

ment will be awarded if there be continued unbelief. It will be seen, however, that the cases described are not suppositions, but facts of actual occurrence. It is not said that if men continue in sin or in unbelief for ever they will be punished for ever, though this is no doubt true; but that the time is coming when those who are now sinners and unbelievers will be doomed to that punishment. There are some, indeed, whose doom is already certain. Their sin goes beforehand to judgment. For any who blaspheme against the Holy Ghost there is never forgiveness, as there is no true repentance. All who go on sinning wilfully after receiving a knowledge of the truth have before them only fiery indignation. And, moreover, the day of judgment is ever represented as a day of decision, a crisis in human destiny. After it, "the wicked go away;" Christ himself bids them go; and the door is shut. When He comes to be glorified in His saints, when He judges the secrets of men, there rests upon the ungodly "indignation and wrath;" "they are punished in the everlasting destruction." [1 Thess. i. 8-10.] These are stated, not as supposed cases, but as actual facts.

11. And yet in spite of this clear and awful teaching I can fancy that some humble inquirer pleads—"Is there nothing in Scripture to give hope? Did not Origen find comfort in the assurance that Christ must reign till He hath put all enemies under his feet? It was but one piece of money that was lost out of ten, but one sheep out of a hundred, but one son out of two, and each lost one—not annihilated surely—was found." "May we not hope that every piece of money still bearing the king's image, though defaced, will be recovered from the dust and restored to the king's treasury, and that every prodigal, convinced, at last, through a self-inflicted misery, of his folly, will return to the bosom of his Father?"

"The wish that of the living whole
No life may fall beyond the grave,
Oh, comes it not from what we have,
The likeliest God within the soul?"

No man with a human heart can fail to feel the force of these pleas. Most men have been tempted to "trust this larger hope." But, alas! when all things are put under Christ's feet, the last enemy destroyed, and Death and Hades cast into the lake of fire, therein is also to be cast "whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life." The "hope" is suggested only by parables, and by parables that clearly touch not the question whether all are saved; while there are parables still more numerous that speak of virgins shut out from the marriage, of the man without the wedding garment [the symbol of sympathy with the purpose of the feast], who was sent away into outer darkness, where was weeping and gnashing of teeth, of servants who knew their Lord's will, and did not according to his will, and who were therefore cut asunder, and after that had their position with the unfaithful. The poet's "dream" is answered by the poet's fears:—

"For I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear;
I falter where I firmly trod—"

Above all, it is impossible to forget that Jesus Christ, Son of Man, and Son of God, perfect love as well as perfect purity, Saviour and Judge, has given no hope that men who die unwon by his love will ever be won by punishment. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Can words be more clear or more awful!

12. In this summary of Scripture teaching I have taken no passages from the Old Testament. I have said nothing of the claims of God's Justice, nothing of the infinite evil of sin; as, on the other hand, I have said nothing of the supposed inconsistency between this doctrine and the Divine goodness. I have purposely abstained from all such arguments on either side. I do not think the question can be settled in that way. The fact is that finite minds cannot tell what infinite justice will demand or what infinite goodness will allow. If I were reasoning from such principles the very first thing I should do would be to deny that there could be sin; and as this reasoning is palpably absurd, I hold my peace. The existence of moral evil is to me a far profounder mystery than the punishment of it. In short, the whole question is one of interpretation simply, and our wisdom is to listen reverently to the New Testament.

13. With this explicit Scripture teaching before us, two lessons at least may be fairly noted and enforced.

It rebukes the style of talk in which many indulge. They scruple not to speak of this terrible ending of human life in any case as unjust or as revolting to charity. It is not that they use the argument of the incompatibility of the doctrine with God's benevolence to explain Scripture, or reverently to guide them to the selection of one of two interpretations both equally probable. They use it to set aside Scripture itself. In the extreme form of this talk it is the very existence of hell that is denied, and the plea urged is that God's benevolence will never doom men to such a destiny. Even when the argument is not carried thus far, men use it rhetorically to set aside the plain teaching of our Lord. They say, "It is torture to think of our friends as there, and how can God allow it?" "Such harsh thoughts of His judgments belong to the dark ages, to priestism, or to 'sulphurous' preachers of our own time. With more charity, and a juster appreciation of God's benevolence, the doctrine would be sent back to the morbid fanaticism whence it sprang." Ought not such reasoners to ask whether Christ had not as much regard for God's honor as they, whether He felt not as tenderly for men? It is He and Paul who speak most of "wrath to come, and warn men to flee from it, or tell them that they cannot escape it." These "harsh thoughts" of human destiny they entertained and published. Our modern benevolence is at best very cheap. What if it be also blasphemous and destructive, dishonoring by implication to God's "philanthropy," and precipitating the very ruin it professes to fear!

And as a second lesson; if the doctrine of a future punishment is Scriptural, ought it not to be preached as Scripture reveals it? To be silent in relation to it, to question it, to teach it as a mystery to be kept in reserve, to tone it down as unsuited for modern ears, is a practice unwarranted by anything in Scripture. Let men give it no larger place in their preaching than it occupies in the New Testament; let them keep if they will to Scripture language—as was Jay's practice; and leave it in all its simplicity and awfulness to produce its fair impression on the popular mind. But to deny or to dilute its affirmations may be to inflict serious mischief on practical godliness. Fear and love are the two motive forces by which men are won to God; and it is at our peril we weaken either. Scripture is clearly in favor of this view; and for myself I believe that the whole Gospel, with its provisions of terror and of grace, will find a readier response in man's complex nature—his conscience and his heart, than the substitutes which some are now seeking to put in its place.

In my next letter I intend to add notes and explanations on some of the statements here made; and in the third and last I purpose noting briefly some alleviations of the great mystery involved in the doctrine itself.

JOSEPH ANGUS.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, NOVEMBER 2, 1870.

The "Christian Messenger" for 1871.

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A WORD FOR SCIENCE.

We have always rejoiced in the advance of Science. There is hardly any department of human industry which is not year by year reaping great benefits from the patient and laborious investigations of scientific men. The field of general knowledge is being vastly widened; and fresh proofs of the beneficence and wisdom of God are set before the world.

In no department of modern research has greater labor been expended than in that of biology. Unfortunately for the interests of science, several among the more ardent investigators have not been able to bring to their task that patience which rests satisfied with step-by-step methods of working, and which is necessary to secure the trustworthy results of induction as applied to any department of investigation, but especially that of biology. The results of imperfect or partial experiments have been seized with avidity, and with a crudeness and haste condemned by every canon of true science, have been made to serve as bases for the wildest hypotheses and speculations; and intelligent men have been asked to accept these as veritable theories—as truth itself. Herbert, Spencer, Darwin, Professor Huxley, and others, have given evidence of this substitution of imagination in the place of reason. Here and there persons whose imaginations are so active and unbridled as to unfit them for the slow and laborious processes demanded by rigorous induction, have accepted the deliverances of these talented men; but the great mass of the more reflecting very naturally ask for a clear and intelligent demonstration of the things they are told to receive as scientific truth. As, perhaps, might be expected, this attitude of mind on the part of those who are slow to rely on the deductions of imagination—if we may so speak—instead of those of calm reason and judgment, is regarded both by those who propound the theories and those who accept them, as opposed to science. Intelligent men who, in harmony with the very genius of true science, demand the exhibit of those crucial experiments which must precede and underlie every scientific theory worthy of acceptance, are met by dark ambiguities and oracular rebukes, which but deepen the conviction in the minds of the recipients that some scientific men are not capable of employing on all occasions, scientific methods. When, for example, the very bread of science, demonstration, is demanded by intelligent Christianity it is quite the fashion with the class of scientific men to which we refer, to give the stone in the form of a sweeping condemnation of all Christendom by the assertion that Christianity opposes science, and has always opposed it from the days of Galileo till now; and that "extinguished theologians lie about the cradle of every science as the strangled snakes beside that of Hercules." This method of working may satisfy the minds of men whose stimulus to research is begotten of enmity to revealed truth; but every lover of science must condemn it as pregnant with that prejudice and blindness so fatal to the discovery and progress of knowledge. The mind which is so porturbed as not to distinguish between the superstition and dogma of the

Church of Rome as exhibited both in the past and at the present, and Bible Christianity, lacks that discernment which is necessary to separate truth from error in the world of science as well as that of history. Rome believes, and acts upon the belief, that ignorance is the mother of devotion. Hence her unceasing attempts to dam up the streams of knowledge, and to shut them off from the people; or, failing this, to poison them at their source. Protestantism, on the other hand, has ever been the constant promoter of knowledge in all its wide departments, and has put forth signal and magnificent efforts both for the universal diffusion of discovered truth and the exploration of new fields of knowledge; well knowing that the Author of revelation is also the Author of the matter and spirit whose wonderful phenomena begirt us on every hand. Science has not begotten Protestantism, but Protestantism science; and a pure Christianity is entrusted, in the providence of God, with the high and glorious duty of defending science from the follies of weak, or the treachery of wicked, brethren, on the one hand; and from the attacks of the devotees of ignorance and superstition on the other. "Extinguished theologians" no doubt lie about the cradles of the sciences (though none have yet fallen beside the cradle of biology); but the tragedy has not stopped here, as the remains of extinguished scientists eminent for their folly or their treachery are to be seen no less thickly strewn beside these cradles, and notably beside that of biology.

When the Christian world was told that protoplasm, a substance common to all living plants and animals, was believed to be the physical basis of life, and that the animal world was dependent on plants for this substance, while the latter derived it, manufactured it, from mineral elements, there was disclosed nothing at variance with previous knowledge, and the wisdom of the All-wise seemed only the more wonderful. But when certain teachers of science set forth the doctrine that the carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, out of which plants manufactured protoplasm, and which were the principal materials yielded by protoplasm on chemical analysis, were able of themselves to begin to live in an organic form, and that in this sense the resultant, protoplasm, was the physical basis of life; Christianity said: This is materialism. It is a doctrine directly opposed to the explicit teachings of the Scriptures; and the evidence on which such a doctrine is propounded in the name of science must be made known. God as revealed in nature has not contradicted himself as revealed in his Word. Combine your dead matter, and make it live before our eyes, said Christian men. The cry of Prof. Huxley and kindred spirits was, in effect: "We have not done it as yet, but the thing is by no means so impossible as it looks. Nature is a better chemist than we are yet, but we hope to overtake her in a few years more." "But," said some of the more ardent disciples of the "New Philosophy," "you blind Bibliolaters may remember the story of the Sophist who demonstrated to Diogenes in the most satisfactory manner that he could not walk; that, in fact, all motion was an impossibility; and that Diogenes refuted him by simply getting up and walking round his tub. Step this way, and you will see how unaided matter gets over your little difficulty, or, rather, an analogous or apparently greater one. Here is spontaneous generation going on. That hermetically sealed bottle contains simply an infusion of hay-water, and mark how it swarms with living creatures—infusoria. The protoplasm contained in the hay has founded the favorable conditions, and has organized itself into living things. That bit of meat is alive with maggots, which are simply the result of the protoplasm organizing itself under different conditions from that afforded by the hay-water—the decomposition of flesh. This is a new wine of science which will burst your old bottles of Judaism and regenerate the world."

After this fashion it is that the "problem of life" is being solved by the defecation of Matter. We hear a good deal about the credulity of those who receive God's word as revealed in the Bible; but we challenge the production of an instance of credulity comparable with that of those who construct a so-called theory of life on the basis we have described. To maintain that a body at rest is set in force independently of any force without itself is, in comparison, a reasonable thing.

We see by our English exchanges that at the meeting of the British Association in September Prof. Huxley delivered the opening address. He reported the various experiments which had been made respecting spontaneous generation, and the results of the later experimenters go to show that