

It is not, of course, implied that these stages were definitely marked—the evidence proves the contrary; but at one time or another it seems that the hare did assume these different characters.

Thus, the material at present available for the purpose of answering the question, "Why was the hare considered unclean among the Israelites?" seems to demand the answer: *Because it was sacred to Ashtoreth.*

At the same time, it is realized that this may have only been a contributing cause, and that further evidence may show that there were additional reasons.

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ART. VII.—THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

THROUGH the kindness of the editor I am permitted to reply to the remarks of the Rev. C. Greene upon my article on the "Intermediate State," published in the September number of this magazine, and reprinted for discussion in the Worcester Clerical Society, as well as for others who were desirous of examining my conclusions more closely. I cannot complain of my kind and courteous critics, least of all of Mr. Greene, who has frankly conceded the most important part of what I contend for when he allows that my "reasoning is fatal to the Romish doctrine of purgatory, and to the possibility of repentance and conversion in the Intermediate State." It may probably have occurred to him that if it is fatal to these errors, it is fatal to much more—the invocation of saints, prayers for the dead and to the dead, and all that mass of hazy sentiment which is grounded on the doctrine of intermediate consciousness, including the various forms of "spiritism," necrology, demonology, soothsaying, and divination by the aid—real or pretended—of the spirits of the dead. All this latter-day rubbish goes by the board when once it is clearly seen that there is no ground in Scripture for believing that the spirits of good men, while separated from their bodies, have any such capacities as is implied in these dangerous intrusions into the unseen world. For let it be once granted that instead of Scriptural "sleep" there is to be a "Hades life" of conscious activity, and it becomes difficult, or perhaps impossible, to refuse to believe in moral and spiritual progress during that life; and when that is granted we must go on to agree to all the discipline, however painful, which is necessary to progress, in the case of those who leave this world in that state of imperfection which is supposed to

require it. And what is this but purgatory, needing only a few touches of medievalism to bring it into line with all the repudiated horrors of the days of Dante and Aquinas, with all the scandals resulting from its pecuniary profit? How soon the modest and tentative suggestions of Augustine deepened into the dogma formulated by the twenty-fifth session of the Council of Trent we all know; and how utterly unavailing are the disclaimers of purgatory on the part of modern advocates of intermediate improvement needs little proof. The ineffectual protest made the other day against the introduction into our own cathedral of the purgatorial poem of Gerontius by Cardinal Newman would afford an illustration, if one were wanting, of where we are drifting.

I observe that Mr. Greene suggests a doubt as to whether or not the Transfiguration was a "real appearance" or a "mere vision," and on the assumption that it was a "real appearance" he proceeds to say it "surely teaches an intermediate state of conscious activity." But can there be any doubt that it was a vision? Has he forgotten our Lord's words, "Tell the vision to no one," etc.? And so what the vision surely teaches is what those two men, and all those whom they represented, will be "in glory"; and to be "in glory," as they were represented in the vision, is to be past resurrection. So here, again, as everywhere else, the intermediate state is ignored.

Then, Mr. Greene objects to the use of the Old Testament, quotations from which he thinks "beside the mark," adding that "many consider that few, if any, Old Testament saints had a sure hope of eternal life." This opens up a large question, to which it would be impossible to do justice here. Warburton's hypothesis is probably well known to most of your readers; but, not to go further into it, I may remind Mr. Greene that at least David seemed to enjoy a fair prospect of eternal life when he said: "In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more." There is at least this modicum of truth in this rather sweeping denial of the value of Old Testament indications as to the future life: that the teaching of the Old Testament is germinal and rudimentary, given as men were able to receive it; for, as Mr. Greene is kind enough to remind us, a progressive revelation is implied in Heb. i. 1. Without the light cast back upon it from the clearer revelation of the New Testament, we could not gather from the Old Testament much definite information. But I humbly submit that, used as I have used it, it has its value by showing clearly enough that the inspired writers give no countenance to the notion of consciousness of the intermediate state.

In commenting on my notice of the words of our Lord to the penitent malefactor, my critic asks if I mean that "to-day" the Lord would be in glory; and then, after assuming that such is my opinion, he kindly tells me that "the Apostles' Creed implies He was in Hades," and assures us that he adheres to that view—as if I denied it! Probably he did not observe that I have carefully explained the sense in which that word "to-day" must be understood. Our Lord spoke in accordance with the poor man's consciousness; and to his consciousness there would be no interval between his death and "the kingdom" in which he prayed to be remembered. It is as if the Lord had said: "You pray to be remembered in My coming kingdom. Yes, you shall be, and to your consciousness you shall be there with Me this very day." As always, so here, our Lord ignores the Hades interval; and, looking on to the day of the kingdom, He promises the sufferer all, and more than all, he had prayed for.

As to the invariable use of the figure of "sleep" to represent death in Scripture, my critic tells me that "sleep is not the same thing as unconsciousness," reminding me that it has its dreams. He quotes the somewhat hackneyed words which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Hamlet about the disturbed sleep of one whose conscience is ill at ease, as if that was the sort of sleep we are to understand by the Scriptural expression. But when we Christians accommodate to our use the consoling words of the Psalmist (Ps. cxxvii. 2), "So He giveth His beloved sleep" (or "in sleep"), we do not think of the troubled sleep of the murderer, but of the calm, restful sleep—"balmy sleep, kind Nature's sweet restorer"—of the man who is at peace with God and man. Such sleep is "the same thing as unconsciousness," so far as the lapse of time is concerned. Dreams are said to be merely the partial action of sections of the brain immediately before awaking; but this is surely not the sleep into which the Bible tells us we shall fall when we die. Some "light sleepers" can awake at will at a given time; but such sleep is not restful or usual. For most of us the lapse of time is absolutely unnoticed; and if in health, from the moment we fall asleep we are quite unconscious of it; and surely, when our Lord uses sleep as the emblem of death ("our friend Lazarus sleepeth," etc.), He implies not only that the sleeper will awake, but that, though alive, he is temporarily unconscious—a sweet thought, and full of tranquil happiness. For what sort of happiness would it be if those we have lost could see and take an interest in all we have done and said since their departure? What of all the horrid blunders, failures, and sins, which the best of us must feel conscious of if we look fairly and closely at our

lives? How thankful must we be to remember that "sleep" is the divinely-selected word to describe their state, and that there is only One, our great High Priest in heaven, who knows all, and yet loves us and bears with us to the end.¹

Mr. Greene thinks I "evade" the parable of Dives and Lazarus. This is strange, when I have devoted no less than fifteen lines to its exposition. But I may add to what I said in my article that I do not see how it can be used with convincing effect on either side of this controversy, though the main purpose and teaching of the parable, to which I previously referred, is plain enough. But why my worthy critic should suppose I think "Paradise" is synonymous with "Sheol" is not obvious, as I have taken all the care I could to show that I think the exact opposite. "Paradise" is only met with in the New Testament three times, and though early Christian writers have by a misconception of this parable inferred that it was equivalent to Hades, and divided it into two compartments (making one of them into a painful purgatory), they have done so without a shred of authority from Scripture. The Jews, with equal lack of inspired authority, divided it into seven, as Dr. Wright tells us. Later Christians, following the lead of Milton, have gone further, and indulged in poetical fancies, which are perilously near incurring the penalties denounced in Rev. xxi. 19 against those who shall presume to add to the words of God. In the passages of the New Testament where alone the word "Paradise" is mentioned it is equivalent to the abode of the blessed. St. Paul uses it as synonymous with the Third Heaven (2 Cor. xii. 4), which surely cannot mean Purgatory. And in Rev. ii. 7, the only other place, it is said, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God." But the tight corner in which the commentators, ancient and modern, found themselves, the difficulty — in fact, impossibility — which they had in

¹ If believers are to be made happy in the intermediate state, and unbelievers miserable, and each apportioned their respective places in that condition, a preliminary judgment is implied before the general judgment; but this idea has no warrant in Holy Scripture, and must be rejected by all who do really abide by its revelations.

One of my most valued correspondents has taken exception to my statement that Heb. xii. 22, 24 is all future. But, after most careful reconsideration, all I can say is that the passage has no note of time, and though some of the items are matters of present experience, others are future. "The firstborn enrolled in heaven," for instance, are not yet all born, others not yet born again; nor is the heavenly Jerusalem manifested; nor is God yet revealed as the Judge of all, though the spirits of justified men are complete in Christ (Col. ii. 10, iv. 12) even now, and in that sense "made perfect."

reconciling this with the ordinary view of the parable, obliged them to give the word in our Lord's mouth a new and quite original meaning. Unable to grasp the thought that our Lord ignored the intermediate state, and taught His new disciple to look on beyond it to the true kingdom, they have been obliged to suppose that Paradise is only another word for Hades. Having reached that point, they were confronted with another difficulty. Dives was in torment, Lazarus in bliss; a great gulf divided them for ever! The inference was inevitable. Two compartments must be supposed for the two classes represented by these two characters. It was a mere detail that there is not a particle of Scriptural evidence for it. There was no other way of reconciling the parable as they understood it with prevailing opinion. So all the way down from Tertullian to Dr. Littledale a stream of erroneous comment has misled the Church, and Mr. Greene tells us once more of the "portion of Hades enjoyed by the blessed," and refers to Smith's Dictionary and the Rabbinic School as his authority! The Rabbinic School, it appears, regarded Hades as "a region of rest in the heart of the earth—the intermediate home of the blessed." With due respect to the Dictionary of the Bible, but none whatever for the Rabbinic School, I venture once more to remind Mr. Greene that the sole and only authority on the future life is the Holy Scripture fairly interpreted. Come what may, let us stick to that. There we are safe.

It is far easier to tie a knot in a tangle than to pick it out. And it is easier "to darken counsel by words without knowledge" than to make clear to reluctant minds a difficult subject. But if I may be permitted to refer for a moment to other and more acute critics (to several of whom I desire to render my grateful thanks), I would observe that the chief stumbling-block would seem to be the difficulty of getting rid of the idea of time in the intermediate state. But this was probably the reason why sleep was used as the proper emblem of it. Time, which Hooker defines as "the measure of the motion of the heavens," is essentially a condition of this life, and cannot be predicated of the next without involving insuperable difficulties. What, *e.g.*, can we think of those who for thousands of years have been in the unseen world, if they have all through these centuries been conscious, and marking with longing expectation the lapse of ages? The Bible speaks of them as asleep. "No, we say they have been wide awake all the time." But, on the other hand, if we regard sleep as unconscious, then all together they will rise at "our gathering together" unto Him. If it were merely an intellectual knot, I should not care to spend time at the *gag-end*

of my life to untie it. But it is a practical question intimately mixed up with our hopes and expectations. Terrible evils are impending over the Church. I have referred to some of them. Others cannot be laid open here. A flood of error is sweeping over us. Surely the time has come when all that can be said to arrest it should be said now. Feebly, but not, I hope, falsely, I have said my say. Soon, very soon for one like me, nearing fourscore, we must enter on that future life of which I have long been thinking. Then I know what it will be. At rest from this body of infirmity and sin. At home with the Lord in a new body of glorified humanity which He shall give, for He giveth us a body as it pleases Him (1 Cor. xv. 38).

FRANCIS GELL.

ART. VIII.—THE MONTH.

THE most interesting occurrence in the month, from a Churchman's point of view, has been a correspondence between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Dr. Horton, the eminent Nonconformist, respecting the possibility of a compromise on the question of religious education in elementary schools. The Archbishop invited a conference, subject to the acceptance of certain "large and leading principles." These principles were, in short, first, "that the elements of the Christian faith, as taught in Holy Scripture, should form part of the regular instruction given in elementary schools," subject, of course, to a conscience clause; secondly, that the persons to give this teaching "should be qualified to give it genuinely as well as efficiently"; and, thirdly, that "it would not be right to banish wholly from our elementary school system the giving of denominational instruction within school hours." A more moderate statement of the principles to which Churchmen must adhere could not well be made. It seems to amount to a readiness to forego some distinctive features of Church teaching, provided it were possible to secure, by common consent, the maintenance of some definite religious teaching on which Churchmen and Nonconformists might agree; and in some quarters it has been thought that the Archbishop was going too far in the direction of compromise. But the result has been to show decisively the uselessness, at the present time, of attempting to make any compromise at all. Dr. Horton consulted his Nonconformist friends, and replied—with some reserve, as it would seem, of his personal opinion—that the proposed conference is only possible subject to the acceptance of two