

## ARTICLE VI.

## "IS ETERNAL PUNISHMENT ENDLESS?"

BY REV. FRANK H. FOSTER, NORTH READING, MASS.

Two years ago there appeared, anonymously, a little book with the title, *Is "Eternal" Punishment Endless?* It was noticed variously by different publications, and then apparently sunk out of sight. Recent events have shown, however, that it had a wider influence than was supposed. One respectable edition of the book has been exhausted, and a second is now put forth.<sup>1</sup> The new edition has a new preface, at the close of which the author signs his name, and an appendix containing some critical remarks, and some congratulatory extracts from private letters to the author; but the text stands unaltered. It is unfortunate that some alterations could not have been made, for the book would do more credit to its author were it cleared of certain unnecessary convolutions in the argument. The argument is defective in method. It proceeds in a series of whirls, rather than in the straight line of a logical discussion. Such phrases as, "Of this more at another stage of our inquiry";<sup>2</sup> and, "We shall presently make a strong objection to the traditional preference,"<sup>3</sup> etc., are of too frequent occurrence. Such anticipation of the argument has an appearance which a candid writer should be

<sup>1</sup> *Is "Eternal" Punishment Endless? Answered by a Re-statement of the Original Scriptural Doctrine, by an Orthodox Minister of the Gospel.* Second edition. Boston: Lockwood, Brooks, and Co. 1878. The Preface is signed, James Morris Whiton, Williston Seminary, Easthampton.—A recent English work is noticed in the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review: Future Punishment; Some current Theories concerning it Stated and Estimated; to which is added a View that is something more than a Theory.* By Clement Clemance, B.A., Camberwell. London: John Swan and Co. 1877. The position of this book seems to be substantially that of Mr. Whiton. The present Article is devoted to a review of Mr. Whiton's book.

<sup>2</sup> p. 2.<sup>3</sup> p. 17.

careful to avoid, when it can be so easily avoided as here. The anticipated arguments, when they come, may sometimes be criticised, also, as not adding enough to what has already been said to justify repetition.

There are more serious errors of method than this. The argument does not begin at the right point. *αἰώνος* is discussed by itself, and then its primitive *αἰών*, after which return is made to the derivative. The derivative should be discussed in the light of the primitive, and not *vice versa*. There is an improper change of base in the discussion. The author first discusses the meaning of *αἰώνιος* upon the supposition that it is quantitative, and then declares that it is qualitative. Certainly it is one or the other, and it is no more than proper to demand that the author should discover which, and then conduct his argument upon that supposition alone.

While, therefore, we follow our author's general order of discussion, and consider first the explicit and secondly the implicit teachings of Scripture, we shall pay little regard to the order of his subordinate arguments. Let us begin with *the explicit teachings of Scripture*.

In the investigation of this subject, as well as of all other subjects, the student should proceed from the simple to the more complex. What is plain may then be used to elucidate what is more obscure. Upon this principle we shall begin with the plainest of the texts, Matt. xxv. 46; with the plainest of the words used, *αἰώνιος*; and with the simplest element in the meaning of this word, the meaning of its primitive *αἰών*.

Upon the derivation of *αἰών* the lexicographers are now agreed.<sup>1</sup> It is derived from the root *AIF*, which appears in Greek in *ἀει*, *always*, and in our own language, which is a member of the same family as the Greek, in *ever*. It is true that no case has been found in extant Greek where the

<sup>1</sup> Curtius, 585; Fick, *vergl. Wörterb. s.v. ἄην*; Benfrey, *Wurzellex.*; Ebeling, *Lex. Hom.*; Lid. and Sc. *s.v. ἀει* (6th Eng. ed.), connect with *ἀει, æternus, æternus*, Germ. *ewig*, Eng. *ever*. It is significant that Cremer, who formerly followed Grimm in deriving it from *ἔω, ἔημι*, has now given this derivation in his second edition (*bibl. theol. Wörterb. 2te Aufl. s.v.*)

existence of the digamma in *αἰών* is indisputably evident; but analogy, and the Latin *aeternum*, destroy the force of this objection.<sup>1</sup>

The word *αἰεί* in Greek has exactly the meaning of the word *always* in English. This meaning is definite and exact, and yet the word is very frequently used aside from that exact meaning. When strictly used it denotes endlessness, but when freely used it denotes perpetual duration under evident limitations. It might be expected that confusion and uncertainty would follow if the meaning of the word might vary as it really does from strict eternity to the duration of a few hours; but there is no confusion or uncertainty. The canon to determine the meaning of the word is simple, and capable of instant application by the youngest child. The word is to be interpreted according to its strict meaning unless there is evidence to the contrary. We say, The truth will always stand; there is no evidence that the word *always* is to be restricted, and accordingly we give it its full force. But when we say, This house has always stood here; there is evidence that the word *always* is to be limited. If we knew nothing about the nature of houses, and if there were nothing in any other circumstance of the case to give positive evidence of the restricted application of the word *always*, we should be obliged on the authority of this sentence to number houses among the imperishable things. It is not enough, therefore, to say, as our author does,<sup>2</sup> that the connection of this word settles its meaning, for this is but half the truth. The word has a meaning of its own, and this is a large element in the decision of any particular case. The connection shows whether this meaning is to be restricted, or not, and how much restricted, but does not supply, as it cannot destroy, the word's original and positive meaning.

The connection of *αἰών* with *αἰεί* proves at least that it is a time-word. From usage is derived the conclusive argument as to its meaning. It properly means strict eternity, and is thus used in classic as well as New Testament Greek. But

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Curtius, 585.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 3, 4, 5.

it is subject to the same kind of variations as its primitive *αἰέ*, and is to be interpreted upon the same principle. In classic Greek it is often much restricted in meaning. It is used of man, the utmost of whose earthly course is his life, and accordingly becomes *lifetime*. The range of its meanings short of strict eternity is very wide. In the New Testament it is often found in these lower meanings, but it also rises into its full and proper significance, especially in the phrase *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, which means just what the English phrase *forever* means. Like *forever*, *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* is sometimes used of strict eternity, as in such passages as Rom. ix. 5, "God blessed forever." But it is very often used in a popular sense; our author refers to the following examples: John viii. 35, "The son abideth for ever"; or 1 Cor. viii. 13, "I will eat no flesh forever." Admit that these and other cases of the restricted application of the phrase may be found, yet no case has been found in which this meaning of *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, if allowed the same latitude of application with our English phrase, does not perfectly satisfy the requirements of text and context.

From the meaning of *αἰών* found in this example comes the word *αἰώνιος*. It therefore means *eternal*. That this is its meaning in *many* cases all must confess.<sup>1</sup> Careful examination will exhibit more than this. It will be found that the requirements of *every* case will be satisfied by this meaning, but that any other meaning will fall short of the requirements of some passages. With this meaning, and with the method of interpretation above explained, the sacred writers are found to speak with the greatest plainness; every other method leaves their meaning often in obscurity. It is but a fair presumption that they intended to speak plainly, and if we are to believe that they did not have this intention, a great deal of evidence will be required to warrant such a

<sup>1</sup> p. 4. "The Epithet *aeonian* may denote the eternity of God." The elaborate concordance found at the close of another Article in this number (vid. pp. 305, 306), will enable any one easily to satisfy himself as to the truth of these representations. The usage of the LXX, which is very important in this discussion, is also illustrated in that Article (pp. 305, 306).

belief. Until such evidence is furnished, it is our place, in accordance with all sound principles of interpretation, to follow the presumption in the case, and while we accept the Bible as our authoritative guide in matters of religion, to believe the doctrines thus educed from it. Accordingly upon the authority of Matt. xxv. 46, unrebutted as it is by any other passage of Scripture, we must accept the doctrine of the eternity of future punishment as those words are commonly and properly understood.

The method of our author is the reverse of all this. He examines the word *αἰώνιος*, and declares that it sometimes refers to limited time. He then affirms that, in the text before us, it cannot be *known* that it is used in the strict sense. He discovers that *αἰώνιος* is qualitative in meaning, and then declares that we *cannot say* that the qualitative force in this passage does not exclude the quantitative. Here is the fundamental error of the book. The author is guilty of the grave logical fallacy called mistaking the *onus probandi*. If *αἰώνιος* is not used in this passage in its most extensive meaning, it is for him to prove it. We should believe that it was so used if the text stood alone. Much more, with the present positive arguments derived from the context, have we reason to believe it. Vastly greater is the reason for believing it when the accumulated evidence, of countless passages of Scripture<sup>1</sup> is presented to us, and when they give us but one impression, and this that punishment is eternal. Here is a presumption created in reference to the word *αἰώνιος* which calls for the most careful attention. We have begun with the explicit teaching of Scripture, but in actual study we do not, and cannot, and have no right to ignore the anterior presumption created by the Bible as a whole. The presumption of the case is the

<sup>1</sup> They are really "countless," for in every exhortation to the impenitent, and every reference to their condition, the endlessness of their punishment seems to appear, as the background of a picture is seen in every part of it. See especially such passages as : Dan. xii. 2 ; Matt. v. 25 and 26 ; xviii. 23-35 ; xxvi. 24 ; Luke xvi. 26 ; John v. 29 ; viii. 21 ; Heb. x. 26 ; Jude 6 ; Rev. xiv. 11 ; xix. 3 ; xx. 10 ; xxii. 11.

key-note of the argument. This presumption our author must rebut, and these positive arguments answer. Instead of this, he throws the burden of proof upon us. He presents reasons why it is *possible* that, in this text and other texts, strict eternity is not meant, and then calls upon us to prove that it is meant. His argument is negative, when it should be positive.<sup>1</sup> This is a grave logical fallacy, and a logical fallacy is never committed without destroying the trustworthiness of the result. Exegetics cannot escape the demands of logic. Logic is not a science for the benefit of advocates in court, but one upon which all sound reasoning must proceed. The reasoning of this book does not proceed upon logical principles, and it is not sound.

It is from the logical stand-point that we make our objection against the author's change of base in the discussion of the word *αιώνιος*. Such reasoning would be perfectly proper for the advocates of the eternity of punishment, for the presumption is upon their side, and they have only to answer objections to prevail. They have simply to criticise the arguments presented by their opponents, and rebut them if they can. They are like the defendants in court, and the prosecution must prove its case. In a trial for murder the defendant may demand proof, 1. that he killed the man; 2. that he killed him in *malice prepense*, and not in self-defence. The prosecutor's duty is different; he has to present the truth as it is. Our author is the prosecutor; but

<sup>1</sup> This is true of the argument as a whole. A semblance of a positive argument is presented upon pp. 47-49. The adjective *αιώνιος* is declared to be qualitative and therefore "aeonian punishment" is punishment of a certain kind. But evidently this does not exclude the quantitative force of the adjective, and Mr. Whiton does not pretend that it does. Now, here we say, the presumption is, that this adjective in this passage is used of time, and of time without end. What is your proof that it does not? To this question no answer is given. Another apparently positive argument is found in the attempt to limit the meaning of *αίών*, and then to diminish the meaning of *αιώνιος*. The final result of this attempt is given on p. 17, and it is that all which the definition "aeonian" gives with any certainty is this, "that the punishment belongs to or occurs in the aeon or the aeons to come." Granting so much, the presumption in this passage that the punishment will never cease remains, and the burden of proof rests upon Mr. Whiton, a burden which he does not take up.

he argues like the defendant. He says, 1. that *αἰώνιος* is limited in duration; 2. that it does not refer to duration. His arguments destroy each other; for such a style of reasoning is out of place.

Let us now examine this argument more in detail. The method pursued by our author is essentially one of minimizing. It is first shown that *αἰώνιος* is applied to temporary and finite objects, like a land-mark or the hills. It is said to have a more or less extensive meaning, according to the word joined with it. This is an unfair statement; because it leaves out of account the intrinsic meaning of the word. Our author then comes to what should logically be the first step in his process, and attacks the phrase *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*. This he translates, "for the aeon." In such a passage as Mark iii. 29, which is, translated literally, "hath not forgiveness forever," the bearing of our author's change upon the subject of future punishment is very evident. "Hath not forgiveness for the aeon" certainly leaves the impression that the sinner may, at least, obtain forgiveness in some succeeding aeon. This translation has, apparently, the advantage of superior accuracy; but we maintain that it is inaccurate. It rests upon the idea, advanced by Dr. Tayler Lewis,<sup>1</sup> that the Hebrews conceived of time under the form of a succession of finite aeons. The argument in support of this idea may be summarized thus: "The plural of עֲשָׂרָה shows that the proper meaning of this word is not eternity, but a cycle. It is a great indefinite period, seemingly independent of outward phenomenal measurement. These indefinite cycles, occurring one after another, make up the grand progress of eternity. This conception will harmonize with many passages of the Old Testament, and with certain indications in other ancient writings. In the New Testament *αἰών* has the same meaning. It denotes a vast cycle, in the future or the past, and eternity is represented as made up of a succession of these cycles. This

<sup>1</sup> Excursus on Olamic Words, Lange on Eccl. i. 4. Dr. Lewis is not to be held responsible for the theory which Mr. Whiton builds upon his remarks.

succession is denoted by the plural *αιῶνες*. By the same mode of speech the present course of things is spoken of as *this aeon*, and past duration is represented as a course or courses of things, succeeding one another under the form of *the aeon*, or *the aeons*, or simply *aeons*.'

This view lacks evidence in its favor. The *onus probandi* is not fairly taken up. It is true that the meaning *cycle* can be derived from the original meaning of the word עֵלָם, which is, "hidden time, i.e. obscure and long, of which the beginning or end is uncertain or indefinite";<sup>1</sup> but it is less readily derived than the meaning commonly accepted. It is true that the plural form, and especially the use to which this plural is put, favors the view advocated; but these peculiarities are easily explained upon the common theory. It is true that repetitions occur, like עֵלָם וְעֵלָם (Ps. xc. 2), and, when translated "from world to world," seem to favor the new explanation; but so, if these principles of interpretation are correct, do repetitions familiar in English, such as *forever and ever*, favor the theory that the English-speaking nations conceive of time under the form of a succession of aeons. The truth is, the language is laboring to express a transcendent idea, and we hear, as it were, the straining of the ship's cordage and the creaking of her timbers under the effort; but this is not her ordinary condition. Let any one examine the passages in the Old Testament containing the word עֵלָם, and he will find that the meaning *eternity* cannot be reasonably doubted. It gives the most perfect rendering possible for the passage (Eccl. i. 4) upon which Dr. Lewis has chosen to found his theory, if the Hebrew be permitted to use language as the English and all other nations use it, and restrict the meaning of the phrase *forever* by the subject in hand. The contrast is between the transitory condition of man and the permanence of his abode: "*Men* pass away, but the *earth* abideth forever." Even in the solitary instance in which our English Bible has

<sup>1</sup> Robinson's Gesenius, s. v. Fürst (Davidson) s. v.: "Properly the veiled, concealed, dark, distant; of unlimited time whether past or future."

ventured to render עולם by *world* (Eccl. iii. 11), the meaning eternity is perfectly satisfactory, and no other meaning is.<sup>1</sup>

But the great objection to Dr. Lewis's theory is, that it exalts to the rank of a consistent and metaphysical theory what was at most a poetical and imaginative conception. Such a conception there was, and it is found in the New Testament. Now it appears in a two-fold division of time between this world and the world to come.<sup>2</sup> Now it appears in reference to the past as ages.<sup>3</sup> Quite common are

<sup>1</sup> "Hath set עולם in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." Dr. Lewis in his comment upon this passage rejects the meaning of *worldliness* in his interpretation of עולם. He acknowledges that *eternity* would give a good meaning; but he applies here his new theory, and in order to do so is obliged to change the meaning of עולם from merely *world* to *world-problem*. Man ponders upon this world, this grand cycle in which events are taking place, and finds that the true explanation of events is not to be gathered in so short a space as his earthly life. "His angle of vision, even with the mightiest aid it has ever had, or may expect to have, is too small to take in more than a few degrees, or a few seconds of a degree in the mighty arc we are traversing." But why not say *eternity-problem*? As far as the point under consideration is concerned, Dr. Lewis's *world-problem* does not differ from *eternity-problem*. If *world* is a great epoch of immeasurable extent so is *eternity*. A man in view of *eternity* may see that this life gives him too short a space to find the explanation of God's dealings, as well as in view of the *world*. What is gained in the idea implied in the word "arc"? If Dr. Lewis has made any contribution to the interpretation of this passage, does it consist in the element indicated in his words, "as things go round"? Let the reader ask himself this question as he runs through the comment, and he will see the unsubstantial character of this theory. But interpret עולם *eternity*, and Dr. Lewis's principle of explanation makes the passage perfectly plain.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xii. 32. Our author makes this passage tributary to his views by translating it: It shall not be forgiven him either in this aeon or in the one to be. This may imply that in some succeeding aeon it will be forgiven. But this rendering, and the validity of this implication, depend upon the theory above presented, and not the theory upon this passage. Without the theory the passage is perfectly plain. The two-fold division of time is as evident as need be, and the parallel passage, Mark iii. 29, makes it, if possible, plainer. But postulate the theory, and this passage and others may be interpreted in accordance with it.

<sup>3</sup> p. 5. "In such connections certainly if the word denotes duration at all, it is duration ended rather than *endless*." Ended and endless, we should say; ended at *this* end, to be sure, but endless as proceeding from an origin infinitely, or when restricted by the context, indefinitely distant. In the foot-note, p. 5, Tit. i. 2 ("In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began") is said to refer to certain *definite* periods of the past. This

the intensive forms, like *εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*. But this is poetry, and poetry it is when found in other languages. The biblical writers had no idea of setting up a theory of time; they are not speaking mathematically, nor does any one in our day under similar circumstances. If there were any evidence that this was a philosophical theory soberly held, if the passages quoted to sustain it were philosophical in character, and not rhetorical, if they were not abundantly explained upon the common theory, the new theory would have more in its favor. But it is supported by no valid arguments. It has its origin in the mysticism of those who propound it. The method of criticism upon which it depends would make ridiculous nonsense of every highly impassioned passage in oratory. A speaker wishes to impress upon the United States Senate the ruinous effects of a false financial policy, and closes his speech with the words: "Senators of this Republic, it is the voice of History, sounding through the ages, that if we pass this bill its evil effects will endure forever, and *ever*, and *EVER*." The critic says: "Forever and ever and ever," — that is a curious expression. What can it mean? "Ever," — that can't mean strict eternity; for then he wouldn't use a second *ever*. The first would cover the whole ground. "Ages," — O yes! evidently there is a succession in his mind, — yes, a succession of ages. He means by the first *ever* one period or cycle; by the second *ever*, another; by the third, another. Of course he means more than he says; for we are not to tie him down to strict accuracy. He means that one age may roll away, and then another, and then another, and perhaps one or two more, before the evil will cease. Evidently his idea is cyclical.

The really accurate translation of *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* is, therefore, *forever*. The effort to break down this meaning rests upon is, at least, not beyond dispute. Alford says that it refers to eternity. God had purposes which he formed in eternity, and hence this form of expression. This eternal purpose was the origin of the promise made in time. So Rom. xvi. 25 ("The revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began.") The idea is, "never before known."

an untenable theory. Derivation and usage both favor this meaning. It satisfies all the requirements of the case. When the Bible declares of those guilty of a certain sin that they shall not have forgiveness forever,<sup>1</sup> it means what it says, and not only takes away the warrant of all hope, by neglecting to promise forgiveness at some future time, but shuts out all hope, by definitely proclaiming that there shall never be forgiveness.<sup>2</sup>

The attack upon the word *αἰών* was designed to show "that there is no single word that regularly carries the meaning of our word eternity."<sup>3</sup> If this could be shown, obviously the meaning of *αἰώνιος* would be greatly weakened. But there is a separate attack upon *αἰώνιος*, and to that we now turn. The minimizing method of the book is somewhat differently applied to this word. As we have seen, the meaning of strict eternity is conceded to it in certain cases; but because it is sometimes used of such objects as the hills, which are not strictly eternal, it is argued that when it is used of punishment we cannot say but that it means *very long*, instead of strictly *eternal*. If the word is used of strict eternity, the context or the nature of the subject must clearly show this to be the case.

This method of reasoning, as we have already remarked, involves the logical fallacy of mistaking the *onus probandi*. But there is another fallacy involved in it. It makes a demand for more evidence as to the meaning of a word than the nature of the case allows. Against such reasoning no word could retain its proper signification. To discover the least extensive meaning of a word, and then say that it can never be positively affirmed to mean more than this least extensive meaning, is absurd. Our author remarks that the word "everlasting itself has this variable meaning, according

<sup>1</sup> Mark iii. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Whiton brings forward certain passages to prove a limited use of the phrase *eis τὸν αἰῶνα* independently of this argument. The method is the same pursued with the word *αἰώνιος*, and does not need special attention. The passages are: John xiv. 16; 1 Cor. viii. 13; Heb. v. 6; 1 Pet. i. 25; vid. p. 13 sq.

<sup>3</sup> p. 18.

to the connection in which it stands. . . . No one is misled by the varied use of the word, because the connection in each case defines it."<sup>1</sup> Does he not see that to quote an English word is to supply materials for his own refutation? The word "everlasting" sometimes has a meaning of very limited extension; and yet it may be positively affirmed, at times, that it is infinite in extension, because, through and in all its uses, it has a meaning of its own. It is not like some animals, to take its color from its surroundings; it has individuality. We restrict it when circumstances call for its restriction; but otherwise we do not. Applied to God, it takes its full meaning; because there is no evidence that it should not. Applied to future punishment, it takes its full meaning; because there is no evidence that it should not. In the face of the phenomena of language occurring in the every-day speech of millions, to demand that whenever the various words for eternity are used in their fullest signification there should be some positive evidence that it is so, is to make a demand beyond all reason. It is a demand leading to strange results. Should ever a dispute arise as to the proper eternity of God, the method of argument which our author employs might be successfully used to prove that the Bible does not teach the doctrine! On such principles the Bible is really no longer the standard of appeal. It becomes a book unable to furnish evidence enough to answer our doubts.

I have said that no word is secure against this kind of assault. The very word which our author puts upon the title-page of his book is as variable in meaning as *αἰώνιος*. Endless trouble may be very transient trouble. Our author quotes certain words which he says are the "appropriate Greek words to express the idea of endlessness with precision." It is a significant fact, in his estimation, that the writers of the New Testament never used these words, but employed one so "elastic and ambiguous" as *αἰώνιος*.<sup>2</sup> But any word would become elastic and ambiguous if subjected

<sup>1</sup> p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> p. 8.

to our author's processes. Our author specifies *ἀκατάλυτος*, *ἀτελεύτητος*, and *ἀπέραντος*. But *ἀκατάλυτος* is applied, by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, to the power of a human institution.<sup>1</sup> *Ἀτελεύτητος* will hardly be able to maintain its character as a precise word with our author, when he looks at Luke i. 33, where of the mediatorial kingdom of Christ, which he himself says will end,<sup>2</sup> it is said: *οὐκ ἔσται τέλος*.<sup>3</sup> *Ἀπέραντος* has little enough claim to precision, in face of the example which our author himself quotes (1 Tim. i. 4), "endless genealogies," which, of course, were not strictly endless; but still less claim has it when we hear Strepsiadès, in *The Clouds*,<sup>4</sup> impatient for the morning, exclaim: *τὸ χρῆμα τῶν νυκτῶν ὄσον ἀπέραντον*. The "appropriate word to express with precision the idea of endlessness" here denotes so endless a thing as one night.<sup>5</sup> If precision is in question, the precise meaning of these words is often nothing more nor less than uninterrupted, continuous — as we say: the ever flowing river; meaning: the uninterruptedly flowing river.<sup>6</sup> It is an old remark, — but elaborate research only makes it more evident, — that of all the words used to express the idea of eternity, *αἰώνιος* is the most precise.

<sup>1</sup> Dion, H. A. R. 10 c. 31, τὸ τῆς δημοκρατίας ἀκατάλυτον ἔσσεσθαι κράτος. Cf. Nicéph. Blomm., p. 617 *Μαί, βασιλείαν μόνιμον τε καὶ ἀκατάλυτον*. Phot. Epist., 128, p. 170 *ἀποθήκας ἀκαταλύτους*.

<sup>2</sup> p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Whiton asks (p. 8) why in the church creed of the sixth century "endless" was added to define "eternal." We reply that a new term may be used merely for clearness in a disputed case without implying that the old term was incorrectly used in the same sense. When a Baptist says that baptism should be by immersion, he does not mean to admit that the word baptism does not in itself mean immersion.

<sup>4</sup> line 3.

<sup>5</sup> Vid. Pind. N. 8, 38, *πεθίον ἀπέραντον*. Eur. Med. 212, *ἐφ' ἄλμυρὰν πόντου κληῖδ' ἀπέρ*.

<sup>6</sup> Cleoricus, *αἵματος ἀπορροή ἀπέραντα φερομένου*. The phrase *eis τὸ διηνεκές* illustrates the use of such expressions. It is used of the strictly eternal perfection of the saints, Heb. x. 14; of the sacrifice of Christ which will never be repeated, Heb. x. 12; of the uninterrupted course of the Jewish sacrifices, Heb. x. 1; and of the priesthood of Melchisedec (which will end when Christ's does), Heb. vii. 3. On p. 27 Mr. Whiton asks why the word *διήμιος* is never used instead of *αἰώνιος*? But if *αἰώνιος* is unintelligible, *διήμιος* would have been also.

We come now to the change of this argument from one base to another. It is now said that *αἰώνιος*, when applied to future punishment, in Matt. xxv. 46, is not quantitative, but qualitative. The argument for this statement may be briefly summed up in what can be said upon a single text: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3). From this text the principle is deduced that *eternal life* denotes *primarily*<sup>1</sup> not life of a certain *length*, but life of a certain *kind*; that the idea of perpetuity inheres in it *not primarily*, but "only so far as the qualities themselves which characterize that life are vital, progressive, and enduring."

To this argument the reply is simply this: *αἰώνιος*, in such expressions, has a qualitative meaning, but this qualitative meaning is not *primary*, as our author says, but secondary and metaphorical. The primary meaning is quantitative, and even in the text quoted is not excluded by the more prominent qualitative force of the word. Eternal life means primarily, life without end. This is what is strictly denoted by the words; but they connote much more. The English word *eternity* itself, which indisputably denotes endless time, connotes much more. The high employments, the sacred joys, the peace, and the holiness of heaven are all suggested by the word. *Eternal life*, in the same way, becomes a rich phrase, laden with meaning to every Christian heart. It becomes almost a compound noun, in which the word *eternal* falls into the background. It signifies, most certainly, a peculiar kind of life; for it expresses that communion with God which is referred to in the context. But under all this is felt, like the deep bass of an organ, the primary meaning, in that these joys are promised by the very word *αἰώνιος* to be never ending.

That this is the primary meaning of the phrase a short examination will show. Lay aside all prepossessions, and run through the examples as given in the concordance, simply

<sup>1</sup> pp. 47-49.

asking the question in each case whether *αἰώνιος* is quantitative or qualitative. Not a single example will be found where the quantitative meaning is inadmissible as the primary meaning. Some examples will be found where the qualitative meaning will satisfy the requirements of the context. Some will be found where both meanings are applicable. And some will be found where the quantitative meaning is absolutely demanded; e.g. John vi. 54, "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." It is the most natural explanation of this phrase to say that Christ speaks of a life which shall continue forever. But when we compare vs. 58, we see that this is in fact the idea had in mind: "This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever." John x. 28 is equally conclusive: "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." The same idea is twice repeated for the sake of giving strength to the statement. If any one should say that "eternal life" cannot mean endless life because Christ goes on to add that they shall never perish, which would be an unnecessary addition if such was the meaning, the reply is, that as the second and third members refer to the same thing, so do the first and second. The repetitions are not made for the sake of making distinctions, but for the purpose of adding strength. John vi. 47, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," may be compared with vs. 51: "If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever."<sup>1</sup> The primary meaning of a word is

<sup>1</sup> Other passages are John iii. 16 and 36; v. 24; Rom. ii. 7; "Whosoever believeth shall have everlasting life." Of course this means much *more* than mere duration; but that does not prove that it does *not* mean duration. — "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." In this passage certainly "immortality" implies more than it expresses; but its implications do not destroy its expressions. So it is with "eternal life." It is a common use of language to give great depth of meaning to expressions denoting duration. Thus we say: Old age is a blessing. We do not mean that mere duration is a *blessing*, for it may be passed in misery. Our principal thought is engaged upon the comforts and rewards that attend it. Still the idea of duration lies at the basis of the whole.

sometimes completely lost in its tropical uses; but surely when, as in this case, a meaning is never absent in the various uses of a word, the argument that it is the primary meaning is as strong as need be; and when it can be shown to be the meaning given by the word's derivation, the argument becomes too strong to be overthrown.

All these attacks are directed against the common interpretation of Matt. xxv. 46, for this text is most justly regarded as deciding the contest one way or the other. If it is to be left as it has previously been understood the ancient doctrine stands. The attempt is therefore made to weaken its force, and make it seem to give an uncertain sound. This attempt must be pronounced a failure. The word *αἰώνιος* is not originally qualitative, but quantitative; and here the whole context makes the quantitative force the more prominent. In its proper quantitative force it signifies eternal, and can only be restricted by the limitations of the circumstances of the case. In this passage no limitations can be made. We cannot limit it by the nature of punishment, for until we have read this passage we know nothing about the actual length of punishment. We cannot limit it by the context, for the whole force of this is overwhelmingly against limiting it. But standing unlimited it teaches eternal future punishment.<sup>1</sup>

Turning now from the *explicit* let us come to the *implicit* teachings of Scripture, or, in other words, to the impression which the Bible makes upon the candid reader.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Whiton's remarks upon some of the other explicit texts are unworthy of him. "Unquenchable fire" (*ἀσβεστος* p. 19) is clearly explained by the parallel expression: "Where the worm dieth not." John iii. 36 must mean that the sinner will be punished for ever. If he "*shall not see life*," when *will* he see it? *Never!* Mr. Whiton calls this an "assumption" (p. 21), and "wresting the Scriptures" (p. 22). If this is wresting, what is interpreting? Our author's method of interpretation seems to be "to shake the head, and pass on." The expression, "He that believeth not the Son," must be understood according to the general tenor of Scripture. It means believeth while the offer of the gospel is held out. That offer will at length be withdrawn, and then the sinner will be irrecoverably lost.

<sup>2</sup> We should note in this connection the impression which Christ's words must

The importance of this argument has often been overlooked. It is evident that the Bible is made for the people. It is written in the popular language, and is adapted to the popular mind. Men in general are not to be reached or impressed by single texts here and there, but they are very quick to take the general impression of a book, and to gather its teachings as a whole. Their "Greek instinct" is not highly developed, but they will gather the plain truth of the Bible in spite of the slight mistranslations which disfigure the pages of our excellent English version, and which are so misleading to scholars. How often does the scholar present in a sermon an idea to him wholly new, elaborately developed, and derived from authorities in Latin and Greek and Hebrew and Arabic and Coptic, to find, to his confusion, that some plain Christian in his congregation had become familiar with that very idea from his English Bible years before. It is the glory of the Christian religion, and a truth upon which scholars should ponder before they venture upon novel interpretations, that the spiritual insight of faith affords the truest source of sound exegesis. It is the gift of the Holy Spirit which makes a man a competent expounder of the Bible. This gift has been promised to lead us into the knowledge of divine things. It is promised to the lowliest as well as to the most learned; and often the humblest obtains it when the proud loses it. The Bible has been constructed so as to favor a spiritual interpretation. In all languages its great truths are equally plain, but in no language are they to be discerned except spiritually. Give me the judgment of the great majority of plain, honest, candid, patient, and laborious readers of the Bible, and I will bow before it with more reverence than before the most learned prelections of an unsubmitive mind. Let me know the im-

have made upon the Jews with their ideas as to future punishment. They believed the punishment to be eternal. Christ did not oppose their belief, as he opposed their belief on many subjects. They must have understood him as sanctioning their belief. He used their words for expressing it. — Compare Jeseplus, Bel. Jud. ii. 8, 14; Antiq. xviii. 1, 3.

pression made by the Bible upon the great mass of Christians, and I will test the productions of scholarship by it.

Upon the doctrine of future punishment the impression made by the Bible is perfectly plain. It stands, and always has stood, in favor of the doctrine of the eternal conscious suffering of the lost.<sup>1</sup> Over the vision of the judgment-day there is a dread aspect of finality. This is admitted even by our author, who cites a number of passages in illustration of it. The verdict of the common sense upon these passages has always been, and always will be, the same: The sinner's case is hopeless.<sup>2</sup>

But here our author asks a strange question. "A finality, no doubt," he says, "but how much of one?"<sup>3</sup> *How much* of a finality? Can finality be divided? If a thing is done, it is done. True, a thing may be done in one aspect and not in another. The question may be asked, A finality, but in what respect? But this is not the case in hand. Our author has asked his question correctly. The finality suggested by the Bible is a finality in respect to time, and in the same respect our author asks, "How much of one?" This is playing fast and loose with language. Upon such principles of criticism the Bible can never mean anything. Either there is an aspect of finality or there is not. Both the negative and the affirmative cannot be true. If the aspect of finality does exist, are we to rest entirely upon it, or is there evidence to contradict our first impressions? If those impressions are permitted to remain, finality is finality, and hope is shut out.

This attempt to parry what is acknowledged to be the impression of the Bible must be pronounced a failure. Yet this attempt must succeed, or our author's book must fail as a whole. The impression of the Bible that the sinner's case is hopeless is admitted, and, indeed, seems to form in part the groundwork of the book. Very solemn passages

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note how many texts Mr. Whiton is obliged to explain away in order to bring the Scriptures into harmony with his view. Vid. note p. 357, for the texts which he takes up.

<sup>2</sup> p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> p. 35.

occur, enforcing the fact that the Bible excludes every ray of hope.<sup>1</sup> But this is in total contradiction of the conclusion to which the whole argument is directed, that the punishment of the sinner is not declared to be endless. If it is not declared to be endless, then we may hope that it is not endless. The sinner's case is not hopeless, for he may be full of hope. In fact it is evident that the writer of this book hopes that the sinner will be relieved of punishment, either by restoration or by annihilation, and that this hope of his is a very strong one. The common doctrine is "fraught with horror" to him,<sup>2</sup> and rests upon him as a "tremendous burden."<sup>3</sup> To dispel this horror, to relieve this burden, that is, to open the door of hope, was this book written. Yet he dwells upon the fact that the impression of the Bible is that the sinner's condition is hopeless. Contradiction is thus found in the very marrow of the argument. The author does know exactly how he is drifting, or exactly what it is incumbent upon him to prove. To the two fundamental fallacies already pointed out, this adds a third, a kind of *ignoratio elenchi*.

The reasonableness of the inquiry, how much of a finality, is supported by reference to the case of Adam.<sup>4</sup> God threatened him with death if he should eat of the forbidden tree. He knew of death only as he saw it in the brutes about him, and it must have seemed a finality in their case. Yet it would have been an error for him to have argued to a speculative doctrine of extinction based upon that threat.

This argument is inconclusive, because it is not plain that the case is in point. The author forgets upon whom rests the *onus probandi*. We do not know that the threat seemed to Adam to portend such a death as the animal died, or that it did not seem to portend eternal death. The writer of Genesis has not given us, it may be, the exact language used by God, or all that God said. He knew that his readers, having possession of the facts of the case, would know that God did not mean immediate physical death, because it was

<sup>1</sup> pp. 21, 50, 60, 81, 87, 98.

<sup>2</sup> p. 61.

<sup>3</sup> p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> p. 36.

not inflicted ; and for the same reason that they would understand that more than an ultimate physical death was threatened, although they could not understand fully what. With the far clearer light of the New Testament we are as really ignorant as Adam of the full significance of what the Bible calls death, though we know enough to say that the sentence will be such as we shall approve, and that it will be terrible in the extreme. So it probably seemed to Adam. There is no evidence that he was surprised at the punishment inflicted, whether filled with joy at a milder sentence than he expected, or cast down by a more terrible one. He was surprised and confounded by God's immediate discovery of his sin, as guilty consciences are surprised to-day ; but there is no evidence that he had formed any idea of God's meaning which the result did not justify.

A deeper argument is presented in a half sentence upon the same page as the above. Even if there were any absolute finality in the sentence of future punishment as pronounced in the Bible, God would not be bound to execute it. God does not "by the terms of his threat preclude himself from acting as emergency" may arise.<sup>1</sup> Some have put the argument thus : God is not bound by a threat as he is by a promise. A promise gives a right to the recipient of it from which he who makes it cannot free himself merely by his own act. But a threat gives no such right. If any right is conferred it is the right of punishing conferred upon the threatener. This he may freely resign without referring to any other being, because no other being has a share in the conferred right. Accordingly the threat of future punishment might be perfectly clear, and yet God, if he chose, might disregard the threat and annul the penalty.

Upon the speculative question underlying this argument we have little to say. It is true that in human affairs veracity is not pledged by a threat. Yet this seems to us to be one of the results of the imperfection of man. Pardon is provided for in our systems of government, but it is to remedy

<sup>1</sup> p. 36.

evils that arise from their imperfection. It seems equally clear that God's veracity is pledged by his threats, except in cases where a change in the circumstances introduces such modifications that it is evident the threat was never intended to apply there. Thus the threat of eternal punishment need not be executed upon all sinners because of the atonement, and because of the trust of some therein. The threat was evidently never intended to apply in such a case. Eternal punishment was threatened to sinners, *things remaining as they were*. But this is not the place for the discussion of such questions. We are discussing the argument from the Bible. It is enough, in order to answer the argument now presented, to point out the fact that the Bible does not leave the question merely in the realm of law. The threatening of the law is as plain as need be, but the Bible rises into the higher realm of *prophecy*. It does not merely declare the law, open the condition of pardon, and utter the threat for the future, but assumes the task of telling us what will actually take place. This is the impression which the Bible has always made upon Christians. The eschatological revelations are not merely minatory, but prophetic. It is prophesied that not all men will repent in this life. That prophecy is certainly fulfilled. It is prophesied that there will be a day of general judgment, and that the wicked and the righteous will be gathered before Christ the judge. This we believe will take place. The prophecy is then added that as an actual fact there will be a division, and some will go away into everlasting punishment and some into everlasting life. These words have been shown to mean what they say. Other expressions are added in great numbers to deepen the impression here made. Explicitly and implicitly God has indicated *what he will do*, and no distinctions about the difference between threat and promise, however applicable elsewhere, can release him from executing his declared intentions, or excuse us from expecting him so to do. Prophecy must be fulfilled.

Our author goes on from this point to examine particular

passages relating to this branch of the subject. Here he insists upon strict construction.<sup>1</sup> So do we. He makes objections to the use made of Christ's remark about Judas (Matt. xxvi. 24): "It had been good for that man if he had not been born." Some of these objections we are prepared to re-echo. To distil rhetoric in the retort of logic is a gross exegetical error on either side of this discussion. But to deprive the rhetoric of all its force is to commit an equal error. The rhetoric was meant to leave some impression, and it is fair to ask what impression? When Christ wept over Jerusalem the fate of that city was settled. The same aspect of finality belongs to his lament over Judas. The air of hopelessness with which Judas is spoken of in this passage is like that in the Acts, where it is said that he has gone to his own place. Hopelessness leaves no hope. If there is no hope there will be no change.

We would strain no passage. We would make no unwarrantable inferences from passages which are not intended to speak exactly to the point in question. But it is an equal error to refuse to make any inferences. We should make every proper allowance; but it is neither common sense nor good exegesis to say that language is to mean nothing more than the most restricted interpretation forces upon us. Such a process would make the most eloquent passages of literature dumb. It would convert the tropical exuberance of Bengal into the tropical aridity of Sahara. If Rev. xxii. 11<sup>2</sup> calls to "an immediate and present decision of a future state,"<sup>3</sup> what is the natural inference as to the alterability of that future state? True, it cannot be affirmed with the positiveness that belongs to a mathematical demonstration that such a decision will be forever unchanged, and if a man insist — as our author would — upon demonstrative evidence for everything, he may call such an inference a "jump"<sup>4</sup>; but if, under similar conditions, a man were offered a bargain in our public marts, and refused it, he would expect to find that it had gone completely out of his control, and would

<sup>1</sup> p. 40. <sup>2</sup> "He that is unjust let him be unjust still," etc. <sup>3</sup> p. 44. <sup>4</sup> p. 44.

dismiss it from his mind. Such would be the impression made upon him, and upon that impression he would act. We are to follow the same principles in securing for ourselves heavenly good which we follow in securing earthly good. The method of reasoning in both is the same. Religion is not removed from the operation of the laws of common life. These laws are the laws of inductive logic, and upon them is founded our argument for the Bible. If they are not substantial enough to furnish us with a system for the interpretation of the Bible when given, they are not substantial enough to give us the Bible to interpret.

It is at this point that we see the logical results of the method which this book employs. We have already seen that it destroys any doctrine of the Bible — such as even the eternity of God — which the reader has not previous reasons for believing. It is now evident that it destroys the Bible itself. Nothing will satisfy our author but the most explicit statements; and when he finds what purport to be explicit statements he subjects them to an examination before which no statements in the power of human language to frame would be able to maintain their place. He never asks, What is it, on the whole, probable that they mean? or, What is logically involved in what they evidently mean? but always, What is the least possible meaning to which they can be reduced? This least meaning is all that he will admit in proof of a doctrine.<sup>1</sup> This is to demand demonstration, and not proof. The discussion is not formally transferred to the domain of deductive logic; but a degree of evidence is

<sup>1</sup> On such a principle of interpretation there is no promise of the Holy Spirit to Christians to-day. Such passages as John xvi. 7-11 do not make the promise. These passages refer to the twelve disciples gathered before Christ. "I will send him unto you. "He will reprove the world of sin," etc., i.e. under your ministry. There is no demonstration that he had in mind any but the apostles. He may have had in mind also the *immediate* successors of the apostles as he did in his prayer, John xvii. 20, "I pray for them also which shall believe on me through *their* word," — but we do not *know*, whatever we may *think*, that he referred to any one else, and so we cannot be sure that he promised the Spirit to any one but the apostles! Now the church will never be imposed upon by that style of reasoning.

asked which the inductive sciences can never give. It is upon arguments none of which are demonstrative that the proof of the Bible is founded. The number of these arguments, their character, the harmony with which they coincide in one result form a body of proof which is properly regarded as unanswerable, but which is not demonstrative. If our author should apply the same style of criticism to the arguments for the Bible, they could not stand before it. The argument for the existence of God, the argument for his attributes, the argument for the truth of the sacred writers, for the credibility of the miracles, and for the inspiration of the Bible, would all disappear. Our author has not followed his reasoning to its logical results, and is unconscious of its real character; but, however unconsciously, he has used a criticism as destructive as the most malignant rationalism. It has begun by making the speech of the inspired authors unintelligible; it will close by shutting their mouths. Its true drift cannot fail ere long to be perceived, and upon such a tide the evangelical church will not be content to float. The sea of atheism is before it.

One more topic in this book, and one only, we shall at present notice.<sup>1</sup> Speaking of the aspect of finality which the Scriptures cast upon the fate of the wicked, our author says: "We are obliged to acknowledge that the theory of the endlessness of future punishment is not the only theory that will agree with the language of despair which the texts before us employ. If the wicked were ultimately to be annihilated as the result of 'aeonian punishment,' that pros-

<sup>1</sup> I pass over the historical argument for lack of space. In any argument from the fathers one fact should be borne in mind: Theology has been a growth. The most fundamental doctrines of the Christian scheme are found in a very rudimentary condition in the early writings. The doctrine of the Atonement was not developed till a very late period. The doctrine of Justification by Faith waited for its Luther. Yet the drift of things in the early centuries was toward these doctrines, and the fact that they were not found in clear and complete statements is no argument against them. The fathers held the doctrines of religion as they are contained in the Bible, in the solution of practical forms. Scientific theology is like a precipitate which falls upon the addition of the proper reagent. This reagent was long unapplied.

pect would agree equally well with the hopelessness of tone in which their punishment is foretold."<sup>1</sup> The goal of the argument of the whole book is here revealed. The writer believes, with more or less firmness, in the ultimate annihilation of the wicked. This doctrine is not presented as the teaching of Scripture; but the design of the book is to furnish a basis for it in a negative exegesis. The hope of restoration is discussed somewhat at length; and, while not positively excluding it, the author's argument tends to discourage it. Somewhat more at length ultimate annihilation is discussed, and the slight possibility hinted at in the above extract is expanded into a somewhat faint probability. To this discussion we now turn.

The basis of whatever argument is presented for ultimate annihilation is, as we have said, the negative exegesis of the book. The punishment of the future world, according to this book, is "aeonian," that is, *existing* in eternity, not *eternal*. A sinner must therefore be punished after death; but that the punishment should end is not inconsistent with the biblical representation; because these represent it merely as *occurring* in eternity. It may be continued no one knows how long, and yet finally cease, without contradiction of the biblical language. With the ruin of this exegesis the whole subsequent argument falls. Future punishment is represented in the Bible as eternal, and this proves that it will never end. This will finally be found to be the conclusive answer to all forms of the argument for annihilation. The cruder forms, which depend professedly upon the Bible for their support, but are based upon a quibble about the word *death*, and these more refined forms as well, which dismiss the Bible from the witness-stand to put upon it their own notions about the effects of sin, are unable to answer the straight-forward presentation of the biblical doctrine. They are all stranded upon the word *αἰώνιος*, especially as that word is explained by the general drift of the Bible; and however they may seem to endure for a while, they will never per-

<sup>1</sup> p. 84.

manently satisfy the mind of any candid reader of the Bible. The foundation of our author's argument is therefore destroyed by the true interpretation of the passages already examined. It may be well, though unnecessary, to consider the subsidiary arguments urged by our author in favor of what degree of probability he chooses to attach to this view.

Sin is represented under the form of a disease, which grows worse and worse, and may finally wear the sufferer out. The figure is a good one, perhaps, for popular instruction, but a poor one for theological discussion. It is understood by our author in a sense which renders it positively erroneous. The choice of sin has no such effect upon the sinner as disease has upon the human body. It does, to be sure, cripple the power of the will to *resist* evil, but it strengthens its power to *choose* evil. Resistance to truth produces insensibility to truth; but it produces sensibility to error. "The moral instincts" do "become benumbed"<sup>1</sup>; but the immoral instincts, if I may so say, become excited. The moral momentum downward must be considered in two aspects; for it is at the same time away from good and towards evil. It is possible that our release from our earthly bodies may increase the spiritual capacities of the lost, as well as those of the redeemed. If so, their capacity for evil may grow and grow with their hourly malignant evil choices, as the capacity of the righteous will be increased by their choice of God. May this not be "constantly progressive, and yet never complete"?<sup>2</sup> This does not look towards annihilation so much as towards the final permanence of moral character. The most natural inference from such considerations is, that as the wicked will always be voluntarily sinning, so they will always deserve and receive the disapproval of God; and as they will always be increasing in sin, so their punishment, instead of growing less and less, will grow greater and greater. Thus the rational argument is seen to be insufficient, as our author suggests,<sup>3</sup> to prove the doctrine of annihilation.

<sup>1</sup> p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> pp. 53 and 60.

A subsidiary thought in respect to the nature of punishment as consisting "primarily in a deeper and deeper involvement in sin"<sup>2</sup> requires a passing notice. If this were so, it might support somewhat the theory of annihilation. It might appear that God had put within us certain forces, tending finally to destroy us, and then left us to the outworking of those forces. But the impression of the Bible is that the punishment of the future world is inflicted by God, and has an objective character. It is a voluntary act on God's part, and immediately so. It is an expression of something on the part of God, and is of such a character that, whether external or internal to the soul, it must be felt as coming directly from him. Pain, — if that word be used quite generally, — pain inflicted by God as an expression of his disapproval of the sinner is the proper definition of punishment. As God's rewards are not the mere outworking of natural laws, but he *smiles* upon his children; so his punishments are not the mere outworking of natural laws, but he *frowns* upon his enemies. The biblical images of the gnawing worm and burning fire are not meaningless, but refer to the positive character of punishment. If it were enough to interpret these figures as referring to remorse, it must be a remorse which could not wear itself out. Even if remorse of itself would tend to die away, God must, according to these representations, so afflict the lost that their remorse will ever be excited afresh. If the redeemed will look upon Christ, and reflecting upon his grace be filled with wonder and praise, the lost, in contemplation of him whom they have pierced, must be filled with confusion and despair. Much of the deadening effect of constant feeling in our present state arises from our bodies. It may be that the spiritual body will be fitted to promote all spiritual exercises, whether in heaven or in hell. Punishment, therefore, instead of tending to a close, may increase with the increase of sin. Here, again, the rational argument, when properly conceived, fails to support annihilationism.

<sup>1</sup> p. 52.

One or two feeble attempts are made to bring exegesis to the support of this part of the essay. An argument is derived<sup>1</sup> from 1 John v. 16, "sin unto death." Death is the *result* of sin. Therefore it cannot be that death which is sin, as men are said to be dead in trespasses and sins. Therefore it refers to extinction. The last is too great a leap. The argument is sufficiently refuted by pointing out the fact that our author has fallen into a confusion of ideas in comparing death in sins with the death spoken of in this passage. Death in trespasses and sins has nothing to do with it one way or the other. Such a death is not referred to in the context, and in fact the phrase is not Johannean. The word "death" is used, here as elsewhere, of punishment; and the only possible argument for annihilationism which can be derived from this text is from the word "death" itself. Our author does not present this, knowing how valueless it is. The teaching of the text is perfectly plain. If the Christian falls away after conversion his case is beyond the reach of prayer.

Another argument, still more feeble, is derived from the fact that the Bible never joins *αἰώνιος* with *θάνατος*. Death itself is not said to be eternal. But if it had been, how easy for our author to interpret such a phrase in perfect accordance with his own views! It would be simply death in a coming aeon. Thus there would have been no force in the phrase if it had been used.

<sup>1</sup> p. 57.

[An unexpected want of space compels us to omit a paragraph which was designed to close this Article. The paragraph acknowledges that Mr. Whiton intends to be perfectly candid, and to hold the balance with judicial equity. Still he seems to have been warped by his feelings more than he is aware. This appears in such expressions as p. ix, "God as distinct from some of his expositors"; p. 61, "doctrine fraught with horror"; p. 22, "tremendous burden;" in the general implication throughout the book that the defenders of the orthodox doctrine are laboring under prepossessions; vid. pp. 28, 34, 37, 38, 43, 66, 72; in his treatment of Prof. (President) Bartlett, vid. spec. pp. 6, 27, 72; in the quotation made upon p. 66 from a Roman Catholic author.]