

ST. JOHN, N. B., MAY 4, 1866.

## Sargison on Eternal Punishment.

In a recent Sermon to his people, this eminent servant of God deals with the solemn question of the future punishment of the wicked, thus:

"It is to bealway's punishment, always punishment. Now if the loss should suddenly be annihilated, that annihilation would be no punishment; it would be a boon to be sought with tears. It would be the cessation of all punishment, for how can they be punished who have ceased to be? The punishment spoken of is said to be everlasting, and everlasting it will be! In the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the first chapter and seventh and ninth verses, we are told that such men shall be punished with eternal destruction. Some lay hold upon the word 'eternal destruction' as meaning annihilation, but it is eternal destruction. Annihilation is done at once and done with, but this destruction lasts on for ever. It is eternal destruction, and then it is explained; 'eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power'; therefore to be forever banished from the glory of God and shut out from every source of hope is the destruction here meant. There is a very terrible passage in the twentieth chapter of Revelation where in vision John speaks concerning the condition of lost spirits. If you read the tenth verse speaking of Gog and Magog, it says, 'And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever.' I do not know what the words for ever and ever mean, if they do not mean for ever and ever. Yes, cries one, that torment is for the devil. Very well, why do you sympathize with the devil as well as with men? Is not there as much reason to sympathize with fallen angels as with fallen men? But our Lord has said that the same punishment which awaits Satan will befall the impenitent, for he says, 'Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels'; and in the last verse of the twentieth chapter of Revelation we find, that whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire, that same place into which death and hell were cast. This fire will not cause annihilation; for in Rev. xxi. 8, we are told that certain sinners, such as the 'fearful and unbelieving, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.' How can those have a part who have no existence? To have a part in that fire is the second death. When Jesus speaks of the fire of hell, he does not say that annihilation is effected by it, but speaks on this wise: 'I shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be (not annihilation, but the signs of conscious misery) weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, even if you could get out again, but when it comes with the solemn sanction, as I am persuaded it does, that you never will escape from those hands, oh, why will ye die? Look, look to Jesus, and find eternal life in him. Beware lest you be 'wandering stars, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.'"

"Some suppose that instead of annihilation, restoration awaits the lost. There are no texts in Scripture which when read by honest men can mean this: they must be wickedly and maliciously perverted before they can be made to teach anything of the sort. Scripture does not speak of the fire of hell as chastening and purifying, but as punishment which men shall receive for deeds done in the body. They are to be visited with many stripes, and receive just recompense for transgressions. What can there be about hell fire to change a man's heart? Surely the more the lost will suffer the more they will hate God. When God sent plagues upon the earth, men blasphemed his name. Are they likely to turn at his rebuke then? Satan has been punished for these six thousand years—do you see any signs of repentance about him? Do you see any tokens of his being reclaimed? Is he not just as much a roaring lion, going about seeking whom he may devour, as ever he was? And the case of Satan must run parallel with ours. There are no tokens of his restoration now, nor will there be any tokens of ours then. Besides, if the gospel of Christ cannot save you, what can? If the wounds of Christ's wounds cannot make you love Christ, do you think the flames of hell will? Oh, my hearers, if, with such a gospel as that which is proclaimed to you, you will not turn, do you think you will turn in the world to come? Jesus says not so, but declares that 'he that believeth not shall be damned.' You live in the company of saints now—let all events, you live in a land which represses immorality, but in hell there are no preachers of the gospel—no holy examples to win you to holiness; the dwellers in hell are enemies of God—a pretty school for virtue that. Do you suppose, then, that you who leave this life without the fear of God will be led to turn to him then? Cast away the thought, my hearer, it will deceive you. This fearful doctrine did much mischief in America at one time, but it was so revolting to the common sense of man's conscience, that its day was soon over. This error will eat out the very soul of piety. Still were it true, believers in Jesus are as well off as you are. A gentleman once said to a Universalist, who had been arguing with him, 'I suppose I hate your religion, laugh at it, ridicule it, and spit on it, it will be all the same with me at the last?' 'Yes,' said the other. 'Well,' said the first, 'mind you do not do that with mine, or you are a lost man.' I like the remark of the people who were requested to accept one of these preachers as minister; they said, 'If you have come to tell us that there is no hell, if your doctrine be true, we certainly do not want you; so that either way we can do without you.' It is a most dreadful fact, that there is no provision made for the future restoration of the lost; not a word said about it, except that for them remains the blackness of darkness for ever. Abraham did not say to the rich man, 'My dear son, you will return to my bosom when you have undergone those purifying fires.' Oh, no! That would have been something more than a drop of water to cool his tongue; that would have drenched him with buckets full of the cooling draught. But no, it was just this: 'And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.'"

## Some Religious Aspects of 1866.

The February number of the *Reverist* offers some observations under this caption, that are worthy of the serious consideration of all religious minds. They indicate most clearly the lack of spiritual life and power on the part of those who profess to be the servants of the most High God, and the tendencies towards Rome on the one hand, and towards Rationalism on the other.

With eager yet apprehensive expectation the momentary year upon which we have now entered has been long looked forward to; and while sober-minded people are unable to sympathize with rash and confident predictions as to the future, none who are capable of understanding the prominent features of the time can fail to perceive that, whether in the Church or in the world, among the nations of Christianity or the nations of professing Christians, it is a day of upheaval, transition, and impending re-

of Christ; and first of all as regards the National Establishment; Dr. Pusey, sincere and conscientious, but under a fearful delusion, offers himself and his party to the Pope, while "the Rev. Arthur Gurney is so anxious to oppose Dr. Pusey's notion of union with the Church of Rome, that High Churchmen as he is, he invokes the aid of the Dissenters against the Doctor, just as the latter has sought to do in a letter to the *Patriot* Mr. Gurney says:—'Mutual toleration and charity are essential; but I do not think charity commands silence when a concordat is proposed with Papal Rome.'"

On the other hand, an Evangelical clergyman has put forth a paper in which he laments that the Evangelical body in the Church of England is in danger of being dissolved into its elements. He says:—"Two great schools of opinion" (the Romanizing and the Rationalist), "alike opposed to Evangelical truth, are struggling for victory, and the success of either is fatal to our own position. Is it true, or is it not true, that those called Evangelical have lost influence? Is it true, or is it not true, that our thoughtless young men are followers—too many of them—of Jewett and Stanley, and that our honest old men to be found—especially those of them who are young—enthusiastic disciples of High Church clergyman? The name of 'Evangelical' is not only a reproach among those who are manifestly of the world, but to numbers who seem to be leading pious and godly lives, and whose doctrine on vital points is sound, it is in the highest degree distasteful. Respect for Christ's name makes it to be an honor to bear; the question is whether our present position is altogether of that character. I must frankly confess that I do not think it is. I believe that the cause of the alienation of almost all the young is to be looked for in ourselves, and that there are certain faults in us as a body, which, unless removed, will destroy whatever influence remains to us, and put out the candle of God's truth in England. Our fault consists in a departure from the first principles, and our restoration must be effected by a return to those principles."

The writer proceeds to show that "the supremacy of Scripture as the sole rule of faith and conduct," which "was the very groundwork of the Reformation," has been supplanted by the doctrine that "the Church Standards are the authorized interpretation of Scripture." He maintains that the aim of Evangelical clergyman ought to be to make Holy Scripture once more the rule of faith. To this end he proposes to form an Evangelical Church Association for the purpose of maintaining this and other principles, in opposition to erroneous views and practices now current in the Established Church."

Infidel clergyman, members of the Evangelical Alliance, have made very pungent remarks indicative of a deep dissatisfaction with the state of things around them. While in private circles the condition of the Church is while by all spiritual men; although, when brought into circumstances where faithfulness to their convictions and to Christ demands outspoken expression of the truth, many shrink back, like them of old, they love the praise of men more than the praise which cometh from the only God. Family and other associations, temporal position and worldly prospects, grieve many a disciple of the Cross. What a fearful prospect does the Church of England in 1866, through all its sections, lack the courageous faith by which the elders obtained a good report, which carried the early Christian martyrs through flood and flame, which inaugurated the Reformation, and which was never more needed than it will be before the present generation shall have passed.

Dr. Zeor, an organ of the Evangelical Church party, reports a meeting of clergy at Islington, at which some very important statements were made; the following summary will be instructive to those who discern the signs of the times:—"A clerical meeting was held at Islington on Jan. 8th, at which three hundred of the clergy met to consider the question, 'How may Evangelical preaching, which was the means, under God, of the religious revival of the Church of England during the latter part of the 18th century, be made as effective in the present day to counteract the errors and erroneous tendencies now prevalent; 1, Secularism; 2, Latitudinarianism; 3, Extreme ritualism; 4, Worldly complacency?'"

"The Rev. D. Wilson, vicar of Islington, said that the tendencies are to Papal Rome on the one hand, and to scepticism Germany on the other. Attempts are made by some to join the English with the Greek Church; by others to make common cause with the Pope. A decline of spiritual religion is visible; rulers of the Church are leading her astray; the plague and infection are spreading, and traitors are within our own coudel. Evangelical men have been temporizing, and are tempted to comply not only as to creed, but as to practice and life. The old standard of the Bible is not considered enough. We need a new evangelic preaching principles, evangelic preaching, evangelic practice, evangelic faithfulness to Christ, evangelic separation from the world; evangelic principles, i. e., carried out in holy, self-denying work and life."

"The Rev. Hugh McNeile showed that the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration lay at the root of the present weakness. He urged the teaching of the Word of God, prayer, and holiness of life. Then our preaching was of the world, the flesh, and the devil. "The Rev. E. Garbett read a paper on ritualism. "The Rev. W. R. Mackenzie read one upon worldly compliances, now so prevalent. He showed what was meant by 'the world.' (For its use in the New Testament, see *Cruden*.) Now the world serves the Church a little; the Church serves the world. He spoke of the mercantile and the moral world, the world of pleasure, of vice, of intellect, of literature, of science, of art, of the world of the soul, even if men were bold enough, and wise enough, and faithful enough to stand forward in these difficult times. The whole Christian Church is in a declining condition. The complaint by godly men on all sides is that the evangelical ministry of the day fails to meet the every-day necessities of the people. They talk of revivals, but they (the Established Church) were not revived."

"In the Church of England that yearnings for a better time are heard. The spiritual torpor and the worldly energy of professing Christians in all the Dissenting bodies is a matter of common lament, while the increased expenditure upon the ornamental building and decoration of churches (chapels are extinct), contrasting grievously with the penurious scale of giving to the poor, affords a melancholy illustration of the truth of the remark made during the week of prayer: 'Christ identified that there should be taxes among the wheat; but often, alas! the state of the Church has been rather such as would bear the inscription—'Wheat among the tares.'"

"Just as in Israel, unbelief and disobedience again and again brought the people into difficulties, and God in mercy interposed to help them by means not provided for in their system; so in the history of the Church, deliverance has been effected after the same manner, but by means not provided for in the system. By Judges and Prophets, not taken from the priestly tribe, but sometimes, as in the case of Gideon, from the meanest of the people, or from men of blighted parentage like David, and at other times from the higher ranks of life, or from the royal family, did God in unfailing faithfulness fulfil his promise to the fathers: 'I will raise up for Israel a Deliverer.' In Israel, David was a Gentile, he was raised to bless or to deliver Israel; but at the same time to stain the pride of human glory. Just so in the Church's history, established forms have invariably degenerated; and by some obscure vessel, into whom God has put the light of truth, has He delivered his people, and thus reiterated his refusal to give his glory to another: 'For no flesh should glory in his presence.'"

"Thus in our own day we have seen lords and labourers, women and children, raised up by God to declare his truth; while the leaders of Israel have, like Barak, taken their instructions from a woman's mouth, and dim-eyed priests, like Eli, have been set aside, while the Lord has been with the child Samuel, and let none of his words fall to the ground."

"But this 'day' is not the time of the inward weakness and imperfection of all human ministry; and while Church Establishments and Nonconformist organizations are being shaken, as we see, it is not strange that the houses which are divided against themselves should regard as an intrusion this testimony of men, women, and children, who have not graduated in the schools of the prophets, are not tainted with the methods of Rome, and have not learned subjection to their codes and forms."

"We have reached an important crisis in the progress of this revival. We require the express guidance of God for the new circumstances in which we find ourselves. One thing is needful for us all—that we be filled with the Holy Ghost. Apart from this, alliance between Church and Dissent will be of no avail. We are called upon to witness, in this season of the Holy Day, Evangelical Church Association."

ations will be powerless, and the gatherings formed by evangelists will not be assemblies of saints with one accord, of one heart and of one soul; but of sects making manifest the men who are approved among them; they will become meetings of individuals, not to eat the Lord's supper, but every one his own supper, not discerning the Lord's body. He need not the repelling as well as the attractive power of the Holy Ghost, to lift up the Son of Man that He may draw all the weary and heavy-laden to Himself, but so to have the power of the Holy Ghost upon his people, that Self, the inward Antichrist, may be consumed by the spirit of his mouth and destroyed by the brightness of his coming. Then would souls be added to the Lord, multitudes of men and women; then would the power of God be seen in the Church, as in the days of Ananias and Sapphira; the crowd of mere professors would be driven out; and the glory of God should so fill his living temple that it should be once more as in the days when 'great grace was upon them all, and of the rest durst no man join himself unto them.' 'Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?'"

## Monthly Report of the Ministerial Temperance Alliance.

The monthly meeting of the M. T. A. was held in the Vestry of the German Street Methodist Church, on Monday, April 30th, at 10 o'clock A. M.

President in the Chair.

Prayer by Bro. Sutcliffe.

Minutes of former meeting read and approved.

Reports from the various meetings held during the month of April, showed an aggregate of 251 names to the pledge of Total Abstinence.

On motion, Resolved—That we publish a report of our operations monthly.

Resolved—That a Temperance Meeting be held with the Portland Baptist Church this evening.

The appointments for the month of May are as follows:—The first meeting to be held with the German Street Methodist Church, on Monday evening, May 7th; second, with the Methodist Church in Carleton, May 14th; third, with the German Street Baptist Church, Tuesday, May 22d; fourth, with the St. John Presbyterian Church, Wednesday, May 30th.

A Committee was appointed to draft Circulars to the Grand Division of the Sons of Temperance, the Good Templars, and to all the Evangelical ministers in the Province. The Committee is composed of the following brethren:—Rev. Messrs. McKay, Bennett, Garner, and Huestis.

Adjourned to meet May 30th, at 10 o'clock.

W. V. GARNER, Rec. Sec.

## Revival Intelligence.

(From the Watchman and Reflector.)

REVIVAL IN CHELSEA.—We are indebted to Rev. Dr. Mason for the following account of the very graceful revival with which his people and the other evangelical churches of Chelsea have been visited:

God has poured out His Spirit on this city in a remarkable manner. From the first of the year there has been much earnest praying and deep feeling. The different evangelical churches felt that there was a work of mercy hanging over them. Their prayer has been that it might break and let down 'showers of blessings' on the Zion of God, and on the city. Pastors and people laboured earnestly, but the blessing did not come. Our cry was, 'Lord, send by whom Thou wilt send, we must have the blessing.' Four weeks ago Rev. A. B. Earle, by invitation of the First Baptist Church, commenced labouring with us. Invitation was given to other churches to come in and share the labour of the meetings.

The Carey Avenue Baptist Church, and the two Congregational churches accepted the invitation, and with their pastors labored as earnestly and were as much blessed as our own church. Many of our Methodist brethren attended and enjoyed the meetings, but were without pastors, it being the time of their Annual Conference. Our house was soon crowded, and many went away not able to get even a stand, and in the last week of the meetings, the Carey Avenue Baptist Church, and the two Congregational churches accepted the invitation, and with their pastors labored as earnestly and were as much blessed as our own church. Many of our Methodist brethren attended and enjoyed the meetings, but were without pastors, it being the time of their Annual Conference. 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