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THE
BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

ARTICLE I.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE NEW ENGLAND
DIVINES.

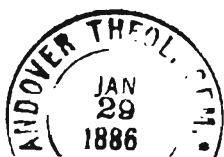
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It is proposed in a series of articles to sketch somewhat fully the history of certain doctrines among the New England divines.¹

Histories of Doctrine are now generally confessed to hold an important place both in the general culture of the theologian, and in the material from which, in his more careful studies, he has to draw his system of divine truth. It is now seen that the Christian system has a history. It was not built up at once, nor erected by any one man. It grew by slow accessions through many centuries, as the cathedral grows. And the conclusion is so easy that many have already made it, and said that Christian truth will never be attained except by this same process. Whoever tears himself loose from his historical antecedents, and endeavors to build anew from the foundations, will be predestined to certain failure.

In its broadest statement we do not accept this view. But it is evident on the most superficial examination, that we are all formed largely by our antecedents, and are thus entangled, whether we will or not, in the meshes of the net of history. We cannot tear ourselves loose from it

¹ This phrase used as in BIBLIOTHECA SACRA, IX. 174.
VOL. XLIII. No. 169.—JAN. 1886. I



entirely, and we may as well submit cordially to the inevitable, and see whether we cannot draw profit from our situation.

New England Congregationalists may, we think, congratulate themselves on the character of the theological history that lies behind them. When earnest men have been seriously engaged in the investigation of great truths through a long series of years, it is exceedingly improbable that their successors will not find many valuable results of permanent worth as the product of such labors. To neglect them, would be to invite failure in further pursuit of truth. It would be to run the risk of laboriously rediscovering things already made perfectly plain, or even of suffering defeat at some point near which the fathers had erected an impregnable fortress. But the studies of our fathers were prolonged, deep, and earnest. There are certain doctrines of theology upon which they labored in the closest sympathy with, and dependence on one another for a century. Their labors cannot be ignored with safety. They were great men. Not great, we must admit, in mere erudition, for they were far from libraries, and thrown upon the resources of their own minds; but these minds were powerful, and well-trained. They lacked many of the tools which the modern scholar regards as indispensable to his task; but they were not weighed down with the impediments which his very advantages cast around him. They concentrated their attention very largely upon one great theme, that of Anthropology. It is within bounds to say that it had never received so concentrated and careful study from any set of men from the days of Augustine down. They arrived at results which are already, and will be, we believe, more and more, esteemed as a great contribution to the Theology of the Church. They have sometimes been accused of being provincial.³ But they had behind them the theology of Westminster, in which they had early been trained. They had around

³ Much of late in certain quarters, e. g. *Andover Review*, Dec., 1884, p. 617.

them the best minds in all America and in Calvinistic Europe. They were surrounded and oppressed by the same great problem of religious deadness that perplexed the whole Protestant world in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In warm sympathy with their Westminster training, and in constant conference with their friends,³ they attacked their task. Earlier by more than fifty years than Schleiermacher and his friends in Germany, they overcame in America the results of a dead orthodoxy, and performed their work vastly better than he. Their revivals, and those of their successors, who were trained by them, and who confessedly owed their power to the peculiar doctrines of their teachers, created the missionary, revival church which we, their children, enjoy. Because they lived in New England they are not, therefore, provincial. Augustine lived in Africa, Calvin in Geneva, and Schleiermacher in Brandenburg. The methods, the spirit, and the tangible results of the labors of the New England divines raise them above any such charge as provincialism. And we think that the ultimate acceptance of their speculations is at least as likely to help in this as that of the three great divines just mentioned.

It has often been emphasized of late that we need a living theology. A merely traditional faith, petrified and encrusted in the lapse of time, no longer touching the heart of any believer, because having no single rootlet drawing life from real experience, is indeed a useless encumbrance, when not a positive bar to progress. The theology of our fathers was not such a one. They took nothing upon human authority alone. They proved all things and held fast that which was true. And with many disadvantages as to the technical form in which they were

³The correspondence of Edwards with Scotch clergymen is well known. In the "Advertisement" to the Treatise on Original Sin we read: "Several Professors of Divinity in the Dutch Universities very lately sent him their thanks for the assistance he had given them in their enquiry into some controverted points; having carried his own further than any author they had ever seen." Works, Dwight edit. II. 306.

able to prosecute and finish their work, they had many great advantages in the line of the topic under consideration for investigating or presenting theological truth. They touched the life of their age at very many points. They were pastors, acquainted with men, and working always under the sense of the real wants and actual condition of living men and women whom they desired personally to help. Thus their theology was wrought out, and it manifestly possessed in great abundance the elements of life. Contact with life begets life. We can perhaps in no better way gain a living apprehension of the theology they handed down to us, and make our theology alive, than by watching it in its original genesis. While, if we turn away from it with contempt,⁴ we may find to our sorrow that the material we have brought from foreign shores for the rising structure of our regenerated and living theology is, after all, untempered mortar.

One element, at least, we can gain from the study of the theology of Edwards and his followers. They were men of mighty spiritual earnestness. They seemed to see the truth by direct intuition, and if they spoke of the peril of lost men, it was because they realized it with exceeding vividness. The consistency of their systems each with itself is a marvel, but it springs from this characteristic. Their unflinching belief in and their faithfulness in preaching upon hard and unpopular doctrines was because of the same trait. Here we have only to learn, and shall scarcely venture to criticise them, if indeed we believe there is such a thing as systematic truth.

We begin these studies with the topic of Eschatology for a variety of reasons. It might at first sight seem preferable to begin with those departments of Theology where the New England divines have laid out their full strength,

⁴ Such expressions as "obsolescent" and "moribund" frequently applied in certain quarters to New England Theology, notably in the Andover Review, are a pain and grief to every loyal son of New England. But they are as unscientific as they are unfilial.

and done their best work. But our choice may be justified. Eschatology is the topic at present exciting the most attention in the theological world, and here the utterances of the fathers will be read in many circles with the greatest interest. Our early divines, again, preached and wrote upon this topic with unusual earnestness and frequency, and passed through one prolonged controversy over it. True, there is one element of attractiveness wanting for the more superficial reader: There will be no very novel conclusions arrived at, and no decided departure from the orthodoxy of that day. Yet many elements provocative of thought will be found; many attempts at the solution of difficulties still felt; and some suggestive anticipations and refutations of speculations and argumentations of the recent past.

At any rate, having recently gone through the matter again, the writer feels confident that the labor has not proved an empty or fruitless one, and respectfully begs the attention of the thoughtful reader, trusting that the history itself will vindicate its claims to be heard.

Generally speaking, the New England doctrine as to the fate of the wicked may be defined as in the Westminster Confession upon which historically the theological thinking of these fathers rests. We may compress the language of the confession into the following statement: "The souls of men after death pass immediately into a state of reward or punishment, the souls of the wicked being cast into hell, where they remain reserved to the judgment of the great day, when they shall receive according to what they have done in the body, shall be cast into eternal torments, and punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord."⁵

We shall begin with the great leader of this school of thought,

⁵The Confession adopted at Boston, May 12, 1680, does not vary here from the Westminster. See Mather's *Magnalia*, Hartford edit., 1820, vbl. ii. p. 178 f.

I. JONATHAN EDWARDS.

Edwards, though a great theologian, was first of all a great preacher and pastor. We must commence our study of him, therefore, from the practical side, and consider

1. *His Practical Point of View.*

This arose both from his personal character, and the circumstances in which he was placed. Edwards was pre-eminently a holy man. He had a very vivid realization of the wickedness of sin. His own heart looked to him, as he says, "like an abyss, infinitely deeper than hell." "And it appears to me," he continues, "that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fullness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself; far beyond the sight of everything but the eye of sovereign grace that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet it seems to me that my conviction of sin is exceeding small and faint."⁶

His circumstances intensified these feelings. The state of religion in Northampton when he was installed pastor in 1827 was very low. He saw sin at work among his people, and his heart and mind were both busy to provide and apply a remedy. He contemplated their prospective fearful fate with great anguish of spirit. He preached unto them faithfully and with the poetic vividness of a Dante. And the result was a great revival, 1734-5, which spread far and wide.

It is of the greater importance for us to pause over this topic, that this same Dante-like poetic and imaginative literalness of Edwards' preaching has been made the ground of charges against him in which the vocabulary of vituperation has been well-nigh exhausted. He did not preach

⁶ *Life*, 134, 5.

on Future Punishment exclusively, or even chiefly. The "Five Sermons" preached in the first revival, and published in 1738 are entitled: Justification by Faith alone, (a treatise rather than a sermon); Pressing into the Kingdom of God; Ruth's Resolution; The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners; and The Excellency of Jesus Christ;—certainly a wide range and a well-proportioned selection of subjects. When he did preach on this dreadful theme, it was with such tenderness as well as plainness, that it melted and subdued the hearts of his listeners. Edwards himself says: "When ministers preach of hell and warn sinners to avoid it in a cold manner—though they may say in words that it is infinitely terrible—they contradict themselves. For actions have a language as well as words. The gospel is to be preached as well as the law, and the law is to be preached only to make way for the gospel, and in order that it may be preached more effectually. The main work of ministers is to preach the gospel." And so it was that that sermon whose simple title has called out so many reproaches,—*"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,"*—preached at Enfield, resulted in a great revival. In it occurs a passage, the suppressed emotion and deep tenderness of which is as remarkable as its directness. We can almost see the awe-struck face of the preacher, and hear the pathos of his voice,* as he says: "There is reason to think that there are many in this congregation, now hearing this discourse, that will actually be the subjects of this very misery to all eternity. We know not who they are, or in what seats they sit, or what thoughts they now have. It may be they are now at ease, and hear all these things without much disturbance, and are now flattering them-

¹ Works iii. 537.

* "Neither quick nor slow of speech, there was a certain *pathos* in his utterance, and such skill of address as seldom failed to draw the attention, warm the hearts, and stimulate the consciences of his auditory." Works, ii. 306.

selves that they are not the persons, promising themselves that they shall escape. If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing would it be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight would it be to see such a person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But, alas! instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell!"⁹

Thus, on the practical side, Edwards' conviction as to the reality of eternal punishment had its origin not in the callousness of an unfeeling heart, but in the extreme sensitiveness of his soul to sin, and his profound conviction of the utter inexcusableness and vileness of the sinner.¹⁰ We are not prepared to understand his reasonings on this subject unless we bear in mind that he is a pastor, tenderly concerned for souls, who could say of himself when leaving Northampton: "I have not only endeavored to awaken you, that you might be moved with fear, but I have used my utmost endeavors to win you; I have sought out acceptable words that, if possible, I might prevail upon you to forsake sin and turn to God, and accept of Christ as your Saviour and Lord. I have spent my strength very much in these things."¹¹

Passing now to the theoretical reasonings, we consider

2. Edwards' Positive Argument.

The one main argument, presented in a great variety of ways, is that *eternal punishment is just*.

He attempts to prove this by showing that sin is an infinite evil, and hence demands an infinite or eternal punishment.¹² Punishment, he says, should be proportioned

⁹ vii. 175.

¹⁰ Cf. vi. 109: The "seeming strength [of objections against the eternal misery of the wicked] arises from a want of sense of the infinite evil, odiousness, and provocation there is in sin."

¹¹ i. 645.

¹² Sermon, "Justice of God," etc., v. 500 ff.

to the greatness of the crime. But a crime is more or less heinous in proportion to the obligation it has broken. Our obligation to love, honor, and obey any being is in proportion to his loveliness, honorableness, and authority. But God is infinitely lovely and honorable, and possesses infinite authority. Hence our obligation to him is infinite; sin is infinite as a rupture of this; and deserves an infinite, *i. e.*, an eternal punishment.

This argument is somewhat vulnerable, and is now generally given up.¹³ It suffers from too great rigidity, and from its mathematical exactness. The first premise is evidently incorrect, inasmuch as punishment should be proportioned to the person of the offender as well as to the abstract greatness of the crime. A child would not be punished for shooting a man dead, as a man would be. To reply by saying that inasmuch as the distance between God and any of his creatures is infinite, the guilt of any creature will be infinite, and all distinctions between individuals will be infinitesimally small in the comparison, is to sharpen the mathematics, but to increase the absurdity of the argument. And then to press the infinity of guilt as the cause of the un-ending duration of the punishment, is to commit an altogether inappropriate play upon words. Yet in one sense, at least, sin is an infinite, or unending evil, in that it has a tendency to produce unending harm. To this indefinite evil a punishment strictly unending may be no more than proportional. This is probably the real meaning of Edwards, when not too much under the influence of logical modes of expression.¹⁴ But his strenuous argument is at least unfortunate. Later divines have therefore followed Edwards' general rather than his special argument, and admitted that, in justice, sin deserves an unending punishment.

Edwards renders this point more luminous by insisting on *the amount of sin*. Here we see again his moral con-

¹³Dr. W. G. T. Shedd (No. American Review, 1885, p. 167) still maintains it.

¹⁴See v. 504 f.

victions and conscience at work. "Sinful men are full of sin; principles and acts of sin; their guilt is like great mountains, heaped one upon another, till the pile is grown up to heaven. They are totally corrupt, in every part, in all their faculties; in all the principles of their nature, their understandings, and wills; and in all their dispositions and affections. Their heads, their hearts, are totally depraved; all the members of their bodies are only instruments of sin; and all their senses, seeing, hearing, tasting, etc., are only inlets and outlets of sin, channels of corruption. There is nothing but sin, no good at all"¹⁵—Here again we might pause to criticise expressions which put sin in the nature of man; but by such corrections the argumentative force of the passage is not impaired.

The argument that *the vindication of God's honor*¹⁶ as a righteous law-giver requires punishment, recurs repeatedly. The negative argument that eternal punishment is *not inconsistent with the mercy of God*¹⁷ is presented again positively under a slightly different form, that *the divine perfections absolutely demand*¹⁸ it. Eternal punishment is suitable and proper, says Edwards. The divine perfections demand that what is proper to be done, be done. It is suitable that God should hate sin, inasmuch as it is an infinite evil, with an infinite hatred. And it is suitable that he should express this hatred, *i. e.*, punish forever. Therefore this will be done. Understood, as it undoubtedly should be; viz., of what is proper *on the whole, and after the atonement*, this argument seems unanswerable. Like another, that drawn from *the good results which will be secured*¹⁹ by eternal punishment, it is, however, much less strongly stated than Edwards would have stated it, had he had in mind his own theory of virtue. He mentions as these *good results*, the vindication of God's majesty, the glory of his justice and of his grace, and the effect of punishment on the happiness of the saints. But he does not show how the principle of benevolence leaves no other

¹⁵ v. 503.¹⁶ vi. 91 et pas.¹⁷ vi. 108.¹⁸ vi. 110.¹⁹ vi. 119.

course to a God who cares more for the promotion of holiness in a universe than for the infliction of pain on the rebellious.

Thus when in Edwards' mind the justice of the punishment is made plain, there remains no answer for the sinner to make against its infliction. The *sovereignty of God*, — that attribute before which Edwards bowed in deepest humility and awe²⁰—was sufficient explanation for mind and heart.

We must now consider

3. *Edwards' Refutation of Errors.*

Of these two are considered formally, that of *Annihilation*, and of *Final Restoration*.

The argument against final *annihilation* is as follows."

The proposition maintained is that "*the eternal death which God threatens is not annihilation, but an abiding, sensible punishment or misery.*"

(1) The Scriptures everywhere represent the punishment of the wicked as implying very extreme pains and sufferings. Whereas annihilation is no state of suffering at all, but the cessation of the same.

(2) The wicked will be punished in such a manner that they will be sensible of the punishment they are under. This is necessary from the ends which punishment is to serve. It is also necessary, to satisfy the expressions of Scripture. But if the punishment is annihilation, the sinners will have no knowledge that it is inflicted.

(3) The Scriptures teach that there will be *degrees* of punishment. This is impossible if the punishment is annihilation.

(4) The forms of expression adopted by the Scriptures militate strongly against the theory. "It were good

²⁰ "God's sovereignty has ever appeared to me a great part of his glory. It has often been my delight to approach God and adore him as a sovereign God and ask sovereign mercy of him." Edwards, quoted in his *Life, Works*, i. 132.

²¹ vi. 110 ff.

for that man if he had not been born," says the Saviour. That is, the existence of the wicked is worse than non-existence, or than annihilation. "The wicked will weep and gnash their teeth." The rich man "in hell lifting up his eyes, was not annihilated, hence annihilation can at best come only *after* the judgment. Before it, he and others will be "spirits in prison." In the intermediate state the wicked will be in torments, much more in the eternal state.

Again punishment is a *calamity*; annihilation is *not*, it is a *relief*. Some have chosen it rather than misery which befell them in this life, like Job.

The term "second death" is inappropriate to annihilation, since it is something *worse* than the first death, whereas annihilation is something *better*. Besides the *second* death can be so called only by reference to the first death. Hence it must imply suffering, etc., which are ordinarily connected with the first death. But it is also said that men suffer *the same* punishment with devils. Therefore the second death must be consistent with those expressions which represent the devil as trembling before torment, and anticipating it for himself (Luke viii. 28.)

The argument against *final restoration*, and the involved conception of a *probation after the judgment* is conducted with greater logical subtlety, and at greater length." The principal arguments are the following.

(1) The punishment of the wicked is represented as everlasting. Hence it cannot be medicinal, or for the good of those who suffer. If it were so, there must be a *probation* in hell. This involves the idea that the damned may repent; this of their being received immediately to God's favor; and hence of the *cessation* of the "everlasting" punishment,— which is absurd.

(2) Edwards notices almost incidentally the supposition of a probation between death and the judgment. We must give a disproportionate amount of space to this, inasmuch as the discussions of the present day so largely gather

²² vii. 374-404.

about the same point. It has been suggested recently in several quarters that our fathers had never come to any definite conclusion as to certain questions of eschatology, and had never had occasion to consider them. The particular point meant is the necessity to a complete probation of a presentation of the historic Christ. The remark has so much truth as this, that in the *precise form* in which the question is now presented, it was never before our fathers. But we think it will be seen that every essential element of the problem was before them and that they would have regarded the modern question already decided by their investigations, had it been presented to them. The obvious importance of this fact is sufficient reason for our calling especial attention to the following, and still later discussions.

The argument is entirely a scriptural one. It might be summed up in the proposition that the Scriptures, by their direct statements and their natural implications, render the doctrine of a probation between death and the judgment impossible.

(a) As to the devil, the prophecies of Revelation that he will oppose the church of Christ so constantly, from age to age, were impossible on the philosophical theories of Edwards' opponents, if it were true that he was in a state of probation. He and his angels "in a state of probation, and having liberty of will, and under the last and most extreme means to bring them to repentance, may be reclaimed by those extreme means." Then, that opposition would cease, and the prophecy fail. But

(b) He is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev. xx. 10) and is reserved under chains of darkness unto judgment (Jude 6). This is not consistent with the appointment of another time of trial and opportunity to escape the judgment and condemnation.

(c) 2 Cor. v. 10 is inconsistent with the idea of probation between death and judgment. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may re-

ceive the things done in his body, whether good or bad." This judgment-seat is evidently the judgment day. (See Acts xvii. 31). But if some repent, and are delivered before the day of judgment, then the assertion of the text is false.

(*d*) Christ declares of certain distinct classes of men (Matt. x. 14, 15; Mark viii. 38), and of certain cities mentioned by name, that their sentence in the day of judgment would be condemnation. This is inconsistent with the idea of an antecedent probation, under new motives to repentance.

(*e*) This declaration, furthermore, is accompanied by the solemn form of address: *I say unto you*; making its sentence, if possible, more certain.

(*f*) The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were to be condemned to misery at the day of judgment, although they had already been in their purifying flames and in a state of probation,—a testimony to the ineffectiveness of such flames in producing repentance.

(*g*) Many texts can only be interpreted consistently when probation is understood to be limited to this world; *e. g.*,

Rom. ii. 16. The wicked will receive their retribution "in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel." The whole context 'shuts the reader up to the conclusion that the sins referred to are committed in this world.

2 Thes. i. 5-9. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," etc. These obstinate unbelievers, whose unbelief is made manifest in what they do in this world, are finally to be thus punished.

So it is apparent, Matt. xxv., that none will be found at the right hand but they that have done such good works as can be done only in this world.

Gen. vi. 6. "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." "It is as much as to say that it is not fit that this day of trial and opportunity should last always to obstinate perverse sinners Wherefore I will fix a certain limit; I will set their bounds to one hundred and twenty years; when, if they repent not, I will put an end to all their lives, and with their lives shall be an end of my striving and waiting."

"Those words of Christ: 'I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh wherein no man can work,' (John ix. 4.) prove that there is no other day of trial after this life. Christ could not obtain eternal life and happiness for himself in any other way, than by doing that work in this life, which was the time of his probation for eternity as well as ours And doubtless to the same purpose is that in Eccl. ix. 10. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, (or no man can work) nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.'"⁷²

Recurring now to the main course of the argument, which we have left; viz., to the refutation of a probation subsequent to the judgment, we find it remarked:

(3) If sinners are punished in a future world while in a state of probation, they are sinners while they are punished. Hence their guilt is increasing under their punishment. Hence when the period of their punishment for past sins is over, there will be still other sins, for which they

⁷² With reference to the modern speculations as to the opportunity of a continued probation for the heathen, I find no hint in Edwards that he ever considered the idea. Doubtless he viewed them, as did most of his successors, as left to their sin and its punishment. The above shows that he recognized no essential defect in their opportunity of repentance.

must be punished. But if punished, they are still unrepentant, for it is inconceivable that God should punish a repentant soul. Then, when this second period is elapsed, there will be still sins to be punished for, and so on forever.³⁴

Edwards thus shuts up the defender of future probation to a denial of any reference in punishment to *past* sins. All must have reference only to the guilt, or rebellious state of the present moment, or else the idea of probation refutes itself. But

(4) The tendency of punishment is not to soften but to harden the heart. If the sinner remain impenitent for any length of time under the tremendous motives brought to bear upon him, he will acquire thereby greater fixedness in wickedness from the greater strength of his resistance against God. Hence, as time advances, he will grow continually worse rather than approach nearer to God.³⁵

(5) Some men's probation ceases *even in this world*; that is, God "gives them up to sin because of their incorrigibility, and perverse, obstinate continuance in rebellion."

(6) It is evident from certain passages pertaining to the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and to the sin unto death (Matt. xii. 31, 32; 1 John v. 16) that some men will suffer a punishment strictly eternal. Hence all condemned in the same sentence, will also suffer strictly eternal punishment.

(7) If the damned in hell shall be finally saved, it will be without Christ, because at the judgment, he will give up his mediatorial kingdom, and will be no more the Saviour of men.

(8) The whole idea of another dispensation of grace (and such that of punishment for merely disciplinary purposes must be) after this, is inconsistent with the perfection of the

³⁴ This fact of eternal sin, though never made by Edwards the sole cause of eternal punishment, is still never absent from his mind. See p. 401 f.

³⁵ This argument is repeated in slightly different form in connection with Heb. iv. 4-6, p. 383 f.

present system.—This remark applies evidently as well to the modern idea of a continued probation, as to the probation before Edwards' eye.

(9) The idea of probation in the future state supposes the continuance of the scheme of divine benevolence. But God is under no *necessity* of using torments to lead man to repentance, and hence his benevolence would find some other way. He is under no necessity because (a) in the nature of things it is not the tendency of punishment to produce repentance. It may lead a man to *fear to commit sin*, but *not to hate it, or to love holiness*. And even less torments than those threatened in the Scriptures would answer that end equally well. (b) God has converted just as bad men by other means than torments as these men are who are thus subjected to torments. (c) For the purpose of the purgation of the soul, the punishments threatened are out of proportion to the degree of wickedness.

(10) The sufferings of hell are represented in the Scriptures as vindictive, and not disciplinary.* Men are left under punishment without any positive means, such as the preaching of the gospel, adapted to bring them to repentance.

(11) It is unreasonable to suppose that God would leave souls to be thus hardened in sin for ages, if he had purposes of ultimate mercy.

(12) The objections to future punishment apply also to the course of things in this world. They are really only objections to the existence of evil.

Having finished our review of his formal arguments on this subject we must now consider

4. *Edwards' Contributions towards a Future Development of the Doctrine.*

This consists in the proposal of his Theory of Virtue. Our limits will forbid a discussion of this at present, and

* Edwards anticipates and replies to Chauncy's idea that sinners would be punished till their punishment *satisfied justice*, and then released. p. 401. Vol. XLIII. No. 169.

indeed it is scarcely necessary to discuss it. It is generally understood, and is as generally regarded as the great contribution made by Edwards to the theology of our churches. Indeed it may be said to be the prolific root from which all that is good in that theology has sprung. It may be summarily stated, so far as it bears upon our theme as follows.

The essence of virtue and vice lies in the *nature* of the choice.²⁷ When any choice is either a primary choice of the good of being in general, or a secondary choice, embodying and effectuating the former, it is virtuous.²⁸ There is in such virtue an inherent *beauty*, since it is the consent of being to being, as Edwards styles it, and as such it is the establishment of a certain equality between the beings concerned, which equality in the ultimate analysis is the constitutive element of all beauty.²⁹ Any other choice possesses an inherent deformity. A right choice is essentially love, and as such is lovely, and excites the returning love of all holy beings. So a wrong choice is essentially hate, and as such is *hateful*, abhorrent to every pure soul, and must call forth his disapproval. This is true of men, but it is no less true of God. His holiness consists in love to being in general, and he too must love holiness and abhor evil.

Now, it is at once evident that in this root-idea lies the foundation of the justice of punishment. God must, in conformity to his holiness, disapprove sin, and hence the necessary expression of this disapproval is both just and right. But so far as we have been able to find, Edwards nowhere makes any such analysis. Justice is always a simple, ultimate idea with him, unadjusted to the fundamental elements of the Theory of Virtue. His expressions of the claims of justice are clear, full, and good. God is under no obligation of any kind to have mercy upon men, whether by providing the atonement or in any other way forgiving them. All this is of grace. Much more then,

²⁷ ii. 186. ²⁸ iii. 95. ²⁹ iii. 93-5 and more strikingly even. i. 693-702.

when the atonement has been provided and rejected, it is evident that the sinner has no claim for mercy.³⁰ God is under no obligation to grant it should such a sinner come to his senses and beg it." Clear and unanswerable as these statements are, they lack the force which might easily have been given them from the premises already mentioned. Sometimes he seems to be just on the point of showing how the holiness of God,—his virtue, if we may use the term,—creates a demand for the punishment of the wicked. "The glorification of the justice of God is the glorification of God himself. But His glory is the greatest good—the chief end of creation—of greater importance than anything else."³¹ Hence it is virtue for him to secure it. But Pres't Edwards does not reach the point, as his successors do. In their hands this thought, however unused by him, will be employed skilfully and triumphantly.

The reason of this cannot be, as one might at first think, that the theory was developed by him after the work now under our review was done. True, he did not write "The Nature of True Virtue" until three years before his death, 1755, and it was not published till some time after his death. But from his "Notes on The Mind,"³² written when he was at most nineteen, we see that the main ideas of his later treatise were then clearly and fully in his mind. For some reason he never followed this line of investigation so as to gain its full results. But it was nevertheless a mighty force which he finally put in motion, the benefits of which his followers did not suffer to be lost.

We have dwelt so long upon Edwards because in him will be found the germs of all that follows, and also as clear a refutation of future probation as has ever been given. We now hasten on to his successors. We select

³⁰ v. 525.³¹ v. 459, 516.³² vi, 119.³³ i. 668 ff.

II. JOSEPH BELLAMY.

Bellamy was a pupil of Edwards in the year 1736,³⁴ and seems to have derived from him the determining elements of his theological system. We do not find, therefore, any great additions in his writings to the arguments, or departures from the views of Edwards. He possessed more power of condensed, vivid statement than the latter, and many of his sentences contain volumes of argument. He never discussed future punishment formally, but only incidentally in his delineation of True Religion, or other treatises on Permission of Sin, The Glory of the Gospel, etc. As to the infinite evil of sin, he held the same views, and supported them by the same arguments as Edwards.³⁵ On two points only, by the greater fulness of his treatment, or the application of Edwards' Theory of Virtue did he contribute to the development of the doctrine. These are

1. *Vindictive Justice.*

This he declares to be an amiable perfection of the Deity. "God," he says,³⁶ "is love; love to being in general; chiefly to the first, the great, the infinite Being, the fountain and source of all being; and, secondarily, to finite beings; and love to virtue, to order, to harmony in the intellectual system. And so all his nature is summed up in this edict *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself* To break this fundamental law of his kingdom is implicitly to turn enemy to being in general; to God, the infinitely great and glorious Being, to the system, to virtue, to order, to harmony, in a word to all good. Love itself, therefore, as it exists in the Deity, who is at the head of the universe, *and whose office it is to govern the world, is a consuming fire* with respect to

³⁴ Probably. Dwight in Edwards' Life, p. 142 is indefinite, and would indicate 1738 or 1739 as the date. Rev. Tryon Edwards, D.D., in his Life of Bellamy, Works, ed. 1853, vol. i. shows that it must be put between graduation, 1735, and the close of 1736.

³⁵ Works, i. 56, ii. 333, ff.

³⁶ ii. 343, f.

sin This curse to the sinner, is love to being in general, *i. e.* love to God, and to the best good of the universe. As when a wise and righteous monarch puts a traitor to death, it is not because he delights in the death of his subjects, or takes pleasure in their pain simply considered; but it is because he delights in the safety and honor of his crown, and the general good of his kingdom. And all his loyal subjects, who are affected towards his crown and kingdom as he is, will see a beauty in his conduct. It can be owing to nothing but criminal blindness, to the spirit of a rebel, of an enemy, in any of God's subjects, that the glory of his character as thus exhibited, does not shine into their hearts."

2. *The Probation of the Heathen.*

This topic is discussed incidentally in Bellamy's treatise on True Religion Delineated. After maintaining that all men "are wholly to *blame* for not *perfectly* conforming to" the law, he introduces as an objection the condition of the heathen: "If the heathen, who have no other outward advantage whereby to gain the true knowledge of God, than the works of creation and providence, do but honestly improve what they have, shall they not be accepted, although they fall short of sinless perfection?" His reply brings out clearly his views of the fullness of their opportunity of salvation, the fairness of their probation, and the utter inexcusability of their sin.

(1) "It is plain that the heathen are, by the law of nature, obliged to the same perfect holiness which is required, in God's written word, of the rest of mankind."²⁷

(2) "It is plain St. Paul looked upon them as enjoying sufficient means of knowledge, and so to be without excuse. Rom. i. 18. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* 'Who hold the truth is unrighteousness, *i. e.*, who, instead of heartily receiving

²⁷ i. 106 ff.

²⁸ i. 107.

and loving, and conforming to the truth, do, from love to their lusts, hate and wickedly suppress all right notions of God, of truth, and duty, stifling their consciences.' But how do the Gentiles discover this aversion to the truth, who are under no advantages to know it? 'I answer,' says the apostle, 'their advantages are sufficient; for (verse 19) *That which may be known of God is manifest in them*; i. e., the perfections of God, which is all that is knowable of God, are discovered to them,' as he adds, '*For God hath showed it unto them.*' But were not the perfections of God discovered to them so darkly as not to be sufficiently evident and perceivable? 'No,' says he, 'for (verse 20) *the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are CLEARLY SEEN, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse*; i. e., ever since the creation of the world, the perfections of God are clearly to be seen in his works, the things which he has made manifesting plainly what a God he is: so that those who see not his perfections, and are not sensible of his infinite glory, cannot plead their want of sufficient outward advantages, in excuse for their ignorance and insensibility; and therefore the heathen, who have this advantage, are without excuse.' And, still further to clear up the point, the apostle seems to go on, as it were, to say — 'Yea, it is evident that the present ignorance of the Gentile nations is affected and so inexcusable, not only from the sufficiency of their present outward advantages, but also from their *former* misimprovement of the advantages which they *heretofore* did enjoy." Because (verse 21) when *they knew God*, i. e. when the heathen nations formerly had right notions of God instilled into them, being instructed in the knowledge of the true God by Noah and his sons, from whom they descended, yet then *they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful*; their instructions had no influence upon

³⁰ "Had not mankind been wholly to blame, they might, *all of them*, from the beginning, have enjoyed the benefit of divine revelation." i. 325.

them to make them holy; *but they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened*; i. e., they soon fell off to idolatry, and lost that knowledge of the true God, in which they had been instructed and educated: *For (verse 28) they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*; i. e., to remember those instructions which had been given them concerning the nature and perfections of God; but they abandoned themselves to idolatry (ver. 23, 25); *For which cause, (ver. 24, 26) for which contempt cast on God, God gave them up to all manner of wickedness*; so that the present extreme ignorance, blindness, and wickedness of the Gentile nations, they have, through their aversion to God and love to sin, brought themselves into; so that it is manifest they do not desire the knowledge of God, but evidently hate all right notions of him, and so are, beyond dispute, *without excuse*; which was the point to be proved.'

We shall obtain a better understanding of the meaning of Dr. Bellamy, if we compare his expressions with the Savoy Declaration. In general, he accepted this confession.⁴⁰ The Savoy reads (chap. xx. Art. ii.): "This promise of Christ and salvation by him, is revealed only in and by the word of God; neither do the works of creation or providence, with the light of nature, make discovery of Christ, or of grace by him, so much as in a general or obscure way; much less that men destitute of the revelation of him by the promise or gospel, should be enabled thereby to attain saving faith or repentance." The word "thereby" is to be understood, as we think, of "the works of creation and providence, with the light of nature." The whole is only a more rigid statement of what is found in the first chapter of the same confession: "Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet they are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which

⁴⁰ Life, in Works, i. p. xxvii.

is necessary unto salvation." As we understand it, this is the position taken in our own day by the advocates of the necessity to salvation of knowing the historical Christ. But Dr. Bellamy had advanced beyond this position. He says:⁴¹ "Thus [from Paul's argument] we see how all mankind have not only sufficient natural powers, but also sufficient outward advantages to know God, and perfectly conform to his law, even the heathen themselves; and that the very reason they do not, is their want of such a temper as they ought to have, and their voluntary, rooted enmity to God, and love to sin." Even "if they have no hopes of finding favor in his sight" they are "under no inability [to love God] but what *must arise from a bad heart.*" The heathen of our own time are still resisting the gospel.

It is thus evident that, though Bellamy did not differ from the confessions as to the practical necessity of preaching the gospel to the heathen, if they are to be saved, he occupied a totally different ground as to the theory of the matter. The New England doctrine of ability appears here in clear and precise application. The heathen have no claim in justice for indulgence on account of their sins. And if their fate be awful, the responsibility is their own. It is sometimes said in these days that the same love which leads God to send his gospel to us in this world though we do not *deserve* any such favor, will lead him to present it to the heathen in another world. But Bellamy has anticipated and replied to this objection. God has *given them up*. How incongruous to suppose that after grace has once been *punitively withdrawn*, it will again be bestowed! The supposition implicitly denies the true punitive character of the reprobation, and hence denies Scripture. Thus the question of the sufficient probation of the heathen in the present world is answered from the words of Paul. It is not depreciated first, and its place supplied by a continued opportunity, the supposition

⁴¹ p. III.

of which runs counter to the whole tenor of Scripture."⁴²

Among Bellamy's pupils was one whose place naturally comes next in this review of the history of New England thought, the son of the great Edwards,

III. DR. JONATHAN EDWARDS.

The occasion of the work contributed by this divine to the discussion of our topic, was the appearance in 1784 of an anonymous work, soon, however, acknowledged by its author, *Rev. Charles Chauncy, D.D.*, pastor of the First Church, Boston, which was entitled: *The Salvation of All Men the Grand Thing Aimed at in the Scheme of God.*⁴³ Dr. Chauncy was a man of wide reading, and of considerable scholarship in the classical and Hebrew languages. He must have been, if we may use the word, an elegant man. He was originally a Calvinist, though one averse to excitement, and new measures. He wrote a book in 1743 against the revivals, and partially in opposition to Edwards' *Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God.*⁴⁴ His position in his later work will be best given in his own words (pp. 12 and 13):

"Upon the whole therefore, what I mean to prove, in the following essay, is, that the scheme of revelation has the happiness of all mankind lying at bottom, as its great and ultimate end; that it gradually tends to this end; and will not fail of its accomplishment, when fully completed. Some, in

⁴² We retain this statement in spite of some declarations to the contrary since it was written, proposing in due time to justify it.

⁴³ Full title is: *The Mystery hid from Ages and Generations made manifest by the Gospel Revelation: or, The Salvation of All Men the grand thing aimed at in the Scheme of God, as opened in the New Testament Writings, and entrusted with Jesus Christ to bring into effect. In three Chapters. The First exhibiting a General Explanation of this gloriously benevolent Plan of God.—The Second proving it to be the Truth of Scripture that Mankind universally, in the Final Issue of this Scheme, shall reign in happy Life forever.—The Third largely answering Objections. By One who wishes well to the whole Human Race. [Greek motto, Rom. v. 21.] London, printed for Charles Dilly, in the poultry. MDCCLXXIV.*

⁴⁴ Title is: *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England, etc., etc., by Charles Chauncy, D.D., Boston, 1743, (pp. xxx, 424, 8vo.)*

consequence of its operation, as conducted by the Son of God, will be disposed and enabled in this present state, to make such improvements in virtue, the only rational preparative for happiness, as that they shall enter upon the enjoyment of it in the next state. Others, who have proved incurable under the means which have been used with them in this state, instead of being happy in the next, will be awfully miserable; not to continue so finally, but that they may be convinced of their folly, and recovered to a virtuous frame of mind; and this, as I suppose, will be the effect of the future torments upon many; the consequence whereof will be their salvation, they being thus fitted for it. And there may be yet other states, before the scheme of God may be perfected, and mankind universally cured of their moral disorders, and in this way, qualified for, and finally instated in, eternal happiness. But whether there are any other such states besides the next, or not; or however many states some of the individuals of the human species may pass through, and of however long continuance they may be;—the whole is intended to subserve the grand design of universal happiness, and will finally terminate in it: insomuch that the Son of God, and Saviour of men, will not deliver up his trust into the hands of the Father, who committed it to him, till he has fully discharged his obligations in virtue of it; having finally fixed all men in heaven, when God will be all in all.”

This doctrine rests upon the postulate, which Dr. Chauncy thinks too evident to need proof, that God in bringing man into the world intended definitely to make every individual of the race finally happy. The proof of the doctrine is presented as a purely scriptural one. “I had no idea of the sentiments expressed in the following pages,” he says, “till I had been gradually and insensibly let into them by a long and diligent comparing of Scripture with Scripture.”⁴⁵ He will not argue from some isolated text. “What I rely on as proof in the present argument,” he says, “is the result of all these texts, not considered singly, but in one conjunct view.”⁴⁶

His proof opens with a statement in several propositions. “Christ is the person through whom happiness is attainable by any of the human race.”⁴⁷ The obedience of Christ, and eminently his obedience to death is the ground or reason” of this.⁴⁸ “Christ died, not for a select number of men only, but for mankind uni-

⁴⁵ *Salvation of All Men*, p. vi.

⁴⁷ *Ib.* p. 17.

⁴⁶ *Ib.* p. 17.

⁴⁸ *Ib.* p. 19.

versally and without exception or limitation."⁴⁹ Then comes the main point of the matter, in the proposition that "it is the purpose of God according to his good pleasure that mankind, universally, in consequence of the death of his son Jesus Christ, should certainly and finally be saved."⁵⁰ The scriptural argument begins here, and treats in order the following texts: Rom. v. 12 to end; Rom. viii. 19-24. He treats each by means of a paraphrase, extended notes, and inferences.

We cannot stop to draw out at full length his exegetical argument. As to Rom. v. 12, etc., the whole may be summarily expressed in Dr. Chauncy's own words as follows (pp. 59, 60):

"In the fifteenth verse, the apostle declares more generally, that the gift by grace hath *abounded* to the *same many*, or all men, who had sustained damage by the lapse of the one man Adam; and with like certainty too, for the same peremptory language is used in both branches of the verse. It is as strongly affirmed, on Christ's side of the comparison, *the gift hath abounded*, as, on Adam's side, *through the offence, many are dead*. In the sixteenth verse, the apostle proceeds to say more particularly wherein the *abounding* of the gift consisted, namely in this, that the judgment took rise from *one offence only*, and terminated in *condemnation*, that is, the whole damage of the lapse; whereas the gift takes rise from *many offences*, and as certainly terminates, notwithstanding them all, in justification, that is, a glorious reign in life conformably to a rule of righteousness. With respect to whom? Indisputably mankind universally. The antithesis will otherwise be lost. For mankind universally are the object of condemnation; the same mankind must universally be the object of the opposite justification."

The strictness of the parallel thus assumed in the face of so many passages which condition salvation on faith, we do not see anywhere proved.

On Rom. viii. 19-24 the argument may be summed up in a single sentence from the paraphrase: "This very creature, the self-same mankind, should be delivered from its slavery through the influence of a frail, mortal, corruptible body, into the freedom of those who, as the sons of God, shall in proper time be clothed with immortal, in-

⁴⁹ Ib. p. 20.

⁵⁰ Ib. p. 22.

corruptible bodies."⁶¹ Creature, *κτίσις*, is thus taken to mean mankind, or at any rate the whole creation, including preeminently mankind,⁶² and the argument for universal salvation is then easy.⁶³

A number of other texts are more or less carefully examined, as, *e. g.*, Col. i. 19, 20. The meaning of such concepts as "reconciliation" and "the restoration of all things" is canvassed. Dr. Chauncy then advances to his next proposition; *viz.*, that "God, by Jesus Christ will, sooner or later, in this state, or another, reduce all men under a willing and obedient subjection to his moral government."⁶⁴ He concedes that "if any of the race of men have so corrupted their minds, and vitiated their tempers, as that they are really incurable by any *moral* means that can be used with them in order to their recovery, their state must be hopeless."⁶⁵ Hence the proof of the proposition

⁶¹ *Ib.* p. 92 f.

⁶² *Ib.* p. 97 f.

⁶³ Dr. Chauncy says that if *κτίσις* means the *inanimate* part of creation, it is more to his point than if it means the animate, because "if *πᾶσα κτίσις* is extended in its meaning so as to take in the inanimate part of creation, the rational, or moral part, ought *much more* to be comprehended. . . . It would be highly incongruous . . . to give this style to the inferior or less valuable part, wholly leaving out the most excellent." (p. 98.) Again the subjection of the inanimate creation would be only a means to the end, and so the deliverance must be also a means, that is, mankind must primarily be delivered, and the inanimate, secondarily, as a means to this.

But Chauncy understands that *κτίσις* is here applied to the animate creation for the following reasons:

(1) This interpretation agrees better with the phrases "earnest expectation," "groaning," etc., etc.

(2) *οὐχ ἑκοῦσα* means, according to him, "not through any fault of its own," and this agrees only with the interpretation referring to the animate creation.

(3) The *κτίσις* is to be delivered "into the glorious liberty of the sons of God," which is only applicable to the animate creation.

(4) The comparison of the twenty-third verse between *ourselves* and the *creation* is only intelligible when understood of the animate creation.

(5) "*πᾶσα κτίσις* is never used," except in Col. i. 15. which is a disputed passage, "to signify more than the whole *moral* creation, or all mankind." Comp. Mk. xvi. 15, etc.

⁶⁴ *Ib.* p. 170 f.

⁶⁵ *Ib.* p. 171.

must be drawn from the Scripture statement of the fact of final restoration.

The first text is Ps. viii. 5, 6, "as explained and argued from, Heb. ii. 6-9": [Thou hast put all things under his feet.] The question *how* this subjection is to be understood is, however, answered entirely on rational grounds. "Sin is an enemy, yea, a *principal* enemy; emphatically *that* enemy which Christ came into the world to destroy;"⁵⁶ and hence the truth of the proposition.

The next text is 1 Cor. xv. 24-29: [Then cometh the end when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God.] "This," he says, "I should esteem decisive of itself, was there no other text in all the Bible of like import. It was this, indeed, which first opened to me the present scheme."⁵⁷ The argumentation is substantially that of the previous division.

We need not dwell longer on this part of the work. In his third chapter Dr. Chauncy proceeds to state and answer certain objections. The first is that "endless, never-ceasing misery is, according to the Scriptures, the portion of wicked men beyond the grave."⁵⁸ Dr. Chauncy replies by discussing several texts, and particularly the words *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος*.⁵⁹ These words *may* signify a limited duration, and hence, we are not compelled, in any given case, to understand them of absolute eternity. Again, they are

⁵⁶ Ib. p. 179.

⁵⁷ Ib. p. 197.

⁵⁸ Ib. p. 256.

⁵⁹ It is interesting to note how completely the ground was covered by this old discussion. Compare Chauncy with the arguments of such writers, for example, as Rev. J. M. Whiton, Ph.D., in his book *"Eternal" Punishment Endless?* The only point of Whiton's discussion which we have not found substantially anticipated in Chauncy is the supposition that *αἰώνιος* is *qualitative* rather than *quantitative*. Chauncy defines *αἰών* age; gives the same canon for determining the meaning of *αἰώνιος* as Whiton; adduces in his support the word *ἡνίκ* (p. 299); discusses the LXX. (p. 264); comments on the same texts; but has the advantage of vastly clearer ideas, and a less disingenuous method. To his credit, as we think, Chauncy does not pretend that any more definite words than *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος* could, and would have been used to express the idea of endless punishment. Comp. Whiton, p. 8.

evidently used in a more loose and general way in the Greek Testament than are the words which have been employed to translate them in our English Bibles. And lastly, the true meaning of *αἰών* is *age*, "whether shorter or longer."⁶⁰ This discussion is unnecessarily prolix, and wearisome. Of the more important points mentioned in it we cite the following: "The precise duration intended by the words cannot with certainty be collected from the force of the words themselves simply considered; but must be determined either by the nature of the thing spoken of, or other passages of Scripture that explain it."⁶¹ This canon is correct but is applied by Chauncy in a way really to beg the question in dispute. The argument is made wholly to turn on the proof of universal salvation already given. "When it is affirmed of the wicked," he says, "that they shall go away *εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον*, into everlasting punishment, the certain meaning of this word *αἰώνιον*, everlasting, is clearly and fully settled by the above proof of the final salvation of all men."⁶² That is, the independent testimony of the word is ruled out. This style of argument reaches its highest point, as well as its best illustration, in another method of treating such antithetical texts as Matt. xxv. 46. "There is a wide difference," he says, "between happiness and misery, reward and punishment; which may make it proper to understand the word everlasting in a different sense with respect to these different subjects."⁶³ "In Matt. xxv. 46, we should understand this word [*αἰώνιος*] as applied to the righteous in one sense, and as applied to the wicked in another."⁶⁴

We will delay the reader on only one point more. Re-

⁶⁰ Ib. p. 264.

⁶¹ Ib. p. 268.

⁶² Ib. p. 270.

⁶³ Ib. p. 285.

⁶⁴ Ib. p. 288 f. As parallel cases of the use of *αἰώνως* in different senses in the same sentence he alleges Rom. xvi. 25, 26; Tit. i. 2. The quibble that the *fire* of Mark ix. 44, 46, 48, may not cease, but the *use* of it in punishment may, is not uncharacteristic (ib. p. 311) and is another anticipation of modern arguments.

ferring to a supposition of Mr. Whiston's in his *Hell Torments Considered*, that in Hades "sinners, (those excepted who have been guilty of blasphemy) will have all possible means used with them to bring them to repentance and salvation," which that writer supported by referring to 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19; iv. 16; Chauncy says: "Neither am I satisfied from the two passages in Peter's first epistle that this apostle intended to insinuate, as though the gospel was preached in Hades in order to bring men to repentance."⁴⁵ This may be taken as his contribution to the discussions of the present day.

We have thus endeavored to give the main course of this work as the writer meant it to be received. We see that it is largely exegetical in its character,—in fact, principally so.⁴⁶ When, therefore, we turn to Dr. Edwards' reply—*The Salvation of All Men Strictly Examined*,⁴⁷—we may be surprised to see that it is for the most part conducted upon rational grounds. There is an exegetical reply which we shall pause upon long enough to learn to admire it; but for the most part the work is linked argument. The reason is not far to seek, and we are compelled to admit the justice and necessity of the procedure. Chauncy's reasons for receiving the doctrine of the final salvation of all men were not exegetical, but rational; and his exegesis, as already repeatedly suggested, was only a cloak, and a thin one at that, for rationalism.⁴⁸ We venture

⁴⁵ *Ib.* p. 339 f.

⁴⁶ There is a discussion of Rev. xx. 4 ff. in elaborate paraphrase, notes, and application, in the appendix.

⁴⁷ *Works of Jonathan Edwards, D.D.*, Andover, 1842, pp. 1-278.

⁴⁸ As an illustration of the truth of this charge, compare the following passage, which is selected at random from a great number of similar passages: "But if the foregoing scheme," viz., that the second death is a mere transition to a further stage of existence, "should be found to have no truth in it, and the wicked are sent to hell as so many *absolute incurables*, the second death ought to be considered as that which will put an *end* to their *existence*, both in *soul* and *body*, so as that they shall be *NO MORE* in the creation of God." p. 282. *No reasons* have been assigned for the annihilation thus dragged in to support the denial of evangelical doctrine.

to suggest that the great lesson of this history lies in this fact. Universalism and every kindred error is fundamentally rationalism. Ultimately it will throw the Bible overboard; or itself succumb to the biblical authority.

We must, however, break off at this point, and defer the consideration of the reply to Dr. Chauncy till a subsequent time.