"It is mere equivocation to call Palestine the Lord's heritage and the land promised to his people. These expressions belong to the Old Testament, in the proper and literal sense, and can be applied to the New only in a figurative sense. The heritage which Christ purchased with his blood is his Church, collected from all nations, and the land which he promised is the heavenly country."—Fleury, cited by Jortin.
INTRODUCTION.

The following Letters were commenced without any view to publication; but before they were all written, the idea of submitting the writer's opinions to the public was suggested and urged by the Reverend Gentleman to whom they were addressed. The Author confesses that he felt but little reluctance in yielding to his friend's suggestion, both because of the deference due to the judgment of his adviser, and because he conceived the opinions controverted to be injurious in their tendency, and to require some corrective. If the Writer's views are just, his Letters may answer their end, if not directly, at least by stimulating some abler pen on the same side. If they are not just, some one, it is hoped, will take the pains to prove their fallacy, that thus, at any rate, the cause of truth may go uninjured, and its positions be the rather strengthened and confirmed.
To adopt the hint of his valued friend and correspondent, and almost the words he has suggested, the Writer assures his readers, that "Truth is his object—that he is most willing to pay due deference to the opinions of wise, learned, and pious men, on this as well as on other subjects; that he wrote these Letters entirely irrespective of anything that had been written in support of either side of the question; and that he did not consult the sentiments of men first, and then the Bible, respecting the subject, but, knowing merely that the question did exist, made the Bible, and that alone, his textbook."

He is aware that the doctrine of Israel's literal restoration to Palestine is a popular one—that it has been favoured by some of the wisest, most learned, and best men in the Church of Christ, and that it is still maintained by the majority of Christians. But, however popular prepossession may be shocked at witnessing this favourite doctrine cited at the bar of Reason and of Scripture, it should be remembered, that other opinions, long maintained by erudition, and still more widely prevalent, have
been cited there before, and long since convicted of gross imposture. Nothing was ever more offensive to popular prejudice than the first annunciations of Christianity, when the declarations of Christ attached the stamp of falsehood to the secular interpretations of the Scriptures given by the carnal Jews. The Crusades, now so justly regarded as fanatical, and which, perhaps, may not inaptly illustrate the practical tendency of this doctrine, were sanctioned by all the erudition and popular favour of centuries. The first breath of Protestantism was deprecated as the menace of a moral plague, and its tenets regarded as monstrous innovations on unquestionable truth. The history of science teems with illustrations of the fact, that error may long remain garrisoned within the fortress of popular opinion, and be fortified by the bulwarks of learning. The unavailable philosophy of Aristotle might have amused, impeded, and school-ridden the world until now, had not Bacon arraigned it at the tribunal of scrutiny and common sense; yet the *Novum Organum*, now so justly appreciated as the
effort of a mighty mind, struggling to liberate imprisoned truth, was at first assailed as dangerous and revolutionary. Those innovators, Copernicus and Galileo, suffered persecution and imprisonment, though Newton be now enshrined in favour. The Ptolemaic system of Astronomy was long maintained, and favoured even by Bacon himself, though now rejected by the world of science. The late analyses of Sir H. Davy, have falsified some of the maxims of alchemy, which to have assailed a few years since, without actual experiment, would have been deemed the height of chemical heterodoxy. Let the consideration of these facts propitiate the reader, and allow him to approach the subject now investigated in the attitude of inquiry. Far be it from the Writer to indulge the ridiculous vanity of comparing himself with the great men whose detections of popular errors he has alluded to. His aim is only to impress upon the reader the possibility that exists of the doctrine now questioned being likewise a popular error, and to bring it fairly to the test of examination. For inasmuch
as the errors which, on account of their strong hold of the public mind, required the mental energy of a Luther or a Bacon to expose, prevailed almost everywhere, where Christianity or philosophy was known; the doctrine of Israel’s literal restoration to Palestine, which, he presumes, has been rarely examined, and though one of the dogmas of the popular creed, has never excited much general interest, may be exploded, if false, without much credit due to his sagacity or perseverance, by one of the lowest of the people.”

The subject is important, not only in relation to the interests of the Jews, but highly so to the Christian Church likewise; because, if the doctrine contested be fallacious, the principles of scriptural interpretation by which it is maintained are fallacious also; and, if not exposed and exploded, are calculated to sap the foundations of truth, to cherish the rank weeds of fanaticism, mislead the ignorant, misdirect the zealous, obstruct the progress of true religion, and weaken the efforts of those who scripturally seek the moral renovation of the world.
INTRODUCTION.

Had the Writer commenced the Letters with a view to publication, the points he has noticed might possibly have been somewhat differently arranged. As it is, the reasons assigned for objecting to the doctrine in question may be resolved into the following, although not thus numerically stated in the Letters. The reasons are stated here, that the Reader may perceive at once the line of argument pursued.

2. Because at variance with the genius of Christianity.
3. Because the allusions in the New to the language of the Old Testament, and the use made of those allusions, are opposed to it.
4. Because there are phrases, terms, and passages in the Old Testament, which cannot be taken literally, or without qualification; and which yet have an equal claim to be so taken with the phraseology adduced in support of a literal restoration; while the literal meaning of others is negatived, some by New Testament authority, and some by the mode of their collocation, or by the sense expressly attached, or otherwise attaching to them.
5. Because there was only one prophet (Malachi) after the last reformation of Nehemiah, until the Christian æra, and he does not predict any future deliverance of the Jewish nation; thus leaving us to conclude that the predictions of former prophets were fulfilled, as to their literal import, on the return from Babylon, and the subsequent prosperity, and, therefore, had no reference to the present dispersion.

6. Because the doctrine is encumbered with certain difficulties, which are not necessary to be encountered, because obviated by an interpretation more simple and more in harmony with the general tenor of the word of God, than that upon which the said doctrine is built. The difficulties are of three kinds.

(1.) Arising from the magnitude of the events necessarily implied.

(2.) Arising from the ordinary course of things.

(3.) Arising from the apparent contradiction to Scripture testimony which the doctrine involves.

7. Because the doctrine is fruitless of good, and prolific of bad effects on the public mind in general, and on the minds of the Jews in particular.
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January, 1828.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In conformity with your wishes, I shall endeavour to investigate this question, which, I am aware, presents itself to your mind, as it does to my own, not as one of mere speculation, but, as possibly involving, in one view of it, very important
practical conclusions, and certainly, in another, the condemnation of much that is said and done, by some respectable persons, as detrimental to the cause of truth. For, as Oliver Cromwell sagaciously observed, when the question on the expediency of naturalizing the Jews in England was pending: "Since the Scriptures predict the conversion of the Jews, it is our duty to employ suitable means to bring it about;"—so now it may be supposed, and is by some affirmed,—if their restoration be predicted, it is our duty to employ suitable means to promote it. But if it be not predicted, it may be inferred, then any efforts to such an end will be as fruitless in result as fallacious in principle, and perhaps attended with consequences positively injurious.

If the Jews are to be not only reinstated in the Divine favour, but to experience peculiar manifestations of that favour beyond the lot of other converts; if they are to be recognized, on their conversion, as they were before their "casting away," as the peculiar people of God above all other people, it must be because they
now stand in a relation to God different from that in which other nations stand towards Him, possessing in that different relation a special ground to expect His pre-eminent regard.

Our inquiries, then, must be, in the first place, directed to ascertain, if possible, in what this difference of relation, if there be any such difference, consists. We shall consider the questions separately.

_First_, Do the Jews now stand in any relation to God different from that in which the rest of the unbelieving world stand towards Him? _Secondly_, If they do, what are the grounds of this different relation?

It is the Divine testimony that they _were_, in a peculiar sense, the people of God; and the peculiarities by which they were indicated to be such are evident. To them alone, of all the people in the earth, were committed the oracles of God. To them pertained _the adoption_ by the world’s Great Parent, in preference to all the other tribes of men, as His own children; and _the glory_ of the Divine presence and communion, and _the covenants_, recognizing and
confirming their peculiar relation; and the giving of the law, while all other people were a law unto themselves; and the service of God, while the multitude "sought out many inventions," and "served idols;" and the promises of future blessings to the world through Messiah, while all the human race beside were tossed on the restless ocean of uncertainty, too fathomless to anchor in, too boundless to explore, and too much wrapped in darkness to present a haven to the keenest view. Of the Jews were the Fathers,—the Patriarchs and Prophets,—distinguished as the favourites of Heaven and the depositaries of its will; and, of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came who is over all, God, blessed for ever. But the very end of Christ's advent being that all might be saved, and salvation consisting in the proper knowledge of Christ, it is obvious that the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile was broken down when Christ was set forth to be "a propitiation, through faith in his blood;" and it was declared that as God was the God of the Jews, so He was "of the Gentiles also;" seeing it is one
God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.

Had the Jews now happily believed in Him, of whom their fathers wrote, a blessed annihilation of their peculiar distinctions would have succeeded beneath the equal love of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, in whom “there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, male nor female, bond nor free,” but all are alike, whatever were their former distinctions, children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. So that the natural conclusion would be, that the Jews stand now in precisely the same circumstances as the unbelieving world in general, and that the highest glory to which they can attain being one equally attainable by others, that is, “power to become the sons of God,” they are not to be regarded as a people at any future period of time to be distinguished above other people, but only destined, in common with others, to participate in the blessedness of the day when “the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth.” This, it is said, would be the
natural conclusion; but, as such a conclusion is contested,—"to the word and to the testimony." It is true, they are referred to by the Apostle after their national rejection, as "the natural branches," and, "as touching the election, beloved for the Father's sakes." It is true, also, that the feelings of our nature respond to the principle here developed, and such expressions as these suggest the idea that the Jews, though monuments of the Divine displeasure in all nations, are still regarded with a father's heart by the God of Abraham, and, though rebellious children, are remembered to be children still. But to conclude that because they sustain the relation of rebellious children, they possess a special ground to expect any peculiar manifestation of the Divine regard, upon their conversion, above other nations, also the "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," would be altogether premature.

The relation, then, in which the Jews stand to the Divine Being, appears to be that of rebellious children in a sense distinct from any in which the designation can be applicable to other people, because
no other people have been similarly situated; "as concerning the Gospel, enemies for your sakes; but, as touching the election, beloved for the Fathers' sakes; for the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." The grounds of this distinct relation are, First, their ancient adoption; and, Secondly, their subsequent rejection of Christ who came to His own, while they received Him not. Upon the first ground, "beloved for the Fathers' sakes;" upon the second, the Lord's witnesses against themselves in all lands whither they are scattered, and illustrating, by their national degradation and dispersion, more remarkably than any other people, the judgments of God upon the children of disobedience. Whether this distinct relation may involve any distinction in their future history, or whether it may present any special claims, or suggest any special duties on their behalf to Christian philanthropy, are further questions. I shall only observe now, that if it be questionable, as I certainly conceive it to be, whether these "natural branches" will be "grafted again into their own olive-tree" with any distinguishing
proofs of the Divine welcome, much more so is the averment of some that they will be gathered to their own land, and enjoy a national glory and distinction under the personal reign of Christ, that shall cause them to be recognised by the rest of the world as the most elevated, dignified, and highly-favoured of all the nations of the earth.

To suppose this superior dignity will be enjoyed while they continue in unbelief, is an idea too preposterous to be entertained for a moment; for, whatever the restoration may be, it is promised only on repentance. To suppose this dignity shall follow on their embracing the Gospel, seems a direct contradiction to its spirit and declaration, that Christ hath broken down the middle-wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, that both might be one.

But the further consideration of the subject, I leave for the present.

Yours, &c.
LETTER II.

The subject more fully entered upon.—Three hypotheses proposed for investigation.—1. The restoration of the Jews to Palestine; their pre-eminent dignity; personal and visible reign of Christ amongst them, and the conversion of the Gentiles by their instrumentality.—2. Their restoration to the Divine favour, with some peculiar tokens of national distinction, without assuming what.—3. Their conversion merely, without any distinguishing proofs of Divine regard.—The first hypothesis objectionable, because unsupported by the New Testament.—If the doctrine be true, this absence of New Testament support very remarkable.—Not a satisfactory answer to say the New Testament Writers had more interesting and important topics to engage them; nor to say that when the New Testament was written the Jews were not yet dispersed.—The words of our Lord, "until the times of the Gentiles," nothing in favour of the doctrine.—Paraphrase of His prediction.

February 25, 1828.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I resume the subject of my former letter, and proceed to the consideration of the following distinct hypotheses, all of which were referred to, at least by implication, in the preliminary matter of my last.

First, It is maintained by some persons, that the Scriptures teach us that the Jews shall not only be converted, but that they
shall be collected and restored as a nation to their own land; and that, as a nation, they will be in some way more dignified and honourable than any other people; that the Messiah will personally and visibly reign amongst them; and that, by their instrumentality, "the fulness of the Gentiles" will be brought in.

Secondly, Others of more moderate views consider that the Scriptures teach us, simply, that the Jews shall be converted and be restored to the Divine favour with some peculiar tokens of national distinction, without defining what those peculiar tokens will be.

Thirdly, A third class, rejecting the two former hypotheses, believe that the Scriptures teach us that the Jews shall be converted, but afford no warrant for the opinion that they will be distinguished in any way whatever after their conversion from other people of the Christian community.

The first hypothesis involves several particulars:—1. "The Jews shall be converted." This may be dismissed with the necessary concession of its truth required
by the prediction, that "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth," and that "all shall know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest."

2. "They shall be collected and restored as a nation to their own land," &c. &c. &c. These notions may be considered together, many of the passages adduced as predicting the one, including some or all of the others, and synchronizing on a literal interpretation, in the fulfilment; but they are unsupported by the New Testament, and go on the presumption that certain prophecies contained in the Old, predicting the future prosperity of Israel, have a literal application to the Jews as a nation.

The New Testament is indeed in perfect harmony with the predictions of the Old, that, ultimately, "all shall know the Lord," but does not hint in the remotest way at a literal restoration of the Jews to the national possession and inheritance of their own land. Now, as nothing is more striking than the general harmony subsisting between the Old and New Testaments, it must, at least, be admitted as very singular, if, as it is alleged, every
prophet foretells the event in question, and is inspired to give it a prominence in his annunciations, that the New Testament writers, *who were Jews*, never confirm the prediction. Supposing this discrepancy, or absence of harmony to exist, it surely is capable of being accounted for; and, in order to this, perhaps it will be said that the predictions of the Old Testament prophets having been addressed to the Jews as a nation, might very properly refer to future events, interesting to *them as such*, but not particularly so to any other people, and therefore unnecessary to be touched upon by those whose business it was to write and speak for the benefit and instruction of the universal Church.

This answer is very unsatisfactory; for, in the first place, provided the restoration of the Jews *is* to take place, the event is as important to the Jews now, and was as important to the Jews of apostolic times, as it was to the Jews of old; and if they are to form so considerable, so pre-eminent a portion of the Christian Church, as it is said by some they will, the New Testament will be *their* "sure word of prophecy," as
well as our's; and the predicted restoration was surely a direct subject for apostolic confirmation and comment, and claimed the general suffrage of the New Testament writers; while, on the other hand, if those prophecies referred to predict no other events than such as occurred previous to the Christian era, or only the general prosperity of the cause of Christ, the difficulty arising from an apparent want of harmony between the Old and New Testaments vanishes. Again, it is urged, that the predicted restoration lays the Christian body under certain obligations, and devolves upon it certain duties, in reference to the event; if so, Christians needed some specific instructions on the subject under the new dispensation, because without them they were liable, as facts prove, to question the existence of the prediction itself, and, consequently, of the obligations and duties involved. And we are reduced to the dilemma, if we admit the doctrine, of concluding, either that there are no duties thence arising to Christians, or that the New Testament is defective as a rule of Christian practice. The latter we shall
not allow, and therefore consistency dictates that no attempt should be made to establish that as a ground of duty which we admit is not so.

Secondly, In the Epistle to the Hebrews, written by a Jew, and displaying a most complete acquaintance with the old dispensation, and with the condition and views of their nation, and in which, as it was written to converted Jews while their nation was in a state of great temporal abasement, some reference to their future national prosperity might have been expected, and would certainly have been interesting, there is no encouragement given to the opinion. But in the 8th chapter, and also in the 9th and 10th, the nature of the "new covenant," made with "the house of Israel and the house of Judah," is explained as essentially different from the old, which is described as "ready to vanish;" and this "new covenant" obviously means the Gospel dispensation, and consequently cannot be considered as having an exclusive application to the Jews. We see then, that Christianity is set forth as the fulfilment of this prophecy respecting
the "new covenant," and the prophecies of which Christianity is thus affirmed to be the fulfilment are some of those very same upon which the opinion in question rests.——Jer. xxxi. xxxiii. &c. "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."——And chap. xxxii. 40, "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me," &c.—Ezek. xi. 19, "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh," &c.—Chap. xxxvi. 26, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Besides, the 11th of Hebrews, 10th, 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th verses, seem directly opposed to a literal interpretation, assuring us that the matters
of divine promise made to the fathers were objects of faith, and that by faith they saw them, and are now inheriting them above: "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

Thirdly. The Apostle Paul, whose heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was, that they might be saved, and who so often and so warmly expresses the solicitude of his soul for his "brethren according to the flesh," and who wrote to explain to them their ancient ritual, and to prove the
fulfilment both of that and of prophecy in the person and Gospel of Christ; and who, in his Epistle to the Romans, expressly, and at considerable length, refers to their existing circumstances and future conversion, never once alludes to such an event as their literal restoration to Palestine and national importance. Nor did even our Lord, who was also himself a Jew, and foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and wept at the prospect of its woes. He did indeed limit the period of ruthless tyranny and reckless oppression, when he said, "Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" but this language appears to me to bring strong presumptive evidence against the idea of a literal restoration; because if, by the word "until," he had intended to intimate that, when the times of the Gentiles arrived, Jerusalem would then not only cease to be trodden under the foot of tyranny, but be restored to its original circumstances; the intimation was extremely dark, and liable, as the present controversy proves, to another construction demanded by the general tenor of the
New Testament. Whereas, if He intended to say merely that Jerusalem should be trodden under foot until oppressors ceased from the earth, when, in common with other places, it should enjoy the blessings of universal peace and love, his words are free from all obscurity, and fully convey their intended sense, and are not liable to any other construction as demanded by the general tenor of the New Testament. For, observe, the expression is not "until the times of the Restoration," but "until the times of the Gentiles;" and, by recurrence to the Prophets, we find "the times" alluded to are those when the distinction of Gentile, as well as that of Jew, shall merge in the universal title of Christian; and, when that time shall arrive, let who may inhabit the land of Judea and Jerusalem, it would be obviously unsuitable to say, in reference to those pious inhabitants, that Jerusalem was still trodden under foot of the Gentiles. I take the passage to be fairly paraphrased as follows: "The day of Jerusalem's sorrows is approaching; the armies of its desolators draw nigh, and soon its destruction will
be accomplished, and it shall never cease to be desolate and oppressed until the blessed period arrive when the Gentiles shall oppress no more, and when all lands shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.” Compare the passage with Gen. xxviii. 15, 1 Sam. xv. 35, Rom. v. 13, Mal. xiv. 25, and Matt. v. 18, and I presume the correctness of this paraphrase will appear highly probable. The Lord says to Jacob, “I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.” Did the Lord mean to say He would leave him then?—“And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death.” Did he come then?—“Until the law, sin was in the world.” Did sin leave the world when the law came?—Christ, at the last supper, said, “Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” Did Christ mean, that in the kingdom of God He would literally drink of the fruit of the vine?—Jesus said, “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” Did He mean to say that
when heaven and earth passed, the holy law of God should be dishonoured? These quotations sufficiently prove that the word \textit{until} does not always imply limitation, or alteration; much less the exact and literal recurrence of a former circumstance. The bringing in of the Gentiles is, doubtless, the event predicted in those reiterated announcements of prophecy, which, if taken literally, appear only to foretell the future restoration and prosperity of the Jews. But, surely, the former seems to be a subject more in consonance with the general tenor of Divine Truth, and more worthy the so frequent inspiration of the Holy Ghost,—not that "Israel and Judah" \textit{only}, be one kingdom under David, but that \textit{the whole world} be covered with the knowledge of the true God, and the ransomed flock of every kindred, tribe, and clime, be "\textit{all one}" under Christ, the one Shepherd. Nor will it satisfactorily account for the silence of the New Testament writers, supposing the doctrine to be true, to say, that when the New Testament was penned, the Jews were not yet dispersed; and that, therefore, any allusion to their restoration,
before that event had taken place, would have been unnatural. The New Testament writers were fully aware that Jerusalem was to be destroyed, and the destruction of the city involved the dispersion of its inhabitants. Christ himself, as already noticed, had predicted that event, and the prophecies which are supposed to imply the future restoration of the Jews, speak quite as explicitly of the rebuilding of Jerusalem; and, with the information they possessed, and with the prophecies in mind, it would have been quite as natural, and in place, (provided they had regarded it as a matter of truth and importance,) if they had noticed and confirmed the testimony of the prophets to the rebuilding of Jerusalem, as it was to refer, as they did refer, to the abrogation of the Jewish polity, and to the prophetic testimony that, eventually, "all Israel shall be saved." Besides, the answer imagined, would suppose the silence of the New Testament writers to be maintained out of regard to what was natural in a certain degree, to the neglect of what was (according to those who may assign the answer) important in a much greater
degree. For the order of nature is preserved, in reference to the few years that intervened between the period of their writing and the destruction of Jerusalem, and the instruction of the Church is sacrificed to this punctilious regard for critical correctness throughout the many centuries that have succeeded.

But if it were allowed (which it cannot be) that the mention of Israel's restoration, previous to their dispersion, would have been unnatural, a parallel strain of reasoning will not explain why the Apostles did not refer to their future temporal prosperity, supposing such prosperity to be a subject of correct expectation. We have before glanced at their temporal abasement beneath the Roman yoke, which was a matter of obvious, bitter, and confessed experience by the Jews themselves; the departed glory of their religious character and polity, and their national rejection by God, were, as noticed, the subjects of New Testament announcement and lament; and their conversion the delightful theme of apostolic anticipation, as their restoration to national dignity was the subject
of Jewish expectancy; and yet the New Testament contains not a sentence to confirm the hope of their future reinstatement in national importance and temporal dignity and honour. No glory is referred to but that which shall encircle, not only the "remnant according to the election of grace" of the house of Israel, but all "the elect," of every name with equal radiance, and shine on every land alike. Duly weighing these considerations, it is presumed, that no one could reasonably persist in the objection, that it would have been unnatural, or premature, in the New Testament writers, to refer to the restoration before the dispersion had taken place, provided such restoration were an object of justifiable prospicence. Should any one, however, thus persist, he must admit, as fair reasoning upon the same principles, what is palpably false, viz. that the Apostles did not refer to the future temporal prosperity of the Jews, because the Jews were not yet in circumstances of adversity. We know they were in adversity, and most eagerly desired a better state of things.

I may just notice Matt. xxiii. 38, 39,
"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;" a very zealous advocate for the doctrine might possibly think the restoration glanced at here. But the supposition is so completely gratuitous and unnecessary, that I must prefer understanding it in its obvious and unquestionable meaning, without any such further meaning appended. Ye shall not see me again until, believing I am the true Messiah, ye shall say, Blessed, &c. &c. When they are converted this will be their language, as with the eye of faith they "behold the man," and no other event will be required to justify the Saviour's declaration. To me the passage appears in perfect consistency with the general tenor of the New Testament, which I conceive to be against the doctrine; and, so far from considering this passage as affording any corroboration of it, I really think its spirit is altogether on the other side.

The omission then of the New Testament writers to confirm the prediction in
question, supposing such prediction to exist, is still unaccounted for; but, sup-
posing no such prediction to exist, the silence of the New Testament on the sub-
ject is explained; while, in spirit, it is found to be in most perfect accordance
with the Old, in those very passages upon which the contested hypothesis is reared,
when those passages are interpreted as alluding to Gospel times and to the uni-
versal Church, and in the spirit of the apostolic interpretations, Heb. viii. Heb.
xi. 13, to the end; and 2 Cor. iii. 6, to the end. A perusal of those passages in the
Old Testament, which are adduced to prove the literal restoration, in the
spirit of these just cited from the New, may be sufficient to prove the spiritu-
ality of meaning to be attached to the former.

Having then arrived at the conclusion, that the New Testament gives no con-
firmation to the opinion under examination, but rather discourages it, by assigning a
spiritual meaning to some of the prophecies upon which that opinion is founded, and
obtaining no satisfactory reason for its
silence on the subject, except upon the presumption that a literal restoration is not foretold, we naturally and fairly proceed to inquire—How far does the genius of Christianity accord with the literal application of the Old Testament prophecies to the future circumstances of the Jewish nation?

I hope, in two or three days, to send you some observations in reply to this question. The Father of Lights preserve me from darkening divine counsel! So pray for,

Yours, &c.
LETTER III.

The literal application of the Old Testament prophecies to the future circumstances of the Jewish nation, incompatible with the genius of Christianity.— The character of the Jews as the Church, not as a favourite nation, the specific object of prophetic allusion.— Importance of this fact.— The prophets moved by "the Spirit of Christ."— The dispensation of Christianity, the fulfilment of God's covenant with Abraham.— "The times of the restitution of all things," what it refers to.— The Divine object in selecting the Jewish nation.— Inference.— New Testament allusions to the Old Testament language, and the use made of these allusions, against the doctrine.— Testimonies of John the Baptist, Joseph of Arimathaea, Simeon, Anna, Zacharias, Gabriel, St. Paul, James, Peter, and Christ himself.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have now to consider the following question. "How far does the genius of Christianity accord with the literal application of the Old Testament prophecies to the future circumstances of the Jewish nation?"

To suppose such accordance, we must relinquish the idea that the special
relation in which the Jews formerly stood to their Divine Ruler was that of the visible Church, and we must conclude that the selection of their nation as the peculiar people of the Most High, was made without any apparent end, and without any reference to the welfare of the world in general, as its ultimate design; and that we have been hitherto wrong in supposing that, from the days of their Father Abraham to the Christian æra, they constituted the infant Church which, in its maturity in "the latter days," should comprise the whole world, when all its kindreds, tribes, and people should be "blessed in faithful Abraham, beneath the universal sway of Zion's King." To suppose an accordance between the genius of Christianity and the limited application of the Old Testament prophecies in question to the Jews only, we must consider that, previous to the Christian æra, they were addressed most specifically and primarily, not as the Church, but as a favourite nation, and that their character as the visible Church, the "Mountain," destined, at last, to fill the whole earth,
was not the specific object of prophetic allusion.

But this will be objected to by all who believe in the Divine authenticity of the Christian Scriptures; for upon the fact that Israel constituted the Church, rest the present value of those "oracles" formerly "committed" to the Jews, and the connexion subsisting between those oracles and the New Testament.

To deny this, will be to deny the divine inspiration of the Apostle in the 8th of Hebrews, before cited, in which he applies the phrase, "the house of Israel and the house of Judah," as referring to the general Church in the days of Christ.

If, then, the prophets addressed the Church in reference to the period of Christianity, they must be understood as referring to the Christian Church, in which, distinctions, such as Jew, Gentile, &c., are all lost. We learn also, from apostolic authority, that the prophets were moved by the "spirit of Christ," searching what, or what manner of time it did signify when it testified of the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow; and
that "all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days," (Acts iii. 24); and the next verse evidently implies that the dispensation of Christianity was the fulfilment of the covenant which God made with the fathers, "saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." "The times of the restitution of all things," mentioned in verse 21, (if the allusion be to any thing of which earth will be the stage,) can only refer generally to the state or condition of things, and not to the adventitious circumstances of things; to the reign of righteousness, interrupted by the fall, but re-established for ever, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and not to the re-establishment of any particular earthly kingdom, Jew or Gentile." But the direct allusion of this phrase seems to be, like Matt. xvii. 11, to Mal. iv. 6, and other passages predicting the return of human affections to the Being who best deserves them, and from whom, alas! they have been too long alienated. Compare Luke i. 16, 17.
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Admitting, then, that the Divine object, as developed in the New Testament, in selecting the Jewish nation as the depository of the Divine will, and the subject of Heaven's peculiar favour, was, that in Abraham's seed all nations should be blessed, a literal application of the prophecies in question, to the future circumstances of the Jewish nation, appears to be at variance with the genius of Christianity.

The frequent allusions, also, in the New Testament, to the figurative language employed in the Old, to describe the promised glory of Messiah's kingdom, and the use made of those allusions, furnish powerful evidence that the glory promised to Israel "in the latter days," was exclusively "the knowledge of the glory of God," which should universally prevail, and make "Jerusalem the praise of the whole earth, a joy of many generations." A "kingdom" was promised, and the carnal Jews expected "that when Messias came, he would restore all things," in a manner consonant with their own secular views: in the spirit of those views, he was asked, "Wilt thou, at this time, restore again the
kingdom unto Israel?" but his answer then afforded no encouragement to their low expectations, and John Baptist had before intimated the nature of the kingdom promised, when he proclaimed the coming of his Lord, and said, "The kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" for, of that kingdom, our Lord expressly says, "My kingdom is not of this world." "The greatest" and "the least" in this kingdom are stated to be those who are most or least observant of the commandments of God. Matt. v. 19. Joseph of Arimathea "waited for the kingdom of God," of course, in dependance on the Divine testimony, that the kingdom spoken of by the prophets should be established; but Joseph was evidently satisfied that "the kingdom of God" was come, now that Messias appeared amongst men. When Jesus entered Jerusalem in peaceful triumph, he made no objection to the loud hosanna, "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord!" which he would have done, most certainly, if the prophets had predicted any other kingdom than that of "righteousness, and
peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost." When his disciples sought his instructions how to pray, he taught them to say, "Thy kingdom come." He was careful to teach them that His kingdom was not of this world; and what kingdom would they suppose, or ought they to have supposed, he thus directed their minds to, in the holy hour of prayer, but to his own spiritual kingdom, in its future glory, when the heathen shall be given to him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession? John Baptist is declared to be the messenger prophesied of; as the precursor of our Lord; and, on reference to the prophecy, Mal. iii. it will be seen, in the 3d and 4th verses, which, taken out of their connexion, might be supposed to allude only to a future season of national prosperity and piety amongst the Jews, that the offerings of "the sons of Levi," and of "Judah and Jerusalem," describe the spiritual sacrifices which should be the immediate fruit of Christ's mission. "When he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered and said, The
kingdom of God cometh not with observation, (or outward shew) neither shall they say, here! or lo! there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you, (or among you.)" If the Pharisees were really correct in their understanding of the prophets, and a temporal kingdom really were promised to be set up under Messiah in Palestine, our Lord's reply was not according to truth. Again, Christ said to his disciples, "I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God," Luke ix. 27; or "the Son of Man coming in his kingdom," Matt. xvi. 28; or "the kingdom of God come with power," Mark ix. 1. Simeon waited "for the consolation of Israel;" and when the infant Messias was in his arms, he exclaimed, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." The widowed prophetess, Anna, "coming in that instant, gave thanks
Likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Upon what ground could the prophetess have given thanks at the birth of Christ, and have spoken of him, as she did, but upon the ground of the prophetic testimony, "since the world began," as understood and stated by Zacharias, that the Lord had now "visited and redeemed His people, and had raised up an horn of salvation for them in the house of His servant David, to perform the mercy promised to their Fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he sware to their father Abraham, that He would grant unto them, that they being delivered out of the hand of their enemies, might serve Him, without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of their life?" It was thus that Zacharias, "filled with the Holy Ghost," interpreted the Prophets, and declared the deliverance promised to Israel to be accomplished in the advent of Christ. Now was began that kingdom which should have no end, but whose glory should advance till its light beamed."
all that sat in darkness and the shadow of death."—Compare Jer. xi. 5: "That I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day. Then answered I, and said, so be it, O Lord."—xxiii. 5, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."—xxx. 9, "But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."—xxxii. 37, "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely."—Ezek. xxviii. 26, "And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them; and they shall know that I am the Lord their God."—xxxiv. 25, to the end, "And I will make with them a cove-
man of peace, and will cause the evil beasts
to cease out of the land: and they shall
dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in
the woods. And I will make them, and
the places round about my hill, a blessing;
and I will cause the shower to come down
in his season; there shall be showers of
blessing. And the tree of the field shall
yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield
her increase, and they shall be safe in
their land, and shall know that I am the,
Lord, when I have broken the bands of
their yoke, and delivered them out of the
hand of those that served themselves of
them. And they shall no more be a prey
to the heathen, neither shall the beast
d of the land devour them, but they shall
dwell safely, and none shall make them
afraid. And I will raise up for them a
plant of renown, and they shall be no more
consumed with hunger in the land, neither
bear the shame of the heathen any more.
Thus shall they know that I, the Lord
their God, am with them, and that they,
even the house of Israel, are my people,
saith the Lord God. And ye my flock,
the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am
your God, saith the Lord God."—xxxviii. 8, "After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land, that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them."—Zeph. iii. 15, to the end, "The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been
LETTER III.

put to shame. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord."—Zech. ix. 9, 10, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth."

These are the prophecies Zacharias must have alluded to; and these too are cited to prove a literal restoration. The angel announced to Mary, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus; He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for
ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." What prophecy in the Old Testament is more liable to a secular construction than this? and yet we all know that any such construction would have been false. Compare Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness."—Jer. xxxiii. 15 to 18, "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. For thus saith the Lord; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel."—Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David;"
he shall feed them and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it.” xxxvii. 24, 25. “And David my servant shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children’s children forever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.” — Amos ix. 11, “In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.” — Dan. ii. 44, 45. “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of
the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."—vii. 13, 14, and 27, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heavens, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."—Micah iv. 7, "And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth,
even for ever."—All prophecies which may be and often are adduced to support the opinion of a literal restoration; but which are here plainly declared to be fulfilled in the dispensation of Christianity at the period of the angel's annunciation.

The Apostles nowhere recognize any other kingdom than a spiritual one; and St. Paul gives thanks "unto the Father who hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." James informs us, that the poor of this world, rich in faith, are heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him, clearly defining the kingdom to be a spiritual one. In Exodus xix. 6, the Israelites are told, that if they obey the voice of God and keep His covenant, they shall be to Him "a peculiar treasure above all people, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation;" and Peter, 1 Epist. ii. 9, congratulates the Christians scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bythinia, "as a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." "Abraham looked for a city whose builder and maker is God;" and, of him and others, it is said, "these all died
in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Now what is the Apostle's inference? why, clearly, that the promises referred not to a temporal inheritance, but to spiritual things, "for they that say such things declare plainly, that they seek a country; and truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned; but now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city." See also particularly Acts iii. 24, &c.; xxvi. 6, 22, 23; xxviii. 20, 23; all opposed to a literal interpretation of the Prophets.

This branch of the argument might be very much extended, but I shall only offer a few more observations in connexion with it, and then proceed further.

Yours, &c.
LETTER IV.

New Testament allusions to Old Testament language continued.—Testimonies of Christ and his Apostles on the subject continued.—"I appoint unto you a kingdom, &c. that ye may eat and drink, &c. and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel," considered and paraphrased.—The doctrine wholly unsupported by the New Testament.—No answer to say the spiritual nature of the kingdom Christ came to establish is admitted; but that distinct from this, the restoration of an earthly kingdom is promised to the Jews.—The existence of this distinct promise unproved.—The kingdom promised exclusively spiritual, the more perfect fruit of principles already developed, and involving all that Jews or Gentiles need.—Probable reason why the language of prophecy is so liable to a secular construction.

March 6, 1828.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

To continue and conclude my observations on the allusions made in the New Testament to the figurative language of the Old, and the use made of those allusions.—The Apostle enjoins, "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises." What "promises" could he
mean but those which a *literal* interpreter must, in many cases, apply to things of which it could by no means be said they are inherited by the saints in glory?—Whoever believes in the future restoration of Israel to Palestine, will undoubtedly cite Amos ix. 11, to the end: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord, that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given
them, saith the Lord thy God."—But the allusion to this prophecy by James, Acts xv. 16, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up," clearly proves that the true interpretation must be a spiritual, and not a literal one; that it does not predict the actual rebuilding of an earthly edifice, or the subjugation of Edom, or any other people, to the Jews, but only the establishment of Christianity, and the diffusion of its principles over Gentile lands. And, having the Apostle's authority for asserting this with respect to the 11th and 12th verses, by what authority, or with what consistency, shall we attach a literal meaning to the 13th, 14th and 15th verses? No, the Holy Ghost has declared that he did not refer to any literal restoration of David's fallen tabernacle, or to any literal possession of the remnant of Edom in the 11th and 12th; and it seems to me that it would argue an obstinate determination to support a particular sentiment at all events, were any interpretation to be put on the following verses,
discordant from the *divinely authorised* interpretation of the former.*

An advocate for the literal restoration would quote Isaiah lii. 2—10, but it would be in opposition to the true interpretation given in Luke ii. 10, 11. In Gal. iii. the Apostle takes much pains to shew that the inheritance of the blessings promised to Abraham was such as the faith of all true believers should apprehend:—

"the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed; so then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham;" and,

* Since writing this, a curious old work, by the historian Fuller, has come in my way, containing the following remarks on Amos ix. and the comment of James:—"Here the Apostle James, more following the sense, than the words of the Prophet, as an expositor, rather than translator, renders the possessing of the remnant of Edom, to be, by seeking after the Lord; by which analogy we collect, that those topical promises to the Jews, of the conquering and possessing such and such places, in and near their own country, import only a spiritual propriety, and shall mystically, not carnally, be accomplished in their sincere conversion to Christ."—*A Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, by THOMAS FULLER, B. D. 1662.
consequently, the substance of the promises made to him, consisted, not of a part in Jewish national prosperity and local enjoyment, but of "an inheritance among them that are sanctified." "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Finally, when inculcating spirituality and humility, and enjoining the duty of mutual service, Christ says, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Now, if this were to be literally interpreted, it would indeed very much favour the idea of a literal restoration; but, with such a meaning, it would have been most directly calculated to excite the carnal emulation it was intended to repress. An observance, however, of the terms employed will sufficiently prove the spirituality of our Lord's meaning, and the adaptation of the words to the circumstance which gave rise to them. They strove who should be accounted the greatest: our Lord reproves them, alludes to the
domination exercised amongst the Gentiles, and then says, "Ye shall not be so."— I appoint unto you a kingdom, it is true, but what kind of one? a theatre for the display of human passions, such as the kingdoms of this world exhibit?— No; I appoint unto you such a one as my Father hath appointed unto me; a kingdom of peace and holiness—and, however destitute, afflicted, tormented ye may be, as it respects temporal things, ye shall participate in the honours prepared for you in this kingdom, which consists not in meat and drink, but in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Ye shall be distinguished, not as earthly monarchs, but I delegate to you a more important trust than ever earthly monarch held—the keys of heaven and of hell; and whatsoever ye shall loose it shall be loosed, and whatsoever ye shall bind it shall be bound. Ye shall sit enthroned with divine authority to utter the announcements of heaven to all the tribes of men, and when the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of your Lord and of His Christ for ever—the true Israel—the children of Abraham by
faith in Christ Jesus, shall still submit with joy to be regulated and judged by the divinely inspired rules of apostolic truth.'

Thus we see, that while the New Testament abounds in allusions to the prophetic writings, and to the predictions of the latter-day glory, it never once confirms the prediction, if any such exist, that the Jews, as a nation, will be literally restored to their ancient inheritance and national importance; but expressly applies those prophecies, which are adduced to prove the literal restoration, to the more important, grand, and extensive subjects of the universal prevalence of holiness, and the world's obedience to the Son of God.

Nor will it avail anything to reply, that the spiritual nature of the kingdom which Christ came to establish is fully admitted, and that proofs are not wanted on this head, but that, distinct from this spiritual one, the restoration of an earthly kingdom is promised to the Jews. The existence of this distinct prophecy remains to be proved; and it does not appear to me
that any such distinct prophecy can be found; but it appears rather that, while a state of righteousness, far transcending the present, is to be expected, that state, whenever it shall arrive, will be only the more perfect fruit of principles already developed, and necessarily producing in their operation, "the effect of righteousness," which is "quietness and assurance for ever," and this is all, perhaps, that seers ever saw, and certainly all that Jew or Gentile needs. "This only kingdom, raised up without hands by the eternal God, cannot be shivered with any violence, or wear old with any process of time, nor be subdued by any force or policy of men, but with His imperishable perpetuity shall crush in pieces and wear out all other kingdoms, and itself persist, nevertheless, unvanquishable, for ever and ever."* It is possible, indeed, the Prophets might not have looked so far as the objects contemplated by the spirit within them would have warranted, and, in consequence, might have

* Extract from a Sermon, by John Foxe, preached at the baptism of a Jew.
couched their dark sayings in phraseology, more liable to secular construction than they might otherwise have done. But this short-sightedness might have been permitted for wise and influential ends, tending greatly to keep alive the expectations of the Jews of a favourable change in their circumstances, and thereby preventing their total despair, and lapse into infidelity and abandonment of all that holds them still in the bonds of a jealous nationality, until the veil shall be taken away, the day dawn, and the day-star arise in their hearts, and the prophecy of national deliverance be illustriously accomplished, when "there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob," "for this (this deliverance, this turning away from ungodliness) is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins."

Since then the Prophets were moved by the spirit of Christ, and prophesised of the glory that should follow his sufferings, when they predicted the future glory of Israel, the accordance between the genius, or spirit of Christianity, and the spiritual
(not the literal) application of the Old Testament prophecies to the circumstances of the Christian Church, is established.

Yours, &c.
LETTER V.

Three objections to the doctrine, besides those already stated.—
Observations on some particular Phrases—Mountain—All
nations—No more—For ever.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Besides what has been already advanced, there appear to me to be three objections more to the doctrine of a literal restoration, each deserving a distinct notice.

First, There are phrases, terms, and passages in the Old Testament prophecies, which cannot be taken literally, or without qualification, and which yet have an equal claim to be so taken, with the phraseology adduced in support of a literal restoration; and the literal meaning of others is negatived, some by New Testament authority, and some by the mode of their
collocation, or the sense expressly attached, or otherwise attaching to them.

Secondly, After the last reformation by Nehemiah, there was only one prophet (Malachi) until the Christian æra, and he does not predict any future deliverance of the Jewish nation; thus leaving us to conclude that the predictions of former prophets were fulfilled, as to their literal import, on the return from Babylon and the subsequent prosperity, and had no reference to the present dispersion.

Thirdly, The doctrine of a literal restoration is encumbered with certain difficulties which are not necessary to be encountered; because obviated by an interpretation more simple, and more in harmony with the general tenor of the word of God, than that upon which the said doctrine is founded.

First, There are phrases, &c.

"MOUNTAIN."

Isa. ii. 2, "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the
hills: and all nations (or, Micah iv. 1, all people) shall flow unto it."—Isa. xxv. 6; "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things," &c.—Isa. lxv. 9, "I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains." Can any other events be here predicted than the triumphs of religion; the resort of all nations to "Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem," the rich repast of gospel-blessings, and the consummation of prophetic visions, when the Lord shall arise, and inherit all nations, and the uttermost parts of the earth become His possession?

"ALL NATIONS."

Much stress has been laid on this and similar expressions, as demonstrative that the Babylonian Captivity could not have been alluded to in certain predictions. Even, if this were true, it would not follow that a literal restoration must succeed the present dispersion; but that it is not true, the following passages, I think, sufficiently establish. Nehemiah i. 8, 9, "Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou
commandest thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: but if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. Now these are thy servants, whom Thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. O Lord, I beseech thee," &c. &c.

Zech. ii. 6, 7, "Ho, ho, come, and flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Lord. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon." Whatever other applications these passages may admit of, it is certain they were applied, and that by the authority that inspired them, to the Babylonian Captivity.

Zech. vii. 13, 14, The prophet, reproving the captives for their sins, and stating their sins to be the cause of their captivity, says
Thus: "Therefore it is come to pass, that as he (the prophet) cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts: but I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not: thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned; for they laid the pleasant land desolate."—Again, chap. viii. 7, 8, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem."

"NO MORE"—"FOR EVER."

Much stress has also been laid on these and like expressions, as conveying the notion of perpetuity; but with how little reason the following will prove:

Hosea i. 6, "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but will utterly take them away."

Amos v. 2, "The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise."

Zech. xi. 6, "For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord;
but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour’s hand, and into the hand of his king; and they shall smite the land; and out of their hand I will not deliver them.”

A literal and unqualified interpretation of any one of these passages destroys the doctrine of a literal restoration at once; but as the subsequent verses prove that the two first passages must not be taken literally, I shall only observe, that as the third seems to have been uttered in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem and the present dispersion, it affords presumptive evidence, in connexion with other circumstances, that a literal interpretation would be a correct one; and that, consequently, the Jews will never be restored again to their own land. Literal interpreters may, at least, receive a caution from these passages when they are considering Zech. xiv. 10, 11, and similar declarations, “All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto
the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's wine-presses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited."

Exod. xii. 24, The Jews are commanded to observe the passover "for ever."

1 Kings viii. 13, Solomon says, "I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in forever."

But the close of the Jewish economy put an end to the duty of observing the passover, and witnessed the departure of the Lord from Jerusalem as His peculiar dwelling place. Had not the promises of perpetual peace and residence in Palestine, to literal Israel, the same limitation? See also Isa. xxxii. 14.

Yours, &c.
LETTER VI.

Observations on particular Phrases continued—Zion—Jerusalem.
—The opinion that Jerusalem will become a resort for all nations, inconsistent with Reason, incompatible with Scripture, and impossible in Fact.—Israel—Jew—Children of Abraham—Zerubbabel—Joshua.

March 22, 1828.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The "objection," founded on particular "phrases," &c. admits of many more illustrations than it will be necessary to offer. In addition to those already given, take the following:

"ZION"—"JERUSALEM."

Psalm ii. 6, "Yet have I set my King on my holy hill of Zion."—Micah iv. 2, "Many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways,
and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Must not the "holy hill of Zion," "the mountain of the Lord," "the house of the God of Jacob," "Zion," and "Jerusalem," supposing the passages to refer to the latter-day glory, be here interpreted, as describing "the general assembly and Church of the first-born," constituted of people from every nation under heaven? For, then, there will be no necessity for the resort of nations to literal Jerusalem, in order to learn the "ways" of God; for "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth." But the latter prophecy of Micah was fulfilled, when the Gospel sounded forth from Jerusalem, in the first age of the Christian Church; and, therefore, no further fulfilment need be expected, and the passage proves nothing in favour of a literal restoration.

Zech. viii. 22, 23, "Many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages
of the nations, even shall take hold of
the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying,
We will go with you; for we have heard
that God is with you."

Whatever the events referred to here,
the language is unquestionably figurative;
yet its primary application was, no doubt,
to the season of Jerusalem's prosperity, just
recommencing when the prophet spake;
and, if a secondary meaning, referring it
to Christian times, be admitted, that mean-
ing must be in harmony with the spirit
and circumstances of Christianity. But
to suppose a general resort of nations to
Jerusalem, and her inhabitants for Chris-
tian instruction then, will be to suppose
an event at variance with the tenor of the
Gospel, to violate the ordinary rules of
reasoning, and to impugn the veracity of
Holy Writ. In comparison with other
nations earlier christianized, converted
Israel will be only a babe in Christ, and
the babe will be resorted to for instruction
instead of the fathers. Instead of all
nations being blessed alike beneath the
favouring beams of "the Sun of Righteous-
ness," one ray of brighter effulgence than
the rest will shed superior glory on Jerusalem, will point, like the star of Bethlehem, to the favoured city, and by its light discover the error of the Apostle, that "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek."—Again, suppose the Jews were converted and restored to their own land, and exemplified, as Christians should do, the power of the truth,—upon what principle would other people apply to them for instruction? Could the Jews, however eminent in piety, tell them more than the written Word? No! nor heaven itself—

"Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach." See Rom. x. 6—13. If we except the first age of Christianity, when the Gentiles began to participate with the Jewish Church in the blessings of the Gospel, this passage in Zechariah cannot refer to literal Jerusalem. "Believe me," said the Saviour, "the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father; but the
hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Besides, the resort of all nations, especially the annual resort, which some insist upon, to Jerusalem, is an absurdity;—it would be impossible.

Zech. xiv. 16—21, "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up and come not, that have no rain, there shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness unto the Lord: and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar, yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts: and all they
that sacrifice shall come and take of them and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts."

No one will say this was ever intended to be received literally in reference to any period, or circumstances whatever; and, interpreted literally, as referring to converted Israel, it is manifestly incongruous in several particulars. Yet if it be not taken literally as referring to the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, after their conversion to Christianity, there is no ground for presuming that "Jerusalem" signifies "the Jerusalem that now is." Read the passage as alluding, primarily, to the prosperity just dawning on the Jews when the prophet wrote, and secondarily, as a metaphorical description of the general church in after ages, and all difficulties vanish.

"Israel" — "Jew" — "Children of Abraham."

These terms, so often used in the Old Testament, we are informed by the New, do not always mean the children of Abra-
ham according to the flesh (Rom. ii. 28; iv. 11, 12; ix. 7, 8.), and therefore a promise made to the Old Testament church, to be fulfilled in New Testament times, should be interpreted with a due regard to this intimation. "Think not to say for yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." "For the promise that he (Abraham) should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith; for if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made of none effect; therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all — (you, Roman Gentiles, as well as myself and other believing Jews). As it is written, I have made
thee a father of many nations." Writing to the Philippians, who were Gentiles, Paul says, "For we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, &c." The converted Gentiles are said to be branches of that olive-tree from which the Jews were broken off; and the Ephesians, said once to be "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise," are, as converts to Christianity, congratulated as "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." With these statements, agrees the comment of the Apostle Paul on Hosea i. 10; and ii. 23. Reading the Old Testament prophecy, uninstructed by the New Testament interpretation, we could do no other than conclude that the Jewish nation alone is addressed. In chap. ii. 23, it is, without the least apparent ambiguity, spoken of "her" (that is, "Israel," see 2d verse); but the Apostle Paul, Rom. ix. 24—26, explains it as referring to the Gentile believers—"us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, as He saith in Osea, "I will call them my people which were
not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God." Without this inspired application of the words to the people of God collected from amongst the Gentiles, it would seem like doing violence to the text, so to interpret it; for in the 6th and 9th verses of the first chapter, it is said, "I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, but I will utterly take them away. For ye are not my people, and I will not be your God." Then in the 23d verse of the second chapter, as the climax of an announcement of returning kindness to Israel, the prophet's "mother," (chap. ii. 2,) it is said, "And I will sow her unto me in the earth, and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy, and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people, and they shall say, Thou art my God;" and the fourteenth chapter still more fully confirms the apparent propriety of understanding the words of literal Israel exclusively; yet we see this would be
wrong. Although literal Israel was primarily addressed, the secondary and more important reference was to the calling of the Gentiles.

"ZERUBBABEL."

Haggai ii. 21—23, "Speak to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the Lord, and I will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts." If this prophecy refer to "the latter days," "Zerubbabel" must, of necessity, describe some other person than the Zerubbabel addressed.

"Zech. iv. 6, 7, 9, "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit,
saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it. The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands also shall finish it.” Primarily this prophecy referred to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah, but its secondary application, it is generally admitted, is to Christ, the mighty Conqueror, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. In this latter case “Zerubbabel” is not taken literally. So upon a due regard to their primary import, and to consistency in their remoter sense, a literal interpretation of many other expressions in prophecy, commonly adduced as favourable to the doctrine of a literal restoration, must be rejected.

"JOSHUA."

Zech. vi. 11—13, “Take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest; and speak unto him, saying, Behold, the man whose name is The
Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall have the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne.”

Here, in the primary sense, “Joshua the son of Josedech,” is signified; but more remotely, though chiefly, Jesus, the King of kings, the Lamb that sits and intercedes upon the throne above. But in this secondary sense, “Joshua the son of Josedech” is not to be taken literally, so neither should many other expressions, supposed to indicate a literal restoration.

Yours, &c.
LETTER VII.

Observations on some particular Prophecies.—Isa. xi. 11; lx. lxxv. 17, &c.—Jer. xxxi. xxxiii.—Haggai.—Zechariah.—No reason why the Jews should be distinguished, on their conversion, above other nations.—Their loss of national character probable.—Objection answered.

March 24th, 1828.

My dear Friend,

Not to multiply further observations on single terms, the force of the objection now under notice may be shewn by a reference to some of the prophecies at length.

Isaiah xi. 11—16, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the
nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry shod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." This prophecy may seem to favour the opinion of Israel's restoration. The words, verse 10, "In that day," indicate the period in which the prophecy contained in the preceding verses is to be fulfilled, as some part of the Christian æra; because
the preceding part of the chapter describes the kingdom of Christ on earth, and it seems in reference to *that*, it is said "In that day." If the prophecy then was to be fulfilled in the Christian æra, it has not been fulfilled yet, either literally or spiritually; and the question is, Does it predict a literal restoration, or not? The language employed is figurative. No countries now exist under the names of Assyria, Cush, &c. Ephraim cannot now be said to be envious of Judah, &c.; and verses 14, 15, 16, admit of no other description, by possibility, than figurative. But, admitting that the prophecy describes a restoration, it does not say to *what*, (if to any thing beyond the divine favour, chap. xii. 1,) nor intimate that the restoration shall be to the land of their forefathers. And, as the language employed is figurative, the interpretation best agreeing with the Christian dispensation is, that all obstacles to the conversion of the Jews will be removed, that, by being gathered into the fold of Christ, they shall lose their character of vagabonds among the nations, and their interests be facilitated by the most unlikely
agents,—"Philistines,"—and that they shall participate in the general harmony and peace of the gospel kingdom, and in the general triumph over Edom, Moab and Ammon, when "all iniquity shall stop her mouth," and all Messiah's enemies be subdued under Him.

Isaiah lx. presents, perhaps, as firm ground as any part of Scripture for the stand of those who plead for the literal restoration of the Jews to Palestine; but that it can only refer to the prosperity of the Christian church, appears from several particulars. When Christ came, the light that was to enlighten the world was come, the Sun of Righteousness was risen, and the Gentiles came to the light, and kings to the brightness of his rising. Sacrifices and blood, now Christ by His one offering hath for ever perfected them who are sanctified, will no more be offered with acceptance on the altar of the Lord. The flocks of Kedar, then, and the rams of Nebaioth, must figure other offerings. The sons of strangers have built up the walls of spiritual Zion, and kings ministered unto her. It cannot be supposed that
when the Jews are converted, "the nation and kingdom that will not serve them shall perish:" in its reference to gospel times, it can only mean that Christianity shall triumph, and all become subjected to its influence, or perish. "The glory of Lebanon, &c." will not be required to beautify the place of God's sanctuary, where no splendid temple, as of old, will exist. There is a day coming, indeed, when those that afflicted the people of God shall see their folly, and have reason to lament it, bowing down at the soles of their feet; and whereas the path of pure and undefiled religion was forsaken and hated, so that, comparatively, "no man" walked therein, it shall be made "an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." If any stress should be laid on the 21st verse, what shall be said to the 19th and 20th? Do the expressions they contain actually mean that the course of nature shall be altered, and that neither sun nor moon shall be required in those days? No; for the same passage declares that the sun and moon shall be constantly visible. What do they mean then, except that the favour
of God will be strikingly manifested in connexion with the prevalence of truth.

Isaiah lxv. 17—25, "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring.
with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."—

In this prediction, comparing it with the first nine verses of the eleventh chapter, which evidently point out the same events, the difficulties involved upon a literal interpretation, are insuperable; for while these passages represent the creation of "new heavens and a new earth;" and declare that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord," they limit the peculiar peace, longevity, security and harmony pourtrayed, to the "holy mountain," Jerusalem; and, for any thing stated or implied to the contrary, the rest of the world, though evangelized, and "called in one hope of their calling," and acknowledging "one God, the Father of all," will remain liable to the weeping sorrows, the early deaths, the bitter disappointments, the painful uncertainties,
and the indomitable rage of animal ferocity, that now combine in proof that "this is not our rest." The necessity of adopting a literal interpretation, however, is negatived by the light of gospel-truth; and referring the beautiful imagery employed to Christianity, to "Jerusalem which is above," (that is, the more excellent Jerusalem,) "which is the mother of us all," we behold a picture that may kindle our devoutest aspirations and exalt our loudest songs.

Jer. xxiii. 5—8. Here is evidently a prophecy of Messiah's coming. To utter this, was one part of the prophet's commission, and it was also another part of it to predict the return of Israel from the Babylonian captivity. Now there is nothing on the face of the whole passage to prove that the "Children of Israel" are to "dwell in their own land" in the days of Messiah. The two predictions are uttered at once, very likely under an impression, on the prophet's part, that the two events would be coëvous, for that the prophets were ignorant when Messiah should come is evident, as we have before observed,
from the Apostle's remark (1 Pet. i. 10, 11,) although they "inquired and searched diligently, searching what, or what manner of time," &c., or the obscurity and appearance of concurrency might, as in other instances, have been expressly designed by the Holy Ghost. It is observable, besides, that the prophet, in predicting the Jews' return, refers to their bondage in Egypt as the last remarkable captivity, and to the deliverance he now predicts in language exactly according with the phraseology elsewhere used in allusion to the Babylonian captivity, as we have before shewn, "out of the north country and from all countries whither I had driven them."—(verse 3; Zech. vi. 8, Babylon called the north country. Neh. i. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 12, 13; also xxxvi. 24, uttered just about the period of the return from Babylon. Zech. ii. 6; also vii. 14, and viii. 7, 8.) Therefore the necessity of interpreting Jer. xxiii. 7, 8, literally, as referring to gospel-times, is superseded by the literal fulfilment which actually took place under the old economy.

Jer. xxxi.—This chapter, although it may
at first appear to contain strong evidence in favour of the restoration, must, upon examination, it is presumed, be relinquished as affording any such evidence at all. There is nothing in it but may be referred either to Israel's prosperity immediately subsequent to the Babylonian captivity, or to the period when the Church, of which the Jewish nation was only a type, should rejoice in the liberty of the "New Covenant." Verses 35, 36, and 37, may appear positively to guarantee the continued existence of the Jews as a nation, but if applied to the spiritual Israel, the phraseology is undoubtedly true, and requires no further fulfilment; and the Jews, standing now in no other relation to God than that of disobedient children, no reason is apparent, on any ordinary grounds of calculation, why, when their rebellion is removed, they should experience any special interference of divine power in their behalf more than any other nations, similarly scattered abroad, would have reason to expect. Let the Jews become Christians, and immediately they enjoy the civil and religious privileges of Christians,
and are recognized as such with equal eye by heaven and earth. Supposing their conversion to occur in the gradual manner in which it has hitherto pleased God to translate sinners into the kingdom of His dear Son, the natural conclusion would be that, in the course of time, and without some very extraordinary intervention, they must lose their distinctiveness among the nations; and past events present to retrospection many precedents that might prepare us to expect that such will be the case. Where is Assyria? and where is Chaldea? and where are others? Babylon is become a place for dragons, and the satyr haunts her "pleasant palaces," the shadow and the mockery of her kings. The only reasonable ground of demur, or doubt that a similar oblivion awaits the Jews, arises from those prophecies which are now the subject of discussion; and if, notwithstanding the former remarks, the literal fulfilment of the before cited 35th, 36th and 37th verses be insisted upon, compare these verses with chap. xxxiii. 20 to 26. Here precisely the same form of adjuration is used to pledge the continuance
of a ruler over Israel, of the seed of Jacob and David, and the perpetuity of the Levitical priesthood, and yet a prophecy had long been familiar to the Jews, in which a period was explicitly announced (as the fulfilment proved, however they might understand the promise,) when the sceptre should depart from Judah. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come."*

Understand Jeremiah as predicting the everlasting continuance of the spiritual nation, and the throne of the spiritual David, all is clear,—and as clear if the primary meaning be understood, viz. the

* It will, no doubt, be observed (and I do not wish to evade the observation) that I have attributed a meaning to the word "until" in this instance, which I have refused to admit in a former one, (see Letter II. "until the times of the Gentiles.") But in the present case, the sense is fixed by the event; "Until Shiloh come," the tribual dignity and jurisdiction of Judah remained; Shiloh came, and the sceptre or authority departed; whereas, in the former case, the sense is not fixed by any event; and I am, therefore, perfectly consistent in assigning that interpretation to the word which appears to me most agreeable to the general tenor of Scripture, and which is shewn to be probably true, by the exs quoted in its support.
return from Babylon, and subsequent national prosperity of the Jews. (Read Nehemiah and Psalm lxxii. 17.) What strength the prophet's language derives from the words "for ever," in the 36th verse, may be seen by recurrence to the observations before made on that and similar phrases. I conclude, then, that Jer. xxxi. furnishes no evidence in favour of the restoration.

Jer. xxxiii. I think strongly confirms the opinion, that it is not the Jewish people that chiefly occupies the spirit of prophecy, but the Church of Christ; and, indeed, this chapter affords a key to many passages incorrectly adduced, as predicting the restoration. Here, the Christian æra is spoken of in terms almost as explicit as those of the New Testament, and yet, who will interpret "The throne of the house of Israel," and "the Levites," "the burnt-offerings," and "meat-offerings," as signifying any other throne than the spiritual throne of Messiah, or any other priests and sacrifices than such as are in consonance with the "new covenant made with the house of Israel, and the house of
Judah?" The other passages from Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, that might seem to favour the doctrine, I think, are clearly explicable upon application to the spiritual Church, or have been literally fulfilled in the Jewish history, since the return from Babylon. Haggai, in the second chapter, 9th verse, while the second temple was building, prophesied, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."—He could mean nothing more of "this latter house," literally, than that Christ, the Prince of Peace, should appear in it, which he did. But, in other respects, the second temple was far less glorious than the first, and the ploughshare has long since furrowed its degraded site. In the 19th verse, he says, by the word of the Lord, "from this day,"—that is, from the day the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid,—will I bless you." This, literally interpreted, would mean that, from that period, the Jews should live in the constant experience of the Lord's blessing; but this interpretation
is negatived by the fact that the Jews are, and long have been, under the Lord's curse.

Zechariah, who likewise prophesied during the building of the second temple, refers the Divine promises of peace and prosperity made to the Jewish nation, as applying to that period, and thus negatives any interpretation of his language that would represent him as predicting any other restoration. The angel plaintively inquires, "How long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? And the Lord answered the angel with good words, and comfortable words—I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, for the multitude of men and cattle therein.
For I, saith the Lord of hosts, will be a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of them, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto them. And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain. Before these days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beasts; neither was there any peace to him that went out, or came in, because of the affliction. But now I will not be unto the residue of this people, as in the former days, saith the Lord of hosts. For the seed shall be prosperous, and the vine shall
give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew: and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. And it shall come to pass, that as you were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the Lord of hosts, and I repented not; so again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah: fear ye not."

Here the peace and prosperity predicted by former prophets is declared by Zechariah, almost the last of the Old Testament prophets, to be realized in the return from Babylon, the building of the second temple, and the re-establishment of the Jewish polity and worship.*

* "As for the Scripture, alleged by the Jews for their temporal restoration to an illustrious condition in their own country, they have found their full accomplishment in the return of that nation to their own land, from the captivity in Babylon; and, therefore, further performance of such promises is not to be expected."—Pisgah Sight, &c. In proof of this remark of Fuller's, I may add the testimony of
In the fourteenth chapter, the 10th and 11th verses are required to be taken literally; so must the 16th, to the end, which will involve, as we noticed, under "Zion and Jerusalem," many incongruities. No other opinion need be expressed here than that the 10th and 11th verses refer to no such actual occurrence as a literal interpretation would suppose; and that, if "no more," in the 11th verse, involve the idea of perpetuity, so may chap. xi. 6, and Hosea i. 6, before considered. Of course, I might here enlarge very much; but unless you think it necessary (which I do not), in order to come fairly at a decision, I shall decline a minute examination of the whole series of predictions usually supposed to favour the contested point. The observations already made may suffice to shew the Josephus, from whom we learn that the population of Judea, subsequent to the return from Babylon, became so overflowing that the land was too confined for them, and they swarmed in all the contiguous countries. We also learn that, from the same period, almost uninterrupted peace and prosperity pervaded Palestine for full 300 years; and this, contrasted with their previous abject condition as captives in a strange land, was quite sufficient to justify the strong metaphorical language of the prophets, consistent as such phraseology has always been considered by oriental poets.
validity of the objection founded on prophetic phraseology.

I have examined, I believe, the chief passages that might be supposed to favour the doctrine, and the result is a persuasion that they do not admit of a literal interpretation without the greatest perversion; that they all refer either metaphorically to the spiritual change alone that shall pass upon Israel, or to the future prosperity of the Christian Church in general, or else to events in the history of the Jews that have already transpired. Admitting, first, that the doctrine of Israel's literal restoration to Palestine is a doctrine according to truth, these passages are, no doubt, very correctly adduced in confirmation of it; but, upon this principle of application, any doctrine that folly or ignorance should invent, might be supported by Scripture. Let these passages be examined and interpreted without prepossession, and with a due regard to the Jewish history and gospel consistency, and then, if no circumstances in the history of the Jews or of the Church hitherto will explain them, let the mind go and search for something that
will; only let the reader of prophecy be-
think himself of what is befitting and con-
sistent under the Christian dispensation,
and he will not, I apprehend, be ready to
receive a doctrine, which, as I think, mili-
tates against its spirit, and confines within
the narrow bounds of Palestine the splen-
dour which is to fill the world.

Yours, &c.
LETTER VIII.

An objection to the doctrine, that the phraseology of Malachi, the only prophet after Nehemiah’s reformation, does not favour it.—
The double reference of Prophecy strengthens this objection.—
An objection to the doctrine, that it is unnecessarily encumbered with difficulties.—The difficulty of accomplishment merely, admitted to be no objection.—Why it is an objection in the present case.—Simplicity of interpretation to be preferred.—Remark of Lord Bacon.—The line of argument pursued defended against a probable objection.

April 7th, 1828.

My valued Friend,

I have now to remark on the second objection advanced, vix.

"After the last reformation recorded by Nehemiah, there was only one prophet (Malachi) until the Christian æra, and he does not predict any future deliverance of the Jewish nation; thus leaving us to conclude that the predictions of former
prophets were fulfilled, as to their literal import, on the return from Babylon and the subsequent prosperity, and had no reference to the present dispersion."

Yet the Seer still predicts the universal spread of truth and the world's oblation of a pure offering. (chap. i. 11.) He beholds "the Sun of Righteousness approaching," but its rising beams make no fresh discovery of Judea's future temporal prosperity. He foretells the coming of "Elias" and the triumphs of Messiah, who will "purify the sons of Levi," or, as John afterwards announced, "whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor."—"Then," says the prophet, "shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years; and I will come near to you in judgment, &c. &c. &c." And how fully was this realized when the pure spirit of Christianity breathed forth, and testified against the works of darkness! How truly did the Lord come nigh to judgment when the imprecated blood of Jesus involved Jerusalem in unutterable woe!
Every one who admits that prophecy has often a double reference—an immediate and a more remote one—will perceive the force of the objection now advanced; for admitting the principle of a double reference, or a primary and secondary meaning, which the second and sixteenth Psalms, Zech. vi. 9, &c., and many other passages abundantly establish, the silence of prophecy after the reformation of Nehemiah is very strong presumptive evidence that the return from Babylon, and the subsequent reformation and prosperity, were the temporal events chiefly referred to in preceding prophecies.

The Prophets, up to Malachi, had predicted the deliverance of Israel from national captivity and oppression, and their re-enjoyment of temporal prosperity in Palestine. The two last prophets before Malachi, (Haggai and Zechariah,) and also Nehemiah, refer those predictions of renewed prosperity to the period and circumstances of the return from Babylon; and now it seemed as if the soul of prophecy were, for a season, satisfied. The grand typical deliverance of
which it had so often sung was accomplished; but, ere it took its flight, it struck again its sweetest chord of melody, and harped a prelude to the Gentile praises, and sung the sudden coming of the Lord, and then, in farewell notes, struck by the rising "Sun of Righteousness," it warned and left the church four hundred years.

The silence of prophecy after the reformation of Nehemiah, I conceive, forms a strong objection to the litigated point, while the generally-admitted principle of a double reference sufficiently accounts for the language of former predictions.

Third Objection. "The doctrine of a literal restoration is encumbered with certain difficulties which are not necessary to be encountered, because obviated by an interpretation more simple and more in harmony with the general tenor of the word of God, than that upon which the said doctrine is founded." I am perfectly aware that no objection fairly lies against a prediction simply because the accomplishment appears to be unlikely; for who shall limit the Holy One of Israel? But
as, when two explanations are offered of any fact in natural history, the whole analogy of nature dictates the reception of that which is the most simple and most in accordance with its ordinary processes and developments, so, arguing from analogy still, I am bound to receive that interpretation of the prophecies which is the most simple, and, at the same time, best corresponds with the general tenor of revealed truth. Thus we admit, as the most simple, the Copernican system of astronomy in preference to that which would suppose a much more complicated and stupendous machinery, and a much greater expenditure of physical energy. And thus any other theory that should be equally plausible, and at the same time more simple, might very properly supersede the system of Newton himself. And thus, we admit the opinion, as most consonant with the same theory (Newton's), that the planets of our solar system are

* Copernicus alleged the *simplicity* of his theory as its strong recommendation, and acknowledged that the confusion of the favourite system suggested to him the idea of examining its claims to implicit adoption.
opaque bodies, deriving their light, as the earth does, from the sun, in preference to the notion that they are orbs of essential light. And thus, upon the same principle, further illustrations of the force attaching to the objection now advanced may be derived from Scripture. Heaven is described with gates of pearl and pavement of gold; and who will say the description must, of necessity, be incorrect? Yet who ever thinks that the description is literally true? The angels of God, it is declared, shall cast transgressors "into a furnace of fire." They "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." If this language admitted of no other interpretation, we should be bound to take it literally (as some persons really have done), however great the difficulty involved of fire ever acting yet not consuming; for what is too hard for "Him who dwelt in the bush?" But there is no necessity for encountering this difficulty, because a solution more simple and more in harmony with the general tenor of the divine record, is suggested upon other prin-
These remarks will apply with equal force to the difficulties into which the doctrine of a literal restoration is encumbered; but before I state what these difficulties are, it may be well to meet an objection that may be advanced against this line of argument. It may be said, the objections advanced against the final restoration of the Jews might equally have been advanced against their return from Babylon and other deliverances. But I presume the cases are widely different. The promise of Canaan (worldly blessings) was to Abraham and to his seed under the law; the promise of an eternal inheritance was to the children of faith. When the old dispensation then was abrogated, the promise of worldly blessings ceased, and, since the dawn of Christianity, the promises to the Church involve chiefly spiritual

* Simplicity of interpretation cannot be too much insisted upon. "As those wines which flow from the first treading out of the grapes," says Lord Bacon, "are sweeter and better than those forced out by the press, which gives the roughness of the husk and the stone; so are those doctrines best and wholesomest which flow from a gentle crush of the Scripture, and are not wrung into controversies and common place."
blessings. No valid objection could have been advanced by an individual, disposed to spiritualize the prophecies predicting the return from Babylon, on the same principle as that on which a literal restoration is now objected to. Whatever difficulties apparently lay in the way of their return from Babylon, (difficulties, by the bye, not comparable to those now in question,) they were absolutely necessary to be encountered, and could not be obviated by any spiritual interpretation in consonance with the genius of the Old Testament economy. The prophecies on the subject demanded a literal fulfilment without alternative.

In my next, I shall proceed to state the difficulties with which the doctrine of a literal restoration is encumbered.

Till then, and ever, believe me truly,

Yours, &c.
LETTER IX.

The difficulties with which the doctrine is encumbered stated.—
The present political aspect of the world less favourable to the
doctrine than imagined.—The writer not to be charged with'
disbelief, or want of confidence in the divine power, for urging
the objection of difficulties.—National existence of the Jews
after conversion improbable.—Why so.—An error to suppose
their continued existence the result of a Divine decree, or their
national preservation miraculous.—The doctrine supposes
distinctions between Jew and Gentile which Christianity has
destroyed.—There are Prophecies that seem directly opposed
to it.

April 10, 1828.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The difficulties with which the doctrine of a literal restoration is encumbered,
are of three kinds.

First, Arising from the magnitude of
the events necessarily implied.

Secondly, Arising from the ordinary
course of things.

Thirdly, Arising from the apparent con-
tradiction to Scripture testimony which
the doctrine involves.
First, The magnitude of the events, necessarily implied.

If the Jews are to be restored to Palestine, it must be by the operation of moral principles; the silent workings of Providence in their behalf; the force of arms, or the intervention of miraculous power—all events most stupendous, whether regarded singly, or in any supposable combination.

Look at their condition scattered among the nations; it is highly improbable that their restoration will be effected by any of these means.

By the operation of moral principles on themselves, or on other nations, or by their operation on themselves and other nations conjointly.

The Restoration, whatever it involves, is promised only on repentance. They must be converted almost simultaneously throughout the world, or, by the slow process of individual conversion that has hitherto marked the history of the Church, they will be merged in the general body of believers, and their nationality be lost. The nation must be "born in a day."
Then there must be an equally powerful operation of moral principles on other nations. The political aspect of the world's affairs must undergo a wonderful mutation. Palestine must change its present masters for others who will be friendly to the Jews, literal interpreters of prophecy, and obedient to the heavenly vision. The tyranny of those who now possess Jerusalem must be subdued by foreign force, brought into exercise by conviction of the justice of the cause, or be vanquished by principle operating on the tyrant possessors themselves, and the restoration be the fruit of a holy war, or of the voluntary vacation of the land—the free renunciation of power, territory, home. Where shall the self-ejected wanderers go? Such an operation of moral principle, is an event too improbable to be expected, while the prophecies are capable of another, an easier, and a more consistent interpretation than such an event implies. And with this more consistent interpretation at hand, I do not see how, upon any moral principle, the Jews could lay claim to Palestine, with more justice or less fanaticism than actuated the Crusaders of old in their attack
upon the same territory. However favourable, in the opinion of some interpreters of prophecy, the present political aspect of the world may be to their peculiar views, had they lived at the period of the Crusades, and especially when Jerusalem itself was wrested from the Saracens, and announced their opinions then, they would have entered the arena of debate with eminent advantage against any controversists, supported only as they themselves now are by political aspects.

By the silent workings of Providence on their behalf.

Doubtless the Lord, who turneth the hearts of men as the rivers of water, could easily secure the literal fulfilment of the prophecies in question; but, however easy to Him to whom nothing is hard, a literal restoration, produced by the silent workings of Providence, employing all necessary agencies, would yet suppose such wondrous changes, such a revolution in the world's affairs, an exercise of power on the minds and circumstances of men so unparalleled
in human experience, that its natural improbability, connected with its want of agreement with the spiritual nature of the Christian dispensation, and with the consideration that another and more consistent interpretation may be given, appears to me sufficient ground for regarding it as an event, involving in its magnitude a powerful objection against the probability of its occurrence.

*By the force of arms.*

Either the Jews themselves, or themselves in league with others, must be the warriors to subdue; or other nations, urged by principle, as before supposed, or by interest, must effect the conquest for them. If the former, the changes in their habits, their resources, their relative consequence among the nations, must be so great, that credulity itself would be tasked to believe it possible, and faith be nobly tried, if, without alternative, she were called upon to admit that prophecy foretold it. If the latter—the intervention of other nations—the task for credulity and the trial of faith would be equally
imposing. Besides, Christ has said, "If my kingdom were of this world, then should my servants fight; but now is my kingdom not from hence."

**By the intervention of miraculous power.**

In how many ways Omnipotence might interfere, no finite being may presume to say, but modes enough of possible operation may be imagined by which to estimate the value of the supposition in debate. By a mighty exercise of overruling energy, the veil of unbelief might at once be torn away from the heart of Israel, the desire to revisit Palestine pervade their minds and fire their souls, the means of realization be created, and every people bow to the divine decree, to "let the righteous nation in;" but the still small voice of gospel truth says "No!" its disclosures render such an exercise of power unnecessary, its light reveals an ampler fulfilment of ancient promise than any such exercise of power would realize.* I conclude that

* * Let me not be charged here with a disbelief of, or a want of confidence in the divine power; this would be
the magnitude of the events necessarily implied, presents a difficulty which forms a strong objection to the doctrine of a literal restoration, while the prophecies supposed to predict that event are easily and more consistently explicable upon other principles.

Second kind of difficulty, arising from the ordinary course of things.

If the Jews continue to exist as a distinct nation after their conversion, one of two circumstances differing from the circumstances attendant on the conversion of other nations must occur. I mean what has been just mentioned, a simultaneous conversion, or a maintained distinctiveness after conversion, unprecedented by any known fact in the history of the world. For what nation has been "born at once?" What people, naturalized in a land and undistinguished by opinions, or municipal privileges, have failed to lose their national character by intermarriages and the various unfair. I am only anxious that our views on that subject should be consistent with the revealed testimony of the divine mind.
intercourse of life with those among whom they have dwelt? Whole multitudes of Jews, in the primitive age of the church, lost their national character when they gained admission into the kingdom of Christ; but if it had been intended that their national distinction should be perpetuated, why are not the descendants of those christianized Jews, \( \text{recognized as such,} \) now resident among the nations, and waiting for the further "consolation of Israel?"

I consider it to be a great error in itself, and a great cause of erroneous observation on the subject, to regard the continued existence of the Jews, as a nation, as the result of a divine decree, with some specific end in view, instead of regarding it as the natural and necessary fruit of their unbelief, national prejudices, and religious opinions. Nothing but these have preserved them as a nation, nor was anything else requisite to preserve them as such.

Men talk of the wonderful exercise of divine power in their preservation, and make a mystery of what is no mystery. Let them consider, when they talk thus, that they charge God foolishly, and attribute
to Him that hardness of heart and darkness of mind which alone have kept the Jews a separate people. Their continued existence as a nation, though admitted to be the necessary result of their sentiments, is not the less on that account an unanswerable testimony to the truth of prophecy, and the testimony is in no essential degree strengthened by the supposition of miraculous preservation.

In order to prove that the Jews have been preserved a distinct people by miracle, it is necessary to shew that a miracle is requisite for the purpose, and that their national peculiarities are of a kind, in the nature of things, likely to be laid aside by intercourse with other people. This, I think, the most sagacious and best informed must vainly attempt to do. No other nation has been scattered under parallel circumstances, and therefore the history of no other nation can be adduced as in point. The miracle—the miracle was the foresight imparted to the prophets, by which they were enabled so exactly to describe the future lot of these children of disobedience. For though, when their city
was destroyed, and themselves sifted amongst the nations, their peculiarities were sufficient to keep them a distinct people, and nothing but conversion to Christianity could destroy those peculiarities; what eye, but the eye which seeth the end from the beginning, could foresee those improbable events? Without adopting the idea of miraculous preservation, their national existence is adequately accounted for, and sufficiently attests the truth of Scripture, and shames the credulity of unbelief.

The doctrine of a literal restoration is encumbered with the difficulty that it implies events unprecedented in the world's experience, unparalleled in the history of the Church, and opposed to the ordinary course of things.

Third kind of difficulty, arising from the apparent contradiction to Scripture testimony, which the doctrine involves.

If the Jews exist after their conversion, under the circumstances alleged, restored to their ancient patrimony in token of the divine approbation, elevated in the rank
of nations higher than the rest, honoured with the personal and visible reign of Messiah in their midst, they will be distinguished not only as Christians in general by the ordinary manifestations of divine love; but, apparently, contrary to the Scripture, there will be a great "difference" (Rom. xv. 9) between them and other Christians, and the "Jew" in Christ will be distinguished far above the "Greek." Circumcision and uncircumcision will avail much, (that is, in spirit, though the sign may cease); and though citizens, it may be, in the spiritual commonwealth of Israel, yet "fellow citizens" with the converted Jews, believing Gentiles can never be, nor otherwise than "strangers" still to one of the "covenants of promise." Contrary to the apparent spirit of gospel revelation, there will be, in addition to the divine procedure towards all other nations, an especial communication of temporal blessings and prosperity to Israel; and the "promises" which were thought to extend to all "the children counted for the seed," it will appear, were not so extensive in their
application, but were fraught, like the mess
of Benjamin, with five-fold bounty to the
Jews.

Further, the following passages, refer-
ing, as I presume no one will question,
to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus
Vespasian, seem to denounce such an
entire and final desolation of their country,
as determines the fallacy of the doctrine
at once. "Thus saith the Lord, Go and
get a potter's earthen vessel, and take of
the ancients of the people, and of the
ancients of the priests; and go forth unto
the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is
by the entry of the east gate, and pro-
claim there the words that I shall tell thee.
Thus saith the Lord of hosts, . . . . I will
make this city desolate, and an hissing;
every one that passeth thereby shall be
astonished and hiss, because of all the
plagues thereof. And I will cause them
to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh
of their daughters, and they shall eat every
one the flesh of his friend in the siege and
straitness, wherewith their enemies, and
they that seek their lives, shall straiten
them. Then shalt thou break the bottle
in the sight of the men that go with thee, and shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again." Jer. xix. 1—3, 8—11.—“ I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord: but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them." Zech. xi. 6.—

These passages I leave to your consideration, not laying, you will be pleased to observe, any abstract or independent stress on the phrases no more, and not, which I have before shewn might be fallacious, but a relative stress alone, regarding them in their particular connexion, and as referring to the last destruction of Jerusalem.*

Amongst all the supposed predictions of

* "Orders were issued out to the Governor of Syria, to set the whole land of Judea to sale, which was done accordingly. Time was when, by the Levitical law, Jewish land, though sold, yet at the year of Jubilee, was to revert to the ancient owners; but now the King of Heaven granted such a licence of alienation, that it was fully and finally passed away from its ancient possessors."—Fuller's Pisgah Sight of Palestine.

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a restoration, that admit of a literal construction, I do not find one that was uttered in such clear and indisputable reference to the Christian æra, as the passages just cited. I take these passages therefore as literally denouncing Jerusalem's perpetual desolation, until desolations shall cease in all the earth for ever. See also Deut. xxviii. 15; xlv. 46. Ezek. vii. 2, 3, 6, 11—14.

The other prediction, such as Zech. xii. 6, "In that day I will make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem;"—Chap. xiv. 11, "And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited"—must be interpreted, so far as they admit of a literal interpretation, as referring to the period of prosperity between the return from Babylon and the birth of Christ;*

* The Almighty was pleased to commiserate their calamity, and as He had foretold them by Jeremiah the prophet,
while, far beyond that temporal prosperity, the spirit of the passage refers to the general Church, when "the Lord shall be king over all the earth." In Zech. xii. the 10th verse, evidently describing an event subsequent to that mentioned in the 6th, is fixed by John xix. 34, 37, as fulfilled at the crucifixion of Christ; and Zech. xiv. 11, has no more right to be interpreted literally than the symbolical language preceding has, or than the last six verses have, which before the destruction of the city, that after they had served Nebuchadnezzar and his posterity for seventy years, they should be restored to their own country, see the temple built, and resume their former state of glory; so He vouchsafed to fulfil His promise in every instance. . . . . The building was erected and finished within the space of seven years, according to the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah. . . . . The priests and Levites, together with the people of Israel, offered in sacrifice an hundred bulls, &c. as sin-offerings for the twelve tribes, in acknowledgment for the blessing of their deliverance from captivity, and their restoration to their former state, and to God's holy worship in a new temple . . . Upon the fourteenth day of the first month they held the passover, and kept festival for seven days afterwards, offering up sacrifices to God for restoring them to the possession and enjoyment of their native country, and their ancient laws and religion, &c. They spared no cost in the celebration of this festival, and, having resumed their former power," &c. &c.—Maynard's Josephus Antiq. chaps. i. & v. See also Ezra, third chapter; vi. 14, &c.; ix. 8, 9.
it would be in the highest degree absurd to interpret so, as I have shewn in a former letter. (See Letter V. under "NO MORE"—"FOR EVER".)

Thus have the difficulties which encumber the doctrine of a literal restoration been stated; and, in the preceding observations, it may have appeared that these difficulties are entirely obviated by an interpretation upon other principles—an interpretation more simple, and more in harmony with the general tenor of the Word of God.

Yours, &c.
LETTER X.

That the doctrine is held by the Jews themselves, and by most Christians, no sufficient ground for receiving it—why.—The continued existence of the Jews, as a nation, to the present time, nothing in favour of it—why.—Probable effect of their conversion before the Gentiles.—The opinion that they will be converted before the Gentiles contrary to Scripture; and, consequently, the notion that the Jews will be chief agents in the conversion of the Gentiles.—The continued national existence of the Jews a proof of the Divine intention to employ them as agents in the conversion of the Gentiles.—Their scattered condition no proof of such intention.—More reasonable, as well as more scriptural, to expect the Gentiles will be converted first.—Personal reign of Christ—Millennium—both unscriptural doctrines.—Remarks of the late Rev. John Cooke, of Maidenhead, on Dr. Gill's description of the Millennium.

April 12, 1828.

My dear Friend,

After all it may be considered by many as an argument in favour of the restoration, that the Jews themselves, and most Christians to the present time, have expected such a literal fulfilment of prophecy.
But this is not sufficient ground for concluding the expectation to be warrantable, any more than the short-sighted and temporal views of the Jews, and of Christ's disciples concerning the Messiah, when and before he came, were a sufficient ground, as the high priests and others alleged it to be, for rejecting him as not agreeing, in their opinion, with the notices contained in the Scriptures.

The opinions of the two disciples, who were overtaken by our Lord going to Emmaus, were in favour of the doctrine of a literal restoration—"We trusted that it had been He that should have redeemed Israel"—and had they been consulted previous to his death, as to the nature and object of his mission, their opinions would, no doubt, have been regarded as powerful evidence that Christ was come to set up an earthly kingdom, and, literally, to accomplish that restoration of which the prophets wrote. But his death falsified their views; and, when he himself declared the spiritual nature of his kingdom, and "expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself," "their eyes
were opened," and their opinions were altered; and we now wonder that their expectations were ever so carnal. And when the world's wild wilderness, still desolate in sin, shall "blossom as the rose," and the Church of Christ be made "the joy of the whole earth," perhaps there may be wonderment that Jews or Gentiles ever limited their views to Palestine, and to "the Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage," when they read of the promised plenty of "the glorious land," and the future splendour of "the holy city" "in the latter days." Again, the continued existence of the Jews as a nation, may be regarded as an argument in favour of the doctrine; and it may be said, that if the Jews cease to exist in a national capacity, one of the strongest testimonies to the truth of Revelation will be removed. But, supposing their conversion to precede that of the Gentiles in general, and in the sudden manner some expect, the occurrence will be one of the most wonderful and striking to all men, that the world ever witnessed; and will, therefore, be itself a powerful testimony in favour of Christianity.
and, to after ages, a standing memorial, to
the same effect, on the well-authenticated
page of history. And this historical testi-
mony will be as satisfactory to the well-
informed of other nations, as the national
existence of the Jews in Palestine would
be; while, to the ill-informed, such national
existence would be no more a matter of
certain cognizance, than historical testi-
mony would.

If the conversion shall be gradual, every
individual instance of it will aid the cause
of Christianity; and when "all Israel shall
be saved," the historical fact, that they once
existed as a nation in the midst of all other
nations, bearing the tokens of Almighty
wrath, and that the awful brand of na-
tional distinction only disappeared upon
their obedience to Him their fathers
crucified, will be a flaming torch of evi-
dence too strong for honest scepticism to
withstand, and too brilliant for wilful
enmity to feign unseen.

Thus, meeting the objector on his own
ground, and supposing the conversion of
the Jews will precede that of the world in
general, his objection is wholly destitute
of force: but the language of Scripture entirely removes any apparent difficulty on this score, for their conversion is not to be completed "until the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in" (Rom. xi. 25, 26), and the universal "belief of the truth" shall render their national distinctness, as a testimony in its favour, altogether unnecessary. The authority of this passage in Rom. xi. likewise explodes the opinion, that the Jews will be the chief instruments in the conversion of other nations.

It has been said, as corroborative of the presumed divine intention to make them special agents in this great work, that their scattered condition in all lands adapts them for it in a peculiar manner. They are residents among all people, it is said, acquainted with the languages and peculiarities of the respective nations where they sojourn; and, therefore, when they are converted, their facilities for communicating the truth will render them most effective labourers in the missionary field. To this I reply, that the statement goes upon two assumptions which remain to be proved. First, That their scattered
condition is not sufficiently accounted for already, without this supposition of a Divine intention, in reference to them, not yet executed; and, secondly, That their scattered condition does adapt them in a peculiar manner for missionary labour. If men will, they may set their imaginations to work, and find apparent indications of a Divine intention to refulfil all the prophecies. The scattered condition of the Jews is now, and, from the moment of their dispersion, has been fulfilling an important end in confirming the "sure word of prophecy," and authenticating the books which purport to be from God. Why should we, then, go out of the way to try if, haply, we may find out some other intention, and discover some other end in their dispersion? But I take the liberty of questioning the statement altogether, and plainly profess that it does not appear to me to be correct. I cannot see that the Jews, when converted, will possess any such facilities as will afford the corroboration assumed. For, how are they to be converted? By an effusion of spiritual influence solely, and unaccompanied by any of the ordinary means?
am not aware of any scriptural ground upon which the supposition is tenable. "Faith cometh by hearing"—then, I should expect, the Jews will hear. What they hear, those also among whom they dwell may hear likewise. "Hearing, by the word of God"—then they will hear the word of God, which is the power of God to salvation, not to the Jew only, but to the Greek also. "But how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?" I see no warrant from Scripture, or reason, to expect the Jews will be brought under the influence of truth, by any means that will not be equally likely to affect the people among whom they dwell. And, if so, their Heathen compatriots are as likely to be converted, through the means that will prove effectual to the Jews, as the Jews themselves; and as little likely to require the agency of the converted Jews in their conversion, as the Jews are to require the agency of the converted Heathen in theirs. Indeed, if we speculate, I think it would not be difficult to shew, that it is highly probable the Jews will hold out to the last, and relent only
when the converted Heathen unite with the universal Church in exhorting them—

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee!"

The supposed case is this, The God of Israel has graciously promised to pour out his Spirit upon the seed of Abraham, when "they shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn." The consequence will be, that, with weeping and supplication, they will return to the Lord, and he will abundantly pardon them. This is the process of conviction, conversion, and acceptance, in all the instances of a soul's renovation. And, as the promise implies nothing more than the ordinary influence and exercise of Divine grace and mercy promised in similar terms to all the tribes of men (Isa. xl. 5; Joel ii. 28*), why should

*I am aware of the phraseology of the passage in Joel, "afterwards" "I will pour out my spirit," &c.; but this is expressly referred by Peter to the Pentecostal effusion, and being fulfilled in the manner related, is, therefore, nothing to the purpose as an argument to prove any future effusion, especially on the Jews in particular; although it is much to the purpose as an argument to prove that the Spirit is equally, and in the same terms, promised to the Gentile with the Jew."
a more miraculous agency be looked for? The means of grace are sent to a Heathen land. Jews and Heathens hear the word; the Spirit is poured out—on whom? The Jews only? Where is there a single passage in the Scriptures to justify the opinion, that God will so depart from his ordinary procedure; and, we may say, from the general testimony of his word, becoming thus "a respecter of persons," and making external circumstances the rule of his conduct?

The experience of the Church, since the day of Pentecost, protests against it. Reason, Scripture, and experience, combine to say there is no ground to believe the Spirit will be poured out upon the Jews, except in connexion with, and as an accompaniment of the usual means employed by the Divine agent, in converting the souls of all, whether Jews or Gentiles; no ground to believe that the Jews will be convinced sooner than their Heathen neighbours under those means; nor any ground, therefore, to believe that native missionaries from the Jews will arise sooner, and in greater number, than native missionaries
from among the Heathen, where the Jews reside.

The opinion, then, I consider untenable; and, before we dismiss the First Hypothesis, let it be observed particularly, that any one of the statements involved in it is as liable to objection, on some, or all of the grounds alleged, as any other of them.

The doctrine of Christ's personal reign, and, indeed, the whole system of the modern Millennarians, has been so ably refuted by a writer in the Congregational Magazine, that it seems unnecessary to do more here than refer the reader to that work, Vol. X. 1827; three papers, beginning page 465, which I take the liberty of earnestly recommending to particular notice, although I do not coincide with the writer in all his admissions. I shall only observe here, that, according to the New Testament, the second coming of Christ will be to judgment, at the last day, immediately after which he shall deliver up the kingdom to his Father; that is, the Mediator's work will be accomplished, the vindication of the Divine authority completed, and God will be all in all. (Acts i.
The New Testament writers speak of no other coming than this. Therefore no passages promising to those who "overcome," that they shall sit with Christ on his throne, reign with him a thousand years, &c., can be interpreted as literally descriptive of circumstances to occur before the judgment, because Christ will not come before; nor of any after, because immediately after it he will deliver up the kingdom to his Father, that God may be all in all.*

* Since writing the above, I find, in the "Remains of the late Rev. John Cooke, of Maidenhead," just published, the following remarks on the Millennium:—"Dr. Gill and others thus describe it. The former says, 'After the world is burned, the living saints changed, and the dead ones raised, Christ will personally appear, and visibly reign a thousand years; after which the wicked will be raised, and the general judgment immediately succeed the resurrection.' The passage on which these sentiments are built, is Rev. xx. 1, 6, which is capable of another meaning, and which, I think, is more consistent with the passage itself, and the general tenor of the Sacred Scriptures.

"A valuable design may be answered, and numerous and weighty objections to the Millennium obviated, by understanding it as referring, not to a personal and visible, but to a spiritual reign, or a dispensation of the Holy Spirit, in his gifts and graces answerable to the prophetic descriptions;
The conclusion, therefore, to be drawn, if the subject have been fairly discussed in the preceding observations, is the following, viz.

The Scriptures teach us that the Jews will be converted, but do not teach us that they will be collected and restored, as a nation, to their own land; or that, as a nation they will be, in any way, more dignified and honourable than any other people; or that the Messiah will personally and visibly reign among them; or that, by their instrumentality, the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in.

Yours, &c.

'I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.' Joel ii. 28, 29. Pentecost was but the first-fruits of this harvest.

"This will restore the Jews, and express the permanent favour of God to them, in a manner never yet experienced; as Ezekiel declares, 'Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord.' Ezek. xxxix. 29."
LETTER XI.

The second hypothesis examined, that the Jews will be restored with some peculiar tokens of the divine favour, without assuming what.—Remarks on Romans xi.—The posteriority of their conversion to that of the Gentiles just what might be expected.—Their sudden conversion unlikely.—Their national existence, supposing them to be converted after all other people, as improbable as it would be if converted sooner.—The third hypothesis affirmed as conclusive of the whole matter, that the Jews will not be distinguished after their conversion from or above other people of the Christian community.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The Second Hypothesis to be examined is the following:

"The Scriptures teach us that the Jews shall be converted, and be restored to the Divine favour with some peculiar tokens of national distinction."

From what has been advanced before in considering the First Hypothesis, it might seem superfluous to enter into any further argument on this, because it would seem
that *any distinctions whatever* would be as objectionable as those *defined* distinctions before considered, and as much opposed to the spirit of the preceding observations. But, that nothing may be slighted which appears to favour the position, we will notice those passages in the eleventh of Romans, which are supposed to do so. Rom. xi. 12, "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?"—ver. 15, 16, "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches."—ver. 23 to 32, "And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive-tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive-tree? For I would not,
brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but, as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.” Any person, however strongly in-trenched in the opinion now under considerati on, must allow that these passages state no more than that, when the Jews are converted, important advantages will accrue to the world in general, and that
themselves will be participators in the universal good. That any national benefits, or distinctions, beyond those enjoyed by all other converts, will result to the Jews in particular, must be the conclusion of mere inference. But as they are not to be enlightened generally, according to the Apostle, until the "fulness" (that is, the greater number if not the whole) "of the Gentiles be brought in," the phraseology "life from the dead," &c. &c. cannot imply that their conversion will hasten the moral renovation of the world in general, but only that it will be the completion of that event. Their "fulness" will crown the moral "riches" of the world, which their "diminishing" commenced, and their reception will be the final triumph of the gospel over moral death—the resurrection of universal man in the image of his Maker, to the jubilee of unbecloaked truth.* The posteriority

* "While some have thought the conversion of the Jews the only work to be neglected in the conversion of the world, others, in return, have thought it the only work to be attended to; and mistaking time and occasion for causality, have misinterpreted the words of Paul, as if they
of their conversion to that of the world in general, is just what the nature and obstinacy of their unbelief would lead us to expect; and, though posterior, their conversion may nevertheless be perfectly gradual, though, most probably, not so painfully gradual as the work of conversion proceeds at present. Their continuance as a nation, however, will be as improbable as it would be if their conversion were gradually effected before the rest of the world.

For, converted in the midst of other converted nations, unfettered by former prejudices, and warm with the first sweet

asserted that the Jews were to be the instruments of converting the world. "If the casting away of them," &c. &c. The Jews who rejected Christianity, were certainly neither the causes nor the instruments of the Gentiles receiving Christianity; but the time of the Jews rejecting Christ was the time of the Gentiles being received into the church; and God took occasion, from their obstinacy, to shew mercy to the Gentiles. If, then, that season, when judgment was mingled with mercy, was yet a season of such abounding grace as that the Gentiles should be received, what shall the time be, when judgment is remitted with regard to the Jews, but a time of unbounded mercy, in which the uttermost parts of the earth shall be saved, and the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in?—Douglas's Advancement of Society, &c. &c.
love of brotherhood to all who bear the image of Jesus, their feelings will naturally concur with the usual course of human affairs to annihilate their national distinctions, and to absorb them in the body of Christ.

Considering that the apostle shews the general conversion of the Jews will not take place until after the rest of the world, or the greater part of it, have submitted to the gospel—that the above-cited passages from the eleventh of Romans, say not a word respecting any national distinction to be conferred,—and the spirit of the arguments adduced to disprove the First Hypothesis,—the fair conclusion, it is presumed, must be, that

"The Scriptures teach us that the Jews shall be converted and be restored to the Divine favour, but not with any peculiar tokens of national distinction."

The Third Hypothesis need not be examined particularly, its affirmation being necessarily implied in the previous conclusions. I shall merely re-state it as the expression of my own humble opinion, and the conclusion of the whole matter.
"The Scriptures teach us that the Jews shall be converted, but afford no warrant for the opinion that they will be distinguished, in any way whatever, after their conversion, from other people of the Christian community."

I shall only trouble you with one letter more; in which it will be my aim to present a fair estimate of the doctrine in its tendencies, and to suggest a few hints that might possibly be useful to many who are zealously affected towards the house of Israel.

Yours, &c.
LETTER XII.

An estimate of the doctrine in its tendencies.—Hints to such as are zealously affected towards the House of Israel.—Official and public sanctions of the doctrine injurious to the Jews.—The employment of divinely appointed means for their conversion urged.—The principle of the Bible Society, and the avoidance of all disputable points recommended.—Conclusion.

May 3, 1828.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Supposing the conclusion of my last to be (what indeed I conceive it to be) the plain truth of the matter, and supposing it to be the conclusion of every Christian in the world, what damage would the Jews sustain? The writer can only answer for himself; but his answer, if it were the universal one, would ensure to the Jews as great a share of sympathy in the rejection as in the belief of the doctrine of their literal restoration. It must
not, however, by any means be conceded, that the truth or falsehood of a controverted opinion may *always* be decided by its apparent practical tendency, when compared with an adverse hypothesis, because in some cases, as in the present one, the quality of tendencies is, or may be, as much a matter of opinion as an hypothesis itself. But admitting the tendency of the doctrine to its full account in the weight of evidence, I feel that the position assumed in the conclusion referred to, presents a more powerful appeal to the highest motives and the best principles in behalf of Israel, than is presented by the doctrine of their conversion, coupled with the doctrine of their restoration also.

Upon what principle, approved in social life, can those who regard the Jews as aliens, never destined to resume their place among the nations, or to repossess the land of their forefathers, behold them with less interest than they excite in the breasts of those who look for their literal restoration? Do we admire less the instances of *disinterested* generosity, than those of generosity rendered, by some connected
circumstances, evidently, or even probably, 

Selfishness, as well as generosity, might lead us, as a nation, to protect and entertain a royal fugitive, expatriated for a season, but with a kingdom in expectancy. In such a case, policy might dictate, not only the generous hospitality due to fallen greatness, but extra tokens of consideration, originating in the prospect of his future resumption of a throne. In such a case, at least, generosity might receive a stimulus, even though no sordid principle were consciously allowed to operate. But would not the alien have as great a claim on sympathy and hospitality, upon every principle that humanity would love to recognize, although the future were all dark, and not a glimpse of returning glory shone? There would be kindness and hospitality, doubtless, in the first case, but those qualities would be more conspicuous, if exhibited in the last.

And, to apply this to the present question, Christianity asks the highest and the purest motives—she is not indeed insensitive to the promise of reward, but she is most herself, when "giving, hoping for
nothing again;" and the supposition which involves the strongest appeal to the noblest principles of Christianity, possesses in that very appeal, presumptive evidence of its truth. If the truth of doctrines is to be judged of by their effects, what will be gained, upon such a test, by those who hold the doctrine of a literal restoration? Will their opinion suggest any procedure beneficial to the Jews that is not suggested by the simple belief of their future conversion? Far be it from those who entertain this simple belief to be heedless of Israel's welfare! No: remembering the glory that once pertained to them—remembering all the benefits instrumentally derived from them, and, especially, that from them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, "who is over all, God blessed for ever," they are "beloved for the fathers' sakes;" and the more abject their present condition, the more generously should we strive to soothe them in their exile, and to compensate them for their loss of temporal possessions. But let the efforts of Christian charity be made intelligently—let the end contemplated be clearly understood,
and be pursued upon substantial grounds, and let the means employed be suitable.*

Look at the wretched Jews—wretched, wretched...

* "The Christians have fallen into two opposite errors respecting them (the Jews); either a culpable indifference, and a want of that gratitude which was due to them for their fathers' sakes, 'of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came;' or, if any earnestness was felt about their state, it was accompanied with a total hopelessness of the efficacy of human means, since they seemed reserved in a miraculous manner, till some great moral revolution, beyond the reach of man to accelerate, should occur."—Douglas's *Advancement of Society in Knowledge and Religion*.

Dr. Bogue, speaking of the comparative claims of the Society for the Conversion of the Jews and the Missionary Society, says of the supporters of the latter, "They consider that unspeakably most important, on account of numbers and external circumstances. Of one thousand millions of inhabitants of the earth, nearly five hundred millions are ignorant of the gospel. The Jews do not amount to above three or four millions. Those Heathens and Mahometans live in distant countries, and far from Christians; the Jews are in the midst of Christians, and have numerous opportunities of acquiring knowledge of Christ. Besides, if the Christians and ministers live where there are Jews resident, they might instruct them and preach to them with little trouble and expense. These, many consider, as the grand legitimate means of converting the Jews, and that other methods which have been resorted to, instead of promoting, will retard the wished-for and glorious event."—Letter to the Rev. Lewis Way, cited in Dr. Bogue's *Memoirs*, recently published by Dr. Bennett.
not more sensibly so, perhaps, than the
great majority of Gentiles, but wretched
more than others, by their mental degra-
dation, and wretched, in comparison with
their favoured ancestry. What is the
present and perpetuating cause of their
wretchedness?—Their disbelief of Chris-
tianity. Why are they a bye-word among
the nations? Not because they are exiles,
but because they are Jews. Why are they
less privileged as subjects and as citizens?
and what is the source of all the invidious
distinctions that constitute their temporal
degradation?—They are Jews! Talk to
them of their nation's return to Palestine,
what does it avail?—It elevates them not
—it relieves not a want—it removes not
a woe—it breaks not a fetter. The Jew
is a Jew still. His eye may brighten for
a moment at the distant prospect of his
nation's glory, and, by anticipation, he
may live in his posterity; but soon it sinks
again in apathy, or roves in search of some
present good. But, aim at his conversion,
there is plain unquestionable duty, and its
own sweet reward in the act; and, if
effected, all that is truly worthy of desire
in the end. The Jew becomes a Christian, and Christianity describes the circle of his wishes. Dissipate the delusions of Judaism, and the manacles that bound him in the prison-house of woe are broken. Then he waits not for uncertain happiness, and transitory, however certain; his heart dreams not of an earthly inheritance that must soon be left, but he has blessings in possession, an eternal inheritance inalienably secured.* But is not the prospect of brighter days to Palestine his solace in his wanderings? And would you rob him of

* "More probable, therefore, is it, that the Jews shall not come back to their land, but their land shall come back to them: I mean those several places in Europe, Asia, and Africa, wherein they reside, shall, on their conversion, become as comfortable unto them, as ever the Land of Canaan was to their ancestors. Forti quævis terra patria; and a contented mind in them shall make any mountain their Olivet—river their Jordan—field their Carmel—forest their Libanus—fort their Zion—and city their Jerusalem. But, as for their temporal regaining of their old country, in all outward pomp and magnificence, even such as are no foes to the Jews' welfare, but so far friends to their own judgments, as not to believe even what they desire, till convinced with Scripture, or reason, account this fancy of the Jews, one of the dreams proceeding from the Spirit of Slumber, wherewith the Apostle affirmeth them to be possessed."—Pisgah Sight of Palestine.
this sole comfort? I would make no allusions whatever to his expectations on that subject, either one way or the other; because, if they were groundless, I might help to confirm him in error, if my views accorded with his own; and should needlessly assail his prejudices, whether groundless or not, if I expressed an opinion in opposition to them. I would attack no prejudice not directly necessary to be removed; but preaching only "Jesus," I would leave the glories opened by the truth, to their own eclipsing influence.*

Speaking now hypothetically, as we are, of the tendency of the doctrine, has not the holding out of secular advantages a tendency to divert the minds of the Jews from the first and main consideration in the estimate of truth, and to eclipse the light of heaven by the false splendours of earthly grandeur? If, indeed, they are to be restored, then the doctrine, we might

* "If the Jews can once be brought to reflect, it is impossible but they must feel how untenable is their adherence to the Law of Moses, a dispensation which was strictly local, and which their dispersion among the Gentiles has itself abrogated and rendered of none effect."—DOUGLAS'S Advancement of Society in Knowledge and Religion.
LETTER XII.

expect, will present motives that may be wisely urged upon them for their acceptance of the gospel. But let us inquire into this, and see how it places the Christian preacher in respect to his Jewish hearer. The preacher says, "on your reception of the gospel, the prophecies referring to your restoration will be fulfilled, and your people will return and prosper in their own land."

The Jew replies, "When Messiah comes, then, indeed, I believe we shall be restored; but urge me not by fallacious motives. Should I believe in the Nazarene, I should exclude myself from the kingdom of the true Messiah, and shut myself out from participation in my nation's glory." Thus, to the motives founded on the doctrine, the Jew is utterly impervious, through his disbelief of Christianity, and it would be altogether needless to urge them upon him when his disbelief is removed. Before the doctrine presented any motive to him to become a Christian, he would require evidence of the truth of Christianity, and when that shone upon his mind, he would ask no earthly motive to embrace it, and
thus the doctrine, in either case, would be unfruitful of advantage.

The Christian preacher, then, will waste his time by any reference to the supposed restoration. But, because this is the fact, he need not go to the other extreme, and violently assail the prejudices of his hearers by ill-timed allusions to the Saviour's humiliation. His humiliation and its objects must be preached, and plainly too, but his present exaltation, and the future glory of his spiritual kingdom, should be likewise dwelt upon; and the once crucified man of Nazareth be exhibited as the universal King to whom, eventually, "every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess."

Now, suppose the preacher to be mistaken in his opinion, that Israel will be restored to Palestine; will not every allusion he makes to the subject, instead of quelling his hearer's enmity to the gospel, and softening his prejudice, have a direct tendency to confirm him in his disbelief, (as we have before intimated,) and to foster his false hopes, and at the same time his national pride? It will do so thus. We have shewn it will furnish no motives
to him to embrace Christianity, but he has struck a chord that revives fallacious hopes and wild ambition; and, in proportion to the skill of the preacher in depicting the future, are the worldly feelings of the Jew excited, and his heart hardened against the religion, which consists "not in meats and drinks, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The zealous and faithful preacher of the crucified Jesus, may neutralize all his annunciations by the false array with which they invest the King of Zion.

But why should the risk of thickening the veil of Israel be incurred? If the Jews are to be restored, it will not be till their conversion; and the prospect of their restoration, however beautifully portrayed, will not convert them. The Saviour did not enjoin his disciples to urge this matter on their notice, but he did enjoin them to press on their attention the things belonging to their peace. All were included in the command, "Go ye, and preach the Gospel to every creature;" and, with this unambiguous warrant, let those who believe, and those who reject
the doctrine of a literal restoration, combine in vigorous action, nor suffer themselves to be diverted by doubtful disputations.

I cannot but express a fear that many persons have been deterred from affording their countenance publicly, to the exertions made in behalf of the Jews, because of the questionable and speculative matters that have been allowed (from the best motives, and in the most perfect sincerity, no doubt,) to mingle with, and sometimes to characterize those exertions. But if the object pursued were simply to promote the spiritual welfare of Israel, by such suitable means as their peculiarities suggest, surely the sympathy in their favour would be as prevalent, as it is in favour of any other class of unconverted men.*

* "To speculate concerning the manner in which the Jews shall be converted, and to be minutely particular as to every circumstance which will accompany their return, is unwarranted alike by reason and by revelation, and tends to throw discredit on the Scriptures, by mixing such sick man's dreams with the oracles of truth. But every active exertion in favour of either the temporal or spiritual condition of the Jews, is truly Christian; and is according to the mind of that Apostle, who, for the sake of his brethren, like Moses, almost wished himself cut off from Christ, and blotted from the book of life."—Douglas's Advancement, &c.
LETTER XII. 161

The strength and usefulness of the Bible Society arise from its fundamental principle of circulating the Scriptures without note or comment. This ranges under its peaceful banner all who make the Scriptures the standard of their faith; and the darkest cloud that ever hovered in its firmament, was attracted by a mountain of Apocryphal formation.

If all disputable points were carefully avoided in public addresses to the Jews and to their friends, and in all publications emanating from official sources, circulated with a view to their information and instruction, it is not too much to expect that very numerous accessions would be made to those who openly seek the peace of Jerusalem. As the subjects of peculiar prejudices and circumstances, the Jews must be met by a system of appropriate means; and all the essential questions between Jews and Christians may be wisely adverted to. But the restoration to Palestine is not one of those essential questions; or, as we stated before, the New Testament, which is silent on the subject, is not a sufficient rule of Christian practice.
Indeed, it has never been regarded as a disputed point between them at all; for, whatever ideas Jews or Christians may connect with the belief of Israel's *restoration to the Divine favour*, all unite in admitting the doctrine as unquestionable.

The believers in a literal restoration, and their opponents, join issue in the one grand truth, that before "all Israel shall be saved," those divine influences must be exercised, and that change produced in their hearts and understandings, without which neither Jew nor Gentile can inherit the kingdom of God. And, joining issue here, let them, as fellow-workers and helpers together with God, leave all minor points, and unite in lifting up the Son of Man, that the dying Jews may look and live. If a literal restoration is to occur, the preaching of the cross, all allow, must first prove effectual; and if it be not predicted, the preaching of the cross is still the work of Christian duty, and "unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Let our faith pierce through the darkness of futurity, and, beholding the splendor of the day,
when the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, "whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom;" let the vows of God be upon us—"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning: if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy!"

Yours,

My Dear Friend,

&c. &c.
APPENDIX,
CONTAINING A SUMMARY OF WHAT THE WRITER SUPPOSES TO BE
THE SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY
CONCERNING THE
FUTURE DESTINIES OF THE WORLD AND THE CHURCH.
APPENDIX.

The advocates for the doctrines rejected may, now that he has attempted to demolish one set of opinions, challenge the Writer to state his own. To accept such a challenge he has not the least objection; but must impress it upon his readers, that, although his opinions should appear to be erroneous, or even be demonstrated to be so, his error in this case does not affect the validity of his objections in the former one. Whether the conclusions he may draw, upon examining the testimony of Scripture, concerning the future destinies of the world and of the church, involve a more or less plausible theory than the one rejected, the latter, he conceives, must still be condemned as extravagant and unscriptural. To state his views on the subject compendiously, he believes that the present course
of things, as to the external circumstances of the world, will continue, only modified, in proportion as the truth prevails, to the end of time, and vicissitude and revolution characterize the affairs of individuals and empires. (Matt. xxiv. 38; 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.) But the truth will advance until it has enlightened every region of the earth; (Isaiah xi. 5; Hab. ii. 14,) and this, as effect follows cause. Truth has a tendency to self-propagation. It has been, on the whole, advancing from its earliest dawn to the present moment, and must go on advancing until its triumphs be complete, or the Great Ruler proclaim that Time shall be no more. All truth must prevail, and, in its progress, the ills and inconveniences, as well as the vices connected with this mortal state, must be lessened. The despotism of tyrants, and the defects of governments generally, as Christianity becomes diffused, (and its diffusion is a matter of inobstructible necessity,) will give way. The impediments, therefore, to the spread of truth, arising out of human misrule, will be removed. External circumstances will consequently favour every
plan of benevolence, and encourage every project of Christian zeal. Borne on the favouring gales of liberty, political, civil and religious, the everlasting gospel shall wing its way to every land;* and, as it becomes more widely propagated, the Spirit will be more copiously effused. As Christians are multiplied, devotional exercises will be multiplied; and the Spirit, more universally implored, will more universally be granted. Piety will spread, and its fruits increasingly abound. Religion, morality, the arts, sciences, and commerce, will all be in the most favourable circumstances, and flourish accordingly, while “Holiness to the Lord” shall be the universal motto. Every virtue will prevail, and, beneath the fostering influence of holiness, prudence, and industry, the earth will yield her increase, the substantial comforts of life abound, “God will bless us, and all the

* Religion cannot flourish where religious liberty is not enjoyed. . . . . . . The want of religious liberty in nearly all the countries of the world, is the grand hinderance of the propagation of the gospel at this day.”—Letter to the Rev. Lewis Way, by Dr. Bogue, cited in Dr. Bogue’s Memoirs, by Dr. Bennett.
ends of the earth shall fear Him.” “And it shall come to pass in that day, the heavens shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and the Lord will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of the air, and with the creeping things of the ground; and He will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make the people to lie down safely.”

The proper direction of human talents and resources will provide, generally speaking, against the ills of life; the general cultivation of the earth will leave few resorts for beasts of prey, and the prevalence of universal love refuse nourishment to the principle of war. (Hosea ii. 18, 22.) Yet, while human nature is less than perfect, its condition, in regard both to holiness and happiness, must be less than perfect also. When the aggregate of crime is lessened, the sum of wretchedness, which owes its chief amount to sin, must be proportionately diminished. But death will still invade domestic peace. Vain imaginations and sinful actions will still discover
unregenerate hearts, and the saint shall still acknowledge this is not his rest, because it is polluted, and long to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Now the majority consists of such as are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; then the majority will consist of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. To the end of time the means of grace will be requisite, though now more especially so, for the conversion of the ungodly. Let us "work while it is day."

When religion has thus advanced, the long-predicted "times of the Gentiles" will have arrived, when the foot of tyranny shall cease to trample on the soil of Palestine; and Judea, with the rest of the earth, shall become "as the garden of the

* It is a dangerous error, paralyzing to Christian zeal, to regard prophecy as if it possessed some supernatural influence in the production of the events it refers to. Prophecy is the voice, not the power—the foresight, not the operation of God. It is for man to do whatsoever his hand findeth to do, and to do it with his might, and prophecy assures him his labours shall not be in vain in the Lord. In this view of prophecy, there is every thing to encourage diligence and to cherish hope in the use of means, and, in proportion as Christians are active in the field, may they calculate on the riches and the end of the harvest.
Lord;" its inhabitants, whoever they be, a holy people, zealous of good works. Antecedently to this, the Jews will have turned to the God of their fathers, and the literal descendants of Abraham have been merged in the general assembly and church of the first-born; so that when the seed of Abraham is asked for, the respondent shall answer, "if you seek the seed of Abraham, look around, behold all people have become the children of Abraham!" This progression shall go on, without any serious interruption, or interval, any loosing of satan, any revival of popery, idolatry, or infidelity, until opposition to the government of Christ shall cease; and, "in such an hour as they think not," the terminating day arrive, when, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, all who live shall be changed; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the living shall be changed." At that quickening hour those which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those which are asleep; for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, in like manner as he
went up personally, visibly, corporeally; but now with a shout, with the voice of the archangel; and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall be raised first. Then the living, being changed, and the dead in Christ raised, all shall be "caught up together with him in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord; wherefore, comfort one another with these words," nor perplex your own minds, or the minds of others, by vain disputations about where our glorified bodies shall reside, and what shall become of the earth we leave. There is a locality already somewhere suited to the condition of glorified bodies; for Christ has risen and is become the first-fruits of them that believe. (Luke xxiv. 51.) But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in holy conversation and godliness, looking for and
hasting unto (in your anticipations and desires) the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless"—this is your grand and most important business. But if, when comforting yourselves with the divine promise, you seek its full import, and inquire what the Lord means by "new heavens and a new earth," the necessity there is of understanding the import of his promise in order to enjoy it, sufficiently justifies your inquiries; only pursue them "in the light, as children of the light." The following comparison of texts will prove that the Apostle employed the terms, "new heavens and a new earth," only metaphorically and antithetically, as descriptive of that blessed condition in which the renovated "creature" shall be no more "subject to vanity," but crowned with the full fruition of the hope
which was his solace here. "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2 Cor. v. 1. Now, if the Apostle really looked for "a new earth" literally, he was of a different mind from St. Paul, who was "persuaded" that when his earthly house was dissolved, he should take up his eternal abode "in the heavens." The patriarchs (Heb. xi.) are said to have "looked for a city, whose builder and maker is God;" to have sought "a better country, that is, an heavenly." Is there not here an employment of language, without question metaphorical, that ought to satisfy us the "new heavens and new earth" referred to by Peter, are neither more nor less than heaven? The phrase, "new heavens," is nothing against this; for the Apostle could only allude to the material heavens, as that which should be dissolved; and, as if reminding himself and his readers, that, amidst the dissolution of nature, the Church would stand secure, he contrasts, by a powerful and striking antithesis, the wreck of nature with the
“hope which is in heaven,” and finely describes the latter as “new heavens and a new earth;” not, like the former, liable to dissolution, but altogether separate from, and destitute of the malignant principle which leads to it—a state, “wherein dwell-eth righteousness,” and, therefore, permanent and indestructible.

Then, when heaven and earth shall flee away, and the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; the dead, small and great, standing before God, and the books be opened; and the book, which is the book of life; and the dead shall be judged out of those things which are written in the books. The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous to life eternal. And the sea having given up its dead, and death and hell relinquished theirs, the judgment closed, and death and hell cast into the lake of fire; then cometh the end, when Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the
Son also be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all, and in all. (1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 15, to the end; 2 Peter iii. 10—14; Matt. xxv. 31, 46; Rev. xx. 12, 13; 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.)

Thus has the Writer stated what he has gathered from the Scriptures; "but of the times and seasons," agreeably to the divine intimation, he believes nothing can be stated positively without presumption. It is true that God has been pleased, in the prophecies of Daniel, to afford a clue by which the labyrinth of time might be traced to a certain extent. But although it has conducted to the verification of prophecy in past events, perhaps it would be unsafe to follow it upon precisely the same principles, in reference to any future event. As "of that hour knoweth no man" exactly; so I believe no dependence can be placed on the assumed data upon which some would tell us the very year in which the angel shall swear that "Time shall be no more."

May the good Spirit of Truth direct his people in the path of duty, keep them
sober and vigilant, zealous and faithful, even unto death—the saints of the Most High be our companions now, and the "lot" in which we may "stand at the end of the days!"*

* Dan. xii. 13.

THE END.

R. CLAY, PRINTER, BISHOPSGATE.