

SERMON XXVI.

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OF HELL.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.—Matthew xxv. 41.

IF any in the broad way, upon the hearing of this terrible text, shall say to me, as the devils in the Gergesenes said to our Saviour, "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (Matt. viii. 29;) I say, No: but to "warn you to flee from the wrath to come;" (Matt. iii. 7;) and reduce you from the broad, into the narrow, way. (Matt. vii. 13, 14.) For, all the while [that] you are in a state of nature, going on in sin against God, you do but "wrong your own souls," and by hating wisdom "love death," (Prov. viii. 36; Rom. vi. 23,) yea, eternal death, though you like not to hear of it. Let not prejudice take away your judgment; and then a Boanerges, a "son of thunder," (Mark iii. 17, with John xii. 29,) to-day, may fit you to give better entertainment to a Barnabas, a "son of consolation," to-morrow. (Acts iv. 36, with Rev. iv. 5.)

For my part, I hope I am not studious, neither do I expect, to please men in treating on this severe point: (Gal. i. 10:) their censure is a small thing to me, (1 Cor. iv. 3,) if I may approve myself the servant of Christ our Judge; which I shall endeavour, in not erring from the scope of this his last sentence in my text; wherein we have,

TEXT DIVIDED.

1. *The persons sentenced or judged.*—Namely, the wicked, described by their station: Εξ εωνυμων, "On the left hand:" and by their condition: Οι καταραμενοι, "Cursed."

2. *The person sentencing.*—Namely, Christ, who is Lord Chief Justice of all the world: "Me."

3. *The punishment or sentence itself pronounced by this Judge, who cannot but do right.*—Namely, "Depart from me into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" from God who hath no beginning, into hell which hath no end; noting *terminus a quo*, the pain of loss: "Depart from me:" and *terminus ad quem*, the pain of sense: "Into everlasting fire," &c. Where we have hell-torments set forth by their *quality*, extremity; and *quantity*, eternity.

(1.) *Extremity*, aggravated by their inflammation: "Fire:" the preparation of them: "Prepared:" the association in them: "The devil and his angels."

(2.) *Eternity*, which makes all hell indeed: "Everlasting fire."

Take the sum in this PROPOSITION:—

DOCTRINE.

The wicked shall depart from Christ into the greatest torments.

Or, if you will have it shorter, take it in David's words: "The wicked shall be turned into hell." (Psalm ix. 17.)

I shall endeavour to prepare this for *application*, by *explication* and *confirmation*.

EXPLICATION.

I. EXPLICATION of the *subject*, and of the *predicate*.

(I.) *The subject*: "The wicked;" that is, all ungodly men and women who die in their sins, unclean, unsanctified; (Rev. xxi. 27; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10;) who "know not God, nor obey the gospel;" (2 Thess. i. 8; Col. iii. 6;)—the goats on Christ's left hand at the great day; in my text denominated *οἱ κατηραμένοι*, "the cursed," with a dreadful execration; detested of God with abomination, and destined to all misery without remedy.*

(II.) *The predicate*: "The greatest punishment," or hell; of which I shall say somewhat to,

Quid nominis.

1. *The name*.—"Hell;" answering to the Hebrew *שְׁאוֹל* *sheol*, and the Greek *γέεννα* [of] which though the former primarily signifies "the grave," and the latter "the valley of the son of Hinnom," yet they do also signify "extreme and eternal torment;" especially the latter in the New Testament, where Christ speaks of "the whole body being cast" *εἰς γέενναν*, "into hell," (Matt. v. 29, 30,) *γέενναν τοῦ πυρός*, "the fiery hell;" (verse 22;) which Mark explains to be "inextinguishable," *τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἀσβεστόν*. (Mark ix. 43; Matt. xviii. 8.) Hence our Saviour elsewhere bids, "Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body," *ἐν γέεννῃ*, "in hell." (Matt. x. 28; xxiii. 15, 33; Luke xii. 5.) Men could not cast the soul into the proper *gehinnom*, but God can cast that into hell after the body is killed: which several of the ancient Jewish doctors apprehending,† they did by *gehinnom* metaphorically describe "the infernal fire;" as the learned have proved,‡ notwithstanding what is said to the contrary in that abominable treatise "Of Hell," justly sentenced to be burnt about two years ago, wherein the Jesuited penman,§ whether out of ignorance or malice or both, hath most shamefully wronged our best authors. But could he and any others (which they cannot) evade the

* *Katapa*, *execratio horrenda et abominanda*. — CAMERARIUS, et GERHARDI *Harmonia Evangelica*. "A curse, a terrible and horrible execration."—EDIT.

† Targum JONATHAN BEN UZZIEL; *Hieros. Paraph. in Gen. iii. 33: Præparavit gehennam improbis in futuro seculo.* יְהִי עֵשֶׂת. "He hath prepared *gehenna* for the wicked in a future state."—EDIT.

‡ P. CHEITOMÆUS, BEZA, SCAPULA, MINSHAW, USHER, FULKE, BUXTORFII *Lexicon Talmudicum*. *Αἰωνίαν τιμωρίαν δίκην*, *et eis γέενναν χωρησάει*, *idem sonant apud IGNATIUM, Epist. ad Ephes., cap. iv.* "The phrases, 'They shall endure eternal punishment,' and, 'He shall go to *gehenna*,' have the same signification in Ignatius's Epistle to the Ephesians."—EDIT. § S. R., London, printed 1667.

tropical signification of *gehenna*, yet all the strength of their arguments to shake and remove hell-pillars will be but just enough (as it fared with Samson in a far more lawful undertaking, when he shook the pillars of the house in which the Philistines were, Judges xvi. 28—30) to pull down the rotten fabric of their hellish tenet upon their own pates ; since there are abundantly more of scripture-expressions noting an extreme and eternal misery after this life is ended ; namely, “destruction,” by way of eminency ; (Matt. vii. 13 ;) “outer darkness, where shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth,” (Matt. xxii. 13,) and “the worm dieth not ;” (Mark ix. 44, 48 ;) “damnation,” (Matt. xxiii. 33,) “everlasting punishment,” (Matt. xxv. 46,) “eternal fire, chains, blackness and mists of darkness ; (Jude 6, 7, 13 ; 2 Peter ii. 4, 17 ;) the prison where the spirits of the disobedient be, (1 Peter iii. 19, 20,) “wrath to come,” (1 Thessa. i. 10 ; v. 9,) the “furnace of fire,” (Matt. xiii. 42,) “the second death, bottomless pit,” place of “torment, lake of fire and brimstone.” (Rev. ii. 11 ; ix. 2 ; xiv. 10 ; xx. 10 ; xix. 20 ; xxi. 8.)

Quid rei : THE DESCRIPTION OF HELL.

2. *The nature of hell* may be thus described :—It is no less than the eternal and second death in its latitude, as opposite to eternal life ; that is, the most miserable state of the wicked, wherein they are everlastingly separated from the sight of God and all comfortable good, locked up in chains of darkness, under the fresh, lively, and afflicting sense of the wrath of God, justly kindled and continually flaming against them, for their sins and according to the measure of them ; so that they are filled with never-ceasing horrors of conscience, and scorched in soul and body with such grievous flames as will for ever torment, but never consume them to an annihilation.

THE DESCRIPTION EXPLAINED.

More particularly, this description suggests two things agreeable to them already noted in the text, further to be explained ; namely, the punishment itself, and the properties of it.

PUNISHMENT ITSELF.

(1.) *The punishment itself, to which the wicked are adjudged.*—And that is *pœna damni*, “the pain of loss :” the absence of infinite mercy : and *pœna sensûs*, “the pain of sense :” the presence of unspeakable misery.

First. *The pain of loss, the privation of all good.*—Πορευθε ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ, “Depart from me,” says Christ ; “get ye gone from my presence into your proper place.* (Acts i. 25.) Away with you ; here is no comfort for you. Depart from all the good [that] you were once, while on earth, invited to have in me and with me in heaven ; yea, and from that [which] you chose and preferred before me. You must now lose all real, and all [that] you and others reputed, good things ;” whether,

* *Abjiciendi in illud vov quo infernus.*—GERHARDUS. “To be cast down into that ‘somewhere’ which is hell.”—EDIT.

(i.) *Natural*.—Your sins will go along with you ; but all your pleasures, profits, honours, with the vain hopes of greater content in your sinful courses, will leave you. The covetous cormorant shall not have his bags, nor the ambitious his honour, nor the voluptuous his pleasure. Judas left his silver, which he prized more than our Saviour ; (Acts i. 18 ;) Haman, his honour ; the deceased gentleman in the gospel, his delicious fare with which he had pampered himself in his life-time ; and glad he would have been, upon his importunate begging, to have had one drop of water from the end of Lazarus's sorest finger, to cool the tip of his tongue, when he was "tormented in flames ;" but, alas ! he must remain deprived, with this sharp answer : "Remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things." (Luke xvi. 24, 25 ; James v. 5.) Though wicked men be rebels and traitors to God, yet here he gives them meat and drink to keep them alive for a time. He deals not with them as the cruel duke d'Alva did with his prisoners ; whom he starved, after he had given them quarter, saying, "Though I promised you your lives, I promised not to find you meat." He [God] gave Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar, and vast dominions to Alexander ; but in hell wicked men shall be deprived of all. There they shall have no houses, nor lands, nor moneys, nor good cheer, nor mirth, nor credit, nor friends, nor servants ; no stately Italian palaces ; no rare coaches of Naples, drawn by the horses of Barbary ; no artificial wares of Quinsao and Alexandria ; no Indian gold, no Bisnagar diamonds, no Scythian emeralds, no topazes of Ethiopia ; no Molucca spices, no Canary sacks nor sugars, no Candy oils, no Spanish sweetmeats, no French wines ; no velvets, nor tissue, nor scarlet, nor purple clothes, but purple flames.

(ii.) *Spiritual good things* they had here, and might have had in common with the saints. In hell [there are] no offers of Christ, nor pardon by him ; no preachers, nor promises, nor possibility of heaven, as there was here, in the wicked's apprehension ; * which will be exceedingly enlightened to see what they are deprived of ; yet then can see no "wells of salvation," only the pit of damnation.

(iii.) *Eternal good things*.—The wicked lose God himself, and heaven with him. O unspeakable loss to the understanding soul, infinite loss,—to want an Infinite Good, to be separated from the Chief Good ! To depart from God,—this is a most sad departure, the worst of all, as reverend and learned Bolton well observes from the ancients.† It is true, wicked men cannot depart from God's essence ; for he is essentially in hell : (Psalm cxxxix. 8 :) but they depart from his comfortable presence ; not to see God, (Heb. xii. 14,) nor to have one comfortable glance at the great Creator, merciful Redeemer, and gracious Sanctifier. And with this loss of losses, they are deprived of heaven, and those admirable perfections and ravishing beauties with which the spouse of Christ is for ever endowed ; and are shut out, with the foolish virgins, (Matt. xxv. 10 ; viii. 11, 12,) from those

* *Vide* part iii. of BAXTER'S "Saints' Rest."

† In his "Meditations on the

inconceivable "pleasures" and joys which "are at God's right hand for evermore." (Psalm xvi. 11.)

Secondly. *The pain of sense*.—"Depart from me," saith Christ. "Whither?" may the damned say. "Why, from my face, into the fire of hell;" (Matt. xiii. 30;) not a purifying, but a tormenting, fire; in the last verse called "everlasting punishment," *εις κατασιν αιωνιον*. In my text, "the fire," *το πυρ*, as more notable than any other. But [with regard to] what and where this fire is, I have only this to say *negatively*:—Neither the fire nor place of hell are merely fantastical or imaginary; that is, such only as have their being in the operation of the mind. But *positively*:—That both are real, such as have a certain physical being; however, scripture gives me not a warrant distinctly and demonstratively to particularize of what kind and where.* Some style this more gross part of hell-punishment "positive," vexation and torment, considering it concretely; yet abstractively considered, even the pain of sense may be privative, as these torments deprive a man of that due perfection which would otherwise be in him. For example: though the sensible vexation of a man in a caldron of scalding liquor be in the materiality of it positive; yet the formal nature of that punishment, precisely considered, lies in this,—that the scalding takes away from the man some perfection belonging to him; else the scalding liquor would be no more an evil to him, than fire is to the salamander.† "For it is impossible," saith the learned Barlow,‡ "that should be evil to a man, which does not in some respect make him worse;" as that which does not deprive him of any perfection cannot do, and by consequent could not be evil. This I only premise, that I may not be understood by any to have a mind to cavil.

REQUISITE TO THE PAIN OF SENSE, THREE THINGS.

There are three things requisite to constitute the nature of this pain of sense.

(i.) *The real presence of all evil*.—That which some term "the position" of all horror, anguish, and vexation. Some resemblance we may have of it by supposing what the person sustains who is cast into a furnace of scalding lead or brimstone; still remembering that all the tortures which ever seized upon all the senses of any body in this world, are but shadowy resemblances of this more sensible part of hell-torments.

(ii.) *The strong impression of vindictive justice in reference unto sin*.—Else the most vehement tormentings could not properly be punishments.§ When one undergoes the cutting-off [of] a rotten leg, *ne pars sincera trahatur*,|| that pain is not properly called "a punish-

* Μη τουν ζηταμεν που εστιν, αλλα πως αν αυτην φυγομεν.—CHRYSOSTOMI Homil. xxvi. in Rom. s.xvi. "Let us not, however, seek curiously where hell is, but how we may escape it."—EDIT.

† Salamandra est animal vivens in igne, tamen non comburitur.—ISIDORUS. "The salamander is an animal that lives in fire, and yet is not burnt."—EDIT.

‡ Exercitatione de Malo. § Omnis pena, si justa est, peccati pena est.—AUGUSTINUS. "Every punishment, if just, is a punishment of sin."—EDIT.

|| OVIDII Metamorph., lib. i. 191. "Lest the sound part be corrupted."—EDIT.

ment," because it is not inflicted for any fault; it is for cure, not in vengeance. But in hell-torment, which is the execution of the just wrath of God, the Lord Chief Justice comes "in flaming fire inflicting vengeance;" * (2 Thess. i. 8;) which relates to the fault, by reason [that] it is fit that the punishment be apportioned to the fault in the execution of justice; as may be more plain in this case:—Suppose Titius for treason should justly deserve death; yet so, that none living know his crime: then imagine Cæsar in a rage [to] take away Titius's life, his crime of treason all this while neither considered nor discovered. Why! the death of Titius (though in itself it be a natural evil, yet) in order to Cæsar is no proper punishment, since it is not the execution of justice in reference to the crime, however it may be so in respect of God, who knew, not only that Titius so died, but that he deserved so to die.† This may illustrate, that, in the punishment of the damned, there is an impression of Divine Justice; and therefore, "because of God's just judgment,"‡ this punishment is called "the damnation of hell," (Matt. xxiii. 33,) thereby noting the keen impression of God's wrath; wherein not only the Almighty Punisher doth respect sin; but the finite creature who is punished, knows that he is cast into the furnace of fire for his sin against the infinite God. Whereupon there is further requisite to this punishment,

(iii.) *That the party punished have an acute feeling himself spoiled of all his perfections; a lively sense of all that he is deprived of, by reason of his sin.*—Otherwise it would not properly be punishment, as I hinted before. The damned hath always quick and terrible apprehension of an angry God impressing his wrath, and persisting to deprive him of all that glorious good [which] was offered to him. Instead of which, (that being refused,) he is more and more assured of lying in a consuming fire, that is and will be continually burning up all those perfections [that] he had; not purging but plaguing him worse and worse: yet not so, that the flames devour his essence, or that the torments utterly, that is, absolutely, destroy his substance; but, that they are continually feeding upon all that it should otherwise have been, his simple being nevertheless remaining. Thus of the punishment itself both of loss and pain.

THE TWO PROPERTIES OF HELL-PUNISHMENT.

(2.) *The properties of hell-punishment, inseparable from it, are its extremity and eternity.*

I. EXTREMITY.

FIRST. Extremity.—It infinitely exceeds all other punishment: no pain so extreme as that of the damned, who sustain the absence of all good and the presence of all evil. All the cruelties in the world cannot possibly make up any horror comparable to the horrors of hell.

* *Διδόντος εκδίκησιν, infligens ultionem.*—BEZA. † *Latet culpa, ubi non latet pœna.*—AUGUSTINUS. "The fault sometimes lies hidden, when the punishment is open."
—EDIT. ‡ *Quia Deus ex judicio hanc pœnam impiis infligit.*—GERHARDUS.

I noted in the analysis of my text, that the extremity of hell-torments is aggravated by *their inflammation*: Το πυρ, "The fire:" *the preparation of them*: Το ἡτοιμασμενον, "The prepared:" *the association in them*: Τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ, "The devil and his angels." There is a great force and emphasis in these prepositive articles, in the original thus repeated, demonstrating and defining this punishment to exceed all others in its extremity.*

(i.) *The grievous inflammation*, setting forth the extremity of these torments.—Fire is the most furious of all elements: but this is "the fire," hotter than elementary or culinary fire; importing the torments to be of a more violent nature than any other. Strabo relates that there is a lake, near Gadara in Galilee, infected with such malignant and pestiferous qualities, that it scaldeth off the skin of whatsoever is cast into it: † yet this is not comparable to the fiery lake of brimstone, where the extreme anguish of the damned is,

First. *Most exquisite*.—All the exquisite torments that ever were heard of, cannot express it to the full. ‡ Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace could but cause horrors like flea-bitings, in comparison of those [which] the damned in hell do suffer in every sense. The little monosyllable "hell," though it is easily overlooked by many at present, yet it is the most unexpressibly grievous rack in the world. § They say, *gehene* (which we translate "hell" in the New Testament) does in French signify "a rack," which (as the strappado) is thought to be the most exquisitely tormenting. Those terrible allusions to Tophet, to the shrieks and yellings of children sacrificed there, (2 Kings xxiii. 10; Isai. xxx. 32, 33,) are but shadowy representations of *their pain who die* "the second death."

Secondly. *Intolerable*.—Soul and body shall be ever supported by God in being, but neither be able to avoid nor yet endure hell-pain. If Cain, the fore-man, coming within the sight of hell here, cry out, "My punishment is greater than I can bear;" (Gen. iv. 13;) (for, "a wounded spirit who can bear?" Prov. xviii. 14;) if the apprehensions of hell even distract the Psalmist; (Psalm lxxviii. 15; xc. 11;) if an angry God, but meeting the soul of a sinner, "rent the caul of his heart;" (Hosea xiii. 8;) how will he be able to bear burning in the lake with fire and brimstone? (Rev. xix. 20.) Hanging, stinging, racking, roasting, suffering under harrows and saws of iron, (Heb. xi. 36, 37,) flaying off the skin, scratching off the flesh with thorns, &c., unheard-of merciless miseries, are nothing to the unsufferable tortures of hell. I grant, there are degrees of torment in hell; yet the least is intolerable; whether we,

Look upon the omnipotent hand of God executing the vengeance of eternal fire.—Ah! "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," the Judge to whom "vengeance belongs;" (Heb. x. 30, 31;) who takes the wicked immediately into his own hands, as

* BEZÆ *Annotationes*.
LERO.

† STRABONIS *Geograph.* lib. xvi. col. 764, citante FULLERO. ‡ *Damnati exquisitissimos dolores sentiant, quibus majores non dari nec cogitari possunt*.—GERHARDI *Loci Communes*. "The damned will feel the most exquisite pains, than which no greater can be inflicted or conceived."—EDIT.

§ LONG'S "Four last Things."

if none else were strong enough to inflict the fierceness of his wrath. Or,

Look down on the impotent punished creature.—No way able to make any resistance, (Rom. ix. 19,) or lift up his head under the burden of divine indignation; but [he] must crouch under it. For, alas! what can a leaf driven to and fro do against the blast of God's displeasure? How should the weak back of a poor feeble man bear "the pile of fire and much wood, which the breath of the Lord doth kindle?" (Isai. xxx. 33.) "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isai. xxxiii. 14; Job xx. 26.) They that suffer least in hell will find the torments intolerable: so that, when our Saviour saith, "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city" which despiseth the offers of gospel-grace, (Matt. x. 15,) he means not that any damned Sodomites should find hell-pains tolerable at all. For Jude, writing by the same Spirit that Matthew did, says, "They suffer the vengeance of eternal fire;" (Jude 7;) and "eternal fire" with a "vengeance" can be no tolerable pain. Christ will come "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those that know not God," as well as on those "that obey not the gospel." (2 Thess. i. 8.) Yet the disobedient and despisers of the gospel (especially as to the pain of loss) shall be more fearfully plagued than Sodomites. If Turks and Tartars be damned, then debauched Christians (as their sins have been double-dyed, so) shall be double-damned; deeper in hell, by reason [that] here they were nearer to heaven. If there be "heinous sins" against "wonderful mercies," they must needs bring "tremendous punishments:"* O, consider it, England, city and country, courtiers and commonwealth's-men! Again: the anguish is,

Thirdly. *Easeless and remediless.*—"The wrath of God abideth." (John iii. 36.) In hell [are] no cooling fits, but continued burnings, the worm perpetually gnawing, the same torment remaining both "day and night." (Rev. xx. 10.) There [is] no remission of sin, dismissal of pain, intermission of sense, or permission of comfort; but "judgment without mercy," (James ii. 13,) mischief "without measure," (Isai. v. 14,) crying without compassion, pain without pity, (Ezek. vii. 4,) sorrow without succour, bitter lamentation without any consolation, descending without hopes of ascending; (Job vii. 9;) the prisoners being locked up in this dungeon without possibility of release; no passage out of this darksome, fiery pit of no-ease;† where the prisoners would not live, yet cannot get out. (Luke xvi. 26.) Christ, the Supreme Keeper, who hath the key in his own hand, (Rev. i. 18,) affirms with an asseveration [that], if thou be cast

* *Ingentia beneficia, ingentia flagitia, ingentia supplicia.*

† *Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*—HORATI *Epist.* lib. i. ep. i. 75. "Hence are there no returning steps."

—EDIT.

*Gradumque retrò flectere haud unquam sinunt
Umbra tenaces.*—SENECÆ *Herc. Furens*, 678.

"Ne'er do the shades, tenacious of their prey,
Allow them to retrace their downward way."—EDIT.

in, "verily thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing;" (Matt. v. 26;) nay, cue or "mite;" (Luke xii. 59; Mark xii. 42;) which will never be.

Fourthly. *Universal and various*.—Both in respect of the subject tormented, and the objects tormenting. Even as the tooth-ache, stone, gout, fever, plague, &c., concurring to torment one man in every part. Every power and faculty, sense and member, both of soul and body, will be filled with anguish and vexation, within and without; the never-dying worm of conscience, (Isai. lxvi. 24,) and unspeakable tribulation that follows upon it, (Rom. ii. 9,) manifested in "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth," (Matt. xxii. 13; xiii. 42; xxv. 30,) to confound the eye and perplex the mind. As all have joined in sin, so they shall [all join] in suffering. The soul, indeed, was ringleader in sin, and so will be chief in suffering, when the "sharp arrows of the Almighty are within, and the poison thereof drinketh up the spirit." (Psalm cxx. 4; Job vi. 4; xx. 25.) Thus of the inflammation greated by the four ingredients.

(ii.) *The preparation* further aggravates the extremity of the torments.—The text acquaints us that it is "the prepared fire" by way of transcendancy; as if the wisdom of God had devised on purpose the most tormenting temper for this formidable fire, which the Lord "kindled in his anger of old." (Deut. xxxii. 22; Isai. xxx. 33.) In God's secret purpose it was prepared from eternity, and actually made ready for the fallen angels when they fell from God. The Talmudists conceive, that by reason to the things created in the second day there is not added (as in the rest) "that it was good," (Gen. i. 6—8,) therefore the fire of hell was then created;* but, to leave such a conjecture, we are certain it is "the prepared fire," and that "for the devil and his angels:" not as if it were not prepared also for wicked men, but chiefly to show [that] it was first assigned to the devils; to note the extremity and inevitableness of the torment of the wicked, who have the devil and his angels for their companions.† Hence,

(iii.) *The association in hell*, "the devil and his angels," contributes to the extremity of the damned's punishment.—"The devil," so called, because he first calumniated God to Eve; as elsewhere "Satan," because the capital enemy of God and man. (Rev. xii. 9.) It should seem, there is one notorious Beelzebub in the kingdom of darkness over the rest of evil spirits; (Matt. xii. 24; x. 25; ix. 34; John xii. 31; xiv. 30;) who may be called "his angels," probably, by reason he, being one above the rest, as head of the faction, drew multitudes of others into the party, who with him sinned and fell.‡ But because the distinction in the order of angels is not so evident, we may take it of the evil angels collectively, rather than distributively; miserable comforters, indeed, tormenting companions! (Matt.

* Buxtorfii *Lexicon Talmudicum*. † CALVIN, BEZA, BAXTER, &c. ‡ *Facti perduelles ad exemplum sui principis, atque adeo semen illius audiunt*.—DR. ARROWSMITH, *Tactica sacra*, lib. i. cap. 2, sect. 4. "They became enemies of God after the example of their chief, and therefore are called 'his seed.'"—EDIT.

xviii. 34.) O think how sad it is to be chained with the devil in his fiery fetters; shut up in the darkest den with the roaring lion, (1 Peter v. 8,) with ravenous wolves; to live in a nest among stinging, freckled adders, having your loins encircled with the girdles of serpents; to lie in a pit amongst millions of ugly toads; to be every where bitten with venomous asps; to have cockatrices killing you with their eyes, dragons spitting fire in your faces, vipers eating out your bowels! And then tell me, if the companions in hell, who are infinitely worse than these, can be desirable, that we should any of us be so mad (as too many are) to choose them, rather than the society of saints. Wier speaks of a charmer at Saltzburg, that, when in the sight of the people he had charmed a company of serpents into a ditch and killed them, at last there came one huge one, far bigger than the rest, which leaped upon him, wound about his waist like a girdle, and rolled him into the ditch, and so killed the charmer himself in the conclusion.* Alas! how many men and women can sport themselves with the devil's temptations here, till at last the grand "old serpent" come out with his strength, (Rev. xii. 9,) and roll them into the pit of hell; where they shall live in misery, and lie sprawling with no other companions but the devil and his cursed fiends; who will be continually tormenting one another, and stinging them with horrors, to all eternity!† Hence,

II. ETERNITY.

The second property of this punishment is its *eternity*.—In the text *το αιωνιον*, "*the everlasting fire*;" and in verse 46, "*everlasting punishment*;" which is there directly opposed to "*eternal life*," that blessed state of the righteous which will never have an end; and therefore, according to the rules and maxims of reason,‡ doth necessarily import a punishment of the same duration that the reward is. Now that is acknowledged, by the Socinians themselves, to be eternal, absolutely so as never to end; and therefore the punishment cannot but be so too. The damned are "*in everlasting chains of darkness*," "*suffering*" no less than "*the vengeance of eternal fire*," in "*the blackness of darkness for ever*;" (Jude 6, 7, 13;) and their smoke goes up "*for ever and ever*." (Rev. xiv. 11.) *A parte post*, it is an interminable duration; as beyond measure in extremity, so beyond time in eternity. None but he who was "*from everlasting to everlasting*," can fully describe this most permanent duration. (Psalm xc. 2, 4.) They that, by the help of the best spiritual and rational prospective, can see furthest into it, will be forced to cry out, "*O the ocean that cannot be looked over! the depth that cannot be fathomed!*" There is never an *exit* to this saddest tragedy this "*eternal judgment*." (Heb. vi. 2.) God "*sets an end to*" all other "*darkness*," (Job xxviii. 3,) but none to the darkness of hell. When the wrath of

* MORE, *Atheism*. lib. iii. cap. 2.

† *Peccato diabolorum nullum paratum remedium*. "No remedy is afforded for the sin of the devils."—EDIT.

‡ *Oppositorum est eadem scientia; et oppositorum sunt opposita consequentia*.—*Can. Logic*. "The knowledge of opposites is the same; and the consequences of opposites are opposite."—EDIT.

God is come upon the ungodly, it will still be "wrath to come." (Matt. iii. 7.) This fiery durance is not measurable by our petty particles of time. Alas! it is for ever. "Woe! woe! woe!"* (Matt. xxiii.) O eternity! eternity! eternity! This word, "ever, ever, everlasting," will even break the hearts of the damned.

Mark what I say: suppose, with me, (after others,†) the whole world were a mountain of sand, and a little wren come but once every thousandth year to fetch one grain of sand; what incomprehensible millions of millions (not to be numbered by a finite being) would be spent before this supposed wonderful mountain could be fetched away! when it would be millions beyond reckoning, before the sands in an hour-glass could be carried away after this rate; but six thousand years, and so but six sands, would be gone since the creation of the world. Well; but supposing yet this wonderful, astonishing thing should be effected; if a damned person should stay in torment so long, and then have an end of his woe; it were some comfort. But when that immortal bird should (according to the pre-supposed portion) have carried away this mountain ten thousand times over, alas! alas! and woe! his anguish and torment will be as great as ever it was, and he no nearer coming out than he was the very first moment he entered into hell.

Beloved, think seriously on this sad supposition. I know not whether your hearts tremble; but I am sure mine does, when I dwell on these things in my thoughts. O who are so stout-hearted among us, that they can "dwell with everlasting burnings;" (Isai. xxxiii. 14;) that they can struggle with this wrath to come, which will never be overcome, never come to an end? Believe it, friends! "the worm dieth not, the fire is not quenched:" they are not mine, but the most sure, yet sad, words with which the most evangelical prophet Isaiah shuts up his long and sweet prophecy. (Isai. lxvi. 24.) And you know, our Lord Jesus, who "spake as never man spake," (John vii. 46,) did frequently utter his mind in the same style.

Thus for explication.

CONFIRMATION.

II. FOR CONFIRMATION, that the wicked shall depart from Christ into an extremity and eternity of torment, as hath been described, take these particulars, which, laid together, are cogent:—

(I.) The fore-mentioned explication, grounded upon evident texts of scripture, (not wrested from their genuine meaning,) doth imply the quod sit, that is, the existency of the subject, namely, that there is a hell, as the basis or hypothesis upon which not only the quid, but quale, is founded in scripture; that is, the essence and essential properties; namely, that there is a real punishment appointed to some, consisting in the pain of loss and sense, both extreme and eternal.—For, "of that which is not, there can neither be essence nor manner of being described."‡ But, from what hath been said, you see there are both

* *Ouai, ouai, ouai* as if he had said, *Ouk aei, ouk aei, ouk aei*. ["Never, never, never!"]

† DREXELIUS, GERHARDUS, BIRKBECK, &c.

‡ *Non-entis nec est essentia nec modus essentia*.—Maxim.

predicates in scripture, answering to the questions, "What pain?" and, "What manner of pain?" And therefore it must necessarily follow, that there is some subject on which they are affirmed, and to which they do appertain. To this purpose Augustine says truly, that "whatsoever is grieved doth live or exist; and that there cannot possibly be any grief but there must be some real subject to sustain it." * If, then, the scripture speaks of an eternal pain, it doth certainly suppose [that] some must endure it.

(II.) *The beams of natural light in some of the Heathens have made such impressions on the heart or natural conscience, that several of them have confused notions of a hell, as well as of a judgment to come.*—Profound Bradwardine and others have produced many proofs concerning their apprehensions of this truth.† What made the heathen emperor [Adrian], when he lay a-dying, cry out,—*O anima, vagula, blandula*, &c., "O my little, wretched, wandering soul, whither art thou now hastening?" &c. "O, what will become of me? Live I cannot, die I dare not!"—but some discoveries of the wrath to come?

Surely it was not merely the dissolution of nature, but the sad consequent, that so startled and terrified Belshazzar, when he saw the hand-writing on the wall. (Dan. v. 5, 6.) Guilty man, when conscience is awakened, fears an after-reckoning, when he shall be paid the wages of his crying sins, proportionably to his demerits. (Heb. ii. 15.) Hence [we find] Tertullian in this matter appealing to the consciences of the Gentiles: ‡ and after him Chrysostom affirmeth, that "poets, and philosophers, and all sorts of men, speaking of a future retribution, have said that many are punished in hell." § Plato is very plain, that "whoever are not expiated, but profane, shall go into hell, to be tormented for their wickednesses with the greatest, most bitter and terrible punishments for ever in that prison in hell." || And Trismegistus affirms concerning the soul's going out of the body defiled, that it is "tossed to and fro with eternal punishments;" ¶ and another, that "it was the common opinion among them, that the wicked were held in chains by Pluto," (so they call the prince of devils,) "in chains which cannot be loosed." **

It would take up too much time, and not be so fit for your Christian ears, to mention what conceits the poets have of Tartarus, (that is, in plain English, "hell,") and the judgment there: wherein, for want of scripture-revelation, they are much out in their fictions con-

* *Certum est vivere omne quod dolet, doloremque omnem nisi in re vivente esse non posse.*—*De Civitate Dei*, lib. xxi. cap. 3.

† BRADWARDINUS *De Causâ Dei*, lib. i. cap. i. corol. 39; RAYNAUDI *Theol. Nat.*, disp. viii. quest. 4; WENDELINI *Contemplationes Physicæ*, pars i. sect. 2; JUSTINI *Historia*.

‡ TERTULLIANUS *Adversus Gentes*, p. 78; et *De Resurrectione*, cap. 3.

§ *Kai gar poiηται, &c., kai en ἄδου κολάζεσθαι ειρηκασι τους πολλους.*—CHRYSOSTOMI *Homil. viii. in 1 Thess.*, sub *fine*.

|| *Ὅτι ὁς ἀν ἀμνητος καὶ ἀτελεστος εἰς ἄδου ἀφικηται.*—PLATO *in Phædonē*, p. 52, edit. Francof., 1602. *Δια τὰς ἁμαρτίας τὰ μέγιστα καὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρεπτάτα καὶ φοβερώτατα πάθη πᾶσιν ὄντες τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον ἐκεῖ ἐν ἄδου ἐν τῷ δεσμοτηρίῳ.*—*Ita ille in Gorgiâ*, sub *fine*.

¶ MERCURIUS TRISMEGISTUS, cap. x., *Æsculapius*.
** *Ὁ μὲν δὴ πολλὸς ὁμιλος, &c., τοπον τινα ὑπο τῇ γῇ βαθὺν ἄδην ὑπελιηφασιν.*—LUCIANUS *De Lucio*.

cerning the manner of this punishment; yet these imaginations of theirs give some evidence to the thing itself written in their consciences, about which the word of God doth inform us more fully and clearly.* Every one's guilty conscience (not seared and stifled) calls for our assent to this same doctrine. The secret checks in our own bosom do sometimes affright and appal us, even anticipating torments, and giving the sinner an earnest of that sum of misery, which is "the wages of sin," (Rom. vi. 23,) the payment whereof shall never have an end: so that every conscious wretch may find and feel such a worm crawling in his own breast which, unless it be killed by the Physician, who only cures sin-stung souls with his own blood, will never die. The very Turks speak of "the house of perdition," and affirm that they who have turned God's grace into impiety, shall "abide eternally in the fire of hell, and there be eternally tormented." †

(III.) *It cannot but be equitable, that the wicked, who despised everlasting happiness, should suffer eternal miseries.*—They would not be heirs of an everlasting kingdom; (John v. 40; Isai. ix. 6, 7; Dan. vii. 14, 27; Rev. xiv. 6;) and therefore no marvel [that] they are everlastingly shut out. (Matt. xxv. 12, 46; xviii. 8.) They slight and refuse God's eternal mercy, and the honour which the heirs of glory do accept of upon the terms of the gospel; (John v. 39, 40; Jude 21;) and therefore they must arise to "shame and everlasting contempt," (Dan. xii. 2,) and undergo eternal misery, according to the terms of the law: ‡ for,

* *Tarturus horriferos eructans faucibus æstus.*

LUCRETIVS *De Rerum Natura*, lib. x. 1028.

"And gloomy hell disgorging lurid flames."—DR. BUSBY'S Translation.

Tartaræ sedes, et formidabile regnum

Mortis inexpleta.—STATIUS.

"The infernal shades, and kingdom dread

Of death insatiate."—EDIT.

Viscera præbebat Tityos lanianda.—OVIDII *Metamorph.* lib. iv. 457.

"Here Tityus lay, his entrails all exposed

To be for ever prey'd upon."—EDIT.

Perfidus Ixion.—HORATIUS *De Arte Poetica*, 124. "Treacherous Ixion."—EDIT.

Saxum ingens volvunt alii, radiisque rotarum

Districti pendunt: sedet, æternūque sedebit,

Infelix Theseus; Phlegyasque miserrimus omnes

Admonet, et magnā testatur voce per umbras:

Discite justitiam moniti, et non temnere divos.—VIRGILII *Æneid.* vi. 616.

"Some roll a stone, rebounding down the hill:

Some hang suspended on the whirling wheel.

There Theseus groans in pains that ne'er expire,

Chain'd down for ever in a chair of fire.

There Phlegyas feels unutterable woe,

And roars incessant through the shades below,

'Be just, ye mortals; by these torments awed,

These dreadful torments, not to scorn a God!'"—PITT'S Translation.

Nec mortis penas mors altera finiet hujus,

Horaque erit tantis ultima nulla malis.—OVIDII *Ibis*, 195.

"No second death shall end the pains of this,

And ills so dread shall never terminate."—EDIT.

† *Alcoran MAHOM.* cap. 14, p. 160, et cap. 20, p. 198.

‡ *Factus est malo*

dignus æterno, qui hoc in se peremit bonum, quod esse posset æternum.—AUGUSTINUS.

"He has become worthy of eternal evil, who has destroyed in himself that good which might have been eternal."—EDIT.

(IV.) *The violation of those everlasting obligations which lie upon them unto God, do demerit an answerable punishment.*—Since the wicked have trampled upon “the blood of the covenant,” (Heb. x. 28, 29,) and abused the many favours [that] God tendered to them to make them meet for glory, (by which they have “fitted” themselves “for destruction,” Rom. ix. 22, 23,) it is but reasonable they should be punished with “the mist and blackness of darkness for ever,” (2 Peter ii. 17; Jude 13,) who by their profaneness and errors did seek to cloud the beams of God’s infinite goodness, “everlasting light,” and eternal truth. (Rom. i. 18—25; Isai. lx. 19; Rev. xiv. 6; Rom. xvi. 26.) To draw to a period:—

(V.) *If wicked impenitents after this life shall not be punished by God with everlasting torments, then something must hinder either on God’s part or theirs.*

1. *If on God’s part, then it is either,*

(1.) *Because he will not.*—Now what his will is, you have heard revealed, and may know further if you consult the scripture. My text acquaints you plainly with Christ’s mind; and that is the mind of God. Or,

(2.) *Because he cannot.*—Which to affirm, were to deny his omnipotency; to say, he is not God. Or,

(3.) *Because he dare not.*—What were this, but to suppose the Sovereign Judge upon the bench to be, as it were, a cowardly underling to the trembling prisoner at the bar? when his very “breath” can kindle the fiery river of brimstone into which he sentenceth every impenitent malefactor. (Isai. xxx. 33.) Or,

(4.) *Because, like unjust judges, he may be corrupted with bribes.*—But “shall not the Judge of all the world do right?” (Gen. xviii. 25.)

2. *If the hinderance be on the wicked’s part, then, I conceive, it must be either,*

(1.) *Because their living and sinning but a short time here on earth does not deserve eternal punishment in hell.*—For the evil of punishment should be but commensurate to the evil of sin. Now there is no proportion betwixt finite and infinite. I confess, this pretence is ready to shake the faith of many in this point; but if the ground of it be rightly understood, it may confirm the point. For,

(i.) *If the wicked had lived always, they would always have separated themselves from God by sinning against him, and never have repented of their sin, nor been weary of sinning: neither, then, will God be weary of plaguing, or repent of punishing.*—The Schoolmen from Augustine argue, *Peccant in æterno suo: ergo puniuntur in æterno Dei*; * which will never have an end, but remain while God is God. This may be illustrated by a similitude:—As men, [who, being] addicted to pleasure, do in the night-time eagerly and earnestly pursue their game at chess, tables, or the like, by an inch of candle,

* AQUINÆ *Suppl.* quæst. 99; SCOTUS in *Sententiarum librum ultimum*; THOMÆ *Prima Secunda*, quæst. lxxxvii. art. 5. “They sin in their eternity: therefore they are punished in God’s eternity.”—EDIT.

which unexpectedly goes out, would questionless have played willingly all night had the light lasted; so wicked men—they desire to spend all their inch of time in the pursuit of their sins. If that would continue, they would continue in sin, and not leave sinning; wherefore they shall not leave suffering. Had they lived for ever here, they would have sinned for ever: but in hell, where they would not live, (Rev. ix. 6,) they must be kept alive, because of their will of sin upon earth.

O wicked wretch, is it not a righteous thing with God (what thinkest thou?) that thy punishment for thy sins should never cease in hell; who, shouldest thou live for ever here, wouldest be an eternal standing provocation to his Majesty? I deny not but the wicked will sin eternally in hell: yet I lay not the stress on that, which some do, as the reason of their eternal punishment; but because they never ceased, nor would have ceased, to transgress God's law, whilst upon earth; * and eternal punishment was denounced against the first transgression, which every one that lives and dies in sin is not only guilty of, but will not repent of. (Gen. ii. 17; Rom. vi. 23; v. 12; Gal. iii. 10.) He would not be reconciled to God here; (Isai. xxx. 15; Matt. xxiii. 37; John v. 40; Ezek. xxxiii. 11;) and God will not be reconciled to him hereafter; but will say to him always, as Tiberius once said to one that requested death rather than long imprisonment, *Nondum tecum redii in gratiam*, "I am not yet reconciled to thee, that I should show thee such a favour."†

(ii.) *The sinner hath but his choice and option; if he be plagued with eternal death, it is no other than that which he preferred before eternal life.* (Prov. viii. 36.)—The Lord "sets life and death before us;" as by Moses, the typical—so by Christ, the true—Messiah. (Deut. xxx. 19.) If we will choose Christ, and accept of him, we may have eternal life: (John vi. 40, 54; iii. 36:) if not, we must be sure of eternal death. (Ezra viii. 22; Hosea xiii. 9.) He that refuseth the "eternal weight of glory" in one end of the scale, chooseth "eternal punishment" in the other end; as our first parents did choose the curse, by their voluntary refusing of the blessing. Which bad choice of theirs laid obnoxious unto eternal pain both themselves and their posterity; who cannot complain of God for inflicting the death [which] they are by corrupt nature liable to, since, beside their choice in their first parents and in their own persons, they who live under the gospel have as great a mercy tendered by the Second Adam as eternal death is a grievous punishment. Yea, the atheist (who, as it was said of Antiochus Epiphanes, ‡ "takes more pains to go to hell, than some others [do] to go to heaven") must confess that he deserves his wages of eternal death as his pay; since he hath toiled and drudged all his life long in the devil's service, only to fit himself for misery.

* *Ad magnam justitiam judicantis pertinet, ut nunquam careant supplicio, qui in hâc vita nunquam voluerunt carere peccato.*—GREGORIUS. "It appertains to the great equity of our Judge, that they whose will it was never to cease from sin in this life, should never be free from torture in hell."—EDIT. † Suetonius in *Vita Tiberii*. ‡ Bunting's "Itinerary."

(iii.) *The Schoolmen have observed, from the philosopher, that the punishment ought to be levied according to the dignity of him against whom the offence is committed.**—He is more severely punished who gives his sovereign a box on the ear, than he that does so to his equal. Now wicked men (and that without repentance) sin against the eternal God, by the violation of his honourable law, which he resolves to “magnify.” (Isai. xlii. 21.) And as they ought not in their own case, so they are unqualified to be competent judges of their own offences; (since they cannot see the thousandth part of that evil [which] there is in the least sin;) and therefore [are] unfit to appor- tion the punishment which ought to be levied by “the Judge of all the world,” (who knows what is meet, and will do nothing but what is right, Gen. xviii. 25,) proportionably to the offence committed against the Supreme Majesty.† For where there is satisfaction required, there must be proportion; ‡ which would not at all be here in this case, without some kind of infiniteness. And because that cannot be found in any mere creature in value, it must necessarily be in duration: for if, after millions of years, it could ever be said [that] the damned had fully satisfied God’s justice, it might be said [that] they shall be set free, as the prisoner from the gaol, having paid the debt; (Luke xii. 58, 59;) (a thing impossible;) but because the sufferings of the damned, (which are all the satisfaction they can give Infinite Justice,) *ex parte subjecti*, “in regard of the subject,” being finite, and consequently not of infinite value, they must be so in duration, at least *a parte post*, “as to the future,” for the defect of satisfaction in the temporal finite punishment of any mere creature.

EXCEPTION.

If it be excepted, “Neither by the eternal punishment of men is God’s justice satisfied: for then this punishment would not be eternal, (which is *contradictio in adjecto*, ‘a contradiction in the very thing itself,’) if ever it could be said of God’s justice, ‘Now it is satisfied.’” I reply,

REPLY.

First. Let it be very well considered, whether God’s justice, being infinite, and consequently an essential attribute in God, doth not require from man upon his delinquency that satisfaction which is *infiniti valoris*, “of infinite value,” he (the party offended) being essentially “of infinite dignity.” Now such a satisfaction, that is, of infinite value, could only be made by Christ; who, being the Surety of the covenant, and [having] suffered in our stead, is Θεανθρωπος, “God-man” in one person, and gave plenary satisfaction unto God. (Acts xx. 28; John i. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Rom. iii. 25.)

* AQUINÆ *Suppl.* quæst. xcix. art. 1. † *Peccatum in Deum crimen læsæ majestatis.* “Sin against God involves the crime of high treason.”—EDIT.

‡ *Adsit*

Regula, peccatis quæ penas irroget æquas.—HORATII *Serm.* lib. i. sat. iii. 117.

“Then let the law adapt to every crime

Its proper pain.”—DUNCOMBE’S Translation.

Secondly. Though eternal punishment may not be called “a satisfaction made or given *parti læsæ*, ‘to the party offended,’” yet it is that which the party offending must ever be in making or giving, by the order of the Supreme Judge, who is to hear the cause, and apportion the punishment to the fault; because he, (the delinquent,) wanting that infiniteness in dignity of person which doth bear a proportion to the dignity of the party offended, must make this up by an infinite duration of punishment; which may perhaps in some sort be termed *satisfactio legi præstita*, “satisfaction performed to the law,” it being *persolutio totius quod est in obligatione*, “the payment of the whole in the obligation.” For upon default of paying *debitum officii*, “the debt of duty and obedience,” what more is required of *debitum supplicii*, “the debt of penalty and suffering,” to be paid, than death in its full latitude,—temporal, spiritual, and eternal? So that in this respect it is no error to call it “satisfaction.” But if we speak of a complete satisfaction made *parti offensæ*, “to the party offended,” it must be granted that none but the only Son of God did or could give it. Thus for the first great impediment pretended in regard of the subject. Or,

(2.) *It is because there is a possibility of freedom from the prison of hell.*—And then this must be either *by covenant and compact*: which whoever affirms, *proferat tabulas*; * for it is fancy, not faith, which believeth any such thing without the written word. Or *by commutation*: and what place for such a fancy? Is any so absurd as to think there are any in hell who belong to God, and in heaven who belong to the devil, that there should be matter for such a chimera, such a strange fiction? Or *by force*: and what were this, but to overpower Omnipotency? Or *by fraud*: and what were this, but to outwit Divine Wisdom, and to put a trick upon Him whose “understanding is infinite?” Or *by a price paid*: and what it is that offending man can lay down as a sufficient compensation or satisfaction to an offended God, who is infinite, for the injury done unto him, which God should accept of, is hard to fancy; (1 Sam. ii. 25;) and woful experience (if nothing else will) may convince vain man, that it is impossible to procure. Or *by manumission*: † now this doth belong only to obedient servants; not to “children of disobedience.” (Eph. v. 6.) Or,

(3.) *The impediment is because there is an impossibility ex parte subjecti, “in regard of the subject,” (as is pretended,) of undergoing torments of an eternal duration by a finite creature.*—And therefore all the hell [which] Socinians, &c., ‡ grant, is annihilation; by reason it is said, the wicked shall be “destroyed.” (2 Thess. i. 8, 9.) But, to remove this, remember,

(1.) *The same infinite power of God which preserves angels and men, “vessels of mercy,” to the glorifying of his grace, can preserve devils and wicked men, “vessels of wrath,” to the glorifying of his justice.*

* “Let him produce his authority.”—EDIT.

† “Let him produce his authority.”—EDIT.

‡ “Let him produce his authority.”—EDIT.

† GODWIN’S “Roman Antiquities,” book i. sect. ii. chap. 6.

‡ SOCINUS, *Catechismus Racoviensis*, CRELLIUS,

BIDDLE, RICHARDSON, &c.

(Rom. ix. 22, 23.)—And God will do so, by reason his mercy cannot contradict his justice and truth. Christ, who at the last day will judge others for unmercifulness, best knows what it is to be merciful: and it concerns us to credit the verity of his sentence in my text; though, upon hearkening to the shallow reasonings of flesh and blood, we may be apt to apprehend severity in it. But, as Gregory says truly, “He that cannot find out a reason of God’s doings, may easily find in himself a reason why he cannot find it out.”

(ii.) *The destruction mentioned is rather in a continual fieri than in facto esse, “in a perpetual doing, never finally done.”*—The living of the wicked in hell is a dying life, and their dying is a living death. One arm of God’s power is always bearing up what the other is always beating down.

(iii.) *They shall be destroyed in a moral, not in a natural, sense.*—A man that is dead in law, may live a natural life, but is deprived of that which before was due to him. The wicked have their beings in hell, but are deprived of all that which makes to their well-beings; sequestered from the fruition of God, and all comfort with Him, who is the Fountain of life: instead of which, they cannot be freed from all that tends to their ill-beings. Christ says expressly, they must depart into “everlasting fire” and “everlasting punishment:” therefore, certainly, not to be annihilated; but to abide and remain in torment. For,

First. *He that shall be everlastingly punished, must needs remain in being everlastingly.*—His punishment cannot continue when he is not; he that hath an end cannot be punished without end after he ceaseth to be: * so that, if the wicked should be annihilated, or absolutely destroyed, and deprived of being, then nothing should be tormented with the never-dying worm, (if the worm die not, it must live in some subject,) and nothing should dwell in unquenchable fire, as the scripture affirms there shall. Again:

Secondly. *Men, as well as devils, may have their essence and being eternally preserved, and yet not “inherit eternal life,” but remain in a moral condition of eternal death.*—For “eternal life,” promised and purchased, in scripture, does not only note our physical or natural being in life, but chiefly our moral well-being in bliss and happiness. And therefore “eternal death” does not deny wicked men being naturally alive, but their being morally alive. They live indeed, but miserably; in a condition absent from all comfortable good, present with all evil. “There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth” for ever: (Matt. viii. 12:) therefore there shall some be who shall so weep, &c. And they are the wicked that shall still remain in these remaining torments beyond expression, which are called “the second death.” Not that this death is a consumption of their persons, an absolute wasting of their substances, as to the continuance of

* *Non-entis nulla sunt prædicata.* “Nothing can be affirmed of that which does not exist.”—EDIT. *Ejus quod falsum est nulla potest esse scientia.* ΟΥΚ ΕΣΤΙ ΤΟ ΜΗ ΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΤΑΣΘΑΙ, *id est, ως ον.*—*Ut PHILOPONUS in ARISTOTELEM.* “There can be no knowledge of that which is not;” that is, “as existing.”—EDIT.

their beings; (for though they seek to have their beings destroyed, yet they shall not find their desire accomplished; Rev. ix. 6; yet,—as it is said of Roger, bishop of Salisbury, in king Stephen's time, "He would not have lived" that life in prison, "yet could not die,"* —they would be annihilated, and cannot :) but this, which is "the worst death,"† is a deprivation of all the comfortable good of life,—natural, spiritual, and eternal; with an infliction of the greatest evil, [which] the wicked are then supported and capacitated to lie groaning under for ever.

Thus for the confirmation of the point; wherein we have had likewise (implied) a confutation of the most considerable adversaries to this infallible doctrine of hell. There remains,

APPLICATION.

III. A short APPLICATION, to be enlarged in your meditations. Learn hence,

1. *To fear sin, and its sad consequent, hell.*—The clear evidence of an eternity and extremity of hell-tortures should stir up in us a holy affection of fearing God, and being afraid (by reason we are guilty) of eternal vengeance. The truth is, we should be so afraid of sin and hell as to be afraid of nothing else, if we would copy out in our practice the lesson [which] Christ commands; namely, "Fear not them who can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell;" (Matt. x. 28;) "yea, I say unto you, Fear him." (Luke xii. 5.) Christ repeats his precept, that it may not be forgotten. An urgent necessity lies upon us to "pass the time of our sojourning here in fear." (1 Peter i. 17.) We must "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. ii. 12.) We may, we ought to, fear the pain of losing the sight of Jehovah's blessed face and favour; for this is a filial affection, consistent with the greatest love. He that truly loves God, will solicitously fear nothing so much as to displease and lose him.‡ Yea, and though we may not, with an irrational, or selfish, uneffectual, slavish fear, (which dishonours God,) fear the pain of sense; yet, because hell-torments are such extreme and eternal violations of the primitive integrity of our nature, we may and ought also, with a rational fear, to be afraid of the pain of sense; § but not immoderately and immeasurably more than we are afraid of sin, which is a worse evil in its own nature than hell itself; for all the evil that is in hell doth arise from sin, as the mother of it. O, if we should but hear the bitter complaints of those suffering in hell for their sins, I need not then, I might hope, persuade the stoutest to be afraid of sin and hell; for our ears would even tingle, our hearts tremble, our blood curdle, and our spirits, as it were, congeal to ice, at the noise of their most horrible lamentations. Learn,

* *Vivere noluerit, mori nescierit.* † *Nulla major aut peior mors quam ubi non moritur mors.*—AUGUSTINUS. "There can be no greater or worse death than when death never dies."—EDIT.
‡ *Res est solliciti plena timoris amor.* "True love is full of anxious fear."—EDIT.
§ JEANES'S "Mixture of Scholastical with Practical Divinity."

2. *To flee speedily from sin by real repentance.*—Having this warning to “flee from the wrath to come,” which will inevitably seize upon impenitent sinners; O let us all learn of our Saviour and Judge, from this consideration, to “bring forth fruits meet for repentance!” His reason is in effect the same with this doctrine; namely, Every fruitless tree is cast into the fire, “unquenchable fire.” (Matt. iii. 7, 8, 12.) Yet of ourselves we can bring forth no acceptable fruit, till we be ingrafted into Christ, the true Vine. (John xv. 4—6.) O let us, then, labour to see, and be truly sorrowful for, all our sins; and pray, “Lord, turn thou us, and we shall be turned” from all our sins; (Jer. xxxi. 18;) and accept of a whole Christ for our only Lord and Saviour! O, since we cannot “wash our hands in innocency,” let us be washing them daily in the tears of true penitency! Let us go to the “fountain opened,” to wash in, “for sin and for uncleanness;” (Zech. xiii. 1;) that we may not be cast into the river and “lake of fire and brimstone!” (Isai. xxx. 33; Rev. xx. 10, 14, 15; xxi. 8.) O, let us now bathe our souls in the blood of Christ; that everlasting burnings may not hereafter seize upon us! Hence learn,

3. *Not to blame gospel-ministers for preaching of terrors.*—Hereby they would stave us off from running headlong into hell; and bring us to repentance, that we may not be cast into that prison, where there is “no place for repentance.” “Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men:” (2 Cor. v. 11;) in love to their precious souls we are bound (being assured we must give an account, Heb. xiii. 17) to awake our hearers, lest they “forget God, and be turned into hell.” (Psalm ix. 17.) We dare not betray your precious souls, to gratify you at present, and indulge you in your sins. As the apostle says, we must “not for meat destroy the work of God;” (Rom. xiv. 15, 20;) for preferment, favour, or respect from you at present, we dare not suffer your immortal souls to perish without warning. O friends, be not angry with us, the ambassadors of Jesus Christ, when we see any of you hastening down the broad way which leads to hell, (as sure as we are here now,) if we then cry, “Fire! fire!” to bring you back. You have no more reason to think us your enemies for this warning of you, and “telling you the truth” in love, (Gal. iv. 16,) than any of your children [would] have to think [that] the most dear and tender parents amongst you were their enemies, when, seeing them through carelessness ready to fall into fire or water, they should cry out, “O, take heed, children; or you are irrecoverably lost!” Learn,

4. *Not to grudge sinners their portion in this world.*—David’s advice should be our practice, enforced from this very doctrine; namely, “Not to fret ourselves because of evil-doers, nor to be envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.” (Psalm xxxvii. 1, 2.) They “shall be turned into hell:” (Psalm ix. 17;) their foolish prosperity will destroy them: their “candle shall be put out;” (Prov. xxiv. 20;) and that in a snuff which will never

cease stinking. Why, then, should we be offended at *their* prosperity here, *who* are reserved to an extremity and eternity of torment hereafter? It is a gross mistake to "call the proud happy;" (Mal. iii. 15;) or to think the godly "most miserable," (1 Cor. xv. 13—19,) because they are here sometimes a little under a cloud. The Psalmist was tempted to it; but the knowledge of this doctrine in "the sanctuary" did soon rectify his judgment, and made him conclude that God had "set them in slippery places, to be cast down into destruction, and utterly consumed with terrors, and perish for ever." (Psalm lxxiii. 3, 17—19; Job xx. 6, 7.) We had more need to pity, than repine at, our wicked neighbours having their good things here; when we consider how hard a matter it is to have good things here with Dives, and with Lazarus, too, hereafter in Abraham's bosom. (Matt. xix. 24; Luke xvi. 25.) Learn,

5. Lastly. *To admire, and be greatly affected with, the superlative love of Christ, in undergoing that punishment in our stead (if we will receive him for our Lord and Saviour) which will be extreme and eternal torment to all that do refuse him.*—And if he be judge, they who receive not his ambassadors in his name are of that number. (Matt. x. 14, 15, 40, 41.) O who would not, then, "kiss the Son," that believe the wrath of God will inflict these eternal torments? O Christians, (such I wish we may all be in deed and truth,) let us bless and "kiss" this blessed Son of God, (Psalm ii. 12,) that bare for us this insupportable wrath; "even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come," (1 Thess. i. 10,) and "triumphed over principalities," (Col. ii. 15,) and over the grave and hell. (Hosea xiii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.) The greatness of the damnation we are exposed to by nature, (Matt. xxiii. 14,) doth greaten the salvation purchased by grace. (Heb. ii. 3.) O blessed Jesus! thou wast cursed here, and tastedst the death that was accursed; (Gal. iii. 13; Heb. ii. 9;) even this in thy sentence. Thou wast bruised, afflicted, and broken of God for us: but thou wast "taken from prison and from judgment" and everlasting condemnation; (Isai. liii. 5, 7, 8; Rom. viii. 1; Mark iii. 29; Heb. vi. 2; v. 7;) for "it was not possible that thou shouldest be holden of any pains:" (Acts ii. 24 :) so that, though every believer shall see a temporal, (Psalm cxvi. 3,) yet "shall he never see" eternal, "death;" (John viii. 51;) but "inherit eternal life."