

so pleased with it; for he that danced by the light of burning Rome, might feel a communion of spirit with a sentiment that lights up the future with the flames of endless torture, and delights in the miseries of the damned. But the kind in heart—those pure spirits who are noted for their benevolence, and who have in reality hearts to feel for the sufferings of their fellow creatures: those shrink away from the thought and weep over the horrors of hell. True, their education and prejudices may be such that they feel bound to believe the sentiment, and though it may find a place in their creeds, and heads, yet it is most evident that it finds no congenial spirit in their hearts. The thought of it gives them pain, and as often as they pray, they cry mightily to God to save them from it, and with them, the whole world. They are made partakers in some measure of the divine nature, and that nature rises up in rebellion against the doctrine in question; for with it, it has no sympathy.

I pray you, then, friends, if you will not listen to my arguments, hear the voice of the Divinity that stirreth within your inmost souls, that God himself hath no fellowship with the spirit of wrath in any of its forms.

POPULAR OBJECTIONS ANSWERED. CONTINUED FROM LAST NUMBER.

II. "Universalism may prove false. We therefore will not embrace it; for, if we did, we should give up two chances for one. If our doctrine proves false, yours will take us in; but if yours should happen to prove false, you will have no security. We have two chances, and will keep on the safe side." So, friend, you are determined to disbelieve, in spite of evidence. You will not investigate, you will not "examine yourself whether you be in the faith," for fear you may be found not in it! that is, for fear you shall feel compelled by evidence, to embrace a doctrine which, though true, might not be so safe. This is wisdom—this is principle—this is noble!

Is not the side of truth unquestionably the safe side? Examine, then; and if you be convinced of error, renounce it immediately, and rest assured there is nothing safer than the truth.

But it may prove false. What then? Are you any more in danger by being honestly, and conscientiously in error,—by believing a doctrine which you cannot help believing, from the force of evidence, and rejecting one which you are obliged to reject, on account of its manifested absurdity? Rest assured, if there is any absolute sin here, it is striving to countenance and keep in favour, with a doctrine which your understanding rejected, and your very soul abhorred. I repeat, if there is any sin here, and danger on that account, it is not in rejecting a doctrine which you felt obliged to reject, but rather in striving to favor one, which you could not find sufficient evidence to sustain, for the miserable consideration that it might be more safe. Remember this.

But let us see if it really would be more safe, or if you would have one more chance by believing in the opposite doctrine. What does this doctrine teach? That, from all past eternity, God has elected some to everlasting life, and reprobated others to everlasting death; that those thus elected and reprobated are made so, as the Confession of Faith says "without any foresight of faith and good works, or any other thing in the creature as conditions or causes moving him thereto;" and that the number "thus predestinated and foreordained is so certain, that it cannot be either increased or diminished." What a glorious chance here is! If this doctrine be true and the main salvation is deliverance from an endless hell, it is certainly foolish to preach it. What, think, friend, of two chances here. You might as well be a Universalist as not, if this is true, and despite of every danger. The fact is, there is no chance about it; for it is all absolute and "particular" "predestination" and "design," "without any foresight of faith or good works." So, Universalist or Partialist, if you are of the

elect, you will be saved; and if not, you will be damned, in spite of faith.

But, says the reader, this is an old-fashioned doctrine, and universally abandoned now. I beg the reader's pardon; I have heard it preached myself, within three months, from a pulpit in this town—the veritable Newburyport. Remember that. It was preached to more than two thousand people.

But we are willing to take the objection on the other ground,—to admit that our eternal destiny is placed at our disposal. And what then? Can faith save ye? Or can honest, conscientious opinion, made up from careful examination of the Bible, and the use of all the helps within your aid,—can such honesty and sincerity damn you through the eyes of eternity? I pity the man who is so far lost in bigotry as this. But if faith cannot save ye, can works? Admit that they can. Admit that a good character is requisite for the attainment of salvation, or, rather, that a good character is salvation itself. And what then? Does the doctrine of endless damnation afford two chances here? I know not. So far as the first and second commands are concerned, we have already proved it "good for nothing;" yes, worse than useless. I refer to the closing lecture of the series, where it has been amply demonstrated that this system of universal grace is all-sufficient in moral power; and it only needs to be reduced to practice, to keep the believer in the way of all the commandments of God. On the contrary, reduce partialism to practice, imitate its God of cruelty, enact the scenes on earth that God, it is said, will enact in eternity, and crime and cruelty would overspread the earth. We do not say that such is the character of the believers in this doctrine generally: we rejoice that it is not reduced to actual, universal practice. But we do say, that such has been its tendency; that the bloody inquisition, and other enormities, owe their origin to the doctrine of endless torment; and, in every case, so far as it becomes operative in inducing a moral action related to the two commandments, it does prevent obedience, harden the heart create antipathy to God, and destroy a Christian sympathy for man.—These are facts which cannot be controverted. So far as chance is concerned, then, whether by faith or works, or both, the substantial, enlightened, practical believer in the universality and efficacy of God's grace and love is still upon the safest side. I pray that he may remain there; and "not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name, give glory."

III. It is objected to the system of our theology, to that part of it which relates to punishment, that it destroys the Christian doctrine of forgiveness, by teaching a full and complete punishment for every sin. This objection is founded on one grand theological mistake. You cannot point a single passage in the Bible which speaks of forgiveness of punishment. In Exodus xxxiv 6, 7, the character of God is proclaimed in this way: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty." Here we find that sin may be forgiven, that is, blotted out, or remitted while their punishment they could not flee from. Again, in Psalm xcix 8, "Thou wast a God who forgavest them, though thou takest revenge of their inventions." Here, also, we learn that God could forgive their sins, that is cleanse them from iniquity, at the same time that he took vengeance for them. Also in Isaiah xl. 1, 2, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Here is an emphatic testimony, that sin may be adequately punished, and yet forgiven. After the punishment is inflicted, the sin may be forgiven. If we should ask some Christians how this could be, they would ridicule the idea. The reason would be, they would be all the time thinking of forgiveness of punishment. And the forgiveness which our Christian clergy preach is generally misrepresented, and generally understood, to be the forgiveness or remission of hell torments. But the Bible knows nothing about such a doctrine. It never teaches the forgiveness or remission of punishment for sins committed. It is the forgiveness of sins; by which it is understood, the blotting out, or cleansing from, after due justice is administered. You see, then, that our system of theology does not destroy the Christian doctrine of forgiveness, but maintains it. It only destroys the gross doctrine of forgiveness of punishment. Ha-

that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons." (Col. iii. 25.)

In human governments there is indeed such a thing as the power of pardon,—pardon of punishment. But this is owing to the imperfection of the government. Mistakes frequently occur with human judges, with regard to the degree of guilt which a criminal is involved in, and also with regard to the question of guilt or not guilty. And, under such circumstances, a pardon is granted, by which the punishment is remitted. But no such mistakes occur in the government of God. He knoweth the secrets of the hearts. He is intimately acquainted with all the facts in the case, can institute no punishment but what is just to be administered, and, under such a government, why should the punishment be remitted for a sin committed against full light and knowledge? Such forgiveness would be manifestly unjust. And God has never declared it to us. He is the gracious forgiver of our sins; and sin may be forgiven, after the just punishment is administered;—that is, "remembered no more against us." Universalists, then, so far from destroying, are the only Christians who maintain, the Christian doctrine of forgiveness, for every other sect perpetuates the sin through all eternity.

OBEEDIENCE TO GOD THE SOURCE OF FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS.

Christianity requires all who adopt it to offer unto God the sacrifice of a sincere and contrite heart—to act from correct principles, from a sense of right, and consciousness of duty. It judges human conduct according to motives and intentions, and not from outward manifestations. It makes every man the arbiter of his own moral destiny, by giving him ability to judge for himself what is right, what is duty, and what ought to be avoided. It confers blessings where there is capacity to enjoy, and withholds, only where the bestowment would be productive of no good.

Hence, it quickens to a livelier sense of duty and responsibility, by making every man feel that he is personally to answer, not for his conduct merely, but also for the desires he may cherish.

God requires all men to love him, which implies that every man is bound to cultivate the sentiments of gratitude and reverence, and practice obedience to all his commands. This does not abridge his liberty, but qualifies him to apprehend what is right, and so act from high and noble considerations of obligation to God and his relations to the world. He obeys God's commandments, for he knows that his rights are to be maintained, and his happiness and honor best promoted in that way. He will not deviate from the line of duty, thus indicated by the wisdom and loving mercy of God; for he has no other light by which to walk; all without, to him, is darkness, or, at best, but dim uncertainty. Satisfied of what the will of the Lord is, he hesitates not for a moment, but starts to the accomplishment of such work as is planned out for him. He takes counsel from no one whose advice diverges a single shade from the clear pathway, which opens straight before him. And, hence he feels a perfect freedom, and will consent to no infringement upon his rights. The world, with its allurements, cannot, when he is in such a frame of mind, tempt him from his course, or entangle him in its snares. The frowns and sneers, or the flatteries and promises of other men, excite in him no feeling but that of pity, and serve but to arm him with a more manly fortitude, and a firmer confidence in the protection of God. His resolutions deliberately formed, under a full knowledge of the circumstances, are not to be changed, for slight reasons, under trivial circumstances. He will not even take a progressive step till new light and principles, equally pure and sacred, are superinduced. He must have further developments to guide him in his conduct, or else he will pursue the even tenor of his way. As the plans of that government, to which he has sworn fealty, were perfected, in wisdom, he looks for no sudden changes, but constantly marks the progress of that growth which promises a full maturity, and an abundant harvest. Any interference, such winds, or dark and portentous clouds, excite no apprehensions of permanent calamity. His faith in God enables him to look beyond them all, and perceive a clearing sky, a warm sun, and a rich reward. He submits, without a murmur, to the temporary inconvenience, for he entertains not a single doubt as to the result. He is willing to wait a little, till the winter be over and gone, and

the singing of the birds returns; for he knows that "all things, whatsoever shall work together for the good of them that love God;" and to God's will he cheerfully submit till that time comes.

Such a man is happy—happy as no other can be. God has provided no other way.—no other name is given, under heaven or amongst men—whereby we can be saved, except the name of Jesus Christ. His religion gives freedom, inspires confidence, and fills the soul with peace and love. W. S. B.

PROFANE SWEARING.

It is astonishing to see how many indulge in this vice, when it is, and can be of no possible benefit to any person under any circumstances. Young men especially, practice it greatly to their injury. They seem, many of them, to think it honorable, that it adds to their dignity, respectability, or importance. How much are they mistaken! The very reverse is true. Every time a man uses profane language he lowers himself in the estimation of the good and wise, of every name and denomination. No virtuous high minded person thinks better of him for it; and even those who have accustomed themselves to it more highly respect one that is free from it. And did all who now curse and swear realize the great loss they sustain by it in reputation, in morals and otherwise, we do not believe they would ever again, take the name of God in vain. The evil flowing from it are numerous, in addition to all this. It is sin against God, and as such, must receive adequate punishment. In some way or another sorrow and distress will come, as the just penalty of his law. It degrades the mind, brings it down from its native dignity to things earthly and sensual; while it gives a harshness to the general character, and is highly prejudicial to the cultivation of anything like christian graces or pleasing and agreeable manners. No man can long command the esteem of an enlightened and virtuous community, although possessed of almost all the common advantages of life, whose mouth utters cursings and profanity. The probability is that he will sink deeper and deeper in evil as he advances in age. And although he may think it a small thing in itself, still it will have a most powerful influence upon his relative happiness and in deciding the rank he ultimately takes in society.

There is no excuse for the sin. It is most clearly opposed to the laws of God, and of all refined and civilized circles. To plead that it is a habit that cannot be thrown off, is no palliation. It can be put away. No person has become so confirmed in it, as not to be able at once to cease swearing. Any man can resolve to do it, and at all times afterwards, practice in the use of a pure language. To all I would say in the voice of Scripture, and with all sincerity and affection towards them—especially to all who have named the name of Universalism—"Above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath, but let your yea, be yea; and your nay, nay; least ye fall into condemnation." James v: 12. Again, says the Saviour—"Swear not at all: neither by heaven; for it is God's throne; nor by the earth; for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communications be yea, yea; and nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Matt. v: 31-37.—Star in the West.

BETTING ON THE BIBLE.

Can you believe it?—Our Baptist and Presbyterian brethren have really been to betting on sacred subjects. A poor \$1000 wager: I see by the Religious Ark of May 20th, that the Southern Baptist Almanac and Annual Register for 1848, offers to bet \$1000 that no passage can be found in the Bible teaching infant baptism. J. C. Bradley, a correspondent of the Ark, which is a Cumberland Presbyterian paper, accepts the wager on certain conditions. "The above is from the Star in the West. How long will it be, oh how long, before gambling will cease in our land, while our Baptist and Presbyterian neighbors set the world an example in betting on the Scriptural proofs of a controverted doctrine! We hope to see better examples of morality set by the religious press."