

It is indeed far more sickening than a heavy dose of lobelia to examine even slightly such impertinent, undignified, and bat-eyed Rationalism, hatched in Germany, fed to the fluttering point at Boston, and made to soar to undefinable regions from Nashville. While God enunciates in a clear tone that sin has been superinduced, seeing that he "cannot tempt any man," and while over every spot where wretchedness appears there is written in readable language, "AN ENEMY HATH DONE THIS," the adventuring doctor of divinity, with a zeal for new discovery, and regardless of heaven's unerring oracles, pitches headlong into the ditch of perverted reason and boasts of his height when he is constantly sinking.

It never seems to have occurred to the new school of philosophers, whose sparks of reason are so bright, that punishment, in the government of God, is not even a primary effect. Temptation first; transgression next; punishment third. Brother James, one of the ordained Twelve, makes it out in these terms:—first, lust; second, sin; third, death. This is precisely what we mean by temptation, transgression, punishment; and if the "God of all grace" does not lead any man into temptation and hence does not induce him into transgression, it is quite evident that in yielding to temptation and becoming a transgressor, he is the active and immediate agent in bringing and continuing punishment upon himself.

This being true, the two fanciful conceptions relative to 'forming a creature for wretchedness' and 'the eternity of punishment' planned and designed for man, are fatally smitten and cast among nonentities.

Man, formed with intelligence, blessed with freedom and noble endowments, and having the offer of divine truth, divine love, and divine happiness, but rejecting heaven's overtures and choosing the guidance, influence, and waywardness of the great Enemy, why, yes, why, O Rationalist, should he not be a joint partaker in all that appertains to the destiny of this Enemy? Why should any one, even the most wicked, be deprived of his wages?

Now who but a daring and novel-loving speculatist ever thought seriously of the old adversary repending or reforming? And if wicked men have a common doom with the unrepenting, unreformable Enemy, who with any degree of right-reason thinks of a time when God will be willing to say to these impure spirits, 'Come, ye blessed who were banished my presence; your long association with the adversary has made you at length fit for the inheritance of the saints: you are henceforth all saints together—they by the Lord Jesus and you by the devil!—?!—!!'