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believe it was understood by those who heard Him, namely, His disciples, to mean strictly everlasting; and so we understand Him.”—*Man's Destiny*, p. 71.

Q. What is everlasting punishment?

A. It is endless non-being, not including a single pang preceding or accompanying death. So say Grant, Storrs, Thorn, and others.

Q. If the preceding statements are correct, where are Cain and Abel, and the millions of wicked and righteous they represent, who have died in the six thousand years past?

A. They are all on a perfect level, irrespective of character, in a state of non-being, nothing remaining but unconscious dust.

Q. If the endless non-being of the wicked is endless punishment, is not the limited non-being of saints limited punishment?

A. It certainly is. There is no evading this.

Q. Has any materialistic author asserted this?

A. Yes. Mr. Blain says: "If God should put to death, for one year, a prosperous, happy man, it would be a year's punishment; if for one thousand years, and then bring him to life, it would be a thousand years' punishment; and so, if he never raised him to life, it would be an everlasting punishment."—*Death not Life*, p. 79.

Q. What follows from this view of punishment?

A. It follows that materialism consigns God's redeemed, pardoned, and sanctified children—Abel, the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles, and all others who have died in the faith—to future punishment; some of them for thousands of years!

Q. Does the materialism of Messrs. Storrs and Grant teach that all grades of sinners are punished exactly alike?

A. It does. Being dead, not suffering, is

the penalty. The “punishment does not begin,” says Mr. Grant, “till they are dead;” and, of course, nonentity admits of no gradation of punishment.

Q. Do the Scriptures teach thus?

A. They do not. They teach different degrees of infliction for different degrees of crime. Some of the wicked of our Saviour’s time were to receive “the *greater* damnation,” (Matt. xxiii, 14;) and some who had “trodden under foot the Son of God” were to receive a *sorer* punishment than the death penalty of the Jews by stoning. Heb. x, 26–29. Now, if death is the utmost possible penalty for sin, and death is annihilation, what *sorer* punishment is possible for any of our race? Observe, the *sorer* punishment cannot be in the mode of killing, for “the punishment does not begin till they are dead.” This text of itself is a mountain in the way of this form of materialism. The Scriptures in various forms of language de-

clare that the wicked are to be punished more or less according to their doings. Non-being does not admit of this.

Q. What is the common and accepted definition of punishment?

A. It is "any pain or suffering inflicted on a person because of a crime or offense; by the authority to which the offender is subject, either by the constitution of God or civil society."—WEBSTER. This is the received and understood sense the world over, with the exception of our materialists, who interpret everlasting punishment to mean everlasting non-being, which is virtually saying that all punishment shall be everlastingly ended!

Q. Did Christ suffer most intensely, both mentally and physically, for the sins of the world?

A. He did. See Matt. xxvi; Mark xv; Luke xxiii; John xix; 1 Pet. iii, 18. Notice the agony, bloody sweat, buffeting, re-

viling, mocking, thorns, spear, nails, and dying cry.

Q. Why should the Redeemer have experienced these dreadful sufferings if the penalty of sin includes no suffering whatever, as Messrs. Grant, Storrs, Thorn, and others have taught?

A. This certainly is a question not easily answered in harmony with the theory of these teachers, and the fact upon which it is based clearly indicates that their definition of penalty is a monstrosity.

Q. Does God now love, and will he continue to love, faithful believers forever?

A. He will; for death, even, cannot separate them from the love of God. Romans viii, 38.

Q. Can God love a nonentity?

A. He cannot. This is one of the things he cannot do. He cannot lie; he cannot deny himself; and he cannot love man if no man exists.

Q. If the soul dies with the body, and the Christian becomes a nonentity for ages, does not death separate him from the love of God?

A. It certainly does, as then there is no man for God to love. This materialism virtually represents God as giving death a commission as follows: There is a man who has loved me, and I have loved him for scores of years. Go, strike him into non-being. Leave nothing of him but a little unconscious dust, and we will have no more affection for each other for thousands of years!"

Q. Is the punishment of nonentity for a long, indefinite period before the Christian can meet his Saviour and the loved ones that have gone before, a thing to be hoped for?

A. It is not. No good man was ever comforted by such a prospect. To such it is a most revolting consideration.

Q. Has any leading materialist made a concession to this effect?

A. Yes. Mr. Storrs assumes that good Hezekiah (2 Kings xx, 1-5) was a materialist, and concedes that it utterly failed to give him comfort when he saw death approaching. He says of him: "He could not but prefer to remain here, where he could see something of the works of God, and behold the inhabitants of the world, even though attended by many sorrows and sufferings, to lying down in the dust of the earth, to remain in the silence of death till a distant day of resurrection. In view of death as such a state Hezekiah had an object worthy of desire: he had gained a real boon; fifteen years were actually added to the sum of his earthly existence."—*Watch Tower*, p. 23. So we should think, Mr. Storrs, if your gloomy doctrine of non-being for ages is true.

Q. But if Hezekiah was not a materialist, if he believed that immediate bliss awaited him on his departure, why was he unwilling to die?

A. It is no uncommon thing for good men, believing thus, to be willing to forego heavenly bliss for a season, to accomplish good in the world. Dr. Doddridge had this desire. Christian mothers have desired to live for the good of their children, while they have felt assured that death could not separate them from the love and presence of God. Paul knew that “to depart and be with Christ” would be far better than to live in the flesh; but he says, “nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” Phil. i, 24. Paul was willing to remain and suffer for the good of others, while confident that in case of his departure he would be with Christ immediately.

From these definitions and concessions of materialists, to what conclusions are we forced?

We must conclude:—

1. That God’s justified children are punished after death, some of them for thou-

sands of years, before they can enter heavenly bliss.

2. That sinners of all grades are punished exactly alike.

3. That the doctrine of dark and dreary nothingness for ages upon ages, between death and the resurrection, causes good men to shrink and beg for life, if Mr. Storrs may be credited; and that such a state cannot be hoped for, or give the Christian comfort in the dying hour, but is the cause of his fearing death—one of the things the Gospel is designed to deliver him from.

4. That while God has given the strongest assurance of his continuous love for, and union with, his faithful children, he commissions death to sever that union by striking them into nonentity, so that no personality remains to love him, or for him to love. The truth is, to so interpret everlasting punishment as to make it endless non-being, (which is, in fact, all punishment eternally

ended,) or to talk of punishment when there is no personality to be punished, is at war with the Bible, the English language, and common sense.

These conclusions are a logical sequence from the premises furnished by the writers named. Without availing ourselves of a score or two of texts in refutation, we will, for the present, select but two from the great Teacher, showing that the death of the body does not consign to the punishment of non-being. We turn, then, from these modern speculators to the words of Christ. He says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death." John viii, 51. What death? Not physical death, for all must meet that. It must be death in sin, as in Eph. ii, 1; Rom. viii, 6; 1 Tim. v, 6; 1 John iii, 14. This being so, the life imparted by God to the believer when regenerated, if faithful, if he keeps Christ's sayings, must continue; and if this

remains, consciousness must continue; and thus the Saviour rebukes materialism, which asserts non-being between death and the resurrection. Again, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Matt. x, 28. Here it is asserted, as plainly as language can do it, that the body may be killed while the soul survives, which would be impossible if the soul is a mere attribute of the body. Thus the Saviour again sets aside the doctrine of the dark chasm of nothingness between death and the resurrection.

We are aware that there is a class of destructionists who admit that suffering is a part of the penalty of sin, that the dying is a part of the death, and thus they find place in their theory for different degrees of punishment for the different degrees of crime, as some may have a long and others a short and less severe struggle in the second death. But this class we deem not more consistent, and not more scriptural, than

those who deny the resurrection of the wicked. They often inquire, If souls go into a state of happiness or misery at death, why should they come forth to a future judgment? To this question all we will answer now is, We find both of the facts named clearly revealed in the Bible; and if they cannot be harmonized by our finite thought, we are quite sure they can be by Him whose thoughts are far above our thoughts. As an offset to this kind of argument we will, for the time, join with those who deny the resurrection of the wicked when they inquire, if literal death is the penalty of sin, why should the wicked be raised and killed over again? When the latter is explained we will explain the former.

Adopting the vicious method of interpreting the Scriptures, so common with both classes of annihilationists named, it were an easy matter to show not only that the wicked will not be raised, but also that the whole race

of man must remain forever under the dark dominion of death. (See Tract No. III.)

“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Acts vii, 59.

To turn the force of this text some have asserted that it was the Jews and not Stephen who uttered these words. But why use such words when Stephen was dying by their stoning? One answers as follows: “Only by way of mocking the confidence Stephen had in the Saviour, whom he had on that occasion been defending.”—*Gospel Light*, p. 44. Admitting, which we do not, that it was the Jews and not Stephen who cried, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,” what is gained to materialism? Does not this interpretation teach that the Jews mockingly said either just what Stephen had said, or what, from his confidence in Christ, they supposed he would say, and, therefore, that Stephen was confident that he had a spirit which would not cease to exist when his body should be killed? It certainly does, or there would be no pertinency whatever in their using such language. We see, then, that nothing would be gained for materialism even if this false interpretation were admitted, for it would then teach the doctrine of separate spirits. Violence, however, is done to the grammar of the text when it is said that the Jews uttered these words, as could be shown did space admit. (See LANDIS, p. 214.) Mr. Storrs admits

that this is the language of Stephen, and says the meaning is, "Lord Jesus, receive or accept me."—*Watch Tower*, p. 56. Stephen had long before this been accepted of Christ, for he was a faithful preacher and "full of the Holy Ghost." He was not then praying for present acceptance. Observe, the *me* is now *living dust*: in a few minutes it will be only *dead dust*. Is he, then, praying to Christ to accept his battered carcass either before or after death? and had he so far mistaken matters as to call that carcass *my spirit*? Flesh and bones are the component parts of a carcass, but the Saviour says (Luke xxiv, 30) "a spirit hath not flesh and bones." These few thoughts, which might be greatly extended, show the warfare of materialism with the truth of God.

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TRACT DEPARTMENT.

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