

He must therefore punish sin with all the exquisite torture which infinite thought can devise. His code is Draconian—he that offends in one point is guilty of all. Good were it for man that he had never been born.”

Language even more revolting might be quoted, and even where men have not gone to this extreme yet exhibited something of a similar spirit. In refutation of such a view, we might refer to the fact that this aspect of awfulness belongs to the religion of all nations. The conscience of man testifies of his sin and warns him of a judgment to come. Nature and Providence are full of facts irresistibly impressing the mind with the same conclusion. From all these quarters evidence may be drawn corroborating the view of the divine nature as set forth by Moses and the Prophets as one of spotless purity and unmasked antagonism to sin.

Without dwelling on this point, however, we remark that those who take this view, only take the half of the Old Testament statements of the subject instead of taking a candid view of the whole. They cull out all the expressions of God's punitive justice, but as uniformly pass over all that it asserts of his goodness and beneficence. They quote it as asserting that he will by no means clear the guilty, but they do not quote those portions of it which describe him as keeping mercy for thousands of generations of those that fear him—as delighting in mercy, as “pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin.” We are told that he is there declared to be “angry with the wicked every day,” but we are not told that he is represented as saying, “As I live I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth.”

We add further that the teachings of the New Testament are identical with those of the Old. We acknowledge indeed that there has been a progressive development of truth, that the Old Testament was an imperfect revelation of God's will, and that the New is the completion of it. But we acknowledge no contrariety between them. The teachings of the New as to the penalty of sin are certainly not less terrible than those of the Old. True, it brings life and immortality to light, but it also unveils death and destruction in a manner peculiarly its own. The

“cursings of David” says Mr. Cairns, “are not more terrible than our Saviour's denunciations of the Pharisees; and one who does not find any difficulty in regarding the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men as perfectly consistent with love, should not be greatly stumbled by that sublime impersonal hatred of evil that breathes through the Psalms of David, as the blast of heaven against the face of wickedness.” We add that no where in the Old Testament are such fearful denunciations of terror as those which fell from the lips of the meek and lowly Jesus.

The Old and New Testaments then stand together. In fact the view we have been considering, has been a sort of half-way house to Infidelity. It has done its work in Germany and it is likely to do the same in Britain and America. We cannot pass from the subject without pointing out an error which is characteristic of the age, and which is exercising a most pernicious influence upon many portions of the church. It is the view of God which recognizes in him no other moral attribute than benevolence.—Many treatises on science, ethics, and on Natural and Apologetic Theology reason in this way. Many even of fashionable preachers of Christianity utterly ignore his holiness and punitive justice. The effects of this view are wide-spread and apparent. They appear in many of those Utopian schemes of social improvement, which are proclaimed by those who would banish all punishment human and divine. They appear in that mawkish tenderness to atrocious crime which corrupts so much of the literature of the day. But there are appearances in the church which indicate more serious danger. The dogma that benevolence is the only moral attribute of God cannot long remain in company with vicarious atonement and eternal punishment. It inevitably leads to Socinianism or Universalism and ultimately to infidelity. There cannot be a doubt as to the teaching of the word of God on the subject. It attributes to him infinite love and benevolence, but it as certainly attributes to him immaculate holiness and an unchangeable disposition to punish sin. Along