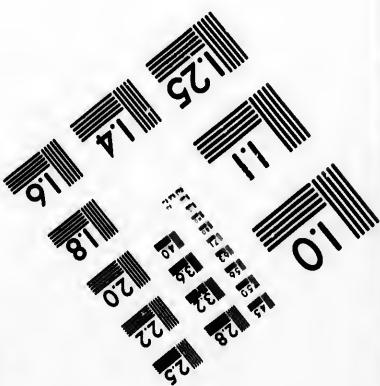
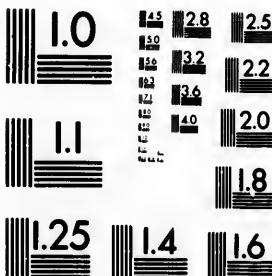


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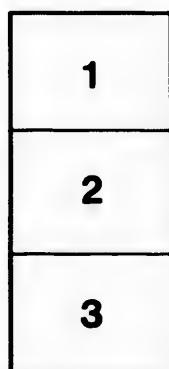
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No. 1

A TRACT FOR THE TIMES.

"A Burning Question"!

....

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

Will it be endless suffering?

BY

REV. JOHN PAUL.

—(1)—

For we are also His offspring.

ACTS XVII. 29.

—(2)—

MONTREAL, 1883

Religion has many dialects, and many tongues, but it has one voice ; the voice of reverence, and humanity, of mercy, of justice, of righteousness.

JOHN MORLEY.

A TRACT FOR THE TIMES.

"A Burning Question"!

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

Will it be endless suffering?

BY

REV. JOHN PAUL.

—:o:—

These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. Matt. xxv, 46 (*New Version*).

These words were used by Our Lord with reference to two classes of character: those who had wickedly neglected his poor "brethren" in times of sickness and persecution, and those who had shown them kindness, for his sake. The former class, he says, "shall go away into eternal punishment", and the latter "into eternal life".

The punishment here threatened to a certain class of sinners is generally applied to *all* sinners, as if Our Lord had said, every sinner, and all kinds of sinners, "shall go away into eternal punishment". But is this the cor-

rect meaning ? Do not the words rather mean, that this particular sin, shall have a particular, or specially severe punishment ? However this may be, these words of Christ, form the *strong-hold*, and staple argument of those who believe in the doctrine of endless torment, for the unsaved. Whatever may be their true meaning, from them there can be no appeal : therefore it is of the utmost importance that we should understand what he really did mean when he said "these shall go away into eternal punishment". It will be observed that the same word is used to express the duration of the punishment of the wicked, as is used to express the duration of the happiness of the righteous. This fact is often employed with some degree of confidence by those who believe in the doctrine of endless torment, as if that settled the whole matter. They say, there can be no further question on the subject, for Christ himself has for ever settled it. They listen to anything that can be said on the other side with impatience. But are they infallible ? May they not after all, be mistaken ? There is one certain rule or law of interpretation, which can never be safely or wisely departed from. It is this. No passage should be so interpreted as to contradict, or be out of harmony with other passages, or with the general tenor of the book itself. And the same rule or law must be applied to the interpretation of the doctrines and teachings of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us then proceed on this principle.

Our Lord (Matt. 7) when speaking on this subject on another occasion, says : "Enter ye in by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to *destruction*",—not to *endless torment*. For narrow is the gate, and straitened is the way that leadeth unto *life*"—the opposite of death or destruction.

Here explained and now that this se punishment punishment Lord ". peace a them. (into a hurtful dition. strong, signify often r Drown ter, me to bring author this ? eternat ion o all th Every is eith thew strikin will l " T (Ch.II is cut a man

Here then we have the terms eternal punishment as explained by Our Lord himself to mean "destruction", and not a life of eternal suffering in hell. It is evident that the great apostle St. Paul understood him in this sense, for when speaking afterwards of future punishment, he says : (2 Thes. 1) "They shall suffer punishment, even *eternal destruction* from the face of the Lord". St. Paul further says : "When they are saying, peace and safety, then sudden *destruction* cometh upon them. (1 Thes. v, 4.) But they that desire to be rich, fall into a temptation, and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as *drown men in destruction*, and perdition. (1 Tim. vi, 9.) This language is plain and very strong, we all know what *drowning* means. Does it not signify the *destruction of life*, -- of all consciousness ? We often read in the newspapers items headed,— "Death by Drowning". Destruction according to Walker and Webster, means, extinction, extermination,—to put an end to, to bring to nought—*eternal death*. If we accept them as authorities in explaining all others words, why not in this ? Eternal *destruction* is a very different thing from eternal *torment*. Destruction as we have seen means extinction of life—death. And this sense corresponds exactly with all that is said on this subject in St. Matthew's gospel. Every-where, as in other places in the Bible, the same thing is either affirmed or implied. Let us now see what St. Matthew says about it, in other places. He uses a variety of striking figures to set forth the way in which, the wicked will be punished.

"The chaff he will *burn up* with unquenchable fire. (Ch.III,10,12.) Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is *cut down* and cast into the fire (VII, 19). For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world and

forfeit his life (xvi, 26) ? Shall cast them into a furnace of fire, x, 13, 50. On whomsoever it (stone) shall fall it will scatter him as dust, xx, 44. Fear Him who is able to *destroy* both soul and body in hell—*Gehenna*, x, 28. In all these passages relating to the punishment of the wicked St. Matthew speaks of it as being severe, but short and sharp, in none of them is there any statement conveying the idea of the suffering being endless. The figures employed are very striking and plain.. “ *Chaff* ” to be *burnt up*—fruitless trees to be *cut down* and burnt up in the fire—ground to powder, or *scattered as dust*—Cut a sunder—killed — destroyed soul and body in *Gehenna*. Bible metaphors always convey a certain definite idea of the doctrine taught, but no one can fairly extract the idea of endless torment, from any of these metaphors ; quite the reverse : therefore may we not safely affirm that the meaning of the words of Christ, would not be out of harmony with the foregoing passages, and the rest of the Book ? Neither would the doctrine taught by him in this passage (xxv, 46) be out of harmony with his own teaching on other occasions, or with his blessed life of loving sympathy and kindness to all, even to the “ evil, and unthankful ”.

He who shed tears over the doomed city of Jerusalem, who wept at the grave of Lazarus, and who in due time died “ the just for unjust ”, would hardly consign them to endless suffering in the flames of hell. As this view does not harmonize with the general tenor of St. Matthew’s gospel, nor with the teaching of Christ on other occasions, nor with his spirit and life, nor with the teaching of St. Paul, we must try to find some other meaning. The sense we have just given to these solemn words of Our Lord accords well with all

that is said on the subject elsewhere in the word of God. By way of confirmation we may mention another passage given by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (vi, 23). The wages of sin is *death*, but the free gift of God is eternal *life*, through Our Lord Jesus Christ. Death here, as in other places, is put as the opposite of life. Then as now, men so understood it. Death no where means *life* in hell. In common conversation, in books, journals and in all legal documents *death means death*, and *life means life* — “the wages of sin is *death*”. It is certainly not likely that St. Paul would preach “another gospel” on this awful subject, differing entirely from that preached by the Master. Destruction and death then are the terms used by this Apostle to indicate the future punishment of the wicked. May we not then from our present finding according to the Scriptures, read Our Lords’ words thus? —“These shall go away into eternal destruction, and the righteous into eternal life”? This reading, as we have already shown, accords more satisfactorily with a fair interpretation of other passages relating to the future destiny of the unsaved, than does that of *endless* suffering. Besides it is vastly more in harmony with the loving, and beneficent character of God, and with our own moral consciousness, as to what is right and just.

Again, is it either safe or wise, to build a theory, or found a doctrine on a subject so momentous, on two or three single texts of Scripture, especially when they stand to other passages, like a limb out of joint? The few texts that seem to favour the doctrine of endless life in hell, when carefully examined, and when interpreted according to our present just rule, do not favour it at all. But these texts when *taken alone*, with much that we hear from the pulpit, on the subject, are easily misunderstood, especially if we do not carefully study the Bible as a whole.

This has been in the past the chief cause of the prevalence of this fearful doctrine, for when carefully tested by the word, and testimony of the prophets, and of Christ and his apostles, it has no solid scriptural foundation.

The Bible should be prayerfully read, and *searched* to see "whether these things are so" or not.

If we read eternal death or eternal destruction instead of eternal punishment, the *duration* is the same. In both cases it is endless, but not endless conscious suffering. We read of eternal redemption, and of eternal judgment (Heb. ix, 12,—vi, 2) just as we read of eternal punishment. But this surely cannot mean that the work—or process of redeeming and judging is now going on, and will continue going on to all eternity? It doubtless means that the effects, or consequences of redemption, and judgment are irrevocable and eternal, and so with eternal destruction the effects of the sentence are eternal in their duration.

But if we admit that the punishment consists of conscious suffering, the terms everlasting and eternal do not warrant us in concluding that it is endless, for they are sometimes used in the Scriptures, in the sense of an indefinite, but limited period, and are applied to things that have passed away. Cruden in his well known orthodox concordance, says — The terms "eternal and everlasting, and for ever, are sometimes taken for a long time, and are not always to be understood strictly, but eternity when God is the subject, in question, always denotes a real eternity". The nature of the subject determines the meaning of the words. God is good and all good is eternal, evil is not, and cannot be eternal. It had a beginning, and must come to an end, that "God may be all in all."

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Therefore sin and its direful consequences, in God's good time, and it may be long, will be destroyed, and cease for ever.

The terms “for ever” and “for ever and ever”, are frequently applied to men and things which “perish in the using”.

See Deut. XXIX, 29, Jer., 7, 7, where the hills were to be everlasting ; things revealed, and the lands, were to be given to the children of Israel “for ever”, and “for ever and ever”. These quotations might be greatly extended, showing that such terms and phrases are often applied in the holy Scriptures to perishable things. Then when we find such words as these, and others akin to them, in the New Testament, it is well to remember, that the Greek terms from which they are derived, generally signify indefinite periods, such as “an age”, “age lasting”, “for an age”, or “for ages of ages”. The periods here indicated may be long, but they are not necessarily endless. “The last end”, of the *finally* impenitent is designated by St. John, “the second death (Rev. xx, 14), a phrase that certainly indicates but a brief period of suffering, and this view accords perfectly with what is said concerning their *final* destiny in other places. They die, per sh, are destroyed, “and are not”. Their *destruction* is “everlasting”, and “for ever and ever”. If we take these words in their most obvious and current signification, we shall find no difficulty in understanding them.

An able Biblical scholar and commentator (Rev. J. A. Best) to whom the *British Quarterly Review* assigns a foremost place, says—“The future lot of the wicked, is not life, but eternal death”. Were it necessary a long array of names of distinguished and learned students of

the Bible could be given, who bear testimony to the correctness of this interpretation of Our Lord's words.

Then the word eternal is not always applied to duration, or endlessness of time. Hence we read—"The things which are *unseen* are eternal", and "This is *life eternal* to *know* thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent". So when we look closely into the uses and derivation of this and kindred terms we find that they cannot always be fairly used as an argument in favour of the endlessness of future punishment.

There are some fifty passages that speak plainly of the *destruction* of the *finally impenitent*, while there are only two or three that *appear* to teach the terrible doctrine of everlasting suffering. With such a mass of evidence against it, we may well hesitate before accepting it. To many thoughtful persons, both learned and unlearned, the doctrine is incredible, unreasonable and unjust, and therefore they cannot accept it. The prominence given to it, has led such to doubt the whole Christian system and Christianity has in this way lost many of its friends. A returned missionary, an able man, recently assured his audience in London, that this and its kindred doctrines, was a great obstacle in the way of the heathen accepting Christianity. They were often very inquisitive and wanted to know the reason of things, and it was not an uncommon thing to find them in possession of sceptical books, which were well read and understood. This was especially the case in India and Japan. Some of the old doctrines needed revision, and the truth presented in a new form, or the advance of Christianity would continue to be slow both at home and abroad.

Had this awful doctrine been true would it not have been inscribed in plainer and *stronger* language, both by

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Our Lord and his apostles ? So that there could have been no cause for controversy, and no possibility of mistake. Men easily assent to this frightful doctrine, because they never seriously think, as to what *endless duration* means, and still less do they give themselves the trouble to ponder the dreadful thought of endless and hopeless suffering in a hell of fire ; suffering too, without a moment's alleviation, or ease or comfort, throughout "the countless ages of a never ending eternity". If they really believed it, and to some feeble extent realized the meaning of it, they would surely give up sin, that they might escape its dread consequences : but do they ? To them the doctrine is incredible, they do not, and cannot believe it, therefore it seldom influences them for good, and they go on though life hoping for a "better gospel". Hence the present reaction against the Bible and against Christianity.

By explaining Scripture with Scripture, I think we have found the true and correct meaning of Our Lord's words. But I would not dogmatize, or dictate to others. Let every one read, and think for himself, and be "fully persuaded in his own mind". Whatever be the true meaning, *that* must stand, and *that will* stand, but our duty is "to prove all things", and hold fast, only that which is good and true. Christ is "the way the *truth* and the life", and "not one jot or tittle of his word shall fail". By his word shall we be judged, and his decisions will be final and irrevocable. But let us be careful not to substitute the doctrines and "traditions of men" for the truth of God. He is infinite in love, wisdom and power and has access to the "inner life" He weighs the spirit and scans the motives of men, and doubtless often takes the will for the deed", for he knows our frailties, and "remembers that we are but dust". A tear or a sigh, from

a broken heart in the last moments of life, may often be all that He requires, and millions may in this way be saved, for "with God all things are possible". There seem to be strong reasons adducible from the holy Scriptures, and from what we know of the ever merciful, and beneficent character of God why we may hope that multitudes of the heathen, the less fortunate of our race, and of the morally weak, and erring will be saved, while "the children of the kingdom shall be cast out".

But who can tell who are wicked and who are righteous, for there is but a slight difference between the best sinners, and the worst saints! Providential circumstances are frequently occurring around us in trade, society, and in families, as if designed to show us, that those whom we have regarded as great saints, are only great sinners, Pharisees and hypocrites of the first water. God judgeth not as man judgeth. "Men look upon the outward appearance but God looketh into the heart". A fine coat, full purse and great swelling words, are nothing to him. Many shall say at the last day — "Lord, Lord, did we not.... by thy name do many mighty works? Then will he say: I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matt. viii, 22, 23)". "The first shall be last and the last first". Let those who make a great show, and profit by their religious professions, ponder these words of Our Lord, the Judge of all.

We will now select a few additional passages from the word of God which when understood and applied in their plain common sense meaning, go to confirm what I have said in relation to the future destiny of both the righteous and the wicked. — "As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live, turn ye,

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turn ye, from your evil ways for why will ye die. For his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall *die for it*," Esk 33. "For we are unto God, a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that *perish* ! to the one we are the savour of *death unto death*, and to the other the savour of *life unto life*" (2 Cor. II, 16). The wicked "abide in death", but the righteous, "pass from death into life. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish" (John x, 28). "None can keep *alive* his own soul" (Ps. XXII, 29). "I have set before you this day *life and good*, and *death and evil*... I have set before you, *life and death*, blessing and cursing ; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deut. XXX). "If ye live after the flesh ye shall *die*, but if ye through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall *live* (Rom. VIII, 13). "Whosoever believeth in him shall not *perish*, but have *eternal life* (John III, 14)."

"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life (John IV). This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and *not die*. He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever, I am that bread of life, I am the resurrection, and the life, and he that believeth in me though be were *dead*, yet shall he *live*." "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall *never die*" (John VI and VII). "He that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from *death*" (James V, 20). "And Moses did so, as the Lord commanded him, so did he. And the children of Israel spake unto Moses saying. Behold we die, we perish, we all perish. Whosoever cometh anything near unto the tabernacle of the Lord shall die : shall be *consumed with dying*" (Num. XVI). "He spared not their soul from *death*. Let them be put to shame and perish. The wicked shall not be" (Ps. XXXVII,

20, 10). "The wicked shall perish. The wicked shall be silent in darkness (1 Sam. II, 9)".

I have taken these passages promiscuously, and without order, from the word of God. It will be seen that they are the words of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and his apostles. They are all of one mind, and speak the same thing, concerning the future destiny of both the righteous, and the wicked. Their meaning is plain and easy to be understood and in perfect accord with the conclusions reached in the foregoing pages, thus confirming and establishing our position, that the final destiny, of the disobedient is not endless suffering in hell, but "death, and everlasting destruction from the face of the Lord". It would take some ingenuity, if not perversity, of both mind and heart, to construe all, or any of these passages so as to bring them into line, with the traditional and orthodox view. St. Paul alludes to the destiny of the impenitent twenty-seven times, but in not one of them does he state that they will go away into *endless* conscious misery. If this had been a doctrine of Christ, he must have known it, and consequently would have made it plain to all readers of his Epistles.

A doctrine of which he had no knowledge cannot surely be an essential article of the Christian faith. If such a doctrine had been true, and was known to him, he would doubtless have spoken of it in earnest burning words, for it is too awful to be spoken of in words of "uncertain sound". When he and the other apostles speak so frequently about sin and its punishment and yet never once tell us in plain terms that "the wages of sin", is not death, but *unending* torture in hell, have we not some reason for doubting the truth, or Scripturalness of the doctrine? Suppose you put the Bible in the hands of a

learned Hindoo, or unlettered peasant, or any one else, they not having either heard or read it before, and you request them to read it without note or comment, would they be able to discover that the terms death, perish, destroy, and destruction, meant an eternal life of pain in hell fire ? I trow not. The plain obvious meaning ; that which strikes the reader first is generally the correct one. "The wages of sin, is death", but "after death the judgment". There shall be a resurrection of "the just and of the unjust". "Be not deceived God is not mocked for whatsoever a man soweth that shall be also reap". These and many other kindred passages teach the doctrine of a future and just retribution, but that such retribution is terminable, I think we have given full proof in these pages.

The righteous shall *live* for ever and the wicked shall *die* for ever. Christ when speaking to his disciples said : Because I live, ye shall *live* also (John XIV, 19). The wicked die for ever, because they believe not in him. The "second death" cuts them off from that eternal blessed life that comes from faith and obedience to Christ.

Some affirm that the doctrine of a terminable retribution undervalues the atonement of Christ, and tends to encourage men to continue in sin. This is plainly a mistake, a mistake that can only be committed by those who have not fully considered the subject. Christ died to save men from *sin*, and not merely from its punishment. If they are saved from the love and practise of sin, they will be saved from its punishment, whether the duration be long or short, terminable or not terminable. Judging from the present state of the world, and considering the length of time, and energy with which the doctrine of everlasting misery has been preached, it can hardly be truthfully affirmed that it has been effectual in deterring men from

the practise of sin. So we may at once dismiss this thought from our minds. We must honestly adhere to the truth of God, as we find it revealed to us, and leave all consequences with Him. Are not these facts somewhat significant, that the Old Testament Scriptures should be almost entirely silent on the subject of endless misery, and that neither Peter, James nor John should have taught it ?

If the doctrine had been true, surely these inspired expounders, and defenders of the faith, would have been among the first to impress it, most earnestly upon the minds, of their readers.

Eight hundred millions of our race are still under the shadow of paganism, and idolatry. A generation of them is supposed to pass away, about every thirty years. What becomes of them after death ? Do they go away into *endless suffering* !

We find the following on this subject in the *West-Minster Confession of Faith* , The punishments of sin in the world to come, are most grievous torments in soul and body, *without intermission*, in hell fire, for ever ... shall be cast into hell, to be punished with unspeakable torments, both of body, and soul, with the devil and his angels, for ever " ... "They who having never heard the gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him, cannot be saved, be they never so diligent, to frame their lives according to the light of nature ". If this be true, then all the so *called heathen*, are hopelessly lost, and will suffer endless torment. I have no hesitation in saying that such a doctrine is in direct opposition to the plain teaching of the word of God. Do those ministers who subscribed to it, at their ordination continue to believe it ? Is it not too shocking to be believed by any serious minded person ! And yet

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it is found in all orthodox standards and "Confessions of Faith." Is it not time, they were revised !

If this doctrine be according to the Scriptures, one would think that all ministers of the gospel, if they believed it, would "cry aloud and spare not", and never cease, night nor day to warn men to flee, with all possible speed, to Christ, that they might escape from so terrific a punishment. There is indeed of late a very significant reticence in most of our pulpits concerning this awful doctrine, but that is not sufficient. If true, it should be "proclaimed as from the house top", with all possible diligence and zeal, to the end of life. I well remember one who had been long in the ministry remarking that if he believed this doctrine, he could *never smile* again ! And yet ministers, church officers and members who profess to believe it, and who would expel you from church membership if you ventured to differ with them, eat and drink and smile and enjoy life, as if they were sure that all men were going to heaven. Are they so selfish and cruel as not to care whether men go down to an endless hell or not, or is it because they do not believe the doctrine ? Which ?

I can well understand why a Universalist should feel calm and hopeful, but I am profoundly amazed, and shocked, to think, that any followers of Christ should believe in the doctrine of endless torment, for the masses of mankind, and yet be unconcerned, and do so little in order to rescue them from such a fearful doom ! No wonder that a certain good man should remark, that if this doctrine were true, and seeing the terrible risk they run, it would be far better for all children to die before they arrive at the age when they become, responsible for their actions. But does it not ill comport with the loving

character of God, as revealed in His word, and manifested in nature and providence, to suppose that He will consign millions of His erring children to *endless* torment, for the sins of one short life, especially when we remember that they are ever surrounded with tempters, and temptations, and also come into the world with a nature inclining to evil, through no fault of theirs ? Then it is so utterly repugnant to our sense of justice, that as a good Bishop, has remarked " We may imagine such a thing, but we cannot really believe it ".

The Rev W. R. Dale, LL.D. a leading and able Congregational minister of Birmingham (successor to late Rev. John Angell James) when speaking of the state of opinion in England, on this subject, says : " The traditional theory of the endlessness of sin, and of suffering, has *lost its authority* ". If the " traditional theory " has not quite " lost its authority " here, it is safe to say that it is " scotched ". Thoughtful Christians and especially young men, are asking : Can this horrible doctrine of endless torment be true ? Is it after all, according to the Scriptures ? These enquires together with the reticence of the pulpit on the subject, are signs of the times, and doubtless ere long, a revision of the doctrinal portion of our denominational creeds will be called for. But this call will not come from the pulpit. It will come from the pew and the people, and the sooner the better.

Rev. John Foster, the Essayest and preacher, whose letters " are weighty and powerful ", says :—" I have discarded the doctrine of everlasting punishment. I acknowledge my inability (I would say it with reverence) to admit this belief together with a belief in the divine goodness,—the belief that God is love, and that His " tender mercies are over all his works ". It often surprises

me that the fearful doctrine sits, if I may so express it, so easy on the minds of the religious and benevolent believers of it. How *can* they have any calm enjoyment of life, how *can* they even be cordially cheerful, how *can* they escape the incessant haunting of dismal ideas darkening the economy in which their lot is cast ". His imagination vividly painted before him the horrors of multitudes of his fellow-men, going down to an endless hell, created surprise, and staggered him, when he saw that so many professing christians could calmly look on, and enjoy themselves ! " He seemed to feel that were he himself among the saved, the knowledge that those with whom, he had once been a fellow - sojourner, were in keen and everlasting anguish, would make him weep, upon the plains of heaven ".

" If the progress of discussion should finally give to all an assurance that the *endlessness* of hell was not actually taught by Christ (or the apostles) there would not only be a general feeling of relief from a heavy burden, but a general consent to regard the superseded belief as an odious night-mare of medevial ignorance and superstition ".

If I may be allowed a personal allusion, I should say that this awful doctrine has cast a shadow over my whole life. In the days of my childhood and youth, I was made miserable by the terrific preaching of men who seemed to take pleasure in dwelling vehemently upon it. The thought that the millions whom we call " the heathen ", in other lands, and the tens and hundreds of thousands of the " unconverted ", around us, including some of our own friends, and relatives were hastening onward, to a life of hopeless and endless suffering, so oppressed me that I was almost in continual sorrow. My deep sym-

pathy for suffering humanity around me, as I worked and walked through life, combined with the sad thought (as we have been taught to believe) that these myriads of mankind were constantly dropping into an everlasting hell of pain, was often more than my spirit could bear. I have long carefully and prayerfully, studied the subject with a sincere desire, I believe to find the truth, and nothing but the truth, as presented in the word of God. I have given, days and nights and years to it. I have read and pondered all the arguments and reasons, over and over again, which the best writers on the orthodox side have brought to prove the doctrine of endless torment, to be according to the Scriptures, but they have failed to convince me.

I now read the Bible in a new and clearer light, and with vastly more comfort. Things that were a mystery to me, and gave me much discomfort, are now clear, quickening, and comforting. God's book of nature around me looks more bright and beautiful, and the ultimate destiny of the human race, which is a great human brother-hood, is more cheering and hopeful. I believe that many more than we have been taught to believe, will be saved, for "They shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God". Christ "gave himself a ransom for all". He is "the propitiation for the sins of the whole world". He is "mighty to save". "Able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him".

An American lady while travelling in Europe visited the Cathedral at Milan. In solemn silence she slowly paced its sacred isles, lost in wondering admiration, at its interior richness and beauty, and afterward while gazing on its

magnificent exterior, she looked up toward heaven, and said, " Yes, that is beautiful to look upon, but *one sigh from a broken heart*, is more acceptable to God, than all that magnificent Temple ". She was right, for who can estimate the value of a sigh or tear from a broken heart ! Our Father in heaven saith.— " To this man, will I look even to him, that is poor, and of a *contrite spirit*" (Isa. LXVI, 2). The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a *broken heart*; and saveth such as be of a *contrite spirit* (Psl. XXXIV, 18).

We know what is said by the advocates of this *dogma*, about moral government and divine justice, but we also know that God is love, and infinite in compassion and mercy, " a father infinitely fatherly ". He can see, and will accept, even the " *germs* of faith and penitence ", as if they were fully developed, ripe spiritual fruit. We are assured that, " He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax ". The feeblest religious desire comes from Him, and is proof of His willingness to save. Hath he not said, " Him that cometh to me, I will in *no wise cast out*" ? Therefore we believe that in this life, " a multitude which no man can number, of *every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue, will be saved* ". May we not hope, that myriads will be snatched " as brands from the burning ", in " the hour and article of death ", and also during the long interval that will elapse (in the intermediate state), between death and the resurrection ? Some portions of holy Scripture seem to fully justify us, in confidently indulging such a hope.

Of one thing we may be certain, that Christ the Redeemer,— " Shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be *satisfied* ". If He be satisfied, who shall complain ! He will finally triumph, and destroy all evil, or, change it into good, and reign, as King for ever.

“ O brothers ! if my faith is vain,
If hopes like these betray,
Pray for me, that my feet may gain,
The sure and safer way.

And thou, O Lord, by whom are seen,
Thy creatures as they be,
Forgive me, if too close I lean,
My human heart on Thee ! ”

—————:o:————

The Lord is merciful and gracious, *slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy* (Pslm. 103, 8).

—————:o:————

“ By death, some men understand endless torments in hell-fire. But it seems a strange way of understanding a law which requires the plainest and directest words that by death should be meant *eternal life in misery*. Can any one be supposed to intend by a law which says, ‘ For felony thou shalt surely die,’ not that he should lose his life, but be *kept alive in exquisite and perpetual torments ?* ”

(1704) JOHN LOCKE.



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I am the resurrection and the *life*...
whosoever liveth, and believed in me,
shall never *die*.

(JOHN 11, 25, 25).

He that hath the Son, hath *the life*, he
that hath not the Son of God, hath *not*
the life.

JOHN v, 12.

