

harmonize with any opposite errors. The harmonizing with such,—the belief of such,—can only be accounted for, on the supposition of darkness, disorder, moral evil, *sin*, that which is justly the subject of punishment.

Such is the argument which we proposed to submit to you ; and its weight we must leave to be estimated by yourselves. Had time permitted, we should have liked to confirm the conclusion arrived at, by an appeal to the testimony of conscience,—to the practical judgment of mankind,—and to the explicit statements of Scripture. But we can only say a word about each.

1. As to the testimony of conscience, let us take one case. A man finds reason to change his belief about the character of God, or about some important Bible truth. From having the belief about God and his moral government, which arrays him in the attributes of a stern and vindictive judge, he comes to have the beliefs, which invest him with the attributes of a kind and forgiving father ; or from believing that he must seek deliverance from wrath by his own works, he comes to believe, that he may find it through a simple reliance on the merits of a crucified Saviour. And what is the decision of conscience about his former beliefs ? All who have undergone the change will tell you, that it amounts to a most pungent and overwhelming testimony against those beliefs as evil. And similar illustrations might be multiplied indefinitely. It is true that men often seem, to have no trouble of conscience about the unsound beliefs which they cherish. But if it be really the case that conscience is thus asleep within them, will not the defect in their moral state, which that unsound belief of itself implies, more than sufficiently account for it.

2. Again, what is the practical judgment of the world about unsound beliefs ? Do men usually look upon them all, as free from moral evil and inculpable, if they are only sincere ? Do not, on the contrary, some beliefs fill us instinctively with horror,—and do we not shrink from him who entertains them, as from the touch of a serpent, and all the more vehemently, if we think that he is sincere in holding them ? We doubt if the sturdiest assertor of man's non-responsibility for his beliefs, that ever formed the resolution, " henceforward nothing shall prevail upon us to praise or to blame any one for that, which he can no more change than he can the hue of his skin, or the height of his stature,"