

Alexander, Archibald's

# UNIVERSALISM

**FALSE AND UNSCRIPTURAL.**

**AN ESSAY ON THE DURATION AND INTENSITY  
OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT.**



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# UNIVERSALISM

## FALSE AND UNSCRIPTURAL.

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### SECTION I.

Universalism characterized—Its contrariety to Scripture.

THE final destiny of men is a subject, which, beyond comparison, exceeds every other in interest and importance. After a short time has elapsed, the affairs of nations, of empires, of kings and rulers, of agriculture, commerce and manufactures, of canals, railways, steam engines, navigation, architecture and political economy, will all have passed away, and be as though they had never been. But when the sun shall have ceased to shine, the heavens become dark, and the stars have fallen from their fixed places, THE IMMORTAL SOUL of man shall exist, and think, and feel, and expand its powers, and shall flourish in the vigour of perpetual youth and health, and shall advance in knowledge, dignity, glory, and felicity, far beyond any thing which we can now conceive ;

or with its imperishable faculties, shall sink into the darkness of eternal night; shall be corroded with unceasing regrets, and bereft of all hope as well as present comfort; shall see nothing in the boundless prospect of the future, but the blackness of darkness for ever. Her energies impotently excited against God, shall return upon herself with terrible vengeance; and sin unpardoned, unrepented of, and now unrestrained, shall be the principal cause of that torture, which is represented by the "worm that never dies, and the fire that is not quenched."

It is truly wonderful, that knowing, as we do, that there is a future state, we are not all, whatever may be our characters or opinions, more occupied with the concerns of eternity than with all other interests. When we seriously consider this subject of infinite moment, we cannot but censure our own carelessness and stupidity; we cannot but feel that we are chargeable with the grossest inconsistency. What! to walk along the brink of eternity, and to be drawn towards this endless existence by an irresistible force, so that in a few years, months, or days, or even in a

few moments, our condition will be immutably fixed, and yet feel no concern, take no thought, and make no exertions for our own salvation! What words are strong enough to express such folly! If we were all perfectly sure of making a change for the better; if we entertained assured and well-grounded hopes of a happy life after our departure, the nearness of that event, and the object before us so interesting and glorious, ought, in all reason, to lead us to have our minds principally occupied with these future and eternal things.

There is, then, in the universe, no question so interesting to us as this: "What will be the condition of the different characters of men after death?" I take it for granted that there is a future state, and that the soul of man exists after the body returns to the dust, and will continue to exist without end. If any of my readers entertain a different opinion, and suppose that there is no hereafter for man, I must leave them at present to indulge in their infidelity. It is not my object at this time, to refute this degrading doctrine. I can only stop to offer up a prayer to

the FATHER OF LIGHTS, to recover you out of the snare of the devil, by whom you are led willing captives; and that of his infinite mercy he would so enlighten your minds, awaken your consciences, and impress your hearts, that you may not remain in this destructive error, but may be speedily rescued from this horrible pit of atheism, from this midnight darkness, and brought into the "marvellous light of the gospel," if yet you are within mercy's limits—for there is a degree and kind of error from which there is no deliverance, but the unhappy wretch is sealed up under judicial blindness and hardness of heart. For such we may not even pray. 1 John v. 16. ✱

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Their character and doom are described by Paul, where he says: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they shall believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." To such characters Isaiah received a message, when he saw the glory of the Lord Christ in the temple. "And he said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.




Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." These awful words our blessed Saviour applies to some of the Jews who attended on his ministry. It is important that all men should be aware that there is an error, or state of infidelity, from which there is no recovery, and a sin which is never forgiven, "neither in this world, nor in that which is to come;" a sin unto death.

But taking for granted the doctrine of the soul's immortality, our inquiry is, whether all men of every character and class shall be finally saved; or whether they who die impenitent and unreconciled to God, shall be eternally punished.

To err on such a point must be dangerous, but the danger is not the same on both sides. For if they should be right who hold that all men will eventually be saved, those who deny the doctrine would only lose the present knowledge of their happiness, and even this they would not lose if they were sincere Christians; for whatever be-

comes of the wicked, such are certain of salvation, and eternal happiness they cannot forfeit on this plan. Therefore, if universal salvation should be the truth, sincere Christians will not be losers; and if wicked men should err on this point, and reject the doctrine of universal salvation, it will not be injurious to them, even if their error should afford them some uneasiness. Their error, in this case, would impose a salutary restraint upon them. If it be said that it is always beneficial to know the truth, I answer, if this doctrine be true, I deny the position. It is better for society, and better for the sinner, that he should not be sure that there is no danger of losing eternal happiness. But we may have occasion to return again to this subject. I now proceed to observe that if the doctrine of universal salvation is not true, then the error is likely to be fatal. For I presume that most who receive this doctrine, make it the foundation of all their hopes of future happiness. Now, if this foundation should prove to be false—if they should be found altogether mistaken about this matter—if the eternal misery of impenitent sinners should

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*the clearest*  *the*

be by them realized—O, how grievous the mistake! How dreadful the surprise! How remediless the loss! How deplorable and desperate the condition! If we saw some of our fellow-creatures walking along a narrow path on the verge of a dreadful precipice, having on one side firm ground, but on the other a frightful abyss, what advice should we give them? Would we not most earnestly exhort them to lean to the safe side, and to be constantly on their guard, not to tend in the smallest degree toward the yawning gulf? The cases are alike, and the application is easy.

But perhaps the advocates of universal salvation will tell us, that there is in this case no danger of mistake; that they can demonstrate from reason and scripture, the truth of what they believe, and are willing to venture their salvation  
 x upon the scheme. Well, this seems to be placing the subject on fair ground. It is certainly incumbent on those who depend on this doctrine, and especially on those who teach it, to be able to demonstrate it so clearly that not even the shadow of a doubt should remain. If the doc-

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trine cannot be rendered absolutely certain, it is most manifest that they are inexcusable who propagate it, whatever show of reasoning they may exhibit, or whatever probabilities they may rake together. If there is the least danger of being mistaken in their opinion, the teachers of universal salvation ought to be considered as the destroyers of the souls of men; for many, no doubt, are induced from their belief of this doctrine, to neglect the means of grace, and to continue in the practice of their sins.

But here, at the very entrance upon our subject, we are met by two classes of Universalists, differing exceedingly from each other. The one denying all future punishment of every kind and degree; the other admitting and maintaining the doctrine of a retribution to the impenitently wicked after death, but insisting that however long their punishment may be protracted, yet it is not in any case strictly and absolutely eternal.\*

\* That section of the Universalists who have lately risen, and deny all future punishment, have retained the name "UNIVERSALISTS;" and those who admit a limited

Unless it had been verified by experience, I never could have believed that any man, much less a whole sect, with the Bible in their hands, could have persuaded himself that the Scriptures of the New Testament taught no such doctrine as that of the future punishment of the wicked. I should be as little surprised if these men were to assert that the Scriptures inculcated a system of atheism; or that in the whole volume there was not a letter of the alphabet to be found. There is in this opinion an audacity in relation to the word of God, which should cause us to tremble. It seems like giving the lie direct to the Almighty. "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar." To deny what is so clearly, so frequently, and in such various methods, taught in the holy Scriptures, appears to me to be more presumptuous and impious than to reject the

x Bible altogether. Indeed, this doctrine is worse

punishment of the wicked, according to their demerit, have taken the name of "RESTORATIONISTS;" but as this term is not familiar with the people, I have chosen to use the old denomination for both parties, as in fact they both hold that all men will eventually be saved.

than that of many deists; for they are willing to admit a state of retribution after death. It is equal in its licentious tendency to the very worst systems of paganism; I say to the very worst, because the heathen generally admitted and believed, that wicked men after death underwent a severe judgment, and were doomed to horrible tortures in TARTARUS, according to the nature of their crimes. The plain truth is that this system contains in it the most virulent poison of atheism. That doctrine which frees wicked men from all fear of future punishment, even if they die blaspheming the God that made them, goes as far to open wide the door to the commission of all manner of sin as atheism can. If the person imbued with this doctrine feels inclined to commit some secret crime under the influence of avarice, revenge, ambition, or lust, what has he more than the atheist to restrain him? Suppose that by assassinating a near relative he can get possession of an estate, or can remove a disagreeable partner, or that he has it in his power to defraud the speechless orphan, or the helpless widow, by appropriating to his own use their property, what

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is there, I ask again, in this doctrine to restrain the sinner from the perpetration of the foulest crimes more than in the rankest atheism?

This opinion is also insulting to the good sense of mankind. It seems to suppose that men are so silly or stupid that they will believe any thing which is preached to them; that they are such dupes that if it be told them that sweet is bitter, and bitter sweet, or that white is black, and black white, if there be some appearance of logic, and some boldness of assertion, they will receive it. Why do these false teachers (for such I must call them) meddle with the Bible? They might hold out some appearance of defence if they would reject the Scriptures entirely, but by acknowledging the Scriptures, they subscribe to their own condemnation. But perhaps they will say this is all mere assertion, and will call upon me to prove their doctrine false. To this I reply that there are some things so plain, that they require no proof by argument. This is one of them. Suppose I should bring forth a host of scriptural arguments to prove that there is a terrible hell into which the wicked will be cast,

*instead of the innocency of our kind  
that a few benighted men will wash away*

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these perverters of truth and reason, might pretend that I did not hold or teach the doctrine of future punishment, with just as much plausibility as that it is not contained in the writings of the New Testament. For what if I should use the strongest terms which our language affords, and employ every variety of expression, and even descend to particular cases, and give a vivid description of the punishment endured, what could I after all do more, to render my meaning plain, than is done in the sacred Scriptures? I do consider, therefore, this opinion to be one that needs no formal refutation. Can any man in his sober senses believe that those abandoned sinners whom the justice of God would not permit to remain on earth, but who, by the immediate vengeance of Heaven, were cut off by dreadful judgments, shall go directly to the pure regions of heavenly bliss? What! shall the traitor Judas, who died by his own hand, and thus went out of the world with the guilt of the most unnatural murder on his head, find his "own place" immediately among the saints of the Most High? Shall the sinners of the antediluvian world, whose enormous wickedness caused its destruc-

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tion, be admitted at once to glory? And the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha, stained with all the pollution of their abominable crimes, feel no evil on account of their sins, but be ushered forthwith into Paradise? And the Canaanites, whose unnatural crimes the earth could no longer endure, be placed in a far more eligible condition than the saints of God ever enjoy upon earth? But perhaps these enemies of the truth will say, that they do not believe that the soul exists in a conscious state after death, until the resurrection of the body, and therefore all that has been said about the wicked going directly to heaven, is without force. I have long observed that error never appears single. One false opinion requires the aid of others to support it, and give it the appearance of consistency. But if we should admit this principle, it could not afford any real support to this most unscriptural opinion, or at all weaken the force of the objection which has been urged. For according to this supposition, those abandoned sinners, whom, on account of their crimes, justice did not permit to live upon earth, will, in their next conscious mo-

ment after death, be arraigned before the tremendous tribunal of God, to give an account of the deeds done in the body, and can the Judge of all the earth do right, if he should free them from all condemnation and punishment? Why are they called into judgment, to receive according to their deeds? Would these Universalists, in the fulness of their benevolence, have us to believe that on that awful day, intended especially for the manifestation of divine justice, there will be no distinction made between the righteous and the wicked, and that it will fare as well with the man who has spent all his life in open rebellion, as with him who has sincerely and faithfully served God, and has embraced the terms of reconciliation proposed in the Gospel? But it may be that I still mistake the real opinions of these men. They may believe as little in the day of judgment as in the fire of hell. And certainly it is as easy to disprove the one as the other. But if this be the case, I must be excused from following them any further. They must enjoy their delusion. I will therefore take my leave of this new race of Universalists. I believe they

have the credit of broaching a doctrine which no sect called Christian, ever entertained before. Indeed, I do not think that in the foul sink of heresy, which seems to embrace almost every monstrous form of error, a single instance can be produced from antiquity, of any one who denied all future punishment. If originality in this case be any matter of boasting to these corrupters of the truth, they may rejoice in their "bad pre-eminence."

But that I may not seem to dismiss the subject without exhibiting any proof, I will select a few out of the many passages in which the doctrine of future punishment is clearly taught: "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 shall never be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." The same form of expression is here repeated three times in the most emphatical manner by our Lord. I have no doubt, however, that these wonderful critics would undertake to prove to us, that there is no threatening of future punishment here! They

must possess extraordinary ingenuity, or must calculate very largely on the stupidity and prejudice of those who receive their instructions.

The same divine Person says to the wicked scribes and pharisees who malignantly opposed the truth: "Therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" If there had been any of our modern Universalists among them, they could have told them to set their hearts at rest, and not to regard these threatenings, for they should all most assuredly escape the damnation of hell.

Again: "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by

patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality; eternal life: But unto them who are contentious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish on every soul of man that doeth evil." There is no need of comment here, words cannot be plainer.

Again: "Seeing that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

It is unnecessary to multiply the citation of texts of similar import. The frequency of such declarations is known to all who are familiar with the New Testament. If it be said that all these texts can be so interpreted as to give a sense consistent with the doctrine of those Universalists who deny all future punishment, I have only

to say, in reply, that upon the same principles of interpretation, it can be proved that there will be no future happiness to any of the human race ; no resurrection of the body, and no general judgment. For although these doctrines are taught in the New Testament as clearly as it seems possible, yet not more expressly than the future punishment of the wicked. Some men, to support a favourite theory, may renounce the clearest principles of reason and common sense ; but people who are wise will not commit themselves to the direction of such teachers, in spiritual matters, any more than they would in the affairs of this life.

This tenet is one of serious import to the well-being of civil society, and demands the attention of the magistrate as well as the theologian. I do not mean that these propagators of dangerous error should be persecuted for their opinions. I abhor all such methods of suppressing heresy, as contrary to the spirit of Christianity. But my meaning is, that it behoves the civil magistrate to consider well, whether such persons as openly profess that they believe in no future punishment,

ought to be admitted to give testimony on oath, in any case. It has certainly been the practice of some of the English courts, and I believe, of some judges in this country, to refuse to admit men professing such opinions, to take an oath, and with good reason; for how can the most solemn oath bind him who believes that there is no punishment reserved for the perjured person in another world?

But I will not spend longer time in refuting an opinion, the condemnation of which is written as with a sun-beam, on almost every page of the New Testament; especially, as all that may be said in opposition to the more plausible opinion of those who admit future punishment, but hold that it is not endless, will equally militate against this error.

*Ever plac'd a human soul  
in danger of such a penalty*  
UNIVERSALISM FALSE

## SECTION II.

The fallacious reasoning of Universalists answered.

I DESIRE you to bear in mind what was said in the commencement of this treatise, that it is incumbent on the Universalist to prove his doctrine so clearly that there may be no ground for the least reasonable doubt. But how will he be able to accomplish this task? He may pretend to argue it from the perfections of God. 1. He may assume it as a first principle, that a Being of infinite wisdom, power and benevolence, never would bring into existence a creature to be eternally miserable. If we had nothing but theory to deal with, this argument would appear plausible; but it has this great defect, that it concludes as strongly against known and acknowledged fact, as against the doctrine of eternal punishment. If it could prove any thing, it would show that a Being of infinite benevolence never would give existence to creatures who should be miserable in any degree, or for any period. How can it be

*of it is... is endless punishment or that God in his wisdom*



reconciled to the goodness of God, that men suffer in this world, and that many of them will suffer for ages in the future world? The answer may be, that their sins deserve the punishment which they endure; or that the good of the universe requires it. Well, if sin is of such a nature (and none can demonstrate the contrary) that it deserves eternal punishment; or if the good of the universe requires the eternal punishment of sinners, then their punishment may be eternal as well as temporary. Whatever sin deserves it is right to inflict, and as right if its desert be eternal suffering, as if it be temporary. But if the Universalist insist that no sin can merit eternal punishment, I answer, let him demonstrate this, and the dispute is at an end. But this point shall be considered presently.

2. The argument derived from the holiness of God against the eternal existence of sin, is of the same nature, and may be answered in the same way. If the eternal existence of sin were incompatible with the holiness of God, the existence of sin for a million of years, or for one year, or one moment, would be also incompatible with this

perfection. As far as the argument is concerned, the length of duration is of no consequence, for God is the same through his eternal existence, and is as holy now when sin does exist, as he ever will, or can be through eternity.

3. But we come now to the main point; the hinge of the whole question. The Universalist lays it down as a principle, that the sins of finite creatures never can merit eternal punishment, and therefore a just God never can inflict such a punishment. Undoubtedly, if the principle assumed is correct, the conclusion is inevitable. God will never inflict an undeserved punishment. "The Judge of all the earth will do right." But we demand the proof of this assumed principle. How is it manifest that the sins of men may not deserve an endless punishment? I am sure the position is not self-evident, and I know of no means by which it can be demonstrated. The Universalist may allege that sins committed in a short time never can deserve an endless penalty. But this is no correct method of estimating the duration of punishment. No such principle is recognized in the administration of

the divine, or of human governments. In providence a man often suffers all his life for one wrong step; and in civil governments, the crime which it required only a moment to perpetrate, is punished with confinement for years, or for life. And the admitted principle of those with whom we dispute is incompatible with this method of apportioning punishments; for they agree that the sins of a short life are punished, or may be punished for ages of ages—for a period which, in some sense, is called *everlasting* and *eternal*. Now, if they can tell us how this is consistent with the principle assumed in their argument, it may not be difficult to show that for aught we know, sins of this life may be justly punished for ever. The truth is, this is a subject on which human reason is incapable of judging correctly. We are not, without revelation, competent judges of the deserts of sin.

But it is alleged again, and may perhaps be principally depended on, in support of this argument, that a finite creature cannot contract infinite guilt; as the acts of such a creature are finite, the punishment which they incur must, of

necessity, be finite also. This may be thought good reasoning by those who use it, but in my apprehension, it is mere sophistical quibbling. Just as forcibly might we reason that a finite creature could not be the subject of eternal happiness, for this is as infinite as eternal misery. And it matters not, as it relates to the argument, how the finite creature becomes the subject of that which in its duration is infinite. If I were fond of reasoning about infinites, I would confront this argument by one much stronger, which indeed has been often employed. I would say, that the guilt of offences is properly measured by the dignity and excellence of the Being against whom we transgress, and by the extent of the obligation which binds us to obedience. This is an acknowledged principle among men. He who strikes or abuses a good father, or a good king, to whom he is subject, aggravates his guilt to a degree which is estimated by the scale mentioned. But I am aware how liable we are to mistakes, when we reason about *infinites*, concerning which our ideas are merely negative, and of course very inadequate; and therefore, though I see no flaw

in this argument, I lay but little stress upon it, and choose to rest my faith on the plain declarations of the word of God, which will never mislead us.

4. Another argument to which Universalists resort with much confidence in support of their favourite tenet, is derived from our feelings. It is asked whether every benevolent man does not desire the salvation of all men, and can it be supposed that God is less benevolent than his creatures? It is, moreover, asked whether any earthly parent who loved his offspring, would consent for any misconduct, to see them eternally miserable? If it was completely in his power, would he not use every means to rescue them from such destruction? And does not God, the Father of us all, love his creatures more than any parent does his children? and can we suppose, therefore, that he will inflict upon them eternal punishment? There is no doubt but that this argument has more influence in making converts to Universalism, and confirming them in this doctrine, than any other. It may therefore be necessary to consider it the more particularly.

1. And let it be remarked in the first place, that mere *feelings* are a deceitful source of argumentation in most cases.

2. That the feelings of interested persons, can, least of all, be permitted to sit in judgment on a matter of this kind. We know well enough how the opinions of men are biased by their interested feelings.

3. The feelings of persons ignorant, in a great degree, of the design and end of punishment, ought to have no weight in determining the degree of punishment. But we are not sufficiently acquainted with the divine government to be able to judge correctly of all the ends to be answered by the infliction of the penalties of the law. Our feelings may be natural and even virtuous, but they may arise from the narrowness of our views. If our knowledge was greatly enlarged, we might possess very different feelings on this subject. A child on seeing an atrocious murderer executed, feels a tender compassion for the sufferer, and would give the world to rescue him from the gibbet, but the enlightened and just judge, though he compassionates the culprit,

feels no wish to save him from punishment, knowing how important it is to make a public example of such transgressors. Now, it would be just as reasonable to reason against capital punishment, from the feelings of the child, as to conclude against eternal punishment, from the feelings of men.

4. But the fallacy of this argument is manifest, because it is as strong against the sufferings of men in this world, by pestilence, war, famine, oppression, earthquakes, shipwrecks, &c., as against eternal punishment. What benevolent man does not desire that the millions of suffering creatures in the world at this time should be relieved? and yet God, who is able to deliver them, does not do it. What father, of natural feelings, could stand by and see his children, for any misconduct, so cruelly tortured and oppressed, and so miserably destroyed as multitudes have been in every age? And is God less benevolent than man? Does he love his creatures less than earthly parents their children?

5. Finally, the argument derived from compassion, and benevolent feelings, militates against

the opinion that men shall suffer for ages in the future world, as well as against eternal punishment. What benevolent mind can think of such sufferings without earnestly wishing to relieve the unhappy sufferers? but God does not relieve them.

The truth is that this mode of reasoning is utterly fallacious. It overlooks those circumstances in the character of God which ought to have principal weight in judging on this subject. God is infinitely holy as well as benevolent. God is the Governor of the universe. And after all, for aught the Universalists can prove, this infliction of eternal punishment may be a part of his universal benevolence.

I think, that now, every candid mind must acknowledge, that the Universalist cannot bring any clear demonstration from reason, that the punishment of obstinate and impenitent sinners will not be eternal. If he can establish his doctrine, it must be by proofs derived from the Scriptures. We are perfectly willing to meet him on this ground, for in our opinion, the only way, in which this question can be satisfactorily decided,



is to subject it to the test of a fair examination of the word of God, correctly interpreted. God knows what will be the end of the wicked, and if he has revealed, that after suffering for a season in hell, they shall come out and ascend to heaven there for ever to dwell, we shall willingly embrace the doctrine; for we take no pleasure in contemplating the sufferings of our fellow creatures, either in this world, or the world to come. We do not hold this doctrine because it is agreeable to our feelings, but because we believe God hath revealed it. Just as we believe that there are now thousands of our fellow creatures in a suffering state, not because the idea is agreeable, but because the fact is attended with such evidence, that we cannot disbelieve it. True benevolence does not consist in disbelieving that men are now miserable, or will be miserable hereafter, but in efforts to relieve them from misery and render them happy, as far as we can, or as far as is lawful.

In defending his position, the Universalist ought to adduce texts so clear, that their meaning cannot be reasonably disputed, and answer

satisfactorily all the objections from other plain texts, which seem to teach an opposite doctrine. It will not answer the purpose, to bring forward obscure passages of Scripture, which are of difficult or doubtful interpretation, to which he may choose to give a sense favourable to his tenets. Neither can we admit doubtful inferences, from principles or declarations which may be clear. Least of all can it be tolerated, where such interests are at stake that he should think it sufficient to show that the terms employed by the Holy Ghost, to represent future punishment, may *possibly* signify a limited duration, because in some other places they are so used. The usual and proper signification of the terms, in the New Testament, must not be departed from without evident necessity. The usage of the writer or speaker in other passages, where these terms occur in relation to other subjects, should be carefully kept in view. No forced and extravagant construction of plain passages ought to be listened to, for a moment. What we want is truth, and not to be amused with the ingenuity of fanciful glosses. With these principles in

sight, let us come to the point. And I would demand of the Universalist to produce one plain text of scripture, in which it is unequivocally asserted, that wicked men, cast into hell, shall be released from their misery, and raised to glory. This he cannot do, and he must be bolder than wise, who shall undertake it; yet this is the very point on which we want proof, and on which we might expect the Scriptures to be explicit, if it had been the intention of God to reveal this doctrine.

Again, I demand of the Universalist, to produce some plain declarations of scripture, showing that all the sins of sinners, dying in impenitence, will be pardoned in the future world; or, that any sins will be pardoned in the future world. No such text can be produced.

In the accounts which the Scriptures give us of heaven, we learn that there are many admitted to that glorious place, who came out of great tribulation in this world, but no mention of any that were brought out of the torments of hell; yet surely if this was the doctrine of the Bible, we might expect to find some hint, somewhere,

of this marvellous translation, and of the means by which it was effected.

Moreover, the doctrine of the Universalist is inconsistent with itself, for on the one hand he maintains, that sin does not deserve eternal punishment, and therefore there was no need of a Redeemer to save sinners; as in the course of time, they would come out by discharging their own debt; but on the other hand, teaches and insists, that men are delivered from sin and hell by the death of Christ, which supposes that they could not be delivered without his mediation. These things are irreconcilable. The dilemma is completely horned, and their escape impossible. If they fly from one, they are caught on the other. To show this, we ask this simple question, Are sinners saved from hell, by the operation of justice, or mercy? If the former, then the death of Christ was unnecessary, and the damned are saved without being under any obligation to Christ, and all men might have been saved in the same way. If the latter, then eternal punishment is consistent with justice, and all the divine attributes. We will propose it in a different form,

Is the reason why sinners are released from hell, because they have satisfied justice by their sufferings, or because Christ has atoned for their sins? Let the Universalist answer. Or again, does the sinner in hell suffer all the penalty threatened in the divine law, or is he released from that penalty by the atonement of Christ? If the former, then certainly he is saved without dependence on Christ; if the latter, how long must he have suffered, if a mediator had not interposed? If only for some longer time, then Christ by his death, does no more than shorten the period of his punishment, which would have come to an end without a Mediator's interposition. And how can it be explained, that if Christ undertook the salvation of these sinners, he did not save them from all the punishments of hell, as he is supposed to do from a part? But this notion of sinners being saved from a part of the deserved punishment is repugnant to scripture, which in numerous passages, declares that wicked men shall receive according to the deeds done in the body. It is plain from the general tenor of scripture, that whatever is threatened in the law,

will be endured by those who are cast into hell. And in the whole Bible there is no mention of any mercy exercised towards those who will be condemned at the day of judgment. There is no hint that their dreadful torments will come to an end.

Some, indeed, suppose that future punishment is designed to humble the sinner, to bring him to repentance, and to accept of the offers of mercy through Christ. This scheme is a mere human invention, not supported by a single text, rightly understood, in the whole Bible. It is inconsistent with the idea which the scriptures give of the effect of these vindictory punishments, the tendency of which is not to produce repentance unto life and reconciliation with God, but to stir up impotent rage, to drive to utter despair, and to lead the unhappy wretches to blaspheme the God of heaven. But I would ask, what will be the consequence, if some of these sinners should continue in obstinate impenitence? The whole scheme goes on the principle, that repentance and reconciliation depend on the free-will of the creature. It is evident then, if he remained obstinate under

all the means enjoyed in this world, and for ages of ages, under the torments of hell, there can be no certainty that he will ever repent. Therefore some may suffer eternally according to these principles.

It is a point which has never been explained, how sinners, long confined to a dungeon of darkness and despair, and to a society of abandoned blasphemers, should be fit for the exercises, enjoyments, and society of heaven. If they go out, as criminals from a penitentiary, because they have suffered their time out, they will be found as unfit for the mansions of glory, as our penitentiary criminals, for refined and virtuous society. Some do indeed, talk of a purifying fire, a sort of purgatory, by which all the dross of sin will be consumed: just as a furnace removes the dross of metals, cast into it. This, perhaps, is the most plausible idea, which the Universalists ever advance, in favour of their system. But the mere infliction of pain has no tendency to make men holy. The natural effect of mere punishment is to lead the sufferer to hate the person who inflicts it. No inference in favour

of this theory can be drawn from the utility of afflictions to Christians, in this world; for the agency of pain, in this case, is merely incidental. It is the sanctifying efficacy of the grace of God, to which the benefit should be ascribed. Again, if this purgation depends on the free will of the creature, it may never be completed; for as before said, that obstinacy which can resist this means for ages, may continue to resist as much longer, and so the sinner may remain eternally in misery. But if pain produces its effect, by any kind of necessity, independently of the human will, it is hard to see how that effect can be moral purity; which cannot exist without the consent of the will. Or, is it meant that the Holy Spirit operates on the soul by means of the pains of hell? I shudder to express such an idea. The decisive objection to this theory however is, that it is totally repugnant to the doctrine of future punishment, contained in the word of God. The punishment of the wicked in hell, is never represented to be salutary to the individual sufferer, but always destructive. The soul cast into hell is never spoken of as sent into a state of discipline and



purification, but as *lost*, or *destroyed* with an everlasting destruction. "Fear not them that kill the body, but fear Him who after he hath killed hath power to cast both soul and body into hell."

It is a favourite maxim with Universalists, that all punishment is intended for the benefit of the transgressor: a principle contrary to all the reason of man, contrary to all the principles on which penalties are annexed to human laws, and it would scarcely be possible to conceive of any thing more opposite to the whole doctrine of Scripture respecting the punishment of impenitent sinners.

Among all the numerous texts of Scripture which speak of future punishment, there is not one, which in the smallest degree, favours this principle. According to this notion, the wrath and curse of God against impenitent sinners, would in reality, be a blessing. The execution of the penalty of the law, would be the means of salvation; and everlasting destruction would be the means of everlasting life. Into what absurdities will some men run, to prop up a favourite system!

## SECTION III.

The Doctrine of Universal Salvation receives no support from the express declarations of Scripture.

It is time to inquire how the advocate of universal salvation, attempts to demonstrate his doctrine from the express declarations of Scripture. Here, in the first place, he entrenches himself as in a citadel, in the declarations of Scripture, often repeated, that "Christ died for all men;"—"is a propitiation, for the sins of the whole world"—"tasted death for every man;" and "gave his life a ransom for all," &c.

It may be doubted, on good grounds, whether any of these universal expressions in which *all the world, the whole world, &c.*, are used, ought to be interpreted so as to comprehend every human being, who ever has, or ever shall live. The true import and extent of such phrases must be determined by the subject and the context. When it is said, "the whole world lieth in wickedness," certainly true believers are excepted.

When we read in Rev. xii. 9. "That the Devil and Satan deceiveth the whole world," we must restrict the phrase to the whole world of the ungodly. So also when Paul says to the Romans, "your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world," we cannot interpret the phrase in its most unlimited extent. And to the Colossians he says, "which is come unto you as in all the world."

There was a special reason, in the times of the Apostles for using frequently such general expressions, respecting the extent of Christ's atonement, to counteract the deep-rooted prejudices of many of the Jewish Christians, who entertained the narrow principle, that the church and the blessings of the gospel, peculiarly belonged to their nation. This led the sacred writers often to declare, that Christ came to save the world, and that his death was a propitiation, not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world; not of us Jews merely but likewise of all nations.

There are many, therefore, who believe, that some of them are intended, merely to express, in a strong manner, that the benefits of Christ's

death were not to be confined to the Jews; but to be extended to the whole world;—to all nations; and that these universal expressions, in other places, refer, as appears by the context, to all sorts of men, kings, governors, and servants, &c., and in some instances, (and these are the texts most depended on by the Universalists,) they include all the members of Christ's mystical body.

They believe, that God, foreknowing all that should ever repent of their sins and believe in Christ, did provide an effectual atonement for all such and no others: and although, they admit the infinite value of Christ's death, and its sufficiency for the salvation of all men, in itself considered; yet as it was designed and offered only for such as should believe, it is in strict propriety an atonement for no others. Now if this theory be correct, the doctrine of the Universalists is cut up by the roots. Their boasted argument from the death of Christ can have no existence.

But as many Christians receive those declarations of scripture which have been referred to, as

teaching that in some sense Christ did die for all, and every one, of the apostate race of Adam, I will answer the argument on which so much stress is laid, on this ground.

And here I remark that although it is said that Christ died for all, gave himself a ransom for all, &c., and is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, &c., it is no where said that he so died for all as to render the salvation of all certain. Provision may be made for the benefit of men, which they shall never enjoy, because they never comply with the terms on which it is offered. This argument would have some plausibility if the blessings purchased by Christ were not suspended on certain conditions; and if it had not been expressly and repeatedly declared, that all they who refuse to comply with the conditions, shall assuredly perish. A king might make provision for the pardon and reconciliation of a rebellious province, but if it was ordained that none should receive the benefit of his clemency but such as came forward and made their submission, and renewed their allegiance, then certainly it never could be argued that they who refused

these terms and continued in rebellion, would be pardoned and reconciled. It matters not how the way of reconciliation was opened, if the mercy proposed was by the sovereign suspended on a condition, and that condition is refused by some of those to whom the benefit is offered, it is evident that they can claim no share in the pardon. Now, there is no truth more undeniable than that the benefits of Christ's death are offered to men, on condition of sincere faith and true repentance. No promise of pardon is made to any others; no intimation given that rejecters of the gospel shall ever receive the benefits of the gospel; but on the contrary, it is positively declared that such shall not be pardoned, but shall be subjected to a heavier condemnation than if Christ had never died, and the offers of salvation had never been made. Wherever the gospel is preached, these terms are proclaimed. They are contained in that commission given by the risen Saviour, from which all the authority of ministers is derived: "Go," he says, "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that be-

lieveth not shall be damned." Now, if the doctrine of the Universalists had been the truth, the commission would have been expressed in a very different style. The good news to be proclaimed would have been that all will be finally saved. Why is it, if this was intended to be revealed, that it is never mentioned? Surely every unprejudiced man, in reading or hearing these words, would suppose that there was no salvation for unbelievers. Our Lord, when he is speaking of the great love of God in sending his Son into the world, at the same time teaches emphatically, that none will be saved but believers; that all unbelievers will certainly perish, with an aggravated destruction. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." But the Universalist says that he shall have eternal life whether he believes or not—that there is no danger of perishing utterly. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Is there any

trace of universal salvation here? <sup>yes</sup> Would our Saviour have used this method of speaking, if he had intended to teach this doctrine? "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be <sup>good</sup> saved." Here, indeed, is something, which, separated from the context, seems to make as much for universal salvation as any thing in the Bible, but the next words entirely remove every impression of this kind, and seem to have been uttered to confound all such opinions. "He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

And if there were not another text in the Bible on this subject, the last verse of this third chapter of John is sufficient to affix a seal of condemnation on the doctrine of the Universalists <sup>no</sup> for ever. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God



abideth upon him." Here nothing depends on the import of terms, which it is pretended are of equivocal meaning. It is positively asserted that *they shall not see life*. The only possible evasion is, that all will some time or other believe; but is there the least intimation of any such thing here, or any where else? If our Saviour knew that all would certainly believe, and intended that we should receive that, as a revealed truth, why speak of some who *should not see life*, but remain under the wrath of God?

The Universalist cannot demonstrate then from the fact of Christ dying for all, that all will eventually be saved; for the contrary is declared concerning those who do not believe.

It is impossible in this treatise to enter into a critical discussion of all those texts which are adduced by Universalists to prove their favourite doctrine. But to show how far they come short of a demonstration of universal salvation, by an appeal to scripture, I will select a few of those texts which are apparently most in their favour, and give them a brief consideration.

In 1 Cor. xv. 22, it is said: "For as in Adam

all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." Here the Universalist pleads, that the salvation of Christ is just as extensive as the death introduced by Adam. To which we answer :

1. That the apostle in this chapter is evidently treating, not of the resurrection of all Adam's race, but of all true believers. What he says of a glorious resurrection, relates to those who had fallen asleep *in Christ*; "they that are Christ's."

2. But admitting that the word *all* is equally extensive in both members of the sentence, it makes nothing for universal salvation, for the apostle, by the phrase *being made alive*, evidently means that *all* shall be raised from the dead; and this is what we all believe. Christ will raise from their graves not only the just but the unjust. "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." Yes; all *shall be made alive*; all shall rise and stand before the Judge, but not that all may go into the happiness of heaven; but they that have done

evil shall be raised to life, that they may be doomed to deserved damnation. That the words of Paul do relate to the resurrection, a child may know by reading the chapter whence they are taken.

1 Tim. ii. 4. "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." This text does not assert any thing respecting the event of the salvation of all men; it only declares that the salvation of all men is a thing which in itself considered, is agreeable to the will of God. But it can be shown from scripture, in many passages, that that which is consonant to the will of God does not always take place. Christ says, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often *would* I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" "O that they were wise!" But such expressions cannot be adduced to prove that the event thus willed or wished must come to pass.

"Do not that abominable thing which I hate."  
But although nothing is clearer than that God

hates all sin, yet we cannot argue from this that sin has no existence.

Sin, in all its degrees, is contrary to the will of God, and yet sin exists. The present happiness of all creatures is in itself a thing most agreeable to the will of an infinitely benevolent Being, but yet many endure pain. Nothing, as to the event, can be argued from these expressions of the divine will. If the Universalist should argue that what God wills must be accomplished, for who hath resisted or can resist his will? I answer, that when it is said that God wills that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, he did not declare his purpose in regard to the event, but only expressed what in itself was pleasing to him, as he has elsewhere declared, with an oath, that "he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked." But if we take it according to the mind of the Universalist, it will prove too much for his purpose. It will prove that all men must immediately be saved and brought to the knowledge of the truth, for it is now the will of God that all men should be saved; and if the will of God is necessarily effec-

tive, then all men would have now the knowledge of the truth. It cannot therefore be demonstrated from this passage that all men will be saved, on any interpretation.

But if we take an impartial view of the context, I think it will appear highly probable that the word *all* here does not refer to men individually, but to classes; for this verse contains a reason for offering prayers for all men; that is, for all conditions of men, as the apostle explains it, "For kings and all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Another text on which great dependence is placed by the Universalists, is Rom. v. 16. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life." There is not a word here of men's being delivered from hell and translated to heaven. If these words proved

universal salvation, they would prove that in this life all men are justified. Two persons are in this context brought into view, and one is said to be the type of the other. Between Christ and Adam there is this remarkable correspondence or similitude, that they are each the head of a people who are intimately connected with them and depend upon them. Though they thus stand as type and anti-type,, and are alike in this one respect, yet this resemblance does not hold in every thing. They are not compared as to the number of persons connected with each ; but in regard to the efficacy which they respectively exerted on those connected with them. As to the argument of the apostle and the pertinence of his comparison, it is of no consequence what the numbers are. The superior influence and abounding of grace over the power of sin, will be manifest in a single case. But as both these heads or representatives have a certain seed to whom they stand related, the whole of these are several times mentioned by the apostle, by the terms *many* and *all*, which terms, in such a connexion, do properly refer, not to the same per-

sons, and precisely the same number, but to the individuals composing these two bodies or systems, whether the number in each be equal or unequal. The number connected with each head must be determined by the general doctrine of scripture. When *the many*, dead through Adam, are mentioned, we know that the whole human race are intended, because we know from other sources, that they are born under this curse; but when *the many* and the *all*, who "receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness," are spoken of, there is no necessity for supposing that these words include the same, or an equal number, as in the former case. It is much more natural to refer them to that whole body of which Christ is the head. The condemnation which came on *all men* undoubtedly relates to the whole human race; but the justification which comes upon *all men*, can properly relate only to those who are justified by faith. But even if the words *all men* should be taken here in their utmost latitude, it never can be intended to teach that all men, however impenitent and unbelieving, are in a state of justification. It can mean no more

than that justification is freely offered to all men.

It is a good rule of interpretation never to give a meaning to a particular passage which is repugnant to the whole scope and tenor of the writer, and which would make him contradict himself.

Now, if these texts do not prove the doctrine of universal salvation, it cannot be proved—it is incapable of being demonstrated from the scriptures; for although many obscure passages are alleged, none of them are stronger than those already considered.

Is it safe, then, I would ask, for any man to venture his salvation upon these interpretations? Is it benevolent to instil a doctrine pregnant with so much danger, into the minds of men, when it rests on so slender a foundation?



## SECTION IV.

Universal salvation cannot be inferred from the limitation, in some instances, of the terms *everlasting*, *eternal*, *for ever*.

As the Universalist cannot demonstrate his doctrine from any passages of scripture which directly assert it, so he cannot prove that those numerous texts in which future punishment is expressed by the words *eternal*, *everlasting*, *for ever*, &c., are not to be taken in their usual and obvious meaning. I say in their usual obvious meaning, for it cannot be denied by the Universalist, that in nine instances out of ten in the New Testament, the word *eternal* means a duration without end. Certainly it does when used in relation to God and his perfections; and to the future blessedness of the saints; with what propriety, then, can we depart from this meaning, when it is used to express the future misery of the wicked? Why would the inspired penmen employ a word so likely to mislead, if they meant

to teach that future misery was temporary? That these terms do, in some cases, express an endless duration, he cannot deny, without denying the perpetuity of the saints' felicity in heaven, and the eternity of God himself, for by these same terms are these ideas conveyed. Let us take a single passage, Matt. xxv. 41. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Let it be well weighed that this sentence of everlasting punishment is to be solemnly pronounced when Christ shall come to judge the world, when time shall have come to an end. Now if Christ had intended to save men out of hell, we might suppose he would accomplish the work of salvation before the day of judgment, for then he will give up the mediatorial office, so far as it consists in the government of the universe and the salvation of sinners. This is the time of the restitution of all things. After this he that is unjust must be unjust still, and he that is filthy, filthy still.

But let it be considered again, that the dura-

tion of the happiness of the righteous and of the punishment of the wicked, are expressed by the same term. There is a variance in the words in our version, merely to avoid the too frequent recurrence of the same word, and *everlasting* and *eternal* were thought to be of the same import; but in the original the word is precisely the same in both cases. If then eternal happiness means happiness without end, eternal punishment means punishment without end.

And let it again be considered that the same term is used to signify the eternal existence of God himself.

Out of more than seventy passages in which this adjective is used in the New Testament, in above sixty it must be conceded by the Universalist, that it expresses a duration strictly eternal, unless he will deny the endless duration of God and his attributes; or the perpetuity of the felicity of the saints in heaven. By what rule of interpretation can he determine that when it is used to express the duration of the misery of the wicked, it is not to be taken in the same sense? especially when the future destiny of the right-

eous and the wicked are contrasted in the same passage, as in the text cited above. Can it be believed that in one part of the sentence it means a duration strictly eternal, and in the other signifies temporary punishment? If this could be believed, then we must suppose that there is no certainty in any thing taught in scripture. There could be no means of ascertaining what the meaning of the scripture writers is.

The Universalist believes that the salvation of all men is a doctrine clearly revealed in scripture; but if it had been the purpose of the inspired writers to teach this doctrine, would they have expressed the extent or future punishment of the wicked, by a phrase which every where else in the New Testament means an endless duration?

Again, suppose that it had been the design of the inspired penmen to teach that the punishment of the wicked was endless, what terms could they have used more forcible than those which they have employed? I know of no language which would have answered the purpose of conveying this idea if the language used by them does not.

If then it is not taught in Scripture, that the punishment of the wicked in hell is without end, it cannot be reached in human language. Let the Universalist tell us how the idea of a duration absolutely eternal could have been conveyed, and I will agree to show, that the same objections may be brought against his terms, as those used. In fact there are none stronger. And what if they are sometimes employed to designate a period not strictly eternal? this use of the terms is almost confined to the Old Testament, and from the nature of the case the meaning can easily be ascertained, from the nature of the subject spoken of, or from the context, but what is there in the passage quoted, or in its context, to show us that endless duration is not intended? I confess, that if I were to set myself to devise a form of expression to convey the doctrine commonly held by Christians, I could not find any one, which to my mind would be more decisive. I could here cite hundreds of texts, but it would be useless. If the Universalist can demonstrate that this means a limited duration, he can prove any thing.

Some of them, indeed, make short work of answering the argument from this text, by denying that it has any relation to a future state of existence. It is, according to them, a highly figurative representation of Christ's coming in his providential dispensation, to secure his friends from persecution, and to inflict temporal punishment on his enemies. But methinks, it would be much easier still to deny that there was any future state, or judgment to come; and indeed some of their teachers, have come very near to this point.

## SECTION V.

Universalism disproved by express declarations of Scripture as well as by man's relations to the divine law.

It may be said, why should a doctrine of so much importance be conveyed only in terms which it is acknowledged, do not always signify endless duration? Why not express it in some less equivocal form; in a way which could not be misunderstood? I answer, that the very thing demanded is done in passages, almost innumerable. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" "Many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able." "Shall not see life." "Not every one that saith Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Ye shall die in your sins, and whither I go ye cannot come." "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." "He that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger

of eternal damnation." "Unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." "If any man see his brother sin a sin unto death, I do not say that he shall pray for it. For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation." "Woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed; good were it for that man if he had never been born." "Between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." "There shall be gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." "For I say unto you that none of these men that were bidden shall taste of my supper." "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." "I pray for them, I pray not for the world;" "whose END is destruc-



tion;" "whose END is to be burned;" "whose END is, according to their works." "The things that are not seen are eternal;" "whose names are written in the book of life of the LAMB, from the foundation of the world."

But there is one view of this subject, which ought not to be omitted, in this treatise, from which it may be shown, that the punishment of the sinner may justly be eternal, even if any one sin deserved no more than a very short punishment. As long as man exists, in whatever state, a rational, free agent, he must be under obligations to obey the law of God. That law binds him not only on earth, but in hell. Disobedience to the law of God necessarily incurs its penalty according to the nature and malignity of the offence. If then a sinner be cast into hell, under the guilt of such sins as would require him to suffer for some limited period, he will by repeated and continual disobedience, go on perpetually to contract fresh guilt, so that he will never be able to pay the debt due to divine justice. The only objection to this view is, that men are in Scripture said to be punished for the deeds done in

the body, and that men in hell are not in a state of probation. I admit, that men at the day of judgment will be condemned, only for the sins committed in this life. No man can justly be condemned for sins not yet committed; but this does not hinder, but that the sinner may continually contract fresh guilt, in a future world.

That men should be capable of sinning, it is not necessary that they be in a state of probation. Those who have committed the unpardonable sin, or who are given up to judicial blindness, although their probation is ended, are still capable of sinning.

Indeed, if the principle here assumed, that men could not sin unless in a state of probation were correct, there could have been no sin since Adam's fall, if a Saviour had not interposed. Upon this principle, there could be no holiness, among the saints in heaven; for when a state of probation is closed, if there can be acts of duty, there may also be acts of transgression. The fallen angels do still sin, although their probation is ended. Satan sinned grievously in deceiving our first parents, and in murdering our whole

race, as he does every day in seducing men into sin. On these accounts he is called a murderer, a liar, and the father of lies. If sinners in hell feel enmity to God, and blaspheme his name, and indulge the worst passions of every kind, they only sin continually. If the damned were incapable of acts of sin they would be equally incapable of a sinful nature, but will any one be so absurd as to maintain that casting a sinner into hell will take away his depraved nature ?

Still, however, it may be urged, that although the wretched in hell may sin, they cannot with propriety be punished for their sins. There is great inconsistency in this allegation, for the very nature of sin is, that which deserves punishment. If sin in the damned do not deserve punishment, they are not blamable for it; but that for which a man cannot be blamed is no sin. If we admit the existence of sin, we never can deny the justice of punishment.

If it should be further objected, that sinners in hell cannot avoid sinning, and therefore cannot be justly punished for what they cannot avoid, I answer, that if this objection has any weight

it goes to prove that they cannot sin; but in whatever circumstances they can sin, in the same they incur deserved punishment. But sinners in hell are under no compulsion to sin, any more than the saints in heaven are compelled to be holy. In both cases they act freely. If saints in heaven are secured from sinning, it is in a way perfectly consistent with free agency. And if the damned in hell are under any necessity of sinning, it is nothing else than that which arises from total and unrestrained depravity. There is then no compulsion in hell to sin, any more than there is in heaven to be holy. Now if men may remain sinners for ever, they may justly be punished for ever. But finally, their sin is itself the most dreadful punishment that can be conceived. What worse hell can any imagination conceive, than unrestrained malignant passions, with the lashes of a guilty conscience, conjoined with fear and utter despair in regard to the future?

If then the soul be immortal, and be entirely abandoned to its own sinfulness, the torments of hell must be eternal. This argument does not prove, that God could not save men from hell, if

that had been his purpose, but it utterly refutes all arguments against the justice of punishing sinners eternally; for if we were to concede that in a short life men could not deserve eternal punishment, or that the evil of sin was not infinite; yet these concessions would not affect the conclusion derived from this view of the subject.

## SECTION VI.

The immoral tendencies of Universalism invalidate its pretensions to a divine origin.

It may be fairly asked, whether this doctrine of universal salvation has a good tendency; whether it is a doctrine *according to godliness*? What effect has it a tendency to produce upon the multitude who are living in sin, and who are exceedingly reluctant to forsake it? Will it not render the daring transgressor still bolder in his defiance of divine authority? Will not the profane and licentious, under its influence, become more impious and more abandoned? Will not the careless multitude, who love their pleasures, their gains, and their ease, become still more regardless of their duty and their best interests? Surely the world is wicked enough already. Surely there is no need of opening wider the flood-gates of iniquity? Why lessen the salutary restraints, which however neglected and despised by many, still have a powerful influence in preventing enormous crimes?

But what, in fact, is the effect of this doctrine on the minds of those who receive it? The question may be answered, by asking another; who are they that greedily embrace this opinion? Are they the truly pious, who are endeavouring to live in obedience to the gospel? Or are they men of corrupt lives, who wish to be at ease in the indulgence of sin? I leave any reflecting man to answer these questions according to his own impartial observation of facts. I do not inquire whether a few apparently devout Christians may not, on account of a sensibility too exquisite, have favoured this doctrine? The inquiry is not whether there are not among Universalists men of upright moral character, for such men are found among atheists. The true point of inquiry is, whether, while the doctrine of universal salvation is rejected by almost all serious Christians, it is not cherished by the most profligate. I do not mean that these join themselves regularly to organized societies of Universalists. The fact is, they are mostly men who hate all religion, and if this opinion obliged them to attend any kind of worship, they would like it

much less than they do. Those who associate for the worship of God, and yet hold this doctrine, are a small minority of the great mass who in one form or another embrace it, and are influenced by it. In speaking of the practical effects of this doctrine, therefore, I wish not to be considered as referring to those societies which maintain the regular worship of God, and whose lives are decent and characters respectable. I allude to a much greater multitude—to that vast corrupt mass of society, from among whom all forms of religion, and all respect for religion are banished. Go into the haunts of vice, in high life, or low life, and you will find almost every man cherishing the belief, that there is no punishment in reserve for his sins. The gambler, the swindler, the debauchee, the blasphemer, the perjured man, the assassin, the duellist, the fraudulent dealer, and such like characters will generally be found holding the doctrine of universal salvation. When we meet with an exception among gross sinners, of one who does not believe this doctrine, it is not for want of inclination, but for want of evidence.



Some men would give half their fortune to be assured of the truth of this doctrine. But when they have been carefully instructed in the doctrines of the Christian religion in early life, they often find it extremely difficult to receive doctrines so opposite to the plain language of scripture.

How baleful the influence of this doctrine on the minds of men, when under strong temptation to commit some great crime, may be easily conjectured. Avarice, lust, or ambition prompts to the deed; the occasion is favourable; secrecy seems to be secured; conscience remonstrates—the idea of the judgment crosses the mind. The will remains for a while suspended, but the doctrine of universal salvation is suggested. There is no future punishment, why need I hesitate? thinks the man; or if there is a hell I shall soon be delivered from it; and instantly he is determined to perpetrate the foul deed to which by his lusts he is solicited. O ye preachers of this false doctrine, how many atrocious crimes will you be responsible for, of which ye know nothing at present! How can you be accessory to so many horrid deeds of darkness?

“How long will ye not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?” And O ye people, beware of these false teachers who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Regard not their fair speeches. Their doctrine is not of God. If Satan were to preach, what doctrine can be conceived more congenial with his designs? It is indeed all derived from his original text: “Thou shalt not surely die.” Mark the spirit, the character, and the conduct of those men who go about the land proclaiming universal salvation. Inquire into their former lives, and suffer not yourselves to be imposed on by these false teachers. They are not commonly men to whom you would confide your dearest earthly interests, and will you commit to their guidance your immortal souls? Remember that you are acting for eternity, and that you cannot return to correct mistakes made here, however fatal they may be. Permit me earnestly to exhort you to read your Bible with serious attention, and you cannot be misled by the cob-web sophistry of these seducers. Be kind to all men, as neigh-

bours and citizens, and fellow-creatures, but receive not those who bring such doctrine, as teachers, or you will bring a curse upon yourselves and your children. "Bid them not God speed" in their impious work. You cannot doubt but that they are false teachers, and their doctrine ruinous, if you will read your Bibles.

## SECTION VII.

The argument against Universalism from general consent.

IF the New Testament were put into the hands of a thousand indifferent persons who knew the Greek language, but had never heard of the doctrines which had been derived from the book, and they should all be asked separately whether it inculcated the doctrine of eternal punishment for such as should die impenitent, there would be but one opinion in the whole. Whatever they might think of the reasonableness or justice of the doctrine, they would with one consent declare that it was plainly taught in that book. This is not a mere conjecture, for we have in fact not only thousands, but millions of witnesses of this kind in the people of all nations, who from the beginning have embraced Christianity. During the successive ages in which this religion has been embraced by millions, and the scriptures translated into almost every language, this has been understood to be the undoubted doctrine of

scripture with the exception of a very few speculative individuals. On this subject the belief of the primitive church is undoubted. Except Origen and Clemens of Alexandria, no one of the Fathers embraced such an opinion. All sects in the eastern or Greek church, hold this doctrine to be taught in the New Testament. The western or Romish church has always held it. Every portion of the Protestant church has understood the scriptures on this point in the same manner. Perhaps a few of the fanatic Anabaptists of Germany might dream of an escape from hell-torments, but even among them, with all their crude opinions, this opinion did not prevail. Even the Socinians, who do not deserve to be ranked among Christians, did not venture to deny the eternity of future punishment. Faustus Socinus, the father of the sect, admits in all his works, and often reasons from it, against the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. What modern Unitarians think is not yet evident. I believe they are puzzled what ground to take. Such men as Priestley and Belsham were indeed believers in universal

salvation, but whether this is the common belief of Unitarians, is not clear.

Until lately there never existed a sect calling themselves Christians, however heretical, who made universal salvation an article of their creed. On this point even Jews and Mohamedans are of one mind with Christians. And will you, then, O reader, venture your eternal interests on a doctrine so circumstanced? Will you give more credit to these seducing teachers of universal salvation than to all the martyrs, fathers, and saints who ever lived? Finally, retire, I beseech you, into your own breast, and ask whether you are conscientious in cleaving to this doctrine. Inclination pleads for it, but what does conscience say? In your most serious hours—in affliction and sickness, have you no misgivings—when death stares you in the face, are you not afraid to trust to this refuge of lies? Let me ask you, did you ever know a sinner to be reformed and converted from the error of his way, by means of this doctrine? Did you never observe any case in which any one was the worse for receiving this doctrine? Have you known any who were reco-

vered by the grace of God, from a vicious life, and still after their conversion held fast this doctrine? And have you not heard of instances of men renouncing this doctrine, with abhorrence, as soon as they became penitent?

If a criminal were about to suffer capital punishment, whose life had been exceedingly wicked, could you advise him to set his heart at ease, and trust to universal salvation? Would you not think it safer for such an one to repent and flee to the peace-speaking blood of Jesus? Why then teach a doctrine which cannot be safely trusted in the last hour?

## SECTION VIII.

## The Nature of future Punishment.

TAKING the Holy Scriptures for our guide, we must believe, not only that the punishment of such as die in their sins is endless, but that the misery experienced by such will be exceedingly great. We cannot entertain the opinion that the threatenings of Scripture are merely intended to frighten men: the word of God uses strong figurative expressions, but never resorts to exaggeration to produce an impression. All its declarations are sober verities, and will be found in experience to be awful realities. It is a remarkable fact, that those descriptions of future misery, which are most appalling, were uttered by our Saviour himself. Surely no one after reading these can be of opinion that the sufferings of the lost are small. No; their intensity cannot now be fully conceived, they so far exceed all the sufferings endured in the present life. Consider only the case of the rich man



who had while in life, been clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and he seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and he cried and said, Father Abraham have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Could any representation of intense misery be greater? The words need no comment, they speak for themselves. "And if thy hand offend thee," says our Lord, "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 (that is, cause thee to sin) 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 their 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." I know not what the reader may think of these awful words, but I confess, that I never read or hear them without an impression of terror. Indeed, were it not for the blindness of our minds and our stupid unbelief, such awful declarations from the mouth of Truth itself would cause our very flesh to tremble. This dreadful fire is not merely hinted at, but the declarations are repeated and reiterated as if to present the fires of the pit before our eyes. Surely "God is a consuming fire;" and, "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." How will the Universalist dispose of this passage? Oh, it is appalling to see men trifle with such a subject. In these words of our Lord, we have both the perpetuity and intensity of the miseries of the damned clearly announced. The pain is that of fire, and it never is quenched. Whether the *fire* be understood literally or figuratively, is of no importance. It will be a pain better represented by the suffering produced by fire, than any thing else.

Again, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." And who knoweth the power of his anger? Who can tell the pressure of THE WRATH OF GOD, not merely striking him, but abiding on him? We are exhorted by the same divine Teacher, "not to fear them that kill the body, and have no more that they can do; but to fear Him who hath the power to cast both soul and body into hell."

In several instances, he describes the place of torment as "outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." And when sentence is pronounced upon the wicked at the judgment, the sentence will be, "Depart, accursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels—and these shall go away into everlasting punishment."

Even if we should suppose no positive infliction of pain, but only that which must come from the nature of the human mind, and circumstances in which the person will be placed, the misery of a lost soul will still be inconceivably great. Only

think of the loss of all earthly enjoyments in a moment. The king descends from his throne, into darkness and degradation; the noble personage is deprived of all his titles and estates; the rich man can carry no part of his wealth with him; the man of pleasure will find no sensual enjoyments in the world of woe. The common man leaves behind him his home, his farm, and his occupations; and the poor man must leave his cottage, which is as much to him as the palace to the prince. In short, at death, every man must lose all the earthly possessions which he claimed, and all earthly pleasures are for ever at an end.

The pleasant light of this world shall be no longer seen; the senses will no longer be regaled by the sweets of nature. The world of punishment is always represented as dark—exceedingly dark. Whatever is perceived will be objects of horror, and instead of the pleasant sounds of melodious music, there shall be the voice of weeping and wailing.

That the rich and great are in as much danger of being lost as any others, is evident: God is

no respecter of persons. He will not regard the thrones of kings in dispensing justice to his creatures; and if we may rely on the testimony of history very few of this class will escape perdition. Of the kings of Israel, after the division of the tribes in the days of Rehoboam, all, without exception, were wicked; and of the kings of Judah, the good were a minority. And in countries called Christian, how few royal personages have even the appearance of piety! We need not, therefore, inquire what the state of the fact is, in regard to the heathen. According to the Scriptures, rich men are in greater danger of perdition than others, for it is declared by our Lord himself, "that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." And the Apostle James says, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten, your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh, as it were fire. Ye have heaped up treasure together

against the last day." Again, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom?" The misery of the rich will be greater than that of the poor, as they will lose more, and have more talents to answer for. I know that these truths have very little effect to discourage men from hastening to be rich, in doing which, they fall into temptation, and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. But the degree of misery, in the future world, will depend more on the sins committed here, than on any difference of external circumstances. The poor are often greater sinners than the rich; and every one shall reap the fruit of his own doings.

The thought which will give poignancy to the sufferings of the lost will be the conviction that they admit of no relief, nor the least mitigation. However the view may be extended far into futurity, no ray of light or hope dawns on the thick and terrible darkness.

In the sufferings of this life, the prospect of a speedy termination, is the chief alleviation; but

there, no such prospect arises to the view ; and so certain will the wretched sufferer be, that his case admits of no relief, that all comfort from delusion is impossible. How many persuade themselves, that there will be no future punishment ; or that if there is, it will be temporary ! but there are none in hell who retain this doctrine. The slightest pain would become almost intolerable, if the patient believed that it would never cease. As hope alleviates every kind of misery ; so despair is the ingredient in the cup of suffering which renders it so exceedingly grievous, that none can exercise any patience ; but all are found weeping, wailing, and gnashing their teeth. Dismal, indeed, must be that prospect which is alleviated by no ray of hope, but presents the blackness of darkness, for ever and ever.

One reflection which will greatly aggravate this misery is the irresistible conviction that it is deserved, and that it has been brought on by misconduct. And in regard to those who enjoy the offers of the gospel, the misery of hell will be aggravated to an inconceivable degree, by the

reflection that heaven was within their reach but was foolishly rejected; and also because the guilt of despising and rejecting the mercy of God exhibited in the gospel, so exceeds the guilt of the sins of the heathen, that compared with it their guilt seems to be small. Our Lord said to Nicodemus: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." And he said of the Jews: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin." "That servant who knew not his master's will, and committed things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; but he who knew his master's will shall be beaten with many stripes." In apportioning punishments, the rule of justice will be followed: "To whom much is given of him much will be required."

But of all the ingredients in the cup of future misery, none is so bitter and intolerable as remorse. This is a pain diverse from all other pains. It has a poignancy and excruciating anguish which renders misery complete. We cannot conceive of any misery so great as this, when



it is felt in its power. For as pleasures are of many different kinds as well as degrees, so also pains have as great varieties. Some very acute pains we are subject to, only by a connexion with the body; others are independent of the body, and are more lasting, as the pain of disappointed hopes, of reproach, of regret for not having done the good that was within our reach. From these and similar causes, our pains may be exceedingly intense; but the pain of remorse, which may be described as the feeling of ill-desert—the consciousness of sin voluntarily committed, is of a different kind from all other pains, and is more intolerable; and it is not a transient emotion, but one which must occur upon every recollection of our evil deeds. And though here we may continue to forget our sins by plunging into the vortex of pleasure, or engaging with all our powers in worldly business; or by the blindness of the mind and the errors of the judgment, we may not have the clear conviction of the enormity and guilt of our sins, yet all these methods of avoiding remorse will be wanting in the world of woe. There no amusements will be possible—no busi-

ness will occupy the mind to prevent serious reflection, and all blindness and error as to the number and magnitude of our sins will be done away. They will appear continually before the mind, in all their blackness, with all their grievous aggravations, and remorse will sting the soul with incessant venomous strokes, as if it were for ever subject to the attacks of a scorpion. This is indeed a worm that never dies; a fire that is never quenched. God may have so constituted the mind and so ordained the laws of nature, that the punishment of sin shall arise from itself. It matters not whether the Governor of the universe inflicts condign punishment on incorrigible transgressors immediately, or by the instrumentality of those laws which he has established for every species of being. I believe we can conceive of no greater torment than what will arise from a conscience thoroughly awakened to see sin in all its aggravating circumstances of turpitude and guilt.

To this we may add the misery of malignant passions—of impotent rage and envy, and unsatisfied cravings after a good which is for ever out

of reach. In these exercises there is a double misery. The very feeling of evil passions is an unhappy feeling. The malicious, and revengeful, and envious are their own tormentors here. Such passions may have a *gratification*, but it is not of the nature of happiness. It is a diabolical feeling, and will constitute a portion of the misery of hell. But besides the unhappiness of these malignant passions, they will be accompanied with a conviction of the moral evil which attaches to them, and with an irresistible feeling of deep and damning degradation. Remorse and self-contempt will accompany all the exercises of the active soul, in a world where every restraint is removed.

Happiness or misery may be much enhanced by contrast. If there were no heaven, hell would not be as dreadful and intolerable as it is. The idea of the happiness and glory of the saints in heaven may be considered as giving the consummation to the misery of the lost; especially the consideration that they might have possessed everlasting joys if they had been wise; and that some with whom they were nearly connected on

earth, and who often entreated them to be reconciled to God, and to lay up their treasures in heaven, are among those who are rejoicing and praising around the throne of God and the Lamb.

The most vivid pictures of the sufferings of the damned, commonly represent them as having a distant and despairing view of a lost heaven. Thus, when our Lord represents the misery of the rich man, he places it in contrast with the happiness of Lazarus. "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom."

And it will be seen that some whose advantages and opportunities of obtaining eternal life were far inferior to their own, will be in possession of that felicity which they failed to secure. In this respect "the first shall be last, and the last first." According to what our Lord said to the Jews: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and

shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold there are last, which shall be first, and there are first, which shall be last.”

Let us look distinctly at the condition of a lost soul, as far as we can imagine it, when it first enters eternity. All delusive hopes vanish in a moment, and all doubts respecting the truth of a future state. It is felt to be a dreadful reality. The reflections of the lost soul may be conceived to be something of this kind. “The pangs of death are over, and I have passed into a new state of existence.—But what means this tremendous darkness? What horrors are these by which I am surrounded? What fiends are these which stare upon me and seem ready to seize me? Oh how wretched are my feelings! What a burden of guilt oppresses my soul! What I often was warned of has come upon me! My probation is ended! The door of mercy is shut for ever against me! My salvation is now impossible! Oh! that I had been wise, that I had considered my latter end.—But my repentance comes too late. I am lost!—my soul is undone!—I am already in hell! O misery! misery! misery!”

Next, let us view this same lost soul when the archangel's trumpet shall sound and call the living and the dead to the great tribunal. Now the sleeping dust awakes, and every human soul is clothed again with its own body. But while some rise with glorious, celestial bodies, resembling that of the august Judge, the wicked rise with bodies of frightful deformity—they rise “to shame and everlasting contempt.” The judgment is set, and the books are opened; and now comes the turn of this man who died in impenitence. All his sins of thought, word, and deed are recorded in the book of God's remembrance, with all their aggravations. The man is speechless, “for every mouth shall be stopped.” And all his shameful acts of iniquity are exhibited to the attending universe in the clearness of sunlight. Shame and confusion cover him. But the book of the law is there also, and the awful penalty and curse due for every sin is made manifest. Justice holds the balance; and every one sees that the sentence of condemnation is just: it could be nothing else than what it is. And his own conscience re-echoes the curse of the law.

His wicked rejection of the gospel is also made prominent, as the chief ground of condemnation. The very devils seem to rise in condemnation, for they never had a Redeemer provided. The heathen rise up in judgment against him, for they never had a Saviour offered. Tyre and Sidon appear in judgment against them; and even Sodom and Gomorrha enhance his guilt and condemnation, for with his privileges and opportunities, they would have repented.

The rejecters of the gospel stand conspicuous among the condemned throng: their shame and remorse far exceed that of others, and their terror of condign punishment agitates them in a horrible manner. But now the sentence against them, in a voice of thunder, pierces their soul. If any one moment of the eternal misery of the lost is pre-eminently more painful than all others, it would seem, that this must be that moment; when the Son of God, who died for sinners, and who waited with much long suffering on these unhappy wretches, having now, in the impartial exercise of his function as Judge, examined the case, estimates the guilt of every sin, pronounces the heart-rending

sentence, "Depart, accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." It is in vain that we attempt to conceive the pangs and agonies which must accompany that sentence. Experience alone can reveal the whole truth, and may a merciful God save us from this experience!

The judgment is past; the Judge and his saints and angels return to heaven, where he resumes his place on the celestial throne. But what becomes of the lost sinner? He hears the music of their universal song of praise—but it increases his anguish; he goes away into everlasting punishment. Let us endeavour to grasp this eternity of woe. Let us call in the aid of arithmetic and try to number his years, or ages of misery. Alas! vain is our mightiest effort of imagination.—Vain is the aid of the most extended multiplication. It seems to be at last as far from the end, as at the beginning. Let us then imagine a point of duration as far forward as our imagination can reach, and let us suppose an inquiry be made, of this miserable man, whether he experiences any mitigation of his torment, by the lapse of millions of ages; or whether he finds that he can bear



up any better under his load of sorrow, in consequence of having borne the pressure so long. His answer must be, No! no! I experience no alleviation. My despair—my remorse—my raging enmity,—my anguish are the same, and ever will be the same!—But we are wrong in attempting to conceive of the full misery of the damned. It swells like a turbid ocean far beyond our thoughts.

Then what should we do, while there is an opportunity of escaping from such a dreadful state? My only motive, in endeavouring to depict the misery of the damned as vividly, and yet as truly, as I am able, is to induce my readers to flee from this coming wrath. I beseech you, therefore, my dear fellow sinner, to indulge in no delay in fleeing for refuge to the hope set before you. Remember Lot's wife. Remember how unexpectedly the deluge came upon an ungodly world, and how suddenly the storm of fire and brimstone burst on the cities of the plain. "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die; for as I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn and live."

## APPENDIX.

## AN OBSOLETE ERROR REVIVED.

AN obsolete opinion, viz: "that the wicked will be annihilated at the day of judgment," has recently been revived by the Rev. Mr. Dobney, a Baptist minister of the city of London, in a work which has been republished and pretty widely circulated in this country. This theory is not less repugnant to the clear teaching of the New Testament, than the different systems of Universalism. According to this scheme, the most enormous sinner who ever lived, would receive the same punishment as the person chargeable with the fewest sins, and these of the lightest guilt. Upon this theory, how will it be more intolerable for Chorazin and Bethsaida, than for Tyre and Sidon, and the doom of Capernaum more dreadful than that of Sodom? But the Holy Scriptures, in innumerable places, declare

that wicked men will be punished "according to their deeds"—according to the fruit of their doings. And in many cases it cannot be said that wicked men are punished in this life, for they spend their days in mirth and festivity, and are exempt from the afflictions which the pious suffer. As the Psalmist says: "There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued as other men. Their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart can wish. They are corrupt and speak wickedly. \* \* They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth." But of the people of God it is said: "Waters of a full cup are wrung out to them."

And as to the doctrine of annihilation, it is our opinion that it is nowhere taught in the sacred volume; and there is no evidence from reason or revelation that any substance which God has created, will ever be annihilated, much less the rational soul of man. When the inspired writers speak of *destruction*, they do not mean that the person or thing said to be destroyed, shall be re-

duced to its original nothingness, but that its beauty, value, or felicity shall come to an end. When we read of the world being reserved to be destroyed by fire, the substance of the earth will no more be annihilated than when it was said that it was once destroyed by a flood. But however this may be, we have clear evidence from divine revelation, that the souls of the wicked will not cease to exist, for the sentence denounced on them by the Judge will be: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire;" and "they shall go away into everlasting-punishment." But annihilation is a momentary punishment. It can scarcely be said to be felt. The "quenchless fire and the never dying worm" are not felt by the annihilated. To them there is no place nor time for "weeping, and wailing and gnashing of teeth." This doctrine has really no foundation in scripture, and can only be rendered plausible by putting a forced construction on a multitude of plain passages. The universal testimony of the church in all ages is against it. Some pious men, through the indulgence of too great sensibility at the thought of eternal misery, may have adopted

this singular opinion, more to save their own feelings than from any clear conviction that the doctrine was scriptural. But it is always the wisest and safest course for short-sighted mortals to receive the declarations of God in their plain and obvious meaning, and leave it to him to vindicate his own character and administration, on that day specially appointed for this very purpose. The righteousness of his dealings with his creatures will then be made manifest to the whole rational universe. There is no reason to fear that the Judge of all the earth will not do right, or that he will punish any of his creatures more than they deserve.

It moreover appears to us that this doctrine will be found to derogate from the necessity and value of Christ's sufferings and death, and from the obligations of the redeemed to praise him for his glorious work of redemption.

Let the lovers of truth and the Bible, therefore, beware of this doctrine. They do not need it for their own consolation; and as to the wicked, it is enough to know that they can be punished in proportion to their demerit, without being an-

nihilated. At last all will be convinced that his ways are not unequal; and although he has sworn that he has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, yet he has also said, that "he will by no means clear the guilty."

It is true that God is love; but it is also true that he is a consuming fire. While his mercy will be eternally displayed in the salvation of the saints; his justice will for ever be manifested in the punishment of sinners. In both these attributes he is glorious; and one great end of all his works and dispensations, from the creation of the world, has been to exhibit these attributes, together with his wisdom, power, and faithfulness. And although the doctrine of eternal punishment is awful and mysterious, yet the justice and propriety of it will no doubt be made evident to the whole universe of intelligent beings. Let every humble disciple learn to receive the truth of God implicitly, and bring not only his own feelings, but reason itself in due subordination to the teachings of the word of God. This submission God requires of every disciple in his school; and the want of this childlike simplicity and

humility, is the true reason why many cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth," says Christ, "because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matt. xi. 25, 26.

THE END.