

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jtvi-01.php

JOURNAL OF
THE TRANSACTIONS
OF
The Victoria Institute,
OR,
Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

VOL. LIX.



LONDON:
(Published by the Institute, 1, Central Buildings, Westminster, S.W.1.)

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

1927

703RD ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, JUNE 13TH, 1927,
AT 4.30 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT, DR. J. A. FLEMING, F.R.S., IN THE CHAIR.

Before the proceedings began, a warm welcome was extended to the President by the Chairman of Council, Dr. J. W. THIRTLE, M.R.A.S., on behalf of the Institute, on this his first official appearance in his new capacity as President. The whole company rose to signify their cordial association in this welcome.

The PRESIDENT then called upon the HON. SECRETARY to read the Minutes of the previous Meeting, which were confirmed and signed. The following Elections were announced:—As a Member, the Rev. Alfred Swann, M.A.; and as Associates, F. V. Appleby, Esq., C.E., M.Sc., and the Rev. R. E. Dowle.

He next invited the Lecturer, Dr. Alfred T. Schofield, who, he said, needed no introduction, to read his paper on “Time and Eternity.”

ANNUAL ADDRESS.

TIME AND ETERNITY.

By ALFRED T. SCHOFIELD, Esq., M.D. (*Vice-President*).

I.

MY only comfort in writing a paper on a subject of which I know so little is that probably others do not know much more. For neither philosophers, psychologists, nor metaphysicians can by searching find out much about it. Let us see what we do know.

Man undoubtedly sees (spiritually) more than he can comprehend, for he is not all merely human. If in his body he has a touch of the beast below him, in his spirit he has something of the Divine above him. Man is thus tripartite in another way than in body, soul, and spirit. It would appear that the relative proportions of each part vary exceedingly: some men being described as animal, or even bestial; others, where the spirit is in excess, are mystics. This paper would probably interest the latter class most.

To man, the Divine is thus, in medical language, “Homologous,”

because there is something of it in humanity. Were it not so, and all were "Heterologous," or alien to man, this paper would be impossible.

Before man, therefore, is no stone wall, but glass, through which he cannot pass, but sees dimly (1 Cor. xiii, 12); for all glass in the Apostle's day was only semi-transparent, and not much could be seen through it.

Were it not so, man could not apprehend the Divine at all; but though he can apprehend God, he cannot comprehend Him. Man has thus an interest in the Infinite (of which Eternity is a part) which would be impossible had he not in himself a link with the Divine. The Bible states that this link has been much damaged by sin; but can now be restored by the new birth; so that man can thus know God in part, though not "as he himself is known." "Now we see through a glass darkly, but *then* face to face" (1 Cor. xiii, 12).

We are here, therefore, to see how much we can now perceive through our dim glass; for "now" refers to Time, and "then" to Eternity. Dr. Weymouth translates 1 Cor. xiii, 12: "Now we see through a glass, and are puzzled"; the Revised Version suggests "as in a riddle"; the Greek word actually being "enigma." Perhaps the best word is "obscurely," instead of "darkly." We cannot fail to note the triple repetition of "time" and "eternity" with three "nows" and the "thens" in 1 Cor. xiii, 12, 13.

NOW (Time)	{	we see through a glass darkly . . . we know in part . . . abideth faith, hope, love . . .
THEN (Eternity)	{	face to face . . . as we are known . . . love abides alone . . .

The second clause gains greatly by a more literal translation (R.V.): "Now we know in part, but then shall I know *fully*, even as also I have been known *fully*" (*i.e.* from Eternity). The word "fully" here denotes that perfect knowledge which belongs to the Divine (*epignōsis*), but which is here given to the human. Such words may be uttered, but to understand them is beyond the power of the highest intellect; for if finite can reach to infinite, there is no longer finite and infinite.

A belief in this present dim perception was shared by ancient and modern philosophers—Socrates in a remarkable way, Plato,

Kant, James, F. W. H. Myers, etc. ; and it is well to note this. For it is the crowning glory of the human race that we are able to grope at all, and that it is possible to read a paper on such a subject before the Victoria Institute. It is not therefore for us to complain if the subject is obscure ; and that we are groping after it in semi-darkness. The wonder of wonders is that we can understand in any way what we are groping for, and that large numbers of us believe that there is a life outside time altogether.

Time and Eternity are well contrasted in the threefold view we have just given. *In time* we are as *children* and are puzzled, we partly know, and what we do see is through the two eyes of the spirit—faith and hope. *In eternity* we are as *men* face to face, we then know fully as we have been ever known, the two eyes of faith and hope are gone, and love abides alone. This certainly implies a great general development of mental power, and throws light on our present possession of embryonic powers of spirit ; in the wonders of telepathy, hypnotism, individual and collective, second sight, etc., which are so puzzling now, and are only cultivated with extreme risk.

Respecting the wonders of Divine love, may I be allowed to quote some rather fantastic lines, believed to be a rough rendering of Akdamut, a well-known Aramaic poem, centuries old, and well known to the Hebrews. (I am indebted to our Chairman for this information.)

“ Could I with ink the ocean fill,
 Were the whole sky of parchment made :
 Were every stick on earth a quill
 And every man a scribe by trade :
 To write the love of God to man
 Would drain the ocean dry ;
 Nor could the scroll contain the whole
 Though stretched from sky to sky.”

II.

Turning to a consideration of Time, we are practically forced to associate space with it. The two are, indeed, said to be inseparable, and not to exist apart, and we cannot really think of time without space. Time and space are respectively duration and extension. Dean Inge writes :—“ Philosophic mystics say that neither space nor time is ultimately real. They may look

with favour on Professor Alexander's theory, that time is a fourth dimension; but they are unlikely to agree with Bergson, who gives a supreme metaphysical value to duration. They accept St. Paul's tripartite psychology of body, soul and spirit."

Objectively, time and space are regarded as having real existence. Bishop Berkeley declares time and space to be nothing but a succession of ideas. Space alone is not real objectively to man. Time objectively is real to man when change occurs, not otherwise, as we have seen. Concepts of time and space set inevitable limits on human thought which the Divine absolute life transcends. There is no limitation to the Eternal or the infinite.

It is rather startling to find that the word Time is not derived from the Latin *tempus*, but was in old English *tima*, which is derived through the Danish and Norse from the same root as "tide"; the basic concept of time being change and not duration. Time apart from change is as unknown as is any change in eternity. The familiar lines in our much-loved hymn—

"Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me"

become charged with a deeper meaning as they reach us with the voices of Time and Eternity.

All change, it would appear, must not only take place in time, but is its essence; for where there is no change there is no time. We would here also suggest that by "change in time" we refer to that which is external to ourselves, and not to development of soul or spirit. It is interesting to note that the military term of "marking time" is very significant, as it does not connote duration of any kind, but consists of incessant change of feet. We should also remember that we are now and always in eternity. Death is not the entrance into eternity, but the exit from time. Till then we are in time, which is that portion of eternity marked out for us by change. Time and change are practically synonymous, as we often experience when in a reverie, or light doze; hours seem no longer than a moment, and all sense of time is lost, simply because there is no change.

During this period we are in eternity, which is simply the cessation of time or change. In some cases we find we have thus lost all sense of duration, which to most means "time"; but in some our friends never tell us how long we have been sitting, and we are not conscious that for a space "time has been no

more." Time also often disappears to the sick, in hospitals and elsewhere, while, when in a semi-comatose state, weeks may appear as hours. Time, however, is ever connected by us with duration, though this is not its primary meaning.

Perhaps the most definite expression of time found in the Bible is in Luke iv, 5, *en stigmé chronou*—"in a moment of time." It is not certain, however, that this is not exceeded in brevity by "the twinkling of an eye," one-fifth of a second (1 Cor. xv, 52). Humanity cannot readily think of eternity save in terms of time, even when it tries to imagine or define it; but it is possible even now to read our past, present, and future in the light of eternity, and thus, "through a glass darkly," to get somewhat of a Divine view of them.

III.

We often speak of what we cannot really conceive, *e.g.* time being "swallowed up by eternity," though we may know vaguely what we mean. Speaking as to "eternity," I feel almost justified in stating that it is a thought not found in any human language. I say "almost," because I do not know all human languages; but judge it very improbable that the lesser-known tongues should contain thoughts not expressed in European speech. We will look at the word in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and English. The word in the New Testament for "eternal" is *aiōn*, which literally does not mean eternal at all, but an age. It is better rendered by "eternal" than by "everlasting." Everlasting may be used to mean eternal, but eternal never means everlasting.

We cannot in our thought exclude duration from Time, but it forms no part of Eternity. I speak here in the language of men, and that is ever relative. In the absolute, "duration" may raise us above all ideas of Time, and equal Eternity; though obviously it does not mean "duration" as used relatively by us.

Eternal life is constantly spoken of without any relation to time; but solely with reference to its quality and its Giver. *Aiōnios* is applied to God Himself, and cannot therefore mean merely "everlasting" or non-ending. In Matt. xxv, 46, *aiōnios* would be better translated, as in the R.V., by "eternal." "Everlasting" is purely a time-measurement and should never be used for "eternal." *Aiōnios* is 54 times used for the state of the blessed in heaven, and 7 times for those in hell. The literal

meaning of *aiōn*, as an age, or a fixed number of years, should not be insisted on, for it ceases then to mean "eternal"; and the state of the saved and lost have a definite end.

Seeing, as I have already said, that the word is applied to the existence of God, and is everywhere used for "eternal," such a meaning is seen to be impossible. There is no other word for "eternity" but this in the New Testament (in the Old Testament Hebrew *olam*).

Turning for a moment to the Latin equivalent, *æternus*, we find it far more expressive than the Greek; and indeed it has been said that it seems expressly formed to lift us out of time notions, and from this world to the next. It is certainly the best word in human language (with its English equivalent—*eternity*).

Olam (Hebrew) is as expressive, but is so constantly used in a purely relative sense in the Bible, being associated with human and earthly things, that its original force of "concealed" or "hid" is lost, and it becomes almost a time-measure.

In the same way, when we turn to the English language, we find in the Old Testament the Hebrew *olam* translated "for ever"—"The earth abideth for ever" (Eccles. i, 4), etc., which cannot mean eternal. *Aiōnios* is rendered "ever," "eternal," and "everlasting"; of these, we judge "eternal" is the best and "everlasting" the worst. It is, of course, constantly used in its time-sense of "age-long," to which "everlasting" is equally inappropriate.

We must now briefly review what we know of Eternity; always remembering that the wonder is, not how little we know, but that we can postulate anything about it at all.

Dr. Johnson defines "eternity" as "duration without beginning or end." I must confess this seems to me rather an accurate description of "endless time" than of "eternity." Some of my audience may suggest that the two are the same. This I venture to question.

John Locke says: "By repeating the idea of any length of duration we have in our mind, with all the endless addition of numbers, we come by the idea of eternity." This statement is far from clear. Its chief interest seems to be the way in which he seems to agree with Johnson, that, after all, eternity is some sort of duration, which is very doubtful.

Montgomery says: "Eternity is a moment ever standing"—a decided, though obscure, advance in definition.

There can be no "duration" in Eternity, if it be true that in it one moment and a million years are the same, and that neither have any "duration." It is therefore probable in Eternity 1,000 years will be with us as now with God, as one day. We must ever remember that Eternity is absolute, infinite, and Divine, while Time is ever relative, finite, and human. The two cannot be therefore co-related, but are essentially different in thought. Everlasting or eternal punishment refers primarily to its changelessness, and not to its duration.

Many years ago, in Painswick Parish Church, my attention became riveted on a large brass tablet, on which was engraved the magnificent prophecy of Isa. lx, 19, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." I find the wonders of this verse as fresh to-day as when it seemed to talk to me in that Church, and told me that the "now" (with its sun and moon) was TIME and CHANGE and HUMAN, that the "then" (shall be) was ETERNAL and CHANGELESS, and DIVINE.

My audience will pardon me if I mention a third truth that I seemed to hear that day: that if in eternity there is no change, whereas it is the essence of time, I can never age a day if my spirit dwells there, for age belongs to time only. We can dwell in spirit in either; but in proportion as we live in eternity we have discovered the secret of perpetual youth.

IV.

Let us return, and consider for a moment "eternity" in its relation to God. Exod. iii, 14, is the best and absolute declaration of eternity as a fact and not an idea, a concept, nor a philosophic theory, "I AM THAT I AM." The margin of the R.V. gives it, "I AM BECAUSE I AM," or "I AM WHO AM," which do not bring us further light. What the verse does give us is an unique view of the fixed and changeless present of Eternity, and the absence of all past or future; Time, on the contrary, being all past and future with no fixed present.

If we believe in God, there can be no doubt that here is something beyond the relative, outside Time, and humanity, or earthly thought or language; an eternal present, with no past or future; in short, the fact of an absolute Eternity is inseparable from God. This is the picture of Eternity in the Old Testament. How far different is the same presentment in the New,

where God has revealed Himself in Christ the God-man. He, when He declares Himself, does not express the truth in the transcendent language of Exodus, but, speaking to us after the manner of men, seeks to bring to our apprehension that which in its essence we cannot fully comprehend.

“From Him which is, and which was, and which is to come.” “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” (Rev. i, 4, 8). It is true that here, as in Exodus, we get a declaration of the Divine; but being now revealed to us in Christ in whom “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,” Eternity is expressed to us here in terms of time.

We must, however, remember the revelation of the Son, born of a Virgin in time, here precludes the absolute and transcendent picture of Eternity in Exodus, which verily passes all understanding, while the language of Revelation does not.

We must never, however, regard Eternity as a mere negation of Time. It is more; it is an essential fact of the existence of God. It is worthy of remark that the chief attributes of our Lord—truth, love, light, wisdom, &c.—are not connoted with time. Of course, God has an endless existence, but this alone is no expression of Eternity. God and Eternity, the Infinite, and the Absolute, are, then, expressions of the attributes of God in relation to time, space, and creation. As to time, He is Eternal; as to space, He is Infinite; as to the relative (creation), He is Absolute.

Eternal life consists in the knowledge of God; and this shows that the antithesis of life and punishment in Matt. xxv, 46, is really a true one; as “life” consists in the knowledge and love of God, while “punishment” connotes its absence, and the consuming fire of God. Alford well remarks on this antithesis: “The *zōē* here spoken of is not bare existence, which could have ‘annihilation’ for its opposite; but blessedness and reward, to which punishment and misery are antagonistic terms.”

In connection with love it is truly a sublime thought, cognate to our subject, that the I AM has but two abodes; for, “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit” (Isa. lvii, 15). The “I AM” is His name for ever (Exod. iii, 15). He also “lives” for ever (Deut. xxxii, 40), and from “everlasting to everlasting,

thou art God." And perhaps personally most precious of all : "The eternal God is thy refuge" (or, R.V., "dwelling-place"), and underneath are the everlasting arms (that is, the changeless and eternal care of God Himself) : of which we may say, in the language of Ps. xxiii, one is called "goodness" and the other "mercy." The Hebrew is always *olam*, which, as we have shown, would have answered more to its derivation were it not equally applied to things of time. This is almost a necessity of the human brain, for man must ever connect Eternity with Time.

V.

I should like, before closing, to add a word about "punishment," so inseparably connected with eternity in Matt. xxv, 46. It must be remembered that to the Jews eternity was a strange thought. Even endless time was never a part of the Jewish figurative teaching in the Talmud concerning Gehenna (which was the valley of Hinnom). It always included the hope of exit after a longer or shorter period. In this connection it is interesting to note that "punishment" (*kolasis*) gives here no prospect of termination, and that for two reasons : (1) It is connected with eternity, and this involves (2) cessation of all change. The condition seems absolutely fixed. I think, however, we also should remember that most of our crude, unreal, and unjust ideas on eternal punishment lie in the persistent ideas of time wrongly connected with it ; and especially the constant concept of duration, with which Eternity has no connection.

It is also too often forgotten that, as we shall see in *kolasis*, there is nothing vindictive. It is a question of "what a man sows that shall he also reap," *i.e.* as we leave this world, so must we take the place in the next, for which we have made ourselves fit. As Professor Gwatkin (Camb.) observes, "This is not a decree, it is mercy ; for Heaven would be hell for one who does not love God." It is worthy of note here that while God has specially prepared two homes for the saved—in Heaven for His heavenly people (John xiv, 2), and also in the earthly kingdom of Heavenly rule in Matt. xxv—*He who "will have all men to be saved" has absolutely prepared no place for the "lost."* Nothing remains, therefore, but that they share the fate of the great enemy of souls, whose lie they have preferred to God's truth. Of course, God alone knows who these are.

We must note, too, that in the "fire" and "worm" we are

dealing with symbols. The former, I would suggest, is the aspect of God against sin (Heb. xii, 29), whereas the "worm" is clearly the remorse of wilful neglect. The sentence, therefore, is neither vindictive nor arbitrary; but is the inevitable result of the life lived.

VI.

Two words are used for the punishments of men—each word once. They are: *Kolasis* (Matt. xxv, 46) and *timōria* (Heb. x, 29); but are very far different in their force and meaning. We must remember that the former is the fate of those who reject the Jewish messengers in the last days: while the latter expresses the terrible destiny of those who degrade and deny the Son of God Himself, who count His blood an evil thing, and who insult the Holy Spirit—a threefold sin that is without a parallel in the Word of God. The "punishment" for such is *timōria*, a truly awful word. Dr. Young gives the force of "restraint" to "punishment" in Matt. xxv, 46. Bagster calls it "pruning." Dr. Bullinger says *kolasis* is the relation of the punishment to the sinner, while *timōria* is the relation of the punishment to the punisher. The former contains the idea of correction, the latter of vengeance. With this the new Liddell and Scott Lexicon agrees.

The use of *timōria* three times in the New Testament also fully bears this out. It describes the Pharisees' vengeance on the Church, carried out by Saul in Acts xxii, 5, and xxvi, 11; while in Heb. x, 29, it is God's avenging the threefold unparalleled insult to the Godhead. Archbishop Trench gives instructive light on the classical use of the word *kolasis* by Philo, Josephus, Plato, Clement, Aristotle, and others. With them it has reference to the correction and bettering of him that endures it, and is much milder than *timōria*. The Archbishop, however, wisely adds: "It would be a very serious error, however, to attempt to transfer this distinction in its entirety to the words as employed in the New Testament. Matt. xxv, 46, is no corrective, and therefore temporary, discipline, and in Hellenistic Greek we find the severer sense, with no necessary underthought of the bettering through it of him who endured it."

Moreover, it is "eternal," which we have shown precludes change.

* *Synonyms of the New Testament*, p. 24. By R. C. Trench, Archbishop of Dublin.

While, however, we may not press the old classical limitation of the word, we must be struck with the totally different meaning and terrible force of *timōria*, which is reserved for an entirely different class of sinners, in Heb. x.

Though I fear I have done little in this monograph towards increasing the knowledge of my subject, I trust I have made somewhat clearer the radical distinction between Time and Eternity.

DISCUSSION.

Dr. J. A. FLEMING, F.R.S. (in the Chair), said : I am sure that I am expressing the feeling in the minds of all present in saying that we are very grateful to Dr. Schofield for the suggestive and extremely interesting address he has given to us. The subject is one which, in a rather different aspect, has been much before the minds of scientific men ever since Einstein published his searching investigations into the concepts of Time and Space. The starting point of these investigations was the important research of Michelson and Morley, in 1887, on the velocity of light. Those experiments proved that the speed of light is independent of the motion of the source of light and of the motion of the observer. In other words, it is an absolute constant of Nature. When this fact came to be translated into mathematical language by Einstein, it was found to involve revolutionary changes in our ordinary and previous ideas of Space and Time, and that the measurement of these depended upon the frame of reference.

Everyone can see at once that this is the case with a velocity. In a railway carriage, a traveller may be moving at forty miles an hour with respect to a fixed point on the rails, but he is at rest with regard to the carriage itself. The same is true of Space and Time. If a clock were flying away from us with a speed approaching that of light, it would appear to record time much more slowly than a similar clock at rest by the observer. Hence our measure of the duration of any event depends on the frame of reference.

Dr. Schofield has turned our thoughts at the end of his address to the very serious subject of future retribution. We know what libraries of books have been written on this subject, and on the meaning of certain Greek words in the New Testament. It has always

seemed to me, in thinking over these matters, that we should beware of projecting into the future state those ideas of Time and Space which have been formed in us by our present state of existence and by the powers and limitations of our own bodies. When death removes from us these physical bodies, our capacities and limitations may be greatly changed. Hence I think Dr. Schofield has made an instructive statement in saying that Eternity is not endless time, but something belonging to a different category.

Subdivision of Time into past, present, and future is due to our present mental and bodily limitations. It does not exist for the Divine Creator. The name by which He designated Himself to Moses, which was also applied by our Lord Jesus Christ to Himself, viz. "I AM," is only appropriate to one for whom Time is only an ever-continuing present.

There are many suggestive vistas of thought opened up by this paper, but as many others will desire to speak on the subject, I shall conclude by asking you to record a very hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Schofield for his impressive and thought-stimulating address.

Mr. PERCY O. RUOFF said : The central thought expressed in the paper, on p. 284, l. 17, that "Time apart from change is as unknown as is any change in eternity," is certainly involved in difficulty. The human mind has no faculty to understand an eternity of any sort which does not involve the idea of successive events. Timeless stagnation is unthinkable ; at least, it does not represent the Bible view. The concluding chapters of the Book of Revelation evidently refer to eternity, and therein reference is made to God's servants *servings Him*. There is every suggestion in this of the activities of personalities, and consequently development stage by stage. The difficulties involved in Dr. Schofield's discussion of Eternity are apparent from the fact that he uses the term Eternity in more than one sense. On p. 282 he sets out three contrasts between Time and Eternity, evidently making the latter word refer to the future ; but on p. 284 he says : "We should also remember that we are now (and always) in Eternity." Also there seems some confusion of thought in the presentation in the paper of the Eternal God and the Eternity which He inhabits. When Christ said, "I give unto my sheep eternal *life*," it is difficult to conceive that He meant anything other than infinite duration,

which had features corresponding in kind, though not in degree, with what man now understands by the term "life." No doubt the lecturer is right in referring to eternal life as qualitative; but is this the whole truth? There is an interesting quotation from Olympiodorus, on the subject of Eternity, in the *New Oxford Dictionary*, as follows:—"The eternal is a total now exempt from the past and future calculations of time, and totally subsisting in a present abiding now; but the perpetual subsists indeed always, but is beheld in the three parts of time—past, present, and future."

Mr. W. E. LESLIE said: The paper raises problems philosophical and exegetical. The difficulties inherent in the concept of time—or, to speak more accurately, the time co-ordinate of the space-time continuum—have caused much perplexity, at least since Zeno shot his paradoxical arrow into the air. The view, however, that the time co-ordinate is not ultimately real is also attended with numerous difficulties. For example, change is necessary to consciousness, and succession to any theory of ends; or, perhaps, to any "values" whether moral, intellectual, or æsthetic. Attempts are being made to combine the two views, which would, perhaps, accord with the twofoldness of reality which appears to be involved in the Incarnation.

Exegetically, I would urge that the Bible is not a scientific textbook. Were its terms metaphysical definitions they would be incomprehensible to the unlearned, and if expressed in the thought-coinage of one age, would become unintelligible in a later age; whereas the Bible is for all men and all times. I much admire the author's brilliant literary gifts, but when he ventures upon the technicalities of philosophy, his language becomes too vague and inconsistent to be discussed in detail.

In conclusion, I would congratulate the author upon the measure in which he has succeeded in striking a blow at the widespread (but superficial) error that Eternity is endless duration.

Mr. THEODORE ROBERTS expressed himself as in substantial agreement with Dr. Schofield, save that he thought the judgment described in Matt. xxv had a much wider bearing than Dr. Schofield's reference to "the Jewish messengers in the last days" (p. 290) implied. He pointed out the distinction in Ps. xlix between what is stated of the

redemption of the soul being costly and being left alone (R.V.) for ever (representing *olam*) in *v.* 8, and the man living for ever (or alway, R.V., representing a different word in the Hebrew text) as a parallel to not seeing corruption (or death) in *v.* 9. The Revisers had changed the rendering "for ever" into "alway" in *v.* 9, in order to make clear the distinction between what had reference to the eternal existence of the soul (*v.* 8) and what only contemplated the duration of this present life (*v.* 9).

He called attention to the statement in Heb. ix, 14, that our Lord offered "Himself by (His) eternal Spirit without blemish unto God," the absence of the article before "eternal Spirit" showing, according to Bishop Westcott and Dr. Moffatt, that our Lord's own timeless Spirit, or personality, was indicated. It was this that gave a value to His Sacrifice which was eternal and therefore beyond the reach of time.

He appreciated Dr. Schofield's paper, because it cleared away certain crude ideas of eternal punishment which had burdened many and showed that the final state, both of bliss and of misery, was not a question of time at all.

Lieut.-Col. HOPE BIDDULPH remarked that the eternal life of a believer did not rest on the meaning of words translated in our version as "eternal" or "everlasting," but on the word of Christ, who said to His disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Rev. A. H. FINN said: Having only seen the paper after entering the room, I do not feel able to discuss the main subject, but there are one or two details calling for comment. On p. 282, "Now we see through a glass darkly" (1 Cor. xiii, 12) is quoted as enabling us "to see how much we can perceive through our dim glass." Am I wrong in thinking that the word used means "a mirror," and not a glass *through* which we can see? On p. 282, and again on p. 283, we are told that in eternity "love abides alone." Am I wrong in thinking that St. Paul asserts that "now *abideth* faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love," in which there is no word of love abiding alone? On p. 286 there is some comment on the word *olam*. Though the word may be derived from *alam*, "to hide, or conceal," yet it is not safe to determine the meaning of a word from its ultimate derivation; we have to ascertain what meaning it

has acquired in actual usage. Critics, for instance, have insisted that because *torah* is derived from *horah*, "to point out, or direct," therefore it only means "direction." Yet there can be no doubt that it has acquired the meaning Law, and nothing else.

Mr. W. HOSTE said: Though the paper is interesting, as one would expect as issuing from its author, it seems to cast more light on side-issues than on the main question.

Ought we not to distinguish carefully such phrases as "a suitable *time*," "keeping *time*," the "*times*," from Time in general? The basic idea of the lecturer that Time is necessarily connected with "change," and that Eternity is not so, hardly seems well founded. He appeals to the derivation of *time* and *tide* as being the same, but this is only through the A.S. verb *tihan*, "to say, show," but I do not think the sense of *change* is inherent in the Greek *chronos* or *kairos*, in the Latin *tempus*, or in the Hebrew *yôm* or *êth*, or for that matter in the English word.

The idea of an Eternity of no change is not attractive, and seems to run counter to Scripture, e.g. John xvii, 3: "This is *life* eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent," which seems to predicate never-ceasing development and progress in Divine knowledge. How the fate of the impenitent is ameliorated by being "changeless," instead of endless, is not clear.

Should not "time" on p. 284, and indeed in several places, be "sense of time"? When we sleep we are simply unconscious of our surroundings, of space as of time, but space is not annihilated, and if we oversleep ourselves, we may be in blissful ignorance of the passing of time, but it does pass. In fact, when we are conscious, it is "change" which tends to annihilate time, and "no change" to prolong it. "Swallowed up by eternity" (p. 285): is this a quotation? and, if so, would the lecturer let us have the authority?

On p. 285 we read, "Duration forms no part of Eternity." This sounds a hazardous statement. Is not the Hebrew *olam* constantly connected, as the Greek *aiônios*, with Eternity. Of the former, Dr. Handley Moule used to tell his students at Ridley Hall that "the root idea of *olam* is mystery connected with duration." This agrees with Gesenius—"unsearchable duration." To quote

Moule again : " In every passage in the Hebrew, except two, and they quite exceptional, *olam* implies *duration of time*."

In such a phrase as " Let the King live for ever," his death is put out of sight : and when the word is applied to mountains, it is by hyperbole, which in no way affects the general sense. As for *aiōnios*, Aristotle says its root is *aei*, and, as Dr. Moule says, " such endlessness is implied by this word, whose tendency is infinite extension to as long *duration* as the subject spoken of will allow." The distinction on p. 286 between " eternal " and " everlasting " is not very satisfying, as the two words are etymologically the same, and also by long usage.

The tendency of the paper, in spite of its literary charm, seems to be to enshroud in mystery a subject which, however limited our knowledge of it may be, is revealed to us in the Scriptures in language that is simple and unaffected, and which illumines while not defining the theme.

Rev. J. J. B. COLES, in proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman, said that the Institute was fortunate in having for its new President one who was not only a specialist in Electrical Science and in matters relating to Wireless Telegraphy, but also in many branches of up-to-date scientific investigations. He trusted that during the period of his tenure of office there might be a nearer approach to a true synthesis of Philosophy, Science and Religion. We who, in common with all other students, adopt inductive methods of scientific inquiry and the comparative study of phenomena, and who *also* accept a Divine revelation from God as to all questions of origins and future destinies of men, are in a much stronger position than those who argue on evolutionary lines alone. The advanced Science of to-day has nothing to teach us as to origins or as to a future life, thus demonstrating that a true synthesis of knowledge can never be attained on evolutionary principles alone.

The transcendent question of Eternity, the subject of Dr. Schofield's most interesting and suggestive paper, is beyond the full comprehension of the creature's finite intelligence, whether of angels or of men. In the glorious Person of Christ—the True Reality—the relative and the absolute meet, and in and through Him alone is eternal life to be found. The truth as in Him

transcends all mere scientific knowledge, as Sir Isaac Newton and other believing leaders of thought have readily acknowledged.

In conclusion, Mr. Coles remarked : The Members of the Victoria Institute are, by God's grace, in a wonderful position of advantage. Under the encouraging leadership of our new President, Dr. J. A. Fleming, F.R.S., let us pursue our studies with all confidence and thankfulness.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

Miss C. TINDALL writes : Dr. Schofield's paper leads me to believe that he inclines to a less severe view of "everlasting punishment" than that which many theologians used to hold, but that he fears to weaken the deterrent force of our Lord's words. In Gehenna, was it not the fire which endured, and not the thing which was being consumed ? As fresh refuse was cast in, the worms and the flames would still be ready to consume it. "The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Dr. W. BELL DAWSON : We may better understand Time and Eternity by considering the conditions when God existed alone, before the creation of the material Universe. We thus realize that God is quite independent of time and space, and that He is unaffected by their existence or non-existence. Yet there is sequence in His thoughts and plans, because there is ground for the belief that He had the whole plan of creation in mind, from its beginning to its culmination, before He began the work.

Philosophers tell us that our conception of Time is primarily due to the consciousness of sequence in our thoughts. Hence we cannot divest ourselves of the idea of Time unless we could cease to think. Our only means of measuring Time is by motion. The day is measured from the rising of the sun until it sets ; the month is measured by the successive phases of the moon in its course around the heavens. We measure the hours and minutes by the motion of the hands of the clock. Although the fact that Time is passing may impress itself upon us because of sequence, yet we have no

means of knowing the length of Time, or duration, apart from movement.

It seems evident from all these considerations that there was no need for either Time or Space before material things came into existence. We may thus regard Time and Space as concomitants of creation. To us they are necessary accompaniments of the material elements in our nature. What Time will mean to those who have the spiritual bodies of the resurrection state, in the new heavens and the new earth, we cannot, perhaps very definitely grasp.

REV. JOHN TUCKWELL, M.R.A.S., writes: Our thanks are due to the beloved physician for his thought-provoking address. He has frankly admitted the existence of various opinions upon both its subjects, and ungrudgingly conceded to us the liberty of differing from those he has expressed. I must confess that although I can agree with many things he has said, I must differ from a few others.

(1.) First of all, I cannot help thinking that the idea of "Time" is an abstraction which the human mind has made from the observation of its own existence, and of the constitution and course of Nature. Time and duration must not be confused. We measure duration by moments, hours, days, etc.; but Time is independent of our measurements. It is "duration" which has change for its essence, not Time. One moment follows another like inches upon a tape-measure, but there is no change in the moments, and no change in "Time." The "change" and changes are in ourselves and in the universe around us. It would thus be more correct to say that Death ends our present duration of life, and is an exit from the material or temporal universe into the eternal, than to say that it is an exit from the unmeasurable abstraction we call Time.

(2.) This will be still more evident when we consider Eternity. The Scriptures give us more light on the subject than Dr. Schofield has recognized. Eternity is that realm of existence upon which we enter at death. We then quit the Time-state, the material, the physical, and enter upon the Eternal. But it cannot be true that there is no duration and no change there. Of the Eternal God alone can it be said that He knows no change, and has no experience of

duration. It is rather strange that the Lecturer has never once used the word "succession," for no finite being can possibly have the whole of the thoughts of his entire existence present at once, or he would not be finite. There must be succession. We may reasonably ask: Did Moses and Elijah know no succession of thought, and no change, when they came to the Mount of Transfiguration and talked with our Lord about His coming *exodus*? Was there no change in Heaven when the Devil and his angels fell? Did the angel know no change when he was caused to "fly swiftly" to Daniel? Will the redeemed know no change when they are re-clothed in their resurrection bodies, and come with our Lord in the clouds of heaven? Surely there is change, duration, and succession implied in all these events, and it may not be so much amiss therefore to speak of "time being swallowed up by eternity." We may thus, as the author admits, "remember that we are now and always in eternity" (p. 284).

(3.) Turning to the words used, I am not prepared to admit that the Latin is more expressive than the languages of Scripture. *Æternitas*, "eternity," and *æternus*, "eternal," "continual," "lasting," have nothing to commend them above the Hebrew and the Greek terms. The Hebrew, *olam*, it is true, is an elastic word, as Hebrew words often are; but it is evidently used in Prov. viii, 23, for eternity before the creation: "I was set up from *everlasting*." In Deut. xxxiii, 27, it comprehends all eternity: "Underneath are the everlasting arms"—*zerō' -ōth 'olam*, "the arms of eternity." Wonderful language! Nor do the Greek words appear less satisfactory. Retaining the idea of succession, as we must for all things finite, they too are fit to fill us with awe and wonder. We have *aiōn*, an "age," an indefinite period, as in Heb. i, 2, and xi, 3, the "ages" or "days" of Creation; and in Eph. ii, 1, *ton aiōna tou kosmou toutou*, "the age of this kosmos." Then we have "the age of the ages" and "the ages of the ages" (1 Tim. i, 17). The accumulation of thought here is staggering. The human mind cannot grasp "an age" of an indefinite period of time, and "an age" consisting of "ages" of indefinite periods and "ages" of indefinite periods consisting of ages of indefinite periods. It is more than a repeating decimal going on for ever, or a line produced *ad infinitum*; no mathematical formula can express it; it is an involution beyond our

powers of thought. We may well stand amazed at the grace that can bring us poor frail mortals out of this Time-state of temptation, sin, and conflict, and bring us into that Eternal State of everlasting spiritual stability and strength.

With regard to the righteous and the wicked in the future, I will add nothing, except to say that we can, perhaps, all agree that "eternal life" is the life of eternity, and "eternal punishment" the punishment of eternity, be it what it may.

AUTHOR'S REPLY.

Dr. SCHOFIELD, in reply, said: I am very glad that our distinguished President and Chairman has approved of an essential point in my paper—that Eternity does not connote "duration."

Mr. Percy O. Ruoff endeavours to show confusion of thought in my paper. On examination, however, it appears that what he really complains of first is the limitation of the human mind. His next reference to the Book of Revelation is very unfortunate; for the "serving" is clearly in "time," *i.e.* during the thousand years. It is a common error to suppose, as Rev. John Tuckwell actually says on p. 298, that when we "enter" (a wrong word, for we are in it now) Eternity we "then quit the Time-state" (*i.e.* for ever); for we shall find ourselves again continually under time limitations, at any rate as long as the world endures. Surely our Lord did not leave Eternity when He entered the conditions of time. It seems very difficult for any of my critics to conceive that the two may go on together. I have not pointed this out in my paper, because I thought it needless to such an audience. To me, time appears to be those portions of Eternity that are marked by "changes."

Mr. Ruoff sees further confusion in my reference to the "nows" and "thens" in 1 Cor. xiii, where I say "then" refers to Eternity in the future, although in p. 284 I say we are now in it. It is clear Mr. Ruoff requires me to point out to him, that although always in Eternity, *now* we are also in "Time": *then* we shall not be. He next observes that "when Christ said, 'I give unto my sheep eternal life,' it is difficult (for Mr. Ruoff) to conceive anything but infinite duration." Surely this expresses Mr. Ruoff's limitations rather than my confusion.

The Rev. A. H. Finn points out that St. Paul never says that love abides alone: but when faith is changed to sight, and our hope is fulfilled, it surely does, and the remark is permissible.

The Hon. Secretary has many criticisms. He takes exception (p. 295) to "change" being a root idea of "time" though this is supported in the last edition (just out) of the *Ency. Brit.* in its article on the subject. His gloss on John xvii, 3, seems to contradict 1 Cor. xiii, 12, where the *epignōsis* of knowledge appears to preclude all development.

A serious mistake is made by the Hon. Secretary in the next paragraph, when he confuses the "*fate of the impenitent*" with my remarks on our *false ideas* concerning it. The two are very different. He next speaks of "sleep," on p. 284, where it is not named: a "reverie," or "brown study" being what is referred to. In sleep, sense of space is lost, but in a reverie the space of the room is there; all that is lost is the sense of time. Dr. H. Moule no doubt rightly pointed out the connection of *olam* with duration; and this is because, as I have said, it is constantly connected with time in the Bible.

I regret I do not agree with Miss C. Tindall's remarks.

The Rev. John Tuckwell, M.R.A.S., definitely states the error I alluded to when replying to Mr. Percy O. Ruoff. On p. 298 he says it "is an exit from the temporal universe into '*the eternal.*'" We confess we had not heard before of the latter. He says, "We then quit (for ever) the Time-state," and adds, "it cannot be true there is no duration" (in the Eternal), but does not say "why?"

Why, at the end of his reply, he adds to "the punishment of eternity" the words "be it what it may," is difficult to understand, when the Word of God tells us what it is.