42 THE APOCALYPSE (on. ii. 11  
  
lake of fire 2?” Certainly not! To be liable to a thing,  
and to experience it, are very different.  
But he would steady His people against the fear of  
man by a more tremendous fear—even that of God.  
When the last trial comes, and the persecutor says to  
the believer, ‘“‘ Abjure your faith, or die ! ”’ there is great  
glory to God and profit to His churches, when the con-  
fessor accepts death, rather than abandon the faith, But  
what if he succumb before the enemy? Great is the  
shame and mischief to God’s cause, to himself, and  
others.  
Can a believer, under such trying circumstances, fall ?  
Alas! English ecclesiastical history has furnished sad  
instances of it.  
“Promise to read this paper in public, without  
omitting or adding a single word ”’ (said Barnes’ judges  
to him). It was then read to him. “I would die  
first,” was his reply. “ Will you abjure, or be burnt  
alive ?”’ said his judges: “take your choice.” The  
alternative was dreadful. Poor Barnes, a prey to the  
deepest agony, shrank at the thoughts of the stake:  
then suddenly his courage revived, and he exclaimed,  
““T had rather be burnt than abjure.”’ Gardiner and  
Fox did all they could to persuade him. ‘“‘ They en-  
treated him; they put forward the most plausible  
motives: from time to time they uttered the terrible  
words, burnt alive ! His blood froze in his veins: he  
knew not what he said or did . . . they placed a paper  
before him—they put a pen in his hand—his head was  
bewildered, he signed his name with a deep sigh. This  
unhappy man was destined, at a later period, to be a  
faithful martyr of Jesus Christ; but he had not yet  
learned to ‘ resist even unto blood.’ Barnes had fallen.”  
D Aubigné, vol. v. p. 250.  
While then there are joyful promises, positive and  
negative, to him who, at the cost of life, maintains the