

Why then, may not the soul be changed for death? What law is there of which we have any knowledge, that can prevent Jesus can have access to it there the same as here—and an access unobstructed by the earthly influences which here arm against him. Spirit can communicate with spirit in one world as well as another. It will be the same to the soul in the next world that he is in this—the same parental, gracious, merciful, forgiving God, who changes not. Jesus will be kind, loving, tender and forgiving, there as here; for he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. The soul will be there the same free and voluntary agent that it is here;—and if God were to take away its power of choice and progress, it would cease to be animal for its love of evil. Here then is the way in which those who die in sin can be saved; we can therefore do more than hope for them, we can believe in their final subjection.—*Uni. Mis. O.A.S.*

Punishment of the Wicked.

Not only are the scriptures explicit in declaring, that the righteous shall be rewarded, but also in declaring that the wicked shall be punished. Their punishment is represented in various ways. One of the most expressive figures by which it is set forth, is the following—the reward of their hands shall be given them. This figure is often used. Solomon says, "Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them." Prov. i, 31, 32. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly shall he go astray." Prov. v, 22, 23.

There is a terrible import in these expressions. They show that such as man sows such also shall he reap. We wonder that sinners are not startled by this fearful fact. For every wrong of which they are guilty they will reap the harvest of evil. They will gather in, but they will gather only misery. He that sows to the wind shall reap the whirlwind. Such is the way in which the wicked are punished—they are paid in their own coin.

Their punishment being a consequence of their sins, cannot be endless; for a finite cause can produce only a finite effect. Hence the Bible says there are degrees of punishment. God is represented as punishing every man according to his deeds. The punishment is proportioned to the crime—the effect corresponds with the cause. It speaks also of the end of punishment: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which have corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Heb. xii, 9, 11. Punishment, therefore, is that corrective process designed by the infinite Father to restrain the evil doer, and to reform him. Of itself we do not pretend that it is sufficient to produce reformation. It is only an aid for the accomplishment of this great work. It makes the path of disobedience, so hard

painful and disagreeable, that the sinner becomes weary of it, and looks for another way. It makes him realize that there is a power above, which cannot be despised with impunity. When the sinner realizes this, he is ready to listen to the supreme Lawgiver, and obey his righteous commands. And if he sees in that Lawgiver infinite wisdom, justice and goodness, he will harken to him with a willing heart, and patiently ask—What wilt thou have me do?—*Uni. Mes.*

Denominational Shackles.

Every day brings with it new proofs of the fixed determination of the dominant sects, to keep the mind in shackles, and prevent freedom of thought. Though professing to take the Bible for their guide in all the concerns of faith and practice, they teach what must be found in the Bible—what doctrines it must be supposed to teach, in order to render their members worthy of the christian name. It is not enough for a man to say—I believe in Moses and the Prophets—in Jesus and the Apostles—that they were God's special messengers, sent to teach his truth—he must believe in the interpretation which the creed gives of these divine teachers, or he is no christian! We can see no difference between this and the Catholic church. All that the church asks, is, that its interpretation of the Bible shall be received—that no private opinion shall be set up, against its interpretations. So the dominant sects—believe what we teach—take our creed—and you shall be allowed the christian name, but not without! It is idle then, to say, that they bid people to follow the Bible; to go to its divine pages for light and guidance. It is not so—they bid them go to the creed—to believe nothing contrary to the creed, and they declare if they do, they shall be cut off as heretics! The people are beginning to feel the weight of such shackles.—They want more freedom, and they are resolved on breaking their fetters. Even the ministers of the sects to which we refer, are becoming uneasy, and are beginning to speak. Rev. Mr. Bacon, of the West, son of the celebrated Lyman Beecher, formerly of Boston, now of Cincinnati, has spoken with manliness, that cannot fail to inspire others with courage. The father, has spent a good portion of his days in explaining away the old creed—in trying to suit it to the wants and views of his times! Calvinism as explained by him, is quite a different thing from what it is in the creed of his sect. The son, takes a much wiser, more manly and christian course. Instead of trying to make the creed say what no fair rules of interpretation can make it say, he denounces the creed! Hear him.

"There is nothing imaginary in the statement that the Creed Power is now beginning to prohibit the Bible, as really as Rome did, though in a subtler way.—During the whole course of seven years' study, the Protestant candidate of the Ministry sees before him an unauthorized statement, spiked down and stereotyped, of what he must find in the Bible or be martyred. And does any one, acquainted with human nature, need be told that he studies under a tremendous pressure of motive? Is that freedom of opinion—the liberty wherewith Christ maketh free? Rome would have given that. Every one of her clergy might have studied the Bible to find the

Pontifical Creed, on the pain of death.—Was that liberty?

Hence, I say, that liberty of opinion in our Theological Seminaries is a mere form. To say nothing of the thumb-screw of criticism, by which every original mind is tortured into negative propriety, the whole boasted liberty of the student consists in a choice of chains—a choice of handcuffs—whether he will use the Presbyterian handcuff, or Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, or other evangelical handcuffs. Hence it has scarcely come to pass, that the ministry themselves dare not study their Bible.—Large portions thereof are seldom touched. It lies useless lumber; or if they do study and search, they dare not show their people what they find. There is something criminal in saying anything new. It is shocking to utter words that have not the mould of age upon them."

The Reward of the Righteous.

To a person who looks with a philosophical eye upon the teachings of the Bible, it appears inexpressibly strange that any could ever doubt the reward of the righteous. That God is the Friend of righteousness we all know; that he is infinitely wise and powerful we all know. What farther knowledge, then, do we need to prove, beyond the possibility of doubt, that we shall be rewarded for every righteous act? Nothing we do escapes the notice of God.—The smallest act as well as the largest;—the secret wish which we never utter, God knows. He that goes unseen by human eyes to the home of poverty, in order to extend relief, is not unseen by him to whom all things are naked and open. In the darkness as in the light, he beholds all the good we do.

From the conduct of many, one would draw a different inference; for they seem unwilling to do any good thing, unless it can be seen by the clear light of day.—Nothing, then, you do, is unknown to God. Every prayer you breathe he hears; every sacrifice you make to do good he knows; every virtuous deed you perform he knows.

Not only does he know all things, but he is the Friend of Righteousness. As its Friend, therefore, he will let no righteous act go unrewarded. To do this, would be to abandon his government; and falsify his name, and prove himself to be only a careless spectator of good deeds; and who will say, this of the infinite and righteous God?

There are many other considerations which show that God will reward the righteous. 1. He has promised it. See Ps. i, 1-3; xxiv, 3-5. 2. His justice shows it. See Deut. xxxii, 4; Ps. lxxii, 5-12. 3. His dealings show it. See Ps. xlv, 1, 2; Ps. cxxv, 1-4.

That God will reward the righteous is evident from the perfection of his government. All human governments, however imperfect, and invidious that we do for them is never rewarded. In God's government there is no imperfection; and, therefore, it is as certain that every righteous act will be rewarded as that effect will follow cause. Righteousness is the cause; the reward is the effect. If, then, the divine government is perfect, extending to all acts, all conditions, and all feelings, we shall certainly be rewarded for all our righteousness. Hence, we read, "Happy is the

man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her." Prov. iii, 13-16, "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." James i, 25. Here we see that the reward is the consequence of the obedience.

If the reward of the righteous is consequential, it cannot be endless happiness. It cannot for the plain reason that a finite cause cannot produce an infinite effect.—Endless bliss, then, is not a reward but a free gift. This view of rewards is greatly encouraging to the obedient.

1. It encourages those who toil in an unpopular cause. See Ps. cxxvi, 6. 2. It encourages those who see no prospect of success. Ps. cxxxviii, 7, 8. 3. It encourages those sinking into the grave. Rom. viii, 28, 29.

The Love of God.

How sublime and satisfactory the theme! How elevated, pure and joyous the emotions it inspires in the soul! It is the sunlight of heaven shed upon man's pathway, to cheer and bless him on his journey to the grave.—The soul who dwells a firm and abiding conviction in the changeless and infinite love of Jehovah, rests in perfect peace. The care worn and sorrow-stricken children of humanity, realizing that here they have no abiding home, nor continuing city—yet sustained and consoled by the strong assurance that God is their Father and everlasting Friend—that he loved them in the beginning, and will continue to love them through the all coming future with an eternal and unchangeable affection, can calmly and confidently lift their eyes to heaven and exclaim—"there is my house and portion fair, and my abiding home."

A belief in the existence of God, and the immutability of his nature, and the infinitude of his love, afford an immovable ground of support amid the ever varying scenes of life. We then feel that our hope is anchored upon the rock of eternal ages—that God is our everlasting dwelling place; and then in the exercise of amiable and contrite spirit we are disposed to be thankful to him and speak good of his name—to raise in highest strains the anthem and the song of praise and thanksgiving. When we meditate upon the word of truth which God has spoken, and there read our title clear to an un fading and incorruptible heritage in the elms of immortality, and they reflect that all the mercies which have rendered our existence a blessing, were but so many tokens of the care and loving kindness of our Father in heaven, and that eternal life is likewise the gift of his love, and can exclaim with emotions of inexpressible joy—

"Could we with ink the ocean fill,
Was every man a scribe by trade,
Were every single stick a quill,
And the whole earth of parchment made,
To write the love of God above,
Would drain the ocean dry,
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky."
—Star in the West.

By Firm.

The wind and the waves may beat against a rock, planted in a troubled sea, but it remains unmoved. Be you like that rock, young man. Who may entice, and the song and the cup may invite. Beware, stand firmly at your post. Let your principles shine forth unobscured. There is glory in the thought that you have resisted temptation and conquered. Your bright example will be to the world what the light house is to the mariner upon the sea-shore. It will guide hundreds to the point of virtue and safety.