death.

(d) God must have a sanction for his law ; but the infliction of temporal punishment does NOT restrain men from committing crimes against God and Society. If the punishments of hell were not eternal, there would be no necessity for the redemption.

IV. Catholic teachers distinguish two kinds of pain, the pain of loss and the pain of sense. The pain of loss of God to a reasonable being, is the most terrible of all. The burnings and remorse of conscience are good illustrations of this pain of loss. God being infinitely merciful and just, will not prolong the intensity of the pain beyond the proportion of the crime.



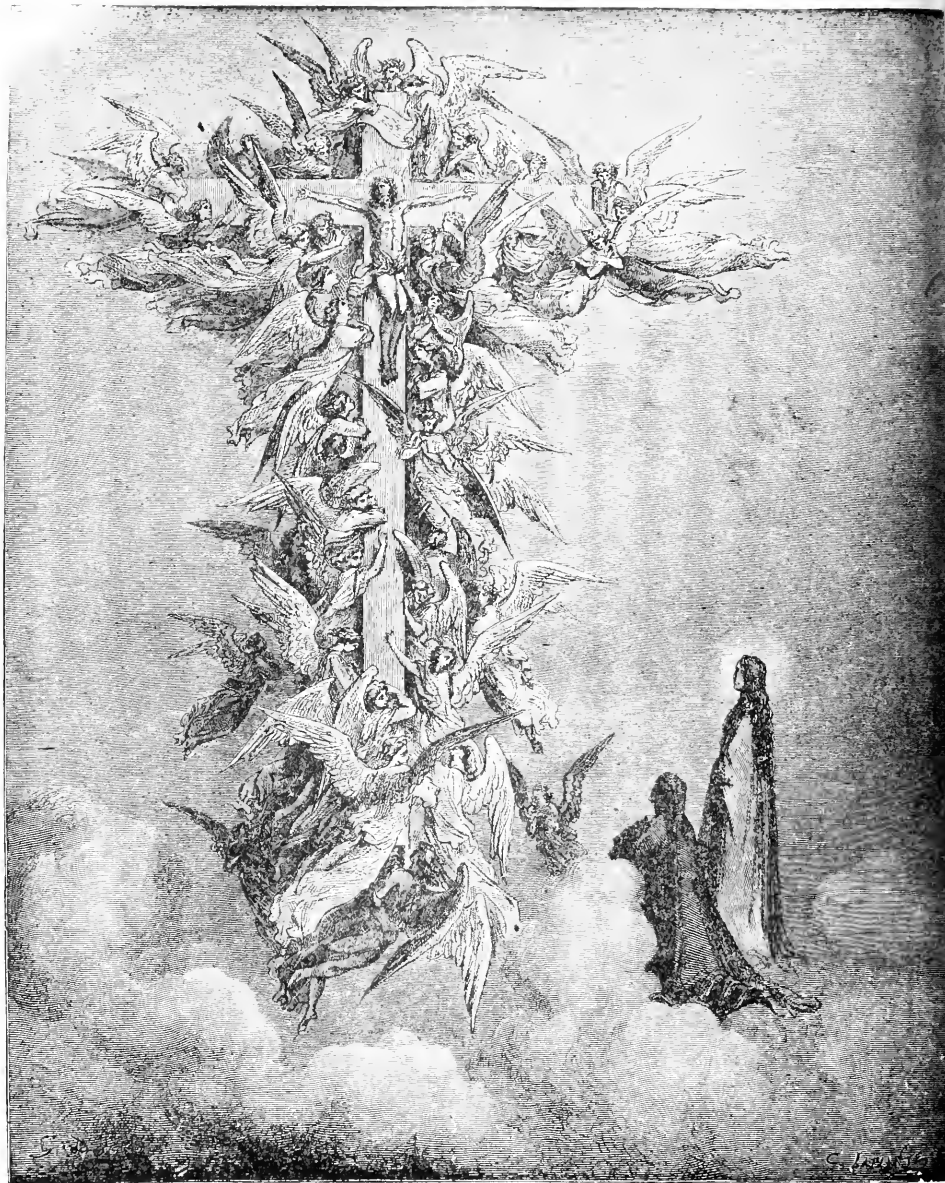
PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS.

“Death is the lightest evil we should fear ;
'Tis certain, 'tis the consequence of life ;
Th' important question is not that we die,
But how we die.”

“To live holy, is the way to die safely, happily. If death be terrible, yet innocence is bold, and will neither fear itself nor let us fear. Wickedness is cowardly, and cannot abide any glimpse of light or show of danger.”

Death, to a good man, is but passing through a dark entry, out of one dusky room of his father's house into another which is fair and large, lightsome and glorious.”





The appearance of the blest after the Resurrection.
fighting for the true faith ranged in the sign of a cross.

The souls of those who have died
—The Vision of Paradise, Canto xiv.

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS.



IN DRAWING these brief discussions to a close, we call the attention of our readers to the conclusions arrived at. In brief they are as follows:—

There is a God. The soul is immortal. There is a day of judgment. The decisions of that august tribunal are irrevocable. The conduct of the present determines the character of the future. The sufferings of the wicked and the happiness of the righteous are alike eternal.

“The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.” No one but a fool could say so. Why? Because, to prove a negative demands infinite knowledge. One foot-print upon the sand of a desolate island is sufficient evidence that a human being has been there. But to prove the contrary, the entire island must be traversed, and every spot examined. In like manner the Atheist must have winged his way from star to star, and world to world—must, in fact, be endowed with omnipresence, before he can say, “There is no God.”

It is indeed very questionable if ever a man CONSCIENTIOUSLY said, “There is no God.” Lord Bacon accounted Atheism a thing of the lip more than the heart. Arnold said, “I believe conscientious Atheism not to exist.” The tongue indeed may utter the

monstrous blasphemy, but the soul remonstrates and protests.* Galileo, when forced by tortures to recant, his assertion that the world moved, insisted, notwithstanding his formal recantation, that it moved for all that.

Atheism is a cold, withering, repulsive creed. It is indeed the very shadow of death. Whatever there has been in the past, the age of avowed and brazen-faced Atheism is gone. Even skeptical philosophers are not ready to accept the blank negations of Atheism. It does not satisfy the intellect—far less the soul. It carries with it the greatest of absurdities. For, as has been said, it is easier to believe that the works of Homer were the product of the fortuitous concourse of the Greek alphabet, than that this world is the result of a fortuitous concourse of atoms. And hence among the varied shades of materialism in modern days you can hardly find a man who says, "There is no God." The most that men say is, "There was a God, there is a God; but he takes no active interest whatever in the creatures of his hand. In virtue of certain fixed, unchanging laws, he rules and governs, but takes no cognizance of

*It is this idea that the poet Laureate, beautifully expresses when he says :—

"I found him not in the world or sun,
On eagle's wing or insect's eye;
Nor thro' the questions men may try
The petty cobwebs we have spun.

If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
I heard a voice, 'believe no more,'
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the godless deep.

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And, like a man in wrath, the heart
Stood up and answered, 'I have felt.'

No, like a child in doubt and fear;
But that blind clamor made me wise,
Then was I as a child that cries,
But crying, knows his father near,

And what I seem beheld again
What is, and no man understands:
And out of darkness came the hands
That reach thro' nature, moulding men."

individual action, or as the Pantheist forms his creed—God is nature and nature is God.” His distinct personality is merged in the matter he has formed.

But such a God might as well not exist. How can we know indeed that such a God exists? Take from the Almighty all His perfections, the power of will and action—of authority and sovereignty ; of hearing and answering prayer ; and I may as well have Baal for my deity, or follow the crowds that are crushed under the chariot-wheels of Juggernaut !

The evidences for the being of a God are manifold. But the best of all is that the soul of man cannot help believing that there is a God. As flowers look upward to the sun, so does man seek after the immortal, ever-living God. As the sparks rise heavenward, so does the soul towards its maker. In lonely hours of mental suffering, the instincts of our better nature, like the clinging tendrils of the vine or ivy, feel after a being possessed of more than human sympathy ; one who can be confided in, in times of weakness, and trusted unhesitatingly in seasons of desertion and despair.

It is related of Napoleon, that on one occasion he was crossing the Mediterranean, on his Egyptian expedition, in company with certain philosophers of the Voltaire-Diderot school. During a brief discussion, which occurred as they gathered on the vessel's deck on a beautiful evening, when the stars were shining in all their beauty, they asserted that there was no God. Napoleon, without stooping to debate the question, simply pointed upwards to the heavens and said, “Gentlemen, who made these stars?”

The first chapter of Genesis, has been for ages and still is, as we have seen, the battle ground of rationalism and faith. What Carlyle says of it all Christians believe : “that the sublime account of creation given so concisely, is in advance of all theories, for it is God's truth, and as such, is the only key to the mystery of the origin of matter. Science and savans can never find out any other, although they may dream about it.” If the simple statement contained in

the first verse of Genesis be accepted as true, then ATHEISM IS IMPOSSIBLE.

But the existence of a God and a Creator may be admitted, while the method of creation may be denied. The first chapter of Genesis however, not only asserts the fact that matter is the production of the Almighty, but that out of matter, by successive creations he made everything that we see, in the animate and inanimate world. Evolution or Development, or Darwinianism, if by this we understand the power of matter to transform itself into suns and systems and living organisms, is alike opposed to reason and revelation. "You may be pleased, said the author formerly quoted when addressing a company of LITERATI, to trace your descent from a tadpole and an ape, but I would exclaim with David: 'Lord thou hast made me but a little lower than the angels.'"

There is nothing in the universe, but what has sprung directly from God's hand. The wild theories of certain skeptical astronomers, that the source of matter has been discovered, and the limits of creation reached, in a nebulous fluid, or star dust, which becomes solid and revolves itself into stars and worlds, is not necessarily athiestic. God might in this, as by the direct method, have created the world. But if such theories are intended to prove the eternity and spontancity of matter, they are false. Science never has produced a single instance, of inert matter becoming instinct with life, or changed into a shining world. The telescope has now resolved the nebulous fluid on the outskirts of creation into stars and clusters of stars, in harmony with the language of inspiration, "He made the stars also."

The sun and moon and planets appear comparatively vast, and worthy the majesty and omnipctence of a God. We know more of their uses than the stars. The distance of some of these stars is simply incomprehensible. In eight minutes light rushes from the sun, but from the highest fixed star it comes not in less than

ten years! Some of these stars are larger than our moon or earth. Nor is the sun itself stationary. Though separated from the "Pleiades," thirty-four millions of times greater than the distance between the sun and earth, it is yet attracted by the central star of that brilliant cluster! What vast consequences depend upon that one little star, that shines out upon the brow of midnight, like the point of a diamond!

But not only the greater, but the lesser lights of heaven, are the Creator's handiwork. Nothing has been made in vain. Their uses to the mariner on the ocean are too well known to need more than a passing mention. Whether they are inhabited, or have been created simply to give light, or gardens of beauty, such as was paradise before man's fall, we cannot tell. Leaving all speculation aside, we know they are not failures, nor abortive attempts at making planets—"lumps which have flown from the potter's wheel—coils from his mighty lathe, or sparks which have darted from his awful anvil when God was forging the solar system." No!

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is and God the soul."

The poet may be speaking but the simple truth when he says :

"Each of these stars is a religious house ;
I saw their altars smoke, their incense rise,
And heard hosannahs ring through every sphere.
The great proprietor's all bounteous hand
Leaves nothing waste, but sows these fiery fields
With seeds of reason, which to virtue rise
Beneath his genial ray."

If, then, these myriad stars are all sustained by the one infinite God, gravitation is but another name for Omnipotent power. Like God's attributes, all of which are alike necessary to the complete glory of the Divine Being, so the smallest star is requisite to ensure the harmony and stability of the solar system. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth

out their host by number. He calleth them all by their names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power ; not one faileth. The Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary ; there is no searching of his understanding." The falling of the snowflake is in obedience to the same law that moves the planets in their orbits.

Which is the greater wonder of creation, the eye of man, or the tear which it sheds? When we think of the origin of this drop of moisture, we discover an astonishing product of divine wisdom and power. The finest machinery in the universe is that which makes a tear. "Heart struggles and soul combinations of thought and emotion lie far back in the mysterious laboratories where tears are first generated and compounded." The soul struggle which goes on far below the weeping eye compels the hidden fountain to gush forth as a spring. Thus tears are in reality thoughts that weep, and griefs that speak in dumb petition. The eye and the tear that dims it are equally the product of that same wondrous wisdom, whose care extends to every creature and every atom of matter.

There is nothing little in God's estimation. Not only rocks, hills and mountains, sea and ocean, but the countless existences and forms of life, which can only be seen by the microscope, are His handiwork and share His attention. The remains of animal life in marble formations, which geology discovers, testify to manifold generations of living creatures that lived their little life and then passed away—but God made them all. The cedar, the sapling, and the shrub and blade of grass ; the lion and the insect ; the ocean and the drop of water ; the hurricane and the zephyr ; the lightning flash and the sunbeam ; the torrent and the dew-drop, alike afford evidence of God's existence, and reveal His constant activity in the more subordinate parts of creation :

"He sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall ;
Atoms or systems into ruin hurled,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world."

That men should deny as Materialists do, the existence of a supreme being, surrounded as they are by so many footprints of the great Creator, seems marvellous. The very stones cry out against such blasphemy :

“No God ! No God ! the simplest flower
 That on the wild is found :
 Shrinks as it drinks its cup of dew,
 And trembles at the sound :
 “No God !” astonished echo cries,
 From out her cavern hoar :
 And every wandering bird that flies,
 Reproves the Athiest lore.”

But while Atheism in the abstract is rare at the present day, there are many who wish there were no God. Men of godless, debauched, unprincipled lives would have it so. Atheism gives momentary relief to such souls. No God, means no judgment day—no hell—no eternity of misery. Annihilation is a coveted end to a life of moral ruin !

Practical Atheism is also found in company with most respectable creeds and orthodox churches. Men who would not for the world be branded as Atheists live such lives, as can only be accounted for on the supposition that belief in a Divine Being has been renounced as false and foolish. Bad as human nature is, there are crimes and courses of sin, which men engage in, that are only possible, where the conscience is paralyzed and man reduced to a level with the brute creation !

It is perfectly possible to reach that point. Apostacy from the faith is most frequently reached through deflection from virtue. When the obligations and restraints of religion become irksome and oppressive, it is the most natural of all things to take refuge in Atheism ! By a long course of wickedness, conscience becomes so debauched and degraded, that what in other

conditions would be regarded as hideous and revolting becomes sufferable and fascinating.

“Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen ;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

See that little child at its mother's knee, lisping its evening prayer. Between that sweet emblem of innocence and the unfallen angels that hover over it, there seems but little space. You would hardly believe that such simple childlike faith would ever change to coarse, unreasoning Atheism. But it does—and how? The child grows up to manhood. The time comes when he must go forth into the world, where, unless followed by the guardian angels of his infancy, he is beset at every point with the devil's snares! Finally, there comes the crisis of his fate, when perdition in time and eternity, or a christian manhood rich in good deeds and certain of a blessed hereafter, tremble in the balance! He yields, and takes his place on that inclined plane that leads to infamy. And now gradually, but surely, the breach is widened between him and purity, until at last it seems impossible to go back. Standing like the petrified, horror-struck Indian, who awakes when too late to find his canoe in the boiling rapids; face to face with a dreadful eternity; character and reputation gone; the physical and mental and moral energies worn out and wasted, he cries out, “No God! No God!” Such an affirmation cannot be accepted as the voice of reason. It is worth as little as is the defiant bearing of the murderer who steps nimbly upon the scaffold, with apparently no concern about his soul, which is soon to pass into the presence of its Judge.

There is another reason why men bring themselves to say “No God.” Delay in punishment strengthens unbelief in an avenging Providence. “Because sentence against evil is not executed

speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

" Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes
Unwhipped of justice."

says the poet ; but so long as crime remains unpunished, men grow defiant rather than timid. They mistake the mercy and forbearance of God for weakness. They become bold and reckless and attempt greater monstrosities. "God hath forgotten, He will never see it. How doth God know? Can He judge through the dark cloud? Is there knowledge in the Most High?" It seems strange to such characters that justice should not track them, and the marks of God's vengeance brand them before the world. And when, on the contrary, they prosper in their wickedness ; when it is found no inconvenience in so-called christian societies to lead immoral lives, need we wonder though men should say "No God—no God?"

There is a period at hand when Atheists will find the awful consequences of such a life. Saying "no God," or wishing there was no God, does not in the least affect the reality of God's existence. If the sinner could by his Atheism destroy the God he hates and fears, there were some reason, although much wickedness, in his unbelief. But as denying the existence of fire and water does not prevent these agencies burning or devouring a man, so doubting the existence of God will not stop the Judge of all the earth from destroying the rebel who breaks his laws. There is another scene beyond the present where self-deception ends :

"Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him."

The thought of death makes cowards of the most defiant skeptics. They quail at his approach :

" The grave ; dread thing !
Men shiver when thou'rt named : Nature appall'd
Shakes off her wonted firmness."

And why? Because death is not an eternal sleep. It does not end the heart-ache; it does not silence conscience; it does not blot out memory; it is but the beginning of an existence commensurate with eternity. But why should such an endless state of being seem so terrible and uninviting? The Atheist himself, surely in his better moments, might shrink from annihilation—and so he would, were it not that destruction of soul and body is preferable to the worm that dies not and the fire that is not quenched. “A shamed life is, indeed,” as the poet says, “a hateful one,” but death is a fearful thing:

“To die, and go we know not where;
 To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
 This sensible warm motion to become
 A kneaded clod; * * * 'Tis too horrible!
 The weariest and most loathed worldly life
 That age, ache, penury and imprisonment
 Can lay on nature, is a paradise
 To what we fear of death.”

The soul is immortal; the decisions of the day of judgment, which are irrevocable, determine its condition throughout eternity. “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” Every one must give an account of himself to God. The dead, small and great, shall stand before God. The Archangel's trump shall sound; the sea give up its dead; the graves shall give up their prey! All shall appear—from Adam, the first of the human family, down to the unconscious babe, that last entered life! The scrutiny is rigid—the reward impartial. “There is nothing hid that shall not be revealed: whatsoever ye have spoken in the darkness shall be heard in the light; that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed on the housetop. God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Escape there is none; mitigation there is none; appeal there is none!

“O, that fire! before whose face,
 Heaven and earth shall find no place.
 O, those eyes! whose angry light
 Must be the day of that dread night.

O that trump, whose blast shall run
 An even round with the circling sun,
 And urge the murmuring graves to bring
 Pale mankind forth to meet his King.

O, that Book! whose leaves so bright
 Will set the world in severe light.
 O, that Judge! whose hand, whose eye,
 None can endure, yet none can fly.”

“THE DAY OF WRATH” spoken so frequently in Scripture, is a reality. It is the climax of the Almighty’s anger: the outpouring without measure of what has been long restrained, but at last bursts the barriers of long-suffering patience. The impression left upon the mind by such a phrase, is that of terrible retribution, where mercy is utterly excluded, and vengeance swift and sure overtakes the rejectors of God’s grace. Figurative language! you say. But if so, it comes far short of the reality. No human tongue can express the compass of God’s love, and no human tongue can describe the fierceness of his wrath. It is righteous wrath: not like man’s malignant, fitful, and passionate: not cruel, unjust, or arbitrary, but the expression of calm and resolute determination on the part of the Judge, who punishes sin in conformity with the demands of his nature and government. Once kindled that wrath is terrible: unspeakably awful and overwhelming. No human being can stand before it—nothing can stay its fury. When the great day of His wrath is come, who is able to stand? It was said of Tamerlane, that he could abash his enemies with a single look. How much more terrible the gaze of an angry God—whose eyes are as a flame of fire!

THAT DAY DRAWS NEAR. Its coming does not depend on human contingency. It is ordained and necessary. It follows as a consequence of the method of God's government of the world. The conduct of the present, determines the character of the future. "Rejoice O young man in thy youth, says Solomon, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart and in the sight of thine eyes : but KNOW THOU, THAT FOR ALL THESE THINGS, GOD WILL BRING THEE INTO JUDGMENT." Go on in your career of vice : mingle with the gay and giddy throng : fill up the intoxicating cup of pleasure to overflowing, and drink it to the dregs : cast off all moral restraint : despise parental authority : stifle and quench the stinging accusations of conscience : rush on blindly and madly in the ways of sin, until the body mortifies and falls a prey to disease and death, and the mind becomes paralyzed and feeble—but do not forget the end ! There is a day of reckoning. The immortal principle within never dies : a faithful and minute record is kept of every act—or as an old writer quaintly puts it : "Run down the hill young man as fast as you please, but remember at the end you will break your neck."

This volume will, in all likelihood, come into the hands of many who are entering upon active life. To such the words of the wise King of Israel are especially addressed. He would not diminish the innocent enjoyments of youth—he would only regulate and moderate the intensity with which they are pursued. Solomon thoroughly understood the passionate fondness for pleasure which characterizes the opening years of existence. Long had he worshipped at the shrine of voluptuousness, a pleased and willing votary. Long was he fascinated and spell-bound by the witchery of sin. But all had failed in satisfying his immortal nature, or producing lasting contentment. Gifted with mental endowments unrivalled in his age, with a versatility of talents unapproachable, and an elo-

quence that astonished the world, what a melancholy wreck does the Book of Ecclesiastes represent him to be, and how plainly we are told that talents and genius, intellectual power and social position, human fame and worldly glory, are invariably curses, instead of blessings, when possessed by unsanctified and unconverted men !

“There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Every man is writing his record of salvation or damnation. We are building for eternity, and according to the materials used will be the character of the structure. We are sowing for the great harvest, and according to the character of the seed sown will be the ingathering. We are sailing upon the sea of time, and according to the winds which fill our sails, and the direction in which we steer, shall be our final destination.

That the sins of youth are of serious importance, some deny. They take exception to such language. Errors, mistakes, follies, inadvertencies and thoughtlessness, are names given to what God calls sins. Others go further and maintain it absolutely necessary, that in the early years of life, men and women may indulge in sins, not only with impunity but with profit, which, if continued, would disgrace the riper years of existence. It is said : “Young men must sow their wild oats ; we cannot expect old heads on young shoulders ; young people must know the world.” In other words they are to serve an apprenticeship to the devil, before they enlist in the service of their rightful master. But whoever heard of a man going into an hospital with the avowed purpose of catching infection, that afterwards he might know the symptoms of some malignant disease, and possibly be in better health all the rest of his days ! or going to his physician and saying, “Be kind enough to inoculate me with the smallpox, so that I shall have the smallpox a little, or with the plague, so that I might just have a taste of its virus !” When once such diseases reach the blood, you cannot say how much or how little you shall have of them. They carry

out the work of death, irrespective of the victim's wishes. To run such a risk is madness in the extreme.

These sins of youth shorten life. Illustrations everywhere abound. The morning of existence spent in dissipation and debasing pleasures, brings with it premature infirmities and an early grave. The bones full of the sins of youth soon mingle with the dust. Premature old age seizes upon such constitutions, like fire upon the timbers of a rotten house. The old proverb says: "The excesses of youth are bills drawn by time, payable after thirty years with interest," but frequently long before the thirty years are reached, payment is demanded.

Oftentimes a vivid memory of the sins of youth clouds the closing hours of existence. Have we not heard old men longing for death as a happy deliverance from infirmities and evil habits acquired in youth? Even moral men, as the world calls them, are not free from such thoughts when death approaches. It was Sir Walter Scott who said in his declining years: "The old post-chaise gets more shattered at every turn; the windows will not pull up, the doors refuse to open, or being open, will not shut again. The recollection of youth, health and uninterrupted powers of activity, neither improved nor enjoyed, is a poor source of comfort. Death has closed the long, dark avenue upon loves and friendships, and I look at them as through the grated door of a burial-place filled with monuments of those who were once dear to me, with no insincere wish that it may open for me at no distant period."

Finally, the sins of youth unrepented of bring the soul into judgment. If it be true that the sting of sin is never blunted, and that the memory of youthful follies become more acute and vivid as years roll on, and that the soul never forgives itself for wrongs committed, what must be the final condition of the impenitent? Surely the most defiant criminal that ever lived must shrink from remembering in death or throughout eternity the sins of youth and all the evils of which he has been guilty. Surely also there must be

retribution for the wicked, for the Judge of all the earth is not less inflexible in the enforcement of His laws than the conscience of the sinner himself. Byron, that brilliant son of genius, who died at the early age of thirty-eight, thus wrote under the lash of an accusing conscience, the last thoughts of a noble but wasted life:

“My days are in the yellow leaf:
 The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
 The worm, the canker and the grief
 Are mine alone.

“The fire that in my bosom preys,
 Is like to some volcanic isle,
 No torch is kindled at its blaze,
 A funeral pile!”

But there are sins and crimes, that are irreparable. Nay we might go further, and with but slight qualification say—unrepentable. Flowers by the cold of a single night, may be frozen beyond the power of reviving. Break the arm or limb and it may be set, but puncture the heart with the smallest needle, and death is instant. Unless the seed is sown at the fitting season, no harvest can be gathered. In the realm of morals it is the same. Yonder stands a man convicted of murder by a jury of his fellowmen and condemned to die a felon's death. Let us hear his story. Up to a certain period of his life, he was pure and virtuous. But in a fatal moment he yielded to the intoxicating cup. It fired his brain. He came home to his wife an infuriated demon. She remonstrates and rebukes. He draws the knife and in less time than I write these lines, she falls at his feet, a bleeding, mangled corpse!

Examples might easily be multiplied, proving this fact, that there are certain crimes irreparable and unrepentable. No amount of sorrow, or tears, or regret, can wash away their stain. Like the switch on the railway, where a few inches one way or another involves the safety or destruction of thousands of precious lives—so

the slightest yielding to temptation determines the future of the soul for time and eternity.

It follows, then, that repentance must not be regarded as a remedy or atonement for every species of wrong-doing. It is not omnipotent in its effects, or limitless in its range. It does not blot out the penalty due to sin, and should never induce continuance in evil-doing. It should rather be the forerunner of moral reformation.

When men for a term of years go on alternately sinning and sorrowing, the chances are, that if men repent at all, it comes too late. Men do not scruple to sin, because they think sincere sorrow will atone for their crimes. They fondly imagine that sin will always appear sin, and the heart be always more or less sensitive to its power. The reverse is rather the case. Continuance in sin produces a state of mind in which there is no inclination to repent or reform. The heart becomes harder and more callous as years roll on. Trifling sins prepare the way for darker, until at last the fear of punishment and the terrors of a violated law have no effect whatever upon the conscience.

But even repentance, however genuine it may be, cannot recall lost hours and precious privileges, which once neglected or despised are gone forever. Nor does it in any way compensate for loss of character, or injury done to the heart or conscience, that certain actions have been done thoughtlessly. The spark that falls from the sportsman's gun among the dry leaves of the forest, kindles the prairie for miles and miles, and leaves nothing behind but ashes and blackened timbers, where formerly there were happy homes. And so in early life, men kindle fires which oceans of tears cannot quench. Secret and open sins—violations of natural and moral law, injuries, immoralities and frauds committed against our fellow men, involve permanent and deadly injuries upon the wrong-doer. Such men never prosper. They walk through life as under a cloud. The stars in their courses fight against them. They are doomed men—haunt-

ed by a shadow that mocks them and mars their every enjoyment. Their sins never cease to cry for vengeance, and death is longed for as a possible relief from present agony. The birthright has been sold, and no place of repentance can be found, "for heaven has wrath that can relent no more, and the grave closes o'er dark deeds that cannot be undone."

"We barter life for pottage ; sell true bliss
For wealth or power, for pleasure or renown,
Then wash with fruitless tears our faded crown."

Abstinence from sinful indulgences is the only and the best guarantee for a green old age. "Time," says Charles Dickens, "is not always a hard parent, and though he tarries for none of his children, often lays his hand lightly upon those who have used him well. The grey head is but the impression of father time's hand, in giving them his blessing, and every wrinkle but a notch in the quiet calender of a well spent life." Like the evergreens of the forest, whose colors instead of fading at the approach of winter, assume an additional lustre, when contrasted with the surrounding desolation, or like the holly whose leaves above are smooth and pointless, in contrast with the keen and prickly ones beneath :— such is the happy, calm, contented temperament of sanctified old age. The poet beautifully illustrates it when he says :

"And as when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green,
The holly leaves a sober hue display,
Less bright than they :
But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the holly tree ?

"So serious should my youth appear, among
The thoughtless throng,
So would I seem among the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be,
As the green winter of the holly tree."

“Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age. They shall be fat and flourishing.”

Little has been said in this volume, of the unchanging and eternal happiness of the redeemed in heaven. Certainly the glory and blessedness of the saints, must be as enduring as the misery of the lost. But who can describe, in what heaven consists? “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” “It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” “Before the throne of God, they serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne dwells among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.” “There shall be no more sea.” “There shall be no more curse: his servants shall serve him: they shall see his face and his name shall be in their foreheads. There shall be no more night there: and they need no candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” Such passages help us to form but a faint conception of the future state. There is nothing in the present existence, to indicate the life beyond the grave. Golden streets, seas of glass, rivers of crystal, gates of pearl, and crowns of gold, are beyond comprehension. They simply indicate what ordinary language cannot describe: transcendent blessedness and effulgent glory. The employments, enjoyments, society and communion of the saints, can but faintly be emblemized. The pic-

tures given are but shadowy—mere outlines—so delicate that when we attempt to analyze them and define the meaning of details, we spoil their beauty, and render them useless for the end intended. When the Queen of Sheba witnessed the magnificence of King Solomon's retinue and palace, and heard his matchless wisdom, there was no more spirit in her; "the half had not been told her." And such we may believe shall be the feelings of the glorified in the beatific vision. The perfectly developed life of heaven far transcends the highest attainments and purest fellowship of earth. As Dr. Palmer, of New Orleans, said when standing over the remains of his beloved friend, Stuart Robinson, of Louisville: "We cannot but break our hearts over the graves which hide these precious forms from our sight, but think of the blessed communion which they enjoy with the saints in glory. Have you never tried to imagine the first half-hour in heaven when the first burst of surprise is over, and we are led up through the hierarchy of the skies, through the ranks of angels and of seraphim, and join the mighty company of the redeemed as they gather in that inner circle around the throne? Myriads of voices swell the eternal anthem, but every note gives the record of the experience here below. Each saint sweeps his fingers across the chords of his own harp, and utters in song what he himself learned on earth of the riches of divine grace, his own struggles with indwelling sin, his own conflicts with outward temptations, his own victory and triumph over evil, his own sense of the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost. As the separate notes combine in the general harmony of music, so these diversified histories are joined in harmonious accord into the anthems of praise to Him who hath redeemed them with His own precious blood and made them priests unto God in His temple forever."

The descriptions given us of heaven are for the most part of a negative character. "NO MORE NIGHT; NO MORE TEARS; NO

MORE PAIN." Among other things these figures imply the absence of all darkness, natural, moral and spiritual. In the light that streams straightway from the throne, they see clearly. Night is emblematic of ignorance. Such is our condition in the present life. Our minds are clouded by disease, and doubts and fears; our intellects feeble and blinded by prejudice; insoluble problems meet us at every step:—

"We wander long in the mazes, trying to find the light,
And the more we toil and struggle, the denser is the night."

In heaven all this ends. On the method of the divine government, and other perplexing questions, the light of infinite wisdom shall fall. Not perhaps at the very moment of entrance shall perfect knowledge be enjoyed, but the advance shall be steady, and without the drawbacks that are inseparable from the mortal state.

Night is the emblem of sorrow. The world is full of sadness. But there and then discipline is no longer needed. The weeping which has endured for the night, is succeeded by the joy of the morning. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Night is the emblem of death. It reminds us of the gloomy sepulchre; of the final extinguishing of the flame that has long been smouldering in the socket; of the closing in of life's brief and fitful day, and entrance upon the existence that lies beyond the valley of death's shadow. But in heaven there are no biting nor blighting winds; no funeral processions; no graves. The inhabitants are no more sick; a deathless immortality is the portion of every saint. Night is the time for repose and rest. Exhausted nature demands a cessation of the labors of the day. Sleep comes gently, and woo's to oblivion. Without it man's physical nature becomes exhausted, and the brain delirious. But no such exhaustion is felt by the saints. They rest not day nor night. With untiring zeal they pursue their holy work. There is no sense of fatigue, and no periods of inactiv-

ity. It is angelic life, the perfection of mind and body, that needs no sleep. The active powers, purified and intensified, are capacitated for grander efforts, than are possible to this earthly state.

Heaven is often spoken of in Scripture as rest. "There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God." "They rest from their labors." "Labor, therefore, to enter into that rest." It is not however, the rest of inaction, but "action satisfied ; not stilness, but duly proportioned movement. Rest is the ever-recurring coincidence between seeking and finding. Seeking is unrest, finding is rest. A body is at rest, not when all attractions cease, but when they are so balanced as to give it undisturbed security in its own place and power. The earth rests in its ceaseless flight ; the ocean rests when its mighty waters, calmed beneath a cloudless sky, mirror back the depths of heaven. It is not then the dead, the inert, the incapable of motion which presents to us the idea of rest ; but movement adjusted and sweetly controlled ; power balanced and unstained ; life, full and intense, satisfied. The stars in their silent brightness ; the sweet ripple of the brook ; the murmur of waves breaking on the shore and seething through the pebbled sand ; sun shined trees in blossom ; the sleeping child with its heaving and falling breast ; the human countenance radiant in worship—these furnish us with the imagery of rest."

The mind was made for action. It finds its greatest joy in the exercise of its powers. And thus it must be in heaven. It is not a realm of unbroken repose, of mere indulgence in spiritual felicity, but a condition of ever increasing aspirations after higher altitudes in the glorified life, and clearer comprehension of those mysteries which the angels desire to look into. "They REST not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is and is to come."

NO MORE PAIN. Days of agony ; nights of feverish excitement and troubled dreams ; convulsive heavings and rapid breathings—

all are left behind. The natural body gives place to the spiritual ; the corruptible puts on immortality. There is no more pain, because there is no more sin. There is no further need to learn the lessons which pain is intended to teach, and no need of any further sanctifying process. The shrivelled, contorted marks of suffering all fade out, as the spirit passes to the rest of heaven. NO MORE TEARS. At times our tears are a relief :

“In tears the heart oppressed with grief
Gives language to its woes.”

Though not good in themselves they are better than pent up sorrow. Man because of sin has been made to mourn, and born to weep. This world is a vale of tears. The tears of the child foreshadow those of manhood and old age. Tears of penitence and of godly sorrow : of disappointed hopes, foiled ambitions and hopeless unreciprocated love : tears of memory that shade the sombre walls of bygone years with melancholy recollections : tears of repentance as when the prodigal returns to the parental roof : tears shed over treacherous friendships : tears of remorse, when we feel as Cain of old—outcasts of the world, shunned by man and accused by heaven : tears that precede the severing of loved companionships, when the eye of affection marks the slow but sure progress of disease : tears around deathbeds where all but the dying weep : tears that fall upon the icy cheek and marble forehead of our dead ones, when

“ Though mute and cold, the pale unconscious clay,
The spirit seems to linger in a smile :
In death still beautiful.”

And tears which moisten the fresh upturned soil, and dissolve the first snows of winter, that freshen the sepulchre ! To dry up such tears, it is not given to mortals on this earth. They must flow and fall, until the life that now is, is lost in the better life which is to

come. By an art divine, tears are then dried up never to return. "He shall swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from off all faces." In this land the saints no more languish, nor droop under the presence of human ills. As in sinless Eden, no tears are shed.

THERE IS NO NIGHT THERE. BUT IN HELL IT IS PERPETUAL NIGHT. Chains and darkness: anguish unutterable, agony unspeakable make up the cup of woe. If there is immortality at all beyond the grave, it must be so. Such is the dreary prospect of the impenitent soul.

The pictures of heaven's blessedness, that we have been looking at, are not distasteful or unlovely to the carnal eye. There is danger indeed that under their spell, readers of this volume yet unconverted and unsaved, may lull themselves into a false security. It is not enough that we describe such glories, we would fain persuade all to seek after them. Said a hearer once to his minister who had preached an eloquent sermon: "It was really a grand sermon as far as it went. I never enjoyed a description of heaven better. You told us everything about heaven, except how to get there." THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY. Redemption through the blood of Christ and sanctification through the spirit, fit us for his presence. Those before the throne have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. "But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable and murders, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Many still affect not to believe this. The illustrations of "Dante's Inferno" are not only regarded as fancy, but so are the punishments, which Scripture foretells as awaiting the impenitent. Even were it so, what it may be asked of the scoffer, is your own

conception of the future that succeeds a life of open or secret sin? Does conscience approve of the same hereafter, for saint and sinner alike? Does the phrase "NO NIGHT THERE" MEAN NO NIGHT ANYWHERE? Are those who now tread the highways and byways of vice, to walk the golden city with the pure in heart? Surely this cannot be! If there is a God, whose crowning attribute is holiness, there must be a gulf between those who die impenitent, and those who after living lives of faith, die victorious! There is not a soul, but feels the absolute necessity and certainty of a two-fold destiny beyond the grave, in keeping with the character of the existence here. If so, how needful the earnest expostulation:

"Oh! quench not the spirit—the spirit of light,
For if he depart, thou wilt wander in night;
Thy sun and thy stars will alike disappear,
And thy heart will be harassed with fear upon fear."

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For William Tompkins

Author

Cochrane, William

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Future punishment; or Does death end probation?

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