

supposed to be drawn, from the nature and attributes of God. It is said "God is love," and it is incredible that He will consign millions of beings to endless torment for the sins of the present life; that such punishment would imply vindictiveness, which is utterly foreign to His nature. Let us look at this a little more closely. A man is tried for a capital offence; he is convicted, condemned and executed. You are greatly shocked. You go to the executioner and say, "Why were you so vindictive against this man?" "Vindictive!" he answers; "on the contrary, I pitied him from my heart, and would gladly have avoided the terrible task of being his executioner; but the judge had sentenced him to die by my hand, and I only carried out that sentence." You go to the judge, and say, "How could you be so cruel as to sentence that man to a violent death? I had supposed that such vindictiveness would be utterly foreign to your nature." But the judge replies, "My friend, you are utterly mistaken in supposing that I was moved by vindictiveness. I but discharged a most painful duty—a duty that wrung my heart with pain and filled my eyes with tears. But the jury had found him guilty of a capital offence, and I had no choice." You next go to the jury; but they tell you they were under solemn oath to render a verdict according to the evidence, and the evidence in this case was direct and clear as to the prisoner's guilt. You question the witnesses, and they say they were sworn to tell the "truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," and as they had personal knowledge of the man's guilt, they had no choice but to testify accordingly. You question the officer who made the arrest, but he tells you a warrant for the prisoner's apprehension was placed in his hands by the magistrate before whom information had been laid, and he was compelled to execute the commission. You go to the magistrate, but there is no vindictiveness there; he has but obeyed the law in ordering the arrest of the prisoner. One step farther backward, and you question the law-makers, "How could you be so vindictive as to pass so terrible a law?" But with one voice they answer, "We were not vindictive; we only discharged a public duty; we only voiced a great public sentiment that, for the protection of human life, murder should be made punishable with death." Here, then, you have gone back, step by step, from the executioner to the judge, from the