

candid mind can deny that, when applied to the future spiritual state, they convey the idea of absolute, endless duration. And unless we have recourse to an arbitrary and reckless criticism, we seem shut up to the conclusion that it is the Divine intention, by the use of these terms, to impress upon men the idea that future punishment is as eternal as the life and blessedness of the saints, and as the life and blessedness of the ever-living, ever-blessed God Himself." Mr. Fyfe says very little about the intermediate state, or the question of a second probation, either because it did not come strictly within the limits he set himself, or because he concluded that his researches rendered any more detailed statements unnecessary. And he concludes with a review of the moral difficulties that lie in the way. Eternal punishment may be repugnant to human feeling, and many may echo Canon Kingsley's passionate utterances in this respect. But was Canon Kingsley, is any human heart, satisfied or content with the sufferings of God's creatures in the present life? By the Canon's criterion, the whole course of nature stands condemned. Are we to place everything here and hereafter under the universal malediction of pessimism, or can we say that the Judge of all the earth does *right*? As Mr. Fyfe shows, whatever may be said about its being inconsistent with the character, or the conduct, or the Fatherhood of God; whether eternal punishment is necessary or not, or however disproportionate it may seem to us; the same arguments may be applied to the things that are going on in the world around us, and they cannot alter the facts. "The government of God in both worlds is of a piece, and proceeds upon the same lines." It would, at any rate, from our point of view, be a glorious consummation if all sin and sorrow and suffering were banished from the universe, and every created being shared the love and joy of the ever-blessed God. But have we any ground for expecting an intervention of this kind? "After most careful and candid examination," says Mr. Fyfe, "we are bound to say, we can find no foundation for this beautiful theory either in Scripture or nature."

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