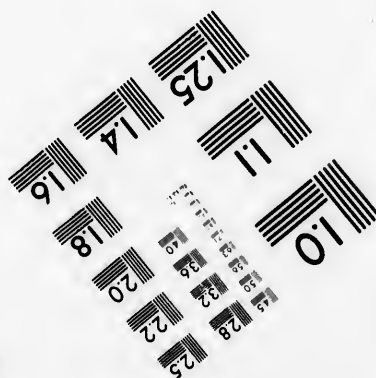
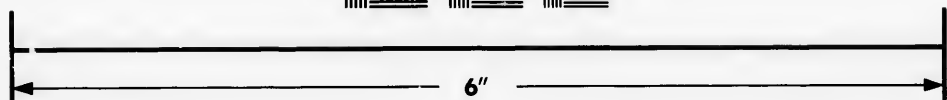
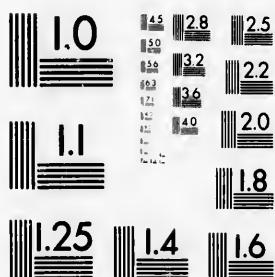


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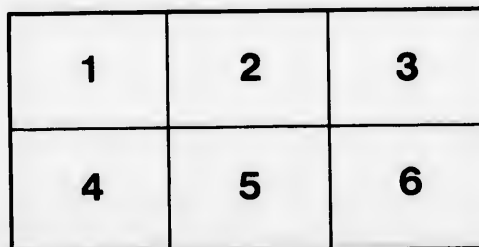
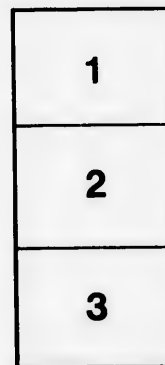
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ON

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BY

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“WHAT SHALL THE END BE?”



SCHATOLOGY—the study of the last things—such is our theme; and we propose to discuss the questions: What should we hold and teach respecting the Eternal Future? What is the Final Destiny of all Mankind? What shall The End Be?

And surely no subject connected with Religion is of more, or indeed, at the present time, of so much, importance; and, moreover, it is one upon which we cannot afford to keep silent. The Christian world is stirred to the very depths on this question, not only on this continent, but even more so in the old country, as is evidenced by the vast number of books, pamphlets, magazine-articles and pulpit utterances, which have lately issued from the press, all upholding various views regarding this most momentous question. Nor is the agitation confined to the Anglican Church, though it is there more marked; for all religious bodies are more or less exercised thereby.

And well they might be. For my part, I think this general restlessness is a good sign; it shows that the heart of the great Christian world is expanding. Hitherto the Pilgrim of the Narrow Way was too often content to ask,

What is going to happen to ME? now he is enquiring, What is going to happen to *my brother*? The generality of men, hearing of the terrors of the Lord, of the never-ending torments and misery of the damned, quieted their minds by thinking, each for himself: "Surely Almighty God can never doom ME to all that." Now they are thinking, and saying: "Surely Almighty God can never doom *any one* to all that." Are we not justified in this statement when we consider the class of men who are now speaking out? Farrar, Jukes, White, Cox, Constable, Dewes, Wilkins, Wharleigh, Oxenham, Littledale, and a host of others, are not publicans and sinners, nor scoffing infidels, but clergy of the Anglican Church and men of Faith, and Hope, and Charity. And we may be sure there are numberless others, that care not as yet to speak out, who, in their hearts, fully sympathise with such writers in their recoil from the ghastly doctrine which has hitherto been generally upheld.

Ghastly it is; and the only wonder is how the Christian world could have so long tolerated it. And I feel sure that no greater hindrance to the acceptance of the Faith could be imagined*—no more powerful weapon could be put into the hands of the enemies of the Cross—nothing more opposed to reason and justice and humanity

* If we may trust the testimony of Mr. Baldwin Brown, it would appear that the younger [Congregationalist] ministers are almost in a state of insubordination: nor can anyone who even dips into the current literature help perceiving that this is one of the main causes of the alienation from Christianity of the educated mind.—*Church Quarterly Review*, July, 1877, p. 290.

could be conceived, than that presentment of Eschatology which is (I think I may now say which *was*) so prevalent among Protestants.

Canon Farrar, from the vantage ground of his venerable pulpit, and with his over-powering eloquence, has brought this question to the forefront; and much as his sermons have been criticized and deprecated, still the effects of his "vehement denunciations," have been manifestly only too telling. It is curious to read and analyse the various critiques of his book which appeared in the *Contemporary Review* from all schools of thought. The impression made on my mind by their perusal was that even his most "sound" reviewers as Arthur and Salmon, could do little more in defence of the popular opinion than "damn it with faint praise;" while the complaint of one was that he (Farrar) "shouted what others would have whispered." Exactly so; Farrar shouted from the housetops (and all honour to him for his courage) the thoughts which had been rankling in countless hearts that could only timorously whisper them with bated breath.

But though Farrar was prominent in forcing these things on the attention of the public at large, his utterances were but the explosion of the thunder-storm which had been long gathering. Among the more intellectual in England, Robertson, Maurice, and above all Tennyson, in that marvellous poem, "In Memoriam," had been long exercising an ever-growing influence in setting thinking men a-thinking upon this subject.

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I know some will argue, "Why discuss this matter at all? While opinions are so diverse and so hazy—while confessedly we can know so little about the Future—why should we Anglicans at least be agitated? Why should we descend into this distracted arena?"

Such remonstrants may flatter themselves that they thus assume an attitude of calm, dignified, contemptuous silence; but the world will call it cowardice, and rightly too. The fact is our duty as "pilots and mariners" is to trace the signs of the coming storm and prepare "the Ark of Christ's Church" to meet it. That such a storm is coming and is daily gathering force must be evident to any reader of even the secular press. That storm will, I feel sure, result in a purified atmosphere; but, meanwhile, it is none the less our duty to prepare our own ship to weather it, lest, during its prevalence, she be disabled or overwhelmed.

And, moreover, this question is no mere trifle, or "non-essential." It lies at the very foundation: for, whatever else we may preach about, whatever doctrine we may urge, whatever Scriptural precept or Catholic practice we may enjoin, all must be built upon or lead up to the Last Things: and the world at large—not only the scoffing, but the earnest, sincere, enquiring, world—is pressing us for an answer to the question, "What is all this work of God, of which you tell us, going to End in?" If our ears are only quick enough to catch their murmurs, we can hear them saying: "Your religion begins, like Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, with bidding us flee from the Wrath

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to come ;—*what is that Wrath to come ?* You speak of God's mercy—to whom will that mercy be finally extended ? You talk of God's Justice—how will that Justice at last be vindicated ? You bid us enter the true Ark of Salvation—Salvation from what ? and if not saved, what then ? You enlarge on those who win the Prize ;—what of those who fail ? Supposing you are right in your various doctrines, what is the result if we follow your directions, and what if we don't ? You tell us of the End of the World, of the Resurrection of the Dead, of the Day of Judgment—well, after all these things are past and gone, what then remains ?"

And what answer to such tremendous questions does the preaching of the day return ? What is the great picture of the Eternal Future, as usually drawn, to satisfy the earnest enquirer or persuade the unbelieving ? Let me endeavour to supply the answer ; to furnish the picture as portrayed by either Romanist or Protestant divines.

We will begin with the pure, old-fashioned, "orthodox," Protestant presentment, in its most hideous and revolting aspect. And I beg you to bear with me while I draw it with an unsparing hand, but yet with truth. Horrible as it is, every detail of it is warranted by the utterances of a thousand pulpits, some of them, alas ! of our own communion, by the catechisms of many sects, and by the elaborate treatises of many divines ; all based upon such "isolated texts" as "Depart ye cursed into Everlasting Fire ;" "Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched ;" "Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life,

and few there be that find it;" "Many are called but few are chosen;" "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance;" "When the ungodly shall perish thou shalt see it."

Let us then, under such teaching, transport ourselves in imagination to the Last Times. Let us suppose that the curtain has fallen ages since upon the drama enacted on this little earth; the world has been burnt up; the Judgment Day has become long ago a thing of the past. What do we now see? What is The End—the final summing up of God's great Work of Creation and Redemption? What is the condition of all those countless millions of immortals, who once had their little day on earth and rose again?

We see a vast host around the Throne of God, walking for ever in the light of His countenance, in bliss unspeakable, in never-ending joy; for them there is no more sorrow; no more sadness, but happiness eternal, for they see His Face. So far good. But turn your eyes, and yonder is a bottomless pit of fire and brimstone. Here you see multitudes, compared with which the inhabitants of heaven are a mere speck, writhing in torments unspeakable, shrieking and blaspheming; and there they have been since that Judgment Day, it may be millions of years or millions of ages ago. And what are they there for? To make them better? No; to make them worse, and still worse. And yet these millions of ages that they have endured such excruciating torments are but a moment compared with what they have yet to undergo.

And even then, stretch your imagination as far as you may, their anguish is only just beginning. "Fire," "worm," "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth," and torment for ever and ever to the vast majority of those who lived their little moment of life, millions of ages since, upon this little world.

And, as if that were not enough, we have the warrant of Fathers and Doctors of the Church and preachers of the Gospel—from Tertullian to St. Thomas Aquinas, from Aquinas to Jeremy Taylor, from Taylor to Jonathan Edwards—for thinking that the Saints of Heaven, to stimulate their own joy and self-gratulation, shall watch this scene; and with no more feeling than a Spaniard at a bull-fight, or an ancient Roman at the Colosseum, or a child pulling off the legs and wings of a fly, shall whet their appetites by gloating over this spectacle of horror; shall see, perhaps, their own sons, brothers, sisters, daughters, writhing and howling in this unspeakable torture. The brutal murderer, who, convicted and executed upon earth, expiated his crime on the gallows, being now in glory (for all such characters—if we may believe their own or their chaplain's statements—invariably go straightway to glory), will amuse himself by watching the agonies of his unhappy victim (who, of course, having had no "time to prepare," will be in hell) and when satiated with the sight of his or her anguish, will return to sing the praises of Him whose mercy endureth for ever—towards himself.

Now when we regard the end attained, it matters not

what view a man may take as to what brought these creatures to this awful, hopeless, endless torment. Whether, with the Calvinist, he conceive that that God of his, arbitrarily and capriciously, picked out some few, comparatively, to share His unending joy, while the rest He chose, for His own *pleasure*, thus to torture; or whether he take the Arminian view and say that, for their little span of life, some millions of ages ago, they failed to fulfil certain conditions; those conditions varying according to the peculiar views of the various sects. Some are there, because they trusted too much in their "works;" some because they hadn't any works; some are there because, upright, sincere, God-fearing though they were, they had no "assurance" (as those inclined to Plymouthite whims would say); some because they had not been "converted," according to the true Methodist regulation standard. Some are there who on earth had been bright, happy, innocent girls, the light and gladness of their respective homes, because they went to a theatre or ball and the floor gave way or some accident happened, which brought them to a terrible and sudden end, without "time to prepare." Some are there because they had not been baptized; some because they had been baptized, and rested content on that; some are there because they had neglected the rites of the Church; some because they relied too much on external rites. No matter what brought them there; there they are, and there they will remain for ever and ever. Whatever the cause, the result is alike horrible and revolting and the end the same—untold joy to the few, unutterable

anguish to the many—the award in either case quite disproportionate to their little day on earth, however good and holy, or however execrable that little day may have been.

And, oh God, to call this the Victory of Christ! This, the bruising of the Serpent's head! This, the end for which the Son of God was manifested! This, the grand result of all God's Love and Providence and Redemption, of all those 4,000 years of the slow unfolding of the Gospel of Salvation! This, all that was effected by the Lamb of God who "taketh away the sin of the world!" This howling, shrieking, blaspheming, tortured host, compared with which the multitudes of heaven are as nothing, *this*, the grand eternal monument of the Love of God!

A good many divines of this school, seeing the horror of their own conclusions, are now saying, "Oh, but Christ will have the Victory; the great majority will be in Heaven." If so, what becomes of those texts which speak of the narrowness of the way, of the few that find Eternal Life, of the many called, few chosen, &c.? Why, they must all be "viewed in another light," or modified somehow. And if pressed to substantiate their views, these divines reply, "The majority will be made up thus: 1st, All infants will be saved, because they are not accountable. 2nd, All idiots and insane, for the same reason. 3rd, The heathen, because they have had no opportunity to embrace the Gospel."

Well, let us accept this position, and see how it mends matters. To be sure the countless hosts of Hell's in-

mates are thus considerably thinned, and those in Heaven outnumber them. But is this, we again ask, the Victory of Christ? Is this all for which the stupendous scheme of the Incarnation was wrought, that, when the great war with Satan shall have closed, upon counting the spoils, Immanuel should be found to have the biggest share? Is the Victory of Christ over Satan, after all, one which can only be decided by such a counting of heads? And, besides, granting that this is so, let us once more look at the two contrasted hosts. Who are these who have been redeemed, and are now in Eternal Glory? Who are these elect that form the Church Triumphant? They consist of—all the Infants—all the Idiots—all the Heathen—and some few Christians. And who, on the other hand, are they in such tortures and agony? And the answer comes, the great mass of those who had called themselves Christians.

Is this the result of the preaching of the Blessed Gospel? If so, better, far better, that the Gospel be never preached. Better that the heathen should remain such. The preaching of the Gospel to them, if this be true, is an act of positive cruelty, imperilling instead of advancing their salvation. Happy Zulus! happy Brahmins and Buddhists! happy Red Indians of the wilds! for yours is indeed the Kingdom of Heaven; and the bulk of us Christians will have to curse the day that the light of the Gospel came unto them, for that light was darkness indeed!

"But," say others, "we need not believe in material

fire: these expressions as to the nature of the punishment need not be taken literally." If so, then away goes another batch of texts, to be cast once more into the exegetic crucible. But even then, I do not see how this mends matters. All confess that these terms, if they are figurative, are at least figures of something appalling.* And the real horror of the state is not its intensity, but its eternity—its never-ending hopelessness. No, turn it and twist it which way we will, still the Protestant Presentment of Eschatology is most hideous, most ghastly—

"Soon we must through darkness go,
To inherit bliss unending
Or eternity of woe.

"As the tree falls, so must it lie;
As the man lives, so will he die;
As the man dies, such must he be
All through the days of Eternity."

I for one rejoice that this last verse is struck out of the latest Edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern—itself a sign of the times.

Now compared with this, the Roman doctrine is infinitely more humane, viz., that there is a Purgatory, where the bulk of mankind go; where all but those who are

* The metaphorical meaning has always been allowed by the Church. Yet we must confess, while allowing due weight to it, that we have great difficulty in altogether accepting it. The fire is spoken of in Holy Scripture so persistently and in such a way as seems to imply the reality, if not of literal fire, at least of its analogue, and some real pain of which the burning in literal fire is to us the expressive image.—*Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1878, p. 51.

wholly saints, or wholly, incorrigibly, hopelessly wicked (and does not all experience teach us that either class is extremely rare?) shall pass through a term of purgation—some being beaten with more stripes, some with less—until they all reach that state of purity or holiness which various causes prevented their achieving on earth. Now, when we remember that all these imperfect beings whom Roman Catholics send to Purgatory, the Protestant coolly sends to Hell, we must see how much more amiable, how much more winning, nay, how much more consonant with our natural sense of justice and right, is the Roman doctrine than the ordinary Protestant one.

Now here the Anglican will say, "We need not commit ourselves to either theory. We ought to preach, more than has been done, the doctrine of the Intermediate State. This will be the grand solution of the difficulty, the panacea for all these disordered imaginations." My reply is, That is all very well; but what is this Intermediate State? what are we to preach about it? Mere terms, however, grandly as they may sound, will not suffice in these days, especially terms of such "vasty vagueness" as this. What is the character of this Intermediate State? Is it a place where the soul, freed from the body, becomes gradually cleansed, refined, purified—"so as by fire," it may be—and thus made meet for the inheritance for which it was unfit when first lodged there? Or is it, as many say, merely a "foretaste" of what is to come, where the saved soul enjoys, and the impenitent soul suffers, a "foretaste" of that which will be his lot at the

judgment day—the lost soul in Hades awaiting the doom of Gehenna, and the saved soul in Abraham's bosom waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God? If the latter be the view intended, I do not see how the difficulty is at all removed, or the horribleness of the Protestant doctrine of the two states, "As the tree falls," &c., at all mitigated. If a father says to his erring son, "Go up stairs, sir, and stay in your bedroom until I return from the office this afternoon, and then I will give you a sound thrashing," I do not see how that "Intermediate State" helps the poor boy or softens his suffering. If, on the other hand, we adopt the former view that the intermediate state is a place of discipline and purification—where souls are undergoing chastening who will yet enter Heaven—why then we have Purgatory, neither more nor less, and if so, let us out with it and say so; and let that very vague term of "Intermediate State," which may mean anything at all, including Archbishop Whately's sleep of the soul, be exchanged for the definite term of Purgatory, the meaning of which all understand.

But yet, mild as is the Roman Catholic or Purgatorial view in comparison with the Protestant one, and angelic sweetness itself as contrasted with the awfully repulsive view of some extreme Calvinists, even it must be looked upon with horror: for though the numbers of the ultimately lost are thus reduced to a minimum, still there looms up that Eternal Hell with its perpetuity of horrors for some of our race; and any one of feeling must turn with shuddering from the thought of *any single being*,

of the like nature with ourselves, suffering agonies, whether physical, mental or spiritual, *to all infinity* ; for, as before remarked, the horror is not in the intensity of the punishment, but in its eternity—its endless, hopeless character.

Hence are arising two schools of thought upon this question in the Anglican Church. The one party, headed by White, Constable, and others, maintain the theory of the utter destruction or annihilation of the lost, under the title of "Conditional Immortality," and this view finds its most learned defence in the work entitled "Life of Christ," by Rev. Edward White. The other party, whose greatest champions are Revs. Andrew Jukes and Samuel Cox, uphold the idea of the final restitution of all the lost—in the course of time—after ages it may be, or "ages of ages," *αἰῶνες αἰώνων*, *sæcula sæculorum*. The former insist upon the force of the expressions "death," "destruction," "perish," &c., as applied in the Holy Scriptures to Future Punishment; the latter lay stress on the exact meaning of the word *αἰώνιος*. If my prognosis be correct, we shall soon find a large proportion of the Low-church party drifting into the former or annihilation idea; while the majority of High-churchmen will "trust the larger hope," and adopt the restitution theory of Jukes. Any reader of the *Church Times* will see with how much favour many of its correspondents and writers regard this view.

The doctrines of the body called Universalists, at least those views maintained by Ballou and other founders of

that system, need not, I think, be taken account of here ; for they cannot be held in conformity with the teachings of the Church. The doctrines I refer to are : That there is no punishment whatsoever after death ; that the penalties of sin, though certainly and invariably following its commission, are all inflicted on the sinner in his present existence ; that every soul at death immediately enters Eternal Life.* Indeed, these views are, I fancy, declining among the Universalists themselves ; and the belief in some state of discipline for impenitent sinners in another world is gaining ground in their body.

"But is there no one to uphold the old orthodox doctrine?" Undoubtedly ; many books and essays have appeared by writers of all denominations. The ablest from a Roman Catholic standpoint is Father Oxenham's "Catholic Eschatology," which, however, A. Jukes has, I think, effectually answered.† The work which is most highly commended by Protestants, is "The Doctrine of Future Rewards and Punishments," by Doctor Hamilton, a Congregationalist Minister, of Leeds, England. In my opinion this latter is a treatise which will have great weight with those—and they are many—who mistake prolixity for profundity ; and those who have patience to plod through its weary pages will, doubtless (if its fallacies escape their detection), arise much strengthened in their

* And consequently they do not hold, at least in our sense, the doctrines of the Resurrection of the Body, and of the Coming of Christ to judge the quick and the dead.

† In his pamphlet entitled "Catholic Eschatology" Examined : reprinted from the *Contemporary Review*.

old amiable belief. The most powerful advocate among modern Anglicans is Dr. Pusey. But his arguments, forcible as they are, have been well met by A. Jukes. I have seen no modern work on this subject which is more exhaustive (though many are more discursive), or more candid than the Dissertation by Whitby, in his now old-fashioned commentary. And that makes many concessions. First, he "conjectures" that the risen body, after having suffered the torments doomed to it—the *pœna sensus*—will be once more destroyed, but that the soul will exist for ever suffering the *pœna damni*. Then again, he admits that only the "incurably bad" will thus suffer—he says nothing about the *curably* bad. He has the good sense to dismiss, very summarily, those foolish arguments about "Sin being infinite in regard to the Object sinned against;" "No injustice, because the sinner duly warned," &c. That still more foolish, not to say suicidal, plea—that "our idea of Justice may be different from God's idea of it"—had not, apparently been invented in his time. His main argument is precisely the same, though not so amplified, as that relied on by Jos. Cook and other moderns, viz.: The law of continuity, the self-perpetuating nature of evil, &c., and in the use of it, like all writers of this school, he makes too many postulates—he assumes that the spirit which sinned in the flesh, and because of the flesh, will be still more addicted to sin when freed from the flesh; that the soul, abhorring all goodness will be filled with grief, because excluded from goodness.

"But cannot the old doctrine be upheld by reason?" I

do not see how. For upon what grounds are we going to argue the reasonableness of Endless Misery? On the ground of Justice? I feel sure that any presentment of this idea must shock all our sense of right. No justice can possibly be shewn in assigning an unlimited, infinite vengeance for a limited wrong. The mind resents all excessive, useless punishment as cruelty. Endless punishment is excessive, in the same proportion (whatever that may be) that Infinity exceeds a hundred or even a million years: it is useless too; for it is not remedial—that is confessed; it is not deterrent; for in that Future State there will be none to be deterred; it is not to extirpate crime and wrong; for it will perpetuate them.

There is an argument much relied on, though I cannot see why, based on our Free-will, and amounting to this: If we admit Free-will, we must admit Eternal Punishment. I fail to see the force of it, simply because it is a two-edged argument. Is the Free-will of the saved destroyed because they can no longer sin? Or again, if the Free-will of the lost is *not* destroyed, then they may at any time repent and so be delivered, and thus hell is stripped of its chief horror, viz.: its hopelessness. Hugh Miller Thompson, in his able little pamphlet, "Sin and Penalty," has the candour to admit this. Besides, if the lost are hopelessly lost to all eternity, and yet preserve Free-will, there arises this startling dilemma: Either God's punishment will have produced some effect on the damned (in the way of remorse, self-reproach, consciousness of their guilt, &c.), or it will not have produced any such effect.

If the former be the case, then there will be good traits even in the lost; "hardened sinners" or "incurably bad," they will be no longer; "Total Depravity" will not exist even in hell. If the latter be the case, then the inmates of hell will be for ever defiant, and so God's power will be limited, for He will not subdue, however much he may torture, His enemies.

Well then, are we to take the argument from Analogy? I answer, all Analogy is entirely against it. The Analogy of Nature teaches that *no pain can be everlasting*. All experience shews that pain is either the sacrament (the sign at once and the means) of the destruction of its subject, and so of its own cessation, or the passport to a better state. "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come;" but that hour of pain will eventuate, either in "joy a man is born into the world," or—in her own death. Nature is too merciful to allow unending pain. As to the views of the great master of analogical reasoning, Bishop Butler, let any one read Professor Plumtre's letter in the appendix to Canon Farrar's book, "Eternal Hope."*

* Like Canon Farrar, I may say it was the study of "Butler's Analogy," that, when I was a theological student, much impressed me with the thought of the incorrectness or, at least, incompleteness of the popular idea of hell, *e.g.*, such passages as the following (Part I., chap. III.): "Moral government consists, not in barely rewarding or punishing men for their actions, which the most tyrannical person may do; but in rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked; in rendering to men according to their actions, considered as good or evil. And the perfection of moral government consists in doing this in an exact proportion to their personal merits or demerits." See also the passage quoted further on.

"But what saith the Scripture?" Ah, that is just what all parties are fighting about. All Roman Catholics, Calvinists, Annihilationists, Restorationists, Universalists, claim Scripture as on their side. And besides, let me remind the Protestant that he is here treading on dangerous ground; he must take care that he is not caught arguing in a vicious circle. He must not say "I accept Everlasting Punishment, because, though contrary to my reason, still I find it in the Bible," and then turn round and say, "I accept the Bible because it accords with my reason." "I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say." If any one aver, "I, relying on my private judgment, find Everlasting Punishment the doctrine of the Bible," what can he reply to the infidel who says, "I, relying on my private judgment, declare such a doctrine abhorrent to all reason and justice, and therefore reject the Bible?"

But as Anglicans we ask; "Does not our own branch of the Church demand us to believe this?" I answer, no! thank God. It is true such an expression as "Everlasting Damnation" once occurs in the Litany, and the Athanasian Hymn has the phrase, "They that have done evil shall go into 'Everlasting Fire.'" But we cannot find fault with these because they are simply Scriptural quotations. The whole question turns on: What do these terms connote in the Scriptures? Whatever we think them to mean there, that we conceive them to mean in our formularies. But one thing is very striking and suggestive. At the first draft of the Articles, in 1552, there were forty-two set forth, the last of them asserting un-

mistakeably the Eternity of Punishment; but upon their revision just ten years after, in 1562, that article was STRUCK OUT. How significant! And now, our "forty stripes save one," contain no allusion whatever to this most repulsive dogma, while the great creed of the Church simply bids us affirm, "I believe in the life everlasting."

And, by the way, the afore-mentioned Dr. Hamilton, of Leeds, is greatly scandalized at those expressions in the Church's collects which declare that God's "nature and property is *ever* to have mercy and to forgive," and that He "hates nothing that He has made."

Oh! how I thank God that, in His Providence, the Catechism for our little ones was saved from those disgusting and outrageous descriptions of Future Punishment which can be seen in the Catechisms of almost every other denomination!

"But, what are we, as Anglo-Catholics, bound to believe? Has not some General Council established the Faith on this point? Has not some definite opinion been held *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*? What saith the Universal Church?" Thank God, nothing whatever. No decree of the Church, before her schism into East and West, touched this point. Even the Roman branch of the Church, which, one would think, had defined everything and legislated upon everything, till there was no chance for anybody to have any latitude of opinion upon anything whatever: even the Church of Rome has never, God be praised, committed herself to any dogmatic utterance on this most perplexed question. Petavius (as

quoted by Cardinal Newman, in his *Grammar of Assent*) says "De hac damnatorum saltem hominum respiratione, nihil adhuc certi decretum est ab Ecclesia Catholica; ut propterea non temere, tanquam absurda, sit explodenda sanctissimorum patrum hæc opinio; quamvis a communi sensu Catholicorum hoc tempore sit aliena"* (Jukes, App. p. 190).

"But was not Origen condemned for his Restorationist views by the Vth General Council?" No; he was condemned upon several points; but this particular point, though carefully specified by the Emperor in the indictment, was *passed over in silence*, thus significantly showing that the Fathers left it an open question. This has been placed beyond dispute by the very able letter of the Rev. F. N. Oxenham (not the Roman Catholic but the Anglican Oxenham) to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.

And now to sum up the whole discussion.

1. The Doctrine of Endless Misery (whether that Misery be the Eternal Torture of the Resurrection Body, or only the Misery of the Soul) for any human being whatever, is utterly repugnant to all ideas of Justice and Right, to say nothing of Mercy and Goodness. This Canon Farrar has pretty forcibly argued.

* *i.e.* "Concerning this respite of the damned, nothing positive has been decreed by the Catholic Church; so that this opinion of most holy Fathers need not be exploded as if an absurd one; although indeed it is opposed to the general consent of Catholics at the present time."

2. The Jewish Church—as a Church—never held this doctrine. The Sadducees did not, of course. The Pharisees did not, as Farrar has shewn in his article on Hebrew Eschatology ("Expositor," vol. vii.) See also S. Cox's "Salvator Mundi" chap. iv. The Canadian ex-rabbi, Dr. Freshman, says the same thing in his book "Jews and Israelites." And most scholars would now, I think, agree with Archbishop Whately, and with the Presbyterian, Dr. George Campbell, that (in the words of the latter) "in the Old Testament the most profound silence is observed in regard to the state of the deceased, their joys or sorrows, happiness or misery."

3. It is strange, to say the least of it, that such a hideous doctrine, unknown to the Old Testament worthies, should be first brought to light by Him who came to "take away the sin of the world," and should form the leading feature of the *Glad Tidings of Great Joy*, which should be to *all people*.

4. Every term, every phrase on which divines rely for proving this doctrine is, in turn, questioned by some of those divines themselves; and texts are thrown overboard on every hand. For example, many think that the finally chosen will *not* be few; many, that the terms "fire, worm," &c., are not to be pressed. Dr. A. Clarke considers Gehenna, of Matth. v. 22-29, to refer only to the literal, actual Valley of Hinnom, and he believes in the salvation of even Judas Iscariot (see his Com. on Acts i.)*

* The *Church Quarterly Review* (April, 1878, p. 43), in speaking of Saml. Cox's opening argument, based on St. Matt. xi. 20, 24, says he "begins by

All scholars must, I think, agree with the author of "Salvator Mundi" that the words "Hell," "Damnation," in our present version prove nothing whatever. While the word that is the *crux* of the whole, viz. everlasting—*aiōnios*—has been ably discussed by various writers from Thomas de Quincey down, and can in all strictness be made to mean nothing but "age-lasting" *ævi-ternus*.

5. The Church Catholic never pronounced on this doctrine, as Father N. Oxenham has proved.

6. Not only Origen but many of the Fathers believed in Restoration—while some inclined to Annihilationism. For a catena of these see Jukes' Appendix.

7. St. Augustine himself, the principal concoctor of the orthodox scheme, speaks of the "very many" (*inmo quam plurimi*) "tender-hearted souls" who could not receive his doctrine. And his immediate followers had to mitigate the horrors of his system by introducing Purgatory, which corrective Protestants have refused.

8. The Anglican Church has not adopted—nay rather, by her action of 1562 has *deliberately rejected*—any dogmatic utterance upon this doctrine. Nor has the Roman Church spoken officially, still less the Church at large.

But you will say, "What conclusion would you have

taking a saying of our Blessed Lord, which was clearly uttered *ad hominem*, in the sense of an absolute dogmatic statement, and upon this wrong rendering bases the most momentous of the conclusions he arrives at." This sentence would apply equally well to Dr. Pusey's famous argument based on our Lord's words "It had been good for that man if he had not been born."

us come to? Would you simply pull down and not build up? Have you nothing definite to offer?" My object in writing this is rather to provoke discussion than to dogmatize—to traverse the whole field and give as complete a survey as possible of the present state of the controversy—to urge that these, to me, overwhelming objections to the popular doctrine should be thoroughly met, or candidly admitted. But not to evade the question, I will frankly express that I accept the views (which are by no means of a mere negative or destructive type) propounded by And. Jukes in his work "The second Death and the Restitution of All Things," a book which I should urge all my brethren to read as the work of a scholar of no mean order, and a divine of the Anglican Church, and a good Churchman too.* It is the only treatise I have seen, which fairly attempts to *reconcile* ALL the texts—including such as, on the one hand, "many called, few chosen" (all which modern upholders of the popular view seem to drop into oblivion) and, on the other hand, all those passages, and they are many, which taken in their obvious signification tend to establish the "Restitution of all Things," which texts also the orthodox, in this discussion, very conveniently ignore. I shall not spoil Jukes' beautiful train of thought by attempting to epitomize it; but, by way of leading up to it, I shall thus give my own "confession of faith."

1. I believe that Christ came "to destroy the works of

* Saml. Cox's *Salvator Mundi* is also a valuable and powerful contribution to this side of the question.

the Devil:"—I believe He will do it—effectually, completely.

2. I believe that there is a judgment to come at the end of the world when all men shall rise with their own bodies, and shall give an account of their own works.

3. I believe that they that have done good shall go into Life Everlasting; and they that have done evil shall go into Everlasting Punishment (αἰώνιον κόλασιν—κόλασιν mark not τιμωρίαν—for the distinction between these see Archbishop Trench's Synonyms of N. T.).

4. I believe that punishment will be everlasting, i. e., αἰώνιον—*ævi-ternum*—age-lasting.

5. What that "age"—that "æon"—may be, or how long it may last, or how many "ages," or "ages of ages," (αἰῶνες αἰώνων) there may be I know not.* But as there have been "ages" in the history of mankind, as there were six "ages" of Creation—as there must have been "ages of ages" before the world was created—so doubtless there will be "ages of ages" when this world shall be no more. But it is hard for us to take in this idea; we can conceive of nothing whatever in the future existence except a dead level of eternity. And, just as the novel-reader is satisfied he has come to "The End" when he learns that the hero married the heroine and "both lived happy ever after," while practical common-sense tells us

* That the term "For Ever" may refer to a period of time which must have a limit, ought at least to be known by the Churchman, for in reciting the *Benedicite*, he calls upon the earth, and the various things therein, all of which are to come to an end, to "praise Him and magnify Him *for ever*" LXX. εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας)

that the very marriage was to them but the beginning of another *æon* fraught with tremendous results ;—

Just as the rustic, who has never travelled a dozen miles from home, wonders if London city can possibly be larger than his own market town ;—

Just as the ancients imagined the earth to be surrounded by an illimitable ocean, and that nothing could possibly exist beyond their *ultima thule* ; while modern science opens out to us worlds upon worlds in illimitable space ;—

Just as, in short, we are all prone to

"Think the rustic cackle of our bourg
The murmur of the world ;"—

So men in general cannot grasp the idea, because it is too vast, that even when this world, this *æon*, has come to naught, there will then be another *æon*, and then another, and so on through "ages of ages ;" but imagine that when this little planet has been blotted out, there can be nothing possible but a Finality—an eternity of sameness. And just as, in God's great Book of Nature, these millions of globes have been revolving in space all the while, though men knew it not till of late ; so, in God's great Book of Revelation, have intimations of these "ages of ages" being existing all along, though hid from general observation.*

* Butler's Analogy (Pt. I., chap. iii. § v. On Tendencies of Virtue and Vice) : "And one might add, that suppose all this advantageous tendency of virtue to become effect amongst one or more orders of creatures in any

Lastly, I believe that "in the dispensation of the fulness of time"—in the "ages to come"—God will "gather together in one all things in Christ." "For it pleased the Father that in Him should All Fulness dwell; and (having made peace through the blood of His Cross) by Him to *reconcile all things* unto Himself by Him; whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." That Christ will "reign till He hath put all things under His feet." That at last, in those "ages to come," "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those in heaven and those in earth, and those under the earth;" not in servility or abject terror, or hypocritical compliance, but in loving adoration. *Then*—when all things shall be subdued unto Him, when all things shall have been reconciled by the blood of His cross—"then cometh THE END, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father, that God may be all in all."

I grant that these views may be somewhat too speculative to be preached at large as dogmatic truths; that might be as great an error as teaching the certitude of

distant scenes and periods, and to be seen by any orders of vicious creatures throughout the universal kingdom of God; this happy effect of virtue would have a tendency by way of example, and possibly in other ways to amend those of them who are capable of amendment, and being recovered to a just sense of virtue. If our notions of the Plan of Providence were enlarged in any sort proportionable to what late discoveries have enlarged our views with respect to the material world, representations of this kind would not appear absurd or extravagant."

Endless Fire and Brimstone. I do not think Almighty God intended us to know positively all about the next world. His Revelation was given to guide us while here, and not to gratify our curiosity about things to come. Enough that we know that the wicked shall most certainly incur the wrath of God—there would be no justice in His government if the guilty were unpunished. Enough that we know that "we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every man may receive of the things done in his body." Enough that we know that that Judge will be infinitely just, and that the penalties of sin, though fearful, will be yet most equitable. Let us rest content with this; let us preach (as we needs must) "the terrors of the Lord," to warn the sinner, but let not those terrors be defined. Let us not merely pass over in silence, but openly repudiate, those hideous descriptions of endless misery which, once so much in vogue, still linger among the more unlettered and barbarous of revival preachers, making infidels of the strong-minded and maniacs of the weak.

And if we meet the man whose tender heart or waning faith stumbles at this stumbling-stone, let us bid him take his stand on the sure ground of the Justice and Mercy of the Most High, and that these attributes of His are infinite and eternal, and not simply limited to His dealings with men whilst here. Let us hold fast to the faith that whatsoever will happen will infallibly prove the best—not the best "under the circumstances" merely, but the best absolutely—though as yet we know not

how ; and, sweeping away all the metaphysical cobwebs of "Free-will," of the "Law of Continuity," of "The Self-perpetuating Nature of Evil," all which prove too much if we leave out the power of Christ, and too little if we include it—let us simply fall back on that impregnable position of the Father of the Faithful : " SHALL NOT THE JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH DO RIGHT ? "

