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I.

ETERNAL RETRIBUTION.

THE question of the future and eternal destiny of man will not rest from discussion. One does not wonder at this. The thought that a single man, still more that multitudes of men, because of their deeds in this short life, should be lost eternally, is one which is so awful to contemplate, that it is not strange that not merely rationalistic expositors of Scripture, but also not a few truly devout and spiritual men, have ever protested that it is impossible that this should be the real teaching of Scripture. Accordingly, such have eagerly laid hold of every word here and there which might of itself seem to warrant a larger hope, and have earnestly sought to show that the passages which, to the ordinary reader, seem to declare the doctrine of the eternal doom of many are susceptible of a different interpretation.

By those who contend for the belief in the final universal restoration of all rational beings to holiness and happiness, it is assumed that this is a necessary logical corollary from our affirmation of the infinite perfection of God. For it is insisted that if we believe in a God who is infinite in knowledge and wisdom, power, love and righteousness, then we must logically admit that it is impossible that He should have allowed any creature to come into being, by whom He foreknew that the gift of life would be so abused as to issue in endless sin and misery. Whatever force there may be in this presumption considered in itself, it will be observed, in the first place, that it wholly overlooks the powerful counter-presumption which is furnished by the fact of the uniformly hardening power of habit. For character, to all appearance, tends to fixedness

sentative, and if the logical analyses were more perfect. The *gravamen* of the charge that is brought against Calvinism is that it makes God's omnipotence the governing principle of the divine procedure (p. 75), a charge certainly not capable of being made against Mr. Harris, who does not hesitate to limit God's omnipotence (p. 278) in the interests of free-will. The flaw of the book, which vitiates too much of its argumentation, is its fondness for "undistributed middles." Thus, when arguing as to the sincerity of God's free offer of salvation it confuses the senses of "desire" and "intention" under the one word "will" (p. 67 *sq.*), though it does not seem so difficult to understand that one may sincerely desire what he cannot get his consent to produce. So it confuses the universal offer of the gospel with an offer to the non-elect as such (p. 73), though Chalmers had just before been quoted (p. 66) to the effect that the offer is made to no class, but to men as such. So, too, it confuses "decree" with "efficiency," as if God did not need "to execute his decrees" (p. 92); "good opportunities" are taken at once in an objective and a subjective sense to oppose the doctrine of inability (p. 193); inability is allowed to vibrate between a physical and a moral sense (p. 195); "shall not" is undistributed between a future and a prohibitive sense (p. 203); "foresight" is played on (p. 223) without distinguishing foresight of possible and actual; and the like. Now and then an insufficient acquaintance with theological nomenclature and opinion comes out; *e. g.*, no Calvinist ever taught that the non-elect are condemned irrespective of their wicked deeds or character (p. 205); Gill is far from "peculiar" in distinguishing between "preterition" and "predamnation" (p. 215); Dick is wholly misunderstood (pp. 217, 218), so that the comments miss the point; and the whole section beginning on page 217 is based on the gross misapprehension that sublapsarians and supralapsarians differ as to the sovereignty of preterition, this being one of the points on which they expressly agree. The intention of the book is thus much better than its performance. It is interesting to observe that appeal has to be made to so-called false Jewish views of God in the Bible, to escape the Scriptural proof of the Calvinistic position (pp. 228, 229).—*Calvinism and Evangelical Arminianism*. Compared as to Election, Reprobation, Justification and Related Doctrines. By John L. Girardeau, Professor of Systematic Theology in Columbia Theological Seminary, South Carolina. 12mo, pp. viii, 574. (Columbia, S. C.: W. J. Duffie; New York: The Baker & Taylor Co., 1890.) The antidote comes with the bane. Although it is too little to say of Dr. Girardeau's massive and complete argument that we have in it a thorough refutation beforehand of Mr. Harris' attack on Calvinism just mentioned. Every line in this book gives proof not only of the practiced controversialist, but also of the sound thinker and the trained theologian. The Arminian case, on the points discussed, is presented with fairness and examined with candor. The Calvinistic position is moderately stated and vindicated from Scripture and reason so solidly that it would seem to us impossible to read the book without conviction. In these days, when men seem to be confused as to election and reprobation, and even good Calvinists appear almost ready to yield the distinguishing doctrine of their system to Arminianism or semi-Arminianism, it would be a blessing if all could be persuaded to read this delightfully consecutive book with diligence and care. The only serious fault we can find with it is that the several sections of the argument are not always sufficiently distinguished from one another to the eye; so that the reading is rendered sometimes unnecessarily hard.—*Christus Mediator*. By Charles Elliott, D.D., Professor of Hebrew in Lafayette College. 12mo, pp. 145. (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1891.) Dr. Elliott's leisure moments gather honey; he has given us here a pleasant little book breathing the very spirit