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HAPPINESS IN HELL
AND
MISERY IN HEAVEN.



—BY—

CHARLES WATTS

*Author of "Secularism: Constructive and Destructive,"
"The Superstition of the Christian Sunday,"
"Glory of Unbelief,"* &c., &c.



TORONTO:

PRINTED AT "SECULAR THOUGHT" OFFICE.

Price Ten Cents.

THE HISTORY OF THE

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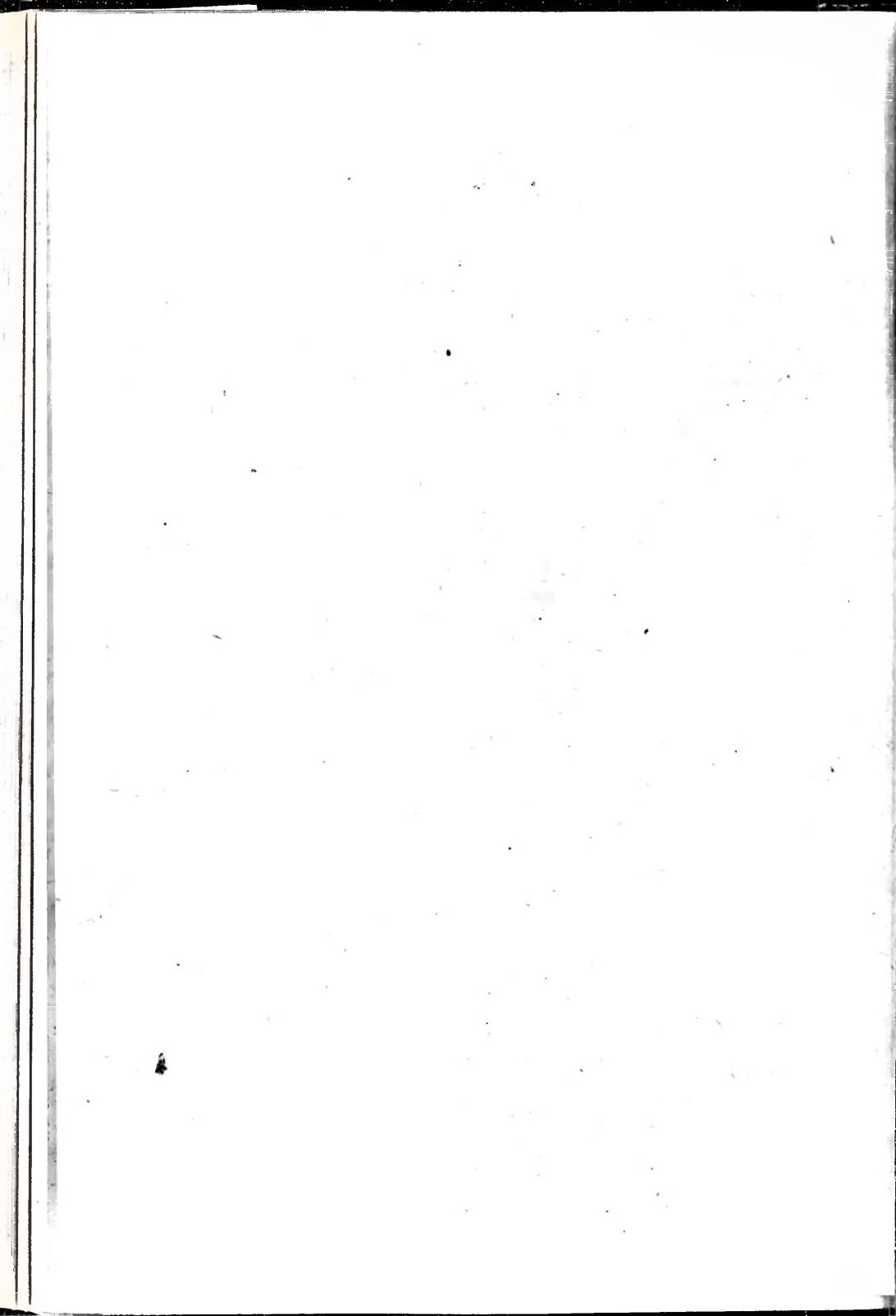
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“HAPPINESS IN HELL.”

UNDER the above title there appears a remarkable article in the December number of *The Nineteenth Century*, written by St. George Mivart, who is one of the ablest exponents of Roman Catholicism at the present day. His new theory has produced quite a sensation in orthodox circles, in consequence of his reversing the hitherto supposed nature and conditions of the abode of his Satanic Majesty. Whatever views we may personally entertain in reference to Christianity, we always welcome any effort made to improve upon its harsh and cruel features. We sincerely hope, therefore, that this declaration that there is “happiness in hell” will have the effect of rendering future Christian pictures of everlasting torments less horrifying than those ghastly spectacles that in the past too frequently accompanied the publications of such orthodox teachings. It will appear a novel idea to most minds that hell is a place of agreeable associations and of pleasurable sensations; but to be assured that “happiness” is to be found there is indeed startling, and will no doubt astonish and bewilder members of the Christian community who have always regarded that institution as being the abode of extreme and unutterable misery. Besides, apart from the followers of Swedenborg, few persons profess to have any conception of different degrees of happiness hereafter. Such, evidently, was not Christ’s idea if it is true, as stated in the New Testament, that at “the last judgment” “before him shall be gathered all nations:

and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." From this we learn that mankind are to be divided into two classes only—the blessed and the cursed.

Mr. Mivart says that he deals with his subject in all seriousness, and he avows his pity for intellectually good men who are staggered at the monstrosity of hell. He asks two questions: "Is the doctrine (of eternal hell) really one essential to Christianity? and if so, can it be a belief reconcilable with right reason, the highest morality and the greatest benevolence?" For ourselves we answer the first query in the affirmative, and the second in the negative, as they appear to us to be two very different questions.

It is rather strange that Mr. Mivart should announce that he offers his suggestions to believers only. Surely Free-thinkers are as competent as his church, his councils or himself to judge what is reasonable or moral. We especially press this point because he professes not to blink any difficulty, and to be impartial and candid. The belief in Theism is not necessary to enable a person to decide whether it was just or otherwise to establish an "eternal hell" for those who cannot accept the Christian God as a reality; neither is the belief in immortality indispensable to the formation of an opinion that it is inhuman and unreasonable to "torture for ever" those who reject the Roman Catholic doctrine of a future life. In fact, persons are in a better position to judge fairly and accurately the points at issue, whose minds are free from prejudice and whose reason is unfettered by priestly-enforced dogmas.

It is worthy of note that Mr. Mivart does not deny the existence of hell; neither does he contend that the Scriptures do not mean what they say upon the subject, or that they have been wrongly translated. On the contrary, he ascribes to God the preparation of the institution which, in Mr. Mivart's opinion, exists sure enough; but the material used and the mode adopted in carrying out its punishments are changed. Instead of

fire and brimstone for all its inhabitants, a section of the "lost souls" are only to suffer through banishment from heaven and deprivation of the "beatific vision of God." While agreeing with Jesus that hell is to be eternal, Mr. Mivart differs from his Master by allotting to the tenants different degrees of punishment according to their merits and demerits. Banishment from God is to be the only fate for some, while others are to suffer the *pœna sensus*, which he says is "the equivalent of hell fire." This is to us a very important point, for we are told that the recipients of "the equivalent of hell fire" are to be the "Unbelievers"—those who do not accept the doctrines of the Church. In his defence of hell-fire torments Mr. Mivart is supported by the writers of the New Testament (see Matt. 5 : 22, 29, 30; 10 : 28; 23 : 15-32; 25 : 41, 46; Mark 3 : 29; 4 : 42-47; Luke 10 : 15, 16, 23; Rev. 14 : 16; and 16 : 8), and also by the Catechism of the Eastern Catholic Church, which distinctly says "they will be given over to everlasting death; that is, to everlasting fire, to everlasting torments with the devils." This is a doctrine which Mr. Mivart informs us his church never condemned, and he frankly admits that the reality of a terrible and scorching hell has been enforced by the eloquence of the pulpit, the brush of the painter, the skill of the sculptor, and the art of the engraver. This may be all too true, but it shows the brutal nature of theology and its inhuman influence upon its believers nevertheless.

It would indeed be useless to appeal to Freethinkers, and we trust it would to all men and women whose minds have not been perverted by a cruel and relentless faith, to believe that the existence of such an institution could be defended by "reason and the highest morality." We urge most emphatically that to deprive anyone of rights and privileges, either in this or in any other world simply on account of differences of opinion, would be a violation of the principles of justice, and in opposition to the teachings of all true ethics. As to the "benevolence" of putting those who honestly reject a particular faith in the worst position among the alleged new conditions of hell, that requires

special faculties, which we do not possess, to enable us to appreciate it.

But Mr. Mivart observes there is "another side" to Catholic doctrine which teaches that the "happiness of hell" will be the lot of "unbaptized infants," and it may even be extended to "adults in heathen nations." If this be so, baptism becomes an unfortunate ceremony, for it is by no means certain to be accompanied or followed by conversion, and if it is not, even according to his new theory baptism destroys the possibility of happiness in the next world. Upon the same principle missionaries are simply agents for introducing damnation among the nations they visit. If the poor heathens die without having heard the gospel, happiness, we are told, awaits them hereafter, but if the "glad tidings" are preached to them and they cannot or do not believe, hell-fire is their portion "for ever and ever."

Mr. Mivart considers that a process of evolution is going on in hell; but he also says the occupants are not allowed to escape from the "prison house" however much they may develop in goodness. Where, then, is the utility of such development if emancipation from imperfect surroundings is not to be the result? It is a kind of progress similar to that made by the horse at the mill. Mr. Mivart does not interpret the law of evolution thus when he applies it to animals on earth. His argument in dealing with man is that the process of evolution raises him higher and higher both in body and in mind. This is a clear contradiction to his idea of evolution in hell.

Mr. Mivart considers that Atheism is preferable to the belief "that God could punish men however slightly, still less could damn them for all eternity, for anything which they had not full power to avoid." But this is precisely what the Christian's God is represented as doing. According to the popular orthodox belief, which is based on certain portions of the New Testament, and is sanctioned by the articles and catechisms of the churches, it is only the elect that are to be saved, while the vast majority of the human race are to be punished "for all eternity." The Bible states that the non-elect are powerless to secure their own

salvation, for it alleges that of ourselves we can do nothing; it is God that worketh within us, and that some unfortunate victims were ordained to condemnation before they were born (see Romans 8: 29, 30 9: 21, 22; 2 Cor. 3: 5; Eph. 2: 8; Phil. 2: 13; 2 Thess. 2: 11, 12; Jude 8: 4).

Mr. Mivart says: "Any unnecessary or useless suffering cannot, of course, exist with a good God." Just so, then the fact is that either God does not exist or the orthodox doctrine of hell is a delusion. If there is any suffering at all in hell we allege that it is both unnecessary and useless. Such suffering, be it remembered, is not regarded as being merely a consequence, it is a penalty inflicted as a punishment upon those who believe not the "Gospel of Christ." Apart entirely from the monstrous injustice of this suffering, where is its utility? The true object of punishment should be to reform those who are punished and to deter others from doing wrong. The threatened punishment of orthodoxy achieves neither of these results, inasmuch as it affords no opportunity for repentance and offers no facility for improvement, for when the victim is once in hell there he must remain for ever. Neither can it be truthfully said that the sufferings in the "bottomless pit" would exercise a beneficial influence upon those on earth. That the belief in hell torments is not a deterrent from crime the history of criminality clearly proves. Nearly all our worst criminals have been taught this doctrine. The terror of the policeman has evidently been more efficacious in the prevention of crime than all the hell-fire that ever was or ever could be manufactured. Besides, if it were possible for the "tortures of the damned" to be witnessed, would such a sight inspire the spectators with obedience to a God who caused such barbarous cruelty? Here the rejected of heaven are represented as enduring tortures the extent of which no humane mind can fully conceive and no pen can adequately portray. The end of perhaps a happy life is to be the beginning of everlasting misery. The joy and sunshine of a mundane existence are to be followed by clouds of wretchedness and the endurance of perpetual agony. Amidst the eruption of burning mountains, flashing of light-

ning and the roar of thunder; while the stars are descending, the sun darkening and the moon being converted into blood, the majority of mankind are to be exposed to the severest cruelties it is possible for the most barbarous nature and the most fiendish disposition to inflict.

Mr. Mivart makes the astounding statement that "nothing, in fact, has been defined by the church on the subject of hell which does not accord with right reason, the highest morality, and the greatest benevolence." Is this true? God has been defined by the church as the creator of all things; he must therefore have created the devil. God, we are told, is all-wise; he must, therefore, have known the nature of the being he was creating, and the havoc his handiwork would make among the sons and daughters of men. God, it is said, is all-good; then how could he have been the cause of so much evil of which it is supposed the devil is the principal agent? God is alleged to be all-powerful; why, then, did he not destroy the devil when he was defeated in heaven instead of turning him upon the earth to play his devilish pranks among mankind? God is defined as a being of love; how is it, then, that he planned a scheme by which most of the human race are doomed to an eternity of heart-rending suffering, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched?" Does it accord with reason to believe that our "heavenly Father" would do what an earthly parent would recoil from doing? Is it moral to inflict infinite punishment for a finite act, even if that act is intentionally performed? Is it benevolent to burn men and women "forever," some of whom have been guilty of no other "crime" than their inability to recognize the orthodox notion of "truth as it is in Jesus?" This may be the theological view of what is right and useful, but it is a conception of justice at which unperverted humanity stands aghast.

Mr. Mivart contends that God has granted a revelation whereby hell may be avoided. "But," says he, "justice certainly does not demand that this revelation should be made clear to all men." This is orthodox reasoning and consistency with a vengeance! How can that be a revelation which is not clear? And, further-

more, of what service can a revelation possibly be to us if it is not understood? How can we act upon that, the meaning of which is hidden from us? If a knowledge of this special revelation is necessary to enable us to avoid misery and to secure happiness, then justice does demand that the author of the revelation should, if he has the power, make it clear to all his children. If he does not do so he is partial in the treatment of his children, and, therefore, not, in this instance, a good Father.

But the real question is, why did God make a hell for us to avoid? We are told that the devil was "a fallen angel," that he was once in heaven, where he fell from his original state. It would be interesting to learn that, if heaven is sinless, whence came the evil influence that caused the angel to fall? Angelic materials cannot be of the best kind, and if war and sin once reigned in heaven, what guarantee have we that they may not again disturb the harmony of the "celestial city?"

If there be a hell, how does Mr. Mivart know that there will be happiness there? We presume that he has not visited that habitation. St. Frances says that she was permitted to look into hell, and she found it had three divisions. In the upper hell the inhabitants were tolerably miserable, in the middle one intolerably so, but in the lower the torments were beyond all understanding. When she had looked into this terrible place her blood was frozen with fright. "The Confession of Faith" tells us that the inmates of hell suffer "most grievous torments in body and soul, without intermission, in hell-fire forever." The Wesleyan Catechism affirms that "hell is full of fire and brimstone where the bodies are tormented for ever and ever;" and finally the New Testament alleges that "the wicked shall be tormented . . . and the smoke of their torments ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night." Now here are four authorities quite as trustworthy upon this subject as Mr. Mivart (that, we grant, is not saying much), and if what they assert be correct, happiness cannot exist in such a place. If, on the other hand, the scriptures and the Christian writers

are in error, then the whole doctrine of hell is a delusion, which we decidedly think is the case.

But let us turn from these revolting figments of a barbarous faith to the inculcation of Secular teachings. In these we have no threatened hell in another world to appal, no fire to burn or devil to torture. Our injunction is, endeavor to avoid making a hell upon earth, which is often done by fostering dogmas as cruel as they are pernicious in their influence upon the peace of the human mind. We have faith in the power of love, not in the dread of fear. Therefore

While here live out a noble life
And ever follow right because 'tis right ;
Not because ye shall be crowned with light,
And if in grander worlds ye go to dwell
It shall not there be counted to your scorning
That you your best have done,
But you shall still progress to everlasting morning.

MISERY IN HEAVEN.

MR. ST. GEORGE MIVART informs us that that there is an eternity of happiness in hell, and that "the loss of heaven is an infinite loss." He does not, however, define what he means by happiness, although he asserts that it differs in degree, and that some persons "no more desire the supernatural state than fishes can desire to become birds or oysters sigh because they are not butterflies." If hell exist, and it is such a place as orthodox Christians generally describe it, we fail to understand how it is possible for any degree of happiness to be found there. But what of heaven? Let us endeavor to ascertain the nature and state of affairs "in another place," as they say in the House of Commons. If the information given in the Bible concerning heaven be reliable, misery, not happiness, is its chief characteristic. Those, therefore, who prepared themselves for "above,"

expecting to find comfort and enjoyment, took the wrong road ; they should have gone "below," where they would have a warm reception, and a brilliant and prolonged entertainment prepared for them.

Happiness is understood in this world as being associated with agreeable sensations. It is not a thing, but a state in which our wants are supplied ; a condition of the mind that is in possession of what it desires. Felicity expresses great happiness, and bliss is its highest form. Happiness furthermore implies an absence of conflicting influences. It depends on conditions, which of course vary with individuals. A clown and a philosopher may be both equally satisfied, but they cannot be equally happy when surrounded by the same conditions. Happiness, great or small, can be secured only by experiences congenial to the tastes of individuals, and which meet the requirements of their varied capacities for enjoyment. An "eternity" of happiness can only mean a continuous state of joy. The common conception of eternity, "swallowing up time," or "when time shall be no more," is only symbolical. Applying eternity to a future state is like speaking of a rope with one end cut off. Eternity is neither future nor past. It cannot begin after the one or before the other ; hence entering on an eternal future is inconceivable to the human mind.

Now do heaven and its arrangements, as depicted and recorded in the Bible, comply with the requirements necessary to happiness ? In the first place, it seems paradoxical to speak, as some theologians do, of the happiness of heaven, and at the same time to assert that the senses through which all sensations enter are not present. They speak of immaterial souls enjoying bliss, which is as unphilosophical as it would be to talk of dissolving moonlight or carving a shadow. Attributing agreeable sensations to a soul without senses is as grotesque as ascribing the darkness of the Middle Ages to the result of the Pope's uncorking bottles of Egyptian darkness. To experience any sort of happiness necessitates our possessing senses that enable us to feel, see, and understand. Immaterial souls can enjoy only im-

material happiness, and it is quite immaterial to us whether we experience such enjoyment or not, for it could make no material difference to such souls as we are now supposed to possess.

Jesus, in speaking of children, said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." We cannot, however, imagine a child being happy without his toys or even with always having the same. Fancy a boy without his top or a girl without her doll—where would be their happiness? Is it not also a fact that children begin to wonder why they do not continue to admire their old sources of enjoyment when they have acquired tastes for new ones? It is similar with children of larger growth, whose happiness consists greatly in the change of scenes and occupation. Literature is the heaven of some minds; but the most devout student looks out for new books. To be compelled to read the same forever would not be the happiest occupation. Everything is mutable, changes are interminable through all nature, absolute quietude is unknown, and without constant change life itself would cease to be. These essentials to the happiness of existence are not to be found in heaven, and therefore to intellectual persons it would be a place of misery.

We are not now dealing with the questions whether there is a heaven or not, or if there is where it is located. These are no doubt important points, but our present object is to ascertain whether the Christian's heaven, as described in the Bible, is an abode of happiness or of misery. It may be urged that the language of the Scriptures upon the question of heaven is figurative, which we do not deny; but what is it figurative of? Language should make the subjects to which it refers clear to the reader, and not obscure their meaning. Christ on several occasions refers to the kingdom of heaven in parables, but from these we obtain very little information as to its real nature.

This is not at all surprising when we are told that he spoke in parables, so that those who heard him should not understand (Mark 4: 11, 12.) It is true that on another occasion, Jesus located heaven by saying the kingdom of heaven was "within you," but this is as difficult to understand as the parables are,

since he also states: "In my Father's house are many mansions I go to prepare a place for you." For persons to get these mansions within them would be a greater performance than that of the whale swallowing Jonah! There is, however, one parable about heaven (Luke 16: 19, 31) which tells us of "a certain beggar" and of "a certain rich man;" the one was in heaven and the other within hell, and both were in hearing, seeing, and speaking distance of each other. From heaven the rich man is seen being tormented in hell. Now to think that anyone could be happy while contemplating such suffering would be an outrage against our common humanity. Such a horrible heavenly spectacle would be worse than a Spanish bull-fight, or than bishops warming their hands before the fires that consumed the martyrs of old. Brutal as those scenes were, they lasted only for a time, whereas this heavenly scene consists of ever-lasting torture where all help to lessen the cruelty is denied. If any person with a spark of humanity in his or her nature should get into such a heaven, it is to be hoped that blinds will be there that may be drawn, for such sights are only fit for monsters who die on the gallows, and whose exit from earth was a blessing to those left behind. The Christian's heaven, as here described, must be a place of misery indeed for every loving heart.

One great source of our happiness on earth is the liberty to select our companions, to refrain from attending exhibitions of torture, and to be permitted to relieve the victims of injustice and cruelty. To be shut up, therefore, in heaven with those who can look on others being tortured in flames of fire and who will not or cannot relieve them must be a source of indescribable misery. This parable receives confirmation from St. John, who states (Rev. 14: 10) that a certain person "shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb." And this is the Christian's idea of ultimate happiness. When a wish is expressed to be with Jesus and the angels, as it frequently is by orthodox believers, they can-

not understand the sights and experiences that are in store for them. Let us hope it is true that "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard . . . the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Milton says, "It's better to reign in hell, than to serve in heaven;" but in our opinion it would be still better to do neither. Both institutions deserve to be lost in total oblivion for the belief in their existence is no factor in the progress and elevation of mankind. Humanity would have two evils the less to overcome if hell were to cease from troubling, and if the preachers about heaven were to be at rest.

We will now glance at what may be termed the Throne Room of heaven as it is described by St. John, who is alleged to have been an eye-witness. He certainly had very peculiar ideas both of artistic beauty and of pictorial theology. He says that God was like a jasper and a sardine stone; the rainbow about him was the color of an emerald. This sparkling Deity was surrounded by four-and-twenty elders, their heads being adorned with crowns of gold. Before the throne was a sea of crystal, near which there were seven lamps, which were the seven spirits of God. It is said that St. John was "in the spirit." This may be so, or perhaps the spirit was in him; for no man in his normal mental condition, either waking or sleeping, could conceive such a jumble of nonsensical impossibilities as those recorded in the book of Revelation. Some profane persons have compared their alleged author to Tam O'Shanter, who also is said to have had some strange visions.

St. John, we are told, found the door of heaven open, and there he stood in front of a great white throne, with a frontage of a crystal sea, but, "whether (he was) in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell." He does not say that he felt alarmed at the "lightnings and thunderings of voices," which "proceeded out of the throne." People as a rule do not feel supremely happy in a thunderstorm. But in addition to the war of the elements there were four most remarkable beasts in the midst of and round the throne, the like of which, so far as we know, no naturalist has ever seen in this or any other country. The

beasts are represented as having resemblance to a lion, a calf, a man, and an eagle, and they possessed six wings each and "eyes before and behind," besides being "full of eyes within." They must have been wideawake animals indeed, and to have found the blind side of them would have been exceedingly difficult. But, stranger still, they were musical beasts, and could all sing, and evidently did so to some tune, for "they rest not day and night, saying Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." Then we have what may be called a chorus, in which the beasts are joined by the elders and by "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" of angels. A pleasant place this, truly, for a studious man or a nervous woman to be doomed to "forever." Of course it may be a matter of taste, but, speaking personally, if ever we find ourselves among such a motley crew, we shall be inclined, if all other means of escape fail, to test the efficacy of prayer, and to exclaim, from this place "Good Lord deliver us."

According to St. John, the acoustic properties of heaven must be unique, for he says that he heard every living thing both there and on the earth, under the earth, and on the sea, say something to him that sat on the throne, to which the four beasts (one of them having a voice of thunder) said Amen! Such an exhibition of heavenly music would be to us no pleasure, but a tremendous nuisance. We might, perhaps, under pressure, be able to sit out the performance for a brief time; but to have to endure it day and night for ever would be enough to drive one stark staring mad. A succession of the same sounds and sights, even when of a pleasant kind, would be one of the most monotonous experiences on earth; but to be compelled to listen perpetually to the uproar of St. John's heaven, and to behold its horrible sights without any intermission, would be the quintessence of misery. Putting aside their hideous thundering shouts amidst lightning and hail, it makes one's flesh creep to think of those strange beasts constantly crawling all over the place. There would be no rest for us even in the presence of all the saints and the Lamb. St. John incidentally

remarks that a good deal of bookkeeping goes on in heaven. If this be so, accuracy, we should think, could not be guaranteed under such conditions of noise and confusion. In all probability many names will be omitted or wrongly inserted, unless the recording angel is deaf and dumb and receives his instructions through the medium of "divine inspiration." As to him who was sitting on the throne, he must have been a peculiar individual, for it is said that from his face "the earth and heaven fled away," but whence we are not informed.

There were other wonders in heaven, one of which was a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and twelve stars on her head. Evidently she must have been the centre of light, and had no necessity to grope about in the dark. She was not, however, to be compared with the marvellous angel giant, who was clothed with a cloud, had a rainbow on his head, a face like the sun, a voice like a lion, and his feet like pillars of fire. The length given of his legs is most remarkable; he set his right foot on the sea, and his left on the earth. There is one thing mentioned which must have given inexpressible joy to some of the unfortunate inhabitants. "There was silence in heaven for the space of about one hour." This must have been indeed a relief, even though it was only for a brief interval. Crusty old bachelors have thought that if there were silence in heaven it was evident that there were not many women there. Upon this point we give no opinion, except that, if there were more than one there, they must have been delighted that the chorus of the beasts was stopped even for an hour, so that a little cheerful feminine conversation could be indulged in. Most women are painted as angels, at least before they are married; let us hope, therefore, that if there were any in heaven, they had wings with which, at the re-commencement of the native music, they could fly away and be at rest. This description of heaven and its angelic inhabitants is what the Americans would call "fine and large"; but we ask, where does the happiness come in? Gaping at monstrosities and wonders like St. John witnessed, is not our idea of a blissful state. It is said in the New

Testament that Jesus was going to prepare a place for us. If, however, St. John's account of the "place" is correct, we have no wish to congratulate Christ upon the success of his undertaking.

One thing, perhaps, we ought to be thankful for, and that is, that the path to heaven is so narrow that only a few can find it. If ever it is our misfortune to be located in the orthodox heaven, we shall be inclined to burst into song and say :

"Heaven's a cheat, and all things show it ;
We thought so once, but now we know it."

We are sometimes told that if heaven does not really exist, it is a pleasing illusion which people ought not to be ruthlessly deprived of ; and that they should not have doubts concerning its existence infused into their contented minds. Our answer to this is, when absurd errors are taught as truths, it is necessary that the fact should be made clear, in order that their injurious influences may be avoided. Now St. John says his account is accurate, and that anyone making alterations or additions will be subject to unspeakable penalties. But we repeat that it is not the existence of heaven that we here question, neither do we desire to deprive anyone of the hope of happiness hereafter. We have simply shown that the Christian's heaven as depicted in the Scriptures does not offer grounds for a pleasing illusion, and that it is not a home of happiness, but an abode of the most wretched misery that it is possible for the human mind to conceive.

A heaven to be desirable should be a place where suffering is unknown ; where the true and the noble of the earth can dwell in peace and harmony, undisturbed by personal pain, or a knowledge of the gloom and sadness of others. To us the Christian's heaven appears destitute of every redeeming feature, and it would be no pain to us to see it occupied by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and ourselves shut out. If there is such a heaven as that described by St. John, we know of no people to whom it would be a more appropriate abode than to the inmates of a lunatic asylum. The fact is, the popular notion of heaven and

hell, which the churches profess to entertain to-day, is based on superstition of which Pope said:—

She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray,
To Powers unseen, and mightier far away ;
She, from the rending earth and burning skies,
Saw gods descend and fiends infernal rise ;
Here fixed the dreadful, there the blest abodes ;
Fear made her devils, and weak hope her gods :
Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust,
Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,
And formed like tyrants, tyrants would believe.
Zeal then, not charity, became the guide,
And hell was built on spite, and heaven on pride.

