

PREMILLENNIALISM A DELUSION.

=

BY A

MEMBER OF THE PRESBYTERY OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ἐάν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ· Ἰδοὺ, ὦδε ὁ Χριστὸς, ἢ ὦδε· μὴ πιστεύσητι.

—MATT. xxiv. 23.

Τοῦτο γινώσκοντες, ὅτι πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς, ἰδίᾳς ἐπιλύσειως οὐ γίνεται.

—2 PET. i. 20.

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TO THE
PRESBYTERY OF NORTHUMBERLAND,
This Essay,
WHICH WAS PRESCRIBED AS A PRESBYTERIAL EXERCISE
TO ONE OF THEIR YOUNGER MEMBERS,
IS DEDICATED,
WITH
AFFECTION AND RESPECT.

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ESSAY ON THE PREMILLENNIAL ADVENT.

PART I.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENT.

It can be made very clear, from the Word of God, that the Antichristian system at present in the world is Popery, and that it is to be destroyed. Does that Word contain hints that a further development of error shall take place after the Papacy has been cast down, suggesting at the same time what its nature shall be? If so, can we form any proper notion of the system, so as to reason from its nature to the mode of its destruction, and by a comparison of it with Popery, see cause to conclude that its downfall shall be accomplished in an entirely different way? And, in connection with the Word, are there any facts or principles upon which a generalization may be formed to arrive at the same result, or at least to throw light and explanation upon the statements which are to be found in that Book of God? And, in pursuing such an investigation, if it be found that a sound generalization of many facts and principles lead to the opinion that there shall be such a system, and if it be found that its nature is such as that its annihilation can only be accomplished by the Second Advent—according to the constant method of the divine

government—shall we not have the aid of philosophy, so far as it goes, to counteract (1.) the theory of the Premillennial Advent; and (2.) the idea that a “Cæsar-ianism,” or concentrated civil Papacy, shall arise while Romanism is still in existence? We propose to pursue this investigation for a little, specially to catch the light it may shed on the subject of this essay.

“He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit,” is a formula that more than aught else declares the nature of the Christian life and the beauty of the Christian religion. The result of it is a oneness of will, and entire self-dedication to the Lord, which appear in all relations, places, and circumstances. This is the ideal of the Christian life; so much so, as that he is no true Christian who does not desire it, and aim after it as the great business of his life.

To produce similar phenomena, with the Lord Jesus Christ excluded and superseded, is the masterpiece of satanic ingenuity and crime. The wicked one has been labouring for the last eighteen centuries to bring the Christian world into this entire subjection of mind, will, and conduct to a creature of his own. He has attempted, and that not ill, to counterpart the mechanism of God’s highest scheme of love to man, and to produce thereby vice, and misery, and wo,—a misery which does not cease with an abode in this world.

There are two ways in which this great work of Satan might be elaborated. We could suppose him contriving that a visible spiritual head shall obtain such mastery over the Christian world, as to bend every man, in will and action, into a conformity with an arbitrary dictation; and this under a system which shall be enforced by spiritual and temporal penalties. Or, we

might suppose a visible political head raised up to do precisely the same thing in all civil matters, and by a terrible Erastianism to compel the same in that which is spiritual. There might be either a Papacy concentrated into universal Jesuitism, or a despotism concentrated into a universal "Cæsarianism." And, suppose the wicked one knew the end from the beginning, there is no reason to suppose but the two might have been embodied in one individual head. From the known principles of the Papacy, and from the hypothetical principles of the Cæsarianism, there is nothing abstractly to prevent the coalition of the two, and their unity in one head, who might be called "the vicar of Christ," or the "vicegerent of Christ," or the opponent of Christ, according to circumstances.

We know that the devil will counterfeit every part of the ideal of the Christian religion. Now, this religion means no less than what has already been stated. Surely it means that the one will of Christ ought to actuate every man baptized into his name, and will do so in every one baptized into him in a spiritual manner. If we view him as the Bishop of souls and the Head of the Christian church, this will be the case in all things spiritual; and if we regard him as the Mediatorial King—as the actual head of a Christian polity,—that is, if we view the Christian world as a theocracy, with the Lord, either visibly or "by name," at the head of it, this will be the case in all matters temporal likewise. So that, to use the language of Jesuitical and of Cæsarian writers, "Men being unable to use their own liberty aright, or to have a will of their own, must submit reason, will, and conscience to the supremacy and dictation of another;" that other, in this case, being

neither the Pope nor Cæsar, but the Lord Jesus Christ. When men are taught of God to know that they cannot order themselves aright, and that their activity and volition both are unto evil, unless the will be regulated by Christ, then do they place themselves under him as a privilege as well as a duty. And suppose a nation or the world did so, we should have a theocracy, national or universal. And without a doubt, such shall yet be the case. Men shall yet yield up the will and conscience to the Lord. They shall yet know how incapable they are of self-control or independence. For the Eternal Father hath determined that the experiment of the Mediatorial Headship, in the individual instance, shall be an experience in the world.

There is in the spirits of men an instinctive craving after such an order of things, all dark and indistinct as may be the perception of the object craved after; and, when strong counteractives are not in force, this *apocadokia* of humanity takes body in some way, good or evil. It is upon this known principle of the humanity,—a principle exhibited at present in every possible way and by all kinds of writers,—exhibited in the unconscious breathings of heathendom, in the unconscious groanings of the lower creation, as well as in the almost equally unconscious longings of “the popular literature,”—that Satan works to counterfeit the Christ of God, and the theocratic age which men seek and the Most High has promised. He seeks, by a great Antichristian system, to delude and mislead men, and to satisfy their unsettled longings, and desires, and wants, in such a way as shall still keep them under his own power, and ruin them for ever.

It is evident a universal Papacy would serve his pur-

pose, were that merely to make men miserable in the life to come, leaving them with a modicum (not very great sometimes) of worldly pleasure, while they have existence here. And a universal despotism, without the spiritual element, would do equally well if he desired to make them miserable for the present life (such an one as Exod. vi. 9), and probably in that to come. But suppose he could get them both embodied in one, that he could get a "Cæsarism" set up, then the purest misery would obtain, without intermission, both in this world and the next. In proportion to the extent to which they have at any time been combined, has been the misery of those who were exposed to its tyranny. And of course the desire which animates the wicked one's mind to accomplish the ruin and wretchedness of humanity, will direct all his energies to the elaboration of a system in which the two shall be incorporated into one. He aims at the setting up of a "Cæsarism."

There are many principles, blessed be God, with which he has to contend. When undertaking from the beginning to counterfeit the supremacy of the Mediator, he did not understand the obstacles which stood in the way. Unable to comprehend the conflicting sentiments which are found in the human breast, unable precisely to see the proper effect of God's religion in moulding the characters of men, and unable to perceive how civil and religious interests and their principles would act together,—he constructed a system which will defeat his own ends so long as its principles are in operation. For rushing headlong, and yet with singular sagacity, he seized what was evidently the strongest forces acting in and upon men, and moulded them into the system of the Papacy. He marked with much precision, at the

time he tried to overturn the Christian faith by bonds, and imprisonments, and burnings, and death, that the principles of civil liberty and political prosperity are feeble when called to contend with real faith and genuine Christian life. Previous to Constantine, when the civil and religious elements were in opposition, and when good men clung to the spiritual and let the temporal go, he devised his tactics and sketched his system. These he steadily pursued with some modification—a modification from the purely spiritual, so as to take some account of the civil element when the empire became professedly a Christian one,—until, in the gigantic Papacy, he had formed an Antichrist which, from its principles of infallibility and universality, can admit of no equal, religious or civil. We believe he cannot himself wield the system he has contrived, so as to accomplish the design his heart is set upon. Not but that it will serve his purpose well enough for ruining the souls of men. But he has more than that at heart. His desire is to counterfeit the theocracy, and set up a universal despotism over mind, and body, and conscience. He longs for a civil and spiritual Jesuitism in one head—even a Cæsarianism.

A person with a mind powerful enough to comprehend the force of principles of every kind, and to know the characteristics of nations and the idiosyncrasies of men, could tell how given principles, at a given time, in given circumstances, would operate on a given nation or individual, so as to predict, with tolerable accuracy, the time when, and manner how, certain results would arise. And if he had access to the springs of action, he could fix his mind on a specific result and obtain it. But to do so, he must be ready to meet accidental

powers which may arise,—yea, at the outset, he should know that these will appear, and the time and way in which they shall present themselves. To an extent greater than most men think of, the prince of darkness has such a mind as the first part of this proposition implies. But he is wholly ignorant of the nature and power of the many forces God can present to thwart his designs. Without our referring at all to those which flow from “the new covenant,” and its introduction into the world in the Spirit of all grace, and attending only to those which *naturally* present themselves, we are at liberty to say, that, in elaborating the Papacy, he took not such account as was necessary to his design of those principles of civil liberty in men who, though Christian in name, are not like the Christians of the times of Nero or of Mark Antony. Hence his grand scheme has been thwarted even in Popish countries. The “Gallican liberties,” and the “concordats” of continental law, show the impossibility of a Popish Cæsarism. We take very much for granted,—indeed, with those whom we specially address, it will not be controverted,—that the prince of this world can be satisfied with no less than the union of Popery and of despotism in that concentrated system of wickedness we have referred to, under the name “Cæsarism;” and the inquiry turns to this, whether it be possible to obtain such unity, beginning, as he has done, by constructing the Papacy. We believe not. Leaving out universality in its proper sense, and viewing only Christendom, it can only be done by the Papacy giving up its distinctive claims, or the civil powers all at once casting away their authority and merging themselves into the Pope of Rome. The former of these cannot take place. The

principles held by most Roman casuists, and promulgated by the Council of Trent, are of such a kind as for ever to prevent it. Nothing but annihilation can sweep away the embodiment of such principles. It is a system which claims to be all that the *ideal* of Satan demands; and it will go down with the claim on its lips. It ceases to be by a self-destruction, when it lays aside this claim. It must nail it to the mast. It shall sink into the abyss with it.

There is nothing to prevent the civil powers from merging into, or rather being absorbed in, the papal, save the superior power of infidelity over conscience, and the tenacity with which all men cling to power. (We have already said that the element of true religion is at present left out of view.) And to accomplish this absorption is now the aim of the wicked one, and of his myrmidons the Jesuits, who, indeed, make it their sole pursuit, their very order being called into existence for this purpose. But it cannot be. To obtain this result, there would require to be but one universal emperor, who himself should be elected Pope, or at least would hand over his power and dominion, by bequest or demission, to the supreme pontiff. And the power of conscience would require to be greatly stronger than it is, ere it could cope with infidelity; the latter being a much more powerful mechanical agent than the former. There cannot be a pure Cæsarianism save as it springs out of the ashes of Popery. There is nothing, indeed, in the principles of infidelity, nor in the *national* perception of civil liberty, to prevent the temporal authority from being subservient to the Roman pontiff. And we have the intimation in God's Word (Rev. xvii. 12-14), that this shall be the case for a little time, but in such

a way as admits not of a previous universal empire. The ten kings are to give their power and strength to the beast, and soon after are to hate her who sitteth on the beast and make her desolate.

So long as there are ten kings, there cannot be a Cæsarianism. There may be the manifestation of it on a small scale, as is so lamentably the case in Romagna. The civil and the spiritual may be united in a crushing tyranny in one or more parts of the world, or for a short period more extensively ; but this is not the system referred to. Even though this were the case in most of the world's kingdoms, it would not be the system we speak of: for, like the Papacy itself, its claim is to universality. And according to the march or cycle of error,* it will be universal. While there is the divisible in earthly monarchies, it cannot be set up ; but the Papacy shall be destroyed by "the ten kings:" wherefore it will be so before the Cæsarianism is set up, but not before it is thought of, and the theory mooted. For we see not any reason which will lead those who have given their power and strength to the beast, to hate and make desolate the Papacy, save this—that a mighty effort shall be made in the interval to set up this "the Antichrist" at Rome; even that Antichrist spoken of in Scripture, which, rolling into being down through the Papacy, will be the diabolic counterpart of the theocracy.

In the present order of things, the Papacy and the Cæsarianism are, as systems, antagonist. They are not necessarily so, but incidentally, from the peculiar tactics the wicked one has pursued. That they are not necessarily in a state of antagonism is clear from the coincidence of their proper principles, and their unity if

* See the last part of this essay.

they had only been constructed together ; and also from the fact that nothing else than the combination of the two can be the counterpart of the Redeemer's position in the holy catholic church. Satan will ultimately attain it, for the ultimate phase of error can only be developed when this gigantic masterpiece of villany is perfected. And, therefore, taking matters as we find them, we believe the conclusion is plain, that the one system must be destroyed ere the other have existence. That it will come into being—that the terrible system to which we have referred shall yet be perfected in the earth, we need not stop to prove. The fact that God allows Satan to do his utmost, and then sweeps his work away, to glorify his own gracious name ; the fact that heathenism has often presented, to some extent, Satan's ideal, only wanting the peculiar elements which an apostasy from Christianity shall present ; the fact that sin shall be better known by unbelief than by nature—by the rejection of revelation, than of the light of nature ; the fact that the Christian world has rushed as eagerly and determinedly from God as the heathen ; the fact that men seek naturally to rest in such a state of things ; the fact that the divine and glorious embodiment of it, as a satisfying of these instinctive cravings of the spirits of men, *may* have a counterfeit ;—these, and many more facts which might be named, are sufficient to prove it, especially when we analyze the nature of that defection of the world from Christ, and the confederacy of Gog and Magog against the Lord God of Hosts and his Christ, of which the Bible speaks, the elements of which seem to agree with what we speak of.

Here then are two great systems. Both are wonderful exhibitions of satanic intellect and energy. Both

arise from the proneness of men to seek rest in the external and the material. Both shall be destroyed by the Lord ; that destruction resulting in the calling back of men to the spiritual and the eternal. We think it could be demonstrated that both cannot exist together, as matters now are ; we would not have much difficulty in proving this. And we find the Papacy now existing. The other must then be still future—a future which does not become present till the Romish Antichrist is swept away.

Again, that which holy Scripture holds out to the church of Christ as its millennium is something distinct from its eternal glory. And nothing can be more plain from the Word, than that this millennium shall commence when the Papacy is “made desolate and burnt with fire ;” and the eternal glory, when “fire comes down from God out of heaven to consume” the impious Cæsarianism. Wherefore, the question of the time of the second advent of the Lord can be answered by discovering how these two great systems of delusion and guilt shall be destroyed ; and the nature of that state of things which shall obtain when either is swept away, may be determined by remembering that it shall be suited to the system put down, and by understanding what the nature of that system is. The millennium shall answer to Popery ; the heavenly glory shall be in contrast to the Cæsarianism.

Another principle requires to be stated before we can look directly at these things, and conclude on the claims of premillennialism. The religion of Jesus Christ progresses to a divine theocracy. In every true Christian this theocratic kingdom is set up. And the world is yet to be full of true Christians, so as that the interrelations of the universal community shall be con-

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ducted on theocratic rules. The Christian ideal shall obtain universally. The world shall be a Christendom, and its religion very much a real one. There are two ways in which we might imagine its form to be presented,—one, by having its King visible in the midst of it; the other, that he being at a distance, or at least “not seen,” his NAME shall be the object of homage. The Jewish people had a theocracy, with many tokens of Jehovah’s presence; but he himself was among them by name,—he “put his name there;” whence the origin of that common appellation of the Lord God which that people use, we mean יהוה, “the name,” applied by them to intimate the Shem-hamphorash, but also in the way we mention. Now, if the world’s theocracy have the Lord visibly in the earth, which will be discovered by the course of investigation we are pursuing, the claims of our premillennial friends are good; but if his “name” be the object visible, then they are unsolid. To have the Lord visibly in the midst of the earth, is accomplished of course by a visible descent; so that the quomodo or way in which the millennium shall be brought about, would on this hypothesis be the Second Advent. To have the Lord’s name in the midst of the earth, every one sees, admits of a quomodo altogether different, even the extension of the divine Word in which that name is revealed. When the apostle directs attention to the headship of Christ Jesus, and its recognition by all men, it is to something of this kind he refers in the words, “Every knee shall bow at his name.” The world has not yet seen such a beauty or authority in the name of Jesus as to bow the knee to it. The only way it could do so is by an intelligent acquaintance with that exhibition of it which we have in the inspired volume. If the Bible

were world-wide, and the belief and love of it supreme, we should soon see "every knee bow at the name of Jesus," and hear "every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

We consent to the creed of all true Protestants, that the Pope is Antichrist. Yet we do not suppose Popery is the *summum* of apostasy, any more than the many Antichrists in the days of John the Divine were the perfection of that blasphemy, where one "sits in the temple of God showing himself that he is God." We have already seen, that there is a possibility of a system still more diabolic and atrocious than the Papacy itself. We have no desire, indeed, to conceal the atrocities of Popery; we will not dispute but that it has at different periods wellnigh exhausted the cunning of hell and reached the satanic ideal. Still there are many reasons for believing that the perfected Antichrist—the ultimate cycle of Antichristian error, delusion, and blasphemy,—will appear in a Cæsarianism. It can be all that Ultramontaniam has ever been, and a good deal more; and our stand is taken on the principle of the moral government of the redeeming God, that the possible, the *summum* of sin—will be permitted, to evidence the true nature of grace and of glory: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

Now, the precise meaning and aim of the system of Popery is not discovered in a *professed* war against the Lord Jesus Christ and his saints. Of course, we can show that practically it is so. But what is its professed, and actual, and acknowledged design? A war against the Bible and the spiritual life and privileges of men. We cannot be contradicted in saying that this apostate system openly declares it will not tolerate the Bible,

but will destroy it wherever it can. We cannot be contradicted in saying that Popery is a renouncing of God's grace, and a systematized sanctifying of all that is vile and unspiritual in fallen, corrupt human nature. **THIS IS POPERY.**

On the other hand, if we understand that extraordinary system which is already becoming a theory by some writers in France, and which they have called Cæsarianism, its very nature is such as to lead to a professed war with the Lord and his saints, in addition to all the essential elements of the Papacy. It is an exterminating warfare, which no system save a mighty Erastianism can wage, and which can arise at no time save as the reaction of a universal spiritualism—a spiritualism, we mean, in the Bible sense. When the Roman Antichrist fights against the saints of the Most High, it first denounces them as not being saints at all, and then, under the standard of the cross, and as the professed servants of Christ in the matter, it puts them to death. Under the sign of the cross, it makes a crusade against the children of God and his Christ, placing them in the same category with the children of Mahomet. But when the Cæsarianism shall tread the same path and “go forth to compass the camp of the saints,” it will first declare them to be the people of Christ, and then, in public and declared hatred to him, go forward under the banner of hell, to sweep away the spiritual out of the world. The fire which shall set this world on a blaze will come down from God out of heaven, to consume this army of Gog and Magog, at the time the dead are raised, the living changed, and He descends who “shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom.” He knows little of the heart of man,

the nature of sin, the malignity and intellect of the devil, and the operation of the terrible principles which are on the field of the world in men and things, who will call this picture of the apostasy of the end a fancy. And he has read history and his Bible with little discrimination who does not see that a much higher colouring could be given to it with the data which a comprehensive philosophy of humanity, as exhibited under the two covenants, supplies. There is a possibility of reasoning upon the materials we are in possession of, almost as accurately of the future as of the past.

So far then as we are able to comprehend matters, we conceive that the destruction of the Papacy synchronizes with the commencement of that blessed epoch when "the stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall fill the whole earth;" and that the state of things consequent thereon shall be a Millennium—"the Millennium"—the nature of which will correspond with the nature of Popish delusion and apostasy, standing out as the great contrast to it. And we conceive the destruction of Cæsarism is contemporaneous with the visible descent of the Judge of all, the renewal of the earth in the baptism of fire, and the everlasting perdition of the wicked; and that the state of things thenceforth, the new heavens and the new earth, shall exhibit God's highest work of grace, following the development of Satan's masterpiece of villany and guilt in the greatest apostasy of deceived and unbelieving men.

More light shall be cast on these things in the course of the essay, but meanwhile we are in a position to indicate our theory and carry it into the question of the Second Advent. If we take every system now in the world, we shall find that, with the exception of God's

true church, the essential and vital element of all is enmity to and rejection of the written Word of God. This enmity is carrying men onwards to two points—to Popery and Pantheism. There is a priestly war against the Bible, and there is a rationalistic war against it. Nor are these confined to their respective camps. One's soul almost dies within him when contemplating the amount of both in the Protestant churches of more countries than continental ones, forming a volcanic gathering which shall ere long upheave every denomination, and split it into a thousand fragments,—fragments which shall again arrange themselves into the two classes of believing and unbelieving, of those who serve God and those who serve him not. In a certain view of them, rationalism and priestism are repugnant and in a state of antagonism; but in their vital element they are one. In their internal relations to each other, they are repellent forces; but in their external energy and action appears a thorough unity against the revelation of God. And that system which is already Pantheistic in its practice and morality—which has already overturned the foundations of right and wrong, will not be slow to accept with open arms the Pantheistic army. Ere long we expect to find two armies in possession of the field of Christendom, instead of the thousand and one sects with which it is inundated. The one army shall be God's true church, a small band, a "little flock," but steadfast, and hopeful, and orderly in its phalanxes; the other shall be the Papal Antichrist, with a Pantheistic creed engrafted on the canons of its Tridentine Council. A collision of not very long duration, and not of doubtful result, will take place. A persecution, of probably three years and a half, will aim at

crushing the church. And then the Antichristian power is broken, in the way described in the Apocalypse, and the Millennium commences—one which, commencing in Christendom (probably in Scotland, Isa. xiv. 13), shall spread like a flood of glory over the whole world—the flood of light pouring forth from every centre of spirituality, in India, in China, in Britain, in the Antipodes. And Satan being bound, we shall not then be long in subduing the wide world by the two-edged sword of the Spirit. Will the Second Advent take place before and in order to this, or not till the time of the end, when Satan, having been loosed from his prison, where his mind was intent on the elaboration of a method of counteracting millennial grace and revenging himself upon the church, shall accomplish the universal apostasy which at the end is to be for ever swept away? To guide our answer, let it be remembered that the creed of the premillennial Antichrist is to a great extent Pantheistic, the proper counteractive of which is the entire subjection of man's reason and conscience to the written Word of God; and that the creed of the postmillennial Antichrist is infidelity, pure and professed (2 Peter iii. comp. Matt. xxiv. 37–39), that its aim is the destruction of all that is spiritual, either really or in appearance, so as that heaven, and God, and Christ, and salvation, and eternity may no more be named in the earth, and that its claim is to be itself recognised as God, and Lord, and Christ for ever: to which Cæsarianism there can be no counteractive but the visible descent of the Lord the Judge.

If the characteristics of these two great systems have been accurately stated; if error be developed by cycles, the second embracing the first, the third the first two,

and the last all that go before (as is shown in the last part of this essay); and if Cæsarianism, or whatever else it may be called, be a cycle which can embrace that of the Papacy and much more, being, so far as we can see, the *summum* of apostasy,—then must the present system disappear from the earth before the other can be established in it. And it is only necessary to investigate the method of the divine procedure, in the destruction of error and the advancement of his cause and welfare of his church, to decide the question, Whether the Lord's second coming shall take place at and in order to the destruction of Popery—that is, be premillennial; or at and in order to the overturning of Cæsarianism—that is, after the world's conversion, and when time shall be no more? And here we must not allow our minds to be disturbed by the relative meaning of the words first and second in the two advents of Christ the Lord. So far as the nature of his first coming and the work he fulfilled when on earth is concerned, there is nothing in it to fix it down to any particular period of the world's history. We know it took place in the “fulness of time,” at the most suitable period, to suit and exhibit God's merciful plans. But the nature of it does not abstractly tie it down to any precise time. It is different entirely with the Second Advent; its very nature fixes it down to one determined period of the world's history. And the only relative meaning of this kind which they can bear is not one which places the first advent at the commencement of the Christian dispensation, in which there arises an apostasy, and the second at the beginning of the millennial dispensation, from which there arises an apostasy likewise; but is this, that the first advent took place when God ceased

“to wink at” universal heathenism, and the second when he ceases to wink at universal apostasy.

The counteraction of error by the Spirit of the Father and of Christ has hitherto been in such a way as that there is retained in the true, which then becomes prevalent, a picture, or remembrance, or knowledge of the false, that good men may know and abhor it. Of course, every one acquainted with ecclesiastical history is aware of this; and he who has made the philosophy of that history his study, can show, or at least perceive, the rationale of it. When Ultramontanism shall be destroyed, the order of things then constituted will be such as to keep before the church a remembrance of the great adversary of God and his Christ. Just as Scripture leads us to expect the sad apostasy which has lain upon the civilized world as an overwhelming incubus, ruinous to the temporal and eternal welfare of men, so does it lead to the assurance of its certain overthrow for, and displacement by, a glorious Millennium. And even as we are directed by the truth of God in his Word to look for this downfall, so from his truth in history, from the constant method of the divine government, we discover the state of things which shall thereafter obtain, and are led thereby to believe that such a system shall then prevail, and such a scene be presented, as to remind those who see that time that the blessed Word has outlived all the hatred and plots of wicked priests and unscrupulous Jesuits, and all the dotard casuistry of self-conceited rationalists, and that it is flourishing in power over the hearts of men when its deluded enemies are swept away. Thus shall we have a triumph of the divine Word—thus shall we have a time when every knee shall bow at the NAME of Jesus.

How long this state of things may continue, we presume not to fix. Whether it shall be a thousand, or three hundred and sixty thousand years, we do not know. But pass on to its end; remembering the busy intellect of Satan, the time he shall then have had for maturing his plans, and his increased hatred to the cause of the Lord, because of his ignominious imprisonment proclaimed in the face of heaven; and remembering also that the constitution of man is of such a kind as that he seeks to rest in the visible, as that even the Millennium cannot satisfy the cravings of his spirit as the heavenly glory and the visible Lord can; remembering these things, we say, let us approach the end of that blessed period. And the same Word which led us to expect, as already stated, also leads to the idea that a universal Jesuitism, with a visible head, being still sought after, under the deceiving influence of the prince of lies, shall be obtained in the mighty Cæsarianism of the end. Then shall be set up in the earth an embodiment of evil with an extent of sway unspeakably greater than the petty "universality" of the tyrant at Rome. But a small portion of the world's people yields an obedience to the present apostate despotism; and even that portion has regulations and concordats to limit the pretensions of its head. But different shall it be towards "the time of the end." The peoples of the world, brought nigh to one another in a way hardly conceivable even in these days of progress, and incorporated into one great nation in language and interests, shall stand up against the Lord and his church. For even as it was when the flood came, shall it be when the Second Advent takes place. As soon as men universally have consented to worship at Jehovah's lowly altar, they will

give over the idea of "a tower whose top shall reach to heaven." And then shall the Babel curse be removed, and the Babel dispersions be counteracted ; and the various families of the earth, divided no longer by selfish interests, but united in the one Spirit, shall turn to the Lord with a pure lip, and "all the earth be of one language and one speech:" we shall have the one Noachic family again embraced in the Abrahamic church. If there shall be a final apostasy from Christianity, it shall be from a Christianity which shall have embraced the nations of the world, and made them one family. And that such an apostasy shall take place, the voice of Scripture and philosophy alike declares ; and this, to use a bold figure, when the world's body shall be so closely and intimately compacted, as that one will shall act as readily on its different members (and not much less quickly) as the human will is operative throughout the members of our physical frame. Then shall it be as in the days of Noah. The little church, hemmed in on all sides, shall be saved from utter ruin by the fiery deluge, and, floating away amid the cries of a lost world, shall it meet its Lord in the air. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Does the type throw light upon the anti-type? Let us view the type then. While the ark is preparing, the Spirit of God is preaching to the "infidels" (1 Pet. iii. 19, 20) by the mouth of Noah. But his voice is unheeded, the world continues in its unbelief and its mirth: "they marry and are given in marriage," they eat, and drink, and make merry, till the day that Noah enters the ark. Meanwhile the godly are dying out. As the work which was necessary draws to a close, the godly are taken away from the evil to come.

One by one the pious builders of the ark (for it was the church and not the world that built it) sleep with their fathers. At last Lamech is taken away, about five years before the flood; and Methuselah, who had conversed with Adam, and who had been to the infidels a living token of the truth of those things which were preached, dies also, a few months before the world is drowned. Awful is the suspense now! Not indeed to the ungodly world—they laugh at all, they mock the holy ones of God. But there is a suspense among the angels who look on—there is a suspense in that little family, the last remains of God's church. Yet Noah slacks not his hand; he finishes his work, and he appeals—with what earnestness!—to those poor creatures now shut up under the wrath of God. The hundred and twenty years are now at a close; the warning voice intimates as much; the world is on the eve of its deluge. Let us think of that eve—the eve of the deluge—of the judgment! May we with the following elements attempt a picture, not altogether (Rev. xx. 9) one of fancy? God's church is now a little flock; the world is immensely multitudinous. That little flock—that one man—keeps the world in confusion. The world, disturbed with his ominous cry, hates him, and would tear him in pieces. That hated ark, too—that symbol of the old man's folly, of which he continually prates! Is it to be endured that one man, talking about a God and an ark, is to give us so much annoyance? How easy to get rid of them altogether! Let us burn the whole—the man and his family, and that lumbering vessel together—let us “encompass the camp of the saints.”

It is the eve of the deluge. It is the eve of the Sabbath. For the last time has the voice cried in that

awful wilderness, and its echoes been heard in the contemptuous jeers of the "scoffers." The cry is gone; the voice of mercy speaks no more; the lamp is lifted out of the midst of a guilty world; the ungodly are left to their doom. Noah has turned away from the scowling multitude, his heart crushed with grief, and his mind racked with suspense. He enters the ark, and "God shuts him in." The dark night hangs sorrowfully over the doomed world, but the morning dawns at last; the first faint streaks of the Sabbath morn gild the eastern horizon. But, hark! what noise is that? There is a low, hushed, distant murmur, as of a multitude of people. Nearer, nearer swells the din. Savage outcries, terrible imprecations, fearful threats grate upon the ear. Behold! That surrounding wood crashes before them, and the masses of the ungodly, with demoniac glee on their faces, with satanic cruelty in their hearts, with flaming firebrands in their hands, rush forth. But where is the ark? God hath shut Noah in; he hath smitten the condemned with blindness; and they grope about for the ark, "till the flood came and swept them all away."

"As it was in the days of Noah," so shall it be when the Lord himself will come to destroy utterly the infidel organization, to purify the earth from the effects of the Adamic curse, and to dwell therein for ever with his church. It is then there shall be exhibited that state of things which humanity instinctively craves, but which it has hitherto sought in a delusive way through satanic devices. God has prepared such a state of things. He has promised it in his Word. He has stamped the hope of its realization in the deepest being of man. With a thousand diversities, the pantings of

burdened humanity, yea of the very creation subjected to vanity, are after this. It cannot be otherwise ; there is a vacuum till it be obtained. During the Millennium itself, the purest form of this *αποκαταδοxia*, this earnest expectation, shall swell in every bosom where the first fruits of the Spirit are, as well as in “the whole creation.” Till the great ideal is an experience, universal nature cannot but heave in throes of travail and of hope.

Entering thus into the nature of the two great apostasies, there is a congruity in the first being supplanted by the Word and by the preaching of the gospel, and in the second being overwhelmed by the coming of the Lord himself. And if a congruity, then a certainty ; for all the ways of God are congruous. In the former case, we use the word supplanted, not in opposition to overwhelmed in the second, but for the obvious reason that “the stone cut out of the mountain without hands ” is to smite the Roman part of the image, and fill not only its place, but the place of all the other monarchies. It fills the earth ; the time being intimated in the two statements that the four monarchies are meant by the image, and that the stone strikes upon *the feet*—the latest period of Roman dominion. But we do not see that this supplanting shall be a gradually-increasing one. We see nothing in the Bible, or in God’s general procedure in the gospel dispensation, to lead to the idea that Romanism, or any other of the Paganisms, shall fade away before the mighty Word of God, as darkness before the rising sun. We would extend the gospel and circulate the Scriptures to the widest possible extent, as the best means of counteracting Popery and heathen darkness, so long as we are permitted ; and this in order

to the production of as many luminous centres as possible, which shall burst in light and beauty all around as soon as Satan is bound, and the cry sweeps athwart the firmament of the church, "Babylon is fallen!" All this we would do, that not a year may elapse, after the millennial period commences, before every nation under heaven may hear the glad sound. But still, a careful examination of Daniel ii. 34, 35, and many other Scriptures, clearly shows that some very sudden and violent destruction is to accompany the opening of the Word and the waving of the gospel banner in central Italy, that there may be clear space and *unclaimed*, in the wide world, for the kingdom of grace.

We expect that Popery shall be destroyed thus:—When the gospel is carried into central Italy, or some powerful check made some other way to the pretensions of the Papacy, great will be the tumult. The triple crown will be commended with all solemnity, with many ceremonies, and not few "miracles," to the keeping of those kings and governors in whose councils the hierarchy, the Jesuits, rule supreme, and perhaps some others. These kings will give their power to the beast (Rev. xvii.), to wage war with the only nation or nations which may stand out for the gospel, and to crush any in their own dominions who may show their love to the truth. The struggle will commence. The church, and those who in the love of civil liberty may have joined with her, shall be crushed. The enemy will make merry. Meanwhile, "the woman that sitteth upon the beast," that is, the Papacy, will put forth her distinctive claim for absolute dominion. Even as now, when dependent for a protracted existence upon foreign bayonets, the Ultramontane claim is as arrogant as ever; so

then, when held up into a new existence by the kings of the apocalyptic earth, will the same impudent desires be expressed. Very possibly, at the time "the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north" (LXX., the exalted mountains, *i. q.* kingdom, which lie towards the north, Isa. xiv. 13) is desolate beneath the foot of the great Popish league, the Man of Sin will unmask his jesuitism, and claim all power in things civil and spiritual. And so fierce will be the effort to support the claim, that these very kings shall turn the sword against "the great city which reigneth over the kingdoms of the earth," and the whole Antichristian empire and system become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, which the wind carries away. While the survivors are terrified and fainting, Satan is bound, the sword of the Spirit waves over the world, and the gospel is victorious. It would be a cheering and a lovely investigation to inquire into the state of matters during the bright era that shall then roll on. But it is not now in our way. May its spirit descend upon our weary hearts to bear us up in the approaching struggle!

We now put our case. Two systems of Antichristian error are to be elaborated; the one requiring to be destroyed before the other can be set up. The second is of such a nature, as to require the visible advent of the Lord to put an end to it; whereas the first is of such a kind as that it *will admit* of being destroyed in a different way. Reason leads to the conclusion that it shall, the Word of God tells us it shall: from these two the church has generally believed it shall be so destroyed. We say the Word of God tells us it shall be put down

in another way; it does so, and makes the very distinction that a philosophic inquiry would conduct us to, when (2 Thess. ii. 8) it distinguishes between the *επιφανεια της παρουσιας* I.X. (described in Rev. xix. 11, &c.) and the *παρουσια* itself, referred to in 1 Thess. iv.; Rev. xx. 9-15; Matt. xxv. 31-46. But the Millennium does not commence till the first system of apostasy is broken in pieces, and it is at a close when the second begins: therefore the Second Advent is not premillennial.

The only possible exception which can be taken, by one who understands the constancy of the divine procedure in destroying the errors which arise in the church by suitable and congruous means, must be by impugning the validity of the theory of a future Cæsarianism. We see not why this exception should be taken. Until some undigested writings appeared in the present generation, there was a very general persuasion in the church that a falling away would take place after the millennial prosperity and blessedness. Philosophy leads to such a persuasion. And surely there are statements in Scripture calculated to give rise to it. We cannot conceive any one escaping from such a belief, save by an exposition both forced and unnatural. We have both the native meaning of these hints of Scripture, and an extensive philosophic generalization, declaring that there shall be a postmillennial apostasy, and that it will be of a more terrible kind than Popery itself. More extensive it will be; for whereas the Papal embraces Christendom, it will embrace the world. More fierce against all religion and religious men it will be; for the growth of every thing is progressive, and the cycles of error and misery enlarge as they lie distant from their centre or origin. And if the system we have

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indicated under the name of Cæsarianism—a name we found ready to our hand—be not of such a nature, we are at a loss to conceive what else could be. And if this be admitted, we care not what it may be called; you may call it by any word you deem more suitable. But if *the thing* be admitted, then there is no difficulty in perceiving that a demonstration can be given, proving that the Second Advent is not premillennial.

PART II.

THE THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL ARGUMENT.

WE may call the preceding remarks the philosophy of the question. We shall now examine it upon theological and Scriptural grounds, which will lead us more minutely to the one point at issue, and which is the special subject of this essay. There are several ways of settling the question proposed to me. The idea of the premillenarians may be shown to be inconsistent with certain general facts and principles; and if these admit of a more easy solution, or if the proof of them be generally received, then it falls to the ground though not directly analyzed. This mode of settling the matter seems to content very many who have given but little special attention to the subject. Again, there are certain passages appealed to by the advocates of the premillennial system of prophetic interpretation, and of course they would not for a moment maintain a theory which they did not believe to be founded on holy Scripture; if, then, these texts can be shown to have really and demonstrably another meaning, or at least if it can be shown that they do not contain premillennialism—though their real meaning might not be reached, then surely the whole system will fall to the

ground—then surely its advocates will give up the idea. And again, a number of incidental matters, which cannot easily be put in categorical arrangement, may throw very much light upon the subject, when seen through the medium furnished by the two first lines of argument; and this to such an extent as to make us wonder how such views could ever be held by men who know and love their Bibles, as truly the great part of our premillenarian friends do. It would seem as if the starting point—the doctrinal system or its unity—the rules of Biblical hermeneutik—or some recondite principles essentially idiosyncratic in their origin and operation, induced the ultimate diversity. We are inclined to trace the diverging lines appearing in the two modes of explaining passages, to a bent received by them, or at least to the starting of them, from two doctrinal ideas. But whether we shall be able to explain the reason of premillennialism, we undertake to prove satisfactorily that it is altogether an erroneous system. We trust to do so, by God's grace, in a spirit of meekness, and with esteem for those from whom we differ. We sincerely believe that they are seeking the TRUTH as well as ourselves. They would not for a moment retain the theory if they did not think it the truth of God.

The two leading principles of interpretation, the following of which seems to give rise to the opposite views which are held on this subject, are these:—that the Millennium is a spiritual thing entirely, and therefore the author of it is the Holy Ghost, acting precisely as he does in the individual when regenerating his heart, and implying of course a civil and visible economy sweetly adapted; the second, as gathered from Justin Martyr, or John William Petersen, or the writers of

the present day, that in addition to this it is a visible and material state, having Jesus Christ and his resuscitated saints visibly in the midst of it, thus making it a matter entirely unique, and having no fac-simile on a small scale, and no corresponding equivalent, in any part of the church's history. There is evidently a great diversity between these two opinions, requiring to a great extent a different view of certain passages of Scripture, and a different dogmatik—a doctrinal system not by any means differing *in toto*, but in some of its parts, and in the unity and coherence of the whole. If that which the Bible promises as the Millennium of the church is either to be introduced by or characterized by the visible advent of our Lord, then its nature must differ very much from that which should be effected by the Spirit of the Father and of Christ working according to his proper nature. And, in fact, one very substantial reason many of our theologians have for dissenting from our premillenarian friends, without giving very much or very minute attention to certain texts and arguments they adduce, arises from the somewhat meagre theology which has wellnigh universally accompanied their theory. The present is not, indeed, the epoch of massive divinity. But still, sundry elements are more dilutive of it than one could well wish. Our friends blame us for manifesting impatience as soon as their system is mentioned. It is a pity such a thing should be exhibited, but more so that it should be merited. The eye of the practised builder soon detects a jutting stone, or an unplumbed fraction in an extensive building. Much more will a tolerably able theologian, possessed of the degree of dialectic faculty necessary to make him such, be able to detect the disjointing or disorganizing ele-

ment when it intrudes into, and juts out from, the temple of truth. And we believe a very few remarks will explain the reason, if not the reasonableness, of this impatience with which we are blamed, and be wellnigh sufficient to dismiss the theory itself.

The fundamental principle of Bible interpretation is that supplied by the apostle in the fifth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. We may take two or three of its particulars :—Even as Adam is the covenant head of his natural posterity, so is Christ, the second Adam, of his spiritual children ; even as Adam stood (or fell) for those who were *in him*, so Christ stood for all who were *in him* ; even as from Adam flows to all his posterity descending from him by ordinary generation the virus, so from Christ to all who are his by spiritual generation flows the antidote ; yea, as from Adam flows the ordinary generation itself, so from Christ flows the spiritual regeneration ; even as Adam was overcome, and in him the humanity, so Christ overcomes, and in him the election. And so on might we exhibit the parallelisms. There is one more, the one to which we specially refer—even as Adam, the one covenant head, conveys, *though unseen*, his guilt and his image to all for whom he stood, so the Lord, the new covenant head, conveys to all for whom he died his righteousness and his image, *being also unseen*. Even though there were no doctrinal reasons for it, the very nature of things implies the invisibility of Adam, while the effects of his visibility are flowing down through the race ; and there are many such reasons besides the type and the nature of things, also implying the necessity for the invisibility of the Lord while the work of redemption is going on. It is by faith that every elect soul shall be made

a partaker of the redemption purchased by Christ ; but where would be the place for faith if the glorified Redeemer were visible ? Adam required to be visible for a time ; and now the effects of that visibility, so far as he was a covenant head, are flowing down to all the humanity “by blood ;” and the Lord required to be visible for a time, and now the effects of that visibility are flowing forth from him to all the election by the Holy Ghost. Why should we confine the parallel to some particulars when the invisibility of both covenant heads is as much a particular as any other, is as necessary to the scheme of God and of truth, and is distinctly intimated in John i. 13 ? As is Adam in this particular to the end of time, so is the Lord. And then both heads are made visible again—the Lord as the judge, and Adam as the first who shall stand at the tribunal. All this is disjointed by our friends, if their system has any meaning in it at all. Just as they catch hold of one or two particulars in many of the types, as, for example, that of “the days of Noah” (Matt. xxiv.) referred to in the first part, so do they in explaining the parallelism of the two covenant heads. But the type and antitype agree in many more particulars than they take account of. And it is easy for the eye of one who knows the theological system, to the extent that every minister of the Word ought, to run over the concinnity of truth—the *καταργισμος σωματος*, and to smile at the fervid fancies which hang but too loosely to some of the separated parts.

Then, again, it does not require much power of mind to compare their theory with some such syllogism as the following argument exhibits :—A glorified body cannot dwell on the earth till it be renewed ; indeed, the two

events are expressly declared to synchronize.—(Rom. viii. 17–25 ; 1 John iii. 2 ; Rev. xxi.) If the renewal of the earth take not place till after the Millennium, then the Lord's glorified body cannot be in it during that time. But if the earth be renewed before the Millennium, that is, at its commencement, and the Lord come to dwell in it, then no unglorified or unspiritual body can remain in it during that time—it cannot even be a grave to dead saints, or to the wicked, after it is made new. It would first of all be a contradiction to say that glorified bodies, one or more, could dwell in an unrenewed earth. Why are Enoch and Elijah not here ? And, secondly, it would equally be a contradiction to maintain that a renewed earth—"the new earth"—could be a grave. Is the conclusion a difficult one ? We fear it sweeps the theory of our friends clean away.

But the truth is, an earnest mind that grasps these things clearly cannot help a feeling of impatience with the feminine sentimentalism about the sweetness and gentleness of "dear Jesus," which mingles so abundantly with the emotional in this matter. No doubt, earth never saw beauty and sweetness like his. Eden was not cheered with so lovely a flower, nor did its fragrance breathe aught so reviving and precious as his name. But he is more than this—even to the feelings of his own children he is more than this. Ethan in the eighty-ninth Psalm uses an epithet of overwhelming meaning and magnitude when he says, "Terrible God in the assembly of holy ones," *אֵל יִצְרָן בְּסוּד־קִדְשִׁים*. Little do people know what it is they desire when seeking the visibility of "the King that scattereth evil with his eyes," and whose glorious appearance sunk even a Daniel and a John into feebleness and a kind of death. The

Lord will not any more lay aside his glory. It is now his royal robe, and one that was dearly won. He is clothed with majesty and brightness. And only a church made "like him" can see him as he is without wailing.

It is thus that the subject of premillennialism might be thrown aside, as it often is. And we might stop here, were it not our design to give it a thorough examination, both to show how baseless it is, and also to catch much precious truth it has led many to miss.

As regards the expression, "the personal advent," which is generally used by our friends to point out the Lord's visible coming, in contradistinction to all other manifestations of him which might be supposed, we have a few words to say. It seems to be used in such a way as to imply that all who hold the Millennium will take place before the Second Advent, deny the Lord's personal presence with his church during that time. It might very well be replied to this, if we (as they say) deny the Lord's personal presence with his church during that time because we reject a visible advent, surely they who confine the Lord's personal presence to the times after the visible advent, deny any personal presence with the church during the times before. In other words, by their peculiar use of this phrase, they affirm we have no personal presence of the Lord now. We enter our protest against any such use of this phrase, as conveying an idea utterly at variance with sound doctrine. There may be, there is, a personal advent of the Lord in the Holy Ghost, as well as in the visibility of his glorified human body at the last day; and there is as real a personal presence of the Lord in his church now, as there shall be when his body is again

visible in the midst of it. Let us examine this : it will throw a flood of light on our investigation.

By reason of the hypostatical union of the two natures in the person of our Redeemer, the κοινωνία ιδιωμάτων *non tantum est verbalis, sed realis* (the communication of properties is not only verbal but real.) It is so, however, only when viewed in the Person, and when spoken of the Person. When we make the interchange to be from the one nature to the other, as the Lutherans do, we fall into grievous error, so as even to destroy the properties of both. We cannot say the human nature is ubiquitous because it is united to the divine, for then it would cease to be humanity altogether. But while watching against this language and its consequences, as a kind of Eutychianism, we should also be careful not to use such words as "the human nature suffered," the human nature ascended, the human nature will come again ; for all this would lead us directly into Nestorianism. For, if we say the human nature suffered, or the human nature will come again, then, as a nature cannot be an agent—(the divine nature itself being active only in personal operations)—but it is a person that acts, that suffers, that goes, that comes—it is really an ascription of two Persons to the Lord Jesus Christ. When we say that our Lord, viewed either as to the divine or as to the human nature, did, does, will do any thing, then we mean that a Person does it, or that he does it personally. Thus we say a Person suffered, or Christ suffered personally. Whereas, while it is right to say he suffered in his human nature, it would be improper for us to say that the human nature of Christ suffered ; for this would be using a form of speech which can only be used of a per-

son, and the human nature of the Lord is not his Person, but subsists in his Person, being assumed into union with it. Wherefore, to express any act of the Lord whatsoever, we must attribute it to a Person. It is correct to say the Lord was personally on the earth, and that he will come personally to it again; but not more so, than that he is personally in the midst of his church now, and has always been so. Wherefore the expression, "the personal advent of the Lord," is a correct one *in itself*; and if the doctrine of premillennialism were true, it would be right to indicate it by these words. But the idea that a personal coming of the Lord, and his personal presence in the earth, necessarily implies that they shall be *visible*, or that a personal reign necessarily means a *visible* reign, is pure error. It is Nestorianism. We all hold that the Lord will come again visibly, and that he will reign visibly; but to make this all one as personally, and then to affirm that they who deny a visible advent at a particular part of the church's history, do thereby disown a personal reign during the Millennium, is not only bad in doctrine, but equally so in logic. If the Lord come at all—if he reign at all—it is necessarily in a *personal* manner; and therefore he reigns *personally* in men's hearts, if he reign there at all. He reigns personally over men and things now. When he comes in ordinances, it is in a personal way he does so. Though not personally in the elements, he is personally in the sacraments. It is well we should remember, when we have communion with the Lord Jesus Christ now by his Spirit, Word, and ordinances, or hereafter, "eye to eye," that it is not an intercourse with a system of truths, nor a communion with a nature we enjoy, but with the personal Lord.

It is a Person who saves us, who comforts us, who comes to us with words of peace, and affection, and consolation. It is in the bosom of a Person we lay our wearied spirits, by faith and love now, and by affectionate enjoyment hereafter.

We do not, therefore, deny a personal coming, presence, reign, of the Lord in the Millennium, when we affirm that he will come and reign then, just as now, in the hearts of believers, and hold that the advent which the Bible says shall be visible will not be premillennial. But surely they do deny the personal presence of the Lord with his people now, who use that expression as synonymous with visibility. We trust it is only a thoughtless use of the word, though it manifests withal too much ignorance of matters peculiarly necessary to be known in the present day. But however used, it indicates a general thoughtlessness and want of precision, which must tell against the system at the head of which it stands.

And now we shall approach our subject in a more direct way. We all hold that the Lord will come again in a visible manner. The question is not concerning the fact, but the time. We all agree in affirming that it is the church's hope, and the hope of each believer in particular; and that the church, and each one personally, should be waiting and watching for it with proper preparation and desire, even so as to be able daily to say, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen." And we hope to show, in the fourth part of this essay, in opposition to the charge which our friends bring against us, that it is *only* upon our principles, and not upon theirs, that this result can be expected to arise from the injunctions to watchfulness presented in the

New Testament. Meanwhile, the only question we discuss is this :—Will the Second Advent be before and in order to the Millennium? Unhesitatingly we answer—No. To prove which, we shall first examine the leading reasons adduced for such an idea, and then state several against it. Being confined to certain limits with this essay, we shall be unable to embrace every thing which might be said on the subject. However, that is not necessary, if the principal matters be examined, and certain guiding rules be laid down.

The starting point of the whole system of premillennialism seems to be, “the two resurrections.” Our friends look upon it as one of their strongest positions, if not the very strongest—with how much reason shall immediately be seen. Our own view of “the first resurrection,” we give in Part III., and shall only now examine what they say. They tell us there are two resurrections—the first, that of the saints when the thousand years commence; the second, that of the wicked at a future period. Some say the first is of the martyrs only. But let them take which they choose—our line of argument will meet either. They attempt to prove this from some texts, and from a broad statement that the New Testament uniformly recognises a difference between *ἀναστασις τῶν νεκρῶν* and *ἀναστασις ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν*, the resurrection of the dead, and the resurrection from among the dead. Now, if this were the case, it would go far to settle the question. If the *νεκροί* (the dead) mean those who are dead and buried (for Luke ix. 60 has nothing to do here), and if part of them, whether all the saints, or only the martyrs, be raised at one time and part at another, then we say, till the Lord come, not one of these *νεκροί* shall be raised, and the only two

times which could be introduced by these resurrections must be the Millennium and the final Judgment. If, then, this were really the case, there would be little difficulty in proving the very converse of our proposition that premillennialism is a delusion. But we have distinctly to state that holy Scripture makes no distinction of the kind. If our friends could prove that it does—if they could prove that a resurrection of some parties takes place long before that of others, we would on the instant accept their whole system, for the unity of Bible truth would then carry all other matters into a different form. And if we prove that the Word recognises nothing of the kind, but that the whole thing is a mistake, will they agree with us? We should hope so—we believe they will.

In regard to the Greek particle *ex*, we may make an observation or two, especially as we shall require to analyze the force of two other prepositions in the course of our essay. It is very difficult always to find out the precise import of the Greek prepositions, or, indeed, of any language, and we should feel unwilling to base much upon them in an argument. We are to be guided more by their use, according to examples which may be adduced, than by their native meaning. There can be no doubt but the proper meaning of *ex* is, to go *out* of any place, or to take one thing *out* of another, or to retire *from* (like *απο*). But this can constitute no foundation for an argument, if it can be shown that the major proposition drawn from the native meaning of this particle is not *always* true, and next, that it is not so in the very case referred to. Now, this can be done. It can be shown that *ex* has come by usage to lose its native meaning altogether, or to have affinity

to it in the remotest manner ; and also, that it is used for an absolute genitive, as in Luke ii. 35, which might be confirmed by examples we are prepared to produce from Hebrew, Arabic, and some of the continental languages, exhibiting the same construction. But it is needless to occupy space with them, when it can be shown that it is used for a simple genitive in the case before us, and that really there is no difference between $\alpha\nu: \tau\omega\nu \nu\epsilon\chi\rho\omega\nu$ and $\alpha\nu: \epsilon\kappa \tau\omega\nu \nu\epsilon\chi\rho\omega\nu$. We have examined every passage, and can affirm that there is no exception. The following reasons will make this plain.

1. When the Sadducees came to the Lord to puzzle him about the resurrection, he proved to them that they were in error in denying the anastasis. In doing which, he uses about the very same party, and as simply equivalent to that anastasis of which they were speaking, both of these expressions,— $\alpha\nu\alpha\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\iota\varsigma \tau\omega\nu \nu\epsilon\chi\rho\omega\nu$ and $\alpha\nu: \epsilon\kappa \tau\omega\nu \nu\epsilon\chi\rho\omega\nu$. He uses the three expressions indiscriminately as exponents of the one idea which was in their minds, and which they denied.—(Matt. xxii. 31 ; Luke xx. 35.) Let both places be read with the context, marking in Matthew the 23d, 28th, 30th, 31st verses, and in Luke, the 27th, 33d, 35th, 36th, 38th verses.

2. That which the Sadducees called $\alpha\nu\alpha\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\iota\varsigma$ in Matthew, &c. they call also $\alpha\nu: \epsilon\kappa (\tau\omega\nu) \nu\epsilon\chi\rho\omega\nu$ in Acts vi. 2. (the reading is $\tau\eta\nu \epsilon\kappa$, $\chi. \tau. \lambda.$ not $\tau\omega\nu \epsilon\kappa$, as some have it ; see Tischendorf;) and $\alpha\nu: (\tau\omega\nu) \nu\epsilon\chi\rho\omega\nu$ in Acts xxiii. 6, 8, according to Luke's explanation of what they held and said. For Paul uses this form of words, (v. 6), and Luke (v. 8) tells us it was what the Sadducees did not believe, because they denied the anastasis. And, lest it should be imagined by any that our Lord

introduces a new or different idea in Luke xx. 35, by using *εχ*, from what we have in Matthew, Paul tells us he hoped for this resurrection of which the Lord speaks, and in doing so leaves out the *εχ*; and besides, when referring to the very expression (in Acts xxiv. 15), which he had made use of in chap. xxiii. 6, he calls it *αν: νεκρων δικαιων τε και αδικων* (see verse 21.) So that these phrases are not only all equivalent, but point out one simultaneous event so distinctly, that we wonder how any who are acquainted with their Greek Testament could imagine a difference of parties, or of times, of the kind our friends desiderate, to be indicated by the one of them which has *εχ*. This one paragraph is sufficient to prove that the good and bad (Matt. xiii. 47, 49), the just and unjust, shall rise together, and that this is what the Bible calls the anastasis. Whether before or after the Millennium remains to be seen. But in the mean time, we say, our friends are not prepared to commence their Millennium with such a resurrection as this, unless they be prepared to take up such ground as shall oblige us to prove the very fact of a Millennium being promised to the church of God before "the kingdom of glory come." We do not suppose they would ever think of having recourse to the refinement, that the Lord adopted the style of speech which the Sadducees understood, or that they, in denying the anastasis, denied, of course, every kind of it, and that, therefore, it was unnecessary for the Lord, or the apostle, when brought into contact with them, to explain the difference, but that still they might have their own meaning, which we, who admit the doctrine, can discover. Such a refinement has already been brushed away by a reference to the personal hope of the apostle

Paul; but there are other grounds on which we could know how to deal with it.

3. We might take some other instances of the use of these phrases. Paul (explained by the Athenian philosophers, *and* by Luke), uses *η αναστασις* and *αν: νεκρων* as equivalent, in Acts xvii. 18, 32. But we need not occupy room any more. Surely it is not needful! We have the Lord, Paul, Luke, the Sadducees, the heathen Philosophers, giving testimony in the matter.

4. The Lord's own resurrection is spoken of under all these modes of expression.—Acts i. 22, ii. 31, iv. 33, and 1 Cor. xv. 12, 13, 20, 21, and Col. i. 18, and Rom. i. 4, and Rev. i. 5, (where there is so little authority for *πρωτοτοκος εκ κ.τ.λ.* as to make us wonder how the *textus receptus*, and even the "*textus ab omnibus receptus*" of the Elzevir press should have adopted the reading, when, as is shown by Tischendorf, the ancient Codices, forty versions, &c., &c., do not contain the *εκ* at all.)

5. The only difference recognised by Scripture is the *αναστασις ζωης* and the *αν: κρισεως*, John v. 29, Luke xiv. 14, Acts xxiv. 15; where, let it be observed, the one event spoken of is the anastasis, and the parties are divided into the two classes, *αν: των δικαιων*, same as *αν: της ζωης*, and *αν: των αδικων* = *αν: της κρισεως*. The one class is that of the righteous, and the other that of the wicked. Again, the time of this resurrection may be gathered from Heb. vi. 2, and John xi. 23, 24. But that is not now in our way.

Thus, then, it will be seen how gratuitous is the assertion that there is a difference between the expressions, and much moreso to say that Scripture does always recognise it. And we fear our friends did not take their

Bibles and give the matter a proper examination before making such a statement, and building a delusive theory upon it. If they did, they are but ill acquainted with the Greek language.

There are a number of texts to which they refer us in support of their system. It would be a waste of time to examine them all, unless we desired to give an exposition of the Word instead of an argument. But in this and the succeeding parts we shall both analyze the principle, and give such explanations as will remove the difficulty from any others. Let us begin with Revelation, the 20th chapter: "I saw an angel come down from heaven." All agree in explaining this angel to mean the Lord Jesus Christ. Does it say he came down to the earth, (chap. ix. 1, *εις την γην*)? No. Of course, we admit that he will be found to have reached the earth. What we mean is, that the terminating object of his descent was not the earth, but something else, which shall be mentioned immediately. Does it say he came down *visibly*? No; for the words are precisely the same as those in chap. x. 1, which are confessedly "apocalyptic;" the standing with one foot on the earth and the other on the sea (v. 2) being an impossibility to a human body which has not lost its properties by being assumed into union with a divine Person, but which occupies an extent of space no greater than any one of our bodies doth. For what purpose comes he down? To bind the old serpent, the deceiver, and to cast him into the bottomless pit. Is this deceiver *visible*? No; and, therefore, he can only be seized in an invisible way, and by an invisible person. What, and where, are the delusions which are to be swept from the church and the world? They are not men,

but principles; even the principles and elements of the apostasy described in 2 Tim. iii. 1, 5, (and counteracted, mark,—vers. 14–17—by the Holy Scriptures), which are to be found in men's hearts. Where does the Lord come down to, then, to accomplish this great work? To men's hearts. And it is there that the old serpent is seized, and thence he is expelled. How can the Lord come down to, and dwell in the hearts of men? In the Holy Ghost, and by faith—the faith of God's elect.

As regards verses 4–7, they shall be explained in the next part, when we speak of the first resurrection. But, meanwhile, who reign? The souls of the martyrs. Where is it that these souls are represented as being during the time of Pagan and Papal supremacy? "Under the altar." (Chap. vi. 9–11.) Where is that? Not within but without the vail, that is, IN THE CHURCH. In other words, they are still viewed as a part of the church. In the sixth chapter, we find them praying for something in the way explained, Gen. iv. 10; in the twentieth chapter they have the answer to their prayers, (in the same style of speaking, of course.) They pray—they receive the answer; where? In both cases without the vail, that is, within the church; for the altar is without the vail. During the sad time of witness-bearing, they are under the altar, that is, they are slain; and their blood is crying from the church for vengeance upon the persecutors. During the Millennium, the very commencement of which takes place in the destruction of the persecutors, they are represented as reigning. And both are in the same place—the church, and with the same kind of visibility. With whom do they reign? "with Christ" *μετα του Χριστου*. In explanation of which, we suggest what follows. There are two expres-

sions in the New Testament which have been rendered "with Christ" by our translators, but which have very different meanings. They are *συν Χριστῶ*, and *μετα τοῦ Χριστοῦ*; the former occurring in Phil. i. 23, the other in this place of the Apocalypse. Now, were it merely our desire to deprive premillennialism of this passage, it would be enough to say that the language is not nearly so strong as that which is used in chapter xiv. 1, which our friends will allow, we suppose, to be entirely apocalyptic. Or, we might accept Bengel's words, (*erunt cum Christo et Deo, non Deus et Christus cum illis: igitur id regnum erit in coelo*), and say that it is a very different thing that is meant by their being with Christ, from what it would have been had the words read "Christ was with them."

But all this would leave us without the meaning of the passage; and it is worth while to take some trouble to try and obtain the meaning of a portion of Scripture which has occasioned so much difficulty. If Bengel's meaning were the true one, the reading in this verse would have been *συν Χριστῶ*, and in the sixth verse either *Θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ*, or *τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ* (chap. xi. 15, and xii. 10.) Although, indeed, we need not complicate the inquiry by taking in the sixth verse, which speaks, not of the martyrs, but of those who shall live in those days, we may merely say of it in passing, that Isa. lxi. 6, and Matt. v. 9, give us the first reading we mention as necessary, if the idea were an absolute one, and Rev. xi. 15 the second, if the idea were relative. The meaning of this shall appear immediately.

The reading is *μετα τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, with the article, though Stephanus and, following him, Mill omit it.

There are two things in it which require special notice, viz., the preposition and the article. As regards the preposition *μετα*, every Greek scholar knows it has not at all the close connection of *συν*. For whereas *συν τινα ειναι* means to be personally *in company* with any one, *μετα τινος ειναι* is to be on the side of any one, or to be in some way *connected with* any one.* When

* I have already had occasion to take notice of the Greek particles. A few more words are necessary. It is hardly possible to give a precise rule to indicate the difference between *συν* and *μετα* governing the genitive. Some grammarians state the difference as I have done above, and others say they are used often indiscriminately, "in nonnullis phrasibus nihil differt *μετα* a praepositione *συν*." I believe, however, that the usage in the New Testament is very much as I have said. To show which, the following examples may be referred to: 1 Thess. iv. 14, 17; Col. iv. 7, 9; Gal. ii. 3; Acts i. 14, 17, ii. 14, iv. 13, 27, v. 1, 26, xiii. 7, xvi. 3. We need not increase the number. These are enough to show that the preposition which would suit the idea of premillenniarism is *συν*. There could not be a more favourable passage for testing this than Rev. iii. 21. But the idea of *personal company* is not conveyed there, it is only *participation in a state* that is pointed out. I do not suppose it is necessary to say that all my references are to the Scriptures in the original, or to the Septuagint.

I have to speak of the Greek article, and may also notice it in this note. I hardly think any exception will be taken with what is to be said. But lest there should, I would remind my readers of the following rule. When a proper name is altogether indeterminate, that is, when it is absolute; or when there is only one individual bearing that name, the article is never (I think) used. But when the name is not altogether indefinite, or *when it conveys some idea with it*, then the article is used. We may give an example or two. When the name Jesus is used without the article as in Matt. viii. 29; Luke ii. 21; Matt. xiv. 1, it is always determined what Jesus it is by some other word or circumstance, otherwise it always has the article as in Acts iv. 13, because Jesus was a common name. But when "Christ" has the article before it, it is always to convey some other idea than the personal one; for there was only one who had that name. Thus "the name of Christ" when expressed by *το ονομα Χριστου* is very different from *το ονομα του Χριστου*, the one meaning

Paul expresses his strong desire to depart and be in his Lord's company instead of his continuing in the company of men, he uses the particle *συν* and not *μετα*, "I desire to depart and to be with Christ" *συν Χριστω*. And we maintain, that if the Lord's visible presence were referred to in this place of the Apocalypse, then *συν* would have been used. Compare 2 Peter i. 18; 1 Thess. iv. 17. The word, however, is *μετα*, and conveys the idea of participation with that satisfaction which is spoken of when it is said, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied;" a being satisfied, found not only in the Redeemer himself, but in his members, with whose triumph he and the slain souls under the altar reign, as shall now appear. For let us inquire how the name *Χριστος* is used with and without the article. We are not prepared (who is?) to explain the reason of the use of the article before the name "Christ" in every instance. But of this we are very sure, that when the word is used strictly to point out the personal Redeemer without any other idea, it has not the article. We feel quite prepared to argue this with any one. Whenever the article is used, there is some relative idea contained,—always a reference to something else than the Lord, as the doctrine, the gospel, the church, the anointing, the official capacity, the Jews, &c. We cannot exhaust the subject here; but this may be stated as certain, that there is a marked precision in the use or the omission of the article with this name. For example, when the apostle speaks of the Lord without any regard to his relative or official

Christ himself, the other the Christian name. And so the doctrine of Christ means the Christian doctrine, when the article is used before Christ, &c.

position, as he does in 1 Cor. xv., with the exception of verses 15, 22, 23, the article is not used. But why its marked use in these three verses? Because the fifteenth contains a fine use of the mystical doctrine of the unity of Christ and his church; and the other two point out his covenant relation to that church. For you will observe, the article is put before Adam in the same way, whereas it is not in Rom. v. 14, where he is spoken of strictly as an individual. Compare Gal. iii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 16; Rom. vi. 4, 8, 9, and viii. 9, 17, 34; John ix. 22, in all which the Lord is personally referred to. Again, in connection with the word faith, as "faith in Christ," "the faith of Christ," "believe in Christ," we never have the article; for the believing act terminates upon the personal Redeemer. Once more, the following expressions do not admit of the article before the name: to walk with Christ—to be crucified with Christ—dead with Christ—risen with Christ—to live with Christ—heirs with Christ—to be with Christ,—there remains but one step more, to reign with Christ: have we not induction enough to conclude that the article will not be used, if the idea be that the Lord himself is spoken of. Now it is used. There is no authority of the least value for its omission, as Tischendorf and Griesbach show. And even suppose the correctness of the MSS. might be denied (which would be a strange step, and a dangerous), there is another line of argument we might pursue. Except in chapter xi. 15, and xii. 10, where allusion is made to the second Psalm, and where we might translate thus, "the kingdom of our Lord and his anointed one," "the kingdom of our God and the power (or rights) of his Christ," showing that the Lord is not personally named, John nowhere

in the Apocalypse uses the word "Christ" as the name of the Lord. "The Lamb," the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus, are the words he uses.* And when speaking of the Second Advent, he says, "Even so come Lord Jesus." Hence, we conclude, that John does not indicate the Lord Jesus Christ in this place, but that the word has the same meaning as in 1 Cor. xii. 12; Jer. xxxiii. 16; compare Gen. xxxiii. 20. Wherefore, founding our opinion on all these things, we suggest that the CHURCH is that which is meant in this place, for it is called "Christ" and "the body of Christ" in the New Testament. Compare ο Χριστος with υμεις εστε σωμα Χριστου in 1 Cor. xii. 12, 27. So that there is a lovely harmony now seen to obtain throughout this whole book. The martyrs, in *apocalyptic language*, have all their sympathies with the church of the living Saviour, and are not looked upon as separated from it when—like Paul—they are συν Χριστω in heaven. But even as their prayers and blood are represented as being still before the throne and in the church, so are they recognised as uniting μετα του Χριστου in triumph and praise during the thousand years of the first resurrection. They had the assurance when

* This will do for my purpose. But if chapter xi. 15 be taken as the key to chap. xii. 10 and xx. 6, then the following might be drawn. The name for the Father in the Apocalypse is "the Lord God Almighty," that is Jehovah, and "God" (chap. xxi.) as explained in 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28. Now the Hebrew language knows no such word as יהוה even grammatically. We cannot say "our Jehovah." And, therefore, when we find the words "our Lord," they do not refer to the Father, but to the Redeemer. Now, what is implied by the phrase "our Lord—(Saviour)—and his Christ?" Evidently, Jesus the Lord and his church. So that we believe it could be shown that the word "Christ" does not refer to any thing else than the church, in these places named.

they died for the truth that they would “overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.” And it is so. Even as in them the church—we—you and I—died amid the flames of persecution, so in the church they live and reign. In them, in these our noble warriors, we went against the enemy and died ; in us, in the Millennial Church, the noble army of martyrs triumph over all the enemies and appear on thrones. Does not this exhibit the blessed oneness of the church of all ages and of all countries, that the martyr Paul, who is now *συν Χριστῷ* in heaven, is represented as having all his sympathies *μετα τοῦ Χριστοῦ* on earth, joying in its joys, reigning in its triumph, as he sorrowed in its afflictions and died in its persecution? We do not say that Paul feels this in the intermediate state. In our fourth part we shall speak of that. But we say that the unity of the church is a metaphysical one, as well as a mystical one. We have Paul still among us. We have the martyrs still among us. Like Joseph’s body, they form a part of the church caravan as it goes up through the wilderness. There is no separation in the body of Christ. However we shall go no more into the idea that is at present before our mind, as we shall have to return to it in the two last parts—an idea well nigh overwhelming in its grandeur, when clearly grasped. All we aim at now is, to find out the meaning of the word “Christ” in this verse ; and we are greatly mistaken if it is not proved to be the CHURCH. And the visibility of the martyrs with the church is entirely a mystical and apocalyptic one ; for their souls are *συν Χριστῷ* in heaven.

The rest of the chapter constitutes simply a text to the first part of the essay ; and we do not think any

one is prepared to give a more probable explanation of it than has been done there. And if our friends might wish more said upon the sixth verse, they are referred instead to 1 Peter ii. 1, 5, 10; and to the fact that a very different idea is contained in it from that of the fourth verse.

Take next 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. The proof which our friends draw from this place depends on the meaning they give to the words, "The dead in Christ shall rise first." Indeed, the starting point of the whole error seems to have its root here. It would seem as if the similarity of sounds in the "rise first" of this place, and the "first resurrection" of Revelation, had led them astray. And when one considers how easily a thoughtless and somewhat superficial exegesis would apply to this place to clear the difficulty in Rev. xx., it is not difficult to account for the theory that has been taken up. It is more difficult, however, to conceive how men could persist, in these days of sounder analysis, to prove the doctrine of two resurrections from these two verses! To clear away the gloss, we may merely observe, that the apostle does not speak of the resurrection of the wicked in any place of this chapter. Save in its connection with the one resurrection of which he speaks, and which he knew well embraced it, the subject is not before his mind. There cannot therefore be any reference to *them* in the relative meaning which the word "first" conveys. And he does not draw a distinction between the martyrs and the rest of God's church; they are not before his mind either. The two parties of which he speaks are the dead saints *ἐν Χριστῷ* who are *συν Χριστῷ* in heaven, and the living saints *ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ* who shall be on the earth at the time the Lord will appear the

second time without sin unto salvation. The word "first" refers to the former, and "then" to the latter. And the two particles *πρῶτα* and *αὐτα*, when connected with "first," express only a precedence of order not admitting of any interval of time. They are simultaneous events like the "then" and the other things in 1 Cor. xv. 24. The sounding of the trumpet shall be followed instantaneously by these two things, the raising of the dead and the changing of the living. Now, it is easy to see how this would comfort the Thessalonian Church for the present loss of departed saints, when they are told that the living shall not enter upon the glory promised in the gospel till the dead are raised. Then all the saints—the dead raised, the living changed—are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. And the wicked—raised and changed—remain on the earth and are judged there. This is the general resurrection and the general judgment.

We defer any inquiry into the meaning of the writers of the New Testament, when they speak of the nearness of the Lord's coming, using very generally words in the present tense to indicate it, to the fourth part of the essay. But we cannot help saying, in passing, that we are surprised at the strange explanations which more trustworthy writers than Gibbon have ventured to put upon the apostle's words, "we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." Strange that so many interpreters, several of whom we could name, should draw a meaning from these words so identical with that which Paul labours earnestly to counteract both in the second epistle and in 1 Cor. xv., where he speaks of the same event. The Thessalonians seem to have mistaken what he means in his first

epistle to them, from the way in which he expressed himself. They seem not to have known the language which is instinctive to those who understand and realize the unity of the body of Christ. But we need have no difficulty with it. Certainly the multitude of foolish conjectures which have been cast up from some minds has created difficulties where no difficulty is. This church was anxious to know whether their dead friends were lost to them for ever. They are not, is the reply. Over those who have died in the faith God takes such care, that ere living believers shall enter upon the rest promised, the dead shall be raised, that the church of all ages—"the bride, the Lamb's wife"—may at once meet its Lord, and enter with him into the eternal glory.

Take next Joel iii. The following things, together with the fifth part of the essay, will guide us to a correct explanation of this chapter. 1. The preceding parts of the book, though speaking of a literal and historical circumstance, are figurative or poetic in their language; therefore this also, unless clear proof be produced to show the contrary. 2. Either this chapter is figuratively descriptive of the gospel dispensation, or (if this be not granted) then it must describe matters which take place after the Millennium. For by comparing Isa. xix. 22, 25, where we are told Millennial blessing is to embrace Egypt, with the 19th verse of this chapter, where Egypt is excluded and pronounced a desolation, it will be manifest that the Millennial period is not the one pointed out. But the Apostle Peter, in quoting Joel, does so in such a way as to show that the state of things, during the ministration of the Spirit commencing with the day of Pentecost, is opened

up. The chapter points to matters which take place from the rejection and dispersion of the Jews to their conversion and restoration. Now, this restoration takes place at the commencement of that time which lights up the prophetic eye with beauty and gladness. Then Egypt, which has been very much a desolation both spiritually and temporally from the time of Cyprian, or soon after, till this present hour, will be "the third with Israel" in the Lord's blessing. Will our friends accept of this? Whether they do or not, they close with a dilemma which assuredly deprives them of another passage. We believe, however, they will accept our rule of interpretation, after they have examined the fifth part, and that which we say on Zechariah xiv., to which we now come.

Zechariah xiv. To enter fully into the investigation of this portion of the Word of God, would require more room than we are allowed. But we believe a few things will show its inapplicability to the purpose of proving the theory of premillennialism. 1. When certain rules of a general kind have been laid down, and which are evidently grounded upon the word, then no explanation of a passage which opposes these can be admitted as the true one: all texts of this kind should be explained according to the analogy of faith. Whether the views of our friends agree with that analogy, appears more and more clearly as we go along. 2. If Egypt is to be a sharer in the Millennial blessing,—and we suppose our friends believe that every nation under heaven shall be so, when "the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord," and "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ,"—then all this chapter down to verses 20, 21,

must indicate the state of things antecedent to that time.

Notwithstanding the multiplicity of views which have been expressed by Jewish commentators, and by Christian, upon this book ; notwithstanding that Rabbi Salomo calls it "*valde abstrusum vaticinium*," and Jerome terms it "*obscurissimum librum*;" notwithstanding that such names as Calvin, Grotius, Dathe, Marckius, Lowth, Scott, Henderson, Clarke, Newcome, Henry, Blayney, J. H. Michaelis, the ancient fathers and the modern writers, are almost all at variance, besides many other commentators to which these refer ; we do not think we should at all despair of arriving at the mind of the Spirit of God in this chapter. Of course, we do not for a moment arrogate to ourselves the ability to walk securely where so many have failed, nor even to weigh accurately the probabilities in the various comments we have consulted. We are almost ashamed to venture forward to seek the meaning of this chapter, with such a list of mighty names rehearsed, for fear of what people may say of us. But our task is principally to show that premillennialism gets no countenance from it, and, while doing so, some things shall be stated to serve as landmarks to guide us through its intricacies. We believe that one may be able to arrive at a tolerably correct knowledge of our prophet's meaning by consulting the notes of Calvin, Marckius, and J. H. Michaelis ; and attending to such landmarks as these which follow :—The double meaning of prophecy, explained more fully in part fifth, or to take it as expressed by Michaelis, "*Noster propheta passim a figura ad rem ipsam ascendit, i. e., ad veritatem et mysteria Novi Testamenti*," so as to use the very

words, and the same phrases, which apply to the Levitical economy to describe the mystery of godliness which is opened up in the New Testament.—The order of chapter xiv. is certainly posterior to chapters xii., xiii. But these describe the Lord's passion at Jerusalem, and the passing away of the peculiar dispensation which had been maintained among the Jews till that time. Wherefore the attack on the city, chap. xiv. 2, is certainly in an order succeeding the death and ascension of our Lord. We therefore agree with our friends in this, and join issue with them only on this question, Do the matters contained in the most of this chapter pertain to the Millennial period wholly; or do they belong to the whole period, extending from the Lord's ascension to the dawn of Millennial beauty—the beauty of holiness? We maintain the latter, they the former.—The second verse describes the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army. “Half of the city shall go into captivity;” if city be taken for the country, which is probable, for there was more fighting than at Jerusalem, and the well-known inscription is *Judea capta*, not *Hierosolyma capta*, then the half means the half of the survivors, and the rest of the people may be the other half of the survivors. It is not necessary to show the absurdity of Rabbinical boasts about the number of the inhabitants of Judea, nor to dissect the statements of Villalpand. Nor is it necessary to imagine that the three parts into which the inhabitants are here divided were precisely equal in point of numbers. It is unnecessary to the accuracy of prophetic explanation to say that a third part exactly was killed, that a third went into captivity, and that the other third is under God's continued dealings. Whatever may be the

truth, in the family of Jacob from the time they began to be a people until their captivities and slaughter be at an end, it is quite enough for finding the meaning of this portion of Scripture to say that one part was killed, that another went into captivity, and that the third part is under the discipline of chapter xiii. 9, from that hour to this. Indeed, no one who understands the genius of the Hebrew language will once think that the statement is intended to convey an exact idea of numbers; the words which explain the second verse are these, "in all the land two parts shall be cut off and die," literally or legally, by the sword or by captivity, "but the third shall be left therein,"—"shall not be cut off from the city," "and I will bring the third part through the fire," &c. Thereafter Jerusalem is no more, its service passes away (John iv. 21, 24), and the language that has marked its history is now applied to the history of that of which it was the type, even to the Christian church: which history commences with the third verse.—For an explanation of verse third we may compare Isaiah x. 12, and consult Gibbon's Roman History, Ferguson's Roman Republic, Alison's History of Europe, and the present state of Rome's descendants.—Verse 4, "His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives;" remembering what has been said on the meaning of the *κοινωνία ιδιωμάτων*, a comparison of Exodus xix. 18, and xxiv. 10, 11, with Deut. iv. 12, v. 3–5, Isa. lxiv. 1, and of the Apocalypse throughout, will show at once what is meant. There is no visible advent referred to here, for the place of the visible advent is "the air," 1 Thess. iv. 17, and the historical period referred to has witnessed no other descent of *JEHOVAH* than an apocalyptic one. From which we see

no reason whatever why we should not accept the interpretation of the Targum, "He shall make himself manifest in his power."—"On the Mount of Olives;" the same language is properly applied to that Jerusalem (Gal. iv. 26), which has taken the place of the city destroyed by the Romans—destroyed all but "the third part." Papal Rome and the spiritual Jerusalem answer fitly to Pagan Rome and the literal Jerusalem; and, if the name Jerusalem be mystically retained, there is good reason for keeping up such expressions as "the Mount of Olives" in this verse. And, therefore, to a great extent are we inclined to accept the remarks of the judicious Marckius upon this verse and downwards to the eleventh. He may be profitably consulted. As also Hutchison of Edinburgh, whose remarks on this chapter are as valuable as any thing he has written on the minor prophets.—From the beginning of the 12th verse to the 19th inclusive there is a parenthesis, partly broken in the 16th, but returned to in the three succeeding ones. So that the historical progression of the chapter will appear by passing over these. The construction of the scheme of the Apocalypse is an exact parallel to that of this chapter. If we regard the church, its history runs on from the 6th verse; if we regard the enemy, its history will run on from the same verse; the parenthesis being either the history of the church, or of the persecutor, according to the idea most prominent before the mind.—Then, lastly, the progress of the gospel, verses 9, 10, 11, is carried into the millennial prosperity described in verses 20, 21, as is shown by J. H. Michaelis on verse 9.—

There are now four particulars which will settle the question between our premillenarian friends and us,

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besides opening up more fully the meaning of a part of the chapter. That question is: Does this chapter carry us over a series of events from the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus until the restoration of the Jews in the time of millennial blessing; or is it all fulfilled after their future restoration, and immediately before the Millennium; or at the end of that period, and as parallel with Rev. xx. 7, 9? We maintain the first of these three; and there are four particulars which demonstrate the correctness of so doing. In the first place, there is the way in which the Lord is fighting with the nations which overthrew Jerusalem. "Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth." This is not a punishment of individuals, for the word is כָּל־הָעַמִּים, —LXX., *παντας τους λαους*; it applies to the different nations of the עַמִּים which came against Jerusalem. Wherefore it is a description of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. While Rome was yet "standing upon its feet," and the prestige of its name over all the earth, its strength decayed, its resources dried up, its "corpulency" wasted till it became a very skeleton. Together with this, its wisdom departed from it; there was no one that could take the helm of state and steer it through the difficulties: its eyes had consumed away. And as the last sign of a nation's decay, its very language deteriorated till the tongue of Rome consumed away in its mouth and became a dead language. Now, besides the length of time which general principles show this must take, besides that history has shown how gradual is its progress, the whole order of the chapter will be broken if we do not

explain it as taking place while the living waters are going forth from Jerusalem. It is while the Lord is standing on the Mount of Olives that both of them flow downwards through history. All this has been fulfilled. But like the Jerusalem that then was, the Jerusalem that has taken its place has enemies who have hitherto fought against her. Has not this plague followed them? And we have reason to expect it shall still do so with all those nations which persecute the church of God. This is the plague of the persecutor from the Lord. Nor can this be supposed to throw the Millennium indefinitely forward, for we believe a safe rule, and one every way philosophical, though it may appear trifling, is this,—that in proportion to the rapidity of all things now when compared with the past shall be that of the plague of these nations “which have fought against Jerusalem.” Now, this wasting of the persecuting nations must take place before the Millennium; there is no other period that can, by any possibility, be assigned to it.

In the second place, as there were intestine divisions, and discord, and treachery in Jerusalem while it was in a state of siege, so are there in the church while the persecuting army is besieging it. Calvin draws this from the 13th verse. We are not quite sure of the propriety of this. We rather think it applies to the intestine wars by which the persecuting nations of the preceding verse would waste away their flesh by fighting with each other. But we find the internal divisions of the church in the 14th verse. After we are told that enemies from without would fight against Jerusalem, it is added, “And even Judah shall fight against Jerusalem,” (*sic* in the Hebrew.) For there are three sorts of

enemies with which the church has to contend. These are the peoples *הַעַמִּים* of the 12th verse; there is Judah, or the treacherous ones, of the 14th; and there is the *הָאֵל כָּל-הָעוֹלָם*, *the army of all the heathen*, viz., the gold, and the silver, and the apparel in great abundance. Jerusalem's enemies are the persecutors without, the *traitors within*, and MAMMON. For observe how this 14th verse reads in the Hebrew—"And even Judah shall fight against Jerusalem; and scraped together shall be the army of all the gojim around (in the world), gold, and silver, and garments, in great abundance;" meaning that gold, and silver, and silks, and cottons, collected from all parts of the world, shall be an army uniting with the others to distress and waste the church of God. Now, when is it that Mammon has been "the sin of the Christian church?" Where is it that it has united with the other destructive powers to ruin Christ's heritage? Not during the Millennium, nor only immediately before it. Alas! the scene of Acts iv. 34, 35, soon passed away from the midst of it; and from the latter part of the second century till now, Mammon has been enthroned in every country of Christendom—in every branch of the church—in almost every congregation. And when is it that this church shall be disturbed from within, that those who are baptized and bear the Christian name are the most successful in weakening its hands and discouraging its heart? Do we not see the time and the thing, too, in the divisions of the Protestant churches? Do we not see it in the way in which the body of Christ is even now lying wellnigh prostrate before the adversary, rent into a thousand pieces? Yes.—If these things are to characterize the time after the Lord's Second Advent, alas for the truth of Scripture

promise! Is it for such a state of things that Isaiah's prophetic eye glows with seraphic delight? Is this what is meant by those burning words, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied"—"Thy people shall be all holy?" And yet all this finds its place between the time of the 4th verse and that of the 20th, and only then. All this is to take place after the Lord's coming, if the 4th verse contain that coming, as is the theory of our friends.

In the third place, we have the peculiar case of Egypt. We should like to be able to enter fully into this part of the chapter, as it would greatly serve our purpose; but the limits of a presbyterial essay forbid what would necessarily be very long. We shall therefore merely refer to the remarks made upon it in the parallel place of Joel. To fulfil our task in dealing with premillennialism, it is quite enough to say that if Egypt is to be a sharer with Israel in the happy period to which we look forward; and if famines and distresses of a spiritual, political, and temporal kind, are to mark its history previous to that; and if the notice of it in this chapter presents us with its sterile condition—then the chapter speaks of a period which precedes the Millennium.

In the fourth place, there is that singular expression of the 21st verse, "There shall no more be the Canaanite in the house of the Lord." This does not mean that there shall no longer be a *merchant* in the Lord's house, though this would suit well with John ii. 14-16, and the traffic which has been carried on in the service of Mammon. Nor does it refer to the command that "Ammonites," &c., should not be permitted to enter into the house of the Lord, for no nation or person is

excluded from the grace of the New Testament. We believe the following remarks will be appropriate; and it is on the strength of them we resist the tempting offer presented by translating it "merchant," to support the observations made on the power of Mammon in weakening the body of Christ. The apostle Paul, in Gal. iii. 8; Rom. xv. 8, 13, 16, and many other places, referring to the Abrahamic church, declares that it shall yet embrace all nations: "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." And again, specially connecting this with the seed of Abraham, "Not seeds as of many, but as of one, in thy seed, which is Christ," he makes the very blessing which descended on the patriarch himself depend on him who should spring from him. He says, "Christ was the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers; and also of the Gentiles, that they might glorify God for his mercy." This Abrahamic church, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the prophet, priest, and king, is to embrace all nations, for the covenant under which it was constituted does so. In other words, all nations shall, by God's grace, embrace the gospel, and be brought into it through faith. This faith respects a gospel, for "God preached the gospel unto Abraham;" and therefore this same gospel, which embraced him, is to be preached to all nations, so as to embrace them. Well, then, the commencement of this church is indicated thus:—A weak, wandering, witnessing church, sojourning in a land that does not belong to it save by promise—seen in the actual circumstances of Abraham at the time, and the very significant statement, "The Canaanite was then in the land." Divest all this of the typical character and symbolic language,

and what have we? The church of God, constituted under promises which centred in Christ, placed in a world which is full of "Canaanites." It wanders up and down in it, lifting up a testimony for the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth; and though weak, and small, and despised, at its beginning, and during the long dreary period of witness-bearing, still it has the promise of the world: "In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the world be blessed." And sometimes, like the patriarch, it shows its dignity, and grasps the sceptre, and is mighty even in the eyes of the Canaanites. We pass on through the lapse of ages; we enter upon prophetic times; we see nations born in a day; we hear anthems of praise swelling over every country, its music entering our wearied spirits, and even now reviving them, as if there dropped liquid odours from the wings of that holy dove which hovers over Messiah's church with the branch of peace to implant in each wounded heart; at length we see the church of all nations "keeping the feast of tabernacles," not now as during its wilderness sojourn, when it had to show itself a pilgrim, but in the way described in Isaiah chapter xii.; and as an indication that the gospel has accomplished the divine design, and that Abraham—the church that is—has got his own now, we are told in the closing voice of Zechariah, "There shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord." Why is this sentence put into this place with so little connection, as we might think, with that of which the prophet speaks? Because he is declaring the ultimate triumph of the Abrahamic church. At the commencement of that church it is said, "The Canaanite was then in the land;" at its completion in Millennial triumph it

is said, "There shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord." That which was "the land" then, a dreary usurped land, without God and Christ, is now "the house of the Lord," and full of his glory. Does not this shed light on the last chapter of this difficult book, and is not this expression placed there as a guiding thread? Does it not show that the heaven which was hid in one family extends to the world, and that the world is to be brought into covenant with God by the preaching of the gospel? And whether the remarks made on this chapter be deemed satisfactory or no, we believe enough has been said to demonstrate that it gives at least no countenance to the premillennial theory, which is our chief design.

The truth is, there is absolutely nothing in the Bible to support the idea of a visible advent of the Lord before the Millennium. We are aware of the many other passages to which our friends appeal. Two classes of them which constitute really a difficulty,—they say to *us*, we shall prove it is to *them*,—shall be examined in the fourth part. And, incidentally, notice shall be taken of the others, such as Matt. xxiv. and some places in Isaiah. But to these we need not now give special attention. It would occupy too much space; and, we are confident, a conjunct view of all that shall be in this essay will show it to be a work of supererogation, save as comments upon Holy Scripture. Already it is very manifest how unsolid is the basis on which our friends have placed their system. Already we would hope is the strong title of our essay justified. But we have more to say.

1. It has already been stated that the gospel is given by God for the conversion of all nations. But the

gospel is the ministration of the Spirit, and this ministration is during the Lord's absence.—(John xvi. 7.) The time of his absence and the continuance of this ministration is till the world be convinced, verse 8. But conviction by the Spirit is in order to conversion and salvation. Any other kind of conviction is either exhibited in despair or in hell, and certainly is not the work of the Holy Spirit. This might be illustrated in another way. Faith is called in the Scripture "the faith of God's elect;" that is, all the elect shall be saved by faith alone. When the election is exhausted, when there is no other elect soul to be born, then the world shall be at an end, for it is preserved only for the sake of the election. But this faith is the operation of God the Spirit, and therefore he will continue his peculiar work till the election be completed. And faith embraces an absent, not a present Lord; therefore the Lord comes not till the Spirit's work be at a close—therefore it is expedient for the church that the Lord should not be visible in the midst of it till the number of the elect be fulfilled; for if he were not absent, we should not have the presence of the Paraclete; and if we had not this presence, we should have no faith; and if we had no faith, we should have no salvation; and if no salvation, what would the Lord's presence be? Amos v. 18, 19, 20, will supply the answer. Now, this agrees precisely with the relation of the persons of the Holy Trinity to the work of redemption; and one of the most profitable inquiries, as well as the most sweeping confutation of the theory we are examining, will be found in the nature of the Trinity, and the relation borne to redeeming work by each divine Person. It is a pity more deep thought is not given to this subject. In the economy

of redemption, the Father elects, the Son redeems, the Spirit draws. The Son reveals the Father, who is not known but in the Son. The Spirit reveals the Son our Lord, who is not known as the Christ of God save in the Holy Ghost. Now, the elected of the Father, the purchased of the Son, and the regenerated of the Spirit, are one number of individuals. If we view these individuals with the idea of election before the mind, then our minds necessarily terminate on the act of the Father, that is, on the Father; if we view nothing but redemption, strictly so called, it terminates on the Son; and if we view nothing but renovation, it terminates on the Spirit alone. In the work of satisfaction, atonement, righteousness, no other Person of the Godhead steps in but the Son; in that of renovation, the application of the Son's work to all whom it respected, no other person steps in but the Spirit. There would be a discord in the harmony of the Godhead if there did; for the same order obtains in the personal operations as does in the personal subsistences in the Trinity. And while that is an order developed without the element of time on God's part, on the part of man the only way in which it can be understood is by the idea of a succession of time, events, results, Persons. If the Lord take the place of the Spirit before the election be all saved, the order of Persons is destroyed; or if the Lord were to appear in the field of renovation in company with the Spirit, there would be exhibited an act which finds no place in any other of the personal operations which flow from the Triune Jehovah. Yet not on this account is the Father or the Son away from the church, or unengaged in the work of regeneration, for the Father in the Son by the Spirit doth work; for when the Spirit

worketh, God doth work, the divine essence being omnipotently active in the person of the Spirit—for *Spiritus Dei nihil aliud est quam Deus Spiritus*. All which agrees with such passages as 1 Cor. xv. 25; Acts iii. 21; and Heb. x. 12, 13, where Jesus Christ is represented as going into the heavens, having received them as a kingdom,—(Ὁν δεῖ οὐρανοὺς μὲν δεξασθαι, *Who must receive the heavens*, until, &c.; the same Greek construction you will find in 2 Tim. ii. 6),—until the Holy Ghost shall have put all things under him, and prepared this world, in its baptism of fire, to be a fit place for the Lord and his glorified church to dwell in. Which baptism cannot take place till every elect soul shall have been baptized; for the “creation” is waiting till then, (Romans viii. 17–25); and the one laver of regeneration must be a world’s sacrament before that world can be washed in fire. This line of argument might also be drawn from the formula—the Father creates, the Son redeems, the Spirit regenerates.

2. If the Spirit in his peculiar ministry is only needed during the Lord’s absence, so are the word and sacraments. In fact, the one implies the other; but we shall also attend to this particular on its own merits. If any one should feel inclined to dispute this proposition as regards the word, it cannot be done as regards the sacraments; for the substance of the sacrament is Jesus Christ not seen by the bodily eye, nor cognizant to the bodily senses, as it is. But the sacraments cannot exist without the word of promise which they seal, just as we cannot suppose the word to be given without sacraments, if a complete revelation from God to creatures with a sensational nature be intended. It is nothing to the purpose to speak of the sacraments in the life of

Christ, for they required to be instituted ; and no truth can be plainer to one who knows their meaning than this, that they cease as soon as he who is the substance of them appears. The "inward spiritual grace" of them is nothing else than that seal of the Holy Ghost which brings the Lord to us and us to him in a spiritual communion, by means of suitable ordinances ; so that even the necessity for this inward spiritual grace, so far as it exhibits the life of faith, shall cease when the Lord comes again. Sacraments, in the visible and invisible use and effects of them, shall cease, and also the word which always accompanies them, or rather which they always accompany, as soon as the Lord appears. Now, the continuance of these is indicated when Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me till I come."—(See also 1 Cor. xi.) Here it is intimated, in the first place, that the sacrament shall cease when the Lord comes, and not till then ; and, secondly, that the two sacraments are coeval, which throws us upon Matthew xxviii. 18–20, to obtain a distinct reply to the question, When is this coming to take place, and the word and sacraments be needed no more ? The answer is, When "all nations" are disciplined, baptized, and taught. And lest there should be any mistake, it is added, "Lo, I am with you always unto the end of the world," showing that the ministry of word, and sacrament, and prayer, shall continue to the end of the world. Wherefore the end of the world shall not take place *before* all nations are baptized into Jesus Christ, although some strange explanations of this phrase have been given by men who wrest the Scriptures, calling it "the end of the age or dispensation." Suppose it were the end of the age, and not the end of all things, what would our friends gain

by it? All nations are to be baptized into Christ (which is the true idea of the Millennium) before it take place—that is, baptism is to be exhausted before it; but as long as there is a visible church, it shall have the visible sacraments, and therefore when the sacraments are at an end, the visible church is at a close. But when the visible church is at a close, the kingdom of glory begins, time is no more, eternity rolls on. Strange that, for the sake of a theory, such a translation as this should be adopted! What will they gain by it? Suppose it took place a thousand or a hundred thousand years before time be at a close, it is distinctly stated in God's Word that the Lord does not come till the end of all things (an "all things" which of course includes time and death, &c.), and therefore by their own postulate are they deprived of the visible presence of the Saviour during the Millennium. And, again, how inconsistent is this with a passage of their own, Matt. xxvi. 30, 31. Does not this place seem to say that the end of all things is meant by any term you please which is associated with the Second Advent? What says it? When the number of the elect is ready to be gathered and delivered up to the Father, Christ will come, the trumpet shall sound, and all tribes of the earth shall mourn. If, however, the conversion of the world were to succeed or immediately precede the Advent, what reason would there be for this mourning? It is not a *godly sorrow* that prompts it, but the anguish of despair. It is not the idea of hatred and warring against the Lord and his saints surely that is conveyed in this wailing. But we need not pursue this. Clear it is that the sounding of the trumpet shall be followed with the resurrection of myriads who shall have bitter cause to

join their wailing with the miserable apostates who dwell on the earth at the time. And then *time* and *death* shall be no more. But both these are to continue during the Millennium, as we shall now see.

3. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Now, the destruction or counteraction of death can be no other than resurrection, and a ceasing to die afterwards. It is vain to confine the idea to the cessation of mortality, for so long as a dead body remained in the earth, death would not be destroyed. But the Lord sits at the right hand of the Father till the last enemy be destroyed. He does so till *all* his enemies be made his footstool; and death is the last to be so. Does the sitting at the Father's right hand mean a thing which may consist with visible presence on the earth, as they say intercession may? Is this phrase used in the New Testament only to express a state of honour, and not a locality—a locality, we mean, somewhere else than on earth? Nay, it is opposed to visibility. Whatever it be, and wherever it be, it continues the same *as now* till death be destroyed, for the apostle says he is *waiting* till all his enemies be made his footstool. Whatever time he may come, we are in plain words told it will not be till death is destroyed. And no one who understands the meaning of words can hold that it is destroyed so long as multitudes are in their graves. When death is destroyed, destroyed out of God's world, there is nothing but life. It is therefore at the time of the resurrection that the Lord comes. And it has already, yea it is now proved, that there can only be one resurrection. And when this takes place, time shall be no more,—(Rev. xxi. 4); for this mortal shall put on immortality, death be swallowed up in life, and God be all in

all. This is the state of things when our Lord comes again. But will any of our friends say that no deaths shall take place during the Millennium? Why, then, that passage Isaiah lxv. 20? Life shall be longer then; people, perhaps, may not die in infancy, but still they shall die. And will there be no *time* then? Why speak of a hundred years old then? Wherefore there cannot be a clearer syllogism than this:—The Lord comes not visibly to this earth till death be destroyed; but there shall be death during the Millennium, therefore he comes not till after it.

Thus, then, we conclude that,—as the reproving of the world, the subjugation of all nations under Christ, and the first resurrection (to be explained immediately), are the work of the Spirit, and as he works while the Lord is absent,—the Second Advent will not take place till after the Millennium. The fact of a universal church, having the characteristics described in Isaiah and others of the prophets, being in the world, and that in such a way as that the church and the world shall be correlative terms, is evident from Psalms ii., cx., xlv., xlvii., lxxii., &c.; and Acts iii. 21; 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25; Zech. xiv.; Daniel ii. 34, 35; and multitudes of other texts. There will still be “tares” or hypocrites in the church, for this arises from the heart of man; but there shall be no Canaanites in the Lord’s house, for this arises from the power of the wicked one, and he is bound. The simple fact that the Canaanites were not in the church, and the tares were, shows that they are not identical. There will be tares as long as original sin remains—that is, as long as the human race descends from Adam by ordinary generation; but the Canaanite shall cease, for the old serpent that deceived the na-

tions and carried the world into the church shall be bound.

We mentioned that there are many incidental proofs scattered over the sacred page which appear filled with light when viewed in connection with other arguments. We shall present a few out of the many which any one may gather in the course of reading the Scriptures. 1. In Paul's Epistle to the Philippians he says, "God hath highly exalteth Christ Jesus, and given him a name which is above every name: that at *the name* of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." In reading this we instinctively inquire, How is it to be brought about? In Hebrews x. 13, we are told that this man,—the humanity specially pointed out,—is waiting at the right hand of the Majesty on high until this great result be effected. It is not yet accomplished, but it will be; and therefore the Lord will continue where he now is until then,—that is, until after it; for from the time of sitting down at God's right hand till the subjugation of all things, there is no intimation of any change of position. Wherefore homage is rendered to "the name" of an invisible person. And the apostle gives the Philippian church three means by which, under God, who worketh both to will and to do, the name of Jesus may be thus exalted:—Their advancement in personal holiness; their blameless conduct in the world; and their positive activity in shining as lights (windows—the word, however, is used by the LXX. in Genesis i. 16) in the world, holding forth the word of life.—(See chapter ii. 12–16.) Alas! instead of this, most Christians "seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." 2. It used to be a favourite theme

with some to dwell on the evidences of the Lord's resurrection; and they found always a deal of difficulty in getting the question settled, Why did not the Lord appear to his enemies, so as to confound their lies, and prove to all that he was indeed risen from the dead? Various answers were given, some of them satisfactory enough. We shall supply another. If our Lord had permitted his enemies to look upon him, it would have been a renewing of his humiliation. It was a part of that estate of humiliation which the Saviour of mankind had to undergo, that ungodly and unbelieving men were able to look at him. With his abode in the grave that humiliation is gone for ever, and his enemies have never seen him since (compare Acts ix. 7), nor shall they till they see him as their Judge. Indeed, so marked is this thing, that even *his own* could not look upon him, nor see him, during the forty days he abode on the earth after his resurrection, save by a direct act of his will. When they saw him, we are told of it always in such words as these, "He showed himself unto them," "He appeared to them," "He was seen of them," "He was made known to them." Suppose, then, the glorious One were to appear on earth now, or at any time before the changing of those who are alive, and the resurrection of the dead, ungodly men could look at him. Even though we might suppose the "Canaanites" driven out of the land, and sent to the place prepared for them, still there would be tares in the church (Matt. xiii. 30, else it is the glorified church), and they would see him—they would look on him—they might converse with him; all which would throw us back to his state of humiliation again. The world never can be in such circumstances as that the Lord could appear, and the ungodly see him, save at

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that time when it shall be in flames, and the living be "changed"—when "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." 3. When the Lord appeared to John in Patmos as the great King, how are the stately steps of his power, by which he goeth forth to take possession of the world as its lawful sovereign, characterized or exhibited? By the seven stars in his right hand, and the two-edged sword proceeding from his mouth—that is, by the gospel ministry and the Holy Scriptures. (Compare Heb. iv. 12 and Rev. xix. 11-16.) In other words, the universal Headship of the Lord Jesus is to be made known in all the earth by the gospel ministry. 4. When he appeared to John in such a glorious way, as one like unto the Son of Man, he who had stood gazing up into heaven with a breaking heart when his Master was leaving him, would instinctively desire to ask questions about himself—where he was—when he would return; in short, his attention would naturally be all turned upon the Lord. He is not, however, allowed to do so: "It is expedient for you that I go away." Another work lies before John and the body of ministers than to gaze up to heaven, or to rest in satisfied delight in personal intercourse with the Redeemer, or to turn monk; and his attention is at once and wholly turned to the church, and away from the immediate view of his Lord,—an example to all ministers so long as the church needs our attention, which it will do to the end of time. 5. Paul directs the minds of ministers to this very thing; for when urging Timothy (2d Epist. iv. 1, 2) to faithfulness and diligence in preaching the Word, he charges him before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing and his king-

dom; as much as to say, that while the ministerial work is needed, the Lord's *ἐπιφάνεια* shall not take place. We might point out and enlarge the following things:—That the close of preaching is at the appearing of the Lord—that the appearing of the Lord is at the commencement of his kingdom—that this kingdom is not the triumph of grace, but the eternal kingdom of glory—that the judgment of the quick and the dead (*ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς* = the whole humanity, for this is its force without the article) shall take place when the Lord appears; but we have not time to enlarge. We shall only say, that the number of these incidental proofs might be greatly enlarged. We do not say they would of themselves be conclusive against premillennialism, but we do think they constitute a corroborative evidence when viewed in connection with the other matters which have been adduced. And, therefore, in placing before you this whole line of argument, and commending it to a careful attention, is it without sufficient reason we close it up with the judgment pronounced by the Synod of London in 1552, before the death of the sixth Edward, and placed among the standards of the English church:—“*Qui millenariorum fabulam revocare conantur, sacris literis adversantur, et in Judaica deliramenta sese precipitant?*” And although the Westminster Assembly did not formally pronounce upon it, is there any minister so unacquainted with the writings of these great men, as not to know that George Gillespie speaks out the view of most of them on this subject, when he says—“These new lights are not new. They are not lights, because not according to the Word of God; nor new, because the very same things have been before moved and maintained. Antinomianism, Anabaptism, universal atone-

ment by the death of Christ, universal salvation, a temporal and earthly kingdom of Christ, &c., have been maintained, *and confuted also*, before this age?" And as if to show the feeling of the universal church, and to prove that the idea has been considered unscriptural, it is ignored by all the creeds.

PART III.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

WE stated that an explanation of this subject would be given. While it does not properly present itself as an argument to either side—for it is a good rule to bring forward nothing in support of a position, the meaning of which is disputed—it will still throw much light upon the preceding argument. And it is quite necessary to seek some explanation of it, lest any one should imagine the unity of the scheme, which shall be presented in this essay, to be broken by the ideas which conventionally are attached to the phrase, “the first resurrection.” Much stress has been laid upon its meaning by our friends; not indeed upon its true meaning,—that they have entirely missed,—but upon that which, by an empty exegesis, they have been accustomed to assign to it. We do not speak thoughtlessly or arrogantly when we say this. Our position, in opposing the views of many godly men, is far too solemn a one to admit of any such thing. We shall endeavour, by a calm and sober analysis, to see how far our friends are justified in drawing for the support of their system upon this subject, presented in the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse. We are not afraid of the result. The precise question to

keep before our minds is this, What is the meaning of the words, "This is the first resurrection, blessed and holy is he who hath part in the first resurrection;" and do they give any countenance to the idea that all the saints, or only the martyrs, shall be raised from the dead at the commencement of the Millennium? In order that a clear path may be open before us when specially speaking of the point at issue, a few notes of exposition are necessary.

That promise, under which the dispensation of mercy began, runs thus: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." We are glad to find that Andrew Fuller agrees with us in making a distinction between the crushing of the serpent's head and the crushing of Satan himself. Roberts, in his "*Mysterie and Marrow of the Bible*," seems to do the same, and other eminent authors whom we need not particularize. In that nature which the Son of God assumed into union with himself, and which was so far beneath him as to be properly designated his heel, or that by which he marks his "goings" upon this world of ours, the serpent crushed him. And in that nature which the devil assumed when tempting Eve, and which was so far above himself as to be rightly termed his head (Milton has excellently wrought out the idea), even that assumed character in which he has deceived the world and the church from that day to this, will the seed of the woman crush him. There will be no assumed character—no mask—no show of spirituality—no form of an angel of light, in the great Cæsarism of the end. The name of serpent shall have ceased then; and the deceiver of the nations is Satan the devil, in his own

base, black character. If then the Bible mark the history and progress of this dispensation of grace and love, it will carefully point out these two cardinal points, the bruising of the heel and the bruising of the head. It will do so both as to the general meaning of the word seed, and its special; that is, both the bruising of the Son of Man and of his church will be marked out, and that of the old serpent and his followers. It does so in language singularly precise. What were the words made use of by the serpent's seed when the heel of Christ was bruised, and he descended into the depths of the earth (into the earth's abyss תְּהוֹמוֹת הָאָרֶץ)? They called him "the deceiver;" and having got him into the "grave's abyss," they rolled a large stone upon it, and "shut him up, and set a seal upon him," that he might not deceive the people any more. (Matt. xxvii. 63-66.) They dared to use such language of, and do such things to, the Son of God; they presumed to think they had got him into the abyss and could keep him there. But it was only the heel that was bruised. The Lord lay down on his peaceful bed for a little till it recovered, and then, by the Spirit of holiness, he burst asunder the bands of death and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. But let us pass on to the bruising of the serpent's head, and how is it marked? (Rev. xx. 2, 3.) Wellnigh in similar language to that which describes his conduct to the Lord of glory. He is cast into the abyss,—an expression different from that in verse 10, and used (by no chance coincidence) with a distinct reference to a grave. The same word is used, in Romans x. 7, in speaking of the Lord's state of death, and resurrection from the grave. And the Hebrew scholar knows how closely interwoven is the idea of a grave with such

words as Sheol, the depths of the earth, שְׁאוֹל, &c. Wherefore this place of the Apocalypse marks the bruising of the serpent's head, and the descent of Him who has the keys of hades and of death to cast the serpent into its grave. "Say not in thy heart who shall descend into the abyss, that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead," for he is not there; he hath risen and left an empty grave for the reception of the old man. By faith, his people cast their body of sin and of death into it; and he is coming down to seize the old serpent himself, and throw him into that grave headlong, and to roll a great stone upon him to shut him up, and to set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till, &c. This place marks, then, the bruising of the serpent's head. And if so, the consequences will follow,—only of an opposite kind,—as followed on the bruising of the heel of Christ. As then the serpent and his seed had it all their own way, so now the seed of the woman—Christ and his people—have it all in the way the martyrs have prayed and suffered for. As, then, Satan had his short-lived triumph *in his members*, so now Christ the Lord will have the millennial triumph in his members—that is, in the church. According to the promises—according to the method of the divine government—according to the law of compensation, there must be a state of things, after the bruising of the serpent's head, corresponding to what there was after the heel of Christ was bruised. And this on the *outside of Eden*; for the promise of Genesis iii. 15 belongs to the woman and her seed out of paradise, and not in it, nor restored to it. As Christ and his church had to descend into the abyss of the grave under the crushing which the serpent has been permitted to accomplish, so must

the serpent and his seed descend into the abyss under the crushing which the seed of the woman will effect. And all this takes place in the world.

It is only visibly that the seed of the woman goes into the grave; invisibly it "ascends unto God and his throne." Wherefore visibly, too, shall the serpent and his seed be thrust down into the abyss,—that is, it is not the future punishment which is referred to, but the present existence which is taken away. We know what the eternal lot of Antichristian persecutors is, but it is not referred to here. The cause and kingdom of the prince of this world shall die the death, and be thrust down into Christ's empty grave, and the stone be rolled upon the mouth of it, and the seal of God make it sure. And there it lies, unable to come forth again until God please. And he keeps it there for the thousand years, "and after that he must be loosed a little season."

Now, as the death and burial of the seed of the woman takes place during the supremacy of the usurping prince, the death and burial of the serpent and his seed will take place during the supremacy of the world's lawful king. And therefore the life of the church and the death of the world will correspond to the death of the church and the life of the world. But the world lives *now*, and the church dies—the world is triumphing, and the church is crushed. In other words, Christ's cause is at a low ebb, and that of the serpent prosperous. But it is not meet that the bands of death should hold it; God will raise it up again. This is the first resurrection. The church shall arise from its present death, and the world descend from its present life. The church shall live, the world shall die. The resurrection

of the woman's seed takes place, and the burial of the old serpent and his brood.

We have already explained the fourth verse in part. One matter of it only remains. Is the word "souls" used for persons, as it often is in all languages? The construction is *τας ψυχας των πεπελεκισμενων*. Now, it might form a very nice inquiry whether it refer to persons or souls. There can be no doubt but the genitive is often used instead of the adjective of concord; as the people of holiness, for the holy people; the soul of life, for the living soul; and we remember several examples of this, both in Greek and in Latin. At the same time, we do not think this construction occurs either in the Hebrew or Greek Bible or Testament. Romans ii. 9, 1 Peter iii. 20, and, both in Hebrew and Greek, Ezekiel xviii. 20, Genesis xli. 26, Exodus xii. 15, would show that if *persons* were meant in Rev. vi. 9 and xx. 4, the construction would have been *τας ψυχας τας πεπελεκισμενας*, which is confirmed by chapter xviii. 13, where souls of men certainly mean souls and not persons. So that if we attend to the construction only, we would at once conclude that souls, in the strict meaning of the word, are meant.

And, again, the question might be put, Does it not stand for dead bodies? Does it not mean, "I saw the bodies of those that had been slain, and they lived and reigned with Christ?" In Hebrew and Greek, and (Augustine tells us it is so) in Latin, the words *שׂרֵפָה*, *ψυχη*, *anima*, are used to signify a dead body. It might be replied that the word is so used in Hebrew as that it cannot be mistaken, as in Leviticus xxi. 11, Numbers vi. 6, and ix. 6, 7, seeing that it is accompanied by *נֶפֶשׁ* as a participle in one case, which is both

masculine and feminine in its gender, and therefore feminine here; and in the other by אֶפְרָסִי as an adjectival noun—a *nephesh Adam* being a most appropriate name for that periphrasis, “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” And it might also be shown that, “The blood is the life thereof,” is an expression which would account for two or three more of the passages, by making them mean *blood*. This, however, would leave Leviticus xxi. 1, Numbers v. 2, and Haggai ii. 13, to be accounted for, which can be done no otherwise than Maimonides has it, when he says that this word signified the body after the departure of the soul. And our translators, and Ainsworth and Bush, have followed him. But of course our friends will never think of calling it bodies here; for besides the strange contrast it would present to have bodies pointed out in this way, it would not in the least advantage their theory, since it is an *apocalyptic* sight of them, as in chapter vi. 9, and because the one resurrection has already been proved. We are not aware that any of them, have ever asked us to translate it as we do Leviticus xxi. 1. We may be mistaken, but we have not met with it in any of their books we have consulted. We have no doubt whatever that souls are literally referred to, both on account of the peculiar construction, and also because it can be demonstrated that the martyrs are not to be raised from the dead during the Millennium. But they are referred to in such a way as to imply personality, for “the rest of the dead,” referring to the Antichristian army, is used in a personal way, and the two are in contrast. There is no difficulty in demolishing the premillenarian meaning of the word; but this gives no satisfaction, unless we can really discover what it does mean. And we think

that which suits the great idea of this book is the one we have already given, viz., that the martyrs are still viewed as a part of the church, that we can feel as if we were in their company, and that this shall be much more realized during the Millennium, when the members of the Church shall know more clearly what great things they owe to the martyrs, and be more thankful for that which has been transmitted to them with tears, and blood, and prayers, and death, than they now are.

In the fifth and sixth verses there is a *hysteron proteron*, as is often the case in the sacred writings. The logical place for the words, "The rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished," is between the sixth and seventh verses. But why stands it where it is? By no error whatever in the MSS., but in strict conformity with the philosophy of the association of ideas. We appeal to all who have made themselves intimate with the style of Scripture, whether they would not *a priori* expect these words to stand where they do, and yet logically to belong to the commencement of the seventh verse. In verses 2-4, the Millennium or first resurrection has been revealed. It consists of life; it consists also of death. Both the life and the death are before the apostle's view, as making up the one thing he speaks of; and before he can speak of this first resurrection, or declare its blessedness, the crushing of the serpent's head must be declared. But for the sake of analysis, how are we to gather it up? Certainly by classifying the first resurrection and its predicates, and then uniting the first part of the fifth verse with the seventh, so as to perceive how the reviving of the rest of the dead and the loosing of Satan refer to one and the same thing. Hence the first resurrection is the life of the

seed of the woman—the Head and the members—after being bruised in the heel; and the living of the rest of the dead is the revival of the seed of the serpent—the Devil and his professed followers—after the bruising of its head, which, however, is not called a resurrection, but only “a loosing out of prison for a little time.”

We are now prepared for a clear and direct statement of what is here meant, at least we shall be so, as soon as this exposition of the relative meaning of the word “first” to something else than “the rest of the dead,” is confirmed upon doctrinal grounds; and also in its relation to the resurrection of saints or wicked at the last day. We grant in the most cordial manner that it has no reference to the loosing of Satan and the reviving of his cause in the world, for that is not called a resurrection—that is not the second resurrection. The word resurrection cannot be applied to a thing of death, and which runs on into the second death. We grant this most cordially. We maintain it. But we also hold that it bears no relative meaning to the rest of the dead, as if that remainder meant either dead saints or dead wicked, lying in their graves till some future period. Is any one still inclined, after all that has been said, to affirm that some shall be raised from their graves before others, and that this is the meaning of the first resurrection? Then, notwithstanding that it is almost superfluous to write more, to show the baselessness of such a theory, we may again approach it with a most important historical fact. Suppose it meant a relative rising of *parties* in the way they maintain;—In 1 Cor. xv. 23–26, we are told of two resurrections; the *first*, that of the Lord Jesus; the *second*, that of all who are his at his coming—the coming, namely, of 2 Tim. iv. 1,

which synchronizes with "the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; having put down all rule and authority and power," and which is in order "to judge quick and dead." If the apocalyptic first resurrection is to be explained according to the scheme of our friends, then it becomes a general Scripture doctrine; and the only general doctrine on this subject is that of Acts xxvi. 23, and the place of Corinthians referred to. So that, by all fair reasoning, it is the LORD's *resurrection* that must be meant, for the apostle distinctly makes this statement. Nor will that incident, Matthew xxvii. 52, 53, oppose this any more than the raising of Lazarus or of the young man at Nain, though it would give difficulty to the system of our friends. Wherefore there can be nothing clearer than this, that if there be a doctrine of the Word of God declaring that there are two resurrections in the history of the church—these being a resurrection of parties—we must search that Word for a distinct mention of these parties. And the only parties to which any reference whatever is made are of such a kind and so express, as to require at once the application of the first resurrection to our Lord, and of the second to all who are his at his coming. This is a doctrine—this is a truth—this is one of the most important doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. But a single glance at this chapter of the Apocalypse suffices to show that our Lord's resurrection mentioned by the evangelists is not the special object of the apostle's vision. What then is it? If this be not the meaning of the vision, nor of this expression, what is?

There is a double resurrection—the first and the second—in the case of each redeemed sinner, in the case of a re-

deemed church, and in the case of a redeemed world, as there was in the case of the Lord Jesus Christ the Head. It has already been said that the counteraction of death is no other than resurrection. What, then, is the death which in redeeming work has to be counteracted? It is the death of the soul and also of the body. And what mean these deaths? The separation of a spiritual being from Him who is its life, and of the animal being from that which is the principle of its life. The restitution of animal life—the reunion of the soul and body—does not imply a spiritual existence any more than the present union of them does; and therefore the resurrection of the body is not a deliverance from the second death. But the restitution of spiritual life places a man in such a position, as that the second death has no power over him. So that to the wicked, raised as they shall be at the last day, there is still the second or eternal death. It is not so with believers; when they are raised from spiritual death, they have, in the Holy Ghost, who quickens them, a seal of their physical anastasis, and of their eternal glory and deliverance from the second death. Here, then, we find the meaning of the first resurrection. If it be not that of *parties*, it is that of *parts*; if it be not the revival of dead persons, it is that of their spiritual existence in the universal diffusion of the principles which breathed through their own spirits a heavenly vitality. In a word, the first resurrection is that of the SOUL. It is the counteraction of the soul's separation from God. It is the quickening from spiritual death, which in order must precede that of the body. The Apocalypse speaks not of individuals but of the church, it speaks not of a man but of a world of men. And therefore the first resur-

rection which it particularizes must refer to the church and the church's world ; but the nature of it must be gathered from what it is in the individual, and especially from what it was in the Head. Let us trace it in the different parties.

1. The first and second resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.—Our Lord's humanity was a true body and a reasonable soul. Into that humanity guilt was taken by a real transfer, so as that the effects of sin were really there. When our Redeemer died, it was not in phantasm; and when he groaned in agony of soul, it was not a well-sustained dissimulation. There was sin there, not in act but in imputation; the effects of that sin were there, not in imputation, but in fact. All the sin was there by transfer, and all the misery and death accompanied it. And even as it issued in the death of the body, so did it effect the death of the soul. The soul of the Redeemer was separated from God, and shut up amid the terrors and torments which are inseparable from sin; not by an abode in Sheol, for "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," shows that his intermediate state was not one of misery. That article of the creed (inserted to counteract the Apollinarian heresy), "He descended into hell," by no means indicates that the separation of the soul of Christ from the light of God took place when it was where other souls are. No. Hell rushed into his holy soul before he died, not in its pollutions, but in its agonies. We are used to think and speak of the Lord's death, and the mind terminates not in the act upon the soul of Christ but his body. It is right a veil should be drawn over his soul's death, even as darkness enveloped his drooping body. But it is not right that the spiritually-

minded should keep away from meditation on the spiritual death of the Lord—his sensible separation from his Father's love—to contemplate merely physical sufferings. The soul of the Lord died within him. And when did that death of his soul take place? Was not its dying agony seen in Gethsemane? "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, *even unto death.*" And was not the death itself seen during those three hours, marked with universal darkness—marked with the burning tears of angels and of the universal redeemed church?—was it not when, in the anguish of grief and death, he—thy Redeemer, believer—cried out "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" Let the silence of heaven and earth hang over these three hours, that believers may weep with their Lord. And when the light dawned upon his soul again (Ps. xxii.), and ere his head sank upon the breast of death, did not his first resurrection take place?—a resurrection wherein his soul burst into a life it never knew before. And when, after the resurrection, in which he burst asunder the bands of death, he remained on the earth for forty days, did he not exhibit the nature of that life which those enjoy over whom the second death shall have no power,—not that life which believers have in heaven, but that spiritual existence they enjoy here, which is, or ought to be, as independent of carnal obstructions as the Lord's body was of physical? In all which he is the prototokos from the dead, taking the order of precedence, as is most due. "He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all he may have the pre-eminence."

2. Why should it be thought a strange thing that there should be this double resurrection in the case of each

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elect person? There is the death of the soul as well as of the body; and could words be used with more precision than in calling the counteraction of this a resurrection? Were there not the fact of this first resurrection in the history of the redeemed sinner, he would be under the power of the second death for ever; and it is not possible that a spiritual person should have any part of him always holden by death: there shall be also a resurrection of his body. All this flows from that intimate union which subsists between him and his Lord. That which is true in the Head is so in the members. We are baptized into it. In our Head we die, not only objectively, by faith, but efficaciously, by one Spirit. In our risen Head we live, not only in law but in newness of life. By the voice of his Spirit we live in soul now, as we shall in the last day by the voice of the King. Sin having been put away by the sacrifice of the body of Christ—in the Head by act, in the members by faith—a body united by one Spirit, the Father draws the whole body into communion with himself; each one in his order. Throw away the element of time and the idea of succession which attach to our state here, and what have we? The whole body—the Head and members—descending into one grave, and rising in the one resurrection of soul and body. Why should the incident of *time* affect our calculations, words, or feelings? Jesus is risen: I am risen. From my soul are shaken off the bands and weeds of corruption—my sins; and from the body are shaken off in him, and shall yet be in me, the weeds of corruption I carry with me to the grave, and the bonds which keep me there.

3. There is also a first resurrection in the history of

the visible church, as well as the second referred to in 1 Thessalonians iv. And as the church is a visible corporation, its first resurrection as well as its second is both in a corporate and visible way. We could suppose the first revival of the individual to be hid—to be unknown to his fellows; but such a thing finds no place in the church. We are now approaching the apocalyptic vision. In this book two armies are described, that of Christ and that of Antichrist. The one is the church and its Head; the other is the dragon, that old serpent the devil, and his followers, who arise in the place where Christ is revealed—that is, in Christendom. In chapter sixth, we have a glimpse of the progress of the war in the slain souls under the altar; and in the eleventh, we have the issue in the church's death. Like its Lord, it is thrust down out of sight; the heel of the woman's seed is bruised. But we have the death of another party mentioned in the nineteenth, even that of Antichrist; and, immediately after, the thrusting of the old serpent down into the pit, the serpent's head is bruised. Sudden and abrupt is the opening of the millennial vision, if we regard only the twentieth chapter. But let us return a little, and connect chap. xi. 11, 12, and 13, &c., with the xix., which speaks of the same events, and we shall see that the xx. does not open without due preparation. During the three days and a-half of the xi. chapter, there is great joy among the serpent's seed. But the days expire, and the church rises into a new existence; and the same hour the enemy perishes by intestine discord. In the midst of the tumult, heaven is opened, and the cry goes forth, "Babylon is fallen." Antichrist dies and the church lives. That which had been

the world's death dies, and that which shall be its life lives. This is the first resurrection of the church. Endued with a new existence, and impelled by new affection, it goes forth as the army of Him who sitteth on the white horse to subdue the world to God. And her condition and appearance are described in the xix. chapter, which states no more than may be said of every saint (verse 8.) But the world and the church are to be coextensive terms during the Millennium, for the field in which Christ's treasure is placed is the world; and, therefore, it is in the revived church's taking possession of the whole earth that we have the precise idea conveyed by the words, "This is the first resurrection." It will be seen that more than the preceding verses of this chapter is referred to, for the xx. chapter is a continuation of the xix. Wherefore, the revival of the church from the death of the xi. chapter, the fall of Antichrist, the binding of Satan, and the glorious campaign of the "Word of God" and his army, resulting in the subjugation of the world, constitute together that commencement of the Millennium called "the first resurrection." The church's death is counteracted, and in a spiritual triumph of a thousand years is seen its new existence.—(Isaiah xxv. 7, 8.)

4. But the death of the church was one of pressure under the enemy; it was not a separation from God. Let us, however, view the world at the time the witnesses are slain, and the enemy vaunting. It is in a state of universal death of soul, so far as visibility is concerned. It is without a spiritual existence. The church, whatever be its members or condition, is near to God; but the world in which it is placed, is far from him. If we take the church as the body of the faith-

ful, then it cannot have this resurrection, except in individuals ; and it is only for the sake of illustration and proof that reference has been made to the preceding matters at all. The 4th to 6th verses of the xx. chapter of Revelation follow the slaying of the witnesses, when the church and the world mean the same thing in an evil way. And it is in the calling back to God of that dead thing, by the Spirit of all grace, and in the manner described in chapters xi., xix., xx., that we find THE MILLENNIUM OR FIRST RESURRECTION. The world is like an elect person lying in death ; but when the time appointed comes, it is irresistibly called into a new existence—a life purer than that of the renewed soul now, for Satan is bound—a life indicated when it is compared to that of the martyrs, to whom, in a spiritual sense, Satan was bound, for “ they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.” A life, however, not so pure as that of chapters xxi., xxii., and not without tares, even as a martyr’s heart is not without them. The church is near to God ; but the world in which it is placed is not—it lies in death. The usurper tries to keep it there by the ministry of Antichrist, and thinks he has succeeded when he kills the church, as he did the Lord of glory. But he shall have his head bruised in the act—in the very act ; for even as “ God raised up the prince of life, having loosed the bands of death,” so will he raise up the church again, as it is “ not possible that he should be holden of it.” God will raise her up again, that, by its ministry, the world may be brought back to himself, and the first resurrection be accomplished. Long has been the conflict ; many a warrior—the noble army of martyrs—has fallen in the

contest ; the very church has died (Rev. xi. 7, 8), that out of its ashes a new existence may animate the world. But the swelling sound of the silver trumpet echoes through heaven at last ; and even as the trumpet of the archangel shall startle into life the inhabitants of the tomb—the universal death—so shall that of the Gospel awake into the first resurrection the world of dead souls. The soul of the world, which is in a state of dreary apostasy and separation from God, shall yet be brought back to Jehovah, with its high intellect, noble will, and tender sensibilities. For in the time that the church lives and reigns, all that is great in intellect, and noble in character, and wonderful in discovery, shall be in it, and of it. May we call this the soul of the world ; may we unite into one the multitude of minds with which the world teems ; may we view as a totality the universal mind of the world, and say, this soul of the world lies in spiritual death ? Then, in the sanctification of this mind to God and his Christ, with all of mighty enterprise it has accomplished, and will yet do, we discover the world's first resurrection. This is the first resurrection of the Apocalypse. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part" in it. And does there remain a second ? As the Millennium is to exhibit a holy world in the resurrection of its soul, is there a period still more future when itself shall be holy, in its material renovation, to be the abode of the Lord and his church for ever ? The body of the Lord Jesus was raised ; the body of every believer shall be raised ; the bodies of the wicked shall be raised : is the second resurrection confined to the dust of these bodies (we do not mean that the Lord's body saw corruption) ? Even though we had no direct statements of

the Word declaring that the very earth is groaning under the bondage of being a grave, and is heaving in throes to be delivered from the corruption which that implies, reason itself would tell us that the destruction of death's gloomy chaos, in which each body of Adam's race is lifted into its proper position, will take place in the cleansing away of that one mass of corruption which is spread over the earth's surface. That mass of decayed matter which burdens the earth's surface shall be washed away. The dust of man shall be raised up, and the dust of animals, and trees, and plants, and rubbish, shall be burned up. For even as my baptism signed and sealed my rising from the bed of death, even as it symbolized the baptism of fire, yea, as there was a sacramental unity between my baptism, my first resurrection and my second, so as that the totality consists of the three, having abstractly no reference to succession or to intervals of time,—so with the world's baptism. When it emerged from the waves of the deluge, and shook the sparkling spray from its mighty locks, it was signed and sealed as the dwelling-place of the church visible, in the universal extension of which its first resurrection should take place; and it had likewise the earnest of that fiery baptism, in emerging from which into its second resurrection it shall be fitted to be the abode of the glorified church, with King Jesus in the midst of it to all eternity.

PART IV.

DIFFICULTIES EXAMINED.

IN the preceding parts, proof of various kinds has been led to arrive at a proper verdict upon the claims of the Premillennial Advent. We have found that it is unsolid and unscriptural. Having confined our aim very much to one point, the incidental matters and explanations are necessarily treated briefly, and in one or two instances, perhaps, somewhat obscurely. Our present purpose is not either to lengthen these or to amplify the details. The main idea has been prominently enough held before the reader's mind; and whatever come of any other matter, a decision on that is what is sought. We hasten now to notice the principal difficulties with which the view we have defended is said to be beset. These are partly dogmatic and partly textual. The textual difficulties have been mostly disposed of, when explanation was given of the leading passages produced by our friends in support of their system. And there remain but three particulars to be taken up in this part :—

1. We are often pressed with the following question :
If a time of millennial peace is certainly to precede the

Second Advent, and if the length of that period be so distinctly marked as that at least it will continue for a thousand years, how are we to explain the fact that we are constantly called upon to watch for the Lord's coming, to expect that it will be sudden, and that it may be at any moment, and that we must be in a state of daily preparation for it? In regard to this matter we change ground with our premillenarian friends, and shall bring their own charge to bear irresistibly against their own system. And to make the case somewhat clearer and none the less strong, let it be observed that wherever the Lord speaks of his Second Advent, he uses a verb in the present tense. When it is referred to by creatures, as in Acts i. 11, 2 Peter iii. 10, the verb is not in the present; but whensoever the Lord speaks of it himself, it is so, as in the seven epistles to the churches of Lesser Asia. No words could be used to bring us closer to that great event than we find there. When reading them, we feel as if heaven were to open in a moment, and the glorious One to burst upon our view. We have not met with a satisfactory explanation of this. We are obliged to our friends for keeping attention so much fixed upon it. We are not sure that they have been satisfactorily met upon this point. We will make the attempt. May the gracious Spirit give light!

They say to us: if you are to throw the Lord's second coming indefinitely forward, you interfere with all those injunctions given in the Word, and lead men to carelessness and sloth. And they remind us of the parable of that wicked and slothful servant who said in his heart that his Lord was delaying his coming, and therefore began to act disorderly. They tell us of the proneness of men to

grow careless and remiss, and that every doctrine should be held prominently before their view which is calculated to counteract such natural and dangerous declension. And then we are assured that the doctrine of the premillennial advent is fitted to rouse men from this sleep, yea, that from its suitableness to disturb careless ones, it exhibits an internal evidence of its being scriptural. The history of the church is appealed to as proving that the prominency given to this doctrine constitutes an index to the spiritual life and activity of professing Christians. And many other such things are we told. In reply to all this, we too affirm these things—these very things, and yet throw back this very accusation against premillennialism, every way assured we can make it good. We have no wish to rake in the dust-heaps to bring to light the delusions, and worse, in whose company this theory has not seldom been found. We have no wish to call church history to give the testimony it is well competent to do, not only to show what sort of company this theory has kept, but to show that it occupies the place in many of the delusions which not a few criminals have assigned to Sabbath-breaking in their career. But we call not history to prove whether it be as they say. We agree with our friends as to the place the Second Advent, and the doctrines which are entwined around it, should occupy, and has occupied, in the spiritual life of the church; only, we fear it is a grave error to postulate this of their peculiar views of that advent. We too affirm, that no doctrine is more likely to arouse men than that of the Lord's second coming: only, we maintain they have missed the true solution of the difficulty which attaches to the declarations of its suddenness, when they ex-

plain them on the theory which they have adopted. Already many of their positions have fallen to the ground, and the present is as likely to do so as the others.

If our system militate so much against the watchfulness of Christians, if this principle cannot well be kept alive in the soul save upon their scheme of interpretation, then observe the consequences. Paul either knew that the Second Advent was not to take place for many hundred years after the time he lived, or he did not know it. If he did not know, then why those anxious exhortations to the Thessalonian church to attend to their business, and not to suppose that the last day (for this is it) was at hand? They seem to have acted as some modern parties have done—left their work to stand gazing up for the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. The whole fabric of society seems to have been loosened, and a general terror and amazement to have seized hold of them. This ceased, however, as soon as they received the apostle's second epistle, and every thing went on properly as before. Nor do we find that any of the churches were troubled about the matter afterwards. These two epistles, if not the first, were the second which the apostle wrote. We know from 2 Peter iii. 16 that the Pauline epistles were spread over all the churches before the year 66, with the exception of the second to Timothy, which was only written that year. These two to the Thessalonians were therefore in many hands. If the first was mistaken by a church which stands at the head of all the others, how much more so by others; and yet no necessity appears to have been felt for obviating similar mistakes in the other epistles. It is true, we have not every thing so

clearly and so minutely stated as we might wish. But for any thing we know, the Thessalonians were satisfied that the day of the Lord (the day *του Κυριου*, not *Χριστου* —Tischendorf) was not at hand. Indeed, we know they were. Tertullian tells the persecuting authorities in his apology, that the Christians by no means could be accounted traitors to the empire. So far from this, so far from desiring the downfall of the state, he tells them they had the greatest reason to pray for its peace and establishment. For not only were they commanded to seek the good of the country where they dwelt, but especially so of the Roman empire, seeing it was the great obstacle in the way of the apostasy rising in the church. And where did he find this? In the second epistle to the Thessalonian church. True, that epistle says nothing of the Roman state and its overthrow, in so many words. It would have been unsafe for the church had it done so. But we cannot explain the effect of that epistle, and the way in which Tertullian refers to it, on any other idea than that the apostle had told them, when present with them (see 2 Epis. ii. 5, 15), many things which they had forgotten under the mistaken views they took of some expressions in the first epistle, or that, by the messenger who carried the second epistle, a distinct explanation of the second chapter was verbally conveyed. And from them spread abroad, or perhaps from Paul's personal conversations spread abroad, the general persuasion of the church that the Roman empire would fall; but that for a length of time it would be preserved, to stand in the way of the Papal apostasy rising up in the church. That empire was then the world. In the ordinary course of events, it could not be got out of the way, so as to allow the

apostasy to work into existence, for many years. Paul knew this. He taught this to the anxious church. And yet it is he who writes these words, "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." And to him, as well as to the church of his time and to us, was this warning voice, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch." Truly, Paul was not ignorant that the Second Advent was far in the future. He knew it both from revelation and from his accurate perception of the philosophical question of development,—a question which implies that the principles of the apostasy could not assume a body save as they rolled into existence through a long course of ages. And when speaking of the Lord's coming, he has this before his mind, and says, "That day shall not come until there be a falling away first." We need not stop to show how exactly history has confirmed his words.

We are aware, too, that John the apostle (who had all the writings of Old and New Testaments in his hand) knew how distant the Second Advent was. Whether he could understand the number of the beast himself or no, whether he had the key to his apocalyptic years or not, one thing is certain—he knew they extended into a vast future. Apart altogether from the numbers of years mentioned; the incidents which were to occur, the nations and kings which were to arise, the principles which were to develop themselves, and the extension of the apocalyptic vision, all gave to his mind a clear and firm persuasion that the Lord's coming was far distant, at the very time that he felt how desirable it was, and urged believers to be watching for it, and to be hasting to it with prayers and mighty deeds. And he opens up his own longings in

those words, "Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. Amen."

And whatever we may suppose the conviction in the minds of apostles and of the church to have been—though the mistaken view which continued to be taken by many in the church, of those words which the Lord said to Peter concerning John (John xx. 22), speaks volumes as to the general belief of the futurity which that coming implied—the Holy Ghost knew how distant from those times was the advent; and in the very book—the vade-mecum of Christ's church—in which he urges to a steady watchfulness, we are supplied with periods and years which he intended we should search into and understand; periods which make manifest to Paul, or John, or Polycarp, that they would sleep with their fathers long before the Second Advent should be an event in the church's history.

Now, we reason thus. It is not fair to urge an opposite system with a difficulty which weighs more heavily upon the party's own, or to make use of it without attempting aught else than the most limited application, when its very terms are of the most general kind. This command to watch for our Lord's coming, was as obligatory on the primitive church as on us. "What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch." Yet this church gathered from the inspired record (even Tertullian, who held the views of our friends, tells us so) that the event referred to would not take place in their time. Was the doctrine of the Lord's coming a useless one to them? Was the church of the first century on that account an unwatchful church? We can prove that Paul, and John, and the brethren of those days, were holy and watchful. We can prove that this watchful-

ness was in connection with this doctrine, though not in the way our friends explain it. How could they, on their principles, explain the fact that John, James, Peter, Paul, gave heed to the warning voice, and watched for the coming of their Lord, as we see from their writings, and yet that they *knew* the advent was far in the future?

We are confining our argument to the first century, because we know distinctly what the state of the church was then, and what were the opinions held by its ministers, and, with the exception of a few Judaizing sects, by all its members. We might take the whole of the past history of Christianity, we might take the first eighteen centuries, and without any reference to the opinions which have been held by some, may reason in this way. The Divine Spirit cannot place a fallacious motive before the church of Christ; he places before it, as a reason for watchfulness, such passages as these, "Watch, for you know not what hour your Lord doth come;" but he knew that, from the year in which these words were uttered until the year 1851, the Lord would not be in the world in the way our friends explain these passages: therefore, the meaning they give them is not the true one—therefore they have missed the mind of the Spirit in them. It is in this way we are to view the question. We grant that Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, and many more, held what our friends call "the personal reign," and that they placed this in the thousand years of the first resurrection. We grant that this was a very common belief in the second century. But what of that? Will it prove that it is the mind of the Spirit, any more than the fact that many good men in 1851 believe it, will show

it to be that Spirit's mind? But more than that, we can show that, though Justin Martyr, and some others, held many of the peculiar views of premillennialism, they did not hold this one, that it might take place in their days. Perhaps our friends may call it one of the many contradictions which are to be found in the writings of the most of the fathers, that they held premillennialism and yet did not expect it to commence in their days. It may be so. But still it is the case that Tertullian and others have written such things as to show they did not expect the advent for many, many years after their time. But we need not pursue this. It is enough for our present argument to take the first century, and to say—in order that we may no more hear of this sad charge, which has been too unceremoniously thrown upon our system—that if the daily expectation of this advent be the only meaning of that motive presented to the church to stir it up, it was not placed before the primitive church; and, therefore, if these injunctions be a difficulty to our system *now*, it was so much more to the premillenarian system *then*.

But more than that. If our friends be correct in their explanation of these verses, and if the principal motive for watchfulness and activity be contained in them (and we shall presently show that this is the case), then, instead of the result which our friends desiderate, the very reverse will follow. It was not a healthy condition that the Thessalonian church was in after the time they received their first epistle till the second reached them; but if the idea of our friends had possessed them after that second arrived, and they understood how far distant the advent was from their time, they would have fallen into a more unhealthy

state still. The fact is, this theory succeeds most thoroughly in making the primitive church believe that they have nothing to do with the command which the Lord addressed to "all." But this injunction to watch daily for the Lord's coming is equally to them as to us, is equally to us as to them: it is to the church of all the New Testament dispensation; and, therefore, to premillennialism belongs of right this heavy accusation, that it tends to make people like the slothful and wicked servant. Leave out of view the opinions which were erroneously cherished by some of the eminent men of the early church—we say erroneously, we are now entitled to do so—and take the Christian body while the Roman empire is still standing and entire. On it rests this injunction of the Master equally as on the church of these days. But the believers know well that the second advent will not take place till long after their days; for, in the nature of things, principles are long in evolving the system to which they belong; and the apostasy was not then formed. Have they then no reason for watchfulness? If they have, and that from these very verses on which our friends love to dwell; and, if that reason be not the premillennial one, then to what does the charge come which we are examining?

We shall now show the meaning of the injunctions of which we have been speaking, and illustrate their principles. It might be done by showing that one very essential idea attaching to the church is that of personality. It is viewed in its unity very much as an individual is, and is very often spoken to in that capacity. We could construct a satisfactory enough argument upon that premise. It would leave us with some diffi-

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culties, and require us to show how the fitting-in of many details could be effected. But we have another design before our mind; we desire to show how this matter may be brought to bear on each individual's conscience, as there can be no doubt the Lord intended it should. And now to our task.

Many an injunction is laid on the church of the Old Testament to prepare for death. So much is this the case, as that "all their lifetime they were subject to bondage through fear of death." Death bears the most dreary aspect to them. It is painted in the most sombre colours. Its whole aspect is exhibited as terrible and forbidding; and this though many could look upon it as a bed (Isa. lvii. 2), and lie down upon it in peace, expecting by faith a happy resurrection. The motive presented to the Old Testament church, to effect the result we have been speaking of in the last few pages, was founded on the doctrine of the sudden, the unexpected, the sure approach of death. They are called to be watching for it, and to be ready to go every day. We have no sympathy with the figment of a Limbus Patrum, or the equally improper conjectures of many a rationalistic Protestant; we know that the godly entered into "Abraham's bosom" as soon as they died, and that Abraham's bosom was separate from hades (Luke xvi. 23), and was just the Jewish phrase for the state of glory. Still, from the nature of that dispensation under which they lived, we would have concluded that their minds would, in this way, be directed to *death*, as the incentive to a holy activity and watchfulness. The more one thinks of death, and the matters which must necessarily be viewed in connection with it, the more does he discover how solemn and impor-

tant a place it should occupy in the thoughts of men. And in that book which professes to treat of the highest interests of men, we expect to find a prominent place assigned to this subject. And in the Old Testament we know that it is so.

But how is it that all this ceases when the New Testament church appears? How is it that we are not once directly commanded to prepare for death in all the New Testament? We know death is spoken of incidentally. It would have been strange had it not. We know the Lord uses, in his own case, and for a general example, the words, "The night cometh when no man can work: I must work while it is day." We know also that death is referred to (*e. g.* Rev. ii. 10) in such a way as implies that Christians should "be up and loing." But any one who pleases to investigate the matter will find that the motive placed before the New Testament church to urge it to be watchful, is very different from that which had previously been presented to the church of God. Compare the preacher's message in Ecclesiastes and in 1 Thessalonians, or the epistles to the seven churches. And we can understand the reason of it. Even as one would conclude that *death* would be the terminating object presented to the mind of the Jew to incite him to a life of watchful energy and piety, when we remember the nature of his dispensation, and the fact that the Lord's First Advent had not taken place; so would we, in the same *a priori* manner, perceive that *LIFE*, in some view of it, would be the object held before the Christian's mind to lead to the same result, when we recollect that his Lord "hath brought life and immortality to light by the gospel."

One requires but slight knowledge of things to perceive how the commands to prepare for the Lord's coming—to bear in mind that the Judge standeth at the door—to watch for the Bridegroom—and other like expressions, could have no special reference to the Second Advent, in such a way as that the apostles and brethren—as that Luther and Calvin—as that Owen and Baxter—were to expect the visible descent of the Lord before they died ; for the Holy Ghost presents no fallacious motive. We do not suppose any one will dispute this from Matt. xvi. 28 ; for it has already been shown that John, Peter, Paul, knew this was not the case ; and yet the motive to watchfulness is a real one, and one given in the most solemn way. Compare Matt. xvi. 26, 27. How are we to explain this ? Not surely in the way the Jews account for the non-appearance of their expected Messiah ?

The church of God in all ages is one, though with a dissimilarity of dispensation. All it is required to believe will, therefore, be one too, with just the corresponding dissimilarity. The same motives urging to diligence in business, fervency of spirit, and the service of the Lord, will be presented to the whole church, and will contain these two elements, that an account has to be rendered, and that life is very short. We find death held up for this purpose to the view of one part ; will it not be so to the other, only with the particular dissimilarity ? That it will, our Lord's words already quoted, and Heb. ix. 27, show clearly and indisputably. And we think a good rule of biblical interpretation is this : when a special result is desired, and when every element is alike in both the cases where it is wished, except the aspect of the motive presented to

induce it, that motive is not two but one, although it may be presented in two different aspects. At least we have the reason of congruity and scriptural unity for believing so. We hear the Lord referring to death as the end of all labour in his own case, and looking upon it as a motive for increased activity. He speaks of it in such a way as to imply the generic nature of the rule; are we not, therefore, to conclude that the same thing is, in some way or other, indicated in the many injunctions given elsewhere to watch—to be diligent—to be holy—to be weaned from the world?

To be more precise. We point attention to the fact that the New Testament does not urge us to prepare for death in the same way that the Old does; but that it directs us to be ready for the Lord's coming, and to have our loins girt and our lamps burning, not knowing when the Bridegroom may come, and the cry be heard, "Go ye out to meet him." Indeed, it would be more correct to say of all its commands, that they urge us to prepare for life rather than for death. And yet the words, "The night cometh when no man can work," show that both relate to one and the same event; only in different aspects. And, whether we may be able to give a satisfactory explanation of the reason of this, we maintain it forms no difficulty to our system, but does very much so to that of the premillenarians. It will not do to run away with an idea, and cast a one-sided statement in the face of an opponent. Our friends are bound to look this matter directly in the face. They have met our system with it again and again. Well, can they explain it themselves? Can they face the difficulty which has now been started? They must know that the Lord places death before the minds of men as

a close to all their activity, that the Old Testament does so too ; and yet that our minds are called to a very different matter seemingly, throughout all the Christian volume, when it throws men upon thoughts of the future, and warns them of the possibility of a meeting with their Lord ere many days or hours have fled. We cannot see that it is very kind to shackle us with this matter till an intelligent account be given,—on their principles,—of this interesting and solemn but difficult subject. How can it be said we remove the motive and incentive to Christian watchfulness, by denying the kind of Advent they hold, when Paul and the primitive church had no such incentive held out to them ? How can they say these injunctions given to the New Testament church to watch for the Lord's coming mean that they should expect the Second Advent every day, when the Master himself shows that it is death which is referred to—referred to, indeed, in a different way from what it was before, but still referred to ? And, if not, then is there no command to prepare for death in this new dispensation ; and that event described in the Old Testament as so terrible, is made nothing of in the New ; not only is its sting taken away, but all thought of it is lifted away ; it is not even mentioned in such a way as to stir men up : and those who knew that the Advent was far off from them are thus left without any motive for watchfulness and activity !

We are now prepared to show (at least to make the attempt, for we move with diffidence into the field that is stretching before us), that the hour of death is referred to in those passages of which our friends have made so much use ; and still farther to prove that it is they who remove the motives to Christian watchfulness,

and give room and reason to the foolish virgins to fall asleep, by explaining all these peculiar texts according to their ideas of the Second Advent. This is a grave charge. When directed against the system we defend, we have felt it was a serious charge. We should not like to sit at ease in any system that lay open to such a heavy accusation. We think our friends will not—friends in the real meaning of the word,—for we love some of them much, and are persuaded they do the same of us. We know they are earnest men. It is their deliverance from an error we aim at.

There are two ways in which we would explain the fact, that when Christians are called upon to be ready for death, the command is expressed in such words as these, "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh," "The Judge standeth at the door," "Watch, for you know not what hour your Lord doth come." So far as we can characterize one phase of the difference between the old and the new dispensations, we would do it thus:—The Jew was told that his system was to fade into that which was more perfect, so as to become old and vanish away when the new covenant was established. His religion is to die into a brighter and a better. His religious life is to contemplate an end. So far as he is a believer, he has the bright hopes that we cherish; but so far as he is under a system, he is—to compare Job, chapter xiv., with the words used by Paul in Hebrews viii. 13—like an old man ready every day to vanish from the land of the living. Death is the terminating object to him; eternity to us: he passes onward to death; we to eternity. The motive urging him to diligence is that he has to die; that which incites us to the same is that we have to live—to live eternally. He must watch

for death ; we for eternity. No one will mistake us, as if we assumed the views of those who imagine the Jew knew nothing of a resurrection. He did know of it. Job knew of it. And, if it had suited the design of Old Testament revelation, we should have been made better acquainted with the secret experience which the believers undoubtedly had in this particular. What we view at present is the genius of the two dispensations, in the exhibition of which lies one of the many internal evidences of the divinity of the Scriptures: the Old Testament speaking much of death and little of resurrection, the New speaking little of death and very much of the resurrection and the Second Advent ; and with our view on that, we affirm that when the New enjoins us to wait and watch for the Lord's coming, it means the same thing as the Old does when urging us to remember the days of darkness which shall be many, and to seek the Lord in our youth, as there shall be no knowledge nor device in the grave. To the church as a body, the Second Advent occupies the same position as the first did to the Jewish church : it is its consummation, it should keep its eye fixed steadfastly upon it. But to individuals, as such, the motive for diligence in the one case is, that they may die at any moment ; and in the other, that at any moment they may look upon their Lord.

There is a unity and precision in Holy Scripture—a unity of idea, and a precision in keeping that idea before the mind of the church. The idea of the Scriptures before the time of Christ is, that men have to die, and therefore that they should be watchful and well prepared. That which obtains in the Gospels and Epistles is, that when they close their eyes on this

world, they open them on the unseen and the eternal, and therefore that they should be as men making ready to meet the King. And seeing they are not now in bondage to death, but the servants of Jesus Christ, they should remember their Lord hath the keys of hell and of death; that he hath taken the sting out of it, and therefore that gloomy death should not be the terminating object on which their minds may rest, but Him who hath power over it—who is its governor—who prevents it from touching them till he who hath the key in his hand come and open. This is a truth; it is a truth which the New Testament is intended to teach. And with a precision, beautiful because divine, it says little about death—that would terrify—that would be the language of bondage again; but it speaks of the coming of Him who hath the key of death,—and that is new covenant language—it encourages—it keeps us in peace.

Now, if it can be proved that the apostolic church knew the Second Advent was far distant, and if it can be proved that in point of fact the church of the first eighteen centuries has had nothing to do with it as a fact of history—and both of these can be demonstrated; and if it can be proved that the wakeful language under discussion was directly and personally addressed to these, then the expression must mean something else than the Advent, as we are accustomed to use the word. And if this be not its meaning, then we are obliged to search about for something else that will suit; and if reason has not been given to show that the day of our death is meant thereby, we should despair of reaching the truth on any disputed point. Wherefore, since the Lord hath the key of death, and Christians have now to do with

him, and not with it,—when the inspired Word urges them, like the Jewish church, to prepare for death, it rightly does so by telling them to watch for the Lord's coming. It is no longer legal but gospel language that is used—it is no longer the words of bondage, but of hope, and joy, and life that are spoken; it is the language of the new covenant, for the old has vanished away. And with a correct view of all things connected with the covenant of grace, one could, *a priori*, say, what in fact is the case, that we would nowhere in the New Testament be told to prepare for death, but for the coming of the Lord.

One expression, "The Judge standeth at the door," leads us to the second mode of explanation. It certainly implies that when the Lord comes to a man, the man is then and there at the bar of judgment. He passes from this world to the judgment-seat, there being no interval of time between death and judgment. This is the ground we take up, and trust to explain in a clear and distinct manner. We have no patience with the explanations given by Bengel and others to the command, "Watch, for you know not the day nor the hour;" as if it were a mere play upon the word *you*, or as if this were the case before the Lord's death and resurrection, but not so afterwards. We take the words in their widest and most literal sense, and believe it can be shown that the most satisfactory meaning they can bear is the one indicated above. Surely they lead us to realize the judgment as very near to us. If we were sure that the day of judgment were to be next week, what an effect it would have upon the church! But surely the same stirring effects should follow our realizing the fact opened up in these words, "The Judge

standeth at the door." There must be something real, something solemn, something awful in them. We cannot see that they mean any thing less than this, that any living man may have the consciousness of standing at the tribunal ere many hours may pass away. It is the realizing of this that shall lead us to "paint for eternity"—"to walk honestly as in the day"—"to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord"—"not to sleep as do others, but to watch and be sober." We shall attempt the explanation of this.

When the Lord comes to a man as the Judge and passes sentence upon him, it is a person, a living agent that is at the bar. Judgment cannot pass upon a thing that is dead. Death itself, even when personified, is not said to be *judged*, but only cast into the lake of fire. And therefore a dead body cannot be judged; it must first be raised up, and in a reunion with its soul be viewed in the person who lived, and spake, and acted. This person with an identity of the most exact kind, is to appear before the Judge and give an account of the *τα δια του σωματος*, the things transacted by means of the body, and "while in the body." But at death this person is separated into the two parts of his nature, and we can see the dead bodies in our world for thousands of years. And seeing this to be the case, how can we say that the coming of the Lord takes place at death, and that when he comes it is as the Judge,—how can we say there is no interval of time between death and judgment? For that judgment is one of persons, and not of parts. Even the special sentence that is passed upon the soul at death does not

* I refer to what Xeuxies said, and which became a proverb, "Aeternitati pingo."

seem either to exhaust the meaning of this or to reach it. For the soul of a man is not the person of a man, any more than his body. The way in which this difficulty has commonly been got over is by saying that "as the tree falls so it must lie; as death leaves, judgment will overtake us;"—as much as to say that. He who comes to us at death is the Judge, though the act of judgment may not be entered upon immediately. And hence, when we are watching and preparing for our departure from the world, we may do so, and should, with our eye resting on the judgment-seat. Now, all this is quite true; but we think there is a way of bringing men nearer to the Judge and the eternal sentence than this, which may be made intelligible without going very deeply into pneumatology.

Unless we are led away with the error of those who think the soul falls asleep at death, and remains so till the resurrection, we must believe that judgment is passed upon it at the instant of death. If it exist and have the consciousness of existing (and reason and consciousness are inseparable from souls), it must have the consciousness of existing in some condition. But such a consciousness implies a virtual or real act of judicial appointment, or of recognition, which indeed ultimately comes to the same thing, implying, as it does, an act of divine volition. At death, therefore, if the soul pass into glory or into hell, it does so by reason of a sentence. Wherefore to it, the coming of the Lord at death is the coming of the Judge. There cannot be any interval of time between temporal death and the judgment of the soul; for that would be an interval spent by it in no recognised state, which is entirely opposite to both Scripture and reason. Now, if there be no interval

between death and the sentence which assigns the soul in its consciousness to a particular condition, there is none between death and eternal judgment; for a sentence which cannot in nature admit of repeal, does not in nature admit of reiteration. It may be made public to others, and that publication may be thousands of years after; but this does not constitute a reiteration of sentence to the consciousness of the subject: that consciousness is necessarily an everlasting one from the moment in which it is first excited. We at once grant that the general judgment means something else than this; that it is visible, that it has visible subjects, and a universe of them as its objects. But we maintain that there must be this special act of judgment on each at his death, assigning his soul to its proper doom, unless we are prepared to accept the dreams of those who speak of the sleep of the soul, or mayhap the still grosser views of Priestley; and therefore that when the Lord comes at death, it is as the Judge he comes,—so far, at least, as the soul is concerned.

Thereafter we do not suppose there is any succession of time with it. Whatever be its state, and whatever be the extent of beatific vision and blessedness it enjoys—and it is much higher than we can now conceive—the believer's soul ceases to be subjected to time. It may be that all it learned while in the body by experience or by faith is now a realized enjoyment; it may be its state consists in an enlarged comprehension of all it knew before, and the delighted rapture in, or absorption into, the united objects of its faith; whatever it be we may hardly be able to tell, but this we know, that a soul has no consciousness of time or of succession save when it is in union with a body. It is one of the fun-

damental axioms of metaphysics that a soul has no respect to space or time, and cannot be subjected to the consciousness of time's succession save in union with that which has respect both to space and to time, even the body. There is then no past and future with it any longer; it abides in a constant present, feeding in blissful intuition upon God and upon Christ, *according to the extent* of the knowledge and faith it arrived at when under the means of grace, until that, in union with the body again, the redeemed person shall go on in a growth of knowledge and of blessedness to which there is no limit. It is an incident attaching to our state here, that we have the past and the future in our ideas; but when the immortal spirit quits this sublunary sphere, it has them no longer—till the resurrection. This is a great truth craved after and approached by such writers as Emerson, but one which is not to be had here. It may be predicated of the spirits of just men made perfect, and it may be approached in endless glory, but assuredly we know but little of it now. We know something, however. We know so much as to confirm its truth. Even now the soul exhibits this its nature, as if it would tear asunder the bands which tie it to a succession, by embracing the mighty past and the glorious future,—the one objectified by memory, and the other by faith,—and absorbing them into its own delighted (or sorrowful) present intuitions: a daily, a perennial consciousness. But it is in part.

Wherefore, when we view the soul of Abraham as now in glory, we cannot say that it is an older soul than when it quitted his body, for such a language is unknown in eternity (and pneumatology), and Abra-

ham's soul is in eternity. To us, to the consciousness of humanity, many centuries have elapsed since Abraham died; but he has no consciousness of that.* So that if we take the idea of a judgment passed upon a person at his death, it is right to say, so far as his soul is concerned, that there is, and that the Lord's coming is the coming of the Judge. But this is not the person that meets the Lord the Judge, but only his soul; and therefore is this true in the case of the body? Unless the body pass from existence to the judgment-seat, without being conscious of any interval of time, it would not be solid language to affirm of that statement, "The Judge standeth at the door," that it is addressed to men as persons, so to be found true in their personal experience or consciousness. But the mere statement of this proviso is quite enough to obtain the conclusion we desire. Every one will perceive at once that a dead body has no consciousness, for it has not even sensation; and therefore that there is no consciousness of time's elapse with it—that is, there is no elapse of time to it. We—living men—are conscious that years pass away between the time we commit a loved one to the tomb, and the Lord's descent to judgment. But our ideas are no rule in the case. We arrive at the true idea in this matter according to the consciousness of the dead one, and that extends no farther than death, till it be resumed again in resurrection; and it is resumed without any perception of an interruption. If Adam's soul is no older now than it was when he died, no more

* We may be met here by some who will refer to the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Instead of attracting attention to it and away from the argument, we shall place it in a note at the end of the volume.

is his body. When we see him in the resurrection, he will be exactly nine hundred and thirty years old.

But when we disjoin soul and body to arrive the more easily at the desired result of an investigation, we must not forget that it is only for the sake of furthering the inquiry. It is a person that is the proper subject of judgment and of sentence. To the person dying, He who hath the key of death comes, and it is as the Judge he comes. And whatever may be the difficulty of reconciling the fact of the conscious existence of the soul during the disembodied state (and it does so exist) with the fact that there is no interval between death and judgment to any man, we hold it as none the less true, that immediately when a man dies, *he has the consciousness of* standing before the tribunal of Christ with the assembled humanity. We, thinking or speaking about the dead, take for granted such interval, because there is such to us; but it is of the nature of Bacon's *idola*, and should cease from guiding our inquiries into absolute truth. There is no such interval to the dead; there is none to the soul, there is none to the body, there is none to the person—his consciousness flows on unbroken to his own perception, though it seems broken to ours. We think we could even pass securely through an explanation of the difficulty which may be supposed to arise from the disembodied existence and consciousness of souls. But it would lead too much away from the design of this essay and too deeply into abstract reasoning. We seek merely to obtain the fact. And the fact, all paradoxical as it may appear, has been obtained. Will any one disprove it? Will any one maintain the intervening of a space of time between death and judgment, between death and resurrection, in the consciousness of

the departed? Then we are prepared to show the legitimate consequences of such a position. And we think they are such as no sound Protestant theologian would like to homologate.

But we do not suppose such a thing will be undertaken. We hardly imagine more will even be thought necessary to prove our position. But if more be required, then here it is. It is manifest that there is, abstractly speaking, no real difference between extension into space and extension into time. The eternal existence of Jehovah is the infinite extension of Him who is life in one aspect of it, even as the infinitude of Him who is life is extension in the other aspect of it; so as that immensity embraces both eternal existence and infinite pervasion. On this principle we can view all men standing before the Lord when the covenant was made with Adam, only extending from the first parent backwards into a distance in space, instead of downwards into a distance in time; which distance of space entirely vanishes if we were to view it in a more metaphysical way, and speak of the one humanity. But in order to get hold of the idea of individuals, let us admit the idea of succession, distance, extension. We are standing, suppose, upon some height, on what the Rabbins would call the Kōtet ʔmeth, the precision or pinnacle of truth, and we see the congregated human race extending away into the background beneath us. We see the whole: Adam and his race. Into the midst of them as fallen, He who is Saviour, King, and Judge comes. The gospel cry is raised. Many believe; many reject. To many the sound reaches not at all. Meanwhile, amidst the activity of the various mechanisms which mould and develop humanity, the time approaches when all must

pay the debt of a broken covenant, and when He who is in the midst of them as Judge will "take account of his servants." They must die. The Judge lifts his arm, and the sword of justice, doom, death, flashes before the startled gaze of that universe of beings. The stroke is given. It begins in Adam's house and sweeps over all his race. We see it in its fatal progress till its work be accomplished. The Lord comes to each in particular, and he comes to all. He who is infinite embraces all that extension in one fell stroke. Leave out the element of succession, view them all as dying at once, and each one is so old, and no more. No one is older when standing at judgment than when he died. The humanity dies, the humanity looks on the Judge, the humanity is in eternity. To that multitude the Lord comes; all of it, and each one in particular, is urged to prepare for the Lord's coming, "for the Judge standeth at the door."

But we must leave this. We do not think many who give thought to the matter will see very much difficulty in understanding how a soul that has in it the consciousness of judicial sentence, during what appears to living men thousands of years previously, may stand before the public tribunal of the Lord as part of that person who is then and there to give account for the things done in the body, without implying a reiteration of judgment and sentence. Every one who knows the nature of conscience, and who knows that the sentence of the soul at death is one in conscience, will have no difficulty in the matter. Wherefore, when the New Testament urges us to prepare for the coming of the Lord, it means the coming of Him who is the Judge, the first steps of eternal judgment being the stroke of

death. The instant we close our eyes on time we open them upon eternity; for, personally, we are not conscious of any interval, the consciousness of the soul terminating on something else than either time or space. The moment we cease to have before our eyes the dear relations who weep around our dying bed, we open them (so far as our consciousness is concerned—forgive the repetition) upon our Judge, seated on the great white throne, and see them standing there with us. Yea, each individual arises in the resurrection morn with the consciousness of the last word of his lips and thought of his mind present to him, in the very same way as we perceive we have spoken the moment after we have done so. We have heard of men being struck dead with the oath of profanity half-uttered in their lips; they will awake, feeling that it is just going forth into an utterance, and their eyes shall behold their Judge. There was a city once, so runs the tale, which was instantaneously turned into a petrification. Men with their mouths in the act of uttering words were sealed up in that position. The very drop from the cistern did not reach the ground. Every thing stood motionless and still. But the reviving wand was waved, the drop reached the trough, and the words flowed from the lips of the speakers, who were all unconscious of any interruption. Men have been turned into that grave where “there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom,” where “the dead know not any thing,” with words on their lips. When the trumpet sounds, it will seem to the resuscitated dead as if the words were just proceeding from their mouths. Myriads would give the world then to awake with the consciousness of uttering such words as Stephen, and such breathings as those of Dr Owen

or Dr David Welsh. But it is too late. The Lord is come!

This is the view indicated in our Westminster Confession: "As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity; so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come, and may be even prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen."

We may hence see another reason why the Jew was told to prepare for *death*. To him the Lord had not yet come as the Redeemer, and he could not have understood such injunctions as are given to prepare for him as the Judge. The fact is a true one, that he had to prepare for this Judge; but because he could not have understood it, because he would naturally have applied such statements to the coming of the Messiah, he is told to do with his might whatever his hand might find to do, for he would soon be in the grave. Then, indeed, to him, as well as to us, the judgment opened. Thus, every thing in the distinctive nature of the two dispensations, and an accurate analysis of things as they really are, lead us to explain these injunctions of the New Testament as similar to those of the Old—in both to be ready for death—in both to be waiting for the coming of the Lord.

We should like to ask now, whether the system we oppose or the one we defend be the more calculated to make the people prepare for eternity, or, which is the same thing, to be ready and waiting for the Lord's

coming? In the one, a false meaning is put upon certain passages, and a doctrine preached from them, which could exercise no influence whatever on the minds of those who knew that the Second Advent was far future from the time in which they lived; yea, indeed, there could be no salutary influence exerted by these passages (with our friends' meaning of them) upon the church of the first eighteen centuries, unless we imagine the Holy Ghost countenancing a fable, for to them this meaning of it has been a fable. But in the common system, which has obtained all over the church, the true meaning of these texts being discovered will be owned by the Spirit of the Father and the Son—as in Apostolic, Reformation, Puritan times—to produce no sentimental fancy, but a solid and holy awe upon the spirits of men; for whereas the one leaves us to look away into the future for our Judge, the other brings him near, even to the door. I cannot but feel that I may step to the tribunal with this pen in the act of describing these very words. The Lord may come upon us this very night. We cannot tell. We must watch. Oh, that men understood this! An earnest, believing knowledge of this would lead to a ministry of fire. We could not lose ourselves in vague dreams and controversies if we were living thus near to our Judge. Accustom the people's minds to this. They may find it difficult for a little to understand such modes of thinking and hermeneutik, but why? Only because they are kept conversant with certain words, and phrases, and ideas; stereotyped well-nigh over the ministry of the church. But why should this continue? What is the use of our Hebrew and Greek, our Logic and Philosophy? Is it not to reach the mind of the Holy Ghost, and to guide

the mind of the age? We tremble when we think that a false view of these passages, or a dead stereotyped way of explaining them, by men who are otherwise in earnest and holy, is depriving the church of one of the most powerful incentives to self-denial and holiness.

But we must pass from this inviting subject, merely remarking that if the Bible have reference to the whole church, then to draw the doctrine of the Second Advent (as our friends use the words) from passages intended to guide the whole church into diligence and watchfulness, would have been at once opposed by the apostles—is opposed to the mind of the Lord's Spirit. There will, indeed, be the Second Advent, when every eye shall see the Lord; and, no doubt, these passages contain an intimation thereof, for there is a pregnancy of meaning in them, as shall be explained presently. But if one volume tells us that this will not take place till many ages pass away, and yet urges us to be in daily expectation of meeting our Lord, we are forced to conclude that two aspects of it are presented. And we believe it has been made tolerably clear that our premillenarian friends have missed the meaning of these their favourite passages; and instead of their charge against our system being true,—the charge, namely, of making people act like the foolish virgins,—it tells altogether and fatally against their own.

2. The second particular to be attended to is Ezekiel's vision. This is confessedly a difficult portion of the Holy Scripture. It is not a little surprising that truths of such an important nature as the premillennial theory embraces,—granting they were true,—should be found in the most difficult passages of the Bible. We would be inclined to draw a *prima facie* evidence against the

whole thing from this fact, that passages which are the most obscure are made to contain the doctrine which is said to be most necessary for awaking the life of the church. Of course, we are aware of the reply which might be made to this. We know perfectly that it is said the *fact* is stated clearly and distinctly enough elsewhere, and that it is only the time, and manner, and details, and consequences, that are veiled in obscurity. But, pray, what is the fact without these? What would this theory be without these? We could speak a good many homely truths here, only we must forbear. We trust, by the Master's blessing, to obtain the result we aim at without refering to any thing unpleasant. But certainly we have often wondered how our friends can see so very clearly into the details of this vision of Ezekiel. We are as intimately acquainted with our Hebrew Bible as any of our premillenarian friends, and have carefully and painfully hung over this prophet's page. But we cannot say we are prepared to give any thing like an unexceptionable explanation of the last nine chapters of his book. We do not shrink from saying that they who find nothing but clearness in this vision, and who can enter into all its details with voluble ease, have never fairly faced its difficulties. Let any one take up Lightfoot or the Bible of John Henry Michaelis, and after wading through the extent of thought to which their notes and investigations will give rise, we believe he will find that,—with all the assistance he can get from the masters in Israel, and from a proper knowledge of the original, and from such an acquaintance with the Jewish ritual and ideas as every theologian should possess,—he will remain restless and unsatisfied with the best theory he can form,

and be very much tempted with Lightfoot himself to give over the attempt to understand it in despair. What a pity, we feel inclined to exclaim, that John Calvin was not spared to give us his views of these chapters! We should have had something more satisfactory than either Professor Dathe or Hävernicks has given us, valuable as is the commentary of the latter. Honestly stating our inability to explain all these chapters, we might leave them. But we have given a good deal of careful investigation to the matter, and believe we shall be able to do two things:—to show in general that this vision contains nothing countenancing premillennialism; and to give what seems to be the design of it, and therefore the key to its interpretation; adding a few incidental observations.

We dissent from the idea that it opens up what the Second Temple *might* have been, if the Jews had chosen to return and implement the prophecy, as being wholly beneath the dignity of prophecy and the Spirit of God. We dissent also from all the Jewish comments we have seen, as being radically unsolid, and subversive of the Christian religion, at least as ignoring that system. And we specially protest against Christian writers borrowing Jewish ideas. God hath sent a spirit of judicial blindness into them, and they are unable to understand the plainest parts of the Old Testament, how much less then the most obscure? Christians should beware of imbibing their conceits. Are those who do imbibe them aware of what rabbinical ideas and writings really are? Do they know the explanations of Scripture which are spread over the Talmud? If not, let them read Allen on Modern Judaism, and they will not only get an insight into Jewish blindness, and godlessness, and

blasphemy, but may also arrive at the origin and character of premillenarianism. We wish we had room for a few extracts, but we must not. We dissent also from the idea that this book corresponds in its scope and parts with the Apocalypse of John. This view is placed before us very much in these terms: After the denunciations upon the peoples around Israel, we are told of the raising up of the Good Shepherd—of Israel's return to him—of the conversion of the Gentiles—the resurrection of the dead (chap. xxxvii.)—the destruction of the wicked—the eternal glory, in the new heavens and new earth, in the heavenly city and temple. This throws the last nine chapters to a period posterior to the resurrection of the dead, as the two last of the Apocalypse (at least down to chapter xxii. 8) are. On the contrary, the whole book is to be closed ere time be at an end. We are sure of this from the references which are made to days, and nights, and weeks, and months, and from the statement that "the east gate of the temple shall be shut during the six working days; all which is disowned in the Revelation of John, chapters xxi., xxii., which belong to eternity and not to time—which belong to the church triumphant and not either militant or millennial.

We therefore agree with our friends, whose system we are analyzing, that Ezekiel's city and temple are to be sought for while the church is in its earthly position,—that is, not yet entered upon its eternal rest. But, as there are diversities of views among them, we require to say that they who explain the two last chapters of the Apocalypse as belonging to millennial times, must believe that Ezekiel's vision is fulfilled before that time; for the former exhibits a much higher condition of the church than the latter does, having no temple, no night,

no death, which the latter has. And they who believe with us that the former, the Apocalyptic vision, belongs to the eternal blessedness of the saved church, cannot maintain the same concerning that of our prophet. Ezekiel's prophecy and John's Revelation are not coincident; and, therefore, we are left to examine his last nine chapters without any reference to the last two of John. This cannot be too much pointed out. There are many who hold that John's vision is millennial. Of course, unless they are "spiritualizers," they believe there shall be there no night—no pain—no death—no temple; for such is expressly stated. Then how can they apply Ezekiel's vision to the same period, where we have a temple—where death is described (ch. xliv. 22, 25)—and where the alternation of day and night marks some of the most important services of the temple. And as regards those who refer that part of the Apocalypse to the glory of eternity, and who explain our prophet's vision as if it pointed out millennial times, we shall place these few words under their notice. It has been proved that the Lord will not come till death be destroyed. If they think he will enter into this temple, how can they account for death being referred to in the way it is, and marriage, and controversies, and things "dead of itself or torn, whether fowl or beast"? They tell us of the difficulties which meet our system. Why, what system has ever been beset with more of these than theirs is seen to be! Really, they should not speak of difficulties when they can bear up so easily under all those which we have seen lying upon their theory like an annihilating incubus. Are we to "spiritualize" this vision? If not, are we to take every particular literally? The polling of priest's heads instead of shaving

them? The fishers at Engedi spreading their nets? The defilement from touching a dead man? Surplices? Circumcision? Sacrifices? An altar with four horns? We will stop. The indignant testimony of the apostle in his Epistle to the Galatians should for ever put a stop to such wild ideas. Either the vision is literal, or it is not. If literal, then these things are literal; and to make these things literal is not only to ignore but to subvert the Christian faith. And if not literal, then the theories of many fall to the ground.

We are now in possession of some things which help us very much in wading through the intricacies of this vision. If it cannot be explained literally, we are at liberty to cast about for its figurative sense. Suppose it contained a description of the church of God in gospel times, as very many Christian commentators have thought, then how could such a description be given to a Jew but in Jewish language and figures? We grant that Isaiah does so in different terms. But besides the peculiarity of Ezekiel's mode of teaching, which is symbolic throughout, and which, therefore, for the preservation of unity, requires that this description be symbolic too, we question whether the Jew would understand Isaiah so well as he would Ezekiel. One thing is certain, from chap. xliii. 10, 11, that God desired the Jews should clearly and distinctly know his meaning, and he adopted the most suitable way to do so. To those who turned away all the prophet's preaching, and all his denunciations of divine wrath, with the sneer, "Doth he not speak parables?" that preaching is represented pictorially, that there may be no possibility of ignorance or evasion. And however difficult we may find this part of Scripture, compared with the clear Isaiah, the

evangelic prophet, there is no doubt that the Jew had far more difficulty in guessing what he meant than in understanding what Ezekiel wished to convey, accompanied as the pictorial description would be with explanations. Nor do we here mean the unbelieving Jew alone, though him principally.

Two things we believe will be granted us by those who have given any degree of attention to the matter,—that unity required our prophet to present evangelical truths under Jewish figures; and that the Jew would understand him better in this way than if he had spoken like Paul, or even like Isaiah. There is unity in Isaiah; and yet how have the Germanists demurred to the authenticity of the last part of his book! And if Ezekiel had ceased his usual style, and given us his vision as Paul would do, the utmost external evidence would hardly have counterbalanced the internal marks of a broken unity and a different authorship. The principle of unity would thus lead us to expect evangelical truths of the kind (by hypothesis) before us, to be presented by our prophet in a symbolic or pictorial manner; and especially when there was a reason for it—the reason, namely, of compelling the attention and the understanding of a sensuous people. Apart from the insuperable difficulties attending a literal meaning being given to it, these things would suffice to incline us to the idea that the vision is figurative. Our friends may call us spiritualizers if they choose. Whether they or we have appeared most literal in explaining the Scriptures which have been analyzed, we leave all to judge. And if we are compelled to explain this vision in a spiritual way, it is nothing at all extraordinary. Besides, that any one who knows the laws of a just criticism will not think

it strange, we have hundreds of examples in the Bible itself; every one knows how often one thing is presented in different ways by different writers, and frequently by the same writers. Every minister of the Word must have recourse to it to guide the understandings of his people—every public speaker studies the art. Had Isaiah's style corresponded with that of Ezekiel, we should have had a pictorial instead of an evangelical—a figurative instead of a literal prophecy. Of course they are combined. All the prophets combine them.

We have *supposed* the truth of those commentaries which refer this vision to gospel times, in order to obtain thereby the principle of interpretation; and this we have got, undeniably got. But now, where is the authority for explaining this vision of gospel times? Why do our commentators fix it down to the Christian dispensation? It is entirely arbitrary on their part? The vision does not say so. Its position in the prophecy does not imply it. Some rule or principle must be adhered to to enable us to find out the mind of God's Spirit in the Word. Either a direct undoubted statement, or a quotation by another inspired writer, or position and order relatively to other things which are defined, must be produced. We have none of these here. No reason has been given such as will stand the test of the common principles of criticism. It may be a good and lucky guess. It cannot be more.

We have already said we move with diffidence in stating our own opinion. But whether it appear satisfactory or not, enough has surely been said to show that some explanation must be sought for, and that a different one from any we have ourselves seen;

and if such be given, that the reasons for it shall be stated.

So far as we can arrive at any thing definite in the landmarks of the vision, it is much more extensive than has generally been imagined. All that is desired by those who explain it of gospel times is embraced in the meaning we adopt, but their view is far too limited. They throw it all into the future,—the future as respected Ezekiel's times. They explain it as being an embodiment or representation of the Christian dispensation. Now, this dispensation had not then commenced; whereas chapter xliii. 7, 8, surely seems to indicate that "the house" which our prophet saw measured existed in that very time, and previously. It says, "And the house of Israel shall not still (shall not any longer, *לֹא עוֹד*—compare Genesis xxxv. 10) pollute my holy name by placing their threshold with my threshold, and their door-post beside my door-post." One cannot read over these and some other verses,—keeping out of view for the time those ideas which have been derived from translations and comments,—without being convinced that the prophet speaks of a temple which had been erected long before the times in which he lived, and which the Jewish nation had dared to defile. And had Dathe fixed upon the first, instead of the second temple, and given us as the meaning of the vision this idea: That the prophet was commissioned to go minutely over the sacred things and services, to show how far astray Israel had gone, and how much reason there was for their punishment,—he would not have been so wide of the mark as he is. For it is as if the prophet had reasoned thus with the people: "You complain of your hard lot and your grievous afflictions,—you complain that Jehovah

is not fulfilling his covenant with you, but hath cast you out of your land; but is it at all wonderful when you consider how you have profaned his covenant, and how his very name has been blasphemed among the Gentiles through you? And that you may not be able to deny this, let us go minutely over that holy service which separated you from all the peoples which dwell on the earth; look at every part of it, and see how every part has been defiled by you; recal the history of your kings and their idolatrous doings, and see how they and you have made my house a mere temple of abominations." If we are to explain the vision literally, then this would form the key to such interpretation. But there are many things in it which could not be embraced in this way. We would be met by interminable difficulties if this were supposed to exhaust the vision. Still we have one guiding thread in this view of the subject, and shall try and get some more.

Suppose this were the way of explaining it, and that Solomon's temple and the Levitical ritual were really the matters described, and that the guilt of the people were pointed out by a reference to the defilements which they introduced into that temple, and their apostasy from its divinely-appointed ritual (see chapters viii., xvi., xviii., xx.); whether would the circumstances of the case, the general character of this book, and the stage of prophetic advance or of the development of the divine plan of mercy, require the eyes of a determinedly carnal people to be fixed upon the typical house and its economy, or upon that which it typified? In other words, whether would their minds be directed to that peculiar sanctuary service which they had in the midst of them, or to the spiritual reality which it ex-

hibited? We have no hesitation in saying that the design of God would not have been accomplished,—a design which contemplated their return into the faith and spirituality of Abraham,—if their attention had been turned merely to an external and typical economy, which had already been cast behind them and profaned. And the opening vision of chapter first, and the many other exhibitions of a purely spiritual religion, besides a thousand other things which will now flash on the minds of those who have carefully studied this prophet, and the design of God in the Jewish service, clearly indicate that “the house” which is shown to the people of Israel is that house of God which Paul says is “the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” Now, this church of the living God is not a mere synonyme for the Christian church, nor for the Jewish church, nor for the Abrahamic church, which comprehends both; but of the one universal church of God—the church of all ages, and of all lands.

Thus, then, we venture our own view of this part of Ezekiel, as not only free from the difficulties which attend any other we have met with, but as explaining to all its extent the vision and its details. It is an exhibition in Jewish language of that holy catholic church into which they were adopted, and part of which was exhibited among them, with a service suitable to the development of the plan of grace and of the human mind at the time. The details (however minute) of the Jewish religion could never exhaust those that are given here, but they furnish a key to unlock the symbolic characters in which the church of God is described. Let us see how this will fit into the circumstances of those times.

Our prophet is commissioned by God to declare the vision with the utmost minuteness for a special purpose, chapter xliii. 10, 11. It was intended to set in as strong a light as possible those besetting sins of the house of Israel, pride and idolatry, that they might be ashamed. In their idolatry, they had persisted in provoking God to anger; yet in their pride they reasoned in this way: "We are Jehovah's people (Matt. iii. 9)—we are the lot of his inheritance (see the Talmud on this expression). He cannot do without us; we are the only people where he is known. If he cast us away, there will be no knowledge of him in the earth; he will not put us away. Why then heed the words of Jeremiah or of Ezekiel, who speak only of evil? 'Do they not speak parables?'—(Chapter xx. 49.) Let us act as we will we cannot be cast away, for then Jehovah would have no people, no church, no temple; and the heathen would boast in their gods, which Jehovah will not permit. To prevent this boasting of the uncircumcised, we shall ever be preserved; for he who kept our father Abraham though but one, will not destroy us who are so many."—(Chapter xxxiii. 24.) Thus was it that the deluded people buoyed themselves up with hope and clothed themselves with pride, at the very time their city was razed, their temple a ruin, and they themselves captive in an enemy's land. The very same thing was exhibited at the final destruction of their city and nation, and tracks the whole of the rabbinic literature, and is found in the Jewish characters to this day.

To counteract this self-righteous, conceited spirit, the Lord gives Ezekiel this vision, to be declared minutely and with explanations, so as that they would know what

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was meant, (all this is conveyed by the combining of **אֵל** and **יְהוָה**, used in chapter xliii. 10, 11; compare chapter xl. 4.) It is a positive declaration that he hath had a church in all ages irrespective of them, although he had been pleased to confine it to their nation for a time. Before they were a people, and after they are cast away, this church and its service has its place in the world. It is declared that they were grafted into God's church in absolute sovereignty (Deut. vii. 7), that its service was revealed to them in grace and mercy, and that they ought to know another people might have been chosen as soon as they—(chap. xvi. 2, 3.) Instead of remembering this, and walking humbly before God, they had lived as if the land—"my land"—were their own; they had looked on the temple as their own property, which they might put to any use they pleased; and they had imagined they were at liberty to follow any religious services they might devise, or combine idolatrous worship with that of Jehovah; they had served God and Mammon; they had set their threshold beside that of God, and their post beside his. This was their crime; they shut up God's church among themselves, and then acted as if they could do what they would with it. They thought and spake as if the heavenly religion and worship must live and die with them.

But they were mistaken. God's church was in the world before them, and would be so after they were scattered among the nations of the earth. Its existence in the world was proved and illustrated by those historical facts which are contained in the vision of the waters, chapter xlvii.—a vision conveyed in a way which would suit the Jewish mind, but which is surely to be explained according to our modes of thinking;

now. This principle must be yielded to us, that if one and the same object were presented to the Jew and to us, the form in which it would be so necessarily will suit the different habits and modes of thinking. For suppose that the holy catholic church were contained in this vision, and that it were given to us, would it not have been in our mode of speaking of these things; and would not the Jew have been at liberty, yea, under the necessity, of transposing it into the scale which was familiar to his mind in order to understand it? The Bible evidences itself to be divine, not only in developing the spiritual life of men, but also the mental and emotional. The Scriptures of the Old Testament were given to Jews, and in such a way as they could understand; but their language is to be clothed in New Testament garb, that we may perceive its meaning too. Wherefore, by a reference to many portions of the Word, we discover that these waters are the doctrines of grace. This is distinctly shown in verses 8, 9. It is the river which makes glad the city of God,—the doctrines of grace,—the gospel. There is a singular change of words in the ninth verse; the river is all at once called *the two rivers*, when the reviving effect of them is to be declared. We may refer to John iii. 8, as a beautiful parallel passage. The influences of the Holy Ghost do not constitute a river distinct from that of the gracious Word. In the one river of grace, we have both the Word of salvation and the Spirit's influences. The river which flows from the house into the church, and from it into a dead world, is not one, but two, when the healing takes place. So that from the day in which the first gospel sermon was preached,—preached in that blessed promise made to our tremb-

ling first parents and embraced by them,—the waters of the sanctuary, the promise and the Spirit of grace, have been flowing forth and quickening dead souls wherever they come. The Spirit is not seen; men's minds are not in contact with any thing but a word; but when the healing takes place, the river is found to be not one, but two. "Our gospel came to you not in word *only*." Such puerile books as "Erchomena" may cast an empty and verbose ridicule upon God's glorious gospel, and sneer at Bible societies and Methodist meeting-houses, in a way that will gladden the heart of the veriest Jesuit; but that will not for a moment dim the heavenly lustre which shines the more sweetly that it is bespattered with ignorance or enmity. No, "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto the saved it is the power of God;" and "*potentia Dei nihil aliud est quam Deus omnipotens*."

This river,—this gospel,—these influences of the eternal Spirit,—these "two rivers," have been proceeding from the throne of God into the world in all ages, for he has had a church from the beginning. The degree of this church's development is declared in the beginning of this chapter, in the four distinctly-marked periods of its history. In the antediluvian church, the doctrines of grace were but dimly revealed, and the power of religion but feebly felt: "the waters were to the ancles." From the deluge to Sinai, the revelation became brighter, especially to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: "the waters were to the knees." From the giving of the law to Christ, brighter still shone the light of salvation: "the waters were to the loins." And from Christ onward through the Christian dispensation,

life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel : the waters are "a river to swim in." These four periods—the Antediluvian, the Noachic (not "Abrahamic," that is more extensive), the Mosaic, the Christian, have all been vivified by God's gospel, though in different degrees. And when Ezekiel would point out this to these Jews, they would see how sadly in error they were, when thinking they were "the people, and that wisdom would die with them,"—that they were the church, and that the Lord's grace and love were necessarily confined to them.

It will thus be seen that this explanation embraces that of the most part of the British commentators and divines. The river is rolling on since the first promise was given ; and now, in pentecostal power and fulness, it is going forth to embrace the world : and "*magna est veritas DEI et prevalebit.*" By which we are brought, as in Zechariah, to the state of things on which the prophetic eye rested from afar, but glistened with holy delight as it did so, and may bathe our rapturous spirits in the sweet font of all the prophecies—(prophecies all claimed by our friends to support their strange system!)

We think this is the key to Ezekiel's vision. We could give a plausible explanation of very many of its details, though indeed we would shrink from attempting all. But in the meanwhile enough has been said, and it is humbly thought with proper reasons, for discarding the views which premillenarians entertain of it. No countenance is given to their theory from any thing that is said in this part of holy writ. Of course, we admit that the future restoration of the Jews is intimated in it. But this is not a matter peculiar to the hopes of our

friends. We are sure of it, even as they, and upon better grounds. Like all the other ways of God, mercy is mingled with judgment here. Truly he smites with one hand, and supports with the other. In the very midst of the rejection of Israel, promises are sovereignly given of their being grafted in again into God's church. But this we pursue not now. In closing our remarks upon these chapters, we simply add a word upon another subject than the present one. Let this way of interpreting the vision be established by a more extensive argumentation than we have time for here, and let it become the idea associated with it in the popular mind or the general mind, and we have an invincible argument for the perpetuity of the SABBATH from chapter xlv. 1, 2: "Thus saith the Lord God, The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east (from which the living waters issued, chap. xlvii.) shall be shut the six working days; but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and the gate shall not be shut *until the evening*; likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of the gate before the Lord, in the Sabbaths and in the new moons." Observe also the provision of a standing ministry, and the provision made for its comfort.

3. We had intended to give a few notes upon the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew and the second epistle to the Thessalonians. But to do any thing like justice to them would greatly too much lengthen this essay. And after glancing at the judicious and full remarks to be found on these places (chap. xxiv. 29, 30; chap. ii.) in Bengel's Gnomon (Bengelii Gnomon Novi Testamenti, a book which should be in every minister's library), we believe it would be unnecessary.

However, the chief thing we had in view to bring out may be stated in a very few words. We have frequently wondered why different events—events with centuries perhaps or even millenaries of years between them—should be found combined in the prophetic vision, and narrated in a kind of involved description. The double meaning of prophecy has generally been produced as the principle of interpretations. As to that principle we shall speak immediately in the next part ; meanwhile, the rationale of it may be exhibited thus. Suppose that the system of events could be compared to several concentric circles, whose exponents are, a, b, c, d, e, x . Let a be the central circle, having its centre common to all the others, and let it expand in the course of divine providence into b ; let the expansion continue to c , so as that c not only embraces but exhibits the elements of a and b in a higher development, like the motion of a wave on a still expanse of water caused by the dropping of a stone into any part, and so on to x . Let x both embrace and exhibit the elements of the others in their highest development. Then it is clear that the description of any one of these will equally apply to all. There might be a specialty in some of the details ; but the salient points would be distinctly marked in the whole. By this specialty the mind might be fixed on one more than on another, so as to trace out the whole of it, even when a description—as in Matthew chapter xxiv.—is given which involves two or more. We are inclined to think that the course of events does fall out according to this hypothesis. A large induction of facts, and the philosophy of the mighty principles which are in operation in the history of our race, lead to the conviction that good and evil, that truth and error, are developed

by great cycles. The more deeply one dives into the principles and facts of history, moral or civil, the firmer will this conviction become; and the help which is afforded by the understanding of it, in order to arrive at the meaning of prophecy—of Matthew xxiv., for instance—is most valuable.

PART V.

“GLORIOUS THINGS SPOKEN OF ZION.”

WE have now finished the subjects which are properly in our way in investigating the claim of premillennialism. Very much more might have been said, and many other arguments which have been solidly enough adduced by other writers on the same side might have been illustrated, and the various topics touched upon in our essay might have been greatly more lengthened out. But on the grounds which have been laid down, we think we are not unjustified in designating this essay by the title which it bears. It has not been done to hurt the feelings of our friends. We love and respect them too highly to offend them in any such way. Indeed, on this very account we have forborne the mention of their books or the names of those who write them,—one book alone, which is calculated to give pain to any one who reads it, being only hinted at. But it is our conscientious conviction that the theory is a delusive one, and that it should therefore be attacked in an open and honest way. Whether we have shown it to be so, we leave to the calm verdict of the careful and prayerful reader. If assistance be given to any one, and especially to some

ministers of our acquaintance who are doubtful which view to take, then let all the glory be to God.

While assaying to demolish an error, we have by no means been overturning the doctrine of the Millennium. We entirely agree with our friends as to the fact of such a thing being yet a part of the church's history. We entirely agree with them that the Jews shall be converted and restored to their own land; that the world shall be converted to Christ, and the antichristianism of Christendom and the paganism of heathendom be swept away; and we only differ as to the *quomodo*, and the precise nature of the state of things hereafter. And lest any should imagine that the preceding remarks tell against the fact of a Millennium in any way, and especially against an event which we view with much interest, as being pregnant with glorious effects to the church and the world—we mean the salvation, temporal and spiritual, of the seed of Jacob—we shall now add some observations on this subject. Suppose we were asked to defend some of the truths of unfulfilled prophecy, to which premillenarianism, by a kind of conventionalism, has come to lay claim, and in doing so to keep the system we have defended in a prominent way before the view, we should find little difficulty in doing so. Take, for instance, the return of the Jews to their own land, and their conversion to the faith of Christ. This is a cheering prospect, if it be true; and its truth can be established in many ways and by various modes of argument. We could fill a volume with proofs of this. We shall pursue but one, taken from the prophet Joel. And this proof we take in order to show the application of the principle already laid down, which is generally known under the designation of the double meaning of prophecy.

In the second chapter of Joel's prophecy, we are told of the deliverance of the people of Israel from the effects of the devastations mentioned at the beginning of the book. It is said, “Ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you.” There had been a famine in the land; for the narrative spreading over the first part of the prophecy is strictly literal, being one of those locust plagues which are so common in eastern countries. But while we are to view it thus, we know from other parts of the book that these matters are figurative of God's present dealings with Israel and with Israel's country. It runs into the whole of Jewish history. We would not say that there is a double meaning in the book, or in this twenty-sixth verse of the second chapter, but rather that there is a pregnancy of meaning in it, thus,—the Jews, placed under an economy peculiar in many respects, are to be dealt with according to that economy, until “the heart turn to the Lord, and the veil be taken away.” From the explanation of this economy in Leviticus chapter xxvi., and the latter chapters of Deuteronomy, we find that temporal judgments—an exhibition of the internal and spiritual—are denounced against their sins during all their dispensation. But this dispensation is viewed in its vast unity and completeness, and the whole judgments extend over it all. It will therefore be found, on a retrospective view of this dispensation when it is closed, that there has been a certain progressive development of parts, according to the scheme set down a little ago. Each of these parts has been a germ and a representation of the whole, and that which is true of the whole as a whole will be true of each part as a part;

and the proper relation of each part will be found, when enlarged, to be the true representation of the whole.

Apply this to the matter before us. Certain parts of prophecy are applied in the New Testament, and generally by divines, to events which were far distant from those immediately calling forth the prophecy. Has the prophecy, therefore, an arbitrary or a double meaning? Nay; but as the whole dispensation when finished shall be found to contain all the parts, and as it were to have its image in each of these parts, so with the prophecy: it came forth with a literal reference to the events occurring at the time, but having like these events, and just because applied to them, a pregnancy of meaning. In applying this to the doctrine of Israel's restoration, it may be asked, Were the prophecies of a literal return exhausted by that from Babylon, and is it therefore improper to gather from them the assurance that this people shall be restored from their present long and sad captivity? We cannot answer this question satisfactorily by saying that the Jews shall not be restored to Palestine, for there are many reasons of a weighty kind to lead to the conclusion that there will be such restoration. Nor would it be satisfactory to answer affirmatively on the ground that the prophecy has a double meaning, for the meaning of Scripture is one; and if we attach a double meaning to some of its parts, why not to all? Still, we do find passages in prophetic Scripture applied by the inspired writers themselves to events which literally were not the events occurring when and about which the prophecy was given. What solution have we for the difficulty? Evidently the one laid down in the previous remarks. It is only in the relative character of the various events connected with

the remarkable dispensation of Israel, and in the pregnancy of meaning which they are thus seen to bear, that we can discover a clear and satisfactory reason for the application of prophecy to what appear like different events. And this explanation of the difficulty is as remote as possible from the myths of Germanism, in which the historical position of events is denied, and a mere ideal development assigned to them.

In Joel's time there had been a plague of locusts. Every thing had been destroyed. A grievous famine ensued. The prophet is commissioned by God to point out the cause, and the means of deliverance. The cause is sin, for which they are called to repentance, and urged "to rend their hearts, and not their garments, and turn to the Lord." The sin is a national one, the punishment a national one, the repentance a national one; and the grace and mercy are national too, for it is sovereignly added, that the Lord will send them national prosperity again, and that they should as a nation rejoice and bless the Lord. This last thing is contained in the twenty-sixth verse of the second chapter; so that this is the position which that text occupies in the narrative or prophecy that is placed before us. We have seen how we are to apply the facts in Israel's history, just as we predicate from God's dealings with a man his dealings with the humanity of which that individual is a component part, or as we gather from the Lord's dealings with a nation or the world what they shall be with the individual. Indeed, it is on this principle that the personal application of Scripture depends. It is on this principle we are permitted to apply those things which were spoken to the Jews in such a way as to bear an influence upon ourselves, who were outcast Gentiles,

and upon whom the ends of the world have come. The history of Israel is that of God's dealings with the world when it is grafted into the church. Israel is a theatre on which the grand drama of the world is acted ; and each national fact in the history of that people—the present one, for example—is a picture in which the whole of the dispensation is displayed, as it were, in miniature. This is the basis of prophetic interpretation ; as Bengel says somewhere, "*Prophetia a temporibus extremis remota summam et uno conspectu omnia complectitur.*"

In the national history of the Jews, the events before us occur—a solemn testimony to them of what they might expect if they shut their eyes and hardened their hearts. They did act in this manner. They went on adding sin to sin, till the Lord cast them out of his land, and dispersed them among all nations. They are at this moment under the heavy hand of God, as described in this book. Still, no matter where they are, no matter that they are scattered out of their land and into all the kingdoms, they are yet viewed as a people,—the land is still theirs ; and the word of prophecy concerning them and their land is as strictly literal as if they were now living in Palestine. Into the midst of them Joel comes. He points to their sin, to God's anger, to the desolate appearance of their land, and calls them to repentance. Indeed, we may say that all this is as strictly immediate—or virtually so, if you choose—as if we now saw Joel, and were listening to him as he delivers his weighty message. We can conceive Israel as even now addressed. This prophecy—this sermon—of Joel is not a thing delivered once about an event nigh two thousand and six hundred years ago, and then,

when its purpose was accomplished, stored up in the annals of history, like some musty volume in a neglected library. This word is a present word, uttered by Him who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever—in whose eternal existence and presence Joel still lives, stands forth as ambassador, and utters the will of the Lord in the ears of these living Jews, calling them to repent and return to Jehovah their God. The Word of God knows neither past nor future: it is the present pure living voice of the Eternal, who knoweth the end from the beginning, and who, in his own immensity, gathers up the past and the future into an ever-abiding present. To *us* Joel lived more than two thousand years ago; but Joel, the Lord's ambassador, lives now, speaks now, exhorts now. And Israel shall yet hear his voice; for their heart shall turn to the Lord, and the veil be taken away. Joel has cried long in their hearing, “Turn to the Lord with all your heart, and with fasting, and weeping, and mourning. Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people. Yea, the Lord will answer and say to his people, Behold, I send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; and I will no more make you a reproach among the people. Fear not, O land, for the Lord will do great things. Be glad, then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God, for he hath given you the former and the latter rain. And the floors shall be full of wheat; and ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you.” In this wondrous procedure of God, manifested in the peculiar economy of Israel, the Jews may still be viewed as inhabiting their own land—as still dwelling in Palestine—as never hav-

ing been thrust out of it. But they are under the heavy cloud of the Lord's anger, and the former and the latter rain are restrained, and the land is not bearing for them. "The seed is rotten under the clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered." Israel is there, but the land is cursed for their sakes; it is not bearing for them. Yet Joel is in the midst of them; his voice is raised, and the power of the life-giving Spirit is in that voice. After a long, dark night of sin, disobedience, unbelief, famine, and misery, Israel awakes—is astonished—is ashamed—repents, and turns to the Lord their God. Then is Jehovah jealous for his land; and it comes to pass that he "heareth the heavens, they hear the earth, and the earth heareth the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and these hear Jezreel." Israel's land is fruitful for them again; the famine is no more; they eat and bless the Lord; Palestine gives Israel food again. And in the bright, glorious era that then dawns, they eat in plenty, and praise the name of the Lord.

In the fully-developed history of Israel's dispensation, these words of Joel reveal the abundance of produce and the happiness of the people during the days of the millennial peace, as also their state of mind in reviewing all the Lord's dealings with them. Israel is in Palestine again. And this prophecy exhibits their internal peace and gladness, and the happy external condition in which they dwell, when, during the latter-day glory, that word shall be fulfilled, "Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance." Then shall

flow out their true and cheerful gratitude to the Lord for all his mercies. Their heart shall be full as well as their mouth—full of love, and joy, and peace, and praise. They have been painfully taught the exceeding greatness of every mercy of the Lord during their “famine.” They have learned that the promise of a land flowing with milk and honey had in it something divinely great and excellent; and now they value their mercies, and praise the Lord for them. They review all the way by which they have been led; they review all the merciful dealings of the Lord—all, temporal and spiritual, and for them all they sing praise. For a feast of tabernacles shall be kept, such as shall display their devotional spirit, the frame of their minds, and the constant exercise of their lives, after they have awaked up from their dream of delusion, and turned with weeping and mourning to seek the Lord.

We cannot suppose any will view the difficulty of restoring this people back to their country as an insurmountable one, even on human calculation, and without embracing the divine element at all. Surely there is no greater difficulty in the matter now than there was in the days of Cyrus, or in the days when Cæsar’s Commentaries were written, or in the days when the Republic of Liberia was settled. Would it be a difficult matter to restore the Italian exiles, or the Hungarian refugees, or the Polish and Siberian captives? Only let the cycle of events open up in a favourable manner, and how soon would they be in their own lands! In these cases we reason on human probabilities; in the one before us we have all these, and the immutable truth of the divine promises besides. So that we are at liberty to assume this matter, and to reason upon it

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in the hypothetical manner we have done in the preceding remarks. They are still a people ; God is still dealing with them as such ; the volume of prophecy is still opening up in its relations to them as such, and it will do so till it is exhausted.

But take now the economy of the Israelitish church as typical of that of the Christian, and the Land of Canaan as symbolizing that of the world, and we can arrive at the true idea of the Millennium, and the mode of its accomplishment. And this we are at liberty to do, not only from the principles of general interpretation, but from the peculiar way in which reference is made to the book of Joel in the New Testament. The Apostle Peter, quoting the last verses of Joel's second chapter, applies them to the New Testament church, and shows that the beginning of their accomplishment took place at Pentecost, which was the commencement of that ministration which is to embrace the world in its arms. In the preaching of the word as at Jerusalem on Pentecost, and by the outpouring of the Spirit who descended then, Israel is yet to be saved, for all Israel shall be saved ; and the apostle applies the Scriptures which tell us so to that particular mode of it exhibited in the second chapters of the Acts. If this be confined to the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, then we gradually open into a general restoration of the people to spiritual privileges, and, as a matter of course, to temporal prosperity in their land, for this is a part of the peculiar covenanted position they occupy. But if we view the type as a circle, resolving in all its parts into a wider one, then we obtain the result in the experience of the Christian church.

View it in both of these ways, and single out in each

four periods or cycles, the one resolving into the other. In Jewish history, we have the deliverance from Egypt carried into the deliverance from Babylon, the greater comprehension of the circle being explained in Haggai, ii. 3-9. This, again, is extended into the millennial deliverance, for there can be no intermediate period fixed upon; and that again into the eternal glory, for if we refer to Zechariah, third and fourth chapters (not to point out any more of the volume of prophecy), we see that there must be a stage of development between the second and the fourth. Philosophical principles will guide to the same result. In all this we have the type of the Christian history, four periods of which may be singled out in very much the same words: the Apostolic period, the Reformation period, the Millennial period, and the Heavenly glory.

In considering these things, in order to found any argument upon them, we require to establish, in the first place, the philosophic principle of the development of history in cycles—a thing pretty generally granted by those who have been led to examine it; and, secondly, by the application of prophecy to the whole, as embracing or providing for that principle. From any little thought we have been able to give to the subject, we think it will be found a truth without almost any exception, that the prophetic language, figures, descriptions, though applicable to and coloured by the present matters, assume their thought or idea from the *last* cycle in the series rather than the others. We shall not now analyze these two particulars; but we state them as being essentially the basis on which prophetic Scripture should be explained, and as being exceedingly simple and satisfactory in their application. On no

other principle can we conceive of a solution to the question why language is used about the destruction of Jerusalem, or the establishment of the Christian religion in the Roman empire (Rev. vi.), or the Millennium, which is strictly true of the last day and its events, and of no other time.

Suppose these things granted, observe their operation in Jewish and Christian history. The covenant with Abraham embraced his natural posterity in a literal way, and also the land of Canaan; and it is a covenant of salt—it shall never pass away. (Compare Psalm lxxxix., Romans xi.) Hence we find that just as God was preparing them for the land, he was preparing the land for them. It “spued out its inhabitants,” that there might be room for his people. The land is represented as heaving and travailling in desire to have them in it. It was so at the first when the people were brought forth from Egypt to go in and possess it. It was the same at the time of the Babylonian captivity, Hosea ii.; and it is the same now. While God has been bringing the third part through the fire, and disciplining it in a way it is slow to learn, and has not yet begun to learn, is not the land of the Jews waiting for them, and has it not emptied itself of every people that has endeavoured to occupy it? It might offend some if we were to pass onwards to the final period, and inquire into the disposition of things when, in the new heavens and the new earth, the full accomplishment of the prophecy and of the covenant shall possibly take place. Wherefore, without enlarging any more upon the state and prospects of the Jews, we merely remark that, if the gracious salvation is to embrace them during the Millennium, then it will also embrace their land, for

they are kept for it and it for them, the peculiar nature of their economy requiring this—an economy, we mean, which is Abrahamic and not Mosaic. So that we cannot affirm any thing of a spiritual restoration, without predicating a return to their land, they being homeless in a manner without it—it being empty without them; all in terms of the covenant made with Abraham. Wherefore, on these grounds, which are furnished in the pregnant meaning of prophecy, we confidently expect the literal as well as spiritual restoration of the seed of Jacob in the latter days.

And how is this their conversion—their millennial revival—to be brought about? Precisely as that of a part of them was accomplished on the day of Pentecost; for Joel tells us, tells them, it is to be by calls to repentance and the outpouring of the Spirit. The apostle Peter, quoting this declaration, says to them that the promise was to them and to their children—says that if they would “repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” And lest it should be imagined the promise was fulfilled and exhausted on that day, there is an interesting change of the words. Joel says, “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.” Peter, applying it to that day, and quoting purposely from the Septuagint, says, “I will pour out *of* my Spirit;” as if he had said that the dispensation was then commencing which should embrace all flesh, and which would only be fulfilled when it did so. From all which two special arguments might be constructed, namely—that until all the Jewish people are partakers of the Holy Ghost, the promise in Joel is unfulfilled; and that the same must be said of others than Jews, even of “all who are afar off, as many as the

Lord our God shall call," who are as certainly included in the "all flesh" as the Israelites themselves. Again, if words have any meaning, those of Peter declare that the preaching of the name of Jesus Christ, and baptism in that name, are coincident and coextensive with the outpouring of the Spirit, and hence included in the prophecy of Joel. To go particularly into these would, however, lead us back to subjects which have already been discussed under their proper heads, so we leave them, merely suggesting to our premillenarian friends that this indicates how large is the field of argument we might have carried them over when showing the error of their theory. Joel, explained by Peter, tells us first of the restoration of the Jews into the covenant of Abraham, which is filled with provisions temporal, spiritual, eternal; and, secondly, that this is to be effected under the dispensation of the Spirit of grace; and, lastly, that Jesus Christ the Lord is "away" (John xvi.) during that dispensation—a dispensation which is to embrace all flesh, for the preaching of his name and baptism into it are alone to characterize it.

The conversion of the Jews will not, however, constitute the whole of the first resurrection, although truly included in it. The prophecy extends to a larger circle than "to them and to their children;" it reaches to all flesh,—“to all who are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” The Jewish type enlarges into the Christian antitype,—an antitype which has likewise its four periods, the Apostolic, the Reformation, the Millennial, the Eternal, falling into a coincidence with the Jewish in the last two, according to prophetic writ. In the second of these we now live, and towards the third our eyes are turning with wist-

ful gaze, as promising the only remedy for our innumerable evils, and the only possible deliverance from a state of things which the very framework of society and of nations would seem to have indelibly stamped upon groaning humanity. We have no desire to witness upheavals, for we know the miseries which for a while are sure to be found in their train; but we speak, we believe, the thoughts of all earnest and deep-thinking men, when we state as our conviction that Satan has so welded together the whole framework of society, and done so to serve his own purposes, as that deliverance cannot come save by a wrench which shall be felt—to the core of Europe alone?—to the deepest core of the world. And if such a thing must come, if we must look for “distress of nations and men’s hearts failing them for fear,” if we must look for the darkest part of the night before the dawning of the world’s light, then the sooner it comes the better. God will carry his elect safely through.

It may alarm those who are in love with primitive Christianity, or rather the period of it, to have such a place assigned to the Reformation as we have done, and to be asked to view it as an enlargement of the Apostolic circle; even as not a few might be found who would be unwilling to admit that the Reformation under Nehemiah was a widening of the previous circle in the Jewish church. And possibly there may be wanting *now* the self-denied spirit, the burning love, and the martyr constancy of the times in which Tertullian wrote his apology. We are not sure that to any great extent the same integrity, constancy, and heavenly-mindedness, could be predicated of Christians now, as is opened up in these few words of that apology:—

“We worship Him alone, and are ready to lose our lives in his service; thus, then, let the claws of wild beasts pierce us, and their feet trample upon us, while our hands are stretched out to God; let crosses suspend us, let fires consume us, let swords pierce our breasts, —a praying Christian is in a frame for enduring any thing. We are dead to all ideas of worldly honour and dignity. We nourish our faith by the Word of God.” We fear it is not so *now*; but was it not so at the Reformation and downwards? Trace it in the Church of Scotland, in the Reformed Church of France, in the Pilgrim Fathers. But we need not trace it. Every one knows that the spiritual life, fed on the Word of the living God, burned bright and pure even as at any period of the three first centuries. But apart from this, it is right we should know the relative position of these two periods—the primitive and the Reformation—to serve as a testimony against the language of Tractarian and Popish writers, and those who are tinged with their spirit. Leaving out the apostles and the inspired writings (which they will most heartily do) as belonging to no one period of the church but to all of it, even as Jesus and the Bible (Ephes. ii. 20–22) do, then all who know what the primitive church was will hardly hesitate a moment in maintaining that the Reformation and its three succeeding centuries is a wider and brighter circle by far than any time before. For mere extent, we believe, the Protestant circle has extended more widely than the Apostolic, if we view it together with its missions; though it is in other respects we view it, even as the reformation under Nehemiah must be viewed in other respects too. Were we to compare the men—Edwards with Tertul-

lian, Howe with Chrysostom, Owen with Augustine, Calvin with — there is no name to be thought of; indeed, why should we adduce many instances? There is not a standard writer in Reformation times that is not, from the shoulders upwards, taller than the most of the fathers put together. Which of them is like Turretine, or Dr Francis Roberts, or Richard Baxter? Is there any that could be mentioned with Chalmers? In a word, for precise theology, sound morality, eminent men, the diffusion of the Scriptures, healthy writing, and right preaching, they are not to be compared. We are not *now* what a healthy Christianity would desire; but truly we would not like to exchange for the days of Ambrose or of Salvian. Bad as the nineteenth century is, it is greatly in advance of the fourth.* It would be an interesting subject to take up the three first centuries, and the three bygone ones, and institute a comparative analysis of the two; but it is beside our subject here. We should like to see it done by some one. A good beginning has been made by Isaac Taylor.

It is unnecessary to follow the application of prophecy to this branch of the subject, so as to open it into the Millennium; we shall fall back upon it as already exhibited in the typical church, and turn our eyes at once to the glorious future, which breaks in bright beauty upon our faith. All things are advancing towards a Millennium. “The good time coming” is felt after by men of all minds, and pursuits, and theories. The only embodiment of the general thought and universal instinctive craving is the good time of the future. The ancient

* Of course it is Protestant not Popish countries we are speaking of.

poets belied humanity when they commenced history with the golden age—unless, indeed, some glimmerings of the Eden of God, lighted up by his favour, and the excellency of unfallen man, are to be traced in their Saturnian period—for human hopes and instincts feel out naturally towards the future, assured the golden age is yet to come. And come it will. It may be with garments dipped in blood—it may be amidst the ruins of nations—it may be with the throes and writhings of a travailing world—it may be with sore trials to the godly, and heavy judgments upon the unholy—it may break forth in its beauty from amidst a darkness deep as that which was dispelled when the “Dayspring from on high” visited our world, or as the gloom which was rent asunder by the great Reformation—it may be with all these and more, but come it will, for God hath spoken the word, and the Lord Jesus Christ has been in the world. It is written, “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” He has been in the world, not as its Judge (*οὐ ἵνα κρίνῃ τὸν κόσμον*, John iii. 17)—he will yet be that—but as the Saviour. He is in the world to save it; and by the ministry of reconciliation all things are advancing towards this glorious issue. Remembering the rules for the application of prophecy, we may even say that the very creation is groaning to be delivered. Every sigh of the expiring animal—every noise of the crumbling leaf—every moan of the rushing wind—every roar of the rolling thunder—is a cry of hope and a cry of desire for the manifestation of the world’s redemption, and for the exclusion of intruders and of the usurping prince. “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now; for

the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.”

Hence this principle of prophetic application opens to us the true meaning of such passages as these: “He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.” “The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” “He gave himself a ransom for all, to be manifested in due time,” as the tide of gospel efficacy and glory rolls on, in the ministration of God’s sovereign Spirit, covering the world with life, and love, and peace. We see not yet the manifestation of the world’s redemption, but we know it is a redeemed world; we know the Lord, for the sake of his precious pearl, his treasure, his church hid in it, came and sold all that he had, and bought it; and we know not how soon the infinite Spirit may show this to be the case. We know not when, but we know the fact; for God hath said, and Christ hath bought, and the Spirit is now in it, and ministers are called to beseech and to pray, and men to listen and repent, “that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” The Shepherd is even now in the wilderness—he is looking for the strayed sheep; yea, he has found it—he has fought with the lion, and bound him—he has satisfied the Father’s law for its sin of apostasy—he is even now laying it across his shoulders, to bear it back to the Father as his own recovered sheep, his own saved world, the field of his purchase. By creation this world belonged to the creating God, but it apostatized; by redemption it belongs to Christ, and he is recalling it from its apostasy—he is standing in its streets and broad places, proclaiming forgiveness—he is standing forth in the midst of its kingdoms, and offering re-

conciliation. The usurper and his host are giving all the opposition in their power, and while wilfully rushing to the pit themselves, they seek to bear this redeemed world along with them. But they shall not prevail. That voice which echoed through the tomb of Lazarus, and the loud tones of which shall yet summon all before the Judge, is now, in the still small voice of the gospel, wooing and constraining poor convinced sinners to come under the broad shadow of his everlasting name, and will do so till this strayed world shall nestle, like a stricken dove, in the bosom of its Lord.

This message of redemption was promulgated by the godly race of ministers who lived and preached before the flood. It was declared to the ungodly that they had no right in God's world, unless they would throw down the arms of rebellion, and lie at the feet of their merciful King. But they did not. Down through the world's history men have not done it. They have dared to live in the Lord's world without submitting to his rightful authority—they have dared to use the blessings which God put into his world, and to waste them according to the lusts of their own hearts, as if there were no judgment and no wrath. But thus will it not be always. "Glorious things are spoken of Zion." The wicked shall be driven out of Christ's redeemed world to their own place, or by conversion shall be incorporated into that Zion, of which these glorious things are spoken. Zion shall yet be the name of the world; the world is yet to be the name of Zion. And thus doth the eternal God view it. As at first, when he was pleased to enter into covenant with the representatives of our race, he viewed as present before him all those for whom Adam stood, as if they were then existing, present, looking on, consent-

ing; so in the new covenant representation doth he view all who have existed, or may exist, as congregated together in this his world. Christ crucified is lifted up, and offered to them; the rejecters are driven out of his world; the believers dwell there. And thus we, grasping in thought the world's duration, the world's history, and the mighty events which have come to pass in it, have it all before us, in one vast view, as the lost, the convinced, the saved world.

May we be permitted as Christ's minister to add a word of exhortation? Reader, the Lord Jesus Christ is now in this world to save it. He, the coming Judge, is present as the Saviour to direct men to the refuge which is provided from the overflowing scourge. All things are hastening forward to the bright era at which we have been glancing. This world is a redeemed world, though not yet manifested as such. But the Spirit of the Father and of Christ is in the midst of it, the crucified One is lifted up, the echoes of the heavenly music—yea, and of the redeemed world's music, yet to be sung—sweep across the dreary wilds of the apostasy, alluring in power and sweetness the laden soul, the toiling, weary race. That glorious gospel rolls along in majesty and beauty, in love and life. The healing waters of the sanctuary are “going forth into the sea,” and the multitudes have been rushing into life. These waters, this gospel, has reached you. In it conviction of sin, danger, wrath, is poured into your spirit. Thus is it with you as with the world; with the world as with you,—convinced that you might be saved; taught your guilt that you may bring it to Christ to have it removed. All this has come forth from the throne of the Eternal to you; the Lord of

glory and the Spirit of grace even now urge you to be reconciled unto God. Are you to stand in the way of this gospel's success? Many cogent reasons thou mayst give, many a plausible argument thou mayst use, why thou shouldst not embrace salvation. Thou mayst not feel thyself guilty; thou mayst believe thy guilt to be but small; or thou mayst see thyself so very guilty as to think of nothing but despair. But is not God's own dear Son in the world, and has he not been crucified?—and does not that declare, as a sunbeam, the deep guilt and wretchedness of that world—of thee; for has not the crucified One been rejected by thee—a sufficient token of thy guilt, astonishing as it is dangerous? But he is not in the world as yet to judge it; it was to save it he came. Is he not sweetly knocking at the door of thy heart, and placing the cup of salvation to thy lips? Why not drink it then? why put away heaven's peace from thee? why feed on ashes when thou mayst enjoy the hidden manna and the water of life—when thou mayst rest on the Elder Brother's bosom, and look up into those eyes which look down into thine the glances of a love stronger than death, sweeter than a father's, and abiding as eternity?

“God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” And Jesus came; and Gethsemane, and Calvary, and Olivet are witnesses of the accomplished work. And according to Old Testament prophecy, on Pentecost commenced the dispensation of that ministry which is to embrace the world. It has not yet embraced all the earth, nor all the men—alas, no! But it is to do so; and “the morning's kindling blushes hail the rising day of grace.” The morning has dawned, and the glory

is arising. Sad as is the state of things at present by reason of the usurper and his followers; gloomy as is the view when the eye stretches over the hills of darkness; yet the word is gone forth,—the Saviour hath died,—the Spirit is working. During the time of travail, many have been convinced and saved. But the world's conviction will erewhile take place, and its conversion will speedily approach; and a humble world it will be in millennial times, after conviction of such guilt, after experience of such love. And thus the rolling river of the gospel, “wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby,”—where are no wars, no tumults, no strifes,—where “the weapons of warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds,”—is steadily advancing and flowing, till, in its universal diffusion and universal acceptance, Christ shall make manifest that this poor strayed world is his saved world.

“Fly abroad, thou mighty Gospel,
Win and conquer, never cease;
May thy lasting wide dominions
Multiply and still increase.
Sway the sceptre,
Saviour, all the world around.”

NOTE.

It may be thought the parable of the rich man and Lazarus contradicts those things which have been said, in the argument of Part Fourth, on the disembodied state, as it represents conversations to be carried on, and individual recognitions to take place, in the unseen world of souls. The following particulars will show this to be a mistake:—1. It is sometimes the case that Scripture parables admit of proper names, as in Ezekiel

xxiii. 4, and sometimes so distinctly personal are these as to require other circumstances to be taken into account to prove that they are not real but figurative only, as in Hosea i. We are free, however, to admit that Lazarus seems to have been an individual well known in Jerusalem, and by those Pharisees who were standing before Jesus. But the rich man was a parabolical character, in which the Lord exhibited the ungodly men who were standing around him very much in the same way as Matthew xxi. 28-32, only with a prominence given to the matter spoken of, Luke xvi. 14, 15. Bengel supposes there were five of these covetous men standing about our Lord and deriding him, and that he, as was his custom, endeavours to reach their consciences by this parable. 2. The Lord has two special objects in view, besides the one referred to, namely, to shut them up to the Word of Life, and to show them the impossibility of any one revisiting this world again to make known the secrets of the other world, either for the gratification of an idle curiosity, or for the confutation of their opponents, the Sadducees. If we are to take the nonsense of the Talmud as any indication of their ideas and statements at that time (see Allen's "Modern Judaism," chapters x. and xi.), then we can easily see the great design of our Lord in this parable. Indeed, a reference to these things would be quite sufficient to show us the absolute necessity of taking up the ground which we have done, and of explaining this parable precisely as Calvin has done. Any one who studies the Popish and Jewish ideas on "the intermediate state," will not be slow in seeking for something definite (so far as pneumatology can be supposed to supply any thing definite), as to the possibility or otherwise of getting access to souls, or of one soul having conversations with another. And we are convinced that it is all mere delusion, and, on the part of the Jewish rabbins and Popish priests, something worse than delusion, to maintain that there is. Nor does this

parable give the least countenance to the idea; for, 3. If the conversation recorded in it be a literal one, then souls have tongues, and hands, and voices, and eyes, and could drink water and feel its refreshing and cooling influence. Wherefore, as "Abraham's bosom" was the Jewish term for the state of glory, and did not refer to Abraham himself, and as so many things in these verses are after the manner of a parable, we conclude with Calvin that the conversation is so too, and are only words put into imaginary mouths in a parabolical way, that the Lord may read a lesson of fearful importance to five godless men who were on the way to torment, while they flattered themselves in their own blinded eyes that they were going to Abraham's bosom. It is a pretty thing and fine food for sentimentalism to talk of souls recognising each other, and being spectators of what goes on in this world, and being witnesses of Christian activity, in the disembodied state; and it is and has been a most profitable speculation for designing and knavish priests to keep up the conceit, with all the accompaniments which that prolific system of iniquity which is so intimately acquainted with purgatory and purgatorial matters knows so well to invent. But it is right to know there is no such thing, and that there is not a syllable in the Bible to support it. There is no interval of time between death and judgment,—therefore all men should be well prepared to meet their God.

THE END.