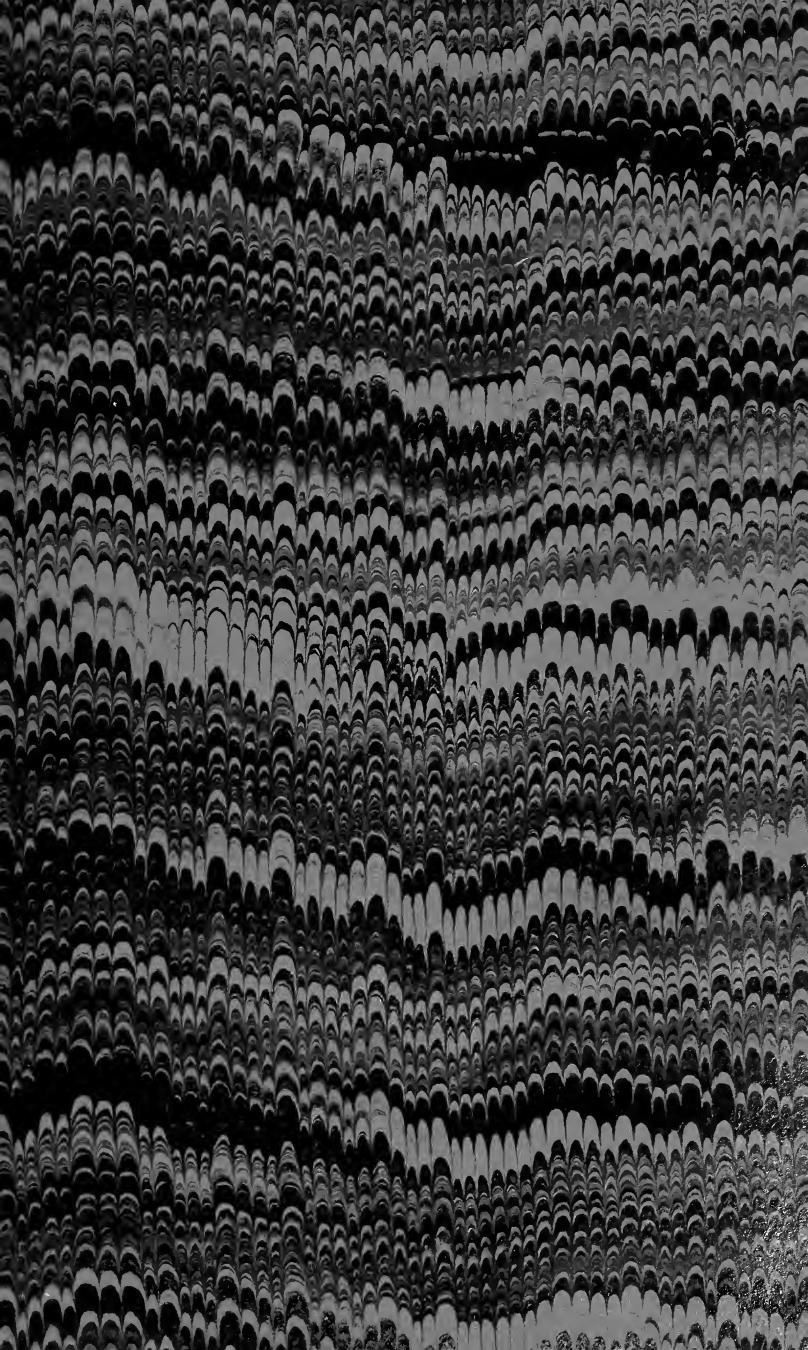
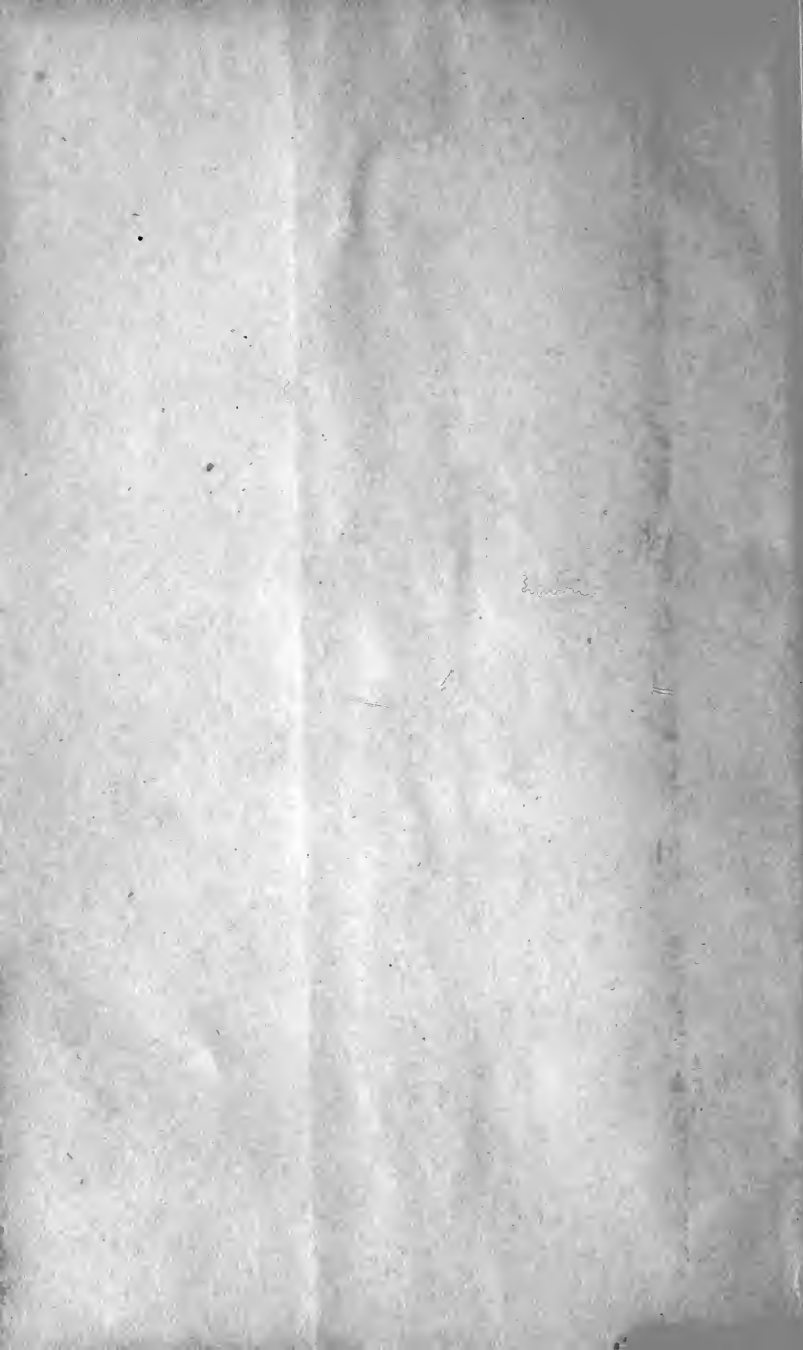


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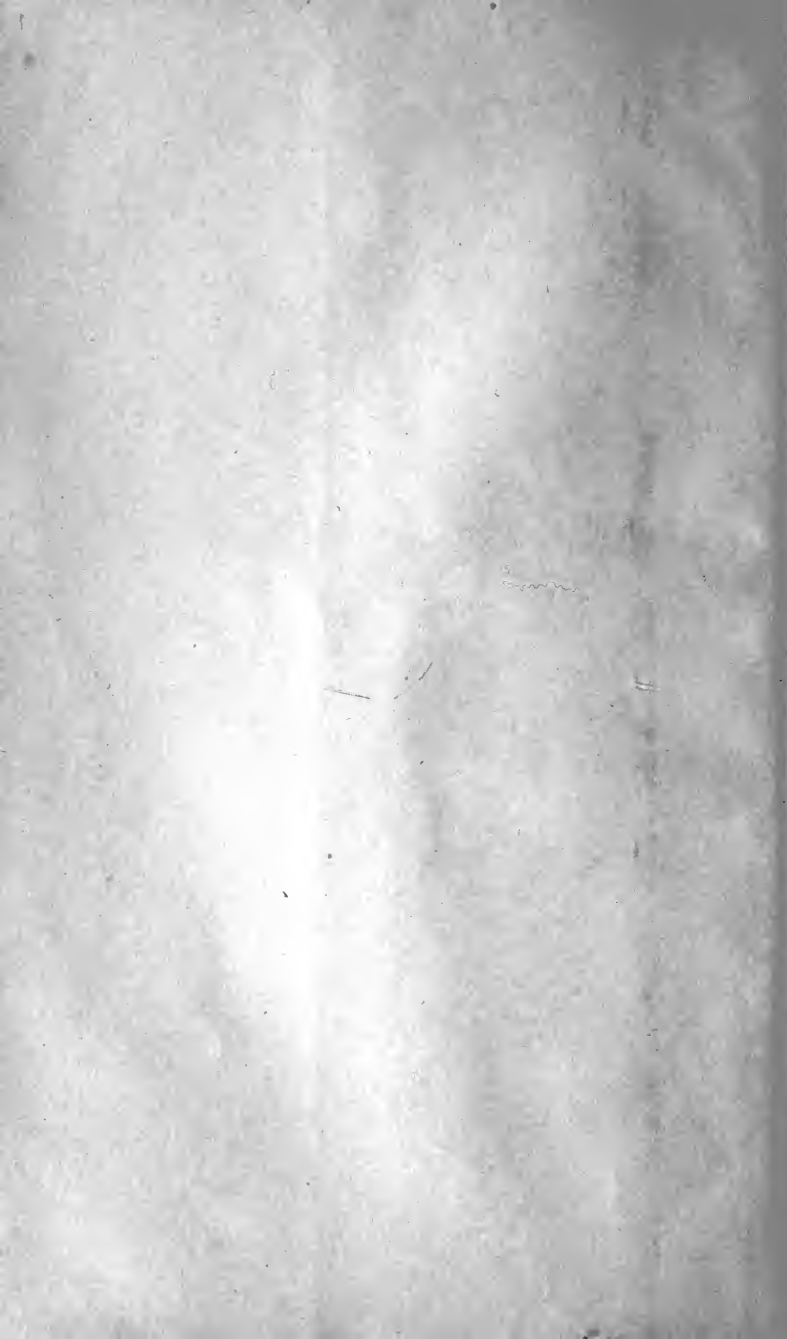
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# INQUIRY

INTO THE SCRIPTURAL IMPORT OF THE WORDS

SHEOL,

HADES, TARTARUS, AND GEHENNA:

ALL TRANSLATED

HELL,

IN THE COMMON ENGLISH VERSION.

---

BY WALTER BALFOUR.

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SECOND EDITION.

CHARLESTOWN, (Ms.)

PRINTED BY GEORGE DAVIDSON.

1825.

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P.  
Mr. Charles Matthews

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1825

*District of Massachusetts, to wit :*

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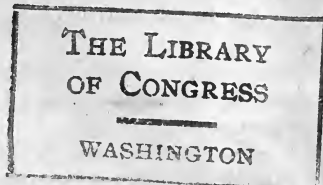
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In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;” and also to an act entitled “an act supplementary to an act entitled ‘an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching, historical and other prints.’”

**JOHN W. DAVIS,**

*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

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## INTRODUCTION.

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**T**HE simple object of the author, in this Inquiry, is, to examine the foundation on which the doctrine of endless misery is built. This doctrine rests on the *fact* or the *falsehood* that a place called *hell*, in a future state, is prepared for the punishment of the wicked. In speaking, and preaching, and writing on the subject, this is always presumed as true. It is taken for granted as indisputable. Most Universalists have conceded this to their opponents, and have contended not against the existence of such a place of misery, but against the endless duration of its punishment. All the principal writers on both sides of this question proceed on this ground, that there is a place of future punishment, and that the name of it is *hell*. Winchester, Murray, Chauncey, Huntingdon and others, all admit that *hell* is a place of future punishment. Edwards, Strong, and others who opposed them, had no occasion to prove this, but only to show that it was to be endless in its duration. This Inquiry is princi-

pally for the purpose of investigating, if what has been taken for granted by the one party, and conceded by the other, is a doctrine taught in Scripture. If the views I have advanced be false, it still leaves the question between Universalists and their opponents undisturbed. If they are found upon examination to be true, all dispute about *endless misery in hell* must of course cease, for if no such place exists, why dispute about the endless duration of its punishment?

The author is aware, that the subject he has undertaken to discuss, is both *solemn* and *important*, and that his sentiments, are not in unison with the principles and prejudices of the religious community. He is deeply sensible that much learning, and piety, and popular opinion, are against him. The doctrine he opposes is a fundamental article of almost every religious creed, is taught weekly from almost every pulpit, and writings from the press are numerous in its support.

There are some, we hope many, who would rejoice to find it fairly and scripturally proved that hell is not a place of endless punishment. Their benevolence of disposition, and their inability to reconcile this doctrine with the character of God, and with many parts of his word, all concur in leading them to wish that clear and decided evidence of this might appear. The following pages are an humble attempt at showing this. From such, the author expects a candid and patient hearing of the evidence he has to produce. All he wishes, is, that his arguments and explana-

tions of Scripture may be impartially examined, and his views received or rejected accordingly. The importance of the subject itself demands that it be candidly and impartially examined. But there are other considerations, which ought to excite universal attention to it. In the present day, various opinions are entertained as to the future punishment of the wicked, and that by men eminent for both learning and piety. Some hold to the doctrine of eternal punishment, some to its being of limited duration. Others think they are to be annihilated, and some hang in doubt, not having any fixed belief on the subject. If the Bible does teach us any thing certain on this subject all ought to know it, and we think in no other way can this be ascertained, but by mutually communicating our researches for candid consideration to the public, and let all men, through a free press, read and judge for themselves. To deter men from investigation, on a subject which involves their eternal condition, is of all inquisitions the worst.

As to the sentiments advanced, the author makes no apology for them, nor does he claim any indulgence from his readers. He has appealed to the Scriptures, and to this test he desires his views to be brought for examination. If they are found to be false, no one can wish more sincerely than himself to see their falsity detected. If true, they are of too much importance, and God's character is too much concerned, to be treated with indifference by judicious men. If

God never threatened men with endless misery in hell, it places his character in a very different light from that in which it is generally viewed.

The attempt has been made to conduct this investigation in a cool, rational, and scriptural manner and to express with plainness and candor the sentiments advanced, for the candid consideration of others. We have endeavored to state what we consider the truth, on this subject, and to state it in the spirit of the truth. Should any thing contrary to this be discerned, we hope the reader will impute it to inadvertence and not to design.

In the course of the work a number of quotations have been made from different authors. None of these have been taken from Universalist writers. We have purposely avoided this, and have availed ourselves of quotations from those, who, while opposed to the views advanced, have conceded many things in favor of them. The testimony of an opponent is always reckoned valuable. Such testimonies might have been much increased if it had been necessary. But we rest the truth of the views advanced, on evidence and facts which we have drawn from Scripture.

The path in which the author has trod, in this Inquiry, has been new to himself, and but little frequented by other writers, of which he has any knowledge. That we have not, in any instance, turned aside from the path of truth, in any of our statements, we do not affirm. It would be surprising if we had not, considering the disadvantageous circumstances, for accurate thinking and



writing, in which we have brought this subject forward. All we can say, is, that we have studied to be accurate in our statements, and to be guided by the Scriptures in the explanations we have given.

Should any trifling inaccuracies be pointed out by any one who dislikes the views which I have advanced, my time and habits of thinking forbid my promising him any reply. Any answer, meeting the body of the evidence produced, shall be attended to, either by acknowledging my error, or by defending what I have written. That the truth of God on this, and every other subject, may be made manifest and prevail, is the desire of the author, whatever may become of his sentiments.

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### NOTICE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

It has been suggested, by many who have read the "Inquiry," that it ought to be printed in a form, and sold at a price, suitable to a larger class of readers. A second edition being called for, the author has availed himself of this suggestion, and would state the following things in regard to both editions for the information of his readers.

1st, The present edition, printed in a different form, and reduced to one half the price, is for substance the very same as the first. All that part of the work, containing the arguments and facts, proving that Sheol, Hades, Tartarus and Gehenna, do not refer to a place of endless misery, is the same as in the first edition. The au-

thor has seen no reason to change his opinion, and therefore has made no change in its matter. Any alterations made, are merely verbal, which require no particular notice, and are rather an improvement of the work. Being more deeply concerned than even his readers, that the evidence adduced should not be impaired, he has been scrupulously careful that nothing of this kind should be omitted, or even abridged, to the injury of the book.

2d, To reduce the size and price of the present edition, the following are all the principal alterations, which were found necessary.—The long quotation in regard to the Targums, and some others of a critical nature, which were deemed of little value to most readers, are here abridged, and the latter in one or two instances are entirely omitted. In every instance however, the books from whence such quotations were taken are referred to, so that any who are inclined may consult them. The two last sections, containing answers to objections and concluding remarks, in some places have also been abridged. These, with some reflections, and an occasional superfluous sentence or expression not essential to the argument being expunged, constitute the alterations in this from the first edition. The author would however assure his readers that nothing has been expunged or abridged of the evidence and argument which it contained.

It is known generally that during the last winter Mr. James Sabine announced in the Boston papers his intention to refute the "Inquiry," if a

suitable place for that purpose was afforded him. When none of his orthodox friends volunteered their pulpits, and the Methodists after granting, withdrew theirs, the Universalist Society in Charlestown unanimously voted him the use of their place of worship for that purpose. This unexampled instance of candour, liberality, and unfettered inquiry, ought to be universally known for universal imitation. Mr. S. accepted their invitation, and before a crowded, but attentive audience, delivered six lectures, which have since been published. The public can judge if they are any refutation of the "Inquiry." So far as it was concerned, few I presume would blame me for silence, for we believe it is generally allowed, that his discourses do not touch the facts and arguments of my book. Indeed he does not advocate endless hell torments, but attempts to establish a future retribution, which, if he had established, would leave the book unaffected. I should therefore have deemed a reply to his discourses unnecessary but for the following reasons.

1st, The subject of discussion, is of solemn and deep interest to all men. If therefore any additional light can be shed on it, by a candid and serious appeal to the Scriptures, it ought to be done. Since the doctrine of endless hell torments seems to be given up as indefensible by Mr. Sabine, yet if his doctrine of future retribution be a Scriptural one, it ought to be examined and believed by us all. What is truth, respecting the eternal destinies of men, is a question of no ordinary concern. I am willing therefore to

follow him to his own ground and examine his evidence for a future retribution.

2d, Since the "Inquiry" was published, and Mr. Sabine's attempt at an answer to it, I have often and seriously turned my thoughts to this important subject. But so far from being convinced that the views given in my book are unscriptural, considerable additional evidence has appeared of their truth. We have entered into a further investigation of the texts of Scripture which he controverts, together with others by which he attempts to prove a future retribution. This investigation, not only confirms in the strongest manner all we have advanced in the "Inquiry," but proves fatal to his doctrine. If he judged it best in answering the "Inquiry," to abandon the doctrine of endless hell torments, and only advocate a future retribution, it will now be found, that both must be given up as unscriptural. If what we have to advance in answer to Mr. S's discourses be true, and it will be difficult to prove it false, some entirely new ground must be taken by him to support future punishment in another world, either for soul or body, temporary or eternal. Such are the reasons which induce us to make any reply to Mr. S's discourses. An answer may therefore be expected to them in a few weeks in a separate pamphlet. This we have deemed the fairest method, for had our reply been added as an appendix to this edition, those who purchased the first, must also purchase this to obtain it.

# AN INQUIRY

INTO THE SCRIPTURAL IMPORT OF THE WORDS

SHEOL, HADES, TARTARUS, AND GEHENNA.

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## CHAPTER I.

**WORDS** are signs of men's ideas, and were used as such by the inspired writers, as they must be by every man, who speaks and writes to be understood. To understand their writings, it is necessary to ascertain what sense they affixed to their words, and this we can only learn, by consulting Scripture usage of them. That men have attached ideas to some Scripture words and phrases which they never meant to convey by them, we think will not be denied. That this not the case with the words *Sheol*, *Hades*, *Tartarus* and *Gehenna*, which we propose to examine, ought not to be taken for granted. We shall therefore attempt a consideration of all the places where these words occur, and endeavour to ascertain if by any of them the Spirit of God intended to convey the idea of a *place of endless misery*.

## SECTION I.

ALL THE PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE CONSIDERED, IN WHICH SHEOL OCCURS, TRANSLATED PIT, GRAVE, AND HELL, IN THE COMMON VERSION.

THE idea which most Christians have attached to the word *hell*, is *a place of eternal punishment for all the wicked*. Wherever they meet with this word, in reading their Bibles, it calls up the idea of such a place of punishment, and by many it will be deemed the worst of *heresies*, to give it any other signification. The cry of *heresy* ought not, however, to deter us from candidly inquiring "what is truth?" on this deeply interesting question. I have ventured to inquire what saith the Scriptures on this subject, and would submit the result of my investigations for candid consideration.

It is well known that there are four words in the original languages of the Bible, which are all translated by the word *hell*, in our common English version. These are Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, and Gehenna. The two first of these words are sometimes translated grave, as well as hell; the two last always hell in the common translation.

There is one fact, which deserves attention at the outset, of which many readers of the Bible are ignorant. The fact I allude to, is, that the word *hell* does not occur once in all the Old Testament, where it means a place of eternal misery for the wicked. The fact is indisputable; no man can doubt it who will take the trouble to examine this matter for himself. Nor is this a novel opinion, or a new discovery of mine. The fact is attested by some of the ablest

writers, who believed in this doctrine. Lest my veracity may be doubted on this point, I will quote their words. Dr. Campbell, in his 6th Preliminary Dissertation, p. 181, thus writes:—"As to the word *αιδης*, which occurs in eleven places of the New Testament, and is rendered *hell* in all, except one, where it is translated *grave*, it is quite common in the classical authors, and frequently used by the Seventy, in the translation of the Old Testament. *In my judgment it ought never in Scripture to be rendered HELL, at least in the sense wherein that word is now universally understood by Christians.* In the Old Testament, the corresponding word is *שאוֹל Sheol*, which signifies the state of the dead in general, without regard to the goodness or badness of the persons, their happiness or misery. In translating that word, the Seventy have almost invariably used *αιδης*. This word is also used sometimes in rendering the nearly synonymous words or phrases *בֹּר bor* and *אבני בֹּר abne bor*, the *pit*, and *stones of the pit*, *צַל מוֹת tsal moth*, the *shades of death*, *דומה dumeh*, *silence*. The state is always represented under those figures which suggest something dreadful, dark and silent, about which the most prying eye, and listening ear, can acquire no information. The term *αιδης Hades*, is well adapted to express this idea. It was written anciently, as we learn from the poets (for what is called the poetic, is nothing but the ancient dialect) *αιδης*, *ab a privativo et εἶδω video*, and signifies obscure, hidden, invisible. To this the word *Hell*, in its primitive signification, perfectly corresponded. For, at first, it denoted only what was secret or concealed. This word is found with little variation of form, and precisely in the same meaning, in all the Teutonic dialects.\*

\* See Junius' Gothic Glossary, subjoined to the Codex Argenteus, on the word *hulyan*.

“But though our word *hell*, in its original signification, was more adapted to express the sense of *αἰδης* than of *γεεννα*, it is not so now. When we speak as Christians, we always express by it, the place of the punishment of the wicked after the general judgment, as opposed to heaven, the place of the reward of the righteous. It is true, that in translating heathen poets, we retain the old sense of the word *hell*, which answers to the Latin *orcus*, or rather *infernus*, as when we speak of the descent of Eneas, or of Orpheus, into *hell*. Now the word *infernus*, in Latin, comprehends the receptacle of all the dead, and contains both *elysium*, the place of the blessed, and *Tartarus*, the abode of the miserable. The term *inferni*, comprehends all the inhabitants, good and bad, happy and wretched. The Latin words *infernus*, and *inferni* bear evident traces of the notion that the repository of the souls of the departed is under ground. This appears also to have been the opinion of both Greeks and Hebrews, and indeed of all antiquity. How far the ancient practice of burying the body may have contributed to produce this idea concerning the mansion of the ghosts of the deceased, I shall not take upon me to say; *but it is very plain, that neither in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, nor in the New, does the word αἰδης convey the meaning which the present English word HELL, in the Christian usage, always conveys to our minds.*

“It were endless to illustrate this remark, by an enumeration and examination of all the passages in both Testaments wherein the word is found. The attempt would be unnecessary, as it is hardly now pretended by any critic, that this is the acceptation of the term in the Old Testament. Who, for example, would render the words of the venerable patriarch Jacob, Gen. xxxvii. 35, when he was deceived by his sons into the opinion that his favourite child



Joseph had been devoured by a wild beast, *I will go down to hell to my son mourning?* or the words which he used, ch. xlii. 38. when they expostulated with him about sending his youngest son Benjamin into Egypt along with them, *Ye will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to hell?* Yet in both places the word, in the original, is *Sheol*, and in the version of the Seventy, *Hades*. I shall only add, that in the famous passage from the Psalms, xvi. 10. quoted in the Acts of the Apostles, Acts ii. 27. of which I shall have occasion to take notice afterwards, though the word is the same both in Hebrew and in Greek, as in the two former quotations, and though it is in both places rendered *hell* in the common version, it would be absurd to understand it as denoting the place of the damned, whether the expression be interpreted literally of David the type, or of Jesus Christ the antitype, agreeably to its principle and ultimate object."—I have made this long quotation from Dr. Campbell at the outset of my remarks for several reasons.

1st, It shows that *Sheol* of the Old Testament, and *Hades* of the New, both translated by our English word *hell*, do not signify a place of endless misery for the wicked, but simply the state of the dead, without regard to the goodness or badness of the persons, their happiness or misery. It follows of course, that wherever those two words are used in Scripture, though translated by the word *hell*, we ought not to understand such a place of misery to be meant by the inspired writers. Inattention to this has led to a misunderstanding of many parts both of the Old and New Testaments.

2d, It establishes also that our English word *hell*, in its primitive signification, perfectly corresponded to *Hades* and *Sheol*, and did not, as it now does, signify a place of endless misery. It denoted only what was secret or concealed. This we shall show more

fully afterwards. What we wish to be noticed here, is, that people generally have connected the idea of endless misery with the word hell, but it is evident that it is a very false association. It is beyond all controversy, that the word *hell* is changed from its original signification to express this idea.

3d, It is also obvious from the above quotation, and from other authors which might be quoted, that Gehenna is the word which is supposed to express the idea of a place of endless misery. The correctness of this opinion we shall attempt to consider afterwards. At present it need only be observed, that if the opinion be correct, it is somewhat surprising that the English language had no word to express such a place of misery, but the word hell must assume a new sense to accommodate it with a name.

4th, I shall only add in regard to the statements, made in the above quotation, that they are not opinions, broached by a Universalist, which he found to be necessary, in support of his system. No: they are the statements of Dr. Campbell, who was not a Universalist. Nor are they his own individual singular opinions, but are now admitted as correct by learned orthodox critics and commentators. In Mr. E. J. Chapman's critical and explanatory notes, we find the following remarks on Acts ii. 27. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell *eis adou*, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." This is a quotation from Psalm xvi. 10. It is evident that the primary reference of the words was to David, and equally so, from St. Peter's application of them in Acts ii. 31. that they are referrible principally and finally to Jesus Christ. The question immediately arises—in what sense are they in this application to be understood? That Christ should not be *left* in hell, is not at all incredible. But the thing implied in the declaration, *viz.* that Christ, or Christ's soul, was once *there*, creates

the difficulty. The following remarks may be useful, especially to common readers:—There are two Greek words which are translated hell—*Hades* and *Gehenna*. But their precise signification is very different. *Hades* or *Ades*, is derived from *a* and *eideo*, and means of course, invisible. It is synonymous with the Hebrew *Sheol*. *Hades* denotes sometimes the *grave*, but more commonly the state of the dead, or the region and state of separate spirits after death; whether that state be a state of happiness or of misery. To the rich man, Luke xvi. 23. *Hades* was a state of misery. We cannot, however, infer that he was in misery merely because he was in *Hades*, for Lazarus was there also. But that the rich man was in misery, we infer solely from other circumstances; other expressions—such as ‘being in torments’—‘I am tormented in this flame,’ &c.—They were both in *Hades*, *i. e.* the state or region of departed spirits; but to the one *Hades* was ‘joy unspeakable’—to the other, ‘everlasting burnings.’ *But neither Sheol nor Hades have, in themselves considered, any connexion with future punishment, as will be evident to any one who will examine, in the Hebrew Bible and in the Septuagint translation, the following passages, viz. Gen. xlii. 38. Isa. xiv. 9. and xxxviii. 10. See also, Rev. xx. 14. But Gehenna denotes properly the place of torment. It is derived from the Hebrew words Ge and Hinnom, i. e. the valley of Hinnom. See Josh. xv. 8. In this valley, otherwise called Tophet, the idolatrous Israelites caused their children to pass through the fire to Moloch. 2 Kings xxiii. 10. &c. From its having been the place of such horrid crimes and abominations and miseries, it came to pass, in process of time, that the word Gehenna was made to signify the future state of sin and punishment. If now the inquiry be, in what sense Christ went to hell, or in other words, what is meant by Acts ii. 27. the verse before us, the reply*

is—all that is meant by it is, that he was for a season, not in *Gehenna*, the place of torment, but in *Hades*, the state of the dead, or region of departed spirits. And in that state neither his soul nor body was left, but he rose again and triumphed over the grave.”

I have deemed it of some importance to avail myself of such concessions from these authors, to show, that neither *Sheol* of the Old Testament, nor *Hades* of the New, means a place of endless punishment. How the last quoted author could say, that *Hades* was to the rich man, “everlasting burnings,” and in the very next sentence add, “but neither *Sheol* nor *Hades* have, in themselves considered, any connexion with future punishment,” is to me altogether inexplicable. If neither *Sheol* nor *Hades*, has any connexion with future punishment, how could *Hades* be to the rich man, “everlasting burnings?” As to the correctness of the opinion that *Hades* is the “region and state of separate spirits” and “everlasting burnings,” see Sections 2d and 3d.

5th, If the doctrine of eternal misery was not revealed under the Old Testament dispensation, it follows, that it, as well as life and immortality, was brought to light by the Gospel. If it be allowed that this doctrine was not revealed under the Mosaic dispensation, it is very evident that persons could not be moved with fear, to avoid a punishment, concerning which they had no information. If it be said, that it was revealed, we wish to be informed in what part of the Old Testament this information is to be found.

It seems then to be a conceded point, that neither *Sheol* of the Old Testament, nor *Hades* of the New, so often translated hell, means, as is commonly believed, the place of eternal punishment for the wicked. From the concessions made in the foregoing quotations, most people would deem it proper for me to decline the labour which Dr. Campbell calls *end-*

less, to illustrate by an *enumeration of all the passages* in both Testaments, that these words do not signify this place of punishment for the wicked. Unwilling however, to take this matter on trust, I have submitted to this endless labour, and shall proceed to bring forward all those passages.

The word *Sheol* in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, occurs, sixty-four times. It is rendered by our translators, three times *pit*, twenty-nine times *grave*, and thirty-two times *hell*.

1st, Let us attend to the texts in which it is translated *pit*. In Numb. xvi. 30, 33, it occurs twice. Speaking of Korah and his company, they are said to go down, "quick into the pit." What is said in these two verses, is explained by *the earth opening her mouth and swallowing them up*. Had *Sheol* been translated *hell* here, as in other places, according to the common acceptation of this word, Korah and his company went down alive, soul and body to the place of eternal misery. But this would be contrary to common belief, for it is allowed, that men's bodies do not go there until the resurrection. All that seems to be meant in this account is, that they were swallowed up alive, as whole cities have been by an earthquake, and that without any reference to their eternal condition. This, I presume, is the view most people take of this judgment of God upon those men. Job xvii. 16, is the only other text in which *Sheol* is rendered *pit*. It is said, speaking of men,—“they shall go down to the bars of the pit.” What is meant, is explained in the very next words,—“when our rest together is in the dust.” As it would be a mere waste of time to make any further remarks to show that *Sheol* translated *pit* in these texts, does not refer to a place of eternal misery, let us,

2dly, Bring to view all the texts in which this word is translated *grave*. The first three places then,

in which it occurs, are, Gen. xxxvii. 35.; xlii. 38. and xliv. 29. noticed already by Dr. Campbell in the above quotation. Had Sheol been translated hell in these texts, as it is in many others, Joseph would be represented as in hell, and that his father Jacob expected soon to follow him to the same place. In like manner, it would make Hezekiah say, "I shall go to the gates of hell." And to declare,— "hell cannot praise thee." See Isai. xxxviii. 10, 18. I may just notice here, that, if those good men did not go to hell, it will be difficult to prove from the Old Testament, that Sheol or hell, was understood to mean a place of eternal misery for the wicked. But further, let Sheol be translated hell, instead of grave in the following texts, and we think all will allow, that the idea of a place of future misery, was not attached to this word by the Old Testament writers. Thus translated, it would make Job say, chap. xvii. 13,— "if I wait, hell is mine house." And to pray, chap. xiv. 13,— "O that thou wouldst hide me in hell." It would also make David say, Psalm lxxxiii. 3,— "My life draweth nigh unto hell." And to complain, Ps. vi. 5,— "in hell who shall give thee thanks."

To translate Sheol hell, would represent David as a monster in cruelty, in the following passages. Thus, speaking to his son Solomon, and just before his death, he says to him concerning Joab,— "let not his hoar head go down to hell in peace." And concerning Shimei, he adds,— "but his hoar head bring thou down to hell with blood." See 1 Kings, ii. 6, 9. No fault is generally found with David, as to Joab, mentioned in verse 6th, for his crimes justly subjected him to death. But David's conduct in regard to Shimei, verse 9th, has been often blamed. The following quotation from the *Missionary Magazine*, vol. vii. p. 333, removes all difficulty from this passage, which has afforded sport to infidels. It is there

said,—“David is here represented in our English version as finishing his life with giving a command to Solomon to kill Shimei; and to kill him on account of that very crime, for which he had sworn to him by the Lord, he would not put him to death. The behaviour thus imputed to the king and prophet, should be examined very carefully, as to the ground it stands upon. When the passage is duly considered, it will appear highly probable that an injury has been done to this illustrious character. It is not uncommon in the Hebrew language to omit the negative in a second part of a sentence, and to consider it as repeated, when it has been once expressed, and is followed by the connecting particle. The necessity of so very considerable an alteration, as inserting the particle NOT, may be here confirmed by some other instances. Thus Psalm i. 5. ‘The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor (the Hebrew is *and*, signifying *and not*) sinners in the congregation of the righteous.’ Psalm ix. 18.; xxxviii. i.; lxxv. 5. Prov. xxiv. 12. If, then, there are many such instances, the question is, whether the negative, here expressed in the former part of David’s command, may not be understood as to be repeated in the latter part? and if this may be, a strong reason will be added why it *should* be so interpreted. The passage will run thus: ‘Behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, who cursed me; but I swate to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death by the sword. Now, therefore, hold him not guiltless, (for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him.) but bring not down his hoary head to the grave with blood.’ Now, if the language itself will admit this construction, the sense thus given to the sentence derives a very strong support from the context. For, how did Solomon understand this charge? Did he kill Shimei in consequence of it? Certainly

he did not. For, after he had immediately commanded Joab to be slain, in obedience to his father, he sends for Shimei, and, knowing that Shimei ought to be well watched, confines him to a particular spot in Jerusalem for the remainder of his life. 1 Kings, ii. 36—42. See *Kennicott's Remarks*, p. 131." Those who wish to see this verse noticed at considerable length, may consult the *Christian's Magazine*, vol. i. p. 172—181.

But to return from this digression: David says, Psalm xxxi. 17,—“let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in hell.” In some of the preceding texts we read of persons going down to hell, and in the following we read of persons being brought up from it. Thus, 1 Sam. ii. 6,—“the Lord killeth and maketh alive: he bringeth down to hell and bringeth up.” And, again, Psalm xxx. 3,—“O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from hell.” But what this means is explained in the next words,—“thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.” In these passages the language is evidently figurative. It is evident, that by hell could not be meant a place of endless misery, nor could these passages be understood literally; for surely David, nor no one else, was ever brought down to such a place, and afterwards brought up from it. We find Job says, ch. vii. 9,—“he that goeth down to hell shall come up no more,” which contradicts what was said in these passages about persons being brought up from hell. But what Job means, is plain from the next words, “he shall no more return to his house.” But further, if Sheol was translated hell instead of grave in the following texts, it would make the sacred writers represent all men as going to hell. Thus it is said, Psalm lxxxix. 48,—“what man is he that liveth and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of hell?” Notwithstanding this, David



says, Psalm xlix. 15,—“But God will redeem my soul from the power of hell.” By comparing these two last texts, it is evident that “*hand of hell*,” and “*power of hell*,” mean the same thing. We have also a proof, that Sheol did not mean a place of eternal misery, but the state of the dead; for death and Sheol are words used to express the same idea. Besides, we know for certainty, that no man can deliver himself from the power of death, or hand of the grave; but surely all men do not go to hell, or a place of eternal misery? Again: if Sheol is translated hell instead of grave, it makes Solomon say, Eccles. ix. 10,—“there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in hell whither thou goest.” But are there none of these things in the place of eternal misery? To answer this in the negative, would be to contradict common opinion on the subject. But this can be affirmed concerning the state of the dead, and shows that Solomon, by Sheol, did not understand a place of endless misery, but this state, or, as Job calls it, “the house appointed for all the living.” Here “there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom.”

But further; if Sheol indeed means *hell*, in the common sense of the word, very strange statements are given us in the following passages. It is said, Prov. i. 12,—“Let us swallow them up alive as hell.” And in Job xxiv. 19. it is added,—“drouth and heat consume the snow waters; so doth hell those who have sinned.” Again, Psalm xlix. 14,—“like sheep they are laid in hell; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in hell from their dwelling.” And, Psalm cxli. 7,—“our bones are scattered at hell’s mouth as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood.” Now, I ask every candid man, whether all these statements do not per-

fectly agree with understanding Sheol to mean the grave, but are contrary to truth, to understand them of hell, or a place of eternal misery. Such an idea does not appear to have entered the minds of the Old Testament writers. Does any man believe that people's bones are scattered at the mouth of the place of eternal misery? and does this place consume persons in it as drought and heat consume the snow waters?

It is not generally noticed by most readers of the Bible, that our translators have rendered Sheol both grave and hell in the same passage, and speaking of the same persons. An example of this occurs in Ezek. xxxi. 15—18. In the 15th verse it is rendered grave, and in verses 16th and 17th it is twice rendered hell. Besides, observe, that what is called grave and hell in verses 15th, 16th and 17th, is called in verse 18th, "the nether parts of the earth."—Another example we have of this in Isai. xiv. 3—24. In this passage, too long for quotation, is given a description of the fall of the king of Babylon. Any one who reads it, may see that things are stated which forbid us thinking, that by Sheol, translated both hell and grave, a place of eternal misery was intended. But it is well known that detached parts of this passage have been so applied. The persons represented as in hell, are said to be moved at the coming of some other sinners to the same place of misery; and as saying to them,—“Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?” But the passage needs only be read by any man of ordinary sense to convince him of the absurdity of such an interpretation. But further; in Prov. xxx. 16. Sheol, or hell, is represented as never satisfied. And in Cant. viii. 6. jealousy is said to be “cruel as Sheol, or hell.” All this may be said of the grave, but how it could be said of a place of eternal misery I cannot

perceive. Had our translators rendered Sheol hell in the following passage, it would have given such a plausible aspect to it, as meaning a place of misery, that it would not have been easy to convince many people to the contrary. Thus it is said Job xxi. 13. speaking of the wicked,—“they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to hell.” Had this been done, people would have quoted it as decisive in proof of the doctrine of eternal misery. Why it was not rendered here hell instead of grave, I know not, but sure I am, it is as strong as any of the texts in which it is rendered hell, to prove this doctrine.

The last passage in which Sheol is translated grave, is Hosea xiii. 14,—“I will ransom them from the power of the grave. I will redeem them from death; O death I will be thy plague; O grave, or hell, I will be thy destruction.” On this text I beg leave to make the following remarks.

1st, If Sheol, translated grave, and in other places hell, means a place of eternal misery, it is evident from this passage, that men are to be ransomed from it, and it destroyed. “I will ransom them from the power of hell,” and, “O hell, I will be thy destruction.” It will be easily perceived, that those who believe Sheol to be the place of endless misery, ought to give this up, for if they do not, they must admit, that neither the place nor its punishment is to be of eternal duration. If Sheol, translated pit, grave, and hell, is relinquished, as referring to such a place, it follows, that no such doctrine as this was known under the Old Testament, as taught by the inspired writers. Dr. Campbell, and others, as we have seen in the foregoing extracts, give up Sheol, and contend that Gehenna is the place of eternal punishment for the wicked.

2d, In the passage under consideration, there seems to be a double kind of proof, that Sheol does not

signify hell, but the grave or state of the dead. The first clause of the verse,—“I will ransom them from the power of the grave,” is explained by the second, “I will redeem them from death.” Death, in this last clause, answers to, or is synonymous with, grave in the first. But again, it is equally evident, that death in the third clause, is equivalent to grave in the fourth. This kind of parallelism is common in the Old Testament; attention to which is of importance in understanding the precise import of many expressions there used. As this text is quoted in the New Testament, and must again be brought to view, we shall for the present dismiss it.

These are now all the passages fairly before us, in which Sheol is rendered grave in the common version. Some may be disposed to ask,—why did not our translators render Sheol hell in all these texts, as they have done in many others, which we shall presently introduce? The answer to this question is of easy solution. It would have been absurd, nay, shocking to all our best feelings, to have rendered Sheol hell in many of the above passages. For example, it would not do to represent Joseph in hell, or a place of endless misery. No one could bear to hear, that Jacob expected soon to go to the same place. And surely it would never be believed that Job ever prayed,—“O that thou wouldest hide me in hell.” In short, it never could be admitted, that David, Hezekiah, and others, could have spoken about *Sheol* as they did, if they attached the same ideas to it as we do to the word *hell*.

Had our translators rendered Sheol uniformly by the words pit, grave, or hell, we would have been less liable to mistaken views on this subject. Let us, for example, suppose that they had always translated it hell. We, in reading our Bibles, must have seen from the context of the places, from the persons spoken

about, and other circumstances, that a place of eternal punishment could not be meant by this word. The Old Testament saints expected to go to Sheol, yea, prayed for it; but what would we think, to hear Christians now speaking about hell, as they did about Sheol? For example, would it not astonish us to hear a professed saint, pray,—“O that thou wouldest hide me in hell, or in the place of endless misery?” But why should it astonish us, if they meant by Sheol, what we now do by the word hell? Take only a single example of this. If Jacob meant by Sheol what we now mean by the word hell, why ought the following statement to surprise us?—A Christian loses a son, and refuses to be comforted by his family. He says, “I will go down to the place of endless misery unto my son mourning.” Concerning another beloved child he says,—“if mischief befall him by the way in which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the place of endless misery.” This would be strange language in the mouth of a Christian in our day. But it ought not, if we indeed contend, that Sheol or hell, in the Old Testament, had any reference to such a place of misery.

3d, Let us now turn our attention to all the texts in which Sheol is rendered by the word *hell*, in the common version. It ought to be observed generally, in the outset, that in several of the places where the word Sheol is rendered hell in the text, the translators put grave in the margin. The man who does not perceive that grave in many places, at least, is much more suitable to the text and context, must read his Bible very carelessly. Who, for example, does not perceive this in Psalm xvi. 10. “for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.” This is quoted, Acts ii. and applied to the resurrection of our Lord. It may surely be asked,—was our Lord ever in hell; the place of eternal misery? When he said, “father into thy

hands I commend my spirit," did his father send him to hell? This, I presume, will not be pretended. Where, it may be said then, was our Lord's soul not left? He was not left in the state of the dead, or in *Sheol* or *Hades*, which are only two names for the same place. The Lord did not suffer his Holy One to see corruption, but raised him again from the dead.

But again: was Jonah in hell, when he said, chap. ii. 2,—“out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou hearest my voice?” I have always understood, that in *hell* prayers were unavailing. But if Jonah was in hell, this is not true, for he not only prayed there, but was heard and delivered out of it. It deserves notice, that our translators, Gen. xxxvii. 35. aware that it would not do to send Jacob to hell, translate the word *Sheol* grave; and here, thinking it rather strange to represent Jonah as praying in hell, they put *grave* in the margin.—But again; are we to conclude, when it is said, Psalm lv. 15,—“let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell,” that David prayed that the persons of whom he spoke, might go down quick, or alive, into a place of endless misery? As this was not a prayer very suitable for the man after God's own heart, we find our translators again put *grave* in the margin.

Having seen from Psalm xvi. 10. that the Saviour is represented as having been in hell, we need not be much surprised at what is said in the following passages, which refer to him. Thus, Psalm xviii. 5. it is said,—“the sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me.” See also 2 Sam. xxii. 6. and Psalm cxvi. 3. where the same language is used. In this text, “sorrows of hell,” and “snares of death,” are convertible expressions, and seem evidently to refer to the Saviour's sufferings. I am aware, that it hath been held as an opinion, that our Lord actually went to *hell*, and suffered its pains for

a season. This opinion was probably founded on these passages. In the present day, I presume the man is not to be found, who would risk his reputation in defending it.

That Sheol, translated hell, means the grave, or state of the dead, is, I think, obvious. Thus, Solomon, speaking of a lewd woman, says, Prov. vii. 27,—"her house is the way to hell;" which he immediately explains, by adding, "going down to the chambers of death." This is, if possible, still more evident from chap. v. 5,—“her feet go down to death,” which is explained by the next words,—“her steps take hold on hell.” The same remarks apply to Prov. xxiii. 13, 14.—As the state of the dead was concealed from the eyes, or knowledge of all the living, its being known to God, is stated as a proof of his perfection in knowledge. Thus it is said, Job xxvi. 6,—“hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.” And again, Prov. xv. 11. “hell and destruction are before the Lord, how much more then the hearts of the sons of men.”

*Sheol*, whether translated pit, grave, or hell, is represented as below, beneath, and as a great depth. Persons are always spoken of as going down to it. It is contrasted as to depth, with heaven for height, the extent of both being alike unknown. Thus it is said, Prov. xv. 24,—“the way of life is above to the wise, that they may depart from hell beneath.” And,—“it is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?” Job xi. 8. See also, Amos ix. 2. And Psalm cxxxix. 8. where similar language occurs. See also Dr. Campbell’s dissertation quoted above, on all these texts. But not only is *Sheol*, *hell*, represented as a great depth, but we read of the lowest *hell*. Thus in Deut. xxxii. 22. it is said,—“for a fire is kindled in mine anger and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the

earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." Here, as in other places, for hell in the text, our translators put grave in the margin. Should we understand hell, in this text to mean the place of eternal misery, it is implied, that there is a low, and lower, as well as lowest place of misery for the wicked. Accordingly, it has been common to assign to notoriously wicked men the lowest hell. But whatever sense we put on the phrase, "the lowest hell," it is the same place of which David thus speaks, Psalm lxxxvi. 13,—“for great is thy mercy towards me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.” Was David ever in the lowest place of eternal misery? But here again our translators for hell in the text put grave in the margin. The fact is, the language in the above texts is used figuratively, and it would be absurd to interpret it literally. See the foregoing dissertation of Dr. Campbell in proof of this.—When we read of the lowest hell, which implies a low, and a lower, is not this mode of speaking used as a contrast to the expression highest heavens, which implies a high and a higher heavens? We read also of the third heavens, which clearly implies two more. I would therefore suggest it for consideration, if the expression “lowest hell,” did not originate, from the dead being sometimes cast into pits, the depth of which was as little known, as the height of the highest heavens. When the common honors were paid the dead, they were put in caves, or vaults, or decently interred under the earth. But when persons were deemed unworthy of funeral honors, were they not cast into pits, the depth of which, were sometimes unknown? Did not this unknown depth give rise to the expression *depths of hell*, just as the unknown height of the *highest heavens*, gave rise to this expression?



In Isai. v. 14. it is said,—“hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure; and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it.” This may be said with respect to the grave, but surely with no propriety could it be said of a place of eternal misery. Speaking of the proud ambitious man, it is also said, Hab. ii. 5,—“who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied.” In this text, death and hell are used as convertible words to express the same thing. In Prov. xxvii. 20. it is said “hell and destruction are never full.” Similar things are stated above in the texts where Sheol is translated grave, as in these passages, and show, that the same was intended by the inspired writers, although the original word is differently rendered. The context of all these texts sufficiently show, that the grave or state of the dead is meant, and not a place of eternal misery. Indeed, let any one read Ezek. xxxii. 17—32. and observe, that all the dead are represented as in hell, and as speaking out of the midst of hell. Their graves are represented as about them; that the mighty are gone down to hell with their weapons of war, and that their swords are under their heads. All this description agrees very well with the ancient mode of placing the dead in their repositories, but it is contrary to common belief, that a place of eternal misery could be referred to. Does any one believe that the mighty of this earth have their swords under their heads in such a place?

As Sheol the grave, or hell, was the most debased state to which any person could be brought, hence I think God says, reproving Israel for their idolatries,—“and didst debase thyself even unto hell.” Isai. lvii. 9. And as death and the grave are of all things the most dreaded by men, it is said of some, that they,—“have made a covenant with death, and with

hell are at agreement." This language, expresses in a very strong manner, their fancied security, but which were only vain words, for it is added,—“your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand.” Isai. xxviii. 15—19.

The last text in which Sheol is translated hell, is Psalm ix. 17,—“the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations who forget God.” There is no text in which the word Sheol occurs, which has been more frequently quoted than this, to prove that by hell, is meant a place of misery for the wicked. The wicked are the persons spoken of, and they are said to be, or shall be, turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God. Plausible as this appears to be, we have only to consult the context, to see that no such idea was intended by the inspired writer. The Psalm in which the words stand, is treating of God’s temporal judgments upon the heathen nations. We think if verses 15—20. are consulted, this will sufficiently appear. What leads people to think that this passage refers to eternal misery, is, the false idea which they have attached to the word hell. They have associated a false idea with this word, and in this text they conclude that it is taught. But surely no one, who has attended to all the above texts, can continue to believe that Sheol here, has such a meaning. It is the same hell into which the wicked are turned, which Jacob said he would go down to Joseph mourning. It is the same hell in which the Saviour’s soul was not left. It is the same hell David prayed the wicked might go down quick, or alive into. When once I can believe that David prayed the wicked might go down alive to a place of endless misery, and that Korah and his company did go there alive, it is possible I may believe that the text before us contains the answer to David’s prayer. But it will not be easy to

produce evidence of this. The fact is, it would prove too much for even those who take this view of it. It would prove that all the heathen nations must go to eternal misery, a thing which few are prepared to admit. Ask the question of the most zealous advocates of the doctrine,—are all the heathen nations turned into eternal misery? They hesitate, they falter to say *yes*. But why do they so? for if Sheol means such a place, the passage is plain and explicit in declaring it.

It perhaps may be objected to this view of the text,—are not all good people turned into Sheol, or the state of the dead, as well as the wicked? why then is it said the wicked shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God? The answer to this is easy. Though all good people in David's day, went to Sheol, as well as the wicked, yet not in the way he is here speaking of the wicked. David is speaking of God's public judgments on the heathen, and by those judgments they were to be cut off from the earth, or turned into Sheol. It is one thing to die, and quite another to be cut off by the judgments of God from the earth. That the Sheol or hell here mentioned, was not a place of endless misery for the wicked, see Ainsworth on this text, and on Gen. xxxvii. and Psalm xvi.—I shall only add, if all the wicked, yea, all the nations who forgot God in those days were turned into a place of endless misery, upon what principles are we to justify the character of God, or of good men, for their want of feeling towards them, or their exertions to save them from it? We are told that the times of this ignorance God winked at: that he suffered all nations to walk after their own ways. If all the heathen nations were turned into a place of eternal misery, neither God, nor good men felt, or spoke, or acted, as if this was true.

I have now finished, what Dr. Campbell calls an *endless labour*, namely, to illustrate by an enumeration of all the passages in the Old Testament, that Sheol, rendered pit, grave, and hell in the common version, does not signify a place of endless misery. What he stated concerning this in the above extract, we think is strictly correct. Before closing my remarks on all these passages, there are a few facts and observations, which have occurred in the examination of them, which deserve some notice.

1st, The word translated everlasting, eternal, forever, is never connected with Sheol or hell by any of the Old Testament writers. If they believed that this was a place of punishment for the wicked, and that it was endless in its duration, it is somewhat surprising that this should be the case. Every one knows, that these words are very often used there, but not in a single instance do the inspired writers in any way use them, when speaking of Sheol, or hell. So far from this, in some of the texts, it is said, hell is to be destroyed. We may then make an appeal to every candid mind, and ask, if hell in the Old Testament refers to a place of eternal misery, how are we to account for this? The fact is certain. To account for it, I leave to those who believe this doctrine. We read to be sure in books, and we have heard also in sermons, of an *eternal hell*, but such language, is not found in all the book of God, nor did it ever drop from the lips of any inspired writer.

2d, Another fact equally certain is, that not only are the words eternal, everlasting, or forever, omitted in speaking of Sheol or hell, but this place is not spoken about, as a place of misery, at all. Whether Sheol is translated pit, grave, or hell, in not one of the passages, is it described as a place of misery for the wicked, or for any one else. Before there need to be any dispute, whether the punishment in this

place is to be of eternal duration, we have got first to prove, that it is a place of punishment. But as this place is Sheol and not Gehenna, I pass this over.

3d, But so far from its being a place of misery, or eternal in its duration, it is also a fact, that it is described as a place of insensibility and ignorance. We are told that there is,—“no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, or Sheol, whither thou goest.” Eccles. ix. 10. Besides; Hezekiah, we have seen, said, Isai. xxxviii. 18,—“the grave cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.” I ask, could those persons have spoken in this manner, if they believed that hell was a place of punishment? Yea, I ask, could they in truth have spoken so, if their ideas about Sheol were the same as ours are about hell? We think this is impossible.

4th, It is a fact beyond dispute, that the Old Testament writers, and Christians generally in these days, are hardly agreed in a single idea about hell, if Sheol in the Old Testament signifies a place of eternal misery. It would be tedious to state this at length. I shall give a specimen of this disagreement.

Notice then, 1st, How the inspired writers in those days, and good men in these, speak about Sheol or hell, in regard to *themselves*. Jacob, Job, and others, speak of going to hell, and expecting it as a thing of course, which they could not avoid. Yea, Job, under his trials, prays to be hid in hell. I need not be more particular, for the texts above show, what were the views and feelings of the very best of men in those days about this. Now I ask, is there a Christian in the world, who, in the present day speaks, and prays about hell, as those Old Testament saints did? But why not? The reason, I think is obvious. In those days Sheol or hell, did not as in these, signify a place of punishment, but the state of the dead. In

these days, when Christians speak about hell, they always mean the place of endless misery for the wicked. Now, the obvious reason of such difference between their mode of speaking and ours about hell is, that we have affixed a very different sense to this word from what they did. If we are to understand the Scriptures correctly, we must ascertain what sense the original writers attached to the words they used, without regarding the sense men may have given them, since the book of Revelation was completed. What right have we, or any one else, to alter the sense of the words used by the Holy Spirit?

2d, How the inspired writers in those days, and pious people in these, speak about hell to *the wicked*. Not an instance, can I find where it is intimated, that any such went to hell as a place of eternal misery. Both good and bad went to Sheol, but not a word is said, that this was such a place as people now think hell to be. If the Old Testament saints entertained the same ideas about hell, as most Christians do in our day, I wish some person would rationally and Scripturally account to me for the following facts.

1st, If their belief was the same as in our day, why do we never find them express that belief about eternal punishment, as is now done in books, and sermons, and conference meetings, and in common conversation. No man can possibly deny the vast difference between their language, and the common language now used upon this subject. If the language is so different, is it not a presumptive proof that this invention of new language arose from the unscriptural doctrine that hell was a place of endless misery? An unscriptural doctrine always gives rise to unscriptural language; for the words of Scripture are the very best which could be chosen to express the will of God to men. That doctrine is not of God, or the man who contends for it, has a wrong view of it, who thinks,

that the words of Scripture are not sufficiently definite in expressing it. The man who can find similar ideas, and similar language in the Old Testament, as are in common use in our day about a place of eternal misery, must have read his Bible with more attention than I have done. After repeated and careful perusals of it, I frankly confess my inability to find either such ideas or language. I ask then, if the Old Testament writers had any such ideas, why did they not express them? I ask further, if they never expressed such ideas how do we know that they had them?

3d, How is it to be accounted for, that the fears and feelings of good people under the old dispensation, yea, their exertions also, were so different from the fears and feelings, and exertions of Christians in our day, about saving men from hell? It was no object of fear, of feeling, or of exertion in those days. In these, it is the *ultimate object* of the fears and feelings and exertions of the religious community. Let us glance at the conduct of men in those days about the subject of eternal punishment.

To begin with their fears; I do not find that they express any, and it is fair to conclude that they had none. If they had any fears, I have no doubt that on some occasion or other they would have expressed them. As I do not find them expressed, I cannot produce any examples of their fears about their children, their relations, their neighbours, or the world at large, going to eternal misery.—As to their feelings, I do not find a sigh heaved, a tear shed, a groan uttered, a prayer offered, nor any exertions made, as if they believed men were exposed to endless misery in a future state. We see parents, and others, deeply affected at the loss of their children and friends by death. We see pious people deeply grieved on account of their disobedience to God's laws, but where

do we find any thing like any of the above expressions of feeling, arising from their belief, that such persons would lift up their eyes in endless misery? I find nothing of the kind expressed, either in the way of anticipation before death, or after such persons had been removed from the world. Now, is it not strange, that all this should be the state of the fears and feelings of good people, if they did indeed believe endless misery was to be the portion of the wicked? The whole race of mankind is swept from the earth by a flood, Noah and his family excepted; but, does this good man deplore, in any shape, that so many precious souls should be sent to hell? God also destroyed the cities of the plain: Abraham intercedes that they might be spared, but uses no argument with God, that the people must go to hell to suffer eternal misery. Now suffer me to ask, if Abraham believed this doctrine, is it possible he should have failed to urge it as an argument, that all these wicked persons must go to hell, if God destroyed them? No notice is taken of the very argument, which in our day, would be most urged in prayer to God, if any thing similar was to take place. All who have read the Old Testament know, what vast numbers were cut off in a day, by war, and pestilence, and other means, yet do you ever hear it deplored by a single individual, as it is often done in our day, that so many were sent out of the world to eternal misery? If, in short, this doctrine was then believed, a dead silence and the most stoical apathy were maintained even by good men about it.

Under the Old Testament dispensation, the sinful condition of the heathen nations, is often spoken about. But do we ever find the inspired writers representing those nations as all going to eternal misery, or did they use similar exertions to save them from it as are used in the present day? If the doctrine of eternal



misery was known and believed in those days, is it not very unaccountable, that so many ages should pass away, before God commanded the Gospel to be preached to every creature, and before those who knew their danger, should use exertions to save them from it? If the doctrine be false, we may cease to wonder at this, but if it be true, it is not easy to reconcile these things with the well known character of God, and the feelings of every good man. What an immense multitude of human beings, during four thousand years, must have lived and died ignorant that such a place of misery awaited them in a future state. It is evident, that both Jews and Gentiles, during the above period, were often threatened with, yea, suffered temporal punishment. God raised up, and sent prophets to warn them of his judgments against them. I am then totally at a stand, what to think, or what to say, in justification of God's character, the character of the prophets sent by him, yea, of all good men in those days, that, knowing eternal misery awaited every heathen, yea, every wicked Jew, that nothing should be said to them on this subject. Jonah was sent to Nineveh, and the sum of his message was,—“yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” But did he either receive, or did he deliver any message to them, that their souls were in danger of eternal misery? Nothing like this; and every one who has read the Old Testament knows, that this is only a single example from many more I might adduce. The very reason why Jonah refused to go to Nineveh was, he knew that God was a merciful God, and would spare Nineveh. After he did go, his pride was hurt, because God did not destroy the city as he had predicted. His peevish disposition was sufficiently manifested about this; but not a word escapes him that the Ninevites were exposed to endless punishment. I ask; can a single instance be produced

from the Old Testament, where a prophet of the Lord, was ever sent to any people to warn them against eternal misery in a place called hell? Yea, I go further, and ask, if any man can produce a single instance where a *false* prophet ever endeavoured to make gain to himself, by the doctrine of eternal misery? I do not find that either true or false prophets did so under that dispensation, or that this doctrine was known and believed by a single individual. As men were not threatened with such a punishment, so none were ever congratulated as being saved from it. As it was never held up to deter men from sin while ignorant of God, so it was never urged on believers to stimulate them to gratitude and obedience. Is it possible then, that this doctrine could be believed, yet all remain silent on the subject? If no revelation was given about it, how could men avoid such a punishment? If a revelation was given, how is it accounted for, that it is not mentioned by one of the Old Testament writers? If it is mentioned by any of them under any other name than Sheol, I am ignorant of it; nor is this even pretended by those who believe the doctrine. I am fully aware, that there are two or three passages commonly quoted. For example, Dan. xii. 2. is perhaps the most plausible that can be adduced:—"and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." All I shall say of this text here, is, that were I fully convinced that the doctrine of eternal misery was true, I never could quote this passage in support of it. To assign my reasons here, would be aside from the present investigation.

5th, Another fact deserving our notice, is, that the living in speaking of their dead friends, never speak as if they were to be separated from them after death, but always as associated with them. This appears

to have been the case, whether the persons were good or bad. An instance to the contrary, cannot be produced, where a person ever expressed himself, as if he expected after death to be separated, and separated from his friends forever. But it is well known, that persons in our day, not only expect to be separated from many of their friends forever, but even say, that they shall give their hearty amen to their everlasting condemnation. Yea, it is even said, that the happiness of those in heaven is to be greatly enhanced, by their looking down on those in eternal torments, in seeing the smoke of it ascend forever and ever. This was once the current popular divinity, and though not yet altogether out of use, yet I am happy to say, the more thinking and sober-minded reject it.

But, it may be asked, is it true, that persons under the Old Testament expected to be associated with their deceased friends after death? I do not recollect a single instance to the contrary, and shall here, in proof of the assertion, refer to Jahn's *Biblical Archæology*, p. 234.

To this it may probably be objected, that association with their friends after death, only referred to their bodies mingling in the dust together, and had no reference to their spirits after death. Admitting this to be true, permit me to ask, can any proof be adduced, that their *spirits* were separated from each other after death? As I am unable to adduce any proof, I request those who say that they were so separated, to produce evidence of this from the Old Testament. I shall give it all due consideration. At any rate, if the Old Testament is silent on the subject it ill becomes us to assert that such was the case. Its very silence is to me an indication that no such idea was entertained in those days. If it was, it is somewhat surprising that no person ventured to express it.

And if it is not expressed by any of the Old Testament writers, how is it known that such an idea was entertained by them.

One thing we think must be admitted by all who have read the Old Testament with attention. It is this: good people in those days, do not appear to have had the fears and anxieties of mind which haunt men's minds now, about their children, their relations, their neighbours, and a great part of mankind, as all going to a place of endless misery. You may read the Old Testament, until your eyes grow dim with age, before you find any thing like this there. How is this silence to be accounted for, if the doctrine of endless misery was known and believed? If by Sheol they understood the same as men do now by the word hell, is it possible, that good people in those days could feel so easy on such a subject? Whatever ideas they attached to this word we think it is certain, they did not mean by it a place of endless misery.

The question is likely then to be asked, seeing that Sheol or hell does not mean a place of eternal misery,—what does it mean? What is the idea the Old Testament writers affixed to this word? From the remarks already made, we think something has been said in answer to this question.—By Sheol, seems evidently to be meant, what Job calls, chap. xxx. 33,—“*The house appointed for all the living.*” And it is the same to which Solomon alludes, when he says, Eccles. iii. 20.—“all go to one place.” The question still returns, What place is this? What place it is, may be learned further from the following passages. In 2 Sam. xii. 23. where David is speaking of his dead child; he says,—“I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.” This, it may be said, only provokes the question—where was his child? In heaven, most people would answer, and some have quoted this text to prove the salvation of all infants. Nothing more, I

conceive, is meant, nor could be rationally inferred from this text than this,—that his child was in the state of the dead or in Sheol, and David, impressed with a sense of his own mortality intimates, that he would soon follow him to the same place. So Jacob speaks of himself in a similar way in reference to his son Joseph. But further, we find in 1 Sam. xxviii. 19. Samuel thus speaks to Saul, “tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me.” Where was this? It may be asked,—When Saul desired the woman to bring up Samuel, was it from heaven he expected him to come? Surely not; for in this case Samuel would have been brought down, not up. Was it then from hell, the place of eternal misery, he expected him to come? This cannot be admitted, for neither Saul, nor any one else, ever thought that Samuel was there. From what place then did Saul wish the woman to bring Samuel? I answer, from Sheol, the same place to which Jacob said he would go down mourning to Joseph. The same place in which the Saviour’s soul was not left. If Saul and his sons went to hell, a place of endless misery, it is certain Samuel was there before him. And it is equally certain, that if Samuel was in heaven, Saul and his sons were there soon after with him. But what appears simply to be meant is this,—Samuel was in Sheol, or the state of the dead, and the issue of the battle proved, that Saul and his sons were with Samuel, and with all the dead who had gone before them. As to the woman’s having power to bring Samuel from Sheol, we do not believe any such thing. We believe that she was an impostor, but this is not the place for assigning our reasons, or entering further into this part of the history of Saul. We have merely referred to it as showing what were the popular opinions in those days on the subject before us.

We are aware, that it may be objected to the above investigation, that future existence was as little known under the Old Testament, as the doctrine of endless misery; and therefore we might just as well deny future existence, as endless misery, from the mere silence of the Old Testament writers. To this I would answer that we do not believe that future existence was altogether unknown under the Old Testament. We cannot, here, however, give our reasons for thinking so. But admitting it true, the objector has then to prove that endless misery in hell was brought to light by the Gospel. But is this any where declared in the New Testament? That the ancient Jews had some knowledge of a future state of existence we refer to Jahn's Biblical Archæology, Section 314.

## SECTION II.

### ALL THE PASSAGES IN WHICH HADES OCCURS, CONSIDERED.

WE have seen that the word *Sheol* in the Old Testament, rendered *pit*, *grave*, and *hell*, in the common version, was not used by the sacred writers, to express a place of endless misery. This we have attempted to establish, not only by an enumeration of all the texts where it occurs, but by a number of facts and observations, which on most subjects would be deemed conclusive. We have also adduced the testimony of Dr. Campbell, and other critics, that this is not, in a single instance, the sense of the word *Sheol* in the Old Testament.

It is allowed by consent of all critics and commentators, that I have ever seen, that *Hades* is the corresponding word in the New Testament, to *Sheol* in the Old; and that both words are used by the inspired writers to express the same thing. Indeed, the slightest attention to this subject, must convince any candid person of the correctness of this statement. In neither Testaments is a place of endless misery expressed by these words. I might then take it for granted, that *Hades* does not refer to such a place of punishment, any more than *Sheol*, and save myself the labour of the following investigation about it. But I shall proceed to examine all the places where *Hades* is used in the New Testament, because some texts in which it occurs, are still considered by many people, as teaching the doctrine of eternal misery. I am truly sorry to add that even some preachers, who certainly

ought to know better, still continue to quote such texts in proof of the doctrine. My labour therefore, though altogether unnecessary, may not be altogether unprofitable, in showing, that this word was not so used by the New Testament writers.

I find then, that the word *Hades*, is only used eleven times in the New Testament. It is rendered in the common version once *grave*, and in all the other ten places by the word *hell*. The place in which it is rendered *grave* is, 1 Cor. xv. 55,—“O death, where is thy sting? O *grave*, where is thy victory?” This is a quotation from Hosea xiii. 14. which has been noticed already under the word *Sheol*. In addition to the remarks there made, I would add the following here on this passage, as quoted by the apostle. Notice then,

1st, That our translators, put *hell* in the margin for *grave* in the text. This, with other instances noticed under *Sheol*, show that they used *hell* and *grave* for the state of the dead, and not for a place of endless misery.

2d, By comparing this text with the place from which it is quoted, it is evident that the apostle and the prophet both use this language to show, that *Sheol*, *Hades*, or *hell*, shall not always have dominion over the dead. Death is to be swallowed up in victory, and the place expressed by these words, be destroyed, or be no more. This victory is to be obtained through our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and incorruption to light by his resurrection from the dead. Nothing can be more obvious, than, that the apostle, in the chapter where he quotes this passage, is not speaking on the subject of endless misery, but is treating of the resurrection. It is a plain case, that if any one will contend, that *Hades* in this passage signifies such a place of misery, final victory is to be obtained over it; for



It is triumphantly asked,—“O Hades or hell, or, O place of endless misery where is thy victory?”

3d, As the apostle in this chapter, was professedly treating on the subject of the resurrection, did Hades or any other word express a place of endless misery, it was the most proper occasion to introduce it. Dr. Campbell, and others I might name, contend for Gehenna, and, that to this place the wicked go after the resurrection. But, neither here, nor any where else, is a word said about Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, nor even Gehenna, being a place of endless misery after this period. If any of these words are used to express a place of punishment after the resurrection of the dead it has escaped my notice, and I should be glad to see this pointed out.

4th, It is a question which is certainly not very impertinent for me to put,—“Why did the translators of the common version translate the word Hades here grave, and in all the other ten places render the same word by the term hell?” To have rendered the word Hades here hell, we must have been plainly told that hell would not be always victorious, but would finally be destroyed. This, according to the usual sense of the word, would have been doing away the doctrine of endless misery for the wicked. To avoid this, it is rendered grave, and the word hell inserted in the margin. But Hades here might have been rendered hell, with just as much propriety as it is in other places; for in whatever way it is translated, the text and context must decide its sense, and here very evidently decide, that a place of endless misery could not be meant.

Acts ii. 27, 31. comes next to be considered—“because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. He seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did

see corruption.” This is a quotation from Psalm xvi. 10. which has also been considered already under the word Sheol. It is quoted here as a prediction concerning the Messiah; not to prove that his soul should not be left in the place of endless misery, but that he should not continue in the state of the dead. This is so obvious, that all remarks are unnecessary. But, I shall here introduce the following quotation from Whitby, as it sheds general light on all the texts in which the words Sheol and Hades occur. On this passage he thus writes:—“that Sheol throughout the Old Testament, and Hades in the Septuagint, answering to it, signify not the place of punishment, or of the souls of bad men only, but the grave only, or the place of death, appears,

“1st, From the root of it *Shaal*, which signifies to *ask*, to *crave*, and *require*, because it *craves for all men*, Prov. xxx. 16. and will let no man escape its hands. Psalm lxxxix. 48. It is that Sheol or Hades whither we are all going. Eccles. ix. 10.

“2d, Because it is the place to which the good as well as the bad go, for they whose souls go upwards, descend into it. Thither went Jacob, Gen. xxxvii. 35. There Job desired to be, chap. xiv. 13. for he knew that Sheol was his house, chap. xvii. 13. And to descend into the dust was to descend into Hades. Is not death common to all men? Is not Hades the house of all men? Hezekiah expected to be there after he went hence, for he said, ‘I shall go to the gates of Hades,’ Isai. xxxviii. 30. That is, saith Jerom, to those gates of which the Psalmist speaks, saying, ‘thou wilt lift me up from the gates of death.’ The ancient Greeks assigned one Hades to all that died, and therefore say, Hades receives all mortal men together, all men shall go to Hades.

“3d, Had the penmen of the Old Testament meant by Hades any receptacle of souls, they could not

truly have declared there was no wisdom or knowledge in Sheol, Eccles. ix. 10. No remembrance of God there, Psalm vi. 5. No praising of him in Sheol, Isai. xxxviii. 18. For those heathens who looked upon it as the receptacle of souls, held it to be a place in which they would be punished or rewarded." This quotation from Whitby affords a number of remarks, a few of which we shall only briefly notice. It is evident from it,

1st, That Sheol and Hades are one and the same place. Our English word hell only expressed originally the same idea as these two words.

2d, It is asserted, yea, proved in the above quotation, that by Sheol, the Old Testament writers could not mean any receptacle of souls, or they never could have spoken as they did about it.

3d, That those heathens who looked on it as a receptacle of souls, held it to be a place in which they should be punished or rewarded. If Whitby is then correct in these statements, it is very evident, that we are indebted to the heathen and not to the inspired writers for the idea, that Sheol, Hades, or hell, is a place of future misery. This we shall show more fully, Section 3d, to have been a notion which the Jews derived from their intercourse with the heathen.

Luke xvi. 23. we shall now attempt to consider.—“And in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom.” See the whole of this parable, which I need not transcribe. Here it is said, is not only a place of torment mentioned, but a person there is said to be lifting up his eyes in it, and declaring, that he is “tormented in this flame.”—It is frankly admitted, that this looks very plausible in establishing a place of misery. Plausible as its appearance is, we think this parable must be given up as teaching the doctrine of *endless misery* in a future state. With a view to show this, I

shall submit for candid consideration the following observations :

1st, Let it be noticed, that the rich man is not represented as in *Gehenna*, but in *Hades*. It is contended by Dr. Campbell and others, that *Gehenna*, not *Hades*, is the place of endless misery for the wicked, and that the punishment of *Gehenna* does not take place till after the resurrection of the dead ; yea, it is contended, that *Hades*, the place in which the rich man is here said to be, is to be destroyed. It is very evident then, that whoever contends for this person's being *actually* in a place of torment, must allow, that it is not to be of endless duration. But, I ask those who advocate *the torment to be a reality*, first to prove, *the person tormented in Hades to be not a parabolic person*, before they draw the conclusion that the torment is not a *parabolic torment*. The first must be proved, before the last can be admitted ; for a person must exist before he can be tormented in any place. If the person mentioned is a *real being* and the torment he complains of a *reality*, and not a *fictitious* or *parabolic representation*, we have a right to demand why every thing in this account, is not considered a narrative of facts, and not a parable ?

But letting such persons have this parable all their own way, on their own principles, it does not prove *endless misery*. All that they can possibly draw from it is, that *Hades* is an *intermediate place of punishment* between death and the resurrection ; and that then, according to their own account, this place is to be destroyed. Supposing then that I should grant all they desire, they must allow, that this parable does not say a word about a place of *endless misery*. I might here close my remarks on this parable, as it has no bearing on the subject of our investigation. But I proceed to observe,

2d, That whatever place Hades is, in which the rich man is here represented as in torment, it is very evident that Abraham and Lazarus were also in Hades. Though spoken of as at some distance from each other, yet they were within sight and hearing, and could converse together. The one is not represented as in heaven and the other in hell. No; they are represented as in the same place and on a level with each other. Every one knows, how very different this representation is from the common ideas entertained about the place of punishment, and the place of happiness in our day. Do you ever hear Christians speak as if both righteous and wicked were in the same place after death? The very reverse of this is the case. But,

3d, If people will interpret a part of this parable literally, to suit their own religious opinions, we insist, that they go through with a literal interpretation. If it is maintained, that Hades was to this man a place of torment, they must allow, that *literal fire* was the *cause* of it. This we believe some are consistent enough to maintain. They must also admit, that his body was tormented in Hades, and, that he believed a drop of water would give some ease to his torment. It must be granted, that while tormented in the flames of Hades, he could see, and hear, and hold conversation with Abraham, &c. But in these, and other things, the literal sense is abandoned, and the part only which speaks of his torment, is literally interpreted. But we have a right to ask why this is done? Who gave any man the privilege to cull out a circumstance from this parable, and consider it a literal fact, and view all the other parts as mere fiction, to fill up the body of the parable? Let us be informed, upon scriptural and rational principles, why this man was not tormented in *his body* in Hades, and why all that is said is not to be as literally understood as this one

circumstance? The reason of this I think is obvious. This part of the parable so interpreted, does very well to support the popular idea, that the wicked go to hell at death, and are tormented in this place. But every candid man must allow that this is a very strange and arbitrary mode of interpreting parables; yea, any part of the Bible. Give me leave thus to interpret the Bible, and I pledge myself to prove almost any thing from it. Until rational and scriptural rules of interpretation are adopted, it is in vain we attempt correctly to understand it, or that ever people shall be agreed about what it reveals. If men only exercised the same rationality and common sense in interpreting the Bible, that they do in understanding human writings, the diversity of opinion in religion would decrease greatly.

4th, Interpreting this parable literally, we cannot blame the Roman Catholics to claim it as a proof of the doctrine of purgatory. It might be urged, that in this place the rich man was brought to repentance, felt sorry for his past sins, and was deeply concerned for the welfare of his brethren he had left in the world. This he showed by his requesting one to be sent from the dead, to warn them lest they should come into this place of torment. But we have always understood, that there is no compassion among the damned in hell, nor any desire that others should avoid the same misery. But here the rich man is represented as very solicitous that his five brethren should escape this place of torment. We are aware that it has been said that his solicitude arose, not from any desire he had for their good, but that his own misery might not be increased, by their persisting in the wicked courses, of which, he, while in this world, had set them the example. But this is a mere gratuitous assumption, for the parable affords no evidence of this. His brethren's personal good, is

the only motive assigned in the parable, as inducing him to such solicitude.

5th, All know, or at least ought to know, that the imagery, or the language of parables, was never intended to be interpreted literally. This every sensible commentator allows to be correct in interpreting other parables. Why then interpret the language of the one before us literally? A parable, like a fable, is designed to impress on the mind, in a pleasing manner, some important truth. What man in his senses ever supposed that the language of a fable was intended to be interpreted literally? It is the moral lesson to be taught, which is of any importance, and the fable is only a pleasing mode of inculcating the moral. Great care, we think, is necessary in interpreting parables; and the utmost caution should be observed, in reasoning from them, to establish any particular doctrine of Christianity. The occasion of them ought to be strictly attended to, and the object the writer had in view by them. Without this, parables may be made to teach any thing, and every thing, as fancy may dictate.

Perhaps it may be asked,—“what then is the important truth our Lord intended to teach by this parable?” This I think may be learned from verse 31st.—“If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” The parable was spoken to the unbelieving Jews, who enjoyed the writings of Moses and the prophets. They, as a people, owned such persons to be sent of God. If their writings did not persuade that wicked generation to believe, and turn from their evil ways, one sent from the dead would not effect these things in them. Such a person could come with no greater authority, nor give them any more assurance of the truth of God, than they had from Moses and the prophets. Jesus, who spoke this parable, did

rise from the dead, and abundant evidence of this was given them; but as a nation, the Jews still remained in unbelief, and were as little persuaded by this, as they were by Moses and the prophets. Is there any thing then surprising, that in this parable our Lord should introduce the popular idea, which the Jews had imbibed about punishment in Hades, when by it he was teaching them, that, if they did not believe Moses and the prophets, neither would they believe though one rose from the dead? It was only availing himself of their popular belief, to show them the obstinacy of their unbelief. It was taking them on their own received principles, to give the more effect to the parable spoken to them. This mode of teaching and reasoning has been adopted in all ages, and was used by our Lord on various occasions.

6th, If the language of this parable must be interpreted literally, we urge that the following, among other texts which speak about Sheol, be also interpreted literally. See Ezek. xxxii. and xxxi. 15—18. Isai. xiv. 3—24. *Sheol* and *Hades* are only the Greek and Hebrew names for the same place. We ask then, why the parable before us must be literally interpreted, and not these passages also? Certainly they have as righteous a claim, as it, to a literal interpretation. The difficulties to be encountered here, are neither small nor few; but they must be surmounted, before we can admit, that this parable was designed to teach a state of torment in Hades. I shall simply hint at a few of those difficulties, stated in these texts.—Persons are mentioned as speaking out of the midst of Sheol or hell. The graves of persons are there represented as about them, and that they lie there un-circumcised, slain by the sword. They have gone down to hell with their weapons of war, and laid their swords under their heads. Hell from beneath, is also represented as moved to meet the king of Babylon.



at his coming. All the dead are stirred up for him, and all the kings of the nations, are raised up from their thrones, in hell, at his arrival. They address him, saying, "art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?" The worms there are said to cover him. When it can be proved that all these things take place in hell, we shall admit this parable to be a literal account of torment in Hades. Until this is done, such passages must prove an insurmountable difficulty in the way of establishing the doctrine of future misery from it. Certainly these passages have much more the appearance of a narrative of facts, than the parable we are now considering.

7th. We do not suppose that it will be doubted that this account of the rich man is a parable. If so, we beg leave to ask, why a parable, in which Hades is once mentioned, must be so very differently understood, from all other texts where the same place is mentioned? This is a solitary exception to all the other texts where Hades or Sheol occurs in the Old or New Testament. If *Hades*, the same as *Sheol*, be indeed a place of torment, how could it be said, "that there is no knowledge, nor device, nor wisdom" in this place? Was the rich man tormented in the flame of Hades, yet had no knowledge of it? We have seen from the last section, that Sheol is always represented as a place of silence and insensibility, except in places where figurative descriptions are given of it. If this place had become a place of torment in the days of our Lord, it is very evident that it was not known as such in the days of Moses and the prophets. We ask then, at what period it became a place of torment? And did the wicked in those days suffer any punishment there? For all good and bad went to Sheol. *To understand Hades then in this parable, to signify a place of actual torment, would be at*

*variance with the uniform usage of both these words throughout the Bible.*

We have seen in a quotation from Whitby on the last passage, that the idea of Hades being a place of punishment after death, was derived from the heathen. Now I admit, that to this heathen notion our Lord might allude in the parable before us. The Jews had, in our Lord's day, imbibed many heathen notions, and this one among the rest. But it is one thing for a sacred writer to allude to, or even speak according to the language of the popular opinions of the day, and quite another to recognise these opinions as truth. To illustrate what I mean by an example or two: Our Lord says, "ye cannot serve God and mammon." But who would infer from this, that he meant to recognise the God mammon? Again; Paul says, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you." But was any man to conclude from this that Paul believed in the doctrine of witchcraft, he would certainly draw a very wrong inference from his words. I might illustrate this by many more examples. But, instead of referring to other examples in Scripture, I shall take one or two from our own every-day language. A person says, such a one has St. Anthony's fire, and another has St. Vitus' dance. But does any one think that this person-meant that these saints had any influence in producing these disorders? I presume not. Supposing such statements to be printed in some medical work, and this book to be read eighteen hundred years hence—were they to infer that medical men in these days believed such saints were the agents who produced such diseases—can any man believe, that they understood the language of this book correctly, or formed a just idea of the science or the common sense of medical men among us? No; I venture to say, that neither a quack nor a clown is to be found so ignorant, who would not smile at such gross mis-

apprehension. If we would then understand the Scriptures correctly, we must ascertain by all the means in our power, what is there delivered as truths and facts to be believed on God's authority, and what are mere allusions to popular opinions. The man who has not yet learned the importance of this distinction in studying his Bible, has overlooked one very essential rule of Scripture interpretation.—In further proof that the Jews in our Lord's day had imbibed many heathen notions, and among the rest, that Hades was a place of rewards and punishments, I might here quote Dr. Campbell on this very parable. But the quotation will be more appropriately introduced when we come to consider the word Tartarus, also rendered hell in the common version. See the next section.

8th, We have seen that the Old Testament represents persons as speaking out of Sheol or hell, and that conversations were held there. But we presume no one ever thought this a reality, but a poetical license, or a mere figurative description. But in this parable a dialogue takes place between the rich man and Abraham. The rich man is in torment, and this is believed to be a fact, yet the very dialogue, part of which is about this torment, is believed to be a fiction. Such as believe so, are bound to assign reasons why they take such liberties in their interpretations of the divine oracles. We have insisted that the parable ought to be either interpreted literally throughout, or this literal interpretation of a part abandoned. It must be allowed, we think, that this is a rational and fair way of interpreting the Bible. Supposing that the rich man's being in torment, is no more to be interpreted literally, than the dialogue said to have taken place between him and Abraham. Yea, let us understand Hades here to signify the grave or state of the dead. All that is said in the parable, is in

agreement with this; for the rich man seems to have a body there; and it is also in perfect agreement with the representations given about Sheol in the Old Testament, *except that Hades is a place of torment*. Nothing in the parable but this, would strike any person with surprise, as materially different from what is said of Sheol by the ancient prophets. A very important question then arises, *how is this exception to be accounted for, and how are we to be satisfied that our Lord did not, in this parable, teach that Hades is a place in which persons are tormented after death?* Keeping in view the remarks already made, we offer the following reply, which to our own mind is satisfactory.

1st, What is said about Hades being a place of torment, is but once mentioned in the New Testament, and it occurs in this parable. It is remarkable enough that it should only be mentioned once, but still more so, that this should be in a parable. Had it occurred in a plain narrative, and when our Lord was plainly speaking on the subject of a future state, it might be thought that he did teach such a doctrine. But even in this case, its only being mentioned once, would lead us carefully to examine if this one instance was not susceptible of a different interpretation. The importance of the subject naturally leads us to think that it would be mentioned more than once, and that it is possible we might mistake the sense our Lord meant to convey in this one passage. We think we may fairly leave it to any candid man to say, if Hades be a place of torment after death, whether our Lord would only mention this once, and only in a parable. If the resurrection of the dead, or any other important doctrine, was only mentioned once, in a parable, would a very solid foundation be laid for our faith in them? Should we not rather have cause to suspect, that no such doctrines were revealed, but that it was only a part of the imagery of the parable?

2d, But whether our Lord meant in this parable to teach that Hades was a place of torment, ought to be decided by *the manner in which his apostles understood this parable*. Let us suppose, that they understood it as most religious people do in our day. If they did, it is an indisputable fact, that they never spoke of it as such in their preaching and writings to mankind. Not an instance is to be found, where the apostles ever spoke of Hades as a place of torment for any being in the universe of God. They neither speak of it as a place of *temporary*, nor of *eternal misery*, as is notorious from all the places where they say any thing about Hades in their writings. Let it be remembered that what they heard in the ear from our Lord in parables, they were to proclaim upon the house tops. They heard the parable under consideration; but I ask where, or when, or how, did they proclaim in any manner, that *Hades* was a place of torment? The apostles make mention of Hades in their writings, but never speak of it as a place of punishment. Our Lord's mode of teaching was, in a great measure, and for certain reasons, by parables. But what he taught *in this way*, the apostles were to teach *plainly*, and *without any parable*. But where did they ever do this, showing, either *plainly*, or even *obscurely*, that Hades was a place of torment? The case here ought to be reversed. It was our Lord who taught this doctrine *plainly*, in a parable, and the apostles taught it by being altogether silent on the subject; which if any one chooses, he may call a parable, but one more difficult to find this doctrine in, and one not less difficult to explain. The apostles were inspired teachers, and as capable of forming a correct idea of our Lord's meaning, as any preacher in our day. Can any man suffer himself to think that the apostles understood this parable as most preachers do now, yet never say that Hades or hell was a place of torment for the wicked?

Did they indeed believe, that at death every wicked man lifted up his eyes in hell, and was tormented in its flame, yet never taught it to their hearers? This parable is in the mouth of every preacher of hell torments in our day. It is the citadel of the doctrine of endless misery, from which he thinks it impossible he can ever be dislodged. Does any man now think that he understands this parable better than the apostles did? Every man who teaches the doctrine of torment, or punishment in Hades, virtually says that he has a more correct understanding of it. He alludes to it, quotes it, and considers this parable as an explicit and certain proof of the doctrine. The apostles never alluded to it, nor quoted it, nor in any way inform us, that Hades or hell is a place of torment. There is only one text which can be thought an exception to this, and which forms the subject of the next section: but we shall see that it confirms the views I am advancing.

*We think then, that this one fact, that the apostles never taught that Hades was a place of torment, ought to satisfy every candid mind that this parable was never designed by our Lord to teach such a doctrine. If men consider themselves authorized from it to teach it in our day, the apostles who heard our Lord utter the parable, were very differently minded. If we say that they did consider themselves from this parable authorized to teach it, yet never did it, what are we to think of their fidelity and zeal, compared with that of modern preachers? Why do not all preachers now imitate the apostles in this?*

3d, If our Lord meant by this parable to teach a state of torment in Hades or hell, it was a new revelation to the world; for God had not revealed it under the Old Testament dispensation to the Jews. Whatever notions the Jews and heathens had about Hades being a place of torment, it is certain that these could not be learned from the Scriptures. The

doctrine then was new, so far as God had made any communication of it to the world. If our Lord then used Hades in this parable to express such a place, it is contrary to the uniform usage of Sheol in the Old Testament writings. If this be true, and we do not think it can be proved false, there is one thing in the parable which seems to be at variance with it. The object of the rich man in sending one from the dead to his five brethren, was, that "he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." To this Abraham is represented as replying, "they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." If the question is asked from this,—“let them hear Moses and the prophets” about what? The answer is,—“let them hear Moses and the prophets testify unto them, lest they should come into this place of torment.” But how could this man’s five brethren hear Moses and the prophets testify this; for neither Moses nor the prophets had ever testified that Hades or Sheol was a place of torment. From what part of their writings could they learn that Hades or Sheol was a place of *torment immediately after death, or any time else, either for saint, or for sinner, for soul, or for body?* All the places where Sheol occurs in the Old Testament, have been noticed in the preceding section. The critics and commentators we have there quoted, positively deny that Sheol of the Old Testament was a place of misery, or was even the receptacle of souls after death. If this be true, how could Abraham say,—“they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them” testify that Hades or Sheol is a place of torment, when in fact they had testified no such thing. Every one may see, from the preceding section, that Moses and the prophets had testified that all the dead were in Sheol, and that there was no knowledge, nor device, nor wisdom, in this place. If Moses and the prophets had testified of such a place

of torment, there was no necessity for one being sent from the dead to do this; but if they had not, it was very necessary that such a messenger should be sent; for no divine revelation had been given about it. Either, then, it must be proved that Moses and the prophets had taught Hades or Sheol to be a place of torment after death, or the common interpretation of this parable must be abandoned.

Again: If this was indeed a new doctrine our Lord meant to teach mankind, is there the least degree of probability that he would only mention it once in the course of his ministry, and that too in a parable? We think this to be very improbable. The very circumstance of its being *new*, required it to be frequently taught, delivered in plain language, and its truth well attested. But it ought to be particularly noticed, that though only mentioned once, and that in a parable, yet it is not introduced as a novel doctrine, but something which was in accordance with current opinion. This, to be sure, was in perfect agreement with popular opinion; but this popular opinion was not derived from the Scriptures, but from the heathens. The opinion was current, but it wanted the stamp of divine authority.—Further: if this was a new doctrine our Lord meant to teach mankind, is there not the greatest reason to conclude that this new doctrine would be often taught and enforced by his apostles, in their preaching to the world? But is this done by them? No; it is not said by any one of them, that Hades is a place of torment. The uniform usage of the word Hades in the New Testament, like the usage of Sheol in the Old, forbids the common interpretation. The use of this word in the parable before us, is the only exception. The truth of this assertion is seen from all the passages about Hades already considered; and we shall see that it is not contradicted by any of them yet to be introduced. Supposing it



then a fact, that in this parable our Lord teaches for the first time, that Hades is a place of torment, and that his apostles so understood it, what is the course we ought to expect them, as preachers, to pursue? I answer, just the very same course which preachers in our day take, who believe this parable to teach the doctrine of future misery; that they should often preach the doctrine, and recur to this parable of our Lord about it. But the apostles never did this. We must either conclude then that modern preachers misunderstand this parable, or that our Lord's apostles were not faithful to the souls of men.

4th, But how is this representation of Hades being a place of torment, to be accounted for, in opposition to the uniform usage of this word in the New Testament, and also of Sheol in the Old? To this I answer, that Hades is a Greek word; and as the ancient Greeks looked on Hades as a place in which men would be punished or rewarded, there is nothing very strange that our Lord should introduce this notion of theirs when speaking of the dead in Hades. But for what we have to advance about this, we refer to the next section; and also for some additional remarks there made in regard to this parable.

5th, If our Lord alluded to the heathen notion, that Hades was a place of torment, as we think he did, yet it is evident that he did not recognise it as a fact, or teach it as a doctrine to be believed by his followers. This we think is evident, from a variety of considerations, one or two of which we shall merely mention. It is very improbable that he should transplant this doctrine from the Pagan religion, and make it a part of his. Was Jesus indebted to the heathens for inventing a part of the doctrines which he taught? As this will not be asserted, we notice further, that both Christ, and other sacred writers, allude to, and even speak according to the popular opinions of the day,

without sanctioning those opinions. This has been shown above. But what we think conclusive about this, is, that had the apostles understood our Lord as recognising this heathen notion, and adopting it as a part of his religion, they would have taught it in their writings to the world. But this they have not done. If they had then, as many preachers do now, considered this parable as a strong proof of hell torments, how are we to account for their silence about it? I think I may be allowed also to ask, how are we to account for the difference between their preaching and that of modern preaching about hell torments, and that too from this very parable? I confess my inability to account for these things, if this parable teaches the doctrine. I can account for both if this is not true.

Though most readers of the Bible build their faith on this parable, as to the place, and the nature of future punishment, yet the learned know, and as we have seen, confess, that Hades is to be destroyed. This we have seen from Hosea xiii. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 55. and also from quotations made from Dr. Campbell and others, above. Dr. Whitby denies that Hades is a receptacle of souls. Gehenna is contended for by Dr. Campbell and others, as the place of eternal punishment. That Gehenna and Hades are not the same place, I shall show, afterwards, I think, to the satisfaction of every candid man. All then which any person can draw from this parable, is, that Hades is a place of punishment in an intermediate state, but not of endless duration. This was sufficiently evident from our first remarks. Whether the additional observations made, prove the incorrectness of this common opinion, it is not for me to decide. How the *fallacy* of my observations is to be shown, and the common opinion established by rational evidence, my present degree of knowledge does not enable me to perceive. Besides, how the statements, and the evi-

dence produced by the above critics, can ever be reconciled with the doctrine commonly drawn from this parable, must be left for others to determine. It is far above my powers to attempt such a reconciliation.\*

Matth. xvi. 18. is the next passage in which Hades occurs.—“Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” All that need be said on this passage, Dr. Campbell furnishes us with. He says,—“it is by death, and by it only, the spirit enters into *Hades*. The gates of Hades is therefore a very natural periphrasis for death. To say then that the gates of *Hades* shall not prevail against the church, is in other words to say, it shall never die, it shall never be extinct.” See Dissert. vi. sect. 17.—There is only one remark I would make, in passing, on this quotation from the Dr. He says,—“it is by death, and by it only, the *spirit* enters into Hades.” We do not recollect a single text where it is said the *spirit* enters into Hades. It is said the Saviour’s *soul* was not left in Hades. But we shall attempt to show afterwards that the Scriptures make a distinction between *soul* and *spirit*, and though the *soul* is represented as in Hades, yet the *spirit* is never so represented. Indeed we have seen from Whitby’s quotation on Acts ii. 27, that he denies Hades to have been considered a receptacle of souls by the Old Testament writers. If it was, it is evident from the Scripture usage of the word Sheol, that it was not a receptacle of souls, where any of them were *tormented*.

Luke x. 15. comes next to be considered. “And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell.” See the parallel text, Matth. xi. 23. which I need not transcribe. Here again, Dr.

\* See additional proof that this is a parable, and that it does not teach a state of future misery, in my Reply to Mr. Sabine’s discourses, soon to be published.

Campbell furnishes all that is necessary to be said on these passages. In the above quoted Dissertation, he thus writes,—“as the city of Capernaum was never literally raised to heaven, we have no reason to believe that it was to be literally brought down to Hades. But as by the former expression we are given to understand that it was to become a flourishing and splendid city, or, as some think, that it had obtained great spiritual advantages; so by the latter, that it should be brought to the lowest degree of abasement and wretchedness.” But how often has this passage been quoted to prove that Capernaum, and all who have abused great privileges, shall be brought down to a place of endless misery. . . Indeed this is the common use which is made of this passage, even in the present day. It is certainly to be regretted, that if the doctrine of *endless misery* can be fairly proved *true* from the Scriptures, that men should thus quote and misapply texts in its support.

Rev. i. 18. is the next passage.—“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” This Jesus said of himself. That Hades or hell here simply means the state of the dead, we think none will dispute. This is the same hell in which the Saviour’s soul was not left, and considered above on Acts ii. 27. and Psalm xvi. 10. The expression, “keys of hell or Hades,” appears to be in allusion to the ancient custom of inducting a person into office by delivering him a key. The steward of the family had the keys of the house committed to him, and he had power over it, to manage its temporal concerns. Peter had the keys of the kingdom of heaven given him, or power to open it, as we find he did on the day of Pentecost, to the Jews, and afterwards to the Gentiles, in the house of Cornelius. Jesus proved that he had the keys of Hades and of death, by his rising from

the dead, or that he had *power* over death and the grave. But all know that this text has been often quoted to show that Jesus has the keys of hell or the place of endless misery, and can shut up whom he pleases in it. What is it men may not prove from the Bible, if quotations made from it at this random rate are admitted as evidence?

Rev. vi. 8. comes next to be noticed.—“And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was death, and hell followed with him.” It is beyond all fair debate, that Hades follows death to all men, whether good or bad. Death brings all men to Hades, or the house appointed for all the living. But does death bring any persons to Gehenna? No; we may challenge the whole world to produce a text, in which it is said that any, good or bad, go to Gehenna at death. But we all know that it is believed by most people, that at death the wicked go to hell, and by this is meant a place of endless misery. Not a word of this is true; for Hades, and not Gehenna, follows death; and we think it has been proved that Hades is not a place of endless misery. After what has been said on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, we must receive some new light on the subject, before we can believe it to be a place of any misery at all. If it can be proved to be a place of endless misery, or even a place of temporary punishment, we shall give the evidence of this a candid and careful consideration. See Chap. ii. about Gehenna.

Rev. xx. 13, 14. is the last passage in which Hades occurs in the New Testament.—“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” As I have considered this text in a separate Inquiry into the import of the

expressions, "lake of fire," and "second death," I shall only make a few brief remarks on this passage here, so far as the term Hades or hell requires attention.

1st, The first remark on this passage, I make, is—that one of two things must be abandoned as unscriptural, by those who believe in the doctrine of eternal misery. They must either give up the idea that Hades or hell is a place of eternal misery, or that the lake of fire is. To say that both are places of eternal misery, makes the Bible speak of two such places; and at the period of which John speaks, it makes him say that hell is cast into hell, or one place of eternal misery, is cast into another place of eternal misery. I am not disposed to believe that John ever used such inconsistent language. On this passage, Dr. Campbell, in the above quoted Dissertation, thus writes: "indeed, in this sacred book, the commencement, as well as the destruction of this intermediate state, are so clearly marked, as to render it almost impossible to mistake them. In a preceding chapter, vi. 8. we learn that *Hades* follows close at the heels of death; and from the other passage quoted, that both are involved in one common ruin at the universal judgment. Whereas, if we interpret Hades *hell*, in the Christian sense of the word, the whole passage is rendered nonsense. *Hell* is represented as being cast into *hell*: for so the lake of fire, which is in this place also denominated the second death, is universally interpreted." I shall only here remark, that while the Dr. and others clearly prove that neither Sheol nor Hades signifies this place of endless misery, all he advances in proof that Gehenna and the lake of fire refer to it, is only bare assertion. It is very easy to prove any thing, if assertions are to be considered proof; but this will not do in the present day. The Bible was never more critically examined than it is now. The

man who thinks his assertions are proof on any subject of religion, may find, and he ought to find, that they are just good for nothing. The persons who believe his assertions, are a disgrace to religion; and if they are any honour to him, he is welcome to all the honour such converts to implicit faith can confer upon him.

2d, Instead of Hades or hell being here represented as a place of torment to others, itself is here spoken of as being destroyed; and before this takes place, it is said to deliver up all the dead which are in it. It is very evident that Hades here simply means the grave. But, having fully considered this passage in another Inquiry, and these remarks being sufficient to show that Hades does not mean a place of endless misery, we give it no further attention.

These are all the passages in which the New Testament writers use the word Hades, and which is once translated grave, and ten times hell in the common version. We think all must admit, that it is never used to express a place of endless misery; and some evidence has been given that it is never used to express a place of punishment of any kind. In connexion with the remarks made on the word Sheol, I shall add the following here.

1st, It will not be disputed by any man, that what the Hebrew writers of the Old Testament expressed by the word Sheol, the Greeks expressed by the word Hades.

2d, But observe, that the heathen Greeks seemed not only to have attached similar ideas to the word Hades, as the Hebrew writers did to the word Sheol, but also the additional idea, that in Hades persons were punished or rewarded, according to their merits or demerits in the present world. This was their own addition; for no such idea seems to be conveyed in all the Old Testament, by the word Sheol. The

evidence of this adduced above, we think will be allowed conclusive. If the Jews did not imbibe the idea, that Hades was a place of punishment, from the heathen, let it be shown from what source they derived this information. The doctrine must be either from heaven or of men. I have attempted to prove that it is not from heaven. It becomes those who believe it, to show that it is not of men, or cease from believing it, and from quoting the texts in which Sheol and Hades occur, in proof of it. The very circumstance, that only Hades, and not Sheol, is represented as a place of torment, shows in part, that this doctrine is of heathen origin. Hades is a Greek word; and it is well known that Greek was the language of the heathen, and Hebrew that of the Jews. There is nothing then, but what we ought to expect, in the use of the term Hades in the New Testament. It was a Greek word, and this additional idea attached to it was in familiar use among the Jews as well as Greeks. Besides, the Jews had blended many of the heathen notions with their own religion. If we then find the New Testament writers, in using the Greek word Hades, speak as if this was a place of punishment, it is easily accounted for, without admitting that they believed any such thing, or wished to inculcate this doctrine as a part of divine revelation. But of this they have been very sparing; for only in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, can it be supposed there is any allusion to any such idea. All the other places where they use the term Hades, it is plain no such doctrine seems to be hinted at, but the reverse. In face of these facts and circumstances, and current usage of the word Hades, we think it would be well for persons to pause and reflect, before they attempt to establish the doctrine of future misery from the language of a parable. If a Universalist was to attempt to establish his views from the language of a



parable, and in face of so much evidence to the contrary, he would be considered as driven to the last extremity for proof in support of his system, and that finally it must be abandoned as indefensible. But with most people this parable is considered as the most plain and conclusive part of Scripture, in proof of a place of endless misery. It is considered more conclusive than any, or even all the passages which speak of Gehenna. What critics and orthodox commentators give up as no proof of the doctrine, by the least informed, is considered as the very strongest. Here, say they, is a person actually in a future state, and said to be "tormented in this flame." In fact, common readers of the Bible are not to blame in drawing such a conclusion; for this passage has more plausibility in proving the doctrine, than all other texts put together.

3d, Since neither Sheol nor Hades, nor even the word hell, in English, originally signified a place of endless misery, we have a few questions to put to those who believe in this doctrine. We ask, then, is it not a perversion of the divine oracles, to quote any of the texts in which Sheol or Hades occurs, to prove it? It is well known that such texts are often quoted for this purpose. But I ask again, is it not a very great imposition upon the ignorant, to quote such texts in proof of this doctrine? The simple, honest-hearted English reader of his Bible, sees the word hell often used by the sacred writers. He has been taught from a child, that hell means a place of endless misery for the wicked. Every book he reads, every sermon he hears, all tend to deepen his early impressions, and confirm him in this opinion. Those who know better, are not much disposed to undeceive him. On the one hand, they are perhaps deterred from it by a false fear of disturbing public opinion, and on the other, by reluctance to encounter the odium of the

Christian public, in being looked on as heretics. Select the most celebrated preacher you can find, and let him frankly tell his audience, that neither Sheol, nor Hades, nor even our word hell originally meant a place of endless misery, and his celebrity is at an end. He would from that moment be considered as an heretic, and his former admirers would now be his warm opposers. But I ask again, and I solemnly put it to every man's conscience, who professes to fear God,—Ought not men to be honestly told the truth about this, let the consequences be what they may? Are we at liberty to pervert the Scriptures in favor of any sect, or system in the world? Must we be guilty of a pious fraud, in concealing from people what they ought to know, because the disclosure may excite popular prejudices against ourselves, and afford cause of suspicion that the doctrine of endless misery is not true? If it be *true*, it *can* and *must* be supported from other texts than those in which Sheol and Hades are used. Perhaps some may think, if all those texts are given up, some of the principal supports of the doctrine are removed. Well, allowing this true, would any one wish to retain them, but such as are determined to hold fast the doctrine of eternal misery at all hazards? It is a false system of religion, or those who embrace it do not know how to defend it, who wish to support it by perverting a single text of Scripture. To found the doctrine of endless misery on the texts which speak of Sheol or Hades, is building on the sand. When the building is assailed by reason and argument, and an appeal to the Bible, it must fall, if it has no better support. Even if it could be proved true from other texts, this is calculated to bring the doctrine into suspicion.

4th, The translators of our common English version, appear to have had more correct ideas about

Sheol, Hades, or hell, than most people who read their translation. They certainly were at some pains to guard us against attaching to the word hell, the idea of a place of endless misery. In many places where they render Sheol and Hades by the word hell, they have put grave in the margin. Besides; let it be remembered, that the word hell originally signified the same as Sheol and Hades. It was then the very best word they could use in rendering these two words. If men have affixed a different sense to the word hell, the translators are not to blame. Admitting that when our translation was made, it had acquired the sense of a place of endless misery, what could the translators do but use this word in rendering Sheol and Hades. It meant the same as those words originally; and to prevent misunderstanding, they frequently put grave in the margin. They no doubt thought that this, together with the context, was security against all misapprehension. Unfortunately this has not been the case. But no blame attaches to them, for they must in this case have either coined a new word, expressed themselves by a circumlocution, used always the word grave, or left these words untranslated. I am inclined to think, that if Sheol, Hades, Tartarus and Gehenna, had been left untranslated in the common version, very few, if any, would ever have thought that by any of these words a place of eternal misery was meant. Every reader would then have been obliged to consult the context, wherever these words were used, to attain the sense of the writer. Obligated to do this, he would soon have become familiar with them, and must have seen, from the way in which they were used, that the idea of a place of endless misery was never intended to be conveyed by them. But here are four words all rendered by the word *hell*, and this word is

allowed not to mean originally a place of misery, but the concealed place. Let any one go over all the texts where these words are found, and put this remark to a fair trial. It is true, that our translators, in rendering the word Gehenna, have also used the word hell. But here again, what could they do, for this word had acquired a new sense from its original signification. This new sense they supposed answered to the word Gehenna, considered as the place of endless misery. Here they were under the necessity of either again coining a new word, leaving Gehenna untranslated, or expressing themselves by a circumlocution. We doubt if the translators were at liberty to do any of these, without shocking public prejudice, and exciting the displeasure of those in high authority, under whose patronage they made their translation. They were not left at liberty to give us the best translation, which their own judgments, and the progress of Biblical criticism, even at that day, could have afforded. In proof of this, see the king's instructions to the translators.

5th, Several very serious evils arise from understanding Sheol or Hades to mean a place of endless misery. In the first place, it is a perversion of those texts in which these words occur. This perversion of them leads to a misunderstanding of many others. By this means the knowledge such texts convey, is not only lost, but our knowledge of the word of God is greatly retarded, and our minds are perplexed and embarrassed on other connected subjects. Every text of Scripture misunderstood, lays a foundation for a misunderstanding of others; and thus error is not only rendered perpetual but progressive. But this is not all. Understanding Sheol and Hades to mean a place of endless misery, is perverting God's word to caricature himself. It is putting our own sense on

his words, to make him say things against ourselves which he never intended. It is giving a false colour to the language of the Bible, that we may support the false views we entertain of his character, and his dealings with the children of men.

6th, I may just add about Hades what was noticed about Sheol, that we never find the words eternal, everlasting, or forever, used in connexion with it, or concerning it. We never read of an everlasting or eternal Hades or hell, or that men are to be punished in it forever. Nothing like this is to found in Scripture. Such epithets added to the word hell, found in books and sermons, are among the improvements in divinity which man's wisdom teacheth. The word *hell* is first perverted from its original signification, and then the word *eternal* is added to it, to make the punishment of endless duration.

## SECTION III.

### 2 PETER II. 4. CONSIDERED.

THE third word which is translated *hell*, in the common version, is *Tartarus*. It occurs only once, and is found, 2 Peter ii. 4.—“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.” The quotation from Dr. Campbell, to which I alluded in my remarks on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, I shall now introduce. It is a quotation which ought to arrest notice, because it not only gives us information about the origin of Hades as a place of punishment, but assists us in explaining both that parable and the passage before us. He thus writes:—Dissert. vi. part 2. sect. 19.—“But is there not one passage, it may be said, in which the word *αἰδης* must be understood as synonymous with *γεεννα*, and consequently must denote the place of final punishment prepared for the wicked, or *hell* in the Christian acceptance of the term? Ye have it in the story of the rich man and Lazarus, Luke xvi. 23. ‘*In hell, εν τω αἰδη, he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom.*’ This is the only passage in Holy Writ which seems to give countenance to the opinion that *αἰδης* sometimes means the same thing as *γεεννα*. Here it is represented as a place of punish-

ment. The rich man is said to be tormented there in the midst of flames. These things will deserve to be examined narrowly. It is plain, that in the Old Testament, the most profound silence is observed in regard to the state of the deceased, their joys or sorrows, happiness or misery. It is represented to us rather by negative qualities than by positive, by its silence, its darkness, its being inaccessible, unless by preternatural means, to the living, and their ignorance about it. Thus much in general seems always to have been presumed concerning it, that it is not a state of activity adapted for exertion, or indeed for the accomplishment of any important purpose, good or bad. In most respects, however, there was a resemblance in their notions on this subject, to those of the most ancient heathen.

*“But the opinions neither of Hebrews nor of heathen, remained invariably the same. And from the time of the captivity, more especially from the time of the subjection of the Jews, first to the Macedonian empire, and afterwards to the Roman; as they had a closer intercourse with Pagans, they insensibly imbibed many of their sentiments, particularly on those subjects whereon their law was silent, and wherein, by consequence, they considered themselves as at greater freedom. On this subject of a future state, we find a considerable difference in the popular opinions of the Jews in our Saviour’s time, from those which prevailed in the days of the ancient prophets. As both Greeks and Romans had adopted the notion, that the ghosts of the departed were susceptible both of enjoyment and of suffering, they were led to suppose a sort of retribution in that state, for their merit or demerit in the present. The Jews did not indeed adopt the Pagan fables on this subject, nor did they express themselves entirely in the same manner; but the general train of thinking in both came pretty much to coincide. The Greek HADES they found well adapted to*

express the Hebrew SHEOL. This they came to conceive as including different sorts of habitations for ghosts of different characters. And though they did not receive the terms *Elysium* or *Elysian fields*, as suitable appellations for the regions peopled by good spirits, they took instead of them, as better adapted to their own theology, the *garden of Eden*, or *Paradise*, a name originally Persian, by which the word answering to *garden*, especially when applied to Eden, had commonly been rendered by the Seventy. To denote the same state, they sometimes used the phrase *Abraham's bosom*, a metaphor borrowed from the manner in which they reclined at meals. But, on the other hand, to express the unhappy situation of the wicked in that intermediate state, they do not seem to have declined the use of the word *Tartarus*. The apostle Peter, 2 Ep. ii. 4. says of evil angels, that 'God cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.' So it stands in the common version, though neither *γεεννα* nor *αδης* are in the original, where the expression is *σειραις ζοφου ταρταρωσας παραδωκεν εις κρισιν τετηρημενους*. The word is not *γεεννα*; for that comes after judgment; but *ταρταρος*, which is, as it were, the prison of Hades, wherein criminals are kept till the general judgment. And as, in the ordinary use of the Greek word, it was comprehended under *Hades*, as a part, it ought, unless we had some positive reason to the contrary, by the ordinary rules of interpretation, to be understood so here. There is then no inconsistency in maintaining that the rich man, though in torments, was not in *Gehenna*, but in that part of *Hades* called *Tartarus*, where we have seen already that spirits reserved for judgment are detained in darkness."

This quotation from Dr. Campbell, affords matter for many remarks, a few of which I shall briefly notice.



1st, He declares, that the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, is the only place in Holy Writ, which seems to give countenance to the opinion, that Hades sometimes means the same thing as Gehenna. We have seen already, that he denies that Hades is the place of eternal punishment; and that he contends for Gehenna being this place we shall see in the next chapter.

2d, He declares that,—“it is plain that in the Old Testament, the most profound silence is observed in regard to the state of the deceased, their joys or sorrows, happiness or misery.” If the Old Testament maintains a *profound silence* on this subject, it ought to be inquired,

3d, How did the Jews in our Lord’s day, come to consider Hades as a place of punishment for the wicked? That a change in their opinions on this subject, had taken place from what is contained in the Old Testament is evident; for he says,—“on this subject of a future state, we find a considerable difference in the popular opinions of the Jews in our Saviour’s time, from those which prevailed in the days of the ancient prophets.” Well, how did this change in their opinions take place? Was it by some new revelation which God made to them on this subject? No such thing is stated by Dr. Campbell, but the reverse. He thus accounts for the change of their opinions. “But the opinions neither of Hebrews nor of heathen, remained invariably the same. And from the time of the captivity, more especially from the time of the subjection of the Jews, first to the Macedonian empire, and afterwards to the Roman; as they had a closer intercourse with Pagans, they insensibly imbibed many of their sentiments, particularly on those subjects whereon their law was silent, and wherein, by consequence, they considered themselves as at greater freedom. As both Greeks and Romans had

adopted the notion, that the ghosts of the deceased were susceptible both of enjoyment and of suffering, they were led to suppose a sort of retribution in that state, for their merit or demerit in the present. The Jews did not indeed adopt the Pagan fables on this subject, nor did they express themselves entirely in the same manner; but their general train of thinking in both came pretty much to coincide."—This statement is surely too plain to be misunderstood. How much plainer could he have told us, that a punishment in *Hades* was a mere heathen notion, which the Jews learned from their intercourse with them? Could this have been more obvious had he said so in as many words? We presume no man will deny this. He not only declares that neither Sheol nor Hades is used in Scripture to express a place of punishment, but he shows, that the Pagan fables teach it, and the Jews learned it from them. What are we then to think, when this is the account of the origin of the doctrine of hell torments by one of its professed friends? Had this statement been given by a professed Universalist, the cry would be raised that it was a mere fabrication of his own, in support of his system. But no, this is the statement of the learned, and acute Dr. Campbell, late principal of Marischal college, Aberdeen, who lived and died, a celebrated theologian in the church of Scotland. It is notorious, that in this quotation he declares, that the Jews derived these opinions from their intercourse with the heathen. Where *they* got those opinions he does not inform us. Had they been from divine revelation, the heathen ought to have learned them from the Jews. But here the matter is reversed. The heathen it seems anticipated divine revelation, as to the doctrine of punishment in Hades. They revealed it to the Jews by means of their fables. The Jews it is said,—“did not adopt their fables, nor did they express them-

selves entirely in the same manner, but their general train of thinking came pretty much to coincide." That man must be very dull, who does not learn from this, that the doctrine of torment in Hades, had its origin in heathenism, and, that the Jews were ignorant of it, until they learned it from the heathen.—From all this, will it be easy for any one to resist the conviction, that to this popular opinion, which the Jews had imbibed from their intercourse with the heathen, our Lord alluded in his parable of the rich man and Lazarus? Such were the popular notions of the Jews in our Lord's day; and to what else could he allude? The Old Testament, as we have seen, taught no such doctrine, and in the parable it is not introduced as a new revelation to the world. It is merely brought in as a part of its imagery, and that without asserting its truth, or exposing the erroneous notion which people had imbibed. He no more attempts to correct this Pagan notion, than the common opinion, that satan had bound a woman eighteen years with an infirmity.

4th. Dr. Campbell further declares, that though the Jews did not adopt the Pagan fables on this subject, yet their train of thinking pretty much coincided with theirs. "The Greek Hades they found well adapted to express the Hebrew Sheol. This they came to conceive as including different sorts of habitations for ghosts of different characters." They did not adopt the terms Elysium, or Elysian fields, to express the regions of good spirits, but he says, "they do not seem to have declined the use of the word Tartarus" to express the unhappy situation of the wicked in an intermediate state. The text, and indeed the only text he could adduce as an example of this, is the passage under consideration. Concerning the word Tartarus in this text, he says—"the word is not Gehenna, for that comes after judgment, but Tartarus, which is, as it were, the prison of Hades, wherein criminals are

kept till the general judgment." That a punishment in Hades is a Pagan notion, which the Jews derived from the heathen, we have the authority of Dr. Campbell in the above quotation. That Tartarus was the prison of Hades, is derived from the same origin, for it is no where so represented in Scripture. If punishment in Hades be a Pagan notion, Tartarus, the prison of Hades, is only a part of the same Pagan notion. It is only the prison of Hades, says Dr. Campbell, in which criminals are kept till the general judgment; but after this, Gehenna is to be the place of eternal punishment for all the wicked. And why make Gehenna the place of their punishment after this period? Dr. Campbell, we have seen from the preceding sections, had shown that Hades, and no doubt its prison also, were to be destroyed, and be no more. What then is to be done with the criminals which had been confined in this prison? They are not then to be released, and made happy, therefore some other place of punishment must be provided for their reception. He provides for them an everlasting asylum in Gehenna, after the day of judgment. They must be sent somewhere after this period, and no place so suitable could be devised as Gehenna. But whether it be a very happy device, in establishing the doctrine of eternal misery, we hope will appear from the next chapter. All that we wish noticed here, is, that at the day of judgment we shall have done with *Hades*, and *Tartarus*, the prison of *Hades*, and all punishment in them, for they are to be no more. If this be true, and we think it will not be disputed, Gehenna is the only place of eternal punishment for the finally impenitent. This is not only the opinion of the authors we have quoted, but we believe is the general opinion of all the learned. But though many contend for Hades being a place of intermediate punishment, and in the above quotation Tartarus is made the prison of

this place, where criminals are kept till the day of judgment, yet in the passage before us, no other beings but the angels that sinned are said to be sent to it. Not a word is said about the rich man in the parable as being there; no; nor of any other beings in the universe of God. Moreover, it is not even said, that those angels who sinned are punished there; they are only reserved for judgment in chains of darkness. Now what does all this amount to, in proving the doctrine of *eternal misery*? Tartarus is part of Hades, or the prison of this place, according to the above account of Dr. Campbell. He tells us that the place is to be destroyed; and he tells us further, that the idea of punishment in Hades, the Jews learned from their intercourse with the heathen. I should consider it trifling with the reader's understanding to pursue this subject further, in adducing proof that neither *Sheol*, *Hades*, nor *Tartarus*, was used by the inspired writers to express a place of eternal punishment. *Gehenna*, is the place contended for by Dr. Campbell and others, who believe in this doctrine; and whatever way the place of supposed *temporary punishment* may be understood, it is with *Gehenna* I am principally concerned.

Though enough has been said, showing that punishment in Hades was a heathen notion, and not sanctioned by divine revelation, it may be of some use to see what were the views entertained by the ancient heathen about Hades and Tartarus. M. Le Clerc, in his *Religion of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 147—154. thus writes:—"In general, the doctrine of a future life has been adopted by all nations, at least by all those that deserve to be cited as examples. Legislators considered it as the most effectual curb for restraining the passions of men, and they have employed every argument to establish this salutary doctrine, as we may

be convinced by attending to the descriptions which the ancients have left us of hell.

“This word signified among them the *residence of souls*. Thither, after death, they repaired in crowds to receive remuneration for their deeds. Minos sat as judge, and as the names were drawn out of the fatal urn, he distributed to each his merited punishment or reward. Pluto, seated on a throne of ebony, presided over the infernal regions; because, as we have already observed, in the symbolical religion of the ancients, part of which was dedicated to the worship of the stars, winter was the night of nature, and because the sun at that time took the name of King of the Shades. For this reason Pluto, who represented the sun, makes so important a figure in mysteries destined to describe the empire of the dead. That gloomy region was situated at an immense distance, far beyond the limits of this universe. According to the author of the *Theogony*,\* ‘as far as the heaven is distant from the earth, so far is the earth removed from the dark abyss. A mass of iron, falling from the top of the starry heavens, would take nine days and nine nights before it reached the surface of the earth; and it would require the same time in falling from thence to Tartarus,’ the place destined for the punishment of the wicked.

“This frightful abode was said to be twice as deep as it is distant from the brilliant summit of Olympus. It was surrounded by a triple wall, it was bathed by the flaming waters of Cocytus and of Phlegethon, and towers of iron guarded the entrance. The cruel Tysiphone watched night and day at the gate, armed with serpents, which she shook over the heads of the guilty. Their groans, their doleful cries, mixed with the sound of their stripes, cause the wide abyss to

\* *Hesiod, Theog. v. 720.*

resound. There are forever shut up the impious Titans, and those no less audacious mortals who dared to resist the divinity; Tityus, Ixion, Pirithous, and the impious Salmoneus. Perjury, adultery, incest, and parricide, are likewise punished; and those whose life has been sullied with odious crimes; those who have not respected the ties of blood, who have waged unjust wars, who have sold their country; those who have dared to commit enormous wickedness, and enjoyed the fruit of their crimes, are all consigned to the most cruel torments.

“A less rigorous fate was reserved for him who had been guilty of smaller offences, or who, having committed crimes, had given signs of repentance. It was necessary that he should be punished till he had expiated them; but when he had been in some sort regenerated and cleansed from the impurities contracted by guilt, he was admitted into the abodes of the blessed.

“That place of delights was admirably contrasted with the dismal regions of Tartarus. The ground sparkled with gold and precious stones; its fertile plains were watered with a multitude of never-failing streams, which maintained a perpetual verdure. The flowers of spring were mixed with the rich fruits of autumn. A sky forever serene and unclouded, a sun and stars from which incessantly flowed streams of living light; and, in fine, all the objects which the most brilliant imagination could conceive, were collected to embellish those happy plains. They were inhabited by virtuous men, the friends of justice, who had served their country, and cultivated the useful arts; they tasted a pleasure which nothing could embitter; and the remembrance of the virtues they had practised on earth was for them a continual source of felicity. In the midst of the unmingled pleasures they enjoyed, they exercised themselves in the occupations

which during life had obtained them the gratitude of their countrymen. The legislator contemplated the principles of that august and eternal law of which he had before but a glimpse; and the assembly of the just that surrounded him, were attentive to his instructions. The sight of arms, even in the bosom of peace and tranquillity, recalled to the remembrance of the hero those battles which he had fought in defence of his country; while the poet, who had consecrated his harp to the worship of the gods, celebrated anew, in celestial strains, the power and benignity of the immortals.

“ We may conceive what impression these images would make on the mind, when unceasingly presented to the eyes from earliest infancy. It is not to be doubted, that if the hope of felicity unbounded leads to virtue, the idea of endless punishment must have a still stronger influence on the conduct. The religion of the ancients, which to us appears of so light a nature that we are apt to believe its only end was to flatter the senses, yet employed the most proper means for restraining the outrageous multitude. It alarmed them on all sides with the most frightful representations. A poet of antiquity\* paints, in the strongest colours, that continual terror which takes possession of the human heart, which disturbs and poisons the pleasures of life, and which in every part of the earth has erected temples for the purpose of conciliating the gods. Plato, in the beginning of the first book of his Republic, represents an old man seized with fear at the approach of death, and full of inquietude with regard to objects that never occupy the season of health. Then it is, says he, that we reflect on our crimes, on the injustice we have committed, and that often, in our agitation, we start in our sleep, and are

\* Lucretius, lib. 5.



frightened like children. As soon as some were found among the ancients who had overcome these fears, it was pretended that such had never existed among them: we might as reasonably judge of the public belief at this day, by the opinions in which some modern writers have been pleased to indulge themselves. The testimony of those of antiquity who opposed the prejudices of their times, their very attempt to dissipate those fears, and to turn them into ridicule, rather proves how deeply they were rooted. Observe with what solicitude Lucretius every where endeavours to burst the bonds of religion, and to fortify his readers against the threatenings of eternal punishment. The observation of Juvenal, so often cited, that nobody in his day believed in the fables of hell, is that of an enlightened mind, which takes no part in the opinions of the vulgar. The same thing is to be said of what we read in Cicero, and in some other writers, on the same subject: and when Virgil exclaims, 'happy the man that can tread under foot inexorable Destiny, and the noise of devouring Acheron,' he indicates, in a manner sufficiently precise, that it was the province of philosophy alone to shake off the yoke of custom, riveted by education.

"Those who were unable to conquer these vain terrors, found consolations of a different kind. Religion stretched forth her kind hand to encourage their hopes, and to relieve their despondency. When remorse had brought back, within her pale, an unfortunate wanderer from the paths of justice, she informed him that, by a true confession of his guilt, and sincere repentance, forgiveness was to be obtained. With this view expiatory sacrifices were instituted, by means of which the guilty expected to participate in the happiness of the just."

Such were the views of the ancient Greeks about Hades, or Tartarus, and its punishment. There is

considerable similarity in the above quotation to some descriptions given of hell torments by modern preachers. I shall leave all to their own reflection on it. One or two things I shall merely notice.

1st, The doctrine of punishment in Tartarus, seems to have originated with legislators, for the purpose of restraining the passions of the multitude, and to alarm "them on all sides with the most frightful representations." The Persians, Chaldeans, Egyptians and Greeks, all introduced punishment after death. The Jewish nation is an exception. Some deistical writers have even blamed Moses as a legislator for not introducing eternal punishment into his code of laws, as a curb on men against licentiousness. It is generally allowed that the punishments threatened in the Old Testament are of a temporal nature.

2d, From the above quotation it appears, that though punishment after death in Tartarus was believed by the heathen generally, yet the better informed among them did not believe "*in the fables of hell,*" but turned them into ridicule. Juvenal took no part in those opinions of the vulgar; and Virgil says—"it was the province of philosophy alone to shake off the yoke of custom, riveted by education." Is it not then strange, that a doctrine, which was invented by heathens, and treated with contempt by their own wisest men, should be a fundamental article in the faith of Christians? How is this to be accounted for?

3d, I may just add, that when the heathen were made converts to the Christian faith, all allow, that many of their previous notions were soon incorporated with it. This, together with the erroneous views held by the Jewish converts, laid a foundation for such a corruption of Christianity, which, if it were not attested by evidence indisputable, could not be believed. That punishment in Hades, or Tartarus, after death, is not a part of this corruption of Chris-

tianity derived from the heathen, at least deserves to be seriously considered. The evidence we have adduced, proving that it is, we submit to the reader's judgment.

To conclude this chapter. We have shown, that neither Sheol, Hades, nor Tartarus, is ever used by the sacred writers to signify a place of endless misery for the wicked. This was all we were bound to do, in opposing the common opinion on this subject. But we have also shown, that this opinion originated with the heathen; and that the Jews learned it from them. To invalidate the evidence which has been produced, the very reverse must be proved. See note in the first edition, or the improved version on 2 Peter and Jude.

## CHAPTER II.

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GEHENNA, UNIFORMLY TRANSLATED HELL, IN THE  
NEW TESTAMENT, CONSIDERED AS A PLACE OF  
ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

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WE have now arrived at a part of this Inquiry, which requires the utmost attention. The New Testament is considered as clearly and decidedly teaching the doctrine of *endless misery* to all the wicked, and *Gehenna* is the place in which they are said to suffer it. The *truth*, or *falsehood* of this doctrine, is then at issue upon the decision of the question,—*What is the Scripture meaning and usage of the word Gehenna?*

## SECTION I.

### REMARKS ON DR. CAMPBELL'S VIEWS OF GEHENNA.

WE have seen from a consideration of all the texts in which Sheol, Hades, and Tartarus occur, that these words never ought to have been translated *hell*, at least in the sense in which it is used by most Christians. This is confirmed by Dr. Campbell and other writers, who were all firm believers in the doctrine of eternal misery. Indeed, it is not now pretended by critics, that these words were ever intended to convey such an idea, by any of the sacred writers.

The *word*, and I believe the *only word*, which is supposed to express the place of *eternal misery* in the Bible, is the term *Gehenna*. As Dr. Campbell conclusively proves, that Sheol, Hades and Tartarus do not mean this place, he as positively asserts, that this is always the sense of *Gehenna* in the New Testament. He thus writes concerning it in his 6th preliminary dissertation, part ii. sect. 1.—“That γέεννα is employed in the New Testament to denote the place of future punishment, prepared for the devil and his angels, is indisputable. In the Old Testament we do not find this place in the same manner mentioned. Accordingly the word γέεννα does not occur in the Septuagint. It is not a Greek word, and consequently not to be found in the Grecian classics. It is originally a compound of the two Hebrew words גֵּיהֵנּוֹם *ge hinnom*, the valley of Hinnom, a place near Jerusalem, of which we hear first in the book of Joshua, xv. 8. It was there that the cruel sacrifices of children

were made by fire to Moloch, the Ammonitish idol, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. The place was also called *tophet*, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. and that, as is supposed, from the noise of drums, *toph* signifying a drum, a noise raised on purpose to drown the cries of the helpless infants. As this place was, in process of time, considered as an emblem of hell, or the place of torment reserved for the punishment of the wicked in a future state, the name *tophet* came gradually to be used in this sense, and at length to be confined to it.—This is the sense, if I mistake not, in which *Gehenna*, a synonymous term, is always to be understood in the New Testament, where it occurs just twelve times. In ten of these there can be no doubt; in the other two, the expression is figurative; but it scarcely will admit a question, that the figure is taken from that state of misery which awaits the impenitent.” Such is the statement given by Dr. Campbell. It will be easily perceived, that the whole of it is bare, unsupported assertion. He does not do here as we have seen him do with Sheol, and Hades, prove what he says, by an appeal to the passages. No; he leaves us to make out the proof the best way we can. At first I was inclined to think, that, it was so plain and full, that he deemed it superfluous to adduce it. Resolved not to take this very important article on bare assertion; even from him, I have considered it as carefully as I could, and shall submit the result of my investigation for candid consideration. It is with diffidence and reluctance I dissent from such a learned and sensible writer as Dr. Campbell. But even he has taught me to call no man master. He encourages free inquiry, and inculcates on his readers, that no doctrine ought to be believed because it is asserted by the learned, and professed by the multitude; but on the argument and evidence whereby it is supported. As the foregoing quotation contains, for substance, the

views of all who believe Gehenna to signify the place of eternal punishment, it is necessary to make some remarks on it in the outset. With all due respect for the memory of Dr. Campbell, I solicit attention to the following remarks on the above quotation.

1st, Let it be then observed how very differently he speaks in the first and last part of it. In the first he says,—“that Gehenna is employed in the New Testament to denote the place of future punishment, prepared for the devil and his angels, is *indisputable*.” But in the last, instead of speaking with such confidence, he only says,—“this is the sense, *if I mistake not*, in which Gehenna, a synonymous term, is always to be understood in the New Testament.” Whether what he had written between the first and last of these sentences, led him to hesitate about the meaning of Gehenna, I cannot say; but sure I am, that he was too shrewd a man not to perceive, and too candid not to own, the insufficiency of the evidence adduced to convince his readers. It is not his usual mode merely to assert things. He generally states evidence, and seldom fails to convince us. But here he affords us none. It was in attempting to make out the proof of what he asserts, for my own satisfaction, that I have been led to alter my opinion about the meaning of Gehenna.

2d, Though Dr. Campbell asserts in the above quotation that this is always the sense of Gehenna in the New Testament, yet he denies that it has any support from the Old. He says,—“In the Old Testament we do not find this place in the same manner mentioned. Accordingly the word Gehenna does not occur in the Septuagint. It is not a Greek word, and consequently not to be found in the Grecian classics.” Here it is positively declared, that Gehenna is not to be found in the Old Testament, as meaning a place of endless punishment. To me this is very strange; that the word Gehenna in the New Testament should indis-

putably mean such a place of misery, that it should even be taken from the Old, and yet this never be its meaning there. *Are we then to believe without evidence, that this word is taken from the Old Testament, and this new sense affixed to it by the New Testament writers, yet no intimation given of such a change, or in what way we are to understand it under the gospel dispensation? This we think ought to be indisputably proved, before it be believed by any man.* We think it will be granted, that it is not the usual practice of the New Testament writers to borrow words from the Old, and put such new senses upon them, without any intimation or explanation. But we may ask, if they have indeed done this, how could their hearers understand them? They were Jews, and to Jews they addressed themselves concerning Gehenna. Unless they explained the word in this new sense, it was impossible, in the very nature of the case, that their hearers could understand them. At any rate, it becomes those who say they did use it in this new sense, to prove it, and show how they could be understood without any explanation. It is true, that the authors of the Targums use the term Gehenna to express a place of endless misery; but it remains to be proved, that the New Testament writers used it in this sense, and not in the sense it has in the Old Testament. Besides it ought to be shown how those uninspired authors came to use it so, on their own authority, and it ought to be proved that it was afterwards sanctioned by divine authority.

3d, But Dr. Campbell attempts to account for such a change in the meaning of Gehenna in the New Testament, from that of the Old, in the following manner. "As this place was, in process of time, considered as an emblem of hell, or the place of torment reserved for the punishment of the wicked in a future state, the name tophet came gradually to be used in



this sense, and at length to be confined to it." I am surprised at this statement, and especially from such a writer as Dr. Campbell. Let it be noticed, that he does not so much as hint that the New Testament writers explained Gehenna to their hearers in this new sense. Nor does he say, that any sacred writer either of the Old or New Testament, made tophet an emblem of this place of torment. How then, I ask, could tophet become an emblem of hell, the place of torment, until this place was first known by the persons who made it an emblem? We surely cannot make one place the emblem of another until that place is known, of which it is to be the emblem. But here is one place made the emblem of another, and yet it is confessed that no revelation was given about this place, of which the other place is made the emblem. — Yea, it is even declared, that for this very place, the Hebrew, Greek, nor English language has no name. Is it asked how I make this appear, I answer, let it be remembered, that Dr. Campbell has told us, that neither Sheol, Hades, nor Tartarus, means this place of torment. In the very quotation on which we are remarking, he declares that Gehenna does not occur in this sense in the Old Testament, that it is not a Greek word, and is not found in the Grecian classics, nor in the Septuagint. He has also told us, that our English, or rather Saxon word hell, did not originally signify the place of eternal punishment for the wicked, but expressed the same place as Sheol and Hades. Here then we have got a place, a place even of eternal punishment for the wicked, but for which the Bible, in the original languages, has no name; a place, for which even the copious Grecian classics afford no name; a place, for which our Lord and his apostles could find no name, but were obliged to borrow a word from the Old Testament, affix this new sense to it, and did this without any explanation, or even inti-

mation, to their hearers. They did this too, in addressing those who had the Old Testament in their hands; persons who were opposed to the doctrines they taught, and who were jealous of innovation. Moreover, the change of sense put on this word taken from their Scriptures, is for the purpose of threatening them with torment in a future state. And to add no more, such persons receive all this without a murmuring word at this alteration, or the dreadful punishment with which they are threatened. All this may possibly be true, but we must say, it is not very probable, nor ought it to be received until very conclusive evidence is produced. But it may surely be asked, from what source did Dr. Campbell learn, "that tophet or Gehenna came gradually to be used as an emblem of hell, and at length came to be confined to it?" From what he has said, it is very evident that it was not from the Old Testament. If it was used as an emblem of hell, and confined to it in the days of our Lord, it must have assumed this new sense, between the completion of the Old Testament writings, and the commencement of the gospel dispensation. If it began to assume this new sense before the Old Testament was completed, it had no authority from it; for Dr. Campbell himself declares, that Gehenna does not occur in this manner in the Old Testament. If this be true, and we think it indisputable, this new sense affixed to the word Gehenna, is not of divine, but of human origin: it rests on the authority of man, and not on the authority of God. I think this cannot be denied, unless it is proved that our Lord did use Gehenna to express the place of future torment for the wicked, and informed those to whom he spake, that this was the sense in which it was now to be understood. But is any thing like this to be found in all the New Testament, and is not this taking for granted the very thing which ought to be proved?

But further ; we think it must be allowed, that the way Dr. Campbell says Gehenna came to assume this new sense, is extremely suspicious. Had it been of divine authority, it would not have come *gradually* to assume it. No; the sense would have been settled at once. But it seems from Dr. Campbell, that this new sense affixed to the word, was of slow process. It came, he says, "*gradually to be used as an emblem of hell, and at last to be confined to it.*" At what time it began to be used in this sense, who had the honour of first using it in this way, how long before it came to be confined to it, and who completed it, we are not informed. The thing is barely asserted by Dr. Campbell. If any evidence of this is to be found, we must find it, if we can ourselves. We have been at some pains to find evidence of this, but our labours have been entirely fruitless. We have, to be sure, found it *asserted* that the Targums and the Apocrypha use the term Gehenna for a place of endless misery. But we are left in the dark, as to when, or by whom, or on what authority such a meaning was first given to Gehenna. If the writers of the Targums and the Apocrypha used Gehenna in this sense on their own authority, is this a sufficient foundation for our faith in such a doctrine? But it may be said, is it not evident that our Lord used Gehenna *always*, and *indisputably* in this new sense? It is certain, it is indisputable, that Dr. Campbell has asserted this, without so much as attempting to prove it. But surely this ought not to be received on the assertions of any man. Only let it be proved that our Lord used Gehenna in this new sense, and I am forever silent on the subject.

But Dr. Campbell has said, that, "in the Old Testament we do not find this place in the same manner mentioned." May I then be allowed to ask, if this place of torment for the wicked is not mentioned in this manner in the Old Testament, in what other man-

ner do we find it mentioned? If it is not mentioned under the name Gehenna, by what other name is it called? He denies that it is called by the names *Sheol*, *Hades*, or *Tartarus*. Yea, he denies that the Hebrew, Greek, or English language affords a name for this place of torment. In his Dissertation, already quoted, he thus writes in regard to the state of the dead. "It is plain that in the Old Testament the most profound silence is observed in regard to the state of the deceased, their joys or sorrows, happiness or misery. It is represented to us rather by negative qualities than by positive; by its silence, its darkness, its being inaccessible, unless by preternatural means, to the living, and their ignorance about it. Thus much in general seems always to have been presumed concerning it; that it is not a state of activity adapted for exertion, or indeed for the accomplishment of any important purpose, good or bad. In most respects, however, there was a resemblance in their notions on this subject, to those of the most ancient heathen." It is obvious from this, that he did not believe, that either the idea of a place of torment, or the name for it was known under the Old Testament. Besides, we have seen in a quotation of his, chap. i. sect. 3. that the Jews, from their intercourse with the heathen, learned the notion of punishment in a future state. He therefore not only denies that the Jews had any knowledge of this from the Old Testament, but he informs us of the source whence they derived their information. Either he must be greatly mistaken in his statements, or endless punishment in hell is a heathen notion, and ought to be rejected by all Christians. But I have to ask further, did our Lord speak to the Jews about Gehenna, in a sense it had not in all their sacred books, but in that given it by mere human authority? Did he indeed use a Scripture word in a sense which man's wisdom teacheth,

laying aside the sense which the Holy Spirit teacheth? Are we to believe, that he who said to the Jews, "full well ye reject the commandment of the Lord, that ye may keep your own traditions," thus give them countenance by his example? Admitting, for argument's sake, that Gehenna was made an emblem of future torment, I ask, by what name was it called before this new sense was affixed to the word Gehenna? Dr. Campbell says, that Gehenna came gradually to mean the place of future punishment, and at last came to be confined to it. He also says, that in this manner it is not used in the Old Testament. Before this term was then used to express a place of endless misery, was such a place known, and what word or phrase did men use to designate it; or, was it a nameless place before Gehenna was used as an emblem of it? If so, how could they speak about it? But it seems men came gradually, in process of time, to use Gehenna as an emblem of this place of torment, before they had any revelation or knowledge about such a place. We thought places and things were always first known, and then names for them followed; but here the matter seems to have been very different. In fact, there is something here which will not bear examination. I ask again, why were not men content to speak of it by the name God had given it, if indeed he had said any thing about it? Or did men first invent this place of torment, and then change the sense of the word Gehenna to suit it, or be an emblem of it? Unless it is proved that our Lord did use Gehenna in this new sense, will it not follow that such a place of torment is not mentioned in the Bible by the name Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, or Gehenna? If it is proved that he used Gehenna in this sense, does it not follow that he adopted an idea of men's own invention, and made it a doctrine to be believed under the gospel dispensation? It is certain, if Dr. Camp-

bell be correct, that he incorporated a heathen notion with his religion, and has made it a principal article of belief to all his followers. It may just be added, how could Dr. Campbell with truth say, that tophet came gradually to be used as an emblem of hell, the place of future torment, "*and at length to be confined to it?*" It might indeed be made an emblem of this by the Jews, but could not be *confined to it*; for, in reading the Old Testament Scriptures, they could not but understand it in a very different manner. Let any one consult the places where it occurs, and see if it could be so understood by them. If they did, it was a great misunderstanding of the passages; for Dr. Campbell himself declares, that in this sense it does not occur in the Old Testament.

4th, Let it be noticed, that although Dr. Campbell declares in the above quotation, that Gehenna does not occur in the Old Testament in the sense of a place of torment for the wicked, yet he gives us the following information about it.—He says,—“it is originally a compound of the two Hebrew words, גֵּיהֵנוֹם *ge hinnom*, the valley of Hinnom, a place near Jerusalem, of which we hear first in the book of Joshua xv. 8. It was there that the cruel sacrifices of children were made by fire to Moloch, the Ammonitish idol, 2 Chron. xxiii. 10. and that, as is supposed, from the noise of drums, toph signifying a drum, a noise raised on purpose to drown the cries of the helpless infants.”—Here, then, is the origin of Gehenna in the New Testament, stated by Dr. Campbell himself. We see, though it does not occur in the sense of a place of torment for the wicked, yet it does occur in the Old Testament in some sense. What this sense is, and what it is there made an emblem of by divine authority, ought to be carefully considered, and not departed from, unless very substantial reasons are assigned, arising from its usage in the New Testament. We do

not think it at all probable that our Lord would use Gehenna in such a different sense, or make it an emblem of such a very different thing from that of the Old Testament writers, if Dr. Campbell himself may be believed in the following quotations. In his fifth Dissertation, part ii. sect. 13. he says,—“Our Lord, we find from the evangelists, spoke to his countrymen in the dialect of their own Scriptures, and used those names to which the reading of the law and the prophets, either in the original, or in the versions then used, had familiarized them. Our translators, and indeed most European translators, represent him as using words, which, even in their own translations of the Old Testament, never occur, and to which, in fact, there is nothing there that corresponds in meaning.” In his first preliminary Dissertation, part i. sect. 1. and 2. he further says,—“if the words and phrases employed by the apostles and evangelists, in delivering the revelation committed to them by the Holy Spirit, had not been agreeable to the received usage of the people to whom they spoke, their discourses, being unintelligible, could have conveyed no information, and consequently would have been no revelation to the hearers. Our Lord and his apostles, in publishing the gospel, first addressed themselves to their countrymen the Jews; a people who had, many ages before, at different periods, been favoured with other revelations.

“As the writings of the Old Testament are of a much earlier date, and contain an account of the rise and first establishment, together with a portion of the history of the nation to whom the gospel was first promulgated, and of whom were all its first missionaries and teachers, *it is thence unquestionably that we must learn, both what the principal facts, customs, doctrines, and precepts are, that are alluded to in the apostolical writings, and what is the proper signification and extent of*

*the expressions used.*" No man could have written a refutation of what Dr. Campbell has said about Gehenna, so complete, as what he has here furnished himself. It needs no comment nor observation from me.

What we have here to inquire into then, are principally the two following things:—*In what sense is Gehenna or tophet used in the Old Testament; and what do the writers make it an emblem of, when they use it in this way?*

1st, Then, let us inquire in what sense Gehenna or tophet is used in the Old Testament. Doubting the correctness of Dr. Campbell's statement, that Gehenna did not occur in the Old Testament in the sense of a place of eternal punishment, we have examined all the places in which it occurs. The result of this examination of the texts in the Old Testament, has given us very different views of the places where it is used in the New. The substance of this examination I shall now briefly state.

*Gehenna* of the New Testament, is, according to Dr. Campbell and others, "a compound of the two Hebrew words גֵּהֶנְנוֹם *ge hinnom*, the valley of Hinnom, a place near Jerusalem." I find upon examination of all the passages, that this valley of Hinnom formed one of the boundaries in the division of the land among the tribes of Israel, Josh. xv. 8. and xviii. 16. This valley was in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem, Jer. xix. 2. It was in this valley the cruel and abominable sacrifices of children were made by fire to Moloch, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. It was here Ahaz, Manasses, and others, made their children pass through the fire to this idol god, 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. and xxxvi. 6. Jer. xxxii. 35. and vii. 31, 32. In Isai. xxx. 31. tophet is not only mentioned, but allusion is made to the fire kept up there.\* The Jews were expressly forbidden

\* This last text is often quoted to prove that tophet is a place of eternal misery for the wicked. But how it does so, it is difficult to per-



to let their children pass through the fire to Moloch, Levit. xviii. 21. It was commanded by God, that such as did so should be punished with death, Levit. xx. 1—6. Notwithstanding this, the law of the Lord was disregarded, and kings and subjects were guilty of such unnatural crimes. The following texts may also be consulted, which have some relation to such horrid abominations. Amos v. 26. comp. Acts vii. 43. 1 Kings xi. 4—8. Ezek. xvi. 20, 21, and xxiii. 37—39. and xx. 26—31.

I have not quoted any of these texts at length, nor was this necessary, for the following things will not be disputed. It is evident that Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom, was in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem. It was in this valley the children of Israel sinned greatly in their cruel and abominable sacrifices offered to the idol god Moloch. A constant fire was kept up in this place, and it was a place of wretchedness and abomination. Indeed, no place to a Jew, could convey such a lively view of misery and wretchedness as the valley of Hinnom.

2d, Let us now inquire what the Old Testament writers make Gehenna, or tophet, an emblem of. Dr. Campbell avers, that in process of time, it was made an emblem of hell, or the place of torment reserved for the punishment of the wicked in a future state. He denies, however, as we have seen, that it is used in this manner in the Old Testament. The question then is, do the Old Testament writers use Gehenna or tophet as an *emblem* of any thing, and what is *that*

ceive. If it does, it also proves, that "the pile thereof is fire and much wood." But is this true of hell, or the place of endless misery? Parkhurst, on the word *peteh*, gives us the following translation of this passage. "For the furnace *is already set in order* : for the king (of Assyria, namely) it is prepared," &c. Was hell or eternal misery set in order and prepared for the king of Assyria? This follows from what Mr. Parkhurst says, who was not a Universalist.

*thing*, concerning which they use it as an emblem? Permit me then to quote the two following passages, which show this clearly, and at great length. The first I quote is the whole of Jer. chap. xix. I also quote chap. vii. 29. to the end.

“ Thus saith the Lord, Go and get a potter’s earthen bottle, and *take* of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests; and go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee; and say, Hear ye the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; thus saith the Lord of hosts; the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which, whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle. Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; they have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake *it*, neither came *it* into my mind: therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter. And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives; and their carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. And I will make this city desolate, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and hiss because of all the plagues thereof. And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness,

wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them. Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee, and shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Even so will I break this people and this city, as *one* breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury *them* in tophet, till *there be* no place to bury. Thus will I do unto this place, saith the Lord, and to the inhabitants thereof, and *even* make this city as tophet: and the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods. Then came Jeremiah from tophet, whither the Lord had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the Lord's house; and said to all the people, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words." Chap. vii. ver. 29—34.—“Cut off thine hair, *O Jerusalem*, and cast *it* away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of tophet, which *is* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded *them* not, neither came it into my heart. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be called tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter; for they shall bury in tophet till there be no place. And the carcasses of this people

shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray *them* away. Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate.”

No one can doubt, after reading these two quotations, that the Old Testament writers made the valley of Hinnom or tophet, an emblem of something. It is our duty candidly and carefully to consider what that thing is. I shall attempt briefly to do this. 1st, Then, it is evident that they made tophet an emblem of *punishment*, and of *future punishment*, but, *not of future eternal punishment in another state of existence*. This all will admit without any hesitation, 2d, It is equally evident that they made it an emblem of *future temporal punishment to the Jews as a nation*. Not a word is dropped, that this punishment was to be in a future state of existence, or of eternal duration. No; it is a punishment of a temporal nature, in this world. It is a prediction of miseries to be endured by the *Jews*, for their sins. It is not mentioned as a punishment for wicked men generally, or for Jews and Gentiles indiscriminately. No; the Jews, and they as a nation, were to suffer this punishment. In this prediction they are reminded of the crimes they had committed against the Lord, in the valley of Hinnom, and it is used by the spirit of God, as an emblem of the punishment he was to inflict upon them. This is very apparent from the following verses in the above quoted passages, Jer. chap. vii. 20, 21. and xix. 4, 5. No man, we think, can read these predictions of the prophet, without recognising that our Lord, in the following texts, referred to the same punishment. “That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the

blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except these days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled," Matth. xxiii. 35. and xxiv. 21, 22. Luke xxi. 22. Yes, the days referred to, were indeed the days of vengeance, and the things which God had long predicted, were fulfilled, and the above quoted predictions of Jeremiah, were surely of the number. But that we may see more particularly what Jeremiah made Gehenna or tophet an emblem of, it is necessary to point this out by going over the above predictions.

1st, Then, the prophet predicts, that the valley of Hinnom should be to the Jews the valley of slaughter, and that they should bury in tophet till there should be no place to bury. The verses which predict this, are Jer. vii. 32. and xix. 6, 11. That this referred to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies, there can be no doubt. In proof of its exact fulfilment, I quote the following from M'Knight on Matth. chap. xxiv. He says:—"besides, in the progress of the siege, the number of the dead, and the stench arising from their unburied carcases, must have infected the air, and occasioned pestilence. For Josephus tells us that there were no less than six hundred thousand dead bodies carried out of the city, and suffered to lie unburied." It should be recollected, that we have seen that the valley of Hinnom was in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem.—We see then this part of Jeremiah's prediction literally and minutely fulfilled.

2d, Jeremiah further predicts, "that their carcases also should be meat for the fowls of heaven and

for the beasts of the earth." See chap. vii. 33. and xix. 7. If the fowls of the air, and beasts of the field did not feed on their carcasses, it was not for want of opportunity, for we have seen that six hundred thousand of their carcasses lay unburied. This part of the prediction was also literally fulfilled.

3d, Jeremiah also predicts, that "in the straitness of the siege, they should eat the flesh of their children." See Jer. xix. 9. This was also fulfilled in the siege of Jerusalem, as Josephus, their historian, testifies.

4th, He further predicts, that "their land should be desolate," Jer. vii. 34. and xix. 8. This it soon became, after the destruction of the city and temple, and in this state in a great measure it remains until this day.

5th, Again, the prophet predicts, "that their city should be as tophet," chap. xix. 12. We have seen, that he said before, "the valley of Hinnom should be to them the valley of slaughter, and that they should bury in tophet till there should be no place to bury." It is evident, from these parts of the prophet's prediction, that the city of Jerusalem should be as tophet or like unto tophet. Tophet is used as an emblem to describe the misery in which it was to be involved by the judgments of God. And why, it may be asked, was tophet made an emblem of those temporal miseries, rather than any thing else? To this I answer, that no temporal miseries since the world began, nor ever shall be, could equal them in severity, and no place known to a Jew could be more fitly chosen by the prophet as an emblem to represent them. I shall here quote the following account of the valley of Hinnom, or tophet, in addition to what may be gathered from simply reading the above passages in the Old Testament. Calmet, on the word tophet, thus writes : — "It is thought tophet was the butchery, or place of

slaughter at Jerusalem, lying south of the city, in the valley of the children of Hinnom. It is also said, that a constant fire was kept here, for burning the carcases, and other filth, brought hither from the city. Into the same place they cast the ashes and remains of the images of false gods, when they demolished their altars, and statues. Isai. xxx. 33. seems to allude to this custom, of burning dead carcases in tophet, when speaking of the defeat of the army of Sennacherib, he says; 'for tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large. The pile thereof is fire, and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it.'—Others think the name of tophet is given to the valley of Hinnom, because of the sacrifices offered there to the god Moloch, by beat of drum, to drown the cries of the consuming children."—The idol god Moloch was worshipped in the valley of Hinnom. On the word Moloch, Calmet says:—"The rabbins assure us, that the idol Moloch was of brass, sitting on a throne of the same metal, adorned with a royal crown, having the head of a calf, and his arms extended as if to embrace any one. When they would offer any children to him, they heated the statue within by a great fire; and when it was burning hot, they put the miserable victim within his arms, where it was soon consumed by the violence of the heat; and, that the cries of the children might not be heard, they made a great noise with drums, and other instruments, about the idol. Others say, that his arms were extended, and reaching toward the ground; so that when they put a child within his arms, it immediately fell into a great fire which was burning at the foot of the statue. Others relate that it was hollow, and had internally seven partitions, the first of which was appointed for meal or flour; in the second there were turtles, in the third an ewe, in the fourth a ram, in the

fifth a calf, in the sixth an ox, and in the seventh a child. All these were burned together, by heating the statue on the inside."

6th, The prophet adds, that "all the evil which the Lord had spoken he would bring upon them," chap. xix. 15. The following words of the apostle, 1 Thess. ii. 16. sufficiently explains this,—“for the wrath is come, or coming upon them to the uttermost.” And the words of our Lord, quoted above,—“for these be the days of vengeance, that all things that are written may be fulfilled.” Luke xxi. 22. This part of the prediction compared with these passages, show that the prophet did refer to the dreadful punishment which God brought upon the Jewish nation at the end of the world, or age, and described, Matth. xxiv. For “all the evil which the Lord had spoken” he did not bring upon them until the destruction of their city and temple by the Roman army.

Such are the principal things contained in this prophesy of Jeremiah. Whatever fulfilment these things had in the captivity, in the reign of Zedekiah, we think, the ultimate fulfilment of them took place in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. It is then put beyond all fair debate, that Gehenna was made an emblem of punishment to the Jews; and nothing but ignorance of their own Scriptures could prevent their fully knowing this. It is made an *emblem of temporal punishment*, and a very striking emblem indeed. But that it was made an emblem of *eternal punishment* to the *Jews*, or *any of the human race*, does not appear from this prophesy of Jeremiah, or any other part of the Bible. We hope these things will be kept in view; as they have a very important bearing on what is to follow, in considering the passages about Gehenna in the New Testament. Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, or tophet, is made by Jeremiah an emblem of the temporal calamities coming on the Jewish nation.



That in this very way it is also used by our Lord in the New Testament, we shall show when we come to consider the passages in which this word occurs. Dr. Campbell, is so far correct then, in saying that Gehenna was made *an emblem of punishment*, but is certainly mistaken in saying that it was made an emblem of *future eternal punishment for the devil and his angels*, or any other beings in the universe. Supposing Gehenna to have been made an emblem of the place of eternal torment to the wicked, it is certain, it was not done by the Old Testament writers. Even Dr. Campbell himself assures us, that in this manner it does not occur in the Old Testament. That he is correct in this, has been shown from the places in which it occurs. Is it not then deserving particular notice, that the Old Testament writers should use the term Gehenna as an *emblem of temporal* and not of *eternal punishment?* and yet we are told, that in process of time it came to be used as an emblem of eternal punishment. Only let this change in the sense of Gehenna be established, on Scripture authority, and I am perfectly satisfied. Until this is done, to appeal to the Targums and the Apocrypha, is only in another way, telling us, that the Bible does not authorize it. See sect. iii.

## SECTION II.

A NUMBER OF FACTS STATED, SHOWING THAT GEHENNA WAS NOT USED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS TO EXPRESS A PLACE OF ENDLESS MISERY.

BEFORE we proceed to consider the texts in which Gehenna occurs in the New Testament, some facts, of essential importance, ought to be noticed. These facts have been altogether overlooked, or but little attended to, on this subject.

1st, Then, let it be kept in remembrance, *that neither Gehenna, nor any other word, is used in the Old Testament to express a place of endless misery for the wicked.* This we presume will be admitted, as established from the preceding part of our examination. It is evident from chap. i. that Sheol, Hades, and Tartarus, have no such meaning. Yea, it is contended by the authors quoted there, that *Gehenna* in the New Testament, is the word which is used to express the place of endless misery. They contend for no other, and I never heard that any other words were ever alleged as expressing this place, by the inspired writers. The phrases, *bottomless pit*, and *lake of fire and brimstone*, it is true, have been thought to mean the same as Gehenna. We believe, however, that Gehenna is considered *indisputable*, and that in this sense it is uniformly used in the New Testament. If it fails, and refuge is taken in these two phrases, or any other, it will be then time enough to consider them. *Is it not*

then a curious fact, that *Gehenna* of the *New Testament*, should be taken from the *Old*, where this is allowed never to be its meaning, and for this change of meaning we should be referred to the authors of the *Targums* and the *Apocrypha*? This fact ought to lead us to examine carefully if this indeed be the sense in which *Gehenna* is used in the *New Testament*. We ought not to take it for granted; but be sure that we correctly understand the passages which speak of *Gehenna*. This fact leads to a suspicion, that we may have mistaken their meaning. But has it not been common to believe *Gehenna* a place of endless misery, and that without any examination?

2d, *The word Gehenna occurs just twelve times in the New Testament, and is always translated HELL in our English version.* The following are all the places where this word is found. *Matth. v. 22, 29, 30. and xviii. 9. Mark ix. 43—47. Luke xii. 5. Matth. x. 28. and xxiii. 15, 33. James iii. 6.* I only refer to these texts now, because they shall all be particularly considered afterwards. The fact, that this word is only found twelve times in the *New Testament*, I notice for the following reasons.—It is contended by *Dr. Campbell*, and I believe is universally admitted, that *Gehenna* is the only word which signifies the place of endless punishment for the wicked. But do most Christians know, that the word *hell*, so much talked of, and preached about, is only found twelve times in the *Scriptures*? But a little reflection may convince any one, that, properly speaking, it was not used originally so often as twelve times. It occurs eleven times in the gospels written by *Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, and by comparing the places, it is easily seen, that these historians only relate some of the same discourses, in which our Lord used this word. Though it occurs then eleven times, it is plain it was not so often used by him when he uttered his discourses. Viewing the matter

in this light, and surely it is the true one, few words of such importance occur so seldom in the New Testament, as the word Gehenna. I do not view this fact of any great importance, further than to show the difference between the inspired writers and modern preachers, as to their frequent use of this word; and to confine them, if possible, in preaching about *hell*, to those texts, and those only, in which *Gehenna* occurs. Whether they ought to quote the texts where *Gehenna* is used, or not, is the subject of our present investigation.—Admitting that it occurs twelve times, and in all these it is certainly used to express a place of eternal misery, it deserves notice, that this is not so often in the whole Bible, as it is used by many preachers in the course of a single sermon.—But I have noticed this fact, with a view also to undeceive the minds of some, who, seeing the word *hell* so often in their Bibles, conclude that the Holy Spirit has said a great deal on this subject. The fact is indisputable, that it is only used twelve times in the New Testament, and every other text in which the word *hell* occurs, quoted to prove the doctrine of eternal misery, is worse than no proof; it is misquoting the Scriptures. I frankly admit, that, if in the texts in which *Gehenna* occurs, it can be fairly made to appear that the sacred writers use this word as expressive of a place of eternal punishment, it is a truth we ought to receive without gainsaying. Common Scripture usage of any word is an allowed just rule of interpretation. But it ought also to be admitted, that if this word is used in the above texts to express temporal punishment, or in a similar way as by the prophet Jeremiah, *Gehenna* must be given up, as meaning a place of endless punishment for the wicked.

3d, *Another fact is, that the word Gehenna or hell, is used by our Lord, and by James, but by no other person in the New Testament.* This fact, every person who can

read English, may satisfy himself about, by reading all the texts referred to above, where the word Gehenna is found. Is it not, then, somewhat surprising, that it should only be used twelve times in the New Testament, and still more surprising, that our Lord and James should be the only persons who say anything about it? It is surely a very natural expectation, warranted by the frequency of similar important subjects, that hell should be often spoken of, and that all the New Testament writers should say less or more about it. The conduct of preachers in our day, would lead us certainly to conclude, that the inspired writers would all reiterate this subject in the ears of their hearers. But no such thing is to be found. Most of them do not appear to have used the word Gehenna or hell in all their lifetime. John, though he wrote the history of our Lord, as well as Matthew, Mark and Luke, does not once name Gehenna, either in his gospel, or any of his epistles. What is still more remarkable, Luke, though he mentions Gehenna in his gospel, names it not in his history of the acts of the apostles. Paul, Peter and Jude, are as silent about Gehenna, as if such a place had no existence. No person in the New Testament, our Lord excepted, ever threatened men with the punishment of Gehenna, or hell, which is very strange, if by it eternal misery be intended. To say they ever did this, yet not be able to produce a single text in proof, is only begging the question, and will never satisfy the mind of a candid inquirer after truth. Now, let it be remembered, that the writings of those persons who have never mentioned Gehenna or hell, form two thirds of the New Testament. We think we may appeal to every candid man, if this fact ought not to strengthen the suspicion, that we may have misunderstood the passages in the New Testament which speak about Gehenna.

I am fully aware that it may be objected to all this, though these writers do not mention Gehenna, yet they have spoken of the same punishment in another way. If they have, we are willing to consider what they have said, and, we think, have considered it. All we wish observed here, is, that they have surely not spoken of it by the name Gehenna or hell. This cannot be disputed. Since this is a fact, an argument of some weight arises from it, that Gehenna was not used to express a place of endless misery. It is this. If our Lord taught this doctrine at all, it will be allowed that he taught it in those passages, in which he speaks of Gehenna or hell fire. Well, if the disciples did understand our Lord as teaching this doctrine in such passages, how came it to pass, that they never once afterwards spoke of it by this name as their master had taught them? Is it likely that they would lay aside his mode of speaking about it, and adopt a mode of their own?

4th, *Another fact deserving our attention, is, that all that is said about Gehenna, was spoken to JEWS. Jews, and they only, were the persons addressed, when speaking of Gehenna. It is not once named to the Gentiles in all the New Testament, nor are any of them ever threatened with such a punishment.* This fact is indisputable. The evidence of its truth does not depend on a tedious, intricate process of reasoning, which few persons could go through and decide about. All that any one has to do, is to read all the texts referred to, in which Gehenna occurs, in connexion with their contexts, and he must be satisfied of the correctness of my statement. It is not of the least consequence to decide to whom the gospels were originally written. In all the eleven places in which Gehenna is used by our Lord, it is easily perceived that he was addressing Jews. In the only other passage in which it occurs, it is evident that James was addressing the twelve tribes

which were scattered abroad. See chap. i. and compare it with chap. iii. 6. Should it be objected to this, "that our Lord's ministry was among the Jews, and that he did not minister among the Gentiles, and therefore could not speak to them of the damnation of hell;" to this I answer, that the objection would have force, if his apostles, in their ministrations to the Gentiles, had spoken of the damnation of hell. But this they never did, and their silence not only renders the objection of no weight, but shows that the *damnation of hell* peculiarly concerned the Jews, and that the apostles considered the Gentiles not concerned in this punishment. This fact, which I deem of great importance in this inquiry, is put beyond all fair debate. No man can doubt the fact, who takes the trouble to read the above passages. Its truth will appear when we come to consider them. *Let us then attach what meaning we please to the word Gehenna; it is certain that the Jews are the only persons addressed about it.*

It has been thought by some, that Matthew, Mark and Luke, wrote their gospels for the use of the Jews. In whatever way this may be decided, it seems certain that John wrote his gospel for the use of the Gentiles. Of this the book contains sufficient internal evidence. John explains Jewish places, names and customs, which was altogether unnecessary, had he been writing to Jews. Is it not then very worthy of our notice, that in his gospel he never mentions Gehenna? If the punishment of Gehenna or hell, was for Gentiles as well as Jews, how came it to pass, that he said nothing to them about it? Not only does he never name Gehenna, but he omits all the discourses in which our Lord used this word. If the damnation of hell only concerned Jews, we see a very good reason for this omission; but if it equally concerned Gentiles, how is it to be accounted for upon rational principles? If both were alike concern-

ed in its punishment, why are not both throughout the New Testament admonished about it, and warned against it? How could the Gentiles fear and avoid a punishment not once mentioned to them by any one of the inspired writers? The only way in which these omissions can be accounted for, is, that they attached a very different idea to the punishment of hell from what we do, and did not consider the Gentiles concerned with it.

It may possibly be objected,—“were not all the Scriptures written for the benefit of mankind? Why then make such a distinction between what was addressed to the Jews and not to the Gentiles?” In reply to this objection, I frankly answer,—yes; whatsoever was written aforesaid, was written for our learning. But notwithstanding this, who does not see, and does not admit, in other cases, the importance, yea, the necessity of this very distinction? We may derive as Gentiles, much instruction from Matth. xxiii. xxiv.; but who will deny that what is there written had a particular reference to the Jews? This is but one example out of many which might be adduced in illustration of this distinction. It should be recollected, that in the very first of these chapters referred to, some of the most important things said by our Lord of Gehenna occur. All will allow, that the words,—“fill ye up then the measure of your fathers,” had a special reference to the Jews. If so, why not also the very next words, “ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” This is the only instance which can be produced, where our Lord ever threatened the unbelieving Jews with the damnation of hell; and the whole context goes to show, that the subject he was speaking on, had an especial reference to the Jews. Our Lord, nor any of his apostles after him, ever threatened the Gentiles with a punishment in



Gehenna. This fact not only confirms the suspicion, which the preceding facts were calculated to excite, but I think ought to lead every man strongly to doubt if by Gehenna our Lord meant a place of eternal misery for all the finally impenitent. The man who can avoid doubting this, must have some way whereby he accounts for these facts, of which I frankly confess my ignorance.

5th, *Another very important fact to be noticed, is, that the chief part of all that our Lord said about Gehenna, was spoken to his disciples. Out of twelve times in which Gehenna or hell is mentioned in the New Testament, in only two instances is a word said about it to the unbelieving part of the Jewish nation. In nine of those places our Lord was evidently addressing his disciples, and in the other place where Gehenna is mentioned, James was addressing believing Jews of the twelve tribes, who were scattered abroad. This fact is also so notorious, that the texts where the word Gehenna occurs, need only to be consulted, to be perfectly satisfied of its truth. It is not more certain that this word occurs just twelve times in the New Testament, than it is certainly used ten times in speaking to the disciples, and only twice to the unbelieving Jews.—May I not then be permitted to press home the question,—how is it to be rationally and scripturally accounted for, that so much should have been said about Gehenna or hell to the disciples, and comparatively so little to the unbelieving part of the Jewish nation? If Gehenna did mean, as is commonly believed, a place of future eternal misery, why did our Lord appear so solicitous that his few disciples should escape this punishment, yet say so very little about it to the unbelieving multitude? To his disciples he always spoke of it as a thing they might escape; but to the unbelieving Jews, he says, “how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” Pray, why did he*

warn so much those in least danger of this punishment, yet say so little to those in the greatest danger of it? If he attached the same ideas to the word Gehenna, which we do to the word hell, how can we account for this part of our Lord's conduct? It is self evident, and must strike every reflecting man with great force, that his conduct, and the conduct of preachers in our day, are at perfect variance. For example, what would people in our day think of a preacher who should preach most about hell to the church, and say but little about it to the unbelieving part of his audience? appearing much more solicitous that the few composing the church should be saved from its punishment, than the multitude he considered as living in disobedience and wickedness. All know that the very reverse of this is the uniform practice of modern preachers. How this difference between our Lord's practice and theirs, is to be accounted for, I leave others to determine. On the commonly received views of Gehenna or hell, I am satisfied it can never be rationally accounted for.— I may add, how is it to be rationally accounted for, that our Lord only once during his whole ministry, should say to the unbelieving Jews, "how can ye escape the damnation of hell," if by this he meant future eternal punishment? That this could not be his meaning, we shall presently show from a variety of evidence. We only request that his conduct as it respects this, should be rationally accounted for. Either he said a great deal too little about hell to the wicked, or most preachers in our day say a great deal too much. Which of these two they will admit as the truth, must be left for themselves to determine. I need hardly notice that this fact is calculated to increase the doubts created by the other facts already stated, and ought to lead every man to a candid and careful examination of the New Testament, as to the sense of

Gehenna there. When we sit down to examine this subject, these facts ought to be kept in view. Besides, we ought to remember, that Gehenna in the Old Testament, is used, not for a place of endless misery, but as an emblem of temporal punishment to the Jewish nation. It is hoped the reader will keep these things constantly in his mind, in reading the next section, where all the passages which speak of Gehenna are considered.

6th, *But another fact, which deserves some notice, is, that in all the places where Gehenna or hell is mentioned, the persons addressed, are supposed to be acquainted with its meaning. No explanation is asked, and none is given, nor is it thought, either by speaker or hearers to be necessary.* The Jews, who are always the persons addressed, appear to have understood what our Lord meant by the punishment or damnation of Gehenna, as well as what was meant by stoning to death. The very first time it is mentioned, Matth. v. 22. the disciples had no more occasion to ask our Lord what he meant by Gehenna, than what he meant by the judgment and council. If this be true, and we think it will not be disputed, a very important question arises,—how came they to understand that Gehenna meant a place of eternal punishment for all the wicked? From what source did they derive their information concerning this? I cannot conceive any sources from whence they could possibly derive this information, unless from one or other of the following: 1st, From *immediate inspiration*. No evidence that this was the case can be produced, nor is it likely to be asserted by any person who has considered this subject. 2d, The *preaching of John the Baptist*. But as John never said a word about Gehenna to his hearers, this cannot be contended for by any one. 3d, Did they then derive their information from the *instructions and explanations of the Saviour*? Neither can this be contended for by any one.

who has read the four gospels. Our Lord never gave any such explanation of Gehenna. No man will say he ever did. 4th, Did they derive their information from *the Old Testament Scriptures* which they had in their hands? This they could not do, for we have seen above, that it did not contain such information. They could not learn a doctrine from it, which Dr. Campbell and others declare it did not teach. We have seen what the Old Testament teaches about Gehenna, but not a word does it say that it means a place of future eternal misery for the wicked. 5th, The only other source from whence they could learn, that Gehenna meant a place of endless punishment for the wicked, was, the writings of *fallible, uninspired men*. Accordingly, no other alternative was left Dr. Campbell but to say, that "Gehenna in process of time, came to be used in this sense, and at length came to be confined to it." Here, then, is the way in which it is said Gehenna came to have the sense which is now commonly given it in the New Testament. No man, we presume, can devise a better.

We have seen, in a quotation from Dr. Campbell, chap. i. sect. 3. that the Jews learned from the heathen the notion of punishment in a future state. We shall show, sect. v. how they came to apply the name Gehenna to this place of punishment. We shall also see that the Jews did not believe that any of their nation, however wicked, would suffer the punishment of hell. How is it possible, then, from the nature of the case, that the Jews, by the *damnation of hell*, could understand our Lord to mean a place of eternal punishment? Had they understood him so, would they not have shown their displeasure against him? Can any man suppose that they heard such a threatening and were silent? Had he so threatened the Gentiles they would have been pleased, for the Jews considered them fit fuel for hell fire.

That a punishment was threatened the Jews under the emblem of Gehenna, in their own Scriptures, we have seen from the last section. Of this they could not be ignorant. In the next section we shall show that to this punishment our Lord referred by the damnation of hell, and we think in this sense the Jews understood him. There is no evidence that the unbelieving Jews understood our Lord by Gehenna to mean one thing, and the disciples another. No: our Lord seems to use Gehenna, in speaking to both, in the same sense, and both appear to have understood his meaning. Neither of them ever asked him *what he meant by the damnation of hell*. There appears to have been no need for this, for both derived their information from the Old Testament Scriptures. If this was the common source of their information concerning the punishment of Gehenna, they never could understand our Lord by it to mean a place of eternal misery, for it contained no such information. Those who assert that they did understand our Lord so, are bound to inform us where they got this knowledge, seeing it was not derived from this source. They must also rationally and scripturally account for the above facts, before such a view of the punishment of *hell* can be established. We have no hope of ever seeing this accomplished.—We have a number of additional facts, to prove that Gehenna is not used to express a place of endless punishment; but these will be more appropriately introduced, after we have considered all the passages of the New Testament where this word occurs. These we shall now attempt candidly to consider.

### SECTION III.

#### ALL THE PASSAGES IN WHICH GEHENNA OCCURS, CONSIDERED.

NOTWITHSTANDING the facts which have been stated, and the observations made, in proof that Gehenna in the New Testament does not signify a place of endless misery, yet this must be determined by a consideration of all the places where it occurs. The texts, with their respective contexts, must decide in what sense the writers used the term Gehenna.—It is not material in what order we bring forward the passages. But as all the things said about it, were either addressed to the *unbelieving Jews*, or to the *disciples*, I shall begin with the texts in which the former were addressed.

The first then is Matth. xxiii. 15.—“Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell, (Gehenna) than yourselves.” This is one of the places in which Dr. Campbell thinks that the term Gehenna is used figuratively. It is observed by Parkhurst, on the word  $\Upsilon\text{ΙΟΣ}$ , that “son of Gehenna, or hell, is one deserving of, or liable to, hell.” He considers the expression an Hebraism. It is evident, from the context, that the words were spoken to the unbelieving Jews. They plainly imply, that our Lord considered them children of hell. This, according to Parkhurst, means, “deserving of, or liable to, hell.”—Their making their proselyte two-fold more

the child of hell than themselves, must therefore mean, that they made him two-fold more deserving of, or liable to hell, than themselves. It is easily seen here, that the whole depends upon what sense we affix to the word *hell*, or *Gehenna*. If we say that it means a place of eternal misery, the sense evidently is, that the Pharisees made their proselyte two-fold more deserving of, or liable to, eternal misery, than themselves. But how is this sense of the word *Gehenna* to be proved? This ought not to be taken for granted as its sense. This would be assuming as true the very question under discussion. As there is nothing in the verse itself which decides this, we must have recourse to other places, in which the sense of *Gehenna* is decided from the text and context, considered in connexion with the other circumstances mentioned. This we shall find in the next passage, which occurs in the same chapter.

In verse 33. it is said, addressing the same persons as in the preceding text, "ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" As much dependance is placed on this passage to prove eternal punishment in hell, I shall give it a particular consideration. Indeed, if this passage does not teach this doctrine, how can it be proved from any other? For this is the only passage of the New Testament, in which wicked men are threatened with *the damnation of hell*. If this text fails to support the doctrine, it must be proved from some other texts than those in which *Gehenna* or *hell* is used. Let it be then remarked, that the word *damnation* which occurs in this passage, simply means *judgment*, or *punishment*. Dr. Campbell and others translate the word *punishment*. See his note on Matth. xii. 40. If it were necessary, it could be easily shown that the same original word is rendered *punishment* in some other places of our common version. The sense then is, "how can ye escape

the punishment of hell or Gehenna?" The word *damnation* determines nothing about the *place*, the *nature*, or the *duration of the punishment*. It expresses punishment to the persons addressed; but all these things must be determined from some other sources of evidence, than the word damnation. As in the preceding passage, the whole depends here on the sense we affix to the word Gehenna or hell. If we say that it means the place of eternal misery for the wicked, our Lord's meaning evidently is, "how can ye escape the punishment of eternal misery?" But here again observe, that this sense of the word must not be taken for granted. How are we then to decide in what sense our Lord used the term Gehenna in this passage? There are two ways at least in which we may form a decision respecting this; namely, *an examination of the context in which this passage stands*, and *Scripture usage of the word Gehenna*. No person can object to these rules of interpretation. On the contrary, they are such as every man of any intelligence highly approves.

1st; Then, let us examine the context in which these words stand. It is evident from verse 1. of the chapter, that what is contained in it, was addressed to the *multitude*, and to the *disciples*. From verse 2, to 13. our Lord spoke to his *disciples* concerning the Scribes and Pharisees, and warned them against several evils in those men. But notice, that at verse 13. he begins a direct address to the *Scribes and Pharisees*, which he continues to the end of the chapter. That some of those men were present, seems evident, for the discourse has every appearance of a very pointed address to them. All must have noticed how often our Lord says to them, "wo!" or "alas! unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." No man, who reads from verse 13, to 32. can help seeing in what a plain, forcible, and pointed manner, our Lord exposed their



wickedness and hypocrisy. He says to them in verse 32. "fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." Then immediately follow the words under consideration: "ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"—Two questions here present themselves for consideration—*How were these men to fill up the measure of their fathers? And what damnation of hell was it which they could not escape?*

1st, How were these men to fill up the measure of their fathers? If we consult the context for an answer to this question, we find the following very plainly given us in verse 34.—"Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men and Scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city." That this is a just answer to the question, I presume will not be disputed. Their fathers, our Lord told them, in verses 30, and 31. had killed the prophets, and they gave but too good evidence that they were the children of such fathers. The measure of their fathers they were to fill up, by their crucifying him, and persecuting those whom he was to send them, as described, verse 34. Compare also John xvi. 1—3. and 1 Thess. ii. 16.

2d, What damnation of hell was it which those men could not escape? Let us again consult the context for an answer to this question. If verse 34. answered the first question, verse 35. must answer the second. "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." That this is the true answer to the second question, is not easily denied. Those who believe the expression "damnation of hell," means eternal misery, will readily admit, that my interpretation of the words, "fill

ye up then the measure of your fathers," is correct. This cannot well be disputed; for the context clearly decides this to be our Lord's meaning. Suffer me then to ask, why my interpretation of the words, "damnation of hell," should not also be correct? Surely the context as clearly points out the latter interpretation to be our Lord's meaning, as it does the former. If the context decides the sense in the one case, it must decide in both. Besides, is it not a strong confirmation that my interpretation is correct, that this expression, "the damnation of hell," occurs in this discourse about the destruction of Jerusalem, and in no other *discourse* our Lord ever delivered. Had he used this expression when preaching the gospel, and enforcing the necessity of repentance on the Jews, it might be supposed that he referred to eternal punishment. But as it occurs in this discourse, and is never used by him on any other occasion, it seems to put it beyond all doubt that I have justly interpreted the words *damnation of hell*. No man doubts that what is said verse 35. refers to the punishment inflicted on the Jews at the destruction of their city and temple, and more fully described in chap. xxiv. The succeeding verses of the chapter in which the words stand, confirm the view I have given. At verse 36. our Lord says, "verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation," and surely the damnation of hell was a part of them. See also the three remaining verses, which I need not transcribe.

It is now seen that the context of this passage leads us, not to interpret the words "damnation of hell," of punishment in a future state, but of the temporal calamities coming on the Jewish nation, during that generation. If ever the context of any passage decided in what sense the writer used a word or phrase, it is certainly decided in the one before us. But I

ought to be allowed the liberty, with those who may oppose my view of this passage, to call upon them to avail themselves of the context as I have done, and show, if they can, from it, that by the damnation of hell, our Lord meant a place of eternal misery. Let only the attempt be made, and nothing is so likely to convince them as this, that my interpretation is the true one. It was in making such an attempt, that I was led to the views which have been stated. Not a vestige of evidence does the context afford, that our Lord attached such a meaning to these words as is generally given them. The only thing in support of such a meaning, is the *false* and *entirely gratuitous* sense affixed to the word *hell* in the passage. But who does not see, and who will not allow, that if we are at liberty to affix what sense we please to the words of the Holy Spirit, there is an end put to all just interpretation of the Scriptures?

I am aware, that from verse 3. of chap. xxiv. "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" it has been thought that our Lord blends in one description, the end of the Jewish state, and the end of this material world; and that the calamities of the former were intended as a faint description of the latter. Perhaps some may think that something similar is the case with the passage we are considering; that when our Lord said, "how can ye escape the damnation of hell," he included in one expression, the temporal miseries of the Jews, and the eternal punishment of the wicked. Prophecies, say the objectors, have often a double meaning, and though in the first instance, our Lord by the damnation of hell, referred to the vengeance coming on the Jewish nation, it may also include the endless punishment of the wicked. In answer to this, I would observe, that this double view of Matth. xxiv. is now given up by most critics and commentators, and that even by those

who call themselves the orthodox. Mr. Stuart, in his letters to Dr. Channing, p. 126, gives it up. He says, "of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels, which are in heaven, neither the son, but the father. The *day* and *hour*, according to some, is the day of judgment; but as I apprehend, (from comparing the context) the day of vengeance to the Jews is meant."—Here Mr. Stuart sets aside this double view of Matth. xxiv. and precisely by the same rule of interpretation, that I have set aside the popular sense attached to the words "damnation of hell," in the passage before us. If the context shows him, that by "that day and hour," is not meant the day of judgment, but the day of vengeance to the Jews, the *context* of the passage we are now considering as clearly shows, that, by the damnation of hell, is not meant a place of eternal misery, but that this *very* vengeance is meant. The fact is, this double view of Matth. xxiv. is not only abandoned by Mr. Stuart, but by Whitby, M'Knight, Gill, and other commentators.

But we are willing to notice this objection a little further. It is said in the above objection, that the damnation of hell *may* refer to the endless misery of the wicked, as well as to the temporal calamities coming on the Jewish nation, because prophecies have often a double meaning. In answer to this, we would simply remark, that the words *damnation of hell* are not a prophesy, but a very plain declaration, put in the form of a question by our Lord, to the persons whom he addressed. But admitting that they had occurred in the 24th chapter, where our Lord predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, we think the objector ought not to rest such an important article as the one in question, on a *may be*, but a *shall be*, not on a *peradventure*, but an *absolute certainty*. If any evidence can be produced, that our Lord meant two such different ideas should be conveyed by the words *damnation of*

hell, we shall be happy to see it. But until the evidence of this is made apparent, the objection has no force. We cannot believe without evidence. The labour of proving this, belongs to the objector. What would he have said, had I assumed, without attempting to prove, that Gehenna, Matth. xxiii. only referred to the temporal punishment of the Jews? When the evidence we have adduced is invalidated, it will be time enough to admit the validity of this objection. *So long as an examination of the context, and the Scripture usage of words, are considered safe rules in determining the sense of any Scripture writer, we shall feel somewhat confident, that, by the damnation of hell, a place of endless misery was not intended by our Lord.* But this double view of the expression *damnation of hell*, is not only assumed, but it is assumed in face of evidence to the contrary. Our Lord, with the same breath, uttered the words, "damnation of hell," and declared, "all these things shall come upon this generation." But does he intimate in any part of the context, that this expression had another meaning, referring to eternal misery in a future state of existence? If the damnation of hell was to come on that generation, is it not in effect saying our Lord was mistaken to affirm that it also means *endless punishment*? If he intimates no such thing, ought we to put such a construction on his language? And are we at liberty to do this, in opposition to the scope of the context, and Scripture usage of the term Gehenna? But further; why assume this double sense of the term Gehenna in Matth. xxiii. and not give a double sense to almost every discourse our Lord delivered? If we take the liberty to do so here, are we not at the same liberty to do it in any other of his discourses? But such as do take this double view of Matth. xxiv. we leave them to settle the account with Stuart, Whitby, M'Knight, Gill, and other commentators. Let them answer what these persons

have said, showing that it refers only to the destruction of Jerusalem and its attendant calamities. We are persuaded, that, if a favourite doctrine was not in danger of losing its support from the passage we are considering, such an objection would never be urged. The very circumstance of urging it in this case, is calculated to bring the doctrine into suspicion.

But it perhaps may be also objected against the interpretation we have given, "why should our Lord speak of the temporal vengeance coming on the Jews, as a damnation, or punishment of hell, or Gehenna? Is there any other part of Scripture, which authorizes such an interpretation of our Lord's words?" In answer to this objection I would observe; supposing there is not, still it remains a fact, that the context of this passage plainly authorizes the interpretation we have given them. Besides, the context gives no countenance to the opposite interpretation. Will it not then be granted, that if I can show this view given, is supported by other parts of Scripture, that my interpretation must be admitted as correct? Moreover, if I can show that our Lord could not be understood in any other sense, allowing the Scriptures to be the best commentary on his meaning, is not my view placed beyond all fair debate?—I have contended that the Jews could not understand our Lord, by the "damnation of hell," to mean a place of eternal misery, because Gehenna had no such meaning in the Old Testament. I now as fully contend, that if Gehenna is not used in the Old Testament in the sense I have given it, neither could the Jews understand him in this sense. Candour requires this. Well, on the other hand, ought not candour to allow, that if it is used in the Old Testament as an emblem of the temporal miseries coming on the Jewish nation, that in this sense it was used by our Lord, and understood by his hearers? I frankly admit, that if Gehenna was used in

both these senses in the Old Testament, it might not be so easy to decide, in some passages of the New, which of these senses was intended by the writer. This could not, however, be the case with the passage we are now considering, for the context clearly decides the sense in which it is used. But we are happily free from all difficulty here, for, as we have seen, Dr. Campbell assures us, that Gehenna does not occur in the Old Testament in the sense of a place of eternal misery. This we have also proved above, from an examination of all the texts in the Old Testament, where this word is found.

2d, Let us now attend to the Scripture usage of the word Gehenna or hell. It has been established, that in the Old Testament the word Gehenna has no respect to eternal punishment. It has also been shown, that the Old Testament writers made Gehenna an emblem of the temporal punishment which was to come upon the Jews, in the destruction of their city and temple by Titus. So far then as Scripture usage of this word in the Old Testament goes, it establishes the interpretation of our Lord's words in the passage before us. The prophet Jeremiah had made Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom, an emblem of this punishment of the Jews; and our Lord addressing this very people, says to them, "how can ye escape the punishment of Gehenna?" Now notice the following things, which all concur to show that our Lord referred to Jeremiah's prophesy above considered. Jeremiah and our Lord evidently spoke to the same people, the Jews. Both speak of a punishment, and a very dreadful punishment, to this people. Both speak of temporal punishment, and not of eternal, to this people. Both, in speaking of this punishment, describe it under the emblem of a punishment of Gehenna. Neither of them give the least hint that the punishment they speak of, was a general punishment

for all wicked men, that it was in a future state of existence, and of endless duration. Jeremiah foretold, some hundred years before, this punishment to the Jews, to the fathers of those very persons whom our Lord addressed, and to whom he said, "fill ye up then the measure of your fathers," and added, "all these things shall come on this generation." But I may add, that the time referred to by the prophet, when this punishment should be inflicted on the Jews, and that mentioned by our Lord, exactly agree. The time of which the prophet speaks, was when the Lord "was to bring upon them *all the evil* he had spoken of," and precisely accords with our Lord's words, "for these be the days of vengeance, that *all things which are written may be fulfilled,*" Luke xxi. 22. Jer. xix. 15.

*Must my view of Gehenna then be erroneous, though supported by Scripture usage of this word in the Old Testament, and the context of the only passage in the New, where any unbelieving persons were ever threatened with the punishment of hell? And must the common view of Gehenna be correct, without any support from Scripture usage in the Old Testament, or the context of this passage?*

But further; if by the damnation of hell, our Lord did not refer to this prediction of Jeremiah, it is certain that in no other place does he ever remind the Jews that such a punishment had been threatened them. Is it then probable that our Lord should entirely overlook such a plain and pointed prediction in speaking to the Jews? Is it possible that he should say so much to them about the punishment coming on their nation, and yet never hint to them, that it had been clearly foretold by one of their own prophets? He often quotes the prophets; and is it likely Jeremiah's prediction, so full and plain in predicting punishment to that generation, was altogether overlooked by him? But it ought to be particularly noticed, that the passage under consideration occurs in the fullest



and plainest discourse ever uttered by our Lord, concerning the temporal miseries coming on the Jewish nation. Besides, it is the only time he ever said a word about the damnation of hell. Why then, I ask, does it happen to be spoken of in such a discourse as this, and in no other? How comes it to pass, that if the damnation of hell means eternal misery, it should only be introduced in such a discourse? To this, I feel confident, no satisfactory answer can be given. If any one can account for it, we shall be happy to see it done, on Scriptural and rational principles. But before I dismiss this passage, permit me to bring the prophesy of Jeremiah a little more into view in connexion with it. See this prophesy considered above, chap. ii. sect. 1. which ought to be consulted and compared with the passage under consideration. On both, taken together, I submit the following brief remarks.

1st, Who does not see that the prediction of Jeremiah and the discourse of our Lord, Matth. chaps. xxiii. and xxiv. speak of the same events? Comparing both with that part of Josephus' history of the siege of Jerusalem, we see both minutely and affectingly fulfilled. Such a fulfilment of prophesy is calculated to silence infidels, confirm the faith of Christians, and stimulate their researches into the true sense of Scripture.

2d, It could not appear strange to the Jews, that our Lord should speak to them of the damnation or punishment of Gehenna, for under this very emblem the prophet Jeremiah had foretold great and dreadful calamities to this people. With the prophet's language the ears of the Jews were familiar, so that they had no occasion to ask what he meant by the damnation of hell. Nor could they find fault with him, in calling to their remembrance, a punishment to which they were exposed, so long ago foretold, but which

was now near, even at the doors. Unless we suppose the Jews ignorant of the predictions of Jeremiah, they could be at no loss what our Lord meant by the damnation of hell. Indeed, nothing but blindness of mind could have prevented them from fearful anticipations of such dreadful calamities. Accordingly they asked no explanation, nor seemed surprised or offended at our Lord's saying,—“how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” Is this likely to have been the case, if by this expression the Jews understood our Lord to threaten them with eternal misery in the world to come? No sentiment our Lord ever uttered, was more calculated to shock their feelings, and rouse their indignation against him. To understand our Lord in this sense, was entirely at variance with their pride, prejudices, and religious opinions; for the Jews had no idea that any of their nation should ever suffer eternal misery. See Whitby's note on Rom. ii. hereafter quoted, sect. v.

3d, Let us for a moment suppose, that any of the declarations concerning Gehenna, in the New Testament, had occurred in the above predictions of Jeremiah. For example, let us take the words of our Lord before us,—“how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” I ask any candid man how the Jews would have understood these words, had they been uttered by the prophet, or how we would understand them? It will, I presume, be readily answered, that the prophet would be understood as threatening the temporal punishment which he had been predicting. Must the words *damnation of hell*, then, only mean temporal punishment, in the mouth of Jeremiah, but in our Lord's, eternal misery? If these words would have conveyed no such idea in the days of Jeremiah, why should they in the days of our Lord, and especially as he not only seems to allude to Jeremiah's prophecy, but introduces them in a discourse to the same

people, and in treating of the same temporal punishment? It will not be said that our Lord was discoursing about a future state of existence, or even on a different subject from that of the prophet when he used this expression. No: the subjects are precisely the same, and the same people were addressed.

4th, I ask, was the expression, "damnation of hell," understood when our Lord used it, or was it without any meaning? If the latter, then the idea of eternal misery is given up, at least from this expression. Besides, it is not very honourable to our Lord to say that he used this expression without any meaning. If the former is contended for, in what way was our Lord understood by his hearers? Nothing is said in the Old Testament, intimating that Gehenna was to have a different meaning under the gospel dispensation. Nor in the New Testament is any thing said, showing that Gehenna was used there in a different sense from that which it had in the Old. By whose authority, and upon what rational and Scriptural ground, do we then interpret Gehenna, in the passage before us, so differently from its allowed sense in the Old Testament? Our Lord was a Jew, and he spoke to Jews, who had the Old Testament in their hands. Until it is proved to the contrary, we must conclude that the Jews must have understood our Lord, by Gehenna, as their Scriptures had taught them. We think all will allow that this is at least a rational conclusion. That it is a correct one, ought not to be denied, unless it can be shown that our Lord laid aside the sense in which Jeremiah had used the word Gehenna, and adopted a new sense on the authority of the writers of the Targums. If our Lord did this as to the word Gehenna, we doubt if another instance of the kind can be produced from the New Testament. If it were proved that he did so, it follows, that instead of calling the attention of the Jews to the true sense of Scrip-

ture, he rather encouraged them in a sense put on Scripture words of men's own invention. We have seen that Dr. Campbell avers, that our Lord spoke to the Jews in the dialect of their own Scriptures, and used words to which their reading of the law and the prophets had accustomed them; and yet he contends for a sense given to Gehenna in the New Testament, which it never had either in the law or the prophets.

5th, If we are to be indebted to the Targums how to understand the word Gehenna or hell, but few people could ever understand the New Testament on this subject. Is there one in a thousand who ever saw the Targums? and is there one in ten thousand who ever read them? But until we have learned from such writings the true sense of the word Gehenna, we must either remain ignorant, or take this sense at second hand from others. But put the Bible into a man's hands, let him search it on this subject, and compare the New with the Old Testament, would he ever conclude that the New Testament sense of Gehenna was so different from that of the Old? No; he would soon perceive, that there is an agreement, and a very striking agreement, between the writers of both Testaments in their sense and application of the word Gehenna. Scripture usage, and the context, safe rules in all other cases, would soon lead such a person to the same conclusion to which I have come, that our Lord by "the damnation of hell," did not mean punishment in a place of endless misery. But it seems these safe rules of interpretation, must all be laid aside, to sit down at the feet of the writers of the Targums, to learn the meaning of Gehenna. But it is well known, how little confidence most people place in those writings in other cases, though their authority is considered good by many in the one before us. See the argument drawn from the Targums and Apocrypha considered, sect. v.

6th, That Gehenna was made an emblem of temporal punishment to the Jews, rests on divine authority. But, that it was made an emblem of eternal misery, rests merely on human authority. Let us state a case, where system, and preconceived opinion being out of sight, we would give a just decision, which of these authorities ought to be preferred. Suppose this case then reversed. In the Old Testament, let us suppose the word Gehenna to mean the place of eternal punishment for all the wicked. That this was its allowed sense, by critics and commentators, and that it never, in a single instance, meant temporal punishment. Suppose further, that the term Gehenna occurred twelve times in the New Testament. That upon examining one of the texts in which it occurred, say the passage before us, it evidently had the same sense as in the Old Testament. That the text and context clearly decided this to be its meaning. But one, say a Universalist, comes forward and informs us, from the Targums, that Gehenna, in the Old Testament, in process of time, came to be used as an emblem of temporal punishment, and at last came to be confined to it; and that this was always and indisputably its meaning in the New Testament. This he roundly asserts, without any attempt at proof on the subject.—I ask what decision we would form in this case? Let candour decide, if we would not say that the doctrine of eternal punishment was put beyond all debate. And would not every man agree to condemn the Universalist? Happy, then, we would say, is the man who condemneth not himself in the thing which he alloweth. But what would be the decision in favour of eternal punishment, and against the Universalist, if upon examining all the other eleven places in the New Testament, it was found, that Gehenna had the same or a similar sense as it had in the Old Testament, and in the one in the New Testament

where the context so clearly decided? The triumph of the doctrine of eternal misery would be complete.— We shall leave it for the decision of every man of candour, what to say, if it is proved that all the remaining passages which speak of Gehenna, corroborate the views I have advanced on the passage we have been considering. But all this would be considered as strongly confirmed, if a number of facts were adduced, showing that no other sense could be rationally attached to the term Gehenna. We have adduced a few facts already, and have yet some more to produce, proving, that Gehenna cannot mean a place of endless misery for the wicked, but that it referred to the temporal vengeance coming on the Jewish nation. We should like to see an equal number of such facts produced, showing that Gehenna does not mean this temporal vengeance, but eternal misery, before we are condemned for refusing to believe that this is its meaning.

7th, Supposing that the term Gehenna, in this passage, was *equivocal*, as it certainly is not, still, according to Dr. Campbell, my interpretation of the passage is correct. In his third Dissertation, sect. xi. he says: “Nothing can be more pertinent, or better founded, than the remark of M. Le Clerc, that ‘a word which is equivocal by itself, is often so clearly limited to a particular signification by the strain of the discourse, as to leave no room for doubt.’” The strain of our Lord’s discourse in this chapter, fixes the sense of Gehenna, to be what I have stated, so clearly and decisively, that no room is left for doubt. But let us hear Dr. Campbell further. In his ninth Dissertation, part i. sect. 13. he says,—“When a word in a sentence of Holy Writ is susceptible of two interpretations, so that the sentence, whichever of the two ways the word be interpreted, conveys a distinct meaning suitable to the scope of the place; and when

one of these interpretations expresses the common import of the word in Holy Writ, and the other assigns it a meaning which it plainly has not in any other passage of Scripture, the rules of criticism manifestly require that we recur to the common acceptance of the term." This is just what I have done with the term Gehenna in the passage before us. I have given it a meaning "suitable to the scope of the place." The sense I have given it, also "expresses the common import of the word in Holy Writ," where it is used as an emblem of punishment in the Old Testament. We shall see that it agrees also with all the places where it occurs in the New. The interpretation commonly given to Gehenna "assigns it a meaning which it plainly has not in any other passage of Scripture." "The rules of criticism manifestly require" then, the interpretation which I have given this passage. The commonly received sense of this word, is therefore contrary to the rules of criticism, as declared by Dr. Campbell himself.

I am aware that I have dwelt longer on this passage than was absolutely necessary. This I have done for several reasons. It is one of the principal texts, supposed to teach the doctrine of hell torments.—It is also the only text, where a punishment of Gehenna or hell, is threatened wicked men in the New Testament, whether Jew or Gentile. It is also a text, the context of which decides clearly, what our Lord meant by the punishment of Gehenna. It serves as a key to unlock the meaning of other places, where the circumstances in the context may not so clearly determine the sense of Gehenna. If our Lord did not, in this passage, mean by Gehenna a place of endless misery, there is no probability that in any other this was his meaning; for here he spoke to men, whom Josephus says, were the wickedest race of men that ever lived on the face of the earth. Since by the

damnation of hell he did not threaten them with eternal punishment, it is not to be supposed that in any of the other texts he did this; for what is said in them is addressed to his disciples. It is not likely he used Gehenna to express both a place of temporal and eternal punishment; and it is less likely that he should threaten the unbelieving Jews with the former, and his own disciples with the latter.

I shall now proceed to consider all the other texts in which Gehenna is used in the New Testament. A consideration of them will likely either confirm the views I have advanced, or detect the fallacy of my opinions.

The first then I introduce, is Matth. v. 22. "But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, *raca*, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell (Gehenna) fire." In this passage there are three crimes and three punishments mentioned; the judgment, the council, and hell fire. It will be allowed that the two first of these punishments are of a temporal nature, and are confined to the present life. Why the third should be extended to a future state, and considered of endless duration, is not so easily perceived, unless we take it for granted that hell means the place of endless misery in a future state. But this ought not to be taken for granted; for this is again taking for granted the very question in debate. A question very naturally arises on this text.—Is the guilt of being angry with, and calling a brother *raca*, deserving *only of temporal* punishment; and must calling him a fool, subject the offender to *hell or eternal misery*? This is far from being probable, if punishment is to be regulated by the nature and degree of the offence. But on this text let us hear Mr. Park-



hurst, who was as far from being a Universalist, as the east is distant from the west. He says, on the word Gehenna,—“a Gehenna of fire, Matth. v. 22. does, I apprehend, in its *outward* and *primary* sense, relate to that dreadful doom of being *burnt alive in the valley of Hinnom.*” It is here allowed by Parkhurst, that Gehenna, in its outward and primary sense, relates to temporal punishment in the valley of Hinnom. Well, and let me ask, what is its *inward* and *secondary* sense? And to what in this sense does it relate? Are persons who turn words and texts of Scripture aside from their *outward* and *primary* sense, under no obligation to inform us why they do so, and on whose authority it is done? If we take the liberty to turn words aside from their outward and primary sense, to suit ourselves in support of our religious system, what is it that may not be proved from the Bible? But if Gehenna, in this passage, is to have some other sense than its outward and primary one, two thirds of our work yet remains to be done. We have also to find out some other sense, than the outward and primary sense, to the words *judgment* and *council*. If we take such liberty with the word Gehenna, why not also with those other words? We must go through with the text, or show solid reasons why we do so only with the word Gehenna. Until this is done, let Gehenna be understood in the sense it has in the Old Testament, and also in the sense it had when our Lord addressed the unbelieving Jews, as we have seen in the preceding passage. There is certainly nothing, either in this text or its context, which shows that our Lord used the word Gehenna in a new and different sense from what it had in the Old Testament; nothing which indicates that he meant by this word a place of endless misery. There is just as much reason to believe that he used the words *judgment* and *council* in a new sense, yea, for a place of eter-

nal misery, as that he so used Gehenna. There is nothing but the popular idea which is affixed to this word, in favour of the one more than the other. This idea is attached to the word hell, and wherever we see it, or hear it, the idea of a place of endless misery is always suggested by it. The same would have been the case, had the idea been affixed to either the word judgment or council. Why the word hell should be thought to mean a place of eternal misery in this text, rather than those other words, I can assign no other reason except the one just given.

This is the first place in which the word Gehenna occurs, and what is said was addressed by our Lord to his disciples. It is evident then, that our Lord began to speak of Gehenna to his disciples long before he said a word about it to the unbelieving Jews. One should think this rather strange, if by this word he meant to teach them the doctrine of eternal misery. Here he told them, that by calling their brother a fool, they were in danger of hell fire. What, then, it may be asked, did he mean by this hell fire, in thus addressing his disciples? To this I answer, that we have seen Gehenna in the Old Testament made an emblem of the temporal miseries coming on the Jewish nation. We have also seen from the preceding passage, that our Lord spoke of these miseries in the same way. If any of his disciples did not continue in obedience to him, but apostatized, they should be involved in the same temporal calamities with the rest of the Jews. Their safety from the damnation of hell was inseparably connected with constant faith and obedience. This damnation or punishment of hell was to come on that generation. It was to come on them as a thief, and to constant watchfulness the disciples were exhorted, that they might escape it. Accordingly, let any one read Matth. xxiv. and see at what pains our Lord was to point out the signs which

should precede the destruction of Jerusalem, and to give his disciples suitable directions how to conduct themselves in regard to it, so that they might be saved from all the dreadful calamities in which the Jewish nation was to be involved.

Before I conclude my remarks on this text, it may just be noticed, that neither in this passage, nor in any other where our Lord addressed his disciples, does he speak about Gehenna to them as he did to the unbelieving Jews. Here he says, by calling their brother a fool, they would be in *danger* of hell fire; but when he addressed the unbelieving Jews, he said, "how *can ye escape* the damnation of hell?" In this last passage, let it be noticed, that the word *damnation* is connected with the word *Gehenna* or hell. In the passage before us, the word *fire* is connected with it. We have shown above that the word *damnation* simply means judgment or punishment. In remarking on one of the passages yet to be considered, I shall show that the word *fire* is used figuratively to express temporal punishment. Inattention to this apparently trifling circumstance, has led to some very mistaken views of many parts of Scripture.

Perhaps the following objection may be urged against my view of this passage.—"Allowing Gehenna to refer to the temporal punishment coming on the Jewish nation, why did calling a brother a fool, subject to this punishment, rather than the other crimes here mentioned?" In answer to this, let it be observed, that as hell fire, or God's temporal judgments on the Jewish nation, is the severest punishment mentioned in the passage, we may expect that the crime of which it is the punishment, would also be the greatest. Accordingly, the word *moreh*, in the common version rendered "fool," Dr. Campbell renders "miscreant." In his preface to Matthew's gospel, sect. xxv. he says,—"the word *moreh*, here used by the evan-

gelist, differs only in number from *morim*, the compellation with which Moses and Aaron addressed the people of Israel, when they said, Numb. xx. 10. with manifest and indecent passion, as rendered in the English Bible, *Hear now, YE REBELS*, and were, for their punishment, not permitted to enter the land of Canaan. The word, however, as it is oftener used to imply rebellion against God than against any earthly sovereign; and as it includes disbelief of his word, as well as disobedience to his command, I think better rendered in this place *miscreant*, which is also, like the original term, expressive of the greatest abhorrence and detestation. In this way translated, the gradation of crimes, as well as of punishments, is preserved, and the impropriety avoided of delivering a moral precept, of consequence to men of all denominations, in words intelligible only to the learned." This, we think, fully meets the objection, and the gradation of crimes, as well as of punishments, is preserved.

The next passage occurs in verses 29, and 30. of the same chapter. "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be east into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." On this passage it may be observed in general, that if the word *hell* does not mean the place of endless misery in verse 22. it is not in the least probable that this is its meaning here. Our Lord surely would not use it with the same breath in two such different senses, without any intimation of this, and especially in addressing the same persons. But I shall proceed to consider this passage; observing that many of the remarks to be made, apply to several other passages yet to be con-

sidered. The reason of this is obvious. In other passages the very same things are stated, and in almost the very same words. By considering them all here, it will save time and labour, and supersede the necessity of again repeating the same remarks when we come to those other passages.

1st, Then, let us consider what our Lord meant by a right eye, and a right hand. It should be remembered that he was addressing his disciples. All will allow that this language is not to be understood literally. What our Lord meant by this figurative language, is explained in verse 28. and other preceding verses, to be their evil passions and propensities, dear to them as a right eye or hand.

2d, What did our Lord mean by these offending them? It is well known that the word translated offend, signifies to cause to stumble, and is in some places translated a stumbling block. By their right eye or hand offending them, then, must be meant, their unsubdued passions and propensities causing them to stumble and fall from their profession of Christ's name. If these proved a stumbling block, or caused them to offend, they thereby exposed themselves to the punishment of hell fire. It was profitable, therefore, for them to subdue these, or to part with them, though dear to them as members of their bodies, than expose themselves to such a punishment. This, so far, I presume, will be allowed as our Lord's meaning, whatever sense we give the word *Gehenna* or *hell* in this passage. Is it then asked—What does our Lord mean by *Gehenna* or *hell*? I answer, the very same punishment which he threatened the unbelieving Jews with, Matth. xxiii. 33. when he said to them, "how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"—If his disciples indulged their lusts, and proved apostates from their profession, they should be involved in the same dreadful calamities with the rest of the Jewish

nation. Accordingly, he said to his disciples, Matth. xxiv. 13,—“he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved.” If the question is asked,—Saved from what? The context clearly shows, that they should be saved from all the temporal calamities foretold by our Lord, which were to come on that generation. All who did endure to the end of the Jewish state, were saved. M’Knight, in a note on Matth. xxiv. thus writes:—“The people of the church in Jerusalem being ordered by an oracle given to the faithful in that place, by revelation, left the city before the war, and dwelt in a city of Perea, the name of which was Pella.” This oracle, perhaps, was no other than the information our Lord gave his disciples in Matth. xxiv. If they attended to it, they needed no other oracle. But I only notice this, without pretending to decide about it. As to his disciples, the following is very evident. Patient enduring to the end, was not only connected with their temporal safety, but attention to the directions given Matth. xxiv. If one of them, being in the field, returned back to take his clothes, the safety promised might not be obtained. No worldly consideration was to be an apology for a moment’s delay, but with the utmost speed they were to make their escape. When our Lord spoke of the punishment of hell to the unbelieving Jews, he mentioned it as a thing they could not escape. “How *can* ye escape the damnation of hell?” They had nearly filled up the measure of their iniquity, and upon them was to come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth. But when he spoke to the disciples about this punishment, he spoke of it as a thing they might escape, if they attended to the instructions which he gave them. See Matth. xxiv. where he is at great pains in pointing out the course they must pursue, if they would avoid the impending destruction.

We then see a very good reason why our Lord said so much to his disciples about the punishment of hell, and so little to the unbelieving Jews. Allowing that hell does not mean a place of endless misery, but the temporal calamities coming on the Jews, every thing said about it is just what might be expected. But can it ever be rationally and scripturally accounted for, that our Lord should only once mention "the damnation of hell" to the unbelieving Jews, if thereby he meant a punishment in eternal torment? Besides, does not this view rationally and Scripturally account for the very extraordinary fact, that not a word about hell or Gehenna is said to the Gentiles by any of the inspired writers? How is this fact to be accounted for on the common view given of the punishment of Gehenna? If my view be allowed correct, it rationally, and I think Scripturally, accounts for these things. That it does account for them, is some evidence that it is correct.

3d, Let us now consider the language of this passage, and see if it does not confirm these views of the subject. It is said twice,—“and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell or Gehenna.” This language is not in unison with the common ideas entertained of hell. Do we ever hear a preacher tell his audience, that their “whole body shall be cast into hell, or that body and soul shall be cast into it?” No; they allow that the soul only goes there at death, and the body returns to the dust, and not at least until the resurrection, do both go there together. The phrase “thy whole body,” appears to be of the same import with that expressed in another passage by the words “*soul and body*.” We shall show hereafter, that by the word *soul*, is not meant, as is generally believed, the *spirit*, which exists in a separate state from the body, but natural life. See on Matth. x. 28. below. Another thing ought to be noticed, that preachers now only

threaten men with the punishment of hell if they continue in unbelief; but here our Lord threatened his disciples with it if they did not cut off a right hand, and pluck out a right eye; or, in plain language, did not part with every thing dear to them, rather than disobey the Saviour. Besides, he said most about hell to those in least danger of it, and only mentioned it once to those in the greatest danger.—The conduct of preachers in our day, about this, is precisely the reverse of his. All they say of hell is said to the wicked.

By consulting the context of this passage, it will be seen, that there is nothing in it to support the idea, that hell is a place of endless misery. Any evidence it affords, rather goes to prove the view I have given of it. But as a consideration of it, would only lead to similar remarks made already, I pass it over.

The next passage is Matth. xviii. 8, 9. “Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.”—It need hardly be noticed, that the remarks made on the preceding passage about a right hand or eye offending, equally apply here, and need not be repeated. If correct there, they must be so here. The remarks also about Gehenna, are applicable here, and neither need they be repeated. I shall therefore proceed to notice some additional observations which this passage affords us on the subject.

Observe then, that the same phraseology, “to be cast into hell,” occurs in this passage, which occurred in Matth. v. 29, 30. The only difference is, that here, in verse 9, the word *fire* is added, which is there omit-



ted. This word I noticed, in considering Matth. v. 22. was used figuratively to express temporal punishment, and meant the same as the word *damnation*, which also signifies punishment. But this shall be more fully considered presently. Let it be further observed, that in the present passage, the very same idea which in verse 9. is expressed by the phrase, "cast into hell fire," is expressed in verse 8. by the words, "everlasting fire." I think no one will dispute that these two phrases are used as convertible expressions for the very same thing. Should any one be inclined to contend, that the word *everlasting* in the one verse, expresses the additional idea of the *duration* of the punishment, I am not disposed to dispute this. It will soon be seen that my views do not require my engaging in such disputes. All I would say at present about this, is, that before any person contends for the everlasting duration of the punishment of hell, he ought first to settle beyond dispute, that hell is a place of punishment for the wicked in a future state. The place should first be proved to exist, before the everlasting duration of its punishment be brought forward for discussion. If this cannot be done, all debate respecting its everlasting duration, is only beating the air. If it should be said, that "it is the word *everlasting*, applied to the *punishment of hell or Gehenna*, that proves that hell is a place of future misery; for surely no temporal punishment can be everlasting in its duration;" to this I answer,—that it is this very word *everlasting*, being applied to Gehenna or hell fire, that convinces me that hell has no reference to a place of eternal misery for the wicked. Evidence, and I hope satisfactory evidence of this, will appear in the sequel. But to return to the phrase, "everlasting fire," in the passage before us. This expression, I find, occurs only in two other places in the New Testament, Matth. xxv. 41. and Jude 7.

These passages we do not profess to consider here. They are only noticed so far as is necessary for the illustration of the phrase *everlasting fire* in this passage. On this phrase, then, I remark,

1st, That those who have attended to Scripture figures and modes of speaking, know that the word *fire* is a very common figure of speech to express temporal punishment, or God's judgments upon any people. Lest this should be disputed by any one, I refer to the following, among many other texts which might be quoted in proof. See Deut. xxxii. 22—25. Isai. lxvi. 15, 16. and v. 24, 25. and xxx. 27—33. and ix. 18, 19. Isai. x. 16—18. Ezek. xxii. 18—22, 41. See also the two first chapters of Amos. I shall only quote one or two texts to show the truth of this. Thus in Lam. ii. 3. Jeremiah, speaking of God's punishment on the Jews, says,—“he burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about.” And David says, Psalm lxxxix. 46. “shall thy wrath burn like fire?” In further evidence of this, and evidence which will be allowed conclusive, let Matth. xxv. 41. be compared with verse 46. All will allow that what is called *everlasting fire* in the first, and expressed figuratively, is in the last verse expressed plainly without the figure, and called *everlasting punishment*. Indeed, nothing is more evident, than that fire is a common figure in Scripture for temporal punishment. This, I think, will be admitted, whatever may be the meaning of the expression, *everlasting fire*, in any passage where it occurs.

2d, What then is the meaning of the expression, “*everlasting fire*,” and which is equivalent to “*hell fire*?” To save time, and repetition of remark, I shall leave the answer to this question to be given in considering the next passage, where we have for the phrase *everlasting fire* here, the equivalent expression, “the fire that shall never be quenched.”—Before

closing my remarks on this text, let it be noticed, that the phrase, "to enter into life," occurs twice. This is necessary to be observed, because in the next passage I shall have occasion to consider it in connexion with the equivalent expression, "to enter into the kingdom of God." Whoever examines the context of this passage, may see that it affords no evidence that our Lord, by Gehenna, meant a place of endless misery. This sense of Gehenna here, as in other places, is taken for granted. It is assumed with as much confidence, as if the context clearly decided that this and no other could be its meaning. We have settled the sense in which our Lord used this word, in considering Matth. xxiii. 33. and also from its use in the Old Testament. Until it can be shown that he used it to signify a place of endless misery in some other text, this ought to be allowed to be our Lord's general usage of this word. It is certain nothing in this text or its context leads to such a conclusion. It rather affords some evidence in confirmation of the sense we have given it, but we deem it unnecessary to notice it.

Mark ix. 43—49. is the next passage. "And 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 having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; 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." This is the longest and most terrific description given of Gehenna, or hell, in the Bible. No doubt is entertained by most Christians, that it is a

conclusive proof of the doctrine of eternal misery. I once thought so myself, and need not wonder that others should still be of this opinion. I now think, that so far from its teaching this doctrine, it in a very strong manner, confirms the views I have advanced on all the above passages. I must therefore be indulged in a pretty full examination of it, with a view to show this. Several things occur here, which have been considered in preceding passages. For example, we have considered what is meant by cutting off a right hand, and plucking out a right eye. Also, the expression, "to be cast into hell or hell fire." In this passage we have the expression, "to go into hell," once, and "to be cast into hell," twice. All, however, I think, will allow that this is only a slight variation of the words in expressing the same idea. The remarks, therefore, made already on these phrases, need not be here repeated.

Some things omitted on the last text, we shall now attempt to consider in connexion with the same or similar phraseology in this passage. It was noticed there, that the phrase, "to enter into life," occurred twice. I now desire it to be noticed, that the very same phrase occurs also twice in this passage. Observe, however, that as an equivalent expression we have the phrase, "to enter into the kingdom of God." It cannot be doubted that these two expressions convey the same meaning, whatever that meaning may be. This can be easily shown from other places, if it be disputed. It is of great importance to a right understanding of the texts in which these two expressions occur, "to enter into life," or "to enter into the kingdom of God," to ascertain what is their precise meaning. To arrive at this, let it be observed, that when we compare the four gospels, we find that where Mark, Luke and John, for the most part use the phrase, "kingdom of God," Matthew uses the expression, "kingdom of

heaven." See Dr. Campbell's fifth dissertation, where this is shown at length. Indeed, no one can doubt it, who reads the four gospels. To enter into the kingdom of heaven, or into the kingdom of God here, does not mean, as many suppose, to enter into the heavenly state, but to enter into the kingdom, or reign, of the Messiah in the present world. That this is the sense often of the phrases *kingdom of God*, and *kingdom of heaven*, few will question, who have ever read the New Testament. The dissertation just referred to, fully and clearly establishes this. That to *enter* into the kingdom of God or of heaven, signifies to enter into Christ's kingdom, or reign, in this world, I shall now attempt to show. In proof of this, I quote Matth. xviii. 3. where our Lord says, "verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Here entering into the kingdom of heaven, means entering into the reign or kingdom of Christ in this world. Should it be said,—“were not the disciples already in Christ's kingdom in this respect?” I answer no; for in this sense his kingdom was not then come. John, Jesus, and his disciples, only preached this kingdom as coming, or as at hand. Christ's kingdom or reign did not, properly speaking, begin until after his resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of God. Our Lord's words plainly imply that his disciples were not in his kingdom, nor could they afterwards enter it, unless they were converted. Dr. Campbell, on this text, says,—“they must lay aside their ambition and worldly pursuits, before they be honoured to be the members, much more the ministers, of that new establishment or kingdom he was about to erect.” M'Knight, on this passage, takes the same view of it, which I need not quote. Besides, it is evident that in one sense his kingdom did not come until the destruction of Jerusalem. As I think it was

about entering his kingdom at this period our Lord spoke in the passage before us, I notice the following things by way of proof and illustration. Thus in Luke xxi. 31, 32. "so likewise ye, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." It is evident from this passage, that the kingdom of God, in some sense or other, was not to come until the end of the Jewish dispensation. It was at this period to come with power, Mark ix. 1. and comp. Matth. xvi. 28. See Whitby on these texts, who takes the same view of our Lord's kingdom which is here given. But in proof of this view of entering into Christ's kingdom, I shall here quote the following from Dr. Campbell's note on Matth. xix. 28. He says:—"We are accustomed to apply the term *regeneration* solely to the conversion of individuals; whereas its relation here is to the general state of things. As they were wont to denominate *the creation* *γενεσις*, a remarkable restoration, or *renovation* of the face of things, was very suitably termed *παλιγγενεσια*. The return of the Israelites to their own land, after the Babylonish captivity, is so named by Josephus, the Jewish historian. What was said on verse 23. holds equally in regard to the promise we have here. The principal completion will be at the general resurrection, when there will be, in the most important sense, *a renovation*, or *regeneration* of heaven and earth, when all things shall become new; yet in a subordinate sense, it may be said to have been accomplished when God came to visit, in judgment, that guilty land; when the old dispensation was utterly abolished, and succeeded by the Christian dispensation, into which the Gentiles, from every quarter, as well as Jews, were called and admitted."

Let us now apply these remarks to the texts under consideration. To enter into life, or to enter into the kingdom of God, is in the passage before us contrasted with going into, or being cast into hell. As the former does not mean to enter into heaven, the place of the righteous, but into Christ's kingdom, or reign, in this world, so the latter cannot mean, to be cast into a place of endless misery, but to suffer the punishment of which we have seen Gehenna made an emblem. Understanding our Lord, "by entering into life," or "into the kingdom of God," in this way, what he says in this passage to his disciples, was pertinent, and peculiarly suited to their circumstances. It was "better," it was "profitable" for them thus to enter into his kingdom with the loss of every thing dear to them, rather than retaining these, to be cast into hell fire, or to suffer all the dreadful calamities foretold by Jeremiah in the predictions considered above, and described by our Lord, Matth. xxiv. At the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, the unbelieving Jews were to suffer the damnation of hell, and at this period all his disciples who endured to the end, were not only to be saved from this punishment, but were to enter into his kingdom, or reign, with him; and the apostles to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. But such of his professed disciples as did not cut off a right hand and pluck out a right eye, or did not endure to the end, should share in the same calamities, or suffer the punishment of which we have seen Gehenna made an emblem by Jeremiah, and also by our Lord. Whitby, on Luke xxi. 34—36. thus writes:—"Here our Saviour calls upon the believing Christians to take care, and use the greatest vigilance that they do not miscarry in this dreadful season, by reason of that excess and luxury which may render them unmindful of it, or those cares which may render them unwilling to part with their

temporal concerns, lest they should be involved in that ruin which would come on others, as a snare, suddenly and unexpectedly; and that they should add to this vigilance constant prayer to God, that they may be found worthy to escape these tremendous judgments, and might stand safely and boldly before the Son of man, when he comes to execute them on the unbelieving Jews.”

It is easily seen that this passage not only agrees with the preceding texts, but also accounts for the fact why the Saviour should say so much to the disciples concerning hell or Gehenna, and so little to the unbelieving Jews. Besides, it also accounts for the fact which can never be accounted for on the common view of hell, namely, that not a word is said concerning it to the Gentiles. If the punishment of hell be as I have attempted to show, the temporal vengeance which came on the Jewish nation, all is plain, consistent, and rational. But how can it ever be accounted for on rational and Scriptural grounds, that no Gentile was ever threatened with such a punishment? We are sinners of the Gentiles, and are threatened with everlasting punishment in hell by preachers in our day. It becomes them to account for this, seeing they are without any authority either from Christ or his apostles for so doing. If *they* never said a word about hell in their preaching to the Gentiles, from what source of information is it learned that *preachers now* are authorized to teach such a doctrine to them? Are we obliged to receive this implicitly on their *ipse dixit*?

But it perhaps may be said,—“plausible as all this appears, and however difficult it may be to account for those facts, how is your view of the punishment of hell to be reconciled with other things stated in this very passage?” To this I shall now pay attention; and permit me to say, that it is the perfect agreement



of these very things with the view I have given, which confirms me in the opinion that it is substantially correct. Observe, then, that Gehenna, or hell, is called in this passage twice, "the fire that never shall be quenched." See verses 43, 45. Indeed, properly speaking, this expression occurs no less than five times; for it is three times said, by way of addition, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." In my remarks on the last passage, I promised to consider here the phrase, "everlasting fire," in connexion with these expressions. This promise I shall now attempt to fulfil. I need hardly notice that the expressions, "everlasting fire," and the "fire that shall never be quenched," five times mentioned in this passage, express the very same idea. No man, I presume, will dispute this. Who would undertake to point out a difference between "everlasting fire," and the "fire that never shall be quenched?" It would be to make a distinction without a difference. I am fully aware that it may be said, this is rather increasing the difficulty than removing it. I notice these things for the very purpose, that the difficulty may be viewed in all its force and extent. Here then, we have in the course of a few verses, a solemn declaration made by the Saviour, no less than five times, that the fire of hell shall never be quenched, and no less than three times is it added, "where their worm dieth not." And as if this was not enough, in a parallel text it is said that the fire of hell is "everlasting fire." No man can now say but I have presented this description of Gehenna fully and fairly, and in its most formidable array. I allow that all this looks very terrible, and seems as if I must certainly be mistaken in saying that the punishment of hell refers to the temporal vengeance which came on the nation of the Jews. But truly I must say that few things I have yet stated, appear to me so powerful in support of my

views, as what is said in this passage. When these things are fairly examined, and the Scriptures are admitted as the interpreter of the language which is here used, few I think will be found to question this. The things we are about to state, at any period of our lives, would have staggered our faith, that such expressions had any reference to endless misery in a future state of existence. They are such, as on other subjects, would be deemed irresistible evidence. I may just notice in the outset, what I think will be readily admitted, that all the expressions in this passage about *the worm that shall never die*, and *the fire that never shall be quenched*, together with the expressions, *everlasting fire*, being *cast into hell fire*, and *going into hell*, in other texts, all refer to *one and the same punishment*. The same punishment is described, although somewhat different language is used in speaking of it. Keeping these things in view, with the remarks made on the preceding texts, I shall proceed to consider what is stated in the passage before us.

It is, then, said of hell or Gehenna,—“where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Were these words understood *strictly*, and *literally* of a place of *endless misery*, it would prove that there is not only *material fire* there, but that there are also *worms* in hell. Some have maintained, and a few perhaps still maintain, that the fire of hell is a literal fire. It is evident that most orthodox preachers still continue to speak as if the fire of hell was real, literal fire. Why speak about it as such if they do not believe it to be so, unless they intend to practise deception on the people? But we presume no one ever believed that there were *worms* in the place called hell, or eternal misery. If such an opinion was ever held, we are ignorant of it. But why not believe that there are worms in hell as well as literal fire? for if Gehenna signifies a place of endless misery, it teaches *literat*

*fire* and *literal worms* on the same authority? Besides, it is implied that the body is there, for worms to feed on, which they could not do on the spirit. I am fully aware that the worm that shall never die, has been long and universally interpreted to mean *conscience*, which is to torment the subject of it forever. But this is a *private interpretation*; for I do not know of a single text in the Bible, in which *conscience* is ever spoken of under the figure of a *worm*, either in this or a future state of existence. Unless then, something like proof of this is produced from the Bible, such an interpretation cannot be for a moment admitted. It may then be asked,—“what do these words mean?” Let us hear what Mr. Parkhurst says on the words,—“where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” He thus writes on the word Gehenna:—“Our Lord seems to allude to the worms which continually preyed on the dead carcasses that were cast out into the valley of Hinnom, גענון, and to the *perpetual fire* there kept up to consume them. Comp. Eccles. vii. 17. Judith xvi. 17. And see the learned Joseph Mede’s works, fol. p. 31.” Here then is a place where their worm dieth not, and the fire that shall never be quenched; not in a place of eternal misery in a future state, but in the valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem. Let it now be recollected, that the valley of Hinnom was made an emblem of the terrible calamities which were to come on the Jewish nation. No place was so wretched and abominable as the valley of Hinnom, and no place known to a Jew, could be made so fit an emblem of such miseries.

But we have something more to produce, and something which we think ought to be admitted as conclusive, in determining in what sense our Lord’s words ought to be understood in this passage.—It is certain then, that our Lord here quotes Isai. lxvi. 24. where it is said,—“and 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, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."—A remark is made by Mr. Stuart, in his letters to Dr. Channing, p. 69. which very well applies here. He says,—“it will be remembered that the passage in question is a quotation from the Old Testament; and that to quote the language of the Old Testament, therefore, in order to explain it, is peculiarly appropriate and necessary.” Let us see how peculiarly appropriate and necessary this passage from the Old Testament is, in explaining the words of our Lord before us. Suffer me then to ask,—did Isaiah mean a place of endless misery, when he said, “for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched?” Was Isaiah so understood when he uttered these words? I have to ask further, did the Jews so understand these words when they read them in the prophet? Yea, I ask still further, did our Lord’s disciples so understand the prophet’s words when they read them there? Can any or all of these questions, with truth, be answered in the affirmative? As this will not be so much as pretended, how comes it to pass that they are made to mean a place of endless misery when quoted by our Lord? By what rule of interpretation, do we make Isaiah, by these words, only to mean temporal calamities, but when our Lord quotes them, we make them to mean endless misery? I urge this; on what grounds, and by what authority do we make Isaiah and our Lord to have two such different meanings to the same words? Yea, I press it upon all who regard the words of the living God, to think how it was possible that our Lord’s disciples could understand him in this sense, when those very words were understood by them in so very different a sense when they read them in the prophet? It is evident our Lord did not

explain them in this new sense to the disciples, nor gave the slightest hint that he made any alteration in the meaning of the prophet's words by quoting them. Until it is therefore proved, that by these words Isaiah meant a place of future endless misery, I might excuse myself from any further remarks on them. But as they very strongly confirm the views I have given of Gehenna or hell, in the preceding passages, I proceed.

On this passage in the prophet, let it be remarked, that the chapter in which it stands, evidently relates to events which were to take place under the gospel dispensation. The new heavens and new earth, mentioned verse 22. refer to this period, and the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles, is repeatedly spoken of in the course of the chapter. But let us attend to the passage, and go over what is said in it, and if possible ascertain the meaning of the prophet. It is said,—“and they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me.” Let us ask here, who are the men referred to, and who are said to have transgressed against the Lord? I think the context shows them to be the unbelieving, disobedient Jews. Evidence of this will appear as we proceed. Again; let us ask, who shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the Jews who had thus transgressed against the Lord? The preceding verses *show* that they are the persons who *worship* and *obey* the Lord. But again; let us ask, to what place they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men who have transgressed against the Lord? Not surely to a place of endless misery? The connexion of this with the next part of the passage shows that they shall go forth to the place where “their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” If it is said, by way of objection,—“is not this the place of endless misery, and is not this sufficiently obvious

from the words, their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched?" I must answer it is not. We think this can be proved from a variety of evidence, which few, if any, will undertake to dispute. This we shall show presently is not the Scripture meaning of these expressions, but that they refer to temporal punishment and to the punishment of the Jews as a nation. Here I would only ask—do any persons go forth either from this world or from heaven to a place of endless misery, to look upon the carcasses of men who have transgressed against the Lord? Besides, is it not a very strange mode of speaking, to speak of the carcasses of persons in a place of endless misery? But if we understand this place to be tophet, or the valley of Hinnom, all this may be literally and affectingly true. We have seen from the predictions of Jeremiah, that the Lord was to make the city of Jerusalem as tophet, and the carcasses of the Jews were to be meat for the beasts of the earth, and that they should bury in tophet until there should be no place to bury. Besides, we have seen from Josephus, the Jewish historian, that six hundred thousand of the carcasses of the Jews were carried out of the city and left unburied. It is evident then, if those who worshipped and obeyed the Lord, did not go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men who had transgressed against the Lord, it was not for want of opportunity. Suffer me, then; to ask, might not the worshippers of the Lord, or our Lord's disciples, literally go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men who had transgressed against the Lord? Yea, could they avoid seeing them, and looking on them, when they left the city and were saved from the dreadful vengeance of God which came on the unbelieving part of the nation? But it is added, "and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." This all will allow to be said to the same persons, who, in the former part of the passage,

are said to have transgressed against the Lord. It will be allowed that the Jews had transgressed against the Lord in a very great degree. They had crucified the Lord of glory, persecuted the apostles, they pleased not God, and were contrary to all men. In this respect we see that the passage fully applies to them. Let us see how the last part also applies to them. "And they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." The phrase "all flesh," it could be easily shown, is used in Scripture to designate the Gentile nations. As one instance, among others which I might adduce to prove this, it is said,—“all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” Now it is literally true that the Jews then were, and still are, in their descendants, an abhorring unto all the Gentile nations. They have been, and still are, a by-word, and a reproach, and an afflicted people, among all the nations of the earth. How long this is still to continue, God only knows. Sure we are, that the Lord is yet to have mercy upon Israel; they are still beloved for the father's sake. The deliverer is to come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

But let it be noticed, that it is three times said in the passage in Mark, where this passage from the prophet is quoted, “where *their* worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Let the question be asked, “Whose worm shall not die?” We think the answer to this must be looked for in the prophet whose words our Lord quotes. The answer is, the men who have transgressed against the Lord; their worm shall not die, and their fire is not quenched. Should we recur to the context of the passage in Mark for an answer to this question, the only antecedent to the word *their*, is the persons who should offend Christ's little ones, verse 42. This agrees to the answer taken from the prophet; for the Jews were the greatest opposers and persecutors of Christ's disciples.

I have now given a summary view of what I think the prophet meant by these words. If just, it must be allowed that the passage has no reference to a place of punishment in a future state, but to the temporal miseries of the Jews. It is easily seen, then, that as face answereth to face in a glass, so does this passage to all the others we have considered. Yea, may I not with some confidence affirm, that it strongly confirms the views I have advanced about Genenna? Is it then dealing fairly by our Saviour's words in this passage to say, that when he quoted them from the prophet, he changed the meaning of them from temporal punishment to that of eternal misery? I ask, is this at all probable, or is this the usual mode of our Lord and his apostles, to put such a different sense on the passages which they quote from the Old Testament? No honest minded man, who has ever read the New Testament with attention, will assert that this is their practice. But allowing the disciples acquainted with the words of the prophet, as no doubt they were, and supposing them to understand them as I have done, it is obvious that nothing could be said more suitable to the disciples. It was indeed profitable for them 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; or, in plain language, to perish with the rest of the Jews, in the destruction that was to come on them in that generation.

But it is likely to be said, by way of objection—How, with any consistency, can it be said that this punishment of the Jews was to be a *fire that shall never be quenched*, and in the preceding text is expressly called "*everlasting fire*?" To this I shall now pay attention. As this mode of speaking, or rather as these modes of speaking, may be considered as unfavourable to my views, I shall give them all due attention.



I approach this part of the passage with great satisfaction, because what is considered the most weighty objection against my views, will, upon examination, be found the strongest confirmation of them. If I cannot show that this very temporal punishment of the Jews, to which I have referred hell or Gehenna, is called everlasting fire, or punishment; or a fire that shall never be quenched, then let all I have said fall to the ground. When it is said, however, to be everlasting, or a fire that shall never be quenched, I mean that these expressions be understood by us in the sense in which they are used in the Old Testament, and understood by the Jews. All I ask is, that the Scriptures be admitted as the interpreter of the meaning and extent of this language. This no reasonable man will certainly be disposed to deny me. This preliminary then being mutually understood and agreed on, I proceed.

It has been shown above, that the word *fire*, is a figurative mode of expressing punishment. This we think has been proved by an appeal to the Scriptures, which will not be gainsayed. All I have then to do here, is to show that when the word *everlasting*, or *perpetual* is applied to the word *fire*, or *punishment*; or when a *fire that shall never be quenched*, is spoken of, in reference to the Jews, endless duration is not meant. Let us then attend to the Scriptures respecting this. In Isai. i. 31. we read of a fire that "none shall quench." In the same book, chap. xxxiv. 8—11. we read of a fire that "shall not be quenched, night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever." We hardly think any sensible person who ever read these passages, ever supposed that the fire mentioned was to be of endless duration. In the last, the *forever* mentioned, is explained by the prophet thus,—“from generation to generation it shall lie waste.” But what we are chiefly concerned with, is

this ; are the *Jews* ever threatened with *everlasting fire* or *punishment*, or with a *fire that shall never be quenched* ? That they are, is too obvious from the following texts to be denied. Thus in Jer. vii. 20. it is said—" thus saith the Lord God ; behold my anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground : and it *shall burn, and shall not be quenched.*" I would only observe on this passage, that here is a fire that shall not be quenched mentioned, it is threatened to the Jews, and it is introduced in the very same chapter in which we have seen that this prophet made tophet, or Gehenna, an emblem of the temporal punishment, which God was to inflict on this people. But again ; I quote Jer. xvii. 27.—“ But if ye will not hearken unto me, to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day : then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, *and it shall not be quenched.*” No one can doubt, that this also was spoken of the Jews, and of temporal punishment. Any one who wishes to see similar language in other passages may consult the following places. See Jer. iv. 4. and xxi. 12. and Ezek. xx. 47, 48. It is put beyond all doubt, that in the above quoted texts, punishment is threatened the Jews under the figure of a fire that shall not be quenched. That this punishment referred to the punishment inflicted on the Jews in the destruction of their city and temple, there can be as little doubt. But I ask—did any man in his senses ever think, in reading the above passages, that this punishment extended to a future state, and was of eternal duration ? No ; I presume the most simple and ignorant person that ever read the Bible, never put such a construction upon them. Well, give me leave to ask, why the very same or similar language used by our Lord,

should be thought to mean punishment of endless duration?

But perhaps it may be objected, that in all these texts, nothing is said about an “*everlasting fire*.” I do not affirm that there is; but it has been observed above, and the correctness of the remark will not be disputed, that “*everlasting fire*,” and “*the fire that never shall be quenched*,” mean precisely the same thing. But I am desirous that every objection should be removed, and shall now introduce the following passages. In Isai. xxxiii. 14. it is said; “*the sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*” I am aware, that this passage is often quoted to prove the everlasting duration of future punishment, but in opposition to the scope of the context. All who candidly examine it, I think must see, that the everlasting burnings mentioned, refer not to punishment in a future state, but to temporal punishment. As such a different view has been taken of this text by some, it will be necessary for me to point out the meaning of the prophet, and show, that it refers to the temporal punishment of the Jews, or the damnation of Gehenna. This I shall do as briefly as possible.

1st, By considering the scope of the preceding chapter, in connexion with the one in which these words are found, the gospel dispensation, or the days of the Messiah are referred to. See the context.

2d, In the passage it is sufficiently manifest, that the *Jews* and the *hypocritical, wicked Jews* are the persons spoken of in it. They are termed *sinners*, and *sinners in Zion*, and *hypocrites*. This forcibly calls to mind the expressions so often used by our Lord Matth. xxiii. “*wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.*” Let it be noticed, that what is called

sinner in Zion in the first part of the sentence, according to the Jewish parallelism, is termed hypocrites in the second; and their being afraid, in the first, answers to fearfulness seizing them, in the last. No doubt can be entertained that of the Jews the prophet was speaking.

3d, Let us consider what kind of punishment the prophet, in this passage, is speaking about? It is not doubted that he does speak of punishment, for it is here alleged that he is speaking of future eternal punishment. But from what in the passage is this learned? It is learned, we presume, by those who take this view of the text, 1st, From the words *fire* and *burnings* being used. But we have shown above, that the word *fire*, is only a figure used in Scripture to describe temporal punishment, and is used to describe the temporal vengeance which came on the Jews, at the destruction of their city and temple. This we think is placed beyond all fair debate. 2d, We presume eternal misery is supposed to be taught in this passage also, from the word *everlasting* being applied to the word *burnings*. But that the word *everlasting* is applied to temporal punishment, and to this very temporal punishment of the Jews, is also beyond a doubt. This has been partly seen already, and we shall see it plainly stated in the next passage. When in the passage before us it is said, "who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" It is just expressing, under another figure, what is expressed in the following texts: "how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" "who hath warned you to flee from the impending vengeance or wrath to come?" That both referred to the same period we think may be seen from the context. See verses 11, 12, 18, 19. Something, then, must be discovered in this text more than the words *fire*, *burnings*, and *everlasting*, to prove that eternal

misery in a future state is taught in it. Indeed we think had attention been paid to the figurative use of the word *fire* in the Old Testament, and the way in which the word *everlasting* is often used there, much perversion of the oracles of God might have been avoided. In confirmation of the view I have given of this passage, I may add the following. As in the passage, the condition of the unbelieving part of the Jewish nation is referred to at the destruction of their city and temple, so in the context the condition of our Lord's disciples is described. See verses 15—17. From verse 20. to the end of the chapter, the peace and prosperity of the Christian church is described. We have said enough to show that this passage does not teach the doctrine of endless punishment in a future state. We have also given what we conceive to be the general meaning of the prophet. Should we be mistaken as to its true sense, yet we think the other never can be proved from it. But as we do not wish to depend on any text of doubtful meaning in support of our views, we shall introduce the following, about which there can be no dispute.

The passage I refer to, is Jer. xxiii. 39, 40. "Therefore behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence. And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten." This passage affords no room for debate. The Jews are the persons spoken about: the punishment threatened, all will allow, is of a temporal nature: that it refers to the punishment which came on the Jews at the destruction of their city and temple, will not be doubted: and that it is said to be perpetual and everlasting, is in as many words declared. I may just notice, that the word *perpetual*, in this last passage, is the same in the original as the word *everlasting*, and

is the same word which is translated everlasting, perpetual, and forever, in other passages. After attending to these texts we think it will no longer be doubted, that the temporal vengeance which came on the Jews at the destruction of their city at temple, is called *everlasting*, and also is described under the figure of *fire*. But did the Jews understand the words everlasting or perpetual to mean, in these texts, endless duration? We presume this will not be affirmed. It may be asked, and it is a very proper question to ask,—How comes it to pass, that this punishment of the Jews, of a temporal nature, is described as *everlasting*, *perpetual*, as *everlasting fire*, and *a fire that never shall be quenched*? To this I answer, that any one who has examined the Scriptures on the subject, knows, that *olm*, of the Hebrew, *aion*, and *aionion*, of the Greek, are often used to express limited duration. They are often used to express a shorter or longer period of time, as the subjects to which they are applied require. I might illustrate this by many examples, if it were necessary. But having fully considered this in the separate Inquiry, referred to above, I forbear introducing the evidence of it here. The recollections of every man who has read the Old Testament, are sufficient, in the present case, to exonerate me from the charge of saying any thing but the truth. But further, in answer to the above question, I would say, that the above punishment of the Jews, may be called perpetual, or everlasting, in the Jewish sense of those words; for it is the longest punishment they ever endured as a people. It began at the destruction of their city and temple, and has already continued for nearly eighteen hundred years. How long it is yet to continue, no man, I presume, can, with any certainty say. But it is to end. It is not to be everlasting in the common sense we attach to this word. The Jews as a nation often suffered punishment at the

hand of God for their sins. The longest punishment they ever endured before this, was their seventy years' captivity in Babylon. But neither it, nor any other, is ever called everlasting, or perpetual, as the one they are now enduring. That it is called everlasting in the Old Testament, is indisputable. That this everlasting is not endless duration, we presume all will allow. We would then beg leave to ask why the word everlasting, used by our Lord in the New, must mean endless duration, when he applies it to the same people and the same temporal punishment of that people? I appeal to every candid man if this is not a very arbitrary mode of interpreting the language of the Bible?

I have one thing more to observe, and I trust it will be seriously considered. It is this. We find everlasting applied to punishment, and to temporal punishment, when no one will contend that endless duration can be meant by the sacred writers. Now, admitting that we should be able to find in Scripture the word *everlasting* applied to punishment in a future state of existence, still it would be a question if in this case it was not also used in a limited sense, as when applied to punishment in this world. But I demand of those who hold to the doctrine of eternal punishment, to produce a single text in which the word everlasting is applied to punishment in a future state of existence. I seriously request all who hold to this doctrine, candidly to examine this subject. If there be a single text in the Bible in which such a doctrine is taught, I shall feel somewhat ashamed if I have been so careless as to overlook it. I am aware that there are some texts in which such a thing is said to be taught, and the one we have been considering is of that number. We think we have shown that this is not its meaning. All the others in which the word everlast-

ing is applied to punishment, we have considered, and we think can show that they teach no such doctrine.

The Jews who fell in the siege of Jerusalem, and the Jews scattered yet among all nations, suffering the predicted punishment of their own prophets, may with equal propriety as the Sodomites, be said to be set forth as an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Their punishment is called everlasting, it is described under the figure of fire, and they are certainly an example to all nations of the direful effects of rejecting the Saviour and persisting in unbelief of mind. But the veil shall be taken from their hearts, and they shall look yet on him whom their fathers pierced and shall mourn. They are cut off, and have been so for eighteen hundred years, but they are not cast off forever. God has not forgotten his covenant, but will yet have mercy upon them. They have been an ill treated people among the Gentile nations. No wonder that they continue to reject Christ, considering the sufferings they have endured from those professing the Christian name. One should think, that every Christian's heart would glow with affection to a Jew, considering, that through this people God has been pleased to impart to us the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament.

But to return from this digression: Should the context of the passage on which we are remarking be examined, it will be seen that it affords no evidence, showing that Gehenna means a place of endless misery for the wicked. We think, if it were necessary, we could glean a few remarks from it in confirmation of what we have advanced. But this we shall pass over, and especially as the difficult nature of the two last verses of the chapter, would require an extension of remark, aside from our present investigation.

There is one objection, which may have occurred to the minds of some from what has been stated on



this passage, taken in connexion with what is said on others, of which I shall take some notice here. The objection is this.—“ You have made the damnation of hell to mean the temporal punishment which came on the Jews in the destruction of their city and temple and yet in this passage you extend this punishment to that which the Jews are yet suffering.” In reply to this, a remark or two will be sufficient. It is true that the valley of Hinnom, or rather tophet, a particular part of that valley, was made an emblem of the temporal vengeance which came on the Jews at the destruction of their city and temple. The prophet Jeremiah as we have seen, said that the Lord would make the city of Jerusalem *as tophet*, &c. But observe further, that this punishment was not to end when their city and temple were destroyed. They were then led away captive into all nations, and as we have also seen, God was to make them an everlasting reproach and a perpetual shame. Though the damnation of hell therefore came on the generation of the Jews to whom our Lord addressed himself, yet it is evident from the Scriptures, and also from the fact that the descendants of that generation were to suffer a punishment, which in Old Testament language is called everlasting or perpetual. We are far from thinking that the present punishment of the Jews includes no more in it than banishment from their land, and the cruelties they have been called to suffer among the Gentile nations. Their spiritual miseries in being cast out from the presence of the Lord, are the worst part of their punishment. This could be easily shown. We think also we could show that though the Gentiles are never threatened with the damnation of hell, or that punishment which came on the Jews, in the destruction of their city and temple, yet many of the Gentile nations are partakers of the same punishment of a spiritual nature, which the Jews

at present are enduring. But this is not the place for entering into details about these things.—I shall close my remarks on this passage with the following observations.

1st, As the prophets spoke of the temporal punishment of the Jews as an everlasting fire, or a fire that shall never be quenched, is it surprising that our Lord should use the same or similar language about it, in the passage we have been considering? We should rather wonder if he had not; and especially as we see that he quoted what the prophet Isaiah had said respecting it. I ask, how in this case he could avoid using the same or similar language?

2d, If the temporal punishment of the Jews is in the Old Testament called *perpetual* and *everlasting*, and yet is to end, why ought the same language, borrowed by the New Testament writers from the Old, and used in speaking of the same people and the same punishment, be interpreted of endless duration? The Jews could not have understood such language or forms of speech in this way. I ask why should we do it? We have been accustomed to attach the idea of endless duration to the word *everlasting*, and that without consulting what sense the Old Testament writers attached to it. But if we would understand the Scriptures aright, we must throw ourselves back to the time in which they were written, and as far as possible enter into the views, and feelings, and habits, of the people to whom they were written, and get acquainted with their modes of speaking, and the meaning and extent of the language they used.

3d, The language of the Old Testament was familiar to the New Testament writers. The meaning and extent of various words and forms of speech they perfectly understood. Without a similar acquaintance with the Old Testament, it is impossible for us ever correctly to understand the New. The reason

is obvious. The New Testament writers are constantly using phraseology borrowed from the Old. This is often done when no formal quotation is made. They spoke in the words which the Holy Spirit taught in the Old. They clothe their ideas in its language. To the Old we must then have constant recourse for the true meaning of it. In short, the Old Testament is the dictionary of the language of the New. Some proof has been given of this already, and more will be afforded in the course of our present investigation.

Matth. x. 28. is the next passage which comes to be considered. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," (Gehenna.) I shall here quote the parallel text in Luke xii. 4, 5. and consider them together. "And I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more 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, (Gehenna;) yea, I say unto you, fear him." It is easily seen that these two texts relate the same discourse, and the remarks to be made apply to both. What is said here was addressed by our Lord to his disciples. Jesus calls them his friends, and the contexts clearly show that what our Lord here spoke, had a particular reference to the circumstances in which his disciples were soon to be placed. These two passages are supposed, however, to present a difficulty to my views of Gehenna, which demands consideration. The difficulty stands thus:—"If Gehenna does not mean a place of future misery for the wicked, why is it said that the power of man extends only to killing the body, and after that he hath no more that he can do; but that after God hath killed the body, he hath power to cast into hell or Gehenna?" Before we proceed to make any remarks on

these two passages, directly to meet this difficulty, let us compare them.

Notice, then, that in both, the disciples are dissuaded from the *fear of man*; and the *fear of God* is strongly inculcated upon them. This was done in anticipation of the trials they were to endure for Jesus' namesake. "I will *forewarn* you whom ye shall fear." Notice further, that the power of man, whom they were not to fear, extended only to killing the body. Matthew expresses it thus: "fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Luke thus expresses it: "be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." Observe again, that what Matthew calls, in the first part of the verse, to "kill the body," and to "kill the soul," in the last part he expresses thus: "to destroy both soul and body."—Man can kill the *body*, but he is not able to kill or destroy the *soul*, but God is able to *destroy both soul and body in hell*; or, as Luke expresses it,—"*after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell or Gehenna.*" Notice again, that Matthew makes a distinction between soul and body, whereas Luke does not. He only mentions the body. It seems that all that Matthew meant by *soul and body*, Luke considered as sufficiently expressed by simply mentioning the *body*. Had the word *soul* in Matthew been used to express the *immortal part of man*, there is certainly a deficiency in Luke's language, in relating this discourse of our Lord. But if he by merely mentioning the body, correctly and fully stated what our Lord meant, we ought not to consider the word *soul*, used by Matthew, as meaning the immortal *spirit*. We shall presently attempt to show that the word *nephish*, of the Hebrew, and the corresponding word, *psuhe*, of the Greek, here translated *soul*, are both often used to express mere natural or animal life. They are used to express the life of beasts, as well as of

men. *Nephish*, in the Old Testament, as any one may see by consulting an English concordance on the words life and soul, occurs in innumerable instances where it can mean nothing else but natural life. These two words are the common rendering of *nephish*. The same remark applies to *psuhe*, also rendered life and soul in the New Testament. That the word *nephish*, translated *life* and *soul* in the Old Testament, as *psuhe* is also in the New, are sometimes used *expletively* by the sacred writers, is obvious from the following quotation from Pilkington's remarks, p. 94:—"For the same reason נַפְשׁ should not always be translated *soul*, though the word *soul*, by the use of it in the translation of the Bible, hath acquired nearly the same latitude with נַפְשׁ in the Hebrew; which is sometimes used *expletively*, sometimes means life, sometimes the whole man, and sometimes is applied to the irrational part of the creation. A few instances of which will be sufficient to show the impropriety of the translation, where the word *soul* is mentioned in several passages, in which no correct writer would now make use of it. Gen. xii. 13. my *soul* shall live because of thee: xix. 20. let me escape thither, and my *soul* shall live. Exod. xii. 16. save that which every *soul* must eat. Lev. v. 2. if a *soul* touch any unclean thing: xx. 11. if the priest buy a *soul* with his money. Numb. xi. 6. but now our *soul* is dried away: xxxi. 28. one *soul* of five hundred, both of the men, and of the beeves, and of the asses, and of the sheep. Psalm lvii. 4. my *soul* is among lions: cvi. 15. he sent leanness into their *soul*.—The writers of the New Testament also, finding ψυχη to be the general translation of נַפְשׁ, have used that word both for life and person; and therefore it is sometimes improperly rendered, a soul: and when ψυχη is, in some places, used to signify life, the writers are best justified in their expressions, by imputing it to their knowledge of the gen-

eral import of the Hebrew word. Matth. ii. 20. they are dead which sought the young child's *life*; vii. 25. take no thought for your *life*. Luke xii. 23. the *life* is more than meat. John x. 15. I lay down my *life* for my sheep. Rom. xiii. 1. let every *soul* be subject to the higher powers. Acts iii. 23. every *soul* that will not hear that prophet. 1 Peter iii. 20. eight *souls* were saved out of the water.

“And, as *soul* is used expletively, so is *body* also, in several passages of the New Testament; as Rom. vi. 6. that the *body* of sin may be destroyed: vii. 4. ye are dead to the law by the *body* of Christ: vii. 24. who shall deliver me from the *body* of this death; or from this *body* of death? Col. ii. 11. in putting off the *body* of the sins of the flesh. And it may be said that *body* is here a figurative expression; yet the metaphor is so obscure, as not readily to convey any clear idea to us.”

That the word *soul* is used *expletively* by Matthew in the relation he here gives of our Lord's discourse, seems pretty evident from its being omitted by Luke in *his* account. It is evident that he did not consider it necessary to mention the soul in relating what Matthew did, but considered our Lord's meaning sufficiently expressed without it. If this be true, no difficulty can arise to my views from the use of the word *soul*, as distinguished from the *body* by Matthew in this passage. If it is used expletively, or is a mere Hebrew idiom, and has no reference to the immortal part of man, what argument can be drawn from it to prove that the passages teach eternal punishment in hell or Gehenna? We think before any thing like this is attempted to be drawn from them, it should be satisfactorily shown that Gehenna means a place of endless misery for the wicked. But what renders it still more probable that the word *soul* is a mere *expletive* in the above passage, is, that though the New Tes-

tament is written in Greek, yet the idiom of it is Hebrew. Concerning this, Dr. Campbell's first dissertation ought to be consulted. In his second, referring to the first, he says:—"But whoever would argue in this manner, must have forgotten what has been fully evinced in the former dissertation, that though the words, the inflection, and the construction in the books of the New Testament are Greek, the idiom is strictly Hebraical." That the distinction between soul and body in Matthew, is a Hebrew idiom, is confirmed from the consideration that it is Matthew, and not Luke, who uses this distinction in his account. He is thought generally to have written his gospel originally in Hebrew, and consequently his gospel must partake more of the Hebrew idiom than Luke's.—That the word soul is used expletively in the Old Testament, is evident from the above quotation. It is also evident that in the New the word soul simply means *person*, and that both *soul* and *body* are by the New Testament writers sometimes used expletively. That this is the case with the word soul in the passage before us, is strongly confirmed from comparing Matthew and Luke a little further. What Matthew expresses by the words, "to destroy both soul and body in hell," Luke thus expresses,—“hath power to cast into hell.” Here Luke considered himself as expressing all our Lord meant, and also all that Matthew expresses by the words,—“to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Besides, every one must perceive the similarity, or rather the sameness of the phrase, “cast into hell,” to phraseology used in some of the preceding passages which have been considered. See Mark ix. 45, 47.

But it may be thought that the distinction between soul and body made in this passage, ought to be particularly noticed, as it seems not to agree with the views I have advanced about the punishment of Ge-

henna or hell. This we intend now to do, and would observe, that allowing all the remarks already made on these two texts to pass for nothing, we shall proceed to show that they are not only in accordance with the views advanced on the above passages, but are additional confirmation of them. Allowing that there is no Hebrew idiom in the case, let us see what can be fairly made out from these two texts in favour of the doctrine of eternal misery in Gehenna. By the body, then, is universally understood the fleshy, corruptible part of man, which, after death, returns to dust, from whence it originated. This we think cannot be questioned. By the soul, in distinction from the body, is almost as generally understood the spirit, or that part of man which survives the body, and at death goes either to heaven or hell, to be happy or miserable forever. In this mistaken view of the word *soul*, originates the apparent difficulty in these two passages.—Let us now proceed to a few additional remarks, with a view to obviate the difficulty arising from its being said that man has only power to kill the body, but is not able to kill the soul; but that God is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

1st, It may just be observed, that it is not said God would do this; it is only said he is *able* to do it. It is said he “is *able* to destroy both soul and body in hell;” and that “he hath *power* to cast into hell.” Power or ability to do this is one thing, *actually* to do it is another. I merely notice this for the following reason. Admitting it was true that Gehenna was a place of eternal misery, and the soul here means the immortal spirit, yet nothing positive about eternal misery could be fairly made out from this passage. The doctrine is rather our own inference, than any positive declaration.

2d, Were we to interpret the words *kill* and *destroy* in a strict sense, these texts would prove total anni-



hilation. To *kill the soul*, and to *destroy the soul*, intimates as certainly *the death of the soul*, as to *kill the body*, or *destroy the body*, intimates the extinction of the life of the body. If by the word *soul* we understand the spirit, or immortal part of man, and if here God positively declares that he will kill the soul, we think the doctrine of annihilation is clearly established. Understanding Gehenna to mean a place of endless misery, it would follow that the disciples are threatened with annihilation in Gehenna, and the unbelieving Jews with endless misery in it, Matth. xxiii. 33. But can any man believe this?

3d, The cause of the difficulty which these texts present, arises from the sense we attach to the word *soul*, which is understood to mean the immortal part or spirit, which is to exist in a separate state from the body, yea, after the body returns to dust. But this we think is a great mistake. The original word here for soul, is not *pneuma*, but *psuhe*. This word, as is easily shown, is used in instances out of number for the mere natural life. In proof of this, I shall quote the following from Whitby:—on Acts ii. he thus writes: “Verses 26, 27. ‘my flesh shall rest in hope;’ ‘that thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.’ That is, saith Dr. Hammond, ‘I am confident that though I die, yet shalt thou not leave me so long dead, as that my body shall be putrefied; or thou wilt not leave my life in the grave, or in the state of death.’ In a word, this phrase is by St. Peter interpreted of our Lord’s resurrection; for so he speaks, ‘Him whom you by wicked hands have slain, God hath raised up, loosing the bands of death,’ verse 23, 24. ‘for David saith of him, thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,’ *i. e.* my life in the grave; and it is opposed to David’s continuing in the grave, and in the state of death, thus, *David is both dead and buried, and his body lies*

still in the sepulchre ; he therefore could not say this of himself ; but *being a prophet*, and so foreseeing that God would raise up Jesus from the dead, he said this of the resurrection of Christ, *thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, or my life in the grave.*"\*

What we have made the above quotation chiefly for, is to show that the word *psuhe*, or *soul*, goes to Hades, or the grave, as well as the body. The Saviour's *soul* was not left there. Or rather, is not the word *soul* used here for the person of our Lord, and the meaning simply is, that *he* was not left in the state of the dead? At any rate, it had no reference to his *spirit*, which he commended into the hands of his Father. Does not this confirm what has been stated already, that the phrase *soul and body* spoken of in this passage, is a mere Hebrew idiom? Or that *soul* is used as an expletive? If it is not, let it be shown that the *soul* is the same as *spirit*, or the immortal part of man, and that body and spirit both go to Hades. If the *psuhe*, soul, is said to go to the grave, and to be left there, if the person is not raised again from the dead, why may it not with as much propriety be said, that it is cast into or destroyed in Gehenna? It has no reference to the spirit, or immortal part, unless we believe that the *spirit* goes to the grave at death, and is left there until, with the body, it is again raised from the dead.—That a distinction is made between the *psuhe*, soul or life, and the *pneuma*, *spirit*, we shall now proceed to show.

Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, chap. iv. 12. makes a distinction between *psuhe* and *pneuma*, or soul and spirit, "dividing asunder of soul and spirit." And in 1 Thess. v. 23. says,—“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly : and I pray God your whole spirit (*pneuma*) and soul, (*psuhe*) and body, (so-

\* See Whitby's note on Acts ii. 26, 27.

ma) be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here is a distinction not only between the body and soul, or natural life, but between both these, and the spirit, or immortal part. When Stephen prayed,—“Lord Jesus receive my spirit,” he did not pray,—“Lord Jesus receive my (*psuhe*) soul,” but “Lord Jesus receive my (*pneuma*) spirit.” When Jesus said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,” it was not his *psuhe*, (soul) but his *pneuma*, (spirit) which he commended into the hands of his Father. See Luke xxiii. 46. And when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, it was not his (*psuhe*) soul, but his (*pneuma*) spirit, he yielded up. John xix. 30. Matth. xxvii. 50. Besides, believers are not said to be come to the (*pshuhai*) souls of just men made perfect, but are said to be come to the (*pneumasi*) spirits of just men made perfect. Heb. xii. 23. For more examples, see 1 Peter iii. 19. Luke viii. 55. and xxiv. 37, 39. and 1 Cor. v. 5.—That a distinction between soul, body and spirit is made in Scripture, is too obvious from these passages to be denied. Concerning this distinction, see Whitby on 1 Thess. v. 23.

But that (*psuhe*) soul, in the passage before us, means the natural life, I shall illustrate by an instance or two in point, from the very context of the passages before us. Thus in Matth. x. 39. it is said, “he that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.” Here the word for life is *psuhe*, as in the passages we are considering. See also Luke xii. 19, 20. Had this word been translated soul instead of life in the last quoted text, it would have read thus:—“He that findeth his soul shall lose it: and he that loseth his soul for my sake, shall find it.” Could this be said of the immortal spirit? This no one will assert. This text, then, not only shows what *psuhe*, *life*, or *soul*, means, but it ex-

plains the texts on which we are remarking. They then read thus :—“ Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the life : but rather fear him who is able to destroy both life and body in hell.” But it may be said, is not killing the body killing the life ? To this I answer, in one sense it is, and in another it is not. It is killing or destroying the life from this present world. This men may and can do. But their power reaches no further than this. Men may kill the body, but they cannot kill the life, so as to prevent its reanimating the body ; but God can not only kill the body, but prevent its ever again living. God’s power reaches to this ; for he is able to destroy the life, or in other words, prevent the person from living again.

But to illustrate this still further, it ought to be duly considered, if in Scripture the *psuhe* or life, is ever spoken about as existing separate from the body. That *pneuma*, *spirit*, is thus spoken of we think is obvious from the above texts. But we do not find *psuhe* so mentioned, but the contrary. This we have seen from the quotation from Whitby on Acts ii. 27. “ Thou wilt not leave my soul (*psuhe*) in hell.” Here his life or soul is considered as along with his body in Hades or the grave. But observe, that his *pneuma*, *spirit*, which he commended into the hands of his father, is never said to be in Hades or in the grave. This is not said of him, nor of any other person. It is easily seen, then, that there is nothing more strange in speaking of both life and body being destroyed in hell or Gehenna, than there is in saying that our Lord’s life or soul was not left in Hades or the state of the dead. By his soul not being left there is evidently meant that he did not continue dead, but on the third day lived again. So in the passage under consideration, God is said to be able to destroy both body and soul in Gehenna or hell, or to prevent the persons from

ever living again. This men could not do; they could only kill the body. The Jews killed the body of our Lord by crucifying him. Had God not raised him from the dead, his soul or life would have been killed. But God raised him from the dead, and consequently his soul was not killed or left in Hades. Now, in the passages before us, where God is said to be able to destroy or kill the soul, after he hath destroyed the body, its continuance in this state is all that seems to be meant: for the persons are not spoken of as existing or suffering after this in soul or body in any place. On the contrary, soul and body are not said to be *destroyed* in Gehenna. But God is only said to be *able* or to have power to do this. It is evident then, that by soul and body, nothing more is meant than what is expressed in some of the other passages, by the phrase "*whole body.*" Besides, we think it will be admitted that the punishment here mentioned is nothing more than what we have seen mentioned in the other passages already considered.

We have now one remark to make, and we deem it conclusive on this subject. Supposing then that Gehenna, in the passages under consideration, does mean the place of endless misery. Let this be considered, for argument's sake, a truth: yea, let it also be granted that the punishment of this place is of endless duration, I ask what follows from these passages? It only follows that the body, or if you please, body and soul, or the life, are destroyed there. It does not follow that the *pneuma*, *spirit*, or immortal part, has any concern in this punishment. No; for we have seen them expressly distinguished; and in these passages not a word is said about its being in Gehenna, or punished there. No: nothing like this is to be found in the Bible. We read there of *nephish*, *psuhe*, *soul*, or *life*, going to Sheol or Hades, and hear of its being destroyed in Gehenna; but do we ever

read of the *pneuma, spirit* being in any of those places? No; at death, it returns to God, who gave it. So far from the *pneuma, spirit*, being tormented, killed, or destroyed in Gehenna, or any of those places, it is never represented as being in them at all. We call on any man to produce an instance from Scripture where it is ever said the *pneuma, spirit*, is in Gehenna, or killed or destroyed in Gehenna. Though nothing like this is to be found in the sacred writings, yet people, from the passage we are considering, conclude that the immortal spirit of man is to be killed or destroyed in Gehenna. Even in the parable of the rich man, it is not said his *pneuma, spirit*, was there, or tormented in Hades. No such representations are given in the Bible, either about Hades or Gehenna. But ought not such representations to be found there, if the common belief be the doctrine of Scripture? It certainly is the common opinion that the spirits of the wicked go to hell, at death. But from what part of the Scriptures do we learn this? If evidence of such a doctrine is to be found there, let it be produced.

In confirmation of all the above remarks, it may be noticed, that the more those texts and their contexts are considered, Gehenna in them will appear to have the same sense which it has in other places. Indeed, it would be surprising if in this solitary instance it should mean a place of eternal misery, and in all the others only temporal punishment; that it should be used in this sense when addressing the disciples, and that our Lord should never have used it so when he addressed the unbelieving Jews. If it means this in these two passages, it would be in the face of facts, and other texts, altogether irreconcilable with it. The language, we see, agrees with other passages already considered, where it is said, "and not that thy *whole body* should be cast into hell." See Matth. v. 29, 30.

The language of these passages does not accord with common belief; for it is believed that the soul only goes to Gehenna, or the place of endless misery, at death, and the body suffers not its punishment until the resurrection. But if soul means the spirit, or immortal part, and Gehenna means a place of endless misery, it is a plain case, that, soul and body being destroyed, or the whole body being cast into hell, both go there together. And if killed or destroyed, are they not annihilated?

But we think, if the contexts of these two passages are examined, and the occasion of what is said to the disciples considered, it very strongly confirms the view taken of them. It also confirms all that is said of Gehenna in other passages. Let us glance at this for a moment. By comparing Matth. x. and xxiv. all may see that many things stated are similar, or rather the same. No man can read them without seeing this. The sufferings the disciples were to endure, are similar. The sources from whence they should arise, are the same; and the directions given to them, how they should conduct themselves under them, are similar. But there is one thing mentioned in both, which deserves particular notice. It is said in Matth. x. 22. and xxiv. 13.—“but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.” What end is meant in both passages? Evidently the end of the Jewish dispensation, or state, when all the tribulations mentioned, Matth. xxiv. should come on the Jewish nation. This evidently shows that in both chapters our Lord's discourse related to the same time and events. During the period which was to elapse before this end should come, the disciples were to be employed in publishing the gospel. In the two passages before us, our Lord warns them against the fear of man, and the fear of God is enforced on them in view of their labours and sufferings. See Matth. x. 26, 27. Luke xii.

1—3. He assures them of the protecting care of God, if they feared him, Matth. x. 29, 31. Luke xii. 6. The sufferings they were to endure would prove them, whether they feared God or man. Matth. x. 31—39. Luke xii. 8, 9. Should any one of them, being influenced by the fear of man, apostatize from the faith of Christ, seeking thereby to save his life, (*psuho*) he should lose it. They should, with the rest of the Jewish nation, be involved in all the miseries coming on that generation. On the contrary, he that did endure to the end, should be saved from them, as we have seen that they were; for all the disciples left the city, and were saved. We have seen that Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom, was made by the prophet Jeremiah an emblem of this very punishment coming on the Jewish nation. We see then, that in this passage, as well as in the preceding texts, that it is when our Lord was speaking in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, that he says any thing about the punishment of Gehenna. Can it be accounted for, why our Lord never spoke of Gehenna or hell when preaching the gospel, but always in discourses which had a reference to the calamities at the end of the Jewish state? Besides, all he did say about hell, was chiefly spoken to his disciples, and neither by him nor any other inspired person, is a word said about it to the Gentiles.\*

These are now all the passages where our Lord says any thing about hell or Gehenna. It must, I think, be allowed, that the views I have stated, are supported by facts, by the context of the places where Gehenna occurs, and confirmed by an appeal to the Old Testament Scriptures. May I not, then, be permitted to say, that, if I am in an error, it is very strange this error should have such a body of evi-

\* In my answer to Mr. Sabine, about to be published, these two texts are again brought to view and we hope satisfactorily settled.



dence to support it. The sense I have given to Gehenna, is not assumed, but it is settled by divine authority. Can any man produce such facts and evidence in support of Gehenna's being a place of endless misery for the wicked? If this cannot be done, must it not be allowed, that either error has more evidence to support it than truth, or that my view of Gehenna is the true one? At any rate, with such weight of evidence pressing on my mind, how could I do otherwise than honestly avow the convictions which this evidence has produced, without violating my conscience and forfeiting all claim to an honest minded man? If indeed I am mistaken in my views of those passages, no man can more sincerely wish to see where the mistake lies, than I do. If this mistake can be pointed out, and if it can be proved that Gehenna, or hell, is a place of endless misery for all the wicked, we doubt not but this will be done. It is not to be expected, that a doctrine so popular, which has been so long believed, and supported by the learning and talents of so many good men, will be given up without a struggle. If it be true, we earnestly wish to see it established by an examination of all the passages where Gehenna occurs; and a rational and Scriptural account given of the facts which we have adduced, and have yet to produce on the subject.

The last place in the New Testament in which Gehenna is used, is James iii. 6. "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." This is one of the two places, in which Dr. Campbell thinks the word Gehenna is used figuratively. He observes, that it is "the intention of the writer to draw an illustration of the subject from that state of perfect wretchedness." It is rather surprising that Dr. Campbell should not have noticed, that

before any illustration could be drawn from Gehenna as a place of endless misery, by a Jew, or any one else, it must first be known as such to be a place of perfect wretchedness. Let me ask from what source could a Jew learn this? Not from the Old Testament; for Dr. Campbell himself assures us, that Gehenna is not found in the Old Testament in this sense. It is not found in the Septuagint, nor even in the Grecian classics. If James therefore knew all this to be true, how could he ever draw such an illustration? This was impossible, unless we suppose that James learned this doctrine from the Targums, or from our Lord's instructions. To suppose the first, is to say that James learned this doctrine from a source which is not very creditable to it, nor honourable to him. To suppose the last, is to make James use Gehenna in a sense it never was used by our Lord. This has been shown from an examination of all the places in which he did use this word. It should be recollected that James was a Jew, and that he wrote to believing Jews. No place, to a Jew, could afford such a view of perfect wretchedness as the valley of Hinnom or Gehenna. It is certainly then more rational to think that James drew an illustration of his subject from this place, well known, than from a place of endless misery, which was not known. If we understand this text literally, it is at least as difficult to understand how the tongue could be set on fire from a place of future endless misery, as how it could be set on fire from the valley of Hinnom. It is evident that James is speaking of the evils arising from an improper use of the tongue. What could be more natural, in speaking of the filthiness and abominations which proceed from it, than to draw an illustration from Gehenna or the valley of Hinnom, the most abominable place known to Jews? But if Gehenna here is understood figuratively, as Dr. Campbell thinks it ought to be, it

requires no further remark from me ; for surely no one will attempt to prove the doctrine of *endless misery* from the mere *figurative* use of the term *Gehenna*.

Such are all the texts in which the word *Gehenna* is used by the New Testament writers, and such are the remarks which have occurred to me in my examination of them. According to every just rule of Scripture interpretation I am acquainted with, I do not see how I could have interpreted them differently. Indeed, to me it is surprising how the doctrine of eternal misery was ever founded on any of the texts which speak of *Gehenna* or hell. If I am correct, it also affords a striking example how far we may be misled, in a proper understanding of the Scriptures, by attaching to a single word a sense different from that given it by the inspired writers. How far I am correct, my readers must judge for themselves. I hope they will, on the one hand, guard against receiving my error, if it be one, and on the other, beware of rejecting my view, if true, from prejudices of *education*. Under the influences of these prejudices, I began to examine this subject, and have been obliged to relinquish my former views of *Gehenna*, from the force of the evidence I have already stated, and which I have yet to adduce on this subject. If my views of *Gehenna* are, upon examination, found correct, it is also a striking proof how far we may be misled, in a proper understanding of the New Testament, from our inattention to the Old. If the word *Gehenna* in the New, is used in a similar sense as in the Old Testament, all the false views we have had of the texts in which it occurs in the former, have arisen from our inattention to its usage in the latter. Whether I am right or wrong in my views of *Gehenna* in the New Testament, no man, we think, will deny, that there is a degree of plausibility in what I have stated between the Old and New Testa-

ment usage of this word. It would be foolish in me to think that I have brought forward all that can be urged for or against this view of Gehenna. The subject is brought forward for deliberate and serious consideration. If I am wrong in my views, I shall have an opportunity of being better informed. If right, I have only performed a duty which I owed to *mankind*.

Before closing this section, it is proper to notice any objections which have occurred against the *sense* given to Gehenna or hell in the passages we have been considering. 1st, One of the most popular objections likely to be urged, is, that the sense I have given to Gehenna is very contrary to the long established *ecclesiastical* use of this word. This is frankly and fully admitted; but certainly this is no *certain* evidence that my views are incorrect. In the present case, I have done no more than what is done by Presbyterians, Hopkinsians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists, yea, by all sects in religion. They all, in their own way, take the liberty of thinking that Scripture usage of words is, *sometimes at least*, different from long established ecclesiastical usage of words. That the ecclesiastical use of some words is very different from the Scripture usage of them, few will deny. That they are different, and also how little we ought to regard the ecclesiastical use of words when contrary to Scripture usage of them, we here quote the authority of Dr. Campbell. He says, p. 416. of his dissertations,—“ecclesiastical use is no security that the word, though it be understood, conveys to us the same idea which the original term did to those to whom the gospels were first promulgated. In a former dissertation, the fullest evidence has been given, that in regard to several words, the meaning which has been long established by ecclesiastic use, is very

different from that which they have in the writings of the New Testament.”

It is easily seen from this quotation, and more fully from the other dissertation to which he refers, that he did not scruple to disclaim the ecclesiastical use of words, if that use did not agree with New Testament usage. We have examined the Scripture usage of the words Sheol, Hades, Tartarus and Gehenna, and if ecclesiastical usage considers any of these words to mean a place of endless misery, we must say that it is not supported by the Bible. But of this our readers must judge. If it can be proved that we have erred in the sense we have given to Gehenna or those other words, we shall be glad to see the error exposed.

2d, Another objection closely connected with the former, is, that my views of Gehenna are contrary to the opinions of almost all the learned in the present day, and in the ages past of the Christian Church; yea, contrary to the authors of the Targums and the Apocrypha. This may be true, yet my view of Gehenna be the correct and Scriptural one notwithstanding. I am again supported in this by Dr. Campbell. He says, p. 91. of his dissertations,—“the opinion of Grotius and some learned Rabbis, unsupported by either argument or example, nay, in manifest contradiction to both, is here of no weight. Scriptural usage alone must decide the question. These commentators (with all deference to their erudition and abilities be it spoken) being comparatively modern, cannot be considered as ultimate judges in a question depending entirely on an ancient use, whereof all the evidences that were remaining in their time, remain still, and are as open to our examination, as they were to theirs. In other points where there may happen to be in Scripture an allusion to customs or ceremonies retained by the Jews, but unknown to us, the case

is different. But nothing of this kind is pretended here." We have attempted to decide the question, what is the meaning of the term Gehenna, by an appeal to Scripture usage of this word, and we must say it is our present opinion that it is not once used, either in the Old or New Testament, to express a place of endless misery for the wicked.

We conclude this section with two brief quotations from Mr. Stuart, in his letters to Mr. (now Dr.) Channing, which we wish were engraven on every man's heart, never to be effaced. In page 14. he says,—“the claims of the Bible to be authoritative being once admitted, the simple question in respect to it, is, what does it teach in regard to any particular passage; what idea did the original writer mean to convey? When this is ascertained by the legitimate rules of interpretation, it is authoritative. This is *orthodoxy* in the highest and best sense of the word; and every thing which is opposed to it, which modifies it, which fritters its meaning away, is *heterodoxy*, is *heresy*; to whatever name or party it is attached.” He adds, p. 109—“after all, it is a principle, by which, if I have any knowledge of my own heart, I desire forever to be guided, to ‘call no man master, on earth.’ I would place the decision of Scripture, fairly made out, IMMEASURABLY ABOVE all human opinions. I regard the one as the decision of an *unerring* God; the other as the opinions of *fallible* men.”

## SECTION IV.

ADDITIONAL FACTS STATED, PROVING THAT GEHENNA WAS NOT USED BY THE SACRED WRITERS TO EXPRESS A PLACE OF ENDLESS MISERY.

THE facts which have been stated in a preceding part of this investigation, are certainly very singular, if it indeed be true that Gehenna of the New Testament signifies a place of endless misery for the wicked. Those I am now to adduce, are to me also strange, upon such a view of this subject. Some of them have been slightly hinted at in the course of our remarks, but deserve a more distinct statement.

1st, *If Gehenna means a place of endless misery for the wicked, it is a fact that the apostles never preached it, either to Jews or Gentiles.* The history of the Acts of the apostles, contains an account of their preaching for thirty years, but not once is the subject of *hell* or *Gehenna torments*, mentioned by them. They were commanded to preach the gospel to every creature, and they did so, but to no creature under heaven, did they ever preach this doctrine. No living being did they ever threaten with such a punishment. They addressed the worst of characters, but to none of them did they ever say, "how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" They did threaten men sometimes with punishment, but never with *eternal punishment in hell*. Saul said to Elymas, the sorcerer—"O! full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease

to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" But does he threaten this man with the damnation of hell? No; he says, "and now behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." Acts xiii. 10, 11. In the same chapter, verses 40, 41. he says, "beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets. Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish." But did he on this, or any other occasion, ever threaten them with the punishment of hell? No; nothing like this is to be found. In this last text the word *perish* occurs, and perhaps some may think that eternal punishment is included in it. But it should be observed, that Paul was here addressing himself to Jews, and concerning them our Lord had said—"except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," referring to the temporal destruction which was coming on the Jewish nation. May I then ask, how this fact is to be rationally accounted for, if the apostles did indeed believe *hell* to be a place of endless misery? Can any man suppose they believed this, yet in the course of thirty years' preaching, never mentioned it to their hearers? What would we say of a man in these days, who should preach thirty years, yet never say a word about hell to those whom he addressed? Would we not say he was a Universalist? He would be an outlaw from orthodoxy. If my veracity in this statement is doubted by any persons, let them read the book of the Acts of the apostles. In the whole of it, whether they preached to Jews or Gentiles, you will find that they are all alike silent on the subject of hell torments. If they believed such a doctrine, let others account for it why they never preached it. If preachers *now* took the apostles as their models, we should hear no more about hell from them. We would then, respectfully ask, from what source did preachers learn that they should preach Gehenna or



hell to us Gentiles, as a place of endless misery? To what chapter or verse, in any book of the New Testament, can they refer us, where an inspired apostle ever did so? Let every one who preaches this doctrine, consider, if he did not learn this from his catechism, when a child; from books he has read, and from the preaching he has heard since he became a man, and not from his Bible? Let him also consider, before he condemns my view, whether he has ever given this subject a thorough and impartial examination. We are all too prone to receive things in religion on such kind of authority, and too ready to condemn opinions contrary to our own, before we have duly considered the evidence brought in support of them.

To this we are aware that it may be objected—“Gehenna was a Jewish figurative mode of speaking of future eternal punishment, and had it been used by the apostles in preaching to the Gentiles, they could not have been understood; for the Gentiles knew nothing about Gehenna, as a place of future punishment.” To this I reply,

1st, That this objection would have some force, if it was found that the apostles, in preaching to the Gentiles, made use of their own modes of speaking about future eternal misery to them. Had they said to the wicked Gentiles, “how can ye escape the damnation of Hades, or Tartarus,” we might suppose that this was the reason they avoided the use of the term Gehenna. But do we find this to be the true state of the case? We certainly do not. No such conclusion, we conceive, therefore, can be drawn that the apostles said nothing to the Gentiles concerning Gehenna, because it was a Jewish figure which they could not understand. But,

2d, Admitting that the term Gehenna was a mode of speaking of eternal misery the Gentiles did not un-

derstand, they could have explained it to them, as they have done other things of seemingly less importance. Let any one read John's gospel, and he will see that he explains Jewish names and customs; some examples of which we have given in another place. But,

3d, The above objection takes it for granted that the Gentiles were unacquainted with the term Gehenna. But ought it to be so? Is there not as good reason to think that the heathen, in their intercourse with the Jews, should imbibe their notions of Gehenna, as that the Jews should imbibe the heathen notions concerning Hades or Tartarus, in their intercourse with them? Their mutual intercourse would produce a mutual interchange of opinions. This being the case, if the spirit of God recognized either the Jewish notions of Gehenna, or the Pagan notions of Hades, as truth, we might expect that the apostles would have preached this doctrine to both Jews and Gentiles. Had both been recognized, we might expect Hades and Gehenna to be used indiscriminately by the apostles, in speaking of future eternal misery. But this is not done by them, if we may judge of their preaching from what is contained in the New Testament. If they believed both to be true, they would have spoken at least of Gehenna to Jews, and of Hades to Gentiles, as a place of eternal punishment in a future state.

4th, But this objection takes it for granted, that the Jews in our Lord's day, did use the term Gehenna to signify a place of endless misery, and that this was its *exclusive* sense. That this could not be its *exclusive sense* we have proved; for in reading the Old Testament Scriptures, they could not understand it so; or, if they did, they must have perverted them to an extent I am unwilling to believe, even of the Jews. The objector must then prove, that the Jews, in our Lord's day, did use the term Gehenna, exclusively to express

a place of endless misery. When he has done this, upon the authority of the Targums, he must also prove that this sense of the term was sanctioned by the New Testament writers. Besides, he ought to account for it, if the reason why the apostles never said any thing to the Gentiles, concerning Gehenna, arose from this term's not being understood by them, why they never *even* speak to the Jews of the damnation of hell? According to this objection, it was understood by them to mean a place of endless misery. The apostles did preach to the Jews as well as the Gentiles, but they did not even name it to them. Will any man affirm, then, that the apostles of our Lord understood him to mean, by Gehenna, a place of endless misery, yet never preached it, to either Jews or Gentiles, in the whole course of their ministry? Whatever excuse we may make for them, in regard to the Gentiles not understanding the term Gehenna, none can be made for them on this ground respecting the Jews.

2d, *Another fact is, that the salvation revealed by the gospel, is never spoken of as a salvation from hell or endless misery. No such salvation was ever promised or predicted in the Old Testament, and no such salvation was ever preached by Christ or his apostles. Our Lord received the name Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins. But I do not find that he received this name, or any other because he should save them from hell. Our Lord and his apostles, in preaching, proposed by it to turn men from darkness to light; from the power of satan unto God; from idols to serve the living God; from the course of this world; and from all sin to holiness; but where do we ever read of their saving them from hell? No such salvation was preached by our Lord. In all the texts where he speaks of hell, he was not preaching the gospel, but addressing the Jews about the temporal calamities*

coming on them as a people. In no instance did he ever exhort men to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, because they were exposed to hell torments in a future state. So far from this, in nine instances out of eleven, where Gehenna is used by him, he was addressing his disciples. It is of no use to observe, that his apostles never made use of the punishment of hell to induce men to repentance, for they do not once name it in all their writings. James is the only exception, who mentions hell once, and that only in a figurative sense. Nothing is said in our Lord's commission to his apostles about hell, and as little is said of it by them in their execution of it. To Jew and Gentile, bond and free, they are all silent about it. It is never mentioned by them to any persons, on any occasion, or in any connexion, or on any subject. This silence of the apostles respecting hell, could not be because the people in those days were all so very good, that they did not need to be saved from hell. No; the whole world lay in wickedness around them, yet not a word is said of the torments of hell to alarm their fears, and to turn them from sin to God. No calculations were then made, as in our day, of the number who were daily and hourly going down to hell to suffer eternal misery. No; nor was such a variety of schemes adopted by the apostles to raise funds to save men from hell, as we see resorted to in our day. As they expressed no alarms about the vast crowds going to hell, so we do not find them express their joy because any were saved from it. They were deeply grieved to see men living in sin, and their spirit was stirred within them to see whole cities given to idolatry; but they never assert that all such were on the road to hell. They had great joy to see men walking in the truth, and often congratulated them on account of their being saved from their former course of life, but not a syllable escapes them, that such per-

sons had been saved from endless misery. You search the Scriptures in vain to find a single instance where the apostles make any attempt to work on the fears and feelings of men by giving terrific descriptions of hell, or the horrors and howlings of the damned. As they never held up the torment of hell to make men Christians, so we never find them using it as an argument to induce Christians to love and to good works. The latter are often reminded that they formerly were idolaters, working all uncleanness with greediness, to induce them to holiness; but where do we find a word said of their being saved from hell, as any inducement to it?—In view of these things, permit me to ask, how are we to account for them, if they believed hell to be a place of eternal torment for the wicked? Is it possible that they believed this, yet preserved such a dead silence on the subject? This silence is an indisputable fact. To account for it, is above my comprehension.

Perhaps it may be said,—though none are said to be saved from hell, yet they are said to be delivered from the wrath to come, and to be saved from wrath through Jesus. All this is true; but it is nowhere said that this wrath to come was in a future state, or of eternal duration, which is the point to be proved to be conclusive on this subject. I think I can show that the expression, “wrath to come,” does not refer to a future state. To do it here, would be too great a digression from our present subject. Nor is this my business, to show that it does not refer to a future state of existence. It is the business of those who say that it does, to prove this, and not to take things for granted at this rate, on a subject of such deep importance, as the one in question, to the human race. But this, and other things, are all taken for granted, as if they ought not, nor could not be doubted. The evidence I have stated, and have yet to produce, has

led me to doubt that Gehenna is a place of future eternal misery. If it is, we shall be happy to see it proved.

3d, *Supposing that hell is a place of endless misery for the wicked, it will not be an easy matter to vindicate either the character of our Lord or of his apostles. It will not be easy to vindicate their character for fidelity to God, or to the souls of men.* It is certain our Lord was faithful to him who appointed him. The apostles were also faithful, in declaring the whole counsel of God. But can all this be true, if they knew that hell was a place of eternal misery, and that all the world stood exposed to it, yet said nothing to them about it? It is true, the Saviour mentions hell nine times to his disciples, and twice to the unbelieving Jews. Neither he nor his apostles ever use the word in speaking to the Gentiles. Now I ask, is this like being faithful? Is this being half so faithful as most preachers are in our day? We think every candid man must say no; it is rather being very unfaithful, if they indeed believed this doctrine as it is commonly received among us. Let it then be accounted for, how preaching hell as a place of endless misery now is so much a duty, since it was not done by the apostles, nor even by our Lord himself. The fidelity of preachers in these days, both to God and the souls of men, in preaching the doctrine of endless misery in hell, far exceeds that of the apostles or of Christ, the Saviour. *But how is their compassion to the souls of men to be vindicated, if by hell is meant a place of endless misery?* The case stands thus. The Saviour, it is thought, knew *hell* to be a place of endless torment, but we have seen how he acted? He had compassion on the multitude, when they needed to be fed, and wrought a miracle to supply their wants. The compassion of his heart made him weep over Jerusalem, in anticipating the temporal calamities coming upon its inhabitants, and faith-

fully to warn them of their danger. In reference to those temporal calamities, he once said to the unbelieving Jews,—“how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” In reference to the same calamities, he uses the word hell in addressing his disciples. But he sheds no tears, he gives no warnings, he works no miracles to save, when it is said he knew hell to be a place of endless misery to all the wicked. But can any man think so of the Son of God, the Saviour of the world? I ask; can any man believe, that he whose heart was wrung with anguish, at foreseeing temporal evils to be suffered by men, and who could shed tears at the grave of Lazarus, was so callous, so devoid of all compassion, as never to warn men of *endless misery in hell*? But *supposing* we should admit, that in all the places where our Lord mentions hell, such a place of misery is meant. In this case, our Lord indeed had a little compassion for the Jews. But neither he, nor his apostles, had any for the Gentiles. The apostles did shed tears, but not a sigh is heaved, nor a tear falls from their eyes, on account of men's being in danger of hell torments. On this subject their bowels of compassion were entirely shut up, for they say not a word about hell to any man.—Either then we must allow these men to be devoid of compassion, or admit that they did not know that hell was a place of eternal torment for the wicked. It is a plain case, that preachers in our day far exceed the Lord and his apostles in compassion for the souls of men. How solemnly, and seriously, and frequently do we hear preachers warn men of hell torments? What deep compassion they pretend, at least, to feel for the multitudes of poor souls on the brink of hell, and going down to suffer its torments forever. In what loud and frightful tones do we hear them describe the horrors of this place? Their compassionate hearts they describe as bleeding, because men

will thus rush down to hell in crowds. But where do we find such things in our Lord's, or in his apostles' preaching? Were they to return to the earth, and preach just as they did, every pulpit would be shut against them, and they represented as unfaithful and unfeeling men. *But how is their zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of men, to be vindicated, if they knew hell to be a place of endless misery?* Our Lord said, "the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." But surely, as we have seen, it was not spent in preaching, and warning men against endless misery in hell. The apostles had also zeal, great zeal, and zeal according to knowledge, but they never spent any of it in preaching such a doctrine. The topic of hell torments, on which so much zeal is spent in the present day, is one which they never introduced to their hearers. This topic, hardly forgotten in a single discourse, and so powerful in inducing all classes of society to contribute, seems to have been unknown in the days of the apostles. This theme, so effectual in rousing the sleeping energies of mankind, and of exhausting human ingenuity in devising means to save them from hell, was either unknown to them, or they did not know how to avail themselves of it. It was never used by them to procure themselves a morsel of bread, or in any way to do good to others. The most profound silence is maintained by the apostles on this subject.

I do not blame the zeal of any in the present day, in urging the doctrine of hell torments on all mankind. If the doctrine be true, I contend that their zeal is not ardent enough. Indeed, if true, no one can easily go to excess in his zeal. So far from condemning the greatest zeal which can be manifested, I have some doubts if a great many of such persons believe their own doctrine. If they did, how could they live in such wealth and splendour as they do, yet do so



little to save men from hell torments? I have serious doubts if even many of the preachers most active and zealous in rousing the public to give money to save the heathen from hell, believe this doctrine. If they did, would they live at home in comparative ease and affluence, and send raw, inexperienced youths abroad to encounter the difficulties and dangers of such a work? No; they would rush into the hottest place of the battle, and suffer every privation in such a conflict. One thing is certain, that in saving others from hell, they seem determined to do it with as little self-denial and personal risk as possible. How often does it happen that all the zeal for the doctrine of hell torments evaporates in the pulpit, and nothing more is heard of it until the preacher returns to it again. In the common intercourse of life, he speaks and acts to the same people, as if all his threatenings from the pulpit, of eternal torment in hell, were not true. Yea, some of the very persons whom in the pulpit he threatens with the torments of hell, are his most intimate companions through the week. He visits in their families, he feasts at their tables, and his salary is chiefly paid by them; but not a word escapes him, perhaps the whole week, in warning them of their danger in being every moment exposed to endless misery. Can such a man be said *truly* to believe this doctrine? We must be allowed to doubt it, so long as such unfaithfulness is so apparent. I do not blame any for great zeal, if this doctrine be true. No; I only wish some one would account for it, if they can, why the apostles never mentioned hell as a place of torment, nor availed themselves of this doctrine, to stimulate their own zeal, or rouse that of others, in attempting to save men from such a punishment. I wish it to be accounted for, why this topic was never urged on Christians to induce liberality, to assist in saving the heathen from

hell, or on the heathen to induce them to turn from their idols to the living God. I wish it to be accounted for, if the apostles knew of the doctrine of hell torments, why they *forgot* to mention it either to Jews or to Gentiles. Either they did not believe the doctrine, or, if they did, how is their fidelity, compassion, and zeal to be defended? Who would undertake to defend the fidelity, compassion and zeal of any preacher in our day, who, if this doctrine was believed by him, should never mention Gehenna as a place of endless misery for all who died in ignorance and unbelief concerning the Saviour? Instead of defending him, all sects, Herod and Pilate like, would be made friends for once, to put such a preacher down by every means in their power.

4th, *The Old Testament is often quoted in the New, but it is an indisputable fact, that though quoted by our Lord when speaking about hell or Gehenna, it is not quoted to show that hell was a place of eternal misery, but in reference to temporal punishment.* Indeed, it was impossible for our Lord or his apostles to quote the Old Testament to prove that hell was such a place of misery; for it is acknowledged by Dr. Campbell and others, that in this sense Gehenna or hell does not occur there. They could not make a quotation in proof of this from it, for it did not afford them any thing to quote. Well, permit me to ask, why our Lord did quote the Old Testament, and quoted it in the very texts in which hell or Gehenna is spoken of? In Mark ix. considered above, our Lord expressly quotes a passage from Isaiah, when speaking concerning hell to his disciples. In other places he seems to allude to others. Had our Lord then meant to use Gehenna or hell in a different sense from that in the Old Testament, was it not calculated to mislead his hearers thus to quote it? Is it rational and proper to suppose, that our Lord quoted texts from the Old Testa-

ment, which speak altogether of a temporal punishment, when he intended that what he said about Gehenna or hell should be understood of eternal punishment? I think this would be imputing to our Lord a want of correctness of judgment, and even of common propriety, which we seldom have occasion to impute to our fellow men. The man would be looked on as insane, or something worse, who in the present day, if he intended to prove the doctrine of hell torments, should quote from the Old Testament the passage about the three children thrown into the fiery furnace, as proof of it. But this is just what our Lord did, as we have seen, if Gehenna in the New Testament means the place of eternal misery. See on Matth. xxiii. 33. and Mark ix. 42. considered in the preceding section.

5th, *If there be a place of endless misery for the wicked, is it not another remarkable fact that the Hebrew, Greek, and English languages originally had no name for this place?* We have seen from Dr. Campbell, that Gehenna does not occur in this sense in the Old Testament; that it is not a Greek word; that it is not found in the Septuagint, nor in the Grecian classics. It is originally "a compound of the two Hebrew words *gia enm, ge hinnom*, the valley of Hinnom, a place near Jerusalem, of which we hear first in the book of Joshua xv. 8." Let us also see what he says about our English word *hell*. Speaking of *Hades*, in his 6th dissertation, he says:—"To this the word *hell* in its primitive signification perfectly corresponded. For, at first it denoted only what was secret or concealed. This word is found with little variation of form, and precisely in the same meaning, in all the Teutonic dialects. But though our word *hell*, in its original signification, was more adapted to express the sense of Hades than of Gehenna, it is not so now. When we speak as Christians, we always express by

it, the place of the punishment of the wicked after the general judgment, as opposed to heaven, the place of the reward of the righteous."—It is very evident from this, that the word hell did not originally signify a place of endless misery. In confirmation of what Dr. Campbell says, I shall quote the following from Parkhurst on the word Hades. He says,—“our *English* or rather Saxon word *hell*, in its original signification, (though it is now understood in a more limited sense) exactly answers to the word *Hades*, and denotes a *concealed* or unseen place; and this sense of the word is still retained in the *eastern*, and especially in the *western counties* of England; to *hele* over a thing is to cover it.”—The correctness of these statements are above suspicion; for, the fidelity of these men as writers, has led them to say things at variance with their professed creed as Christians. It is very evident, if they are to be believed, that our English, or Saxon word *hell*, did not originally signify a place of endless misery for the wicked, but like Hades or Sheol signified the unseen or concealed place; and that it has this meaning in some of the counties in England to this day. It is then a very plain case, that for this place of endless misery the Hebrew, Greek, and English languages did not originally furnish a name. We have then to ask, had the inspired writers any idea of such a place of misery? If they had, it is evident they wanted a name for it to express it to others. If they have not expressed it by any word to others, how does any man know that they entertained such an idea? We have seen persons use words to which they had no distinct ideas. And we have also seen persons having ideas, which they could not very easily express in appropriate language to others. But we believe it is a singular case, that the Bible is said to reveal a place of endless misery, yet the inspired writers had no name for it. It is surely

then a very proper question to be asked, who changed the words Gehenna and hell from their original signification, to mean a place of endless misery? We shall see in the next section that the writers of the Targums and the Apocrypha, are appealed to for this change, that this change was gradually produced, and finally Gehenna was used exclusively to mean such a place of misery. Who gave this new sense to the word hell, or whether its change of sense was gradual or sudden, I can afford no information. It is enough for us to know, that this was not its original signification; and this fact is attested by Dr. Campbell, Parkhurst and others, all firm believers in the doctrine of hell torments.

After these statements from such eminent critics relative to Gehenna and our English word hell, not originally signifying a place of endless misery it is very natural to put something like the following questions. 1st, Were these words changed from their original signification by divine authority or was it on the authority of men? None of the above authors assert or even insinuate that such a change in the meaning of these words was made by any of the inspired writers, or by God's authority. It has never been noticed in the course of our reading that any one ventured to prove this or even asserted it. As to the word Gehenna, we have seen that Dr. Campbell says it came gradually to be used in this sense and at length came to be confined to it. 2d, By whom, and at what period of time, did this change in the sense of these two words take place? Here we are left to conjecture; for neither Dr. Campbell, nor any other writer, of which we have any knowledge, gives us any information about this. That a change in the sense of these two words has taken place, is certain, but when, or where, or by whom it was done, no information is afforded us. 3d, By what name was this

place of endless misery called, before the Jews called it by the name Gehenna? And what was its name in the English, or rather Saxon language, before the word *hell* was changed from its original signification and applied to it? Or was it without a name before these words were altered in sense to suit it? 4th, If it had a name before Gehenna and hell were changed in sense, and applied to it, why was it laid aside? And what were the reasons which induced men to make such an alteration on their own authority? Why were they not content, to speak of this place as the Scriptures teach, if indeed they do reveal such a place of endless misery? 5th, If Gehenna and hell have undergone such a change of sense, on mere human authority, may we not, and ought we not, to change them back again to their original signification, on the same authority?—Such are a few of the questions which may be put, relative to the change in the sense of these two words. We leave our readers to determine how they are to be answered. The last is easily answered, but all the others, we think must remain unanswered.

6th, *Another fact, deserving our consideration, is, that Christians, when they speak of hell, adopt the phraseology used about Sheol and Hades, rather than Gehenna, though it is contended that Gehenna is the word which signifies hell, or the place of endless misery.* I shall explain what I mean. For example, it is evident from an inspection of the passages, in which Sheol, Hades and Gehenna occur, that Gehenna, for depth, is never contrasted with heaven for height, like Sheol and Hades. Nor, do we read of persons going down to Gehenna, of the depths of Gehenna, or of the lowest Gehenna. Neither do we read of the gates of Gehenna, nor of the pains of Gehenna. All these things are said of Sheol and Hades, as we have seen in a former part of this Inquiry. Besides, no representations are

given of Gehenna, as of Sheol and Hades, as if all the dead, or, even the wicked were there. No persons are ever represented as alive in Gehenna, as speaking out of Gehenna, or as tormented in its flames. It is never, like Sheol and Hades, represented as a dark, concealed place, under the earth. No: it is represented as on a level, or nearly so, with the persons addressed concerning it. All these, and other modes of speaking, are used about Sheol and Hades, but never in speaking of Gehenna; and show a remarkable difference in the Scripture representations of those two places. Such a marked, uniform difference must strike every man's mind with great force, who takes the trouble to examine this subject. In all the twelve places, in which Gehenna occurs in the New Testament, we have seen that what I have stated is strictly correct. In them we read of the damnation of Gehenna or hell: persons are there said to be in danger of it; they are threatened with going into it, or being cast into it; but do we ever read of any person's being in it, and lifting up his eyes in the torments of this place? Now, comparing all these different forms of speech, about Sheol and Hades, with those of Gehenna, the difference is not only manifest, but very great.

Let us now compare these statements with the way in which Christians speak about hell, or the place of future punishment. It is evident, that they seldom, if ever, use the language employed in the Bible, about Gehenna, but generally that used in speaking of Sheol and Hades. Thus, for example, when a preacher describes hell to his hearers, and threatens the wicked with the punishment of it, he speaks of it as a deep place, as the lowest hell, and as a place to which they are going down; and speaks of some already there, lifting up their eyes in its torments. All this we have seen, is said of Sheol and Hades, but never

of hell, or Gehenna, the place of eternal punishment. Permit me then to ask, why this is done? For what reason is the Scripture language about Gehenna laid aside, and that of Sheol and Hades substituted in its place; when it is allowed on all sides, that neither Sheol nor Hades means a place of endless misery? It must be confessed, that this is, at least, handling the word of God ignorantly, if not deceitfully; and under the mask of Scripture phraseology, imposing on the ignorance and credulity of mankind. If such persons will have Gehenna to be the place of endless misery, let them use the language of Scripture about it, and not use the language, allowed to have no reference to such a subject. We cannot help thinking that the reason of this change of phraseology is from necessity. It would be contrary to fact, and even common belief, to speak to people of hell, in the language used about Gehenna. To tell them that their *whole body* should be cast into hell would not do. A case of this kind was never known. It is believed only, that the souls of the wicked go to hell at death, and the body returns to the dust, and not until the resurrection, do the soul and body go there together. This change of the language from Gehenna to that of Sheol and Hades, is therefore necessary, to be in unison with the common belief on this subject. If men were obliged to confine themselves to the language used in Scripture about Gehenna, when they speak of hell, it would, probably, lead them to see, that all was not correctly understood respecting it. I may even add here, that this change of language is not altogether in agreement with the popular ideas entertained of hell. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus, is not in unison with common belief. No man believes that the body is tormented, at least, till after the resurrection of the dead; but how often do preachers represent the body after death as in hell, lifting up its



eyes there, and as tormented in its flames? But fondness for a popular sentiment, often blinds our eyes to the contradictions and absurdity of our language in speaking about it.

7th, *Another fact, deserving some notice is, that the punishment of hell or Gehenna, is never once spoken of as a punishment of the spirit, separate from the body in an intermediate state, nor as a punishment for both body and spirit, after the resurrection of the dead.* As to the first part of this statement, let the texts in which Gehenna occurs, be ever so rigidly examined, they do not afford a particle of evidence, that Gehenna is an intermediate place of punishment for the spirit after the death of the body. The text, and we believe the only text, quoted to prove this intermediate place of punishment, is, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. But supposing this account to be literally understood, it should be remembered, that the rich man was not in Gehenna, or hell, but in Hades. Now it is a point, settled beyond all dispute, that Hades is not Gehenna or hell. Admitting then, that Hades is an intermediate place of punishment for the separate spirit, Gehenna or hell must be given up as such a place. But every one knows that it is the common belief, that hell or Gehenna, is the place of suffering in the intermediate state, Ask any *common Christian*, who believes in the doctrine of eternal misery, if he thinks this punishment before and after the resurrection, are in two different places; he would stare at you as an heretic. He has always believed as he has been taught by his *parents*, his *catechism*, and his *sect*, that there is only *one hell* for all the wicked. It is high time that *common Christians*, in distinction from *learned Christians*, should be told that this is very far from being the true state of the case; as they would soon see, if the *learned* only spoke their minds freely on this subject. Dr. Campbell has *dared* to speak of

Gehenna and Hades as two places of punishment for the wicked, and it is somewhat surprising that *orthodox Christians* have not, before now, denounced him as an heretic.

But the punishment of hell or Gehenna, says Dr. Campbell and others, comes after the judgment, for Hades is to be destroyed. But let the texts which speak of Gehenna, be again examined, and as little is said about its being a place of punishment after the resurrection, as before it. No; we never find it once mentioned, in connexion with the resurrection of the dead; but, as we have seen, always in connexion with the temporal miseries coming on the Jews. Without making myself liable to the charge of arrogance, I think I may challenge the whole world to produce a single text, which speaks of Gehenna or hell, either as an intermediate place of punishment for the spirit, or for both body and spirit after the resurrection of the dead. All the passages, we think, have been shown to have a totally different meaning. What has led people into such mistaken ideas, on this subject, is, their confounding Sheol, Hades and Gehenna together, as one place, and supposing that the word hell, by which all these words are translated, means the future place of punishment for the wicked. The endless duration of this punishment has been believed from Mark ix. 43, 44. considered above, and from a few more passages, in which the word everlasting is used and applied to punishment. It has been shown from a consideration of the passages which speak of Gehenna or hell, that it referred to the punishment of the Jews; and we think no man can dispute that we have proved that this punishment was called an everlasting punishment. But where do we ever read of an everlasting punishment in hell for soul and body, either in an intermediate state, or after the resurrection? Let

something like proof of this be produced. It is very true, that we read in books, and hear in sermons, of an eternal hell, and of the howlings of the damned, and of infants of a span long being in that place. But in the name of common humanity, and in vindication of the character of God, we demand in what part of the Bible such statements are to be found. Do the Scriptures ever give such statements as these? They certainly do not. Is it not, then, daring presumption in any man to speak thus? Shall we never have done in attempting to supply what we deem God's deficiencies?

Dr. Campbell, and we presume all critics, object to the doctrine, that Hades is to be a place of punishment after the resurrection. It is evident from Scripture, that it is to be destroyed, and be no more. But why should this be objected to, and why should it be contended for, that Gehenna is to be a place of punishment after this period, and of eternal duration? Certainly as little is said about Gehenna, as about Hades, being a place of eternal punishment after the resurrection. From no text in which Gehenna is mentioned, could this be even inferred. Gehenna is never spoken of as a place of punishment after the resurrection of the dead; nor is it ever mentioned in connexion with this subject.

8th, *Closely connected with the last fact, is another, that the learned seem to believe in two places of future punishment, and the common people only in one.* Dr. Campbell, we have seen, declares that Gehenna is the place of eternal punishment for all the wicked. He also thinks that Hades is an intermediate place of punishment until the resurrection; but that this place is then to be destroyed. If it be true then, that Hades is one place of punishment, and Gehenna another, it is beyond all doubt that there are two places of future punishment, the one temporary, and the other to be

eternal in its duration; the one before, and the other after the resurrection of the dead. The first, a punishment for the soul, separate from the body, until the resurrection, and the other after, for both soul and body forever. This is indisputable, unless it can be proved, that Hades and Gehenna are only two names for the same place; or, which is much the same, that Hades is a part of Gehenna, or Gehenna a part of Hades. But no man who has paid the slightest attention to the passages in which these two words occur, can for a moment think so. So far from this, no two places could be more distinctly marked, as two separate places. The various modes of speaking about them clearly decide this, which we have noticed already. We think it has been shown that none of the passages which speak of Gehenna, support the idea, that this is a place of endless misery for the wicked. If such a place exists in the universe of God, and is revealed to us in the Bible, it must be under some other name than that of Gehenna or hell. Neither Sheol nor Hades can be this place; for admitting it to be a place of punishment in the intermediate state, it is agreed that it is to be destroyed, therefore can not be of endless duration. If such a place of misery is taught us under any other name in the Bible, I am willing to consider it. But this is not pretended, I believe, by the most zealous friends of the doctrine of endless misery.

The common opinion of the unlearned is, that there is but one place of future misery, and this place they call hell, whether this word be the translation of Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, or Gehenna. They always speak about it as one place of punishment, and consider this punishment as of endless duration. The same hell to which the spirits of the wicked are sent at death, is the hell to which they send all the wicked forever. If this be a mistaken notion of the vulgar,

it is certain most orthodox preachers do not attempt to correct it, for what they say about hell tends to confirm them in this opinion. They always speak about *one* hell as certainly as about one God; nor do they, in preaching, take any notice of the distinction so clearly marked in Scripture, between Hades and Gehenna.

9th, *Another fact is, that though we read of the sea, death and Hades, delivering up the dead which are in them, yet we never read of Gehenna delivering up any thing dead or alive.* Now, let us suppose, that at death the body goes to Hades, the grave, or state of the dead, and the spirit goes to Gehenna or hell, to suffer punishment until the resurrection of the body. If this commonly received doctrine be true, is it not as rational to think that we should read in Scripture of Gehenna or hell delivering up the spirits of the wicked at the resurrection, as that Hades or the grave should deliver up their bodies. In order to a reunion at this period, it is just as necessary that the spirits should come forth from the one place, as their bodies from the other. But nothing like this is to be found in the Bible. Does not this seem to intimate, that Gehenna or hell is not a place of misery for the wicked?

If heaven be, as is generally believed the place of happiness after death, for the spirits of the righteous, and Gehenna or hell be the place of punishment for the spirits of the wicked, must not the spirits of the last, in order to a reunion with their bodies, come forth from hell as certainly as the first from heaven? But I do not find that at this period a word is said about hell, or any spirits coming forth from it. But how is this accounted for, if the generally received doctrine be correct? The only possible way to account for this, is suggested by Dr. Campbell—that Gehenna is not the place of punishment for the wicked.

until after the resurrection. But this, we think, will not bear examination. In all the texts which speak about Gehenna, nothing is said of the resurrection of the dead. No; nothing that has the least appearance of this. It will not be disputed, that when our Lord spoke to the unbelieving Jews, and to his disciples, of Gehenna, he was speaking on a very different subject, the temporal punishment coming on the Jewish nation. Why introduce Gehenna on a subject like this, if it be true that the punishment of Gehenna or hell, is that suffered by the wicked after the resurrection? If it is, let it be accounted for, why it is not once introduced by the inspired writers, when speaking of the resurrection. It is natural to think that it would be always spoken of in connexion with it. We find Hades follows death, and these two are spoken of as connected. But do we ever find it said that Gehenna follows the resurrection of the dead; or that there is any connexion between these two things? No; this is not, in the most distant way, hinted at. Let any one read all the passages where this subject is treated of, and he will find that not a word is said by the sacred writers concerning Gehenna or hell. In 1 Cor. xv. the fullest account is given of the resurrection, of any place in the Bible; but neither the punishment of hell, nor any other punishment is spoken of in connexion with it. We should think it, then, a duty incumbent on those who believe that the punishment of hell succeeds the resurrection of the dead, to show, that the spirit of God speaks of it in such a connexion. If what is said about this be true, this ought to be its uniform connexion. But no man will assert that this is the case, who has paid any attention to the subject.

10th, *Another important fact, deserving our notice, is, that none of the original words translated in the common version, eternal, everlasting, and forever, are once con-*

nected with *Gehenna*, or *hell*. No; though we often hear preachers, in our day, speak of an eternal hell, such language never was used by any inspired writer. The phrase "everlasting fire," occurs in the Bible, and this has been shown, before, to be the same as "everlasting punishment," and the "fire that shall never be quenched." But we have seen that none of these expressions refer to a place in a future state, called *Gehenna*, or *hell*; or that the punishment referred to is endless in its duration. But an *eternal hell* is often heard of, from the pulpit, and perhaps many believe it to be a Scripture expression. This, with many other terrific expressions, which are the chief ornaments of many modern sermons, and often uttered without much feeling by the preacher, are not found in the Bible. They are bugbears of his own creating, which no man who regards the Scriptures, and has considered this subject, will be frightened at. Children, and ignorant, weak, nervous people, may, and indeed often are, powerfully wrought upon, by the terrific descriptions which are given of hell. And, after this is effected to a great extent, it is called a reformation. But is this the work of the Spirit of God among these people? If it be, I demand that some part of the New Testament be produced, showing that similar reformations were effected by terrific descriptions of hell under the ministry of Christ or his apostles. Did they paint, in glowing colours, the horrors of the damned in hell to make men Christians? No man will say so. Not a word was said by them about hell, or an eternal hell to the people. All such language is coined at the mint of modern divinity, and may be a very good plan for increasing a sect, but this is a very different thing from making men Christians. When many of these people get over their fright, they return like the dog to his vom-

it, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

I am fully aware that to this it will be objected—is not everlasting life and everlasting punishment contrasted in Matth. xxv. 46. and some other places? Yes, it is freely admitted, but we think we can show that this contrast is not between heaven as a place of eternal blessedness, and Gehenna as a place of endless punishment, as is generally believed. The digression would be too long from our present subject to show this here, and therefore I have reserved this, and all the other texts where everlasting is applied to punishment, to a separate Inquiry.

11th, *In the common language of most Christians, you find heaven as the place of blessedness for the righteous, spoken of in contrast with Gehenna or hell, the place of endless misery for the wicked. Whatever they say about the former they have a counterpart in speaking of the latter. But when we look into the Bible, we do not find such a counterpart.* I shall illustrate what I mean by an example or two. In the Bible we find persons expressing their hopes of going to heaven; but do we ever read of one expressing his fears of going to Gehenna or hell? We indeed find persons speaking familiarly of Sheol and Hades, and expressing both their fears and feelings in regard to this place; but do we ever read of one who expresses his fears or feelings about going to Gehenna? No: not an instance of this is found in Scripture. Again: we read of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven; but do we ever read of endless punishment reserved for any one in hell or Gehenna? Nothing like this is mentioned by the sacred writers. Again: Paul, we are told, was caught up to the third heaven, into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter: but do we ever find any one that was



sent to hell or Gehenna and there heard or saw any thing? No: but why is it not as natural to expect, that some one should be sent to hear the unutterable misery of the one place, as the unutterable blessedness of the other? The one would only be a proper counterpart to the other. But again; we have some instances of persons mentioned in Scripture, who were taken up from this earth unto God and into heaven. Such were Enoch and Elijah. These persons, eminent for goodness, were distinguished from the rest of mankind, by this signal manifestation of the divine favour.—But do you ever find one individual, abandoned for wickedness, on whom God displayed his signal vengeance, by sending him bodily to hell or Gehenna? We indeed read of Korah and his company who went down quick into the pit; but we have shown previously, that this pit was not Gehenna or hell, but only the grave or state of the dead. But further: we read Rev. vii. 14—17. of some before the throne of God, who serve him day and night in his temple, and from whose eyes all tears are wiped away. But do we ever read of any in hell or Gehenna, tormented by the devil, and from whose eyes tears shall never be wiped away; but who must dwell there forever in unutterable anguish? No: these and other things of a similar kind which might be named, are never mentioned in Scripture. We have heard and read enough of this in sermons, but sermons are not the Bible. Again: Moses and Elias made their appearance on the mount at our Lord's transfiguration; but do we find any of the wicked characters mentioned in Scripture ever making their appearance from hell? We have heard idle stories of wicked persons coming from hell to warn others and describing the awful misery of that place. But is any thing like this stated in the Scriptures? All know that such ridiculous fables are not found there.

12th, *It is common with orthodox preachers to represent Hades or hell as the place of future torment for the wicked. They often avail themselves of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in preaching on this subject. But observe that they also often speak of persons being there tormented by the devil and his angels. Indeed it is common to speak of devils and wicked men as being in the same place of punishment. But how they came by their information I know not. It is a fact that is indisputable, that whatever the Scriptures mean by the devil and his angels, they are not once represented as in Hades, or tormenting any persons there. Even Dr. Campbell, though he considers Hades as an intermediate place of punishment, says—"That Gehenna is employed in the New Testament to denote the place of future punishment, prepared for the devil and his angels, is indisputable."* See the whole of this paragraph quoted p. 92. If the devil and his angels are in this place, which Dr. Campbell says was prepared for them, they are not then in Hades, the intermediate place of punishment for the wicked. We ask then how it can be said with truth, that the devil and his angels are the tormentors of the wicked in Hades? But we believe some have thought that though Gehenna is the place prepared for the devil and his angels, they are not yet sent there, nor will they be until the day of judgment, when they and all the wicked are to go there together, to suffer its punishment forever. If this be true, that the devil and his angels are not in Gehenna and are never said to be in Hades, it seems they, for the present, are not in either place of punishment, whilst wicked men are all sent to Hades to be punished from death until the resurrection. Besides, it is certain that such preachers who represent the devil and his angels as the tormentors of wicked men in Hades, greatly misrepresent them, a thing which ought not to be done to *real*

*devils*. But how often has it been heard from the pulpit and published to the world, that wicked men at death go to hell to be the companions of *devils* and *darned spirits* forever? And has not *books* been put into the hands of *children* describing in *words* and representing to their eyes in *cuts*, the devil tossing about the wicked there with *pitchforks*? The truth is, whether my views of Gehenna be right or wrong, it is evident the common opinions entertained on the subject cannot all be true.

The evidence which has already been stated, proving that Gehenna does not signify a place of endless misery for the wicked, we deem sufficient. But there are yet some things, which ought not to be passed over, of a circumstantial nature, which very much confirm this evidence.

1st, Why did not John in his gospel mention Gehenna, and why did he omit all the discourses recorded by the other evangelists, in which our Lord spoke of Gehenna? It has been noticed already, that John wrote his gospel for the use of the Gentiles. This is generally admitted. This being the case, it may be thought there was no occasion to say any thing about Gehenna to the Gentiles. If our Lord as I have stated, meant by Gehenna the temporal punishment coming on the Jews, this is readily admitted; but if the damnation of hell was an eternal punishment for all the wicked, whether Jews or Gentiles, how could John omit all mention of it? How can it ever be rationally accounted for, that he believed the damnation of hell was an eternal punishment, yet say nothing about it to them? Was it a matter of more importance to them, to be told, that *Messias* being interpreted, signifies the Christ, or, that there was at Jerusalem a pool in the Hebrew language called Bethesda having five porches? Or that the water pots, chap. ii. contained two or three firkins apiece? Can any man

think, that if John believed Gehenna a place of endless misery, he would be silent about it, yet mention to his Gentile readers these things, comparatively of small importance? But why did John omit all these discourses in which our Lord spoke of Gehenna? A very good reason can be assigned for this, and it shows, in what light John viewed the discourses of our Lord, alluded to. It was after the destruction of Jerusalem he wrote his gospel. Whitby in his preface to the gospel of John thus writes: "The fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries do all agree, that he wrote it either in that Isle (Patmos) or after his return from it; when he was *ninety years old*, saith Epiphanius; when he was an hundred, saith Chrysostom. So that according to the account of all these *ecclesiastical* writers, John must have writ this gospel a considerable time after the destruction of Jerusalem." Supposing then, that by the damnation of hell our Lord referred to the temporal punishment coming on the Jews, we see a very good reason, why John says nothing about Gehenna, yea, omits all our Lord's discourses in which it is mentioned. The event was past. To have related those discourses, would have been to deliver predictions after they were fulfilled, and warning men of evils to be endured, after they had been suffered. John's conduct is not only then excusable, but highly proper, in saying nothing about Gehenna or hell, and in omitting all these discourses. Does not this very omission strongly confirm the view which I have given of the passages, which speak of Gehenna?—And is not this omission irreconcilable with the common ideas entertained on this subject?

2d, Why does not Luke mention Gehenna in his history of the Acts of the apostles? This is the more surprising, as he mentions it in his gospel. On my view of Gehenna, this can be rationally accounted for, but on the common view, is altogether unaccount-

able. In his gospel, he relates our Lord's discourses to the Jews, in which he spoke to them concerning Gehenna, in the punishment of which they were alone concerned. But in his history of the Acts of the apostles, he gives us an account of the preaching of the gospel, and its success among the Gentiles, who were not concerned in the punishment of Gehenna, and therefore had no need to have it mentioned to them. If my view of Gehenna be correct, we see that there was no occasion for him to say a word about it.—But if he believed, and if the apostles believed, the history of whose preaching he relates, that hell was a place of endless misery, on what grounds are we to account for his entire silence on this subject? If it was a punishment in common to both Jews and Gentiles, who died wicked, will it ever be satisfactorily accounted for, that the apostles did not preach it to the Gentile nations? If they ever preached this doctrine, it is certain, that Luke omits all mention of it in his history. To say they did preach it, is only a gratuitous assertion, and in fact impeaches Luke as a faithful historian. What historian would omit mentioning the doctrine of universal salvation as preached by the Universalists, if he undertook to write the history of their preaching for thirty years?

But if it was right in the apostles, to say nothing in their preaching of Gehenna or hell, it must be right in us, for certainly they are the best models to copy after. Supposing then, that all the preachers among the Gentile nations, should, in imitation of the apostles, say nothing about hell to their hearers, who could blame them? They could urge the example of the apostles in their defence. Here they might take their stand, and bid defiance to the whole world to prove the contrary.

3d, Why did the apostles never mention any thing about hell in any of their epistles to the churches?

Not one of them, James excepted, ever introduces it. The reason of this is equally obvious. The epistles, for the most part, were written to Gentile believers, who were not concerned in the punishment of hell or Gehenna. James wrote to believing Jews, and we have seen, that he once, in a figurative sense uses this word. Now can any one suppose, that if the Gentiles had been exposed to hell or endless punishment; that the apostles never would, in any of their epistles, have reminded those to whom they wrote, that they had been saved from it? They are often reminded that they were idolaters, and wicked, before they believed the gospel, and that they had been saved from such things: not a word is said, intimating that any of them had ever been saved from Gehenna or hell. From the consideration of their being saved, they are often exhorted to love and good works; but never from the consideration of their being saved from hell or endless misery. As it is never said that they were *once exposed to such a punishment*, so they are never reminded that they were now *delivered from it*. No self-complaisant remarks are ever made, that they were now safe from the torments of hell, nor any whining complaints, that their *friends*, and *neighbours*, yea, the whole *unbelieving Gentile world* were every moment exposed to this punishment. We find the apostles and primitive Christians, expressing the most heartfelt gratitude, that they had been saved from this present evil world; that they were translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear son; and using all proper means that their fellow men might believe the gospel, and enjoy like blessings. The New Testament abounds with evidence of this. But do we ever find them saying that they had been saved from hell or Gehenna? Or intimating that their exertions in diffusing the gospel, was for the purpose of saving the heathen from the everlasting torments

of this place? We leave it with every candid man to say, if the apostles and first Christians believed just as people do now about hell or Gehenna, if they could have been thus silent on such a deeply interesting subject.

Further: no instance is left on record where an unbeliever, or a backslider was told, as now they frequently are, that they had sinned away their day of grace, and that everlasting torments in hell would be their unavoidable fate. No: nor is an instance or any thing like it recorded, of a person being driven to distraction, from anticipation of the horrors of hell, produced by apostolic preaching. No example is given in Scripture, of a person ending his days by suicide, to get rid of his present terrors of hell torments. Some instances of suicide are recorded: see the cases of Ahithopel, Judas, &c. but do we find a single hint dropped that it was the terrors of hell torments which drove them to this? Even of Judas it is not said that he went to hell; which, we think ought to teach some persons modesty and caution, who, in the heat of their zeal, affirm that he did go to this place of punishment. If such persons had the Bible to make, they would express many things very differently from what it has pleased God to do, in the revelation of his will to mankind.

It will be allowed, that from the gospel of John, the Acts of the apostles, and the epistles, we learn what were the doctrines taught to the Gentiles. But can we learn from them that the doctrine of eternal punishment in hell was one of these doctrines? Certainly we cannot. Supposing that such writings were published in our day, omitting all mention of hell or its endless punishment, would we not say that they did not teach the doctrine of hell torments? We do not deem it a conclusive argument, that hell is not a place of endless misery, because these writers do not

mention it in all their writings: it is however calculated to lead us to reflection, and candidly to consider, that when in so large a portion of the New Testament no mention is made of hell torments, whether we correctly understand those other parts where this doctrine is supposed to be taught. We have not stated this as an argument conclusive in itself. But we should think, that if none of the other New Testament writers teach this doctrine, the argument is conclusive. We have seen, that it is a conceded point, that Gehenna does not occur in the Old Testament in the sense of a place of eternal misery. If, then, none of the New Testament writers teach it, is not their silence proof, that no such doctrine was known or taught by them? It is well known, that the silence of Scripture about any doctrine, in other cases, is deemed a conclusive argument against it. And why not in the case before us? It would be dangerous to admit the contrary. If it was admitted, then no fault could be found with the doctrine of purgatory and many other things about which the Bible is silent.

We often come to learn what doctrines are held by persons from the accusations of their enemies. Should we bring the doctrine before us to this test, we find some additional confirmation that endless misery in hell was not taught by our Lord, nor his apostles.

1st, Let us inquire what accusations the Jews brought against the Saviour? The Jews accused him of many things: such as his being an enemy to Cæsar; as in league with Beelzebub, and as a blasphemer. On his trial, Pilate said to him, "behold how many things they witness against thee." The principal of these were, that he called himself the Son of God, and said he was able to destroy their temple. But I ask, did the Jews on any occasion, ever accuse him of having threatened them with endless misery in hell? No: bad as the Jews were, they never ac-



cused him of any such thing. If he ever had done it, would they have failed to bring this forward against him? None of the Jews had any idea of going to hell. Would they, then, have endured to be told so, without a murmur or complaint against him? Would this have formed no ground of accusation? No man can believe this, who has read the four gospels, and has noticed the unwearied opposition of the Jews against the Saviour.

2d, Let us see what accusations were brought against his disciples, and apostles. They also were accused of being enemies to Cæsar. But passing over other accusations, we shall fix on what Stephen was accused of, as a fair specimen of what they were all charged with.—“This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.” Enemies as the Jews were to the disciples of our Lord, did they even so much as insinuate the charge against them, that they ever threatened them with endless torments in hell? They say, that Stephen said—“Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place,” but did they ever say, that either Jesus, or Stephen said, that he would destroy them with everlasting misery in Gehenna or hell? No: let me advocate for once the cause of the Jews, they never brought such a charge against Christ or any of his followers. On this occasion, let it be remembered, that the accusers of Stephen were false witnesses, procured for the very purpose of finding him guilty. Now, does any man think, or can he suppose, that these false witnesses after saying Stephen said,—“This Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place,” would have forgotten to add, such an important charge “And he also said, that he would destroy us and all the wicked in hell to endless dura-

tion?"—The man, who can believe this to be a mere oversight in these witnesses, in not mentioning such a material charge against Stephen, is prepared to believe any thing. But they could not bring such an accusation against him or any of the first preachers, for as we have seen, none of them ever used the word Gehenna or hell in preaching either to Jews or Gentiles. All who had ever heard them preach, could have been called as witnesses to prove, that it was a false accusation. Such a false charge, would have been in face of public opinion to the contrary.

But let us see what were the accusations which the Gentiles brought against the followers of Christ. They accused them of turning the world upside down; of turning away much people, saying that "they were no gods which were made with hands." In consequence of this they were accounted Atheists, enemies to the gods, and deserving to be abhorred of men. Now, give me leave to ask, was the charge ever brought against them in any shape, by any person, that they ever threatened men with endless punishment in hell or Gehenna? No: all the jesuitical ingenuity in the world, cannot find a word said, which has such an appearance. Had the apostles then ever threatened the Gentiles with endless punishment in hell would they have failed to bring this as an accusation against them? Should it be objected here "have you not yourself shown in chap. i. sect. 3. that the heathen nations all believed in the doctrine of future punishment, and that the Jews learned this doctrine from their intercourse with them; how then could the heathen be offended with the apostles for teaching one of the tenets of their religion?" To this I answer, that the heathen believed in a future punishment in *Hades*, but observe that the apostles neither taught such a punishment in *Hades*, nor in *Gehenna*. This is a fact we think beyond all fair discus-

sion. Not a word did any of the apostles say to the heathen about punishment in either of these places. If they had preached future punishment in Gehenna to them, they might have said, we have heard of future punishment in *Hades*, but why preach this new doctrine, *a punishment in Gehenna?* Their not preaching a punishment in Hades, shows that they did not believe this heathen notion; and the Gentiles never accusing the apostles of threatening them with endless punishment in Gehenna, is a confirmation that no such doctrine was taught to the heathen world.

Another circumstance corroborative of the views I have advanced concerning Gehenna, is the following. On my views of Gehenna the conduct of our Lord and his apostles is just what might be expected, but if by Gehenna is understood a place of endless misery, it is strange and unaccountable. What I refer to will be best seen by,

1st, Considering our Lord's conduct: We have seen, from a consideration of all the passages in which he speaks of Gehenna, that nine times out of twelve, all he says concerning it, was addressed to his disciples. In only one instance did he ever say to the unbelieving Jews—"how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Matth. xxiii. 33. Now, notice, that at verses 38, 39. he adds, "behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." After this he never said a word to them about the damnation of hell. Now let it be supposed, that by this expression our Lord meant endless misery in a future state,—I ask, is it possible our Lord should only mention this once? I ask again, can it be believed, that he who said on the cross,—“Father, forgive them for they know not what they do,” should have ceased; but with his dying breath, to warn these men, that

such a place of endless misery awaited them? I ask once more, is it possible, that he, who, when he beheld the city, "wept over it," on account of temporal calamities in which it was soon to be involved, should shed no tears, in anticipating the endless misery of its wicked inhabitants? On the supposition that Gehenna is such a place, it must, I think, be allowed that our Lord's conduct is strange and unaccountable. But on my views of the damnation or punishment of hell our Lord's conduct excites no surprise; all is rational and what the circumstances of the case warrants us to expect. They had rejected their promised Messiah, the measure of their iniquity they were soon to fill up, and they could not escape the damnation of hell. But let it be satisfactorily accounted for, why our Lord never afterwards said any thing to them of the damnation of hell, if thereby he meant endless misery in the world to come.

2d; The conduct of his apostles. It is easily seen that their conduct is in perfect agreement with that of their master before them. He never said a word about hell or Gehenna to the Gentiles. Neither do they. He never said a word more concerning Gehenna to the unbelieving Jews after saying—"how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Neither do they. If it should be objected here,—“why did not the apostles continue to speak to the unbelieving Jews about the damnation of hell, allowing it to mean the temporal miseries coming on that generation? why should they not have continued to warn them of this, as their Lord had done before them?”—The answer to this is easy. In Luke xix. 42. our Lord told the Jews that the things which belonged to their peace were now hid from their eyes. Their doom was fixed, their punishment was unavoidable. Accordingly our Lord said,—“*how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*” Soon the wrath of God was to

come on them to the uttermost. This it did in the destruction of their city and temple, when such calamities came upon them as never had been before, nor ever should be again, and unless the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh could have been saved.

In many places of the epistles, written to believers, allusions are made to the judgments of God coming on the Jewish nation, though not mentioned under the name Gehenna. The event is not only alluded to, but spoken of as near; and Christians are exhorted to patience, and holiness, in view of it. But these very parts of the epistles, are by many, like the texts which speak of Gehenna, all applied to punishment in a future state of existence. See for example, 1 Thess. v. 1—10. 1 Peter iv. 17—19.

## SECTION V.

THE ARGUMENT, ARISING FROM THE APOCRYPHA AND TARGUMS, IN FAVOUR OF ENDLESS MISERY IN GEHENNA OR HELL, CONSIDERED.

IF Gehenna or hell in the New Testament, means, as is generally believed, a place of endless misery, the evidence of this, we might expect, to be plain, and conclusive. But we have examined it, and have not only found it defective, but have, in fact, found the evidence strongest on the opposite side of the question. We have considered all the texts in which this word occurs, and have found, the temporal punishment of the Jews is referred to by *the damnation of hell*. Besides: we have stated a number of facts, which we think never can be reconciled with the current opinion on this subject. I might, therefore, here stop, until it is known, how such facts are disposed of, and it is shown, that I have misinterpreted the passages in which the word Gehenna occurs. But as the Targums and the Apocrypha are appealed to in proof of this doctrine, it might be deemed wrong in me altogether to overlook the argument, which such persons attempt to draw from them. They may think, that I ought to account for it, why these writers came to use the term Gehenna as meaning a place of endless misery, if my views of Gehenna be correct.

We think this ought to be accounted for; but I deny, that I am under any obligations to account for it.

Let such as value their authority account for it, how Gehenna, as Dr. Campbell affirms, came *gradually* to be used to express a place of future punishment for the wicked, and at length came to be confined to it. Must I do their work and my own too? It is their business to show, *that the gradual change in the meaning of the term Gehenna did not originate from the gradual invention of men, but from the authority of God.* We think, if Gehenna could be proved *satisfactorily*, to mean a place of endless misery *from the Bible*, there was no occasion to call in *the authority of the Targums and Apocrypha to prove this doctrine.* Only give us *God's authority for it, and we ask no other.*—But, *however unreasonable the demand is on me*, I shall now pay some attention to this.

Let us begin with the Apocrypha. These writings all have access to, and can read them at their leisure. I shall simply give all the places in which the term hell is used in the Apocrypha. It occurs in the following places, 2 Esdras ii. 29.; iv. 8.; viii. 53. Tobit xiii. 2. Wisd. xvii. 14. Eccles. xxi. 10.; li. 5, 6. Song of the three children, verse 66. It would serve no valuable purpose for me to transcribe these passages, as they can be easily referred to and read. On the whole of them I shall submit the following remarks.—Though the word *hell* is used in all these places, yet a very important inquiry is,—did the writers of the Apocrypha use the word Hades or Gehenna in the original? From reading the passages in the English version, we began to suspect, from the phraseology connected with the word *hell*, that Hades and not Gehenna was the word used in the original. We have been at some pains to examine this, and shall give the result of our inquiries about it. We have found, then, in the original Greek of the Apocrypha that it is the term *Hades*, not *Gehenna*, that is used, with the exception of the passages mentioned in the

second book of Esdras, which book we have not been able to find. But from the phraseology which is connected with the word hell, in the English version, we are persuaded that the three places in Esdras, when examined, will form no exception to the use of the word Hades in all the other places. If Gray, in his key to the Old Testament, is to be believed, this book is not to be found in the original. He says, p. 531. "The second book of Esdras is not to be found in any Hebrew or Greek manuscripts. It is supposed to have been originally written in the Greek language; but is extant only in a few Latin copies, and in an Arabic version." He adds, p. 534. "The book was never admitted into the Hebrew canon; and there is no sufficient authority to prove that it was ever extant in the Hebrew language. Its pretended prophecies are not produced in evidence by Christian writers, striking as such testimony must have been, if genuine; and the book was never publicly or generally acknowledged either in the Greek or Latin church; nor was it ever inserted in the sacred catalogue, by either councils or fathers; but is expressly represented as apocryphal by St. Jerom, who describes it as rejected by the church."

Leaving, then, the three places where the term *hell* is used in the second book of Esdras, out of the present question, let us see what all the others amount to, in proving that hell means a place of endless misery for the wicked.

1st, In all the other places, where the word hell is used, the original word is *Hades*. Are we then to receive it as a truth, on the authority of these uninspired writers, that Hades is a place of endless punishment for the wicked? We think it has been shown that this is not the sense in which the New Testament writers use this word. Nor is Sheol, its corresponding word in the Old, used in this sense. See chap. 1.



We demand then, how these apocryphal writers came to give to Hades such a different meaning from that of the sacred writers, both in the Old and New Testament. From what *divine* source of information did they learn that Hades was the place of future eternal punishment? If it is not found in this sense in the inspired writings, ought it to be found in theirs? And are we obliged to receive it in this sense implicitly on their authority? Besides; why have the above authors in proving that Gehenna is used to signify a place of endless misery quoted the Apocrypha, when this word is not once used there? They declare that Hades is not a place of endless punishment, and yet quote texts where this word occurs in the Apocrypha to prove that it is. The fact is, they took it for granted that where hell is used by the Apocryphal writers, that the original word was Gehenna. This was a very great oversight. If they knew to the contrary, it was certainly very wrong to confound two places, which are so plainly distinguished in Scripture, and which they themselves have so expressly distinguished.

2d, It has been shown in Chap. i. sect. 3. that the Jews learned the notion of eternal punishment in *Hades* from the heathen. Is it any wonder then, that in the books of the Apocrypha, we should find this word used in this sense; books known to contain so much fiction, and fancy, and so many other heathen notions? It would rather be surprising, if we did not. If any one will affirm that these writers did not learn their notion of a punishment in Hades from the heathen, it is his duty to show from what other source their information was derived. It was not from the Old Testament, for it contains no such information. If the Apocryphal books were all written before the New Testament, it is plain the writers did not derive their information about Hades as a place of punish-

ment from it. Supposing some of them, yea, admit all of them to have been written after the New Testament, this information was not derived from it, for it contained no such information. If their notions then concerning Hades be not of *heathen* origin, let it be shown that they are *divine*.

3d, But it should be remembered that the original word which is used by these writers, is not *Gehenna*, but *Hades*. Now it hath been shown beyond a doubt, that Hades is not the place of *eternal* punishment for the wicked, but is in fact to be destroyed, or be no more. All, then, which the most zealous contenders for future punishment could make out from the usage of the word hell, in the Apocrypha, would be, that it is an intermediate place of punishment between death and the resurrection. It proves nothing on the subject of *endless misery in Gehenna or hell*, the word which is supposed by Dr. Campbell and others, properly to express this place of punishment. But there is one thing which ought not to be overlooked. Dr. Campbell, we have seen, says that *Gehenna* is not used in the Old Testament to express a place of endless misery for the wicked, but that in process of time, it came gradually to assume this sense, and at last came to be confined to it. The gradual change must have taken place between the completion of the Old Testament Scriptures and the commencement of the gospel dispensation; for he says that in this sense it is always used in the New Testament. It is believed that some, if not all, the Apocryphal books, were written during this period. We were not a little surprised, then, in finding that not one of the Apocryphal writers ever used the term *Gehenna* in this sense, or in any other, throughout their writings. It is then put beyond all possibility of controversy, that this gradual change of the meaning of *Gehenna* was not brought about about by these writers. Whoever did

this, it cannot be imputed to them. We suspect however, from the word hell being used in the English version of the Apocrypha, that they are accused of this. But this is a great mistake, for the word Gehenna is not once used by them. Who then brought about this gradual change in the meaning of the term Gehenna? I cannot find that Dr. Campbell, or any other writer, gives any information on this subject.

I may just add, that it would be much more like the truth to have said, "that the word Hades or Sheol does not occur in the Old Testament as meaning a place of endless misery. But in process of time, it came gradually to be used in this sense and at last was confined to it." Here the Apocrypha could be appealed to for this new sense of the word Hades. But after all, the question would still remain unanswered; On whose authority was this new sense given to the word Hades?

4th, The many silly and ridiculous things contained in the Apocrypha, forbid us receiving the doctrine that hell is a place of endless misery, on its authority. At what point are we to stop, if once we admit its authority on the subject before us? It is the learned, not the unlearned, who appeal to this kind of authority. Never in the whole course of my past life, have I heard a private Christian, or any preacher quote the Apocrypha to prove, that hell was a place of endless misery. Were it done, no regard would be paid to it; and if any Universalist quoted it in proof of his views, it would be proof enough that his views could not be supported from the Bible. But what degree of dependance is to be placed on any of the books in the Apocrypha, in determining the truth of any particular doctrine, and especially such an important one as this in question, may be seen from the following quotation from Gray, in his preface to the Apocryphal books, p. 511. "The books which are admit-

ted into our Bibles under the description of Apocryphal books, are so denominated from a Greek word, which is expressive of the uncertainty and concealed nature of their original. They have no title to be considered as inspired writings; and though in respect of their antiquity and valuable contents they are annexed to the canonical books, it is in a separate division: and by no means upon an idea that they are of equal authority, in point of doctrine, with them; or that they are to be received as oracles of faith; to sanctify opinions, or to determine religious controversies.”

It would be a mere waste of time to pursue this argument further. Whether Gehenna is, or is not, a place of eternal punishment, no argument can be derived from the Apocrypha, to prove that it was considered a place of punishment by those writers; for they do not once use this word.

Let us now attend to the Targums. For the information of some, we give the following abridged account of them from Prideaux's *Connections*, vol. iv. p. 560—585.

“The Chaldee paraphrases are translations of the Scriptures of the Old Testament made directly from the Hebrew text into the language of the Chaldeans; which language was anciently used through all Assyria, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine; and is still the language of the churches of the Nestorian and Maronite Christians in those eastern parts, in the same manner as the Latin is the language of the Popish churches here in the west. And therefore these paraphrases were called Targums, because they were versions or translations of the Hebrew text into this language; for the word targum signifieth, in Chaldee, an interpretation or version of one language into another, and may properly be said of any such version or translation: but it is most commonly by

the Jews appropriated to these Chaldee paraphrases ; for being among them what were most eminently such, they therefore had this name by way of eminency especially given to them.

“These Targums were made for the use and instruction of the vulgar Jews after their return from the Babylonish captivity ; for, although many of the better sort still retained the knowledge of the Hebrew language during that captivity, and taught it their children, and the Holy Scriptures that were delivered after that time, excepting only some parts of Daniel and Ezra, and one verse in Jeremiah, were all written therein ; yet the common people, by having so long conversed with the Babylonians, learned their language, and forgot their own. It happened indeed otherwise to the children of Israel in Egypt ; for, although they lived there above three times as long as the Babylonish captivity lasted, yet they still preserved the Hebrew language among them, and brought it back entire with them into Canaan. The reason of this was, in Egypt they all lived together in the land of Goshen ; but on their being carried captive by the Babylonians, they were dispersed all over Chaldea and Assyria, and, being there intermixed with the people of the land, had their main converse with them, and therefore were forced to learn their language ; and this soon induced a disuse of their own among them ; by which means it came to pass, that, after their return, the common people, especially those of them who had been bred up in that captivity, understood not the Holy Scriptures in the Hebrew language, nor their posterity after them. And therefore, when Ezra read the law to the people, he had several persons standing by him well skilled in both the Chaldee and Hebrew languages, who interpreted to the people in Chaldee what he first read to them in Hebrew. And afterwards, when

the method was established of dividing the law into 54 sections, and of reading one of them every week in their synagogues, the same course of reading to the people the Hebrew text first, and then interpreting it to them in Chaldee, was still continued. For, when the reader had read one verse in Hebrew, an interpreter standing by did render it into Chaldee; and then the next verse being read in Hebrew, it was in like manner interpreted in the same language as before; and so on from verse to verse was every verse alternately read first in the Hebrew, and then interpreted in Chaldee to the end of the section; and this first gave occasion for the making of Chaldee versions for the help of these interpreters. And they thenceforth became necessary not only for their help in the public synagogues, but also for the help of the people at home in their families, that they might there have the Scriptures for their private reading in a language which they understood.

“This work having been attempted by divers persons at different times, and by some of them with different views (for some of them were written as versions for the public use of the synagogues, and others as paraphrases and commentaries for the private instruction of the people,) hence it hath come to pass, that there were anciently many of these Targums, and of different sorts, in the same manner as there anciently were many different versions of the same Holy Scriptures into the Greek language, made with like different views; of which we have sufficient proof in the Octalpa of Origen. No doubt, anciently there were many more of these Targums than we now know of, which have been lost in the length of time. Whether there were any of them of the same composition on the whole Scriptures is not any where said. Those that are now remaining were composed by different persons, and on different parts of Scripture,

some on one part, and others on other parts; and are, in all, of these eight sorts following. 1. That of Onkelos on the five books of Moses; 2. That of Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the prophets, that is, on Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets; 3. That on the law, which is ascribed to Jonathan Ben Uzziel; 4. The Jerusalem Targum on the law; 5. The Targum on the five lesser books, called the Megilloth, *i. e.* Ruth, Esther, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah; 6. The second Targum on Esther; 7. The Targum of Joseph, the one-eyed, on the book of Job, the Psalms, and the Proverbs; and, 8. The Targum on the first and second book of Chronicles. On Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, there is no Targum at all. The reason given by some for this is, because a great part of those books is written in the Chaldee language, and therefore there is no need of a Chaldee paraphrase upon them. This indeed is true for Daniel and Ezra, but not for Nehemiah; for that book is all originally written in the Hebrew language. No doubt, anciently there were Chaldee paraphrases on all the Hebrew parts of those books, though now lost. It was long supposed that there were no Targums on the two books of Chronicles, because none such were known, till they were lately published by Beckius, at Augsburg in Germany, that on the first book A. D. 1680, and that on the second in 1683."

Having given this abridged account of the Targums, let us attend to what men quote from them, in proof that Gehenna, in the New Testament, is used to express a place of endless misery for all the wicked. It is very natural for one to conclude, that the quotations made would be given us at length, and that they would be full and explicit in establishing this doctrine. We have been at some pains to col-

lect from men who have had access to such scarce books, to see and judge for ourselves concerning what they produced from them in proof. The following, is all we have seen quoted from them, to prove that Gehenna or hell signifies a place of endless misery. Mr. Parkhurst on the word Gehenna, thus writes, "From this valley's having been the scene of those infernal sacrifices, and probably too from its continuing after the time of Josiah's reformation, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. a place of abominable *filthiness* and *pollution*; the Jews in our Saviour's time used the compound word *ge enm*, for hell, the place of the damned. This appears from that word's being thus applied by the Chaldee Targums on Ruth ii. 12. Psalm cxl. 12. Isai. xxvi. 1—5. and xxxiii. 14. and by the Jerusalem Targums, and that of Jonathan Ben Uzziel. Gen. iii. 24. and xv. 17. Compare 2 Esdras ii. 29." It ought to be noticed here; that Parkhurst does not quote one word from these Targums to let us see what they have said, but merely says, that the word Gehenna is used for the place of the damned in certain places in the Targums, on some texts in the Old Testament to which he refers. Let any one turn to those texts and he will see, that Gehenna does not occur in one of them. Yea, it is difficult to perceive how any man could introduce the doctrine of hell-torments in speaking of them. The only exception to this is Isai. xxxiii. 14. a text we have considered in chap. ii. sect. 3. In whatever way the Targumists speak of Gehenna in those texts, it is certain that nothing said in the texts themselves afforded them the least occasion to say that Gehenna was the place of the damned. At any rate we ought to have seen what they have said; that we might judge of the evidence they have adduced, for ourselves. On a subject like the one before us, it affords no satisfaction to give us a volume of such kind of proof. I shall



also quote the following from Whitby on Mark ix. 43, 44.—“That Gehenna was by the Jews still looked on and represented as the place in which the wicked were to be tormented by fire: so the Jerusalem Targum represents Gehenna which is prepared for the wicked in the world to come, as a *furnace* sparkling and flaming with fire, into which the wicked fall. And the Targum upon Ecclesiastes speaks of the fire of hell, Eccles. ix. 15. of the sparks of the fire of hell, chap. x. 11. And of the wicked, who shall go to be burned in hell, chap. viii. 10. Accordingly our Lord speaks, verse xlvii. and Matth. v. 22. of the wicked being cast into the fire of hell, and of their being cast into a furnace of fire, Matth. xiii. 42.”—He adds,—“The ancient Jews held that the punishment of the wicked in hell should be perpetual or without end. So Judith saith that they shall weep under the sense of their pains forever, chap. xvi. 17. Josephus informs us that the Pharisees held that the souls of the wicked were to be punished with perpetual punishment, and that there was appointed for them a perpetual prison. Philo saith the punishment of the wicked person is to live forever dying; and to be forever in pains and griefs, and calamities that never cease.” The same remarks which have just been made on the quotation from Parkhurst nearly apply with the same force to the one just quoted from Whitby. We are not furnished with the passages at length, but mere scraps of expressions are afforded us. Yea, in the first of his statement he quotes or rather refers to the Jerusalem Targum, but does not say what place in it we are to find any thing about this. Such a mode of quotation from the Targums or any other books might just as well be spared, if they are made for the purpose of proving any thing with a view to convince the reader.

This is all I have been able to find quoted from the Targums to prove that Gehenna is a place of endless punishment for the wicked. I have no doubt if any thing better could have been found, those two learned men would have produced it. I must be permitted to say, that these quotations, do the doctrine no credit, and reflect no honor on the men who adduced them. But seeing nothing better is afforded us, let us suppose that the writers of the Targums did use Gehenna to mean a place of endless misery for the wicked. Let us grant for argument's sake, that these quotations, if quotations they may be called, from the Targums, show sufficiently that the writers used Gehenna in this way. What does this prove? It simply proves that those Targumists, who are reckoned by Prideaux the worst or the least esteemed, used Gehenna in this sense. The Targums referred to by Parkhurst and Whitby are those into which the writers introduced their own glosses and silly stories, fables, prolix explications, and other additions. Are we then to believe such a doctrine on such kind of authority? He that is able to receive it, let him receive it; I beg to be excused. On these quotations I shall now submit a few remarks for candid consideration.

1st, If the Targums are good authority, that Gehenna is a place of endless punishment, their authority is equally good in determining who are to suffer it. Permit me then to adduce the same authority, as quoted by Whitby on Rom. ii. to show, that no Jew would go to hell to be punished forever, but that all the Gentiles are fit fuel for hell fire. He says,—“The Jewish religion was very much corrupted at our Saviour's coming, so that they thought it sufficient to obtain God's favour, and to secure them from his judgments,—1st, That they were of *the seed of Abraham*; and hence the Baptist speaks thus to them,

*bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and (think it not sufficient to) say within yourselves. we have Abraham for our father, Matth. iii. 8, 9.* The Chaldee paraphrasts do often mention their expectation of being preserved for the merits or good works of their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and their writers add, *that hell fire hath no power over the sinners of Israel, because Abraham and Isaac descend thither to fetch them thence.* 2d, They held that circumcision was of sufficient virtue to render them accepted of God, and to preserve them from eternal ruin; for they teach that *no circumcised person goes to hell; God having promised to deliver them from it for the merit of circumcision; and having told Abraham, that when his children fell into transgression, and did wicked works, he would remember the odour of their foreskins, and would be satisfied with their piety.* And, 3d, They taught that *all Israelites* had a portion in the world to come; and that notwithstanding their sins, yea, though they were condemned here for their wickedness: whereas, of all the Gentiles, without exception, they pronounce that *they are fuel for hell fire.*" Let persons then, who quote the Targums in proof that Gehenna or hell is a place of endless misery, take their choice. They must either reject their authority altogether, or be willing to go to hell on the same authority; as Gentiles we must all be content to be fuel for hell fire. Let us then make up our minds, whether we shall, for the sake of maintaining the authority and honour of the Targums in the one case, be willing to submit to the punishment they assign us in the other. We must either accept of both or reject both.—We might here take our leave of the Targums: for what has now been stated, is sufficient to convince any man, that their authority is not for a moment to be regarded. But we shall proceed.

2d, Parkhurst says in the above quotation, that, "the Jews in our Saviour's time used the compound word, *ge enm*, for hell, the place of the damned." And he adds, that "this appears from that word's being thus applied by the Chaldee Targums and by the Jerusalem Targums and that of Ben Uzziel." And why does it not also *appear* that all the stories, and glosses, and fables, which they introduced into their Targums, are also true? We have the same authority for the one as for the other. If it should be said, that the Targums are only appealed to for the manner in which the Jews used this word, we reply that this is not the whole truth, for it is in the way the Jews did use this word in the Targums, that the doctrine is attempted to be proved. The sense in which our Lord used the word Gehenna is assumed, and the Targums are appealed to not only for the sense of this word but for the truth of the doctrine. Let it be shown from the context of the passages in which it is used, that this is its sense, and there is no necessity to appeal to the Targums. But if this be true which is stated in the above quotations why does it not also appear, that the Gentiles were fuel for hell fire? By this way of making things *appear to be true*, it will be no difficult thing to show, that all the silly, sick-brained stories of the Apocrypha, Targums, and Talmuds, are true. Besides, by the same rule, we ought to believe, that the fire of hell is literal, material fire, for the Targumists appear to have believed this, as is plain from the above quotation. But notice, that Whitby says, that "the Jewish religion was very much corrupted at our Saviour's coming." By what evidence does it appear, that the Gentiles were fuel for hell fire, and that this is a corruption of their religion, but that hell fire itself was not also a part of this corruption? Neither of these is taught in the Old Testament. From what source, then, do we

learn, that both are not a corruption of their religion? How could they be any-thing but a corruption of their religion, when not found in their Scriptures? If this is denied, let proof be produced to the contrary. After reading the above quotation from Whitby, *no one can doubt* that the Jewish religion was *very much corrupted*. It was a corruption, however, as any one may see, which flattered themselves, and sufficiently expressed their enmity against the Gentiles. After seeing this quotation, and considering the strange and even ridiculous opinions held by the Jews, what credit can any man give to any thing such persons could say about Gehenna being a place of endless misery? One would certainly be disposed to think, that, so far from the doctrine being true, it was invented for the purpose of showing the deep-rooted aversion which they had to Gentiles. If Gehenna or hell, held by them to be a place of endless misery, for all the Gentiles, be a truth, yet all the other things stated in the above quotation are considered corruptions of their religion, we honestly own that we have seldom seen a truth held with so many absurd notions. However, if it can be proved that this part is a truth, and all the others are errors which they blended with it, we shall be happy to give the evidence produced a candid examination. To say the least of it, the testimony of such witnesses, is very suspicious.

3d, But we should like to know how the writers of the Targums, Josephus, and Philo, quoted above, came by the information, which they detail to us concerning hell or Gehenna. By what means did they come to know, that it was a place of punishment for the wicked, that the punishment was to be literal fire, and endless in its duration? I repeat the question,—Where did the above persons get all this information which they communicate to us about hell? Did they derive it from the heathen, or did they invent it them-

selves? If from neither of those sources, let it be shown from what source they did derive it. Until it can be proved that this information was derived from God's authority, no man ought to believe it.

But it may be objected to this, by saying, is it not said, in the above quotations, that "our Lord speaks, Mark ix. 47. and Matth. v. 22. of the wicked being cast into the fire of hell, and of their being cast into a furnace of fire, Matth. xiii. 42.?" The two first of these passages have been considered before, being two of those in which Gehenna occurs. It has been shown that Gehenna in no one instance, signifies a place of endless misery for the wicked. As to the last passage, we have shown in an Inquiry into the import of the word *aion*, translated everlasting, &c. that it has nothing to do with a place of endless misery, but that it refers to the same temporal calamities which are spoken of under the emblem of Gehenna, by the prophet Jeremiah. We can show that our Lord did not derive his allusions to a "furnace of fire" in the above passages, from the Targums, but from the Old Testament Scriptures. This, however, we cannot do here. It is very certain, that almost all professing Christians, not only in our day, but for many ages past, have believed that Gehenna or hell, is the place of eternal punishment for all the wicked. One should think that it would not be difficult to show from what source this information was derived. We might also expect, that instead of referring to the Targums and the Apocrypha, God's authority would be appealed to at once, and that the Scripture evidence of its truth, would be full and explicit. A subject of such universal and deep interest to the human race, we think would not be left as a matter of doubtful disputation, depending on the sense which the writers of the Targums give to the word Gehenna. Even when such writings are appealed to, they afford

but little satisfaction, as to proof of the doctrine, and give us but a poor opinion of either the piety of the writers or the correctness of their religious opinions. If, eternal punishment in hell, be a part of the revealed will of God, at some time or other this revelation must have been given. Now I am willing to believe it, and shall teach it with all the ability God has given me, if it can be shown that such a revelation has been given, during any part of the four following periods of time: which includes all periods in which it could be revealed.

1st, I shall believe it, if it can be proved, that it was revealed at any time during the Old Testament dispensation. That such a doctrine, as the eternity of hell torments, was not revealed during this period, is now generally admitted. It is denied that it was revealed under the name of Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, or even Gehenna, during that dispensation: and it is not pretended that any other name is used to express this place of endless punishment. I therefore observe

2d, That I shall believe this doctrine, if it can be proved, that God revealed it any time from the completion of the Old Testament Scriptures to the commencement of the gospel dispensation. The time which elapsed between these two events, was about four hundred years. The Apocrypha and Targums are supposed to be the writings which fill up this chasm; but it is not pretended that any of these writers were inspired to reveal this, or any other doctrine. Though hell is spoken of in these writings, yet it has no more claim to our belief, than many other things stated in them. Malachi, in closing his book commanded attention to be given to the law of Moses, until the coming of John the Baptist, but gives no injunction to pay attention to the Apocrypha or the Targums. And we have no account, during the above period, that any inspired prophet arose, and

revealed such a doctrine to the world. To quote any writer from Malachi to John the Baptist, in proof of this doctrine, is nothing to the purpose.

3d, I will believe this doctrine, if it is proved that God revealed it since the New Testament was completed. This is not supposed, for it is contended by all who hold it, that it was revealed long before this. We have seen that it is spoken of by the writers of the Targums, Josephus, and Philo, which sets this question at rest. To contend that it was revealed after the New Testament was completed, would be to give it up as a Scripture doctrine, and sanction all the wild pretensions to inspiration since that period. If we do not end our revelations with the New Testament, we shall have a host of inspired fanatics, and an inundation of enthusiastical reveries, for the faithful sayings of God.

4th, I will believe this doctrine, if it can be proved that it has been revealed by God to men during the ministry of Christ or any of his apostles; or, in other words, if it can be proved from the New Testament. On this ground it is placed by Dr. Campbell, and all who contend for endless misery, in Gehenna or hell. In support of this sense of the term Gehenna in the New Testament, the Targums and the Apocrypha are appealed to, and it is taken for granted, that this is its sense there, without any examination of the passages where it occurs. All these passages we have considered, and we think have shown, that no such doctrine is taught in them. Besides, we adduced a number of facts, at variance with such a view of the subject. Are we then implicitly to believe what those uninspired writers say about Gehenna, and in face of all the evidence we have adduced to the contrary? No reasonable man can expect this of us. But we have a few remarks to make on the above quotations, of a different nature from those already made.



1st, We cannot help noticing the similarity of opinion among the Jews in those days, and good people in these, respecting those who are to go to hell or Gehenna. In those days the Jews considered *all Gentiles as fit fuel for hell fire*. They exempted themselves from such a punishment; for no Jew could go to hell! If any Jew ever went there "*hell fire hath no power over the sinners of Israel, because Abraham and Isaac descend thither to fetch them thence.*" The merit of *circumcision, and the odour of their foreskins* was sufficient to save them from hell. Such was the faith of the persons on whose authority we are to believe Gehenna or hell to be a place of endless misery! Gentiles now retaliate on the Jews, and in their turn, consign all the Jews to the punishment of hell. Ask persons who believe in the doctrine of hell torments, "do you expect to go to hell?" "Oh! no," say they, "God forbid, that we should go to hell." And why should not they go to hell, as well as any other persons? You will find that they have similar reasons to assign as the Jews had, why they are exempted from this punishment. They have Abraham, or some good man for their father; they have been baptized; they have joined the church. These or something similar has put all their fears to rest about their going to hell! The fact is, I never met with a person in my life who believed that hell was a place of punishment for himself, but always for some other persons, such as Jews and heathen, and wicked persons in their town or neighbourhood. Yea, we have known some, even of the best of men, who, while their children, relations and neighbours lived, looked on them as in the broad road to hell, but when they died, and that without much evidence of repentance, still hoped that they had gone to heaven. This conduct of theirs, has reminded us of the ancient Romans, who, while

their Cæsars lived, counted them devils, but after they were dead, deified them.

2d, If the writers, of the Targums did use the term Gehenna to express the place of endless misery, and if the Jews considered the Gentiles fit fuel for hell fire, it ought to be considered how they came by such opinions. This we shall attempt to inquire into, and, if possible, ascertain the source whence they were derived.—There are several points fixed about this, which will enable us, at least, to come to some general conclusions on the subject. 1st, The word Gehenna does not occur in the Old Testament in the sense of a place of future punishment for the wicked. It is apparent, then, that these opinions held by the Jews, could not have been derived from the Old Testament Scriptures. Here is one point settled, about which there can be no dispute.

2d, That the word Gehenna was used to express a place of endless misery in the days of our Lord, is not only affirmed by Dr. Campbell, but at this period it had come to be confined to this sense. He says that this is always and indisputably its sense in the New Testament. Admitting this to be true, let me observe

3d, That Dr. Campbell also declares, that the term Gehenna came gradually to be used in this new sense, which it had not in the Old Testament. Who first began to give it this new sense, or how long a time elapsed before it came to be confined to it, he gives us no information. At this distance of time, it is perhaps impossible to settle these questions. One thing, however, is certain, that this new sense affixed to the word Gehenna, was not of divine authority, but came gradually to have this sense given it by the Jews. This leads us to inquire

4th, About what period of time the Jews began to give it this new sense. This appears to have been

after their captivity in Babylon. It was long after this period that the Targums were written. Where then could the Jews learn their opinion of a place of eternal punishment but among the heathen? That they did learn this from the heathen, we think, has been shown in a quotation from Dr. Campbell. See chap. i. sect. 3. But observe, that though they learned among the heathen that Hades was a place of eternal misery, they did not learn from them to call it by the name Gehenna. This was a Hebrew word, and its application to the place of future punishment was most likely to be done by the Jews. It is not denied but that the Jews did so apply it, and it is not said to be so applied by the heathen. If the question is asked, how did the Jews come to give to this place of future punishment such a name as Gehenna? We think the answer to this is both easy and natural. Could there be any thing more natural than to call it by the name of the most horrid and abominable place known to Jews, which was Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom. In proof my assertion, I quote Jahn's Archæology, p. 527. He says—"In the later periods of the Jewish kingdom, this idol was erected in the valley south of Jerusalem, viz. גי בן הנם or גי הנם, in the valley of Hinnom, and in the part of said valley called *tophet*, תפח, so named from the *drums*, תפס, תף, which were beaten to prevent the groans and cries of children sacrificed, from being heard, Jer. vii. 31, 32. : xix. 6—14. Isai. xxx. 33. 2 Kings xxiii. 10. The place was so abhorrent to the minds of the more recent Jews, that they applied the name *Ge Hinnom* or *Gehenna* to the place of torments in a future life. The word *Gehenna* is used in this way, (viz. for the place of punishment beyond the grave,) very frequently in oriental writers, as far as India. Compare Wetstein's New Testament, at Matth. v. 5." We have seen that Dr. Campbell has said that, after the cap-

tivity, the Jews began to speak of heaven, or the place of happiness for the good, by the name of paradise, and Abraham's bosom, the happiest or most pleasant places they had any idea of. And is it not as natural to think, that they should speak of a place of endless punishment by the name of Gehenna, the most abominable place they had any idea of? They, in this case, did nothing more than men do every day, in expressing some new thing, by the name of some other thing, which they think most resembles it.

5th, How came the Jews, then, to exempt themselves from the punishment of Gehenna, and declare all the Gentiles fit fuel for hell fire? This ought to be carefully examined. With a view to ascertain how this took place, let the following things be carefully considered. We have shown, chap. ii. sect. 1. that Gehenna in the Old Testament, was made by the prophet Jeremiah an emblem of future temporal punishment to the Jewish nation, and which came upon it as described by our Lord, Matth. xxiv. This we think is beyond all dispute. The Jews could not help seeing such a punishment predicted by their own prophets. From their intercourse with the heathen they had learned the heathen notion that Hades was a place of punishment for the wicked. Observe, also, that a strong prejudice existed in the minds of the Jews against the Gentiles. They counted them dogs and excluded them from all participation of the blessings of Messiah's reign. Every one may see from Acts, chaps. x. xi. how strong this prejudice was, even in the minds of the disciples. They refused to eat and drink with them. Yea, even the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans; and whilst they admitted that they ought to love their neighbours, they thought that they ought to hate their enemies. The whole New Testament shows to what extent self-love, self-righteousness, national pride, and vanity had

taken possession of their minds. This we have seen strongly confirmed from the previous quotation from Whitby on Rom. ii. Taking all these circumstances into view, we think the following at least a rational conjecture about this. The Jews hated the Gentiles, and to testify this hatred, they declared them to be fit fuel for hell fire. Further than this they could not carry their hatred of them. As they had learned the notion of eternal punishment in Hades from the heathen, and had applied the term Gehenna, as a name to it, by consigning over all the Gentiles to its punishment, and exempting themselves, their hatred of them and also their own self-love was gratified; yea, by this they blinded their own eyes, as to the punishment of Gehenna, threatened them by their own prophets.

But there is one important question on this subject to which we ought to pay some attention. It is this. *Is it certain that our Lord, in the New Testament, when he used the term Gehenna or hell, used it in the sense it has in the Targums, and not in the sense in which it is used in the Old Testament?* To decide this question is to put the question at rest. It is very evident that Dr. Campbell, Parkhurst and Whitby take it for granted that our Lord did use the term Gehenna as it is used by the writers of the Targums and Apocrypha, to signify a place of eternal punishment for the wicked. They seem to speak about this, as if it could not, and ought not to be questioned; yet all they advance in proof, is bare assertion. They proceed upon the presumption, that this is indisputable, and entirely overlook, what we have proved to be a fact, that the term Gehenna is used in the Old Testament as an emblem of the temporal punishment which God was to bring on the Jewish nation. Had those men turned their attention to this, they would have given us a very dif-

ferent account of Gehenna, and not referred us to the Targums and the Apocrypha.

But, we have to ask, if our Lord used the term Gehenna to express a place of endless misery, how are the facts we have adduced to be got over on such a view of the subject? If the Targums can be appealed to, showing how such facts can be reconciled with this view of Gehenna, we hope it will be done. Let any one examine those facts, and then say, if it is possible for any rational being to believe this until those facts are removed out of the way. They form a phalanx of difficulties as to any man's believing this doctrine, which is impenetrable. Upon no part of this Inquiry has more labour of thinking been bestowed, than in attempting to reconcile those facts with the idea of Gehenna or hell's being a place of endless misery for all the wicked. We have turned this point round, and viewed it on all sides, and with all the care and attention we could command, but have found the facts and the doctrine utterly irreconcilable. I can sincerely say that I have endeavoured to find something which could fairly controvert the facts, or reconcile them with this doctrine—but in vain. The more I have laboured in this way, the facts have increased. And I doubt not, that, if the labour was continued, they would still increase: for I am not convinced that the subject is yet exhausted.

If I am indeed in an error, in believing that Gehenna or hell in the New Testament has no reference to a place of endless punishment, the first step to be taken to convince me of my error, is to account for the facts. Until these are fairly and honourably removed out of the way, it is useless to endeavour to make me believe this doctrine. The next step to be taken to convince me of my error, if it be one, is to enter into an examination of the passages which speak of Gehenna, and show that I have misinterpreted

them. When these things are done, such persons may save themselves the trouble to quote the Targums, for I will believe the doctrine without any appeal to their authority.

The following is all that is to be found in the Targums, in the places to which Whitby and Parkhurst refer us.

“Ruth ii. 12. The Lord shall abundantly recompense thee in this age, for thy good work, and shall be thy complete reward to the age that shall come, from the presence of the Lord God of Israel; because thou hast come to join thyself to his people and worship, and find protection under the shadow of the majesty of his glory, and for this righteous conduct thou shalt be delivered from the punishment of Gehenna, that thy portion may be with Sarah and Ribhah, and Rachel and Lea.”

“Psalm cxl. 10, 11. Let coals of fire fall from heaven upon them; let him cast them into the fire of Gehenna; into miry pits; from which let them not rise to eternal life. Let the angel of death hunt the violent man, and cast him into Gehenna.”

“Isaiah xxvi. 15. Thou hast been revealed to us, O! Lord! as about to assemble the dispersed of thy people; it shall also come to pass that thou wilt collect them from their wanderings; that thou mightest appear in thy power, to cast all the wicked into Gehenna.”

“Isaiah xxvi. 19. And those who transgress thy word, thou wilt deliver into Gehenna.”

“Isaiah xxxiii. 14. Who among us shall dwell in Zion, where the splendor of his majesty is as consuming fire? Who among us shall dwell in Jerusalem, where the wicked are to be judged, and cast into Gehenna, into everlasting burnings?”

Our readers have now before them, all that we can find in the Targums, and we leave them to decide, if

such glosses, on such texts, are a good foundation for the doctrine of eternal punishment in hell or Gehenna.

We have dwelt much longer on the argument drawn from the Apocrypha and Targums than we at first contemplated; and much longer than the importance of the argument merited. Before closing this Section, we must be indulged with a few observations, respecting the Greek version of the Seventy, in regard to the subject under consideration.

1st, At what period of time was this version made? Concerning this, Dr. Kennicott, pages 319, 320. thus writes: "After many voluminous controversies amongst learned writers upon *the Greek version of the Old Testament*, we seem to have three circumstances clearly ascertained—that there was no Greek version before that called the SEVENTY—that the version so denominated, was made at the beginning of the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 280 years before Christ, and that the version, then made, was only of the Pentateuch.

It is not necessary for me to spend a moment in discussing whether this version was made all at once, or at different times; nor even whether it was made at the precise time here specified. A few years, one way or another, does not affect the remarks I am about to make. One thing will be allowed by all, without a single word of controversy; that this version was made sometime between the days of Malachi and the coming of John the Baptist. Keeping this one fact in view I notice

2d, That Dr. Campbell declares the word Gehenna is not found in the Septuagint version. He says, as quoted before, page 93.—"Accordingly the word Gehenna does not occur in the Septuagint. It is not a Greek word, and consequently not to be found in the Grecian classics." That this word is not found in the



Septuagint, being only a translation, need not surprise us, for Dr. Campbell, in the sentence preceding the one just quoted, says concerning Gehenna as a place of future punishment—"In the Old Testament we do not find this place in the same manner mentioned." Keeping these facts and statements in our view, permit me to make a very few remarks on them, relative to the subject of the present inquiry.

1st, Whoever were the authors of the Greek version, or at whatever period it was made, it is a certain case, that in translating the Old Testament, they did not find that it contained any thing about Gehenna being a place of endless misery for the wicked. Had they perceived any thing like this, we should have found some intimation of it in this translation. Had the Hebrew of the Old Testament warranted such a thing, no doubt but it would have been transfused into this version. We have then the testimony of all the translators of the Greek version, that they did not find that the spirit of God had ever used the term Gehenna in the sense it is commonly used by Christians in the present day. This we think a fact which will not for a moment be disputed. If they did not find it in the Old Testament, how came it to pass that the writers of the Targums could find it? *We have never understood that the Targums are worthy of more regard than the Greek version.*

2d, If Gehenna, at the time this version was made, had begun to be used in the sense of a place of future misery, it is evident that this sense received no countenance from them as translators. It was not by them begun nor does their translation in any way tend to transmit such an opinion to posterity. We cannot even learn from it that such a sense was then given to the word Gehenna by any persons, far less that it was founded on divine authority. If Gehenna then had begun to assume this new sense, which Dr.

Campbell says is always and indisputably its sense in the New Testament, how is it accounted for that they take no notice of it? If this was its sense when the Greek translation was made, had not they as good a right to give it this sense as our English translators, when they made our present English version? If the original and Scriptural meaning of the word was to be laid aside in translating, and an assumed sense of it on man's authority adopted by the latter, why not also by the former? Should it be said, "the Greek version is only of the Old Testament, and it is in the New that Gehenna always and indisputably means a place of endless misery for the wicked;" we reply to this by asking how the New Testament sense of Gehenna comes to be so different from that of the Old? And we ask, further, why Whitby and Parkhurst, quoted before, refer us to the Targums and not to the Old Testament for this new sense given to Gehenna? We ask still further, how this new sense given to this word is ever to be reconciled with the facts we have stated, or can be made to agree with the contexts of the passages in which it occurs? Besides, had men never heard of the Targums and only consulted their Bibles to learn what was the Scripture usage of this word, would they ever give it such a meaning? But what ought to set this matter at rest is, that neither the writers of the Apocrypha nor the authors of the Greek version used Gehenna in this new sense, and even the very writers of the Targums, we are referred to in proof of this sense, are allowed to have given us fables and false glosses of their own. Yea, in the very passages in the Old Testament, where these glosses about Gehenna are given, no rational man would say that any thing in the passages warranted them.

3d, To whatever source then, this change in the sense of Gehenna is referred, which Dr. Campbell

says was *gradual*, it cannot be ascribed in any degree to the authors of the Greek version. Seeing then that they, as well as the authors of the Apocrypha, cannot be quoted as authorities for it, to what other source are we to be referred for this new sense of Gehenna? We do not see that it can be traced to any other source but the Targums. Should it then be found that it is used there in this sense frequently and explicitly, what would be the conclusion which any rational man would draw from this? Would he conclude that Gehenna is a place of endless misery? No; he would conclude that this is something which the writers of the Targums have added as a gloss of their own to the text of the Old Testament, for the authors of the Greek version found no such thing in the Old Testament when their version was made, nor did they think themselves warranted in adding any such glosses of their own. Either, then, the authors of the Greek version did wrong in not finding this sense of Gehenna in the Old Testament, when they made their version, or the Targums are not to be regarded in having made this addition to the oracles of God. If we are to receive this addition of theirs, why not all their other additions, until the word of God is made by us as it was by the Jews, of none effect through our traditions?

## SECTION VI.

### OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

THERE is not a truth revealed in the Bible, against which, one opposed to it, may not start objections. It would, however, be a mere waste of time, and a very trifling employment, to answer every *silly* objection which might be made. *All will allow, that objections which are rational, and which affect the subject against which they are brought, demand an answer.* Every objection which has occurred to myself, or has been suggested by others, of any weight against the views which have been advanced, I shall now attempt to consider. These objections divide themselves into two classes; *plausible, popular objections, but which do not bear against the argument which has been adduced, and such as are supposed to have some weight against the evidence in support of that argument.* I shall begin with the first of these.

1st, One of the most popular objections which I think can be stated, is, that my sentiments are of a licentious tendency. It is remarked, if you do away Gehenna or hell as a place of endless punishment for the wicked, what is left to deter men from the commission of every crime? Indeed, say some, *if I believed there was no hell, I would indulge myself in all kinds of iniquity!* Look, say they, at the loose principles, and still more loose morals, of the Universalists; and add, by way of triumph, who ever heard of a revival of religion among them? It will be allowed, that I have stated

this objection fully and fairly. It shall now be my business, as fully and fairly to meet it.

1st, It is said, "if hell, a place of endless punishment is done away, what is left to deter men from the commission of crime?" In reply to this, I remark—

1st, Under the Old Testament dispensation, it is allowed, that the doctrine of hell torments was not known. Suffer me to ask, what was left then to deter men from crime before this doctrine had existence? When these persons have told us, what was left in *those days* to deter men from crime *without it*, we are prepared to inform them what can deter men *in these days without it*. And *if this doctrine was not preached under the Old Testament to make men holy, how came any then to be holy without it?* Did Adam preach the doctrine of hell torments to Cain to make him holy? Did Noah preach this doctrine to make the antediluvians holy? Did Lot preach this doctrine to make the Sodomites holy? Did Abraham even allude to this doctrine in his intercession with God, as an argument that they might be spared? Yea, was the belief of this doctrine the cause of the holiness of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Lot, &c. &c.? Did the belief of hell torments make them holy in distinction from those who were unholy? If this was the cause of their being holy themselves, why did they not preach this doctrine to make their friends, neighbours, and indeed all mankind, holy? If this doctrine was believed in those days, and was so well fitted as is supposed, to prevent wickedness, why was it not preached? Surely Noah ought to have preached it to the people of the old world, when all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. He was a preacher of righteousness, but I do not find a single hint given in his history, that he was a preacher of hell torments, to deter men from their licentious courses. Besides; why did not Lot preach it to the Sodomites to make

them holy? They were sinners before the Lord exceedingly, but I do not find that he believed this doctrine to keep himself holy, or preached it to others to deter them from licentiousness. Not a word is said, which would lead one to conclude that the antediluvians and Sodomites were all believers in the doctrine of universal salvation, and that this was the cause of their wickedness; nor is a word dropped that Noah, Lot and others, believed in the doctrine of hell torments and that this led them to holiness.

2d, If the doctrine of hell torments, is so well calculated to prevent sin, and promote holiness, why did not our Lord teach it to the Jews, who are allowed to have been a race of very wicked men? Can any man believe, that by the *damnation of hell*, our Lord meant a place of eternal misery, and that he thought it, like the objector, so well fitted to prevent licentiousness, yet only mentioned it once to the unbelieving Jews? Did he think there was nothing left to prevent men from committing all manner of iniquity, and yet but once, and that in a discourse relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, say to them—"how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" It is not the easiest thing in the world for us to believe this.

3d, It is an indisputable fact, that the apostles of our Lord, never said a word about hell to the Gentiles. We ask then, what they had left to deter men from the commission of every crime? If they knew that hell was a place of endless misery for the wicked, and thought it such an excellent antidote against licentiousness, why did they never make use of it? They must have either been ignorant of such a doctrine, or very culpable in not preaching it, to deter men from crime; or they did not consider it so efficacious as the objector imagines. The Gentile nations in the apostles' days, were very licentious. And it appears from chap. i. sect. 3. that they were also

believers in the doctrine of eternal misery in Hades or Tartarus. But we see that the belief of this doctrine did not turn them from their licentious courses. Nor did the apostles of our Lord think the preaching of eternal misery, either in Hades, or Gehenna, would effect this; for they do not say one word to them about punishment in either of those places. Let the objector then account for it, if the apostles were of his mind about this, why they did not preach this doctrine to prevent wickedness in their day. And let him account for it, why the Gentiles in believing it, should be so licentious. If the prophets, Jesus Christ, or his apostles, did not teach eternal torments in hell to promote holiness, ought not their doctrine to be charged with a licentious tendency as well as mine? There is no way of evading this, but by proving, that they did teach this doctrine to mankind. This we think never can be done. If I am then to be condemned, how are they to be cleared? And if their doctrine did not lead to licentiousness, how, in justice, can the views I have advanced be charged with it? I shall not feel much ashamed at being found in such company. These facts are sufficient to put down this objection forever. Nor need we be alarmed that the doctrine will produce an increase of iniquity when the inspired writers never used the opposite doctrine, to check the progress of sin in the world. They had certainly something left to deter men from sin, and which they deemed so efficacious, as to supersede the necessity of the doctrine of hell torments.

4th, Let us inquire, what that was, which they deemed sufficient without it. Paul says, "the goodness of God," and not hell torments, leadeth men to repentance. It is "the grace of God," not *hell torments*, which teacheth to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. It is the "love of Christ," not hell torments,

which constrains men not to live to themselves but to the glory of God. All, who are acquainted with the Scriptures know, to what extent I might here refer to texts of a similar nature, showing the same thing; but I forbear. Here then was the sovereign remedy, which they proposed, to cure a licentious world. If this failed, they had no other to propose. All other remedies which people have tried to effect it, have been like the woman, who spent her all on other physicians, but rather grew worse. The love of God in the gift of his Son, is that, which when believed, and its influence felt, constrains to love and to good works. Every thing else to effect a cure without this, is only religious quackery, and this we deem the very worst kind of quackery. But

5th, Those persons, who aver, that if the doctrine of hell torments be done away, there is nothing left to deter men from the commission of every crime, must certainly think, that where this doctrine is taught, it greatly tends to prevent wickedness. I believe that this will be strongly contended for. Is this then true? Can it be established by sufficient evidence? Has the preaching of hell torments to mankind, produced such glorious effects, as such persons by the above objection would have us believe? Our actual observation of its effects, we admit is very limited. But we have seen a little of it, at least in two quarters of the globe, and we think facts will warrant us to say, that hell torments, and heathenish morality have been preached to people, in many instances, until they have been preached into the grossest immorality. Was not this tried for ages among the Gentile nations, but did it turn them from sin to God? No; it was when the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. Besides, our own actual observation does not lead us to think, that where the doctrine



of hell torments is most preached, there the people are most holy.

6th, But admitting that the preaching of hell torments did deter men, in many cases, from the commission of crimes,—what opinion are we to form of the morality produced by such a cause? We do not envy that parent, the respect and obedience which he receives from his wife and children, who obtains it from the fear of being cast into a furnace of fire! This might do well enough for an eastern despot, but no rational man, far less the God of the universe, would think this true obedience or morality. We venture to say that such a course, to produce obedience, either among men, or in regard to God, is as bad state policy, as it is false divinity. It shows as much ignorance of human nature, as it displays a want of common humanity. In the preaching of Jesus Christ and his apostles, I do not find any attempts made to frighten men from their licentious courses into religion, by terrific descriptions of hell torments. They had so many more rational arguments to induce men to obedience to God, than this, that they never made use of it. Had they deemed it of as much importance as the objector thinks it, we have no doubt but that they would have preached it to the world. At any rate, he must first prove that they did preach this doctrine, before his objection is of any force.

7th, The apostles' doctrine of salvation by grace, through faith, was denounced as leading to licentiousness. Let us sin, said the objector, because grace aboundeth. Now we should like to know how salvation, in this way to all, should be of a licentious nature, and not also to a few? The truth is, the number saved, can make no difference in the case. If the doctrine is licentious when extended to the whole human race, it must be so though limited to a single individual. But every one knows how the apostles re-

futed the objection. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid: how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" We repel the charge in the same way. But the persons who bring this charge against us, seem to think that because no hell torments are prepared, that men are to go to heaven without any Saviour or salvation. We believe no such doctrine. On the contrary, we firmly believe that all who are saved, shall be saved from their sins, reconciled to God, and made meet for heaven. If there be any Universalists, who believe otherwise, we disown them, and would be glad to have them give up the name, until they have relinquished such principles. But we never heard of any Universalists, who held the opinion that any persons went to heaven in their sins. No: in their writings and preaching they disclaim it, and consider it not very candid, nor honourable in their opponents, to bring such a charge against them.

Should it be said here, "but whatever they pretend, do you not see a great many who profess to be Universalists, living very licentious lives?" We freely grant this, but if this is any argument against the doctrine, we think it is one which will prove a great deal too much. It will prove equally against the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Methodists, the Unitarians, and in short, every religious denomination in the world. Do you not find many who profess the principles of all these different sects, who live licentious lives? We are sorry to say that this is but too evident. But this kind of argument, would even prove the principles of the Bible itself to be licentious. Are there not many who profess its principles, who lead licentious lives? Yes, alas! too many. But you will seldom find that the disciples of Paine or Voltaire, are so uncandid, and reason so incorrectly as to conclude, that the Bible is of a licentious tenden-

cy in its principles, because many who profess them are very wicked men. But, say the objectors, those licentious persons who profess to believe the Bible, and of the above sects, do not understand the principles that they profess. Granted. And why will not the objectors allow that many who *profess* to be Universalists do not *understand* and *believe* the principles which *they* profess. If it is no reproach to the other sects to have such kind of professors, why should it be any reproach to the Universalists? The fact is, such kind of professors are no honour to any denomination professing the Christian name, and we once heard of a sect of Deists, who would not have received them into their community, for they would not admit any immoral person among them. We are sure, the fact is too evident to be disputed, that wherever the eternity of hell torments has been published, and published too in all the horrors with which human eloquence could decorate it, and enforced with all the clerical dignity and civil authority that popes, priests, and kings could afford, it has not prevented wickedness in the earth. In my judgment it has produced immorality and other evil consequences, which human nature, bad as it is, agrees to condemn.

Should an appeal be made to facts, by comparing the numbers of those who have lived licentiously, embracing the various religious systems which have been in the world, we are not prepared to admit that the balance of the account would be against Universalists. But admitting that it was greatly against them, all that this could prove, is, that their views tend more to licentiousness than the others. All these different systems produced it to a certain extent, but that of the Universalists was the most prolific. But such a mode of reasoning is false, for it is allowed that an argument which proves both sides of a question, cannot be a good one. The fact is, that persons

professing the very best principles, have led licentious lives. The grace of God has been turned into lasciviousness; and, what good is there which men have not abused?

But, if even a greater proportion of wicked, licentious men were externally attached to the sect of Universalists, we should not be surprised, nor do we think that this proves any thing against the doctrine I have stated. When our Lord was in the world, we are told, that—"then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him." Luke xv. 1. He was also called by his enemies, of a Pharisaical spirit, "a friend of publicans and sinners." Had our Lord preached to them the doctrine of hell torments, why were they so fond of hearing him, and why was he accused of being their friend? Certainly he said nothing to encourage them to continue in sin, but the very reverse; but we think it is equally evident that he did not preach the terrors of hell torments to turn them from their iniquities. If he did not preach this doctrine, there is as little wonder that sinners flocked to hear him, as that now a great many of similar characters should flock to the Universalists. We think, then, that, allowing a greater proportion of loose, immoral people should be disposed to hear the preachers who exclude the doctrine of hell torments from their preaching, the case is not surprising. It was so in the days of our Lord, nor is there any thing in the nature of the case but what might be expected.

But it is said further, "if I believed that there was no eternal punishment in hell, I would indulge myself in all kinds of iniquity." Little need be said in reply to this; indeed it does not deserve one. But as we must reply, we would ask, is this person's holiness of that kind, without which no man shall see the Lord? If it is we do not see but that God must hold up the torments of hell even in heaven, to prevent this per-

son's becoming licentious there! When the *stimulus of hell torments is removed*, what is there to preserve such a person holy? Nothing; and even when thus prevented from licentiousness, what is his holiness good for? If it were not for his evil example in society we would say to him,—indulge in all manner of iniquity, for your wickedness will as soon bring you to heaven as your holiness. But further; it is a very evident case, that the obedience of all such persons, is the obedience of a slave under the terror of the lash. Yea, it shows very clearly, that under all this hypocritical obedience, such persons are in love with sin, and nothing under heaven prevents their outward indulgence of it, but the fear of hell torments. Indeed, the objector openly avows, that if there was no hell, he would indulge his lusts without restraint. Holiness, for its own sake, he does not love. Holiness, from love to God, he knows nothing about. And instead of pursuing it because he finds it the way of peace and comfort to himself, or of any benefit to society, he confesses it to be a burden; and, but for the terror of hell torments, he would prefer a licentious course of life. Can any Universalist be a worse character than this? and if there be a hell, can a man be found who is a more fit subject for its punishment? The terror of hell torments is a common topic. It is held up in such a dreadful and terrific point of view, that we do not much wonder that the objector loses sight of every thing else, and thinks that all he has need to be saved from, is merely from hell torments. We must here indulge ourselves with a few remarks relative to this view of the subject.

1st, To be saved from hell torments is all the objector seems concerned about. This we fear is the case with too many. We are not much surprised that it is so; for in preaching about hell, the chief thing held up to view, is to be saved from such a dreadful

place of punishment. This theme is so much dwelt upon, and this place is described in such a way, that the hearer's mind is wholly absorbed with it. To be saved from this dreadful place is, with him, the most essential part of religion.

2d, The objector is constrained to practise self-denial, much against his inclination, to avoid the torments of hell. If there was no hell he would indulge in all kinds of iniquity. But seeing that there is such a place, to avoid it, he restrains his inclinations. His holiness is the mere effect of fear. The man is chained and in fetters and cannot act himself. Only let him loose from these, by assuring him that there are no eternal torments in hell, and he would be foremost in the ranks of licentiousness.

3d, The objector has a very wrong view both of sin, and the salvation of Jesus Christ. He thinks sin a pleasant, good thing, if it were not for the hell torments in which it must end. He plainly intimates that this is the chief, if not the only thing which prevents his present enjoyment of all the pleasures of sin for a season. Now nothing, we think, more obvious from Scripture, than this, that sin is connected with present misery; and that truth and holiness are productive of happiness. The ways of transgressors are hard, whilst wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths lead to peace. A man that feareth the Lord, happy is he; but though the wicked join hand in hand they shall not go unpunished. Licentiousness is inseparably connected with loss of health, reputation, and property; besides all the pangs of remorse and mental agony to the individual. Holiness is connected with health, reputation, and temporal prosperity, in addition to peace and serenity of mind, which are worth every thing else the world can afford. But the objector does not think so; for he seems to think that a life of licentiousness is the

most happy kind of life he could lead, and but for the dread he has of hell torments, would gratify every sinful lust and passion. But he has also a wrong view of the salvation of Jesus Christ. His mind is so much absorbed with the subject of hell torments, that he has no idea of being saved from sin, but merely from such a punishment. Now the objector should remember that our Lord received the name *Jesus*, because he should save his people from their sins. But does he find that he received this or any other name because he should save them from eternal torments in hell? I do not find it once mentioned in the Bible, that Jesus the Saviour, is said to save any persons from hell. He came into the world to save even the chief of sinners. He came to save men from sin, from the course of this present evil world, from ignorance, folly, crime, and death; but no inspired writer ventures once to say that he came to save men from endless punishment in Gehenna or hell. But this view of Christ's salvation seems, in a great measure, lost sight of: and with the objector and many others, is taken very little notice of, if they can only be saved from eternal punishment.

But the objector says further, "Look at the loose principles, and still more loose morals, of the Universalists; and adds, by way of triumph, whoever heard of a revival of religion among them?" As to the first part of this charge, we think enough has already been said, showing, that persons who understand the true principles on which the doctrine of Universal salvation is founded in Scripture, can neither be licentious in their principles nor morals. Such Universalists are no more accountable for the licentious principles and practice of all those who style themselves Universalists, than Calvinists, Methodists, or any other sect, are for similar characters among them. The very same charge has been brought against other de-

nominations: and, at the present time, is urged with great zeal against the Unitarians, and indeed all who are not orthodox.

As to the charge of *loose principles*, we observe that this is a very loose way of speaking; for we may call any principles loose which do not exactly accord with our own. This is the kind of shot every party fire in their turn at each other, when they have nothing better at hand. Before we can determine any principles to be loose, we must first settle what are true Scriptural principles. The standard must first be established, before we can determine the principles which deviate from it. The principles of our Lord and his apostles were counted loose by the Jews. Besides; do we not find that every thing which does not accord with the popular creeds of the day, branded with this same mark, for party purposes? At the Reformation, the principles of the reformers were counted loose by the Romish church; but these very loose principles which they advocated, are certainly a blessing to us in the present day. Indeed, what man since their day, who ever attempted to state any thing from his Bible, contrary to the popular belief; but has been obliged to submit to the same kind of scorn and obloquy? Some of the principles advanced by those calling themselves the orthodox, in defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, in the present day, would have been deemed not only loose, but also *heretical*, by the persons whose names are the objects of veneration to the different sects of the day. Calvin would not now own many of those who call themselves Calvinists, because their principles have become so *loose*, and differ so much from his. And we doubt if Hopkins would not, like Calvin, disown many who call themselves Hopkinsians. Yea, Mr. John Wesley, if he was to rear his head from the tomb, would remonstrate, we think, with the Metho-



dists, that they have become loose in their principles, in not following up the system which he left them. And it is a notorious fact, that there is a falling off, in almost every sect, from the rigid systems which were originally given them by their respective founders. All sects of professed Christians have corrupted their way upon the earth, and are rather more loose in their principles than they once were. What can be a more loose principle than this, compared with ancient orthodoxy, that *Jesus Christ made an atonement for the sins of the whole world*. Yet this loose principle is now embraced pretty generally by not only Methodists, but Congregationalists, Baptists, yea, by almost all sects of Christians. This *loose principle*, which formerly would have been considered *universal salvation in disguise*, is now advocated by the sects of the day, and what more loose principles they may yet adopt, it is not for me to say, or even conjecture. Such has been the rapid march of Scripture inquiry and investigation, that orthodoxy now is a very different thing from orthodoxy twenty years ago. And what orthodoxy will be twenty years hence, time must develop. If Calvin was now alive, that which is the current orthodoxy, would be heterodoxy with him. He would disown it.

Connected with this loose principle, another is now advocated—that *the number which shall be sent to hell at last, to be eternally miserable, will not be a greater proportion of the whole human race, than the persons executed in any country are to the whole community*. The man who should have broached such a loose principle as this, in former years, would not only have been detested in the religious world, but would have been burned as an heretic. We ask, how much more loose must those persons become in their principles, to be as loose as I am in mine? They have not many steps to take to stand on my ground; indeed, they have

got one foot on it already. If Jesus Christ made an atonement for the sins of the whole world, we really think that such persons might let all the world be saved. Why deny him the glory of saving all for whom he died? Must he die in vain for a number, and must they suffer eternally for the very sins for which he made atonement or reconciliation? And if such persons have reduced the number which are to be eternally miserable to so few, why not let the Saviour's triumph over sin and death be complete, in saving the whole? If my principles are loose, the principles of such persons are far removed from old, rigid orthodoxy. The fact is, that nothing is easier than to call certain principles *loose*. The question with every man ought to be, are they *true or false*? This suggests another—*what saith the Scriptures*? To them I have appealed, and by their decision I am willing to abide; and shall feel grateful to the man who will show me my error, by an appeal to the same authority. The *word of God correctly understood, is true orthodoxy*, and no man's principles ought to be condemned as *loose*, until it is shown that *the standard of truth* does not warrant such principles. It will be allowed that men have gone beyond the Bible, in *rigid* principles. This, present orthodoxy warrants me to assert. It is the duty of orthodoxy to show that my principles are more *loose* than the Bible.

As to the second part of this charge, made with such an air of triumph,—“Who ever heard of a revival among the Universalists?” We shall now attempt a reply. As we do not wish to hurt the feelings of any who may differ from us about revivals of religion, we shall touch this point with as gentle a hand as possible.

1st, If preaching the doctrine of hell torments produces revivals of religion, it is not to be expected that any revivals of this kind could be produced among

Universalists, for they do not preach it. That the preaching of eternal torments in hell, is one of the principal causes which produce revivals of religion in the present day, we presume will not be denied. None of the subjects of such revivals would be deemed genuine converts, unless they not only subscribed to this doctrine, but confessed that they had seen themselves doomed to hell by God's word. Yea, some would even demand the confession of them, that they were willing to be damned, in order that they might be saved.

2d, There were no revivals, arising from this cause, produced by the prophets, by Christ, or his apostles; nor could they be produced, for they did not preach the doctrine of hell torments. We think no man will affirm that any revival of religion was produced, or so much as attempted by them, in preaching such a doctrine. They never used it as a means to alarm and frighten people into a profession of religion. They were never found running from house to house, terrifying men, women, and children by the most frightful descriptions of hell torments, until the whole community was in a religious ferment, and a reaction must take place from the mere want of being able to carry the excitement any further. Nor do we find in those days, what is too obvious in these, the different sects all on the alert, and exerting themselves in every possible way to secure the greatest number of converts to *join* their different churches. A man must shut his eyes very close who does not see through all this religious manœuvring.

3d, Deducting, then, all the religion produced by the preaching of endless misery in hell, which appears in religious excitements, how much would be left with the subjects of it? Such people's minds are lashed with the terrors of hell torments, into religion, or something that passes for it, and the fear of this

punishment in a greater or less degree, operates upon them all the days of their lives. Should we hear of revivals among such persons any more than among Universalists, if this false doctrine, the chief cause of their production, was done away? We question this; for, as far as our observation has extended, the doctrine of hell torments has been a constant theme in public preaching, and in private meetings, to work on the minds of the people. This we believe has been done even with children and others of weak minds, in a way, and to an extent, which men of common sense and prudence ought to avoid. But, let us consider what the Scriptural idea of a revival of religion is, and by what means it is produced. The Scriptural idea of a revival of religion, may be viewed in a two-fold light.

1st, When true religion is revived among those who are already professors of it; when they are stirred up to be more obedient to God, and lively in his service; in obeying his commandments, and observing the ordinances which he has appointed in his word.

2d, When persons, formerly irreligious, are convinced of their sins, believe the gospel of Christ, and turn to the Lord. I presume no person, yea, the most zealous contenders for revivals of religion, would object to this statement.

Let us then consider how Scriptural revivals of religion were produced. It will perhaps, be the best way here, to refer to some examples of revivals of religion mentioned in Scripture. The first I refer to is, that which took place in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, which may be seen at large in the two books in Scripture of those names. What then produced this reformation or revival of religion in those days? Was it by means of Ezra, Nehemiah, or any other person preaching the eternity of hell torments? Was it by working on the passions, and alarming the fears of

people, and by every effort which they could make, to overwhelm their understandings with terror? No man dare say this, who has ever read those two books. How then was this revival of religion brought about? It was by reading the Bible, and pointing out to the people, how far they had departed from what God had commanded in his word, and showing them that all their sufferings originated in this departure from God. This statement of the means by which this revival was produced we think no one will dispute. Nor will the man be found, who will venture to assert that preaching hell torments to the wicked had any share in effecting it. We should rejoice to see such a revival of religion among all professors of religion, in the present day, from studying the Scriptures, to see how far they have departed from the law of the Lord. We trust we should not be wanting in giving it all the aid in our power. I pass over attempts made by Jeremiah, and other servants of the Lord, to produce revivals of a similar nature among the Jews, but without success. I only observe in passing, that they used similar means to effect it, as did Ezra and Nehemiah. But when those means failed, they did not betake themselves to the means, so efficacious in our day, to work on the passions of men, by preaching the doctrine of hell torments, to effect their purpose.

A second instance of a revival of religion mentioned in Scripture, is that in the days of John the Baptist. Was it produced by preaching hell torments? John never used the word hell in all his preaching to the people. It was produced by preaching repentance, and pointing them to the Lamb of God, who was to take away the sin of the world. But the most extraordinary revival of religion, is that which took place at the day of Pentecost, and during the ministry of the apostles. Now let all read the Acts of the

apostles, and see if they can find, in a single instance, that any one of the apostles ever said a word about hell, or its eternal torments to produce this revival. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, is as silent on the subject of hell torments, as if no such thing existed in the universe of God. He addressed the very men who had been the betrayers and murderers of the Lord of glory, but does he threaten them with the torments of hell, or even enforce his doctrine by any intimation that they were exposed to such a place of punishment? And is not all the preaching of the apostles uniformly the same in regard to this subject? No working on the passions; no attempt is made by them to terrify people into religion. One might with as much truth affirm, that an eruption of mount Vesuvius produced this revival, as that it was effected by preaching endless misery in hell! Let men only preach as the apostles did, by declaring the glad tidings of forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ, and many things which go by the name of revivals of religion, would be at an end. As the means of revivals in our day are very different from those used by the apostles, so are the revivals produced by such means. The converts made by such means, instead of partaking of the meek, humble, and gentle spirit of Christ, become censorious, bigoted and dogmatical, and with reluctance will they admit that persons, who certainly give as much evidence as themselves of Christianity, can really be Christians. They get attached to their minister, and to their sect, and zeal for these is often mistaken for a zeal for God and his glory. Strong excitement of the animal passions, sometimes even to extravagance, is ascribed to the power of God, at work among the people. As to understanding and believing the gospel, of the grace of God, little is said, and as little perhaps, cared about. We think we may say to such persons, in their own language,

“ who ever heard or read of such kind of revivals of religion among the apostles and primitive Christians, or who ever heard of their producing any kind of revival whatever by terrifying people with fearful descriptions of eternal misery ?” The course which the apostles pursued was open, manly, and dignified ; and the doctrine they preached was glad tidings of great joy to all people. Their object was not to save men from Gehenna or hell, but from ignorance, idolatry, licentiousness, and unbelief, and to instruct them in the knowledge and obedience of the one living and true God. But, the primary object of preaching in the present day, seems to be, to save men from hell ; to attach converts to some religious party, and enjoin on them to believe neither more nor less, all the days of their lives than is contained in the creed, which they subscribed to on their admission.

No one will certainly construe what is said in the foregoing remarks, into a disapprobation of revivals *generally* ; but only of *such* as are produced by terror. We maintain, yea, we advocate true Scriptural revivals of religion. We know of nothing which could afford us more heartfelt joy, than to see all parties in religion, yea, all mankind, attending to the oracles of God, and sincerely searching them to know and obey all that the Lord hath commanded. In our remarks we have considered terror the principal means in producing revivals in the present day ; and to *such*, and *such only*, the preceding observations are intended to apply. Divest modern orthodoxy of this most powerful mean of producing religious excitements, and henceforth it would probably have as few revivals of religion to boast of, as Universalism itself. We know not, why the truth of God preached by Universalists, should not produce a real Scriptural revival of religion, equally as when preached by others. Is it the particular *medium* or *manner* of communication, that

is to give the word of God effect? Or is the power of the Lord exclusively confined to a certain class of preachers? It is now, we presume, as it was in the days of the apostles, that the Lord *bears testimony to his own word*, and that Paul might plant and Apollos might water, but it was God who gave the increase. But if our memory has not deceived us, we have seen printed rules for bringing about revivals of religion, and some *preachers* have not hesitated to say that it was the people's own fault that they had not revivals among them. Yea, some have determined before hand, that they would get up a revival, and have gone to work in their own way and accomplished it. All this we really think is without precedent or example in the history of apostolic preaching.

It is objected,—“*That this doctrine is a very pleasing doctrine to the world.*” In reply to this objection, I would observe, 1st, That the first question to be settled is this; *is it a true or false doctrine?* The Bible must decide this, and to it we have appealed. Of what use can it be in determining whether a doctrine be true or false, to call it either pleasant or unpleasant? To admit the truth of what is here asserted, what could it prove against the doctrine; and to deny it, what could it prove either for or against it? Such kind of arguments are generally used by such as have nothing better to urge; yea, are too indifferent about what is truth, to give themselves the trouble to investigate the subject. To ascertain the truth of any doctrine, we have only, according to this objection, to find out if it is pleasant or unpleasant. If it is pleasant, it must be false, and if unpleasant, it must be true. This mode of decision will indeed save a great deal of time and labour in reading and investigation; for who would put themselves to the trouble of these, when a decision can be made by so short and easy a process?



2d, I might in my turn say, the opposite doctrine is a very *harsh* doctrine. Perhaps there is as much, if not more, force in this objection against it, than in the one against my views. If they must be false because they are pleasant, does it follow that the opposite must be true, because it is harsh? We should think it rather an argument against its truth. That the objector's doctrine is not a harsh doctrine he has got to prove. The very saying that my doctrine is pleasant, implies that he is sensible that his own is harsh. We presume many have thought it so, who have been afraid to speak freely their minds on the subject. Yea, we doubt if any man can seriously meditate on the doctrine of eternal misery, and can truly say that it is a pleasant doctrine. Influenced by religious prejudices, and overawed by public opinion, persons rather acquiesce in the doctrine, than feel convinced in their judgments, or satisfied in their minds about it. When they begin to reflect seriously on the eternity of hell torments, and compare it with the well known character of God, as a God of goodness, mercy, and truth, the mind is at a stand what conclusion to come to concerning it. They think the Bible teaches it, and therefore they must believe it, but with the character of God they are unable to reconcile it.

3d, The gospel of the grace of God is a very pleasing doctrine, and if the objection has any force against my views, it equally lies against it. It seems then that he has pleasing doctrines as well as the one I have been stating, against which he cannot make his objection to bear. But why is this the case, for if the pleasant nature of any doctrine proves it false, why is it that he believes the gospel of God to be the truth?—It is certainly a very pleasing doctrine to hear that there is even a *possibility* that any of the human race will be saved. It is still more pleasing, that there

is a *probability* that a great number of them will be saved. - And we are at a loss to know why it should not be still more pleasing, if it can be proved, that *all the human race will be saved*. But while the two first of these will be admitted as pleasant and this is no argument against their truth, yet the last is considered false because it is the most pleasant. Does the objector say, we know the two first are true but not the last. This is the very point at issue to be proved, and the proof must be drawn from some other source, showing the falsehood of my doctrine, than the pleasing nature of it.

4th, If the pleasant nature of the doctrine, be a solid objection against its truth, the fewer saved the better, to prove the doctrine false, and the more agreeable, I presume, to the objector. We think, we may go further, and say, that the eternal misery of the whole human race, which would be precisely the reverse of my doctrine, is most likely to be the true one, according to this objection. Its being so harsh or unpleasant, then, shows it to be true; and because it is so unpleasant this is the strongest evidence that it must be true. The fact is, there is no real argument in the case before us. A false mode of reasoning is adopted, and the world might end, before any thing conclusive could be made out relative to this subject.

5th, The objector seems to think that the doctrine is pleasing, and the force of his objection to it arises from thinking that all are to be saved without a salvation from sin. This is his mistake not mine. Should he say, this is the inference that many will draw from it, to go on in sin; I reply, I cannot help this, any more than the objector can, where persons draw inferences from his doctrine, to go on in the same course. Yea, I cannot help this, any more than an apostle could, when persons urged as an inference

from his doctrine, "let us sin because grace aboundeth." What doctrine is it from which men may not draw inferences to go on in sin? The only one that I can at present think of, is the doctrine of universal, eternal misery. Even this is not an exception, for the inference would be, "since at death we are all to be eternally miserable,—let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." If some have argued,—“let us sin because grace aboundeth,” perhaps others have also said,—“let us sin because eternal torments abound.”

6th, Is it not God's design that the gospel of his grace should be a pleasing doctrine to the world? It is glad tidings of great joy to all people. We ask, does God mean to save the world by the preaching of *an unpleasant doctrine*? We know of none better fitted to effect this, than the doctrine of eternal torments in hell. Had the apostles preached this doctrine, just as much as preachers do in our day, we should have been inclined to believe, that God meant to save men and to save them by the preaching of this very doctrine. But will any man affirm, that their preaching has any affinity to the sermons we hear in our day, so far as the doctrine of hell torments is concerned? The word Gehenna or hell, none of their hearers ever heard them utter, if the New Testament is to be our Bible. The word *hell* is on the lips of all preachers, who believe this doctrine, so frequently, that one would think if they learned their divinity from the Bible, that it was full of it. The apostles never used the word hell in any sermon, but *they* seldom omit it. Whether my views be right or wrong, the following things are certain; first, it was not God's design to save men in the apostles' day by preaching hell torments to them, for this they never did: and secondly, it is also certain, that my views are more like those entertained by the apostles, than the sentiments preached concerning hell torments by

orthodox preachers. I put in therefore my claim for being more orthodox than they are in this, if apostolic preaching is a true standard of orthodoxy. I may add, thirdly, which seems also certain, that if it be God's design now to save men by preaching the doctrine of eternal misery in hell, he has changed his mind, for this was not his design in the days of the apostles. I might add more, but I forbear.

7th, If the objector is sincere in urging this objection, that because the doctrine is pleasant it cannot be true, does it not fairly follow, that the more unpleasant any doctrine is, the more certain is its truth? Upon this principle no doctrine ought to be more surely believed than the doctrine of eternal misery, for surely it is not a pleasant doctrine. All Universalists therefore, ought at least to believe the objector's doctrine and for this very reason, because it is so unpleasant to them. But on the other hand, the objector ought to believe their doctrine and for the very same reason, because their doctrine is unpleasant to him. By this mode of deciding what is truth, both doctrines are proved true, and the two ought to believe each other's doctrine, and reject their own. But when they have done this, they must just reject the new doctrines they have embraced and receive their former ones for the very same reason; for the doctrines they have embraced respectively are pleasant, and those they now oppose are unpleasant. In short, it proves both doctrines true and both false at the same time.

8th, But we may ask the objector, is it possible for any man to receive any doctrine until it *appears* pleasant to him? We think this is impossible. A doctrine may appear very unpleasant, and while it does so to any person, he will reject it. This we have a very good example of in the objector himself. The idea that hell is not a place of endless misery ap-

pears to him an unpleasant, a dreadful doctrine, and hence he rejects it. And the doctrine of eternal misery, on the other hand, appears, at least to him, a very pleasant doctrine, and consequently he receives it. Yea, let the objector try, if he can, to receive any doctrine until it appears pleasant. The doctrine of endless misery he has received, and we think it must appear to him, pleasant, whatever it may be to other people. We think he ought not to deny this, and sure we are, that we shall never envy him any part of the pleasure which it affords him, until we have altered our minds greatly on this subject.

9th, If my doctrine be so pleasant as the objector says, how comes it to pass that it is not universally received? Why is it even so much opposed? Yea, why is it opposed by the objector himself? So far from its being a pleasing doctrine to the majority, it is one which is generally condemned. All sects are agreed to put it down, if possible. There is something then in the doctrine, which renders it unpleasant. What this is, it is not very difficult to perceive. This doctrine, certainly bears hard against the pride and self-righteousness of the human heart. It affords no room for one man to glory over another, as a particular favourite of heaven. Some, yea many, murmur against the good man of the house, that every man should have a penny; and like the elder son in the parable, are angry that the father should treat such prodigals with such kindness. They think there should be a *hell* to punish sinners in forever, and some have even gone so far as to say, if all men are to go to heaven, they do not wish to go there. So long as such a spirit prevails, there need be no wonder that my views of this subject should be hated and opposed. The first thing such persons ought to do, is to consider the nature of the spirit they are of. Can such a spirit be the spirit of Christ?

It is further objected "*that this is a very good doctrine to live by, but it will not do to die by.*"—In answer to this objection, let it be remarked, that this objection implies, that the doctrine of eternal misery, is a doctrine which will do, both to live and die by. But that my doctrine can afford no hope nor comfort, neither in life nor in death. Or does it mean, that this doctrine affords more of these, both in life and in death; but that the other only affords a false and temporary hope and comfort in life, but no hope nor comfort in death? Taking this to be the true sense of the words of the objector, we would then ask him, how he knows that his doctrine will do better to live by and die by, than the other? We do not think he can make any possible reply to this but by saying, *my doctrine is true and yours is false.* Well, we hope he, or whoever urges this objection, will consider it a duty they ought to perform, to prove that my views of Gehenna are unscriptural. For

1st, If they are *true*, why will they not do to live and die by better than the opposite views, which must be *false*? The whole here depends on the truth or falsehood of my sentiments. *If they can be proved from the Scriptures false, I frankly confess that they are neither fit to live nor die by.* Candour, in the objector, will certainly also grant, that if my sentiments are found upon examination true, *his doctrine of eternal torments in hell, is not fit either to live or die by, because it must be false.* I contend that true doctrine, or in other words, the doctrine of the Bible, correctly understood, is the doctrine which men can either live or die by comfortably. Error is not good for men, either in life or in death. It is *truth* which gives true hope and joy to the mind, and it is *truth* which is a light to the feet and lamp to the path. The whole here depends on which of the two doctrines is the doctrine of Scripture. While this remains undecided,

I have as good a right to say to him, as he has to me, your doctrine is a very good doctrine to live by, but it will not do to die by. Until the objector fairly meets the arguments, by which I have attempted to prove that Gehenna or hell is not a place of endless misery for the wicked, I might dismiss this and other objections of a similar nature. But I proceed.

2d, The objector must allow, that if his doctrine is so good to die by, it is not very good to live by. He certainly cannot deny, that the doctrine of eternal torments in hell, is such as has given much distress and misery to many, and many too, whom he would not deny to be the excellent of the earth. We think he will not deny, that his doctrine does not give one half the distress and misery to the thoughtless and licentious, as it does to the more thinking, serious, and exemplary part of the community. The former laugh, and dance, and play, and drive away all their fears of the punishment of hell torments. The doctrine only gives distress and misery of mind to the best and most valuable part of society, including with others, such as we should deem Christians. These, and these almost exclusively, are the persons who are rendered miserable all their life-time by this doctrine. We think the objector will not deny, that instances have occurred, where persons of thinking and serious habits, have been driven to distraction and even to suicide by it. But was a case ever known, where a person was so much distressed in his mind, and finally went deranged, or ended his days, because hell *was not* a place of eternal torment for a great part of the human race? We have found a few, who would be very sorry, if my views could be proved true. This we have imputed to want of consideration, and a false zeal for a favourite doctrine, but we are under no apprehension, that if they are found true, they will carry their zeal so far as to end their

days in consequence of it. Is not my doctrine then better to live by, than that of the objector?

3d, But if my views are such as may do to live by, but will not do to die by, how came it to pass, that persons could both live and die by them under the Old Testament dispensation? It was not known in those days, that Gehenna was a place of eternal misery for the wicked, yet all will allow, that many lived happy and died happy. It does not appear, from any thing which I have ever noticed in the Old Testament, that persons then derived any hope or consolation either in life or in death, from the doctrine of eternal torment in hell; nor, that it was any motive in producing obedience to God's commandments. We find no holy man of God in those days, urging the doctrine of endless misery on mankind, as a good doctrine to live and die by, and warning men against the opposite doctrine, as a dangerous error. Besides, how could the apostles and first Christians, either live happy or die happy, seeing they knew nothing about hell as a place of endless misery? They knew nothing of this doctrine; therefore let the objector account for it, why my doctrine will not do to live and die by now, as well as in the days of the apostles. What would the objector have done for this doctrine to live and die by, had he lived eighteen hundred years ago? He cannot say that the apostles ever preached the doctrine of hell torments for any purpose; and far less that they preached it, as a good doctrine to live and die by.

4th, But let us examine a little more particularly, what there is in the doctrine of hell torments, which is so much better fitted to live and die by, than the sentiments which I have stated in the foregoing pages. The objection we are considering, is often used, and serves some on all occasions, when argument fails, in defending the doctrine of hell torments. When



hardly pinched to defend it, from some text which they thought clearly taught it, they cut the matter shortly off thus,—“ Ah! your doctrine may do very well to live by, but it will never do to die by.” This brief sentence, perhaps uttered with a sigh or a groan, answers in place of a thousand arguments with many. I shall therefore give it more attention, than I really think it deserves. Let us then

Consider the comparative merits of the two opposite doctrines to *live by*. The doctrine, or *my doctrine*, that hell is not a place of eternal torment for all the wicked, is *barely allowed* to be a doctrine, which men may *possibly live by* in the present world. Now, how Adam, Noah, Abraham, Lot, and others, made out to live by it, I do not stop to inquire. I leave my opponents to inquire, how they, and the apostles, and first-Christians, yea, I may add Jesus Christ himself, succeeded in living so well by it. When they have found out this, I can be at no loss to tell them, how I and others can live by it. But we pass over this, and wish to bring the comparative merits of the two doctrines into notice, as best fitted to live and die by.

1st, Then, let us attend to the doctrine of eternal misery, and its fitness to live by. If it indeed be better fitted for this purpose, it must be in the following things. 1st, As a ground of hope in respect to future happiness. But how any man can make the eternal torments of others in hell, a ground of hope to himself, I am unable to devise. If the eternal misery of one human being affords the objector any ground of hope, the more doomed to this punishment then, so much greater the extent and solidity of his ground of hope. But as this is not likely to be the ground on which this is placed, I observe

2d, Does it afford to such persons a more certain and sweet source of joy in this world than the opposite doctrine? A man's joy must arise from the hope

he has, whether that hope is well or ill founded. If, then, the doctrine affords no ground of hope, it can be no source of joy to him. Besides; we have always thought that Jesus Christ and him crucified, was both the foundation of true hope, and source of joy to people in this world. We never understood, that the certainty of hell being a place of endless misery, was set forth in Scripture as the ground of hope, or source of our joy. The apostle, Gal. ii. 26. says: "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." But I ask, did the apostle ever say, that the life he now lived in the flesh, he lived by the faith that hell was a place of endless misery, either as a ground of his hope or source of his joy? Or did he ever say, that Christ loved him and gave himself for him, to save him from the punishment of this place? He joyed in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, but I do not find that hell torments were a source of joy, either to him or to any one else. It could not be so; for none of the apostles ever spoke of hell as being a place of endless misery. We then ask, how this doctrine can be to any a better doctrine to live by than mine? When, or by whose authority did it become so eminently fitted to live by? We ask further, in what way is it better fitted to live by than mine, if the persons who profess it derive neither hope nor joy from it? I ought to allow, perhaps, that it does afford a selfish joy to some, that they are secure from the torments of hell, while such multitudes are doomed to suffer its punishment forever. This, we presume, is all the joy which this doctrine affords, and we ought to call it any thing but Christian joy. But as neither of these are likely to be urged why the doctrine of eternal torments is better fitted to live by than mine, I observe

3d, That it is considered better to live by than my doctrine, as it is a better preservative against a licentious life, and a more powerful motive to holiness. This, I presume, is the ground on which the doctrine of eternal misery is counted the best of the two to live by. Is this then true? We think we have said enough in answering the first objection, to prove that it is not. We shall however add the following remarks here, to show that it cannot be true. We ask, then,—Is *love* or *terror* the most powerful principle to stimulate to a cordial and universal obedience? Let both Scripture and every day's experience decide in this case. Will any man affirm that the obedience required of us, and taught in Scripture, is there held forth as an obedience induced by the terror of hell torments? No; it is the obedience of gratitude and love. Terror may overawe, and frighten men to comply with many things to which their hearts are totally averse. It is love which sweetly constrains, not only to external obedience, but to the obedience of the heart and affections. But what does experience and daily observation teach concerning this? Who, that is acquainted with the history of the world, or with human nature, will say, that terror of the most horrid punishments, has been found efficacious in producing a cordial obedience in any grade or department of human society? So much are legislators and others convinced to the contrary, that in many places they are altering their code of laws, respecting the severity of human punishments. We then ask, in what respect the doctrine of eternal misery is better fitted to live by than my doctrine, if it affords no hope nor joy to those who believe it, and is not a proper inducement to a holy life in the world? Let the objector point out, if he can, its preferable nature, and show wherein it consists. My doctrine is, that God never threatened men with eternal torments in

hell, that he never made any such revelation to the world, but that he sent his Son to make reconciliation for transgressors and to save them from their sins. That this doctrine is better fitted to live by, as to hope, joy, and obedience, we should deem it a waste of time particularly to point out. If my doctrine be true, as to these things, compared with its opposite, it is like the joy of noon day, to the gloom of midnight. We think it will not be disputed, that if my sentiments are Scriptural, all anxious fears about eternal misery are at once removed; a foundation of hope and source of joy to men laid open, which are calculated to animate and console the mind under every trouble of this world; and motives to gratitude and obedience to God presented, which the doctrine of eternal misery certainly does not afford. *It*, on the other hand, fills the mind with gloom and anxiety, it leads to views of God not very favourable to his character, nor much calculated to make men love and serve him. We may indeed hope in his mercy revealed in the gospel through Jesus Christ, and may have joy in believing that we shall escape the torments of hell. But that the best of men have been still haunted with fears and anxieties, notwithstanding this, will not be denied. That this has been their state of mind, in regard to their own personal safety from hell, is what we might expect; but they have been also perplexed and distressed, as we think every good man must be, about the eternal condition of all their fellow creatures. We pity the man, who, if he thinks himself safe from this place of torment, feels little or no concern for the unnumbered millions of men like himself, all equally interested in the decision of this all important question.

Let us now consider how the doctrine of eternal misery is better fitted than my sentiments, to die by. This doctrine cannot be better than mine to die by,

from its being at this period a better preservative from sin, and a better motive to holiness to the individual, for he is just leaving this world, where this can alone operate as a motive to obedience. It must, then, be better to die by than mine.

1st, As a ground of hope in death. Now we ask, what ground of hope it can afford to any man at death, to think that the doctrine of eternal misery is true? Can he look on his wicked wife, and still more wicked children, and neighbours, around him, in the hour of death, and make their eternal misery a foundation of hope for his own eternal blessedness? Can the certainty of their eternal misery afford him any *certain hope of his own safety*? Can he die with a more joyful hope because their misery is to have no end?

2d, As a source of joy and consolation in death. But to which of the saints of old shall we refer, to find that the doctrine of endless misery to all the wicked, was any source of joy to them when about to leave this world? Can any thing like this be found in all the book of God? What name ought even a joy of this kind to receive, if it was possessed? But we do not think this doctrine does afford any joy in death to the person dying, either concerning himself or those he is about to leave. We rather think, that the doctrine at this hour, is often to the believers of it themselves, rather a source of pain and uneasiness. Should their hopes of heaven be such as to banish all fear for themselves, it often proves a source of misery to them, in regard to the friends and relations they leave behind. This, we think, will not be disputed. Now, allowing that my doctrine is true and the objector's false, how different would be the state of mind in which people would bid a last adieu to friends and relations, yea, to all the world. He and they must part, and truly such separations are often heart rending scenes. My doctrine, if true, it is ea-

sily perceived, is here a healing balm, for it is only a momentary, not an *eternal* separation. But the opposite doctrine adds pungency to every parting pang, and the only consolation it affords to the dying saint, with regard to many of his relatives, is, that he shall have the pleasure of viewing from heaven, their torments in hell forever. Let us suppose ourselves by the bed of a dying person, and hear him say that he was full of hope and joy, arising from his belief in the eternity of hell torments; and that in heaven the torments of his relations, friends and neighbours, would give him pleasure forever. I ask, what would we think of such a person? It would certainly be but charity to believe that he was disordered in his mind. If we did not, we should conclude that some evil spirit possessed him, and that in this state of mind he was very unfit for heaven.

To conclude. We are either too blind, or too perverse, to perceive how the objector can prove that his doctrine is a good doctrine, either to live or to die by. We should be glad to see it shown, if it can be done, how eternal misery in hell can be to any man a good doctrine, in life, or at death; in time or in eternity.

It is a very popular objection brought against my views of Gehenna,—“If you are correct, we must believe that the most learned, and good men, yea, most Christians, for a great many ages, have been in a great error. Do you think yourself wiser than any of them?” See some remarks in answer to this objection, p. 197, 198. In further answer to this objection, let it be remarked

1st, That I make no pretensions to superior learning, or wisdom, or goodness, about this. I only profess to have paid some attention to the Scriptures on this particular point, which those persons, taking the subject for granted, have inadvertently overlooked;

This all men are liable to. So far from thinking myself more learned, wise, and good than those men, I *sincerely* think the very reverse. It will be granted, that no man is perfect in knowledge. And it will be seen, that those learned and good men from whom I differ, very unfortunately *took it for granted* that *Gehenna was a place of endless misery for all the wicked*. Had they not done this, but as I have attempted to do, examined into the truth of this doctrine, they would have given a very different account of Gehenna or hell, from what they have done. From their superior learning, talents, and means of information to which I have no access, they would have placed this subject in a much more luminous and convincing light. Were those very men alive, they would be the last men, who would blame me for my inquiry on this important subject.

2d, This objection was urged at the Reformation against the reformers, and indeed may be urged against all reformation and increase in knowledge to the end of time. It will serve a Jew, a Mahometan, or a Pagan, as well as a Christian. If it has any weight against me in the present case, it is equally strong against every man, who advances any thing from his Bible, contrary to what learned and good men have believed in past ages. Those very men whom I am blamed in differing from, were blamed in the same way, in dissenting, in some things, from learned, wise and good men who preceded them. They did not scruple to dissent from, or go beyond those who went before them, and assigned their reasons for so doing. And why should not we do the same thing? If this is not done, knowledge would be perfectly stationary, and an end is put to advancement in Biblical knowledge and improvement in every thing else. Had the reformers regarded such objections, urged in their day, and all others since, we

had been at this day all good Catholics, or perhaps idolaters, worshipping the works of our own hands.

3d, So long as such learned and good men are allowed to be fallible men, it must be admitted, that they may have been mistaken. We ought not to receive their opinions about Gehenna, or any other doctrine, without examination. We ought to bring them to the Bible for trial, and be satisfied, that they are not the mere opinions of men, but the faithful sayings of God. This I have done, with respect to the common opinion entertained about hell, and I request every man to try what I have advanced, by this infallible standard. If those men have been mistaken, it is certainly high time that the mistake was corrected. If they are correct, and the common opinion concerning hell or Gehenna be true, much good must result from the present discussion, in leading men to examine more carefully, the ground on which their faith is built. It will not be denied, that a great many who are believers in the doctrine of hell torments, have received this doctrine by tradition from their fathers, without any personal and Scriptural examination of it for themselves.

4th, In other cases it is allowed, that those learned and good men, lived and died in many errors, and some who may bring this very objection against me, take the liberty to dissent from their opinions in other things. Why may they not have been in an error in thinking that Gehenna was a place of endless misery; and why have not I as good a right to dissent from them in this, as some have done in other things? All we wish is, let the subject be impartially examined, and truth will be brought to light by the investigation. Can any Calvinist, Hopkinsian, Baptist, or Methodist, urge such an objection with a good grace, when they all, each in their own way, dissent from the doctrines of so many learned, wise and good



men, who lived before them? Before they open their lips against me, let them return to the doctrines of their forefathers, and confess how greatly they have departed from the good old way. But each of these sects thinks, that their departure from the doctrines of their fathers, is a nearer approach to the doctrine of the Bible. This is just what we think concerning the departure we have made, from their views of hell or Gehenna. In proportion as we have receded from them, we think we have approached the truth in the Bible concerning this subject.

If we are to believe just as learned and good men have taught in past ages, many things now most surely believed, must be renounced, for men have very greatly departed from their views of many Scripture doctrines. You hear men every day call themselves Calvinists: but Calvinism now is a very different thing from what is found in the works of John Calvin. You also hear of orthodoxy, but orthodoxy is not the same now that it was twenty years ago, and what is true orthodoxy in America would not be orthodoxy in Scotland. The truth is, men are beginning to search the Scriptures for themselves, and are taking the liberty to dissent from their fathers, however learned, or good they may have been. The Reformation was the dawn of day, after the long night of ignorance and superstition. But were the reformers to rise from the tomb, who were chiefly engaged in it, they would be surprised to see some good, and wise, and learned men, contending that we must advance no further, but must sit down satisfied where they left us. Happy for us, that we live in an age and in a part of the world, where it would not be in the power of man to stop the tide of inquiry and investigation.

Another popular objection against my views of Gehenna, is thus stated.—“Supposing, that the evidence you have produced, showing that Gehenna is not a

place of endless misery for the wicked, to be almost, if not altogether, conclusive, yet allowing a bare *possibility*, that the opposite doctrine may be true; those who believe it, though in an error, are still on the safest side. They can lose nothing if your doctrine be true, but you may lose both soul and body forever, if their doctrine is true." I have stated this objection with all the force I could give it. It is predicated on a mere *possibility*, that the doctrine of hell torments *may be true*, and that in face of evidence, allowed to be almost, if not altogether, conclusive, in proving the opposite doctrine true. We shall offer a few brief remarks in reply.

1st, If there be any force in this objection, it is certain that we ought not to be regulated in our belief or disbelief of any doctrines, by evidence or the degree of evidence, which may appear in their support. No; this has nothing to do in leading us to believe one doctrine, and reject its opposite for want of evidence; for though it is allowed, that the evidence adduced is nearly conclusive that Gehenna is not a place of endless misery, yet all this evidence is nothing, and we must still go on believing that it is, on the mere *possibility* of its being true, unsupported by evidence.

2d, Whether my views of Gehenna or hell, or the commonly received doctrine about it, be the truth, one thing is certain; every Scriptural doctrine must have evidence to support it. Evidence is the criterion of truth; nor can a man be said to believe any doctrine, farther than he understands it, and perceives the evidence of its truth. Where the evidence, for or against any doctrine is equally balanced, the mind is in doubt, and suspense prevails, until some additional evidence appears, which leads the mind to preponderate to the one side or the other. This is the natural course of every candid mind, in serious search after what is truth. But here, though the evidence

adduced that Gehenna is not a place of endless misery, is allowed to be nearly conclusive, yet the mind must preponderate to the opposite side. It is not even allowed to hang in doubt, and suspend judgment until further evidence shall appear, but must come to the conclusion, that eternal misery is true, on the mere ground that after all it may possibly be true. The mind must come to the very opposite conclusion of that to which the evidence before us leads. A mere possibility, thrown into the one scale, far outweighs all the evidence we have adduced, in the other. This is not the course a candid mind pursues in considering the comparative weight of evidence. If the importance of the subject, demands scrupulous care in coming to a decision, the evidence on both sides is subjected to a strict examination, and further evidence is eagerly sought after, to remove doubts and decide with certainty on the subject. But this is not the course we must pursue on this subject, if this objection is to be regarded. Should doubts remain, arising from lack of evidence, that my views of hell or Gehenna are true, or that the evidence which I have adduced is considerably weakened by the evidence on the other side, all I wish is, let the subject be more carefully examined. But I enter my protest, against shutting our eyes to the evidence which has been produced, and still profess to go on believing an old popular doctrine, upon the mere *possibility* that it may be true, without producing evidence on the other side. Had such a course been pursued, or had such objections as this and others been allowed at the Reformation, we had to-day been in darkness which might be felt.

3d, But the objector in this objection has reduced the subject of discussion to a mere profit and loss account, as to our different views of hell or Gehenna,

and that on the supposition that his views may possibly be true. Let us examine how this account stands.

1st, Then, let us attend to his side of this account. It stands thus: The doctrine of eternal torment in hell, may *possibly*, after all, be true, and if true, I may in consequence of embracing this error, lose my soul and body forever. Such is the loss with which I am charged in his account. It is a loss which cannot be exceeded, by saying any man has lost more than this. It is certainly of such a nature, as no man who was not determined on his own everlasting misery would on any consideration run the least risk about. No language under heaven has a word to express my folly and madness in avowing such sentiments if they are not true. I certainly must then have the credit of being a sincere believer of the sentiments I have advanced relative to this subject, whether true or false.

But, how is this account proved against me to be true? I deny that the entry is true, or that the account of loss charged, can be proved. Is it the belief that hell is a place of endless misery, which *saves* any man? And is it unbelief in this doctrine which damns any man to this punishment? Here seems to be one radical mistake of the objector. He seems to think that if his doctrine is true, all who have not believed it, must suffer this punishment for not believing it. But if this was true, he would send all the ancient prophets and saints to hell. He would also send all the apostles and first Christians to hell. Yea, he would not exempt the Saviour himself, for he nor any of those persons seem to have believed his doctrine. If their unbelief of it does not involve such an awful and solemn loss to them, how can it to me? Placing, me in his account, in such company, I shall not feel much alarmed; yea, he will be obliged to add to our company, all the Universalists, and all who

have doubted of the truth of his doctrine, and a multitude which no man can number, who have in their hearts disbelieved it, but who were not honest enough to avow their convictions. He perhaps may be obliged to add even himself, for a belief founded on a mere *possibility* that the thing believed, is true, is surely not far from unbelief concerning it.

But the objector labours under a mistaken notion as to *what saves*. According to him it is the belief of the doctrine, that hell is a place of endless misery. It is not the belief of this which saves men from hell or from any thing else. Jesus Christ is the Saviour, and it is the gospel or glad tidings of God's grace or favour through him, that saves men from every thing they need to be saved from. Nor would the objector undertake to defend, that a man who believed the gospel, and showed his faith by his works, would be damned if he did not also believe the doctrine of endless misery in hell. Would he not pause a moment, before he, with one indiscriminating sweep, sent all to hell who have not believed his doctrine? This charge must then be cancelled from his side of this account against me. The objector may take his choice, either to do this, or with me to consign prophets, apostles, and innumerable others over to eternal misery.

2d, Let us now examine my side of this account against the objector. My loss is the loss of both soul and body forever, if his doctrine is at last found true. But if my doctrine is true he loses nothing. It is freely granted, that if my doctrine is true, that neither the objector nor any other man, loses soul and body forever. But because these are not lost, does it follow, that he loses nothing? We think that this is another very considerable mistake of the objector, which requires to be corrected in his account. Is it then no loss to a man that he lives all his days, and at

last dies in a very great error, though that error does not involve him at last in eternal misery? Is it no loss to him, that his error gives him very wrong views of God's character, and his designs by the salvation of his Son. Does it make no difference to him, as to profit or loss, to look on God as dooming a part, and by some the greater part of mankind, to inconceivable and endless misery, and being persuaded that God never threatened one of the children of men with such a punishment? Is it no difference to him whether he spend his days in the certain and joyful hope of heavenly happiness, and that without any fears and anxieties about eternal misery, or live under fear and anxiety all the days of his life, and with fear and trembling, as to his future destiny, give up the ghost? And allowing him free from all such fears and anxieties as to his own future happiness, is it no loss to him to be denied the same hope and comfort of mind as to all his fellow creatures? In one word, does he suffer no loss by such wrong conceptions of God's character, which mar his own peace and comfort, and involve so many of his fellow mortals in endless misery? Such is a brief statement of the objector's losses. I leave the reader to enlarge it, which may easily be done to a much greater amount. Can he now say that he loses nothing, admitting my doctrine to be true, and his own to be false?

We are now come to the second class of objections, *which are supposed to have some weight against the evidence which we have adduced to show that Gehenna is not used to express a place of endless misery.* These we shall attempt to consider, without much regard to the order in which they are brought forward.

It has been objected, *that a very great change took place in the language of the Jews during the captivity in Babylon, and that it would be wrong to interpret words in the New Testament according to the sense which they*

have in the Old. It has been thought that during the captivity, the Hebrew language ceased to be vernacular among the Jews, and that they brought back from Babylon the Chaldaic instead of it. This has been urged against the views we have given of Gehenna, and in favour of its meaning a place of endless misery. In reply to this, it ought to be noticed, that the supposed fact on which this objection is founded, is disputed by the learned. Mr. Parkhurst, in his Lexicon, on the word *Ebrais*, p. 181. thus writes:—"A strange notion originally derived from the Jewish rabbins, the descendants of those who crucified the Lord of Life, hath prevailed, and is but too generally received, that, during the Babylonish captivity, the Hebrew language ceased to be vernacular among the Jews, and it is pretended that they brought back the Chaldee or Babylonish, instead of it; and, in consequence, that the language commonly spoken in Judea in our Saviour's time was not Hebrew, but Syriac, or Syro-Chaldaic. But

"1st, Prejudice apart, is it probable that any people should lose their native language in a captivity of no longer than seventy years continuance? (Comp. Ezra iii. 12. Hag. iii. 2.) And is it not still less probable that a people so tenacious of their law as the Jews, should yet be so negligent of their language, wherein that law, both religious and civil was contained, as to suffer such a loss, and exchange their mother tongue for that of their detested and idolatrous enemies; especially since they had been assured by the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxv. 11, 12. xxvii. 22.; xxix. 10. (comp. Dan. ix. 2.) that after a captivity of no more than seventy years they should be restored to their own land? But

"2dly, It appears from Scripture, that *under the captivity* the Jews retained not only their language, but their manner of writing it, or the form and fashion of

their letters. Else, what meaneth Esth. viii. 9. where we read that the decree of Ahasuerus, or Artaxerxes Longimanus, was written unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, *and to the Jews according to their writing and according to their language?* (Comp. Esther i. Ezra iv. 7.) And let it be remarked, that this decree was issued, according to Prideaux, Connect. part i. book 5. *five years after* Ezra had obtained his commission for his return to Jerusalem with those of his nation, of which see Ezra vii.

“3dly, ‘Ezekiel, who prophesied during the captivity, to the Jews in Chaldea, wrote and published his prophecies in Hebrew.’ Leland’s Reflections on lord Bolinbroke’s Letters, p. 229, 3d edit. where see more.

“4thly, The prophets who flourished *soon after* the return of the Jews to their own country, namely Haggai and Zechariah, prophesied to them in Hebrew, and so did Malachi, who seems to have delivered his prophecy about an *hundred* years after that event. Now if Chaldee was the vernacular language of the Jews after the captivity, what tolerable reason can be assigned why those inspired men addressed, not only the priests and great men, but also *the body of the people*, in Hebrew, and did not, as Daniel and Ezra have sometimes done, use the Chaldee language? It is, I think, by no means sufficient to answer, with bishop Walton, that they did this because the rest of the sacred books were written in Hebrew; for if there were any force in this reason, it would prove that Daniel also and Ezra ought to have written in Hebrew *only*.

“5thly, Nehemiah, who was governor of the Jews about a *hundred years after* their return from Babylon, not only wrote his book in Hebrew, but in chap. xiii. 23, 24. complains that some of the Jews, during



his absence, had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab, and that their children could not speak יְהוּדִית, *the Jews' language*, but spake a mixed tongue. Now יְהוּדִית is Hebrew, as appears from *all* the other passages in which it occurs, viz. 2 Kings xviii. 26, 28. 2 Chron. xxxii. 18. Isai. xxxvi. 11, 13. But how impertinent is the remark, and how foolish the complaint of Nehemiah appears to be, that the *children of some* Jews, who had taken foreigners for wives, could not speak *pure Hebrew*, if *that* tongue had ceased to be vernacular among the *people* in general *a hundred years* before that period? 'So that (to use the words of the learned Spearman, to whom I am greatly indebted in the above observations,) *this very text* of Nehemiah, I think, refutes the received supposition of the Hebrew being lost in the Babylonish captivity.'

"6thly, It is highly absurd and unreasonable to suppose that the writers of the New Testament used the term Hebrew to signify a different language from that which the *Grecizing* Jews denoted by that name; but the language which those Jews called Hebrew after the Babylonish captivity, was not Syriac or Chaldee, but the same in which the law and the prophets were written. This appears from the prologue to Ecclesiasticus, which, according to Prideaux, was penned by the grandson of Jesus about 132 years before Christ; for he there observes, that 'the same things uttered in Hebrew and translated into another tongue, have not the same force in them; and not only these things (this book of Ecclesiasticus) but the law itself, and the prophets, and the rest of the books have no small difference, when they are spoken *in their own language*.'

"Lastly, It may be worth adding, that Josephus, who frequently uses the expressions τὴν Ἑβραίων διαλέκτον, γλωτταν τὴν Ἑβραίων, Ἑβραϊστί, for *the language*

in which Moses wrote (see inter al. Ant. lib. i. cap. i. § 1, 2. comp. lib. x. cap. i. § 2.) tells us, De Bell. lib. vi. cap. ii. § 1. that towards the conclusion of the siege of Jerusalem he addressed not only John, the commander of the Zealots, but *τοῖς πολλοῖς*, the (Jewish) *multitude*, who were with him, Ἑβραῖζων in the Hebrew tongue, which was therefore the common language of the Jews at that time, *i.e.* about forty years after our Saviour's death. Comp. Ant. lib. xviii. cap. vii. § 10.

“On the whole, I conclude that the Jews did not exchange the Hebrew for the Chaldee language at the captivity, and that the terms Ἑβραῖς, Ἑβραϊκός, Ἑβραῖσι, in the New Testament, denote, not the Syriac, or Syro-Chaldaic, but the Hebrew language, commonly so called; though I readily grant that this language, especially as it is spoken by the Galileans (see Mark xiv. 73. Matth. xxvi. 73. and under Γαλιλαῖος,) had in our Saviour's time deflected from its ancient purity, as particularly appears, I think, from the words Ἀββα, Ἀκeldαμα, Βοανηφές, Γολγοθα, which see in their proper places.”

We give this just as we find it, and leave those who choose to investigate the subject to determine it. But in whatever way this point is determined, we are unable to perceive its bearing against the views we have advanced about Gehenna. Admitting that a great change took place in the language of the Jews during their captivity, if the Jews by this word did not understand a place of eternal misery from their Scriptures before they went to Babylon, yet understood it so after they returned, it follows, that this *notion* was learned during the captivity. This we think is no honour to the doctrine, nor is it *authority* for a moment to be regarded. However great the change of language of the Jews was during the captivity, we think it has been proved that our Lord uses the term

Gehenna in the sense it was used by the prophet Jeremiah, as an emblem of temporal calamities. Until this is disproved, and it can be established that this change of the Jewish language gave such a different sense to this word as the objector supposes, it does not deserve a serious consideration.

But though the idea of a place of future misery was learned by the Jews from the heathen, yet their giving it the name Gehenna was of a later date. This I think is evident from considering that neither Nehemiah, Ezra, nor any Old Testament writer, after the captivity, ever speak of this doctrine, nor apply this word to it. The fact is, that whatever change, either the ideas or the language of the Jews underwent in Babylon, there is no proof to be derived from the Old Testament, that Gehenna was changed in sense from being an emblem of temporal punishment, to being made an emblem of endless misery. We presume no person will pretend, that any proof can be produced of this. Let us then be informed upon what rational and Scriptural grounds this term was so differently understood by the inspired writers of the New from those of the Old Testament. There must be a conscious lack of evidence, to urge the change which the Jewish language underwent in Babylon, as any proof that our Lord used the term Gehenna to express a place of endless punishment for the wicked. It is rather exploding the doctrine than proving it, to have recourse to such means in establishing it.

It has been urged as an objection—*that though the Targums are not good authority to prove any doctrine, yet they are sufficient testimony in showing in what sense Gehenna was used among the Jews, about our Saviour's time, and it is evident from them that it expressed a place of endless misery.* It is readily allowed, that their authority is good in proving, that the Jews at that period did use Gehenna to signify such a place of punishment.

but is it good in proving that they understood it in no other sense themselves; or that the Saviour used it to signify such a place of punishment? It is very evident that the Jews could not understand it always in this sense nor could they when they read the Old Testament Scriptures. It is difficult to perceive how they could put such a sense on this word, even in those passages in Jeremiah where the prophet threatens their nation with severe temporal punishment under the emblem of Gehenna. How they understood it when they read the Scriptures is one thing, and how they used it in common discourse, and in making all the Gentiles fit fuel for the fire of hell is another. If they gave it such an application, this is no proof that our Lord used it in the same manner. If they learned the notion, that Hades was a place of endless misery, among the heathen, and applied the term Gehenna to it, yea, consigned over all the Gentiles to its punishment, does this prove that our Lord either adopted this notion of theirs, or used Gehenna in this sense? That he should adopt this popular sense of the word, is far from being probable, and that he used it as Jeremiah had done, as an emblem of temporal punishment, we think has been proved. Can any man reasonably believe, that our Lord should use Gehenna or hell in a sense seemingly invented out of enmity to the Gentiles, and lay aside its use in the Old Testament? Besides; and what ought to settle this question, the apostles so far from making the Gentiles or any others fit fuel for hell fire, never used the word in speaking to them or about them.

It is further objected;—*admitting, say some, all that you have advanced about Gehenna or hell to be true, yet the doctrine of eternal misery to the wicked can be established from other parts of Scripture.* If this be true, many a man might have saved himself a great deal of labour in writing and preaching, and many books

on this subject are mere waste paper, for they are written expressly to establish the very contrary. If this ground is taken we shall be very happy, for it is greatly abridging the ground of debate on this subject. Am I then to understand, that all the texts which speak about Gehenna are abandoned, as not teaching the doctrine of endless misery? If they are, it is to be lamented, that they have been so long quoted as the principal proofs of this doctrine, and thus perverted from their true meaning. My labour at any rate, is not lost. If I am instrumental in rescuing so many parts of God's word from such a misapplication of them, I shall have the consolation that I have not lived nor written in vain. A correct understanding of God's word is to me the first thing in religion. There can be no real religion in the perversion of that blessed book. If they then are relinquished as proof, we hope we shall hear no more about hell as a place of endless misery. Not only the texts, but the very word *hell* must be laid aside as inapplicable to the subject. But if this is done, we shall feel some impatience, until we learn by what other name it is called in Scripture.

It has been objected to my views—that *by Gehenna, a STATE and not a PLACE of future endless punishment is intended, and that I have dwelt too much on the idea of its being a PLACE.* In reply to this we observe—1st, That before this objection is urged against me, such as hold to the doctrine of endless misery, ought to give up speaking of it as a *place* of punishment. It is always represented as a place, in writing, in preaching, and in conversation. Let the writer or the preacher be named, who does not speak of it as a *place* but as a *state*. Dr. Campbell, Edwards, and all other writers that I have ever seen or heard of, invariably speak of it as a place. Yea, some have even pretended to tell where it is located, and have de-

scribed also the nature of its punishment, and the wretched condition of its inhabitants in a very circumstantial manner. There can be no reasonable objection brought against my speaking of it as a place, until such persons give up this mode of speaking about it themselves. But if any uneasiness is felt, as if the doctrine was in danger, in speaking of hell as a *place* of endless punishment, we have no objection that they adopt the term *state*. Only let us fairly understand one another, and let them not blame me for speaking about it as they do themselves, until they have made this alteration.

2d, But, supposing the word *state* to be substituted for the word *place*, we ask, what advantage is gained in favour of the doctrine of endless misery? How does this new word shield it from what has been advanced against it? If it affords it any asylum, we confess our inability to perceive it. We are equally at a loss to perceive, how it invalidates a single fact or argument, which we have advanced, in proof that Gehenna or hell in the New Testament does not teach the doctrine of endless misery. If we are mistaken let our mistake be pointed out.

3d, We should feel obliged to the persons, who wish to abandon the word *place*, to describe to us what they mean by *state*, and endless punishment in this state, without any idea of *place*. We hope they will be kind enough to inform us also, why they wish to shift their ground from *place* to *state*, and whether this is coming nearer to the *Scripture mode of speaking of their doctrine*; or, is it with a view to *perplex the subject, and evade the arguments urged against it*? Men who would lay aside the good *old way* of speaking of *hell*, must have some reasons for doing this. We wish to know them.

4th, We have attempted to show, that Gehenna or hell, spoken of in the New Testament, is in reference

to the same punishment, of which the prophet Jeremiah had spoken long before, concerning the Jewish nation. He had made Gehenna or the valley of Hinnom, an emblem of this punishment. In speaking therefore of Gehenna as a place, it was not my views which required this so much, as in opposing the common ideas entertained on this subject. This was rather a thing I could not avoid, than from any thing in my views which required such a mode of speaking in establishing them. Why then blame me for what they do themselves, and which their own views of this doctrine forces upon me in controverting them?

5th, It is allowed that heaven is a place as well as a state. Buck, in his Theological Dictionary, vol. i. p. 330. says—“*Heaven is to be considered a place, as well as a state*; it is expressly so termed in Scripture. John xiv. 2, 3: and the existence of the body of Christ, and those of Enoch and Elijah, is a further proof of it. Yea, if it be not a place, where can those bodies be? And where will the bodies of the saints exist after the resurrection?” I appeal to all the world, if *hell* is not as generally spoken of as a place, as heaven is. And substituting the word *hell* for heaven in this quotation, the same things may be said of the wicked, as is said of the righteous. I only ask in the language of this quotation—“Where will the bodies of the wicked exist after the resurrection,” if *hell* be not a place? For all who believe this doctrine say they are to be raised.

6th, The popular views of Gehenna or hell, not only represent it as a place, but the Bible is thought to countenance this view of the subject. It is very certain, that the Scriptures do not mention *hell* as a *state*, and do not guard us against supposing it to be a *place*, as this objection would have us believe concerning it. All past orthodoxy, would denounce the man as heretical, who would insinuate that *hell* was not a

*place*, but only a *state*. And must I now be condemned as heretical for not speaking of hell as a *state* but as a *place*?

It has been objected—"that the words of our Lord, Matth. xxiii. 33. *to the unbelieving Jews were prophetic, and that by the damnation of hell, he might simply mean some punishment after death, without any reference to the place or the nature of the punishment.*" On this objection we remark

1st, That it has been shown in considering this passage, p. 127. that our Lord's words are not a prediction, but simply a threatening of temporal punishment to the Jews. But this objector takes it for granted that our Lord's words are prophetic. It is not assertions and suppositions, but proof that can avail us any thing on this subject. If the objector says, that by the damnation of hell, our Lord might simply mean some punishment after death, without any reference to the place or the nature of the punishment, let him produce some evidence of this. We think we have shown from this text and its context, that our Lord had no reference to a punishment after death, but to the temporal punishment coming on the Jewish nation. Let the objector disprove what we have said, and let him show from the context of this place, how his supposition can be supported from it. We may *suppose* any thing; but if unsupported by evidence, ought mere suppositions to be regarded?

2d, If the objector can prove, that the punishment mentioned in this passage is after death, we really think that the place where it is to be suffered is called Gehenna, by our Lord. Why he should think the punishment to be after death, and yet have any difficulty as to its location, or the nature of the punishment, we cannot conceive. The context of this place surely gives him no reason to conclude, that the punishment is after death, but the reverse. And if it



does not determine also the nature of the punishment to be temporal, and that which was to come on the Jewish nation during that generation, it will be difficult to determine any thing from the Bible. If the punishment, of which our Lord spoke in this passage, be after death, it will not be difficult to show that every punishment mentioned in the Bible, is after death.

It is further objected—*if the mere silence of the Old Testament concerning Gehenna being a place of endless misery is of any force against it, will it not be of equal force against the doctrine of future existence, the resurrection of the dead, and many other things, which are not revealed in the Old Testament?* In answer to this, we remark

1st, That we have never laid much stress on the silence of the Old Testament, respecting Gehenna not being a place of endless misery. We have decidedly expressed our willingness to believe the doctrine if it can be proved from either Testament. We have said and we now say, that it is somewhat remarkable that such a doctrine as hell torments should not be taught in the Old Testament.

2d, The objector proceeds on the presumption, that future existence and the resurrection of the dead, were doctrines not revealed under the Old Testament. But this he has got to prove before his objection can invalidate any thing which I have said, drawn from the silence of the Old Testament, to prove that Gehenna or hell is not a place of endless misery. If he proves, that a life of happiness after death, was unknown under the Old Testament, it is freely admitted, that my argument, drawn from its silence about future punishment, is destroyed. But if future happiness was known, and future eternal misery not known, how stands the argument? It is easily seen that it has considerable force, in favour of the views which I have advanced.

3d, That both future existence and the resurrection of the dead were in some degree known under the old dispensation, we think can be proved. Our Lord blamed the Jews for not inferring this from the words of God to Moses at the bush. Paul in the 11th of Hebrews shows, we think, decidedly, what was the faith of the ancient patriarchs about this. Though life and incorruption were brought to light by the gospel, yet, if this were the proper place, we think it could be shown, that it was not the *doctrine* but the *fact*, which was brought to light. But can the objector prove the contrary, and can he show, that the doctrine of hell torments was brought to light by the gospel? Unless he can do this, what I have said about the silence of the Old Testament respecting hell torments, remains unaffected by this objection.

It has been objected—*since paradise in the Old Testament merely referred to temporal happiness, but in the New is used for heavenly blessedness, why may not also Gehenna, used in the Old Testament for temporal misery, be used in the New for eternal punishment?* If the objector thinks so, let him show from the use of the words paradise and Gehenna, in the Old and New Testaments, that this is actually the case. To admit things at this *may be* rate, is nothing to the purpose, and especially on a subject of such importance as the one in question. Do we find a place of future eternal happiness and a place of eternal misery equally and clearly revealed in Scripture? This is the first thing to be settled. Were both of these revealed, there would be nothing strange that paradise and Gehenna should be used by the inspired writers in speaking of them. But is this true, as it respects a place of eternal misery? But we do not find, upon looking at all the places in the New Testament where the words paradise and Gehenna are used, that similar things are said of Gehenna as a place of future pun-

ishment after death, as is said of paradise as a place of happiness after death? Let our readers judge, if there be any affinity between paradise and Gehenna, and if these two words are used to express future eternal blessedness and misery alike, in Scripture. The objector takes it for granted that paradise is used in the Old Testament. But in this he is mistaken, for the word does not once occur there. Paradise is not even a Hebrew word but is allowed to be Persian. Had the objector noticed that this word is not used in the Old Testament, it might have prevented such an objection's being made against my views. We have the sanction of the New Testament writers, that paradise is used as a figure for future blessedness; but that Gehenna is used as an emblem of eternal misery, we are referred to the Targums as authority. But this objection is founded in a mistake and did not deserve any consideration.

It has been also objected—that the reason why John said nothing about Gehenna was, that he was the beloved disciple: and that the reason why all the apostles are silent about it is, they wished to save men by love, and not by the terror of hell torments. This objection has some comfort in it, even if it does not convince us of our error. In reply, we may remark,

1st, That if the reason why John and the apostles said nothing about Gehenna or hell torments, was, as is asserted, because they wished to save men by love, it would seem to be the reason why modern preachers preach hell torments, because they wish to save them by terror and not by love. How then does the objector account for, and is he prepared to defend, the difference between apostolic and modern preaching? This objection agrees with my views so far, that God makes men obedient by love and not by terror. So far well.

2d, It should seem from this objection, that the more we become apostolic, or like John, in love, this will lead us to say little, or rather nothing about hell torments to others. If we can only like John, be beloved disciples, and like the apostles in our tempers and dispositions, we shall not mention endless misery in our preaching or our conversation to the world around us, though we may be full in the belief, that they are all in the downward road to it. For

3d, This objection, notwithstanding all the love in John and in the apostles, and their desire to save men by love and not by terror, supposed Gehenna or hell a place of endless misery for the wicked. The objection proceeds on the supposition that John and all the apostles believed this, yet said nothing about it because they wished to save men by love rather than terror. If it is alleged that in the places where our Lord used the term Gehenna, he meant a place of endless misery, John and all the apostles differed from him about this, for it seems he wished to save men, yea, even his own disciples by terror of hell torments. The objector seems to approve of their conduct, and thinks that this was not only a lovely disposition in them, but that it showed love to the persons whom they addressed, in saying nothing to them about hell. Let no man say that this is love. What! John and the rest of the apostles, love men's souls, and believed them exposed to endless misery in hell, yet never once mention their danger to them? All will here agree with me in saying that this is any thing but love or faithfulness to the souls of men.

It is further objected—*if Gehenna signifies wrath to come, it was natural to speak to Jews of endless misery by the former, and to Gentiles by the latter mode of expression.* Why it was natural to speak to Jews of eternal misery by the one expression and to Gentiles by the other, we are not informed. But 1st, allowing that

This is the case, can it be proved that *Gehenna*, and the phrase *wrath to come*, are used in Scripture to express either to Jews or Gentiles endless punishment in a future state? We have shown that *Gehenna* is not so used in Scripture, and we think can show that the expression *wrath to come*, does not refer to a future state of existence. Wrath, yea, even the wrath of God, may be wrath to come, and yet be wholly confined to the present world. We think it will be difficult to prove that the wrath to come, mentioned in Scripture, had any reference to a state of existence after death. 2d, Upon examination, we think it will be found, that the phrase, wrath to come, refers to punishment, and is spoken of to Jews as well as Gentiles; but as the damnation or punishment of hell or *Gehenna*, had a particular reference to the temporal miseries of the Jews at the destruction of their city and temple, we never find it spoken of to the Gentiles.

It has also been objected—that *if my views of Gehenna be correct, my interpretation of the passages where our Lord spoke to his disciples concerning it, goes to show, that he was more concerned for their temporal safety than their eternal welfare.* This objection, to some, will appear more plausible than many others which we have stated. But in answer to it, we remark 1st, That this objection assumes the question in debate, the whole of the present Inquiry being to prove “that the eternal welfare of the disciples was not in danger.” This objection goes on the presumption, that the disciples were in danger of eternal misery, and that according to my interpretation of the passages in which our Lord spoke of *Gehenna*, he was more concerned about their temporal safety, than he was about their deliverance from eternal misery. The objector has then got to disprove the evidence I have adduced, showing that *Gehenna* does not refer to a place of endless misery, and to establish his own views by ev-

idence drawn from the New Testament that this is its meaning. 2d, That our Lord should be more concerned for the temporal safety of his disciples, than for that of the unbelieving Jews, many reasons might be assigned. They were his *disciples*, and their temporal safety could not be a matter of indifference to him. Their temporal safety also made manifest his character, in not destroying the righteous with the wicked. And was not this very sparing them, as a father spareth his only son that serveth him, a fulfilment of what God had spoken? See Mal. iii. 17, 18. and comp. chap. iv. But above all, was it not a matter of importance that our Lord should show concern for the temporal safety of his disciples, as they were to be witnesses of his resurrection, and the heralds of his salvation to the ends of the earth? All these and other things which could be mentioned, account for our Lord's solicitude about the temporal safety of his disciples, without supposing that their souls were in danger of endless punishment in Gehenna.

It is further objected—*if there be no such thing as hell or place of misery in a future state, yet seeing it was commonly believed both among Jews and Gentiles, that there was such a place, why is it that neither Christ nor his apostles ever took occasion to contradict this false notion, but on the contrary expressed themselves in appearance, at least, so much in favour of this opinion that a great part of mankind from that time to this have supposed it fully taught in the New Testament.* Some remarks are made in chap. i. sect. 3. which in part meet this objection. We offer a few additional remarks here in reply to it. 1st, Then, we ask, how came they by such a belief? It was not from the Old Testament, for it is allowed that it does not teach such a doctrine. In chap. i. sect. 3. it has been shown, that the Jews learned this doctrine from their intercourse with the heathen. This made such a belief common to both Jews and

Gentiles, and not that it was common to both, from divine revelation. 2d, But the point of this objection lies in the following things. It is asked,—“why is it that neither Christ nor his apostles ever took occasion to contradict this false notion that hell was a place of misery?” In answer to this we ask in our turn—“If Christ and his apostles believed this doctrine common to both Jews and Gentiles, why did they not avail themselves of this universally received notion to inculcate and enforce this doctrine?” To have taught it, could have given no offence to either of them; yet we find them silent on the subject, that Gehenna or even Hades is such a place. The only exception to this, is the parable of the rich man, which has been shown not even to teach an intermediate state of punishment. If this popular belief then, was true, and believed to be so by the Saviour and his apostles, why did they not avail themselves of it, and enforce it on both Jews and Gentiles? 3d, If we are to conclude, that because Christ and his apostles never expressly contradicted this false notion, common to both Jews and Gentiles, and that they by their silence sanctioned it as true, it follows, that all the false notions entertained by Jews and Gentiles not expressly contradicted by them are true. But we presume few would admit this, though it is a natural consequence from this objection. When any man will fairly make out, that their not contradicting expressly all the false, Jewish and heathen notions, is proof that those about which they are silent are true, we shall admit the one in question to be of the number. But another part of the point of this objection is, that—“on the contrary they expressed themselves, in appearance at least, so much in favour of this opinion, that a great part of mankind from that time to this have supposed it fully taught in the New Testament.” In reply, we would ask in what parts of the New Testament do

we find this? Not surely from those parts which speak either of Hades or Gehenna. The places where our Lord used those words, have been considered, and we think it has been shown, that in none of them did he teach such a doctrine. His apostles never once name Gehenna, nor even intimate that either Hades or Gehenna referred to a place of endless misery. If our Lord and his apostles, did in appearance, speak of such a place of misery, some other texts must be referred to than those in which the words Hades and Gehenna are found. But it is supposed that Jesus Christ and his apostles expressed themselves in appearance, at least, so much in favour of this opinion, "that a great part of mankind from that time to this have supposed it fully taught in the New Testament." It will not be denied, that men from that time to this have supposed Christ and his apostles to teach doctrines, which they are now coming to be convinced are not taught in the Bible. That the one we have been considering is not of that number, ought not to be taken for granted. It is admitted by all, that a great many Jewish and heathen notions, were very early incorporated with the doctrine of Christ and his apostles. Past ages have furnished but too much evidence, that the Scriptures have been used to countenance almost every opinion. Closer attention to the oracles of God has exploded many of them, and increased attention, may expose the falsehood of many more. That hell, a place of endless misery for the wicked, is an opinion which originated with the heathen we have shown above; and have also attempted to show, that those texts on which this doctrine has been founded have been greatly misunderstood. If we have erred in interpreting them let this be pointed out. Until this is done, and it is shown that the doctrine of hell torments did not originate in



heathenism but on the authority of God, our views stand unshaken by this objection.

We find it also objected—*if there be no place of punishment in a future state prepared for such as die in unbelief, how is this part of mankind to be disposed of after death, in what part of the universe is their abode to be assigned them? Not in heaven; for God is represented in Scripture as bringing with him from thence, at the resurrection of the dead, only those that “sleep in Jesus,” and of all the dead only “the dead in Christ” are said to ascend thither with him to dwell forever with the Lord. Not in Gehenna or hell; for according to your views, there is no such place in the world to come.* On this objection let it be remarked—1st, Whatever abode we assign such persons in a future state, we think we have shown, that God does not assign to them as their abode, Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, or even Gehenna. If God has not assigned to them such a place, it is rash in us to assert this without his authority. If he should leave them without any abode either as to happiness or misery, there we ought to leave them. Dr. Campbell as we have seen, declares, that Hades is at last to be destroyed, and accordingly he assigns them an everlasting abode in Gehenna, but we think without any warrant from Scripture. If we then have proved, that hell or Gehenna is not the everlasting abode which God has assigned them, and seeing the objector thinks that heaven is not to be their abode, we ask him in turn how they are to be disposed of? If he denies that heaven is to be their abode, we think it has been shown that hell is not said to be their abode. If it is said, because they are not to go to heaven they *must* go to hell; we may reply, because they are not to go to hell they *must* go to heaven. 2d, The objection states that their abode is not to be in heaven, and the reasons assigned are—“For God is represented in Scripture as bringing with him from

thence, at the resurrection of the dead, only those that 'sleep in Jesus;' and of all the dead, only 'the dead in Christ' are said to ascend thither with him to dwell forever with the Lord." This refers to 1 Thess. iv. 13. &c. on the whole of which passage I shall make the following remarks.

1st, The grand distinction in this passage, is between the dead and those found alive on the earth at the period referred to. The passage is alike silent how the wicked dead and those wicked found alive are to be disposed of; for not a word is said about the wicked. The persons said to be asleep or dead, verse 13. and those which sleep in Jesus, verse 14. and also as asleep, verse 15. and the dead in Christ who shall rise first, verse 16. all refer to the same persons. They refer to the dead, and we presume are exclusively confined by the objector to believers. On the other hand the *we*, who are said to be alive and remain, mentioned verses 15—17. must also be confined exclusively to believers, then found alive on the earth. These shall not prevent, or go before them who are asleep. Before they shall ascend, the dead in Christ shall rise first, and both shall ascend together to meet the Lord in the air. These last, we must confine to all living believers found on the earth, for if we extend it to all living, indiscriminately, why not the first also to all the dead indiscriminately? But if we take into view the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians and especially from verse 51—58. which seems to treat of the same subject, all the dead seems to be included. Compare also verses 20—22, 31, 35, 42—45.

2d, It is evident that the passage makes no distinction between two classes of people to be raised at this period, righteous and wicked. Either, then, this passage does not teach us any thing concerning the wicked, or they are included with the others here men-

tioned. If they are not, and their resurrection is nowhere else spoken of, the inference would be that they are not raised at all. But in some other places their resurrection is asserted. See Acts xxiv. 15. If Paul then in the passage, does not include all dead and alive, it is rather singular, that he should say nothing about the resurrection of the wicked, or how those left on the earth are to be disposed of, after all the others have left it to meet the Lord in the air. If he did not see meet to consign them over to hell forever, nor inform us how they are to be disposed of otherwise, the objector ought to prove, that hell is to be their everlasting abode. If I am mistaken in my views of Gehenna or hell, I wish to see my error pointed out. If it is to be their abode, I am in a great mistake. But if this passage is allowed to speak only of believers, yet there are others, which do not accord with what the objector seems to draw from it. According to this objection, none but such as died believers in Christ are to be finally happy in heaven. This at once excludes all the heathen world, and a great part of what is called the Christian world. But how does all this agree with the promises of God, that in Christ all the families of the earth are to be blessed. That the heathen are given him for his inheritance, and the uttermost ends of the earth for his possession. That God hath reconciled all things to himself by Jesus Christ. That he is Lord of all, Lord both of the dead and of the living. That every knee shall bow to him and every tongue confess. But see among others the following passages which we think it will be difficult to reconcile with the objection urged from this passage. 1 Cor. xvi. 24—29. Rom. v. 12—21. Rev. v. 13. Philip. ii. 9—12. In short, how could it with any propriety be said, that the devil, the works of the devil, and death, the last

enemy are all destroyed, if this objection is founded in truth?

But the whole force of this objection seems to rest on the expression that is here used concerning the persons who are to be raised, that they *sleep in Jesus*. The term *sleep* is used for *death*, and we think it can be proved that it is so used concerning good and bad. It is then the words *in Jesus*, on which the whole depends. Now we would ask, if even those who died in ignorance and unbelief concerning him, are persons for whom he died; for whose sins he was a propitiation, and that he is not to give up the kingdom until all things are subdued; yea, such persons are to be raised by him; may it not be said that they sleep in him?

But there is one thing in this passage which I would notice, and with it conclude my remarks on this objection. In verse 13. the apostle, addressing the Thessalonians, says—"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope." Who were asleep, let me ask, and concerning whom the apostle wished them, "not to sorrow as those who have no hope?" According to the view taken in the objection they were only believers; or believing relatives who had died. But why should they sorrow so much for them and be told not to sorrow like the heathen, whose grief at the death of their relatives was excessive? If we confine those who are represented as asleep, to believers only, it should seem that the Thessalonians had even little hope as to them, and went to excess in grief and needed to be cautioned against it. But if we consider the apostle as exhorting them against excessive grief at the death of their relations, who even died heathens, it not only obviates this difficulty, but their minds are consoled by the apostle in the passage concerning them. To

understand it otherwise would represent the Thessalonians as being grieved only at the death of their believing relations, and no way concerned for the future condition of such of them as died heathens.

Such are the objections, of any importance, which we have heard urged against the views which we have advanced concerning hell or Gehenna. Some of them, we frankly admit, are too trifling to have been noticed. After a consideration of them we must say, that not one of them, nor all of them taken together, have even led us to suspect, that what we have said concerning hell, is contrary to Scripture. But let our readers consider them, and judge for themselves.

## SECTION VII.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

IF the sentiments advanced in the preceding pages have been attended to by the reader, he no doubt perceives, that the conclusion which results from them is, that—*there is no place of endless misery taught in Scripture, for all the wicked, as is commonly believed by most Christians.* This we admit to be the fair inference which results from what has been stated, unless it can be proved, that such a place of endless misery is revealed in Scripture under some other name than Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, or Gehenna. It is our deliberate and candid opinion, that these words are never used in Scripture to express such a place of misery. We have laid the evidence on which this opinion has been formed, before our readers, and they are left to judge for themselves as to its truth or falsehood. Some, no doubt, will condemn and reject what we have said, without giving the evidence produced a patient hearing. The popular, but senseless, cry of *heresy*, is sure to be rung in people's ears, to deter them from paying any attention to the subject. From such persons we expect nothing but noise and abuse, for they have no desire that their faith should stand in the wisdom of God. But there are others, whose good sense, judgment and piety we respect, who, no doubt, will conclude, that my inquiry has ended in a great and fatal error. To all such I would offer a few remarks, in vindication of myself, against this sentence of condemnation.

1st, Let those who thus condemn me, consider, if they do not take for granted, the grand question which has been under discussion. Do they not first determine in their own minds that hell is a place of endless misery, and because my investigation has not brought me to this conclusion also, therefore I must be in a great error? But why ought not such persons to admit, that they may be in an error on this subject; and instead of condemning me, bring the subject to the Bible for examination? It is not our work to make a Bible, to alter it, nor bend it to support any sentiment, however popular in the religious world. It is a duty incumbent on every man, to study that precious book with serious care and attention, and by every just rule of interpretation, to ascertain, what is its true meaning. This I have attempted to do, and unless I shut my eyes against evidence, and am determined to be an implicit believer in the doctrine of endless misery in hell, to what other result could I come on this subject? If after all the care and attention I have been able to give this subject, it can be proved that I am in an error, let this be done, and I pledge myself to renounce it. I have the testimony of my own conscience, that I have sought after the truth, and that without any regard either to the favour or the frowns of my fellow creatures.

2d, But if we are not to examine into the truth of religious doctrines, unless our examinations end in the belief that the popular and long established views of them are true, all inquiry and investigation might as well be spared. It is much easier to adopt the popular belief at once; for, after all our labour and care, to this we must come at last. Besides; in this way we avoid all the pain and popular odium, which a change of religious opinion frequently involves. But, had this course been pursued by all who have gone before us, what would our condition now have

been as to science or religion? We had to-day been sitting in the region of darkness, and saying to the works of our own hands—"ye are our gods." *The Bible is the religion of Protestants*, and among all the sects into which they are divided, free inquiry is, to a certain extent inculcated. Most sects, however, have their limits fixed, beyond which if a man goes, he becomes suspected, and perhaps is denounced as an heretic. He may inquire and investigate as much as he pleases to support the peculiar tenets of his sect, but beyond this it is dangerous to proceed. Should he push his inquiries further, and find some of them the inventions of men, he must conceal his discoveries, for if he does not, the vengeance of the whole sect, if not the whole religious community, will be poured on his head. I must be very fond of suffering thus to expose myself.

3d, Since I am to be condemned because my investigations have not resulted in the popular belief of the doctrine of hell torments, I do not see any possible way of getting rid of error, or increasing in knowledge. I have done no more than thousands have done before me; to examine the Bible for themselves, and state the result for the consideration of others. Such as have done so have seldom escaped the appellation of heretics. But the first to condemn others, are generally the last to examine for themselves what is truth on any religious subject.

If in this investigation I have travelled beyond the record, let this be pointed out by an appeal to the same record. If a man under mistaken views of a religious doctrine, avows his mistaken sentiments, and thereby brings more truth to light and excites inquiry, are not these valuable ends served to society?

4th, Supposing the views which have been advanced, had been the universal belief of the religious community as long as the doctrine of eternal misery, and



that this doctrine had never been known in the world. Allowing that I had come forward and attempted to show that endless misery in hell was a doctrine taught in Scripture, and that the contrary was a mistaken view of the subject. Beyond all doubt I should be liable to the very same condemnation to which I am now subjected. The trumpet would sound loud and long, by all religious parties against me. It would be sagely and gravely remarked,—“what a dreadful doctrine he has embraced. What dreadful views his doctrine gives of the God who made us. He represents him as dooming a great part of his creatures to endless misery in hell. His inquiries have led him into a most dreadful error.” I appeal to every candid man if this would not be my fate, and if as good ground was not afforded for such conclusions and condemnations in the one case, as in the other.—In concluding this subject, we shall view the two opposite doctrines in the following points of light.

1st, How does the two doctrines affect the character of God? Let us view them as to the promises of God. He promised that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. To bruise a serpent's head is to kill or destroy it. But is the serpent's head bruised, if the greater part of the human race are to be eternally miserable? Even this is too gross to be believed by respectable orthodox writers in the present day. Mr. Emerson, in his book on the Millennium, commenting on Gen. iii. 15. thus writes:—p. 11. “Now the question arises, Has the serpent's head been bruised in any degree answerable to the manifest import of the passage under consideration? A great part of mankind have gone to destruction. Does this look like bruising the serpent's head? If the greater part of the human race are to be lost by the cunning craftiness of satan, will that look like bruising his head? To me it would seem far otherwise.

Should Satan continue the god of this world from the beginning to the end of time, leading whole nations captive at his will, surely he will seem to have cause to triumph. But the head of satan must be bruised; his plots must be crushed. Are all mankind to be saved? Certainly not. That would be giving the lie to numerous declarations of eternal Truth; it would be throwing away the Bible at once. And if the Bible be thrown away, it would be impossible to prove the salvation of any. But there is no doubt that by far the greater part of mankind will be saved. This appears necessary, in order that the serpent's head may be bruised. I am strongly inclined to the opinion of Dr. Hopkins, that of the whole human race, thousands will be saved for one that is lost."

We are happy to see from such respectable authors, that thousands are to be saved to one that is lost; and that if the greater part of the human race are to be lost, satan's head would not be bruised, but that he would have cause to triumph. If so many must be saved as stated in this quotation, to avoid these consequences, we would suggest it for the consideration of all, as well as that of the worthy author, whether satan's head could be bruised, or he destroyed, and whether he would not have cause of triumph if one individual of the human race was lost. If but one was left in his power, to be tormented by him forever, how could his head be bruised, and would he not triumph in this small conquest, as well as over one in a thousand? We do not see how the number could materially alter the case. We seriously think that if the number to be saved be so great in proportion to those lost, we would do well to consider if all mankind may not be saved, and that we may believe this without throwing away our Bibles. On this quotation, we cannot help remarking how different the sentiments contained in it are, to what was considered

true orthodoxy in former ages. In those days, it would have been considered throwing away the Bible, to say that thousands will be saved for one lost, just as much as saying in these, that all will be saved. If Christ comes so near saving the whole human race, in the name of humanity why not let his triumph be complete; why strain at the gnat and swallow the camel? God also promised to Abraham, that in his seed, which was Christ, all the families of the earth should be blessed. But if the doctrine of endless misery be true, and a great part of mankind are decreed to such a punishment, how can this promise of God be fulfilled? Let any one go over the promises and predictions of the Old Testament, two of which I have merely adduced as a specimen, and then candidly say, if he finds them in unison with the limited views of salvation which most men entertain. It would be as endless, as useless for me to dwell on this topic.

But let us view the two doctrines in regard to the threatenings of God. The doctrine of eternal misery supposes that God threatened Adam, that in the day he ate of the forbidden fruit he should die, and that death threatened is said to be death temporal, spiritual, and eternal. This eternal death is said to be endless misery in hell. Hell torment, then, was threatened before sin existed, or before the promise of a Saviour was given. But is this a correct understanding of the death threatened Adam? The falsehood of it is evident from one fact, that Adam, Noah, Abraham, and all the Old Testament believers did not so understand it. If they had, would they not have taught it to mankind?

But let us also view the two doctrines, in regard to the attributes or character of God. It has been said, that my views are very dishonourable to God's character. His justice, his holiness, and truth are dishon-

oured if there be no endless punishment for all the wicked. But if my views dishonour God's justice, holiness and truth, what comes of his mercy and goodness, if the opposite doctrine be true? We have to be sure seen attempts made by some metaphysical writers, to reconcile eternal misery with the mercy and goodness of God, but in vain. All they have said, is only enveloping the subject in a mist, or throwing dust in people's eyes to blind them on this subject. It is reported of the late Dr. Osgood, that when he was asked the question, "how he reconciled the doctrine of eternal misery with the character of God as a God of mercy and goodness;" he lifted both his hands, and said, "if any man is able to do this I cannot do it." Whether God is more glorified in men's damnation or in their salvation, I need not discuss. One thing is certain; that those called orthodox writers in the present day are fully aware, that if God did not ultimately save the greatest part of mankind, God's character would be dishonoured. If this was not the case who could deny that the devil was more honoured than God? Mr. Emerson, aware of this, agrees with another celebrated divine, that those saved at last, will exceed those that are lost by a large majority. I am truly glad to see men of such good characters and intelligence so much concerned for God's honour and glory in this respect; and I hope the time is not very distant when they may think God most honoured and glorified by saving the whole human race. It is a very evident case, that those writers do not hesitate to dissent from ancient orthodoxy. Had they written so in some former ages, they would have suffered death, in some of its most terrific forms for their temerity. At any rate, I am not a greater heretic now, than they would have been then.

2d, How does the views advanced and their opposite affect the Scriptures of Truth? I think it will not be denied, that my views of all the passages in which Gehenna occurs, are explained consistently with themselves, and their respective contexts. That so far from the contexts being at variance with the texts they direct to the explanations given. When a man perverts the Scriptures, he does it in the face of facts, and shutting his eyes against the context and Scripture usage of words, indulges his own imagination. But here the reverse is the case. The context points out the sense I have given Gehenna; Scripture usage comes in aid; nor is any thing taken for granted, or imagination indulged. But that Gehenna is a place of future misery, is assumed, and asserted without proof, and when the context and Scripture usage are consulted for evidence, all they afford is on the opposite side.

3d, Let us see how the two doctrines affect the various religious sects in the world. Allowing that this doctrine was universally the faith of all parties, discord must cease, and Christians would embrace each other as children of the same father, and heirs of the same inheritance. It would lead all sects to treat each other very differently from what they have done. But how does the opposite doctrine operate among them? Hell being a place of endless misery, Christians have been for ages consigning each other over to its punishment, and that often for conscientious differences of religious opinions.

4th, Let us now consider how my views and their opposite affect the diffusion of the gospel in the world. Say some, "if your views are correct, why trouble ourselves, or be at such an expense to send the gospel to the heathen?" The principal object in sending missionaries to the heathen in our day, seems to

be to save them from hell. If this be the object of sending them, we think they may abide at home; for certainly they are running on an errand to them, on which the apostles were never sent. Those who wish to see what they proposed, yea, accomplished, by preaching to the heathen, may consult the Acts of the apostles, and all the epistles. Because there is no eternal torment from which to save them, shall we not impart to them the knowledge and hope of eternal life? Unless we can terrify them with preaching hell, shall we let them live and die ignorant about heaven? In short, because we cannot save them from a place where they shall dishonour God and be punished by him forever, shall we not save them from dishonouring his name and from punishment in the present world? Unless we have the honour of saving the heathen from everlasting punishment in hell, it seems we do not think it worthy of our notice to do them any good. I pity the man who can think, and feel, and reason at such a rate. Supposing the happiness of heaven and the torment of hell out of the question, and that the heathen world were as ignorant of science, agriculture and the arts of life, as they are of spiritual things, how ought we to think, and feel, and reason on this subject? Deists and Atheists in this case would put Christians to the blush, if they would do them no service, because they had no hell torments to save them from. My views of hell so far from abating Christian zeal, only gives it a right direction. The zeal manifested in the present day in behalf of the heathen is highly to be commended, and nothing prevents its being more generally approved, but the object towards which it is directed. It is zeal, but we think it is not according to the knowledge of Scripture. If an intelligent heathen were to ask a modern missionary, after hearing him preach hell torments, the following questions, what could he answer?—Do

you profess to take the apostles, the first missionaries to the heathen, as a pattern in your preaching and conduct? To this the missionary would without doubt reply in the affirmative. Give me leave, says he, then, to ask you, what heathen nation they ever went to and preached as you do to us, that they came to save them from a place called hell? To what sermon of theirs can you refer us, in which they even so much as mentioned the word hell, which is so often upon your lips?—Were I this missionary, such questions would nonplus me. But to what could any missionary appeal, showing that those persons were all exposed to endless torments in hell? Not to his Bible, a book they know nothing about? Not to any thing he could point them to as an object of sight, feeling, or hearing. He could indeed refer them back to the old heathen fables about hell, from which source Dr. Campbell thinks the Jews derived this notion. But we are rather inclined to think, so far as our knowledge of present heathenism goes, that the heathen have forgotten the ancient fables about hell, and are obliged to Christians to revive this ancient doctrine of their fathers among them.

5th, Let us see which of the two doctrines accords best with the wishes, and feelings and prayers of every good man. What a good man wishes, and which is agreeable to his best feelings, for this he prays. Accordingly it is common with all Christians to pray for the salvation of all men; and we believe that they do this often with holy and ardent desires for its accomplishment. But, is there not a contradiction between their wishes, feelings, and prayers, and their professed creed? If they are confident all will never be saved, but only a small number elected to everlasting happiness, why pray for the salvation of all men? Their prayers ought to be restricted to the

elect. And we see not why they ought not to pray for the eternal misery of all the rest, seeing that it is the will, yea, the eternal decree of God that they should be forever miserable. All we request here, is, that every Christian would impartially and seriously examine, if my views may not be true, which are so much in unison with his wishes, his best feelings, and his prayers, when in the most solemn intercourse with his God. If I am in an error, it is strange that this error should have such a place in the desires, and feelings, and prayers of all Christians.

6th, How does my views and the opposite affect the eternal condition of men? According to my views, not one of the human race is to be punished forever in hell or Gehenna. This, if true, is certainly a pleasing thought, amidst all the guilt and wo in our world. But how does the contrary represent this? That a certain number, no better than others, are to be received into heaven to enjoy its happiness forever. All the rest of the human race are to be banished to hell torments forever. The husband, the parent, the brother, the sister, shall look down from heaven on their relations in hell, and so far from having any pity at seeing them in such unspeakable and eternal torment, the very sight shall enhance and increase their happiness. Now give me leave to ask, and let conscience speak, which of these two views is likely to be the truth. Unless every thing like Christian feeling is banished from heaven, can such a doctrine be true? Yea, I ask, if Christian feelings are known in this place? Is it possible that the happiness of the place could be enjoyed, while it is known, that a single individual of God's creatures was to be eternally miserable? If this be true, then, a believer does not better his situation, as to Christian feeling, by going to heaven. I once saw the idea highly extolled in an



account of missionary proceedings—"that a Christian could not feel happy so long as he knew that there was a single individual of the human race without the knowledge and belief of the gospel." This is like a Christian in this world. Heaven is then a change for the worse; for the eternal torment of innumerable beings in hell, is to afford an increase of joy to the inhabitants of heaven! For my own part, I must say, that with such feelings, I could not be happy in heaven. If my views, and feelings, and reasonings on this subject are wrong, I hold myself in readiness to be corrected by an appeal to the Scriptures, by any person in the universe of God.

THE END.

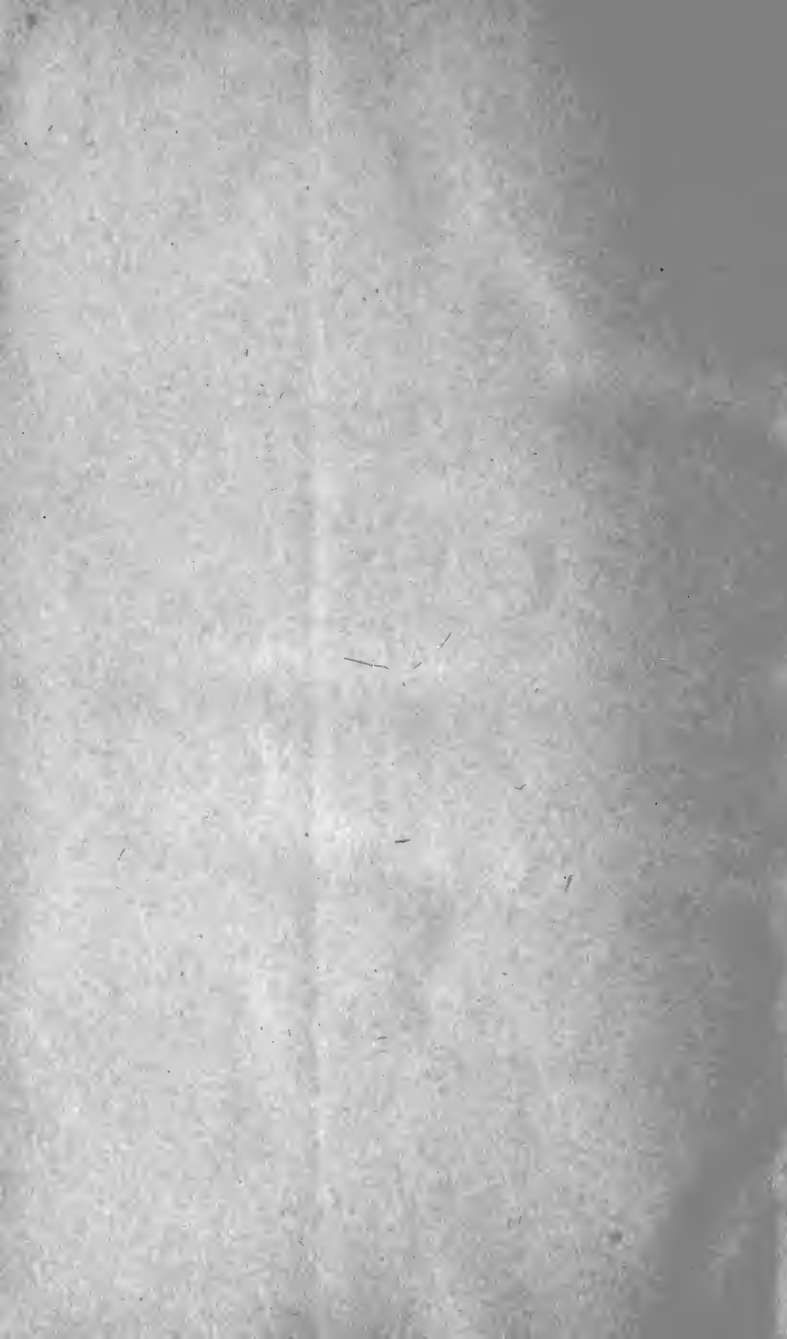
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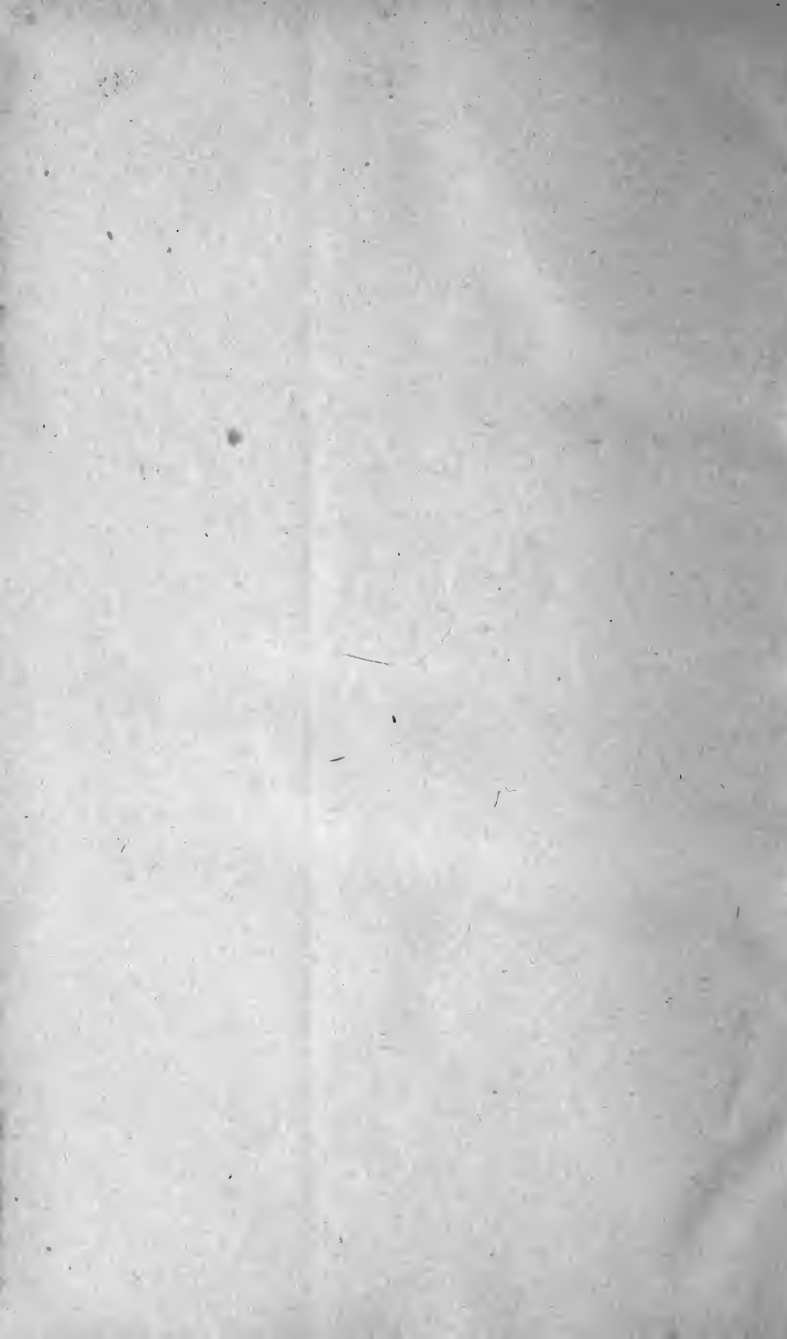
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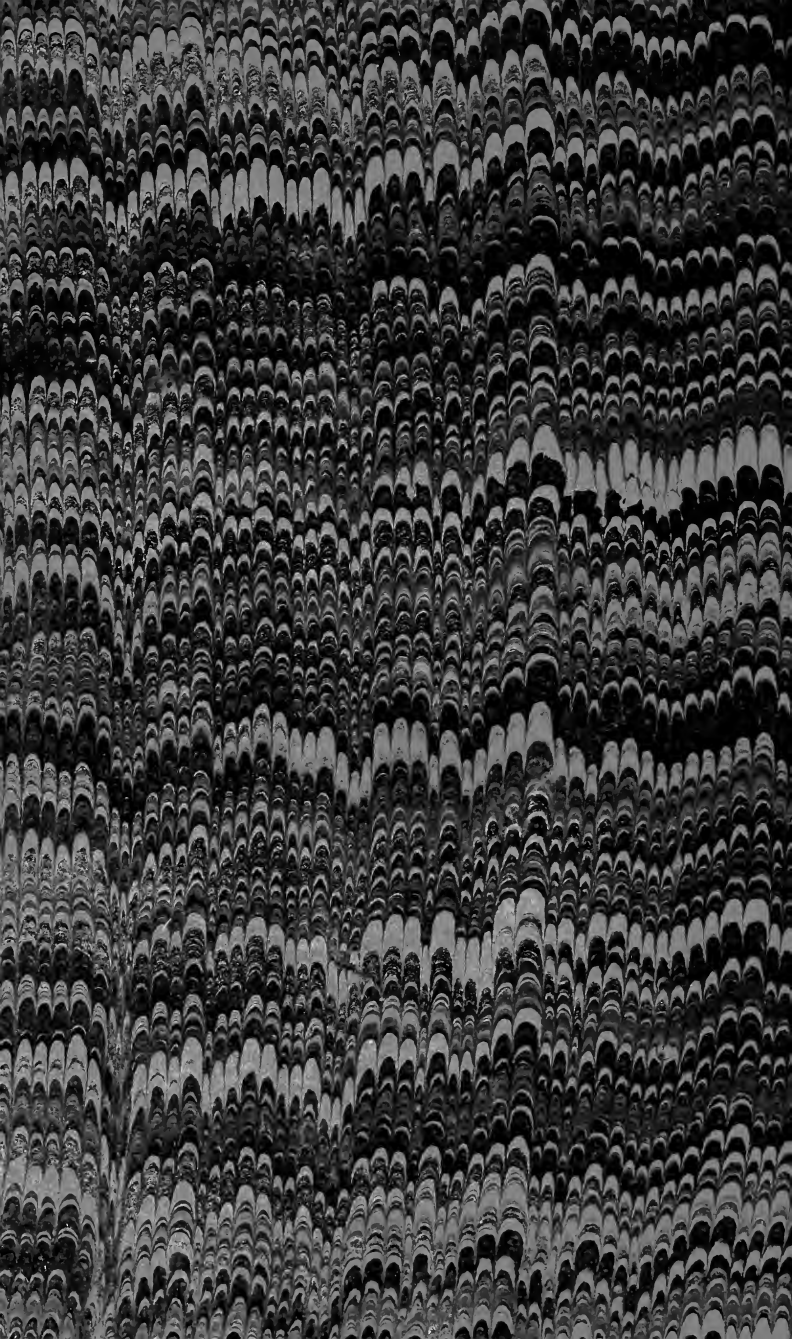


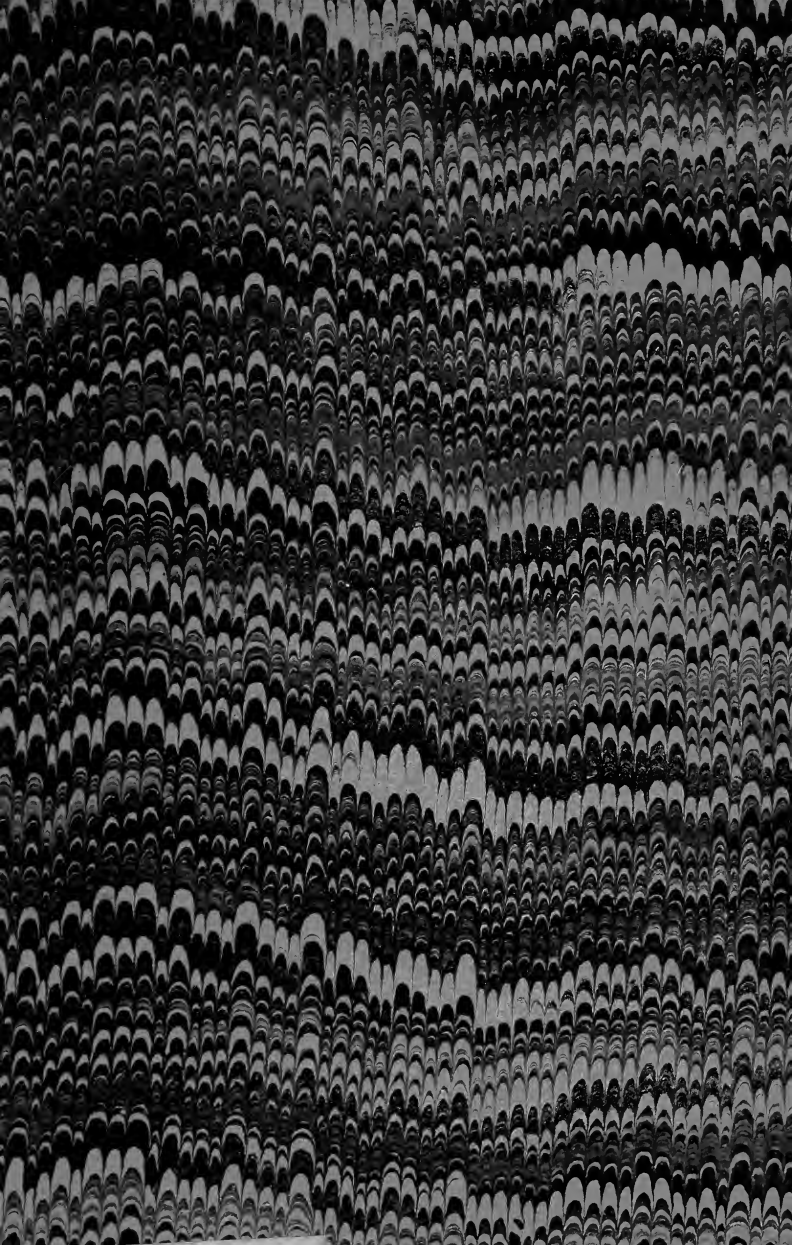






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