

ARTICLE V.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE NEW ENGLAND
DIVINES.

BY THE REV. FRANK H. FOSTER, PH.D. (LEIPZIG), PROFESSOR OF CHURCH
HISTORY, OBERLIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

II.

HAVING in the previous article¹ presented a sketch of the work of Dr. Chauncy which called forth the reply of Dr. Edwards, we now proceed to the reply itself. We shall consider it, first, as an answer to Chauncy, and, second, as a contribution to theology.

1. *The Reply to Chauncy.*

This may be denominated a perfect specimen of unyielding logic. Edwards demands that Chauncy shall be held to the proper meaning of his words, and upon this basis he drives him into a multitude of contradictions. He does not thereby always arrive at results which Chauncy would have acknowledged as his own positions, but this serves only to reveal the more clearly, what it was his object to exhibit, the inner inconsistency of Chauncy's scheme.

He begins by showing that what Dr. Chauncy expressly holds as to some of the wicked, he must hold of all; viz., that they *suffer the full penalty* of the law, and hence, when finally saved, are not *forgiven*, but simply liberated from further punishment. Justice is satisfied, and liberation follows in strict justice.²

But Dr. Chauncy also holds that the future punishment of the wicked is *disciplinary*. It is intended for their good. It is to make them the "willing and obedient subjects

¹ pp. 1-32.

² Works, i. 5-8.

of God."³ But these two ideas are utterly inconsistent, if Dr. Chauncy holds to the distinction between retributive justice and discipline, as it is shown he does.

Again, Dr. Chauncy holds that all men, both believers, and those who are saved after suffering the punishments of hell, are saved *by the mere mercy and grace of God* through Jesus Christ. But this idea is also inconsistent with the first view mentioned, since together they declare that God will of his *abounding goodness* grant to his creatures just so much relief from misery as they are entitled to in *the strictest justice!*⁴

An ordinary reasoner would have been content to stop here; but not Dr. Edwards. He proceeds now to show that Dr. Chauncy not only *does*, but *must*, hold these discordant ideas in order to maintain his scheme.⁵

The damned who suffer for ages of ages must be punished according to their deserts, or else there is some greater punishment threatened than this of ages of ages, which no one pretends. Again the punishment of the lost must be discipline, for otherwise it is vindictive, and this, Dr. Chauncy admits, is inconsistent with the salvation of all men. But, again, all men must be saved of the mere mercy of God, or else all the arguments drawn from the divine goodness are in vain. "Thus," says Dr. Edwards, "Dr. Chauncy was compelled by necessity to associate in his scheme principles which will wage eternal war with each other."⁶

We pass on to chapter iv. which contains an examination of Dr. Chauncy's arguments to prove that endless punishment is inconsistent with justice. There are three of these.

(1.) The difference of treatment between the smallest sinner and the smallest saint is out of proportion to the difference of their characters, and so not reconcilable with the justice of God.—Edwards points out in reply that the question is whether the *sinner* is treated with injustice, which question the argument begs.⁷

³ Ib. 8-10.⁴ Ib. 13.⁵ Ib. 14, 15.⁶ Ib. 15.⁷ Ib. 77.

(2.) Endless punishment is out of proportion to the magnitude of finite sin. Our sin is finite, Dr. Chauncy thinks, because it is impossible in a finite duration to commit a crime which shall deserve an infinite, or endless, punishment.—Edwards replies by showing that Chauncy, in his admission that in strict justice it is impossible that all men should be saved, and in his supposition that future punishment may possibly be annihilation, has already really granted what he now denies. His positive answer is this: that the argument involves the position that no crime can justly be punished for a longer time than was consumed in the perpetration of it. This is palpably absurd.⁸

(3.) The endlessness of punishment makes it equal in all cases, which is against the representations of Scripture.—But Edwards shows that infinity of *duration* does not involve infinity of *degree* also. An infinite line, and an infinite superficies are not equal because both infinite.⁹

Although Edwards thus emphasizes the rational reply to Dr. Chauncy, he by no means confines himself to this. He makes thorough work of the exegetical argument, and displays, as we think all would admit, not only greater acumen, but vastly sounder scholarship than Chauncy. He does not use the methods of modern exegesis altogether, but it is only because he has not at hand the same extent of appliances as now both assist and perplex the interpreter. He interprets like Calvin. He determines the sense by the connection of thought. If the historical element of modern exegesis is wanting, if the grammatical is not so prominent, yet the lexical is there, the contextual is handled as by a master, and the analogy of Scripture is wisely employed.

We select, as examples of the whole, the reply to the explanation of Rom. v. 12 ff., and the discussion of *αἰών, αἰώνιος*.¹⁰

⁸ Ib. 84.

⁹ Ib. 88 f.

¹⁰ The reply to Rom. viii. 19–24 is equally good. Inasmuch as we have already given Dr. Chauncy's arguments on *κρίσις* in a note (p. 28) we subjoin here a few points of Dr. Edwards' reply, p. 159 ff.:—

Dr. Chauncy's argument on Rom. v. 12, etc., hangs, as we have already seen, on the assumption that the antithesis between Adam and Christ, and the universal effects of the act of each is exact and applicable at every point. Dr. Edwards discovers three arguments for this assumption in Chauncy; viz., (1) that as "many" in the former part of the fifteenth verse ("If through the offence of one *many* be dead, much more hath the grace of God abounded unto *many*;") means all men, so it must in the latter part, else "the antithesis will be lost." But, says Edwards, if we say: "The Pretender drew many into rebellion, but many were brought back"; we do not need to assert that *as many* were restored as seduced, in order to the antithesis. (2) οἱ πολλοί means all men because of the article. This is refuted by numerous examples. (3) In

(1) After showing that the figure of speech found in the words "groaning," etc., if we understand κτίσις of the inanimate creation, is by no means too bold to be found in Scripture, Edwards, as is so often the custom of both the Edwardses, father and son, states Dr. Chauncy's argument more strongly than he had himself, in these words: "There is an absurdity in the representation that they [brutes and inanimate creatures] shall be brought into the liberty of the children of God, after the end of the world; because they will then be annihilated; and to represent that, after they shall be annihilated, they shall still enjoy glorious liberty, is a gross inconsistency.

To this he replies: (a) Some writers think that this happiness is to be enjoyed during the millennium, before the destruction of the world. (b) Many writers think that the world is not to be annihilated, but after being purified by fire is to be the home of holy and happy beings forever. (c) Even if they are destroyed, brutes and inanimate beings will be delivered, upon the redemption of man, from the abuse and misuse under which they have suffered; which may be called a participation in liberty.

(2) As to πᾶσα κτίσις, Edwards shows by a careful examination of the passages that, of the four instances in which it occurs in the New Testament besides this of Rom. viii., it signifies in every instance either more or less than mankind, except Mark xvi. 15. He affirms that κτίσις alone is used in the New Testament ten times, "in no one of which does it mean mankind," and cites the passages. And, furthermore, he goes into the Septuagint, and takes the three cases of its occurrence, when it is translated "cattle," "substance," and "riches;" and cites the nine cases of the Apocrypha in which it is not once used "to signify all mankind and not more or less."

We think that the comparative thoroughness of these two works is no mean indication of the comparative merits of the two causes they represent.

the eighteenth verse it is expressly stated that both the judgment and the free gift came to *all men*. The antithesis demands that the phrases be understood in the same sense.—Here Edwards does not content himself with refuting this statement. He points out that the words of inference used at the beginning of the eighteenth verse compel us to understand the second “all men” in the sense of the words “they which receive abundance of grace” found in the seventeenth. The argument introduced by Dr. Chauncy to prove that οἱ λαμβάνοντες, *they who receive*, means simply the *persons on whom this grace is bestowed*, and not rather *believers*, is shown to be immaterial inasmuch as both parties admit that all such persons will be saved. The question is whether such persons are the same in number as “all men” strictly taken. Edwards then takes his stand on the whole course of thought from the closing verse of the preceding chapter. Great and exclusive privileges are ascribed there in many verses to *believers*. Does it follow from this that the free gift of Christ is to come upon all mankind, *believers and unbelievers*? This destroys the whole cogency of the reasoning. It is rather evident “that as by the offence of one, Adam, judgment to condemnation came upon all mankind *who were his seed*; even so by the righteousness of one, Jesus Christ, the free gift unto justification of life came upon all *his seed*, who are believers only, and who are the only persons of whom the apostle had been speaking in the premises.”¹¹ He follows also the example set by Dr. Chauncy, and makes a paraphrase of a part of the passage, only now writing a paraphrase which embodies Dr. Chauncy’s interpretations, and which contains a number of such inconclusive arguments as this (eleventh verse): “And not only so; but *believers* also glory in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *all men* have received the possibility of salvation.”¹²—that is, there is some *special* joy on their part for

¹¹ Ib. 149.¹² Ib. 154.

something which is no special but rather an altogether *universal* gift.

We pass on to the consideration of *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος*. After showing the unfairness of several of Dr. Chauncy's statements, and the fact that he argues from possibility to probability, and from this probability to fact, Dr. Edwards disposes of several other chief assumptions of his. For example, Dr. Chauncy says that the "words *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος* are evidently more loose and general in their meaning than the English words *eternity*, *everlasting*." He asks the question: "If it were not so how comes it to pass that *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος* will not always bear being translated *eternity*, *everlasting*." Edwards replies: "By the same argument it may be proved that our words *eternity* and *everlasting* are more general than the Greek, for we speak of an everlasting talker."¹¹ We notice the remark and its refutation because recent discussions repeat this ancient one. But when Edwards comes to the main argument, we see at once how poor a match in every respect Chauncy was for his antagonist. Edwards counts all the passages in the New Testament where the words under discussion occur. He classifies them. He subjoins a concordance. He proves that the words do correspond to our English words *eternity* and *eternal*, and that Greek and English are used now strictly and now loosely in the same manner. He shows that the presumption with which we come to the subject of future punishment is in favor of their strict use here; and he proves by parallel examples that the presumption is sustained. He follows Dr. Chauncy in all his windings, he confutes him everywhere. The refutation is complete. It has never been shaken since, nor improved upon, and it is safe to say it never will.

We have dwelt long upon this reply and yet we have only sketched it. We have been led to do this that all might feel something of the strenuousness of the contest then waged, and not fall into the mistake of supposing that all

¹¹ *Ib.* p. 220 f.

wisdom on this subject was born with the present generation. We turn now to the more important point and consider

2. *Edwards' Contributions to the Development of the Doctrine.*

(1.) *As to the justice of eternal punishment.*

We find in Dr. Edwards clearer definitions of justice than had been given by his predecessors. He distinguishes three kinds of justice. *Commutative* justice respects the equal exchange and restitution of property. With this our subject has nothing to do. "*Distributive* justice is the equal distribution of rewards and punishments, and it respects the *personal* rights and demerits of the person rewarded or punished. *General or public* justice respects what are called the rights of a community, whether a city, state, empire, or the universe. This kind of justice requires the public good. . . . it is the very same with general benevolence."¹⁴

"Now when we inquire whether the endless punishment of the wicked be consistent with justice the question is, whether to inflict an endless punishment on a man dying in impenitence, be an act of *distributive* justice, or be a treatment of him by his judge correspondent, and no more than correspondent, or proportioned, to his demerit, to his crimes, or to his moral conduct and personal character."¹⁵ The question of the consistency of such punishment with *benevolence*, though deeply important, is another matter.

Having thus sharply defined the question, Dr. Edwards proceeds to answer it. A just punishment is one proportioned to the crime. Any punishment is such "when by the pain or natural evil of the punishment, it exhibits a just idea of the moral evil or ruinous tendency of the crime, and a proper motive to restrain all intelligent beings from the commission of the crime."¹⁶ We must object somewhat

¹⁴ Ib. 73.

¹⁵ Ib. 73 f.

¹⁶ Ib. 74 f.

to this definition, for we think that Dr. Edwards has for a moment lost sight of his own distinctions. The furnishing of a motive to deter beholders from sin is a reason why benevolence may demand a given punishment, i. e., why it is just under the head of *public* justice; but it has nothing to do with personal demerit as such, and so does not enter into the *distributive* justice of a punishment. We should therefore reject the last clause of the definition. And we must reject, again, the apparent equivalence established between the ideas of "moral evil" and "ruinous tendency." Dr. Edwards commits at this point the error of emphasizing too strongly the governmental relations of God to the universe. "The chief evil of any crime," he says, "on account of which it principally deserves punishment, consists in the relaxation of the laws and government of the community in which the crime is committed." Hence he argues that it "deserves just so much punishment as, by restoring the proper tone of the laws, and proper strength to the government, will repair that damage."¹⁷ True, it deserves so much punishment, but it may conceivably deserve *more*, because it does not deserve it for that reason *as such*. Sin deserves punishment because it is not love to being-in-general; and being-in-general is a term vastly broader than "the community" as used in this place. Dr. Edwards held the doctrine of virtue taught by his father. According to this, God must hate sin equally as he loves holiness. He must hate it in proportion to its degree of heinousness, and that must be in proportion to its opposition to being-in-general. Now being-in-general is, first of all, God himself. Hence God must hate sin in proportion to its degree of opposition to himself, and he must express this hate, or punish, in the same proportion. Hence the ill-desert of sin, or the degree of punishment, may as truly be said to be independent of the "community," as dependent upon it, for it might exist, were there no community. Hence the desert of sin must

¹⁷ Ib. 75.¹⁸ Ib. 75.

be measured by referring to God himself. This President Edwards sought to do by declaring sin an infinite evil.

We have criticised President Edwards' reasoning principally because he neglected to consider both terms, and measured the degree of opposition to God in sin simply by the infinity of him to whom it was opposed. Dr. Edwards may have viewed the matter somewhat differently. He does not set forth the argument independently, so that we cannot say what modifications he would have made in it. But he says of those who hold that sin is an infinite evil, that "*all* they mean is, that it may be justly followed by an infinite evil."¹⁹ Such was certainly not President Edwards' meaning. According to him any sin against God was infinitely *heinous*, though it might be so with the infinity of a line and not of a superficies; and endless punishment being infinite in *duration*, is "no more than *proportionable* to the heinousness" of sin.²⁰ Dr. Edwards seems therefore to change somewhat the point of view of his father.²¹

Accepting, then, the definition of the infinite evil of sin as meaning that it deserves an endless punishment, how shall this be shown to be just? Dr. Edwards gives the negative argument—that it is not unjust—in the form of various replies to Chauncy. The positive argument advanced in the chapter devoted to the question may be thus expressed: Granting that it has already been established that "endless misery is the curse of the divine law; the inference is immediate and necessary," says Edwards, "that the endless misery of the sinner is a just punishment of his sin. It is impossible that a God of inviolable and infinite justice should threaten in his law an unjust punishment."²²

We desire to call attention to this argument, and to

¹⁹ *Ib.* 89.

²⁰ President Edwards' Works, v. p. 504 f.

²¹ He does not suppose himself to differ essentially, as is evident by his referring to President Edwards, Bellamy, and Hopkins. Works, i. p. 90.

²² Works of Dr. Edwards, i. 107.

express our opinion that it is a substantial contribution to the doctrine. That punishment for sin is just, that future punishment is just, are different truths from this, that *endless* future punishment is just. If President Edwards' argument fails, as we believe it does, what one will succeed? Who is to pretend to know all the elements entering into the moral desert of sin, and determine what pain expresses appropriately God's abhorrence of it? But God is just, and the Bible is his word. If the Bible declares endless punishment to be just, it *is* so. Auxiliary arguments may define the matter somewhat, and remove this or that difficulty; but the positive argument must, as it seems to us, always remain the biblical one.

Having thus taken an impregnable position, Dr. Edwards' further argument is only a putting in of the confirmatory evidence. The gospel is a scheme of mercy, not of justice. But if endless punishment be *unjust*, then it is no act of mercy on God's part, but only of the strictest justice to deliver man from it. The gospel is also a scheme which excites the *hope* of salvation. But if the endless punishment which it threatens be unjust, then it ought to assure us of the *certainty* of salvation. So the *promises* testify the same thing. God does not promise that he will not tyrannize over men, or injure them. He promises to deliver from what he might inflict without tyranny.

The second contribution of Dr. Edwards to the development of the doctrine relates to

(2.) *The relation of the goodness of God to eternal punishment.*

The second chapter of Dr. Edwards' book takes up the question "whether the damned deserve any other punishment than that which is conducive to their personal good." If not, and if they receive none other, then, of course, there is no difficulty in reconciling their punishment with divine goodness. It is goodness towards the damned themselves, because intended for their good, and does not dis-

play any lack of true goodness towards others, inasmuch as justice has not demanded anything more.

We know how Dr. Edwards would answer the question, and need not delay upon it longer than to say that he shows conclusively how irreconcilable the supposition is with the expressions of Scripture which describe punishment by such words as *curse, vengeance, great evil, etc.*, etc. The supposition involves the doctrine, he says, that punishment is no evil, but a good; that the sinner experiences more grace and mercy in hell than while on earth; and fundamentally, since sin receives no true punishment, that sin is itself, *no moral evil*.

But now, is endless punishment, according to its true idea, consistent with divine goodness?

Many of the arguments against endless punishment may be dismissed with the remark that they are based on the idea that endless punishment is *cruel*. But, if it is cruel, it is unjust. So that such arguments from God's goodness are arguments from his justice, and when we have answered the objection that endless punishment is unjust, we have answered them.

This brings Dr. Edwards to "some general observations concerning the divine goodness," which contain the substance of his contribution to the doctrine. We read:

"The goodness of God is that glorious attribute by which he is disposed to communicate happiness to his creatures. This divine attribute is distinguished from the divine justice in this manner: the divine justice promotes the happiness of the universal system, implying the divine glory, by treating a person strictly according to his *own* character; the divine goodness promotes the same important object by treating a person *more favorably* than is according to his own character or conduct. So that both justice and goodness may and always do, as far as they are exercised, subserve the happiness of the universal system, including the glory of the Deity, or the glory of the Deity including the happiness of the universal system. As the glory of God and the greatest happiness of the system of the universe, and even of the created system, mutually imply each other; whenever I mention either of them, I wish to be understood to include in my meaning the other also. The declarative or the exhibited glory of God is a most perfect and most happy created system; and a most perfect and most happy created system is the exhibited glory of God; or it is the exhibition,

the manifestation, of that glory; as a picture is an exhibition of the man.

"That infinite goodness is in God, and is essential to his nature, is granted on all hands. *God is love.* This attribute seeks the happiness of creatures, the happiness of the created system *in general*, and of every individual creature *in particular*, so far as the happiness of that individual is *not inconsistent with the happiness of the system*, or with happiness *on the whole*. But if in any case, the happiness of the individual be inconsistent with the happiness of the system, or with the happiness of other individuals, so that by bestowing happiness on the first supposed individual, the quantity of happiness on the whole shall be diminished; in this case, goodness, the divine goodness, which is perfect and infinite, will not consent to bestow happiness on that individual. Indeed, to bestow happiness in such a case would be no instance of goodness, but of the want of goodness. It would argue a disposition not to increase happiness, but to diminish and destroy it."

The contribution contained in this passage is not one of essential thought, but only of new fulness and clearness of statement.

On this basis Dr. Edwards now reasons as follows: Pain inflicted in this life, and *some* punishment in the world to come (which it will be remembered Dr. Chauncy did not deny) are evidently for the good of the universe *on the whole*. "Why may not *endless* misery be so too, *provided* it be just?"²³ If it is an evil, and an infinite evil, may it not be overbalanced by the good resulting from it? Endless good arising from punishment is an infinite good. It does not then appear "but that all good ends which are answered by the temporary punishment of the damned, may be continued to be answered by their continual and endless punishment, if it be just."²⁴ Thus Dr. Edwards answers the objections by an irrefutable hypothesis. He thus compels his opponent to prove an universal proposition,—Endless punishment answers no good end.

He advances now to the positive argument that endless punishment is consistent with the divine goodness.²⁵ If good ends can be promoted by the infliction of a just punishment, as has been abundantly shown, then it is consistent with goodness to inflict it. But furthermore to *make* a law which is inconsistent with goodness, is just as contrary to goodness as to execute it. But here is the law threatening

²³ *Ib.* p. 124.

²⁴ *Ib.* p. 133 ff.

eternal punishment. Hence not only its existence but its execution must be consistent with goodness. And, finally, "the voice of reason is that divine goodness, or a regard to the general good, requires that sin be punished according to its demerit in some instances at least; otherwise God would not appear to be what he really is, an enemy to sin, and greatly displeased with it. It is certainly consistent with divine goodness that sin exists in the world, otherwise it would never have existed. Now, since sin is in the world, if God were never to punish it, it would seem that he is no enemy to it. Or, if he punish it in a far less degree than it deserves, still it would seem that his displeasure at it is far less than it is and ought to be. Nor, can mere words, or verbal declarations of the Deity, sufficiently exhibit his opposition to sin, so long as he uniformly treats the righteous and the wicked in the same manner: His character in [the] view of intelligent creatures will appear to be what it is holden forth to be in his actions, rather than what he, in mere words, declares it to be. But will any man say that it is conducive to the good order and happiness of the intellectual system, that God should appear to be no enemy, but rather a friend to sin?"²⁶

So far Edwards. We turn now to a pupil of his, the distinguished President of Yale College,

IV. TIMOTHY DWIGHT.

Dwight does not differ from his predecessors in any point of doctrine. He accepts with them the idea of probation, which, he says, "involves in its nature a close; infers a trial at that close, by which the character of the man who has gone through the probation, shall be finally settled, as good, or evil, as acquitted or condemned; and supposes, also, a reward suited to his conduct, and intended to recompense it with absolute propriety."²⁷ Death terminates this probation.²⁷ Man then enters on a state of reward or punishment,²⁸ which will be rendered final

²⁶ *Ib.* p. 140.

²⁷ *Theology*, iv. 404.

²⁸ *Ib.* 409.

²⁹ *Ib.* 422.

by the confirmatory decision of the day of judgment."

It should be remembered that the theology of President Dwight is presented to us in the sermons which he regularly preached before Yale College. He does not enter into formal controversy. He is also, doubtless, somewhat restricted in the range of his discussion by the youth of his auditory. This may be the explanation of his distinguishing peculiarity in the treatment of this doctrine,—I mean the absence of the speculative element. Dwight rests the proof of his doctrine solely on the Scriptures.

He assigns little weight, for example, to Edwards' argument that sin is an infinite evil, and deserves an infinite punishment. "It is not my design," he says, "to deny this doctrine, nor to scrutinize the arguments by which it is usually supported. It is, however, but just to observe that neither the doctrine, nor the arguments, have appeared so satisfactory to the mind of others as they seem to have done to those by whom they have been alleged. *We know nothing of infinity but the fact that certain things are infinite. . . .* Concerning the *nature* of infinity, I discern no manner in which such minds as ours can argue at all. But in our discussions concerning infinity, we are prone, insensibly, to blend these two things together; and often are amused with words only, when we suppose ourselves to be employed about ideas."²⁹

The same trait is seen in his discussion of the objection that the benevolence of God is irreconcilable with the idea of endless punishment. He does not give a positive answer, as his predecessors would have done, by showing that the benevolence of God demands such punishment. He might have done so. He accepted the doctrine that "love constituted the whole moral character of God,"³⁰ thus holding the doctrine common to all the New England school from Edwards down. He defined justice, "in an extended sense," as "that which is right upon the whole, in all cases; that which is fittest and most useful to be

²⁹ Ib. 442.

³⁰ Ib. 461.

³¹ Ib. i. 196.

done; *that which will most promote the universal good.*"²² We even find, in other connections, some of the more speculative views of the subject briefly stated; as when he says: "It is evident that God, who is thus benevolent, *must* love the same disposition in his creatures, and hate the opposite one, unchangeably and forever. . . . His approbation at the final judgment is no other than a testimony of the pleasure which he takes in the moral character of those who are approved; and his disapprobation a similar testimony of the displeasure which he feels towards those who are condemned." And joining in with a strain of remark found in all these writers, though in a moderate way peculiar to himself, he says: "No good man, no angel, ever regretted that God was just. It is impossible that a virtuous being should not rejoice in the justice of God. The instinctive voice of all the virtuous universe is the voice of angels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect in the heavens crying: Alleluia! Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, be unto the Lord, our God; for true and righteous are his judgments. Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord, God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints."²³

All this, however, is incidental. It is enough to show that he was not blind or indifferent to the deep thoughts of theology. When he comes formally to treat the subject, he prefers, as his teacher Dr. Edwards did, to rest his case elsewhere. In answering the objection from the benevolence of God he prefers to say: "Were I to determine *a priori* what conduct the benevolence of God would prompt him to pursue; I should not hesitate to say that he would never permit either natural or moral evil to exist in the universe. . . . Very remote, however, from this scheme is the actual state of the world which we inhabit. . . . It is certain, therefore, that to permit the existence of sin, and to punish it with suffering, and that suffering often so excruciating as to terminate our present

²² Ib. i. 193.²³ Ib. i. 190 f.²⁴ Ib. i. 201.

life, are things consistent with the benevolence of God. No reason can be given why he who does these things here in a state of trial may not do the same things to a much greater extent in a state of retribution."²⁸ This does not prove his doctrine nor remove the difficulty. But it is a masterly stroke of both rhetoric and logic, whereby the difficulty is put where it belongs, in the very permission of sin. Were Dwight to put the same thought in modern phrase, he might say: "If, in face of the plain declarations of Scripture, you reject future punishment as warring with benevolence, you cannot stop short of the position of James and John Stuart Mill, and reject the doctrine of the existence of a benevolent God because of the undeniable existence of evil."

In like manner, to the objection that endless punishment is unnecessary, Dwight replies: "This cannot be said with propriety unless we know the whole state of the divine government, and all the necessities of those who are governed." Abhorrence excited by the state of the lost "may, for aught that appears, have a powerful, perhaps an indispensable efficacy to preserve virtuous beings throughout the universe in a course of endless obedience. The measures necessary in a moral government reaching through immensity and eternity cannot be contrived by such beings as we are."²⁹

This, then, is what of a speculative character Dwight's system contains. The positive proof is purely biblical, and presents no very new or striking features. The College President preaching to College students enters a little more thoroughly than others into the exegesis of the Greek text, and discusses *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος*. The definition of these words as denoting "the longest period of which the subject mentioned in each case is capable,"³⁰ is both happy and correct. The terms used in Scripture, he says, "leave, so far as I can discern, no hope of the termination of the sufferings of the impenitent."³¹ The

²⁸ *Ib.* iv. 463.²⁹ *Ib.* iv. 464.³¹ *Ib.* iv. 458.

idea of eternal sin is employed as a justification of eternal punishment, though derived from Rev. xxii. 15, and Eccl. ix. 10, the critical reading in Mark iii. 29 being still unknown. But this is not the sole ground of punishment,³⁸ or of its eternity.⁴⁰

We shall pass next to Hopkins and the Hopkinsians.

ARTICLE VI.

THE REVISED VERSION OF ISAIAH XL.—LXVI.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM HENRY COBB, UXBRIDGE, MASS.

BEING a member of a Hebrew club which has been greatly interested for several years past in studying the second part of Isaiah, I offer some observations on this section of the Revision, while I should not venture to review any other portion.

It is often remarked of the revised Old Testament as a whole, that the changes are less numerous in proportion to its length than in the New Testament. This holds true of the section before us. A large minority of the verses are unaltered; five consecutive ones, for instance, in chapter xl. (12–16) and ten out of the thirteen in chapter lv. On the other hand, the next chapter has but one verse unchanged out of twelve; and chapter li. has but three out of twenty-three. The impression which many seem to have gained, that only a few changes have been made in the Old Testament, is entirely erroneous. A careful examination of these twenty-seven chapters shows that seventy per cent of the verses (362 out of 526) differ from the A. V., some slightly, some materially. It is much more

³⁸ Ib. iv. 460.

³⁹ Ib. iv. 446.

⁴⁰ Ib. iv. 404, 461, 463.