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Such as in dreams could hardly soothe
A soul that once had tasted of immortal truth.'—*Christian Year*.

But the difficulty arises the moment we try to find some conception of the nature and duration of that punishment. According to the current notion of the churches it is eternal. It is everlasting, an unending torment, if not a literal flame of fire; an inward remorse that shall last for ever and for ever. It is banishment from God—a life without His life—breath and motion apart from Him; a place and a state of woe, where hope never enters, but every thought is torment in the mind, and every feeling a fiery torture in the heart. All the faculties shall live, but only live to suffer. Memory shall be as a worm at the vitals, all the being shall be on fire, but shall not burn. It is an awful doctrine. But what is the origin and history of this doctrine? I think it will be found that it began with the Jews, and arose from the fact that they took a part truth for a whole truth, that is to say, that they formed a misconception of God in His relation to man. All through the patriarchal ages God is represented as a beneficent Being. He enters into fellowship with man, talks with him face to face. He calls Abraham to a great inheritance. He is the Form at the top of the ladder which Jacob saw. He is the Angel of the covenant, and the God of all blessing. But with the Exodus of Israel from Egypt the idea gets changed. God is the avenger of all the oppressed. He is the great King of the nation. His throne is in the heavens—His sceptre is a rod of iron. From the secret place of His Majesty come forth the thunderings of His law. The fire and the smoke which crown the quaking mountain tell of His power and the terrible-ness of His wrath. He is not only King, but Judge. He pronounces judgment and administers the law. Now, that seems the only way in which those people could have been taught to know right and do it. They were children in Religion. The sojourn in Egypt had corrupted them in mind and heart. They came out of it with the very lowest standard in morals, and a blunted sense of justice. Children must be ruled largely by the rod. They must be kept from