AN EXPOSITION
OF THE
BOOK OF THE REVELATION.

BY
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AUTHOR OF 'LECTURES ON THE SECOND ADVENT,' ETC.

"Comparing spiritual things with spiritual."—1 Cor. ii. 13.

Fifth Edition, Revised and Improved.

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101. A. 208.
TO THE READER.

In sending forth another Edition of this Work, the author is desirous to apprise the reader, who may have seen the former editions, that there is no change in the principle of the Exposition; as he has learned from many who meantime inquired for it that his change of mind has been conjecturally assigned as the reason for its having been for a considerable time out of print: the 'revision' and 'improvement' consisting chiefly in the explanation of some points on which he finds he has not been understood, and in sundry additional Notes, &c.

Not that he would shrink from avowing a change of opinion on such a subject, as the result of further study of the Scriptures, or reading of the works of others: as though tenacity of opinion on all points were evidence of soundness, or being open to conviction, of weakness of mind. But having given his best attention to the arguments of those who have since written on the other side of the question, he has to state that he not only still abides by the
Exposition here offered, but is more and more convinced of its truth.

The way in which it originally suggested itself to his mind was from a comparison of the best known modern writers on the Apocalypse—including Mede, Bp. Newton, Faber, Frere, Cunninghame, Fry, and (the most recent at that date) Irving—whose systems he abstracted and digested in the parallel columns of a Prophetical Chart: when he was at once struck, on the review of them all, with the surprising fact (thus made more conspicuous than it otherwise might have been) of the wide discrepancy between them. The principle on which they proceeded was that it is to be explained by the history, political and ecclesiastical, of a long period, extending over many centuries, and therefore to be understood only by the learned reader, whose alone, it further follows, is the Blessing on him who "reads" and "keeps" the sayings of this Book. The principle which their disagreement suggested to him was that Scripture is its own interpreter:—and, therefore, that this Book is intelligible to every diligent and prayerful student of the Sacred Volume who takes for his comment not "the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual:"—the principle of the present Exposition, confirmed
TO THE READER.

by the works which have since followed in the train of those just mentioned, for which additional columns were added to his Prophetic Chart only to exhibit so many additional varieties of fulfilment.

He was not then aware (in 1832, the date of the first Edition), that the result at which he had thus arrived had in substance the sanction of the unanimous consent of the Fathers of the early Church, whose writings were then less studied than now; and, therefore, the Work appeared at first under the serious disadvantage of appearing to propound a new theory. But this fact has been since abundantly elucidated in works to which he gladly acknowledges his obligation, and among which he would especially name Dr. Todd's 'Discourses on the Prophecies relating to Anti-Christ in the Apocalypse of St. John,' preached before the University of Dublin at the Donnellan Lecture in 1841, and published with numerous notes in 1846; and the 'Apostolic School of Prophetic Interpretation,' by Maitland (C.) 1849: which prove that so far from being new, it is but the revival of the old and primitive Interpretation.

Extracts from this evidence will be found, among other matter, in the Appendix, which was added for the first time to the Fourth Edition, and to
which the Reader is requested to turn when referred to.

The Principle is, however, now no longer on its trial, as proved by the numerous publications, large and small, that have of late appeared, taking the same view of the Prophecies, in which the author is thankful to see the signs of revived attention to this Book, and, with it, of the revived expectation in the Church of the Saviour's Second Advent, and of the making ready a people prepared for the Lord at His coming.
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AN EXPOSITION

OF THE

BOOK OF REVELATION.

LECTURE FIRST.

THE TITLE AND INSCRIPTION.

Revelation, Chap. i. 1–8:—"The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: 2. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. 4. John to the Seven Churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; 5. And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his father; to him be glory, and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 7. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall
wail because of him. Even so, Amen. 8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

This Section, with which the Book of the Revelation opens, is strictly introductory, and may be divided into three parts:—namely, First, the Title, accompanied by a commendation of the prophecy to our attention;—Second, the Address or Inscription of the book, "to the Seven Churches in Asia," with the usual salutation;—and Third, a Doxology to the Saviour.

I. The Title of the book is, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," ver. 1. A Revelation means an unveiling, disclosing, or making known of some matter; which accordingly is stated to be the design of this book, and the reason of its being so entitled, in the words immediately following—"which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." Where, then, at the very outset, I would say, we have a clear warrant for undertaking to expound the things contained in this portion of Scripture, and for endeavouring to call the attention of all to them: and the more necessary to press at this time, because of the prevailing opinion that this book is utterly unintelligible; so that the attempt to explain it, or even to examine its contents, is generally regarded as an indication of a spirit of curiosity and restless speculation, which will not be satisfied with the sober contemplation of those parts of Scripture which are plain and practical. Whence this impression had its origin we need not here stop to inquire—to trace to their source the causes which
have conspired to deter from the study of the Revelation. Suffice it to say, that all arguments against it are at once met by an appeal to the title. For it would surely be extraordinary that the book of the Bible, which of all others is most mysterious, should have a title which characterizes it as plain and intelligible—"The Revelation!" accompanied moreover by the explanation, the end for which this revelation was given by God—"to shew to his servants things which must shortly come to pass." (A.)*

But if there be in the title alone sufficient to commend this prophecy to our attention, what shall we say of the more express commendation which follows—"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand:" ver. 3. Does this say that it is our duty to read this book? It says more:—it promises a reward for the study of it. It pronounces the reader "blessed;" and how blessed? I think the passage itself informs us, and in words which show how practical is the matter of this book—I mean the words, "and keep those things which are written therein:" that is, in "shewing" and disclosing the "things to come" there are afforded in the course of this prophecy developments of the enemy's devices, and warnings consequent thereon, which, if heeded and steadily contemplated, would so instruct the believer as to preserve him from the evils which it predicts, and

* These letters refer to the Appendix of Notes at the end of the Work.
thus prove, indeed, a "blessing" to him. But of this more hereafter; it should be enough to remind the Christian that the Book of the Revelation is part of the word of God, and that we are told "ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for instruction," &c. (2 Tim. iii. 16), to convince him that there is danger as well as loss in deliberately neglecting it; and when to this is added the peculiar commendation here pronounced by God, we may well ask, Who is there amongst us not only that "fears God and trembles at His word," but who regards or values His blessing, that can persevere in the neglect of a portion of it so commended?

II. Taking it, then, for granted that attention to this book of Scripture must be allowed to be a solemn duty, as sanctioned at once by the design of God in revealing it, and His special blessing on the "reading and hearing of the words" and "keeping of the things written therein," I proceed to the Address or Inscription of the book, which is—"To the Seven Churches of Asia," ver. 4.

A question arises here which has been much discussed —Whether these messages to the seven churches were designed to apply to them exclusively, or to the whole church in that and every future age? And in support of the latter opinion has been urged the frequent use of the number "seven" to denote totality in Scripture, and particularly in this book; as for instance, by "the seven Spirits of God" is intended the full power and influence of the Spirit; by "the seven horns of the
THE TITLE AND INSCRIPTION.

Lamb," the fulness of his power: again, the book having "seven seals" denotes that it was perfectly sealed; and "the seven trumpets," and the "seven vials," denote the fulness and completion of the judgments which they symbolize. But, though this must be allowed to make it more than probable, I do not think that we need this proof that these addresses are of universal application; for all the other epistles of Scripture were addressed either to particular churches or individuals, and it is never inferred from this circumstance that they are of limited application: and, generally, it must be acknowledged as a fixed rule, that whatever God has revealed, whether in the way of encouragement, warning, or instruction, to any person or church, is capable of application to all who are in like circumstances. On this ground then alone, I would assume that everything addressed to the seven churches of Asia is of universal concern and general interest to the church of Christ in all ages; but if more positive proof be required, I think we have it in more than one passage of these epistles. See for example, Chap. ii. 23, where God, in threatening a particular church (Thyatira) with his judgments, adds, "and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and heart." And again, at the end of each address, we find the following call—"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." This as to the Address of the book, the persons to whom it would appear the whole of the Revelation, but particularly the portion contained in the first three chap-
ters, is addressed—"the seven churches of Asia:"
accompanying which, we have next a Salutation as is usual
in the apostolic epistles—"Grace be unto you and peace,
from Him which is, and which was, and which is to
come: and from the seven Spirits which are before his
throne."

"Grace be unto you and peace:" (So Rom. i. 7;
1 Cor. i. 3; Eph. i. 2, &c.) Few though be these words,
there is much conveyed in them. First they show what
the apostles of the Lord considered the best wish for
those whom they address. They wished them not, as is
customary with men writing to each other, health, or
happiness, or earthly prosperity. They wished them
"grace and peace." "Grace," the favour of God; and
"peace" which flows from it: that is, in a word, "the
fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." For,
"grace" is the source of all blessing from God. It is
grace which "bringeth salvation," even "the grace of
God which hath appeared" in Jesus Christ; and it is
"grace" which promises "glory,"—which "teaches to
look for that blessed hope, the appearing of the glory
"of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tim.
ii. 11-13); which glory is itself called grace—"the
"grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus
"Christ." (1 Pet. i. 13.) And "peace" is its fruit—
comes from being justified by faith in him, as the
foundation of the sinner's hope already revealed (Rom.
v. 1); and, again, is his special bequest to his disciples
in reference to their position of trial in the world while
waiting his return. (John, xiv. 27.) A suitable wish,
then, and salutation this, to preface these epistles, which those to whom they were addressed would know how to appreciate!

But let us observe from whom the Apostle here invokes this "grace and peace:"—"From Him which is, and was, and is to come, and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth." That is, he wishes grace and peace from God in the several persons of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:—the expression "which is, and which was, and which is to come," (ο ὁν, καὶ ὁ ἤν, καὶ ὁ ἐνρχόμενος) denoting past, present, and future existence, and so being equivalent to the title "Jehovah;"—"the seven Spirits which are before His throne," denoting the Holy Spirit in the fulness of his operations;—while the Son is expressly named, "and from Jesus Christ." It would lead me too far from my immediate undertaking to speak fully here of the doctrine of the Trinity. I would only remark, that as the Apostle here wishes "grace and peace," the distinguishing blessings of the Gospel, from God in Trinity, so it is only in the Gospel that we have God so revealed. It is in the relation of God to Christ that he is "the Father,"—"His Father, and therefore our Father": while in and through Christ also it is that the Spirit is revealed and dispensed, being "given to him without measure" that he may dwell in us "by measure." Accordingly as here, so everywhere in Scripture, these distinct names of God are mentioned, and
this doctrine of the Divine nature stated, in connexion with corresponding blessings bestowed in redemption, and in that connexion only: a circumstance which makes a great and important difference between the Scripture statements of the Trinity and those so often found in human writers; who rather treat it as an inscrutable mystery and abstract dogma of Theology, than, as here, a doctrine which involves all that is most dear to us in the Revelation of mercy, and conveys to us in its true apprehension "grace and peace," and every other spiritual blessing. (See, also, 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Eph. ii. 18, &c.)

In this Trinity, accordingly, the Apostle peculiarly distinguishes and dwells on the name of "Jesus Christ," and for what reason the titles which follow sufficiently declare, viz.:

First, "Who is the faithful witness:"—He by whom that testimony is borne to "the Truth" as it respects the Divine character, which at first by the lie of Satan in Eden, and since by the ignorance and pride of the natural heart then entailed, is falsified and obscured: and this, in reference specially to his death as "the martyr" (μάρτυς) to the truth, on account of his having "witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate;" (Compare 1 Tim. vi. 13; John, iii. 11, 32; ix. 14–18; xviii. 37); by which he became the author of "grace and peace" to us in justification, and also in our renewal in the knowledge of God—both owing to the belief of "the Truth as it is in Jesus."

"And the first-begotten from the dead."—As in the
former title Christ is presented to us in his death, so here in his resurrection. Compare Col. i. 18,—“And he "is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things "(or "among all") he might have the pre-eminence;" where we learn that it is as "the First-born from the dead" that he is "Head of the body the Church," as having in his resurrection brought to light that new life by which he quickens all his redeemed, and which unites them in membership to him—a life by which man's being is linked with that of God himself, and so is everlastingly secured; no longer standing in the first Adam "the living soul," but in the second Adam "the Lord from heaven and quickening Spirit," which also he is declared to be in resurrection: (See 1 Cor. xv. 44, 45; John, xi. 25, 26; Eph. ii. 5, 6.) This is "grace" indeed, more than pardon and reconciliation; and yet not the whole, for he has yet another title, viz.:—

"And the Prince of the kings of the earth."—This is the name and dignity which He will specially assert at His next appearing, as we are told ch. xix. of this book, ver. 16,—"King of kings, and Lord of lords;" so that these three titles present Him to us in His Death, Resurrection, and Second Advent, respectively; i. e., in the completeness of His work as Man's Redeemer, and of the grace of which He is the author to us. For as in the two former characters the grace was pardon and life, so in this it is our glory—"the "grace that is to be brought to us at the Apocalypse of "Jesus Christ." But of this also more hereafter.
III. The Apostle concludes this introduction by a Doxology—"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

These words admit of being largely treated, so rich is their subject-matter; but here I can only speak of them as far as is necessary to show their bearing on the context.

"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:"—Why this expression in particular here used to denote the redemption wrought for us by Christ? It is, indeed, the great proof of his love that he has "washed us from our sins in His own blood;" but more than this is intended. I think the words derive additional force from what follows—"And hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father."

These are not unconnected truths. To be a priest of God it was necessary, under the typical dispensation of the Old Testament, to be purified and sanctified: and so we find that before the priests put on the holy garments they were directed to wash themselves, in order to show that those to whom belongs this high office must be cleansed from every stain of sin; whence also it was especially needful that those whom Christ hath made kings and priests unto God and his Father," should first be "washed from their sins in his blood."

(Comp. Exod. xxix. 4; xxx. 17-21.)

"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father:"—that is, in the administration of the king-
dom of Christ, just before alluded to, as "Prince of the kings of the earth," which shall be established at his appearing, his saints, who constitute the elect church, shall bear a part. For that, we are told, is the period to which these their titles also refer, and these the persons to whom they belong, chapter v. 9, 10,—"And they" (the "four living creatures" and "four and twenty elders," of whom we shall speak in their place) "sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

"Kings!" Think on this glory and exaltation; and yet to this does Christ raise us! not only saving his people by his grace, and restoring them to the favour of God, but making them "joint-heirs" with Him when he shall be revealed; and sharing with them his throne! Well may those who are called with such a calling, and have such a prospect, be content to be disowned by the world now, which knoweth them not in this their high dignity as it knew him not; yea, and "rejoice in partaking of his sufferings, that, when his glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding great joy!" 1 Pet. iv. 13.

And "priests:"—priests with Christ partaking of his royal priesthood, the priesthood "after the order of Melchisedec." On this priesthood Christ entered when he ascended to appear in the presence of God for
us: but it does not terminate with his stay in the heavens, as neither is its object limited to his intercession grounded on the offering of his blood. Were this the whole definition of "priesthood" then could not his people have any participation in it. But it is not so. The term embraces all that is properly mediatorial—all that is administered for blessing to others; and, accordingly, as it is said of Christ himself that "he shall be a priest upon his throne" (Zech. vi. 13), referring to his mediatorial kingdom, so, as it respects the administration of his kingdom under him, his elect shall be "priests" as well as "kings,"—the dispensers of its blessings to the subject nations of the earth.

The Apostle adds—"To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." To Whom? "To Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," and has conferred on us these exalted privileges. O, well may His redeemed say, "Amen!"—those who have tasted the benefits of his precious death and blood-shedding, and who "rejoice in hope of the glory of God!" But is there any who doubts that this ascription of glory and dominion is due to the person of the Son of Man? Are there any of his enemies who still say "we will not have this man to reign over us," and who thus requite his love by drawing from his condescension an argument against His divine glory? Hear the awful warning annexed to this doxology:—"Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him!" Hear this, ye enemies of Christ—hear this, ye that dispute his right to worship—hear this, ye that refuse to
him the ascription of glory and dominion:—"Every eye shall see Him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Yes: this is another object of the appearing of the Lord—to confute his enemies and the unbelieving. He is now "hid" from the world's view, and because hid—because not seen—disowned. And so it will be till he comes forth in manifest glory. And O then what awful results of conviction late, but too certain! "Every eye shall see Him," and seeing "shall wail because of Him!" "Blessed" in that day "they who have not seen, and yet have believed:" who in this the time of his rejection by the world have seen by faith and honoured him! They shall be manifested with him: and shall prove him to be in power to bless what he here declares himself—"The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, THE ALMIGHTY,"—to whom "all power is given in heaven and in earth," "who is before all things, and by whom all things consist," and all as "the Head of the body the Church." "Even so" then: "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." Amen.
LECTURE SECOND.

THE COMMISSION AND VISION.

Revelation, chap. i. 9—end. "I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. 10. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, 11. Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamus, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. 12. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; 13. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. 14. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; 15. And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. 16. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in its strength. 17. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; 18. I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore,
Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. 19. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; 20. The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.”

Having in the last considered the Title and Inscription of this book, with the accompanying Salutation, we now come to “the Revelation” itself, which divides into two parts. The first, consisting of the Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia, occupying to the end of the third chapter; and the second, from chapter four to the end; to the first of which the section now read is introductory, containing the Commission to the Apostle to write these addresses, and a Vision suited to the occasion.

I. First, the commission, ver. 9–11: “I John, who “also am your brother and companion in tribulation, “and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, “was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of “God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” These are the circumstances under which the Apostle received this Revelation—while in banishment for the faith of Christ, in the time of a severe persecution of the Church; when he was not the only sufferer, for he speaks of those of whom he was the "companion in tribulation" as well as "in the kingdom and patience of Christ." And it is not a little remarkable that the Lord Jesus should choose this time to favour his Apostle with this glorious Revelation. It shows the high consideration in which he held his suffering disciple, as also that the
time when the world frowns upon the Church, is the
time when God draws nearest to it in the enjoyment of
his presence. (B.)

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." By this,
I conceive, we are given to understand that the Apostle
was entranced, and (as it were) taken out of himself, in
spirit transported into another scene, as was the case
with the prophet Ezekiel, when he says, (chap. ii. and
iii.) that the Spirit "entered into him," and "lifted him
up and took him away." (Compare also the rapture of
the Apostle Paul, described 2 Cor. xii. 1.) Which cir-
cumstance shews the perfect inspiration of this book,
God overruling the powers and faculties of the Apostle
in order to give him this Revelation.

"On the Lord's day,"—that is, as is generally sup-
posed, "the first day of the week;" the day which
the Christian church observes in commemoration of our
Lord's resurrection; for which observance this designa-
tion of it is thus an additional sanction. Though it is
possible that "the Lord's day" may rather mean that
emphatic "day of the Lord" which forms the burden of
so many prophecies, and of this prophecy in particular;
in which case the sense would be that the Apostle was
in spirit and vision transported into that period. But
this must remain doubtful, as the expression in the ori-
ginal is peculiar and only occurs here.*

* Ἡ κυριακὴ ἡμέρα, not as elsewhere, ἡμέρα τοῦ Κυρίου. See the
argument in favour of the latter view in Dr. Todd's "Discourses on
the Apocalypse, preached before the University of Dublin, at the
Donnellan Lecture, 1841."
"And I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." Having already said that though the epistles in the two next chapters are immediately addressed to the Seven Churches, we should not confine their application to them, I would only add one other observation on an opinion lately advanced as to the way in which they apply to the church at large. It has been suggested that these seven epistles not only apply to the church generally, but that they are delineations of seven successive states through which the church should pass:—viz. 1st, the Ephesus-state, or decline of love, extending through the reign of Nero: 2nd, the Smyrna-state, or persecution to death, from Nero to Constantine: 3rd, the Pergamos-state, or amalgamation with the world, from Constantine to Charlemagne: 4th, the Thyatira-state, or spiritual fornication, during the time of the Papacy: 5th, the Sardis-state, or the formality of a name, our own times: 6th, the Philadelphia-state, or "a little strength," and much opposition from false brethren, times just now approaching: 7th, the Laodicean-state, or self-sufficiency and lukewarmness, the last state, upon which the Lord descends in judgment: in which view the epistles to the churches are inter-
preted as a continuous prophetic history.* For my own part, I do not think that there is evidence upon which to ground so systematic an application of them as this; or to assert for them a prophetic character in this sense. I, however, think them prophetical in another sense. I think that they present us with all the forms of declension in the church, and all the positions in which Christianity should be placed, not indeed successively, but as they should exist, some or all of them together, at all times of the church’s history, in various localities, or in different members of it in the same locality: and that these seven churches were selected by the Lord to address on this account, as affording in their then state occasion for all the warning that should be necessary for his church until his coming, whatever state or states it might be in, and at whatever time. And, therefore, instead of seeking a description and portraiture of our own times in only one of those addresses, I would rather say that they every one apply to the church at present in its different states and conditions, and that we should read and study them constantly as warnings against various evils and temptations, to all of which every church in every locality may be exposed. To proceed—

II. In connexion with this commission a vision is granted to the Apostle of Him who gave it; ver. 12–20. “And I turned to see the voice that spake to me, and “being turned I saw seven golden candlesticks.” In verse 20, these are explained by the Lord himself to be the seven churches: “The seven candlesticks which

* So Irving on the Apocalypse.
THE COMMISSION AND VISION.

thou sawest are the seven churches." A candlestick is then an emblem of a Christian church, and truly it represents what a church ought to be. A candlestick, by which the candle or lamp is raised so as that its light may be seen by and enlighten all, shews us what is the office of the church of Christ in every locality, and the end of its establishment—to give light to the world: according to the exhortation of Christ to his disciples, "Let your light shine so before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven!" and the position he assigns them when he says, "Ye are the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." While at the same time the character of the world to which it is to answer this purpose is implied and with a fearful addition to the church's responsibility:—that it is in a state of darkness as of night, to which the church's light is, like that of the lamp or candle, the only exception; the character which it shall maintain till the Lord's coming, when "the night," already "far spent," shall end, and "the day" now "at hand" shall appear. Rom. xiii. 12. Not that every declension from this state and position deprives a church of its right to the emblem. A lamp may burn dim, and so may a church decline, and yet be a church. It was so with these churches; they had many of them grievously fallen, but yet the emblem applied, until, as is threatened, the candlestick of one or more should be removed, on the failure of all warning and admonition.

"And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one
like unto the Son of Man." That is, the Son of Man is here seen by the Apostle in the character of Head and Bishop of his churches, "walking in the midst of them" (as we read chap. ii. 1), superintending and overseeing them; and agreeable to this his office, we shall find, is the description given of his person. For, though at first reading we might suppose that the Apostle uses the emblems in this description indiscriminately, and that the vision is only intended to give a general impression of the glory of "the Son of Man," on further examination we shall see that each part has its appropriate application to this office of Christ, and is illustrative of some particular qualification for it which He possesses.

And first, His attire:—"One like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet, girt about the paps with a golden girdle." The "garment" and "girdle" are emblems of priesthood, as appears more plainly from the original, in which the words are the same used in the Greek translation of the Hebrew, of Exodus, xxviii. 4, 31, for the splendid robe and girdle of Aaron, the high priest, made as we are there told, ver. 2, "for glory and beauty." In these garments were combined the insignia of royalty and priesthood, and they constituted the high priest a type of him in whom, as priest after the order of Melchisedec, these two characters should after be united. This priesthood he administers from the time of his ascension, for which reason he is here seen by the Apostle invested with its insignia: but, as already said, it does not cease with his ministration in the heavens; for when he reappears it
is in this same attire, if we may so speak, as appears from the fact that in these glorious garments Aaron returned from the holy place to bless the people: (See Lev. xvi. 4, 23, 24, &c.) and also from Isaiah, iv. 2, where we read, "In that day" (the day of the Lord's reappearing, as the sequel of the chapter shows) "shall the Branch of the Lord"—a designation of the Messiah as Son of God—"be beautiful and glorious" (marg. "beauty and glory"), the same words which were used in reference to the garments of the high priest.

"His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire." Eyes like to a flame of fire indicate his power of searching the hearts; and accordingly in the address to the church of Thyatira, which opens with an allusion to this feature (chap. ii. 18), he afterwards explains it by saying, "and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and the hearts." (ver. 23.) An important lesson this to the churches, that nothing can escape the notice of their great Bishop and Overseer: while the emblem also carries an allusion to the judgment which he shall one day execute in this capacity in the day of the church's visitation; for, in chap. xix. 11, 12, after the declaration "in righteousness doth he judge and make war," it is immediately added, "His eyes are as a flame of fire."

The description adds, "And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace." The allusion here is to the Eastern custom of treading grapes in the wine-press, which is often employed as a metaphor in
Scripture to represent the act of judgment. Thus in Isaiah, lxiii. 1, the question is asked, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?" and the answer is, "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me; for "I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them "in my fury." The treading out of corn by cattle was also customary instead of threshing; and so we read Micah, iv. 12, 13, "He shall gather them" (the nations assembled against Zion) "as the sheaves into the floor: "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make "thine horns iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass, and "thou shalt beat in pieces many people." See also Mal. iv. 2, 3, "Ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves "of the stall; and ye shall tread down the wicked, "for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet." The "feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a fur- nace" denotes then their being as it were shod with brass, made hard and specially prepared for this purpose —the purpose of judgment; while it adds to the general character of splendour and glory.

"And his voice as the sound of many waters:" This does not require any comment, being chiefly indicative of power, and so in keeping with the rest of this sub- lime description: compare chap. xiv. 2, and xix. 6; Dan. x. 6, and Ezekiel, xliii. 2.

"And he had in his right hand seven stars." In verse 20, the "seven stars" are explained to be "the angels of the seven churches," who are afterwards particularized at the beginning of each of the epistles to
these churches; thus "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write;"—"To the angel of the church of Smyrna write," &c. There is much diversity of opinion as to the office intended by this designation, expositors varying the interpretation according to their peculiar views of church-government. One thing is plain, that the angel of each church was responsible for the charge of that church, whether we say that he was a person in the situation of bishop, elder, minister, or pastor. This appears from the addresses themselves, and is, perhaps, all that is necessary to be admitted in order to understand the practical lesson which they teach; as also to derive the encouragement and support in this arduous charge afforded by the consideration that the Head of the church "holds the seven stars in his right hand." Though, as there would be several congregations in each city, the presumption is that a bishop or chief pastor must be intended, such as was Timothy at Ephesus, or Titus at Crete.

"And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword." This is a very important emblem, and one, I think, not generally understood. Most expositors interpret it of the Gospel—the word of grace and mercy, which they say is "a sharp two-edged sword" in effecting conversion. But the sword is the emblem of vengeance, not of mercy; as elsewhere in Scripture, so especially in this book. Thus chap. ii., the Lord having announced himself to the church of Pergamos as "He which hath the sharp sword with two edges" (ver. 12), adds, "Repent, or else I will come
"unto thee quickly, and I will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." (ver. 16.) And, again, chap. xix. 15, on his appearing to judge the anti-Christian confederacy, and decide the last dread conflict, it is said, "out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Here the meaning of the emblem is put beyond doubt: and if it be asked, why then does the sword proceed from "his mouth?"—does not this show that his word is intended? I answer, even so: but the Lord has another word beside the word of His grace. His word can destroy as well as create—can condemn as well as save; and so he himself says, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you at the last day." Whoever now resisteth his word speaking in grace, will find it irresistible when it is uttered in judgment; and in reference to the one as to the other is His name "The word of God:" see chap. xix. 13. Even in Heb. iv. 12, a passage which at first view appears to present an instance of another meaning, the attentive reader will perceive that the emblem is used in the same sense. For, what is the context in which it is found? It comes in to enforce an awful warning by a dread of the consequences of neglecting it: ver. 11, "Let us labour, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief; "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and
And thus we come to the last feature of this description:—"And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." What a contrast here to his humiliation, when "His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men!" Then "the Sun of Righteousness" was veiled and clouded; but here He "shines in His strength," in meridian splendour, and unveiled glory—the glory of which a glimpse was given at the transfiguration, when, as here, "His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (Matt. xvii. 2); and in which we are assured He will reappear in the day of His "power and coming," to which, we are told, that scene referred. (2 Pet. i. 16-18.)

Such is this vision of the Son of Man in his glory, as far as description can convey an idea of it; but no description can convey the full impression, and we are left to gather the rest from the effect on him who saw it—"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead," says the Apostle, ver. 17. And such has ever been the effect of a view of the Saviour's glory to mortal eyes. When "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord,"—of Him who had also "the appearance of a man," and is so proved to have been the Lord Jesus—was seen by Ezekiel, the effect was to prostrate him to the ground: (Chap. i. 28, and iii. 23.) When the same vision was vouchsafed to Daniel it is said of his companions, who saw not the vision, that a "great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves;" and Daniel himself says,
Therefore, I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me to corruption, and I retained no strength." (Chap. x. 6-8.) When the disciples witnessed the transfiguration, they in like manner became "heavy with sleep," and were "sore afraid." (Luke, ix. 32; Mark, ix. 6.) And when the Lord Jesus in the same glory appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus, he was struck with blindness, "being three days without sight, during which he "did neither eat nor drink." (Acts, ix. 9.) What, then, I ask, is the lesson we are taught? What the value to us of this vision? I answer, it presents a contrast to the Saviour's humiliation, appalling to the unbeliever, but most precious to the believer. Let the unbeliever tremble who is accustomed to reason from the humiliation of Christ against His divine glory. Let him read this description, and be awed into silence. But the believer need not fear. "And "He laid His right hand on me" (adds the Apostle), "saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the "last: I am He that liveth and was dead: and, be- "hold, I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the "keys of Hell (Hades) and of Death." It is in His resurrection-glory the Saviour is here seen; and in it the believer sees the prototype and the earnest of his own hope. "When he shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is;" but this is the glory of his appearing. Even so it is he shall be mani- fested at his coming as here seen—as seen on Mount
Tabor—as seen by Ezekiel, Daniel, and Saul; and, though all description must needs fall short of the reality, yet are these testimonies of those who were "eye-witnesses of his Majesty" most valuable to us as specimens, and therefore evidences, of our future glory; defining and substantiating that hope to us, which is comprised in the promise of being "joint-heirs with Christ." May such be its effect on our minds; and so we shall verify, as far as this portion of this wonderful book is concerned, the saying—"Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy!"
LECTURE THIRD.

EPISTLE TO EPHESUS.

Revelation, chap. ii. 1-7. "Unto the angel of the Church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2. I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3. And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. 4. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. 5. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen; and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. 6. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. 7. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

The history of the Church of Ephesus, as far as it is given in Scripture, is briefly this:—The city was first visited by the Apostle Paul on the occasion mentioned Acts, xviii. 19-21, when his preaching met
with some attention from the Jews, who urged him to prolong his stay; which being then unable to do, he left them, promising to return, leaving behind there Aquila and Priscilla, who were soon after joined by Apollos. At the beginning of the next chapter we learn that the Apostle fulfilled his promise, and returned to Ephesus, where "he finds certain disciples," the men numbering about "twelve" (ver. 7). He remained this time for two years; and the result was the great triumph of the Gospel against the exorcists, related ver. 13–20, and also the uproar raised by the worshippers of Diana; after which Paul went into Macedonia, leaving Timothy, however, to watch over the church (1 Tim. i. 3); nor did he visit this church again, if we except his affecting interview with the elders of it, for whom he sent while at Miletus, on his way to Jerusalem (ch. xx. 16—end), which closes the historical notice of Ephesus.

Proceeding, then, to consider the address to this church, I would observe that each of these seven epistles may be divided into three parts: namely, First, a title or characteristic designation by which Christ announces himself, adapted to the circumstances of the church which he is about to address; Second, His charge or the address itself; and Third, a declaration of reward "to Him that overcometh;" the whole concluding with a general exhortation to attention.

I. First, then, we have the designation of Christ, ver. 1,—"These things saith he that holdeth the seven "stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of
"the seven golden candlesticks;" with respect to which we may observe that it is taken, as are all the titles which Christ assumes in these epistles, from the vision shewn to the Apostle in the first chapter. There the Son of Man was seen "in the midst of the seven candlesticks," and so here, observing as I there remarked, all their course, overseeing and superintending them with unremitting vigilance. There also he was seen with "seven stars in his right hand," and so here. The "seven stars" were in the same chapter interpreted to mean "the angels of the seven churches," i.e., the persons in charge of them, and responsible for their state; and by the Son of Man "holding the seven stars in his right hand," holding them fast in the hand of power, I understand encouragement and support to be intended in their arduous and trying office. Their situation marked them out peculiarly for persecution; and their charge was one so anxious and responsible, that they might well be apprehensive of fainting under it: but he thus assures them that no opposition should prevail against them, and directs them at the same time to himself for strength and support in every difficulty. As to their light also, the light of truth which they, and the church over which they presided, should reflect, he assures them that none can put it out unless he himself remove the candlestick; for, as long as "he holds the stars" they shall maintain their place and shine. It is not persecution, but apostacy, from which the church or its pastors have ought to fear.

II. Having thus announced himself in a character at
once calculated to warn and to encourage, He then proceeds to charge them, beginning with the words "I know thy works." It is remarkable that every one of the seven addresses commences with these same words, an assurance to each church of the omniscience of the great Head and Bishop of the church universal—a qualification and attribute without which he in vain holds that office; but, possessing which, he can say to each one separately, however distant their localities, how different soever their circumstances, "I know thy works."

"Thy labour and thy patience." Another point of resemblance, and one which reflects much light upon the gracious character of our Redeemer, is, that in every one of these addresses to the churches, he commences by noticing what he saw good in them. Even though he should have much to fault he yet commences by expressing his approbation. He would shew his disciples that he is not disposed to judge them harshly—is not one quick to discern their faults, but anxious to discern and appreciate any good in them; slow to rebuke, and ready to commend. "Thy labour,"—a word which in the original particularly denotes labouring under affliction, and so united here with "patience" or "endurance" so much needed in times of trial. These were proofs of their love for him, whatever there might be to reprove; as, on the other hand, this love and labour in His service would inevitably expose them to suffering for His Name. And accordingly we may observe that in all the epistles addressed in the New
Testament to the more flourishing churches (I mean flourishing as to Christianity), affliction or persecution is noted as a prominent feature of their state: a fact which may well make us anxious about our own state in these times, and lead us to ask, how is it that our profession of Christianity exposes us to so little trial for the sake of Christ? Is it that the world and the heart of unbelieving man is altered, or is it that our Christianity is different from that of its first professors? Why have we so little experience of this "patience," when Scripture says, "every one that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution?"

"And how thou canst not bear them which are evil, "and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, "and are not, and hast found them liars." This and many similar testimonies found in the New Testament clearly prove that the state of the first churches founded by the Apostles, and ere yet the Scripture record was closed, was not a state so pure as many would maintain. Indeed so far from their being free from manifestations of evil such as we often now witness, there is evidence that errors more subversive of the faith were then broached, and sins committed more disgraceful to the Christian name, than any now known among us. But if the ills and diseases with which the church was then attacked were as malignant or more so than those of our day, it possessed then a strength of constitution which enabled it to throw them off and sustain comparatively but little injury; while every disease, be it great or small, is allowed to rankle in the veins and
prey on the vitals of the church in the present day. The church at Ephesus "tried those which said they were apostles, and were not, and found them liars," so exposing and defeating evil as soon as it made its appearance; but this vigour and energy we have lost, and evil when it appears among us is suffered to remain; and better were it, I say, that greater evils manifested themselves, if thus speedily removed, than that the lesser should appear and remain uncorrected, proving as it were a decline of constitution, gradual indeed, but certain; for, says the Apostle, "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Having thus commended, the Lord Jesus Christ now proceeds to remonstrate with this church. Having said all that he could say for them, He is constrained now to say something against them:—"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." What and how great their "first love" was may be gathered from the description of their state after they had declined from it, as contained in the first part of this address just considered. And O! if a state so much to be commended was a decline from love, what portion of love may we be said to have—the church of this our day! Where is the locality in which our highest is equal to their lowest state? Is not this church in its fall greater than the church with us where it stands strongest and exists purest! Do we deplore this, and are we humbled for it? Then let us do what now only remains to us; let us give heed to the exhortation with which the Lord here follows up his
rebuke—"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works:" otherwise note—yea, let all our churches hear the awful alternative—"or else, I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent!" Thus it is that the Lord deals with his churches—this is the way in which He visits their apostacy on them. He extinguishes their light, and removes their candlestick out of its place. This is the consequence now; but the consequence hereafter, to those members of that church who were instrumental to its fall, who will undertake to tell?

To show, however, that He hopes better things for them, the Lord once again returns to commendation:—"But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the "Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." I have already remarked that there were greater evils practised in those times by persons bearing the Christian name than are now found among us; and of these "the deeds of the Nicolaitanes" were instances. It is unnecessary to say more respecting them, than that they were of the most licentious character, such as will not bear description, aggravated, if, indeed, anything could aggravate them, by the attempt to justify them by Scripture and the Christian dispensation. Learning from Christianity of a future condition of the church, when the bodies of the saints will be purified and brought into unison with the renewed spirit, and when the flesh will no longer strive with the spirit, they attempted to prove that the body or flesh in its present
state is intended, and that indulgence of it by the regenerate is not inconsistent with, but congenial to the spirit; and hence, that the Christian has liberty to indulge in the works of the flesh to any amount he pleases. These deeds the church of Ephesus repudiated and hated, and in so doing, manifested, as I said, that health and remaining strength of constitution which could throw off disease in its most virulent and worst forms.

III. And thus we come, in the third place, to the reward which the Lord proclaims for the encouragement of those who should prove faithful, and triumph over all opposition:—"To Him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." The language of this promise is generally supposed to be purely figurative, as though the tree of life could not be a reality; as is also the passage chap. xxii. 2, where more particular mention is made of it. We know, however, that the tree of life really existed in the first paradise, and that after his fall man was debarred from eating of it, lest he should live for ever. Gen. iii. 22. Not that he should never be permitted to eat of it, but that had he eaten of it then, it would have immortalized such a life as he then had, which would have been anything but a blessing; and therefore he must derive a new title to it as well as to life, through Him in whom alone there is now life, and who therefore claims it as His right to bestow this privilege; as He here says, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life." In-
indeed, the contrary opinion can only rest on a supposed 
knowledge of the nature of our existence after the 
resurrection, and its incompatibility with the fulfilment 
of such promises literally taken; but as to this, I can 
only say that I do not see why an act which was not 
incompatible with man's state before the fall, and 
involved then no association with corruption, should 
be necessarily inconsistent with his future existence in 
incorruption and glory. We know also that the Lord 
Jesus Christ eat and drank after he had risen from the 
dead; and what mean his words spoken at the institu-
tion of the Lord's supper?—"I say unto you, I will 
"no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day 
"when I drink it new with you in my Father's king-
"dom." And again, when a voice among the crowd 
on one occasion said, "Blessed is he that shall eat 
bread in the kingdom of God," did he not, instead of 
rejecting the idea as carnal, take it up, and proceed 
rather to show who should be so privileged, by speaking 
the parable of "a certain rich man who made a great 
supper?" See also the instance of Abraham's guests 
at Mamre, Gen. xviii. &c. At all events, it were better 
to say of such passages that we do not understand them, 
than confidently to assert that they must be understood 
in another than their natural and obvious sense. 

In conclusion, this address to the first of the apo-
calyptic churches speaks to all who profess to be of the 
church of Christ, now as well as then, as the proclama-
tion says with which it closes—"He that hath an 
"ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the
"churches." The charge against this church was, that it had declined from its first love. It is for us to ask ourselves as a Christian church, and as individuals, whether we are liable to the same charge. Of many, indeed, of those who profess the name of Christ, I fear it is but too true that they are not only liable to the charge of having "left their first love," but that they never loved Christ at all. The church abounds with nominal professors—the Christian name is common among us; but of an awful majority of those who "have a name to live," it is but too certain "that they are dead." The affections are the test. How is it with our affections? Do we love Christ? Yea, even a little? But this involves another question—Do we know him? Do we know and appreciate what he has done for us? Have we been thrown entirely and exclusively on Him for salvation? For, when we know Him as Saviour we must and will love Him.

But do we love Him, and yet feel conscious that we have declined in affection—have left our first love? O let us to the cross again, to revive the sense of His love to us! O let us supplicate that Spirit who "takes of the things of Christ and shews them to us," to bring Christ crucified afresh before us, and teach us "to know the " height, and depth, the breadth, and length—to know " the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that " we may be filled with all the fulness of God,"—that every rival object may be excluded, and that we may love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and supremely: Amen and Amen.
LECTURE FOURTH.

EPISTLE TO SMYRNA.

**Revelation, chap. ii. 8-11.** "And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; 9. I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich), and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. 10. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried: and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. 11. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Of the city of Smyrna we have no record in Scripture; but history informs us that it was one of much consequence—the next in rank to Ephesus, and often called the metropolis of Asia, and the ornament of Ionia. It is, however, still more remarkable as the place in which lived, and presided over the Church, the celebrated Polycarp, the martyr, who was contemporary with the
Apostle John, and is with much reason supposed to be the "Angel" here addressed.

I. According to the arrangement already mentioned we are to consider, first, the designation or title of Christ—"These things saith the First and the Last, which was dead, and is alive." This title is also taken from the vision at the opening of this book (chap. i. 17, 18), and again will be found to specify such attributes of the great Head of the church as are particularly suited to the case and circumstances of the church here addressed. There the Lord Jesus Christ characterized himself in these words, in order to cheer the heart of the Apostle when overcome with awe at seeing his glory:—"He laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, fear not, I am the First and the Last; I am He that liveth and was dead;" and with the same object he now repeats them to the church of Smyrna: for this church was at the time exposed to tribulation, and threatened with yet greater sufferings for his name; see verse 10. In these circumstances he calls on them to remember that He is greater than all their enemies, and that as he was put to death, and yet now lives, so those who die for his name shall live again with him.

II. His charges I also before observed all commence with the same words—"I know thy works." In this instance the effect of this declaration would be to produce comfort, though to a church differently circumstanced they would be words of fear. An awful consideration it is for a church in a state of declension or
apostacy, that the Lord Jesus "knows their works," and will for all of them assuredly call them to account, and bring them to judgment! But a delightful reflection for those faithful to their profession to know that, though despised by the world, and overlooked as unworthy of notice, there is One who noticeth their path, and marks their every act done—their every suffering endured for his name!

With respect to the charge or address itself which follows, it is remarkable that it consists of unmixed commendation; a circumstance truly cheering to dwell on—a state most delightful to contemplate. Nothing was there in the character or conduct of this church which the great Bishop and Head of the church in taking the oversight of it had to reprove; and now, what do we find noticed in connexion with this, as though an inseparable attendant on it? That the church most faithful, was the church most tried; fidelity and tribulation, godliness and persecution hand in hand:—"I know thy works," says the Lord, and then first on the list are "thy tribulation and poverty." The poverty which the Lord notices here is undoubtedly literal poverty, because in a spiritual sense this church was anything but poor; as he himself says, drawing the contrast, "but thou art rich." And here I cannot but observe that this same state, the absence of worldly wealth, and such circumstances as in the estimation of the world will be called poverty, are far from being unfavourable, nay more, in the estimate of Scripture are most favourable to the faithful profession of the Gospel
of Christ. The Christian is one who in hope is rich indeed; whose prospect is that he shall inherit and possess all things as "joint-heir with Christ"; but at present he desires to possess nothing. His character is that of a pilgrim, a stranger, and sojourner in the earth; a member of a church militant and suffering: and when therefore we see the believer desirous of possessing the temporal things of this world, we cannot but call to mind the affecting address of the prophet Elijah to his servant (2 Kings, v.), when he had just returned from obtaining possession of the things declined by his master—"Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and olive-yards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?" "Is it a time?"—alluding to the state of the church of God in that darkest period of Israel's history. Is this a time to set one's heart on the things of this world, and to consult for one's own ease and comfort? when every true servant of Jehovah should rather put on sackcloth and mourn the apostacy of his people? So methinks—if at all times the believer should be a sojourner on earth,—especially when the church is spiritually poor should he least desire riches. I do not say that it is necessary for the fidelity either of the individual or the church, to be found in circumstances of necessity; as indeed I feel confident the Lord will never suffer his children, who really depend on him, to be in want or destitution. But though necessity is not to be desired, but deprecated, poverty is far from being a thing to deprecate, the poverty spoken of here—the absence
of everything which can be called riches or independ-
dence; especially when we call to mind the words of
Christ, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter
into the kingdom of heaven;" so great is the danger,
so many the temptations that attend them! But to a
church especially, I have no doubt the wealth and
patronage of this world is most injurious; and though
the deprivation of it where it has been enjoyed is ge-
erally regarded only as a calamity, I am persuaded that
in the eyes of Christ the great Head of the church, and
in the estimate of Scripture, such an event would be
regarded as most favourable, because conducing to that
state here noticed and commended, as expressed in the
contrast "I know thy works, and thy tribulation, and
thy poverty, but thou art rich,"—rich in faith—rich
in the fruit of the Spirit—rich in the grace of the Gospel
—rich in everything which the great Head of the
church most commends and approves.

The Lord next makes mention of the difficulties they
had to contend with, as also known to him:—"I know
"the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and
"are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." At the
first promulgation of Christianity great opposition was
experienced from the unbelieving Jews, whose constant
cry was, that the Lord Jesus Christ and his disciples
wished to discredit the doctrine, and subvert the law of
Moses; because they maintained the real use of the law
in opposition to the perversion of it of which the Jews
were guilty—preaching Christ as "the end of the law
"for righteousness (or justification) to every one that
"believeth," of which righteousness the Jews being ignorant, went about "to establish their own righteousness" by it—by the same law, of which one great use was, on the contrary, to cause the unrighteousness and guilt of man to abound or to appear evident, preparatory to the introduction of "the ministration of righteousness" (or "justification") by Christ. The true Jew was one who saw this true use and end of the law; while those who so perverted the law, blasphemed the name of Jew, as Christ here accuses them of doing. (See Rom. v. 20, and x. 3, 4.)

"Fear none," he continues, "of those things which ye shall suffer." He had given them a reason why they should not fear in the title by which he announced himself to them, "I am the first and the last." This was to be their support, and would effectually be found to prove so even in the prospect of what he now predicts should come upon them:—"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." It is remarkable that the devil is here made the instrument of the church's persecution—"the devil shall cast some of you into prison,"—the explanation of which is, that Satan, properly speaking, is at present "the prince and god of this world," and employs his power in opposing the truth of Christ. Not—as we learn in the case of Job—that he has any power against the servants of God
but what is permitted him; but the Lord makes use of his opposition, turning it to account in causing his people's faith to shine the brighter by trial, and so to conduce to their greater reward hereafter; as he here says, "be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of "life"—not only "life" but the "crown" which is the award of faithful service, and especially of suffering with Him.

"And ye shall have tribulation ten days." This clause is one of considerable importance on account of an argument drawn from it in proof of a position, which has great influence on the interpretation of this book. For, assuming that this prediction was fulfilled in a ten-year persecution which took place under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, it is inferred from this instance, that we have a warrant for understanding years by days throughout the prophecy; and thus the period of "1260 days," which comprises most of the remarkable events predicted in it, has been taken to denote so many years by all our commentators, and a fulfilment assigned to the events accordingly. Without entering here into a discussion of this very important question, I would only say, that even were this one instance perfectly established, it would be unwarrantable to make a single instance a rule to apply to the whole book: but the fact is, that even this instance is far from being established. It is by no means certain that this church was subject to a persecution of that exact duration, nor are those expositors even who adopt the rule of a year for a day
agreed that it holds in this case. And, therefore, under these circumstances, and in the absence of definite information from history as to the fulfilment, (and I might add, of any undisputed instance of dates being written one way and fulfilled in another), I would abide by the literal acceptance of the words.*

* The following view of the opinions of principal commentators on this passage is taken from 'Maitland's first Inquiry respecting the 1260 Days,' pp. 15–18, translating the Latin authorities:

'I have looked (says Mr. Maitland) into every expositor within my reach, and the following is the result: Bishop Newton and Dr. Hales agree with Mr. Faber in supposing that Diocletian's persecution is intended. Dr. Adam Clarke goes only so far as to state, that the "ten days" may mean ten years, and that such was the duration of Diocletian's persecution. No other commentator, that I have met with, appears at all to sanction any reference to Diocletian.

"Ten Days:"—understand literally, for consolation is intended from the shortness of the time.' Translated from Grotius in loco.

'As the Egyptians detained and afflicted the Israelites ten times contrary to the will of God, for which reason also they were afflicted by God with ten plagues, so the Christians suffered ten very severe persecutions from the Roman Emperors, of which the last and most severe raged ten whole years.' Translated from L. Capelus Spicileg. in Apocal. ii. 10.

'Mr. Fleming (of the Resurrection, p. 129), with many others, thinks this refers to the persecution under Domitian, which continued about ten years, and begun when John was banished into Patmos, and saw those revelations. But it may only signify a short and limited time.' Doddridge Fam. Expos. in loco.

'This may either mean ten years, which is recorded to have been the duration of Domitian's persecution; or a considerable, but limited time.' Scott Com. in loco.

'This may either mean ten years, which is recorded to have been the duration of Domitian's persecution, or a very considerable time, the term ten being frequently used indefinitely for many.'Gauntlett, Expos. of Rev. p. 26.
III. The reward here proclaimed is,—"He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." In chapter xx. 6, of this book, we find it written, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years;" and to this privilege the promise here would seem by anticipation to refer: especially as we find that in every other promise "to him that overcometh," in these epistles, there is a peculiar reference to the second-advent kingdom. In which view this promise is identical with that just before—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give

'It is altogether necessary, that this should be referred unto that persecution which was done by the authority of the Emperor Trajan.' JUNIUS Notes to folio English Bible, 1708.

'As touching Smyrna, therefore, this persecution fell out in the time of Trajan.' BRIGHTMAN'S Revelation illustrated, in loco.

'It was not to be perpetual, but for a set time, and a short time.' HENRY Comm. in loco.

'Ten days of tribulation may either denote ten years, or many days.' BROWN Self-interp. Bible in loco.

'I incline, therefore, to think, upon the whole, that "ten" is not here to be taken literally for that exact number either of days or years, but for an indefinite number of them.' DR. GUYSE, Comm. in loco.

"Ten years" persecution under Domitian, which is threatened upon the church of Smyrna, under the name of ten days tribulation.' IRVING on the Apocalypse, vol. i. p. 178.

(Afterwards he interprets the "ten days" of the ten Pagan persecutions. Lect. on Ep. to Smyrna.)

'It may be added (says Mr. Maitland) as somewhat singular, that among all the various opinions collected in Poole's Synopsis, the persecution of Diocletian is not mentioned.'
They might suffer death for his name; but there was a death awaiting their persecutors by which they "should not be hurt." And more—their suffering thus with Christ now was an earnest of their reigning with Him also hereafter.
LECTURE FIFTH.

EPISTLE TO Pergamos.

Revelation, chap. ii. 12-17. "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; 13. I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. 14. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. 15. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. 16. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. 17. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

Pergamos was the chief city of Mysia, the residence of the Attalian kings, and famous for wealth and learning. Dangerous pre-eminence this, as is proved by the Head of the church calling it, ver. 13, "Satan's seat,"
and his having to note many and great corruptions in this church.

I. The title he assumes is brief but awful: "These things saith he that hath the sharp sword with two edges." It will be remembered that in treating of the vision it was suggested that this emblem does not denote (as some understand it) the word of God's grace, and its power to convert the soul, but rather his judgments on those who neglect his word; and this passage is one of the strongest proofs that it should be so interpreted, not only because it is adopted to designate Christ when about to address a comparatively corrupt church, but also because it is expressly so defined by the Lord himself in verse 16, when he says, "Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth."

II. Having thus announced himself, he proceeds with his charge—"I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is, and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith." That is, as before, he shows this church that he is fully aware of its circumstances—of the perilous situation in which it stands—and that he takes this into account in estimating its service and character. Ever more ready to commend than blame, our gracious Lord does, indeed, in this instance seem (if I may so speak) to make the most of the good he discerned in them. He fastens on the name of one martyr (I fear because he was the only one they could name), "Even in those days, wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among
“you;” repeating, as an enhancing consideration of his fidelity and suffering, the character of the place, “where Satan dwelleth.”

And even when he reproves, mark the disposition to extenuate—“But I have a few things against thee;” and what were these few things? “Because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.” (ver. 14.) Observe, Balaam, though expressly summoned for the purpose, did not curse Israel, because he could not articulate a word against the will of Jehovah. Not even to please Balak, who was ready to promote him to great honour, could he use his prophetical gift against them. And what then did he do? Alas! he prevailed to do them a more serious injury: He gave Balak his private advice how to ensnare the people by means of the daughters of Moab, and thus did he “cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel.” This is “the doctrine of Balaam,” and perhaps Satan’s great and worst device: not openly to oppose the truth of Christianity, for it is too strong for him; but to work underhand and indirectly, so as to ensnare the disciples of Christ, by tempting them to compromise with the world—by insinuating that Christianity may exist consistently with the indulgence of the flesh, even to the commission of the most awful sins. This, when the doctrines of the Scripture prove too strong for him, is Satan’s next resource, and to this he had recourse, and
it would appear with fatal success, in the church at Pergamos: for, in addition to "the commission of fornication," the Lord adds, "So hast thou them also "which hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which "thing I hate," a doctrine, as already mentioned, of the most licentious and revolting nature.

Such was the state of the church at Pergamos; and what a contrast does it present to that of the church at Smyrna! There there was no 'but,'—no exception in commendation, consequently no occasion for the chief Shepherd's threat or warning: but here the case is otherwise; and hence we have that most awful warning which was before quoted, "Repent; or else I will come "unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with "the sword of my mouth." How changed the character of Christ here! What a contrast to the revelation which exhibits him "full of grace and truth!" Yet so it is: those who will not know him in the one character will too late discover that he possesses the other also; and the word of grace long resisted will turn to the sword of condemnation—the two-edged sword from forth the Saviour's mouth to execute vengeance on the unbelieving.

III. We have the reward proclaimed to the victorious believer:—"He that hath an ear, let him hear what "the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that over- "cometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." It is mentioned in the Old Testament history that when the Lord rained down manna for his people Israel in the wilderness, a small portion was ordered to be gathered and laid up in the tabernacle within the holy place, by
the side of the ark of the covenant, as a memorial; and though if any of the people attempted to keep the manna from day to day it corrupted and bred worms, this portion which was laid up in that place which typified heaven, was preserved free from corruption. When, then, the Lord Jesus Christ here says, "to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna," I think the allusion is to the manna so laid up, and that thus we have expressed under a beautiful metaphor, the immortality and incorruptibility which shall characterize the resurrection-state of the redeemed; whose life is now "hid with Christ in God," but with the assurance that "when he shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory." But perhaps some more special blessing may be intended in this promise, which we are unable now to understand.

"And I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." This metaphor is more easy of interpretation. The "white stone" with the name inscribed is an emblem of victory; and the allusion is to the ancient Grecian games, in which the conqueror received from the Moderators or Arbiters a ticket or token (as we would say), with his name and the quality of his reward inscribed, for which purpose a tile or white stone was used: and, accordingly, it is "to him that overcometh" that the white stone is here given.

"And in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." In explanation of this, I would observe that in chap. iii. 12, we
are told of a new name of Christ:—"I will write upon
him the name of my God, and the name of the city of
"my God, and will write upon him my new name;"
and I would suggest that the new name in the one case
is to be interpreted by the new name in the other: the
new name of the disciple by the new name of his Lord.
In what sense then does Christ receive a new name?
The new name of Christ is his name of exaltation as the
Son of man, the exaltation conferred on him in virtue of
his sufferings and humiliation, according to Phil. ii. 9,
where the Apostle, after stating the humiliation of
Christ, adds, "Wherefore God hath highly exalted
"him, and given him a name which is above every
"name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should
"bow." For in this sense only can Christ be said to
be exalted. Not as to his divine nature—that was
incapable of exaltation; but in reference to his human
nature, in which he is even now exalted to the throne
of God, there to sit at his right hand. But he waits
there we are told till the time when "his enemies shall
be made his footstool." The Heavens only receive him
"till the times of restitution of all things," when it is
that he shall be duly acknowledged by his new name,
by every knee bowing to him, and every tongue confess-
ing him—when the kingdoms of the world, as yet in the
hands of the usurper, become "the kingdoms of our
Lord and of his Christ." Now, in this kingdom, in this
sovereignty of the world, it is promised that his faithful
followers—those who not only believe in, but suffer
with him—those who overcome and prevail over all
opposition and persecution, shall share with him (as we shall see more distinctly specified towards the close of this book), and this new dignity and exaltation will be their "new name" given them by Christ whose alone is the kingdom by right, as the Redeemer of man's lost and forfeited inheritance. And, accordingly, the path of the believer to this crown is the same trodden by Christ himself. He suffered, and therefore reigns: and "if we suffer we shall reign with him." "To Him "that overcometh will I give to sit down with me in my "throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my "Father in his throne."

In conclusion, I would only add, if we would not forfeit these privileges—if we would not lose our crown—if we would reign with Christ—let us beware of amalgamation with the world. Let us beware of the doctrine of Balaam—Satan's master-piece delusion, by which he accomplishes defection in the church. Be assured that he is by this armed with tenfold more power than by any false doctrine, or any openly proclaimed error. If the doctrine of Balaam have place in us—if in principle the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes have place in us—if anything have place in us that would lead to conformity to the world, or indulgence of the lust of the flesh, it will do more evil to the church of Christ in a day than infidelity would do in years. O then, instructed as we are in the devices of Satan by these examples, let us "be sober," let us "be vigilant;" knowing that "our adversary the Devil as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour:"

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"whom," says the same admonition, "resist steadfast "in the faith, knowing that," if fidelity be attended with persecution, "the same afflictions are accom- "plished in your brethren, which are in the world," taking encouragement from the instances of those who have already "fought the good fight of faith," and, having overcome, are now waiting for their reward.
LECTURE SIXTH.

EPISODE TO THYATIRA.

Revelation, Chap. ii. 18–end. "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; 19. I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. 20. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. 21. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication: and she repented not. 22. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. 23. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto everyone of you according to your works. 24. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. 25. But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come. 26. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a
potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. 28. And I will give him the morning star. 29. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

We are now to consider the epistle to the church at Thyatira, a city not elsewhere noticed in Scripture, except as the native place of the woman named Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened that she attended unto "the things which were spoken of Paul," and with whom, then dwelling at Phillippi, the Apostles Paul and Silas abode some time: Acts, xvi. 14, 15.

I. Here, then, as in the former addresses, we have the appropriate title assumed by Christ: "These things saith the son of God." This is the only place in the Book of Revelation in which the Lord Jesus is designated by this name, and here he assumes it evidently in reference to that remarkable prophecy, Psalm, ii. 7, where the Messiah says, "I will declare the decree: "Jehovah said unto me, thou art my son, this day "have I begotten thee;" as appears from verses 26, 27, where there is an undoubted reference to this Psalm, ver. 9—"He that overcometh to Him will I give "power over the nations; and He shall rule them with "a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be "broken in pieces." Which also shows the propriety of the title in this place; because he is about to promise, as a reward to him that overcometh, a share in that very power, and kingdom, and inheritance, which it is there foretold that he himself shall possess in conse-
quence of his being "Son of God:" in both cases the inference holding—"If a Son, then an Heir."

It is added, "who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass." These emblems, as I showed when considering the vision of chap. i. from which they are taken, are used to express—the one, the searching discrimination and omniscience of the Head of the church, which nothing can escape undetected; and the other, the judgments he has the power to inflict, and particularly that which he will inflict at his next appearing, of which the treading of the winepress and also the treading out of corn are such vivid and descriptive symbols. See again Isaiah, lxiii. 3, and chap. xix. 15, and Micah, iv. 13.

II. Having thus announced his title, his address to this church next follows, ver. 19–25, opening with the usual declaration, "I know thy works,"—of which again he first particularizes those which he could not with approbation:—"Thy charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience; and the last to be more than the first." These can be here only briefly noticed.

"Charity," or, as the word here and elsewhere so rendered means, "love" (ἀγάπη)—enjoined by our Lord as the chief characteristic of his disciples, and of which the full exposition is given in 1 Cor. xiii.—the love of the brethren; of their fellow Christians for His sake. In this eminent Christian grace they of Thyatira abounded, an evidence of the healthy state of the church, because the great evidence of love to Christ, as it is also the first fruit of the spirit. (Gal. v. 22.)
“Service:”—This word in the original (διακονία) means, as often with us, offices discharged for others, and therefore it is mentioned in connexion with love, which is at once the motive and the measure of such service: according to that exhortation of the Apostle, so distinctive of Christianity—“Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth” or “good,” 1 Cor. x. 24; and the lesson of humility inculcated by Christ, which would teach every one of his disciples to consider himself the willing servant of every other. (St. John, xiii.) Their service rendered to the Lord Jesus himself may also be intended, and in this view also, it would be the certain fruit of the first-mentioned grace—“Love.”

“And Faith:”—Faith may be considered in two points of view—either as the belief of the Gospel itself, or the constant resting on and habitual belief of all God’s word; the confidence in his promises, and dependence on Him, which becomes the settled character of the believer—of him who having trusted God for that which is greatest, the salvation of his soul, finds it easy to trust Him for those things which are least. Of this faith we have many bright examples in Hebrews, xi., where we shall find it was peculiarly exercised, as it was peculiarly needed, in times of trial.

“And thy patience:”—Patience is invariably found in Scripture connected with suffering; meaning as it does, enduring and bearing up under trial. The value of which grace, as also the way in which it is wrought in the mind, the Apostle states in that deeply experi-
mental passage, Romans, v. 3, 4,— "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience," or, as we should rather read, "experiment,— that proof of sincerity in the profession of the faith, which tribulation patiently endured works:— "and experience hope," for it is an additional confirmation to his hope when the believer, having had occasion to put to the proof God's promises in seasons of affliction, and having relied on them, has found that they are true, and that having trusted in God he was not confounded.

"And thy works, and the last to be more than the first."—This is, indeed, a high commendation, "the last to be more than the first!" Because, generally speaking, the reverse of this is the case. The believer generally begins by running well, and too often falls away or declines; "leaves" (as is said of one of the churches) "his first love;" and hence the Apostle Paul exhorts, "Be not weary in well-doing,"—knowing the tendency in all to grow weary, to flag in their Christian course.

Notwithstanding, however, those various subjects for commendation, the Lord saw something to fault in this church, as the words next following shew: "Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." There is little reason to doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ in these words designates a real per-
son in the church of Thyatira, a false prophetess who acted as here described, and that the name "Jezebel" is given her by the Lord as descriptive of her character, by assimilating her to the person really so named in Old Testament history, the wife of the wicked Ahab, who was the instigator of all his acts, as we read 1 Kings, xvi. 31. So the character of this prophetess in the church of Thyatira is that she seduced the Christians to spiritual "fornication" and "idolatry," as Jezebel seduced the King of Israel to the worship of Baal: and how awful the nature of her seduction, and how great the power which she possessed, may in some degree be conceived from ver. 24, "But unto you I say, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak." A knowledge of the "depths of Satan" was then the pretension of this prophetess—into which it would seem she initiated her disciples: holding, I conclude, direct communication with the evil spirit, and actuated in an especial manner and possessed by him, as we are warranted to believe was the case of those frequently mentioned in Scripture who practised "witchcraft" and "sorcery"—not a pretended but real Satanic agency; the shadow cast before of the coming (predicted in 2 Thess. ii. 9) of the "Wicked One" to be revealed before the Lord's next appearing—"Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish;" of which working these Satanic arts afforded a specimen.
The remainder of the address is occupied by denunciations of judgment expressed in terms analogous to the spiritual adultery of which she was the promoter: (ver. 22, 23,) and this brings us to—

III. The concluding proclamation of the reward of victory:—"He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken in pieces, even as I received of my Father." As I have just ventured to suggest that by the false prophetess Jezebel was exhibited a fore-acting of the Anti-christ to come, so the language of the reward to him that overcometh, that resisteth her seducing power, is borrowed from the description of Christ's Second Advent, and the victory which he shall gain over those confederated with Antichrist. It is, indeed, language scarcely intelligible according to the views which commonly prevail of the Lord's Second Coming, and the nature of his kingdom; but perfectly plain and intelligible according to the description of that kingdom given in Scripture—where we are told that "the kingdoms of this world shall indeed become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ," having been wrested out of the hands of the usurper, and of his agents the confederate kings who shall have ruled them immediately previous to His appearing.

"Even as I received of my Father." "Ask of me," says that prophecy in reference to which the reward promised is worded, "and I will give the heathen
"(or nations) for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts "of the earth for thy possession." This inheritance the Saviour, the son of God, obtains in consequence of his humiliation: this crown and kingdom is the travail of His soul, and reward of His sufferings; and accordingly He here adds, "Even as I received of my Father." And the path to it is the same for His followers, who "suffer with Him" that they may be "glorified together;" as if He had said, 'I received it in consequence 'of my having overcome; and to him that overcometh 'will I grant to participate with me in it.'

To this promise is further added—"I will give him the morning star." In chap. xxii. 16, we have this same symbol connected with another which serves to explain it: "I am the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star." The title, "root and offspring of David," as well as that of "Son of God," refers to the kingdom of which Christ is heir, as we learn from the words of the angel at the annunciation to the Virgin Mary—"He shall be great, and shall be called "the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give "unto him the throne of his Father David." According to the commonly received view there is indeed no importance in the title "Son of David," as belonging to Christ, except its proving that he was descended from David, and enabling us to trace his genealogy. But the announcement of the angel attaches to it far greater importance than this, inasmuch as it asserts for him, as son of David, "the throne of his Father David;" and what throne is this? Not the throne of heaven, nor
yet the throne of God's spiritual kingdom; for neither of these, I need not say, ever was or could have been occupied by David, or could be inherited by Christ as "Son of David." The throne intended, then, must be the throne of "the kingdom of Israel," and that it is so the words of the angel testify; for, having said "The "Lord God shall give to him the throne of his father "David," he adds, "and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever." This throne, then, he inherits as "the Offspring of David:" but as "the Root of David" he occupies a much higher station. As "the offspring of David" he is David's Son, but as the "root of David" he is David's Lord: and, if the one title confers on him the kingdom of Israel, and exhibits him as the antitype of Solomon, the other confers on him the sovereignty of the whole world, as the antitype of all executive power.

And now what is the connexion with this of "the bright and morning star?" The star is the badge of royalty, and not only of royalty but of conquest. It is so with us to this day. It is worn by kings and conquerors; and that this custom is derived from Scripture, or at least that the Scriptures so interpret the emblem independent of the custom, is evident from one passage alone, Numbers, xxiv. 17, where Balaam, prophesying of Christ, says, "I shall see him, but not now; I shall "behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a star "out of Jacob"—and in what capacity does this emblem apply to him? In that of a king and conqueror; for, mark what follows, "there shall come a star out of "Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall
"smite the corners of Moab, and destroy the children of " Sheth: and Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall " be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do " valiantly; out of Jacob shall come He that shall have " dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the " city." When, then, we read the promise, "I will give him the morning star," we only read an amplifi- cation of the promise, "I will give him power over the nations." By both promises a participation in the Second Advent kingdom of the Saviour is intended, that kingdom which he inherits both as the "Root" and "Offspring" of David. O then, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches!" Hear it ye that "suffer with Christ" now, for it assures you that "ye shall reign with him" hereafter; and hear it ye who, "lest ye should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ," barter your faith to purchase present ease. "To him that overcometh" is the promise;— "That ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of " Christ, for which also ye suffer:"—having "drank of " the cup the Saviour drank of; being baptized with "the baptism he was baptized with!" O Lord, so make and count us worthy. Amen.
LECTURE SEVENTH.

EPISTLE TO SARDIS.

Revelation, Chap. iii. 1-6. "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. 2. Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. 3. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard; and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. 4. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. 5. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. 6. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirits saith unto the churches."

The characteristic of the church of Sardis, the circumstance which peculiarly distinguished it, was nominal Christianity; and for this reason I consider this the most useful as well as the most applicable of all the epistles to us—the orthodox part of the professing
Christian church in this day. For, though when we survey the great mass of those who may be said to belong to the church of Christ, we see different parts of the body answering to the description of those churches which were before addressed—in some cases, for instance, we see, as in Ephesus, love declining—in other places, as at Pergamos, Satan appears to have his seat in a peculiar and marked sense—in others, as at Thyatira, spiritual fornication is committed and abounds,—I fear the principal and most general characteristic of the orthodox in creed is "a name to live whilst we are dead."

I. Accordingly the Lord Jesus Christ in addressing the church of Sardis adopts a title applicable to such a state. Nominal religion was the character of the church, and he reveals himself to them as having "the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars:"—the "seven Spirits," or fulness of the Spirit, in opposition to formality; and "the seven stars," the light of truth as opposed to false profession, of both which characteristics of a church—spiritual life and light—He reminds them that He is the source.

II. The usual opening words of his address—"I know thy works," have also here a very different application from what we have seen in the three preceding epistles: for the consequence here is that the Head of the church, from this his knowledge, is enabled to add—"that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." Times and circumstances had greatly changed with respect to Christianity in this place, when a church
could be found desirous of the name of Christianity whilst strangers to its power. For the truth, we know, was at its first promulgation disreputable and despised. The Saviour who first revealed it was, when on earth, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief"—He was "despised and rejected of men;"—He was vilified as a "friend of publicans and sinners;" and finally, condemned and crucified as a malefactor; and His followers were prepared by him to receive the same treatment at the hands of the world. "If" (said He) "they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call them of his household:"—and again, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you:" and so it afterwards proved to be. They were, in their turn, "despised and rejected of men," as was their Lord before them; and of the sect denominated Christians, it was said—"We know that it is everywhere spoken against." But after a while circumstances changed. The power of the truth and Spirit of God converted many to the Christian faith; the number of the disciples increased; and even where the truth was not received into the heart, and there was no real apprehension of its value, its evidence was such as to silence the cavils of infidels and unbelievers. The external evidence of Christianity (to speak of nothing more) at length prevailed to shut the mouths of accusers and objectors, and to produce a conviction of its truth—the conviction at least of the understanding in the greater part of those to whom its announcement reached. And the consequence was that, having thus made many
converts and silenced opposition in every place where it was proclaimed, owing to the number who professed it, it became popular; and that species of evil made its appearance, which we here see noticed in the church of Sardis. Men became desirous of bearing the Christian name, and began to think it respectable to be considered Christians, while as yet they were strangers to the power of Christianity. "I know thy works," says the Saviour, "that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead:" and why then any longer retain the name? Because they would be ashamed openly to renounce the truth.

What thus fell out to Christianity was, at a later period, acted over again in the history of Protestantism.* When first the doctrines of Christianity were revived in their purity at the time of the Reformation, they were pronounced to be heretical. To be a Protestant then was as disreputable as it had been, when first Christianity was preached, to be a Christian: but soon these doctrines gained adherents owing to their truth, and then the case was altered; and, as invariably happens where believers are numerous, others who were strangers to the power of the revived doctrines became desirous of the name. Protestantism became reputable; and thus, like the Christian name and profession, was gradually corrupted.

And so it is in the case of all revivals of religion,

* This word is here used in its present generally received acceptation in this country; though originally it was limited to the protest against a particular decree of the Diet of Spires. (See Mosheim's Eccles. History, Book iv. 26.)
after a period of declension. Opposition again, as in the former instances, attends the profession of the truth—persons holding or preaching the pure doctrines of the Gospel being considered heretical, enthusiastic, and extravagant. But again, when the power of the truth has converted numbers, such preaching becomes popular. Again the profession of the Gospel becomes respectable and reputable, and "the name to live" is found to belong to many who, as it respects the reality of all that is implied in that name, "are dead."

And this fact, this change of circumstances, so distinctly observable in all these instances, leads me to make one remark on a mistake frequently made by those who really believe the Gospel. When such see numbers crowding to those places where the Truth is preached, and perceive that so many out of the number are false professors, they begin to suspect that the doctrine preached is not sound; reasoning on the principle, that a doctrine being popular is a certain evidence of its being untrue; and ministers themselves are not unfrequently made uneasy by the same circumstance, as though their preaching, if faithful, must prove offensive. But though this will be the case in certain circumstances, it is far from being a general rule. On the contrary, the effect of the truth, as in the instances already adduced, is, after a while, to silence opposition and to command attention. With the multitude indeed it may be asserted that the Gospel will be always popular—will always be considered, as it really is, attractive; and hence we read that "the common people
heard our Lord gladly," as they did afterwards the preaching of his Apostles. The opposers were not the great body of the people in either case, but certain of their leaders, those who had been interested and instrumental in keeping them in error—the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees among the Jews, and those who were advantaged by the maintaining of idolatry among the Gentiles; like Demetrius, who made the shrines for Diana at Ephesus. I do not then, for my part, see reason for the anxiety and apprehension entertained by ministers who are in situations where many attend on their preaching and ministry. Never indeed can they be too anxious that they may be found faithful, and that they may not be deceived or elated by the false glare of popularity. But they should beware of the other extreme—of determining to make themselves unpopular, and labouring, as I have known some do, to make the Gospel offensive, and deprive it of the attraction which it undoubtedly possesses for the conscience and the hopes of man. So attractive indeed is it, that the fear is for the hearers, not the preacher, lest (as in one of the cases mentioned in the parable of the sower) they should "hear the word, and anon with joy receive it," without counting the cost, and reflecting on the trials to which it may expose them. They should indeed be often warned to examine the motives which actuate them, lest they should be influenced by reputation or the opinion of others: remembering the words of Christ to the Jews upon this very subject—"How can ye believe "which receive honor one of another, and seek not the
"honor which cometh from God only?" and the case of
the chief rulers mentioned John, xii. 43, many of whom
believed on Christ, but because of the Pharisees did not
confess him; the reason of which the Evangelist adds—
"because they loved the praise of man more than the
praise of God." As long as the truth is not reputable—
as long as it has not the majority on its side, many who
really do believe conceal their conviction of its truth;
but when it gains ground, and has on its side a nume-
rical majority, an opposite effect is produced, and many
then are found ready to profess what they do not believe
in reality.

Such appears to have been the case with the church
at Sardis; and, I repeat, such I fear is the case with the
greater number of ourselves, that many have "a name
to live, and are dead." If, however, we would test
ourselves in this matter, let us ask ourselves this
question—If the name of Christianity, if the truths
which we now profess were again to become disreputable,
how many of us would be steadfast to them? And the
time is perhaps not far distant which may put this to
the test;—when we may perhaps see many compromise
their former principles, and veer about to other and
very different systems, and to other views, thus accom-
modating their Christianity to the times, and endea-
vouring to reconcile the name of Christian with what is
most opposite to it, because it has become popular. O
what occasion have we at all times to offer up that
prayer—"Search me, O God, and try the ground of my
heart; prove me and examine my thoughts; look well
"if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me "in the way everlasting."

And how now does the Lord address the church whose state was such as this? In severe rebuke? No: but in the language of the most gentle warning, and even encouragement; in conformity to that gracious character which we have traced throughout, which seeks to fan the almost dying spark into a flame, rather than extinguish it by severe censure. "Be watchful "and strengthen the things which remain, that are "ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect "before God. Remember therefore how thou hast re- "ceived and heard; and hold fast and repent." Is it possible to conceive language more encouraging than this? and it is only on the supposition that it should not be heeded that he adds the necessary warning:—"If "therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as "a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will "come upon thee." ver. 3.

We will have already observed in these epistles, and particularly in the rewards that are held out to those who overcome by the great Head of the church, a very manifest allusion to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; the language in which the Lord words his encouragements, rewards, and threatenings, being taken generally from the circumstances of that event: as though it were a prospect at all times applicable for the purposes either of warning or encouragement. Nor does the fact that it was at the time so far distant, in the least weaken the force of admonitions founded on it, as in the present
instance. For though the event itself should not soon take place (of which, however, none could be sure), the church in question might be visited with what might be called a type of it; with a judgment the same, as it respected that church, as will take place at His Second Advent. An illustration of this we have in the case of the destruction of Jerusalem. The prophecy of this event was couched in terms the same as are used in speaking of Christ's second advent, as we see in Matthew, xxiv. Yet in truth He did not come then; but the events were analogous, inasmuch as the destruction of Jerusalem was, as it respected the Jewish nation, the day of judgment, and the end of that age or dispensation; as shall be His actual coming the end of this age, and the day of judgment on Christendom.

So in the case of the judgments on the churches threatened in these epistles. Though the Lord's advent itself may not be immediately intended, yet similar judgments are announced which, by the terms employed, are declared to be substantially the same as far as each particular church is concerned. This is one reason why the warnings addressed to these churches should be so worded. But another, no doubt, is, that the Lord did not intend them to be confined in their application to those churches, but to apply equally to similar conditions of the church in other ages, and, perhaps we may add, particularly at the time of his second advent; when these warnings and predictions—which may be said in the case of those churches to have had a first fulfilment, and since that time to have proved true in the case of other
churches whose candlesticks have since been removed,—will be fulfilled for the last time and literally.

Accordingly the warning here addressed to the church at Sardis is addressed elsewhere by the Lord to his disciples generally, and enforced by the same comparison—the coming of a thief in the night into a house unawares:—"But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Not that we are to infer that the Lord's coming will be to all as a thief in the night, unexpected and sudden. No; the contrary is expressly stated in a passage in one of the Apostolic epistles, written, it would seem, purposely to correct this mistake: see 1 Thess. v. 1–6: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." This passage shows that when the Lord speaks of his coming as "a thief in the night," he only means that it will be so to those who are not
his true disciples, or perhaps to those even of them who may not be watchful. But his faithful disciples are ever represented as waiting and looking out for the return of their Lord; waking, with their lights burning, during the night of this world while others sleep;—whence it is said that "they are not in darkness that that day should overtake them as a thief."

And so we see it was in every preceding dispensation—in every preceding "day of judgment:”—that there was a difference between the way in which the ungodly and the Lord's people were affected as to the expectation of it. The flood came upon the ungodly world as "a thief in the night," but not so upon Noah; it found him prepared—it found him waiting and watching. Again, the fire from the Lord out of heaven came upon Sodom and Gomorrah as "a thief in the night," but not so upon Lot; he was warned of it, while the inhabitants of the devoted city were visited with unexpected judgment. The first coming of Christ, in like manner, which (as just said) proved a day of judgment to the Jewish nation, was not an event unexpected by his believing people: though of the nation at large it was true that "they knew not the day of their visitation." And, because it will thus again be at the second advent of Christ, he has left these warnings on record for that period, that his people may be prepared, though there is no hope that the world will. To proceed—

Something, however, there was even in the church at Sardis to commend; and accordingly the Lord does not fail to notice it:—"Thou hast a few names even in
Sardis which have not defiled their garments.” This beautiful emblem, descriptive of Christian consistency, is derived from the dress worn in those countries, which consisted of a robe, which, when walking in places where there was danger of soiling their dress, the wearers who regarded cleanliness were in the habit of girding round them; while those who were less careful let it flow loosely. Now, there were those in Sardis who, as it respected their Christian course and conduct, had not “defiled their garments:” who, walking in the midst of pollution and evil, had kept themselves pure. The emblem describes Christian watchfulness and consistency, with a most expressive reference to the Christian’s danger from the circumstances which surround him; and, as such, this description and character of these few faithful in Sardis should be treasured up in the breast of every believer, as constituting a most instructive example.

Of these the Lord says, as a reward, “they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy;” and then, as though suggested by the case before him, he also announces the more general reward, with which these epistles usually close, in the same terms:—“To him “that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white “rayment.” A favourite emblem in this book, to describe the reward adjudged to the faithful, being at once the emblem of purity and of victory: (see ch. vi. 9-11; vii. 9; and xix. 14.)

To this the Lord adds—“And I will not blot out his “name out of the book of life, but I will confess his
"name before my Father, and before the holy angels." The book of life" seems to represent a record, as it were, not of those only who shall be finally saved, but wherein are registered all who name the name of Christ; for that many names registered there, as of those in Sardis having only a name, will be blotted out, is evident from the words of this promise; and that only those whose names are not blotted out—those which are ultimately found in the book of life—are saved, finally and everlastingly saved; those "who overcome." Compare chap. xx. 12-15.

"But I will confess his name before my Father, and before the holy angels." It was for a name that the church of Sardis compromised its Christianity; for a name, for a reputable name in the eyes of men and of the world—to have "a name to live;" this was all they cared for; for this they did not scruple to defile their garments. If it would conduce to a good name, they would do anything—for it give up anything—for it compromise character and consistency:—and O! what a contrast do the words of Christ present to this when he says, "I will confess his name before my Father, and the holy angels." The name of the few who disregarded reputation, who did not "follow the multitude to do evil,"—who did not seek popular applause—who did not care to have a mere "name to live,"—who studied not to possess the name but the thing, whose names in all probability were cast out as evil by the world—the name of those few Christ says "I will confess;" and before what a different tribunal—"before my Father
and the holy angels!” This surely is a reward to stimulate and support any in undergoing reproach, however great, for the cause of Christ—to know that the hour is coming, when before the most august assembly that ever creation witnessed his name shall be proclaimed—his name shall be singly confessed, who in the midst of “a sinful and adulterous generation” has held fast the truth, and has “counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord;” bent, with the Apostle, on this one thing only—to “know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings,” conformity to Him in his death now, and conformity to Him in His resurrection hereafter at His coming.
LECTURE EIGHTH.

EPISTLE TO PHILADELPHIA.

REVELATION, chap. iii. 7-13. "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth; 8. I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. 10. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11. Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. 12. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God: and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. 13. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The church to which this epistle is addressed presents an aspect of Christianity which, whether we con-
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template it in an individual or in a church, is calculated to excite our deepest interest. It represents to us the disciples of Christ possessing but "little strength," yet in that strength keeping his word, and not denying his name, though they had to struggle with much opposition. Accordingly (as we might expect from the gracious and considerate character of the great Head of the church), the epistle which he addresses to this church is one altogether of encouragement, not only in the usual proclamation of reward "to him that overcometh," but also in the title which he assumes, and his address or charge to them.

I. And first the title—"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true;" that is, as I take it, "He that is holy," and therefore a lover of holiness; "He that is true," and therefore a lover of truth; in opposition to the enemies this church had to contend with, of whom it is said that they were "of the synagogue of Satan," a character the most opposite conceivable to holiness; and who boasted that "they were Jews and were not," being thus distinguished as "liars." To which he adds—"He that hath the key of David; he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." We see, from verse 9, that the opposers and perverters of Christianity in this church were by profession Jews, and it is more than probable that amongst the believing members there were also many Jews in truth—converted and Christian Jews; and this may be a reason that the Lord Jesus Christ, in addressing this epistle, has adopted emblems that would speak
with peculiar force to a Jewish mind. For instance, "he that hath the key of David," is a palpable allusion to that remarkable prophecy in Isaiah, xxii. 15, of the captivity of the Jews and their after-restoration under the Messiah, under the emblem of the displacing of the then chamberlain of the king's household, an officer of the first power in the Jewish state, and his being replaced by another, under whom the Jewish state should prosper and flourish: "Thus saith the Lord God, Go, "get thee unto this treasurer, even unto Shebna, which "is over the house, and say, what hast thou here, and "whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a "sepulchre here, as he that heweth him out a sepulchre "on high, and that graveth an habitation for himself in "a rock? Behold, the Lord will carry thee away with "a mighty captivity, and will surely cover thee. He "will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into "a large country: there shalt thou die, and there the "chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's "house. And I will drive thee from thy station, and "from thy state shall he pull thee down. And it shall "come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant "Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah: and I will clothe him "with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, "and I will commit thy government into his hand; and "he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house "of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open "and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall "open." Compare also the prophecy ch. ix. 6, "Unto
"us a child is born, unto, us a son is given, and the
government shall be upon his shoulder," alluding to the
key which the chief officer of state, the chamberlain
or treasurer, carried as a badge of his office, thrown
over his shoulder, here called "the key of David," sign-
nifying that Christ should sit upon the throne of David,
and rule over the house of Jacob, as confirmed by the
annunciation at his birth: the hope of his kingdom here,
as ever, the consolation of those suffering for his sake;
and, in this aspect of it, a hope peculiarly calculated to
afford support to those who were indeed Jews, when
suffering from the opposition of those who "said that
they were Jews, and were not."

II. Such being the import of the title which the Lord
here assumes, He proceeds, secondly, with his address to
the church, which begins with an application of the
emblem he had just used for their encouragement:—
"I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an
open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a
little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not
denied my name:" that is, they should experience
the power of the great Head of the church, as he that
possessed "the key of David," in the success they
should have in their conflicts for the truth, and espe-
cially in their efforts to make known his name. Such we
find is the use made of this emblem in 1 Cor. xvi. 9,
where the Apostle says, in speaking of the preaching of
the Gospel—"a great door and effectual is opened unto
me, and there are many adversaries:" and Coloss. iv.
3, 4—"Withal praying also for us, that God would
open unto us a door of utterance." And that this is the Lord's meaning here we may perhaps gather from the promise in the ninth verse:—"I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come, and worship at thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee:" that is, the very persons that offer this opposition, who would be the persons least likely to be subdued by your efforts, shall own my power—shall be brought to acknowledge that "I have loved thee"—shall "come and worship at thy feet"—shall desist from their opposition, and more—shall honour as much as they before despised thee.

He adds, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." "The word of Christ's patience" is invariably used in the New Testament to describe the patient waiting for the hope of his second advent; and accordingly he immediately follows up this by the declaration in the next verse, "Behold, I come quickly." The propriety of the expression arises from Christ himself now "waiting," and enduring patiently the usurpation of his kingdom by the enemy; as we read that "for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God,"—"from thence" (as another Scripture says) "expecting (or "waiting") till his enemies be made his footstool." So the church, following Christ's steps, has
set before it the hope of sharing his triumph and glory; but, as Christ patiently endures, waiting the accomplishment of his hopes as Head of the church, so his disciples should wait patiently—should endure suffering at the present time, assured that ultimately they shall receive the fulfilment of their expectations.

"I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth." Expositors, supposing that these words can have no reference beyond the persons to whom they were immediately addressed, have sought for this "hour of temptation," which was to "come upon all the world," amongst the persecutions that came upon the Christian church in or about that time. But though no doubt some trial then approaching was alluded to by the Lord Jesus Christ, which more immediately concerned the persons whom he addresses, yet there is every reason to believe that he designed this promise also for his disciples in other times; and that the main reference is to that "time of trouble" which shall immediately precede his second coming: (See Daniel, xii. 1; Matt. xxiv. 29)—as indeed the announcement of his coming in the next verse proves:—

"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." "That which thou hast," that is, "the word of Christ's patience," which he had just commended this church for keeping, and which is identical with "the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ," mentioned chap. i. 9,—"the kingdom for which they suffered" patiently: see 2 Thess. i. 4, 5.
The crown of that kingdom is then the crown which he cautions them lest any should take; and which they should lose if they yielded to the temptation to exchange consistency and suffering for compromise and ease. A salutary caution this at all times, but especially in the near prospect—as to us I believe it to be—of "that hour of temptation, which," not again in type, but finally and once for all, "shall come upon all the world; to try them that dwell upon the earth!"

III. The twelfth verse contains the usual encouragement of reward "to him that overcometh;"—"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of "my God, and he shall go no more out." Constancy and perseverance in holding fast the name and truth of Christ were the leading characteristics of this church, and accordingly the Lord promises them an abiding, constant, immovable station in His church under far different circumstances, when established in glory, and past the reach of trouble and affliction: "I will make "him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall "go no more out!"

The mention of "the Temple" sends us again to the Jewish Scriptures for the explanation of this emblem; and accordingly it is remarkable that, as is mentioned in 1 Kings, vii. 21, in the temple of Solomon there were two pillars placed at the front, of immense size and strength, to which names were given:—the one was called "Jachin," which in Hebrew means "It shall be established;" and the other "Boaz," which in the same language signifies "In it is strength." "Stability" and "strength" were then represented by
these pillars; and that the Lord alludes to them when he says, "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God," seems to be confirmed by the promise of stability annexed—"and he shall go no more out."

"And I will write upon him the name of my God." To write a name upon anything denotes a property in it; and hence when the Lord says, "I will write upon him the name of my God," he means that he will mark such an one as His. And how much security and consolation is there in this promise! Does it not recall to our minds our Lord's words when,—speaking of his disciples as the sheep of his flock,—he says, "My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and none shall pluck them out of his hand;" where the allusion is to the savage beast of prey, the wolf or roaring lion seeking to devour the sheep. The writing of a name has also another meaning in Scripture: it sometimes denotes consecration, the setting apart to a particular office. For instance, upon the forehead of the High Priest was "Holiness to the Lord," denoting his consecration to the Lord's service. So when the Lord says—"I will write upon him the name of my God," he may mean not only to show the security of the believer, but also to say that he is one consecrated—set apart for ever to the services of his God, as a King and Priest, which is in agreement with the mention of "the temple"—the heavenly temple—and the promise of being "a pillar" in it, like those in the temple of old.

He adds, "I will write on him my new name." The new name of Christ, as before suggested, is the title of
his mediatorial kingdom; that kingdom to which the title is "new," because—not that of his pre-existent glory which he had from eternity, but—earned by his sufferings, and conferred on him in that new capacity and character, in which he appeared by the assuming of man's nature. And being the name of victory—the title "King of kings and Lord of lords," emblazoned on the vesture and the thigh of the Redeemer—there is a peculiar propriety in the promise that it shall be written also "on him that overcometh."

"And the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God." Writing the name of the city of God on him that overcometh evidently confers on him citizenship—marks him to be a citizen of "the new Jerusalem," the description of which, as well as its descent from heaven, is given in chapter xxii. of this book, where it will come more particularly under consideration. Suffice it here to say, that such rewards may well support through trials however severe. Precious, indeed, unspeakably precious, and most desirable the conflict which leads to such a prize! Who of us is there then that prefers ease to warfare? Let him read these promises, and he will learn his losses; if, indeed, they do not inspire him with new zeal and ardour to "press forward for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."
LECTURE NINTH.

EPISTLE TO LAODICEA.

Revelation, chap. iii. 14-end. "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 15. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 17. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: 18. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich: and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear: and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. 19. As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent. 20. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. 21. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. 22. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

In treating of the epistle to the church at Sardis, whose peculiar characteristic was that it had "a name
to live and was dead," I said that I thought it was peculiarly applicable to the church at the present time, to the orthodox part of the church of Christ; and I would say the same of the epistle here brought before us, though I think its application is to a different class of persons in the church, as we shall see from the address.

I. But first we have to speak of the title of Christ:— "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God," a title which, as observed of all the titles adopted by the Lord Jesus in these epistles, has a peculiar reference to the state of the church here addressed. That, as we shall see, was an undecided state. They are described as neither "hot nor cold, but lukewarm;" and accordingly the Lord Jesus Christ assumes a title which signifies decision of purpose and steadfastness of character in opposition to all wavering and neutrality— "These things saith the Amen." For that such is the meaning of this title, and the purpose of the Lord in applying it to himself here, is confirmed by reference to another passage, where this word is used to indicate this character as belonging to Christ: namely, 2 Cor. i. 15–20, where the Apostle, speaking of a promise which he had made in his first epistle to visit the Corinthians again, and which it might appear he had forgotten, says— "And in this confidence I was minded to come "unto you before, that ye might receive a second bene-
"fit. . . . When I therefore was thus minded, did I use "lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose
“according to the flesh, that with me there should be “yea, yea, and nay, nay? But as God is true, our “word toward you was not yea and nay: for the Son “of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you “by us, even by me and Sylvanus and Timotheus, was “not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the “promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, “unto the glory of God by us:” in which view also this part of the title corresponds exactly with that which follows—

“The faithful and true Witness.” The difference between this character and the former—“The Amen,” I would say is, that this refers to what the Lord has revealed, and the former to what he has promised; as if he said to this church, whose character was that of wavering and indecision, ‘Neither in what I have re-‘vealed to you as your ground of hope, or in any pro-‘mise that I have made to you, have I exhibited uncer-‘tainty or indecision of purpose, that yours should be ‘such a character as that which you now in return ‘exhibit. In all that I have promised I am “the ‘Amen;” in all that I have revealed, I am “the faith-‘ful and true Witness.”’ The word “witness” we know means one who testifies that which he has seen and knows of a truth: and the propriety of the appli-‘cation of this title to Christ is, that he reveals to us that which he has seen of the Father, the truth and character of God specially in relation to redemption: as it is said, John, i. 18, “No man hath seen God at any “time, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of
"the Father, he hath revealed him:" (compare chap. xvii. 6,) whence he is named "The Truth." And in this testimony he is found and experienced by every believer of the Gospel to be indeed "the faithful and true Witness," as well as "the Amen" of all the promises which hinge upon that revelation.

"The beginning of the creation of God." So at the opening of the Gospel according to John—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by (διὰ) him; and without him was not anything made that was made." And again, Ephes. iii. 9, "Who created all things by Jesus Christ." And again, Coloss. i. 16, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." A great security and pledge, truly, for the steadfastness of his word and the fulfilment of his promises, in addition to the two preceding titles, if so it be intended—the fact that through him as the executive of God (so to speak) creation itself came into being, and all things are under his control. But, on the other hand, an awful attribute of the great Bishop and Head of the church to those whose character was that which the address following assigns to this church:—
II. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot." Here are three states brought before us—that described as "hot," as "cold," and as neither cold nor hot, but "lukewarm." As to the first, expressed by the word "hot," it least of all requires explanation, the word explains itself. It consists in an overwhelming sense of the love of God in Christ, which produces an unreserved devotion to him, a fervency and zeal in his service, a readiness "to spend and be spent for Christ:" something like what the Apostle expresses in 2 Cor. v. 14, "The "love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, "that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that "one died for all, that they which live should not "henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that "died for them and rose again:" or in such a passage as "Ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a "price; therefore glorify God in your bodies and your "spirits which are God's:" an example of which was afforded by the church at Ephesus in its first state alluded to by the Lord Jesus Christ, when he says, "I "have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy "first love," the fervency and warmth of affection which the first discovery of the love of God in Christ produced.

The state opposed to this is characterized as "cold;" and at first sound it may seem strange that there could be a state worse than this word describes, or to which it could be preferred by the Lord Jesus Christ, which yet undoubtedly there is—the third state of "lukewarm-
ness" which this church exhibited. I find it difficult to express adequately what appears to my own mind to be meant by a state of coldness; but if I were to take an illustration from our own time, I would say that "coldness" characterizes that class among us who are contented with a mere orthodoxy of sentiment or creed, but have never been the subjects of any spiritual feeling or religious affection: who are conscientious and strict, but formal in their religious observances; honourable, honest, and highly principled; possessing high morality, great veneration, and it may be, much natural benevolence; but wanting at the same time "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," the life of Christian faith; reminding us of him of whom it is said that "Jesus beholding him, loved him," while yet he could not include him among his disciples. Now, the Lord loves honesty, and prefers such a character as this to that which he here calls "lukewarm;" persons in an half and half state; acquiescing in the truth, but destitute of zeal and devotedness, and resting in a self-sufficient indolence; satisfied if they have learned the way of justification in the Gospel, and can consider themselves saved; but underrating all growth in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ—all the abundant fruits that flow from a deeper knowledge of Christian truth. Which is confirmed by the description the Lord gives of them—"Because thou sayest, I "am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of "nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and "miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:" that is, something they indeed had attained to, some measure of
faith; but then conceived themselves "rich" and "having need of nothing," because they had so much knowledge of Christ and of Christian truth. I fear this is not an uncommon case among ourselves. Coldness may have characterized the generation that is past; but lukewarmness, it is equally certain, with some exceptions, characterizes the present. There is more knowledge and a better understanding of the Gospel revelation; but of heartfelt affection and fervour of religious feeling we have, alas! but little.

And, how strong is the Lord's expression of abhorrence of this lukewarm state:—"So then, because thou "art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue "thee out of my mouth!" As there is peculiar nauseousness in the taste of that which is only lukewarm, causing us to reject it, so the Lord Jesus Christ especially nauseates this character in His professed disciples. He tells them he would rather they had no knowledge of the truth,—that they did not even profess it,—than that they should profess to believe, and yet be wanting in earnestness and in warmth of affection.

He proceeds in the next place to recommend the remedy:—"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich," &c. It is difficult for those who think they know something to believe that "they know nothing yet as they ought to know;" difficult for those who boast of being wise "to become fools that they may be wise"—difficult, exceedingly difficult, for those who think themselves fully educated in Christianity to descend to be learners. Yet such is
the counsel the Lord affectionately addresses to those lukewarm Christians; referring them to Himself as to Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," the source and fountain of every Christian grace and heavenly affection. "Walk in Christ Jesus," says the Apostle, "as ye have received him, rooted, and grounded, and built up in him, and established in the faith as ye have been taught,"—for, when we go from Him we are sure to become impoverished.

"As many as I love I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent." The language of the Lord Jesus Christ had been severe to this church, but He now tells them that when He spoke to them with severity, He had been prompted by no feeling but that of love: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." If He had been severe in exposing their faults and their vain-glorious professions, if He had stripped them of all their fancied attainments and described them as "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," He did it in order to lead them to the remedy. And truly we should all study in this to imitate our divine Master; and in the remarks which we may find it our duty to make as to the existing state of Christian profession, and in making which we must necessarily seem censorious, the one object of our hearts should be to stir up the minds of those whom, if they have any marks of Christianity, we really should love accordingly as our brethren, to "repent and do the first works." "Behold," says the long-suffering Saviour, "I stand at the door and "knock; if any man hear my voice I will come in to
How great the love and condescension of the Lord Jesus Christ displayed in these words! He puts himself before us as one ready to bestow benefits and full of kindness, in the attitude of waiting to bless, and desirous to gratify his disciples with more intimate fellowship—more intimate knowledge of himself, if they but desire it. O that this invitation may indeed be accepted by us, so that we may have the experience of the blessings it offers!

III. Lastly, we have the reward "to him that overcometh:"—"Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne."

There are two thrones here mentioned by the Lord Jesus—His Father's, the throne upon which he is now set down; and another—His own throne, of which he says, "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." The throne of his Father, being that occupied by Christ now, is the throne of the heavens where, since his ascension, Christ sits at the right hand of God, "expecting (or waiting) till His enemies be made his footstool," and "all things be subjected unto him." This station he occupies owing to His "having overcome;" for, though viewed as to His divine nature only it is but "the glory which he had with the Father before the world was," his sitting there in human nature is in consequence of the work he accomplished in that nature, by which he has raised it to this wondrous elevation and dignity. But "His own
throne," as distinct from this, I take to be the throne of his mediatorial kingdom, which he shall establish on earth at his second coming, and on this throne his redeemed shall be admitted to sit down with him: that is, those who "overcome;"—His faithful disciples. A condition and qualification repeatedly specified in these Epistles, and which it is particularly needful to press in this day of general profession; that the promise is not to the saved only, or as such; but to those who, realizing the end of their salvation, have "followed on to apprehend that for which they are apprehended of Christ," that so they may attain to "the prize of their high calling of God in Him"—who "suffer with him" now, that they may "reign with him" hereafter. Further I would not undertake to define this character; but O there is enough in those few words—"To him that overcometh"—"if so be that we suffer with him,"—to make us most anxious, most fearful lest we should come short, and, resting in a mere profession of the truth, in the end lose our crown! May the Lord grant that these warnings may be blessed to us, both individually and collectively, and give us in time to heed the warning seven times repeated in these Epistles—

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the "spirit saith unto the churches." (C.)
LECTURE TENTH.

THE VISION INTRODUCTORY TO THE SEALS.

Revelation, Chap. iv.—"After this I looked, and, behold, a
door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was
as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up
hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter. 2. And
immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in
heaven, and one sat on the throne. 3. And he that sat was to look
upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow
round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. 4. And
round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon
the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white
raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. 5. And out
of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and
there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are
the seven spirits of God. 6. And before the throne there was a sea
of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round
about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.
7. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a
calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast
was like a flying eagle. 8. And the four beasts had each of them
six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they
rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,
which was, and is, and is to come. 9. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 10. The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created."

The Book of the Revelation (it has been already observed) consists of two great parts, as is intimated in chap. i. 19, when the Lord Jesus Christ, in commissioning the Evangelist to write the whole of the vision, says, "Write the things which thou hast seen; and (or "both") the things which are, and the things which "shall be hereafter." These constitute the two great subdivisions of this book, and accordingly the first three chapters treat of things at the time; they contain addresses to the then existing Churches of Asia, thus relating to "the things which are:"—while now the call to the Apostle is, "Come up hither, and I will shew thee things that must be hereafter." With this chapter, then, the second great division of this prophetical book opens; and, as the first part—that respecting the Churches—was introduced with a suitable vision exhibiting the Lord Jesus Christ in his office of Head of the Church, and with attributes peculiarly suited to that office, so this second part of the book is introduced also by a vision suitable to the matter about to be revealed, with which the chapter now read is occupied.

"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened
"in Heaven, and the first voice which I heard was as a
"trumpet talking with me" (or, as it should be, "and
"the voice—the first one which I heard, as it were of a
"trumpet talking with me,"—alluding to chap. i. 10),
"which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee
"things which must be hereafter." Observe—the scene
of the vision is changed. The first vision was seen on
earth, as we find on referring to chap. i., where the
Apostle, having mentioned that he was "in the Isle
"called Patmos for the word of God and the testimony
"of Jesus Christ" at the time, says (verse 10), "I
"was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind
"me a great voice as of a trumpet," and then (verse 12),
"I turned to see the voice that spake with me," and
"being turned I saw," &c. The matter that he was
about then to reveal concerned the Church of Christ on
earth in different states, and accordingly the Head of
the Church presents Himself to him superintending the
Churches, acting as their Head, and Overseer, and
Bishop, "walking in the midst of them," though in-
visible:—But now the scene is changed, "a door is
opened in Heaven," and the voice that addresses the
Apostle calls to him—"Come up hither." I do not see
any necessity for a figurative interpretation of the word
"Heaven" in this place, though, on the supposition that
the whole book is figurative, it is the opinion of most
expositors that "Heaven" in the Apocalypse uniformly
denotes the Christian Church. That there is much of
symbol in the book is indeed admitted: but it does not
therefore follow that the whole is an allegory, which is so far from being the case that, on the contrary, it may be confidently asserted that, as in other books of Scripture, so in this, all is literal, except where the emblem or figure is obvious to the ordinary reader. I conceive, therefore, that when there is here seen by the Apostle "a door opened in Heaven," and that he hears a voice, saying, "Come up hither," he was translated in the spirit into Heaven; and that the throne set there, and the whole of the vision that follows, is heavenly—appertains properly to heaven and not to earth.

To proceed then to the vision itself:—"And immediately I was in the spirit, and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne, and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone." Here a question of some importance arises—namely, as to the Person here seen sitting on the throne. The throne is evidently the throne of God, but the question is whether it is the Father, or Christ sitting on the throne of the Father (as the last chapter has told us he now does), that is here presented to the Apostle's view. In favour of the latter opinion it is urged that, though not expressed, it is implied that the Enthroned Being is seen in human form; first, from "the book being represented as in the right hand of him that sat on the throne," ch. v. 1, 7; and, second, from a likeness in this vision to that seen by Ezekiel, ch. i. where it is expressly said that "upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it," ver. 26;
added to which we are told that "No man hath seen God at any time," and that he is "revealed" only in Christ.*

On the other hand, in support of the former opinion it is urged, and I think satisfactorily,—

First, that it is God as Creator is seen in this chapter is evident from the address of ver. 11, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive, glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created:" for though we are told that by the Son, as "The Word who was in the beginning with God and was God, all things were made, and without him was not anything made that was made," yet is Creator the proper title of God the Father Almighty (as it is correctly stated in our Creeds) "who," as the Apostle says,—uniting and at the same time distinguishing both truths,—"created all things by Jesus Christ," (Ephes. iii. 9.) Compare also ver. 8, "Which was, and is, and is to come," with ch. i. 4, where it is the Father that is so designated.

Second, when the Lamb is introduced, "a new song" is sung by this same company in which the sitter on the Throne and the Lamb are evidently distinguished. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people,

* This view of the Vision was that given in the former Editions; but I have been since led to reconsider it by a highly esteemed friend whose reasons in substance here follow. (Note to Fourth Edition.)
“and nation; and hast made us **unto our God** kings and "priests:” and again more plainly, ver. 13. “Blessing, "and honour, and glory, and power, be **unto Him that "sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb** for ever and "ever.”

**Third,**—waving the harshness and incongruity of the supposition that Christ in **emblem** comes to himself in **person,** and takes from his own hand a book for the purpose of himself breaking the seals,—the receiving of the book being, as shall be hereafter shewn, the receiving of his kingdom and inheritance by Christ, requires that it should be received at the hand of the Father; and the vision is thus parallel, not to that in Ezekiel, but to that in Daniel, vii. where “one like the Son of man” is seen coming near to “The Ancient of days,” and receiving from Him a kingdom and dominion that all people, nations, and languages should serve him.

And **Last,** this same vision of Daniel proves that the Scriptures do represent the Father as making himself visible by an assumed form, albeit they state that He is in his essential being and glory invisible, if not absolutely, at least to mortal eyes. Compare the promises of “seeing God,” Matt. v. 8, and ch. xxii. 4.

For these reasons, then, I conclude that He who sat on the throne, and who “was to look on as a jasper and sardine stone,”—by which the Apostle would attempt, as far as words can do it, to convey an idea of His splendour and glory—is God in the person and character of the **Father.**

The Apostle adds—“There was a rainbow round
about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." We are well acquainted with this as the sign of the covenant once made between God and the earth in the days of Noah; a covenant by which in type he renewed His grant to man, and restored the dominion which he originally bestowed upon the first Adam. I say, 'in type,' for that this covenant was intended as a type of the restitution of the inheritance which was given to man on his creation, in the "new heavens and the new earth," is evident from 2 Pet. iii. where the Apostle states the analogy between the deluge of water by which the world was destroyed in the time of Noah and the fiery dissolution which awaits it at the "coming of the day of God," and then tells us that the latter shall be succeeded by "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," which will therefore form the antitype to the covenant with Noah of restored possession and dominion (see verse 5-13); of which future and new covenant with the earth, I believe "the Rainbow" to be also now a sign; and therefore fitly introduced as a circumstance of the vision before us. But the analogy perhaps extends still farther: for while we rejoice to observe in it the pledge of the "restitution of all things," at the same time we should remember that, as the sign of this covenant, the rainbow was first reflected in the waters of a world's ruin: that it was first, and still continues to be seen only when "a cloud is brought over the earth," thus carrying with it ever the remembrance of Judgment! And thus, if it be an earnest to us of the restitution of our promised inheritance, we must not
overlook the fact that this will be the sequel of another
deluge (so to speak), another "day of judgment and
perdition of ungodly men,"—that the Lord (as the
sequel shews) is seen here seated on his throne to issue
that commission which shall rid the earth of its oppres-
sors; and that from forth this throne lightnings will
flash, and thunders roar, and trumpets of woe utter
their voices, before the controversy for the redemption
of the earth is decided. The believer will in that awful
hour turn to this vision, and when he sees the throne of
judgment thus encircled by the rainbow, though "men's
hearts fail them for fear, and for looking after the
"things which are coming on the earth," he will "in
patience possess his soul" in the assurance that the Lord
is mindful of his covenant.

The next and following verses bring before us two
objects in defining which there is considerable difficulty:
one, "the twenty-four Elders," and the other "the
four Beasts."

First, with respect to the "twenty-four Elders," we
read,—"round about the throne were four-and-twenty
"seats" (or as it should be translated "thrones"), and
"upon the thrones I saw four-and-twenty Elders sitting,
"clothed in white; and they had on their heads crowns
"of gold." There are various opinions respecting these
—some interpreting them of the Jewish—some, of the
Christian Church—some, of the ministers only of the
Church—others, of the angels; &c.

Amidst such a variety of opinions, our only course is
to adhere closely to the words of the description, which,
with whatever aid can be had from the analogy of Scripture, affords the best means of ascertaining the meaning of any passage. The circumstances then specified in the description are these; their number, "twenty-four:" their office, "Elders;" their station, "sitting on thrones, round about the throne;" their attire, "clothed in white raiment, and having on their heads crowns of gold;" and their actions and language, "worshipping Him that sat on the throne," and giving praise, here for creation, and chap. v. 8, 9, for redemption: (Compare also chap. xix. 4.) From these particulars we are to form our opinion; and from them I would conclude that they represent the Church of both Testaments, the Church of the Old, and the Church of the New Testament; or perhaps, more correctly, the heads of the church of both dispensations, the Jewish and the Christian. This at least is a scriptural explanation of the number "twenty-four;" both Churches, it is remarkable, being founded in the number twelve, the one in the twelve Patriarchs, and the other in the twelve Apostles: and derives confirmation from the fact that, in the description of "the new Jerusalem" which descends from Heaven (chap. xxi. 14), we read that "the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb;" and "on the Gates," also twelve in number, were written "the names of the twelve tribes of Israel" (ver. 12), while it has the advantage of not being inconsistent with any of the other circumstances mentioned respecting the "twenty-four Elders," but, on the contrary, harmonizes
both with their office—"Elders," or "Rulers; their station and attire—"sitting on thrones, clothed in white and crowned with gold:" and equally with their actions and language, especially when in chap. v. 9, 10, they are represented as praising God for "Redemption," and saying "thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us to our God Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the earth;" which language in itself proves beyond a doubt that they represent a portion, at least, of the elect Church which shall reign with Christ at his coming.

The analogy of Scripture also strongly confirms this view. That in this vision the whole scenery is described with reference to the Tabernacle and Temple of old has been often observed, and indeed is most evident:—for, First, the throne on which Jehovah is represented as seated," corresponds to the "Mercy-Seat" in the Holy of Holies or inmost Sanctuary of the Temple, so named because above and upon it rested and dwelt, as it were, the Shekinah, or visible emblem of the glory of the Lord. (Exod. xxv. 21, 22.) Second, "The seven lamps of fire burning before the throne" at once call to mind the seven branched candlestick, or lamp-stand with seven bowls or lamps, described in the same chapter, ver. 31–39, and which also stood in the most holy place; the emblem, as here stated, of "the Spirit of" in his manifold operations. Third, "The Sea of
Glass like unto Crystal" seen "before the throne" would seem to correspond accurately with "The Molten Sea," or great Laver of Brass, described 1 Kings, vii. 23–26, likened to a sea as holding as much as "2000 baths," or about 15000 gallons of water, in which the priests washed before entering on their holy services (Exod. xxx. 18–21; 2 Chron. iv. 6*), and which was placed in front of the Sanctuary, and so before the mercy-seat or throne (Exod. ib. and xxix. 4): fitly introduced here in connexion with a vision of that company whose title is "Kings and Priests unto God."

Fourth, "The four beasts in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne," are, from the identity of description, universally allowed to be the same as the Cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat in the temple: (compare Exod. xxx. 18–20, with Ezek. i. and x.)

And then, Last, there remain only "The four-and-twenty Elders," throned and crowned, which there can be no doubt had their correspondent types in the four and-twenty Chiefs of the four-and-twenty courses of the priests, all selected exclusively from the Sons of Aaron, for the office of "governors of the Sanctuary, and governors of the House of God," 1 Cron. xxv. 1–18; under whom were the courses of Levites, also twenty-four in number (ib. ver. 20–31), and the twenty-four courses of singers (ch. xxv.), each numbering twelve, and together making "two hundred four-score and eight." Whence,

* See the difference in capacity of the Laver here, and 1 Kings, vii. 26, reconciled by Taylor in Calmet's Dictionary, under "Sea."
if it may be assumed that, as those heads of the priests were to the Levites and people, so are these Elders to the whole body of the redeemed, it will follow that "the four-and-twenty Elders" must represent the heads of the whole church:—whether individuals, and so actually and literally the twelve Patriarchs and twelve Apostles; or a larger company of those in different ages whom the Lord may count worthy of such distinction, we cannot perhaps determine.

I would only add that this so obvious analogy, here pointed out, between the tabernacle or temple and the scene of this vision, is no warrant for the inference, which some have drawn from it, that the scene of vision is not Heaven, as expressly stated ver. 1, but the Temple or holy place itself figuratively so named, as though these different particulars here presented to view were not proper to Heaven: for, on the contrary, the chapter already referred to as containing the direction to Moses for making all as in the tabernacle of old, says they were made after "a pattern shewn him in the mount" (Exod. xxx. 40), and the Apostle tells us of what they were the pattern;—that the priesthood "served unto" (i. e. "officiated" in things which were) "the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount" (Heb. viii. 4, 5,) and farther on in the same epistle he gives us the important information that "The Holy Place" was a figure of "heaven itself" (chap. ix. 11, 12, 23, 24). It is then
the antitype and not the type that is here opened to view, which accordingly, as we shall see, at once explains and is confirmed by what follows.

From "the Elders" we pass to the other emblem, which is the more difficult of interpretation, I mean the "Four Beasts," or rather "Living-Creatures" as the word should be translated (ζώα), to distinguish them from the "Beasts" afterwards seen, which represent the Antichristian empire, and for which a different word (θηρία) is used in the original;—"And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast was like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within, and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." I have already observed that on comparing this vision with a like one shewn to Ezekiel—(chap. i. 13, and x. 14, 15, 20–22), it is evident that these four animals are identical with the "Cherubim" spoken of in the Old Testament Scriptures, though whether identical in state or condition with themselves in these former appearances, or with what variety of design if variously exhibited, I fear our imperfect knowledge of the meaning of the emblem will not allow us to decide. They were first exhibited in the garden of Eden, where, after the fall, "the Lord God placed at the east of the garden Cherubim, and
"a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the "way of the tree of life." Afterwards we find them in "the most holy place" of the Tabernacle and Temple; where, as we have just seen, they overshadowed the mercy-seat on which the High Priest presented the blood of the sacrifice, and were an accompaniment of the visible glory of God which appeared above it—of the Shekinah which, with the appearance of a flame of fire, dwelt among these Cherubim or animal forms. Hence it is said in Scripture that God "dwelleth between the Cherubim," that he "rides upon a Cherub;" and here they are represented as "in the midst of the throne of God and round about it," or "in the circle of it."

The opinion most generally entertained respecting these "Cherubim," or "Living creatures," is that in which I can least concur, namely, that they are emblems of the Trinity. I have not space to go into the consideration of the reasons which have been assigned for this idea;* but this, as well as the opinion that they are Angels, is in my judgment at once refuted by the mention made of them in chap. v. 8, 9, where they, along with "the twenty-four Elders," are found ascribing praise for redemption, as well as represented in the act of worship (compare also chap. xix. 4); whilst verse 11 mentions the angels as distinct from either—as "round about the throne and the Beasts and the Elders." Concluding, then, from this that they cannot represent Deity, and it being equally clear that they do not represent angels, whom shall we say they do represent?

* They may be seen in Parkhurst's Lexicons.
The circumstances by which we are to be guided in our interpretation, are the form of these Living-creatures, together with their situation, and the actions and language ascribed to them. Of these, their Acts and Language are much the most certain evidence, because not involving the consideration of symbols; what then are these? The Actions, in which they are engaged, in common with the four-and-twenty elders, are in one word those of worship, which, as has just been remarked, is a decisive argument against their being representatives of Deity, and is equally decisive of their representing some part of creation. But their Language proves more: it proves that they also must have participated in the fall and in the redemption, for it is written (ch. v. 8, 9, 10), that "the four beasts and four-and-twenty elders . . . sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the "book and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, "and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every "kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast "made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign "on the earth." They represent, therefore, some part of mankind—an election "redeemed out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." This, it would seem, is beyond dispute. Yet they do not represent the whole of the redeemed, for, independent of their being distinct from the "four-and-twenty elders" who also are of the redeemed, they are heard to say—not only, "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God," but, moreover, —"Thou hast "made us unto our God kings and priests, "and we shall reign on the earth." To be "kings and priests," and to "reign on the earth," is evidently not
the privilege of all the redeemed as such, because many of the redeemed shall be *subjects* of the kingdom of which those here intended shall be admitted to share the administration conjointly with Christ. The inference then is that they represent the partakers of the "first Resurrection" spoken of at the end of this book—those who at the coming of Christ "live and reign with him," whoever they may be of the redeemed whose shall be this privilege, an inquiry into which it would be here premature to enter. As to their *situation*, much stress has been laid on the fact that the cherubic animals are exhibited in Heaven, as though contributing to the proof that they represent Deity. 'The cherubs in the "Holy of Holies,"' it has been said, 'were certainly intended to represent some beings in Heaven; because St. Paul has expressly and infallibly determined that the Holy of Holies was a figure or type of Heaven, even of that Heaven which is the peculiar residence of God, Heb. ix. 24. And therefore these cherubs represent either the ever-blessed Trinity, with the man taken into the essence, or created Spiritual angels,' (Parkhurst's Gk. Lex.) The alternative, however, is not a necessary one; for, Have not the redeemed entrance into Heaven, and do they not then form a third class of beings there? Not that I would be understood to say that all the saved have passed from earth to Heaven at their death; because Hades is also spoken of in Scripture as the abode of separate spirits:* but it is certain that some do go to Heaven, as for instance, those

* See this question treated in "Discourses on the Life of Christ:"
  No. xviii., on "His Burial and Descent to Hell."
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whose "souls" on the opening of the fifth seal (ch. v. of this book) are seen "under the altar," where the scene of vision is heaven; and "the armies in heaven," who are said (ch. xix. 14) to "follow Christ," at his coming "upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, "white and clean," and who by this circumstance are identified with the martyrs before mentioned. But, however this be, it is sufficient to our present purpose to shew that the situation in which the "four Beasts" or "Living-creatures" are seen does not militate against, but perfectly agrees with their representing the church in glory, in connexion with "the four-and-twenty Elders." Of their Form I can say least; but it has occurred to me that as each animal mentioned is chief of a class—the Lion, of the beasts of the field—the Ox, of the tame class—the Eagle, of the fowls of heaven—and Man, chief of all—the combined emblem may be designed to represent Principality, Headship, and Kingly power; but this is only a conjecture.*

Before I pass from this symbol, I would mention another circumstance respecting these Cherubic Emblems, which, though not expressly recorded in Scripture, seems to be well authenticated, and, if so, is worthy of attention as helping to elucidate their meaning. It is a fact of considerable interest, that when the

* It was from this observation as to the Form of the Four Beasts that I was led to infer, as stated in the First Edition of these Lectures, that they were emblematical of the whole creation in a state of redemption as it shall be at "the restitution of all things." But on re-consideration I think that so general an application of the emblem is inconsistent with their peculiar privileges and anticipations.
Israelites were passing through the wilderness on their way to the land of Canaan, they encamped under "Four Standards" (Num. ii.), which Jewish tradition says bore, each of them, one of those very Cherubic forms:—

To the east pitched Judah, under whom were Issachar and Zebulon—standard, a "Lion:" to the north Dan, under whom Ashur and Naphtali,—standard, an "Eagle:" to the west Ephraim, under whom Manasseh and Benjamin,—standard the "Ox:" to the south Reuben, under whom Simeon and Gad,—standard, "a Man:" while in the midst of these four, which formed the encampment, was "the Tabernacle," containing within it the symbol of the Divine presence: the whole scene exhibiting the Lord dwelling in the midst of His people Israel as their King, and Captain of their united hosts. If then this, as well as the Tabernacle itself and the Priesthood, was "an example and pattern of Heavenly things," have we not here presented to us, as in the vision before us, the picture of that blessed period, when—the earth having been fitted, by the course of events predicted in the sequel of this book, to be the Kingdom of the Father,—the Court of Heaven will be transferred to earth, and then, as the voice from Heaven is heard to announce (ch. xxi. 3)—"The Tabernacle of God will be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God?"—when also "the holy city, new Jerusalem," is seen "coming down from God out of heaven," and the whole world will be object to a never ending Theocracy?
In conclusion—though in attempting to explain this vision, which introduces the prophetical part of the Book of Revelation, some difficulties are encountered, they do not, I would observe, all taken together, affect materially the great scope or import of the vision, much less the meaning of the prophecies which follow. The great object is evidently to exhibit God in that character in which the Son receives from Him as the Father his Mediatorial Kingdom, in consequence of which he proceeds to judge his enemies, and rescue and recover his inheritance from the hands of the usurper. I believe that it also exhibits to view, in its various emblems, the position of the elect church meantime in the Heavens, while waiting with Christ the day of His promise, "when he who is their life shall appear, and when they shall appear with him in glory:" the position of those who having overcome wait for the promises made to them in the addresses to the churches in the preceding chapter. This, in substance, is the scope of the vision, as will appear still more plainly from the actions which follow; and, though I may have failed to explain rightly all the minor circumstances, its connexion as a whole, with the prophecy which it introduces, will, I trust, from what has been said, be sufficiently apparent.

Note.—That there was a connexion between the encampment of the Twelve Tribes around the Schechinah, and the twelve precious stones in the breastplate of the High Priest, set round the Orim and Thummim, the Jewish writers also assert, viz.:

In Jonathan's Targum:—"The Standard of Judah was of linen, of
three colours, answering to the three precious stones in the breastplate, viz., a chalcedony, sapphire, and sardonyx. In it, surrounding the Lion, the names of the three tribes—Judah, Issachar, and Zebulon—were engraved or expressed; and in the midst thereof was written—"Rise up, Lord, let thine enemies be scattered; let them that hate thee flee before thee."

Another, Chazkunis, gives the following account of the other tribes:—'The portraiture of a Man was upon Reuben's standard, dyed in the colour of the sardine set in the breastplate, and his name, with the sign of the mandrakes which he found, which are so called from their likeness to a man.

'The portraiture of a Lion was on Judah's standard, dyed in the colour of a chalcedony, agreeable to his father's prophecy concerning "The Lion of the tribe of Judah."'

'The figure of a Bullock or Ox was on Ephraim's standard, dyed in his colour on the breastplate, a beryl; and this agreeable to Moses' blessing.

'The figure of an Eagle was dyed into the colour of a hyacinth on Dan's standard.'

Further, Aben Ezra says—'So the ensigns were like the Cherubim which Ezekiel saw.'

Compare with this the description in Rev. xxi. of the New Jerusalem in which dwells "the glory of God," and which has twelve gates inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; and twelve foundations of its walls, each of a distinct precious stone, inscribed with the names of the twelve Apostles.

See, Mede on the Apocalypse, in loco.
LECTURE ELEVENTH.

THE VISION OF THE SEALED BOOK.

Revelation, Chap. v.—“And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. 2. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? 3. And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. 4. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. 5. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. 6. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. 7. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. 8. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. 9. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every
kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. 11. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12. Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 13. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. 14. And the four beasts said, Amen: And the four-and-twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."

Important as is the chapter last considered in its bearing on the prophecies of this book to which it forms the opening, that on which we now enter is even more so, inasmuch as to the act of which it treats the vision preceding is but subservient—the enthroned One being there presented to view only on account of the Book which he here holds in his right hand; and the " Elders" and " Living Creatures" being then also introduced to be in readiness as it were for the part they have to bear, and the announcement they are to make, when as here described " The Lamb comes and takes the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne."

The one question then here is—What is "the Book" (or Roll, according to Eastern custom) which is here taken by the Lamb, and which he alone is entitled to open? A point on which there is a great variety of opinions among commentators. Some holding that it represents the Holy Scriptures: some, either Testament singly: some, the Apocalypse, or the part which
contains the Seals: others, the Book of God's Decrees with respect to mankind at large, or the Jews, or the Christian Church, &c., &c. The context, however, I think, will be found here again to be sufficiently explanatory, and to determine the scope of the vision to be the institution of Christ to His Kingdom: parallel to that of Daniel, ch. vii. 13, 14, when "the Son of Man" is seen "coming with the clouds of Heaven" (the character of his second coming), and brought before "the Ancient of Days," from whom he receives "a dominion, and "glory, and kingdom, that all people, nations, and lan-
"guages should serve him"—"the kingdom and domi-
nion under the whole Heaven," ver. 27: and "The Book," or roll, to be (so to speak) the title-deed of man's inheritance; containing also the account of its yet future redemption by Him as His purchased posses-
sion; according to that passage in Ephesians, i. 14, where, speaking of the "Spirit of promise," the Apostle says, "which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." Observe—He speaks of the inheritance as "purchased," but not yet "redeemed,"—not yet recovered out of the hands of the usurper; and I believe that the sealed book is the record of the acts of Christ in effecting this—in ridding the earth of all usurped authority, and establishing His kingdom when his own time arrives: which is also the scope of the book of the Revelation, considered as disclosing the contents of this roll according as its seals are opened—the book of the Lord's Second Advent, and solely occupied with the account of the last great crisis,
the history of the day of Christ's power in the several acts of his subduing all enemies, and finally establishing His kingdom in the world. (D.)

The full proof of this is of course afforded by the sequel; but even here in this chapter we have some evidence of it;—and

I. First, what the subject-matter of the sealed book is we may gather from the language of those who are witnesses to the taking of it—the anticipations to which they give utterance on that occasion: see again verses, 9, 10—"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." In the first part of the ascription of praise they acknowledge His worthiness to take the book, namely, on account of His having been "slain," and having "redeemed them to God;" but the contents of the book, and the reason that Christ's taking it, and prevailing to open it, occasions such joy in their minds—as also why such grief was experienced by the Apostle at the thought of its remaining unopened—we gather from the closing words of the passage, where they say, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." The ground of this joy and the subject of the book, I conclude, are one and the same. They rejoice in the certainty that the glory which they anticipate is about to be realized on the opening of the book, and hence we
must infer that the subject of the book is that glory—is the kingdom of Christ; that kingdom in which these his saints, the elect out of the nations, shall sit down with him in his throne and reign with Him. But,

II. Secondly, another proof that this is the subject of the book we have (verses 11-14), in the further ascription of praise given by the angels that surround the throne, and joined in by all creation. "And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne,... saying with a loud voice: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four Beasts said, Amen: and the four-and-twenty Elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever." They see him take the book, and then they say, "Worthy is the Lamb to receive power, honour, glory, &c." as though his taking of the book and receiving of these were one and the same thing: which is further confirmed by the fact that every creature in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, is heard to join this Doxology—as they will actually do in that day when "all things shall be subjected to him;" the vision thus anticipating the results and objects of his kingdom, in order further to determine the subject
of the book—that it is the Title of the Lamb to "power, and glory," and all which they here ascribe to him: in taking which he "takes to him his power to reign," as afterwards said ch. xi. 17.

III. Again, a third proof, I think, is afforded by the actual description of the book: viz. that "it was written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals." Now the circumstance of a book being sealed may denote either of two things. It may denote that the contents are hidden until it is opened; and so we find that Daniel, in relation to the Prophecy which occupies the last chapters of his book, is told that "the words are closed up and sealed, until the time of the end;" implying that it was not designed that the prophecy should be clearly understood until that period, when, as is afterwards added, "the wise shall understand" (ch. xii. 9, 10). And if the sealed book, seen in the hand of Him that sat on the throne, be identical in its contents with that prophecy of Daniel (which I incline to think it is), it would certainly be an additional proof that it refers to Christ's Second Advent and "the latter days," as that of Daniel undoubtedly does: (see chap. x. 14.)

But there is yet another use of "a seal," of which mention is made in the Scriptures, and which still obtains among ourselves, namely as a signature to certify documents; and particularly, as a passage I shall quote will show, documents by which was conveyed purchased property, the title-deeds of inheritance, &c. First, however, in illustration of the cus-
ton referred to in this passage, it is necessary to observe that, according to the law of Moses, if a man from poverty sold a possession, it was always with a proviso that if he afterwards should happen to be in better circumstances, and should choose to redeem it, or his kinsman on his behalf, he might buy back the property, as we find in Lev. xxv. 25:—“If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possessions, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it, then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it, that he may return unto his possession.” Now we find that on such occasions it was customary to have a subscribed and sealed document as a memorandum of the redemption, which was retained by the person who redeemed the property, or by some third person, as a proof that he had done so, lest he to whom it had been sold should lay claim to it again, and assert a right or title to it. The passage which proves this custom you will find in Jeremiah, xxxii. 6–15: “And Jeremiah said, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Behold, Hanameel, the son of Shallum thine uncle, shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth; for the right of redemption is thine to buy it. So Hanameel, mine uncle’s son, came to me in the court of the prison, according to the word of the Lord, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that it is in
Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin; for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord. And I bought the field of Hanameel, my uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver. And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances. So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open: And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison. And I charged Baruch before them, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days; for thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.' Thus we see that this sealed document was the deed, covenant, or conveyance of the inheritance; that if any one in after time should question either the title to redeem, or the fact of the purchase having been lawfully made, this sealed document would prove it. This passage is indeed peculiarly in point; for it appears that the pro-
property so "purchased" was not immediately taken in possession—was not actually to be "redeemed" until the return of the Jews from captivity, as an assurance of which return and possession this "Book" and "Evidence" was "subscribed and sealed."

To this custom, then, I think the special reference is in the circumstance of "the book" or roll in the chapter before us being "sealed with seven seals," and that thus it is an additional proof that it is (so to speak) the title-deed of Christ's inheritance. And for this reason,—that, if it merely denoted the prophecy being shut up and concealed, I cannot then see any peculiar propriety in the question of right and title to open the seals, as any one might be commissioned to reveal or unfold a prediction. But if the reference be to the custom of which the detailed account is given in the passage just quoted,—to the sealed document which proved after any lapse of time the right of the possessor to purchase, as well as the fact of his having purchased, we then see why the Symbol of a book or roll is chosen as here to set forth the claim of Christ, and prove that his is the right to that inheritance which at his first Advent he had actually "purchased;" and this preparatory, after a long interval, to his proceeding to recover or "redeem" it. But this lead us—

IV. Lastly, to perhaps the strongest of all the proofs in this chapter that such is the import and subject-matter of this book, viz. the fact of "the Lamb" alone being worthy to open the seals. The general interpretation of this fact is, that no one in Heaven or earth was
worthy to unfold this volume of prophecy except the Lamb of God, the Saviour of the world,—that no other could explain the scheme of the Divine administration? But this is an inadequate account; for, the right and title to reveal the future history of the Church is, as has been already remarked, that of any prophet, any messenger of God; and even the very subject of this book was predicted in epitome by Daniel, and the fuller development of it now before us was made through an Apostle. Here, however, is a serious question as to the right to take the book and open it. The proclamation is first made—"Who is worthy to open the book?" &c. And the answer is, "And no man in Heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." The reason of this, however, is at once obvious, if we regard it as the book of the inheritance. We know that the first Adam was possessed of an inheritance in which he was established by the Lord at his creation, even the dominion and sovereignty over all the earth. He, however, fell from this dignity; he lost his possession and his inheritance; and no man ever since has been able by his worthiness to restore, recover, or redeem it. For it is not a question of power, it is a question of worth. It was not a want of power in Adam that made him lose the inheritance or prevented his afterwards recovering it. His title to it was from righteousness. So long as he continued righteous, he continued in possession of it; and when he fell, when he sinned, he lost the inheritance, because he lost the worthiness which constituted his title: and no
one of his descendants has since proved worthy to recover it, because not one of all the race of Adam has been righteous, and "able" in this sense, as a representative of the human race, to recover for man the possession which he lost. A fact this at thought of which the Apostle might indeed well weep! at the reflection that not one of the whole human race could restore the possession which their first Father lost! "And I wept much because no man was found worthy "to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon:"
(verse 4.) But in the next verse his grief is relieved, for he hears of one who possesses the right and is worthy to open the book:—"And one of the elders "saith unto me, Weep not; behold the Lion of the "tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed "to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof;"
and then follows (ver. 6), "I beheld, and lo! in the "midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the "midst of the elders, stood a LAMB AS IT HAD BEEN "SLAIN, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are "the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
"And He came and took the book out of the right hand "of Him that sat upon the throne." What none of the whole human race were found competent to do, Christ in the character of "the Lamb" does. In His own person he claims the inheritance, asserts His right to "the possession" which He "purchased," and to which in man's nature he has for man established a new title. He took on Him human nature for this very purpose, and hence it is as "THE LAMB," and "a Lamb as it had been SLAIN," that he is here seen "to take the book,
and to open the seals thereof;"—a proof, I say, most plain and decisive that the book is not the book of the Revelation of the history of the Church;—that the question is not who should reveal the destinies of the Church (for this any inspired prophet would be competent to do), but the great question of worth—whose the righteousness that can justify the human nature, and give to man a new title to his lost inheritance.

"The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David"—another title defining the subject of the book, and proving its reference to the Saviour's kingdom: for, as that kingdom, while generally the kingdom over all the earth, will be specially "the kingdom of Israel," so here the special title to it in this view is superadded to the general title by which he inherits for mankind, and the nations of the earth at large. As "Son of man" he inherits for man, or in other words as "the Lamb," in which character "He is the propitiation for the sins," not of one people only, but "of the whole world;" but as "Son of David" He recovers and inherits for his people Israel. At the same time, it is intimated that David's Son is also David's Lord—the "Branch of David" also "David's Root," and "the Lamb slain" the "Lion of the tribe of Judah"—to shew that he who became man is more than man, and, because more than man, "prevailing to take the book and open the seals thereof," or, as already said, to recover and take possession for him—that "in THE LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified "and glory," as well as the redeemed of every nation "a righteousness and strength."

We already noticed the ascription of praise which
follows upon the taking of the book. The leaders of
this song of praise, we are told in the eighth verse, are
the "four Living-creatures, and the twenty-four Elders,"
because, as before stated, they represent those more im-
mediately interested in the triumph and kingdom of the
Saviour. They are therefore represented as first to
break forth in praise to him who not only "redeemed
them to God by his blood," but made them "Kings and
Priests unto God." The next persons who are repre-
sented as joining in the song of praise are the Angels;
"And I beheld and I heard the voice of many angels
round about the throne;"—whilst the universal chorus
of all creation is represented as winding up the doxology
as we read in verses 13, 14:—"And every creature
"which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the
"earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in
"them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory,
"and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne,
"and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four
"Beasts said, Amen; and the four-and-twenty Elders
"fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever
"and ever."

So will it be when this prophecy is fulfilled, and this
kingdom come: in anticipation of which, may we all
too say, "Amen," "Amen."*

* Note to Fifth Edition.—Since this was written, I find the
same view here taken of the giving of the book to Christ was suggested
by Dr. Hales, who says (Chron. ii. p. 1301), 'And He came to the
throne and took the book out of the Father's right hand, in token
of inauguration or formal investiture into His universal and everlasting dominion, to whom all authority was given in heaven and earth, as "Son of Man," (Dan. vii. 13, 14; Matt. xxviii. 18). Where, however, it is to be observed, that these passages refer to two different times—the latter to His Ascension; the former to His Second Advent.

Daubrez also, quoted by Dr. Todd, says on ch. v. 7, 'This is the main ceremony of our Saviour's inauguration, by which His human nature is invested with a Divine Kingdom to be worshipped accordingly.' But his scheme also requires that this be understood of the Ascension of Christ.
LECTURE TWELFTH.

THE OPENING OF THE FIRST SIX SEALS.

Revelation, Chap. vi.—"And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. 2. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer. 3. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. 4. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. 5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. 6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. 7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. 8. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. 9. And when he had opened.
the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11. And white robes were given unto every one of them: and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. 12. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; 18. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. 14. And the Heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 15. And the kings of the earth, and the great men and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; 16. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17. For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

It is an objection commonly raised against the study of unfulfilled prophecy that it is utterly unintelligible, so that to say a prophecy is yet unfulfilled is with most persons the same as to say that it is incapable of any certain exposition;—certainty, it is said, being only to be looked for in the exposition of such prophecies as have been fulfilled. Whence it follows that any person who asserts that "the Seals," of which this chapter treats, are yet unopened, exchanges a certainty for an uncertainty, and must be contented to remain without any fixed or determinate idea as to their accomplishment: whereas, on the other hand, if those expositors are right who consider them to have been opened, we should
be prepared to expect a certain and unanimous conclusion among them as to the event or result.

Yet what is the fact? There is no one point, perhaps, in the whole range of scriptural exposition on which there exists so universal an agreement among expositors as on this—that all these Seals have been opened and are fulfilled; and yet it is strange that there is not, on the other hand, in the whole Scriptures a passage as to which there exists more diversity of opinion! In truth, if I were to attempt to detail the different opinions (and at first I did think of stating all those of which I am aware), were I even to sketch in outline the variety of fulfilments which have been assigned to these six prophetical Seals, it would occupy much more time than we have to devote to the whole of the chapter. I shall, therefore, merely state, in illustration of the existing expositions, a few of the principal.

The first is that of a class of expositors who have not now many adherents, who interpret the Seals of the judgments mentioned which fell upon the Jewish people, and hold that they were accomplished in the destruction of their city and temple:—an opinion with which, if I could be at all persuaded that the Book of the Revelation is fulfilled, I would certainly be most disposed to agree; inasmuch as there is warrant in Scripture for speaking of the judgment on Jerusalem as a type of the Lord's Second Coming, the event evidently predicted by the Sixth Seal. This view, however, involves too many contradictions, and in this day has too few supporters to make it necessary to refute it. (E.)
The next class, and which is by far the most numerous, is of those who suppose those Seals to be judgments upon the Pagan Roman Empire, and prophecies of the conflict between Christianity and Paganism which ended in the establishment of the former under the Emperor Constantine, to which result they conceive the Sixth Seal applies. But while the greater number, and particularly of modern expositors, are agreed in this outline, it should at the same time be known that there is a great diversity of opinion among them as to the particular events in the history of the Pagan Roman empire intended by the several Seals,—what particular reigns of emperors fulfilled each Seal during the first three centuries until the reign of Constantine: so much so, that it is not uncommon to find one expositor speak of a Roman emperor as designed by one Seal, whom another supposes to be designed by the preceding or following. Among the writers who have written in support of this opinion—that "the Sixth Seal" was fulfilled by the overthrow of Paganism and its results in the times of Constantine—are, Mede, Whiston, Fleming, Daubuz, Bishop Newton, Lowman, Doddridge, Holmes, Hales, and many of less note who follow them.*

* More recently (since this Exposition was published) this interpretation of this Seal has been put forth anew by Mr. Elliott, in his elaborate work entitled "Horn Apocalypticae"—one of the few points in which he agrees with other expositors of the same school. And yet, notwithstanding this fact, and that the claim he prefers for his work on the attention of the reader in his preface is, that it is "in the fullest sense of the word original" as an exposition of the fulfilment in the greater part of the Apocalypse—he reiterates the
Under this class may also be ranked Mr. Faber, as terminating the Seals at the same period. With respect to the first four Seals, however, he holds an opinion which is somewhat peculiar, having been stated by no other writer that I am aware of except the author of a book entitled "Even Tide or the Last Triumph," published some years ago, viz.: that they are identical with the four Monarchies of Daniel's visions, namely, the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman. The Fifth Seal he supposes to have been fulfilled by the persecutions of the Christians under the Roman emperors; and the Sixth by the establishment of Christianity beginning with the edict of Constantine, A.D. 313. (Sacred Calendar of Prophecy, vol. ii. p. 324.)

The opinion of Mr. Irving, who has written at great length on this book, is also deserving of notice—and is mentioned with these as agreeing with them in principle, though so widely different in fact. He begins where all the others end; and the reign of Constantine, and the establishment of Christianity under him, which others suppose to be the Sixth Seal, he makes the First. To the Second he assigns the reign of the Emperor Theodosius:—the Third, that of the Emperor Honorius:—the Fourth, the irruption of the Goths and Vandals, by which the Roman Empire was destroyed in the fifth century and after:—the Fifth he gives to the period of the Papacy, or the "1260" supposed years: and the Sixth he admits to be yet future.

statement that one great advantage from a true exposition of it is the argument such fulfilment affords for the confutation of the Infidel!
Another (and it is the last I shall mention) is that of a distinct class of expositors, of whom the best known is Mr. Cunninghame. He, following in this Vitringa and Archdeacon Woodhouse, supposes the Seals to be altogether spiritual, or rather ecclesiastical; and says that the First Seal denotes the progress of the Gospel, beginning with the time of its first announcement:— the Second, the dissensions which arose in the Church in the fourth century between the Arians and the Donatists:— the Third, the dark ages of the Papacy:— the Fourth, the establishment of the Inquisition, and the persecutions of the Albigenses and Waldenses:— the Fifth, the dawn of the Reformation: and the Sixth he dates from the French Revolution in 1789 (in which he is followed by Mr. Frere and Mr. Habershon), which, with the political changes that followed in Europe, he conceives to be prefigured by "the earthquake" and "the falling of the stars from heaven" (ver. 12, 13); referring the remainder to a revolution which is to agitate and convulse the nations of Christendom before the Second Advent of our Lord; but limited to the Western Roman Empire. Where it is not a little remarkable, that in the same words in which one class of commentators see the rise of Christianity on the ruins of Paganism, he and others discover its overthrow and the rise of Atheism. "Such" (it has been truly observed) "is the facility with which on such systems the most "opposite results may be obtained from the same prophecies."

Similar to which is the view of Dr. Keith, who makes the First Seal the promulgation of Christi-
aninity—the Second Seal, Mahometanism—the Fourth, Infidelity—the Fifth, Persecution to follow—and the Sixth, the last great Catastrophe which shall decide the fate of the world and the triumph of the church?

I do not pretend, in this cursory mention of these respective authors, to do justice to their several opinions. Of course to appreciate their arguments we should read what they have written on the subject. It is with another view I mention them, and for which a mere mention suffices—namely, to show the variety of opinion which exists as to the opening of the Seals; and, as already said, it might be shown to be very much greater, by any one conversant with all that has been written on the same hypothesis. (F.)

What, then, I ask, ought to be the inference from this variety of opinion? I answer, in a word, that these symbolical prophecies are unfulfilled. And more—It is a serious consideration for those who side with these authors, that they undermine the whole fabric of the external evidence of Revelation by admitting such uncertain theories of fulfilment. Many of them will indeed tell us, that prophecy, while it is prospective, prophecy while yet unfulfilled, cannot be understood. But what do they say of fulfilled prophecy? That it serves to prove the inspiration of the word of God; and so constitutes an important external evidence of the truth of Revelation. Yet, assuming them to be right in their expositions of these prophecies as fulfilled, where does this end and use appear? Who would be so unwise as to quote these fulfilments in controversy with an infidel,
or appeal to them as proofs of the authenticity of Scripture? It is otherwise, however, with prophecies really fulfilled. With these may the infidel indeed be challenged. He may be challenged with the fulfilment of prophecy in the overthrow of ancient Babylon—of Tyre—of Nineveh—in the first coming of Christ—in the destruction of Jerusalem. He may be pointed to the Jewish nation scattered at this moment in fulfilment of prophecy into all the quarters of the globe. But it is strange that if the whole book of Revelation be fulfilled (with the exception of one or two chapters), not one argument has ever been brought from it against the infidel! from the fulfilment of a series of prophecies so remarkable! And why, if it be not that these interpreters have not confidence in their own expositions? To say, as I venture to do, that these Seals are yet unopened and these prophecies are yet unfulfilled, is (we are told) to exchange certainty for uncertainty. But do we indeed part with certainty when we leave expositions that are thus palpably uncertain and discordant? Far from it. No uncertainty could be greater than that which already exists on the supposition of their being fulfilled; and I hope, on the contrary, to show in a few words, that, so far from parting with certainty, the utmost clearness characterizes this vision, if we suppose it yet unfulfilled.

That this is so—that the Seals have not yet been opened—has indeed been already to a certain degree proved; not merely negatively from the difference of opinion just noticed, but positively from the argument
OPENING OF THE FIRST SIX SEALS.

of last Lecture. That is, if we are warranted, from the arguments brought forward in the last Lecture respecting the Sealed Book itself, to state that what has been supposed to be a prophetical history of the Church of Christ from the time of the giving of the Revelation onward, is in reality a prophecy of a certain crisis yet to come; that it is the Book of Christ's inheritance, the taking of which, and the establishing the right to possess and open it, is, in point of fact, the taking of His inheritance, the redemption and recovery of the possession which He has already purchased, but of which He is not yet possessed:—I say, if this be so, what we have now to expect from the opening of the Seals is the developing, according as they are opened, of the acts of Christ when "he takes to himself his great power to reign," and vindicates his inheritance. Let us then see whether the opening of these Seals corresponds with this the assigned import of the sealed book:—

I. "And I saw when the Lamb opened one" (the first) "of the Seals, and I heard as it were the noise of "thunder, one of the four Living-creatures saying, "Come and see. And I saw, and behold, a white "horse, and he that sat on him had a bow; and a "crown was given unto him, and he went forth con-
"quering and to conquer." Who shall we say is repre-
sented by this expressive and striking emblem? I answer, the Lord Jesus Christ himself, going forth—not in the character of his first advent, as some expositors have thought—but in the character of the second; going forth to redeem his inheritance, to rescue it from
the hand of the enemy, and assert his claim to his possession. There had just been an acknowledgment in the court of Heaven of his title to the possession, and accordingly the First Seal which he opens exhibits him on a "white horse," an emblem of victory—and "a bow" in his hand—"a crown" moreover being "given unto him"—"going forth conquering and to conquer." This does not rest upon my suggestion; for in chap. xix. of this book, verse 11, we find this same emblem used, where we are expressly told that the Lord Jesus Christ is intended: "And I saw Heaven opened, and "behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was "called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he "doth judge and make war," and, ver. 12, "on his head were many crowns," where we have the three same features as in the Seal before us—a warrior, crowned, and on a white horse. We can have no doubt that the person here represented is the Lord Jesus Christ,—"The Word of God" as he is named, and we should surely have good reason for asserting that the same emblem in the same book has two different meanings. What is, then, the difference between the two visions? It is this: that in the First Seal Christ is only represented as going forth to his work of conquest, which we shall see embraces a series of acts; but in chap. xix. we have his appearing to strike the last blow—the last act of his judgment: and so we read that at that time "on his head are many crowns" (ver. 12), the crowns of this world's kingdoms, taken (as it were) from the confederate "kings of the earth gathered
together to make war against him;" in consequence of
which also (ver. 16) "he hath on his vesture, and on
"his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord
"of lords;" while in the First Seal it is worthy of
notice that the words are, "a crown was given unto
Him."

This, as to "the crown" and "white horse:" but
the emblem of "the bow" we have distinct warrant for
ascribing to the Lord Jesus in reference to the same
event, as you will see by referring to another synchro-

nous and parallel prophecy—Psalm, xlv. The inspired
writer there commences with a declaration of the wor-
thiness of Christ in consequence of which he reigns:—
"My heart is inditing of a good matter; I speak of the
"things which I have made touching the King; my
"tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer
"than the children of men, grace is poured into thy lips,
"therefore God hath blessed thee for ever;" after which
(verse 3), still addressing Messiah, he says, "Gird thee
"with thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with
"thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride
"prosperously because of truth, and meekness, and
"righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee
"terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart
"of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under
"thee." That is, "the arrows," not,—as before re-
marked with respect to "the sword,"—emblematical
of the work of grace, not the arrows of conviction, but
the instruments of judgment—the weapons used in his
conflict with the confederate nations who at His Advent
"fall under him," as in chap. xix. just referred to. And thus are all the emblems of this Seal proved to refer to that period; and this without doing violence to the language of the prophecy, but on the contrary in perfect consistency with the truest principles of interpretation.

II. We pass to the Second Seal:—"And when he had opened the Second Seal, I heard the second Living-creature say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword."

When Christ is described, as in the First Seal, going forth with "a bow" in hand and "his arrows sharp in the heart of his enemies," it is true that we read metaphorical language; but the metaphor has its corresponding reality. The means are intended by which Christ shall subdue his enemies and recover his kingdom; and what are these? They are the same which the Scriptures uniformly assign to God in visiting upon nations and kingdoms their sin, namely, His judgments; and what and how manifold are these we are told in a passage which throws much light on that before us. If we refer to Ezekiel, xiv. we shall find them enumerated, viz. :—The first, ver. 13: "Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then I will stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send FAMINE upon it, and will cut off man and beast from
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"it:"—The second, ver. 14: "If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts:"—The third, ver. 17: "Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land, so that I cut off man and beast from it:"—And the fourth and last, ver. 19: "If I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast:"—or, all are sent together as in ver. 21; "For thus saith the Lord God, How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast."

These are the weapons of God’s wrath; and if I am right in the interpretation of the “First Seal” as Christ going forth to take to himself “the kingdoms of this world” and subdue his enemies by judgment, we should, therefore, look in the succeeding Seals to see him use these weapons. Accordingly, it is remarkable that the first of them, “the sword,” is the subject of the next, the Second Seal:—“ There went out another horse that was red, and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another, and there was given unto him a great sword.” We pass on now to—

III. The Third, and there we have another of these judgments, and the next in order moreover:—“ And when he had opened the Third Seal, I heard the third Living-creature say, Come and see. And I beheld,
and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four Living-creatures say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

Almost all expositors are agreed that the emblems here used denote famine; and this indeed is capable of proof; for "a penny" (about seven pence halfpenny of our coin) was, as may be seen in Matt. xx. 2, the ordinary daily hire of a labouring man; and history tells us that in the time of plenty from sixteen to twenty measures of corn were given for this sum; but here a voice is heard saying, "one measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny;" while to shew that nothing but the necessaries of life should be affected, "wine and oil" are excepted as being mere luxuries and superfluities. "Famine," then, the second of God's judgments, here follows upon "the sword."

IV. We proceed to the Fourth Seal:—"And when he had opened the Fourth Seal, I heard the voice of the fourth Living-creature say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death" (i. e. "pestilence," as "death" means when, as here, in contradistinction to other kinds of death), "and with the beasts of the earth." That is, as in the two preceding Seals we have the two first in order of God's judgments, which we have seen are
four in number, so in this the two remaining. There was, first, "the sword:"—next "famine:"—and then here, in addition to these two still continued, come "the pestilence" and the "beasts of the earth;" or, in other words, the whole four are combined.

We are prepared now for a change of scene, and accordingly—

V. The Fifth Seal presents us with a new subject:—

"And when he had opened the Fifth Seal, I saw under the Altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them that they should rest for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." There is a fearful fact conveyed to us in this passage:—that the Lord Jesus Christ will proceed against his enemies by his judgments, spend to his last arrow, and find them still impenitent: that they will, on the contrary, be rendered furious—(as the later visions of this book shew, which represent them as arrayed in open hostility against Him in the last act and closing scene)—and in their rage and madness will persecute his people in revenge for their sufferings. And what now remains for him to do? His ordinary weapons are spent; his ordinary judgments have been tried; and his answer to his people who cry to him to
avenge their sufferings and their blood is therefore by
the announcement of the signs of "the great day of his
wrath" approaching, from which his enemies shall in
vain seek an escape—which is the subject of

VI. The Sixth Seal:—"And I beheld, when he had
opened the Sixth Seal, and lo, there was a great earth-
quake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair,
and the moon became as blood; and the stars of
Heaven fell upon the earth, even as a fig tree casteth
her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty
wind. And the Heaven departed as a scroll when it
is rolled together; and every mountain and island were
moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth,
and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief
captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman
and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in
the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains
and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of
him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of
the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come;
and who shall be able to stand?"

This Seal so obviously refers to the second coming
of the Lord Jesus Christ—containing as it does the very
signs of his coming specified by himself in his prophecy
of it (compare Matt. xxiv. 29, 30)—that I must say
there is no room for difference of opinion: and, that it
should have ever been otherwise explained, and by such
events as have been instanced, is a melancholy example
of the way in which Scripture may be wrested by pre-
judice to support favourite theories: since, if this
be not a prophecy of that event, there is not an undoubted prophecy of it or of the Day of Judgment in all Scripture.*

Not then until the Lord Jesus Christ has exhausted all his weapons, all his ordinary judgments—not until he has sent them severally, sent them altogether, and finds his enemies still impenitent, still arrayed in hostility against him—not until after these fearful omens does "the terrible day of the Lord" itself come! So says this prophecy of the Seals, taken in its plain and obvious meaning, and according to a system of interpretation easy and natural, and at the same consistent. If, however, further confirmation be desired of the exposition here given, we have it in the prophecy of our Lord just mentioned in a passage which, as a parallel to this, is most remarkable. There (Matt. xxiv.) at verse 3, we read that, "as he sat upon the mount of Olives, "the disciples came unto him, and said, Tell us, when "shall these things be? and what shall be the signs of "thy coming," (First Seal), "and of the end of the "world (or "of the age")? And Jesus answered and said "unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you; for "many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and "shall deceive many." Now mark what follows;—

* A striking instance of the way in which Scripture will be understood by an unbiased mind has been lately afforded in the splendid picture by Danby, entitled 'The Sixth Seal,' one of the finest of that artist's conceptions; where, with the Bible open before him, he has simply yielded his imagination to its guidance. How unconscious that he had such a host of learned Divines arrayed against him!
"And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars," (Second Seal):—"See that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And there shall be famines," (Third Seal):—"and pestilence," (Fourth Seal:—the two preceding ones still continuing): "Then," verse 9, "shall they deliver you to be afflicted, and shall kill you:"—compare the Fifth Seal, "And when he had opened the Fifth Seal, I saw under the Altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God," &c. And then—after the trials and persecutions to which his disciples shall be exposed for his sake have been more particularly detailed, as well as the abounding of iniquity in the world—follow the signs of his actual coming, the same by which it is announced in the Sixth Seal:—"And Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, &c."—the two prophecies thus presenting a most perfect parallelism, not only in the events, but also in the order of their occurrence.*

* As was to be expected (though I was not aware of it when these Lectures were given), this correspondence between the judgments predicted by the Seals and the signs of His Coming in our Lord's prophecy was noticed before, and among others by a Commentator on this Book so ancient as A. D. 290, namely Victorinus—quoted by Dr. Adams 'On the Sealed Book.'
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It would be premature, at this stage of the exposition of this prophetical book, to enter on the explanation of who the enemies are that shall be thus judged, or who the sufferers that shall be so slain. The book itself will develop this in course—the object of this vision of the Seals being, as I think, merely to give an outline, which is afterwards in the course of the prophecy filled up by more minute and particular detail. Meanwhile I would only remark, in conclusion, that I think we already begin to see the use of studying this book, and with it the use of unfulfilled prophecy in general. For, Is it the case that the prospect before us is such as now described?—that instead of stability of political institutions—and peace and increasing national prosperity, growing out of our improvements in science and political economy—the word of God prepares us for hearing of "wars and rumours of wars"—"nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom!" that in the train of "the sword" shall follow "famine," and in the train of famine—yea hand and hand with sword and famine—shall follow "pestilence," till God's "four sore judgments" shall have devastated the world; and all this to be but "the beginning of sorrows!" And will the Church of Christ remain couched in the lap of carnal ease and security, promising itself triumph and conquest, indifferent to warning and to the line-upon-line intimation of prophecy apprising us that God is about to visit the earth with a series of judgments? And what will be the end of this? "See," says Christ of the first of them, "when you shall hear of wars and
rumours of wars, that ye be not troubled;" and again, "In your patience possess ye your souls." But how is this to be done? What, we may well ask, can thus establish the heart and ease the mind of trouble in the prospect, much less the accomplishment, of such fearful signs and omens? I answer, next to the Gospel itself, the study of the sure word of prophecy, by which the believer is given to know the thoughts and mind and purpose of the Lord in these visitations, of which the worldly-wise, the politicians, and great of the earth, will still be ignorant;—is given to see in the judgments which shall visit an unbelieving world, and a Christian apostacy, the signs of his "redemption drawing nigh." O! it is a fearful thing to oppose our reason and human calculations to the word of God; to substitute our own plans for its direction, and our prospects for its prophecies! The world will ever be doing this: But the Church—Alas! that the Church should do so too! and yet, What is the fact? Instead of attention to the prophecies, there is prejudice against the study of them; prejudice deep rooted, and, I fear, even increasing. The heeding of God's prophetical warnings is among us becoming more and more disreputable. I could give awful proof of this were I but to repeat the language now commonly used to characterize the Scriptural expectations of the Church, and especially the attempt to obtain a hearing for the warnings of this book. But enough: —"May the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God and the patient waiting for Christ:"—May He give us "to know the things which belong to our peace, before "they are hid from our eyes!"
LECTURE THIRTEENTH.

THE SEALING OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL:
THE PALM-BEARING MULTITUDE.

Revelation, chap. vii.—“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. 2. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, 3. Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. 4. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. 5. Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. 6. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nepthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. 7. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. 8. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. 9. After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed
with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. 11. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12. Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. 13. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 14. And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. 16. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 17. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

It is an obvious inference from the interpretation which has been offered of the Seals opened in the preceding chapter, that the remainder of this prophecy is yet future, whether the whole be regarded as subsequent in the order of fulfilment to the opening of these Seals, or, as we shall see reason to conclude, synchronous for the most part with them; and, therefore, until the objector is prepared to question that interpretation, and substitute another from past events more agreeable to the language of Scripture, and consisting better with its integrity, he is not entitled to speak of any subsequent part of the book as fulfilled. As, however, it is stated that from the sequel of the book would be additional confirmation of the interpretation of 1, so we may expect that every succeeding
part of the prophecy will bring its own internal evidence of future application and reference independent of the argument from what preceded; and this, I conceive, is the case with the chapter now before us.

It must surely, then, startle any person not acquainted with the comments on this book—any simple, unbiased reader of the Bible—to be told that by "the hundred forty and four thousand," sealed in this chapter, is intended any or every class of God's servants, of any or every age, except the Jews; though it is expressly said in the fourth verse, "there were "sealed an hundred forty and four thousand of all the "tribes of the Children of Israel," and afterwards the name of every tribe, one by one, is specified, with the particular number sealed of each. Now one can understand (though I do not think an undoubted instance of it exists), how the name "Israel" may be supposed to be figuratively applied to the Gentile Church in Scripture; but to assert that not merely the name of Israel in the general is so applied, but that the names of every one of the twelve tribes in succession have also a spiritual meaning, and denote respectively portions of the Gentile Church, is to stretch the figurative exposition of Scripture farther (we should have thought) than any one would be prepared to go. Yet, strange to say, the only point in this chapter on which we find a general agreement among commentators, is that Gentiles and not Jews are here alluded to. I say the only point; for as to what portion of the Gentile Church is intended there is a great diversity of opinion:—One class of
writers asserting that "the hundred and forty and four thousand sealed" are the converts to Christianity during the reign of Constantine:— Others, that they represent Christians preserved from the judgments on Pagan Rome:— Others suppose them to denote the Waldenses and Albigenses:— Others, the kingdom of Great Britain sealed, they say, at the Reformation:— and Others, the great revival of Religion in these Countries and on the Continent, subsequent to the French Revolution of 1789. In short, as already said, Gentiles of every age and nation; while the people who, on reading the passage, one would suppose to be alone intended, are altogether excluded from any interest in it! Nor is this system of interpretation on the decrease, for a late expositor of this book has gone so far as to assert that the book of the Revelation is the Apocalypse of the Gentiles, while the prophecy of Ezekiel is the Apocalypse of the Jews, and that the Jewish nation is no farther concerned in this book than in having afforded a symbolical language in which to express the spiritual things of the Gentile Church!

And is it asked, How it is that such an agreement can exist as to a principle of interpretation which involves so violent a wrestling of the words of Scripture from their obvious and plain meaning, and the seeking out of so strange an accommodation of its language? I answer, that it is only to be accounted for by the determination to consider this book as a continuous prophetical history of the Church, and the Seals as already fulfilled or opened: whence it follows that some (as we have
seen) supposing the Six Seals to terminate in the establishment of Christianity under Constantine, some in the Reformation, some in the French Revolution, they were under the necessity of treating this chapter next following as allegorical; because after no one of these events could they find anything like a conversion of the Jews, or such recognition of them as the transaction here described would imply.*

Whereas—even admitting that this view of the prophecy as a whole were a natural presumption—on proceeding to expound it, one would suppose that they must have yielded to the correction of their mistake which here met them at the very threshold. We can conceive them proceeding as far as the first Five Seals without much misgiving: but it is truly surprising that when they had come as far as the Sixth Seal, and found that it was followed by the vision before us, they should still have persevered, and did not say, 'Here we must stop; here we must give up the principle with which we set out, and seek for some other interpretation; we must not force the language of Scripture: we dare not explain away or accommodate it in such a manner as we now find to be necessary to the system by which we had hoped to explain this book. The Sixth Seal can only apply to the Signs of

* For the causes which contributed to the adoption of this view—that the Apocalypse is a prophetic history of the Christian Church from the days of the Apostles to the consummation of all things—which had its origin so late as the 16th century, see Dr. Todd's work before referred to, Lect. I.
the Lord's coming, and equally must this chapter refer to a portion of the Jewish nation.'

Nor is there any reason why these two subjects should not be found as here thus closely connected—the Lord's coming, and the recognition by him at the same time of his ancient people: but, on the contrary, this connexion is exactly that for which by a study of prophecy we should be prepared. The period of the Lord's absence—the time for which his coming has been delayed—has been a blank in the history of the Jewish nation. The Second Advent, however, will be the time of "the restoration of the kingdom to Israel," and so does not take place until, in the dispensations of God, that people shall be ready to say, as predicted by the Saviour in his parting words to them, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." And therefore if there be evidence that this book of Revelation is (as already stated) the book of the Second Advent,—a prophecy of the signs and events by which the coming of Christ will be ushered in and his way prepared,—among them we would naturally expect to find a mention of God's dealings with Israel renewed; and that early in its pages we should be met with the resumed thread of their history,—resumed after having been broken off for so long a period.

To proceed then to the consideration of the chapter itself.—After the first Six Seals have been opened, which, I think, have been satisfactorily proved to be the signs which usher in the day of the Lord's Second Advent, the Apostle goes on to say, "After these
"things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." (verse 1.) "The four winds" are evidently here instruments of destruction and judgment, the scene of which, moreover, is thrice specified to be "the earth;" and by the "holding" or restraining of them, and their not being let to blow, is intimated that, before the infliction of the impending judgments, there was something to be done, which accordingly is stated in the next two verses:—"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." The action of the winds is then suspended in order to allow space for "the sealing of the servants of God," which evidently denotes preservation from the injury to be inflicted by them when they should be permitted to go forth and be no longer restrained: and who they are that shall be so preserved we are told more particularly in the fourth verse; "And I heard the number of them which were sealed, and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel," i. e., "twelve thousand" of each tribe, as detailed in verses 5–8.

Without consulting other Scriptures, or going for information out of the passage before us, I think we
should be led to the following conclusion as to its import; viz.—that at the eve of the Lord’s Second Advent, when the signs of his coming already begin to be manifested (by those judgments which we have seen to be the subjects of the first four Seals), the Jewish people will be found re-embodied as a nation; because on no other supposition can such a distinct specification of the tribes and selection from each, as is here found, be accounted for; and that, moreover, out of these tribes a certain remnant will be then characterized as “the servants of God,” and preserved from judgments about to fall on the rest of the nation, as implied in the charge—“Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads:” whether actually consisting of the number here specified, or a proportionably greater, may be a matter of question; though for my part, in the absence of warrant for any other interpretation, I would take the number as it is here given; especially as it is evidently founded in that which, for reasons unknown to us, was originally selected for the number of the heads and tribes of the nation.

We proceed then to seek confirmation of this future dealing with Israel in the other prophetic Scriptures, and such, I think, we find of the clearest and strongest nature. I have elsewhere gone at length into this subject,* and proved, I think satisfactorily, that the greater

* See ‘Lectures on the Second Advent and Connected Events:’—Lecture Fourth.
portion of the Jewish nation will return to their land in a state of unbelief; that they will rebuild their city and temple, and that God will choose that time to consummate his judgments on them:—that he will bring a host of invading armies against them, who will besiege their city, desolate their land, cut off two-thirds of the nation, and leave only an afflicted remnant which shall stay upon God in truth. Not to recapitulate the proofs of this expectation, I would only refer to chaps. xii. xiii. and xiv. of Zechariah, as the part of Scripture where we find it most fully stated. There has indeed been an attempt to explain the prophecies of these chapters as fulfilled in the former siege of Jerusalem; but the attentive reader will perceive a material difference between the two judgments, and chiefly (as I have also there observed) in this circumstance—that, though in both instances an host is brought against Jerusalem, and awful judgments are inflicted on the nation, yet is the end or result quite opposite; inasmuch as on that occasion the destruction of the city and dispersion of the people was total, whereas in the prophecy of Zechariah and the parallel prophecies it is foretold that there shall be "a residue of the people not cut off from the city,"—a remnant in whose behalf God shall appear, defeating the nations that come up against Jerusalem, turning his judgments from his people to those who afflict them, and so proving himself the defender of Jerusalem, where He shall afterwards establish His throne, and which thenceforward "shall be safely inhabited:" (See especially Zech. xiv. 2-4, 9-21, &c.) To this remnant, then, the
remnant which shall be left from that future desolation, and which shall be converted to God by means of that very affliction, I would say the vision before us applies — of the 144,000, who, on the eve of the Lord's Second Advent are here prophetically represented as sealed and preserved from amongst the tribes of Israel.

There is a transaction so parallel to this in every particular recorded in Ezekiel, chapters viii. and ix. that, if it may not be quoted as identical, it is at least remarkable as an illustration. Chapter viii. records a vision given to the prophet of certain abominations practised by the Jews at Jerusalem, which should bring on them awful judgments:—

"And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the Elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me. Then I beheld, and lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoked to jealousy. And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain."

"Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and, behold, northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. He said furthermore unto me, "Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations. And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold, a hole in the wall. Then said
"He unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had
"dug in the wall, behold, a door. And he said unto me, Go in,
"and behold the wicked abominations that they do here."

The detail of these then follows (ver. 10–16), ending
with the following denunciation (ver. 17, 18):—

"Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is
"it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abo-
"minations which they commit here? for they have filled the land
"with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and lo,
"they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in
"fury; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and
"though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear
"them."

This vision, and those of the preceding and following
chapters, are generally supposed to refer exclusively to
the remnant of the nation left in Jerusalem by Nebu-
chadnezzar, when he took the King of Judah and the
principal part of the inhabitants of Judea captive to
Babylon (2 Kings, xxiv.): for to the nation before the
captivity they cannot apply, inasmuch as Ezekiel did
not begin to prophesy till after that event, being him-
self one of the captives and in the land of the Chaldeans
when he had his first vision, which was in "the fifth
year of King Jeconiah's captivity." (Ch. i. 1–3). But,
granting this, it must be admitted that those times
were singularly typical of the time contemplated in this
chapter of the Revelation, if the visions do not relate
to the same event, when we proceed with the vision
of Ezekiel, ch. ix. In the first verse we have the
preparation for a judgment about to be inflicted on the
nation in consequence of these their abominations, similar
to the intimation at the opening of Rev. vii.:—
"He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth towards the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand."

This preparation made, observe now there is a suspension of the judgment as in Rev. vii. and for the same purpose precisely—the marking of a remnant for preservation:—

"And one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the court with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city."

We see here the most perfect similarity of circumstance between those marked in Ezekiel and the 144,000 sealed out of all the tribes of Israel in the Book of Revelation, who, at the time when the iniquity of the nation is at the highest, and before the divine wrath is finally poured out upon the city, are likewise marked for preservation, being those that "sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in it." Nor in this
only, for another circumstance which yet more marks the correspondence is, that, after the writer has fulfilled his commission to "set a mark upon the foreheads" of this remnant, we find at the commencement of chap. x. this direction given to him,—"Go in between the "wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with "coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter "them over the city." Observe, after the marking of the remnant is this direction. Turn now to the Revelation, and you will find the like transaction in chap. viii. after the sealing of the 144,000:—ver. 3, "And another "angel came, and stood at the altar, having a golden "censer:"—and then, ver. 5, "the angel took the "censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it "into the earth, and there were voices, and thunder- "nings, and lightnings, and an earthquake." It may be too much to infer from this coincidence that the events are identical; but at least the comparison of the two passages must leave little doubt as to the interpretation of the sealing of the twelve tribes of Israel which, in agreement with the plain language of the text and of other prophecies, I have offered, viz.—that we are to understand it literally of the preservation of a remnant of the Jewish nation from the judgments with which we have reason for believing, independent of this prophecy, the world in general and their land in particular will be visited immediately before the Second Advent: an interpretation confirmed by the only other reference to this company in this book, viz.—when, as the result of this sealing, we find in chap. xiv. these same 144,000
are again seen, their trials over, standing with the Lamb on the Mount Sion, and singing that new song before the throne which none but themselves might learn (ver. 1–3): the reward of their faithfulness in withstanding the apostacy just before predicted (ch. xiii.)—the first taken out of the judgments consequent, "the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb redeemed from among men" (ver. 4, 5).

But they will not be the only ones found faithful: "the first fruits" are followed by a copious harvest, as the sequel tells us, ver. 9:—"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." We are not left in doubt as to who constitute this "great multitude"—defined, as they are, to be "of (or rather out of) all nations and kindreds, &c." That is, these are an election out of the Gentiles, as are the 144,000 an election from Israel—(an additional proof that Israel must be there literally intended): while another circumstance more particularly identifying them—and which is additionally important as determining the time to which this whole vision of the 7th chapter is to be referred—is stated ver. 14, where, in answer to the question "What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?" it is said "These are they which came out of great tribu-
"lation" (or, literally, "out of the tribulation, the great one," ἐκ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς μεγάλης), "and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

The expression, "the great tribulation," is an evident allusion to a tribulation mentioned in some former prophecy, and such, we have seen, is the subject of the Fifth Seal; which, again, is parallel to our Lord's prophecy of a "great tribulation" (θλίψεως μεγάλη— the very words here used), to precede His coming, and followed by the identical signs of the Sixth Seal (See again Matt. xxiv. 21, with 29, 30, quoted in last Lecture.) At the same time, it is there added (ver. 31), "He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other"—to which corresponds here the vision of "the four winds," and of the sealed of Israel and the elect gathered out of all nations: (Compare, also, "the time of trouble," Dan. xii. 1.) This chapter is, therefore, a recapitulation, in so far, of the vision of the Seals, for the purpose (as before said) of filling up the outline there given, in that part of it more immediately affecting the faithful of that day: the difference being that here the number of the martyrs under that last persecution is completed, and they are seen—taken out of the earth before the judgment on the anti-Christian—waiting with their Lord for His coming, when, as a future vision will tell us, they shall come with Him; and, together with the martyrs of all preceding times—(that is, His faithful "witnesses" and
disciples, who in measure will all have been sufferers for His sake)—be "glorified together" and "reign with Him." In contrast with which, their previous sufferings, is the description of their blessedness in the sequel (verse 15, &c.): "Therefore are they before the "throne of God, and serve him day and night in his "temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell "among them. They shall hunger no more, neither "thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, "nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst "of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to "living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away "all tears from their eyes." The scorching sun is an emblem of persecution, as the Lord Jesus in the parable of the sower teaches us, where he compares "tribulation and persecution because of the word" to the sun's burning heat. From this, however, they are, when here seen, exempt: whence I conclude that they are presented to us here prospectively and by anticipation—their warfare over, and having entered into their rest, in order to fortify the minds of the faithful under the prospect of these trials. What and how great, beyond all precedent, these, we shall also see in the sequel, and how much need at that time there will be of the consolation which this previous disclosure of the reward of suffering is calculated, as it is designed, to afford.
Lecture Fourteenth.

The Opening of the Seventh Seal.

Revelation, Chapters viii. and ix.—"And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. 2. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. 3. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. 5. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. 6. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. 7. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. 8. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood; 9. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. 10. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; 11. And the name of the star is called
Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. 12. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. 13. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"

Chapter ix.—"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. 2. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. 3. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. 5. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man. 6. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. 7. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. 8. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. 9. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. 10. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails; and their power was to hurt men five months. 11. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. 12. One woe is past; and behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

"13. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God. 14. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which
are bound in the great river Euphrates. 15. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. 16. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand; and I heard the number of them. 17. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone. 18. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone which issued out of their mouths. 19. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails; for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. 20. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: 21. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

The vision of the last chapter, we saw, is supplemental to that of the Seals, and in part a recapitulation of it—especially of the Fifth Seal, defining the sufferers under it, and revealing the consoling fact for them in that day that God will interpose for their preservation from the coming judgments by a special election and sealing of them: so, although the Seventh Seal, now opened, is subsequent in order to the Sixth—going beyond it, as we shall see, in disclosing the results of Christ’s coming there foretold—yet is it also recapitulatory, especially as to the judgments from which the Elect are thus preserved. But, first, before these judgments are inflicted, there is mention of a very notable occurrence:—“And when he had opened the Seventh Seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.” This silence,
as appears from the verses following, is for the hearing of prayer at that time to be specially offered:— "And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, "that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."

And the subject of these prayers we may further gather from the answer to them. What is that answer? It is indeed calculated to place in a powerful light the efficacy which attaches to the prayers of the Lord's people; see verses 5, 6:— "And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound." That is, the saints of God—instructed in the signs of the times, and exposed to persecution and suffering unexampled from the anti-Christian confederacy of the nations then leagued against the Lord and his Anointed,—are led to pray that the Lord would hasten his kingdom, would bring to an end the wickedness of the ungodly, and with it the trials of his people: prayer in which the Church on earth, in the common of saints, sympathizes with the souls under the hose cry for vengeance was heard on the opening
of the Fifth Seal. And God, who, when about to effect any deliverance in the earth, delights to be inquired of for it by his saints, is here represented as sending his judgments and hastening his work in answer to their prayers. Great encouragement this to prayer—to calling on God in the hour of trial and distress! Little does the enemy know of what a powerful weapon the saints of God are possessed, even in the hour of their greatest weakness and most extreme oppression!

To proceed—I have already observed the parallelism to the action here recorded of a similar one in Ezekiel, chapter x. The 9th chapter of Ezekiel is parallel to the 7th of Revelation; the former containing "the marking," and the latter "the sealing" of the Jewish remnant. So in Ezek. x. we find the marking followed by an act precisely similar to that by which the sealing is followed here. The "man clothed in linen" is there represented taking fire from between the cherubims, and scattering it over the city; and here, "the angel takes the censer, and fills it with fire of the altar, and casts it into the earth." What is symbolized by the fire we learn from what follows. Fire is an emblem of God's wrath: and, accordingly, when the fire of the altar has been scattered, "the seven angels with the trumpets prepare themselves to sound."

With respect to the "trumpets," I will not delay to mention the different theories put forward on the supposition of their being fulfilled; for that they have been fulfilled, as well as the Seals, expositors in general are also agreed. However, as before remarked of the latter,
they are far from being agreed as to how they have been fulfilled:—Some taking a political view of them, and supposing the first four to be the successive invasions of the Roman Empire by the barbarous nations, and the fifth and sixth to apply to the Saracens and Turks of a later period:—Others, treating them as ecclesiastical or spiritual, and explaining them of heresies which appeared in the Church up to the establishment of Popery and Mohamedanism, which they suppose to have fulfilled the fifth and sixth trumpets. Again, the writers of each class are not agreed even on their own hypothesis:—those who consider them to be political, as to what political events fulfilled them; those who consider them ecclesiastical or spiritual, as to what heresies are meant. In short, there is just the same diversity of views, the same fluctuation of opinion about the interpretation of the seven trumpets, as about every other part of this book when expounded on this supposition. (G.)

I consider them, therefore, as also future; and of this as before, we have, in addition to the evidence from the preceding part, the internal evidence of the passage itself; by which I mean, not only the entire inconclusiveness and variety of the explanations offered on the supposition of fulfilment, but also the necessity there is, on that hypothesis, for a forcible accommodation of the whole language. Thus, the "trees," "grass," "sea," "sun," "moon," "stars," must all atively, and something found which each;

whence, such expositions are common as "s" are the clergy, and "the grass," the
Assuming, then, the language to be literal, it will be observed that the first four trumpets, which are the subject of chap. viii., affect "the earth" and connected objects; while the three following commonly called "woe-trumpets" (from their being announced by a "woe" thrice repeated), affect "the inhabitants of the earth" (ver. 13). So the First trumpet, ver. 7—"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood: and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up." The Second, verses 8, 9—"And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died: and the third part of the ships were destroyed." The Third, verses 10, 11—"And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became worm-
wood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." The Fourth, ver. 12—"And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, so as the third part of them was darkened; and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." After which come judgments directly affecting the inhabitants themselves: ver. 13—"And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpets of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"—where I would remark, as a strong argument in favour of taking the first four trumpets literally, that if, as expositors contend, "the trees, grass, &c." figuratively mean persons, then these trumpets affect the inhabitants of the earth, as well as the last three: whereas in the prophecy the distinction is most clearly marked between the objects affected: first, "the earth," and afterwards "the inhabitants of the earth." (Compare also ch. ix. 4—the command to exempt "the grass, trees, &c." from the judgment of the fifth trumpet, so distinguishing them from men.) And if it be asked, what warrant have we for interpreting literally as judgments such effects wrought on creation? I answer, we have a warrant which we have not for their figurative interpretation—we have a precedent in Scripture. We have the precedent of the plagues of Egypt; and very remarkable it is, that every event here prophesied did actually and literally
occur in Egypt: the plague of "hail, and fire mingled with the hail" there, Exod. ix. 24, corresponding to "the hail and fire mingled with blood" of the first trumpet here: the turning the waters into blood there, Exod. vii. 19, to the same result of the second trumpet here, and embittering of the waters by the third: and "the darkness over all the land of Egypt," Exod. x. 21, to the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars, by the fourth trumpet. And with this precedent, whether, I ask, is it more rational to say that these things shall literally be done again, or that persons are represented figuratively by "grass," "trees," "rivers," "stars," &c.?

Still, however, many will be found incredulous as to this interpretation, simple though it be, and supported also by Scripture warrant, and will still endeavour to explain away such predictions, and for a reason which they will not allow, or of the influence of which, perhaps, they are not conscious, but which is very perceptible in all their reasoning, namely, an idea which prevails that no divine or miraculous interposition is again to be expected on earth. For, in order that such effects as are described in this passage should be literally realized, there must be a renewal of miraculous agency: and this is deemed a sufficient presumption that the whole is figurative. That indeed there has been a long cessation of that divine interposition which marked former dispensations, and which characterized also the first introduction of Christianity, is true: and this cessation of divine interposition has, it is also certain, contributed to strengthen
the hands of the infidel and scoffer; and has emboldened them, and will yet more as the end draws nigh, to open their mouths in blasphemy, as saith the apostle, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, saying, where is the promise of his coming, for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," (2 Pet. iii. 3–5), the argument of the sceptic from the course of nature against miraculous interposition, "willingly ignorant" (as he adds) of the interruptions of it on record by such interposition and Divine agency. I believe, however, that this agency will be renewed, and will be first manifested in judgment; and that then, not only these trumpets, but all the other judgments predicted in this book, will be fulfilled in all their awful reality: a prospect of which we shall have increasing corroboration as we proceed; but which, apart from this book, is placed beyond doubt by other unquestionable testimony of Scripture.*

To proceed—The fifth and sixth, or two first of the woe-trumpets, occupy chap. ix. : the fifth, or first woe, verse 1–11, of which the subject is, A Plague of Locusts.

These, though differing from the usual expositions in the application of them, I formerly agreed with them in treating as emblematical. On further consideration, however, I now feel satisfied that there is no necessity

* On this subject, I may be allowed again to refer to my Lectures on the Second Advent—Lect. II., Sect. IV., and the Prophecies of the Restoration of Israel quoted in Lect. V.
for so interpreting them, and that, on the contrary, all the circumstances of the description agree to prove this judgment literal, as those preceding. The particulars from which we are to form our opinion are three—their appearance, their power, and their Leader or "King."

First—As to their appearance, not only is it verified by the description which naturalists have given of the locusts of the East,* but when any human feature is introduced, it is expressly said that it is only as a resemblance—thus, "on their heads as it were crowns like gold, and their faces as the faces of men" (which, if they were men, it would be superfluous to state): and again, their armour, not real, but—"they had breastplates as it were breastplates of iron:" while "wings" and "tails" are also assigned to them, not as resemblances, but as realities for which resemblances are given—"And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle; and they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails."

Second—Though the power of the locust is chiefly to injure vegetation, and these here attack men only, yet it is observable that this is accounted for as an uncommon and supernatural circumstance. See ver. 3, "And unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power: and it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men

which have not the seal of God in their foreheads;" that is, their natural instinct is laid under a restraint, the more evidently to mark them as a judgment sent from God, and another direction is given to their noxious power. This power, moreover, is such as could not be ascribed to an invading army (of which I before thought them an emblem), viz. merely "to torment" and "hurt" men for a given period of "five months," but "not to kill them"—so much so that "in those days they shall seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them"—the exact description of the effect of a plague, protracted but not mortal. And,—

Third—Their having, as stated, ver. 11, a "king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon," i. e. "Destroyer" (which is the chief argument for an emblematical sense), is rather, when maturely weighed, in character with their supernatural origin as given ver. 2, from "a smoke arising out of the bottomless pit," as well as the supernatural direction of their power just noticed: and fitly indicates their being, as are judgments in general, instruments in the hands of the prince of darkness—Satan—which he is suffered to use for the Lord's purposes.

I would then, for these reasons, abide still by the literal sense; and as in the former instances—the four preceding trumpets—again refer to Egypt for the precedent for such a visitation, in the locusts brought by Moses on
the land, which constituted one of its most grievous plagues (Exod. x. 4–6), confirmed by the fact that these three woe-trumpets are expressly called "plagues," at the close of this chapter, ver. 20, where we read,—"and the rest of the men which were not killed by "these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their "hands, &c."

We have already found considerable light thrown upon the prophecies of this book by comparison with similar prophecies in the Old Testament; and there is one which presents so striking a parallelism to this first woe-trumpet as to demand particular notice—namely, that recorded in chapters i. and ii. of Joel. A judgment unprecedented for its severity is first announced, chap. i. 2–7:

"Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the "land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your "fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their "children, and their children another generation. That which the "palmer-worm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the "locust hath left hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which the "canker-worm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. Awake, ye "drunkards, and weep: and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because "of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth. For a nation "is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose "teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek-teeth of a "great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig-tree: "he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof "are made white."

The Prophet then proceeds to exhort to mourning and fasting, ver. 13, 14, after which, and a further detail of its calamitous effects, ver. 16–end, the instrument of the judgment is thus described, ch. ii. 1–11:
"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"

The analogy between this judgment and the first "woe-trumpet" is so remarkable as almost to warrant the inference of the identity of the two prophecies; with which also would agree the time of their accomplishment. The time of the woe-trumpet is, I have said, future; the Trumpets as well as the Seals being precursors of the Lord's Second Coming; and that Joel's prophecy is also future, and refers to the same period, I think equally evident: for, the description
does not answer that of any judgment by which Jerusalem has hitherto been visited; and, in addition to this, it is expressly said that this judgment ushers in "the great and terrible day of the Lord" (ver. 11), the signs of which are accordingly specified in the words, "The earth shall quake before them: the heavens shall "tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the "stars shall withdraw their shining" (ver. 10). After this judgment, moreover, "the Lord will be jealous for his land, and pity his people" (ver. 18)—that prophecy of the Spirit is also fulfilled, which in this context has certainly not yet been fulfilled, and of which the Pentecostal effusion was but the earnest and specimen,—and Zion and Jerusalem become the dwelling of the Lord. See the remainder of chap. ii. and all chap. iii.

One objection only to this presents itself, which is certainly a serious one—that, while the sufferers from "the first woe" are exclusively men, and the command is express "not to hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, nor any tree," in Joel the vegetation is particularized as affected by the Locusts. Still, if only as an illustration, the passage is important as proving that if literal Locusts are intended in the one instance (which is not questioned), so may they be in the other; though, perhaps, in both instances, of a monstrous species.

According to this view, it would also follow that this "woe-trumpet" affects only the Jewish nation; but this inference, not only as it respects this but all the
trumpets, has, I think, been rendered probable by the connexion of the Seventh Seal with the sealing of the tribes in the preceding chapter, independent altogether of the evidence from the parallelism with Joel's or other prophecies. For, when it is borne in mind that, previous to the opening of the Seventh Seal, which includes the seven trumpets, a certain number of the servants of God are sealed for preservation from its judgments, and that those so sealed are exclusively selected from "the children of Israel," the natural conclusion to draw is that these judgments affect only that nation. But in the instance of this trumpet it would seem to be put beyond doubt by the fact that it is commanded the locusts "that they should not hurt the grass of the earth" (or "the land," as it may be translated throughout), "neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads." Now, it follows either that there are no other "servants of God" on earth at the time but the sealed of Israel, or that the trumpet is confined to the land of Israel, and that it is only intended to say that there are none others of that nation found faithful, and so exempted from this judgment. And this, it may be remembered, is further confirmed by the subsequent context—the intervening of chapters x. and xi. (of which, we shall see, the Jewish people are undoubtedly the subject) between the sixth and seventh trumpets: which, on the supposition of the prophecy from the commencement of ch. vii. referring to Israel, gives us an unbroken thread of God's
dealing in judgment with that nation previous to the judgment of the Gentiles, which, with its causes, occupies the sequel of the book.

The period of "five months," I need scarcely say, I also take literally; the other interpretation of them, as 150 years, being made necessary only by the supposition of past fulfilment.*

Of the next trumpet—the "sixth," or "second woe," ver. 13–end, I am not able to speak so decidedly. It is evidently a judgment more severe than the last, inasmuch as the commission is "to slay the third part of men," the Jewish nation being still, I conceive, the objects. Its being announced by an order to "loose " the four angels which are bound in the great river

* The opinion of Dr. Todd on this trumpet is worthy of notice, who argues, especially from the locusts being said to have issued "out of the smoke of the bottomless pit," and from the fact that their king is expressly stated to be "the angel of the bottomless pit," that they are "evil spirits again permitted to come forth upon the earth, and to afflict men with various plagues;" in which view he has the support of Cornelius a Lapide, and, among the ancients, of Andreas, Bishop of Cæsarea (A.D. 500), who gives it as the opinion also of older commentators: (See the quotations in his note.) And he too observes that the limits set to their power—"That they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing;" and only "torment" not "kill" their victims, seem decisive of their not being an army of men.

He also notices the variety of conflicting opinions respecting them, on the supposition that the prophecy is fulfilled; some holding that they denote heretics:—Romanists, who see in them Luther and the Protestants; and Protestants, on the other hand, interpreting them of the Pope, the monks, the Inquisition, &c.: Some applying the prophecy to the Vandals, A.D. 441–586; others, among whom are the more recent, to Mahomet and his followers.
“Euphrates” plainly points out the quarter whence this invading army (as it appears to be) comes; and which other prophecies not obscurely intimate will yet harbour an enemy to that people as formerly, and to accomplish a like purpose—to be, like the Assyrian of old, “the rod of the Lord’s anger” for their correction, and the instrument of His “indignation,” after which he, in turn, becomes the subject of judgment. See—to take only one instance, Isa. x. 12—“Wherefore it shall “come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his “whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will “punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of “Assyria and the glory of his high looks,” &c. : followed by a prediction of the conversion of a remnant of Israel, which undoubtedly remains yet to be accomplished, ver. 20, 23—“And it shall come to pass in that day that the “remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house “of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote “them; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of “Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the “remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though “thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a rem- “nant of them” (i.e. only a remnant) “shall return : “the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteous- “ness. For the Lord God of hosts shall make a con- “sumption, even determined, in the midst of the land:” —a “consumption” inflicted, it would seem, partly by means of these Trumpets in the vision before us, and especially by the three last “woes;” though not by them completed to the full extent of the “desolation deter-
mined," as stated, ver. 20, 21—"And the rest of the
men which were not killed by these plagues yet re-
pented not of the works of their hands," &c. Further
judgments are yet in store for them, of which we shall
read in the sequel.
LECTURE FIFTEENTH.

THE LITTLE BOOK: THE TWO WITNESSES.

Revelation, Chap. x. and xi. 1-18.—"And I saw another mighty angel come down from Heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: 2. And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, 8. And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. 4. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. 5. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to Heaven, 6. And sware by him that liveth forever and ever, who created Heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: 7. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. 8. And the voice which I heard from Heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. 9. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall
be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of
the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as
honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. 11. And
he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples,
and nations, and tongues, and kings.

Chap. xi. 1-18. — "And there was given me a reed like unto a
rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of
God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. 2. But the
court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not, for
it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread
under foot forty and two months. 3. And I will give power to my
two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and
threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. 4. These are the two olive
trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of earth.
5. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth,
and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he
must in this manner be killed. 6. These have power to shut Heaven,
that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over
waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all
plagues, as often as they will. 7. And when they have finished their
testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall
make war against them, and shall overthrow them, and kill them.
8. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which
spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was
crucified. 9. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and
nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall
not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. 10. And they that
dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and
shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented
them that dwell on the earth. 11. And after three days and an half
the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon
their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. 12. And
they heard a great voice from Heaven saying unto them, Come up
hither. And they ascended up to Heaven in a cloud; and their
enemies beheld them. 13. And the same hour was there a great
earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake
were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted,
and gave glory to the God of Heaven. 14. The second woe is past;
and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. 15. And the seventh
angel sounded; and there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The
kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. 16. And the four-and-twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, 17. Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. 18. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth."

There remained from the last chapter but one of the trumpets—the Seventh—not sounded: but previous to the sounding of it, and, it would appear as a continuation of the Sixth trumpet, or Second Woe, we have some matter of interest detailed.

At the commencement of chap. x. an angel descends from heaven:—"I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rain-bow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and he cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices"—(ver. 1, 2, 3.) Of the communication made by "the seven thunders" I am unable to speak, St. John having been forbidden to write them; but the message which the angel bears, and the announcement he comes to make, we see at verse 6, is "that there should be time no longer, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery
"of God should be finished, as He hath declared to his "servants the prophets." Where, I would suggest, we should render "there shall be delay no longer:" for though the word in the original translated "time" does indeed generally mean time, it is also frequently used to mean delay; and that this is the meaning here I think is obvious from what follows, where we find the things yet to be done, previous to the sounding of the seventh trumpet, are limited to a specified and short time. The meaning then is, that the seventh trumpet should be sounded without delay; an announcement thus solemnly made, with all the circumstances of power, to console the minds of the faithful of that day for the fearful events yet to happen and about to be mentioned. It will be borne in mind also that since the book of the Revelation opened with the signs of the Lord's coming there has been a considerable delay. Judgment has followed upon judgment, and "the end is not yet;" and this may serve to explain why the assurance contained in this proclamation may be so needful at this time.

The Apostle goes on to say of the little book in the hand of the angel that he was directed to take and eat it, which should prove "sweet in his mouth," but as soon as eaten "bitter;" which brings to mind a parallel transaction, mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel, at the end of chap. ii.

* So the words are rendered by a great number of commentators: "Non diu erit quin arcanum Dei impleatur" (Grotius); and to the same purpose Hammond, Brightman, Wakefield, Doddridge, and Vitringa, mentioned by Dr. Todd.
and beginning of chap. iii. where we read,—"And "when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; "and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; and he spread it "before me: and it was written within and without: "and there was written therein lamentations, and "mourning, and woe. Moreover, he said unto me, Son "of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go "speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my "mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he "said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and "fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then "did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for "sweetness." The Lord in the preceding part of chap. ii. had given to the prophet Ezekiel a commission against the Jewish nation, and thus he is, as it were, inaugurated to his office: and so here in the case of St. John, as expressed in the words accompanying the giving of the book—"Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.” The book given to the Apostle proved moreover “bitter” when it was eaten, though it was “sweet” to the taste; doubtless, because, as in the case of the book given to Ezekiel, “there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe;” its subject being also judgment on apostacy, and the sufferings of God’s people, if the prophecy next following may be taken as an exponent of its contents.

Pursuant to his commission the Apostle adds, ch. xi.

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: he angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the
"temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." It will not, I think, be disputed that the natural inference from these words, and that which must strike an unprejudiced reader, is, that this commission concerns the Jewish nation. Does not every word mark the application? "The temple of God,"—"the altar,"—"the court without the temple,"—"the holy city," and the distinct mention of "the Gentiles" as treading it down? For, waiving the consideration of the "temple" and "altar," &c., if with any colour of reason we could allegorize the "holy city," when mentioned in verse 2 as trodden under foot, can we do so when we find it again mentioned in verse 8, as "the city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified?" Surely there is no ambiguity here; this is too express a definition to be evaded.

Notwithstanding this, the chapter has been allegorized: and so allegorized by some of the most eminent expositors as to exclude all reference or allusion to either the Jewish city or people! Thus, according to Mede, whose authority ranks perhaps highest, the inmost court "measured" denotes the primitive state of the Church walking according to the Divine rule, and as yet unprofaned; while the outward court "not measured," and with the holy city "given to be trodden under foot," he says, is to be referred to a period following the
expiration of the times of the measured court, and
denotes the Christian Church profaned by new idola-
tries, or the Antichristian apostacy (of the Roman
Church) to last 42 months, or 1260 days, which, of
course, he makes years. The "two Witnesses," accord-
ing to him, are the true asserters and interpreters
of Divine truth during the period of this corruption of
the Church: their death is a figure of the cessation of
their testimony: the city "where our Lord was cruci-
fied" is Rome! and "the street of the city," where the
witnesses lie dead, is the region and whole territory
subject to this city!* The "three days and half"
during which they lie dead are three years and half,
and their resurrection figurative in like manner as their
death! Some variety indeed exists among exposi-
tors, particularly as to "the witnesses," some, with
Bishop Newton, considering that the measuring of the
Temple 'alludes more particularly to the Reformation,'
and the outer court, abandoned to the Gentiles, the ma-
jority of Christians continuing in idolatry and super-
stition: that the "two witnesses" represent the
collective body of Protestant believers, and their death
is yet future:—while others, as Faber, Cunninghame,
Fry, &c., consider that the Waldenses and Albigenses
fulfilled the prophecy,—that their death was accom-
plished in the triumph of the Papacy over them, while
their resurrection took place in the revived attestation

* 'The city in which figuratively our Lord was crucified afresh,' (Elliott). Truly anything can be made of Scripture so altered and interpolated.
to the truth which ended in the Reformation. In short, here again modern expositors, in explaining the chapter, go on the principle of its being an allegory from beginning to end, representing certain events in the history of the Gentile Church: but what those events are is, as usual, a subject of much difference of opinion; the only point, indeed, on which they are universally agreed being (as in the case of the sealed remnant in chap. vii.) the only point on which, I repeat it, any unprejudiced reader of the chapter must form a different opinion, viz.—that Jerusalem and the Jewish nation have no concern with it! We are, however, prepared, from the portion of this prophecy which we have already considered, in which the Jewish nation have borne a prominent part, to find that they may be concerned in this chapter also; and therefore, still adhering to the more literal interpretation, I would, in this view of the chapter before us, offer a few remarks upon it.

That the Temple of Jerusalem will be rebuilt on the return of the Jews to their land I have elsewhere shown in considering the prophecies of the latter event, and of the coming of the Anti-Christ (or in his relation to them the Anti-Messiah), who there shall assert his blasphemous pretensions, and there "come to his end," destroyed by the brightness of the Lord's coming in the power and glory of the true Messiah.* We have also seen from this book that at this time the Lord will have a select number of true worshippers among the Jewish nation, even that remnant of the servants of God sealed out of all the

* See 'Lectures on the Second Advent,' II. III. IV.
tribes of Israel; and this commission to "measure the "temple (or rather "the sanctuary," ναὸν, see Luke, i. 9), "and the altar, and them that worship therein," would seem to be only another way of expressing this fact and the care God has of these his servants: while in the direction—"the court which is without the temple (or "sanctuary") leave out, and measure it not, &c." is implied that the rest of the people, all except those so particularly specified, shall either willingly or from fear yield themselves to the power which shall then hold possession of Jerusalem.

"And the holy city shall they" (the Gentiles) "tread under foot* forty and two months." Who the Gentiles are, here mentioned, we are told farther on in this chapter, even "they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations," leagued with "the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit" (or "abyss"), verse 7, 9, whose history is given after in chap. xiii. and who will thus accomplish the prophecy of Daniel, (chap. xi.) of "the king who shall do according to his will," and "shall prosper until that the indignation" (against Israel) "be accomplished."

Into his hand shall the Jewish people and their city be given for the period of "42 months," or 1260 days, (i. e. "three years and a half," according to the Jewish reckoning,) or "a time, times, and half a time"—in which three different ways this same period is expressed:

* Rather perhaps "shall tread," that is, walk its streets and occupy it (πατήσωσιν, not κατα-πατήσωσιν), and so in the parallel passage Luke, xxii. 24.
and as this is the time of the Lord's last great controversy with the nation, by which He designs finally to prove them, while "the deceivableness of unrighteousness" works on the one hand, on the other, He raises up, as this chapter next informs us, a testimony among them to the truth:—"And I will give power to my "two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand "two hundred and threescore days" (the "forty-two months" of ver. 2), "clothed in sackcloth." Who now are these "Two Witnesses?"

Expositors having hitherto taken for granted, as aforesaid, that the Jewish nation has no interest in this prophecy, and that it is part of a prophetic history of the Gentile Church, have not been able to find any two individuals whom this description would suit, and hence they have been compelled to resort to such interpretations as have been instanced, in the advancing of which, instead of elucidating the text, their chief labour has been to endeavour to reconcile it; while, even on the supposition that the chapter is a succession of figures, they find it impossible to shew of what figurative.

But reading the description literally, and barely admitting the possibility of the fulfilment being future, have we, I ask, no precedent for understanding it of two individuals? They are described in two ways, first by symbol, and secondly by their power and actions.

First, by symbol—"These are the two olive-trees, "and the two candlesticks (or "lamp-stands"), standing "before the God of the earth." Now this, which commentators have dwelt on as the great proof that two
churches are meant, is a decisive proof that they are not churches, but persons. For though a candlestick has been employed in this book to symbolise a church (as in the instance of the "seven golden candlesticks," which we are told represented "the seven churches of Asia," ch. i. 20), the reference is here to a passage which determines the application to two individuals. The passage is the fourth chapter of Zechariah, the whole of which it is important to read:—

"And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep. 2. And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold, a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps which are upon the top thereof; 3. And two olive-trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. 4. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? 5. Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. 6. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, 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. 7. 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. 8. Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. 10. For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth. 11. Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick, and upon the left side thereof? 12. And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive-branches, which, through the two golden pipes, empty
"the golden oil out of themselves? 13. And he answered me and "said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. "14. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by "the Lord of the whole earth."

Here we find that "a golden Candlestick" is shown to the prophet, such as stood in the tabernacle, with its "bowl," and "seven lamps and pipes;" and "by it "two olive trees, one on the right side of the bowl, and "the other upon the left" (ver. 2, 3); the use of which "olive trees" is afterwards stated to be to feed the lamp with oil, through "two golden pipes" (ver. 12). And as the vision was evidently given to encourage Zerubbabel, and also Joshua, whom we find mentioned as his coadjutor in the preceding chapter in the work of rebuilding the temple of which the foundation was then but laid (ver. 9, &c.), and with it reviving the Jewish Church, we may conclude that the "Candlestick" typified that church, as did "the olive-trees" Zerubbabel and Joshua, who were ministering hope and consolation to it in its then low estate; and, in this view, the intention of the reference to this vision in the description of the Witnesses is to signify that, at the period of the Jewish history here contemplated—at a time when the nation shall be again in similar or more reduced circumstances, their city being given into the possession of the Gentiles —God will raise up two, of whom Joshua and Zerubbabel were but types, such will be their power and the works they shall achieve, who will encourage the afflicted remnant, and by their testimony accomplish the joint purpose of keeping them in the truth, and
consummating the iniquity and condemnation of their oppressor. In the one case two individuals are intended, and therefore, we infer, in the other. But,

Secondly, and still more conclusive on this point, are the actions here ascribed to the Witnesses, ver. 5, 6—“And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.” Now, these are the actions, partly of Moses when a witness for God against Pharaoh,—that remarkable type of the last Antichrist and last and greatest enemy of Israel,—and partly the actions of the prophet Elijah when he witnessed against Ahab and the worshippers of Baal, at the time when his complaint was that the altars of the Lord were broken down, and his prophets slain with the sword, and the children of Israel had forsaken the covenant of their God, and he thought himself to be the only one of the faithful remaining; though even then, he is informed, there was a remnant of seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal, even as, at the time we here read of, there will be a remnant of 144,000 sealed servants of God. Is it then said that the Witnesses have power over the waters to turn them to blood, and smite the earth (or land) with all plagues as often as they will? So did Moses “turn the waters of Egypt to blood,” and “smote the land with all
plagues.” And again, is it said of the Witnesses,—
"And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of
their mouth, and devoureth their enemies, and if any
man will hurt them, he must in this manner be
killed?”—so we know did Elijah cause fire to come
down from heaven to destroy the soldiers of the King of
Israel sent to arrest him, and that merely by his word,
so that fire might well be said to “proceed out of his
mouth.” And again—“These have power to shut
heaven, that it rain not in the days of their pro-
phhecy?”—this also did Elijah when he said to Ahab,
“As the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand,
there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but
according to my word:” and, what is more remark-
able, “the heaven was shut up” then “THREE YEARS
AND SIX MONTHS” (1 Kings, xviii. 1, with Luke, iv.
25, and James, v. 17), the same period during which
the Witnesses prophesy clothed in sackcloth,—“1260
days.”* And again, then, we conclude that these hav-
ing been the actions of individuals, even of Moses and
Elias, and the Witnesses being described by the same
actions, they are individuals also.† An after-question
and second consideration is,—What individuals? And
to this I answer—(observing, at the same time, that the

* It is remarkable that the same was also the period of the
Saviour’s testimony to the nation at his first Advent.
† Dr. Todd (whose Lecture on this chapter is well worthy of
attention) remarks, as an additional argument for the personality
of the Witnesses, that, in no other passage, either in the Old or New
Testament, are the words “witness” (μαρτύρω) and “prophet” applied
otherwise than to individuals or persons.
interpretation of the prophecy would in no wise be affected, though we are unable to answer the question) — I believe them to be the same pointed out by the description, even Moses and Elias, who for this testimony shall be again sent to Israel: whence also—as not then for the first time so commissioned—the Lord designates them “My two Witnesses.” The objection, indeed, will be raised,—How can these things be? How can Moses and Elias come again to earth to testify against Antichrist? And again, I say, were this left utterly unexplained, it were no reason that we should admit a doubt that the Witnesses are individuals, or be driven to allegorize, in the manner usually done, the whole of this chapter.

It is by no means the case, however, that we are without any intimation as to how this may be. For it is remarkable with respect to both these individuals—both Moses and Elias, that there was in their end something very peculiar. Of Elijah it is known that he did not die, he was taken up to heaven; and whether or not with a view to his reappearance we may judge from the prophecy of Malachi, last chapter:—“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth (or land) with a curse:” that is, to do what he did formerly in the days of Ahab. He was then the reformer of Israel, by testifying openly against the prophets of Baal, and exposing their idolatry: and
this he will yet again be—he will restore to the faith of their "fathers" their apostate and degenerate "children," and thus prevent complete destruction being visited on the nation. Which is confirmed—both the second coming of Elijah and this its object (not contradicted, as some would say)—by the words of the Lord Jesus when, descending from the Mount of Transfiguration, where he had been seen with Moses and Elias, his disciples asked him, "Why say the Scribes that Elias must first come?" as though they had said (mistaking this appearing of Elijah for that spoken of by Malachi), 'You have come first, and Elijah has only now been revealed.' The Lord Jesus thus answers,—"Elias truly shall first come and restore all things" (Matt. xvii. 11). Observe, He admits that he should again come, and before himself, and so confirms the doctrine of the Scribes deduced from the prophecy of Malachi; whilst at the same time he informs them that Elijah had come already, in a certain sense—"But I say unto you that Elias is come already," i. e. in the person of John the Baptist: "then understood they that he spake to them of John the Baptist" (13). I say, in a certain sense, because it will be remembered that in answer to the question, "Art thou Elias?" addressed to John, He said, "I am not" (John, i. 21). Both sayings are then true; Elias has first come, and shall first come; so preceding the coming of Christ in both instances—in spirit then; in person hereafter—whether as one of the witnesses or not.

With respect to Moses (whose are the other actions
here mentioned), he also was a great reformer of Israel at another period, and witnessed against their greatest oppressor; and his end was also peculiar. It is true we are told that he died, but there is, notwithstanding, a mystery respecting his end which remains to be accounted for. It is said in the same passage which mentions his death (Deut. xxiv. 5, 6), that "the Lord buried him," and that "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day;" and then in the epistle of Jude, ver. 9, we find mention of "Michael the arch-angel contending with the Devil about the body of Moses;" added to which is the fact that he appeared in the body with Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration. Without, then, pretending to speak positively on this point, I only say that less evidence than is afforded by these circumstances would be a warrant for believing it not impossible that Moses is meant here as well as Elias, and that he shall reappear with him; though, I would again repeat, the general scope of the passage is not in the least affected by our decision as to the particular individuals intended. (H.)

It is added at ver. 7, "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overthrow them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." That Jerusalem is here intended, it has been already remarked, should never have been matter of doubt after so marked a specifica-
tion as "the city where our Lord was crucified;" and the currency which the exposition of the city as Rome, and "the street" of it as a district of the Roman empire, has obtained, is only a melancholy instance of what preconceived systems and the authority of names will do, in carrying the most tortured senses of Scripture in opposition to its plain and obvious import. No less definitive is the note—"which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt," of the city addressed by the prophet Isaiah in the words—"Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom" (ch. i. 10), and whose besetting sin, and worst mark of apostacy, we learn, was "trusting in the shadow of Egypt, and strengthening themselves in the strength of Pharaoh" (ch. xxx. 1, 2). And last—the death of the Witnesses is, as might be expected, a circumstance which gives no little trouble to the expositor who understands them to mean the Law and the Gospel, the Old and New Testament, the Albigenses and Waldenses, &c.

It is added, "And they of the people, and kindreds, "and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies "three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead "bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell "upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make "merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because "these two prophets tormented them that dwelt upon "the earth." Here another objection is made,—How, it is asked, is it possible that all people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, could thus "see the dead bodies" of the Witnesses, if we suppose them to be
individuals, and if they lie dead only three natural days and a half? Or again, How, as further stated, could "they that dwell on the earth" be cognizant of the fact of their death, so as thus simultaneously to rejoice because of it? As to the first, however, it is to be observed, that it is only said "they of the people and kindreds, and tongues, and nations"—that is those of the Gentiles, out of all nations, who hold at the time possession of the Jewish land, and tread the holy city. These of course would see the dead bodies of the Witnesses. And then, as to ver. 10,—"They that dwell "upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make "merry, and shall send gifts one to another," I incline strongly to think we should read "the land," for "the earth" (which the original equally admits), because we have seen that Jerusalem is the scene of the Witnesses' testimony, and the prophecy immediately concerns the Jewish nation. But even if we should understand "the earth," whatever force there might have been, some years since, in this objection, we, in this day, have seen enough of the progress made in the expediting of international communication, to remove any difficulty on this head.

Verse 11, 12,—"And after three days and an half "the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and "they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon "them which saw them. And they heard a great voice "from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. "And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their "enemies beheld them." By this act of slaying the
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Witnesses, the Antichrist, or "Man of sin," shall have consummated his iniquity; and their revival is the signal of his approaching doom. The first intimation of which seems to be given ver. 13,—"And the same "hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth "part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain "of men seven thousand: and the remnant were "affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." But it is plainly stated in the two next verses;—"The "second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh "quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there "were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of "this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and "of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

It has been already said, that the prophecy we have been considering would seem to be part of the sixth trumpet, or "second woe," and this is confirmed by its being now said (ver. 14), "the second woe is past, and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly:" the subject of which third woe is then stated in the words which follow—"The kingdoms of this world are become the "kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall "reign for ever and ever:" a "woe" to the world— "they of the peoples, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations," the persecutors of the Lord's Witnesses and people, mentioned above, ver. 9; though a joy to the faithful, who, in the signs of the Lord's coming, will see their redemption drawing nigh, as we learn from the ascription of praise which follows from the twenty-four elders, ver. 16-18:—"And the four-and-twenty elders,
"which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their "faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee "thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, "and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy "great power and hast reigned. And the nations "were angry (or "were wrath" ὧργίσθησαν), and Thy "wrath (ὁργή) is come, and the time of the dead, that "they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give "reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the "saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; "and shouldst destroy them that destroy the "earth."

Here then, I conceive, we turn over a new page of this prophetic history. All that we have considered of it, with the exception of the general signs of the Lord's coming given in the first Six Seals, treats of God's judicial dealing with the Jewish nation: but from this place we have the judgment of the Gentiles. The visitation and severe trial and purification of the Jewish people is at an end, and now we have the judgment on their persecutors—the nations confederate against the Lord and his Christ, and, for His sake, against the nation over whom he comes to reign, and the city which is destined to be called his throne.

This is the order of the judgment of the Second Advent day:—Jerusalem must first drink of the cup of fury; but apostate Christendom shall drink of it after. Yea, Jerusalem shall but taste it, while the Gentile Antichristian confederacy shall wring out its dregs; and so has it been ordered in former prophecies: (See par-
ticularly Jer. xxv. 15–33.) A judgment only summarily mentioned here, to close the series of the Trumpets, which, we thus see, are synchronous with the Seals in their end: both issuing in the same event—"The great day of the wrath of the Lamb" (ch. vi. 17), and the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, consequent on the destruction of the Anti-Christian Confederacy.
LECTURE SIXTEENTH.

THE WOMAN AND DRAGON.

Revelation, Chapters xi. 19, and xii. and xiii.—"And the temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."

Chap. xii.—"And there appeared a great wonder in Heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; 2. And she being with child cried, travelling in birth, and pained to be delivered. 3. And there appeared another wonder in Heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. 4. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of Heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. 5. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. 6. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. 7. And there was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels. 8. And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in Heaven. 9. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10. And I heard a loud voice saying in
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Heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. 11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. 12. Therefore rejoice, ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. 13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. 14. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. 15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. 16. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. 17. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Although I stated at the close of last lecture that we should here turn over a new page in this prophetic history, and pass from the Jews to the Gentiles, yet it is not now in variance with that opinion that I say, that under the emblem with which this new vision opens is still represented the Jewish people: for, it will be recollected that it was in reference to judgment this was said: that the judgment of the Jewish nation was at an end, and that the judgment on the Gentiles, the Anti-Christian confederate nations, was at hand. But we are not therefore to lose sight henceforth of Israel. On the contrary, we are now to contemplate that people as having arrived at the point to which all the preceding judgments were tending: we are to view them in the
character in which, as yet, we have least seen them,—as the Church; as again recognized and taken into favour by their God, and their history identified with His truth and cause. But while Israel's history is thus kept up, there is here begun the history and development of that consummation of the Gentile apostacy—of which tyranny over Israel is a principal feature—and which is preparatory to the detail of the judgments upon it next to follow. Besides, as already intimated, this chapter and the next are not a continuation of the prophecy (strictly speaking), but a recapitulation in part of the matter, and retracing of the time occupied in the preceding chapter (xi.), in order to give a full account and description of the power there mentioned as slaying the Witnesses, which in that chapter, being the history of the Witnesses themselves, could not be so well introduced. This appears at once from the fact, that the period of time assigned to chapter xi. is also the period in which the events of chapters xii. and xiii. occur. Thus on referring to xi. 2, 3, we find that the time for which the Witnesses prophesy and Jerusalem is trodden down is "1260 days," or "42 months," the same period afterwards assigned in chapter xii. to the events of which it treats,—the flight of the woman and her stay in the wilderness (compare verses 6, 14):—and again in chapter xiii. to the power and reign of the Beast (see verse 5); which Beast, moreover, is evidently, the same mentioned in chapter xi. 7; while a further synchronism will be observed of the reign of terror of the Beast and the unprecedented persecution in his times.
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(ch. xiii.), with the persecution under the Fifth Seal and "the great tribulation" of ch. vii. (I.)

Proceeding then to the consideration of the vision, it is to be premised that it commences with the last verse of chapter xi., which should be read in connexion with chapter xii., inasmuch as it introduces a scene totally different from that presented to us in chapter xi. There the scene was Earth, and in particular Judea and Jerusalem: but at verse 19 the scene changes, for we read,—"And the Temple of God was opened in heaven, &c." while the same is the scene of the vision of chapter xii. which, evidently in continuation, thus commences —"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, &c." Where—in this last verse of chap. xi.—I would say we have also a distinct intimation that the Jewish people are concerned in the vision which follows—in the mention of "the Ark of the Testament" (or "Covenant") seen in "the Temple opened in heaven," or rather, as before, "the Sanctuary," including also "The most holy place" (ναὸς; See Matt. xxvii. 51, Gr. and comp. Heb. ix. 3, 4). For though expositors assume as a matter of course that the passage is altogether figurative, intending nothing more than to set forth, by an illustration taken from the Jewish temple, the nearer access to God which the church of this dispensation enjoys, I am of opinion it may yet prove more literal than they think. Respecting "the Ark" there is certainly much mystery, there being no authentic record of what became of it when the first temple was destroyed, and the nation was carried captive to Babylon; but a tradition of the Jews records that the Lord had it
secreted, and would not suffer it to fall into the hands of the heathen, as we find from a passage in the second book of Maccabees, chap. ii. which, though Apocryphal, is, to say the least, very interesting, and it is difficult to believe should have had no foundation in truth; especially considering the sacredness of that most holy of the holy things belonging to the worship of God. The passage is as follows, ver. 4:

"It was also contained in the same writing," (the 'records' mentioned ver. 1), "that the prophet (Jeremiah) being warned of God, commanded the Tabernacle and the Ark to go with him, as he went forth into the mountain where Moses climbed up and saw the heritage of God. And when Jeremy came thither, he found a hollow cave, wherein he laid the Tabernacle and the Ark, and the altar of incense, and so stopped the door. And some of those that followed him came to mark the way, but they could not find it, which when Jeremy perceived he blamed them, saying, As for that place it shall be unknown until the time that God gather his people again together, and receive them unto mercy. Then shall the Lord shew them these things, and the glory of the Lord shall appear, and the cloud also, as it was shewed unto Moses, and as when Solomon desired that the place might be honourably sanctified."

But, however this be, I think that "the holy place" being here "opened" to the Apostle, and there being seen in it "the Ark of the Covenant," as it were discovered after having been lost or concealed for so long time, is, at the least, significant of God entering again into covenant with the Jewish nation; or, in the words of the quotation, of the arrival of 'the time that God will gather his people again together, and receive them unto mercy:' as, in any other view of it, this circumstance cannot well be accounted for.

This being premised, two "wonders" appear in heaven: and—
I. First—"There appeared a great wonder" (or "sign," οὐσίατοον) "in Heaven, a woman clothed with "the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her "head a crown of twelve stars." What is signified by this emblem? I say 'emblem:' for, as to the supposi-
tion of some few that the Mother of Jesus is intended, it is utterly irreconcileable with the events recorded of this woman—the dragon's persecution of her—her flight into the wilderness from him, and stay there for 1260 days—his persecution meantime of "the remnant of her seed," &c. While, again, the more general applica-
tion to the Christian Church is equally precluded by this last circumstance; for how can the church (the woman) be in safety from the dragon, and its members (the remnant of her seed) at the same time exposed to his power? We look, then, to the Scriptures for an interpretation, and, I think, we find there one in every respect consistent, not only with this vision, but with its context, in the use of the same emblem on another occasion. I allude to one of the prophetic dreams of Joseph, Gen. xxxvii. 9—"And he dreamed yet another "dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, "I have dreamed a dream more; behold, the sun and "the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. "And he told it to his father, and to his brethren; and "his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is "this dream that thou hast dreamed? shall I and thy "mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow ourselves "to thee to the earth?" In this passage "the sun, moon, and eleven stars" ("twelve," including Joseph
himself) are decidedly emblematical of the Jewish nation; and while at no time should we seek for new accommodations of a Scriptural emblem without reason, we are in the present instance the less prompted to do so, when we find the emblem in such close connexion with other symbols relating to that people—namely, "the Temple," and "the Ark of the Covenant." Zion is then personified: Zion at the time when "her light is come," according to the address which we find made to her, Isaiah, lx. 1,—"Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall rise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Zion, no longer "the woman forsaken and grieved in spirit," but recognized again as "the married wife" (Isaiah, liv. 4–6), and accordingly invested with "strength," and having already put on her "beautiful garments:"
"The King's daughter all glorious in herself:" "The Queen arrayed in gold of Ophir" (Psalm, xlv. 9, 13)—"upon her head a crown of twelve stars."
"And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered" (verse 2). The woman being emblematical, so is this her travail; and accordingly, still determined to find the fulfilment in the past, expositors (with the exception of those who take this passage literally, and suppose that it alludes to the birth of Christ into the world at his first coming) for the
most part agree that here again the struggle is prefigured which took place in order to the establishment of Christianity by the subversion of Paganism in the Roman Empire.* Rather, I would say, it is the "bringing in again" (the second time) "of the first begotten into the world" that is here intended (Heb. i. 6, Gr.); which I conceive is clearly intimated, ver. 5—"She brought forth a man child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron:" a quotation from Psalm ii. ver. 9, of which the reference is undoubtedly to the time when, the last confederacy of the nations being broken, Christ shall have "the heathen for his inheritance," and be set as "King on the holy hill of Zion." And if it be asked, How does this interpretation of the birth of the child agree with that just given of the woman? or, What connexion is there between the Jewish nation considered as represented by the woman, and the Lord's Second Advent as the event typified by the birth of the child? I answer, that there is a most important and necessary connexion, and one stated by the Lord himself, when, in his parting address to the Jewish nation (quoted on a former occasion) he said,—"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye

* So, with some slight variation in the details, Bishop Newton, Mede, Cunningham, and Elliott: the first and last of whom see in "the dragon" the Roman Pagan Empire (though expressly stated to be "the Devil" and "Satan," ver. 9); and in Constantine the "Man-child." Faber resorts again to the Waldenses and Albigenses to explain the "Man-child," as before "The Two Witnesses."
"shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of "the Lord." (Matt. xxxiii. 38, 39.) He in these words declares that, rejected then by "his own" people, he would go away and not come again to them, until they should be ready to receive him and welcome his approach: for, that to this event the Lord refers, and not to his riding into Jerusalem (when this cry was raised by some who followed), is evident from the fact that these words occur at the end of chap. xxxiii., just before the prophecy of his Second Coming in chap. xxxiv., while the account of his entry into Jerusalem occurs two chapters before, viz. xxi. 1-10. As long, then, as the period of Israel's blindness continues, so long the Lord will delay his coming, and, therefore, the first sign of his coming—the budding of the fig-tree that announces the approach of summer,—will be a commencement on the part of certain of that nation to look for him, when, in the words of the Apostle, using this same metaphor, "Christ shall be formed in them as the hope of glory." (Gal. iv. 19; Col. i. 27.)

If, however, any doubt remain as to this being the true solution of this "sign," it is at once decided by another prophecy, in which its application to Israel, and in reference to the same event— the Lord's coming, is unquestionable: I mean Isaiah, lxvi. There, at the 5th verse, a persecuted remnant of that people is thus addressed,—

"Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city, a
"voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies."

Here the reference to the Lord's second appearing is plain, as also that it shall be to the joy of a believing remnant of Israel, and now mark the terms in which that remnant is described, ver. 7-9:

"Before" (or "so soon as") "she travailed she brought forth; before her pain came she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such a thing? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God."

That is,—shall the Lord create the expectation of his coming in his people's minds, and lead them to conceive that blessed hope, and afterwards not realize it? He will assuredly do so and that speedily—he will hasten his coming in answer to their cry. The sequel pursues the same emblem to describe Jerusalem as again the mother-church of the world, confirming the application of the whole to the Second Advent, ver. 10-16:

"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her; 11. That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. 12. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. 13. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. 14. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb; and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. 15. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger..."
"with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. 16. For by fire, "and by his sword, will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain "of the LORD shall be many."

II. We proceed to the next wonder:—"And there "appeared another wonder (or "sign") in heaven; and "behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten "horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his "tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did "cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before "the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to "devour her child as soon as it was born" (Rev. xii. 3, 4). That the "great dragon" here is none other than Satan himself so represented is evident from verse 9 of this chapter, where it is said, "the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan." He is here seen by the apostle "in heaven;" but in the character in which he is about to be manifested on earth, as detailed in the conclusion of this and the 13th chapter; just as the woman, seen also "in heaven," represents there the Jewish people as at that time on earth. He is described with "seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads," which mark him as "the Prince of this world;" for it is a remarkable fact, that all the powers of this world spoken of in Scripture as opposed to the Messiah and his kingdom, have been previously represented in prophecy by "seven heads and ten horns." In chap. vii. of the prophet Daniel, for instance, we find that all the Anti-Christian power of the earth, up to the time of the Lord Jesus Christ's Second Advent, is distributed into four kingdoms, repre-
sented by Four Beasts, which the prophet saw successively rise up; which four Beasts have among them "seven heads." Thus, verse 4, "the first was like a Lion,"—one head: verse 5, "And, behold, another "Beast, a second like to a Bear,"—one head: verse 6, "After this I beheld, and lo! another, like a Leopard: "which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; "the Beast had also four heads,"—which, with the two preceding, make six heads: and then, verse 7, "After "this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth "Beast" (one more head), thus completing the number of "seven heads;" with the addition in this last of "ten horns:" while, that this vision extends to the Second Advent of Christ, appears from verse 9,—"I beheld till "the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days "did sit," and then (verse 13), "I saw in the night "visions, and behold, one like unto the Son of man came "with the clouds of heaven, ... and there was given Him "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, "nations, and languages should serve Him, &c." I say then that, all the political Anti-Christian powers of this world being comprised under these "seven heads and ten horns," when we see Satan appear as "a great red "Dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven "crowns upon his heads," we see him only with his proper characteristics as "Prince of this World."

But the question occurs, Why such hostility manifested by the Dragon to the woman?—and we are not at any loss to assign the reason. The woman, I have said, represents the Jewish nation, pregnant with the
expectation of the Coming of the Lord, that coming which has for its object “to bruise the Serpent’s head”—to overthrow his seven-headed, ten-horned power, and to make the kingdoms of this world His own. This we must suppose is known to Satan. He knows that the kingdoms which he has usurped have been promised to and will be asserted by Christ; and that, moreover, in connexion with this promise it is predicted that “Mount Zion” will be the seat of His throne, and His kingdom will be distinctively “the kingdom of Israel;” and, knowing this, he sees in the Jewish nation conceiving the hope of Messiah’s appearing, an omen of the extinction of his power, and therefore directs all his rage and power against that people in order to extirpate them, and, by so doing, anticipate the Kingdom of Christ. Just as we read of Herod that, when he heard the language of expectation,—“Where is he that is born King of the Jews?”—he sent forth, and slew all the male children in Bethlehem, from fear that his throne should be taken from him, so Satan, perceiving the inquiry arise in the minds of the Jews respecting Christ’s appearing, knows that it is the sign of Messiah’s coming to reign, and trembles for his power, trembles for his throne, and seeks to effect the extermination of the people, among whom and to whom it is foretold He shall be manifested.

“The child,” we are told, “is caught up to God, and to his throne,” which I think is simply intended to convey the entire failure of this attempt of Satan to prevent the kingdom of Christ; intimating however, that it is yet delayed for a short time, during which “the
woman flees into the wilderness." Of this I shall speak when we come to verse 14, and at present pass on to verse 7.*

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his "angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon "fought and his angels." I take this war in heaven to be literal, and so taking it we shall find the sense of the passage far more satisfactory than according to any other interpretation which can be given of it. In illustration I would remark, that it was the belief of the ancient Jews that every kingdom and nation was presided over by spiritual powers, angels evil or good as the case might be: and though this may sound strange to our ears at first, yet it cannot be denied that there is considerable warrant for the opinion in the Scriptures. Thus in Daniel, x. 12, where an angel appears to him to reveal the destinies of his people in the latter days, he says, "Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst "set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself "before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come "for thy words. But the Prince of the kingdom of "Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, "Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and "I remained there with the kings of Persia." And

* Dr. Todd suggests, as a more satisfactory interpretation, that the "man-child" may represent a chosen remnant of the Jewish people—the sealed of ch. vii.—to whom it shall be granted to "rule the nations with a rod of iron," according to our Lord's promise, ch. ii. 27; and who shall be placed out of the reach of the dragon watching for their destruction, by being literally "caught up to God"—translated before Christ's coming. See the mention of them again ch. xiv.
again, verses 20, 21, "Then said he, Knowest thou "wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return "to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am "gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I "will show thee that which is noted in the Scripture "of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in "these things, but Michael your prince." See now chapter xii. 1, where, in reference to the fall of the Anti-Christ, Israel's last enemy, we read as follows: —"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth up for the children of thy people:" —in which we have not only a comment on "the war in heaven" in the chapter before us, in the distinct statement of the relation of the heavenly to the earthly powers; ("Michael" being represented as the angel or "Prince" interposing on behalf of the Jewish nation, and in doing so conflicting with two others similarly related to other kingdoms, namely, "the Prince of Persia" and "the Prince of Grecia"), but also another and decisive proof that the Jewish nation is represented by the woman, in the opposition to the Dragon being headed by their Prince. (Compare also Matt. xviii. 10, which countenances the belief in guardian angels in the case of individuals also.)

Another opinion of the Jewish writers somewhat connected with this is, that everything done in earth which concerns the people of God and his kingdom, has a correspondent transaction in the court of heaven; and this opinion, it must be admitted, is also not without its warrant in Scripture. See for example, 1 Kings, xxii.
where the prophet Micaiah, exposing the counsel given by the false prophets to the king of Israel, and prophesying to him his death and ruin, thus speaks,—“Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said," Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.” (ver. 19–22.) Where we have not only a transaction on earth, in the court of the king of Israel, accounted for by a corresponding transaction in the court of heaven; but an undoubted confirmation of another fact important to the interpretation of the vision before us, namely, the fact of the admission of evil spirits and of Satan himself into heaven: though indeed the distinction between "heaven" and "earth" in this chapter is so marked as to put it beyond doubt that heaven is here literally meant:—see ver. 9, where Satan, "cast out of heaven," is "cast into the earth;" and again, ver. 10, "The accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God night and day:"—and again, ver. 12, "Therefore, rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them, woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the Devil is come down unto you," &c.
Compare also Job, i. 6, 7, where Satan accuses Job before the Lord in heaven.

It may indeed be objected that in this view we must admit Satan to have access all this while to heaven, and not yet to have been cast out:—and this is indeed the only question, and not the fact of his having had access to it at one time or another, which is indisputable. But, for my own part, I have no hesitation in saying that I believe we are seriously mistaken in supposing that Satan is already consigned to that place of hell where, when his time comes, he shall be bound and imprisoned. That time, we are distinctly told in this book, is at the commencement of the millennial reign of Christ: but at present he goeth through the earth, “as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” He is at large, and at liberty: yea, and still has access even to the court of heaven, as proved by the very purpose for which we are told this access is permitted him—“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven now is come the salvation, and the strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” We may surely ask those who doubt this fact—has this power of the Devil ceased, so that the church has no more to fear from it? And, if so, when? Is he indeed no longer rightly named “the Devil,” i.e., “the Accuser” (ἐίαβολος)? And again—Will they who say that this casting down of Satan from Heaven is but ‘a spirited symbolical representation of the complete victory of Christianity over Heathenism’ in the reign of
Constantine, maintain that then came, or even now is come, "the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ?"* Is Satan then no longer "the prince of the power of the air," as he is entitled in Ephes. ii. 2, and have we no longer need of the exhortation in the same epistle, chap. vi. 11, 12, "Put on the "whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand "against the wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not "against flesh and blood, but against principalities, "against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this "world (or age), against spiritual wickedness in high "places," or, as it is in the margin, "wicked spirits in "heavenly places?"†

To proceed—In this conflict with the prince of the Jewish people, at the eve of their restoration and of the coming of Christ, Satan being defeated and "cast out" of Heaven, the Heavens are called on to rejoice: but of earth it is said, "Woe to the inhabitants of the "earth and of the sea! for the Devil is come down "unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth "that he hath but a short time:" not that he had not power on the earth before, but now it is confined to, and

* This, which is Mede's opinion, has been adopted by Dr. Daubuz, Vitringa, Bp. Newton, Mr. Cunninghame, Mr. Elliott, &c. But Mr. Faber refers the war in heaven to the time of the Reformation, and says that "Michael and his angels" represent the Reformers, and "the Dragon and his angels" the apostate priesthood of the Roman Church.

† It may be mentioned that the passage in question was commonly understood in its literal sense by the Ancient Church; a witness to which fact we have in its being appointed to be read for the Epistle of the Festival of Michael and all Angels.
concentrated in it. His fall commences when he loses his station "in the heavenly places," after which, being limited to earth, and having allowed him but "a short time," he has "great wrath," of which the first instance and exemplification is given in the next verse, "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman," that is, the Jewish nation, against whom Antichrist in this his short reign will, for reasons before stated, direct all his malignity.

From which "great wrath" of the dragon, however, a providential escape is effected for her, as we see verse 14—"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle" (compare Exod. xix. 4; Deut. xxxii. 11), "that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time from the face of the serpent," which "time, times, and half," it is therefore to be inferred, is the "short time" of "great wrath." Compare also ver. 6, where the same period is written "a thousand two hundred and threescore days." A "short time," indeed, in its literal acceptation, though a very long time as arbitrarily explained by modern commentators—even a thousand two hundred and threescore years! And here we have another remarkable confirmation of the exposition of the emblem of the woman just offered; for, if that exposition be correct, it follows that the wilderness will again afford a shelter and refuge to Israel on their next deliverance, like as it did on the occasion of their first Exodus from Egypt: and accordingly, such an event we find actually predicted, Ezek.
xx. 35-38:—"And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

Intimating, moreover, that the former discipline in the wilderness will be reacted precisely—"like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt:" and with a like object—to "purge out from among them the rebels:" for we know that the great majority of those that left Egypt never reached Canaan, and so, it is here intimated that many of those who shall in the beginning be identified with the next restoration shall come short of the promised rest. The same event, also foretold by Hosea, chap. ii. 14, 15, where, speaking of the Jewish nation under the symbol of a wife, the Lord says, "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her, and I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." The first place that Israel pitched in the land of Canaan was Achor, nigh to Jericho, where, moreover, they were purged of
the "accursed thing;" and so complete will be the parallel in the next Exodus that it is here said, "she "shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as "in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."

The dragon being thus foiled in his attempt to destroy the woman, it is added, "And the serpent cast "out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, "that he might cause her to be carried away of the "flood." This "flood" probably means an host of armies which will be sent forth after them, just as Pharaoh sent forth his armies and pursued the Israelites when they escaped from his tyranny in Egypt, which armies God destroyed by bringing the waters to the help of his people; and something similar to this I conclude is intended when we are told (verse 16) "the earth "helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, "and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast "out of his mouth."

"The woman" herself having thus escaped, a new direction is given to the "great wrath" of the dragon, namely, against a "remnant of her seed:"—"And the "dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make "war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the "commandments of God, and have the testimony of "Jesus Christ:" chap. xii. 17. It has been mentioned as an objection to supposing the woman to be an emblem of the church, that there is a difficulty as to discrimi- nating between her and this "remnant of her seed." But on the supposition that she symbolises the Jewish nation this difficulty does not exist; for, the attentive
examiner of the prophecies of Israel's restoration will find that, while the great mass of the nation is restored by a second Exodus wonderfully analogous to the first, and subject to the discipline of the wilderness, "a remnant" in the land is meanwhile exposed to trial of another nature—"a third left in the land," of which it is said "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name and I will hear them; I will say, 'It is my people;' and they shall say, 'The Lord is my God:'" (Zech. xiii. 9.) And again, chap. xiv. 1, 2—"For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, &c., and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." That is, this will be a remnant of that first and partial self-effected restoration, which, I have attempted elsewhere to show,* forms one of the most striking features in Israel's future history as given to us in Scripture, and which is exclusive of the general restoration effected for them by the Lord, subsequent in point of time, and synchronous with his own advent and the destruction of the anti-Messiah, after that "the consumption and that determined shall have been poured upon the desolate;" a consumption, however, which in the end "overflows with righteousness" in the purification of this very remnant, which is afterwards reinforced by the accession of the fruits of the second Exodus.

* Lectures on the Second Advent.
To which I would now add, that we gather from the prophecy before us that this "remnant" is none other than "the 144,000 sealed," of whom we have already had mention: and who are now honoured to endure this great fight of affliction, to maintain the contest against and suffer persecution from the dragon in "the short time of his great wrath," as detailed in the next chapter (xiii.). I say this is to be inferred from the prophecy before us, for,—immediately after the detail of the power and acts of "the Beast" (the new form which the dragon assumes for this "war"), and his false prophet, which occupies ch. xiii.—in the first verse of chapter xiv. we are presented with the 144,000, standing on the mount Sion with the Lamb, their conflict over, singing the song of triumph, being taken from earth to attend upon the Lamb as a "first fruits" of a large company about to be gathered to Him. But of this more in its place.
LECTURE SEVENTEENTH.

THE BEAST AND FALSE PROPHET.

Revelation, Chap. xiii.—“And I stood upon the sand of the sea and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. 2. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. 3. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 4. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? 5. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies: and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 7. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. 8. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9. If any man have an ear, let him hear.
10. He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”

"11. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth, and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. 14. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. 15. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast or the number of his name. 18. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.”

On comparing the various Expositions of this book up to this place, the circumstance which most strikes the reader is the discrepancy of opinion which they present; of which some, but only a few, instances have been given in the course of the preceding Lectures. On this, however, and some of the following Prophecies, a greater unanimity exists among commentators, but whether with a better foundation remains to be seen.

I propose, first, to state the grounds for rejecting the received interpretation of the prophecy contained in chapter; and, secondly, briefly to shew what is import and object. And,
I. First—The received interpretation of this prophecy (that is, the interpretation which has obtained among most Protestant commentators since the Reformation,—for before that time the opinion of the Church was in substance that which I shall presently offer) is that the subject of the whole chapter is Rome Papal, but in two aspects, corresponding to the two visions or "beasts" here seen, viz. in its political and ecclesiastical character—the empire and the hierarchy of the Papacy."* This is in substance the view generally taken, and to this I say the chapter itself opposes a series of arguments the most clear and conclusive: of which,—

1. First—is to be noted the description of the Beast as at this time seen, viz. "having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns."

A "beast" or "monster," it is universally agreed, denotes an Antichristian or ungodly empire; as defined by the prophecies of Daniel, to whom under this emblem was exhibited, by four beasts successively arising, all Anti-christian power in the earth, from his own time till that period when the kingdoms of the world shall pass from this misrule under the rule of the Messiah, the Son of Man, at his coming in the clouds of heaven (Ch. vii.). I fully admit that the fourth of these beasts was the Roman empire, and that with it in its last state the Beast before us is identical; as it is also with the last state or division—the feet and ten toes—of the political image described in his 2nd chapter. This is

* See Bishop Newton, &c., &c. ]
evident, not only from the *ten-fold* division of the empire in all three cases, but, as respects the fourth beast of Daniel, from the circumstance that this Beast shewn to St. John unites in it the emblems of Daniel’s three first—the leopard, bear, and lion,—which, moreover, with the fourth, numbered exactly “seven heads,” as already shewn in last lecture.

But while I admit this, I deny that the state of the Roman empire symbolized here by the ten horns crowned, as well as the ten-fold division of this fourth empire in both prophecies of Daniel, has ever yet been realized; and for this simple reason, that, while such a division could not be matter of doubt or question had it taken place, the attempt of expositors to shew that the Roman empire has been so divided has utterly failed; of which it is proof sufficient, that even assuming the ten crowned horns to symbolise ten *kingdoms*, they are so far from being able to point out the ten, that, putting their different lists together, double or treble the number may as easily be made out. (K.)

I say, ‘assuming that the horns symbolize *kingdoms,*’ though the contrary is expressly stated by the interpreting angel, chap. xvii. 12, where we read that “the “ten horns are ten *kings,* which have received no king-
“dom as yet; but receive power *as kings* one hour (the “same hour or time) with the Beast:” and further, that they “have *one mind,* and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast,” ver. 13,—a plain proof that ten contemporaneous individual kings are intended, whose power begins and ends with themselves, and
whose history therefore embraces but a short time; whereas ten kingdoms may be extended through many centuries and generations, which is the reason that the word kingdoms has in this place, and in the parallel place in Daniel (ii. 44, and vii. 24), been substituted for "kings," as suiting better the system in question; though manifestly contrary also to the use of the symbols, which is uniformly to represent by beasts, kingdoms; and by horns, kings.

2. Second—Another and obvious objection presents itself in "the names of blasphemy on its heads," in this same verse,—that is, open and undisguised blasphemy, as we learn from verse 5, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies".... And again, ver. 6, "He opened his mouth in blasphemy "against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, "and them that dwell in heaven." For, without desiring in the least to palliate the errors of Romanism, I do say that this is not their proper character and designation.

The word indeed well designates the conduct of one who, like "the Man of sin" described by the apostle 2 Thess. ii. "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is "called God, or that is worshipped: so that he, as God, "sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that "he is God:" or one who, like the king in Daniel, xi. "shall do according to his will, and exalt "himself and magnify himself above every God, and shall "speak marvellous things against the God of gods:" but for the same reason that it does apply to all three, or to one whom all three denote—the wilful king of Daniel,
the "wicked one" or "man of sin" of St. Paul, and the "beast" in the vision before us,—it should, in candour, be allowed to be inapplicable to Romanism, the character of which is corruption and insidious perversion of the truth, in many instances, indeed, utterly subversive of it, but not that of daring and open-mouthed blasphemy.

3. Third—The power of the Beast, whether political or spiritual, as little agrees with the power of Rome Papal, great as that power has been. For, politically, such is his power that "all the world wonders after him," saying, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" ver. 3, 4; and again, ver. 5, "Power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." And, spiritually, it is said, ver. 2, that "the dragon"—that is, "the Devil and Satan," the dragon of ch. xii.—"gave him his power, his seat (or "throne") and great authority;" so that all the power of Satan in and over the world, of whatever character or form, is administered by this Beast: and further, "it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them," ver. 7. And to such extent does this his spiritual, as well as temporal, power extend, that "all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world:" ver. 8.

This last passage, indeed, ought to end the controversy: for in vain, it is needless to say, is proof sought that such is, or has been, the extent of the spiritual power of the Papacy; and that it shall yet be such (if any there who look for it) the signs of the times afford but
little promise—times when those who love the truth and tremble at the word of God have to deplore, not the increase of credulity and superstition, but the abounding on every side of a scepticism, or, as it prefers to be called, a rationalism, which, with a professed abhorrence of both, has already gone far to undermine the very foundations of faith, by explaining away all that is spiritual and supernatural in religion.

4. Fourth—The period allotted to this Beast—the time during which this his power continues, viz. "forty and two months," or "1260 days," ver. 5,—is another and decisive argument against the application of the prophecy to the Papacy, until, at least, it is proved that by a day is meant a year, and by a month thirty years, and by a year 360 years in this book. Not indeed that even on this supposition, and so extenuated, the period can be made to suit the duration of the Papacy: expositors here again differing not only by a few years, but by whole centuries, as to where it should be made to begin, and where end; and meanwhile, pending the settling of this question, another most momentous point being also in debate, namely, whether the saints are yet in the hands of the Beast, and given into his power, or are long since delivered from it! inasmuch as some say the 1260 years are long since ended, and the saints liberated; and others that in part they are yet unexpired; and (strange to say) the saints themselves unable to decide! (L.)

Of the wounding as it were to death of one of the heads of this Beast and its being healed afterwards,
which seems to end in triumph only confirmatory of his power and causing greater wonder to all the world, I do not pretend to speak positively, but pass—

5. Fifth,—from the first Beast to the second, ver. 11, or, as this Beast is elsewhere named, "The False Prophet" of the first (ch. xvi. 13; xix. 20): where again we have clear proof that this is not the priestly, as that the former is not the political, power of Rome Papal. Of this Beast it is written, that "he exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him, and causeth the earth, and them which dwell therein, to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed" (ver. 12): and how this power is exercised, and this influence obtained, the two next verses state:—"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had the power to do in the sight of the Beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the Beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live."

The word here rendered "wonders," in ver. 13, and "miracles," in ver. 14, is the same usually employed to denominate the miracles of the Lord Jesus and his apostles (σημεία), which fact, one should suppose, ought to make a commentator pause before he would assert that it is here used by the spirit of prophecy to denote only the foolish legends and pretended miracles, by which the Romish priesthood have often attempted to impose on the credulity of the poor and ignorant of their
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flocks: especially as in this passage some of those wonders are actually specified, viz. in one instance, no less a miracle than "making fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men;" and in another, "the "power to give life" (margin, "breath") "to the image of "the Beast, that the image of the Beast should speak" (ver. 15). It cannot be too strongly impressed on expounders of the Scripture, that whatever liberty of exposition they adopt, they are bound to grant the same to the infidel and enemy of truth: and if it serves their purpose on one occasion, for the support of a favourite system, to say that miracles, even when so specified as are these here, are mere delusions and cheats practised on the senses by dexterous impostors, it may serve the purpose of the sceptic, who has also his favourite system to support, to say that such impositions also were the miracles of the Saviour himself. But,—

Sixth—Though the power of the Beast has been already noticed, yet there is an addition to it here which forms a distinct argument—namely the exercise of this power in persecution; when we are told of this second Beast that "he has power," not only "to give life unto "the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast "should speak," but also, "to cause that as many as "would not worship the image of the Beast should be "killed:" and further, "he caused all, both small and "great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark "in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no "man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or "the name of the Beast, or the number of his name" (15-17). For, vaguely as commentators may speak
about the saints being given into the power of the Beast, as mentioned ver. 7, so vaguely as that they are not conscious of it, there is no vagueness in the words "to cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed"—that is, no less than the re-acting of the scene described in the book of Daniel, which I have no doubt was the type of this, when the proclamation of the King of Babylon went forth, summoning "all people, nations, and languages" of his vast dominions "to fall down and worship the golden image which he had set up;" with the sanction superadded—"And whoso falleth not down and wor-

shipeth, shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." Then, indeed, it might have been said, as here with respect to this Beast, ver. 10, "Here is the patience and faith of the saints;" who had to make up their minds either openly to abjure the faith, or, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to "resist unto blood striving against sin." That the church should be found deprecating such a day of trial as yet to come is not to be wondered at: but if the sure word of prophecy say that it shall come, in vain shall we seek to explain it away; and when, we may surely ask, has this prophecy been fulfilled? Popery has, indeed, been a cruel and relentless persecutor, as far as she had the power, but when has her power amounted to putting the alternative and to all without exception—"both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," —Worship or die? At all times have there been many who protested against her unharmed, and never more than at this present time, when her errors are publickly
attacked from pulpit and platform, and by some, who, though themselves living witnesses to the contrary, maintain that the saints are still in the power of the Beast. And then,—

Seventh, and Last,—What shall we say of "the mark" and "the name," and above all, of "the number of the Beast"—the number "666," of which an endless variety of readings and expositions have been suggested: by some applied to Pagan, and by some to Papal Rome,—by the Protestant to the Pope,—by the Papist to Luther,—and by others to Mahomet; and with much the same warrant in all cases—a mode of calculation by which this number might be made to apply to almost any system, power, or person. (M.)

To these objections, as is to be expected, others and equally conclusive will be added, when we trace the actings of the same power in other collateral prophecies; as, for instance, in one already considered, when in chapter xi. we read of "the two witnesses" being slain by this same Beast (ver. 7, compared with ch. xvii. 8); where it rests with those who make the Beast Popery to show how that prophecy of the witnesses, in all its particulars, has been or is being fulfilled on their supposition—a sufficiently difficult task, as the diversity of opinion proves.* And again, when we find, at the

* For example—some commentators make the witnesses the Old and New Testament;—others the Waldenses and Albigenses;—others Jerome of Prague, and John Huss, &c., &c. According to some, they still live; while others say they are dead, risen, and ascended. Some say that their death, &c., is figurative, others literal.
close of the book, this Beast heading the confederacy of the kings of the earth and their armies against Christ, at His appearing, it has to be shown that this is the time and manner of the end of Popery by those who, as do these same expositors, assert that it is also the "Babylon" of the Apocalypse, of which the end is previous in time and totally different in cause and manner — being destroyed by the same kings who afterwards give their power to this Beast, and in order that they may so aggrandize him. But space does not allow to follow up this argument further, and I hasten, therefore,—

II. In the second place, to the real question which this chapter suggests, which is—not whether as yet the prophecy has been fulfilled? for as to this, I must say, there should be no doubt with those who reverence the word of God, and fear to tamper with it, but—what is the end for which such a power, and the revelation of one with such pretensions shall be permitted? And to this question a very plain answer is given us, and one which forms another and incontrovertible argument against the received application. In a word, this monstrous incorporation of Satan's power—this embodying of "the energy of Satan with all power, and signs, and prodigies of falsehood"—is for the testing of the profession of Christendom;—first, indeed (as stated in former chapters), for "the accomplishing of the indignation" against Israel, and the visiting on that people "the consumption determined;" which, however (as also before shown), "shall overflow with righteousness," and
issue in "the return of a remnant to the mighty God," Dan. xi. 36; Isa. x. 20–23:—but secondly, for judgment on the Gentile professing church,—those (and they are the majority) "who have a name to live, and are dead," "the form of godliness, but deny its power," as we learn from this chapter, ver. 9, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the "Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world:" and still more plainly from that prophecy which I have already intimated, and all allow is a parallel to this—the prophecy of "the Man of Sin" and "Wicked One," in 2 Thess. ii., where, after an enumeration of the same features as here (viz. blasphemous usurpation of the place of God, "as God, sitting in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God,"—his "coming after the working" or "energy" (ἐνέργεια) "of Satan,"—his miracles, "all power, and signs (σημείως) and lying wonders" or "wonders of falsehood," wonders wrought for the support of lies, but yet real wonders—and "all "the deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that "perish") the cause is next assigned—"BECAUSE they "received not the love of the truth, that they might be "saved. And for this cause God shall send them "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that "THEY ALL might be DAMNED who believed not the "truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness:"* in

* See this prophecy considered at length, and also the subject of Satanic miracles, in Lecture Second of 'Lectures on the Second Advent,' Third Edition.
accordance with which we here read that certain and inevitable damnation is the award of all who are found connected with the Beast,— of all "who worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in their foreheads or in their hands" (ch. xiv. 9, 10). Is this true, again we ask, of all the adherents of Romanism? or, Does it not clearly point to a system such as Popery is not, nor ever has been—all-absorbing as regards unbelief and false profession, uniting and concentrating its now varied forms,—whether of Romanism, Protestantism, Deism, Arianism, Socinianism, Rationalism, in a word, Apostacy of every denomination.

Does any say, 'Impossible!—impossible that elements so discordant, and systems so opposed, as are these in many instances, could ever unite?' I answer, it is not so impossible as at first view appears; for, discordant though they be, they have one point of union, namely, opposition to the establishment of Christ's rule and kingdom in this world. Yea, and they have yet another and no less fearful principle in common, and in which many (may I not say the majority) of the most orthodox are agreed with them, I mean, resting their faith on the wisdom of man rather than on the testimony of God, and making external evidence the sole test of divine truth: forgetting that the Lord himself has told us that such evidence, even the evidence of prophecy and miracles, may be given in support of idolatry: Deut. xiii. 1-5. Let then, I say, such evidence be given—let one "come in his own name," and be but able to shew a sign, and we shall quickly have a union of things which now seem
most adverse; for the infidel will at once say, 'This is enough for me—to see a miracle is all I ever desired;' and the nominal orthodox Christian will say, 'And this ought to be enough for me, for if this evidence be denied, where is any other ground of belief:'—to say nothing of the sanction of the greatest political and temporal power ever possessed, which will compel many to worship, whether they believe or not. If then a consummation, at first sight improbable, be here foretold, so, I say, are the means for its accomplishment. For shall this be so? Then must there be in him who heads all up, the union of earthly power the most absolute, with supernatural power the most convincing—convincing (that is) to all the sole reason of whose faith is external evidence, and only not deceiving, because impossible, "the very elect." And such precisely is the subject of this vision, whose miracles have been already specified, and to whom, in addition to this spiritual power, we afterwards find the kings of the earth—those who at the time divide between them the empire of Christendom—agree to give their dominion! this also being "put into their hearts" by Him who in judgment sends the delusion—"that the words of God may be fulfilled!" (ch. xvii. 17): that all this, however incredible or improbable in the opinion of many, may be done because He has an end to be accomplished by it, He with whom nothing is or shall be impossible, and whose word is therefore enough for his servants under howsoever contrary appearances.

And this view of the import of the prophecy, I would remark, is confirmed by the connexion between it and
the preceding chapter, which a few words will suffice to shew. There we are told that on Satan's being cast out of Heaven into the earth, while the Heavens and those that dwell in them are called on to rejoice, it is added— "Woe to the inhabiters of the earth, and of the sea!" for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (xii. 12). The new form of his power, assumed for this "short time" and this his last and great attempt to hold the dominion of the world, is the subject of this xiii.th chapter, where, it is to be observed, the Beast answers to the description of the Dragon in ch. xii., with this difference,—that "the crowns" were there seen "on his heads" while here we read, "upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." That is, the seven heads denoting (as aforesaid) the whole of the anti-Christian power in the earth, symbolized by Daniel's four beasts which had among them seven heads, the dragon with his heads crowned represents Satan as "God and Prince of the world," from the time that he obtained this power in full, and during the period of his enthronement with his "wicked spirits" in the "high" or "heavenly places"—namely, during the whole of "this age," of which he directs "the course," and "the darkness of which he rules" as "Prince of the dominion of the air" (See Ephes. ii. 2, and vi. 12, Gr.); or, in other words, from the time that the Roman power or Fourth Bestial Empire, then comprising the power of the three preceding, crucified Christ, down to the present, or rather, to the time of this vision.
During this time I hold that the power of Satan has no particular political form,—is not defined by, or distributed among, any given number of kingdoms, it being sufficient for his ends, while working in "mystery" and spiritually, that he holds the power as a whole, and the kingdoms, how many soever they may be, collectively. But when the Saviour's kingdom is about to come visibly—when he shall cease to work in spirit, and is about to be revealed in person to take the kingdoms of the world, and when, moreover, Satan shall have been dethroned from the seat of his spiritual empire, it will be needful that his power should assume a more manifest, as well as a more decided and effective form; and then, this being the time of action, the power is no longer seen in generality in the seven heads crowned, but specified and individualized in "ten crowned horns," or "ten kings, who," as we have already seen, "receive power as kings one hour" (or, "one and the same hour") "with the Beast:" and, having received it, afterwards "have one mind, and shall give their power and strength to him" (ch. xvii. 12, 13); after which passing of the crowns to "the horns," the heads merely retain the name of "Blasphemy," which was all along the character of the power.

Then, as to the second Beast, which will be the religious, as the first is the political form of the dragon or serpent-power I believe, (as I have also intimated elsewhere), that the great solution of this double, or rather this triple form—"the dragon," "the beast," and "the false prophet,"—is an attempt to be made on the
part of Satan to present in this Revelation of "the mystery of iniquity" a complete counterfeit of the revealed "mystery of godliness," in the three Persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost:—"The dragon," who gives his power and throne to the Beast, corresponding to the Father who gives the kingdom to the Son:—the seven-headed ten-horned Beast, with horns crowned, personating the Son as "King of kings," when he shall administer the kingdom received of the Father; and both accordingly jointly-worshipped, as are the Father and the Son, as stated, ver. 4, "they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the Beast, and they worshipped the Beast;" a circumstance not otherwise to be accounted for:—while, for the agency of the Holy Ghost, who is the witness to Christ in the church, is substituted the ministry of the "false prophet" who "causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first Beast," and accordingly confirms his testimony by miracles and signs following, answering to the supernatural gifts of the Spirit. So far is the prospect which the Scripture opens of the apostacy of the last days from an outbreak and spread of infidelity in the common sense of the word, which some look for, who see that worse is yet to be expected than has been. Infidel indeed it will be in one sense—in so far as the marked hostility to the Saviour, and open denial that "Jesus Christ has come and is to come in the flesh" not be infidel; (compare 1 John, iv. 2, and 2 John, 7, but if by infidel they understand also irreligious, grievously mistaken; for never has the power
of Satan assumed a form so religious as it shall in this his last and master-piece device, and crowning effort to hold mankind in bondage. Again let it be repeated—"ALL SHALL WORSHIP"—and "as many as will not worship must be killed;" for so only can Antichrist effectually oppose the pretensions and take the place of Christ, and lay claim to the kingdom promised to Him.

In conclusion, before leaving this important prophecy—the great prophecy (as it may be termed) of this book of the Revelation, to which all the preceding events predicted in it converge, and from which all the subsequent diverge—I cannot forbear one word of application: and,

1. First—it says to all professing Christians—Have you that evidence of the truth you profess which alone is proof against this coming trial, which alone can stand this test? Have you "the witness in yourself," of which the apostle speaks, 1 John, v. 10, to the truth and record "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is "in his Son?" Can that be said of you which the apostle says of those to whom the parallel prophecy of the "man of sin" or "wicked one" is addressed, as marking the preservative against that strong and damning delusion—"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for "you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath "from the beginning chosen you to salvation through "sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; "whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the ob- "taining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ?" (2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.) If so, then need you not fear; but,
though the poorest and most unlearned, and unread in that evidence which is with others the only ground for believing, you may say, "I know whom I have believed, "and that he is able to keep that which I have com-
"mitted to him to that day." But if it be otherwise;
if your profession—however orthodox, scriptural, or evangelical—have any foundation short of this; if yours be that Christianity which is only rational as distinct from spiritual—then are you, even now, the ready victim for this delusion, and led by the spirit of the Antichrist to come; yea though to avoid his mark, or name, or number, you had gone to the utmost possible extreme from Popery, which has ever been reached by any Protestant system.

2. And to the Christian who is such indeed,—and especially those whose attention has been drawn to the blessed hope of the Saviour's glorious appearing—beware, I earnestly warn you, of entertaining that hope apart from the prospect of that which must "first come" opened in this book, and especially in this chapter. Do so, and you split upon that rock on which the Jewish nation has before stumbled, and for warning to us—you take the glory and reject the suffering, the crown without the cross: and this is what the Church is now doing, in looking for Christ without Antichrist, as if she were already fit, having overcome, to sit down with him in his throne, and needed not this fiery trial to test her. Yes—I may be allowed to say it—I have witnessed the progress of this Truth from its first revival in this country. I remember when the scriptural expectation
of the Second Advent was altogether derided. I remember how by degrees the testimony to it obtained a hearing, and began to be received by many who were attracted (as well they might be) by the details of the glory which it defines and brings out. But I remember also when, as was to be expected, the contemplation of the prophecies of the coming of Christ had led to the consideration of the Prophecies of Antichrist, and the testimony to his coming first with all its attendant bearings, political and religious; and then, how many were there who went back and were offended, saying with Peter of old—"Far be this from us: this shall not happen to us:" give us the glory and the crown, but not this cross. And to this day, many there are who advocate the scriptural doctrine of the Second Advent of the Lord, who still stand out for the old, or rather I should say, the new exposition of the prophecies of Antichrist, and of this book of the Revelation, contending for the distribution of its prophecies between Pagan and Papal Rome, and leaving little of it to be fulfilled except the Glory—the millennium—the reign of the saints with Christ—and the first resurrection.

But still is there time for this testimony, and this truth also has of late gained additional attention. May the Lord grant an increase, and that Gentile Christendom may know the things which belong to her peace, before they be for ever hid from her eyes!
LECTURE EIGHTEENTH.

THE FIRST FRUITS AND HARVEST.

Revelation, Chap. xiv.—"And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. 2. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: 3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. 4. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. 5. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God.

6. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, 7. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven and earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters. 8. And there followed her angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. 9. And the third angel followed them, saying with a
loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: 11. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day or night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. 12. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. 13. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

14. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. 15. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. 16. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. 17. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 18. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. 19. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

We have already seen who the "144,000" introduced at the beginning of this chapter are,—identical as they evidently are with the same number of the sealed of Israel in ch. vii.; and it was also observed (at the close of the Lecture before last) that in the context in which they are here again mentioned—immediately after the vision of ch. xiii.—we see how they come to be here on
the Mount Zion with the Lamb, namely, in reward for the testimony they had been called to bear against the Beast, and the sufferings they had endured from his tyranny. It may be a question whether they pass into the presence of the Lamb after suffering death for his name, or whether they are exempted from death, being changed and translated as shall be the saints alive at the Lord's coming: and to the former opinion I once inclined, chiefly influenced by the statement so absolute and universal in the preceding chapter (xiii. 15), that the false prophet "had power to cause that as many as "would not worship the image of the Beast should be "killed," and the assurance, evidently designed to comfort under the prospect of such death, given ver. 10: —"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; "he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the "sword: Here is the patience and faith of the saints." As, however, we know that some of the Lord's people will be alive at his coming and translated—having been, indeed, appointed unto death, but so rescued from it—this statement is not evidenced decisive in itself: and then, there is a guiding circumstance and distinguishing peculiarity noted of these "144,000" in this chapter, on account of which, moreover, they are again introduced in this place, which I have since thought is decisive of the latter—their translation. I mean the designation of them as "the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb," ver. 4. The question is, In reference to what are they so named? Not in respect of conversion, because in this sense the name is given to the converts
in the Apostle's days: (Rom. xvi. 5; James, i. 18.) It must, then, be either in respect of martyrdom or of the Advent-glory; and which it be of these will at once be decided by the consideration of the related term in this chapter (which has been united with this in its Title), namely, "The Harvest," introduced at ver. 15. Such as "the harvest" is, and for whatsoever reason so named, such are "the firstfruits," and for the like reason so named. Now, the harvest (as we shall presently more fully see) is, as it respects the wheat,—of which alone there is here question—the time of its being separated from the tares and "gathered into the barn," or, in other words, of the translation of the Saints; and that, as the first act of the Son of Man in taking his kingdom—yea, prior to the judgment or vengeance on the Antichristian, in the execution of which the Saints are represented as participators (compare Matt. xiii. 30, with ch. ii. 26, 27, and xix. 14): and "the harvest" being thus evidently by translation, so we must conclude is the taking out of "the firstfruits."

Not that I would be understood, in so saying, to express agreement with an opinion recently advanced by some who have given their attention to the subject of the Lord's coming,—that the Saints will be translated at or prior to the revelation of the Antichrist, or Beast of ch. xiii., so as to exempt them from all conflict with him or suffering from him: still less with the opinion, which is connected with this as a necessary consequence, that a Jewish remnant alone have to do with Antichrist. I cannot here go at any length into this question; and
therefore, would merely say that, after the most deliberate consideration, I believe such an expectation to be contradicted at once by the analogy or Types of Scripture —by the object for which Antichrist is revealed—and by the express testimony of the New Testament, and especially of this Book.

It is contrary to the teaching of those Types of Scripture which most unequivocally prefigure the Advent-day—the judgment of the world in the days of Noah, and the fiery judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah. For, when was Noah taken up, and when was Lot withdrawn from the devoted city? They were, indeed, taken timely out of the judgment, but exposed to the conflict and trial to the last moment;—to the last moment that a testimony for God was needed Noah preached righteousness to the old world, and Lot's righteous soul was vexed with the surrounding ungodliness.

It is contrary to the object for which Antichrist is revealed,—which is (as already shewn) not to test the Jews only, but Christendom; and to develope “The mystery of iniquity” in its fulness—all the iniquity previously working in mystery: and shall this be done without discovering to view many faithful—a goodly company, whose names are written in the book of life—a Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, among the Gentiles as well as Jews, who shall not only faithfully witness for Christ, but continue “faithful unto death.”

It is contrary to the uniform testimony of the New Testament Scriptures that those who reign with Christ shall first suffer with him; and, is it reasonable to suppose that in the day of trial so remarkably analogous to the
day of Christ's own trial—"the three years and a half" during which, in testimony and suffering even of death, the Church shall be so literally conformed to her Head, —Jews alone will be so honoured and distinguished? While again, the Epistles of the New Testament, which are, for the most part, addressed to Gentile Churches, always describe the Christian as "waiting for the coming of the Lord," as for an event which might happen in his own time; and always presuppose at the same time his suffering with Christ, and exhort him to stand armed and prepared for the Apostacy of the last days, and even for "the evil day" itself, as in Ephes. vi. before quoted. And last,—

It is contrary especially to the tenor and express statements of this book—The Revelation. For, were the seven Churches of Asia Jewish Churches? Or, are the warnings addressed through the medium of them to the Church,—concluding with the call, "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear"—are these also only for the ear of a Jewish remnant? Yet in every one of them the reward of the kingdom stands associated with "overcoming," and conflict goes before glory. And then, when we read in the Prophecy of the Beast that "it was given him to make war with the saints and to overcome them," and in the same verse, "and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations," are "the saints" of the Jews only meant? as well as "all whose names are then found written in the book of life," mentioned in next verse, confined to that nation? (See again ch. xiii. 7, 8.)
I believe, then, that what the Scriptures and this Prophecy teach is, that the Saints shall indeed be delivered out of the judgments, but not out of the trials; that, before the vials of wrath are poured out, which commence with the next chapter, they shall be translated—both the Jewish "First fruits," and the Gentile "Harvest"—as in this chapter. Nor is this, I would add, an unimportant point for our decision. Rather I think I see the device of the enemy coming in by means of the opinion I have thus briefly touched on, to endeavour to hinder the practical results to the church of our day, and of this our dispensation, which were to be anticipated from the revived preaching of the coming of Antichrist, as well as of Christ: as though he said—'If the word of Prophecy can no longer be suppressed, and the church begins to be warned by it of my last great stratagem no longer concealed, then I will give to the testimony a new direction which will as good as silence it: I will say to them, Do not be alarmed, this is not for you, but for the Jews: you have suffered enough, and yours shall be the crown without this cross.' While at the same time it is instructive to note how, for this end, he is only using an old and long practised expedient, a weapon often before tried and always with success—namely, the meeting of one extreme by another, between which the Truth falls to the ground. For, some few years ago the universal doctrine was that the Apocalypse was altogether the book of the Gentile Church, and that the Jews had no concern whatever with it; and now we are threatened with as great a prevalence of the opinion
that the Gentiles have nothing to do with it, and that it concerns the Jews only—that Antichrist shall have to do only with them. Happy indeed were it for the Gentiles—for false professing, lukewarm, and, worse than lukewarm, apostatising Christendom, that it were so! But, on this very account is it important to sound the alarm, and to say to the professing Christian Church—"Take heed that no man deceive you."

To proceed,—With respect to "the new song" heard in heaven which "none could learn but the 144,000 which were redeemed from the earth" (ver. 2, 3), it will be remembered that there was mention made chap. v. 9, 10, of "a new song" sung by "the four Living-creatures and the twenty-four Elders" on the taking of the book by the Lamb; and it was there observed that the subject of that song is evidently the kingdom of Christ in anticipation, as implied in the words "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the earth." I conjecture, then, that the new song which the 144,000 are here taught and privileged to sing, after their contest with the power described in the two last chapters, is the same as that first-mentioned song of Messiah's kingdom; a confirmation of which perhaps is, that they are said to sing it "before the throne, and before the four Living-creatures, and the Elders;" as also, that they are taught this song in reward for the trials to which they have been exposed, and therefore, I conclude, in anticipation also and earnest of the speedy establishment of the kingdom of Christ, for which they have suffered.
By the character given of them, ver. 4, is meant that they have escaped the spiritual fornication which abounds during the reign of the Beast: they kept themselves from the abounding defilement, and "presented themselves" (according to the expression of the Apostle) "as chaste virgins to Christ;" in which sense also—that is, in reference to the fidelity of their profession and their devotion to him—it is said, verse 5, "And in "their mouth was found no guile; for they are without "fault" (without occasion of blame) "before the throne "of God:" for, this interpretation of the words I think more natural than that which would refer them to their justification.

The Apostle continues, ver. 6:—"And I saw another "angel fly in the midst of Heaven, having the everlasting-"ing gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the "earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, "and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and "give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is "come: and worship him that made Heaven, and earth, "and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Here then, indeed, it is that commences that part of this prophecy which more immediately and exclusively affects the Gentile world. Hitherto we have been occupied by the future destinies of Israel, and even in the description of the Beast we have been principally engaged with those of his acts, which concern the Jewish people; as, for instance, his treading down the holy city, &c. But now, when "the first fruits to God and the Lamb" are gathered in from that people, the
Gentile world and the other nations of the earth come under consideration, and the first step recorded is this here—The preaching of "the everlasting Gospel to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Commentators are in the habit of applying this passage to our own times, and some have supposed that it is intended to predict the operations of that great instrument of good, the Bible Society, engaged in dispersing the Scriptures throughout the world; but I think on examination we shall find it does not relate to any period yet come; and one proof of this is the order in which we find it. It occurs after the Beast has arisen,—after the remnant of Israel has been sealed,—and when now the harvest of the earth is at hand, and, as the preaching itself of this angel announces, "the hour of God's judgment is come." Besides, the purpose of this preaching of the Gospel is very different from that of our present preaching. I think there has been a great mistake with respect to the latter. Our idea has been that the design of this the Christian-dispensation is to evangelize the world, and to spread the knowledge of the Lord over the earth in fulfilment of the prophecy. But facts and the history of Christianity have hitherto spoken a different language; and neither, we shall find, does Scripture warrant the opinion. On the contrary, Scripture clearly states that the object of this dispensation is to gather out of the world an elect Church, a chosen body of witnesses who should bear testimony to Christ, and to the energy and work of his Spirit, during "the working
(εὐεργετής) of the mystery of iniquity” and of the opposite spirit of Antichrist, until that the latter should be consummated in the appearing of that “Wicked One whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming;” when, and not till then, Christ’s kingdom shall come, and his rule over the earth commence, which the Church fondly anticipates and prays for. In short, I would say, that the conversion of the nations is the object of Christ’s second advent, and of the dispensation which it introduces; inasmuch as then it is all things shall be subjected to Him—his enemies by his power, and his people by his grace; but in the one way or the other all that now resist his authority, for which purpose he then “takes to himself his great power and reigns.”

And as the preaching of the Gospel in this dispensation has not hitherto had for its object the conversion of the world, neither do I think will that predicted to take place at the crisis here mentioned, when the Apostle sees the angel “flying with the everlasting Gospel.” Not even is this preaching of the Gospel for the purposes of conversion: it will be, I believe, for another and far different purpose, namely, to test, not convert, the nations; according to that passage, Matt. xxiv. 14, where the Lord Jesus Christ, speaking of this very time, says, “the Gospel of the kingdom* shall be preached in all the

* Quere, is not “the everlasting Gospel,” (αἰώνιος) the same as “The Gospel of the kingdom” the period of which is so often designated “The Age” (Αἰών)?
"world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall " the end come." "For a witness to all nations,"—that is, as I take it, finally to decide the great controversy between Christ and Antichrist; to show who is for Christ, and who against him; to bring this long pending question to a final and speedy issue: as further appears from the angel's proclamation—"saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of his "Judgment is come,"—(announcing, as I have said, the destruction of Antichrist by the coming of Christ)— "and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and "the sea, and the fountains of waters:" that is, asserting the glory of the true Creator in opposition to the pretensions of Antichrist, who, we are told, will stop short of nothing less than the assertion that he himself, and none other, is God,—"who sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." Another angel follows, dooming Babylon to destruction, and announcing the sentence on her as immediately to be inflicted; and then a third, whose proclamation confirms the statement that the preaching of "the everlasting Gospel," or "Gospel of the kingdom," by the first angel is to test, not convert, the nations:—"And the third "angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any "man worship the Beast and his image and receive his "mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall "drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured "out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; "and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence
"of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day or night, who worship the Beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus:" Chap. xiv. 9-12. As the whole subject of Babylon comes before us in chapters xvii. and xviii. and the proclamation of her doom is only inserted here for the purpose of fixing the time of a judgment of which the detail is presently to be given, I will not here say more of it, but proceed with the warning of the third angel just quoted, which more particularly claims our attention.

As, then, the period here alluded to is the period set for the decision of the great controversy on this earth between Christ and Antichrist—between the true God, as revealed in the Gospel, in the person of Christ, and him who will then "sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God,"—so this eventful crisis will be ushered in by a renewed preaching of the everlasting Gospel to "every nation under heaven," accompanied by the announcement "the hour of Judgment is come;" and by a warning not to worship the Beast, together with an intimation of the awful consequences of so doing.* In this connexion will the Gospel then be preached, and it is such a Gospel as should indeed be

* I cannot but observe, that we have here another and plain proof that others than the Jews have to do with Antichrist and the Apocalypse:—for it is after the 144,000 are seen with the Lamb, their trial and conflict over, and in immediate connexion with the
already preached wherever Christianity is professed: the Gospel of Christ, accompanied by a declaration that "His judgment is coming." It is not the Gospel that speaks alone of his first advent, independent of his second; or of his second only as the day of the general judgment of all mankind. It is "the Gospel of the kingdom,"—the Gospel of his first coming followed up and sanctioned by the prophecies of his approaching second coming in this aspect of it, and with this object. Would it were so!—that the ministers of God would sanction the Gospel which they preach by the great truths of Christ's Second Advent, and a faithful declaration of its special and distinctive objects. And for this reason, that nothing is more calculated to bring Christianity and Antichristianity now (as it will then) to the test, than the holding out to the Church of this blessed hope with all its attendant events. The truth is that with respect to the day of judgment there is much practical unbelief in the world, and, I fear, even in the Church. Men think of that day as if it would never come; or at least, as if it were an event so far out of sight that it is not matter for us to concern ourselves about, because they think only of it as the final and general judgment. But the professing Christian Church should be told that the day of its judgment—the day of its visitation—is not indefinitely deferred, but is fast preaching of the everlasting Gospel to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," that the warning is given—"If any man worship the Beast," &c., ver. 9, 10, that is, any of the nations to whom the Gospel is then preached, and implying surely that some among them will not worship.
approaching: that the time is fast approaching when the controversy between Christ and Antichrist shall be finally decided: when the awful judgments, now threatened and impending, shall fall upon Christendom, and on nominal Christianity especially; when "the Lord shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our " Lord Jesus Christ:" and that, however far removed may be the Last Judgment, the day of this judgment is suspended only—as were its types, the judgments in the days of Noah and of Lot, and the visitation of Jerusalem —on the patience and long-suffering of God, and the maturity of Christendom's apostacy.

It is added, ver. 12—"Here is the patience of the " saints; here are they that keep the commandments of " God, and the faith of Jesus:"—as if it were said, In the conflict and trial that shall arise respecting the worship of the Beast, which is the subject of the preceding warning, it shall be seen who will stand fast in the faith, who will patiently abide and endure to the end in spite of persecution and suffering: "Here are " they that keep the commandments of God, and the " faith of Jesus"—here manifested, and their fidelity proved. And then, to cheer and support such, there follows the precious assurance of ver. 13,—"And I " heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, " Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from hence- " forth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from " their labours; and their works do follow them:" a declaration which, though applicable for the comfort, in
the prospect of death, of all believers at all times, yet, there cannot be a doubt, has here a special reference to those saints who, refusing to worship the Beast, shall be exposed to the death which, it is said at the end of the last chapter, he shall have power to inflict on all who will not worship him. They shall indeed be called to martyrdom, and the suffering of death; but they die with the assurance sounding in their ears, previously indited here and placed in this context for that time,— "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth;" "Blessed" peculiarly and emphatically, and how? Because they die on the eve of his coming—of that event for which this book has taught us the spirits of the saints departed in times preceding are waiting with impatience. No delay, however, awaits these, while at the same time they are most sure of participating in the kingdom so near to come, for to them especially is the promise given: (see ch. xx. 4.)

The Apostle proceeds, verse 14,—"And I looked, and "behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like "unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden "crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle." The whole of this chapter to this place, has been preparing us for, and as it were hurrying us on to the event here introduced,—"The harvest and vintage of the Earth." The "144,000" sealed of Israel, and early taken to join the Lamb as a "firstfruits"—the proclamation of the Gospel of the kingdom immediately after to test the Nations—the last struggle of the Beast for mastery, while the sentence of judgment is already announced.
for speedy execution—all this prepares for the crisis here predicted under these most striking emblems. Of which it is to be observed that, though both emblems refer to one consummation, yet there is a difference between them; namely, that “the Harvest” is the scriptural emblem for the gathering in of God’s people, whereas “the Vintage” is exclusively the emblem of judgment on the ungodly. Judgment is, indeed, also implied in the work of harvest, when that emblem alone is used, as in Matt. xiii. 30; but “the gathering of the wheat into the barn” is its object here as distinct from the vintage, while the “treading of the wine-press” has no analogy except in the destruction of the wicked: (See the emblem as used, Isaiah, lxiii. 1, 2; Joel, iii. 12, 13; and Rev. xix. 15). Where, again, that fact is pressed on our notice, of which, in speaking of this judgment, we should never lose sight—that it is not on the nations of the earth considered merely as unacquainted with Christianity that the judgment falls;—it is not against them “the Lord Jesus is revealed in flaming fire taking vengeance:” but against those that “know not God,” taken in connexion with their “not obeying the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” Apostate Christendom, the scene of culture, shall be the scene of vengeance. “The Vine” it is which shall be subjected to the pruning. We indeed are in the habit of speaking of “the harvest” as the time of the passing away or dissolution of the present heaven and earth—“the end of the world,” in the strict sense of the words. But this opinion has no warrant in the Scriptures; for the words of Christ, on which this notion is grounded, and
which we translate "the harvest is the end of the world" (Matt. xii. 39), are really in the original, "the harvest is the end of the age" (συντέλεια τοῦ αἰώνος), — a word quite distinct from that correctly rendered "world" (κόσμος) in the preceding verse. They occur, moreover, in the exposition of the parable of the tares in the field, which evidently has for its result the establishment of a kingdom on earth—in the same place which had been the scene of the mixed growth of the tares and wheat, by which the establishment of such a kingdom in the field or world was for a time hindered. So we learn from verses 40, 41:—"As therefore the tares "are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the "end of this world (this age). The Son of Man shall "send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his "kingdom all things that offend, and them which do "iniquity. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the "sun in the kingdom of their Father." The "tares," it is also evident, are the emblem, not of the unconverted heathen who have no standing in the church, but of the counterfeit-Christian—the anti-Christian, properly so called—who, having seen the light, come under the condemnation of "loving darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil," "because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." 'Thus,' (in the words of a late eminent expositor, who had more just conceptions of the prospects of the Church than most writers of his own time), 'the harvest 'is the constant image of that season when God shall 'gather his elect from the four winds of heaven, reap
the field of the world, gather his wheat into his barn, 
and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Images 
which relate, not to the translation of the just to heaven, 
and the burning of the wicked in hell, but to the placing 
of the faithful in a state of peace and security on earth, 
and to the excision of the incorrigible of the irreligi-
gious faction.'—(Bp. Horsley's Bib. Crit. on Isaiah, 
ch. xviii. note 9.)

As to the rest, on the mode of many things here stated 
we cannot pronounce. What instruments may be em-
ployed in the preaching of the Gospel here predicted— 
who the "angels" sent "to gather together the elect of 
Christ from the four winds" we cannot decide:—but 
certain events are yet prospectively here revealed with 
such clearness as precludes the possibility of our misunder-
standing them, and renders us most inexcusable if we be 
taken by surprise by them. Fearful times, it is plain, 
await the nominal Christian Church: times pregnant 
with awful events, and the prospect of which says loudly 
to all who bear the Christian name, "Examine your-
selves whether ye be in the faith."
LECTURE NINETEENTH.

THE SEVEN VIALS OF WRATH.

Revelation, Chap. xv. and xvi.—"And I saw another sign in Heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. 2. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. 3. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. 4. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. 5. And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: 6. And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, having their breasts girted with golden girdles. 7. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. 8. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

Chapter xvi.—"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the
wrath of God upon the earth. 2. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. 3. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. 4. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. 5. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus: 6. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. 7. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments. 8. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. 9. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. 10. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, 11. And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. 12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. 13. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. 16. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. 17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. 18. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. 19. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierce wrath. 20. And every island fled away, and the mountains
were not found. 21. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

At the time when the portion of this prophecy now read opens, the controversy of the Lord with the nations, which we have been considering, may be looked upon as decided. The "short time" of Satan's "great wrath" is expired, the period of the power of the Beast is at a close, and there only remains to foretell the judgments by which he is destroyed, and his power taken away. But,

I. First—Before these judgments are inflicted, which are comprised in Seven Vials of wrath, the Apostle is given a view of the triumphant state of those who "have gotten the victory over the Beast and his image," chap. xv. 1-4, where, with respect to the "sea of glass mingled with fire," it will be remembered that there was mention before of "a sea of glass," chap. iv. 6, where it is said, "before the throne was a sea of glass like unto crystal;" and, in speaking on that passage, I remarked that, occurring in a vision the whole scenery of which is taken from the temple, its explanation is found in the reference to "the Molten Sea" or great Brazen Laver placed before the Mercy-Seat for the purification of the Priests, and typifying the purification by the Baptism of water and of the Spirit, of all who are made "Kings and Priests unto God." But we read of another Baptism which all such must undergo—a "Baptism with fire" as well as "with the Holy Ghost,"
denoting their purification by trials, as of gold in the furnace (Matt. iii. 11; xx. 21, 22; 1 Pet. i. 7; iv. 12, 13), and this, I would suggest, is the import of the additional circumstance here found—of the sea being "mingled with fire," in connexion with the vision of "those that had gotten the victory over the Beast, and "over his image, and over the number of his name, "standing on (or by) it," that is, it would appear, having just passed through and emerged from it: which is confirmed by its being said of this company that "they "have the harps of God, and sing the song of Moses, "the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." For, the mention of "The Song of Moses" carries us back at once to the passage of the Red Sea by the Israelites, and the signal overthrow of Pharaoh and his host—the occasion of this song being composed, the burden of which was "Sing ye to the Lord for he hath triumphed "gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown "into the sea" (Exod. xv.); and the attentive reader of that song will see that the Spirit of inspiration points in it to a greater victory, and over a greater enemy, when indeed "the Lord shall triumph gloriously;" which enemy, and great antitypical triumph, is, we are here told, "the Beast," and the Victory over him gotten by those who, as characterized in the last chapter,—in "the patience of the saints," and "the faith of Jesus”— "keep the commandments of God." (ver. 12.)

But while the general import of the vision is thus sufficiently clear from the reference to the Type, the circumstances under which this company is here seen,
or rather the manner of the transition, requires further explanation: and this I think we have in the context of the vision with the preceding chapter. I would say, then, that we have in the occurrence of this vision here a remarkable confirmation of the view of the "First Fruits" and "Harvest" which I offered in last, in the fact that the whole company of the victorious saints—all who had been honoured to witness against and suffer from the Beast—are here represented as removed from the scene of conflict before the Vials of wrath are poured on the Beast and his kingdom. I there remarked that a reference to the analogy of Scripture will shew that in those instances when the judgments on the Apostacy were about to be inflicted, which were most plainly typical of those by which the advent of the Lord is ushered in, the faithful servants of God were previously removed from the scene of judgment; as for example the Deluge—the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah—and, I may add, the destruction of Jerusalem, on which occasion the fact of the Christians having been providentially enabled to effect a timely retreat from the city is well authenticated. Another example no less striking is afforded by the Exodus, when, not only were the waters which afterwards destroyed the Egyptians "a wall to the Israelites on their right hand and on their left," but they and their enemies were, moreover, at the time of the destruction, parted asunder by the pillar of cloud and fire, which "came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel, and was a cloud and
"darkness to them, but gave light by night to these; " so that the one came not near the other all the night" (Exod. xiv. 20); after which we are told, ver. 24, "And " it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord " looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar " of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the " Egyptians." Now we read that "those who are alive, " and remain to the coming of the Lord" (Quere "remain" from the destroying power of the Beast, having been appointed to death, as all the faithful shall then be, but rescued by the Lord's coming?) "shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air:" who, another passage tells us, "shall be revealed in flaming " fire, taking vengeance on those who know not God, and "obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ"—the pillar of the cloud and fire which appeared at the Exodus, thus having its antitype in the fact, that the Lord who "cometh with clouds" is also "revealed in flaming fire." And thus I would suggest it is that this company is seen at this time as here presented to us; that, taken timely by translation out of the scene of judgment, like Israel emerged from the Red Sea, "they stand on" what had the appearance of "a sea of glass mingled with fire" ("as it were a sea of glass, &c."), to which the bright cloud that forms the sign of the coming of the Son of Man may well be likened, "having the harps of God, "and singing the song of Moses the servant of God, "and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous "lous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true
"are thy ways, thou King of Saints: who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

And here, I would remark that these closing words of ver. 4,—"Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest,"—are an express revelation of a fact which we were led to infer from last chapter, that not until the coming of Christ in judgment does the conversion of the world take place. We have, indeed, looked for this as the progressive result of the preaching of a Gospel of Grace. But the Scripture says not so. It tells us that the present dispensation shall have no such result, and it assigns the reason. "The mystery of iniquity" that was at work in the days of the apostles "doth already work;" and whilst this disease preys upon the vitals of the Church, weakens its constitution, and reduces its strength, it is impossible that the evangelization of the world could take place. This must first have its crisis:—The apostacy must first be consummated and afterwards judged, before there will be a free course for the Word of God. The tares must be first plucked from among the wheat in order to a due exhibition of Christianity on earth; and this we have seen shall not be till the "Harvest," that is, till "the end of this age" (Matt. xiii. 40, Gr.), or, in other words, till the Lord's Advent. He will then take into his own
hands, and effect by his presence and power, what we have tried to effect in his absence and have not accomplished— the establishment of his kingdom. And why have we failed? Because there stands in the way of our exertions the apostacy, which, covert as yet, latent, and underworking, mingles itself with the profession of Christianity— divides the Church— sows tares among the wheat— and perverts and mars everything: so that we see no fruit of our labour but a small remnant to attest the truth of God. This, then, must be rooted out, must ripen into manifestation, and be judged after the manner of all previous apostacies, and then shall the nations be converted to the Faith of Christ: then "unto him shall the gathering of the nations be;" then "shall the mountain of the Lord's house be established in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it:" for then shall Satan be bound: and no device of his shall any more prevail to obstruct the conversion of the world. The earnest and frequently repeated prayer of the Christian shall be answered, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven:" "The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." "All nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgments are made manifest." Observe the reason—as though the signal defeat of the enemies leagued in confederacy against the Lord and against his anointed, were itself the very means of preparing the nations not concerned in the apostacy to acknow-
ledge His power and subject themselves to Him—
"for thy judgments are made manifest."

II. The faithful servants of God having been removed from the scene of judgment, there follows the pouring out of the seven vials of wrath, or seven last plagues. Of these I have little to say in the way of comment or exposition. I need not state that I consider them one and all as unfulfilled, as I have had occasion so often to state my conviction that even the Beast, upon whose kingdom they fall, has not yet appeared in this his last form: while, on the other hand, it is remarkable that expositors who explain the Beast of Popery, should, for the most part, hold moreover that the vials are all, or nearly all, poured out; although the commission to pour them out is not issued till the period of the Beast's power has expired. I will not delay to detail their various interpretations. Having already named Mede as one of the earliest and of most note, I may mention that he, considering the Vials to be events by which the Papal power has been diminished, interprets the first as fulfilled in the history of the Waldenses and Albigenses, and their resistance of the authority of the Church of Rome: the second as the Reformation: and there stops; leaving the five last yet unfulfilled at the time he wrote, viz. about A.D. 1600. Succeeding writers, however, have gone farther, in addition to varying his exposition; and the interpretation which I believe now receives most general assent is, that the first vial is the French Revolution: that the second and third were fulfilled in the conquests of Napoleon Buonaparte: that
the fourth applies to Napoleon as Emperor: and the fifth predicts his fall.*

I will not repeat what I have said as to the want of conviction that accompanies these and like expositions, and the argument against their truth which is afforded by the variety of them: nor as to the objections which lie against dealing in the way they do with the Word of God. Believing the Vials to be yet future, I would also say that I still see no reason to depart from the literal interpretation, or rather acceptation; especially as the same precedent is found in Scripture for these judg-

* This was when these Lectures were first published: but later writers have varied the fulfilment to suit subsequent political events. Thus Mr. Elliott (whose scheme is adopted by Dr. Cumming in his 'Apocalyptic Sketches'—the last and at present most popular work) assigns to the first five the following dates, treated as judgments on the Papal nations and the Papacy:—

**First Vial:** (The French Revolution,) A.D. 1789-1792.
**Second Vial:** (Naval War between France and England,) 1793-1815.
**Third Vial:** (Subjection of German Empire,) 1792-1805.
**Fourth Vial:** (Do. of Sovereignies by Napoleon,) 1806-1809.
**Fifth Vial:** (Do. of Popedom by Do., and results,) 1809-1842.

Where (waiving other objections) this strange anachronism is observable in the dates: viz. That, whereas the Vials are evidently poured out in succession, the third and fourth are here synchronous with the second, and are even exhausted before it is! (See this and other inconsistencies in this system briefly exposed in a tract entitled 'A Reply to the Rev. Dr. Cumming's Lectures on "The End of the World," &c.' By H. Bland: Glasgow, 1855. *Fourth Thousand.*)

The Sixth Vial both Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming apply to the Decline of the Turkish-Mahommedan Power, which they date from 1820: i.e., again, more than twenty years before the expiration of the fifth: and

The Seventh Vial Mr. Elliott, in 1848, said was on the verge of being poured out: and Dr. Cumming says that it commenced that very year, and, of course, pending the fulfilment of the sixth, as the Turkish rule still exists! (Note to Fifth Edition.)
ments, taken literally, that I had occasion to point out in speaking of the seven trumpets—the seven judgments on Israel and Palestine analogous to these seven Vials on the Beast or Gentile apostacy. For here again, the similarity cannot fail to be observed between more than one of these plagues and the Plagues of Egypt. For instance, the first Vial (ver. 2), "And the first went, "and poured out his Vial upon the earth; and there "fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which "had the mark of the Beast, and upon them which "worshipped his image:" This was literally one of the plagues of Egypt: see Exod. ix. 9. The turning of the waters into blood is the subject of the second and third Vials, and this is another of the plagues of Egypt: Exod. vii. 19. The darkness over the kingdom of the Beast, inflicted by the fifth Vial, has also its parallel in Egypt (Exod. x. 21): a correspondence the more striking, and rendered still more probable in the event (as well as in terms) when we remember the analogy between Pharaoh and Antichrist, which has just been brought before us in the preceding chapter.

The Sixth Vial introduces a distinct subject:—"And "the sixth angel poured out his Vial upon the great river "Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that "the way of the kings of the East might be prepared." I agree with many expositors in thinking that "the kings of (or from) the East," whose "way" is here "prepared," are the Jewish people,—so designated, not in reference to their past or present, but their future, when the original purpose in their election, to be "a
kingdom of priests" (Exod. xix. 5, 6), will be realized—and that the event predicted is the general restoration which synchronizes with the second coming of their Messiah and the downfall of the Anti-Messiah; just as the first Exodus synchronized with the last of the plagues on Egypt, and the downfall of Pharaoh, and also with the descent of the Lord on Sinai to reign over his people, and to establish among them a Theocracy which so eminently typified the restored kingdom of Israel at the second Advent. And as it is plainly revealed that this second Exodus will be attended by wonders not only equal to those of the first, but so much greater as to eclipse and put them out of mind, and among them the making a passage again through the sea, I see no reason for interpreting the drying up of the Euphrates as a mere figure of the overthrow of the Turkish power, as is usually done. Thus in a prophecy of Isaiah, ch. x. before partly quoted (p. 186) in illustration of the Sixth Trumpet, which predicts the invasion of the land of Israel by an army from the region of the Euphrates or Assyria, it is added, in comforting the remnant with the promise of deliverance from this enemy, "The Lord of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb: and as His rod was upon the sea, so shall He lift it up after the manner of Egypt," where there is no doubt the Euphrates is intended. And again, in one of the most notable and unmistakeable prophecies of Israel's restoration in all the Scriptures, ch. xi. 11,—"And it shall come to pass in that day," (the day when "the root
of Jesse shall stand for an ensign of the peoples,'" ver. 10), "the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to remove 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,"—it is added, "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 (or " into") seven streams, and make men go over dryshod;" where there is reason to conclude that the Euphrates is again intended from the words following:—"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."* And once more, to the same purpose may be quoted Zech. x. 9-11:—"And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries, and they shall live with their children, and turn again. I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them. And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and

* So Bp. Lowth on Isaiah, in loco.
all the deeps of the river shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away."

In which view (it may be observed) the mention of the Euphrates in these prophecies,—as also of "Assyria" among the countries from which Israel returns—confirms a fact of much importance to the elucidation of the prophecies, namely, that the restoration from Babylon was never completed. Many indeed did return from Babylon, but we know that a great number of the nation remained behind: while in its results and circumstances not only did not that restoration realize the surpassing glories which the predictions of it promised, but fell short even of their state before dispersion: and though persons who are opposed to any further restoration of Israel venture to assert that all prophecies of such an event were fulfilled at the return of Babylon, and set down the glowing descriptions with which they abound to the exegetical and exaggerated style of prophetic diction, yet when they so speak they can nothave before their eyes the picture of that return given Ezra, iii. 12,—

"But many of the Priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice." Truly, indeed, might it be said, "the glory had departed from Israel."

"The Ark of the Covenant,"—the "Shechinah"—the "Urim and Thummim,"—the sacred fire of the altar—ALL were gone! A portion of the people returned, and the temple was rebuilt, but no return was
there of these, the things which alone constituted the boast of the nation; and yet this we are told is the restoration which forms the burden of prophecy. The Jews themselves, however, do not think so: they say, and say truly, that the Babylonish captivity was never completely turned; and though the prophecy in part received accomplishment, I am persuaded there was left of that judgment to contribute to another—a subsequent further dispersion—constituting "the double" (or two-fold punishment) "for all her sins," of which a future and final restoration shall be the complete remission. But, however this be, there is no such uncertainty as to the other event of this Vial, mentioned verses 13, 14:—

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the false Prophet. For they are the spirits of devils (or demons), working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." A former chapter (xiii.) has told us that the Beast by his false prophet shall work miracles; "he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven:" and the apostle Paul, in his description of "the Man of Sin," tells us that he shall work miracles,—that when revealed it shall be "with all the power of Satan, with signs and lying wonders and all deceivableness of unrighteousness:" so that not one passage of Scripture, but many, shew us that miracles wrought by Satan shall
characterize the manifestation of the last Antichrist. The object, moreover, for which God permits such exercise of power on the part of Satan and his agents is in all these passages also told us, even the same as in the case of the magicians in Egypt who were his instruments in hardening the heart of Pharaoh, viz. judicial delusion previous and in order to the final judgment of the unbelieving; and so here,—" the spirits of demons working miracles go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty." By such "a strong delusion" was Israel's day of grace closed at the first advent and their condemnation sealed: and such a delusion will attend the second advent to seal the condemnation of the Gentiles,—to render repentance impossible; by which will be enforced the awful sentence, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still:" chap. xxii. 11. A fearful consummation this! which powerfully enforces the warning in the next verse,—"Behold, I come as a thief: "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (ver. 16). Some copies have "they gathered, &c." that is the evil spirits just mentioned, which indeed seems to be the most natural reading. It is sufficiently evident from all the prophecies that Antichrist falls in Palestine. The 11th
chapter of Daniel (in a passage which it would seem the Apostle had in mind in his prophecy of "the Man of sin" in Thessalonians, so close is the parallel), thus describes the end of his career (ver. 45),—"he shall " plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas " in the GLORIOUS HOLY MOUNTAIN, but he shall come to "his end, and none shall help him." There, in the temple of God, upon Mount Zion, he will presumptuously assert the impious pretensions of the Anti-Messiah, aim at being "like the most High," and "shew himself that he is God:"—and in that same spot he shall meet with his end: he and his confederate hosts there meeting with a discomfiture and defeat like that of his type Sennacherib of old when invading and threatening the destruction of the holy city. While that "Armageddon" designates a place in the land of Palestine is unquestionable, and confirmed by the name being here given "in the Hebrew tongue," in which it signifies "the Mountain of Megiddo," a town mentioned in Scripture history, adjacent to which is a vast plain remarkable for the overthrow of the armies of Canaan under the command of Sisera, celebrated in the song of Deborah (Judges, v. 10),—another signal type of the last catastrophe; and made further memorable since on more than one occasion, as stated in the following notice of it by a well known traveller:—'This plain, called by way of eminence "the great plain" in Scripture, and else-
where "the great plain or field of Esdraelon,"—"the 'field of Megiddo”—"the Galilean plain,”—we found 'one vast meadow covered with the richest pasture.
'It has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in this country from the days of Nabuchodonosor, King of Assyria, unto the disastrous march of Napoleon Buonaparte from Egypt into Syria. Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Christian Crusaders, and anti-christian Frenchmen, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, and Arabs, warriors of every nation that is under heaven, have pitched their tents on the plain of Esdraelon, and have beheld the banners of their nations wet with the dew of Tabor and Hermon.' (Clarke's Travels.) So much in illustration of what shall yet come to pass when the confederate armies of apostate Christendom, under the last Antichrist, shall assemble to meet their end and overthrow in this so celebrated spot!*

* It would seem that, if anything be certain, it is the fact here stated, that the "Armageddon" of this prophecy is in Palestine. Yet it is painful to notice—as another instance of the little regard had to the words of Scripture, even when most express, and of the reckless speculations which are the result of the modern system of treating the prophecies—that more than one publication appeared, during the late Crimean war, attempting to prove Sebastopol to be the Armageddon of the Apocalypse! from an assumed agreement in meaning between the names, which, among others less known, Dr. Cumming mentioned in his Lectures, as 'an ominous fact;' without, however, offering any proof of it. In connexion with which also was predicted, as the result of the war—the supposed "Battle of Armageddon"—the immediate downfall of the Russian Empire, &c., &c. Nor is it enough that the peace has falsified these predictions, and consigned to oblivion these ephemeral publications: the evil effects of them will long remain—in deterring many from attending to the true predictions of the Word of God, and observing its true omens, which will be set down as like fanciful conjectures. And then—what a triumph to the infidel, who, these very authors tell us, is to be convinced by "the wonderful fulfilments of Prophecy" so interpreted!
Then follows the seventh and last Vial (ver. 17–end), of which I have only to observe, that the proclamation with which it is announced, "IT IS DONE," as well as its results—"a great earthquake such as was not since men were upon the earth," in consequence of which "every island fled away, and the mountains were not "found," identical as they are with the results of the Sixth Seal—confirm the statement before made, that the Seven Seals, the Seven Trumpets, and the Seven Vials all issue in the same great consummation. While the special mention of the judgment on "great Babylon" (ver. 19), further identifies this vision of the Vials with the Prophecy next preceding, of chs. xii.–xiv., in its issue: where, it will be remembered, the fall of Babylon was also mentioned in the same connexion—as one of the events to precede "the Harvest" and "Vintage," the emblems there of the Lord's Second Advent. But of this more in next.
LECTURE TWENTIETH.

THE FALL OF BABYLON.

Revelation, Chapters xvii. and xviii.—"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: 2. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. 3. So he carried me away in the spirit to the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: 5. And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. 7. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns: 8. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and
THE FALL OF BABYLON.

they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. 9. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 10. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. 11. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. 12. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. 13. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. 14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are people, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 16. And the ten horns which thou sawest on the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. 17. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. 18. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

Chap. xviii. "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. 2. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. 3. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. 4. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: 5. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. 6. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. 7. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she
saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. 8. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord who judgeth her. 9. And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, 10. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. 11. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: 12. The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, 13. And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. 14. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which are dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. 15. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16. And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, which was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! 17. For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every ship-master, and all the company in ships and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, 18. And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! 19. And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. 20. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. 21. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. 22. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of
a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; 23. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. 24. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

It was mentioned as one of the results of the seventh Vial at the close of the last chapter that "great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the "cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath," and here one of the angels which had the seven vials—no doubt the one by whom the seventh was poured out—comes to give a detail of the event which was only there announced: just as we have seen before that chapters xii. and xiii. recapitulate the prophecy of chap. xi. to give the account, in detail, of the rise and career of "the Beast," by whom it was there said the witnesses are slain.

The questions, then, for our consideration are two—Of what is this "Woman" and "Babylon" the emblem? and, What is "the Beast" on which she sits? To both which an answer is given by the interpreting angel, who says to the wondering Apostle (chap. xvii. 7), "Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the "mystery of the Woman, and of the Beast that carrieth "her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns."

I. To speak first of "the Woman," it is specially to be noted—

1. That, as indeed her title "Babylon the Great" sufficiently indicates, she represents "A CITY:"—"The "Woman which thou sawest is that great city which
"reigneth over the kings of the earth;" confirmed by every sentence of the lamentation upon its fall following in chap. xviii., which describes in detail the fall from the pinnacle of earthly power, political eminence, and commercial prosperity, of a literal city; occasioning accordingly such universal grief and distress amongst the description of persons there represented as lamenting her downfall, viz. merchants, traders, and ship-masters. In agreement with which also is the fact, more than once stated, that Babylon is destroyed by fire; see chap. xvii. 16—"The ten horns which thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire;" and afterwards, when the emblem and metaphor is laid aside, it is said, chapter xviii. 8—"Therefore shall her plagues come in one day; death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire."

2. Moreover, that "Babylon" is here a mystical name is also indicated by the Title "Mystery, Babylon the Great;" while the definition of its locality—as seated on "seven mountains" (ver. 18)—has justly been considered decisive that the city intended is the well-known "city of the seven hills," even Rome: an interpretation on which there is a more general consent of commentators, ancient and modern, than on any other point in the range of Biblical exposition—even including Roman Catholics, who, however, endeavour to explain the prophecy of Rome Pagan. (Douay Bible, in loco.)

3. That the city is also visited and judged as having been
the seat of a system of false religion, or spiritual "fornication" (always the emblem of apostacy on the part of the Church or people of God in Scripture), and has used its power in persecuting the saints and faithful, is equally clear from both the emblem and its interpretation: (Compare chap. xvii. 5, 6; xviii. 3-5; and 24; and xix. 2.) And that it is a long account she has to render, under this head, is stated (chap. xviii. 24)—"In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, "and of all that were slain upon the earth." The New Testament Antitype in this of Babylon of old—the first tyranny over Israel; as also of Jerusalem—the city whose judgment closes the Old Testament, and of which was required in like manner (as consummating the apostacy of that dispensation) the righteous blood shed upon the earth to that time (Matt. xxiii. 35).

4. Add to this the evil pre-eminence which Rome has had, whether as Pagan or professedly Christian, from the beginning of this dispensation hitherto. For it was the Roman power that crucified the Lord Jesus. It was Rome that desolated Jerusalem, and inflicted the present dispersion and captivity of the Jews. It was Rome that persecuted the first Christians. Since which Rome has been distinguished in the history of Christianity as the seat, not indeed yet of Antichrist, but of "the mystery of iniquity" of which he will be the revelation, in that form of its working which most nearly resembles and most accurately typifies his kingdom—especially in the pretensions and usurpation of the Papacy as claiming to stand to the Church in the
stead of Christ. And, finally, the Rome is the centre of the last of those Empires which form the political image of earthly rule as opposed to the kingdom of Christ, and on which, in its last state, the stone, the emblem of that kingdom, falls and crushes it. (Daniel, ii.) Whence also—to mark it as part of that image—"Babylon," the name stamped upon the head, is still given by the spirit of prophecy to the city which embodies its power at the end. All which considered, there is accumulative evidence, which leaves no room for doubt that Rome is the city here foredoomed, and over which impends the dreadful catastrophe here predicted: and accumulative warning to those who would avoid her fate to have nothing to do with her, as well as to enforce the call to those of the Lord's servants in communion with her (of whom I doubt not there are many)—while yet her judgment is delayed,—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (chap. xviii. 4).

But whether the seat of the Papacy at the time of her fall may be questioned; or whether she be not rather here contemplated as the seat and centre of a system in advance of Romanism in defection from the faith—that "falling away" or "apostacy" in its first form which shall immediately precede the revelation of "the Man of Sin" or "Wicked One" himself (2 Thess. ii. 3, Gr.);—into which the Papal power shall have merged? Rendered probable from the present state of that power, which gives little promise of ever reaching the ascendancy possessed by the city as sitting upon "the Beast with seven
heads and ten horns:” that is, in fact, in the position again of ‘mistress of the world’—a position of commercial as well as political greatness, which Papal Rome never possessed, and by which the days of the Caesars and the pristine glory of Rome will be equalled if not surpassed: for, be it remembered, the city in question possesses the greatness here described at the time of its fall.

I allow this may appear improbable, yea, even almost impossible,—that Rome ever could revive and rise to this elevation or obtain this ascendancy, because inconsistent with the balance of power which present governments are studious to maintain; but besides that predicted events are seldom the most likely or probable, and are revealed rather to our faith than to our reason, I do not think this event so very improbable. The state of empires and nations is already sufficiently unsettled to render it probable that anything, however unlikely, might happen. In truth, we may say, there is nothing politically impossible now; and it only requires to allow our minds to dwell for a little on passing and recently past events, as well at home as abroad, to conceive of any power or state rising ere long to unexpected and extraordinary eminence, especially one with the prestige and antecedents of Rome. Some years ago, indeed, we might have so argued with some reason: but to my mind it appears that the argument from improbabilities has now lost its force, and if there is reason to conclude from Scripture that Rome shall yet arise, and realize in greatness the description here given of “Babylon,”
we need not stop at political difficulties. The scheme of reviving the old glory of Rome and the days of the Cæsars may yet enter into the thoughts of some new aspirant for fame, some new votary of ambition, if indeed the idea did not actually occur to one such not long since, as there is reason to think it did. It is an interesting fact, that when the only son of Napoleon Bonaparte was born, we are told his father threw open the doors of the room in which the infant had first seen the day, and presenting himself to the crowd of ministers and nobles who were awaiting the news of its birth, said—'A king is born to Rome.' So then it appears that when this eminent politician, and most ambitious of men, sought for a title, and we must suppose the highest title for his only son, he fixed on the title of 'King of Rome;' for the heir, moreover, of the power that had been obtained by armies led on by the adopted standard of the Roman Eagle! I only allude to the fact as illustrative of the wish of this great man, and not at all in the idea that that wish shall be realized, or this, or any other prophecy fulfilled in the subject of it—as the application of prophecy to living persons should at least be suspended until by their actions they realize the features and character of the prophecy:*—but it just shows that such a project might, and it appears it did, enter into the mind of a modern conqueror as the restoring of the ancient glory of Rome, and exhibiting it such as it was in former

* The death of the Duke of Reichstadt since these Lectures were given has shown the fallacy and danger of conjectural applications of prophecy to living individuals.
times. And when I consider the march of infidelity which keeps pace with the political revolutions that characterize the present time, and the admiration amounting to a passion in which everything connected with those former times of Rome's glory is yet held, endeared to the mind by all that is attractive in classical association, and from our earliest years presented to us in the writings which form our first study and constitute the greater portion of our education, I think I see the preparation, amounting to much more than a probability, for Rome's rising again to the very station which would answer to the description here given: and which, when the remarkable prominence that from its first rise has distinguished it is taken into account (as just noticed)—in Pagan, Jewish, and Christian history—renders the event far from incredible.

"The mystery of the woman" being thus explained of "the great city which reigneth" (at the time here contemplated) "over the kings of the earth," we next turn to—

II. "The Beast that carrieth her which hath the "seven heads and ten horns" (xvii. 7). Of this Beast there are three notes, viz.—

1. First, "The Beast that was, and is not, and yet is" (ver. 8). This, I take it, must be understood of the time, not of the Angel's speaking to the Apostle, but of the time when Babylon, the city represented by the woman, occupies the position represented in the vision. In this view the words will accurately describe the then-state of the Roman Empire, which once "was"
—but being broken, weakened, and divided, as now and for a long period past, "is not"—"and yet," on the supposition of its being destined to a revival, "is," as shall be proved when it reappears in its last form, as the Beast which "shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition," or as the Beast of chapter xiii. the identity with which is here marked by the words— "and all that dwell on the earth shall wonder whose names are not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world." (N.)

2. This Beast is further distinguished by "seven heads," which have several significations assigned to them; for, first, they denote that in the Beast, as here seen, are united the four beasts of Daniel's vision—the lion, bear, leopard, and fourth unnamed beast, between whom (as remarked Lecture xvi.) there are seven heads: that is, the power and empire held by each of these beasts is concentrated in this one. To this the angel here adds another signification, ver. 9—"The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth," that is, on which "the city" is built, already noticed as identifying it with Rome; and then follows a third, ver. 10,—"And there are (or rather "they"—"the heads—"are") seven kings," of whom it is said "five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come: and when he cometh, he must continue a short space." Not feeling myself at liberty to read "kings," much less forms of government, whether kingly or, for "kings" in this passage, I cannot consent to the interpretations of it which I have seen: such
as that by "the seven kings" is meant sundry changes of government through which the Roman state passed in the long period of its history,—kings, consuls, dictators, decemviri, tribunes, emperors, &c.: to which, moreover, there are two objections, first, that these forms of government were not successive (which the seven kings obviously are), but intermittent, some of them having disappeared and re-appeared several times in Roman history; and second, that the forms of Roman government cannot fairly be limited to seven. At the same time not being able to offer a decided opinion on these heads of the Beast in this last view of them, I would only say that the words of the angel—"five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come"—also seem to me to be spoken, not of the time the vision was given but of the time when the prophecy in process of fulfilment shall have arrived at that stage marked by the relative situation of the woman and beast as here exhibited. This, though the time of the city's greatest power, as would appear, is not yet, however, that of the Beast as seen chap. xiii.; for, when that Beast is introduced here—known by its "ascending out of the bottomless pit and going into perdition," as well as by having "the worship of those not written in the book of life" (comp. ver. 8, 11, with chap. xi. 7, and xiii. 8)—it is as an "eighth" head or king, "of (i.e. out of) the seven" (ver. 11).

3. With which eighth head also synchronize the "ten horns" (that is, the ten horns when crowned as in chap. xiii. 1), as we learn from ver. 12—"And the ten horns
"which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet," at the time when the woman is seen, "but receive power as kings one hour" (or "the same hour") "with the Beast," that is with the eighth head. Their power, moreover, as well as that of the Beast, succeeds the power of Babylon—that is, its great eminence as prefigured by the woman riding on the Beast—for that this rule of the empire by the city is inconsistent with the rule of the ten horns is evident from the ten horns hating the city and conspiring to desolate and burn it as in ver. 16, and also their motive in so doing—"to give their power to the beast" (i.e. to the eighth and last head or king of the Beast, the Beast and its ruling head or king being evidently synonymous): as though the rule of the city stood in the way of this their design. (ver. 13, 16.)

And here I have to notice a difficulty which at first view is presented by the apparent inconsistency of the account of the fall of Babylon with the time of the rise of Antichrist, regarded as the eighth head of the Beast. Reasoning from xvii. 17, where it is assigned as the cause of the ten horns conspiring to burn the city Babylon that "God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the Beast," it might be supposed that this Beast does not arise until Babylon falls; and this is the view of the passage taken by some expositors who believe Babylon to mean the Papacy, and look for Antichrist to succeed it. From other passages, however, it is quite evident that this Beast is in existence in this very character, as Anti-
Christ, long prior to the fall of Babylon: as for instance, chap. xvi. tells us that not until the seventh Vial does "great Babylon come in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath" (ver. 19); while the first Vial had inflicted "a grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the Beast, and upon them which worshipped his image;" and the fifth Vial was poured upon "the seat (Gr. throne) of the Beast" (ver. 2, 10).

The solution of this difficulty which I offer is this: that though Antichrist is revealed prior to the fall of Babylon, has established his pretensions, succeeded in establishing his claim to worship, set up his image, and instituted his mark, it is not until the fall of Babylon that he obtains the political power of the ten kings. Antichrist, I have already given reasons for stating, will be revealed in the first instance to the Jews in the character of an Anti-Messiah. Among them and in their land will he first assert and establish his impious pretensions, and they will be the first victims to his deceivableness, and the faithful of them the first sufferers from his persecuting power. This is his beginning; and indeed in the nature of the case it is to be supposed that he must have a beginning somewhere, and have established his claims in some one locality, before the kings of the earth would be willing to acknowledge him, and even to contribute their power and kingdoms to him; if indeed the very words—"agree to give their kingdom to the Beast"—do not imply his existence previous to such agreement.
Accordingly it is towards the close of the career of Anti-
christ that we find the kings of the earth associated
with him to make war with the Lamb, by the influence
of "the three unclean spirits from out of the mouth of
"the dragon, beast, and false prophet"—"the spirits
of demons working miracles, which," so late as on the
pouring out of the sixth Vial, "go forth unto the kings
"of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to
"the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (xvi.
13, 14). This junction with him forms the climax of
his power; by this he claims to be king of kings; but
scarcely is it formed when HE appears who is truly
"king of kings and lord of lords," and who esta-
blishes his claim to the title in the first instance by the
destruction of him who had just attempted to assume it.

What then shall have been the exact nature of Baby-
lon's influence during the time of her power, as pre-
figured by the woman riding the Beast, previous to the
transfer of the power to Antichrist by the unanimous
rebellion of the ten horns? I can only repeat, that I
believe the system which she will uphold will not be
the Papacy—but "the mystery of iniquity" in some
further stage of its workings, more immediately pre-
paratory to the acknowledgment of the Jewish Anti-
christ by the Gentile powers of Christendom. Whether
we do not already see the embryo of such intermediate
state between Romanism and Antichrist in the preva-
ience of modern rationalism and infidelity is a question
worth consideration: but whatever part it may yet play
to Antichristianity, though it should so compromise its
creed and prostitute its influence as even to bring over worshippers to the Beast and his image, this I do say, that Romanism, with all its errors, is not exactly the school in which to qualify for discipleship to Antichrist; and I much fear that many of those who have renounced its communion, or in heart are beginning to be ashamed of it, have not approached a step nearer to Antichristi-anity than they were in the days of their superstition. I know that in so speaking I expose myself to the charge of favouring Popery; but this is a matter of small moment to me, or indeed to any one whose object is to arrive at truth in the attempt to expound the word of God. I trust I hold the errors of Popery in just abhorrence; but I trust also that, after the example of our Reformers, I know how to draw the line between these errors and the truths which the Church of Rome still acknowledges; and not to involve the whole in one sweeping sentence of condemnation, though part be ever so corrupt. There is perhaps, after all, such a thing as going into an extreme, even though it be in renouncing Popery; and a serious question it is, whether Protestantism without Christianity does not to our own eyes at this day present that extreme? and whether we may not even go the length of saying to many who have left the Church of Rome that it were better for them they were in its communion than be such Protestants as they are; than to have exchanged its creed for infidelity or rationalism, and its galling and oppressive yoke for the spirit which refuses subjection to all power, divine or human, civil or ecclesiastical, spiritual or temporal,
except indeed it be the power of its own making or bestowment. Fearful alternative, dangerous extremity this indeed!

There are other arguments against the received interpretation of Babylon which might be urged, particularly the character of "blasphemy," which, I have already shewn in the case of the Beast, is not the proper designation of Romish error; and "sorcery," by which it is said Babylon "deceives all nations" (xviii. 3, 23). But time does not allow me to dwell more at large on these points, and I, therefore, only notice them in passing. (O.)

In conclusion,—there are two inferences which may be drawn from this prospect of Babylon's elevation and fall, in the way of moral for our instruction and warning. The first is, that as spiritual fornication is the character of Babylon, so we have seen will its extent be such as may well put all professors of Christianity in fear. Fear there is none that the majority of false professing Protestants will become Romanists: as I have already said, they are fast going into the other extreme.*

* I say this still, notwithstanding the recent instances of defection to Romanism, inasmuch as I am persuaded they are already more than counterbalanced by a reaction they have caused in the opposite direction. At the same time that I would express my conviction that they are mainly traceable to erroneous views of Christ's kingdom, and this owing to the disregard or perversion of "the Word of Prophecy:" it being assumed, first, that the Church is to fulfil the prophecies of the universal subjection of the world to Christ before His Advent, or, in other words, is to become Catholic in this sense of the word; from which the transition is easy to acknowledging the Church of Rome to be the true Church, because of her imposing
But, is there as little fear of their being involved in Babylon's condemnation and fall? The woman at the time of her judgment is called "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth;" "all nations drink of the wine of her fornication, and the kings of the earth commit fornication with her." It is true they afterwards repudiate and cast her off, but it is to fall into that condemnation for which their unholy alliance with her prepared them, thus going from one wickedness to another. I have already suggested that this Babylon state is the "falling away" which must "come first," prior and in order to the revelation of Antichrist: a general and sudden declension which shall prepare the Gentiles for his reception. However this be, I am sure it is yet to come, and that the prophecy is yet for our admonition. May the Lord increase our light and faith, and give us ears to hear his gracious warnings!

The other lesson to be drawn from this prophecy is, that we may perceive it is not only all false religions which shall be amalgamated and concentrated in this Babylon-state, but also that all the commercial interest of the world shall be found identified with it—with the then power and exaltation of this great city: so much pretensions to this Catholicity:—this one redeeming consideration constituting a paramount claim, notwithstanding all her errors, in the judgment of those who have once allowed themselves to be captivated and deluded by this 'beau ideal.' But how many earnest Christians among ourselves entertain this same idea and prospect; shewing how extremes often meet, and that we may be adopting a fundamental principle of Romanism while protesting most strenuously against it?—(Note to Fifth Edition.)
so that when this city falls, it is found to have been full of all the merchandize of the earth; the great mart of nations, and emporium of commerce. Not only do "the kings of the earth, who have lived deliciously " with her, bewail her," but "the merchants of the " earth shall weep and mourn over her, for no man " buyeth their merchandize any more;" "and every " ship-master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, " and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried " when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, " what city is like unto this great city! And they cast " dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, " saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made " rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her " costliness!" Consider the whole lament, chap. xviii. 

9–19. And thus it is not only of judgment on an apostacy, religiously speaking, that this prophecy warns us; but also of the judgment that awaits the system of avarice, covetousness, and of unprincipled speculation in trade, which already so eminently characterizes our time, and the world at large. In these unbounded commercial speculations many think consists the glory of this country; but they are an awful departure from the rule of Christianity—"let your moderation be known to all " men;"—"having food and raiment be therewith con- " tent;" and, being a departure from God, they will in time bring their own judgment. It is well known that, when opportunity for such speculation offers, religion is never the question: and so, when Babylon will afford the best market, her apostate character will be no ques-
tion; will cause no hesitation with the ship-masters and merchants of the earth. Alas! How much ungodliness is there amongst us, how much Anti-christianity in occupation and pursuits which pass generally for nothing but what is most worthy, and honourable, and lawful! In how many forms does unbelief shew itself! and how many snares are there laid for the true believer? Let, however, the Christian, and especially the Christian trader, learn from this prophecy that it is "righteousness alone that exalteth a nation;" and not suffer himself to be deluded by plans of political and commercial prosperity, which are formed and prosecuted by the worldly ambition and pride of man, without reference to the will or word of God. Let him think on Babylon, and remember that it is when her prosperity and commercial greatness is at its height "she is in one hour made desolate!"
LECTURE TWENTY-FIRST.

THE SECOND ADVENT.

REVELATION, Chap. xix.—"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: 2. For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hands. 3. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. 4. And the four-and-twenty elders, and the four beasts, fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen: Alleluia. 5. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. 6. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. 7. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. 10. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. 11. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a
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white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself: 13. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. 17. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; 18. That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. 19. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

The chapter now read may be divided into three parts. — First, praise for the judgment of Babylon detailed in the preceding chapters: — Second, the announcement of the Advent of Christ under the title of "the marriage supper of the Lamb": — and Third, the coming itself or appearing of the Lord Jesus.

I. As to the first subject, the universal praise ascribed upon the fall of Babylon, which occupies the first six verses, I have only to say that it confirms the conclusion
arrived at in the last lecture, that the spiritual fornication with which she is charged, as also the persecution of the saints inflicted by her, imply a more extensive influence and exercise of power than can properly be said to have belonged, or be yet expected to belong to the Church of Rome. Babylon is said to have "corrupted the earth with her fornication;" as also before, ch. xiv. 8—"Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of her fornication:" the "blood of God's servants is required at her hand:" and "all that fear God, both small and great," are called on to praise him for her fall.

From the closing words also—"the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,"—the chorus as it were of this triumphant song, it would, I think, appear that Babylon's existence and power is considered to present at that time the great obstacle to the Lord's reigning—to His being acknowledged as the Omnipotent King: another intimation, perhaps, of a more extensive influence than we as yet see possessed by any one system or body; for though, in the adulteration of the pure faith and worship of Christianity, Rome has had and has an unhappy pre-eminence, and therefore her downfall would be a subject of praise to all the servants of God who "worship him in spirit and in truth," yet it cannot be denied that were Romanism at an end there would still remain a large amount of unbelief, and error, and ungodliness, within the pale of Christendom, which must greatly alloy this praise, and leave still "a fearful looking for of judgment;" and that we would be still far from seeing the
result here anticipated—the establishment of Christ's kingdom.

II. Consequent on the fall of Babylon (as in former visions where summarily mentioned, ch. xvi. 19; xiv. 8, and xi. 13), is the announcement of the coming of Christ under the emblem of "the marriage of the Lamb," verses 7–9: an emblem, it would seem, here selected to contrast the Bride "made ready," and "arrayed in fine linen, clean and white," which is "the righteousness of saints," with her whose distinguishing character had been spiritual "fornication:" see again verse 2.

The emblem of a marriage is frequently used in the Scriptures to represent the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, in Matt. xxii., at the beginning, the Lord Jesus himself says—"The kingdom of Heaven is "like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his "son," &c.—and again, chap. xxv. in the parable of "the ten virgins," where we read (ver. 1), "Then shall "the kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, "which took their lamps and went forth to meet the "bridegroom;"—and (ver. 6) "at midnight there was a "cry made, behold, the bridegroom cometh," &c. And there are several reasons that combine to give it a peculiar suitability for this purpose. For—

1. The marriage solemnity, as the hour of the bridegroom's joy and felicity, fitly symbolizes the glory of Christ himself when "coming in His kingdom;" inasmuch as then is his joy as Saviour and Redeemer—then "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied"—because then shall his redeemed be perfectly
united to him, and He shall be glorified in them, and then shall He receive the kingdom which is specially His as Head of the Church and Saviour of the world. He was glorified at His ascension, we see Him now "crowned with honour and glory," seated at the right hand of God on the throne of the Father; but His own throne (as we have heard Him distinguish it in this book, ch. iii. 21) He has not yet received, nor will He until His second coming, when we shall see, as we do not yet, "all things subjected to Him" (Heb. ii. 8, 9).

2. Again—with the glory and joy of "the bridegroom," this emblem unites the glory and joy of the bride; and at the same time. So in the passage before us, the announcement of "the marriage of the Lamb" is accompanied by the mention of the readiness of the bride—"His wife hath made herself ready:" which leads to the inquiry, Who is symbolically represented by the bride at this marriage solemnity? And to this question Scripture gives two answers; corresponding to two distinct aspects under which the Church of the Advent-day is presented to us —the heavenly and the earthly. Thus, in the first point of view, in Eph. v. 25, we are told by the Apostle that the Church is the Bride of Christ:—"Husbands love "your wives, even as Christ loved the Church, and "gave himself for it," &c. Where the Church intended is evidently the Christian Church now so called—the now being taken out of the world, the election spensation from both Jew and Gentile—whose heavenly as of those who are "heirs of joint-heirs with Christ:" a glory, there-
fore, of the Church which, as well that of Christ of which it is the participation, is deferred to the day of his Second Advent, when (as just said) the union of Christ and his Church will be for the first time perfected and fully exhibited; and when, as the privilege of the bride, she will then share his crown, and throne, and kingdom, and "enter into His joy."

Which passage (it may further be remarked) most expressively states, by means of this emblem, the way in which the Church of Christ is qualified for this her future union with him in glory: "Christ loved the Church, "and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and "cleansed it with the washing of water by the word; "that he might present it to himself a glorious church, "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but "that it should be holy and without blemish." That is to say, the Church is represented as having naturally no beauty, as being naturally defiled, and in every respect the reverse of what the Lord Jesus Christ would seek to unite himself to, or could look upon with acceptance; and, therefore, he is represented as making his bride meet for himself. He "gave himself for the Church" in the first instance; he redeemed it from condemnation; and not only so, but moreover, he "sanctified and cleansed it with the washing of water by the word"—by "the Baptism of the Holy Ghost" and "the belief of the Truth" regenerating its members, and qualifying the whole for union with himself. That "he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, &c."—not that she could present herself to God, or make her-
selfacceptable to him; but yet accepted, because he presents her to himself glorious and beautified. All her qualification, all her meetness, all her beauty, is derived from him; as we see also in the passage before us, "to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white," which is defined to be "the righteousness of saints," their righteousness in Christ.

And this prospect, I think, gives to the Second Advent of Christ great interest in the eyes of his people, and shows how unscriptural is that tone of expectation which looks to the believer's death as the time of the consummation of his redemption; as the event that puts him in possession of all heavenly blessing, and the perfection of his bliss and happiness. Most true, indeed, it is that death to the believer is blessed. Scripture repeatedly tells us this: and assuredly it must be blessed if it were only to rest from labour, to cease from the conflict of the flesh and spirit, as well as from the opposition the believer must meet from the world if he be faithful: added to which he is also blessed as entering on a state of positive felicity and actual enjoyment—"departing to be with Christ." But still we must maintain that there is a greater enjoyment even than all this in reserve for him, fixed for the day for which Christ himself now "waits"—the day of His Second Advent: inasmuch as then the Church's glory shall be completed; then she shall enter into the joy of her Lord; for then Christ himself as Son of Man shall receive and enjoy the full glory which is the travail of his soul and the reward of his sufferings: for, though the crown be already secured
to him, and his title already proclaimed, established,
and by his Church acknowledged, yet has he not received
the enjoyment. That which is his own by right is still
withheld, and so is it also with his people: and, there-
fore, when Christ enters upon his glory, and "takes to
him his great power to reign," then his people who have
been faithful to the testimony of his name, are partakers
of his triumph, and receive their "reward" (ch. xi.
17, 18); when they shall be united to him, not only as
now in "the fellowship of his sufferings," but in the
participation of his glory also;—"that he might present
it to himself a GLORIOUS CHURCH."

There is, however, another aspect in which this
"marriage" is presented to us in Scripture, which
should not be overlooked, and another signification of the
Bride:—I allude to the restoration of the Jewish people,
which is also frequently spoken of under this emblem.
See for instance, Isa. chap. liv. where the prophet ad-
dresses Zion, as again recognized by the Lord, under
the emblem of a wife that had been for a time as it were
widowed:—"Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear;
"break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that
"didst not travail with child: for more are the children
"of the desolate than the children of the married wife,
"saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and
"let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations:
"spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy
"stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand
"and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gen-
"tiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.
"Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded: for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood anymore. For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken, and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God:"—where the separate and distinct mention of "the Gentiles" proves beyond dispute that the address of the prophet is to the Jews, considered as having been rejected and refused for a period. Compare also Hosea, chapters ii. and iii. &c.

And where again, we observe, there is the strictest propriety in this application of the emblem. Because the Scriptures of the prophets tell us that the way in which the gathering of the nations to Christ shall be effected—the way in which the long expected conversion of the world shall be brought to pass, is through the instrumentality and by the recognition of the Jewish nation. The Apostle Paul says that the recovery of them shall be "as life from the dead" to the world or the Gentiles; and if we pay any attention to the prophecies we must see that the conversion of the nations on a large scale will not take place until God acknowledges again and restores the Jewish nation;—establishes again the theocracy over Israel in their land, and constitutes them his instruments for the diffusing of the knowledge of Himself over the whole earth. For instance, in Isa. ii.
we read that "in the last days the mountain of the "Lord's house shall be established in the top of the "mountains, and exalted above the hills," and that then "all nations shall flow to it." And accordingly in the chapter to which I before referred, (liv.), after Israel is recognized as a wife, she is told to "enlarge the place of her tent," that is, in order to receive the multitude of converts from amongst the Gentiles, who shall then be brought in to the Church in the capacity of her children. As the same event is again stated in Isa. lx. 1, where the prophet, addressing the Jewish nation,—(and at the period of the Lord's coming, see the two verses next preceding, ch. lix. 20, 21)— says, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory "of the Lord is risen upon thee: and the Gentiles shall "come to thy light," &c." This is the revealed order of God's dispensations. We must not expect that the Gentile dispensation shall convert the world; as though the Gentile Church were the Mother Church, and all those to be converted to Christ should be given to it as offspring. Not so;—the first fruits of the travail of the Redeemer's soul were brought into the Church at a time when he still recognized the Jewish nation as the married wife. The first converts to Christianity were from among the Jews; and the Holy Spirit, and all the accompanying gifts, as well as the Gospel itself, were sent first to the Jews. In this view it will be seen that the Jewish- Christian-Church was in fact, and is, the Mother-church; and so it is the purpose of God, when he would gather all the nations to Christ, to begin by taking that people
into favour again; to take them again into their old standing, and original relation to himself; their relation to him as the married wife, separated for a time because of her unfaithfulness, but not divorced (Isa. 1: 1): as this book has also taught us, in which we have seen Israel bears so prominent a part. And thus, in these two senses, is the Lord's coming "the marriage of the Lamb." It is the "marriage of the Lamb" as it respects the Church taken into the participation of His heavenly glory; and it is also the "marriage of the Lamb" in reference to his reinstating the Jewish nation in the preeminence originally assigned them among the nations of the earth, and using them as his instruments in converting the nations and establishing his kingdom in the world.

And now, all things being ready, the Apocalyptic vision discloses to view the actual appearing of the Saviour Christ, the sublime description of which we have—

III. In the third and last section of this chapter, from verse 11 to end: on which I will not attempt to comment beyond the noticing of the two great points which stand out most prominently revealed in it, viz.: the character in which Christ appears, and the titles which He vindicates to himself.

1. The Character in which Christ is revealed is, we see from this description, as executing judgment: in agreement with former revelations of this book, and with all ages of Scripture that speak of his coming, testify that this will be the first act of his power
in taking to Him his kingdom. Not the general judgment, when "the dead, small and great, stand before God," which is the subject of a subsequent revelation, (xx. 11-13); but a special judgment on the living—on an organized faction or confederacy, found at the time arrayed in opposition to him and his kingdom. Thus, at verse 11, we read,—"I saw heaven opened, and, behold, a white horse"—(the same emblem as in the vision of Him in the First Seal, "going forth conquering and to conquer")—"and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war." And then, ver. 19,—"I saw the Beast and the Kings of the earth" (the same kings, I conclude, who agreed to give their kingdoms to the Beast to support him in this very opposition, chap. xvii. 17), "and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the Beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceedeth out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

The result of which judgment, the purpose which it serves, is declared in—

2. The Titles which Christ vindicates or asserts to himself by it, which again are two:—And,
(1.) First, "the Word of God:"—He was clothed "in a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the "Word of God" (ver. 13). This is the title of Christ in reference to his pre-existent divine nature, as we see from the beginning of the Gospel by St. John—"In the "beginning was the Word, and the Word was with "God, and the Word was God: the same was in the "beginning with God: all things were made by him, "&c." His Title "Son of God" likewise asserts this, but in one sense is also common to the redeemed; whereas "the Word of God" is his exclusively as 'God of God,' and 'Light of Light,' and therefore is here the title of his Second Advent, because designed to reveal prominently his divinity. At his First Advent he purposely veiled and emptied himself of his glory, and this that he might truly suffer. He did not undergo mock-sufferings. He came to suffer truly and endure real humiliation; and it would have been inconsistent with that undertaking if he had allowed his divinity to be in full operation, because it would have counteracted all his sufferings, and neutralized those "infirmities" of our nature by which it was his gracious wish to be "touched." Of this humiliation, however, his enemies have taken advantage, and have argued that because at his first coming his manhood was thus prominent—because he vouchsafed to suffer as a man—because his sufferings were not counterfeit—because he did not allow his divinity to soothe or counteract his pain and sorrow, but as it were placed it in abeyance for a while that he might truly humble himself—His enemies, I
say, see this, see the Saviour feel and suffer as very man—they hear him say, in accordance with the purpose of his humiliation, which is the purpose of his love, "Father, not my will but thine be done,"—and they draw from it an argument against his divinity. Thus they requite his love! Yea, those very persons who, had he less truly suffered, or called to his aid his divine power on every occasion of trial, would have been the first to infer that his humiliation was counterfeit, and his love a pretence!

The Saviour, however, will come again, and then shall they who argue thus from his former condescension, humiliation, and suffering, find that he is God as well as man. There will be then no veiling of his glory, no merging of his divinity. He will be revealed indeed in human nature; "the same Jesus" who was seen by the disciples to go into heaven, "shall come in like manner as he was seen to go." But, as at his first coming his humanity was prominent, so will then be his divine glory: yea, also his divine power, by which he will teach his adversaries who he is, remove all their doubts, and answer all their objections. He shall be "clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and His name shall be called the Word of God."

And here is the importance to the Church of believing in the doctrine of Christ's personal reign, of his coming to reign in human nature: in that it is the event by which the truth of the incarnation will be vindicated, and the divinity of Christ asserted, not only so as to convince his friends but his enemies, not only for the
acknowledgment of the believer but of the unbeliever also. The Church of God, however, gives up the hope; exchanges the prospect of the divine glory to be revealed in Jesus, for the idea of the glory of God in the abstract—the glory of God in the flesh, in our nature and for us, for the glory of God in the Spirit—saying that we should look only for a spiritual kingdom, and so denying to Jesus his mediatorial crown, the fruit of his sufferings and obedience as second Adam, his victory as seed of the woman over the serpent, which shall bring to an end his usurpation, and rescue from his hold the kingdoms of this world. This should not be so. Those who hold dear the humiliation of the Saviour—those who prize his sufferings, should show that his glory is also dear to them; and, in order to this, should cherish, with ardent desire and anxious expectation, the "blessed hope" of his "appearing and kingdom."

(2.) The second title which his Second Advent asserts is—"KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (ver. 16). This has a peculiar reference to the faction which shall then be organized against him:—the confederation of the kings of the earth under Antichrist, which shall oppose his claims. For judgment upon that faction (as already said) he in the first instance comes. The stone falls upon the ten toes of the image. He takes their crowns, and makes their kingdoms his, and thus asserts the title "King of kings, and Lord of lords." And, what is the lesson from this? what its application? It is given in the words of a parallel prophecy—"Be "wise now, therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye
"rulers of the earth. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, "and so ye perish from the right way, if his wrath be "kindled but a little:" (Ps. ii.) Those who hold power should remember that they hold it but as surrogates and deputies until the time of his coming, who alone has a title to all power on earth—who (as that same prophecy says) alone has a title to the inheritance, as having redeemed and purchased it—to whom is given "the heathen for his inheritance," and "the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession."

It is added, that "the armies which were in heaven "followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine "linen, white and clean" (ver. 14); by which, their attire, we are enabled to identify the persons who form these "armies:"—that they are not the angels (who are elsewhere said also to accompany Christ at His coming) but his saints—those who were before seen in heaven, and distinct from the angels, in the vision of chap. vii. 9; the "great multitude which no man could "number, out of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, "and tongues, who stood before the throne, and before "the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their "hands;" and of whom it is said "they came out of the great tribulation:" identified also by the same circumstance with the martyrs under the fifth Seal, and seen likewise in heaven (chap. vi.); of whom it is said, "white robes were given unto every one of them, and it "was said unto them that they should rest yet for a "little season until their fellow-servants also and bre-"thren, that should be killed as they were, should be
"fulfilled." That time has now arrived and—according to the promise to those who should "overcome," chap. ii. 26, 27—they now come with Christ to share his victory and triumph, and, as we shall presently see in the next vision, to reign with him.

The chapter concludes with an awful image and picture of the vengeance which the Lord will execute upon the anti-Christian confederacy already alluded to. These judgments are in one sense fearful to the Christian to dwell on, and yet in another sense they present a cheering prospect. They present an awful view of the end that infallibly awaits the enemies of Christ; but at the same time it is cheering to the Christian to know that the power which has so long withstood the progress of the truth shall have an end, and that the Saviour who is still, as at his first coming, "despised and rejected of men," shall at a time that is coming take to himself his right; when he who is now precious to the few who believe, will reign over the whole extent of the earth—will possess the kingdoms of the whole world—and be proclaimed and acknowledged by his suitable titles of "the Word of God"—"the King of kings, and Lord of lords."
LECTURE TWENTY-SECOND.

THE MILLENNIUM AND LAST JUDGMENT.

Revelation, Chap. xx.—"And I saw an angel come down from Heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. 2. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. 3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power: but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. 7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. 8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about,
and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them. 10. And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and False Prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

11. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the Heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

The prospect opened to us in this chapter presents a delightful contrast to the subject of the chapter last considered, namely, the reign of Christ, and the triumph of Christianity on earth; a consummation which in one view or other of it has been ever looked forward to with earnest desire by the universal Church of Christ. While, however, a Millennium has been expected in all ages of the Church as the time of the triumph of Christianity, when “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea,” considerable difference of opinion exists among Christians as to how this consummation shall be brought about. Some suppose it will be a spiritual reign of Christ, when Christianity, by such means as those now in use, shall be diffused over the earth, to take place before the second coming of Christ: while others believe that this consummation will not take place till the Lord comes, when he
will reign a thousand years on the earth, not only in a spiritual sense, but in person. The distinction, though at first view it may seem immaterial, is one of no little importance; and though the decision of the question has been already, in part, anticipated, the chapter now read, when examined, will, as it were to be expected, be found to afford additional and still more conclusive evidence as to it.

There are, then, four particulars to be here noticed—the time of the millennial reign of Christ—the object of it—its duration—and the persons reigning. On all which, having stated what I believe to be the doctrine of Scripture in my Lectures on the Second Advent, before referred to, I may be allowed again to refer to them for the detail of proof, &c., and shall here only give a summary of the result there arrived at.

I. First—The time is fixed by the action preparatory, mentioned in verses 1–3: "And I saw an angel come down from Heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season." This binding of Satan preparatory to the reign of Christ is, I say, material in deciding whether the reign of Christ is before or after his coming: for, as until Satan is bound and his power restrained the reign of Christ does not
take place, the question for us to consider is, When shall the binding of Satan be? If at the time of Christ's coming, it follows at once that the millennial reign succeeds the Second Advent: but if it can be shewn that Satan is bound before the coming of Christ, then may the Millennium also precede his coming. Now this question, we would suppose, must be at once decided by the latter part of the preceding chapter, which records the coming of Christ as having taken place before this binding of Satan; unless it could be proved that the twentieth chapter is prior in order of fulfilment to the nineteenth; or that the coming in the latter is only figurative: see again chap. xix. 11-end. But it is not only from this express record and description of the personal appearing of Christ before the Millennium that I would reason; but also from the object there assigned to His coming. That object is the destruction of the Beast, of which it is before said that he "ascendeth out of the bottomless pit and goeth into perdition." Till then the Millennium don't take place, indeed could not take place; and again the question is, Does this Beast fall before the Advent? for if only at and by the Advent, then must the Millennium succeed the Advent. And, on this point also, the nineteenth chapter is explicit; while other prophecies go to establish the same synchronism. I have more than once quoted as a parallel passage to the history of the Beast St. Paul's prophecy, in 2 Thes. ii., of "the Man of sin," where there is no pretext for figurative interpretation, and where we are told that at the coming of Christ, and not before, shall
that Wicked one be destroyed,—"whom the Lord shall
"consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy
"with the brightness of his coming." The identity
of whom with the Beast of the Apocalypse in its last
state I will not stop to prove, that being sufficiently
plain from all that has been already said, and indeed
generally admitted, being put beyond dispute by this
one fact here presented to us—the synchronism of their
fall, viz. both at the second coming of Christ. But I
would merely ask—if the Apostle says of his own times,
as at ver. 7, "the mystery of iniquity doth already
work," and it was to be consummated afterwards in
"the Man of Sin" who is not destroyed until the Second
Advent, where is the interval for a spiritual reign of
Christianity between the time when the Apostle wrote
and the Second Advent? None: unless the reign of
Christianity over the earth co-exist with the reign of
"the Man of sin," or with the working of "the mystery
of iniquity." And can this be? Surely not. There
must first be a complete cessation of the working of this
"mystery;" there must be a removal of "the Man of
sin" before there can be established on the earth a
reign of righteousness—a spiritual kingdom of Christ:
and if this be admitted, then can not the Millennium
even in this sense take place before Christ's coming.

And the same may be proved by every description
which the Scriptures give of "the last days;" for, if
the popular expectation of a spiritual reign of Christ be
true, the last state of the present dispensation must needs
be its brightest state; Christianity, or the Gospel (to use
the language of the popular expectation accommodating that of the First Seal), having gone forth "conquering and to conquer," till it shall in the end have made the field its own. Yet Scripture tells us that the last will be the darkest days:—"In the last days perilous times "shall come;" and again, "there shall come in the last "days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming?" and again, the Lord Jesus Christ himself says, "as it was in the days "of Noah, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man "be;" and, to conclude this argument, let it be repeated that he tells us in his parable of the tares in the field, that the tares shall continue mingled with the wheat until the harvest—"let both grow together until the harvest"—at the same time that he explains the harvest to mean "the end of the world" (or "of this age"), and consequently the time of his coming.

II. Secondly—As to the object of the Millennial reign, this having been determined by the time—that, as it does not commence till after "the mystery of iniquity" shall have been consummated and judged, so its object is to do that which the working of this "mystery" has stood and yet stands in the way of, namely, to convert the nations of the world, and establish the kingdom of Christ over the whole earth—I have only to add, that it follows that it will be a terrestrial dispensation; that is to say, the nations of the earth will be still in the flesh as now, the nature of man's existence unaltered, though the condition and circumstances of it shall be inconceivably more felicitous: righteousness then existing where before
was wickedness—universal peace where before was discord—plenty where before was want—joy where before was sorrow—and, in a word, the world subjected to the rule of Christ, and proving His present power to bless in all its fulness. Yet still a terrestrial state; which it is important to maintain in contra-distinction to the opinion which to some extent prevails, that the Millennial earth will be inhabited only by the redeemed Church raised from the dead, and the Millennium itself the consummation of redemption—the substitute, as it were, for the heaven of general expectation: a mistake which has arisen not only from misunderstanding the object of this reign of Christ, but from overlooking the persons reigned over, the subjects of the kingdom, and exclusively considering those who shall then reign. As it respects the latter, the dispensation will be heavenly; as it respects the former, earthly: and the view of it, therefore, as exclusively glorious and heavenly, while at the same time descriptions of it, many as terrestrial, are to be found in Scripture, has, in the attempt to reconcile the latter with the former, given rise to those debasing views of the glorified state, and those carnal notions of Millennial felicity—carnal as applied to the resurrection state—which have often brought this in itself holy and blessed expectation into disrepute. I believe the Millennium will be, as it respects the nations of the earth, a dispensation of grace—grace unobstructed in its course, and successful in its means: and that thus it will exhibit, what otherwise we never should have seen—the operation of the Grace of God on man, in the absence of the
temptations and counterworking of the Evil One. This we see not now; and neither should we see it if this dispensation were to be followed by the eternal state, in which the redeemed shall all have passed through that change of nature which will be effected by the resurrection: but it will be seen in man regenerated but not yet immortalized, effectually "delivered from the "power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of "God's dear Son," when He who is now "the Prince of this world" shall be bound.

3. Thirdly—As to the duration of this reign, we observe that it is limited:—a further and conclusive proof in itself that the Millennium is not the last and glorified state of the Church, the perfected redemption hope: for, were it so, the question would occur, Why then has it an end? But it is preparatory, and therefore temporary. It is Christ putting down all rule, authority, and power—subjecting all enemies, and at last (and observe, at last, and not till the end of the 1000 years) "Death,"—in order to prepare the kingdom in his capacity of Mediator, and make it meet for the Father's acceptance; which having done, he "gives up the kingdom," and becomes himself "subject to God, even the Father," who is then "ALL IN ALL" (1 Cor. xv. 26–28); that is, as I conceive, vouchsafes to re-acknowledge this world directly, and without intervention or mediation, for the first time since the fall; and, now that the victory of "the seed of the woman" over the serpent is achieved, no longer sees fit the supreme power should be wielded by one in
human nature, by Christ as Son of Man and Son of David, as has been during the Millennium. While, as to the particular period to which it is limited, "a thousand years," when we take into account that the Apostle Paul, writing to the Hebrews, and speaking of this prospect as affording the antitype of Canaan possessed by their fathers, says, "there remaineth a rest to the people of God" (Heb. iv. 9), and calls that rest a sabbatism (σαββατισμός), I think we have good ground for acquiescing in an opinion of ancient date among both Jews and Christians, that the period being 1000 years, and also a sabbatical period, and, therefore, following six periods of equal length, it must needs be the seventh thousand of the world: a conclusion which a consideration of the various Sabbatical Types in the Old Testament will be found greatly to strengthen: not that in saying this we are to be understood as fixing the day or hour of the Son of Man's coming, an attempt which the undecided state of our chronology alone must render as fruitless as it would be presumptuous. (P.)

4. Fourth and Last—We are to consider the persons reigning. And first, THE KING, the Lord Jesus Christ, who I maintain will reign in person—in the person of his glorified humanity; and this not only because the kingdom is subsequent to his glorious appearing, being ushered in by his Second Advent, but because the establishment of this kingdom is as much a part of the work for which he assumed human nature as his suffering. His mediatorial offices, as has been often said, are
three—Prophet, Priest, and King; and for the administering of all three did he assume man's nature. On earth he officiated as the Prophet of his Church; in the Heavens he officiates as Priest; but as King he returns to officiate on earth "at his appearing and kingdom." In other words, He will reign as man, because it is as man that it is promised he shall bruise the serpent's head— as "seed of the woman." As man already he has made out anew the title to man's lost inheritance; and as man, as Second Adam, he will in due time assert the possession of it, vindicate, redeem, and recover it. It is the following up of his sufferings—the consequence of his humiliation. Whence also the kingdom is spoken of, not as the administration of the power that he had ever and has as God, but, of a power and exaltation conferred on him:—"Therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and those in earth, and those under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father:" (Phil. ii. 9-11.) "Wherefore"—Because "He made himself of no reputation" (lit. "emptied himself" of his glory), "and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (ver. 7, 8). For which reason also—because thus glorious to Him as Saviour and Mediator, it should be (as already observed) desired
by His redeemed for whom he obtained it; as should likewise his coming, when it is he shall be thus exalted and confessed: confessed, not as now by those only who believe in Him, but, as here stated, by the universal creation.

But the vision mentions others who reign with Christ in the Millennium:—"And I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the First Resurrection:" (ver. 4, 5). From this passage it might have been inferred that only those who shall be honoured to testify against the Beast shall rise to reign with Christ, had we not been previously informed, chap. xix. 14, that "the armies which are in Heaven follow Christ on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean," to share his victory over the Beast; which "armies" we are able to identify (as I have shewn) with the whole company of those who suffered for Christ in preceding times. But still it might seem that this privilege is confined to the martyrs in the received sense of the word, that is those who laid down their lives for the truth; and, accordingly, this opinion, grounded on these passages, prevailed, as is known, to a great extent in the early Church, and
not only proved a support under such martyrdom but rendered many ambitious of the distinction. It was, however, overlooked that previous promises in this same Book had extended the privilege to all who should be found faithful and endure to the end under circumstances of trial—the promises, namely, in the epistles to the seven Churches of Asia, to those who "overcome;" and especially chs. ii. 26, 27, and iii. 21, in which the reference to the Second Advent kingdom and Millennial reign is unequivocal. While, again, other passages in the New Testament relating to this hope are worded yet more generally, which speak of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ "with all his saints;" who are also said to partake of the First Resurrection,—"the dead in Christ shall rise first'"—"Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." On the other hand it is, indeed, said, "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him;" but when we reflect that the natural condition of the Church in this dispensation is always supposed in the New Testament to be militancy and suffering—that "living godly in Christ Jesus" and "suffering persecution" are ever spoken of as necessarily connected, so long as the dominion of Satan in the world lasts; and, until apostate and degenerate times made the exception, were always so,—we will see that this proof, like the promises to those who "overcome," only presupposes believers collectively to be as they ought to be, and, in fact, that there is no exception unless it be that which a corrupt and declining state of the Church should cause—of those who are unfaithful to the Christian
name and profession. All are, in a word, called to "reign" and all to "suffer with Christ:"—not, indeed, death, nor, it may be, even persecution in the ordinary sense; but to "take up His Cross and follow Him," and to be "martyrs" in the strict sense of the word, that is, faithful "witnesses" to His truth and kingdom, which we cannot be without suffering in some sense or making sacrifices for His sake. This is the hope and this is the calling of the Church.

But while we thus reconcile these passages in the only way in which they can be reconciled, what shall we say of the bearing of the fact thus established on the Church of our day? when, in the great majority of instances, the profession of Christianity not alone is not attended by suffering with or for Christ in any form, but by self-indulgence in every form, as well as conformity to the world and enjoyment of the things of it—as though the calling of the Church now were not to suffer but to reign! Truly if the crown belong to all who are Christ's, the condition of the promise goes to unchristianize the mass of those so called. There is no alternative. Could we, indeed, distinguish between the crown and salvation, as they do when they say 'Preach to us justification by faith and salvation by grace: we desire to know no more: we are content to be saved without the crown or kingdom of which you speak:' could it be that the Christian might be saved though he lose his crown—could be in Christ and not reign with Christ, then might we have hope for those who disregard this hope. But, however we may wish to make
such a case, I see no way to it. We may think to hold salvation and let go the crown—"the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus:" but it may not be, and for this reason—because to this end are we saved; and, therefore, failing to "apprehend that for which we are apprehended of Christ," we lose all—the gift of grace as well as the reward of service!*

Which condition of the promise also explains the distinction where it does exist—between those who reign and those who are the subjects of this kingdom. For, Why do not the converts of that dispensation reign? Because they have not been called to suffer. They are called at a time when Satan is bound, and when there is no persecution, no trial: when the truth of Christ will be professed in the absence of the counterworking of Anti-Christianity: when Faith will be sight, and in the subjection to Christ's kingdom and acknowledgment of His rule will be the fulness of earthly peace and happiness. Whereas the crown is for those whose title to it is the same as that of Christ,—The Cross.

* In the former Editions this case was supposed—with a view to account for the present anomalous state of Christian profession: (for in the first age of Christianity there was no occasion for it): but I am now convinced that Scripture does not countenance the distinction, that is, within the pale of the Church—the election of this dispensation—"the called of Jesus Christ." Though that there may be those outside that pale, or not called with this "high calling of God in Christ," who shall be partakers of the redemption, though reign with Christ, we are not forbidden to hope: and is he analogy of the former dispensation in which, out-of Israel—the elect people and "the children of the were confessedly Gentiles, many, partakers of salvation Sermons on 'General Redemption and Election.'
The millennial period having expired, we are next told in this chapter that "Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters (rather "corners") of the earth, "Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they "went up on the breadth of the earth" (in contra-distinction to the "corners of the earth," in the preceding verse), "and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city." (ver. 7–10). I have already remarked the inconsistency of such an attempt as this with the view of the millennial as the final and perfect state. But with the view of it here given there is no inconsistency. That the reign of Christ will exhibit not only the exercise of his grace in converting nations, but also the exercise of his power in suppressing his enemies, I have before said: and that enemies in a state of subjection will be suffered to exist during his reign, for the exhibition of this power, is intimated in other Scriptures; as when it is said to Christ, not only "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," but also, "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies:" (Psalm cx.) That these enemies, when this restraint is removed, and Satan their instigator loosed, should conspire to make the invasion here described, is only what we would expect; and then the only question is, Why this should be permitted? I think, however, this is easily answered: viz.—to prove the undoubted security of the saints, even under the worst attempts of their enemy; as also finally to consummate the guilt of the enemy him-
self, who is thus proved to be unchanged and unchangeable in his hostility against Christ and his people. An attempt upon man redeemed but with a very different issue from that upon man as first created and standing in his own strength: for it is immediately added,—

"Fire came down from God out of Heaven and devoured them. And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (ver. 10, 11).

As to the names "Gog and Magog," the only information we have from Scripture is that afforded by a remarkable prophecy of Ezekiel (chapters xxxviii. and xxxix.), where this is the designation in chief of a confederacy of various peoples against Israel after their restoration; from which some have inferred that both prophecies refer to the same event and enemy. But though both remain to be fulfilled, there is this difference—that Ezekiel's prophecy is expressly said to refer to "the latter days," and to an enemy of whom all the prophets of old had spoken (chap. xxxviii. 16, 17); which would identify them with the hosts of Antichrist who also perish in the same attempt and before the Millennium; while St. John's prophecy is fulfilled after its expiration, and relates to a confederacy—not against Israel only but—against "the saints." Whence the inference would rather be (in the words of Bishop New-
are so denominated because "Gog and Magog" appear to be the last enemies of the Jewish nation.'

To the Millennium succeeds the General Judgment (ver. 12 to end); an event which, did space permit, would afford large scope for reflection: but of which I shall only here say that, in the fact of "the Book of Life" being one of "the books opened," and certain of the dead being "found written therein" (ver. 15), we have a confirmation of the statement that there will be those saved, who had not partaken of "the first Resurrection:" those, for example (as already suggested) who were not of the election,—as well those who lived before the call of Abraham, from which the election dates, as those in after times who were not within the covenant made with him, which has for its promise the kingdom and inheritance.

As for the rest, suffice it to say that, taken in context with what has preceded, it is the announcement of the end of man's probation: the close of the dispensations of revelation which developed in their progress the parallel mysteries of sin and redemption, of Christianity and Anti-Christianity; and the commencement of "the dispensation of the fulness of the times" (Ephes. i. 10) from which dates the final consummation—the eternal condemnation of the unbelieving, and the eternal life and glory of the saved. Of which latter blessed state some further explanation is afforded in the two following chapters, which will form the subject of the next Lecture.
LECTURE TWENTY-THIRD.

THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH.

Revelation, Chap. xxi. and xxii. 1-5.—“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 4. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. 6. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. 9. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the
Lamb's wife. 10. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11. Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal; 12. And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names were written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. 13. On the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates. 14. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. 16. And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs; the length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal. 17. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. 18. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. 19. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; 20. The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. 21. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. 22. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 23. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. 24. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. 25. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. 26. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. 27. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”

Chap. xxii. 1-5.—“And he shewed me a pure river of water of
life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3. And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4. And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads: 5. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

The prophecy of the millennial kingdom is here followed by a prophecy of two other events, namely, First,—"a new heaven and a new earth," taking place of "the first heaven and the first earth;" and, Second,—the descent from heaven of "the new Jerusalem:" and from the order in which these three events are predicted we would naturally conclude that the two last follow the first in the order of their fulfilment; that the creation of the new heaven and earth, and the descent of the new Jerusalem, take place after the millennial reign of Christ. And this I myself am convinced is the actual order; but as the opinion of many of the expectants of the Lord's Second Advent in the present day, of almost all who have had their minds turned to the subject, is, that these two last events are not subsequent to but parallel with the millennium, and take place at the beginning of the thousand years—that chapters xxi. and xxii. are but a recapitulation of chapter xx. for the purpose of fuller detail—it is necessary that I should state the reasons which have led me to a different conclusion.
I. And, first, as it respects "the new Heaven and the new earth," I would observe that, if the statement just made as to the nature and object of the millennial reign be right, it follows of necessity that this new creation cannot possibly have taken place at the commencement of the millennium. How the new Heaven and earth come into existence we are told in 2 Pet. iii. where we find that this event is consequent on the great and general conflagration, when the "Heavens and earth which are now" (by which expression the Apostle distinguishes the present state of the Heavens and earth from their state before the deluge), and which "are reserved unto fire," are "dissolved," to give place to that new state of both called there also "new Heavens and a new earth." Which general conflagration is, in fact, the instrument for producing this change—a change upon the face of the whole world caused by fire, just as the waters of the deluge changed the face of the then "Heavens" (or firmamental region) "and earth," and made their state and condition (we are warranted by the Apostle to say) essentially different from what it was before. This being so, I say that if this general conflagration takes place at the commencement of the millennial reign, it follows that the nature and object of that reign must be completely altered, and that the scriptural descriptions of the millennium can no longer hold: for, during the millennial reign we are told in Scripture that the inhabitants of the earth will be still in mortal flesh, and their national distinctions still maintained (see again Isa. ii. 2-4, and
lxxv. 20–end, Zech. viii. 19–end, &c.), the great object of Christ's reign on earth during this thousand years being, as I have said, to carry Christianity into effect in this world, to subject to himself the nations of the earth, and bring about their conversion. Assuming then this condition of man during the millennium, even apart from the object of that dispensation, I ask, How could this be? How could the nations of the earth continue to exist as men, and under these circumstances, if the general conflagration had taken place at the descent of the Lord from Heaven? Where would then be the nations to be converted to the knowledge of the Lord? Where the nations of whom Isaiah says that "in the last days the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above the hills, and many people shall go and say, Come ye, 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 out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem;" accompanied by the description, "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more?" Where the nations of whom Zechariah says, that "it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all 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 (the nations) that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles" (chap. xiv. 16–18). Where, I ask, these nations, if by the general conflagration all the inhabitants of the earth had ceased to exist in flesh and blood, and all who were not "changed" had passed into another state to wait the general resurrection?

It is to be expected however that, independent of other prophecies, there should some proof be found in the passage itself before us, or its context, that the order of events will be as I affirm, and that these chapters read consecutively; and such proof I think we have. Compare then chap. xxi. 1—"I saw a new Heaven and a new earth: for the first Heaven and the first earth were passed away," with chap. xx. 11, where we find that the very event here mentioned—the passing away of the first Heaven and the first earth—occurs at the end of the millennium: "I saw a great white throne" (set, as the next verse shows, for the last and general judgment), "and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the Heavens fled away, and there was found no place for them." Observe, at the end of the 1000 years, when will be set "the great white throne," and when "all the dead, small and great, stand before God," then "the earth and Heavens flee away;" and unless we suppose

* The enemies subjected by power not by grace, who afterwards revolt when Satan is loosed: (Quere?)
that it is the new Heaven and earth which so "flee away," the new Heaven and the new earth only then appear. To which may be added a circumstance particularly mentioned in this first verse of chap. xxi.—that in the new Heaven and earth which the Apostle sees he says, "and there was no more sea." Now it is remarkable that at the end of the millennial reign it is said (xx. 13), that "the sea gave up the dead which were in it." The sea was then yet in existence, and the face of nature had not undergone that great and entire change denoted by the formation of the new Heaven and earth, and implied in the declaration of God, "Behold I make all things new." (ver. 5.)

It may indeed be objected, that in 2 Pet. iii. where the conflagration of the present world is mentioned as followed by new Heavens and a new earth, these events seem to be identified with the "coming" of the Lord: —"looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day "of God, wherein the Heavens being on fire shall be "dissolved," &c. (12, 13). It however requires but little examination into the other passages where these expressions "coming of the Lord" and "day of the Lord" occur, to show that they are far from denoting, the one merely the descent or appearing of the Lord, and the other a literal "day." The word rendered "coming" is in fact "the being present" (παρουσία not ἐπιφάνεια), and "the day of God," and "the day of judgment," may easily be shown to be designations of the whole period of Christ's reign when "executing justice and judgment in the earth." It is then clear that if the conflagration
and new creation take place in any part of this "day of the Lord," the Apostle's words hold true; while it is also evident that the argument he had in hand only required the fact to be substantiated, and was altogether unaffected by the question of the time when. Isaiah, lxv. 17-25, and lxvi. 22, have been also quoted as proving "the new heavens and earth" to be coeval with the millennium and restored kingdom of Israel: but I would submit whether in the former passage "the creating of Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy" be not proposed as a special benefit to Israel distinct from the promise of more universal concern, of the new Heavens and earth: see ver. 18, "But be ye glad, and rejoice for ever in that which I create"—in another creation,—"for behold I "create Jerusalem a rejoicing," &c., while in the latter the perpetuity of the new Heavens and earth is merely introduced as the guarantee of continued favour to Israel. "For as the new Heavens and the new earth which I "will make shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so "shall your seed and your name remain." I do not speak of 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, which says that Christ shall be "revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel," because I think it has been already made sufficiently plain from this book that the Anti-christian faction alone are the objects of that vengeance.

II. As to the descent of the new Jerusalem, the description of which occupies the remainder of this chapter, there is here again a very general agreement among the expectants of the Lord's Second Advent that
this event also takes place immediately upon his appearing, and that the holy city is on earth during the whole period of his reign. That the saints who partake of the first resurrection and who reign with Christ a thousand years, as mentioned in the previous chapter, shall inhabit this heavenly tabernacle, the new Jerusalem, during that period, and that it is in that glorious habitation they shall be manifested as reigning to the dwellers on the earth—as occupants of the supernal regions, "the high or heavenly places" in which they sit down with Christ, the seat of power from which Satan and his allied evil spirits, "the rulers of the darkness of this age," shall have previously been cast down—I do, indeed, think more than probable: (Compare Heb. xi. 10, 16; and xii. 22, 23). But it is of a descent of the new Jerusalem to earth that we here read, and of this I would say that neither will it take place until the close of the millennium, and for the following reasons:—

First, it is evident that the descent of the new Jerusalem is here identified in point of time with the creation of the new Heaven and the new earth, and therefore if there be any validity in the arguments which go to prove that this latter event is post-millennial, so is the former; the announcement, moreover, that "former things have passed away," and "behold I make all things new," in ver. 4, 5, being evidently made as much with reference to the descent of the new Jerusalem as the creation of the new Heaven and earth. But,—

Secondly, irrespective of the new Heavens and earth, the new Jerusalem state here described is proved to be
subsequent to the millennium from a characteristic of it mentioned in ver. 4, namely, "there shall be no more death." Now we are expressly told that death does not cease till after the millennium. Not only do the prophets speak of persons dying during that period (see Isa. lxxv. 20), but, which is still more express, in 1-Cor. xv. 26, the Apostle says of Christ, "he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death:" and then in Rev. xx. 13, 14, we read that at the end of the millennium "Death and Hades give up the dead which were in them," when, having done their work, they are represented as "cast into the lake of fire." There being "no more death," the character of the new Jerusalem state, is, then, not the character of the millennial state, and this is another argument that the new Jerusalem state is subsequent to the millennium. Again, exclusion from the enjoyment of the new Jerusalem state is called in this chapter "the second death" (ver. 8), and we have been already told that the second death is the final award of the lost:—See xx. 14, 15, where consignment to "the lake of fire," into which Death and Hell and all not found written in the book of life are cast, is called "the second death." And—

Lastly, this qualification for entrance into the new Jerusalem, viz. "being found written in the book of life," in itself proves that state to be distinct from the privilege of reigning with Christ during the thousand years, and also to be the common hope of all the Church from the beginning. The qualification for sharing in
the millennial reign we have seen is suffering with and for Christ, and not simply being redeemed by him; and, accordingly, in the description of those who then reign, no mention is made of their being found written in the book of life. Indeed "the book of life" is not opened till the end of the millennium (xx. 12), and it is then opened evidently for the purpose of final judgment and decision. This is peculiarly worthy of note; because, when we find it said of the new Jerusalem that "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (xxi. 27), it completely to my mind establishes the fact, that participation in the new Jerusalem is post-millennial, and consequent on the last judgment, because consequent on the opening of the book of life.

And now it may appear that I have spent much time merely in determining a point of order as it respects these two events—the Millennium and the commencement of the new-Heaven-and-Earth state: but on consideration, I think, it will be found that there is much more involved than a question of order—that there is an important and altogether distinct practical influence belonging to each prospect. I will speak first of that of the expectation of a new Heavens and earth.

1. In a word, then, I would say that this expectation carries with it all the influence of the redemption-hope, being as it is the natural issue and result of redemption. The objects affected by redemption would, one must suppose, be the same as the objects affected by
the Fall; and what were these? They were three:—Man's Soul, man's Body, and man's Inheritance. In a redemption of the two first we all believe. We believe that, by the atonement and obedience unto death of the Saviour, "all who believe are justified from all things," are blessed with pardon and peace: and we believe that by the truth of the Gospel brought to bear on man by the Holy Spirit he is not only converted, turned from darkness to light, and renewed in the spirit of his mind, but even regenerated, or born again a child of God, thus constituting him more than redeemed in Soul. We believe in, we hope for, the redemption of the Body by the resurrection of the dead: and these two effects of the fall being thus counteracted by the redemption, the question naturally suggests itself, Why not the third? Why not the Inheritance of man restored also? If this originally fair creation of God "was made subject" (as at present) "to vanity not willingly," was perverted from the use for which it was first intended, the administering to the happiness of man upright and unfallen—if the sentence which subjected it to its present bondage was "cursed is the ground for thy sake," and that we read of a time yet to come when "there shall be no more curse,"—how is it that we exempt creation and this earth from an interest in the redemption? or, Why is it that we seek to explain away such express statements of Scripture, as that "the meek shall inherit the earth:"—"the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God:"—"we according to his promise
"look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness?"

It is, indeed, but just to many truly Christian persons, who reject this expectation, to allow that the cause of their objection is a feeling that, in looking for new Heavens and a new earth as the inheritance of the redeemed, instead of the Heaven of modern expectation, the believer loses something, and descends, if not to a carnal, at least to an earthly, and in so far a less glorious hope. But this is less an objection to the prospect of the new Heaven and earth, than to that prospect as it has been defined by some who speak of it. Not only, by confounding the new Heavens and earth state with the millennium state, do many of those who look for the Lord's coming admit into the former prospect much that is really terrestrial or earthly which belongs to the latter; but even in their highest estimate of its glory, and their defence of the doctrine, they seem to aspire to no more than a restoration of man to that bliss which, as heir and delegated lord of this creation, he enjoyed in his unfallen state; in a word than Paradise regained. Were this, indeed, the hope held out to the redeemed in Scripture, I would still say that they ought to entertain it with joy and gratitude, and I would deprecate as profane the application to it of such epithets as 'carnal,' because such a state was once appointed by God, and had His approbation as "very good,"—"very good" in itself, and "very good" for man to whose happiness it observed. But, as the matter now is, I enter myself in the list of objectors to a view which I allow is a
depreciation and underrating of the believer's hope. I believe that the new Heaven and earth will as far exceed in glory the first paradise as the second Adam exceeds in glory the first; and will also as widely differ from it in nature, and in the character of the enjoyment to which it will subserve, as human nature in the risen glorified Saviour, and in those who shall be by the resurrection "fashioned like to his glorious body," differs from human nature in Adam when first created.

"The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from Heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly:"

(1 Cor. xv. 47-49).

"The image of the heavenly" must not be degraded to "the image of the earthy," and neither, I say, must the inheritance of the heavenly—the new Heavens and earth, to the inheritance of the earthy—the first paradise. The inheritor has risen in the scale of glory, and so must the character of his inheritance.

But it may be said—'Then why dispute the matter? Why insist on substituting the words "new Heavens and earth" for "Heaven," as a name for a state which you agree with us is so exceeding glorious as to surpass our conception. Is it not a difference about words?' I will answer this question by another:—we are all agreed that the body of the resurrection, "raised in incorruption" and having "put on immortality," "fashioned like to Christ's glorious body," is a body of
which we can have little conception, so exceeding glorious will it be: but this being so, shall we therefore cease to speak of, cease to contend for the resurrection of the body; and say that there is only a difference about words between those who hold an actual resurrection of the body, and those who either deny it altogether, or say it is passed already, being a mere spirituality realized in our conversion or regeneration? No:—This must not be; and yet why not? First, because the resurrection from the dead is a part of the truth of God's word. This is sufficient answer. But is there not another reason? Does not the resurrection-hope, inconceivably glorious though it be—does not the resurrection of the body as a prospect—appeal to our sympathies? Are not the Apostle's words responded to by the heart of every believer—"Not for that we would be "unclothed" (as it were immaterialized), "but clothed "upon, that mortality might" (in this way) "be swal-"lowed up of life?" (2 Cor. v. 4): and, inconceivable to him as was this prospect, did he not say, "in this we "groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our "house which is from Heaven?" (ver. 2). In like manner, I maintain (in addition to its being the truth of God's word), does the prospect of "a new Heaven and a new earth" appeal to the sympathies, and endear itself to the hopes of man, as compared with a Heaven between which and his nature, between which and his constitution, there is not this connecting link of sympa-

Yes: the very words "Heavens and earth" in the

ception of man's future prospect—like the words
THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH.

"body" and "resurrection"—are dear to man, as connecting his present with his future state, and enabling him so far to conceive of this last, as to dwell on it with lively anticipation, and desire it as that which is only inconceivable in the "exceeding and eternal weight of its glory."*

2. This as to the promise of "the new Heavens and Earth:"—Let us now ask what is the practical influence of the prospect of the Millennium, which I hold to be distinct from it. This has, indeed, been anticipated, but may be briefly here recapitulated.

As, then, the former prospect is general, so will this be found to be special, both as it respects Christ and his Church. As it respects Christ, we have seen that the millennial period is emphatically "the day of his power,"—the day of that "appearing and kingdom" which is designed to contrast with his first coming in humiliation:—the day when his glory shall be as prominently revealed to the world as were before his sufferings and sorrows. The kingdom will be mediatorial; having for its object to carry into effect those sufferings by which he qualified as heir, and established his title to man's lost inheritance; the full result of which, in making the kingdoms of this world the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, has been deferred, in order that another mystery, even "the mystery of iniquity," should be first developed. And for the same reason it will be

* See a discourse on the "New Heavens and Earth," in this view, by Dr. Chalmers, in a volume of Sermons preached at St. John's Church, Glasgow.
administered by him in person, that is, in invisible humanity, as "Son of Man," acting in and by the human nature; for so will he as "Seed of the woman" bruise the serpent's head, and shew that he is appointed heir of all things in virtue of his humiliation and obedience unto death. As then the believer values the sufferings of Christ, so should he value this prospect of His kingdom and glory, when "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied;" by which, as I have before said, the true answer is given to those his enemies who make his humiliation an argument against his divinity, in that "at the name of Jesus"—not, observe, the name of God in the abstract, but the name of God as embodied and manifested in the man Christ Jesus,—"at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue confess him Lord,"—not to the disparagement but—"to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 10, 11.)

And the crown, which in its bestowment is thus special as it respects Christ, is also special as it respects those who shall then reign with him. This glory follows his sufferings; because he suffered he reigns: and, in conformity with this rule, they who shall reign with him must have suffered with him also. "That I may know him" (says the Apostle), "and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings; being made conformable to his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead:" (Phil. iii.

Of what resurrection does he speak? Of the
general resurrection? No: of that all shall be partakers. But of a special resurrection (ἐξανάστασι) with a special qualification. Else, what mean the words, "If by any means I might attain?" What means "the fellowship of his sufferings?" And thus, the prospect of the millennial crown was designed to keep the Church faithful in its relation to the world;—designed to keep it a suffering Church, because a Church militant; a Church conformed to Christ in his cross, because conformed to him in his testimony to the truth for which he suffered.

In a time of persecution—and that such a time is near no believer in the yet future revelation of Anti-christ can doubt—the influence of this prospect would be felt in its full force. How will the words, "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years,"—How will these words thrill on the ears of those who shall be called to witness against Antichrist? How will they be comforted, how encouraged, by this promise!* What a text this for the preacher addressing his flock, assembled again it may chance, as aforetime, in "the deserts, the mountains,

* Which also accounts for the martyrs being particularly mentioned in this book in connexion with this privilege: for, the Apocalypse being the prophecy of the last crisis, its promises have also special reference to it.
the dens and caves of the earth!” Then shall there be no more question as to the practical influence of this blessed hope; and only happy will the Church be if it has in that day those who will know how to administer to it the consolation of these promises, to hold out to it "the light which shineth in a dark place until the day "dawn, and the day-star arise," the light of "the sure word of prophecy!" And, blessed be God, such a ministry seems now to be preparing, by the revival amongst us of the scriptural expectation of the Lord's coming.

In conclusion—Of the first five verses of chap. xxii. which I have read with chap. xxi. as a continuation of its subject,—of "the river of water of life, clear as "crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the "Lamb," and "the tree of life which bare twelve manner "of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month,"—I have nothing to say in the way of explanation except this one word: that if it be true that "the Tree of Life" ranked as the highest blessing of Paradise, and to be debarred of it was one of the worst consequences of the Fall, I cannot see why we should not receive literally this promise of its restoration; nor why, in reading this and the other descriptions now before us of "the heavenly city," its "gates, foundations, streets, &c." we should be ever on the stretch to search out mystical interpretations. I may indeed seem to be presumptuous, and to arrogate to myself too much of knowledge or judgment in asserting them to be literal in relation to the opinion of so many: but, I must be
allowed to say, he arrogates to himself more who asserts them to be figurative. For, to say they can only be fulfilled figuratively requires us to be aware of the fitness of things, of what can and what cannot consist with our future state of glorified existence: while to take them literally only requires us to receive simply what is written, confessing ourselves incompetent judges of what is or is not suitable. Let this conviction—let the feeling that we know nothing of ourselves, bring us oftener in supplication before the throne of grace for increased light and knowledge, and cause us to plead with greater earnestness the gracious promise—"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him."
LECTURE TWENTY-FOURTH.

THE CONCLUDING CHARGE.

Revelation. Chap. xxii. 6—end. "And he said unto me, These things are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. 7. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. 8. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. 9. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them that keep the sayings of this book: Worship God. 10. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand. 11. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. 12. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. 13. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 14. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. 15. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. 16. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morn-
ing star. 17. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. 18. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. 19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. 20. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. 21. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

With the last section of this book which has been considered the Prophecy closed, and the portion now read is rather a concluding Charge, the object of which is to recommend attention to its contents.

That this is the main design, and that other subjects are mentioned chiefly to enforce this one Charge, appears from the recurrence of the speaker again and again to “the sayings of this book;”—as, for instance, ver. 5, “These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord “God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto “his servants the things which must shortly be done. “Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth “the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” Again, ver. 9, in deprecating the worship which John offered to the angel, and which was evidently prompted by the high sense he had of the greatness and importance of the things he “had heard and seen,” the angel characterizes himself as “of them that keep the sayings of this book.” Then, at ver. 10, where the Lord resumes, the same subject is prominent—“And he saith unto me,
Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand." Again, ver. 16, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches:" and, lastly, we have the awful sanction to "the words of the prophecy of this book" in verses 18, 19, "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

That neglect of this book of Scripture, much less objections to the study of it, should exist after such testimonies to its importance as these, is truly wonderful; yet that for a long time past, though not in its early days, the Church has been, and is still characterized by the most deliberate inattention to it, is but too notorious; and this to such an extent, that I tremble to think how many individual Christians there are—how many of those who read and value the rest of the Scriptures, who, it would be found on inquiry, never read this book, and are ready to seek out reasons to justify them in the neglect of it. To afford every answer that might be made to these reasonings is not now my object. I will not, for instance, here insist that "the Revelation" is the word of God, and therefore commands our attention: that as part of the word of God, all of which is said to be...
its special profit, and that therefore to neglect it is dangerous: that for both these reasons, its being part of revealed Scripture, and of that which is designed to be "profitable for instruction," it must be intelligible; if fulfilled, as furnishing examples; and if unfulfilled, as affording warnings for our admonition. I will not here urge these arguments, because I have elsewhere, in an introduction to the Lectures before referred to, endeavoured to show their bearing on all prophecy as such, and consequently on this prophecy: but will confine myself to the section before us, and the considerations by which it enforces the duty of attention to this book, which may be comprised in three—First, the design of the Lord in giving this revelation: Second, the fast hastening accomplishment of the things therein predicted: and Third, the sanction of the Divine blessing.

I. The design of the Lord in giving this Revelation is told us, ver. 6. "And he said unto me, these sayings "are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy "prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the "things which must shortly be done."

And here we cannot but recall to mind the title of the book:—"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave "unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must "shortly come to pass (ch. i. 1). Observe, a "Revelation" —"given to shew," &c.—Can there, I again ask, be conceived a more decisive refutation than those two words "reveal" and "shew" give to the prevailing opinion that this book is of all books of the Bible most mysterious and unintelligible? It may indeed be said
—‘Notwithstanding the presumption from these words, has not experience proved it so, else how can we account for the variety and unsatisfactory character of the expositions of it?’ I admit the fact, but I account for it otherwise. I admit that nothing can be more unsatisfactory than the existing expositions, of which their variety is itself a proof, variety being in this case only another name for uncertainty. But I have attempted to account for this fact otherwise than by impeaching the character of the book as expressed in its title. I have attempted to show that the cause of the mysteriousness is that expositors have utterly mistaken the design of the prophecy: that whereas it is a prophecy of ‘the time of the end,’ and of events yet to be developed, it has been treated as a continuous prophetical history, commencing at least as far back as the Christian æra; or, as some will have it, recapitulating from the times of the Babylonish empire, and the days of Nebuchadnezzar! In this principle of interpretation expositors have been agreed, though they differed about everything else; and, I repeat it, if by nothing else than their failure, we are by it at least moved to question the soundness of the principle.

‘But may it not be designedly kept secret, and, as we find with respect to Daniel’s prophecies, “shut up and sealed until the time of the end,” supposing that to be the time of fulfilment?’ Undoubtedly it might have so. But where, even in this admission, is there a reason for neglecting the study of this book? Who justify us, in the first place, that this is not “the
time of the end,” when even those very prophecies of Daniel, for a long while sealed, may begin to be understood? Or, when the time is indeed come, who must we suppose are they who shall understand? Those who by constant reading have had their minds stored with the sayings of the prophecy, or those who are strangers to it; who know not so much as in which of its chapters any event is predicted, nor the order of its predictions one in reference to the other; who are so ignorant of the mere text as to be unable to appreciate any reasoning from it? That, however, it is so shut up and sealed, I deny; and on what authority? On the authority, first, of its title and assigned object—"the revelation" for the purpose of "shewing to God's servants things shortly to come to pass;" and, if this be not sufficient, we have an express assertion to the contrary in the passage before us, where, after all has been signified and shewn, we read, ver. 13, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book:" observe, "Seal not," said as if in marked contradistinction to what had been said of Daniel's last vision, and to shew that this prophecy is indeed what it purports to be, "a revelation."

But if the simple fact of God's designing to reveal and shew to his servants certain things be reason for their giving diligent heed to that revelation, still more is the nature of the things themselves revealed, in which indeed is to be found the reason of this his gracious purpose. Prophecy—Prophecy as such—unfulfilled Prophecy, I have elsewhere said, is in fact only another name for two things, the use of which few will be found to question,
namely, warning and promise; and, not to recapitulate
the details of this book, and the many portentous events
which its visions have brought before us, have we
not seen enough of the prospect to make us bless
God for giving us warning; bless him for the light
of promise which dawns through the darkest hour
of the night-time of this world? Yes: when the
believer is inclined to be "envious at the foolish, for
that he sees the prosperity of the wicked:"—that "there
"are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm;
"that they are not in trouble as other men, neither are
"they plagued like other men; therefore pride compasseth
"them about as a chain, violence covereth them as a
"garment; their eyes stand out with fatness, they have
"more than heart could wish; they are corrupt and
"speak wickedly concerning oppression, they speak
"loftily; they set their mouth against the heavens, and
"their tongue walketh through the earth; therefore his
"people fall unto them, and waters of a full cup are
"wrung out to them; while they say, How doth God
"know, and Is there knowledge in the most High?"—
when, I say, the believer sees this (and see it in all the
awful reality of the description the Church of Christ yet
most assuredly shall), when in consequence "his feet
are almost gone, his steps have well-nigh slipped;" when
in despair he will be ready to exclaim "Verily I have
used my heart in vain, and washed my hands in
"inequity,"—then shall this book of the revelation open
door in heaven, and admit him to "the sanc-
d," where he shall "understand their end:" you dost set them in slippery places; thou
THE CONCLUDING CHARGE.

"castest them down to destruction; How they are "brought to desolation as in a moment, they are utterly "consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh, "so, O Lord, when thou wakest, thou shalt despise "their image!" Ps. lxxiii. 2-20.

I have not indeed admitted throughout this exposition, neither can I for a moment now admit, a question as to the importance to the Church of this book, or the duty of individual attention to it. I felt that the only question was as to the truth of the exposition itself, not indeed of all its details, but at least of the principle upon which it proceeds, viz. that the Prophecy as a whole is yet unfulfilled: that, though there are and have been many Anti-christs, the Anti-christ is yet to come, and with him all the evils and all the judgments as it respects the world, all the trials and all the sufferings as regards the Church, which we have been congratulating ourselves were all but past. And if, while the Lord was still on earth He thought it necessary by parable after parable, and admonition added to admonition, to warn his disciples that they should be prepared for his return, and not be involved in the sloth and carelessness and the abounding iniquity which he too plainly intimated should characterize the world and the Church at the time of that event, how shall we say for ourselves that we have no need of warning? But this brings us to the next great consideration, by which in the Charge before us attention to this prophecy is enforced, namely,

II. The speedy approach of the events predicted, and especially of the great event of all—the Lord's coming.
So we read here, ver. 6, "The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done:" after which it is added—"Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." Again, ver. 12, "And, behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be:" and again, ver. 20, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen. "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus."

There is no question so often asked, on reading such passages as these, as—How we are to understand the expectation of the Lord's Second Advent having been thus inculcated on the first believers, when it would seem to concern only those who should live at the time, or be on earth to witness the event? But much of the difficulty implied in this question is owing to our not placing ourselves in the position and realizing the circumstances of the disciples when Christ left them to go to the Father—a position in which it was designed that the Church should have continued during the whole period of His absence. To any one who reads with attention the last conversation of Christ with his disciples—(recorded in chapters xiv.–xvi. of the gospel by St. John)—it will be evident that the situation in which they saw themselves about to be placed by his absence was that of persons who were bereft of a dear, a best, and only friend, and left in a cheerless and unfriendly world: in the view of which, and of the trials awaiting them, he applies himself to administer con-
solation to them in this his farewell discourse. He comforts them by the advantage to them of his appearing in the presence of God for them;—by the promise of "the Comforter" whom he should send them from the Father;—but especially by therepeated assurance that he would "see them again," when "their hearts should rejoice, and their joy no man should take from them." The interval was to be the time of the world's joy and their sorrow, but then it would be only a short interval, a comparatively "little while;"—"A little while" (said he) "and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and "ye shall see me." I verily believe that this saying will prove more literally true than many are aware: that the interval of the Lord's absence will prove "a little while" not only (as some have said) in comparison of the eternity to follow, or of "the glory to be revealed in us" compared with "the sufferings of the present time"—but also in respect of the portion of the world's history which had elapsed when he spoke those words. At least if there be any weight in the opinion of the ancient Jews and Christians before alluded to, founded on the sabbatical character of the millennial rest, not less than two-thirds of the whole (I mean of the period from creation to the second coming of Christ) had then already passed: so truly even then was "the night far spent and the day at hand!" And if then, What time of the night is it now?

But, independent of this, the situation of Christ's disciples in the world, which no length of interval could alter, and their being thrown on the promise of
His return for their consolation, added to their uncertainty as to the precise time of this event, must have ever, so long as this dispensation lasted, made expectation of the Lord's coming a characteristic of true discipleship, and increasingly as the day approached. Nor would the fact of one member or another being meanwhile removed by death alter the case, not only as regards those who were left, but those who were taken. For, though taken from the evil to come, still did they leave those after them in this world who should have to endure the conflict and bear the cross so long as the usurpation of Satan as Prince of this world should last; and sympathy with these in their sufferings, as well as zeal for the honour of God and glory of Christ, the assertion and manifestation of which are delayed for the same period, would still endear to them a hope on leaving this world which was their support while in it, and cause them to merge all feelings of selfishness in these paramount objects of desire—the exaltation of the Saviour and the good of the Church. Besides, it is ever to be borne in mind, that it is not his own death which is in Scripture represented as the consummation of the believer's bliss and crowning of his hopes, but the second coming of Christ and the resurrection from the dead: another reason that we seldom find the apostles in their writings allude to their death, while they and those to whom they write are described as "looking for Christ"—"waiting for him from heaven"—"loving his appearing"—"looking for and hastening unto the coming of the y of God." Nor this merely while yet in this world,
but after they had left it, as appears from chap. vi. 9-11, of this book, where, on the opening of the fifth Seal, are seen "under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" thus joining their prayers with that of the Church on earth—"Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven:" a prayer, in its scriptural acceptation, for the Lord's coming, and not till then to be answered. As also from the joy in Heaven at the near prospect of it: chs. xi. 15-18; xii. 10; xix. 1, 2.

But chiefly will the influence of this expectation at all periods of the interval appear from considering that there should come first the Anti-Christ, "with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness," who should put to the severest test the fidelity of Christ's disciples; in reference to which ensnaring apostacy they are again and again warned to see that, as faithful and wise servants, they be found by their Lord watching, whether his coming to them be "at midnight, at cock-crow, or in the morning." When this consummation of iniquity should be revealed they were not told, but only that "the mystery of iniquity" which should lead to it was already at work, and that soon after its revelation in "the Man of Sin" would He also be revealed who should "destroy him with the brightness of his coming." In this view it is—in the view of the events to happen before it—that the expectation of the Lord's advent is, indeed,
important and practical, and also attention to " the say-
ings of this Book:" because the Lord's coming will be
for judgment or salvation, according as we are found
implicated or not in the apostacy which it is the object
of this book to describe and to warn us against. It is
said that the first Christians were under a mistake in
looking for the advent of their Lord as near. Yea, truly,
when they looked for the Lord to come, and overlooked
the " falling away" which should " first come," they not
only were mistaken, but lost sight, moreover, of the
chief practical consideration connected with it: the fact,
in the instance of the Church at Thessalonica, which
called forth from the Apostle this prophecy of it: (See 2
Thess. ii. 1–3). But as for the rest, well had it been for
the Christian Church that it were always so mistaken—
that it had cherished the delusion that " the coming of
the Lord draweth nigh!" Well that the Christian sol-
dier had never ungirt his armour, nor stood down from
the watch-tower, nor betaken him to sleep even for one
hour of the fast-passing night of this world, till he saw
" the day dawn and the day-star arise!" Then would
the first advances of the enemy have been repelled: then
would we not have " given place to the devil:" then would
apostacy, in the various forms in which we now see it,
have had no entrance: then would His household the
Church have been in circumstances to hail and welcome
their Lord at His coming! But, alas! it is we who have
been mistaken: we who have erred, in saying we had no
concern with these predictions—with the coming of our
Lord, which we say " he delayeth"—with warnings and
promises, such as those of this Book, which are our safeguard and preservative, but which we either heed not, or explain away as referring to other times and to events that are past. (Q.)

III. But, lastly, and above all, we have the study of this book commended to us by a sanction which supersedes all reasoning and on which I shall say nothing; I mean the blessing of God pronounced here at its close, as before at its commencement, on him who hears and reads:—At the close,

"Behold, I come quickly: Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this Book; (chap. xxii. 7). And at the commencement,

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand" (chap. i. 3).

In conclusion:—The twofold bearing of this event—the coming of the Lord, which is thus again declared to be the scope of this Book—on the believing and unbelieving is now repeated with awful solemnity: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me to give to every man according as his work shall be" (ver. 11, 12). It will be the
day of decision. Fearful to the ungodly, who will have no more opportunity of repentance! But welcome to the faithful who will be confirmed in blessedness as having “a right to the tree of life,” and being free of the heavenly “city” (ver. 14); who accordingly eagerly anticipate it—“And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, &c. (ver. 17.)

And as these judgments and these promises are specially revealed in “the Book of this Prophecy,” there is added the awful denunciation already noticed against those who should either “add unto” or “take from” its words (ver. 18, 19): which they who read as well as they who expound it should equally bear in mind, lest they be found explaining away or making void its sayings in any respect; praying, as oft as they open it, that the Spirit by whom it was indited would give them light to understand and faith to believe what is written.

Again—“He which testifieth these things saith, “SURELY, I COME QUICKLY.”

May God grant us grace to respond as here—“AMEN. EVEN SO COME, LORD JESUS.”
APPENDIX.

(A.) Page 3.

ON THE TITLE OF THE APOCALYPSE.

In addition to this the obvious import of the title of this Book of Scripture, there is another truth conveyed by it no less important, though generally overlooked, and, indeed, completely obscured by the title which it bears in our Bibles. The title in most editions and versions is 'The Revelation of St. John the Divine,' or 'of St. John the Apostle,' to which some add 'and Evangelist:' whereas the title given by inspiration is "The Revelation of Jesus Christ;" so that, if the Apostle be named, it should be 'The Revelation to (not of) St. John,' being made by Jesus Christ—"the Revelation which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass"—and only "signified by his angel unto his servant John, who bare record of (or "testified") the word of God, and "the testimony of Jesus Christ, and all things that he saw:" verse 1.

The Author of the book is thus emphatically "the Lord Jesus Christ," and he, not speaking by inspiration as the several authors of the other books of Scripture, but himself "revealing" and "shewing" the things in it; and this in the discharge of the office which he bears in relation to his Church since his ascension, and in
verification of his own words to his disciples, spoken in reference to that event, "all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John, xv. 15)—as well as of the promise that the Spirit whom he should send would "shew them things to come." which he does principally through means of this prophecy. This precedent, then (if we may so speak), it has of the other writings of the New Testament, not indeed in point of truth—for they were all equally indited by "the Spirit of Truth"—but as to the manner of its communication, and the dignity of its Author: as it has also in another point of view, namely, its matter and contents, which, next to the history of the Gospels and Acts, are of most general concern to the Church, forming, as it does with them, the complete revelation of the redemption. For, as in the Gospels we have the account of the mission of the Saviour, and his sufferings for our redemption or reconciliation to God; and in the Acts the ministration of the Spirit for the founding of the Church, and the opening and ordering of this dispensation—thus to continue, as then established, in all essential particulars till the Lord's coming—so, this book of "the Revelation" comes in to take up the thread of the history, and tell those events by which "this age" shall be brought to its termination, and "the age to come," the last of the ages and "the dispensation of the fulness of the times," brought in:—this the book of the Second Advent, as the Gospels and Acts may be called the book of the First Advent of the Redeemer—the revelation of the "glory to follow the sufferings of Christ" (1 Pet. i. 1), of the day of his power to succeed to this the day of his Grace: (Compare ch. xi. 15–18, and xxii. 7, 12, 20). On these the Epistles of the New Testament are rather an inspired comment than an additional revelation, expounding, on the one hand, the Grace of God revealed and embodied in the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Saviour, with the gift of the Spirit and its results; of which facts, comprising the history of the First and all Christian doctrine and precept are but the development: and, on the other, enforcing the warnings, and en-
its accompanying signs, is entitled "The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ"—a term by which that event is elsewhere frequently designated: compare St. Luke, xvii. 30; 1 Cor. ii. 7; 2 Thess. i. 7; 1 Pet. i. 13. (Gr.)

(B.) Page 16.

ON THE DATE OF THE APOCALYPSE.

Although it does not belong strictly to the exposition of this book to treat of its Date, yet, as it is disputed, and the question is not only one of much interest but also of some importance, I subjoin a brief abstract of the argument, referring the reader who desires to enter more fully into the subject to 'Tiloch's Dissertations Introductory to the Study of the Apocalypse,' from which it is taken.

Having observed that critics differ so widely as to the time when this book was written—that some (among whom are Sir Isaac Newton, Grotius, Michaelis, and Bishop Newton*) make it one of the earliest published books of the New Testament, ascribing it to the reign of Claudius, A.D. 42 to 54, or of Nero, A.D. 54 to 68: while others (among whom are Mill, Lardner, Bengelius, and Woodhouse), with the Authorized Version, assign it to the close of the reign of Domitian, A.D. 96 or 97—he arranges the argument under three heads: First, The evidence from tradition: Secondly, The evidence from the state of the Asiatic churches: and Third, the evidence in the Epistles of the New Testament.

I. The Traditionary Testimony.

1. The time of Domitian was first assigned by Irenæus, the dis-

* And more recently, Dr. Lee, late Arabic Professor of Cambridge; Professor Luche of Gottingen; and Dr. Moses Stuart of the Theological Seminary at Andover, America; who, though (with some of those mentioned above) they may be considered prejudiced in favour of this decision by their view of the Apocalypse as having been fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem and the introduction of the Christian dispensation, are yet authorities of no little weight.
ciple of Polycarp, who had been the disciple of St. John: but against his correctness it is alleged that he postponed the dates of some other books, and, therefore, might have been mistaken as to the date of this also. Besides (as suggested by Bachmair), the name of Nero, before he was declared Cæsar and successor to Claudius, having been Domitianus, it is possible he might have so written it, and afterwards that by mistake it was changed to Domitianus.

2. Eusebius indeed follows Irenæus in his Chronicle and Ecclesiastical History: but in his Evangelical Demonstrations unites in the same sentence John's banishment with the stoning of James, the crucifixion of Peter, and the beheading of Paul, which happened in the reign of Nero; as does also, it is remarkable, Tertullian. Moreover, Eusebius, a little afterwards in the same history, recites out of Clemens Alexandrinus, the well known story respecting the young man who apostatized and became a robber, and was reclaimed by John, who went in search of him and came up with him after a long and fatiguing pursuit. This is related as having occurred some years after the Apostle's return from Patmos: but between the death of Domitian and that of John there were but two years and a half; and at that time John was nearly 100 years old, and could not possibly have acted the part which this story assigns to him in pursuing the young man: especially as it is elsewhere told that in his latter years he was so weak and infirm that he was carried into the church, where he could hardly speak a few words to the people: (Hieron. Epist. ad Galat. l. iii. c. 6.) The transaction is, however, quite possible, if the Apostle's visit to Patmos was in the reign of Nero, and at all events must be considered as demonstrative of a date long prior to the reign of Domitian.

Other early writers have also followed Irenæus; but as they refer him, or to Eusebius who copied him, they are in fact the same authority.

On the other hand, Epiphanius (who lived three hundred years after John) twice names the reign of Claudius as the time John was at Patmos, and the Apocalypse written; and, though
he is not always a correct writer, his testimony shews at least that
the opinion of Irenæus was not uniformly received. It is possible
too that by Claudius he may have intended Nero his successor, who
was adopted by him, and afterwards took his name—viz. Nero
Claudius Caesar.

4. Again, the commentator Arethas (a writer of the sixth cen-
tury), who quotes Irenæus’s opinion, does not follow it, for he applies
the sixth seal to the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), and adds,
that this event had not taken place when the Apocalypse was given:
and, as he merely exhibited a synopsis of preceding comments, this
also proves that the opinion was held by other writers before him,
as it is known to have been by Andreas, another ancient com-
mentator.

5. The title of the Syriac version of the Apocalypse is also evi-
dence for an early date, viz. "The Revelation which was made to
John the Evangelist, by God, in the island of Patmos, into which he
was banished by Nero the Caesar." And though the earliest transla-
tion of the Apocalypse into Syriac known to us was not made till
A.D. 508, still the argument remains, that the tradition of the
Syrian churches ascribed the Apocalypse to the days of Nero; and
the presumption is that the Greek manuscripts whence they made
their version exhibited the above title.

The conclusion as to the Traditionary Testimony is—that, as the
testimony of all the authors who assign the Apocalypse to the reign
of Domitian, however numerous, is reducible to one, namely, that of
Irenæus; and, as two other traditions assign it to the reigns either
of Claudius or Nero, it follows that the true date must be ascertained
by some other evidence. But, before this, is to be noticed the argu-
ment for a late date from,—

II. The state of the Asiatic Churches.

Whereas it is said that the seven Churches of Asia did not exist
so early as the reign of Claudius, and at least not so early as to
allow time for the declension animadverted on in the Apocalypse;
and also, that no church had been founded at Ephesus in particular,
previous to the visit of Paul mentioned Acts, xix.—it is to be observed,

1. That we learn from Acts, xviii. that Paul visited Ephesus with Aquila and Priscilla, and that he himself reasoned in the Synagogue then with the Jews, and left Aquila and Priscilla after him: (ver. 18, 19.) And this was in the reign of Claudius, because it was only one year and six months after his coming to Corinth where first he met Aquila and Priscilla, who had fled there from Rome owing to a decree of Claudius, issued in the eleventh year of that emperor, answering to A.D. 51 (See verses 1, 2, 11). How long this was before his visit mentioned in chapter xix. cannot be decided, but the latter was his second visit.

2. It is mentioned in the same chapter (xviii.) that, having sailed from Ephesus, he went to Cesarea (on his way to Jerusalem); after which he went to Antioch, where he spent some time; and afterwards that “he went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening the disciples” (21–23). So that churches had existed in Asia Minor previous to this period.

3. When Paul came to Ephesus, on his second visit, chap. xix. 1, he accordingly “found disciples there,” of whom the men numbered twelve; and, after reasoning with the Jews for three months, he “separated the disciples,” that is, organized them into a church, and then remained two years longer there “disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God;” the consequence of which was that “all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (ver. 10). Paul was then the founder of the churches in Asia; and this, too, chiefly in the reign of Claudius.

4. Then, as to the other objection—that the churches of Asia could not have declined in the degree mentioned so early as the reign of Nero, much less of his predecessor Claudius, it is sufficient to refer to the fact that the Epistles, all of which were written during the reigns of Claudius and Nero, represent the churches which had been visited by the Apostles as already infected with the same evils.
the words of Bachmaier—“what the state of the churches was in the
"reign of Nero, can best be decided from the writings of the Apos-
tles; for all their epistles were written during the reigns of Claudius
"and Nero……. The state of the churches as described in the Reve-
lation is as follows:—The Church of Ephesus is commended for
"her sufferings for the name of Christ, for her patience, for her un-
"weariedness in tribulation. She could not bear the wicked, and dis-
covered those that were false apostles; she hated the Nicolaitans,
"whom the Lord hated also; but is charged with having departed
from love and charity, and is therefore called unto repentance.
The Church of Smyrna was pure, only pestered with false apostles.
The Church of Pergamos [held fast the name of Christ and his faith
"but] had such as held the doctrine of Balaam, seducing the people
to eat such things as were sacrificed to idols, and to commit forni-
cation: and had also such as adhered to the doctrine of the Nico-
laitans. The Church of Thyatira is praised [for charity, service,
"faith, patience, and good works], but at the same time there was
fault found with some of the congregation, for suffering the woman
Jezebel to teach and seduce the people to fornication, and to eat
things sacrificed to idols. The Church of Sardis is greatly re-
proved, for having the name of being Christians while spiritually
dead; [but even in her there were a few names who had not defiled
their garments]. The Church of Philadelphia was pure, and no-
thing laid to her charge. The Church of Laodicea was found
"lukewarm.

If we read the Epistles of the Apostles, we find the churches in
"general pestered with all these evils. St. Paul wrote to the Corin-
thians about eating those things which were sacrificed to idols; St.
Peter writes against those that held the doctrine of Balaam. St.
Jude did the same. St. James, greatly incensed against those
whose faith was mere words, and their deeds wicked, means the
Nicolaitans, who afterwards took upon themselves the proud name
of Gnostics, that is, of wise men. And the false apostles made
their appearance everywhere, and were complained of by all the
"Apostles. Love and charity slackened in many churches; witness chap. xiii. of the second Epistle to the Corinthians, and the whole first Epistle of St. John. The second Epistle of Paul to Timothy, who was then Bishop of Ephesus, which was wrote in the year 67 is full of complaints against wicked Christians; and he mentions the names of several of them, who were of the Churches of Asia—Demas, Alexander the smith, Hermogenes, Philetus, and others. These evils were all in the churches when the Apostles wrote their Epistles; and they were all wrote during the reigns of Claudius and Nero. Who then will say, that the state of the Churches in Asia, in the reign of Nero, was different from that described in the Revelation?"

And as to the Church of Ephesus, the only one of the Apocalyptic Churches to which an Epistle is addressed, that Epistle evidently implies the existence of the same fault reproved in the Revelation: Compare ch. iii. 17, 19, with iv. 1-4, 15, 26, 31, 32; v. 2; and 1 Tim. i. 5. And, note, this was written thirty years before the date usually assigned to the Apocalypse; so unfounded is the argument for a late date of the latter from the declension of the Churches addressed in it.

5. It is objected that, as Colosse and Hierapolis in Asia were Churches of note in the Apostle Paul's time, and are not mentioned in the Apocalypse, they must have become insignificant before it was written; and this could only be in a length of time. But the more just inference is that they were not yet in existence, as their having so greatly fallen away would have made reproof only the more necessary, as in the case of Sardis: and, besides, the address—"To the Seven Churches in Asia"—in the original includes every Church in the district; ταῖς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ταῖς ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ. Chap. i. 4, 11.

6. Laodicea was overthrown in an earthquake, A.D. 60, and the persecution under Nero began A.D. 64, whence it has been inferred.

* Bachmair on the Revelation.
that this Church could not have been addressed as in chap. iii. 17—as "rich and increased in goods, &c."—if the city had been ruined five years before. But the words do not refer to temporal but spiritual riches, and in five years there would have been time to collect a Church in the new city: [Laodicea having been immediately rebuilt, though Colosse and Hierapolis, destroyed by the same earthquake, were not rebuilt for half a century after.] The more natural inference, however, is that the Apocalypse was written not only before the Neronian persecution, but before the destruction of that city in the year 60, when Laodicea was, indeed, "rich" in the possession of the accumulated wealth of generations.

7. And last—The opinion that the Apocalypse was written very early is, to use the words of Sir Isaac Newton, "confirmed by the many false Apocalypses; as those of Peter, Paul, Thomas, Stephen, Elias, and Cerinthus, written in imitation of the true one. For as the many false Gospels, false Acts, and false Epistles, were occasioned by true ones: and the writing many false Apocalypses, and ascribing them to apostles and prophets, argues that there was a true apostolic one in great request with the first Christians: so this true one may well be supposed to have been written early, that there may be room in the Apostolic age for the writing of so many false ones afterwards, and fathering them upon Peter, Paul, Thomas, and others, who were dead before John. Caius, who was contemporary with Tertullian, tells us that Cerinthus wrote his Revelations as a great apostle, and pretended the visions were shown him by Angels, asserting a millennium of carnal pleasures at Jerusalem after the resurrection;* so that his Apocalypse was plainly written in imitation of John's: and yet he lived so early, that he resisted the apostles at Jerusalem in or before the first year of Claudius,† that is, twenty-six years before the death of Nero, and died before John."

† Epiphan. Hæres. 28. ‡ Hieron. adv. Lucif.
"Tial mind as very powerful and conclusive against a late date, is generally passed over without notice by those who refer the book to the reign of Domitian; but silence will not set it aside. Cerinthus, who wrote a false Apocalypse, borrowing, altering, and corrupting passages from the genuine one, having died before John, it is impossible that John's Apocalypse could have been written so late as the time of the persecution by Domitian."

To this, the evidence from Tradition and the State of the Asiatic Churches, is to be added perhaps the most decisive of all, namely—

III. The Evidence from the Epistles of the New Testament.

This proof of an early date of the Apocalypse was suggested by Sir Isaac Newton, and Bishop Newton expresses himself satisfied that the allusions to it, pointed out by Sir Isaac, in the Epistles of Peter, and that to the Hebrews, were conclusive. The following are the instances collated by Tilloch, for his arguments on which the reader is referred to his work. And first—

§ 1. In the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Compare chap. x. 37—"Yet a little while, and he that shall come (or "The coming one," δ ἐρχόμενος) will come," when those who have done the will of God shall receive "the promise" and "reward," ver. 35, 36,—with the same title, Rev. i. 4, 8; and iv. 8, Gr. and the declaration, "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me," Chap. xxi. 12.


Chap. xii. 22, 23. "Ye are come to Mount Zion," with Rev. xiv. 1—"I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him 144,000, &c. :"—"The city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem," with Rev. xxi. 2, "the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of Heaven," called "the tabernacle of God," ver. 3:—The "innumerable company of Angels, and the General Assembly and Church of the first-born written
in heaven,” with Rev. v. 11; “ten thousand times ten thousand, 
and thousands of thousands of ANGELS round about the throne;” 
and “the GREAT MULTITUDE which no man could number” (of the 
CHURCH) “which came out of great tribulation, &c.,” chap. vii. 9, 
14; and “the names WRITTEN in the Book of LIFE,” chap. iii. 5; 
xx. 12; xxi. 27.

To these Sir Isaac Newton adds, “The true tabernacle,” in the 
heavens, in which Christ officiates as King and Priest, chap. viii. 1, 
2, with Rev. xi. 19; xv. 5; xxi. 3:—“THE WORD OF GOD,” and 
the “SHARP TWO-EDGED SWORD,” chap. iv. 12, with Rev. i. 16; ii. 
12, 16; xix. 13, 15:—The Sabbatical rest (σαββατικός) ib. 9, 
with the Millennial rest, Rev. xx.:—“The shaking” of the present 
“heaven and earth,” and removing them, “that the things which 
cannot be shaken may remain,” and “the consuming fire,” chap. xii. 
26–end, with “the new heaven and the new earth” after “the pass-
ing away of the first heaven and earth,” Rev. xxi. 1, and “the lake 
of fire,” ver. 8, &c. &c.

§ 2. In the Epistles of Peter.

In the first Epistle, compare—“The Revelation of Jesus Christ,” 
(αποκάλυψις), chap. i. 7, 13; iv. 13; v. 1, Gr. with the same 
words, Rev. i. 1.

“The inheritance reserved in heaven,” and “the salvation ready to 
be revealed (αποκαλύφθηναι) in the last time,” chap. i. 4, 5, with 
Rev. xxi. 2, 7.

“The Royal Priesthood,” ch. ii. 9, with Rev. v. 10, and, perhaps, 
“the Church at Babylon,” chap. v. 13, with Rev. xvii. by which, 
the ancients generally agree, he meant Rome.

In the Second Epistle—compare, as the precursors of the Lord’s 
coming, and characteristic of “the last days,”—“Damnable here-
sies, false prophets, blasphemy of the way of truth, covetousness 
making merchandise of the Church, the lust of uncleanness, and 
scoffers denying the Lord’s coming,” with the Prophecy in the Reve-
lation of “the Beast and False Prophet”—of Babylon’s seductions—
and the confederacy previous to the Second Advent; both books ending with the mention of "a thousand years," and the introduction of "A New Heavens and a New Earth."

§ 3. In the Epistles to Timothy.

The state of the Church of Ephesus, over which Timothy presided, as gathered from these Epistles, clearly proves them posterior to the Apocalypse, inasmuch as it had evidently declined considerably from its state as given in the address in Rev. ii. For, while there faulted for a decrease of love, but praised for her works, labour, patience, not enduring those who were evil, and trying pretended Apostles and proving them liars; here there is mention of false teachers, giving heed to fables—of some who had swerved from the faith and turned aside to vain jangling—and others who concerning faith had made shipwreck—of blasphemers delivered to Satan (1 Tim. i. 3-7, 19, 20).

"All in Asia were turned away from Paul" at this time, and ungodliness and heresy was eating into the Church as a gangrene—there were many opposers and many had been taken in the snare of the devil—and, in a word, a state of things existed which, from the resemblance, suggested to the Apostle the prophecy of the perilous times of the last days (2 Tim. i. 15; ii. 14-18, 25, 26; and iii. 1, &c.) Accordingly, compare "the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall shew," and as "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords," 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15, with Rev. xix. 16:—and "the judgment of the living and dead at his appearing and kingdom," and "the crown" to be given "at that day," 2 Tim. iv. 1, 8, with Rev. ii. 26, 27; iii. 21; xi. 18.

§ 4. In the Epistle to the Ephesians.

Compare the description of Christ's sovereignty, ch. i. 15-23, with the visions and ascriptions in the Revelation, as in ch. i. 6; iv. 11; v. 12, 13:—ch. v. 3-6, with Rev. xxi. 8:—and especially the title "Prince of the power of the air," ch. ii. 2, and "the principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age, and wicked spirits in Heavenly places," ch. vi. 12, with Rev. xii. 7-12.
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§ 5. In the Epistle to the Philippians.

Compare "the Name which is above every name"—as the best MSS. read) "given to Christ" with the "new name" of Christ, Rev. iii. 12: and the acknowledgment of his sovereignty by "those in Heaven, and those in earth, and those under the earth," with Rev. v. 13, "and every creature which is in Heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

Also, and very remarkable, the mention of "the names in the book of life" chap. iv. 3—the only place in which "the book of life" is mentioned in the New Testament, except in the Revelation, where so frequent as to stamp the expression as perfectly Apocalyptic: See Rev. iii. 5; xiii. 8; xvii. 8; xx. 12, 15; xxii. 19.

§ 6. In the Epistle to the Colossians.

Compare "giving thanks to the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in the light" ch. i. 12 (where the article again implies familiarity with the subject), with Rev. xxii. 7, 23, 24, and xxii. 5. And, note, this was an Asiatic Church, and in communication with the Church at Laodicea, ch. iv. 16.

Also, ch. i. 18, "who is the beginning (αρχη) the first-born from the dead, that among all he might be chief," with Rev. i. 5,—"Jesus Christ who is......the first born from the dead, and the Prince (αρχων) of the kings of the earth."

§ 7. In the Epistles to the Corinthians.

In 1 Cor. xv. 52, the time of the resurrection of those who are Christ's is fixed at "the last trumpet," where, in addition to the article, the word "last" proves beyond question this Church's previous acquaintance, not only with the sound of a trumpet as an attendant on the Lord's coming, but with the sounding of a series of
trumpets in succession, of which this should be "the last:" information which they could only have obtained from the Apocalypse, the whole time of which prophecy is divided into "seven trumpets," at the sounding of the seventh or last of which—"the mystery of God is finished as declared to his servants the prophets,"—"the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ,"— and the time comes that he should "give reward unto his servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear his name small and great"—as also "the first resurrection" of those who "live to reign with Christ," (ch. x. 7; xi. 15-18; xx. 4).

But if the first Epistle, of which the date is supposed to be A.D. 56 or 57, was written before the Apocalypse, of course so was the second: in which, though not so evident as in the former, an allusion may, perhaps, be intended in "THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST," before which "all must appear that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to what he hath done whether good or bad" (chap. v. 10), to "THE GREAT WHITE THRONE" of him from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, and before whom "the dead small and great stand," and are "judged according to their works." (Rev. xx. 12.)

§ 8. In the Epistles to the Thessalonians.

In these Epistles are many passages which have peculiar force, if we suppose a reference to the Rook of the Revelation. Thus, in 1 Thess. iv. we have "the trump of God" again mentioned, and "the first resurrection." Compare also chap. v. 1, 2, "the coming of the day of the Lord as a thief in the night," with Rev. iii. 3, and xvi. 15, and "the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints," chap. iii. 13, with Rev. xx. 4.

In the second Epistle, "The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ" occurs, ch. 1, 7, where, for "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from the original reads "in the Apocalypse of the Lord Jesus." Compare also, "the everlasting destruction from the face of the Lord (προσωπον) and from the glory of his
"Power, in that day when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe" (ver. 9), with Rev. vi. 16,—"And they said (the kings of the earth, &c.) to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face (προσωπον) of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand."

But principally, the mention of "the Apostacy," and the revelation of "the man of sin," and "the wicked one," before the coming of the Lord, and by his designation in the Apocalypse—"the son of perdition," a title which, except to Judas, is only given to the Beast of the Revelation: see ch. xvii. 8, 11.

In addition to these, the attentive reader of the Epistles (especially in the original) will find many other allusions to the Apocalypse, just such as would be natural on the supposition of previous acquaintance with the latter book, though not so striking or convincing as many of those now adduced. Thus, "the day of wrath and the apocalypse of the righteous judgment of God," Rom. ii. 5, may be compared with "the day of wrath," Rev. vi. 17, and "true and righteous are his judgments," xix. 2: and "the judgment seat of Christ," here again, ch. xiv. 10, with Rev. xx. 11. In the Epistle of James, "the crown of life," received by those who "endure trial," plainly alludes to the promise to those in tribulation, Rev. ii. 10,—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life;" and in the Epistle to the Galatians, still more obvious is the reference of "the Jerusalem above" to "the New Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven," Rev. iii. 12, and xxi. 10. See also, "Ye have heard that the Antichrist cometh," 1 John, ii. 18, as furnishing evidence that those whom the Apostle addresses were acquainted with the great New Testament prophecy of the "Antichrist" previously given to him.

I would only add, that this argument for an early date is greatly strengthened if, as I believe, and as Mr. Tilloch proceeds next to
show, the Apocalypse be the opening of those prophecies of Daniel which were "closed up and sealed till the time of the end;" because in that case the information which the churches possessed (as implied in the foregoing quotations from the Epistles to them) must have been derived from the Apocalypse and not from Daniel, as the advocates of a late date are compelled to maintain: while this priority is also in accordance with the object assigned to this book in the preceding note, and the importance I have there claimed for it.

(C.) Page 98.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

The following brief notice of the present state of the Seven Churches of Asia (taken from Keith's Evidence of Prophecy) will not be uninteresting to the reader, not only as shewing the fulfilment of prophecy, but as enforcing the warnings given through them as examples to the Church, and the call oft repeated, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."

"The Church of Ephesus, after a commendation of their first works, to which they were commanded to return, were accused of having left their first love, and threatened with the removal of their candlestick out of its place, except they should repent." "Ephesus is situated nearly fifty miles north of Smyrna. It was the metropolis of Iona, and a great and opulent city, and (according to Strabo) the greatest emporium of Asia Minor. It was chiefly famous for the temple of Diana, 'whom all Asia worshipped,' which was adorned with one hundred and twenty-seven columns of Parian marble, each of a single shaft, and sixty feet high, and which formed one of the seven wonders of the world. The remains of its magnificent theatre, in which it is said that twenty thousand people could easily have been seated, are yet to

*Rev. ii. 5.*
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"be seen.* But 'a few heaps of stones, and some miserable mud
cottages, occasionally tenanted by Turks, without one Christian
residing there, are all the remains of ancient Ephesus.'† It is, as
described by different travellers, a solemn and most forlorn spot.
The Epistle to the Ephesians is read throughout the world: but
there is none in Ephesus to read it now. They left their first love,
they returned not to their first works. Their candlestick has been
removed out of its place; and the great city of Ephesus is no
more.

"The CHURCH OF SMYRNA was approved of as 'rich,' and no
judgment was denounced against it. They were warned of a tri-
ubation of ten days (the ten years' persecution by Diocletian†),
and were enjoined to be faithful unto death, and they would receive
a crown of life.§ And, unlike to the fate of the more famous city
of Ephesus, Smyrna is still a large city, containing nearly one
hundred thousand inhabitants, with several Greek Churches; and
an English and other Christian ministers have resided in it. The
light has, indeed, become dim, but the candlestick has not been
wholly removed out of its place.

"The CHURCH OF PERGAMOS is commended for holding fast the
name of the Lord, and not denying his faith, during a time of per-
secution, and in the midst of a wicked city. But there were some
in it who held doctrines, and did deeds, which the Lord hated.
Against them He was to fight with the sword of his mouth; and
all were called to repent. But it is not said, as of Ephesus, that
their candlestick would be removed out of its place.|| Pergamos
is situated to the north of Smyrna, at a distance of nearly sixty-
four miles, and 'was formerly the metropolis of Hellespontic
'Mysia.' It still contains at least fifteen thousand inhabitants, of
whom fifteen hundred are Greeks, and two hundred Armenians,
each of whom have a Church.

"In the CHURCH OF THYATIRA, like that of Pergamos, some tares

* Acts, xix. 29. † Arundel's Visit to the Seven Churches of Asia, p. 27.
‡ Quere? See p. 48, and Note there.) § Rev. ii. 8-11. || Ib. ii. 12-16.
"were soon mingled with the wheat. He who hath eyes like unto a flame of fire discerned both. Yet happily for the souls of the people, more than for the safety of the city, the general character of that church, as it then existed, is thus described; "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first." But against those, for such there were among them, who had committed fornication, and eaten things sacrificed unto idols, to whom the Lord gave space to repent of their fornication, and they repented not, great tribulation was denounced; and to every one of them was to be given according to their works. These, thus warned while on earth in vain, have long since passed, where all are daily hastening, to the place where no repentance can be found, and no work be done. 'But unto the rest in Thyatira (as many as have not known the depths of Satan) I will put upon you, saith the Lord, none other burden.'† There were those in Thyatira who could save a city. It still exists, while greater cities have fallen. Mr. Hartley, who visited it in 1826, describes it as embosomed in cypresses and poplars. The Greeks are said to occupy three hundred houses, and the Armenians thirty. Each of them have a church.

"The Church of Sardis differed from those of Pergamos and Thyatira. They had not denied the faith; but the Lord had a few things against them, for there were some evil doers among them, and on those, if they repented not, judgment was to rest. But in Sardis, great though the city was, and founded though the church had been by an apostle, there were only a few names which had not defiled their garments. And to that church the Spirit said, 'I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.' But the Lord is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And the Church of Sardis was thus warned—'Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not

found thy works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I shall come upon thee."*

"The state of Sardis now is a token that the warning was given in vain; and shows that the threatenings of the Lord, when disregarded, become certain judgments. Sardis, the capital of Lydia, was a great and renowned city, where the wealth of Croesus, its king, was accumulated, and became even a proverb. But now a few wretched mud huts, scattered among the ruins, are the only dwellings in Sardis, and form the lowly home of Turkish herdsmen, who are its only inhabitants. As the seat of a Christian Church, it has lost—all it had to lose—the name. 'No Christians reside on the spot.'

"And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia, write, These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth:—I know thy works; behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.—Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.'† The promises of the Lord are as sure as his threatenings. Philadelphia alone long withstood the power of the Turks, and in the words of Gibbon, 'at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and Churches of Asia,' he adds, 'Philadelphia is still erect; a column in a scene of ruins.'‡ 'It is indeed an interesting circumstance,' says Mr. Hartley, 'to find Christianity more flourishing here than in many other parts of the Turkish empire; there is still a numerous Christian population; they occupy three hundred houses. Divine service is performed every Sunday in five Churches.' Nor is it less interesting in these eventful times, and notwithstanding the general degeneracy

* Rev. iii. 3, 4. † Ib. iii. 8, 10. ‡ Gibbon, lxiv.
of the Greek Church, to learn that the present Bishop of Phila-
dphia accounts 'the Bible the only foundation of all religious belief;' 
and that he admits that 'abuses have entered into the Church, 
which former ages might endure; but the present must put them 
down.' It may as well be added, as stated by Mr. Hartley,* 'the 
circumstance that Philadelphia is now called Allah-Shehr, the city 
of God, when viewed in connexion with the promises made to that 
Church, and especially with that of writing the name the city of 
God upon its faithful members, is, to say the least, a singular con-
currence. From the prevailing iniquities of men many a sign has 
been given how terrible are the judgments of God. But from the 
fidelity of the Church in Philadelphia of old in keeping his word, 
a name and memorial of his faithfulness has been left on earth, 
while the higher glories, promised to those that overcame, shall be 
ratified in heaven; and towards them, but not them only, shall the 
glorified Redeemer confirm the truth of his blessed words, 'Him 
that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God;'
even as assuredly as Philadelphia, when all else fell around it, 
'stood erect,' our enemies themselves being judges, 'a column in 
a scene of ruins.'

'And unto the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans 
write,—These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, 
the beginning of the creation of God.—I know thy works, that 
thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So 
then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will 
spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and 
increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not 
that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and 
naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou 
mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, 
and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint 
thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see.'† All the other 
churches were found worthy of some commendation; and there

* Missionary Register, June, 1827. + Rev. iii. 14. &c.
"was some blessing in them all. The Church of Ephesus had "laboured and had not fainted, though she had forsaken her first "love; and the threatened punishment, except she repented, was "the removal of her candlestick out of its place. A faithless and "wicked few polluted the Churches of Pergamos and Thyatira by "their doctrines or by their lives; but the body was sound; and the "Churches had a portion in Christ. Even in Sardis, though it was "dead, there was life in a few, who had not defiled their garments; "'and they shall walk with me in white, said the Lord, for they are "worthy.' But in what the Spirit said to the Church in Laodicea, "there was not one word of approval; it was lukewarm, without ex- "ception; and therefore it was wholly loathed......But what is that "city now, or how is it changed from what it was?

"Laodicea was the metropolis of the greater Phrygia; and as "heathen writers attest, it was an extensive and very celebrated "city. Instead of then verging to its decline, it arose to its emi- "nence only about the beginning of the Christian era. 'It was the "mother-church of sixteen bishoprics.' Its three theatres, and the "immense circus, which was capable of containing upwards of thirty "thousand spectators, the spacious remains of which (with other "ruins buried under ruins) are yet to be seen, give proof of the great- "ness of its ancient wealth and population, and indicate too strongly, "that in that city where Christians were rebuked, without exception, "for their lukewarmness, there were multitudes who were lovers of "pleasure more than lovers of God. The amphitheatre was built "after the Apocalypse was written, and the warning of the Spirit "had been given to the Church of the Laodiceans to be zealous and "repent; but whatever there they may have heard or beheld, their "hearts would neither have been quickened to a renewed zeal for "the service and glory of God, nor turned to a deeper sorrow for sin, "and to a repentance not to be repented of. But the fate of Lao- "dicea, though opposite, has been no less marked than that of Phi- "ladelphia. There are no sites of grandeur, nor scenes of temptation "around it now. Its own tragedy may be briefly told. It was
"lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, and therefore it was loathsome in the sight of God. It was loved, and rebuked, and chastened in vain. And it has been blotted from the world. It is now as desolate as its inhabitants were destitute of the fear and the love of God, and as the Church of the Laodiceans was devoid of true faith in the Saviour, and zeal in his service. It is, as described in his Travels by Dr. Smith, 'utterly desolated, and without any inhabitant, except wolves, and jackals, and foxes.' It can boast of no human inhabitants, except occasionally when wandering Turks pitch their tents in its spacious amphitheatre. The 'finest sculptured fragments' are to be seen at a considerable depth, in excavations which have been made among the ruins.* And Colonel Leake observes,† 'there are few ancient cities more likely than Laodicea to preserve many curious remains of antiquity beneath the surface of the soil. Its opulence, and the earthquakes to which it was subject, rendering it probable that valuable works of art were often there buried beneath the ruins of the public and private edifices.' A fearful significance is thus given to the terrific denunciation, 'Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.'"

(D.) Page 122.

THE APOCALYPSE NOT A PROPHETIC HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION.

There is an objection commonly made to this view of the design of the Apocalypse, which, as it is a merely presumptive or a priori argument, I notice here, namely, that on this supposition the long interval from the commencement to near the close of the Christian Dispensation is without a prophecy, or, at least, without a detailed and regularly historic prophecy of its events such as the analogy of former dispensations would have led us to expect.

* Arundel's Travels, p. 85.  
+ Journal, p. 252.
That, however, this long interval is without a prophecy by no means follows from the view of the Apocalypse as yet unfulfilled; and has not, that I know of, been asserted. Prophecies there are not a few which fully account for the whole interval, giving distinctly, though in summary, what was to be its character until the time of the end. Such a prophecy is the commencement of 2 Thess. ii. which tells us that, prior and in order to the revelation of "the wicked one," there should come "a falling away," and that the interval was to be occupied with the working of "the mystery of iniquity," which had already begun when the Apostle wrote. Numerous and very distinct intimations are also found in the New Testament of a corruption of the Christian faith, and especially of the rise of false teachers after the decease of the Apostles, from among the disciples and in the pale of the Church: See for example, Acts, xx. 28-30; 2 Pet. ii. 1-3; 1 Tim. iv. 1-3; 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4; Jude, 3, 4, 17, 18, &c.; at the same time it is observable that in the Epistles, also, the spirit of prophecy dwells most on the crisis of this corruption in "the last days," and its consummation at the eve of the Lord's coming, prior to its judgment;—the uniformity of character of the interval (as it were) not requiring more particular detail.

That this interval has proved longer than was expected by those to whom these prophecies were addressed is indeed true; but this very fact proves (what the writings of the early Fathers make abundantly evident), that they did not understand the Revelation to be a prophecy of events spread over a period of, at least, more than twelve centuries: while, on the other hand, were there such a prophecy given, it must, as far as understood, have operated effectually to prevent that expectation of the Lord's coming, by which the faithful servants of his household were, in the interval of his absence, continually to be characterized.

And as to the analogy of former dispensations inferring a continuous prophetical history of this present one, it is remarkable, considering the confidence with which this argument is urged by some, that the inference is just the opposite;—there being no instance in
the Bible of such a prophecy of any lengthened period: though, were
there one such found, it would be no proof that the Apocalypse was
another. The prophecies of Daniel—of the Beasts, and
of Chapters xxi. and xii. have been announced: but, on examination,
they will be found only as many additional exemplifications of that
dimension of Prophecy by which, from the first promise downward
it is so strictly distinguished, namely, coming of causes, and
mixture—the last great crisis and “end (or soon) of all things,”
or those which were typical of it and intermediate. Thus, in the
two former, while the rise of the first three kingdoms in succession is
merely announced in so many verses, the prophecy dwells at length,
and emerges in the fourth: see ch. xii. 37—39, the account of the
first three, composed with 40—43, the account of the fourth: and
more remarkable still, ch. viii., where the interpretation altogether
passes over the three first with the exception of the summary notice
in vers. 17. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings which
shall arise out of the earth;? and is wholly occupied with the fourth
theme to the end of the chapter: and as to the prophecy of chapters
xi. and xii., though a fulfillment has been made for it, which makes
it a prophetic history of the whole period from the date of the vision
to the Second Advent, that interpretation becomes more than ques-
tionable when the Angel’s statement as to its import, and the time it
relates to, is considered, ch. x. 14:—“ Now I am come to make
these understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days,
for yet the vision is for many days:” and the fact that the words are
declared to be “closed up and sealed till the time of the end,” when
also it is that “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge” (as to
its import, I conclude) “shall be increased.” chap. xii. 4, 9.

This passage indeed, I would suggest, gives the key to the silence
of prophecy during the interval. We have yet to learn that the Jew
is the key to prophecy: but so it is; the interval has been the period
of Jewish dispersion, which has occasioned a chasm or gap in the
prophecy—a parenthesis in the dispensations: but when Daniel’s
people come again upon the stage the broken off thread is again re-
sumed, and that crisis, long delayed because suspended on their restoration, speedily takes place, which ends in the setting of their Messiah, as king, on the throne of his Father David; and the throne, as it shall then be, of the world—"the kingdom and dominion and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven." Dan. vii. 27.

(E.) Page 135.

For an example of an Expositor of the Apocalypse in this view the reader is referred to the notes on it of Wetstein and his Synopsis at the end, with whom also are Rosenmüller, Grotius, Hammond, Eichhorn, Ewald, &c. It is sufficient to mention here that he dates the book prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, and considers the whole to have been fulfilled in that event, and the commotions in Italy while Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian, the predecessors of Titus, were contending for the empire, which occupied about three years and a half. As to the detail, he divides the prophecy into two parts—the closed book, and open book, thus:—

1. The closed or seven-sealed book concerns the Jewish land and people. The seals and trumpets are the succession of judgments on the nation ending in the destruction of the temple and city. The 144,000 servants of God sealed from the twelve tribes, the Christians timely warned to escape. The two witnesses, teachers in the Church foretelling the destruction of the temple—their death, their flight to Pella—their resurrection, the fulfilment of their word and subsequent spread of Christianity.

The open book, introduced ch. x., concerns the Roman empire intended by the "peoples, nations, &c." of ver. 11, and predicts the commotions and civil wars above-mentioned..

"The woman clothed with the sun," the Christian Church persecuted by the Roman power. "The great red dragon with seven heads crowned," the six first Cæsars, of whom the sixth was Nero, who cruelly persecuted the Christians. The seven-headed beast with ten horns crowned (ch. xiii. 1), Galba, Otho, Vitellius, symbolized by the lion, leopard, and bear. One head, the seventh, cut off,

Similar in result, though differing in details, is the plan of the Apocalypse put forward by Professor Lee, of Cambridge, in his Sermons and Dissertations, published in 1830. He also considers the whole to have been fulfilled—and that its visions relate, to use his own words, 'to the end of the Jewish Polity, of the dominion of Heathenism, and to the erection of the Christian Church, or spiritual kingdom of heaven, throughout the whole earth.' According to him—

The seals of ch. vi. relate to the persecutions, and the judgments poured out and witnessed, during the first ages of the Church. The 144,000 of Israel, and the multitude out of all nations, ch. vii., are the converts from both the Jews and Heathen in the same period. The witnesses are the law and gospel—the word of God—at first opposed but afterwards triumphant. The Dragon and Beast, the Pagan Roman Empire instigated by Satan. Babylon, heathen Rome. The desolation of Babylon by the ten horns, the destruction of the Roman Empire by the Goths and Vandals. The binding of Satan refers back to the subjection of the devils to Christ and his Apostles. The Millennium commenced some time in the ministry of the Christ, and
APPENDIX.

is an indefinite and highly figurative expression for the period during which miraculous powers were exercised by the Church. The loosing of Satan took place under the general persecutions of the Church which followed: after which, the conflict with the great enemies of the Church being over, the establishment of Christianity which followed is represented by "the New Jerusalem," and "a new Heavens and new earth," in the enjoyment of which state we are now and for centuries past, which state of things, moreover, shall continue for ever. The white-throne judgment is, of course, also fulfilled, denoting the Scriptures being opened—the law to condemn, and the gospel to save—according to which the doom of all is fixed. In conclusion, the Professor raises the question, 'Whether any particular prophecies still remain to be fulfilled?' To which he answers, 'I believe there are none!' Even the prophecy Isa. xi. 9,—"The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"—he instances as fulfilled, as also that of the Apostle, Rom. xi. 26. "All Israel shall be saved!" both being expressions for the general preaching of the gospel in the Apostolic times and since, and denoting the universal character, not extent, of Christianity. These statements will be allowed by most readers to render a formal confutation of this system unnecessary; and yet, extravagant as it is, I must repeat what I have said in the text—that, in my judgment, it has much better warrant than any of the schemes more generally received, which represent the Apocalypse to be fulfilled, or all but fulfilled, in the past history of the Church: and for the reason there assigned, that the destruction of Jerusalem—by which the first Advent was to the Jewish Church and dispensation the Day of Judgment—is spoken of in the terms, as it was undoubtedly the type, of the Second Advent of the Lord as the Day of Judgment to Gentile Christendom; so that the mistake simply lies in making that the anti-type which is but the type; added to which, in giving the Jewish people their place in the prophecy where expressly mentioned, it has so far done less violence to the inspired language. For this reason, I believe, that on this question the truth lies not in the medium, but in either of the extremes; and that our only alternative is either to maintain, with
the two learned professors just referred to, that the Apocalypse is
long since completely fulfilled, or that the fulfilment of the whole is
yet future.

(F.) Page 139.

ON THE VARIOUS DATES OF THE SEALS.

For an exemplification of the difference of opinion among Expo-
sitors on this point, the reader is referred to the valuable work of Mr.
Tyso, entitled 'An Elucidation of the Prophecies,' published in 1838,
some years subsequent to the first Edition of these Lectures, which
has for its object to shew that the prophetic periods of Daniel and
the Apocalypse are yet unaccomplished. The work is particularly
useful as giving the opinions of a number of the most distinguished
writers on Prophecy, which the author does by placing their dates in
parallel columns in tabular views, enabling the reader at once to com-
pare them and perceive the discrepancy.

On the Seals the number of Expositors compared by him is 35,
exhibiting a difference as to the date of the First Seal of 624 years;
and as to the date of the sixth, 1708; thus,—

| Earliest assigned date of 1st seal, A.D. | 33 |
| Latest ditto, A.D.                     | 657 |
| Difference..........................624 years |

| Earliest assigned date of 6th seal, A.D. | 98 |
| Latest ditto, A.D.                     | 1806 |
| Difference..........................1708 years |

of which authors the following may suffice as instances of the most
recent and best known:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cunningham</th>
<th>Keith</th>
<th>Frere</th>
<th>Faber</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Seal,</td>
<td>A.D. 38</td>
<td>A.D. 96</td>
<td>A.D. 312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Seal,</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>The Judgment</td>
<td>1789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From which it will be seen that where Frere begins Faber ends: and
where agreement nearly exists as to the sixth seal, as between Cunninghame and Frere, there is a difference as to the first of no less than 279 years.


ON THE DATES OF THE TRUMPETS.

The same work, quoted in the preceding note, gives the following result from a comparison of the same number of authors’ views of the trumpets, viz.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Earliest Assigned Date</th>
<th>Latest Assigned Date</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Trumpet</td>
<td>A.D. 34</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>403 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th Trumpet (except Day of Judgment by some)</td>
<td>A.D. 1516</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>411 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the expositions noticed in the text, several have contended that the Seventh Trumpet was fulfilled by the Reformation; others (among whom are Cunninghame, Frere, and Faber), by the French Revolution, A.D. 1792; and, strange to say, by only a few is it referred to that with which it is so manifestly identical—the "last trumpet," mentioned 1 Cor. xv. 52.

(H.) Page 204.

ON THE TRANSFIGURATION OF MOSES AND ELIAS.

It has been urged as a decisive objection against the return to earth of Moses and Elias in the character of the two witnesses, that they appeared in glory with the Lord on the occasion of his transfiguration, and, therefore, had already passed into the resurrection
state and "put on immortality;" and the objection would indeed hold if this inference from their transfiguration were just. That, however, the glory in which they appeared (and which, I allow, is the glory of the resurrection and of the Second Advent kingdom) was not their then state of being, is proved by the express statement of Scripture that Christ is "the first-fruits" of the resurrection— "the first-begotten from the dead"—and more, "the first who should rise from the dead" (Acts, xxvi. 23), which expressions cannot be explained (as some would suggest) of his being chief in resurrection or the cause of it, for it is with reference to the order of the resurrection that the first title is given him—"But every man (or "each"), "in his own order, Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are "Christ's at his coming;"" and the idiom in the last two passages utterly forbids such a construction. As then none entered into the condition of resurrection-glory before Christ,—"who in all things," not only "hath the pre-eminence," but "the precedence," or "is first," Col. i. 18. Gr.—it follows that the form of that glory was only assumed for the occasion by Moses and Elias, to afford a specimen and earnest, in accordance with the design of the vision, of the Church's future appearing in glory with Christ. In other words, they as well as Jesus were "transfigured:" ("metamorphosed," μεταμορφώσας), for he is the key to the whole transaction. His then state of being we know was mortal humanity, and the glory in which he was seen was proper to another state; and, though we do not know the manner of being in cases in every respect so singular as those of Moses and Elias, yet that they had not then entered into the condition of resurrection-glory is certain, and if not up to that time, neither, we have reason to conclude, have they now.

Accordingly, in the early ages of the Church, when, as is well known, the received opinion was that the two witnesses were Enoch and Elias, this objection could not have been considered as having any weight; though, in the case of Elias at least, it must have occurred, if it were believed that his appearing in glory on the Mount was evidence of an anticipation of resurrection. But indeed,
the Prophecy of the return of Elias before the return of Christ is so explicit as, when taken in connexion with the description here, to leave little room for doubt that he is one of the witnesses; while the fact of Moses having appeared with him on the Mount, as the witness with him to the glory, is a strong confirmation of the opinion (of some, though a minority of the ancients), that he, rather than Enoch, is the second witness.

(1.) Page 213.

ON THE TIMES OF ANTICHRIST.

From a consideration of Daniel, ix. 27—"And he" (that is, not "the Messiah," but "the Prince to come who shall destroy the city and sanctuary," ver. 26) "shall confirm the covenant with many for one week," (or "one seven," i.e. of years) "and in the midst of the week:

- "he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the over-

spreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the

"consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate,"
— it would appear that the time of Antichrist's power (of whom I believe this passage speaks) is seven years, which is divided into two periods of "3½ years," or "1260" days, each: the difference between which seems to be, that, for the first half week, or 3½ years, he is in covenant with the Jews—"working deceitfully after the league made with him," and "corrupting by flatteries" the wicked of them, as said of him ch. xi. 23, 32—but in the last half declares himself, turns against them, and becomes by his persecution of them the accomplisher of the indignation, and at the same time the means of trying and purifying a faithful remnant.*

Moreover, that I am not singular in referring the "one week" of Daniel to the times of Antichrist will be seen from the following

* See Lecture IV. of Lectures on the Second Advent—On "The Abomination of Desolation:" the exposition of which as there given, (and of the Visions and Periods of Daniel generally), has been adopted and further elucidated and corroborated by Dr. Tregelles in his 'Remarks on the Prophecies in the Book of Daniel.' London: 1852.
passage of Sir Isaac Newton, which not only shows his opinion of that of the early fathers. In his exposition of ver. 25, — "Know therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the Commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks" — he thus writes: —

'The former part of the prophecy (ver. 24) related to the first coming of Christ, being dated to his coming as a Prophet: this being dated to his coming to be Prince or King, seems to relate to his second coming. There, the prophet was consummate, and the Most Holy anointed: here, He that was anointed comes to be Prince and to reign. For Daniel’s prophecies reach to the end of the world; and there is scarce a prophecy in the Old Testament concerning Christ, which doth not, in something or other, relate to his second coming. If divers of the ancients, as Irenæus, Julius Africanus, Hippolitus the Martyr and Apollinaris, bishops of Laodicea, applied the half week to the times of Antichrist; why may not we, by the same liberty of interpretation, apply the seven weeks to the time when Antichrist shall be destroyed by the brightness of Christ’s coming?"

I would add that this also accounts in some degree for the precise period of three-and-a-half years, by referring it to the greater period of the complete week, or seven of years, as its half: while it furnishes another and decisive argument against those who interpret the 1260 days as years; inasmuch as they will have to show two periods of 1260 years instead of one.

(K.) Page 236.

ON THE TEN HORNS OF THE BEAST.

I refer again for the verification of this assertion to Mr. Tyso’s work, who has been at the trouble of comparing twenty-eight different authors; the result of which is sixty-five kingdoms, and this, reckoning only once the kingdoms common to different lists! And if twenty-eight authors furnish this number, how much greater would it be if all the lists that have been given could be compared?
I fully agree with him in his concluding remark on this division, and think that the simple question proposed, and not by him for the first time, is in itself fatal to these interpretations of the ten-horns, independent even of their variety: viz.—

'It is' (he says) 'generally considered by commentators that the lower parts of the metallic image represent the Roman Empire, and that the legs symbolize the two parts into which it was divided, commonly called the Eastern and Western: and that the ten toes represent ten parts into which the Western Empire has been divided. But is there not a great incongruity in representing the ten toes as belonging to one foot, while the other is utterly without?'

(L.) Page 239.

ON THE 1260 DAYS.

The argument for and against the day-for-year system of interpreting this period, may, as far as the appeal is to Scripture, be stated in a short space.

1. For this mode of interpretation the warrants from Scripture referred to are only three,—viz.

1. Numbers, xiv. 33, 34:—'And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years—after the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, and ye shall bear your iniquity even forty years.' But this, it has been very justly remarked, is not a case in point, inasmuch as the period embraced in the prediction is declared, as it was fulfilled, in years; and the forty days are mentioned, not at all as an expression for that period, but its reason; whereas "the 1260 days" are always the

*For a fuller discussion of this question the reader is referred to Maitland's (S.R.) First and Second 'Enquiry into the grounds on which the Prophetical Period of Daniel and St. John has been supposed to consist of 1260 years' (London, 1829; and 1829); as also his subsequent Letters to the editor of the Morning Watch (1830); to the Rev. William Digby (1831); and to William Cunninghame, Esq., of Lainshaw (1834), in reply to their strictures on the same; which may be considered to have set the controversy for ever at rest.
expression for the period which is the subject of the Prophecy in which they occur.

In other words, to make the cases parallel, the passage in Numbers should have said, "ye shall wander in the wilderness and bear your iniquity forty days," without any intimation that forty years were intended, and leaving this to be gathered only from the event.

2. The second passage adduced is Ezek. iv. 4-6, where the Lord having directed the prophet to portray a siege of Jerusalem as "a sign to the house of Israel," adds—"Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year."

But this is as little to the purpose as the former; or rather is, as well as it, a proof plain against the system it is adduced to support. For, again, the very words relied on—"I have given thee a day for a year"—apprised the prophet and his people that a period of years was intended of which the prescribed days were but the type. In other words,—again in this instance, a prophecy fulfilled in years was announced in years; while we are asked, on the warrant of this, to believe that a prophecy announced only in days was to be fulfilled in years.

3. And last, the prophecy of "the seventy weeks," Dan. ix., instanced as a prophecy expressed in days and fulfilled in that, not to enter here on the question as to the calculation of, it is enough to say that, in the first place, a week period between Sabbath and Sabbath, inasmuch as every was with the Jews a Sabbath as well as every seventh and here rendered "week" equally denotes a period of this also see the works mentioned in the last two Notes.
seven years; and accordingly in chap. x. 2, where this word is used for weeks in our sense, the word "days" is added to qualify it,—
"In those days, I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks," or with the margin, "three weeks of days:" So that this Prophecy would literally read—"Seventy sevens are determined," i. e. "Seventy sevens (of years)" determined by the context, ver. 2, &c., the inquiry of Daniel as to the Seventy years. And, in the second place, even did the word mean here weeks of days, the passage is still not in point: for this word is not once used to express the period in question, though, it is remarkable, it is expressed in three different ways—in years, in months, and in days—“three years and half;” “forty-two months;” and “one thousand two hundred and three score days.” And, therefore, unless it is pretended that every notation of time has its typical import—minutes, hours, and weeks, as well as years, months, and days—this passage affords no precedent.*

In addition to these, the "ten days," Rev. ii. 10; and "five months," Rev. ix. 5, 10; and "the hour, and day, and month, and year," Rev. ix. 15, are instanced: but as it is a question whether or not the two last at all, and how the first of these predictions has been fulfilled, no argument can be drawn from them.—See Note on ch. ii. 10 p. 45.

II. Against this mode of interpretation the arguments on the other hand are many, some of which I will merely enumerate without dwelling on them. And,—

1. All the chronological prophecies in the Bible which have undoubtedly been fulfilled, whether expressed in days, months, or years, have been fulfilled literally; as for example,—The "120 years" and "the seven days" notice of the flood, and "forty days" rain, Gen. vi. 3; vii. 4. The "400 years" sojourning of the Israelites, Gen. xv. 13. The "forty years" wandering in the wilderness, Num. xiv. 33, 34. The "three score and five years" allowed to

* Accordingly, it is admitted to be irrelevant by some of the most strenuous advocates of the year-day system, and, among them, Elliott in his 'Horae Apocalypticae.'
Ephraim, Isa. vii. 8. The "seventy years" of Tyre, chap. xxiii. 15. The "seventy years" captivity in Babylon, Jer. xxv. 11: and a number of others less notable.

2. In the same book in which the mention of "the 1260 days" first occurs, namely, in Daniel, chap. vii. 25, where it is expressed, "a time, times, and dividing of time," we have at once both the definition of "a time," as meaning "a year," and the proof that a literal year is intended: namely, in chap. iv. 34, "the seven times" decreed to pass over Nebuchadnezzar, which the mode of calculation adopted for "the time, times, and half" would make 2520 years that the monarch was removed from his kingdom; but which the authors of that calculation are therefore compelled to admit are years, as proved by the event; and thus are forced to assign two different meanings to the same word in the same prophet!

3. Presumptive against such a period as one thousand two hundred and sixty years being the subject of the prophecy, is the fact that it would have effectually prevented that expectation of the Lord's coming which the Church is continually exorted to cherish, and which is said to be the attitude of the faithful servant: that is, unless the Prophecy were to remain wholly unintelligible, and therefore useless. For it would, if at all understood, be an infallible and positive information to the Church that the coming of the Lord could not take place for 1260, or a thousand, or so many hundreds of years as remained unexpired of the period. And, that the Lord has not come for so long is one thing; but that he should have told his Church he would not, is quite another. It will be found, however, that the Scripture interposes no period between any existing generation of men and the Lord's coming, which does not admit the possibility of his coming to that generation.

4. As it will not, of course, be contended that days always mean years, or a year 360 years, in prophetic language—(for in that case a prophet meaning to say 1260 days, or 3½ years literal, would have no way to express himself)—it follows that, admitting some instances could be found in which a day means a year, still in others it would
be a question which the time was figuratively or literally expressed—a question only to be decided by the matter of the Prophecy or the events predicted. But this brings us from the direct Scriptural argument to the consideration of the interpretations of its prophecies, and especially of the Apocalypse, founded on the year-for-day theory; and, as the principal of these have passed in review in these Lectures, the reader must be left to judge whether—with their endless discrepancies and utter uncertainty—they can be received as proofs of it.

5. And last:—It is admitted by the supporters of that theory that for the first four centuries at least the "days" in Daniel's and the Apocalyptic prophecies respecting Anti-Christ were interpreted literally by the Fathers of the Christian Church:—So Elliott ('Horsæ Apocalyptica,' Part iv. ch. ix. §1, Vol. iii. p. 233, Third Edit.), who accounts for the fact by the suggestion that it was needful that the true solution should be concealed from the Church, 'to answer a moral purpose,' viz., 'that she might be kept from the earliest age in the attitude of watchful expectation.' Strange assertion, truly:—that a good purpose should be answered by misunderstanding the word of God! But in fact, though some at an earlier period spoke of a probable mystical meaning of the "1260 days," in addition to the literal, the year-for-day system (it may be shewn) originated as late as the end of the fourteenth century, in the application of the Prophecies of Anti-christ to the Papacy.

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ON THE NUMBER "666."

As an example I subjoin the following from Calmet's Dictionary, by Taylor, Article Antichrist:—

'The number 666 has been discovered in the names—Ulpius Trajanus (a); Dioclesian (b); Julian the Apostate (c); Luther (d); Evanthis (e); Latinus (f); Titan (g); Lampetis (h); Niketes, Conqueror (i); Kakos Hodegos, that is, Bad guide (k); Arnoumai, I renounce (l); Romiit, Roman (m); Abinu Kadescha Papa, Our
holy Father the Pope (n); and, Elion, Adonai, Jehovah, Kadosch.

The most High, the Lord, the holy God (o).

(a) Ο Τ Λ Π Ι Ο Ζ
70. 400. 80. 80. 10. 70. 6

(b) Dioecles Augustus

(c) C. F. Julianus Cesar. Atheus


(d) ל י ל י
200. 400. 30. 6. 80

(e) Ε Τ Α Ν Θ Α Ζ
5. 400. 1. 50. 9. 1. 200

(f) Λ Α Τ Ε Ι Ν Ο Ζ
30. 1. 800. 5. 10. 50. 70. 200

(g) Τ Ε Ι Τ Α Ν
300. 5. 10. 300. 1. 50

(h) Λ Α Μ Π Ε Τ Ι Ζ
30. 1. 40. 80. 5. 300. 10. 200

(i) Ο Ν Ι Κ Η Τ Η Ζ
70. 50. 10. 20. 8. 300. 8. 200

(k) Κ Α Κ Ω Ζ—Ο Δ Η Γ Ο Ζ
20. 1. 20. 70. 200. 70. 4. 8. 3. 70. 200

(l) Α Ρ Ν Ο Τ Μ Ε
1. 100 50. 70. 400. 40. 5

(m) ר י מ י י
400. 10. 10. 40. 6. 200

ample,' says Calmet, 'could have been invented only

unity of all the pains taken in this inquiry; since the
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number 666 is found in names the most sacred, the most opposite to Anti-Christ. The wisest and the safest way,' he adds, 'is to be silent.'

Note.—Of the foregoing, the sixth (f) Lateinos has been again adopted and advocated recently by Mr. Elliott, whose notice, however, it has escaped, that it proves nothing, inasmuch as it will equally suit Rome Pagan, or Papal, or Anti-Christian, as may be.

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ON BABYLON AS ROME.

On the subject of Anti-Christ in general, and the revival of the Roman Empire in particular, the reader will find many important remarks in four Sermons, entitled 'Advent Sermons on Anti-Christ,' viz. on the Times—Religion—City—and Persecution of Anti-Christ,—Vol. v. No. 83, of 'Tracts for the Times,' chiefly as showing the opinions of the Fathers on this point.

One passage I extract on account of the quotation it gives from one of the Fathers, a contemporary of Irenæus, and who with him lived less than one hundred years after the Apostle John:—

'Another expectation of the early Church was that the Roman monster, after remaining torpid for centuries, would wake up at the end of the world, and be restored in all its laws and forms; and this too, considering those same recent events to which I have alluded, is certainly worth noticing also. One of the Fathers, whom I have already quoted, expressly deduces from a passage in the xiiiith chapter of the Apocalypse, that "the system of Augustus, who was founder of the Roman Empire, shall be adopted and established by him (Anti-Christ), in order to his own aggrandizement and glory. This is the fourth monster whose head was wounded and healed; in that the empire was destroyed and came to nought, and was divided into ten. But at this time Anti-Christ, as being a man of resources, will heal and restore it; so that it will be active and vigorous once more through the system which he establishes":—
I need not say I read this passage with no little satisfaction, as stating in so many words the very same expectation—of the revival of the ancient glory of Rome and the days of the Caesars—which I ventured (not being aware of this sanction at the time) to state in these Lectures somewhat diffidently on my own responsibility, having deduced it solely from the Prophecy. It is right to mention also that these two Fathers (as the same discourse adds) assigned that meaning to the number vi (of the Beast which has since been most generally adopted, viz.—' Latinus, Λατέινος; ' but their view of the Anti-Christ and the revival of the Roman Empire shows, as observed in last Note, that, admitting the correctness of the calculation, the name might belong both to Anti-Christ and Rome without proving Anti-Christ to be Popery, or the Beast of the Apocalypse to be the Papal power.

On another point which I have urged in this Lecture, and before in my Lecture on "The Man of Sin," namely, his connexion with the Jewish nation, I am glad again to let the author of these Sermons speak, as also the Fathers whom he quotes. In the same Discourse on ' The Religion of Anti-Christ,' he says—

'I just now made mention of the Jews: it may be well then to state what was held in the early Church concerning Antichrist's connexion with them.

'Our Lord foretold that "many should come in His name, saying, 'I am Christ." It was the judicial punishment of the Jews, as of all unbelievers in one way or another, that, having rejected the true
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'Christ, they should take up with a false one: and Antichrist will be the complete and perfect seducer, towards whom all previous ones are approximations, according to the text just quoted, "If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." To the same purport are St. Paul's words after describing Antichrist; "whose coming," he says, "is...with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

'Hence, considering that Antichrist would pretend to be the Messiah, it was of old the received notion that he was to be of Jewish race, and to observe the Jewish rites.

'Further, St. Paul says that Antichrist should "sit in the Temple of God;" that is, according to the earlier Fathers, in the Jewish Temple. Our Saviour's own words may be taken to support this notion, because He speaks of "the Abomination of Desolation," (which, whatever other meanings it might have, in its fulness, denotes Antichrist), "standing in the holy place." Further, the persecution of Christ's witnesses, which Antichrist will make, is described by St. John as taking place in Jerusalem. "Their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city (which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt), where also our Lord was crucified."

'Now here a remark may be made. At first sight, I suppose, we should not consider that there was much evidence from the Sacred Text for Antichrist taking part with the Jews, or having to do with their temple. It is, then, a very remarkable fact that the apostate emperor Julian, who was a type and earnest of the great enemy, should, as he did, have taken part with the Jews, and set about building their temple. Here the history is a sort of comment on the prophecy, and sustains and vindicates the early interpretations of it which I am relating. Of course I must be understood to mean, and a memorable circumstance it is, that this belief
of the Church, that Antichrist should be connected with the Jews, was expressed long before Julian's time, and that we still possess the works in which it is contained. We have the writings of two Fathers, both bishops and martyrs of the Church, who lived at least one hundred and fifty years before Julian, and less than one hundred years after St. John. They both distinctly declare Antichrist's connexion with the Jews.

The one of them speaks as follows: "In the temple, which is at Jerusalem, the adversary will sit, endeavouring to show himself to be the Christ."

..."cujus (Dei) jussu hoc, quod est in Hierosolymis, factum est Templum, ob eas caussas que a nobis dictae sunt; in quo adversarius sedebit, tentans semetipsum Christum ostendere sicut et Dominus ait, "Quum autem videritis Abominationem desolationis,"

And the other says, "Antichrist will be he who shall resuscitate the kingdom of the Jews."

..."δια αυτοῦ δὲ ἡμεῖς εἰσέβηκαν ὡς ἄντικριστος, δειγμάτων, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς τὴν οὐβαλεῖν βασιλείαν ἀναστήσει.—Hippol. de Anti- christo, § 25. St. Cyril of Jerusalem also speaks of Antichrist building the Jewish temple; and he too wrote before Julian's attempt, and (what is remarkable) prophesied it would fail, because Julian was not the Antichrist, who alone could do it." Vide Ruff. Hist. x. 37.

And if it be asked why Jerusalem should be expressly named in the Prophecy, and Rome only by the figurative name "Babylon?" the reason is obvious—that the express mention of Rome would have attracted the notice of the Roman government and given an occasion for charging seditious principles on the Christians; while for the practical purposes of the Prophecy as it respected the Church, it could not, and has not, been mistaken, as far, at least, as the city intended.

I cannot forbear adding one more extract—a practical appeal from the last-mentioned Father:
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" There will be a time of affliction, such as never happened since there was a nation upon the earth till that time." The fearful monster, the great serpent, the unconquerable enemy of mankind, ready to devour... The Lord knowing the greatness of the enemy, in mercy to the religious, says, "Let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains." However, if any feel within him a strong heart to wrestle with Satan, let him remain (for I do not despair of the Church's strength of nerve), let him remain, and let him say, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"... Thanks to God, who limits the greatness of the affliction to a few days, for the elect's sake those days shall be cut short. Anti-Christ shall reign only three years and a-half, "a time, times, and the dividing of a time"... Blessed surely he who then shall be a martyr for Christ! I consider that the martyrs at that season will be greater than all martyrs; for the former ones wrestled with man only, but these, in the time of Anti-Christ, will battle with Satan himself personally. Persecuting emperors slaughtered the former; but they did not pretend to raise the dead, nor made show of signs and wonders; but here there will be the persuasion both of force and of fraud, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Let no one at that day say in his heart, 'What could Christ do more than this? by what virtue worketh he these things? Unless God willed it, He would not have permitted it.' No: the Apostle forewarns you, saying beforehand, "God shall send them a strong delusion,"—not that they may be excused, but condemned; those, viz., who "believe not in the Truth," that is, the true Christ, "but take pleasure in unrighteousness," that is, in Anti-Christ... Prepare thyself, therefore, O man! thou hearest the signs of Anti-Christ; nor remind only thyself of them, but communicate them liberally to all around thee. If thou hast a child according to the flesh, delay not to instruct him. If thou art a teacher, prepare also thy spiritual children, lest they take the false for the True. For "the mystery of iniquity doth already work." I fear the wars of the nations; I fear the divisions among Christians; I fear the hatred among brethren. Enough; but God forbid that it
ON BABYLON'S NAME "MYSTERY."

There is one title of Babylon or of the Symbolic Woman of these chapters which, it may be thought, I have not sufficiently noticed, and on which I would here make one observation—the name "Mystery," frequently applied to the Papal power and system on the authority of this Prophecy and the words of the Apostle, 2 Thess. ii. "The mystery of iniquity doth already work."

That the symbolic woman means the city Rome, as mistress of the Roman Empire, I have distinctly stated; and that "mystery" is the name of the city in reference partly, though not exclusively, to the period during which it has been the seat of the Papacy I moreover fully admit: but, it is strange that those who apply this title (and apply it exclusively) to Popery, should not have perceived that it disproves the application to it, made at the same time and often in the same sentence by those writers, of the titles "The Anti-Christ," and "The Man of Sin. For "The Man of Sin" is expressly said by the Apostle to be the revelation of the mystery of iniquity:—"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that Wicked be revealed (αποκάλυψησθαι)." Now the words "mystery" and "revelation," or "Apocalypse," are directly opposed the one to the other—the former denoting the latent-state or working of that which is destined to a manifestation in due time denoted by the latter, as proved by the invariable use of the terms in Scripture; it follows that both terms cannot at one and the same time to the same person, office, or system: or, in other words, the Popery cannot be, at one and the same time, "The mystery
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of iniquity" and "The Man of Sin" or the Anti-Christ—the "Mystery" and the "Apocalypse" of the mystery.

Again, in the exclusive application of either title to Popery, another contradiction meets us: for "the Mystery of Iniquity," which was already at work in the Apostle's time, confessedly comprised all the various forms in which iniquity should be latent or lurking in the Church; and when revealed, we are told it is only in one of the many forms of Anti-Christianity now existing—namely, Popery! That, indeed, all the varied forms which the Spirit of Anti-Christ, and Iniquity working in Mystery, has taken, shall be Apocalysed in one only, I fully believe, and have endeavoured to prove. But it will be only one: and I ask any one who says that Popery is the Apocalysed Mystery of Iniquity,—Does he believe it to be the Revelation of all the previously latent-working Anti-Christianity, and to comprise the "Iniquity" in its fulness? For, otherwise, though it may be fitly termed Anti-Christian, it is not "Antichrist;" and though it be part of "the Mystery of Iniquity," it is not "The Man of Sin" or "Wicked One."

And this, I would take occasion to say, is precisely what I believe to be the true designation of Popery. I believe it to be, as a system, Anti-Christian. I believe it also to be "the Mystery of Iniquity," not, indeed, in the whole or exclusively, but in a principal part and most prominent and widely extended form of that working, which, viewed in its fulness, embraces not only every perversion of the Truth, but all Christian profession that is merely nominal:—and from its prominence hitherto in the corruption of the Church, I cannot but fear that a greater and more evil prominence yet awaits it, and that it will yet take the lead in the setting up of the Anti-Christ when revealed;—not sincerely, however, or consistently with its principles or creed; (for, in its principles and creed, I maintain it still contains the elements of effective opposition to Anti-Christ's pretensions, as I am persuaded will be proved in the instances of many of its adherents when the test is put to them; as I am also that even now its pale numbers many of the Lord's people;)—but, bartering
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both creed and principle for that which it has always aspired to with an untiring ambition, and which has already in our day extracted from it large compromises—Political power and worldly aggrandizement. If these baits be held out in larger measure, I will not say what may be the result, or what the ultimate fate of Popery: but it will be a fate affecting itself and its adherents only, and leaving in its full force the warning to those who least suspect they need it—yea, after Babylon's self is no more—"If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." (Compare Rev. xiv. ver. 9, 10, with 8.)

[Since writing the above my attention was directed to a confirmation of the idea here thrown out, both as to Rome being the "Babylon" of the Apocalypse, and also her future destiny, where one would not have looked for it—in the work of a Roman Catholic, and a very zealous one as he shows himself to be, viz.:—'Exposition des Prédictions et des Promesses faites à L'Eglise pour les derniers temps de la Gentilité; Par Le Pere Lambert. A Paris, MDCCCVI.' a valuable work as showing also the agreement of the early Church's teaching with that of Scripture on the subject of the Second Advent generally.

Having shown that Rome-Pagan is not the city intended (as asserted by modern Roman Catholic writers) from its situation, description, and antecedents, he thus states the conclusion arrived at—"Il y a donc lieu de croire, qu'en portant ses regards sur un avenir, dont il est encore séparé par un intervalle de tant siècles, le saint Apôtre nous y montre une Cité chrétienne, mais qui sera alors dépravée, corrompue, chargée d'iniquités, faisant servir la religion à son orgueil, à sa domination, à son avarice, et qui méritera que Dieu "versus sur elle la coupe de sa colère." C'est elle a qui il attribue le funeste caractère d'être, vers la fin du second monde, "le mere des
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fornications et des abominations de le terre." C'est d'elle principalement que sortiront un jour les abus et les désordres, qui, dans les derniers siècles, doivent inonder la Gentilité Chrétienne, et consommer "le mystère d'iniquité," en substituant à l'esprit évangélique, un orgueil effréné, un violent désir de tout envahir et de tout asservir.'

And then, after much more to the same purpose, he thus reconciles this testimony with his attachment to his Church and his veneration, in the person of the Pope, for the successor of Peter and Vicar of Christ, &c., as well as with his abhorrence of Protestant heresy on this point:—

'Mais peut-on aimer sincèrement Jesus Christ et son Eglise, et ne pas détester les pernicieuses erreurs, la profane politique, la superbe domination, l'insatiable avarice, les coupables entreprises dont la Cour de Rome a, durant tant de siècles, donné l'exemple à l'univers? Et si après une si longue expérience, il n'y a plus lieu d'espérer que d'elle-même et par un sincère repentir, elle revienne jamais de ses égarements, n'est-ce pas une partie considérable de la piété Chrétienne et Catholique, d'applaudir d'avance aux sévères jugemens que le Seigneur doit une jour faire éclater sur elle, &c.'

Would that many more such witnesses were raised up in that Communion!

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THE MILLENNIAL PERIOD.

The following testimonies to the antiquity of this opinion [except those so enclosed] are taken from Bishop Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, on Rev. xx., which he thus introduces:—

That there shall be such a happy period as the Millennium; that "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," Dan. vii. 27; that Christ shall have "the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession," Psalm, ii. 8; that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the
Lord as the waters cover the sea,” Isa. xi. 9; that “the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved,” Rom. xi. 25, 26; in a word, that the kingdom of heaven shall be established upon earth, is the plain and express doctrine of Daniel and all the Prophets, as well as of St. John, and we daily pray for the accomplishment of it in praying “Thy kingdom come.” But of all the prophets, St. John is the only one who hath declared particularly, and in express terms, that the martyrs shall rise to partake of the felicities of this kingdom, and that it should continue upon earth a thousand years; and the Jewish Church before him, and the Christian Church after him, have further believed and taught, that these thousand years will be the seventh millenarv of the world. A pompous heap of quotations might be produced to this purpose, both from Jewish and Christian writers (see Burnet’s Theory, b. 3, ch. 5; and b. 4, ch. 6; Mede, Placita Doctorum Hebræorum de Magnae Judicia, p. 535, B. 5, ch. 3, p. 892, &c. &c.); but I choose to select only a few of the most material of each sort.

Of the Jewish writers, Rabbi Ketina, as cited in the Gemara, or gloss of their Talmud, said, ‘that the world endures six thousand years, and one thousand it shall be laid waste’ (that is, the enemies of God shall be destroyed), whereof it is said, “The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.” Isa. ii. 11. Tradition assents to Rabbi Ketina; as out of seven years, every seventh is the year of remission, so out of the seven thousand years of the world, the seventh Millenarv shall be the Millenarv of remission, that “God alone may be exalted in that day.” It was the tradition of the house of Elias, who lived two hundred years, or thereabouts, before Christ, and the tradition might, perhaps, be derived from Elias the Tishbite, that ‘the world endures six thousand years—two thousand before the Law, two thousand under the Law, and two thousand under the Messiah.’ It was also the tradition of the house of Elias, that ‘the just whom God shall raise up (meaning at the first resurrection), shall not be turned again into dust.’

Of the Christian writers, St. Barnabas in the first century thus
comments upon these words of Moses: "And God made in six days the work of his hands, and he finished on the seventh day, and he rested in it, and sanctified it." This it signifies, that the Lord God will finish all things in six thousand years. For a day with him is as a thousand years: as he himself testifieth, saying, "Behold, this day shall be as a thousand years." Therefore, children, in six days, that is in six thousand years, shall all things be consummated. "And he rested on the seventh day:" this signifies, that when his Son shall come, and shall abolish the season of the Wicked one, and shall judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun and the moon and the stars, then he shall rest gloriously in that seventh day."—S. Barnab. Epist. cap. 15.

[And, again, in the same Epistle— The world shall last six thousand years, as God had employed six days to form it, and after these six thousand years the Son of God shall appear. He will come to put an end to the reign of iniquity, and to judge the ungodly. Then we shall sanctify, with clean hands and a pure heart, the Sabbath or perfect rest of the seventh day.... After that the Lord shall have sanctified us, abolished iniquity, and by an entire renewal shall have made us meet partakers of the promise, we shall be in a state to sanctify the day of His Sabbath. God speaketh not of ordinary Sabbaths, man's, but of that only on which He will enter after having finished all His works, and which ends with the eighth day, that is to say, which will commence a new course of ages.]

Justin Martyr, in the second century, declares the Millennium to be the Catholic doctrine of his time. 'I, and as many as are orthodox Christians in all respects, do acknowledge that there shall be a resurrection of the flesh (meaning the First Resurrection), and a thousand years in Jerusalem, rebuilt, and adorned, and enlarged (referring to the New Jerusalem), as the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah, and others unanimously attest.' Afterwards he subjoins, 'A certain man among us, whose name was John, one of the apostles of Christ, in a revelation made to him, did prophesy that the faithful believers in Christ should live a thousand years in the New Jerusalem, and,
after these, should be the General Resurrection and Judgment; (Dial. cum Tryph. p. 313, 315.) which is an early attestation of the genuineness and authenticity of the Book of Revelation; for Justin was converted to Christianity about thirty years after the death of John, at which time, probably, many were alive who had known and remembered the apostle.

Tertullian, at the beginning of the third century, professeth his belief of the kingdom promised to the saints upon earth, of their resurrection for a thousand years, of their living in the New Jerusalem, and therein enjoying all spiritual delights, and of the destruction of the world and the general judgment after the thousand years. (Advers. Marcion. l. 3, c. 24.) And his books of Paradise, and of the Hope of the Faithful, if they had not been lost or suppressed, might have afforded ampler proofs of all these particulars.

Lactantius, at the beginning of the fourth century, is very copious upon this subject, in the seventh book of his 'Divine Institutions.' He saith, 'Because all the works of God were finished in six days, it is necessary that the world should remain in this state six ages; that is, six thousand years.' And again, 'Because, having finished the works, he rested on the seventh day, and blessed it; it is necessary that at the end of the six thousandth year, all wickedness should be abolished out of the earth, and justice should reign for a thousand years': (c. 14.) He saith, 'When the Son of God shall have destroyed injustice, and shall have restored the just to life, he shall be conversant among men a thousand years, and shall rule them with most just government. At the same time the Prince of devils shall be bound in chains, and shall be in custody the thousand years of the heavenly kingdom, while justice shall reign in the world, lest he should attempt any evil against the people of God:' (c. 26.) He saith, 'When the thousand years of the kingdom, that is, seven thousand years, shall draw towards a conclusion, Satan shall be loosed again; and when the thousand years shall be completed, then shall be the second and public resurrection of all:........... and having enlarged upon these topics, he concludes, 'This is the doctrine of the
holy prophets which we Christians follow, this is our wisdom.'
(c. 26.)

[To which may be added that Irenæus, A.D. 178, in his fifth book against heresies, ch. 30, says,—'When Antichrist reigning three years and six months, shall have laid waste all things in this world, and have sat in the temple of Jerusalem, then shall the Lord come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of his Father, casting him and all that obey him into the lake of fire; but procuring, or bringing with him, unto the just, the times of the kingdom; that is, a rest, the seventh day, sanctified, and restoring to Abraham the promise of the inheritance, in which kingdom, says the Lord, "many shall come from the east and from the west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Cyprian, A.D. 252, in his Exhortation to Martyrdom, Sec. ii. p. 179, says,—'that in the creation of the world seven days were spent, and in those seven days seven thousand years were figuratively included.'

Bishop Latimer at the time of the Reformation, in his Sermon, 'The Day of Judgment,' observes—'The world was ordained of God to endure, as Scripture and all learned men agree, six thousand years,' i.e. to endure in its present condition, &c.]

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The Author is glad to be able to enforce this lesson by the following extract from the concluding pages of Dr. Todd's work, already more than once referred to in this Edition:—

'It follows, therefore (from the review of the Prophecy), that the question of the right interpretation of the Apocalypse, which I have endeavoured to bring before you, is not a mere question of idle speculation, but of deep and practical importance. If this Book be a moral myth or allegory, as some have thought; if its predictions have been all long ago fulfilled in the Jewish wars and the destruction of Jerusalem, as others tells us; if the Apostacy be already come, the Witnesses slain, the Beast and the False Prophet long ago revealed
in the mediæval corruptions of Christianity, or the ambitious usurpations of the Court of Rome; then it must be admitted that the Prophecy does less intimately concern us than it would do if we should adopt the explanation of it for which I have been contending. Not that, under any circumstances, we should be justified in treating this sacred book with the practical neglect which is so commonly shewn for it; for, whatever be its interpretation, and particularly if we regard it as predicting the existence of religious corruptions which are still in the midst of us, the Apocalypse must ever be read as a sacred mine of spiritual instruction and holy warning. But if it be true, as I have endeavoured to shew, and as the ancient Christians unanimously believed, that the purport of the Apocalypse is to forewarn us of a fearful trial of our faith which is yet to come, which is, perhaps, at hand; that it predicts an Apostacy and the prevalence of errors, in comparison of which all former apostacy and heresy and error, great and awful as they have been, will sink into insignificance; that it predicts a persecution of such bitter intensity, and of such universal extent, that all former persecutions of the Christian name will become as nothing; and that it teaches us to look for a deliverance of the Church out of this fiery trial, not from any human aid or power, but from the irrefragable promise and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ himself; then, surely, the question whether these things are so or not—the question whether or not this be the real testimony of Holy Scripture, and the mind of Him by whose inspiration the Apocalypse was given—is a question which demands the most serious and unprejudiced examination from every Christian.'

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