grasses, the streams of water which flow
pure as the breezes of heaven, free to all;
here are the animals, I place them un-
der your control; and here are the trees
bearing fruit, and the grain and vegeta-
tables containing seed in themselves; go
forth now and occupy the land, cultivate,
embrace, embellish, ornament and grat-
ify your eye, your taste, and satisfy your
wants, eat, drink, and be merry, plow
the ground, cast in the seed, and I will
send you the rains to water the earth,
and make it fruitful to reward your toil;
and this covenant I make with you, that
so long as you see my bow in the heav-
ens, seed time and harvest shall never
fail you. "But," says the sloth, "I will not
do it, I wish to go and lay me down under
the shade of the trees in the hope that
some kind soul will bring me a little wa-
ter to quench my thirst, and then bring
me some fruit, and put it into my mouth,
and then wag my jaws, or I lay me down
and die." Our Father says: "Then die like
a fool; the penalty is your own, and the
eternal mandate of heaven shall not be
revoked to indulge your idleness." And
the same may be said of all those who
disbelieve in Christ, and who reject the
words of life when they are proclaimed
in their ears without money and with-
out price, and the ordinances of heaven
made free to all. Those who disbelieve,
they perish, and what is the condemna-
tion they bring upon themselves? The
condemnation of the sloth. He perishes
in his idleness, they in their ignorance
and their utter disregard of the means
of grace, losing all the precious things
that others enjoy who put forth their
hands and partake of the tree of life.
And when they die and go hence, they
will wake up in the spirit world, finding
themselves as dark as they were in the
natural world. He who is filthy, then
will be filthy still, and he who refused
to be enlightened, will be found to be in
darkness still, yea, in outer darkness,
because he despised the light and fought
against it, because his deeds were evil;
he finds association with kindred spirits
who like himself refused to obey, refused
to put forth their hands and partake, and
rejected the proffered gifts of heaven.
Their punishment is that of ceaseless re-
morse, fully conscious of blessings cast
off and rejected, which blessings others
are permitted to enjoy, but which they
are not, because of their sins and trans-
gressions, and their own neglect of the
means of grace. Their torment is the
torment of the damned, and it is like
the smoke that ascends up forever and
ever; among them is found weeping and
wailing and gnashing of teeth, to use
the language of the Scripture. But for
what? For blessings lost, for oppor-
tunities gone, for privileges ignored, for
the means of grace, for glory and ex-
alation once within their reach, which
they, in their pride, would not receive,
for being deprived of the presence of God
and the Lamb, and the holy angels and
the sanctified ones, and of the keys of
immortality and eternal life and ever-
lasting increase vouchsafed to the obe-
dient, while they are doomed to perpet-
ual darkness, which they have chosen
in lieu of the blessings of the faithful,
and in which condition they will live to
prey upon each other and to work out
the same evil passions which they de-
lighted to indulge in while in the flesh;
the devil, who deluded them, will rejoice
over their downfall, and will reign over
them until, peradventure, the time shall
come when the long-suffering and mercy