

intolerance, that we are indebted for the inestimable blessing of having our lot in a free land, and under civil institutions which guarantee religious toleration to all without distinction? The time is not very remote when no one dare, at the peril of life and liberty, to dissent from the orthodox standard. The mania of witchcraft was rampant, and numerous holocausts of innocent men, women and children were immolated at the horrible shrine. To dissent from the clergy was to be burned at the stake, and the only basis for these atrocities is to be found in the inculcation of the twin doctrines among the laity of a personal devil and a literal hell. The memory of these times is cause of sincere thankfulness that we are at last delivered from this terrible scourge.

Prejudice has lately tried the experiment of collecting statistics respecting the moral status of the different religious sects, and find to their chagrin that liberal christianity falls far below a proportionate representation in the goals and penitentiaries. We make no Pharisaic pretensions to superior piety or morals. With St. Paul we inculcate that without charity, or love, all our pretensions to the special favor of heaven are as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. But truth and self-defence is our warrant for asking of the author of the pastoral from what class have the ranks of the most notorious criminals, forgers, and defaulters, who have robbed the widow and fatherless and caused so much misery in Europe and the United States for the last few years been recruited. We will leave him to his own reflections to settle the matter with himself, and proceed to seek for a truthful explanation of some of the texts he has quoted to sustain his position and the doctrine of eternal punishment. And first we note Matthew xxv : 46—"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." There is not a passage in the Bible that is more frequently quoted or more confidently relied on to prove the doctrine of endless punishment than this. We suppose that if the believers in the doctrine can be satisfied that it is not taught in this text, they will be willing to concede that it is not taught in the bible. It forms the conclusion of the parable of the sheep and the goats, the first question to