

reconciled to God, why should he not feel the same sting for ten, one hundred, or ten times one hundred years, or forever? It is the *state of mind* that is unhappy whether it be found on this, or the other side of the grave: and until some one can prove that man loses all consciousness of sins at death, or that the *grave* is to be a kind filter to strain out all impurities from his soul and give him a good character that shall be worthy of the "*well done*," we shall be compelled to believe with the poet, alluding to an expression found in Solomon's writings,—

Just as the tree cut down, that fell
Northward or southward, there it lies;
So man departs to heaven or hell,
Fixed in the *state* wherein he dies.

Some even have not scrupled to present the insane suggestion that time heals over the wounds of the soul—that the spirit has a recuperative energy in itself that like the body will outgrow almost any gash made upon it. Even if this analogy were correct it would prove nothing, for the body cannot be crippled without a loss of time with all its advantages; but who ever thought of a thief being any the less a thief or a murderer any the less a murderer who had escaped the hand of justice twenty years than he was one year after the deed had been committed? Is a debtor the less a debtor who has been insolvent ten years, or who has for such a time defrauded his creditors? Or would he not rather become the more involved by the accumulation of interest? The crimes of the ungodly are not diminished by time but rather intensified, nor is the nature of his punishment changed—only the degree of it. Just as the indolent student will feel, as he grows older, a keener sense of the folly of his youth in neglecting his opportunities for mental culture as he gradually wakes up to a deeper sense of the need of education, so may the reprobate's punishment be intensified hereafter, but it will be of the same kind and will rush upon his soul on the same old principle of cause and effect—nothing arbitrary, nothing tyrannically vindictive on the part of his Judge.

The nature of this punishment in time and eternity is doubtless the same. It consists in a wicked state of heart as opposed to God and his reign, and in the abnormal and wretched state of all the affections. Such at least are its beginnings on earth in the breast of every sinful man, and the future world is but a continuation of the present. If the soul do not enjoy God and godliness here, how could it there? God