



## CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY.

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HERE are few topics of importance upon which the Christian Church has spoken with greater decision than on the eternity of future punishments. In all its leading sections, it has taught that those dying in their sins shall endure unending penal sufferings, varying in degree, according to the measure of their personal ill-desert. In all its branches, Latin and Greek, Lutheran and Reformed, Calvinistic and Arminian, it has uttered one voice. This unanimity cannot be regarded as due to the unthinking reception of a dogma handed down from the past. The interests involved are too momentous, and come too closely home to every heart, to admit of such an explanation. It is, moreover, certain that the leading views now embraced by those who reject the eternity of future punishments, were presented to the Church, before the close of the third century, by authors of sufficient reputation to secure for their sentiments careful attention. Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and a few others, taught the final restoration of all free agents to holiness and the favor of God. And Arnobius, a little later, maintained the annihilation of the wicked. This distinguished convert from heathenism was a disciple of Lucretius, and he appears to have brought his master's materialistic philosophy with him into the Christian