

ed general council of Trent promulgated a canon anamethatizing all persons who should say that "the sacraments of the new law were more or fewer than seven."

§ 3. *Time of the administration of Confirmation.* In the Western portion of the Primitive Church, if a bishop were present, Confirmation was always administered, even to infants, immediately after baptism: in the Eastern portion, if the chrism had been consecrated by the bishop, his presbyter had authority to apply it for confirmations, which application then took the place of imposition of hands. Both sections of the Church looked on confirmation as a component part of the sacrament of baptism. TERTULLIAN, after he had given a description of the mode of baptism, thus proceeds: "After this when we have issued from the font, we are thoroughly anointed with the blessed unction, a practice derived from the old discipline, wherein, on entering the priesthood, men were wont to be anointed with oil from a horn ever since Aaron was anointed by Moses."

In the next place, the hand is laid on us, invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit through the words of benediction." In case of the absence of the bishop, it had to be postponed until he was able to visit the portions of his diocese in which the unconfirmed resided. After some time, however, in every case the administration of the rite of confirmation was deferred until the candidate was able to renew in his own person the vows that had been entered into on his behalf by his godfather at his baptism. In the Church of England previous to the Reformation, the usage varied; in some dioceses children were required to be presented for confirmation within the year in which they had been baptized; in others, the time was lengthened to three years; in others, to five, with a penalty to the parents after that time of exclusion from the Church until the child was confirmed. The rule of the Church at present is, that as soon as children came to years of discretion, they shall be presented to the Bishop to be confirmed by him, or, as it is explained in the address to the godparents in the baptismal service, "as soon as they can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue, and be further instructed in the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose."

(To be Continued.)

BOOK REVIEW.

ETERNAL HOPE: Five sermons preached in Westminster Abbey, in November and December, 1877. By the Rev. Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S. Price \$1.00 (free by mail). Rowsell & Hutchison, 76 King Street East, Toronto.

As remarked in a former issue, Canon Farrar thinking his sermons on the subject of a *universal final restoration* had been misunderstood and misrepresented, has published them entire in order to remove misapprehension. In the sermons, he gives no definite statement, either of any system he may have formed upon the subject, or of any arguments he would adduce in support of any scheme antagonistic to the generally received dogmas; so that a certain amount of misrepresentation would very naturally be the result of any attack upon those dogmas. The preface is the

most perspicuous, the most definitely expressed part of the book. The title is a curious one. It strictly means, a Hope that is eternal; but whether it is for ever to be only a Hope does not appear. The real subject of the volume is designed to be—The hope the wicked may have of final blessedness. And the Canon wishes to show, that ultimately, the wicked will be admitted to all the felicity of the saints,—the only drawback being a remembrance of their former sin—a kind of purgatorial cleansing being effectual for the purpose of restoration.

When a subject of this kind is mentioned, there are two or three things which immediately present themselves to the mind, irrespective of the arguments that may be adduced on either side. The first thing is:—The fact that, notwithstanding some few names the Canon has given to the contrary, the Catholic Church has ever held the doctrine, gives *prima facie* reason to believe that the never-ending punishment of the finally impenitent is an essential part of the Christian system. But if there is any doubt at all on the subject, mere ordinary prudence would dictate, that, upon the whole, it would be far better to magnify our danger than to suppose it less than it really is. This is more especially the case when, as in this instance, we can have no absolute knowledge of the subject, until it will be too late to make any practical use of that knowledge during our existence here, and supposing this to be our only state of probation. And what if we first of all find out the truth when we have entered upon a state of retribution that shall be unalterable?

Another thought suggesting itself is that, from what we know of man, we can hardly afford to part with any motive for living a holy life; and surely no one would be so bold as to say that a fear of punishment has no deterrent effect whatever; or that the manifestation of God's intense and unalterable hatred to sin should not increase our love for holiness. As far as fear is to be used as a deterring motive, listen to the Saviour: "Fear not them which kill the body;" "Fear Him, who after He hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell."

A third suggestion is, that with thoughtful minds, any attempt to explain away the Divine threatenings would naturally be viewed with suspicion; because a disbelief in God's threatened judgments has always indicated a downward moral tendency; and as far as we have been permitted to know anything about it, such disbelief has always discovered its mistake when it was too late to remedy it. Canon Farrar objects to a use that has been made of the assertion, uttered by the tempter to our first parents. Notwithstanding his objection, we still think it would be well to remember that listening to the suggestion, "Thou shalt not surely die," first brought sin into the world, and all our woe.

In the Canon's treatment of the subject, his difficulty in accepting a belief in eternal punishment, is the same old story we have so often met with in the ordinary class of unbelievers. It arises, not from any thing definitely revealed to the contrary, although Revelation gives us all the information we can possess on the subject; but because the very idea of such a thing is repulsive to our feelings, and also because he cannot reconcile it with the attributes of a good and merciful Being. But nobody has ever pretended to be able to show how these can be entirely reconciled. Neither do we pretend to be able to reconcile the existence of evil, however temporary, with the wisdom and power of a God of goodness. But we do not therefore pretend to deny the existence of evil in the world, any more than to deny the existence of a God of goodness, power and wisdom. The Canon has also unfairly mixed up all the wild and crude expressions that have been used in connection with the subject, as though believers in the doctrine of the eternal punishment of the wicked were answerable for all that has ever been advanced in support of it; even including Spurgeon—while on the other hand he has quoted with approval, a stanza from a living poet, which even Shelley could not have exceeded in blasphemy.

It has been said of Canon Farrar that "he has not been disciplined in the accuracy of logical thinking." The sermons before us are unmistakable proofs of the correctness of the remark.

When he asks, what would be thought of a human government which had more than half of its subjects in prison? it is seen at once that the question is equally a blow aimed at all the revelation we have ever met with. For it might be asked with equal force by a deist, What would be thought of a human government that adopted no effectual means to acquaint more than about one-third of its subjects with its laws?

In all cases of exegetical pleading, when an effort is to be made to overturn a received dogma or interpretation, one of the first steps taken has usually been to make it appear that the words employed have no definite meaning—that they mean nobody knows how many things, and may mean any thing earthly. The transition is easy to the opinion that they ought to mean exactly what we want them to mean. It is in this way the words used by the inspired writers have been treated. The principal of these is *aionios*, translated *eternal, everlasting*. It comes from *aion*, which denotes *eternity*, or sometimes *the whole of a certain period*, such as a man's life, a dispensation, &c. The late Professor Maurice wished to make it appear that it had no reference to duration at all; but what he would make of several passages where the adjective or the noun occurs does not appear. It would require an immense amount of ingenuity to find any other meaning than eternal duration, and that not only future but past, in the Septuagint of Ps. 89: 2 (In Hebrew and English, Ps. 90: 2), where the terms are *apo tou aionos, heos tou aionos*, which we translate "from everlasting to everlasting;" and so of other passages. The old lexicographers, Parkhurst and others, derived *aion* from *aei*, ever, and *on*, being; but Passow does not recognize such an etymology. That however is of little consequence, as etymology can only be employed as a *guide* to the meaning of a word, while *usage* alone constitutes the *authority*. From the usage of the word, the radical idea contained in *aion* is doubtless that of *continued duration*; and although sometimes used, by way of accommodation, with a limited meaning, it just as much involves the idea of endlessness as our words *ever, never, and always*, which are also sometimes used with a limited signification. Maurice's idea may have appeared to derive some support from an occasional use of the word *eternity*, as when we say of one who has died, that, He has gone into eternity; although this expression, apparently referring either to a state or to a locality, certainly does not exclude the idea of endless existence.

But the Canon, with others of his school, complains of the use of single words and texts—and so do we. If the words *aion, aionos* involve no necessary conception of endlessness, that would not settle the question. If we read over the 25th chapter of St. Matthew, until we come to the last verse, and then omit the word *aionion* altogether—reading thus: "The wicked shall go away into punishment and the righteous into life—the question would remain pretty much the same. We must see throughout the chapter that our attention is directed to the final results of life. No intimation is given of the probability of any thing to take place afterwards, so as to alter the awards distributed when the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory. And so with every other allusion to the subject we find in the New Testament, especially as in 2 Cor. 5: 10 (if we may be allowed to refer to single texts); and yet the Canon contends that there is nothing in the New Testament to show that the present life closes our season of probation."

The sermon on "Are there few that be saved," is particularly unsatisfactory. It begins in quibble, is carried on through a mass of vapour and ends in mist—with no notice whatever of the terrible warning contained in our Lord's words:—"Many I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." We are led to ask, Could the Lord have said this if he knew that after ages of torture the wicked would ultimately be received into the bliss of Heaven? Indeed, this passage alone, if it contains one particle of truth whatever, is a sufficient answer to all the Canon has to advance. And, further; "When once" (or "from the time when") marking the transition from the possession of a privilege to its final withdrawal—"the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without