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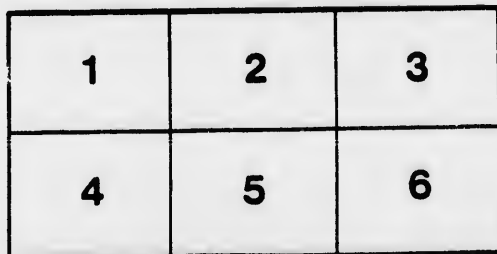
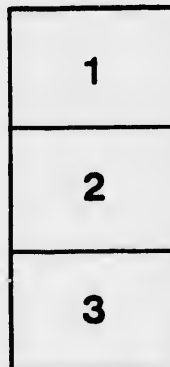
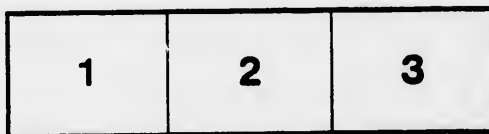
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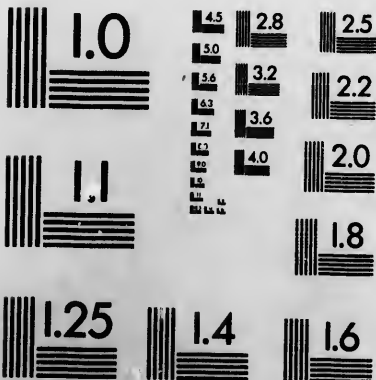
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RESTORATIONISM.

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TWO SERMONS

*Preached in St. Stephen's Church, Toronto, on the last  
Sunday after Trinity, 1875.*

BY

REV. J. CARRY, B.D.,

*Incumbent of the Parish of Credit.*

---

WITH A REPLY TO

MR. OXENHAM'S LETTER.

---

"Deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death."

*Burial Office.*

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TORONTO :

HART & RAWLINSON, Booksellers & Publishers.

. 1876.

Pre

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## RESTORATIONISM.

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Rom. iii. 5. "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?"

*μη ἄδικος ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἐπιφέρων τὴν ὀργήν;*

From all who believe in God, in the customary sense of the word, the first part of this question is sure to receive a unanimous answer. "Is God unrighteous?" they will, either coolly or fervently, answer "No." But at the full question of the text, "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?" many are found to demur. "Does God, indeed, take vengeance?" they ask. Does He "inflict τὴν ὀργήν, the wrath," so often referred to as the expression of His displeasure against sin, and specially to be inflicted at the judgment? They assume, as a certain principle, that all punishment must be reformative, and therefore that the idea of ὀργή, wrath, an infliction wholly punitive, must be excluded from our belief in God. Hence, too, it is argued that in the human administration of justice all capital punishments should be abolished, and none retained but such as shall tend to the criminal's moral improvement.\* To these mild sentiments there can be no doubt that the Gospel of Christ has powerfully contributed, but it does not justify such partial views of God as the Judge. While it animates us with the vision of a God of perfect compassion, it awes us with the exhibition of a corresponding severity of justice. It suggests to us rather that as God is perfectly just, all sorts of justice must be in Him, and so punitive justice

\* Rom. 13: 4, shows the sense of ὀργή in the text. The magistrate is a "revenger for wrath," εἰς ὀργήν. And 4: 15.

also. But do we of ourselves know enough of God's nature, and the nature of justice in the abstract, to reason coolly and confidently about this great question? Have not all our better thoughts, our most certain convictions about God, come to us from His express revelation? This is evident from comparing Christian theism, and even philosophic theism in Christian countries, with the wisest speculations of the heathen. At any rate, it is as Christians I address you now, as those who profess to learn of God from His revelation to His Church, as those who sympathise with the holy Apostle's eager repudiation of the charge of injustice against God because He "taketh vengeance." He is struck with horror at his own question, and he hastens to say it is only "as a man," ignorant and selfish, that he speaks. From the stand-point of Christian faith and enlightenment the thought could not be other than blasphemous; and, not content with his reverent parenthesis, St. Paul expresses his abhorrence of the very thought in the earnest and rapid *μη γένοιτο*: "God forbid," far be the dreadful imagination from me! In the first chapter of this very Epistle we are told "the wrath, *ὀργή*, of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;" and revealed as "the righteousness of God is revealed"—in the very Gospel itself. Dim is our unaided vision of God's righteousness and God's innate necessary hatred of sin. We cannot but err when we become judges in our own causes, between ourselves and God. Our "sweet self-pity" alone suffices to mislead us, and if we would go aright we must be guided herein by that "revelation from heaven" to which the Apostle appeals. This revelation tells us that "*ἡ ὀργή*, the wrath or vengeance of God abideth on him who believeth not on the Son," John 3: 36; that God, the gracious and merciful God, once said of the unbelieving and disobedient, "So I swear *ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ σου*, in My wrath, they shall not enter into my rest," Heb. 3: 11; and the words are in the Christian revelation adduced for the standing admonition of the covenant people.

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That God "takes vengeance" and that He is not "unjust" in so doing, this is now and ever has been the firm faith of the Christian Church; not a conclusion which she has ex-cogitated for herself from philosophical considerations on the nature of God, of Divine justice, and human sin, but a belief accepted with shrinking awe from the mouth of her great Teacher and His Apostles. In the present day there are many, as perhaps always there have been some,\* to gainsay our confession on this awful subject of Eternal Punishment, and therefore I cannot but feel that I am called to a wholesome work in fortifying your faith against those rash and over-confident speculations which seek its overthrow.

I trust, too, that neither preacher nor hearers need to be reminded with what spirit they should approach this most dread subject,—with what tenderness, humility, and fear,—with what prevailing awe and reverence, saying with the Psalmist, "My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee; and I am afraid of Thy judgments." No looseness of words, therefore, much less any exaggeration of rhetoric, is admissible in our discourse; but that sobriety, gravity, and restraint which befit poor purblind creatures who look dimly though longingly into the great deep of God's judgments, and are themselves tremblingly interested in their unknown event.

1. This truth of our religion, like almost every other truth, has been assailed from very opposite quarters. As the heresies touching the Incarnation were mutually destructive, so that St. Hilary (De Trinitate, lib. I.) could say, "Lis eorum, nostra fides est." "Omnesque se invicem vincendo vincuntur;" "Their contention is but the confirmation of the Church's faith; and their mutually destructive arguments are our victory over them:" so it is also in the present instance. One class of assailants hold that the wicked, men and devils, are not punished for ever, but are all brought back at last to God. Another class of assailants denounce this as a horrible heresy, and maintain that there

\* . . . "nonnulli, immo quam plurimi æternam damnatorum penam et cruciatum sine intermissione perpetuos humano miserantur adfectu, atque ita, futurum esse non credunt."—S. Aug. *Enchiridion*, c. cxiii.

who are impenitent and unholy at death are finally annihilated, that is, blotted out of existence; that the soul is naturally mortal, that the belief in its natural immortality is a pagan notion borrowed from Plato, and that when death and destruction are threatened to sinners in holy Scripture, the words are to be taken most literally and rigidly to mean the extinction of being. The instructive thing for us Christians to observe in these contrariant deniers of the common faith is, that the whole question is usually postulated by both sides, Restorationists and Annihilationists. They each assume on the sole ground of consciousness the correctness of their several opinions. This is done boldly and openly, and may be seen wherever the question is stirred. Any one may see how ridiculous in such case are all professions of deference to the authority of Scripture, and any one may see how perfectly uncertain is that mode of procedure which leads to exactly opposite results. But the faith of the Catholic Church was "once for all delivered" to her by Apostles, before a word of the N. T. was written, and is therefore not the result of a comparison of texts of Scripture; nevertheless, if our faith be Apostolic, we may with confidence expect it to harmonise with, and be supported by, the Apostolic writings. Beyond exhibiting this conformity, my ambition does not extend on the present occasion. I do not aim at tracing out the actual or possible consequences of denying the doctrine of Eternal Punishment, nor do I dream of discussing merely philosophical objections to it. The Press and not the Pulpit, I think, is the proper scene of such discussion. Here, it seems to me, a Christian preacher addressing Christian hearers must proceed on the basis of revelation, not of philosophy. Nor do I propose to you a complete Biblical argument, such as you might expect in a system of Divinity; but such considerations on a few topics as may put all reverent believers on their guard against the admission of a single sceptical objection.

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2. I may as well here plainly say that I put out of view in this argument the Annihilation theory, though I shall have a few observations to make upon it presently, and shall address myself chiefly to the notion of a universal Restoration. Against this assumed necessity of universal salvation, on the ground that it would be unjust in God to punish sin for ever, I make my first stand, and deny any such necessity, as opposed to the whole tenor of Revelation. This may be considered a vague generality. Very well; I narrow my position, and strengthen it. I say that this heretical view of what God's justice is bound to, totally abolishes the doctrine of God's GRACE. As a matter of fact God has provided for the restoration of sinners through the Incarnation of His Eternal Son. We are bound to believe that in the wisdom of God this was the indispensable means of our salvation. But if God were in the first place bound in justice to save men from perishing everlastingly, then He was bound in justice to procure the Incarnation, and we must wipe out the Apostle's mistaken words, "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift!" Jesus Christ in His Incarnation and life and death, is not thus the *gift* of God, the offering of His free love to undeserving sinners; but the necessary agent whom the Father was compelled to employ in freeing men from a fate that would reflect on His own justice!

If our redemption, then, is a necessity of justice, where is the grace? Yet, surely, if any one thing is taught in holy Scripture, and has ever been proclaimed by the Church, it is that our salvation is all of grace, the free favour of God, and so not from the constraint of justice. Strong and clear is the Apostle's contrast between *grace and debt*—*κατὰ χάριν* and *κατὰ ὀφείλημα*. Hence the Gospel is "the Gospel of the grace of God," Acts 20: 24, because it tells of that grace; "it is the word of His grace, 14: 3, because it has nothing else to tell of. Hence Christians are an *ἐκλογὴ χάριτος* "an election of grace; they are "saved by grace." Their gratitude is appealed to in the words, "Ye know the grace

of our Lord Jesus Christ." "God so *loved* the world that He gave His only begotten Son;" He gave Him constrained by love and not by justice. To quote all that is said on this topic would be to transcribe the Bible. You need no more. Therefore at the outset we are happily rid of this anti-evangelical assumption, as certain to kill every grateful thought towards God, as it certainly robs Him of the glory of His grace and love. This pretended argument from the justice of God is, I hope, sufficiently disposed of, and among Christians should never be heard of again.

3. The perpetuity of the punishment of the wicked is most plainly affirmed in Scripture by the terms which are employed to describe their final estate, as e.g. those of most frequent recurrence, "death," "destruction," and "perishing." Explain them how you will, literally or metaphorically, they are the strongest terms which language can furnish to describe a permanent, enduring condition—necessarily implying that from this state there is no deliverance by any natural process whatever. This is, of course, admitted and vehemently insisted on by the Annihilationists. But they err in taking the words "death," "destruction," "perishing," to signify everywhere in Scripture what they perhaps nowhere signify, a literal annihilation, a total extinction of being; and this, in the most non-natural sense conceivable, they call "everlasting punishment"—because the extinction is not reversed. Thus they stoutly maintain "everlasting punishment," and are wholly rid of the notion of "everlasting pain." But that the words already quoted are not to be taken in this literal sense of extinction, must be evident to all who have not first committed their feeling and passion to the coarse subterfuge of a philological blunder, countenanced by the use of no civilized language. Take \* the sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. We read, c. vi. 7, "He that is dead is freed from sin." Is this "death," which is freedom from sin; non-existence or annihilation? In c. vii. 9, the Apostle says, "I

\* These examples are taken from Mr. Jukes's more numerous instances.

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was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Was this death, which was wrought in him by the law, annihilation? In c. viii, 6, he says, "To be carnally minded is death"—is it non-existence? When "a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies," as our Lord speaks, is it annihilated? When as Job complains (ix. 22), "He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked," do the "perfect" exist no longer? "The Son of Man came to seek and to save *that which was lost* or had perished (*τὸ ἀπολωλός*)"—was it a thing non-existent? No! these and similar words but express with a dreadful force our moral and spiritual ruin; the corruption of our higher nature, the failure or perversion of our nobler faculties, our incapacity to discharge the functions of that life to which we were called in God's world; and this general collapse, with all its fearful and enduring consequences, is aptly and emphatically called *death*. As these words, then, describe the final state of the wicked, as they of themselves denote a permanent condition, and as there is no intimation of the reversal of that condition by an external power,—they must be taken as a weighty and indeed irrefutable proof of the orthodox belief.

4. In the Parables of the Ten Virgins and of the Talents, our Lord undeniably sets forth the principles upon which Christians are to be judged, and the character of the final award. The wise virgins who were watchful and ready "went in with the Bridegroom to the marriage: and the door was shut." There is no intimation that it was opened again for the "foolish" virgins, who had neglected their opportunities and were found unready: on the contrary, they are repulsed with the words, so expressive of a perfect separation, "I know you not." In the parable of the Talents, "the unprofitable servant is cast into outer darkness;" and so the parable ends, with no hint of any future return.

"The judgment of the Great Day" (Jude. v. 6), in which Christ shall "judge both the quick and dead," is a fixed point of our Christian creed, and probably the

most familiar thought to the Christian mind. Now, if we consider what *judgment* is in its proper essence, we must conclude that it consigns its subjects to an unalterable state. The word *κρίσις*, judgment, properly denotes *separation*, and so the *division* between things of a contrary character, and so again the *decision* of one whose office it is to mark this distinction. So we now speak of the *crisis* of an attack of disease, as the turning point which marks the dividing line between the early stages of the sickness and the later stages of convalescence. The distinction we are to observe, is based on the essential difference between opposite states,—health and sickness, danger and safety.

To pronounce an unerring decision requires, therefore, a perfect knowledge; but as perfect knowledge is not always an attribute of earthly judges, their sentences are not always infallible, and are therefore reversible, and are continually appealed from in every department of human action. A perfect judgment is that which is founded upon an infallible discernment of the true nature and character of the subjects judged, and which proceeds from an uncorrupted integrity, an untainted justice. Such a judgment is in its very nature irreversible. It draws the line between things not seemingly, but essentially, unlike, and so it leaves them for ever. Christ, the Son of man and the Son of God, is “ordained” to be the Judge of quick and dead, because in His twofold Nature He has all the qualities of an ideal Judge—perfect knowledge as God, and perfect sympathy as Man; and if His decision is not a final one, we fail to see with what propriety at all it can be called *κρίσις*. It is a profane illusion to imagine that “the Judgment” is so called but in some inferior\* sense, as human decisions are; and as all the words and circumstances belonging to it in Scripture amply prove this, I shall bring some of them forward into clear view.

\* Christ is in all respects, in His nature and His works, *ἀληθινός* “the *ideal* of perfection,” the essentially and eternally real. His nature, Jno. 5: 20, Rev. 3: 7. His works, Rev. 3: 14, John 1: 9, 6: 32, cp. Rev. 16: 7, *ἀληθινὰ καὶ δίκαια αἱ κρίσεις σου*.

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In referring particularly to our Lord's description of the Judgment, in the xxv. chap. of St. Matthew, it does not concern my argument whether it be, as is popularly supposed, "the general judgment," or whether it be, as I think it is, the judgment of those only outside the Church, "the nations," or the Gentiles. The day has arrived which Himself calls "the Day of Judgment," and the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him; He seats Himself on the throne of His glory, and before Him are gathered πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, all the nations. Every circumstance of pomp and majesty and formality leads us to expect an act of infinite, of eternal consequence; no mere preliminary investigation, but a sentence final in its perfectness.

First, "He SEPARATES (ἀφορίζει) them one from another." Can He err in making this separation? Then He cannot be Judge. But what is the principle of this separation? Some uncertain varying, characteristics? No. Something so radical as to make it unmeet and henceforth impossible that they should be mingled with each other; the possession of natures as different as those of "SHEEP and GOATS." Whatever possibilities there were, in all the long ages of probation of passing from the lower to the higher nature through the transforming power of Divine grace, is not now the question: now is the fatal hour of Judgment; and this it would not, could not be, were the separation temporary, and a future transference from one class to the other contemplated by the Judge Himself.\* *Sheep and goats* the Judge finds them, and the office of a judge is simply to distinguish and divide between things that differ. *Sheep and goats* the Judge finds them; *sheep and goats* the judgment leaves them.

Again, I ask—Can words express more essential contradictions of character and state than the two words which the Judge employs, "BLESSED" and "CURSED"—εὐλογημένοι κατηραμένοι? The judgment, remember, is not

\* How could the separation of the sick of various stages into separate wards, to facilitate their recovery, be called a judgment?

primarily concerned with what either were, or might have become; it is a judgment of persons in their present state and character. *Blessed* and *cursed* it finds them; *blessed* and *cursed* (but with how great heightening) it leaves them. The efficacy and the effect of the sentence of this Mighty Judge may be seen in the lower creation: "In the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto Him, Master, behold, the fig tree which Thou *cursedst*, *κατηράσω*, "is withered away." Mark xi. 20, 21. How significant of essential difference is "Blessed of My Father" τῆ πατρός μη? God owns them—they are His; and He thereby denies all relation to the "cursed."

"Then shall He say to them also on the left, *depart from me*." Is not the Judge's language unreal if this departing is but temporary? If a sentence of perfect κρίσις, the departing must be essential separation, and if essential then enduring. *Ye cursed*, if not expressive of a hopelessly wicked, a perfectly-formed evil character, is the language not of judicial infallibility, but of passionate reviling. But this is not all. Of the condemned it is said, "These shall *go away*," ἀπελεύσονται. Where is there a hint that they shall return? *Go away!* away from Christ, the Saviour, now the Judge! Surely that one word ἀπελεύσονται "go away," is sufficiently expressive of a lasting, a hopeless condemnation. But that is not all: they are bid depart "into the fire that is everlasting," εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον that marks its duration; but the added words, "which has been prepared for the devil and his angels," τὸ ἡτοιμασμένον τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ ἀγγέλοις ἀτὰρ,—they mark the punitive, deliberate, and dreadful nature of the judgment passed. "The devil and his angels" are the most wilful and inexcusable in their sin, and the most malignant in their opposition to God. "The children of God and the children of the devil," are an absolute antithesis in the spiritual world. Accordingly a crime so great and hopeless as angelic rebellion, has been visited with the full weight

of God's holy and just severity. He who does all things in "number, weight, and measure," has "prepared"—awful word of deliberate justice!—has prepared for them a place of torment; and men, holding out to the last against His grace, prepare themselves as "vessels of wrath" to share that dreadful doom. That this is no partial, temporary, reversible sentence, but founded on the full-formed, perfectly-developed evil of their character, appears also from the Judge's words, "ye did it not": no one action which to His discerning eye could indicate that there were in them germs of good which might still be developed into a moral completeness; but He beholds on the contrary all the natural roots of virtue dried up and withered, evil predominant and exclusive, fixed and eternal. But this is not all: here the Son of Man assumes His native Majesty, and, leaving His humble earthly style, He presents Himself as "THE KING!" Our Judge is "the King," whose power none can dispute, whose sentence none can reverse. It is not without significance that at this supreme crisis in the spiritual world, He takes to Himself the title of Supreme authority "the King," ὁ Βασιλεύς, who rules with unquestioned autocracy. There is one more word of the greatest consequence connected with this judgment which must by no means be overlooked. "That Day," "the great day," so continually in the mouths of the sacred writers, derives significance from the fact that it is the grand terminus towards which every argument, every consideration, every course of action is made to look; and what wonder, when our Lord Himself emphasises it as "the LAST day." In the vi. c. of St. John, He calls it so *four* times, and in c. xii. 48, He says: "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the *last* day." Now, on what grounds can we conceive the day of Judgment to be called the *last* day, if it is not the great conclusion of the trial-period of those who are judged, the winding-up of God's great scheme of redemption; if its sentence is not

final, and those who are then condemned as cursed shall enter upon a new state of probation which shall certainly raise them to the rank of the blessed? It seems to me that our Saviour's teaching is robbed of all authority if we deny the significance of the epithet *last*, which He Himself attaches to the Judgment Day, and which justifies the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "*eternal* judgment."

6. But here we are met by objections based on the alleged misinterpretation of two important words in this connexion. The Greek word which our translation everywhere represents by "eternal" or "everlasting," is held to express but a limited duration. Even if this be granted, which can by no means be demanded, it can give no strength or security to the cause of misbelief. For being consigned to punishment or reward for some undefined period, does not certainly imply that the reward and punishment are to cease. The unknown period is but a stage in the onward progress of eternity; and the state of the subjects, happy or miserable, holy or sinful, is, by the law of continuity, projected, without essential change, into the succeeding period. The language of Scripture does not permit us to infer any necessary cessation of anything in either of the opposite conditions, nor any essential change of moral character. There is as little reason to suppose that an after "come, ye cursed" will be pronounced, as a "depart, ye blessed."

7. But it is argued that the customary meaning in the Greek language of the word *κόλασις*, the punishment to which the wicked are consigned, is "a corrective punishment," and not "penal." This is the case in heathen Greek; but not to say that numerous words have been adopted into the language of Christianity with great modifications of meaning; every one, scholar or not, is competent to judge as to the sense of this word in the present connexion. It has to be explained in accordance with its environment so to say; and that is totally against the idea of a corrective

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punishment. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth": it is therefore a proof that He is loving to those whom He thus sends away to corrective, purifying discipline; and yet we must, according to this, believe what it is impossible to believe, that He calls those whom he loves "accursed! and we must further believe that "the fire everlasting prepared for the devil and his angels" is the instrument of this purifying discipline, for those whom God loves; and, further we must believe that those who are yet so far from righteousness that the just Judge pronounces them "accursed," are, in the society of the devil and his angels, to be brought back to a right mind, to purity, and the love of God! Thus it most plainly appears, that whatever conclusion we arrive at, as believers in the Christian revelation, we are not to be freed from intellectual and moral difficulties in this region of mystery—the "unsearchable judgments" of God in the world of spirits.

8. Against any reversal of the sentence of the Last Day, against any after forgiveness, there is an awakening argument derived from the acknowledged conditions of pardon in the New Testament. All "access" to God, all acceptance with Him, is through Christ, as High Priest. As High Priest, He came "not to judge the world;" and in the Last Day assuming the office of Judge He lays down that of Priest, with its work of atonement and intercession.

In the judgment He, the once "merciful High Priest," utters His first, His last, His only, and irrevocable curse. He who so often said "come unto Me," now says "depart from me." And if "no man cometh unto the Father but by Him," how can they any more approach when Christ banishes them from Himself, "the Way?" In His priestly office He "ever liveth to make intercession for *all them that come unto God by Him*"—but how shall those come unto God whom He bids depart from Him? His High-Priestly office is plainly over, for on the Judgment seat He has no word of *blessing*, no prayer of *intercession*, for the guilty. He is only "the King," now and henceforth.

But all this is expressed with a technical exactness in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In c. x. the writer treats of some extreme form of revolt from God, and says, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," vs. 26. From this we must infer that there can be no more forgiveness, for in the preceeding chapter (ix. 22) it is laid down as a fixed principle, "without shedding of blood there is no remission;" and thus the argument is—the blood of Christ which the sinners in question have counted an unholy thing, has failed them, and there is no other means of forgiveness. But we are not left to make our own inference; it is drawn for us explicitly in the next verse (27) "But a certain fearful *ἐκδοχή* (not "looking for," a meaning it never has, but) reception of judgment, and *πυρός ζήλος*, a zeal of fire, *i.e.* a fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." There can be no plainer words as to the event, and there can be no clearer words as to the reason—"adversaries" they are, and adversaries they remain. Surely it is but turning the Bible into a mere puzzle-book to ask us to believe that all these dreadful words are used of those who are still the objects of God's love, and whose salvation He is working through these infinitely incongruous instrumentalities. By "a zeal of fire" we are forsooth to understand "a zeal of love," and "devouring the adversaries" we must interpret to be a restoring them to God's friendship!

I must defer until the evening what more I have to say in completion of my argument, and shall for the present conclude with the words of a lay church-man of 1550 years ago, the eloquent Lactantius, who, though not a theologian, spoke the native sentiments of a God-inspired mind in this just alternative: "If God is not angry with the impious and unjust, neither does He love the pious and the just; for in things of an opposite nature, we must of necessity take some one side, or remain neuter." (*De Ira Dei*, v. 9).

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## RESTORATIONISM.

(SECOND SERMON.)

ROMA. III. 5 : "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?"

μη ἄδικος ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἐπιφέρων τὴν ὀργήν;

9. You will have observed, my brethren, that in my former sermon on these words, I did not aim at accumulating a number of Scripture texts which affirm with more or less distinctness the perpetuity of the punishment of the wicked, that being an easy work for which you are all perfectly competent; but I dwelt exclusively on the *principles* indicated as the ground of the final judgment. I shall not now pursue this line, nor discuss any text of Scripture in this direction, but I shall take the liberty of presenting to you some other considerations which may help to a complete view of this subject; and as I do this not in the spirit of a special pleader, but in the pure love of the truth, I trust that if I shall say what may appear novel, or be in some measure against your previous habits of thought, you will nevertheless give it a patient and candid hearing, and such subsequent calm reflection as is justly due to all the parts of this solemn question.

Those who maintain the final restoration of all sinful beings, tacitly make an assumption of the vastest magnitude, and that is, That God must constrain the *wills* of His sinful creatures; that in effecting their restoration to holiness no *will* of any shall be found to make effectual resistance; in a word, the *freedom* of the creature is left out of the calculation,—it is either overlooked or overthrown. The most awful phenomenon of the spiritual world

indeed its supreme fact, is the existence of a sinful and adverse will in the creature, a will which steadily opposes the Divine Will. We can see but a very little way into this dark abyss. Could we thoroughly explore it, we should doubtless have a satisfactory solution of the difficulty before us, and probably of the whole cycle of Providence. For such knowledge, or any portion of it, we must simply wait. Our present wisdom is to take facts as we find them. As a fact, then, we find created beings exercising their *will* against God; refusing and effectually resisting every method of discipline; every influence of the Holy Spirit, every motive of fear and hope, designed to subdue their rebellious will into a just conformity with God's; and we find such unruly wills not only in men of the longest life, and in the human race through thousands of years, without any symptoms of diminished virulence, but in beings of another race, of countless numbers, and through an unknown period of time; and yet no sign, no token, no ground for imagining, that *ὁ πονηρός*, the Evil and Mischievous One, as he is so emphatically called, is now less evil or mischievous, less a liar, less a murderer, less a Satan, less an enemy to God and goodness, than when with his evil following he was cast out of heaven. As it was possible, then, for man and Satan, both in innocence, to *will* rebellion against God, so much more is it possible for them now to *will* to continue in that rebellion; and as evil acquires strength and fixedness by time, and becomes a second nature,—we are not justified in concluding against all these considerations, much less in *believing* without any reason at all, that no created *will* will resist God forever. If that "forever" overwhelms our understanding, equally does "at all." If it be a mystery that my *will* can erect itself against God forever, it is no less a mystery that it can do it at all. A speculation that thus destroys the freedom of the creature, has against it all the facts and all the analogies of nature and of grace.

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10. But, we are reminded, there are texts of Scripture which look another way. No doubt of it, and all the more that our own thoughts first look another way, and for this natural looking neither God nor man will blame us. But we shall be justly censurable if we allow the inclinations of a perverted nature to mislead us in the interpretation of a few texts capable of, at the utmost, a double sense, against the very clearest and oft-repeated declarations of the Bible, sustained by the unhesitating testimony of every portion of the Christian Church. Leaving what are really obscure in their obscurity, which will probably last through time, look for a moment at the text regarded as most express for the belief of a general restoration. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The Church of God has always, with unvarying consistency, regarded the Apostle as comparing the two Adams, the heads respectively of fallen men and restored believers; and the facts patent to our observation convince us that Christ is not to "all" without restriction what Adam was to "all" his posterity. Most certainly this one ambiguous word must not be allowed to counterbalance all the explicit teaching of the Bible, or the Bible will lose all value and all authority. Here the Apostle speaks of the resurrection of those who are Christ's, the faithful. This is clear from the word employed, *ζωοποιηθήσονται*, "shall be quickened," a word belonging to the economy of grace, and denoting a redemptive work, not the effect of natural energy. So in Rom. viii. 11, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken, *ζωοποιήσεται*, your mortal bodies by or because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you."\* If, however, we insist that St. Paul does here make this resurrection of which he is without question formally discoursing, a spiritual quickening, a restoring of all sinners to a divine life,—then we make him contradict himself, as

\* And so in every place but one in the New Testament.

he tells us elsewhere that this resurrection is of "the just and of the unjust;" and the restorationists contradict themselves, too, as they do not pretend to say that the resurrection is the very moment of the restoration they expect—nay, that it may be unknown ages after. But probably what appeals to us most powerfully is the assurance that "the last enemy shall be, *καταργείται*, abolished." It seems conformable to our ideas of what is becoming, that no enemy to God should endure in His world; that all shall return to loyalty or cease to exist; and we find it very, very hard to think otherwise. But in the face of the facts, and as far as revelation carries us, we have to be content with that majestic repulse to our inquisitiveness, which should at once still and satisfy our troubled minds:—"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." He knows how to vindicate His own supremacy in His own world, and He will do it! Evil at all, my brethren, in God's world is a mystery—all a mystery. Revelation itself does not clear it up. "Now we see (says the Apostle) by means of a mirror *ἐν ἀνύμπτῳ*"—in a dark enigma. The mystery may never be cleared up to us; but should it be, it will not assuredly be in this life.

11. Another objection to this revived heresy and its forced reading of God's word, is one so formidable, that I see no way of overcoming it, nor have I come across more than one or two very weak and most disingenuous attempts at meeting it. The orthodox belief is with great unanimity declared by its opponents to be entirely against the spirit of the Gospel, against all our natural convictions of justice, against all our instinctive beliefs in God; and it is held to be a mighty obstacle to the acceptance of the Gospel, effectually repelling great multitudes who would otherwise be attracted, and brought under its renewing power.\* Now

\* As a matter of fact, do the Universalists succeed most in winning people to Christianity,—and are they successful missionaries? Are they missionaries

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the difficulty is plainly this:—If the Apostles and first preachers of the Gospel taught a universal restoration of all sinners, as the grand doctrine and fact of God's redeeming scheme, what possibility was there of misconceiving their meaning; or what conceivable motive was there for rejecting a dogma which could not but please as it interested all and for substituting for it one which is undeniably repulsive to the unholy, and very awful and mysterious to even pure and intellectual minds? The difficulty is enormously heightened by the fact that this unreasonable, repulsive, ungrateful, and most perverse substitution was effected, if it took place at all, by that faithful, obedient, generous race of Christians who immediately succeeded the Apostles—in fact by the very chiefs in the “noble army of martyrs.” Thus the Venerable Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, the immediate disciple of St. John, answers the Proconsul who consigns him to the fire: “Thou threatenest me with fire, which burns for an hour, and in a little while is extinguished: for thou knowest not the fire of the future judgment, and of that eternal punishment which is reserved for the ungodly” (Martyrdom, sec. 11). But the difficulty reaches its acme when we are asked to believe that the substitution was complete and universal in fifty or at most a hundred years after the last of the Apostles! Here is an accumulation of difficulties which the dullest or the most resolute of misbelievers must feel the pressure of. But what are even all these irrational and profane assumptions, compared with the audacious impiety which would force us to admit, that the good God allowed His truth wholly to fail in even its appointed depository, His Church, the pillar and ground of the Truth; that for 1800 years He allowed the hearts of millions to be made sad with a lie which had supplanted His truth; that the Holy Ghost had thus failed to fulfil the

at all? Cp. Gibbon's secondary causes of the progress of Christianity. Men who have a low sense of Redemption, are likely to be without zeal for the propagation of the knowledge and the means of this Redemption.

promise of Christ, in guiding believers "into *all* the truth;" that the Scriptures have been utterly insufficient to teach essential and elementary doctrine; and that our Blessed Lord's great promise that "the gates of Hell should not prevail against His Church" has proved a signal failure! These are moral difficulties in the way of accepting the erroneous belief, which cannot be surpassed by any that gather around the true.

12. But it is occasionally objected that no *General Council* has ever dogmatically affirmed this doctrine. This, I believe, is quite true; but the objection loses its weight when you consider that General Councils have had for their subjects articles of faith that had met with an extensive denial; and so the objection makes for rather than against the belief. Besides, General Councils do not derive their authority simply from the number of bishops who may attend them. Councils now reckoned by the whole Church as General did not number a fourth of the members of those which have never had any authority in the Catholic Church. What makes a Council to be General is—the general acceptance of its decrees by the conscience of the Catholic Church, taught by the Holy Ghost. (Vid. Palmer's *Treatise on the Church*). And so the learned of even the Romish Church estimated a General Council before these last miserable days of judicial delusion. Now, will any one pretend to say that any dogma defined by a General Council recognised as such, has ever had a wider or a firmer acceptance in the Church than this of the Eternity of Punishment? The Church of God has spoken with no uncertain, with a world-encircling voice—and we may say with confidence, *causa finita est*, the dispute is ended!

How, then, do we hear the sounds of reclamation, the cries of disbelief? What article of faith ever has escaped denial? Are we to be surprised, therefore, if this shares the common fate, especially as it is so awful even to religious souls, and so manifestly repugnant to the profane. The *history* of this instance of unbelief will be its explanation.

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(1.) Down to the fifth century there were, I think I may say with some confidence, no very definite opinions as to the state of the soul between death and the resurrection. But Christians did very firmly believe that souls, according to their moral characters, were in very different states—either happy or miserable—and so awaited the final sentence, by which they were for ever either received to God or banished from Him. I will recite the distinct and pertinent words of the most conspicuous writers of the post-apostolic age. *Ignatius*, Bishop of Antioch, the famous martyr of A.D., 107, or supposing we take the lowest date of his assumed interpolator, i.e. \* 150,—speaking in his Ep. to the Ephes. § 16, of “him who corrupts by his wicked doctrine the faith of God,” says: “He that is thus defiled shall depart into the fire that is unquenchable, εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον.†

*S. Justin, Martyr*, A.D., 140, in his I. Apology says of the wicked, “Both souls and bodies will be united, and punished with eternal torments, and not, as Plato declares, for a thousand years only.” Again, Christ, at His second coming, “shall raise again the bodies of all men who have ever lived, and shall clothe with incorruption the bodies of those who so deserve, but shall send those of the wicked, endued with an eternal sensibility, into everlasting fire, together with the evil demons.” (§ 52.) “Hear also, in like manner, what is foretold, to show in what degree of sensibility and punishment the wicked shall be. ‘Their worm shall not cease, and their fire shall not be quenched.

\*Vid. Westcott on the Canon, and Prof. Lightfoot in *Contemporary Review* Feb. 1875.

† How our Lord’s language fixed itself in the Christian mind! How cruel of the sacred writers, if they were not mechanically inspired, never to write plainly, not sometimes to speak simply and unmistakeably, but always to use language which has effectually deceived the Church, if she is now wrong! And, gracious Spirit! forgive our rising accusation of Thy goodness—“Thou hast deceived us, and we were deceived!” Jer. 20: 7.

*And then shall they repent, when it shall avail them nothing.*" (§ 52.)

Of the intermediate state Justin has a perfectly clear recognition, but no particular theories. He speaks of some "under the Christian name denying the resurrection of the dead, and holding that at the moment of death men's souls are received up into heaven," but he adds the earnest words, "you must not take them for Christians." (Trypho, Otto's Ed. § 80.) "The souls of the godly (he holds) remain in some better place, but unrighteous and wicked souls in a worse place, both awaiting the time of the judgment." (Ibid, § 5.) In like manner *St. Irenæus*, Bishop of Lyons, A.D. 170, a most learned defender of the pure Catholic faith, in his youth the friend and disciple of Polycarp, speaks of heretics, who, despising the resurrection, say that as soon as they die they pass beyond the highest heavens and the Creator to Him whom they feign their Father. But Irenæus makes our Lord's sojourn for the definite three days in the intermediate state the pattern of our condition, and he says of Christ's followers, "Their souls shall go away into the invisible place appointed for them by God, and there they shall sojourn until the resurrection, awaiting the resurrection. Afterwards they shall receive their bodies, and rise in completeness, i.e., with their bodies, and as the Lord arose, *so shall they come into the presence of God.*" Lib. v. cap. xxxi.

These were the sufficient, if not very formal, beliefs of the Church immediately after the Apostles; but it was hardly possible that the vain curiosity of men should be content with them. Hence arose a great variety of speculation as to the state of the disembodied spirit—speculation very free and very diverse, and all perfectly allowable so long as the great lines marked in the quotations from Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin, and Irenæus were observed. Clement, of Alexandria, for example (A.D., 200), thought the Apostles preached in the other world to such of the heathens as

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were ready to be converted. (*Strom.* vi. 6.) And so did another 50 years before him, Hermas, in his Pastor (*Lib.* iii. Simil. ix. § xvi.) Instead of resting in what was, doubtless, the earliest faith of the Church, the faith of Justin and Irenæus,—that the souls of even the righteous await the Resurrection Day for their full reward and the vision of God,—an exception began to be made in favour of the Martyrs by Tertullian, who gave them the “prerogative” of at once entering upon the glorified state. (*De Res. Carnis.* § 43.) This, through Augustine’s influence later on, became an accepted belief, and probably the parent of the mischievous practice of Invocation of Saints. Then arose the notion of a fire which was to try all without distinction,—the Blessed Virgin, Prophets, Apostles. So Cyprian (250) speaks of being “tortured by long suffering for sins, cleansed and long purged by fire.” (*Ep.*, v. § xvii. Leips Ed.) So Ambrose: “All, therefore, must pass through these fires whether it be that Evangelist John whom the Lord so loved, . . . or Peter, who received the keys of the kingdom. Still there was extensive latitude of opinion tolerated, not only on the subject of the intermediate state but also on that of the Eternity of Punishment. Though the belief of the Church was evident and fixed, there were men, reckoned among the orthodox, found to oppose it.\* To say nothing of Origen, a man of speculative mind, though an earnest Christian, and who was probably the father of this error,—Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, a really learned Divine of the fourth century, formally taught and defended the doctrine of universal restoration. But every candid mind must feel the force of a few brilliant exceptions—

\* Few certainly among instructed Christians, probably many among the half-Christianized in the African Church, cp. St. Aug. *De Civit. Dei*, lib. xxi. 17—where he observes, “If this opinion is good and true because it is merciful, it will be so much the better and truer in proportion as it becomes more merciful. Let, then, this fountain of mercy be extended, and flow forth even to the lost angels.” But this, he says, they “dare not do.” Men have since learned to be more daring.

they do but the more clearly prove the rule. Happy, however, would it have been for the Church if Christians had been content with the short creed of the first believers as to the eternity of rewards and punishments, and had left all the disembodied state to the most unrestricted speculation. It may not be amiss, as it certainly is instructive here to observe, that the doctrine of the finality of suffering is usually found as part of the Sôcinian system. As the idea of punishment lessens, so does men's estimation of deliverance and the Deliverer; and it seems irresistibly rational to reject the belief in an infinite atonement, and in the proper Deity of the Atoner. This coincidence is too regular to be ascribed to chance: it is the result of real theological affinities, which, in the long run, overcome the resistance made by individual minds otherwise orthodox.

(2) But with the fifth century began an increasingly rigid opposition to Origen's doctrine of Restoration; while the speculations of Augustine, modestly and doubtfully propounded, gave more definite shape to the fancies of an earlier day, and led on in a couple of centuries to a general acceptance in the West of something like the modern Romish system—for a system I may call it, which maps out, and disposes, and governs, the intermediate invisible state of the dead, as if it were a region lying on the earth's surface.

Now, while contemplative and good men feel the great difficulty of admitting the perpetual existence of evil, and so eternal punishment, opposition to this has more generally arisen (Neander, Ch. H. iv. 444.) "from a lack of Christian seriousness, and superficial and trifling mode of judgment. There are persons who cannot seize the contrariety of moral evil to God's holiness in its strict truth, entangled as they are in the mere pagan view of evil as a property of nature," instead of being a corruption of it, an excrescence. Such persons are easily led on to those assumptions about God's justice and the nature of punishment, which I combated at the outset. And as the Romish doctrine of Purgatory is

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well calculated to soothe such irreligious feelings, it is not to be wondered at, that down to the rude break up of this system at the Reformation the old error had no special inducement to reappear. Men were pretty well content with a theory which practically abolished for Catholics endless torments, and for others—who cared ?

(3.) But since the Reformation the popular theology has contributed very much to drive men to Restoration theories, so narrow and unchristian, so unphilosophical and intolerant has it been. Calvin, (*Instit.* lib. iii. c. xxv. § 6,) generally reckoned so hard and dogmatic, on this subject speaks modestly and reasonably enough. He declares it to be neither lawful nor useful to inquire curiously into the temporary state of the departed. He says in general of the saints that they are happy, comforted with the grace of Christ, and that they expect their crown and reward at the second advent ; that they have a joyful expectation of the promised glory which is not to be bestowed till then. He is too positive indeed, when he at once casts the lot of the wicked with bad angels, without waiting for the Judge's sentence. But Calvin's sentiments are ultra-liberalism compared with the inflexible formula of the confession of Faith. Omitting some positions of a nature philosophical rather than biblical, which would press hard on the Annihilationists, and which would exclude many of the earliest Greek fathers from the number of the faithful, it affirms:—"The souls of the righteous being then [i. e. at death] made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies ; and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Besides these two places for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none." chap. xxxii. ii. What wonder if such an extremely anti-scriptural series of propositions should drive men into

Origen's error ! Every one of these propositions is, I believe, demonstrably false on the ground of Scripture alone ; and it is this miserable Procrustean bed, on which every one is violently stretched or shortened, that tempts men so largely to rebel against the Church's faith. This presumptuous popular religion elevates into a dogma the opinion that death is a hard and fast line in our moral existence, which admits of no after moral change whatsoever, and that immediately upon it we proceed to the supreme reward or punishment ! I have not time, and I should hope there would not be much necessity, to expose in detail these extravagant assertions,—some of them so explicitly contrary to the orthodox faith of the second century, as already represented, and in exact harmony with the anti-christian Gnostic belief of that time, according to the testimony of Justin, Irenæus, and Tertullian. As we revolt from purgatory, so admirably improved into an instrument for supplying the Pope's exchequer, and giving consciences ease in sin ; so we revolt from this theory which contradicts alike every principle of reason and Scripture. In actual life we see no such hard and fast line, and we object to the assurance that those who are in their spiritual estate but slightly separated in this life, are at the moment of death infinitely separated—the one in the highest heaven, the other in the deepest hell.

a. This consummation of holiness or sin, in one instant, is against all our ideas of the great law of continuity, against all our experience of God's disciplinary methods in His Church, leading men through sorrow and joy, through knowledge and trial, by the influence of grace and the influence of example, to a true perfectness of spiritual state. That some should reach this point through long continued discipline of perhaps great severity, and that others, just awakened to repentance, should attain it in one instant, by the accident of death speedily supervening, we cannot reconcile with what is revealed to us of God's ways. Nor can we bring ourselves to think of the interval

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between death and judgment as one in which the soul is stationary or torpid.\* We can picture to ourselves—and who can condemn us? the feeble spark of spiritual life, here oppressed and ready to expire, there fanned into a glorious flame: we can picture to ourselves souls amidst conditions infinitely favourable to spiritual development, expecting with ever-increasing preparedness the final day. And the other side of the picture may be looked at too: the souls that would not be healed, ripening in their wickedness, and preparing themselves through a long interval, for companionship with the leaders of the first revolt.

β. Neither Holy Scripture nor the Catholic church has ever taught with such dogmatic plainness that death is the end of all probation, as to justify us in imposing the opinion on our fellow-christians as a necessary belief. I think it is a perilous thing to hold loose views on this point: it serves to rob life of its solemnity, the Christian of his earnestness. For myself I cannot but think that the spiritual life must here be at least begun. So distinctly believed some of the best Christians of early days. S. Clement of Rome, says, "After we have gone forth of this world, no longer shall we there be able to confess or repent." (ii. Ep. §. viii.) "There is no confession in the grave (says Cyprian) nor can any one be constrained by us to repentance, if the fruit of repentance be taken away." (Ep. iv. §. xiv. "These are the wise virgins (says St. Hilary in loc.) who embraced the opportune season of working while they were in the body." So, in general, the Catholic church has ever taught, and so, apparently the Sacred Scriptures.† Yet though this seems the

\* "Quid ergo fiet in tempore isto? dormiemus? Aut nihil vis agi illic, quo universa humanitas trahitur, quo spes omnis sequestratur?" Tertull. De Anima, c. 58.

† "Neque negandum est, defunctorum animas pietate suorum viventium relevari, quum, pro illis sacrificium mediatoris offertur, vel eleemosynæ in ecclesia fiunt. Sed eis hac prosunt, qui quum viverent, ut hac sibi postea possent prodesse meruerunt." St. Aug., Enchiri. c. cx.

This was the doctrine of the Rabbins. The Rev. Joseph McCaul, on pp.

safer and more prudent view, it falls immeasurably short of the dogmatism of the Westminster Confession, to which even Calvin could not subscribe, and which is utterly to be deprecated. Our own Church wisely contents herself with saying "the souls of the faithful are in joy and felicity,"—a joy so springing from such sense of security as to be able to consist with the sharpness of a loving discipline, if any choose so to believe. All I insist on is, that we shall not pretend to be wiser than what is written, and in a matter where we know no more than is revealed, however justly we may conjecture.

7. One thing we do know, that the judgment is not at death, but at Christ's coming, that then, and not till then is the final separation made; and we should not, therefore, dogmatically ante-date the Judge's sentence, nor presumptuously intrude into His seat. Let us not then grudge our brethren any liberty of speculation which they can justly claim in points undetermined by the clear voice of the Bible or the Church. But so long as we choose to insist on irrational fancies or uncertain inferences, as if they were matters of faith, we may be sure that men will seek a remedy somehow, and chiefly in denying important articles of belief. Nothing can be more dreadful than the easy glibness with which the ordinary orthodox hand over to the fire everlasting the heathen, or the ignorant and imperfect Christian; as if God were indeed as blind in judgment as man, and capable of distinguishing only the broadest lines of developed character.

200, 201, of his commentary on Ep. to Hebr., quotes the following from Ugolinus: "*Tanchum*, fol. 13, 3. Dicit R. Simeon ben Jochai; Deus Sanctus Benedictus nomen suum justis non adjungit, sicut dicitur, *Sanctis qui in terra sunt*, Psal. xvi. 3. Quandonam sunt sancti? Cum in terra reponuntur; nam dum vivunt nomen suum Deus non adjungit; eo quod de iis non certum habeat, malum affectum eos non abducturum; at cum mortui sunt, nomen suum adjungit."

Our Burial Office: "Suffer us not at our last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from Thee."

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But that there shall be a Judgment, with all that it means of decision, of separation, of reward, and of punishment; and that that judgment will be irreversible, because it will be infinitely just and perfect, because it will be founded on the truest discrimination of the nature of things, because it will come up to the Divine ideal of *κρίσις*,—this we must hold unhesitatingly, as a necessary part of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. "But," you are going to reply. My Brethren, let us have no more "buts." *There are difficulties*: we cannot get rid of them. Be content! "the Judge of all the earth will do right." Trust Him\* for yourselves and for your fellow-men, *His* creatures. "Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His seat." No one will ever hear the sentence of "everlasting damnation" from the mouth of the Son of Man but such as Love itself could not save; none but him whose moral nature is incurably depraved; none but him who has come to say with all his heart,—

"Evil, be thou my good!"

\* Even Origen says, "The common and simple people, who cannot follow the wide and various discussions about the Divine wisdom, must commit themselves to God and to the Saviour of our race, and be content with His mere word rather than any other's whatsoever." *δεήσει ἐμπιστεύσαντα ἑατὸν θεῷ, καὶ τῷ σωτῆρι τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν, τούτου μᾶλλον ἀρκεσθῆναι τῷ "αὐτὸς ἔφα."* ἢ ἄλλου οὐτινοσούνη. *C. Cels. Lib. iv. §9.*

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE REV. F. N. OXENHAM'S  
LETTER TO MR. GLADSTONE.

I have only read this pamphlet since the preceding pages, text and notes, were written. With few exceptions, I find I have anticipated Mr. O.'s difficulties. The following list of cross references will, as far as it extends, supersede further notice of them.

- Mr. O.'s 2nd and 3rd paragraphs of introduction, repulsiveness of doctrine, cf. Sermons, note, § 11.
- „ „ § I. (α) Popular belief includes no place of repentance, Sermon pp. 29, 30 (3) β.
- „ „ 2. (α) Charge of cruelty against God. ep. Introduction,
- „ „ 2. (β) God's failure. ep. End.
- „ „ 2. (γ) God's victory over sin. ep. § 9.
- „ „ § II. 1. αἰώνιος. ep. § 6.
- „ „ 2. Any other word meaning necessarily endless? ep. § 4. κρίσις, &c.
- „ „ 4. Any decree of Universal Church? ep. § 12.
- „ „ 5. (ii)(ε)(3) Where is God's oath? ep. In. Heb.3:11.

I shall now notice the other parts of the letter, as they seem to require it. After his introductory words to Mr. Gladstone, Mr. O. begins by taking a leaf out of one of Mr. W. R. Greg's books, in which he proposes, in the interests of Christianity, dropping "from ten thousand pulpits for an entire generation, original sin and imputed righteousness, the legend of the fall, and the story of the incarnation, baptismal regeneration, eternal punishment, the Trinity, and the atonement!" This is *rather* too much for Mr. F. N. O., still he views the suggestion with a good deal of favour. Now my readers perhaps, know that Mr. Greg is a semi-

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atheist. "God" is among the "unproveable" propositions, according to him. Is it anything but *revolting* when a Christian priest goes to such a quarter for guidance in preaching the gospel? Not only decency but common sense is laid aside, when we can imagine a non-christian to tell us wisely what will be best for the interests of the Kingdom. Oh the stolidity! *who* will consent to "drop" the Church's creed? And if "the thoughtful and intelligent" unbelievers were so "won," to what emptiness would they be won! and how desolate would the Church be when her children were banished!

He next quotes, *ad invidiam*, A Lapidé's calculations (!) as to the comparatively small number of the saved—"a great multitude which no man can number." Such a piece of presumption detracts from A. Lapidé's reputation, and Mr. O's. quoting him will not add to his own.

"Is there any statement in Holy Scripture which *must* of necessity mean the popular doctrine?" § II. 3. § v. 1. Yes, our Lord's words to Judas. Mr. O. would vainly turn the force of the words by asking "are we prepared to treat other passages of a similar character in the same way?" i. e. "rigidly." There are no other similar passages—for there was never such another act. There is no metaphor, no "rhetoric," (p. 63, Engl. Ed., p. 51, Canad. Ed.) in the brief words of lament spoken by our Lord—words of holy regret wrung from the solemn depths of the Saviour's human heart. It is an unpardonable profanity to think of "rhetoric." But we do accept "rigidly" the other supposed parallels, "It were better for a man that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea than, that he should offend (cause to sin) one of Christ's, little ones." Import nothing into the words, and their rigid meaning *must* be allowed: it is better to be certainly drowned than wilfully cause others to sin. But the completest demonstration of the force of our Lord's words is given in the desperate attempt of the serious Mr. Jukes to

rob them of the sense that Christendom has put upon them. "Two men, and only two, are spoken of; the 'Son of Man' and 'that man' by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. Are not these in substance 'the old man' and 'the new,' 'man' and 'the Son of Man,' of whom the one is always the betrayer of the other, of these the one is the man of sin, the son of perdition, who cannot be saved, but must die and go to his own place; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Good had it been for this man, if he had not been born; but better is it that he has been born, that God might bring in better things"—and a few sentences more to the same effect; thus making our Lord's words have no special reference to Judas, no more to him than to any human being. Surely this sophistical allegorizing is its own confutation; not to say that it is founded on a *complete mistake* of the Hebraistic idiom of the passage—"good," i. e. good more than, i. e. better. I had written so far when I looked into *Poli Synopsis* on Matt. 26: 24, where we find as follows:—"Bonum, i. e. melius: nam Hebræi carent comparativis. Sic Hos. 2: 7. *toli*. Locutio Rabbinnica, et Talmudicis usitatissima." (Lightf. and Capell.) And from Grotius, "non quod esse bene ei possit qui non sit, sed quod homines ita possunt esse miseri ut merito optent non esse: quod á quibusdam nimium subtiliter philosophantibus negari miror, á quorum inopinata sententia and sensum communem, et hoc Christi affatum provoco. Nam, quod visis piis Jobo et Jeremiæ impatientia ut dicerent expressit, id hic verè ac seriò de Juda Christus affirmat."

But for Mr. O.'s other attempts at Exegesis. Matt. 12: 31, 32, he explains by an absurd etymological expedient. The root meaning of ἀφεσις is "sending away," "getting rid of;" therefore we are only to understand that "something of the sin, its character, its consequences, will last on always." ἀφεσις is found seventeen times in N. T., and with two not certain exceptions in the sense of *forgive-*

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*ness.* Is the *usus loquendi* to be pleaded in vain against Mr. O. ? not to say that his admission is fatal to his theory.

On Matt. 18: 8, 9 ; Mark 9: 43, 44, where the *gehenna of fire* and the *fire everlasting* are equivalents, Mr. O. says the words "tell us where to look for their true explanation, Isa. 64: 24." Of this favourite reference to the uses of the valley of Hinnom, has it never occurred to those who make it, that it was the receptacle of the city's *refuse*, of that which was never to be *used* again? On the latter reference I beg to say that ver. 44 is bracketed in Tregelles's text. Mr. O. says that "never shall be quenched" is an incorrect translation of ἀσβεστος, it is simply "which is not quenched." The adjectival form of the word shows that this cannot be its proper meaning, as it corresponds only to the participle. Liddell and Scott's Lexicon gives one instance of the meaning *unquenched* from Homer, where Heyne explains by the adjectival sense. The other *usual* meanings given are "inextinguishable, endless, ceaseless." How would read "burn up the chaff with *unquenched* fire"? Matt. 3: 12, Lu. 3: 7. Who ever heard of such an idiom! Mr. O. perhaps knows of a "quenched fire" that burns up? Besides, the vulgate, no small authority, has *inextinguishable*. The Peshito Syriac, a very great authority, translates the adjective by the present tense of the verb, *daach*; and in ver. 44 we have ἀσβέννυται, where the present is used for the future, either because it is unalterably determined, or is about to take place by some unchanging arrangement." *Winer*, Sect. XI. 2. a.

Matt. 16: 26, is only "some loss" in the next world! Our Lord says it is the loss of a man's soul, and He implies its perpetuity by asking "what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" what shall be the ἀντάλλαγμα, the equivalent in trade or barter, for it—i. e. whereby he shall win it back. Is it implied that he can find such a price?—Mr. O. argues, rightly, that men will fear pain though it does not last forever—but what a tremendous leap to the conclusion that the punishments believed by the Church need not therefore be everlasting! Yes, our reason might lead us

to believe eternal punishment unnecessary; but that could be only from our point of view. Have we no faith? have we no suspicion of *other* objects than would correspond with our circle of ideas? May there not be ends and aims in the Divine mind, and those too pertaining to ourselves, to be attained by our belief of this mysterious revelation. The indefinite and the infinite in our human conceptions are practically the same; the amount of moral restraint would apparently be the same on either belief; but there may be grounds for requiring this faith from us which we cannot divine now, though very important in the economy of the Divine Rule.

Mr. O. should know the three venerable names he adduces as representative by no means exhaust the defence which orthodoxy can make for itself. All his own arguments I think I have sufficiently, though very briefly, answered. That a mystery is beyond our reason is no argument. His hesitation to accept a mystery concerns faith more than reason. Believers feel the mystery and its awfulness as much as Mr. O.; and the only difference is,—he explains it away, while they do not presume to explain it at all.

Thus, a writer in the *Church Quarterly*, in its first number, p. 143, says:—"It is the belief in the eternity of evil, which makes the greatest demand upon the faith of the Christian to-day." And yet he feels able to add: "Eliminate hell from theology, and you eliminate God and Love. For the doctrine of the eternity of punishment is but the reflex of the belief that Holiness is the one good in the universe and Sin the one evil."

Mr. O. refers to Mr. Jukes's book for a patristic catena of opinions on Restitution. I can only say that all his actual quotations, with the exceptions of those from Origen and Gregory Nyssen, prove nothing to his purpose, and all his references are absolutely worthless. Probably the largest collection of patristic quotations and references on the subject of future punishment, easily accessible, may be found in Spencer's edition of *Origen Contra Celsum*, on lib. iv. p. 167.

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