

on Jewish metaphors and idioms that apart from them it cannot be understood. It is quoted as a decisive proof of 'endless torments.' Its bearing on such a dogma evaporates to nothing when we examine it. In the first place, 'hell' can only mean what the original word 'Gehenna' means, and 'Gehenna' was the vaguest and most metaphorical word of later Jewish theology. In our Lord's time, Gehenna was a pleasant valley outside Jerusalem; but five centuries earlier it had been first desecrated by Moloch worship, and then defiled with corpses, and lastly purified from pestilence by huge fires. To have the dead bodies thrown into 'Gehenna' was a terrible indignity, and became a metaphor for severest punishment; but the use of the phrase in this proverbial way no more sanctions the belief in the 'hell' of the Middle Ages than the use of 'Tartarus' in 2 Peter 2:4, shows that the author intended to vouch for the stories of Ixion and the Danaïdes. . . . On such isolated phrases we have no warrant for building up vast and terrific doctrines which run counter to many plain passages of Scripture and to its representation of God's mercy, and to the moral sense of mankind—which is itself a source of the divinest revelation."

"PROVING" DOGMAS BY "SCRIPTURE."

Discussing and denouncing the methods often employed by pulpiteers to support theological dogmas by isolated Bible texts, Dr. Farrar says:

"The doctrine of 'eternal torments' has been again and again *proved* by Isaiah 33:14: 'Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?' Even a moderate study of the context might have sufficed to show that the verse had not the most remote connection with that terrific dogma. No such doctrine, it may be confidently affirmed, was ever on the horizon of the Prophets or other Scripture writers before (at the earliest) the days of the exile."

BUT SOME MIRACLES ARE NECESSARY.

On the subject of miracles, the position taken by the Canon is about on a par with that adopted by those who reject all miracles but *ours*:

"The miracle of creation—the miracle which called light out of darkness and order out of chaos—the miracle which first thrilled the spark of life into inanimate matter and evolved from its dust the rich diversities of sentient existence—the miracle of the human nature of the Son of God—those two miracles of the creation and the incarnation involve and include to my mind the credibility of all other miracles.

"I withhold my credence from no occurrence—however much it may be called miraculous—which is adequately attested, which was wrought for adequate ends, and which is in accordance with the revealed laws of God's immediate dealings with man. About the miracles performed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—about the Incarnation, the Resurrection and the Ascension, which are the most stupendous of them all—I can still say with all my heart, '*Manet immota fides.*'"

It is but natural that "the line must be drawn somewhere," and the point chosen by Canon Farrar is at those miracles which are necessary if Christianity is to be defended at all—the Creation, the Incarnation, the Resurrection and the Ascension, and Christ's miracles. It would be