

and its foundations of precious stones. There is no night, and no sea; while through the midst of the city flows a sparkling river with ever-bearing fruit-trees on either bank. Here the redeemed abide "for ever and ever," clad in white and shining garments, with crowns of gold upon their heads, with harps and palm-branches in their hands. They also acquire the power of flying and become "angels." Their entire time is occupied in chanting praises and in bowing down before a great white throne; as all mysteries are revealed to them, there is no need of mental effort; and as there is neither hunger nor thirst, nor pain of any kind, bodily effort is equally unnecessary. In short, it is, as one godly old hymn-writer has expressed it, a place

"Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths have no end."

Not far from the walls of this city, separated from it only by a great gulf which is so narrow as to readily permit recognition to take place across it, is a fiery pit, the abode of the lost. Here nine-tenths of the race are condemned to writhe through all eternity, tortured by blistering heat, by raging thirst, by suffocating sulphur-fumes, and every agony that the ingenuity of devils can devise; so that, in clear view of the beautiful city, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever." From a mere human standpoint, one would suppose that this would interfere with the peace of mind of the redeemed, especially as they could readily recognize the voices of a majority of their friends and loved ones; but their dispositions have become so spiritual and celestial that they do not mind it at all. Indeed, one good Calvinistic divine has specially dwelt upon the watching of the tortures of the damned, and congratulating oneself upon escaping therefrom, as one of the joys of heaven.

Of this whole popular conception, it may simply be said that it is almost absolutely without foundation in the teachings of the Master. Its inferior and attendant spirits are taken bodily from Dante and Milton. In short, it is simply a "happy hunting-ground" arranged according to saintly and feminine ideas, combined with a Hades which for injustice and savage vindictiveness is unparalleled even in the cannibal islands.

The "Kingdom of Heaven," "Kingdom of God," "Life Everlasting," of the Master's own teachings is a conception of widely-different form and temper. Its description consists principally of a noble strain of lofty and fearless prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Good and defeat of Evil, which throbs like an everlasting *Leitmotiv* through all of the four Gospels. Righteousness and Truth must and shall prevail. Evil and falsehood will certainly both punish and defeat themselves: "The meek shall inherit the earth;" this is the burden of his song. As to the geographical where? and the chronological when? he is divinely silent. It is enough for us to know that it shall be hereafter and that it begins now; nay, that this divine process is actually going on within us, about us, among us, if we will only open our clouded eyes to see it. "The