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PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION.

ESSAYS

ON

PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION.

BY WILLIAM TROTTER,

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PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

GUERNSEY: J. TUNLEY.

130. g. 89.

PREFACE.

THOSE who knew the author of these Essays will need no recommendatory words of another; those who knew him not, will find no bad introduction here. Besides their intrinsic value, it seems seasonable to reproduce them in a collected form, particularly the review of Waldegrave's Bampton Lectures on New Testament Millenarianism, at a time when a new edition goes forth of a book, clever, perhaps, in criticizing others, but wholly erroneous in its own teaching.

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ON
PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION.

CHAP. I.
ON PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRE-
TATION.*

HAD evidence been wanting of the extent to which the millenarian question has taken hold of the minds of thoughtful, intelligent christians, it is afforded by Mr. Waldegrave's volume, and by the two laudatory notices of it mentioned below,—all in direct antagonism to pre-millennial views. The rev. lecturer, in the preface to his work, refers to "the prestige under which for many years past the tenets he has endeavoured to combat have been urged upon the attention of the

* 1. New Testament Millenarianism ; or, The Kingdom and Coming of Christ, as taught by himself and his apostles : set forth in eight sermons, preached before the University of Oxford in the year 1854, at the lecture founded by the late Rev. John Bampton, by the Hon. and Rev. Samuel Waldegrave, M.A., rector of Barford St. Martin, Wilts, and late fellow of All Soul's College. London : Hamilton, Adams, and Co., 1855, 8vo., pp. 686.

2. Notice of the above, in "The British and Foreign Evangelical Review." No. xiv., October, 1855.

3. Notice of the above, in "The London Quarterly Review," No. x., January, 1856.

4. Millennial Studies : or, What saith the Scriptures concerning the Kingdom and Advent of Christ ? By the Rev. W. R. Lyon, B.A. London : Ward and Co. [This volume has appeared since the present article was in type. We include it with the others, as completing the array of publications on that side of the question ; and we hope to notice its arguments in succeeding papers, so far as they may differ from those of the Bampton Lecture.]

church," while one of his reviewers remarks, that "it is in the English church that this theory has met with most favour. Of the evangelical party probably the majority are on that side, while the tractarians are at least favourably inclined to it." He complains that, "though the press has for years been teeming with productions of every kind, in defence and illustration of this theory, hardly any clerical voice was raised against it," but congratulates himself that this "can no longer be said." The volume under review supplies the lack. "In the Bampton lecture now before us, we have a full treatment of the whole subject; the numerous foot-notes, and the large body of notes in the appendix, showing how well the author has digested the literature of the subject down to the latest." Such is the testimony of the *British and Foreign Evangelical*; while the *London Quarterly* represents "the subject discussed in these lectures" as "one of large and growing interest and importance;" exciting "more attention and argued with greater spirit and energy in the present, than in any former period." "No mean place," we are told, "has it obtained in our current religious literature."

Believing, as we do that, in its grand leading features, pre-millennialism is the truth of God, we cannot but rejoice in such testimonies to the attention it has awakened, and the reception it has met with among christians of various denominations, and especially in the English church. As to the latter, the *London Quarterly* informs us, that "it is well known that the pre-millennialists' view is on the increase among the

evangelical clergy in the established church of England; and it is this fact which led Mr. Waldegrave, as he says, 'not to hesitate to avail himself of the opening given by his appointment to the office of Bampton Lecturer, to indicate the many respects in which he believes the doctrine of a personal reign to be at variance with the plain teaching of Holy Scripture.'

Statements such as these from the avowed rejecters of pre-millennialism can scarcely fail to prove gratifying to those who discern, in its spread and increase, nothing but the progress and triumph of truth. Nor have we the least need to quail before the opposition it has evoked. It is true, as one of the reviewers of the Bampton lecture almost admits, that a favourable change has taken place in the spirit and character of the controversy. "Those who contend for the pre-millennial advent and personal reign of Christ upon earth used," he says, "to complain, that their works were read with a jaundiced eye, that the views of extreme writers were ascribed to the entire party, and that the whole question was misunderstood and misrepresented by their opponents." No doubt such complaints were made, and with good reason. Any one familiar with the earlier stages of the controversy must certainly subscribe to the justice of the charge. Nor can we entirely accord with the *British and Foreign Evangelical*, that "such charges are not, and cannot be made now." They certainly cannot be made with justice against such writers as Dr. Brown and Mr. Waldegrave. These authors have endeavoured, and generally with success, to understand the positions maintained by their opponents; and any instances in which they have incor-

rectly stated the views and arguments against which they have employed their pens, may be accounted for on other grounds than that of wilful prejudice or wilful inattention. But what shall be said of the *London Quarterly*? It represents Dr. Brown to be "as fair in stating the opinions he combats, as he is successful in overturning them;" and of Mr. Waldegrave it speaks as furnishing "ample proof that he has thoroughly investigated the controversy; that every book of importance on both sides he has carefully examined; and that his views have been formed honestly, and with a sincere desire to know the truth." Would that his reviewer had earned a similar character! In what pre-millenarian work did he find, as an argument for an eclectic and pre-millennial resurrection, the statement of the apostle, in 1 Thess. iv. 16, that "the dead in Christ shall rise first?" Do not all the writers of that class agree with what the *London Quarterly* so labours to prove, that the apostle in these words simply affirms that the righteous dead will be raised prior to the change which is to pass on the living saints, and to the translation of both to meet the Lord in the air? We own to some degree of familiarity with the writings of pre-millennialists; but we know of none in which the argument is used, which the *London Quarterly* with so much parade first exhibits and then destroys. Such cheap and easy victories tend to damage rather than to aid the cause in support of which they are achieved. Pre-millenarian arguments may, doubtless, have been based on 1 Thess. iv.: never, that we are aware of,* on the assumption that

[* The reviewer had some slight ground for the change.]

the apostle asserts the doctrine of the first resurrection in the words "the dead in Christ shall rise first."

Nor is this the only instance in which the views of his opponents are misrepresented by this reviewer. "Pre-millenarianism contravenes," he says, "the many Scripture statements that the saints, glorified with Christ at his coming, are so absolutely secure in the possession of their perfected happiness, as to be beyond the power of attack from their adversaries. No conflicts can follow their enthronement in complete bliss." Assuredly not: but where has this been called in question by pre-millennialists? On what foundation does the reviewer rest this charge against them of contravening this self-evident truth? He does not condescend to inform us. Had it been some rustic who, on first hearing of the "thousand years" and the "little season" which succeeds, had enquired in amazement, how such doctrine could comport with the perfect security of the glorified saints, identified, as these might be in his mind, with "the camp of the saints" and "the beloved city," it would have been an easy task patiently to instruct him, that it is *not* "the glorified saints" who are supposed to be the objects of Gog and Magog's attack, but the earthly saints of the millennial state, who will not at that time have put on immortality, any more than we have now. But a writer in the *London Review*—a scholar, a critic, a commender of others for their fairness and impartiality, as well as for their acquaintance with the views they controvert—*he* ought not to need such instruction. *He* ought to have been better informed of what pre-millenarians teach, than to be capable of

charging them with contravening what they hold, equally with this reviewer, as most certain and most dear.

Still, in the main, the tone and bearing of the controversy on the post-millenarian side has undoubtedly improved. Much is now conceded that was disputed at the first. As to the serious questions which remain, it is not now so much a contention as to what pre-millennialists mean, as an inquiry whether what they affirm be taught by Holy Scripture. Their writings, as well as the subjects to which these writings relate, have evidently been studied by the able men who have lately entered the lists against them. In this we heartily rejoice. Truth has nothing to fear from the most searching investigation. Should anything in pre-millennialism be proved by these esteemed antagonists to be contrary to God's Word, *or not taught therein*, none would owe them heartier thanks than pre-millennialists themselves. Nor do we question that many writers who bear this name have presented vulnerable points, which skilful opponents have been quick to discern, and able to overthrow. Some parts of Dr. David Brown's book on the second advent we deem unanswerable; but they are those in which he assails, with righteous indignation and complete success such notions as that of the endless succession of human generations in the post-millennial state. But as to the great questions of the advent, and of the nature of Christ's kingdom, we confess that neither in his book, nor that of Mr. Waldegrave now before us, have we met with anything to shake even for a moment our conviction, that the views which they

oppose are true, and demonstrated to be so by the Word of God.

In one thing we cordially agree with Mr. Waldegrave, namely, that "The controversy before us is, of all others, one which Scripture alone can determine. We may not appeal for its decision to tradition, whether Rabbinical or patristic. The one only question is this, What saith the Scripture?" But then it is the whole of Scripture, not one part of it exalted at the expense of other parts, by which the question must be determined. Above all, it must be by the diligent and prayerful perusal and study of the *prophetic* portions of Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, that *prophetic* questions are to be decided. We never think of referring chiefly to the *preceptive* parts of the sacred volume to decide *doctrinal* difficulties; and if it has pleased God that a third part of the Old Testament, and one whole book in the New, should consist of prophecy, it seems strange to remove the investigation of prophetic questions from this vast field of prophetic instruction, to other parts of Scripture which confessedly consist in the main, not of prophecy, but of narrative, doctrine, and precept. Such seems to us to be the drift and tendency of Mr. Waldegrave's opening lecture. The principles of interpretation which it inculcates seem to us to call for the gravest consideration, before they are adopted as our guide in the discussion of the important subjects to which the seven remaining lectures are devoted.

The opening lecture is the subject of special commendation by both reviewers. "The best feature of the

work before us," says the *British and Foreign Evangelical*, "is the high vantage ground on which he plants his foot at the very outset, and from which he puts forth all his strength." "He wisely commences," says the *London Quarterly*, "in his first lecture, by affirming in the most explicit manner, that the Scriptures are our only authority in doctrine, and lays down two important principles, or rules, by which we are to be guided in our interpretation of those Scriptures.

These rules are introduced by our author himself in a passage, to the opening sentences of which we cannot but demur. "Before we begin our Scriptural researches, it is most important that the principles according to which they are to be conducted should be clearly defined. For there is no controversy in which fixed laws of biblical interpretation are more needed,—none in which they have been less observed." Now, at the risk of differing from some of our pre-millenarian brethren as well as from Mr. W., we cannot forbear enquiring, Whence does the need arise, the existence of which is here so confidently affirmed? Where does Scripture itself inform us of any such need? For our own part, we have a deep distrust of rules of interpretation previously laid down. Who thinks of adopting any rules or principles for interpreting Mr. W.'s language, before he commences the perusal of the Bampton lecture? There may be literal statements here, and figurative expressions there; but who would postpone the perusal of the book, until he had determined how the one class was to be distinguished from the other, and as to which class should have the precedence in fixing the meaning

of the writer? It is not thus we read other books; we suffer them to make their own impressions on our minds, never doubting that the literal and the figurative will each commend itself to us in its own proper character, and the meaning of the writer be apparent in both. And when the book is worth perusing, these expectations are justified. Why should we adopt any other plan in reading the Word of God? May we not safely trust ourselves with it, and with its divine author—that indwelling Spirit, whose illuminations are never withheld from the humble, trustful, prayerful student of God's Word? "We may not indeed appeal to tradition," as our author says, "whether rabbinical or patristic?" No, we would add, nor to modern, human rules of interpretation, which, when once adopted, make Scripture speak a language that they force upon it, instead of leaving it, and every part of it, to speak in its own language to the understanding, the conscience, and the heart.

The two rules on which Mr. Waldegrave builds so much, and which meet with such high commendation from his reviewers, are as follows: we give them in his own words.

"Those rules are embodied in the two following axiomatic propositions.

"First—in the settling of controversy, those passages of God's word which are literal, dogmatic, and clear, take precedence of those which are figurative, mysterious, and obscure.

"Secondly—in all points upon which the New Testament gives us instruction, it is, as containing the full, the clear, and the final manifestation of the divine will, our rightful guide in the interpretation of the Old."

These rules, be it observed, or, at least one of them, our author does not establish by proof, but assumes, as

self-evident. We are told by the *London Quarterly*, that "Mr. W., with great force of argument, successfully establishes the two 'axiomatic propositions' which he lays down as essential to the correct interpretation of the word of God." Our author himself, however, so far from arguing in favour of both his rules, says of the first, (p. 9), "None will care to dispute it." And again, "this is the statement of a self-evident truth. Again, (p. 12), he speaks of "the *postulate* which thus removes the decision of the millenarian controversy out of the province of the Apocalypse." In favour of his second rule, Mr. W. does adduce some arguments; but he has the consistency not to speak of it as self-evident. It is for the *London Quarterly* to commend him for establishing, with great force of argument, a postulate, or self-evident truth!

We do not, however, admit, and we think that many will hesitate to admit, either of these rules to be self-evident truths. Each contains certain elements of truth; but in the form given them by our author's pen, the order in which they stand in his opening lecture, and the use to which they are applied both in that and in his subsequent discourses, the object is but too manifest of removing from the court the chief witnesses on whose depositions the settlement of the case fairly depends.

Our first remark is on the order in which these rules or propositions stand. We are far from imputing any unfair design to the rev. author; but had the order been inverted, had the first proposition been the one which asserts the supremacy of the New Testament, had the

reasoning which establishes it, (by the fact of the Great Prophet's words being therein contained), been first presented to the reader's eye—above all, had it been declared that “in the New Testament as a whole, and not merely in the gracious words which fell directly from his lips, the voice of Jesus is heard” (page 18)—had the question been asked (page 21,) “Where are the great Prophet's words recorded?” and the answer given, “In *the whole* New Testament Scriptures;”—had this, we say, been the order of our author's discourse, the reader might have been startled to be told, in the *second* place, that one whole book of the New Testament—the prophetic book—is, in the examination of *prophetic* subjects, to share the fate of the Old Testament, and yield the palm of supremacy to *some portions only* of the New, which our author deems fittest to be the arbiters of the controversy. The contradiction would have been manifest and glaring *first* to have exalted thus the New Testament “*as a whole,*” and *then* to have reduced its chief prophetic portion to a level with the Old. But, by arranging these propositions as they actually stand, appearances are saved, the Apocalypse quietly disposed of in the first place, and then “the whole New Testament Scriptures” mean, for the present controversy at least, the whole, minus the Apocalypse and any other portions which Mr. Waldegrave may deem “figurative, mysterious, and obscure!”

But why, we ask, this marshalling of Scripture against Scripture? this exaltation of one part of God's Word over' another? To us it appears a hazardous course; nor can we deem the cause a good one, which requires

such a mode of defence. True, we have the author's repeated assurances, that he believes the whole volume to be inspired, and that he does not wish to depreciate those portions which he would place in the back ground when prophetic questions are discussed. These assurances we are bound to receive; but we must not, on this account, shrink from examining other statements of his book, and considering their probable effect on those by whom his views may be adopted. That we may in this do Mr. W. no injustice, we give his own words.

"In the pursuit of his object, the author has appealed to the Lord and his apostles, as they speak in *the literal portions* of the New Testament volume. For he is convinced that they constitute *the one divinely appointed court of arbitration* in all such matters of exegetical controversy." Pref. page xii.

"Our present enquiries must be first directed to *the strictly doctrinal* portions of the sacred volume. For *all the prophecies* abound in metaphor and allegory." Page 10.

"*In a matter controverted* (if I may so speak) *between the Apocalypse and other portions of the divine word*, that book cannot by itself determine the question; appeal must be had to *authority higher*, not in point of inspiration, but in point of literality of doctrinal statement upon the subject under discussion."—Pp. 11, 12.

"The literal sense of a passage may not militate either against the nature of things, or against the tenour of the immediate context, and yet may, at the same time, *come into serious collision with the proportion of faith*."—Page 14.

"But this leads me to the real difficulty of the case. How does this rule apply when the words of Jesus Christ cease to be merely supplementary to, or explanatory of, those of Moses and the prophets? What shall be done *when a seeming conflict arises between them?*" Page 25.

After treating of the acknowledged contrariety between the ritual law and those New Testament revelations by which it has been abolished, our author proceeds:—

"Nor is the case materially altered when it is the prophets who *are seemingly at variance with Christ*. For there are, unquestionably, times in which the teaching of Christ appears, directly or by implication, to *militate with the announcements*

of Old Testament prophecy, when at least those announcements are understood in their plain and literal sense. What shall be done? *Another meaning of the prophets' language must be sought for.*" Page 27.

"He therefore shows the most true appreciation of their high dignity—yes, and he manifests the most true reverence to Scripture as a whole, who surrenders many a pleasant phantasy, rather than consent that the prophets should even seem, *where no imperative necessity exists*, to contradict their Lord. Page 28.

Let these quotations be pondered by the christian reader, and let him judge whether we give an exaggerated account of our author's principle, when we say that it arrays Scripture against Scripture, and exalts one part of it at the expense of another.

What can be the meaning of the last quotation? No doubt every phantasy, pleasant or unpleasant, ought to be surrendered, rather than that any theory should be adopted which would represent the prophets as contradicting their Lord. "Which would *represent* them" thus, we say; for we cannot conceive that any contradiction should really exist between writings which are all and equally inspired. For this reason we wonder what Mr. W. can intend by urging the surrender of many a pleasant phantasy, rather than that the prophets should even seem, *where no imperative necessity exists*, to contradict their Lord. It is the exceptional clause which exceeds our comprehension. What can constitute such a necessity as it contemplates? Sad must be the theory, whether pre-millennial or post-millennial, in which the existence of such a necessity is involved!

Human interpretations of God's Word may, doubtless, be at variance with each other, and with God's Word itself. But what our author sometimes states, and at other times implies, is the possibility of Scripture state-

ments themselves being apparently opposed to each other. He speaks of the literal portions of the New Testament, as the one divinely appointed court of arbitration. Arbitration, and in a court, supposes litigation. Who are the parties in the case? In a matter controverted (if he may so speak) is his reply, between the Apocalypse and others portions of the Divine Word, that book cannot by itself determine the question, but appeal must be had to higher authority. We do not insist here on the absurdity of making the literal portions of the New Testament *parties to the suit* as well as *arbiters of the question*; we only furnish proof that the point of which our author treats is the supposed existence of questions, or differences, between one part of Scripture and another. He sometimes maintains that such differences are possible, while at others he seems to say that they exist. "The literal sense of a passage may not militate either against the nature of things or against the tenour of the immediate context, and *yet may*, at the same time, come into serious collision with 'the proportion of faith.'" The real difficulty of the case, he affirms to be, "when a seeming conflict arises between them," *i.e.*, between the words of Jesus and of the prophets. Nor will the word "seeming" suffice to justify the statement. Mr. W. illustrates his meaning by a reference to the ritual law. Now it is not a *seeming* but a *real* and most important difference which exists between the law and the gospel. The one appointed a place where Jehovah's name was to be put—a place to which certain acts of worship were to be rigidly restricted. The other records the blessed

announcement by our Lord that all such restrictions were to be abolished—that neither at Jerusalem nor at Gerizim, distinctively, or exclusively, should men worship the Father. What could be more real than the difference between the precept, love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy, on the one hand; and, on the other, the injunctions by which our Lord replaced them, love your enemies; bless them that curse you, etc.? True, they were not given to the same people and at the same time. True, the divine lawgiver had unquestionable authority to repeal any of his own institutions, which for temporary uses he had established, replacing them by others of a widely different character. But that which we would have our readers to note is that, in the cases to which Mr. W. has thus referred, it was a question of really repealing one precept or injunction, and issuing others directly opposite. The repeal was *real*, the contrariety was *real*; and the only key to the consistency of the proceeding, is the supremacy of the lawgiver, whose title to fix the duration of any of his laws can be questioned by none. But neither can any one question the contrariety between the laws which are repealed and those which are ordained in their place. When, therefore, our author says, that “the case is not materially altered when it is the prophets who are seemingly at variance with Christ,” the Word “seemingly” is out of place. So far as Christ’s relations to the prophets is illustrated by his relation to the law, it is not a *seeming* but a *real* variance which is indicated.

Nor do the next words by Mr. W. tend to weaken

this impression. "For there are, unquestionably," says he, "times in which the teaching of Christ appears, directly or by implication, to militate with the announcements of Old Testament prophecy, when at least those announcements are understood in their plain and literal sense." This is a most serious statement and cannot be too strictly weighed. We are not left to appearances as regards the law. Distinctly and avowedly does our Lord again and again place his sayings in contrast with what had been said of old time. As distinctly does the Holy Ghost reveal, with regard to the whole Levitical economy, that it terminated at the cross.—"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. ii. 14). But where have we such announcements as to the prophets, or as to one single prediction which they were inspired to place on record? *Our whole question is as to their predictions.* We do not forget that, as belonging to the dispensation which commenced at Sinai, and expressing those relations with God which bore the impress of the Sinai covenant, the prophets are, by the Saviour, connected with the law, in such passages as "The law and the prophets prophesied until John." But it were a mere play upon words to confound such a use of the expression "the prophets" with the question at issue between Mr. W. and those whose views he assails. We repeat, that our whole question is as to the *predictions of the future* recorded by the prophets; and where, we ask, is the ground for Mr. W.'s assertion, "That the teaching of Christ," either "directly or by implication," appears

to contradict these predictions? How can we suppose the existence of good ground for such an assertion? To revoke an edict is one thing; to recall a prediction is another. The former, when at least the edict is divine, only indicates that it had been temporary in its purpose, and, having done its work, is laid aside: the latter would imply some want of accuracy in the prediction, which subverts the idea of its being divine. For a typical observance to cease, when the antitypical event has transpired, is a matter of course; but for a prediction to need to be explained away, when events prove that the fulfilment does not exactly correspond with the terms in which it had been foretold, would be such a reflection on the prophet, as our author would be the last person in the world, willingly or knowingly, to make. No, we are ready by the grace of God to surrender all phantasies, however pleasant, as soon as they are proved to us by the Word of God to be such. But we are not prepared to surrender a jot or tittle of that Word, or to accept a principle which represents one part of it to be contradictory to another, however "figurative, mysterious, or obscure" either part may be judged to be.

That an element of truth is contained in both the propositions laid down by our author has been already admitted. Every one admits, that the plainer portions of any book are of service in elucidating those parts which are more obscure. But when the book in question is an inspired book, and admitted to be so in all its parts, it amounts to self-contradiction to represent one part as of higher authority than another. However we may be

assisted by the plainer passages in learning the import of such as are more difficult, all are equal in authority, and equally demand the submission of the whole man to the voice of God, speaking to us as really in the most figurative and mysterious texts as in those which are most literal and clear. We have Scripture for the fact, that there are in some parts of the sacred volume "things hard to be understood." God forbid that we should refuse the light shed thereon by the simpler statements of inspiration. If humbly to avail ourselves of aid and instruction thus graciously provided had been all to which our author exhorts us, we could only have bid him God speed in such a service. But "*all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable;" and we need to beware of principles which would supersede the necessity of patiently, prayerfully, humbly examining all that Scripture says.

Nor must we forget that, easy as it may seem to be, to give precedence to such passages as are "literal, dogmatic, and clear" over those which are "figurative, mysterious, and obscure," it will not be found as easy in practice as it appears in theory. Who can furnish us with a list of each class of passages? Or, supposing it furnished, who can assure us of its accuracy? A judge, or an arbiter, requires credentials which are above dispute. Who then shall certify us of the number and identity of the passages which are said by Mr. W. to "constitute the one divinely appointed court of arbitration" in the millenarian controversy? Is there no such thing as the question with regard to which passages are literal and which figurative? Do not many which

seem clear to some appear obscure to others? Is it not one prominent feature of the millenarian controversy, that passages which, on the one side are affirmed to be literal, are on the other side maintained to be figurative? Are all these to be excluded from "the court?" And is it to consist of none but such as are admitted *on both sides* to be "literal, dogmatic, and clear?" If not—if we are first to be agreed upon the passages which claim a place as arbiters, and then to receive their judgment of the points under discussion, we shall find that we have been multiplying instead of reducing the number of controverted points, entangling and prolonging instead of clearing and shortening the debate.

On one item in the first proposition we have hesitated to remark. It contrasts "literal, dogmatic, and clear," with "figurative, mysterious, and obscure." *Literal* and *figurative*, *clear* and *obscure*, are contrasts sufficiently obvious and distinct: but is *mysterious* the opposite of *dogmatic*? Does not the latter word denote "pertaining to a dogma?" Is it not synonymous, or nearly so, with "doctrinal?" And is mystery the opposite of doctrine? But it is not to remark critically on this point, that we refer to it. The fear of seeming to lay any stress on this view of it made us hesitate to notice it at all. But in one passage already quoted from our author, he seems avowedly to maintain that *doctrinal* passages are to decide *prophetic* questions, and places all prophetic scriptures in contrast with doctrine. The statement is the more remarkable for being introduced by the following emphatic words. Having styled his first proposition a self-evident truth, he proceeds—"But mark its neces-

sary consequence! Our present enquiries must be first directed to the *strictly doctrinal* portions of the sacred volume. For *all the prophecies* abound in metaphor and allegory." This would be indeed a compendious mode of studying prophecy! Leave *all the prophecies* aside, and study the strictly doctrinal portions of the sacred volume! But here again, does that volume contain no *doctrines* as to the future? And what are doctrines as to the future but prophecies? Of two things one; "the strictly doctrinal portions" to which Mr. W. refers, bear on the future or they do not. If they do, they are prophecies, and "all the prophecies," are not so figurative as he represents. If they do not, of what avail can it be to study them in order to understand prophecy aright?

The fact of the matter is this: there is no such contrariety between one part of Scripture and another, as might be supposed from our author's representations. Only in appearance are its statements ever in conflict with each other; and this appearance arises, not from Scripture itself, but from the state of our own minds. Scripture, from first to last, is one harmonious whole. Were any of us to understand it perfectly, the harmony of all its parts would be perfectly discerned. In proportion as the Holy Spirit does enable any to understand it, this harmony is perceived; but He alone can teach to profit: and it is in the prayerful, diligent, humble perusal of Scripture itself—of all Scripture;—in its perusal, moreover, *as subject to it, and not as subjecting it to our own minds*, that the teaching of the Holy Spirit is afforded. Of all moral preparatives for the study of prophecy, or of any branch of revealed truth, there is none so im-

portant as that we have just indicated—entire subjection to the Word of God. By it are *all* to be judged eventually; *the christian* submits himself to it now. He may find statements in it on one subject, which he cannot, at the time, reconcile with what he understands its declarations on some other subject to be: but what is he to do? Is he to prefer the one class to the other, and having made his selection, subordinate those which he deems of lower, to such as he regards as of “higher authority?” Would that be to reverence God’s Word, and submit to its authority? Surely not. The man who trembles at God’s Word will, in such a case, reflect that the discrepancy is only apparent; that it may arise from his own misapprehension of either class of passages; or even that he may yet be ignorant of some collateral truths, which, when known, will clear up all. He concludes to confess his ignorance, and wait on God.

Take for instance, the millenarian controversy. Many there are to whom it seems written in numerous passages, that the second coming of Christ is to precede the millennium, and to introduce it; while our author, with many other excellent, godly men, maintains that this is contradicted by plain statements of the New Testament. They admit that many portions of the Old, and some parts of the New, seem to favour the pre-millennial doctrine; but they deem it inconsistent with what they judge to be the evident sense of certain literal passages of the latter volume of inspiration; and they contend that the Old Testament must yield to the New—the figurative and obscure to the literal and clear. But may we not well pause, ere we consent to this

course, and inquire whether we be indeed shut up to such a necessity? Contradiction or discrepancy in God's Word there cannot be : the secret of the difficulty must be found elsewhere. May not our brethren have come to hasty conclusions as to the sense of what they term the literal passages? Is it not a presumptive evidence of their having done so, that the effect of their use of them is to place them in apparent opposition to what they admit to be the literal and obvious import of other Scriptures? Pre-millennialists make no admissions of the kind, nor have they any need to make such. The pre-millennial view does not set Scripture against Scripture, nor does it deem such a course admissible. Allowed, even by its opposers, to harmonize with the obvious sense of many Scriptures, it claims the support of all—yea, of the very passages adduced against it, when these passages are rightly understood. And is there to be no question allowed as to the sense of these? Is it by the passages themselves, or by post-millenarian deductions therefrom, that the pre-millennial testimony lying on the surface of so many other passages is said to be contradicted and overruled? And may we not inquire whether such deductions be fair and well-founded? whether they be compatible with the passages themselves, and with other passages equally literal and clear? There can be no refusing or evading such enquiries; and when instituted in a calm and impartial spirit, and conducted with humility, patience, and prayer, we have no fear for the result. It has hitherto generally issued in a firm and abiding conviction, that pre-millennial views are as much taught

by the literal as by the figurative portions of Holy Writ ; that they are, in short, the doctrines of Scripture throughout : and that the only way to avoid receiving them, if serious attention be at all paid to them, is—first, to attach an erroneous meaning to certain passages, and then, to subordinate all others, *not* to these passages themselves, but to the human and mistaken sense in which they are understood.

CHAP. II.

DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

IN turning to Mr. Waldegrave's second proposition, that "in all points upon which the New Testament gives us instruction, it is, as containing the full, the clear, and the final manifestation of the divine will, our rightful guide to the interpretation of the Old," we wish particularly to guard against being misunderstood. There is much of truth contained in it, beyond all doubt; but all the force that it can justly exert on any christian mind is the result of what we acknowledge as cheerfully as our author himself. There are distinctions between the Old Testament and the New, which no christian can fail to recognize. The *authority* is the same in both; for both are the word of God. The grand central *object* is the same; for both testify of Christ. "The law, the prophets, and the psalms," as well as the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse, have him for their glorious, never-failing theme. But how differently is he presented in these two grand departments of divine revelation! The difference is felt even by those who would be at a loss to define its nature and explain its cause. Much that Mr. W. says on this point is so self-evident, that our only wonder is that he should have thought it needful to say it at all. At the same time he is far from having succeeded, as it

appears to us, in illustrating the most important aspects of his subject; and the arguments he has advanced seem anything but conclusive, in favour of the principle of interpretation for which he contends.

It is not so obvious as Mr. W. would intimate (page 15), that in New Testament revelations *as to the future*, "figure is the exception, literality the rule." That this may be the fact *as to the whole volume*, we do not dispute; but in regard to its prophetic passages, which can alone decide prophetic questions, the statement is far from being indisputable. The numerous parables by which our Lord conveyed prophetic instruction to his hearers, as well as other obvious considerations, will at once occur to our readers. But as this is not the basis on which Mr. W. rests his defence of the principle in question, we would not bestow upon it a more extended notice than he gives to it himself. His great argument we give in his own words:—

"The New Testament has this distinct and incontestable claim to the right of arbitration, that it is the inspired record of the words of that Great Prophet, of whom it was said, 'him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you:'" p. 15.

In illustration and support of his argument, Mr. W. expounds the passage in Peter's discourse, from which these words are quoted. He explains that Jesus is the Prophet of whom Moses wrote and Peter spake. He refers to the gospels, as containing much that this great Prophet taught, but contends that the Acts and Epistles may with equal truth be regarded as his oracular communications. He shows that by these the previously "imperfect revelation of the Divine will" is completed

{many things being thus revealed, which were hidden before); and that the New Testament is not only supplementary to the Old, but often expository of its contents. He proves that in certain cases Old Testament institutions are abrogated by Christ in the New Testament; and from the whole he infers, that on prophetic subjects the literal portions of the New Testament are of greater weight, and entitled to more consideration, than the predictions of the older volume of inspiration.

To the argument drawn from the setting aside of Levitical rites, and the passing away of typical ceremonies, we have already replied; showing, at the same time, how seriously our author's reasoning arrays Scripture against Scripture, and exalts one part of it at the expense of another. Nor do the particulars now enumerated require much remark. It may well be questioned whether the fulfilment of the Jewish lawgiver's prediction in our blessed Lord, as declared by Peter in the third of Acts, constitutes the highest feature of the distinctive character possessed by the New Testament. Questions might be raised as to the meaning of the word "prophet" in the text on which Mr. W.'s discourse is founded. Is the foretelling of future events that which is chiefly indicated by that term as applied by Moses to himself, and to that blessed One whose advent he predicts? Is it not rather as the founder, by divine appointment, of the legal economy or dispensation that he speaks of himself, while he foretells the coming of another, by whom a better dispensation should be established? Moses and the law

were to be heard, till Christ should come, and the gospel be introduced; or, as the evangelist has it, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John i. 17). In either case, it would seem rather to be the divine authority of the lawgiver than the supernatural foresight of the seer, that is indicated by the word prophet, as used in the text under consideration.

Nor do the words—"him shall ye hear in all things"—imply that his revelations are more strictly true than were those made by means of Moses. The One of whom the passage treats was to be "a prophet," says Moses, "like unto me." The authority of Moses, as their divinely appointed legislator and the founder of their system, was acknowledged by the Jews; but he himself foretold the coming of another of equal (he does not say *higher*) authority; and him they were to hear in all things. Moses himself thus sets his seal to the mission of Christ, by which his own temporary economy was to be superseded and replaced; but until thus superseded and replaced, Moses was to be heard, and his injunctions to be obeyed as implicitly as Christ and his words are now to be submitted to by all. In fact, we have Christ's own declaration to assure us, that such as truly *heard* the one, reverently and obediently listened to the other also. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." (John v. 46.)

In a word, neither Moses nor Peter lay down a *canon of interpretation* in the passage on which our author builds so much. The question in Deut. xviii.,

and in Acts iii., is not whether the Old Testament or the New is to be preferred *as fixing the sense of a disputed passage*, but, *whether Jesus was to be received as the Messiah*. "No," said the Jews, "we know that God spake by Moses, and we will cleave to Moses." "Moses himself commands you to receive Jesus," was Peter's reply! A cogent reply it was, worthy of the Holy Ghost, under whose inspiration it was made. But to infer from it, that the meaning of Old Testament prophecies is to be authoritatively determined by a few passages of the New Testament, deemed literal and clear by those who make such a use of them, would be to fix upon it a sense which, we are bold to maintain, the apostle never contemplated; it would be to draw from it a deduction, as contrary to the passage itself rightly understood, as it is derogatory to the book of inspiration as a whole.

We shall have occasion to return to this chapter in the Acts, but would now invite the attention of the christian reader to the whole subject of the connexion between the Old and New Testaments. It is one of profoundest interest in itself; while its bearings on the millenarian question are quite as important as our esteemed author represents them to be. The reader himself must judge, whether the path, to which Mr. W. invites us, be one in which the brighter lights of the later revelations become really available for the elucidation of those, which are more obscure in character, and of more ancient date.

That which, first of all, distinguishes the New Testament, is the record it contains of the perfect revelation

of God himself, in the person of his Son. Viewed as an inspired writing, its authority cannot be greater than that of the equally inspired writings of the Old Testament. But as to its subject—that which it presents to us, we no sooner open it, and begin to read, than we find ourselves in the presence of God himself. “God was manifested in the flesh.” It is God who speaks in the Old Testament as really as in the New. But in the one, he is in the distance, or causing his voice to be heard from amid the thick darkness in which He dwells; in the other, “Emmanuel”—“God with us”—is the wonder which bursts upon us in the first chapter of the book. “Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself” (Isaiah xiv. 15) is the utterance even of the evangelical prophet, as he is often termed. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him,” is what the evangelist affirms, (John i. 18); and it is this which stamps its character on the New Testament throughout. God himself is revealed in the person of Christ. No doubt he was the prophet like unto Moses, whose coming Moses had foretold. But while Moses was “faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after,” Christ was as “a Son over his own house.” He was “counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.” And while “every house is builded by some one, he that built all things (which Christ did) is God,” (Heb. iii.) The true, distinctive glory of the New Testament shines upon us in the

fact, that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Nor is even this the whole. Not only was he, as a messenger, thus pre-eminently glorious; he was himself the glory of the message. God was revealed not only *by* but *in* him, who was "the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person." "The Word was made flesh," says the evangelist, "and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "He that hath *seen* me, hath *seen* the Father," was the language of this blessed One Himself. The Old Testament contains nothing resembling this. The will of God is there partially disclosed; his creating power and providential wisdom are exhibited; his government of Israel and the nations is copiously treated of; man's dreary history is largely recorded; the grace of God to individuals is placed in striking relief, while testimony is borne to their faith, and its precious fruits; Christ himself is foreshadowed and foretold, from the pronouncing of the curse on the serpent, and the first institution of slain sacrifices, in Gen. iii. and iv., to the last of the long line of Israel's prophets, and the re-establishment of Levitical rites, on the return from Babylon, in Ezra's and Nehemiah's day. But God himself was not revealed. "The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness," is Solomon's thought of God, in erecting for him the temple in which he deigned to take up his abode. But there, as in the tabernacle which had preceded it, everything testified of the barriers which

sin had raised between God and his people, and of the distance and reserve which marked the relations existing between him and them. Foreshadowings there were of the Saviour, in whose coming this reserve was to be laid aside, and by whose sacrifice this distance was to be destroyed. But it is in the New Testament that we find ourselves actually in the presence of Jesus, who, while a man and the lowliest of men, was yet the full revelation, the perfect display of all that God is, in his wisdom, power, holiness, and love. All this was manifested in him, moreover, in perfect grace to the sinner. With wisdom, which confounded his adversaries by a word—power, which controlled the elements, and to which devils themselves were subject—holiness, so absolute and intrinsic, that contact with man's evil could not defile him, his love and grace were such, that a poor sinful Samaritan woman could freely converse with him, while he revealed himself to her as the Saviour, and his Father as the One who sought such as she, to worship him in spirit and in truth! God, fully revealed in grace in the person of his Son, is that which constitutes the inexpressible charm with which the New Testament is invested, to all who have been convinced of the reality of their lost estate as sinners against God. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost!"

Another distinctive feature of the New Testament is the record it contains of the accomplishment of redemption by the cross. In Old Testament times, it was not only that God was not fully revealed, but that

man had little or no access to him. True, he deigned to fix his earthly abode in the midst of his people Israel, and to speak of himself as dwelling "between the cherubims." But who could venture to approach him there? One man only, and he but once a year, and even then it was with blood newly shed, and amid clouds of incense covering the mercy-seat lest he should die. These were the types of that sacrifice by which guilty man was to draw near to God; but so long as the types continued, "the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest." Christ only could open the way. To accomplish this he had not only to reveal God to man, but had to present himself a sacrifice on man's behalf to God. The whole nature and character of God had to be manifested and glorified *with regard to sin*, in order for any of our sinful race to be admitted to his immediate presence. Sin had to be put away. The believer well knows by whom this has been accomplished. One only was equal to the mighty undertaking; but by him it has been once and for ever achieved. He "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." At his expiring cry, "It is finished," "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." No veil remains between God and the sinner who approaches in the name of Jesus. "Boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say his flesh," is now the assured, indubitable privilege of every true believer. But where, save in the New Testament, is this made known to us? And what more real distinction can exist

between the Old Testament and the New, than the one we are now considering? Many prophets and righteous men had desired to see and hear what the disciples saw and heard when Jesus was on earth. How would they have rejoiced, had they been permitted, as we are, to read of the exaltation of the risen Jesus to the right hand of God—of free remission through his blood—and of access through him, without a single interposing veil, to the immediate presence of God himself! Yet such are some of the wonders which the New Testament distinctively unfolds.

But there is one characteristic feature of the later volume of inspiration—a most important one—on which Mr. W., in his opening lecture, bestows the slightest possible notice. He does indeed say (page 23) “that there are many things which Moses and the prophets—even if they knew them—did not commit to writing,” and adds, that “Jesus, however, has perfected the volume of inspiration.” But it is not thus slightly that the New Testament itself treats of one grand department of truth, the primary and exclusive revelation of which it claims as its own. The divine glory of Messiah’s person, and the wondrous efficacy of his atoning death, had been variously typified and foretold in the Old Testament; and that which, as to these verities, distinguishes the New Testament, is that it *records* what the other only *foreshadows* and *predicts*. But as to one vast range of truth, we have the distinct announcement in the New Testament, that it had been in all previous ages unknown and unrevealed. Hear the Apostle, who, writing to the Ephesians, “of the

dispensation of the grace of God," which had been given him to them-ward, says, "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery: (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ); *which in other ages was not made known* unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. iii. 2—5). Again, he describes the objects of his vocation to be "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world *hath been hid in God*, who created all things by Jesus Christ" (verse 9). Writing to the Colossians, the same apostle speaks of Christ's body, "which is the church; whereof," he says, "I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil (or fully to preach, see margin) the Word of God; even the mystery *which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest* to the saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory" Col. i. 24—27. In these passages, we have the distinct mention of a certain mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God, which had been hid from ages and from generations, and was only now made manifest to the saints. Of this previously unrevealed mystery it is said, that by revelation it had been made known to Paul; and that Christ had now revealed it to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. The

knowledge of this mystery Paul represents as the dispensation of the grace of God which had been given him, in order that he might make all men see what is the fellowship of this mystery; he speaks of the saints as those to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery; and he declares that he had been made a minister according to the dispensation of God, committed to him for the completing of the word of God. Such we take to be the force of the expression "to fulfil," or "fully to preach the word of God." Evidently that word was incomplete till this mystery was made known.

We have no intention, in the present paper, to consider the subject of this mystery, as it is developed in detail in the two epistles from which the above quotations are made. The proper place for considering it at large may be, when we come to discuss our author's statements on the subject in one of his subsequent lectures. For the present, let it suffice to refer to the passages themselves, and to one verse in Eph. iii., not yet quoted, which prove, that *the heavenly unity of the church with Christ by virtue of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost* is the mystery of which the Apostle writes. These are the words in which he himself defines it: "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." (Eph. iii. 6.) "Christ in you, the hope of glory," are the terms in which he sums up this mystery in Col. i.; but then he declares that it is "among the Gentiles" that "the riches of the glory of this mystery" have their scope and their development. Now nothing can

be more obvious, even to a cursory reader of God's word, than that the Old Testament abounds with predictions of blessing to the Gentiles under Messiah's reign. Our post-millenarian brethren will, at all events, admit this. It was no unrevealed mystery that, when the Seed should come to whom the promises were made, both Jews and Gentiles should be blessed *under* him, and *by* him. But that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of *the same body*,—that believing Jews and believing Gentiles should be incorporated in one, being brought thus into a position of perfect equality with each other, by both, and both alike, becoming *the body of Christ*; that there should be thus a community or corporation of persons, not only blessed *under* Christ and *by* Christ, but blessed *in* him and *with* him, “quicken together,” “raised up together,” and “made to sit together in heavenly places *in* Christ,” as the epistle to the Ephesians declares; that Christ should be *in* such, the hope of glory,—this is, indeed, what had been hid in God from all former ages and generations, and what was only revealed to the apostles and prophets of the new economy, since the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God, and the descent of the Holy Ghost from heaven.

The importance of this subject, in its bearing on the millenarian question, can scarcely be over-rated. Let it be once assumed that the subject of the prophecies is identical with that of the epistles—that the latter contain nothing but what was more obscurely revealed in the former—and the consequence is inevitable. The prophecies are spiritualized in order to raise them

towards the level of the epistles; the epistles are brought down to the level of the spiritual sense put upon the prophecies; and each department of divine truth is thus shorn of its peculiar, distinctive character. The church of God, indwelt by the Holy Ghost and thus made "one body" and "one Spirit" with its risen and glorified Head in heaven, is confounded in men's thoughts with the whole company of the redeemed from the beginning to the end of time. All its peculiar blessedness *as one with Christ*, whether in his present rejection, or in the glory in which he is by and by to be revealed, is reduced to what is common to saints of every dispensation. Old Testament predictions, concerning such as are to be blessed *under Christ* and *by Christ*, are regarded in the spiritual sense sought to be imposed upon them, as expressive of the portion which pertains to those, and those only, who are blessed *in him* and *with him*, "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." This is a theme which we cannot at present pursue; but here is to be found, we are fully persuaded, the fundamental error of the Bampton lecturer, and of nearly, if not quite, all who reject pre-millennial views. We hope, hereafter, to give the subject the fullest examination in the light of God's word. We turn from it now, to point out some other considerations connected with the distinction between the Old Testament and the New.

The three great characteristics of the New Testament we have seen to be, that God is there made known as fully revealed in Christ; accomplished redemption is there proclaimed, with all its blessed results; and there

we have the unfolding of the previously unrevealed mystery of the heavenly unity of the church with Christ, by virtue of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Two results naturally ensue, and may be seen to pervade the volume. First the subjects with which it prominently and distinctively deals are not such as relate to God's government of creation, Israel, and the nations, with which the Old Testament is so largely occupied; but the more vital and momentous questions of eternity, the soul, life, death, heaven and hell. We are far from intending that the Old Testament says nothing of the latter class of subjects, or that the New Testament is silent on the former. It is with the general features—the predominant character of both volumes, that we are at present concerned; and who can doubt that eternity is stamped upon the one, as prominently as time is impressed upon the other? Now it is to God's government of the world that prophecy applies; and hence the extent to which the Old Testament consists of prophecy. In proportion as the subject is touched upon in the New Testament, it becomes prophetic; but even in its prophetic parts (as Matt. xiii., and xxiv., xxv.; 2 Thess. ii.; and the Apocalypse as a whole), eternity is connected with what takes place in time, in a way but little known in the Old Testament. Then, secondly, the distinction between Jew and Gentile, so maintained in the older volume of God's word, begins in the latter one to fade away before the glory of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God; it disappears before his cross, by which the middle wall of partition is broken down; and one

essential feature of "the mystery," revealed by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, is this, that in a risen and ascended Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free. Not that these distinctions have finally ceased *in the world*, viewed as the subject of God's government. So far from this, "Jews," "Gentiles," and "the Church of God" form the present triple distribution of mankind, in an apostolic precept enjoining upon believers an inoffensive course towards all the three. (1 Cor. x. 32.) It is in the church, the body of Christ, that these, and all mere human distinctions, have passed away. "Male and female," as really as "Jew and Gentile," is an unknown, unrecognised distinction, in regard to the oneness of believers with an earth-rejected, heavenly Christ. (Gal. iii. 28).

The connexions between the Old Testament and the New we reserve as the subject of our next communication.

CHAP. III.

CONNEXIONS BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

OUR attention was directed, in our last, to the distinctions which exist between the two departments of divine revelation. We found them to be, in some respects, wider and more important than would be gathered from Mr. W.'s opening lecture; besides differing in character from those on which he there so much insists, and, indeed, from any recognized by him in any part of his volume. We must not suppose however, that the change from the old order of things to the new, was immediate; or, that as soon as we open the New Testament, Christianity, in its distinctive and full-grown character, will burst upon our attention. Some of its grand elements are there from the very beginning; but they present themselves along with much that pertains to the former economy; much that has since passed away. The fact is, that the four gospels (and, in a certain modified sense, even the Acts of the Apostles) describe a transitional state of things, as distinct in some of its features from the Christianity which it introduced, as, in others, from the Judaism which it succeeded and gradually set aside. While, therefore, we doubt not for a moment, that it is in the New Testament God's present testimony is found—that by which he immediately addresses our souls,

whether as sinners or as saints ; and while it is therefore most important that the Old Testament should be read in the light cast back upon it by the New ; it is equally indisputable, that many things in the New Testament can only be understood through previous acquaintance with the Old. To know ourselves as ruined and undone, and to know Christ crucified and risen as our only Saviour, is to have everlasting life : and this knowledge God can, by his Spirit, communicate by means of any portion either of the Old Testament or the New. But if, knowing that the great question of eternity has been settled for us, by the sovereign grace which has blotted out our sins, and accepted us in the Beloved, we are desirous of full acquaintance with our Father's mind and will, as revealed in his word, we may not neglect either the Old Testament or the New. They are mutually illustrative of each other's contents, and neither can be neglected without serious loss. God may now usually begin his work in individual souls by means of truth revealed in the New Testament ; but it is with Genesis that he begins the book of inspiration ; and if we are, through his aid and teaching, to understand it as a whole, it is there our researches must commence. Should we reverse this order, and begin with the New Testament, we should continually meet with words, statements, and allusions which the Old Testament alone could explain.

Let it be supposed that some one to whom both volumes are unknown, should open the New Testament and begin to read, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

“Who was David?” and “who was Abraham?” are questions which must instantly arise. Where could the answer be found, except in the Old Testament? Nor is there a verse down to the seventeenth, by which similar inquiries would not be aroused—inquiries which must receive their answer, if answered at all, from the same source. Passing over some verses, on which nevertheless, we might make similar remarks, what could be known of the import of verse 21, had the Old Testament no existence? “He shall save his people from their sins.” What people? And, why “his” people? What is the nature of the relations subsisting between him and them? What has been their conduct in these relations? Whence their need of being saved? And what are we to understand by the salvation he is to bestow? These are all questions naturally suggested by the words; and if some of them must find their answer in the continued perusal of the book itself, how many of them can only be solved by reference to more ancient records of equally divine authority? A direct quotation from these records is what immediately follows: Isaiah’s prediction of Emmanuel, the Virgin’s son, was to find its accomplishment in the birth of Jesus. But, enough. We might take any other chapter of Matthew’s narrative, and almost any chapter of the narratives by the other three evangelists, and we should find ourselves as continually thrown back upon the law, the prophets, and the psalms, for the import of quotations or allusions which would meet us at every step.

We have referred to the transition from Judaism to Christianity, as having gradually taken place. Of this

fact, the New Testament itself affords abundant evidence. Were this evidence to be carefully examined, other facts would be educed—facts overlooked by Mr. W. and by those generally with whom he symbolizes, but which have a most direct and important bearing on the questions at issue. In the introduction to his Epistle to the Romans, Paul speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ under two distinct aspects: as “made of the seed of David according to the flesh;” and “declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” (Rom. i. 3, 4.) As “made of the seed of David according to the flesh” he had special links of connexion with Israel. Where the apostle is enumerating Israel’s distinctive privileges, such as the adoption, the glory, &c., that by which he crowns the catalogue is, “and of whom, *as concerning the flesh*, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.” (Rom. ix. 5.) It is from the same apostle’s pen that we have the words, “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.” (Rom. xv. 8.) “Made of a woman, made under the law.” (Gal. iv. 4.) Let any one read the gospels in the light of these apostolic statements, and how evident it must be to him, that innumerable links with Israel and Judaism, having no place in Christianity as existing in Paul’s day, were maintained by our blessed Lord during his sojourn on earth. Circumcised the eighth day, and duly presented by his mother according to the law, he afterwards accompanied her and Joseph to the annual feasts in the city of solemnities.

It was in the synagogue that he commenced his ministry at Nazareth, and often is it noticed afterwards that he taught in their synagogues. How frequently were those whom he healed or cleansed directed by him to go and show themselves to the priests; and how did he charge the twelve not to go into the way of the Gentiles, or enter any city of the Samaritans, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. "The Scribes and the Pharisees," said he, "sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do." (Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.) It was on the night of the passover, and after he had faithfully observed it with his disciples, that he was betrayed into the hands of men.

How different is all this from the christianity of the epistles, and, in many respects, from what we find in the Acts of the Apostles. No doubt there were other elements, new, heavenly, and divine, from the very beginning of the gospels. Christ was there, the Son of the Father, the image of the invisible God; and wherever this full divine glory of his person peculiarly stands forth, the limits of Judaism and of his dispensational links with Israel were not sufficient to restrain the outflow to sinners, whether Gentile or Samaritan, of that grace, to introduce and exercise which "God was manifest in the flesh." Most true is this, and most blessed. But it nullifies in no degree the fact, of which we have seen such ample proof, that, throughout his continuance on earth, the Saviour deigned to maintain many a link with the nation of the Jews, and with the economy under which they had been placed.

Why were these national and dispensational links

maintained by our blessed Lord? A profoundly interesting question, to which, happily, his own words afford an explicit reply. They place it beyond doubt, that as one part of an extensive tract of land might be selected and enclosed, as a specimen of the whole, for the purpose of testing its fruitfulness by actual experiment, so the nation of Israel was chosen of God for the purpose of testing whether man, favoured with every advantage of even divine care and culture, would bring forth fruit towards God. Isaiah had long before sung of Jehovah's vineyard in a very fruitful hill, fenced, and planted with the choicest vine; the stones gathered out, a tower built in its midst, and a wine press made therein. Touching this vineyard, (which the prophet declared to be the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant), it had been asked, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" (Isaiah v. 4.) Because of such strange results of so much diligent, unwearied culture, judgment had been pronounced in Isaiah's day, and the execution of it had been long impending, when the Lord Jesus Christ appeared. The trial was not complete till then. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin." (John xv. 22.) A vineyard let out to husbandmen is the figure employed by our Lord, to set forth their privileges and responsibilities, and to describe their guilt. (Matt. xxi. 33, &c.) It is not, as in Isaiah v., the fertility of the vineyard that is in question, but the honesty

of the husbandmen, and the consequent productiveness to their Lord, and of the grounds entrusted to their care. "When the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits." Thus had the prophets been sent to Israel. With what result? "The husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another." Thus had Israel dealt with the prophets who had been sent to them. But great is the divine longsuffering. The owner of the vineyard had patience with the husbandmen, and "sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise." Was there no hope remaining? Could no further means be tried? Yes: "last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son." Such, therefore, is one aspect in which the mission of Jesus is to be viewed. No doubt he came to reveal the Father, and to accomplish redemption by the sacrifice of himself; but he also came seeking fruit on God's behalf from those who were responsible for rendering it. Before he became the sacrifice for human guilt upon the cross, he was presented as the final test of man's condition before God. Israel was the theatre in which the experiment was made: but it was human nature itself—man, as such—that was put to the test. With God in the distance, or behind the veil, man had, with every lesser advantage of laws, messengers, prophecies, warnings, promises, made no return to God for the pains bestowed: would he, now that God was revealed in the person of his Son, be more submissive or obedient? Alas! "when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves,

This is the heir : come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him." The last astounding proof of God's forbearing love, of patience which nothing yet had sufficed to exhaust, drew forth from man—from Israel—the expression of intense and complete hatred. They cast him out of the vineyard and slew him!

The application of this parable was left by the Saviour to the Jews themselves. He asks them what might be expected to be done by the lord of the vineyard to those husbandmen, and they are obliged to reply, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto others." He then reminds them of the Stone rejected by the builders, and of its high destiny to be the Head of the corner, and adds, "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

But it was not only as the representative of God's *claims*—as seeking fruit—that the Jews rejected their Messiah:—it was also as the revealer and expression of God's perfect grace. A certain king makes a marriage for his son, and sends his servants to call the invited guests—such as were bidden: "but they would not come" (Matt. xxii. 1—14). Nothing is *claimed* of the guests at a marriage feast; everything is *provided*; and the guests partake freely of the bounty of their host. But the grace which thus provides all for man, and makes him welcome to the whole, is as unwelcome to his heart as those righteous claims of God's holy law, with which he refuses to comply. "They would not

come." But what cannot grace do? The death of Christ is itself made the ground of new invitations! "Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are now ready: come unto the marriage." What can be represented here, but the ministry of the apostles to Israel after the death and resurrection of their Lord? Alas! it was with the same result; save where sovereign grace imparted a new life, and thus subdued the opposition of man's will, these further invitations met with no better reception than the former. "They made light of it . . . and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully and slew them." It was for this rejection of the gospel of an ascended Christ, proclaimed by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, that judgment was executed on Jerusalem and the Jews. "But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." Nor was it till they had thus rejected mercy, offered to them in every form, and pressed on their acceptance in every way, that the proclamation of heavenly mercy went forth universally:—all being now indiscriminately bidden to the feast. "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage."

If we turn now to the early chapters of the Acts, from which Mr. W. extracts the passage on which his opening discourse is founded, we shall find that what they present is this lingering of divine mercy over Israel, before the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles.

They had indeed committed an unparalleled crime in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, and in a certain sense filled up the measure of their iniquity. But the vine-dresser had interceded for the barren fig-tree (Luke xiii. 8). Jesus, on the cross, had cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do:" this, their ignorance, thus pleaded by the Redeemer on the cross, is precisely what the Holy Ghost admits by Peter in Acts iii. 17; "And now, brethren, I'wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." So far were they, in answer to the intercession of Jesus, conditionally forgiven, that instead of judgment being instantly executed, full, free, absolute forgiveness was proclaimed to them on condition of their repentance. Observe too, that it is national forgiveness of which the apostle treats, and the restoration of their forfeited national blessings, even including the return of Jesus himself. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that (see the Greek*) the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord: and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Forgiveness of sins, and the times of refreshing, or restitution, of which all the prophets had witnessed, as well as the return of the Lord they had rejected, are here proposed to the Jews on condi-

* The Greek word *ὅταν* occurs upwards of fifty times in the New Testament, and is never, save in this instance, rendered "when." Its ordinary rendering, and simple obvious import, are as given above.

tion of their repentance. This was the only condition on which Old Testament prophecy had suspended the arrival of these bright and happy days for Israel; and on this condition they are still held out by the apostle. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." He well knew that they who had rejected and crucified a humbled Messiah on earth, would still reject the Holy Ghost's testimony to an ascended and returning Christ; and everything which ensued was arranged of God accordingly. But if Jesus himself, looking down upon Jerusalem, and weeping over it, could say, "If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!" we need not, in the unchangeableness of God's purposes, find any difficulty as to vast and wondrous results depending on Israel's repentance, as taught in Acts iii., even though it was surely foreknown of God that they would persist in their sin, and that wrath would come upon them to the uttermost. We may well understand, that what was long afterwards said by Paul to the Jews of a certain locality was true of the whole nation: "*It was necessary* that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts xiii. 46). The martyrdom of Stephen terminated for the present all hopes of Jerusalem's repentance, or of Israel's reception of the Lord whom they had crucified; and seeing that every Old Testament prediction of the kingdom (or the millennium) treated of its establishment as dependent on Israel's conversion, that also was

indefinitely postponed. And thus was the way prepared for the revelation of the mystery, till then necessarily concealed, that the period of Christ's rejection by Israel and the earth should be occupied in the calling and formation by the Holy Ghost of "the Church"—the elect body or bride of Christ—to be the vessel of his sympathies and sharer of his rejection while he sits on the Father's throne on high; and also to be the sharer of his glory when he shall "take to him his great power, and reign" upon the earth.

But is Israel cast off hopelessly and for ever? Is there to be no fulfilment of those bright visions of rest, and blessedness, and supremacy on earth, under Messiah's sway and Jehovah's smile, with which the Old Testament abounds? Is it anywhere declared by our Lord himself, or by his apostles after him, that these predictions are never, in their plain and obvious sense, to be fulfilled? that they are to receive no accomplishment but that which is alleged to consist in the amalgamation of any converted Israelites with the church of the present dispensation? Such is the doctrine of the Bampton Lecturer: and such, with more or less of consistency, is the doctrine of the reviewers, Mr. Lyon, and all the modern rejecters of millenarianism. They all deny that Israel is to have any national distinction or pre-eminent place in days to come. Some admit that the Jews may be restored to their own land; others deny this, as savouring of the worst features of millenarian literality; while some, of whom Mr. Waldegrave is one, treat it as a doubtful, uncertain matter: but all agree in denouncing the expectation of

any real fulfilment of those national hopes for Israel, of which Old Testament language, if at all literally understood, constitutes so plain a warrant. "Christ," say they, "discountenances such hopes, and the apostles forbid them." But is this the case? Does the New Testament bear out these bold, confident, and oft-repeated assertions? We believe not. We believe that the New Testament needs only to be candidly, prayerfully, and diligently studied, in its evident and inseparable connexion with the Old, to satisfy any Christian inquirer, that these assertions are not only baseless, but contrary to what the New Testament distinctly declares.

First, be it remembered, that the Old Testament itself predicts, in several passages, that for a long season Israel would remain in unbelief; while judicial blindness, rejection by Jehovah, scattering among the nations, and abject misery under the Gentile yoke, should be the result of their sins, and of their having rejected their Messiah. See, among other passages, Is. vi. 9—12; i. 1, 2; liii. 1—3; lxiii. 17; lxiv. 7; Hos. i. 6—9; iii. 4; v. 14, 15; Mic. iii. 9—12; v. 1. But, secondly, all these prophecies and numbers more show decisively that Israel's rejection and unbelief are but for a time, however prolonged; and that this dreary period is to be succeeded by the days of promised blessedness and rest. Thirdly, our Lord and his apostles distinctly recognize both these truths. Without doubt they declare, and that most unequivocally, that the Israel of that day were sealing on themselves the calamities by which they had been already

overtaken, and bringing upon themselves and their children still heavier judgments than any which had yet been inflicted. Nor do they fail to pourtray the blessings to the Gentiles which result from the way in which divine mercy has overruled the sin of the Jews and their consequent rejection for a time. But do they anywhere intimate that this rejection is final and irreversible? Do they anywhere teach that the present Gentile dispensation has permanently and unchangeably replaced God's natural relations with the earthly people of his choice? Far from it—as far as possible. In Matt. xxiii.—the sequel, in fact, to the series of parables which have been already considered, and in which our Lord had told the Jews that the kingdom of God was taken from them and given to others—after pronouncing upon them the dire and oft-repeated woes which their evil and hypocrisy drew forth from those blessed lips; after declaring that on them should come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, lamenting over them in such pathetic language, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered your children together, and ye would not!” after declaring, as he crossed the temple's threshold, “Behold your house is left unto you desolate;” does he not add, as though he would not leave them utterly hopeless, “Ye shall not see me henceforth, TILL YE SHALL SAY, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord?” Can we suppose the Saviour to have used these as his parting words, if he knew that they would never nationally welcome him, and never see him again, till, as individuals, in common with the whole human race,

they behold him on the great white throne? Could words more clearly intimate, that however they might be in the act of rejecting him, the days would come when they would welcome him with all their hearts? that however certain—sadly, sorrowfully certain—that *till then* they should not behold him, yet that *then*, made “willing in the day of his power,” they should see him again, and see him to their joy? “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,” were words well known to Jewish ears. They form a part of that magnificent Psalm (cxviii.) which was well understood to be an inspired, prophetic utterance, prepared beforehand as Messiah’s welcome to the throne. These very words had been but a short time before uttered by the disciples and the multitudes on the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Had they been sincerely used—used, moreover, not only by those who did chant them forth, but by the heads of the nation, and by the nation itself as a whole—then, what might not have occurred? In that case they would have known the day of their visitation, and everything must have been changed. Alas! they know it not. The fervour of the multitudes was rebuked by the Pharisees; and on the part of the nation as a whole, the cry was ready to be uttered, “Away with him! Crucify him!” It *behoved* Christ to suffer, “and enter into his glory.” “The stone” was to be first “rejected of the builders;” but where was the prediction of this fact recorded? In the very psalm quoted by our Lord when he said, “Ye shall not see me henceforth *till ye shall say*, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Thus does he

at once interpret and endorse Old Testament prophecy, linking together in his farewell words to Israel their future national reception of him as their Messiah, his return to them at that time from heaven (where, as the rejected Stone, he is at present exalted), and their own celebration, in that day, of *his* triumphs and *their* deliverance in language prepared for them by the sweet singer of Israel. Read Ps. cxviii. in the light thus shed upon it by our Lord's words; read it, as the joyful, adoring utterance of the penitent, pardoned, delivered Israel of the latter day, when they see their long-rejected, but now welcome Messiah, and say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; read it thus, we say, and every line, every word is pregnant with meaning, and redolent with joy. Set aside Israel's hopes, and the attestation of them by our Lord in the moment of Israel's deepest guilt and degradation, and how unmeaning the Psalm becomes!

If we turn, moreover, to the testimony of the apostles, we shall find it confirmatory, not condemnatory, of Israel's hopes. Take, for instance, Rom. xi. The chapter opens with the enquiry, "Hath God cast away his people?" to which the emphatic and almost indignant reply is at once subjoined, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." Ah," says our author, and many others of his school, "it is the elect—the Israel of God—of whom the apostle speaks." This is Mr. W.'s grand solution of almost every difficulty which arises to his theory of interpretation. But what question was there among those to whom the apostle wrote, as to whether God had cast off the souls of his elect?

Had God utterly and for ever cast off his people Israel—the literal, natural Israel? was a question naturally arising out of all that the apostle had been teaching; and it was one of deepest interest to his brethren according to the flesh. No doubt he mentions an election from among them—“a remnant according to the election of grace.” But this remnant is not his subject in the chapter before us; he only refers to its existence as one argument among many, by which he proves that Israel—the nation Israel—is not utterly and for ever rejected of God. It is thus that he distributes his theme. Not utterly, seeing (1) that he himself is an Israelite; (2) that in the worst days of the nation’s previous history, such as those of Elias, God had a remnant; and (3) that “even so at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” He thus proves the first part of his proposition, that it is only to part of Israel that blindness hath happened, not to the whole. But is the blindness to be permanent, even to the extent in which it does exist? No. “Blindness in part is happened to Israel,” not for ever, but “until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, *and so all Israel shall be saved.*” Mr. W. has the boldness to suggest whether the word “Israel” in one part of this quotation may not be understood *literally*, and in the other *figuratively*! whether “all Israel” and “the fulness of the Gentiles” be not one and the same body of men! Could temerity itself go farther than this in dislocating and confounding the statements of God’s holy Word? What must be the system of interpretation which requires of its exponents to go to such lengths as these?

But it is not at once that the apostle states the conclusion, that "All Israel shall be saved." He reaches it by successive and ascending steps. He argues (1) that through the fall of Israel salvation has come to the Gentiles, "to provoke them (Israel) to jealousy." Can they be *for ever* cast off, if even God's present mercy to the Gentiles be designed to provoke Israel to jealousy, and so beget in them gracious and holy desires after him under whose chastisements they at present remain? (2) If the Gentiles have reaped such profit from Israel's fall, what shall the receiving of Israel be "but life from the dead?" Here is anything but an obscure intimation, that Israel is yet to be received; and not only so, but that the reception of that people is to inaugurate a period of blessedness for the world—the Gentiles—with which the present is not worthy to be compared. (3) The reception of Israel having been thus referred to, the apostle reasons from the very grafting in of the wild Gentile olive to the good olive tree from which the natural Jewish branches have been broken off, that it is *possible* for these latter to be grafted in again. (4) He advances another step, and proves it to be not merely possible, but *probable*: "*how much more* shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into *their own* olive tree?" Then (5) finally, he declares the certainty of their conversion and salvation, quoting in proof of it a passage from Isaiah lix. 20, which inseparably associates it both with the coming of the Lord, and the introduction of millennial blessedness on earth. No doubt there has been, is, and shall yet be, an election from among Israel; but Israel itself,

as a nation, is elected of God, and it is with reference to this election that the apostle says, "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Of what other election than that of the nation itself can the apostle say, "as concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but *as touching the election*, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes?" Our brethren sometimes indulge themselves in speaking of a certain passage as "a millstone round the neck of pre-millennialism;" but certainly the eleventh of Romans may not inappropriately be regarded as a like fatal incumbrance to those "high-minded" prophetic theories, which deny the validity of Israel's national hopes, and seek to resolve all its bright prophetic future into the present heritage of "Gentile branches," even now through unheedfulness to this warning grown "wise in their own conceits," and ready, alas! to be cut off!"

One remark we must by no means omit,—that it was not by Israel alone that Christ was rejected when he came before. He was presented to the Gentiles, in the person of Pontius Pilate, the representative of Gentile power; and his rejection is treated by himself and by the Holy Ghost as his rejection *by the world*. It was, as we have seen, in Israel that the test was applied; but the question to be decided was, whether Christ would be received in his own world. It was decided in the negative. In John's gospel, where Christ is presented in the full divine glory of his person, as the Son of the Father, rather than in his dispensational characters and relations, as in the other gospels, this fact is largely and solemnly insisted on. "He was in

the world, and the world was made by him, and *the world* knew him not" (John 1. 10). "This is the condemnation, that light is come into *the world*, and men [not Jews merely] loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (ch. iii. 19). "Now is the judgment of *this world*" (ch. xii. 31). "The Spirit of truth, whom *the world* cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him" (ch. xiv. 17). "Yet a little while, and *the world* seeth me no more: but ye see me" (verse 19). "If *the world* hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (ch. xv. 18). "And when he (the Holy Ghost) is come, he will reprove *the world* of sin . . . because they believe not on me" (ch. xvi. 8, 9). "O righteous Father, *the world* hath not known thee" (ch. xvii. 25). Who can read these passages and entertain a doubt, that the Christ of the Acts and of the Epistles is a world-rejected Christ? This is another great truth which our brethren who reject pre-millennialism overlook, or, at least, by their system, set aside. This really constitutes the most essential, fundamental difference between their theories and the Christianity of the New Testament, which consists in knowing, confessing, and serving Christ, and in waiting for him, *as the rejected One of this world*. "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, *disallowed indeed of men*" (1 Pet. ii. 4). By and by he will arise from off the Father's throne, and receive to himself the co-heirs who are now being called; the power of the throne will then be exercised in vindication of his long-despised and rejected Name; and when all things are

prepared for the solemn event, he and his saints will return, and this earth shall be subdued to his sway. Of these things the prophecies of the New Testament bear witness; the more they are studied, and the better they are understood, the more evident will it be, that no contrariety exists between the Old Testament and the New. The prophecies of the Old Testament leave room for the revelations and mysteries of the New; the latter fill up, but do not contradict, the former. They both exhibit the purposes and ways of God for the glorifying of himself in Christ, as one vast harmonious whole; and in their combined light, grace and righteousness, mercy and truth, Jew and Gentile, heaven and earth, are all seen to be to the praise of the glory of him, of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things: to whom, indeed, be glory for ever. Amen.

CHAP. IV.

THE THREE-FOLD CORD; OR, CHRIST'S THREE OFFICES OF PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING."

THE object of Mr. Waldegrave's second lecture is indicated by its title—"The kingdom of heaven, as now existing, the proper kingdom of Christ." He represents pre-millenarians as maintaining the negative of this proposition; but prior to his entering on the direct discussion of it, he advances what he deems two strong preliminary reasons in its favour. What are these?

"In the first place, it may well be questioned whether the mediatorial offices of the Lord Jesus are, in operation, separable from each other. A Three-fold cord cannot be quickly broken. Christ is at this moment acting in the capacity of God's anointed Prophet; He is also discharging the functions of God's anointed Priest; it is difficult to believe that He has never yet exercised dominion as God's anointed King, that He is not yet King *de facto* as well as *de jure*. The three offices would seem to be conferred for the same object, and to have, as respects the discharge of their several duties, the same beginning and the same termination. Their one object is the salvation—the salvation to the uttermost—of the people of God. Their actual exercise in the work of that salvation began with the ascension of Jesus; it shall terminate with the accomplishment of the number of his elect." Bamp. Lect. pp. 39, 40.

We are not at present called upon either to affirm or deny that Christ "has never yet exercised dominion as God's anointed King;" but as to our author's mode of proving that he has, we may safely affirm, that it would be difficult to find within the same compass in the works of any sober-minded Christian writer, so many erroneous and contradictory statements as the passage just quoted contains. Have Christ's three offices of

Prophet, Priest, and King, as respects their actual exercise, the same beginning and the same end? And did they begin with his ascension? Did not our Lord discharge the functions of a Prophet—yea, of God's anointed Prophet—while on earth? What meant, then, his quotation of Is. lxi. 1, 2, in the synagogue at Nazareth? "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Could any language more fully express his being anointed to the Prophetic office? And was it only *anticipatively of his ascension* that he quoted these words? Hear what he says. When he had closed the book, given it to the minister, and sat down; when all eyes were fastened upon him; "he began to say unto them, THIS DAY is this Scripture FULFILLED in your ears," Luke iv. 21. Christ not the anointed Prophet until He ascended! This is indeed a worthy use of the principles of interpretation asserted by our author! Had he forgotten his own words, page 24, where having referred to "direct quotations" by our Lord from the Old Testament, "coupled with express mention of their fulfilment," he says,

"The expositions thus supplied must, without hesitation, be accepted as sound. Nor should there be any reserve in our submission to them. For indeed to speak of accommodations, of inadequate and inceptive accomplishments, where Jesus speaks of fulfilments, is *virtually to set aside His Prophetic authority*, and to open the door to a most dangerous licence in the interpretation of Scripture."

Most heartily do we concur in these sentiments. But how condemnatory they are of the position maintained by their author, that Christ began the "actual exercise" of his prophetic office when he ascended on high! Is not Luke iv. 18, 19, a "direct quotation" from Isa. lxi. 1, 2? Is it not "coupled with express mention of its fulfilment?" Where besides have we the mention of such a fact in terms equally express? "This day is this Scripture FULFILLED in your ears!" And was it "fulfilled?" Then, Mr. W. is in error when he says, "*their* actual exercise (that of Christ's three offices of Prophet, Priest, and King) began with the ascension of Jesus." If it was not "fulfilled," our Lord's words would have to be understood by way of "accommodation, of inadequate and inceptive accomplishment;" and to understand them thus would be, according to our author himself, to "virtually set aside Christ's prophetic authority, and to open the door to a most dangerous licence in the interpretation of Scripture."

But it is not by implication alone that Mr. W. contradicts himself on this subject. Let the reader weigh with each other the two following quotations:—

"The three offices have, as respects the discharge of their several duties, *the same beginning* and the same termination. Their actual exercise *began* with the ascension of Jesus," p. 40.

"But where are the words of this great Prophet recorded? To begin with the four gospels: each contains enough, and more than enough, to establish him for a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. And yet these were, as the Holy Ghost testifies, but *the beginning* of his instruction," p. 18.

Let not the reader suppose that we have any satisfaction in exposing such self-contradiction for its own

sake. Gladly would we pass it by as a slip of the pen, were it not that each of the contradictory propositions maintained by Mr. W. is, in its turn, essential to his argument. It behoved him *in the first lecture* to maintain that Christ was a prophet, and acted as a prophet while on earth: the position he seeks *in his second lecture* to establish, requires that Christ should only begin to act thus when he ascended on high! The three offices are to be coeval in their exercise; and to maintain that Christ acted as a king *while on earth* would be more than any readers could be expected to believe; while, as to the Priestly office, the apostle explicitly declares, that "if he (Christ) were on earth, he should not be a priest," Heb. viii. 8. Scripture decides that Christ's exercise of his priesthood dates from his ascension to the right hand of God. Our author, to prove that his kingly office also had its commencement then, maintains (though in contradiction of his own statements, as well as of God's Word) that it was then he entered on the discharge of his prophetic functions. Such must always be the confusion attendant upon the effort to bend God's Word to a system of our own. The very opposite of Mr. W.'s argument is the truth. He says that the three offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, are coeval in their exercise; but instead of this, the Lord first fulfilled his prophetic ministry while in humiliation on the earth; he then entered on his priestly functions when he ascended up on high; and it is when he comes again in his glory that he will be manifested as king. We do not mean by this that he ceased to be "God's anointed Prophet" when he began to act

as "God's anointed Priest;" or, that he will lay aside his priesthood when manifested in the glories of his kingly power. We know that to be "a priest upon his throne," Zech. vi. 13, is his distinctive glory in that day. Nor do we object to Mr. W.'s thought, as expressed in his first lecture, that Christ continues to fill on high the prophetic office on which he entered while on earth. All we maintain is, that what distinguished his sojourn here was his prophetic work, while as yet he had not entered on the functions of his priestly or his kingly office; that what distinguishes his session at the right hand of God is the discharge of his priestly functions, however, he may yet, in a certain sense, fill the place of prophet; and that what will distinguish the coming dispensation, will be his proper, actual reign, however the glories of his priestly and prophetic offices may be conjoined therewith.

It may be interesting, ere we leave this subject of time, to observe how our post-millennarian brethren differ from each other, besides contradicting themselves. Pre-millennialists are expected to be of one mind on every important subject; and their differences, even on subordinate points, are dwelt upon by their opponents as a strong presumption against their views.* If such an argument be of any weight, it may be well to see how it bears upon our brethren by whom it is used. The Bampton lecturer dates, as we have seen, the com-

* See Millennial Studies, p. 16, where Mr. Lyon says, "It may be proper to observe here that millenarians are far from being agreed among themselves in their views of Christ's kingdom. . . . Among anti-millenarians there is at least consistency and agreement." With admirable consistency this writer almost immediately afterwards speaks of Mr. Birks' views as similar to those *usually* held by millenarians.

mencement of Christ's "actual exercise" of all his three offices from his ascension to heaven. Mr. Lyon, on the other hand, dates his reign, at least, from the promise to our first parents in the garden. "His kingdom really began when the first promise was given." *Millennial Studies*, p. 4. Mr. W. maintains that "as respects the discharge of their several duties," the three offices of Prophet, Priest, and King have not only "the same beginning," but also "the same termination." Mr. L. teaches, that "he will continue on the throne as king, *though not as priest*, his priestly functions ceasing because there will no longer be any need for them." It is evidently not by Mr. W.'s argument of "the threefold cord" that Mr. Lyon has been led to reject pre-millennialism; and if it has so little weight with his friends, he need not be disappointed to find it of still less cogency with his opponents, against whom it is directed.

Our author's second preliminary argument in favour of his proposition, that "the kingdom of heaven, as now existing, is the proper kingdom of Christ," is a singular one indeed. It is no other than its invisibility!

"To walk by faith, not by sight,—to endure as seeing Him who is invisible, is the characteristic, the duty, the prerogative of the Christian. Hence the fact, that the present, true, real, and effectual kingship of Messiah calls for the exercise of his faith, is in very deed a strong presumption in its favour," pp. 41, 42.

If this be not to confound things that differ, how could such a censure be incurred? We had always supposed that the period of faith and patience stood contrasted in Scripture with that of rest, and blessedness, and glory, in which Christ and his saints are to share the reward of his sufferings on their behalf, and in

which their endurance of suffering for his sake is also to find its recompense. It was for Mr. W. to discover, that the distinctive features of the one period prove it identical with the other—the contrasted period! The apostle, in writing to the Thessalonians, does speak of glorying in their patience and faith, which says, he “is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, *for which ye also suffer*,” 2 Thess. i. 5. Nay, says our author, it proves that the kingdom has already come! It is the place of a Christian to walk by faith; *therefore*, argues Mr. W., the present exercise of the proper and only royalty ever to be exercised by Christ may be inferred from its being an object of faith, not of sight! But it is not of Christ’s royalty that the apostle treats, where he says, that “we walk by faith, not by sight,” it is of heaven’s joys; and Mr. W.’s argument is as applicable to the one subject as the other. It as much proves, that we are now, in the only sense in which we ever shall be, *in heaven*, as that Christ now reigns in the only sense in which he ever will reign. Alas! we are *not* in heaven. It is by faith, *not* by sight, that we walk. But does this mean that the *future* objects of that faith—the “things hoped for,” of which faith is doubtless “the substance”—does it mean that these are actually present? No, but the reverse. When these are present, and we are present with the Lord, “sight” will take the place of “faith;” and when Christ reigns, in that sense in which his glorious reign is foretold in Scripture, his royalty will be manifest to sense, and no longer, as at present, an object of faith alone.

CHAP. V.

NEW TESTAMENT MILLENARIANISM.

It would but weary our readers were we to subject the whole of Mr. Waldegrave's thick octavo to an examination as minute as has been already bestowed on his opening lecture. Nor is it in any sense requisite. The principles of interpretation laid down in the first lecture are so carried out and applied in the subsequent discourses, that if we have succeeded in shewing these principles themselves to be faulty and unsound, we need bestow no pains on the discourses which are confessedly founded thereon. The fundamental character of the "axiomatic propositions" with which our author commences the discussion, is not only admitted, but triumphantly asserted, both by the *London Quarterly* and the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*. The latter declares that these propositions constitute "the best feature of the work;" while the former says, that "with great force of argument," he "successfully establishes" them, and lays them down "as essential to the correct interpretation of the Word of God." We are happy to find that since our first notice of the volume, it has been reviewed both in the *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, and in the *London Monthly Review*. Both works concur in the condemnation due to Mr. W.'s fundamental axioms; while our own readers, we trust, have been fully satisfied, that humbly and

prayerfully to study the prophetic portions of God's Word, whether figurative or literal in their style, is a more likely mode of arriving at the truth on prophetic subjects, than Mr. W.'s plan of subordinating the greater part of prophetic scripture to other portions, in which prophetic subjects are not handled. *Let the Word of God speak for itself as a whole*, is what we should earnestly suggest; and let us not cumber ourselves, in the study of it, with rules and principles of man's devising.

The second lecture has already been slightly noticed. We only now add, that, in common with Mr. Lyon and other post-millenarians, the lecturer merges all that is distinctive of Christ's royalty, or kingdom, in the place which he fills as the Redeemer, or Saviour, of his people. Referring to his three offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, Mr. W. affirms that they are "conferred for the same object," and he defines that object to be, the salvation to the uttermost of the people of God." Our brethern see nothing in Scripture of a period or dispensation in which Christ is to be displayed as the Second Adam, inheriting through redemption, the dominion forfeited by the first,—in which the sword of government first entrusted to Noah, and since wielded by so many for purposes of selfish ambition and revenge, shall be held by the One, of whom David sang: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God; and he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain," 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4.—in which David's

royalty shall be exercised by David's Son and Lord, and in which the supremacy of the four great Gentile kingdoms shall be set aside and replaced by the final and universal kingdom of the Son of man. With them everything is limited to the single subject of the salvation of the soul, and the glory of Christ in connexion therewith : or, if there be one superadded thought, it is that of his glory as Judge, on the great white throne, declaring the final award of each individual, in the sentence of endless happiness, or eternal woe. But to state such a theory is to refute it. Its own poverty and nakedness, form the most striking contrast to the richly varied testimony of Holy Writ, to "the sufferings of Christ and *the glories* (see the Greek) which should follow." Of these glories, the "many crowns" on the head of Jesus are the expressive symbols; and while to saved sinners the name of Saviour may well be the sweetest that they know, who that knows that name would wish the One who bears it to be despoiled of any one of those "many crowns," or to be shorn of that other name, "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS"?

No doubt there is a kingdom, of which our Lord spoke largely and solemnly while on earth : a kingdom which he announced as then near at hand, and which did form a most prominent subject of his instructions to his disciples and of his discourses to the multitude. But nothing can be more unfounded than Mr. W.'s assertion, that "the words, 'kingdom of heaven,' 'kingdom of God,' and 'kingdom of the Son of man,' are in the gospels, convertible terms," p. 44. Mark

and Luke do indeed generally use the term, "Kingdom of God," where Matthew uses the phrase, "Kingdom of heaven;" but this fact by no means proves them to be in themselves, and universally, "convertible terms." "Kingdom of heaven" is a phrase used nowhere in Scripture but in Matthew: and the instances in which that evangelist employs the other expression, "Kingdom of God," shew most decisively that they are not "convertible terms." "The kingdom of heaven" is always spoken of by our Lord as future, though near at hand; and for this reason, that it denotes a rule or sovereignty exercised by himself *after his ascension to heaven*. Accordingly, where in Matthew he speaks of the kingdom as then present or existing, he does not use Matthew's phrase, "Kingdom of heaven," but changes it to that of the other evangelists: "Kingdom of God." "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then *the kingdom of God* is come unto you," Matt. xii. 28. "*The kingdom of God* shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," ch. xxi. 43. And while even these two expressions are thus seen to be anything but uniformly interchangeable, the other phrase, "Kingdom of the Son of man," is in the gospels *contrasted* with the ordinary use and signification of Matthew's term, "Kingdom of heaven." The proof of this we proceed to place before our readers.

The great subject of Matt. xiii., our Lord himself being witness, is, "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." The disciples ask why he speaks in parables to the multitude, and in reply he says, "Because it is

given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Why does he say "*mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven?" If the kingdom of heaven as now existing be, as our author affirms, "the proper kingdom of Christ;" if it be, as the third lecture seeks to shew, "the true kingdom of his father David;" why should such an expression be employed as "the *mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven?" The fact is, that the Old Testament had foretold that "the children of Israel" should "abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim." But then it had also declared, "Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days," Hosea iii. 4, 5. Isaiah, too, had borne witness to the judicial blindness which was to come upon Israel. Our Lord quotes his words in this very chapter: "This people's heart is waxed gross," etc. The prophet's anxieties had been awakened to know the duration of this judgment on his beloved people, and he had asked, "Lord, how long?" receiving for answer the words, "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land," Is. vi. 11, 12. It would be superfluous to attempt to exhibit here Isaiah's testimony to Israel's restoration and blessedness at the close of this long, dreary period. It was shewn in our last paper but one, how fully the prospect of

Israel's restoration, and of our Lord's return in power and glory in connexion therewith, is recognised both by himself and by the apostle Paul. Then the kingdom of God will come with power. Then shall the dispensation of the fulness of times be ushered in, in which all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, shall be gathered together in one, even in Christ. (See Eph. i.) But how was the interval to be filled up? In what character was the rule of heaven, or of God, to exist during the days of Israel's blindness and dispersion, and during the consequent postponement of the proper kingdom of Christ—the kingdom of the Son of man? “The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,” as unfolded in the parables of Matt. xiii., form the answer to this deeply momentous question. Christ was to suffer first, and to reign afterwards. This all Scripture shews. But more than this,—his kingdom was to exist in mystery first—in open manifestation afterwards. The transition from the one state to the other is, moreover, most definitely set forth in this very discourse. “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; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. THEN shall the righteous *shine fourth as the sun* in the kingdom of their Father,” verses 41—43. Then it is, at the harvest—the end of the age, that *mystery* terminates and *manifestation* begins. To this agree the words of the mighty angel in Rev. x. 7: “But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, *the*

mystery of God" shall "be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Accordingly we read, chap. xi. 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." But with our brethern, the kingdom in mystery and the kingdom in manifestation, the period of patience and that of judgment in power, are hopelessly confounded: nor do they suppose that the Son of man will gather out of his kingdom all things which offend, till just before he delivers up that kingdom to God, even the Father, when God shall be all in all!

One strange argument brought forward by our author in Lecture iii. we must not overlook. Stating his subject to be, "The true meaning of the prophecies, which are said to require that Jesus of Nazareth should yet be manifested to the world as King of the Jews," he says:—

"I begin by remarking, that if the pre-millenarian interpretation of those prophecies were sound, the New Testament is the very place of all others where we might naturally expect to find it clearly enunciated. The Jew had his full share, both in the sermons the apostles preached, and in the letters they wrote. Affection would combine with duty in prompting the first heralds of the gospel to take every stumbling-block out of his way. And what were the stumbling-blocks of the Jew? Messiah crucified, and the door of faith opened to the Gentiles. What then, I may well ask, would have been the obvious course for the apostles to follow, if Israel's ancient glory was yet to be received under the personal government of Jesus the Son of David? Surely they would have said, 'Be not offended at a crucified Messiah; the prophetic writings must be viewed in their integrity; they speak of the sufferings of Christ, as well as of the glories that should follow; you do wrong to overlook the cross, while you gaze so intently on the crown. O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; learn first to accept as your Messiah the despised and rejected Jesus; soon will he come again as Israel's triumphant King.'" etc., pp. 84—87.

· This, says our author, is the way in which modern millenarians would preach to the Jews, and in which he supposes the apostles would have addressed them, had they been millenarian in their views and expectations. But did Mr. W. forget, when penning these words, that millenarians hold no less really than himself, that Israel's rejection of Christ was an awful sin, justly punished by the nation's longest and most complete dispersion? that however grace might linger over Jerusalem, so long as the feeblest hope remained of its repentance, the only token of real repentance would have been their cordial reception of the Christ they had crucified? and that as long as this point was held by them against God, no one who cared for God's glory could use his promises of final restoration for the purpose of coaxing and flattering impenitent rebels, as Mr. W. supposes millenarians would have done? Mr. W. writes as though millenarians deemed the rejection of Christ by Israel to have arisen from a mere intellectual mistake! as though we thought this mistake had only to be corrected, for Israel to receive him with open arms! Alas! it was a widely different case! They had both seen and hated both Christ and the Father. They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. Ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own, they had not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. Let, then, the final purposes of God's grace as to the nation be what they might, that which the apostles had to testify to the Jews was this, that persisting in their rejection of the Christ they had crucified, continuing to

resist, as their fathers always had resisted, the Holy Ghost, judgment was what inevitably awaited them. What would our author think of preaching the glories of heaven to such as were obstinately rejecting the gospel of God's grace, and hardening themselves in sin? Just as reasonably might the apostles have dwelt in detail on the glories of Israel's future restoration, to the men who were ready to follow up the murder of the Messiah by the murder of his martyr, Stephen.

Still, where it was a question of ignorance, and not of wilful rejection of the truth, our Lord does (namely, to the disciples) use the very words which our author supposes would have been suitable, had millenarianism been the truth. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory." Yea, more; until Jerusalem's rejection of an ascended Christ was fully confirmed, the apostles did present the hope of Christ's return, to bring the times of refreshing, the times of restitution of all things, as one great motive to repentance. This was shown in a previous paper, to which our readers can refer.

But while, in addressing that impenitent generation, it would have been preposterous to dwell in detail on the glories and triumphs which await *repentant* Israel in the latter day, the apostles' silence as to these details is no justification of our author in denying them. The *denial* of Israel's prospects, as unfolded in the Old Testament, may be, and is, a stumbling-block to the modern Jew, when connected with the preaching of Christ crucified. This fact millenarians have pointed

out with obvious justice and conclusive force: but it does not follow that Mr. W. is entitled to put words in their mouth, or, rather, on their behalf to put words in the mouths of the apostles, the folly and extravagance of which must appear to all. The folly and extravagance rest not with millenarians, but with the author, who could thus misrepresent the requirements of their doctrine, supposing it to have been that of the apostles themselves. We are perfectly content with what the apostles did say, and immeasurably prefer it to any millenarianism put into their lips by Mr. W. !

CHAP. VI.

NEW TESTAMENT MILLENARIANISM.

“THE ingathering and glorification of the church” is the subject of Lecture iv., in which our author simply gives expression to the popular but unfounded idea, that all saints from the beginning to the end of time constitute the church. We are quite aware that Mr. W.’s views on this point are shared by many who differ from him widely on prophetic subjects; but his mistake is not the less serious on this account. On any other subjects than those of Scriptural inquiry and interpretation, men would smile at such a quiet assumption of the point to be proved, as that which characterizes Lecture iv. The opening sentence declares, in the most positive terms, the affirmative view of the question which ought to be discussed. “As Christ is the exclusive Author, so is the church mystical the exclusive recipient of salvation,” p. 140. So affirms Mr. W. But suppose any one should deny the truth of this proposition, on whom would fairly rest the burden of proof? Surely on Mr. W. himself; but in vain would any one read his discourse with the view of obtaining it. He assumes the truth of this opening declaration, and reasons from it throughout, as though it were not only incontrovertible.

“And so has it been from the very beginning. Immediately that Adam fell was the foundation of this spiritual edifice laid in the primæval promise of redemption. Successive ages beheld it rise, as

one by one, Abel, Enoch, Noah, and all who, like them, by faith obtained a good report, were builded up upon the one chief corner stone."

It may shock the prejudices of some who differ from our author on prophetic subjects, as well as of many who agree with him, when we affirm our conviction that this paragraph expressly contradicts God's Word. Such is our conviction, nevertheless: but instead of assuming its truth, we proceed at once to lay the grounds of it before our readers. Mr. W. says, that the foundation of the church was laid in the primæval promise. The Lord Jesus Christ said, four thousand years after the first promise was given, "Upon this rock (the confession of him just made by Peter) I will build"—not "I *have* builded," or "I *am* building," but "I *will* build my church," Matt. xvi. 18. That is, he speaks of it as a then future work. And though he was, in his own blessed person, as the Son of the living God, the foundation of the church, it was not as a living person upon earth that he was laid as the foundation. For this, his death was indispensable. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," John xii. 24. It was not until rejected of the Jewish builders, that he was exalted to be "the head of the corner:" and that his death was indispensable to the church being builded on him as its foundation, the Epistle to the Ephesians largely testifies. "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, the law of commandments in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man,

so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body *by the cross*, having slain the enmity thereby," ch. ii. 14—16. It was *thus* and *then* the foundation was laid; and being laid, the apostle adds, "Now, therefore, ye (Gentile believers) are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (New Testament prophets, surely*), Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone:" verses 19, 20.

Do we wish, then, to deny or call in question the salvation, saintship, life, or glory, of the Old Testament believers? God forbid! They were quickened by the Spirit, beyond doubt. By virtue of the foreseen sacrifice of Christ, they were forgiven and saved. They will all have part in the first resurrection, and partake of heavenly glory. But no one of these things, no, nor all of them together, constitute the church. The church shares these things, life, justification, resurrection, and heavenly glory, with the saints of Old Testament times; but that which constitutes the church is something additional to all these, and of which the Old Testament bears not a single trace. *It is the actual living unity with Christ and with each other of those, who, since Christ's resurrection, are formed into this unity, by the presence of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven.* God had a nation in former times; and the Holy Ghost by Caiaphas teaches us, that it was for that nation Christ died. All the blessedness, therefore, of restored and forgiven Israel in days to come, is as simply owing to the atoning death of Christ, as is now the salvation

of individual souls. But "not for that nation only," the Holy Ghost adds, "but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad," John xi. 52. There were, then, children of God prior to the death of Christ; but instead of forming one body, they were isolated individuals, "scattered abroad." For their gathering together in one, the death of Christ was absolutely needful. So was his resurrection; for it is only as "the beginning, the first-born from the dead," that he is the "head of the body, the church," Col. i. 18. Nor was it till he had ascended, that the Holy Ghost could be sent down; and it is by his presence and power that the gathering together in one takes place. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you," John xvi. 7. "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified," vii. 39. "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear," Acts ii. 33. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles," 1 Cor. xii. 13. It is of Christ, ascended and glorified, that we read in Eph. i. 22, 23, that "the church is his body, the fulness (or complement) of him that filleth all in all."

* (See page 55.) A reference to ch. iii. 4, can scarcely leave a doubt of this. We read there of "the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is *now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets* by the Spirit." They are "prophets" to whom, with the apostles, had been revealed by the Spirit, that which was hid from all previous generations.

Now it is of the church thus formed and constituted that Scripture predicates completeness at the epoch of Christ's return. How easy to see, that if statements made in Scripture concerning this elect body of Christ be applied to all saints from the beginning to the end of time, false conclusions may easily be drawn from premises so unsound. All our author's reasonings as to baptism and the Lord's supper, the intercession of Christ and the preaching of the Word—all his attempts to shew that on millenarian grounds, these would have no place after the completion of the church and the coming of Christ—all his endeavours to reduce us to the dilemma of holding, either that no souls will be saved after Christ comes, or that they will be saved without the present means or channels of salvation—all rest on the baseless assumption that the church consists of all saved souls from the beginning to the end of time, and all, consequently, fall to the ground. Souls were saved for four thousand years before the church had any existence, save in the counsels and purposes of God; and souls will doubtless be saved throughout the millennium, after the completion of this wondrous "workmanship" of his—this *chef-d'œuvre* of his wisdom, power, and grace. If there lacked not the means and appliances of salvation before the church began, why should we suppose any lack when the church is perfected and in glory with her Lord?

On the subject of the judgment, Mr. W.'s great endeavour is first, to prove that millenarianism "deprives it of its chiefest terrors to the ungodly;" and, secondly, that these terrors consist in what he regards as the

doctrine of Scripture, namely, that of a simultaneous judgment of all the righteous and all the wicked. But as all his arguments on these topics have been answered again and again in well-known works on prophetic subjects, we will not detain our readers by any detailed remarks thereon. On Mr. W.'s theory, that the millennium is already past, and that we are probably far advanced into the little season by which it was to be succeeded, the doctrine of a simultaneous judgment of all at Christ's coming, may well, indeed, strike terror into the hearts of the ungodly. On this theory, the coming and the judgment are both at the door. But how the postponement of Christ's coming, and of all judgment, to the end of a thousand years yet to commence, should be a doctrine of greater terror to the wicked than that of Christ's speedy appearing in the clouds of heaven, to execute judgment on his living foes, having first received his people to himself, we are perfectly at a loss to conceive.

Lecture vi. is on the "recompense of reward to be conferred upon the saints at the second coming of their Lord." With much that it contains we heartily agree. We hold as strenuously as Mr. W., that the main blessedness of the saints hereafter is in the visible and personal presence of Christ among them, or, to be more accurate, their presence thus with Christ. Heaven itself, we delight to know, is the locality of the saints' inheritance. If some pre-millennialists have thought otherwise, our author cannot be ignorant that it is in company with some of their most distinguished oppo-

nents,* that they look on the renovated earth as the eternal dwelling-place of the saints. Our own belief is, however, identical with Mr. W.'s, that the place which Jesus has gone to prepare for us, is in the heaven where his own glorified body now is, and of which he says, "that where I am, there ye may be also." Equally satisfied are we, that from the moment the saints are caught up to meet the Lord Jesus in the air, their state will "not admit of any, the very slightest admixture of evil." But is it not a purely gratuitous assumption of our author's, that this unalloyed perfection of the future state of the saints, precludes any contact or connexion (by Divine appointment, and as ministers of good), with a state of things less perfect, than their own? What! is the state of the holy angels imperfect, because as ministering spirits they are now sent forth to minister to them which shall be heirs of salvation? And if angels can be made thus the channels of Divine beneficence, remaining undefiled and uninjured, their joy unclouded by the imperfection and need with which they come in contact, but only to succour and befriend, shall it be deemed impossible for those who are "blessed and holy," as having part in the first resurrection, to be ministers of blessing to the earth over which they are to reign with Christ a thousand years? And yet this is the sum and substance of Mr. W.'s argument in Lecture vi.

As to the resurrection and reign of the saints with Christ for a thousand years, Mr. W. judges "that the

* Dr. Urwick, for instance, Mr. Fairburn, and Dr. David Brown himself.

thousand years may be even now in progress, if not entirely past," p. 377. He does not venture to propound this view till he has occupied more than half of Lecture vii., with an exposition of the spiritualist theory held by Whitby, Dr. Brown, Mr. Lyon, and many others. This theory he prefers to the pre-millennial view; but after stating certain objections to it, he proposes, as free from such objections, and as best entitled, in his judgment, to be adopted, his own view above stated. And though at first so modestly introduced as a question, whether "the thousand years *may be even now* in progress, if not entirely past," it grows, in the course of its development, into a theory of interpretation, in which the binding of Satan is reduced to his being "for that period forbidden to invent and propagate any *new* (!!) religious imposture among nominal Christians"; the resurrection and reign of the saints with Christ are resolved into their being, while yet on earth, "quickened together with Christ," and seated "with him in heavenly places;" and this spiritual reign and resurrection are represented as perfectly compatible with their suffering unto death at the very time they reign as risen with Christ! But hear Mr. W. himself:

"If this view of the verse be correct, the thousand years will prove to be a period in which Christ's witnessess are witnessess even unto death—a period, in short, of martyrdom, not of triumph—a period in which Satan (being precluded indeed from the invention of fresh delusions), is able notwithstanding to wield those already in existence with such effect as to make the church of God to prophesy in sackcloth and ashes," p. 386.

This is, no doubt, a view of the millennium quite new to most of our readers. We will not pass upon

them the reflection which would be implied, in seeking to rebut a principle by which Scripture language is made to mean exactly the opposite of what it says. Such a principle is not to be met by argument, but by the moral reprobation which attaches to the calling good evil, and evil good. But we are as yet only on the threshold of our author's system. The thrones, and sitters on them, to whom judgment was given, are the powers that be, employed as executioners of Satan's malice, in persecuting the saints to death? The saints reigning, be it remembered, and Satan bound all the while! "The rest of the dead" who rise not, till the thousand years are finished, are "the great body of truly living souls brought to God," during the little season in which Satan is loosed from his prison and goes forth to deceive the nations of the earth afresh! The ten centuries preceding the Reformation are suggested by Mr. W. as "the longer, the millennial period portrayed in the passage before us," while it is intimated that the "three centuries which have rolled away since that epoch," have borne the marks of "the little season" which was to succeed the millennium.

Such is the "New Testament Millenarianism" of the Bampton Lectures; a system commended to us by the lecturer, as one which does "not dislocate the whole frame-work of Christian truth," which he alleges is done by expecting a pre-millennial advent of our blessed Lord. To set aside such an expectation, is the great object of his book. In this object, his reviewers of the London Quarterly, and the British and Foreign Evangelical, are heartily agreed. But as to the interpreta-

tion of Rev. xx., they are wide as the poles asunder. Mr. W. declares it already fulfilled: the London Quarterly maintains "that the scenes which this Scripture portrays are yet future," and addresses itself to the inquiry, "Is it to be interpreted literally or figuratively?" Nor is the enquiry prosecuted far, before the conclusion is arrived at, and stated thus, "We have no hesitation in saying, that the only consistent interpretation is the figurative one, which recognises the revival of the early martyrs and confessors in their spirit and character." The British and Foreign Evangelical, while dealing most tenderly with Mr. W.'s millennial theory, is yet obliged to say,

"There are, in our opinion, two fatal objections to this view. First, the text on the face of it appears plainly to intimate that the *life*—whatever be meant by it—was posterior to the *death*, not contemporaneous with it. . . . Throughout the New Testament wherever it (the word *ἀνάστασις*) is used in connection with *death*, there is not one instance in which it does not signify a state *posterior* to death—either the intermediate state or the bodily resurrection, which, for our own part, we think it plain that the *language* of this symbolical vision expresses."

Admirable unanimity of sentiment! Here are three writers, who agree in denouncing the expectation of a pre-millennial advent of Christ, and in opposing the literal interpretation of John's millennial vision. But when asked to interpret it themselves, one says, It is already accomplished. No, says the second, its accomplishment is *future*, but it is to be *figuratively* understood. No, says the third, it is *bodily* resurrection, which the *language* of this symbolical vision expresses.

Here, for the present, we conclude our notice of these books. Dr. Brown's book is by far the ablest of any

which have appeared in opposition to pre-millennialism, and we rejoice that an examination of it is in progress by another pen. The Lord grant that we may not be permitted, amid any heats of controversy, to lose sight of the solemn, sanctifying truths in which all real Christians are agreed. Whereto we have already attained, may we walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing; remembering the promise, that if in anything we be otherwise minded, God shall reveal this unto us also.

CHAP. VII.

THE MILLENARIAN QUESTION.

[The following letter was addressed to the esteemed author of a volume, entitled "The Flight of the Apostate." A Poem in three Parts. By the Rev. H. NEWTON, B.A. Wertheim and Mackintosh, London. Its merits as a poem it would be out of the writer's province to discuss. It was on account of a long and ably-written note it contains on the millenarian question, that the volume was shewn to him by its author. The following letter was written in reply, and as it discusses questions of general interest, it is presented without alteration to the reader.]

MY DEAR SIR,—I have read with interest and attention, not only the notes you had marked for my perusal, but the entire volume of which they form a part. The notes contain as condensed a view as I have ever met with, of the argument against pre-millennialism. Should you find time to read "Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects," I think you will see that I have there replied to almost each point touched upon in your notes; but as my replies are scattered through the volume, I will endeavour as briefly as I can to state why your arguments fail to convince me of the justice of the conclusion at which you have arrived.

In the first place, I demur entirely to the statement (page 101), that "the seat of the theory of the personal millennial reign of our Lord upon earth is acknowledged to be in Rev. xx. 1—10." That this passage treats of the subject, all who hold the doctrine of the personal reign will, of course, admit; that it supplies the instruction as to the period of that reign, from which the

distinctive word "millennial" is drawn, is undoubtedly true; but to say that "*the seat of the theory*" "is acknowledged to be in Rev. xx.," is not correct. It represents us as acknowledging what we not only deny, but are prepared to disprove; viz., that it is from this passage *exclusively* or *pre-eminently*, that the knowledge and proof of the doctrine is to be drawn. For myself I can truly say, that except as to the single point of duration, it was not from this Scripture more than others, *or so much as others*, that my own belief of millenarianism was derived; and as to the point of duration, my views underwent no change when the pre-millennial doctrine was received. I believed in a thousand years of blessedness on earth before I saw that it was to be introduced by the personal coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The attempt to make the whole question turn on the interpretation of Rev. xx., is, in my opinion, much more common than just. Had it pleased God to withhold that chapter, or even the entire book of Revelation, the proof would still, it seems to me, have been complete and decisive, of a long period of universal righteousness and joy introduced by Christ's second coming, and characterised by his reigning along with his risen and glorified saints over Israel and the nations of the earth. You will not suppose, from this statement, that I undervalue the confirmation afforded by the Apocalypse of doctrines previously revealed, or the precise instruction of ch. xx. as to the 1000 years' continuance of Christ's reign. That against which I protest is, the representation that this passage is *the seat* instead of *a seat* of the doctrine in debate.

It was with sincere pleasure that I found on pages 40—54, the distinct recognition on your part of an approaching crisis, “when God will ‘take the cup of trembling out of the hand of the Jew, and put it into the hand of the Gentiles that afflicted him.’” You say, “Whether we turn to the old or to the New Testament, we read of a time (immediately preceding the triumph of the gospel) of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time.” “We have repeated intimations in Scripture,” you say, “of a grand crisis, a final and decisive controversy, a day of retributive judgment upon nations, which have put the last insult upon his truth.” You quote the passages, “I have trodden the wine-press alone,” &c., “For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.” “It consists,” you observe, “of judgments, unlike preceding ones, by which ‘the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.’” You speak of it as “connected in many places with the fall of Babylon, almost everywhere characterized by surprising rapidity, and accompanied by a prophecy of the restoration of Israel; so much so, that these events have been always apprehended to be synchronous.” You add a series of quotations from Isa. xiii., xiv., xxiv.—xxvii., xxxiv.; Jer. xxiii., xxv., 1., li.; Ezek. xxxvi., xxxix.; Joel iii.; Mic. iv., v.; Zeph. iii. 8, 9; Hag. ii.; and Zech. i. 15—21, xii. 2, and xiv. 13.

It was not from Rev. xx. that I received pre-millennial views, however confirmatory of those views that chapter may since have proved. It was from the many

passages which treat of that solemn crisis, your expectation of which is so forcibly expressed in the above quotations. I found links of connexion between these and many New Testament passages, which left no doubt on my mind that not only do Israel's restoration, judgment on the Gentiles, and the universal triumph of truth and righteousness, synchronize with each other, but that the synchronism includes another event, the most central and majestic of all: the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ himself. In proof of this, allow me to call your attention to one or two of the passages you quote, along with the connected passages in the later volume of inspiration.

One passage to which you refer is, that in Daniel's prophecy, in which he predicts a "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." Happily, I have no need to prove to you that this does not refer to the time of Israel's overthrow and Jerusalem's destruction by Titus, but to the yet future, though rapidly approaching time of Israel's deliverance and restoration. This you believe and maintain. In quoting Daniel's words you insert an explanatory clause, which shews decisively that you regard as future the time of unequalled trouble which he foretells. "A time (immediately preceding the triumph of the gospel) of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time," is the form in which you quote the passage. Turn then, my dear sir, to Matt. xxiii. xxiv., and what do you find? At the close of the former, our Lord, crossing for the last time the threshold of the temple, says to the blinded

and infuriated nation, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Then follows the conversation between him and his disciples in which, he having foretold the destruction of the temple and its buildings, and they having asked him, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age" (*αιωρος*)? he delivers to them the majestic prophecy, in which he certainly answers the two latter questions, whether the first be answered by him or not. It is in this discourse he quotes Daniel's words, adding to them what still further distinguishes the epoch in question from all others: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Such is to be the extremity of distress, that those days are, for the elect's sake, to be shortened, else "there should no flesh be saved." But while Daniel connects this tremendous crisis with the deliverance of his people, our Lord connects it also with a more solemn event. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also *the coming of the Son of man* be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. **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, and *they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*" I am not ignorant of the efforts made to shew that this is not a real personal coming of Christ, but only a figure of his interposition in providence at the destruction of Jerusalem 1800 years ago. With you I need make no reply to this interpretation; as you quote the prediction of the time of unequalled trouble, as one yet to be fulfilled. And if it be not a personal coming which our Lord's words denote, I know of no language by which such an event could be described. And when we bear in mind the declaration which gave rise to the whole discourse, "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," I see not how the conclusion can be resisted, that in ch. xxiv. 27—31, our Lord predicts the circumstances under which repentant Israel will see him again—see him, as *truly* and *personally* as when their impenitent forefathers saw him cross the threshold of that house which was "desolate" indeed when his presence was withdrawn.

Isa. xxiv.—xxvii. is another Scripture from which you quote, in reference to the solemn crisis which you regard, justly, I believe, as at hand. It is indeed an impressive testimony to those judgments, "by which," as you observe, "the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." But it is in the midst of this prophecy, connected both with the judgments to be executed and the blessedness to ensue, that we find the words quoted by the apostle in 1 Cor. xv. 54, quoted there by him with the most precise declaration of the

epoch *at* which, and the event *in* which, they are to find their fulfilment. "So **WHEN** this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, **THEN** shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." To speak of Rev. xx. as being the *only* or the *principal* passage which treats of a pre-millennial resurrection at Christ's coming, is surely to overlook this divinely-inspired comment of the apostle on the saying recorded by Isaiah. Seeing that the Holy Ghost has deigned to tell us in the New Testament *when* a certain prediction of the Old shall be accomplished, is it not boldness approaching to temerity, to insist on interposing a thousand years between the event foretold and the moment indicated for its accomplishment?

Isa. lix. 18, 19, is a remarkable prediction of the crisis you anticipate. "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompense. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Here we have the judgments, the outpouring of the Spirit, and the universal prevalence of piety which is to follow. But are these the whole of the events predicted in the passage? No; the next words are, "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." These are the words quoted by the apostle in Romans

xi., where, predicting Israel's future conversion, he says, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Should the variation between the passage in Isaiah and the quotation in Romans be insisted upon, it seems to me that either way the doctrine of the pre-millennial coming of Christ is established. If the Old Testament version be received, that coming is foretold; if that in the New Testament be preferred, it declares the *presence* of the Deliverer at the epoch in question, and thus presupposes his *coming*.

Both from Isaiah and from Joel you quote the passages which treat of the harvest and the vintage. I need not insert these quotations here. But who can fail to note their connection with "the harvest" in Matt. xiii., which our Lord declares to be "the end of the age"—the harvest and vintage in Rev. xiv., where "he that sat on the cloud (like unto the Son of man) thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped;" while "the winepress trodden without the city" is said, in Rev. xiv. 15, to be trodden by the One who comes forth from heaven, followed by "the armies which were in heaven, "to his victory over the beast, the false prophet, and their armies. On this coming and victory there follows, as foretold in the much-controverted twentieth chapter, the reign of the saints with Christ. To your remarks on this chapter, I would now turn.

Your first observation is, that in the Apocalypse "life and death, and rising from the dead, stand for the

enjoyment, the loss, and the recovery of corporate or political existence and power." It is thus you interpret ch. xi. and other portions of the book; and you infer that these words are to be so understood in ch. xx. But with whatever weight this argument may apply to numerous pre-millenarian expositors of the Revelation, you are not unaware that there are those who look for the fulfilment of ch. xi. in the sackcloth testimony, martyr-death, and triumphant resurrection of two individual men, yet to appear on God's behalf in the crisis which is probably at hand. And should it even be conceded that the terms life, death, and resurrection, are in some parts of the Apocalypse used figuratively, it would not follow that they are to be so understood throughout the book. Much less can it be justly inferred from such premises that these terms are to be understood *figuratively* in passages of ch. xx., which certainly seem to be *literal explanations* of the symbolic scenes which the Prophet of Patmos beheld. "This is the first resurrection," and, "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," for no part of John's description of the vision which he beheld, but would appear to be a literal statement of what that division was designed to represent. So that if life, and death, and living again, were to be understood figuratively in John's statement of *what he saw*, it would by no means follow that they are to be understood thus in his explanatory statements; and it is in these that the proof of the doc-

trine of a pre-millennial resurrection of the saints is found.

You say "There is a very obvious reason for the distinctive epithet *first*, in the first resurrection which the world is to witness." It is, that "as the resurrection of an individual saint at the last day is, as it were, seminally contained in his spiritual life, in his being quickened in time; so it is with regard to the entire mass." "They have their part," you observe, "in the mystical body of Christ, which, when triumphant in every part of the world, has that triumph denominated by a resurrection, not of this or of that people, but generally by a first resurrection."

But if this be so, how can "the rest of the dead" consist, as you represent, of "the rest of the wicked, slain as a party, having no corporate, acknowledged existence" till Satan is loosed, when "they do live" again in Gog and Magog's rebellion? Let the prophecy be understood as treating of a literal, bodily resurrection, and the language is intelligible and appropriate. Righteous and wicked are both alike dead in the sense of bodily dissolution; and it might, therefore with the utmost propriety be said, after naming the resurrection of the saints, "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Both form one aggregate of dead ones, of which part after the abstraction of another part, can properly be termed "the rest of the dead." But if the risen and reigning martyrs do but represent the triumph and ascendancy of the church during the 1000 years, and the resurrection of "the dead" the revival of wickedness at the

close of that period, with what propriety, either as to language or facts, could this phrase, "the rest of the dead," be so used? As to language, I say: for surely the pre-millennial non-existence of the righteous as a party, and the millennial non-existence of the wicked as such, cannot make the two at any time appear, *as one aggregate of dead ones*, of which it could be said, that part of the dead rise, and "the rest of the dead" rise not again for 1000 years. The very idea carries absurdity on the face of it. Then the phrase is just as inappropriate as to *facts*. Do you really mean that prior to the millennium, truth and righteousness are to be so extinguished from amongst men, that the saints, "as a party," have no "corporate acknowledged existence?" If not, from what state of death do they emerge, rendering it in any sense proper to term the millennially non-existent wicked party "the rest of the dead"? No; the attempt to set aside the literal import of the words, "first resurrection" and "rest of the dead," involves all who make it in difficulties and confusion, with which the alleged difficulties of pre-millennialism bear no comparison whatever.

It seems to me that you greatly overrate the magnitude of the post-millennial rebellion, when you say "an extent of territory and a number of subjects is here ascribed to Satan such as the beast and the false prophet never had." The words of scripture are, that Satan "shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four 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

breath 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." No doubt it is a solemn defection from Christ which is thus depicted—an awful proof that unregenerate man, with every possible advantage, is powerless to withstand the enemy when he is let loose. But his going forth "to gather," would not necessarily imply that he succeeds in gathering all; and the expression "as the sand of the sea" is, as we all know, applied in the Old Testament to Israel, and does not, therefore, necessarily denote such an unprecedentedly overwhelming multitude as you represent. But be this as it may, what ground there can be for speaking of "millions upon millions of close hypocrites, mixed up with the company of the truly converted" *during the millennium*, I am at a loss to conceive. Forty or fifty years would be "a little season" compared with a "thousand;" and supposing that none were deceived by Satan, but those who were born after he was loosed, and who grew up without being converted, it is easy to realize how this part of the prophecy might be fulfilled. And if Satan could triumph over our first parents, when as yet their nature was untainted, what difficulty is there as to his permitted success with those who, confessedly, have the same need of regeneration as ourselves?

The objections as to the camp of the saints and the beloved city being besieged—as though the inmates of that camp and city were the glorified saints—have been so often answered, that I will not repeat here

what has thus been urged. It is easier to call such answers "castle-building," &c., than to present the slightest proof of our maintaining, or being under any necessity to maintain, that the occupants of the beloved city are any other than Israel after the flesh, dwelling in their own city Jerusalem. What more of inconsistency can there be in the idea of an attack by mortal foes on such a city and its mortal inhabitants, even though its name be "Jehovah Shammah," than in the thought of any similar attack in days gone by? Then, besides, the assault is an unsuccessful one; the enemies are permitted to come up; but it is to their own sudden and overwhelming and eternal overthrow.

You say, "the evangelist saw thrones, the symbols of honour and power; not one of them is specified as the throne of Christ. He is not here placed in front, nor as the principal figure, but named as an adjunct at the close of the verse, 'they lived and reigned with Christ.' 'I saw thrones and they sat on them;' *they sat on them*. Could it be the mind of the Spirit to point out, in such a form, the great coming of the Judge of all the earth, literally to fix His throne, with those of glorified saints, amongst or above all the potentates of the earth?" "What would we think," you enquire, "of the coming, the instalment, &c., of an earthly prince, related after the following fashion:—'I saw chariots, and persons seated in them, and great honour was paid to them; they entered the city and the palace; they took their seats and were installed in their high and honourable offices *with the prince*'?"

I have quoted thus largely that I may not be sup-

posed to do injustice to your argument, which has, at first sight, some appearance of strength. This appearance vanishes, however, on a moment's reflection. No one maintains that "the coming of the Judge of the earth" is pointed out in this vision of the millennial thrones and their occupants. All who regard this vision as depicting the personal reign of Christ and His saints, see the prediction of *His coming* in the latter part of chap. xix.; and no one can allege that in the vision there portrayed, the central, conspicuous, and all-commanding place is not occupied by our Lord Himself. I am not at this moment discussing the import of the vision, or whether it be a personal coming of Christ that it sets forth. This you would, of course, dispute. But, in examining the views you controvert, fairness requires that you consider them as a whole. If those on whose tenets you remark see the coming of Christ in chap. xix., and His reign with His saints in chap. xx. it will never do to ignore their use of the former chapter, and assume that, in their view, the latter presents a theme which they believe the former alone to handle.

And if, as all millenarians insist, the coming is treated of in chap. xix., and the reign in chap. xx., what is there surprising in the fact that, the descent from heaven of the Lord Jesus Christ in pomp and majesty having been foretold, *the saints being mentioned as mere attendants of His train*, they should, in the description that follows, be mentioned first, as partaking of the glories of His reign? It is only by the arbitrary and unwarranted severance of the chapters, that this argument has show of plausibility or strength.

But you urge that the same remark applies, and with still greater force, to Dan. vii. In it, you say, we have both prophecy and interpretation. The prophet sees in vision "the Ancient of days"—God the Father. He beholds "one like unto the Son of man," and he "came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him." To him, thus brought into the presence of the Ancient of days, all nations are rendered subject. "In the interpretation" of this vision, you say, "we have not so much as a hint of a personal coming of the Son of God to destroy Antichrist: but on the contrary, what forms a powerful argument against it." "In the *symbolic* part of the chapter everything is consigned over to him. In the *interpretative* part, what we have as the effect of transactions taking place in the invisible world is simply this, the kingdoms shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whom all dominions shall serve and obey."

In reply to this well put argument, I would, first of all, freely admit, that no coming of Christ *to the earth* is *expressly* treated of in Dan. vii. That is, no one could gather from that chapter alone, that the final and universal kingdom would be introduced by the coming of the Son of man *to the earth*. I lay stress on these words *to the earth*, for there is a coming treated of, but it is, as you urge, "to the Ancient of days." But though the chapter itself does not *expressly* teach the coming of Christ to this earth, there is an expression used as to His coming to the Ancient of days, which, when viewed in connexion with numerous quotations of it, and allusions to it, in other parts of

scripture, makes it sufficiently evident, that a coming of Christ to the earth is to take place at the crisis of which this chapter treats. "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came *with the clouds of heaven*, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Let it be remembered, then, that, when Daniel wrote, Jesus of Nazareth had not come in humiliation, nor was it as yet revealed that he was the "one like unto the Son of man." But there can be no doubt that this title "Son of man" was appropriated by our adorable Lord, and in His lips the phrase "*came with the clouds of heaven*" received a significance and application, which could scarcely have been inferred from the mere language of the prophecy itself. "And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and *they shall see* the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." (Matt. xxiv. 30.) *They shall see!* True, that in Dan. vii., the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of days might seem to be "a transaction taking place in the invisible world." But in our Lord's quotation of its phraseology, we find that there are to be human spectators, either of this transaction, or of its immediate result. *The tribes of the earth* are to see the coming of the Son of man in *the clouds of heaven*. Equally emphatic is our Lord's allusion to this prophecy when before Caiaphas. Adjured by the living God to

say whether he was the Christ, the Son of God, the meek and holy Sufferer replies, "Thou hast said ; nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and *coming in the clouds of heaven.*" (Matt. xxvi. 64.)

Do we object, then, to listen to the angelic interpretation to Daniel, of the vision he had beheld? By no means. We only object to the understanding it in such a sense as to set aside the interpretation of it by a greater than the angel—by the Son of man Himself.

Should it still be asked why there is no mention of the Son of man by the angel, but only repeated mention of "the saints of the Most High," let the following suggestion be weighed. In Daniel's day the question of all-absorbing interest, was not so much as to the Person by whose coming the kingdom and dominion should be wrested from the hands of its Gentile possessors; but as to its transfer *by the Most High* from these haughty oppressors of *His people*, to the very saints whom they persecuted and trod under foot. Daniel was a captive; the holy people were in bondage to the Gentiles: the holy city was in their hands, to waste and to destroy; and the vision and interpretation of Dan. vii. were evidently designed to put in relief the assurance, ominous indeed to the Gentiles, but most consolatory to Jewish saints, that the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, would, in His own time, execute judgment on the imperial power of the Gentiles, and transfer to His own down-trodden people the sceptre of the whole earth.

Even this could not be made known without a

r velation of the glorious One *in* and *through* whom these counsels of God are to be accomplished; and accordingly, in the vision, "in the *symbolic* part of the chapter," as you say, "everything is consigned over to Him." When the blessed Heir of these dignities was here and rejected by the people—His own earthly people, who are to hold under Him the dominion under the whole heaven—the question of *His* person and of *His* coming became the all important one; and *He* leaves no room for doubt, that His coming in the clouds of heaven will be visible to all; that public as was the humiliation He underwent, the insults heaped upon Him by mankind, so public shall be the display of His glory, the vindication of His outraged dignities and claims. "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." (Rev. i. 7.)

In the remarks on John v. 28, 29, Dan. xii. 2, and on the subject of a premillennial resurrection of the saints as a whole, there is nothing but what has been urged and answered by almost all who have discussed the subject. If the "hour" in which the Son of God quickens dead *souls* has already lasted 1800 years, why should not the "hour" in which "all that are in the graves shall come forth" be of more than 1000 years duration? And why speak of a "resurrection of life" and a "resurrection of judgment," if there be but one simultaneous resurrection of those who, after being raised, are divided into classes, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats? Why speak of the parable

of the sheep and the goats in Matt. xxv. as fulfilled in the resurrection and judgment of all mankind, when there is no mention of resurrection in the passage, and when the term employed is never used in scripture except of *living nations*?

It is not a gratuitous assumption, a mere begging of the question, that in Matt. xiii. *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος* means "the end of the age," or "present premillennial dispensation." It is, on the contrary, a meaning of the words demonstrated to be correct, by the accustomed force of the words themselves, and by the entire scope of the divine instruction which the chapter contains. The subject of the chapter is "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"—mysteries, which have their existence and development contemporaneously with Israel's rejection of Christ, and the judicial blindness under which, in consequence, that nation lies. To suppose that these "mysteries" extend beyond the era of Israel's dispersion, and the universal triumph of truth and righteousness with which all scripture associates Israel's restoration, would be to confound things which most widely and obviously differ: and nothing can be plainer than that the transition from "mystery" to "manifestation"—from the period of patience to that of the establishment of righteousness by power—is, in this chapter, identical with the harvest, the end of the age. The millennial saints, whom you would have included in "the net," or amongst "the wheat and tares," evidently belong to "the age to come"—the period of manifestation and of power.

You assert that "there is no dispensation but one,

that of the gospel, so long as sin and Satan exist,—so long as there may be found in the world deceivable mortals exposed to signal divine visitation,—so long as death, the last enemy, as well as he who had the power of death, are undestroyed.” If all you mean by this is, that all saved sinners, from Adam or Abel down to the last that shall be converted, are saved by grace, through faith, saved on the ground of Christ’s atoning work, and regenerated by the Holy Ghost, most gladly do I concur in all this. But this is no warrant for denying the existence of separate dispensations. When the apostle says, “until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed where there is no law,” does he describe the same dispensation as in another passage where he says “the words spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward?” Is there no change of dispensation indicated by our Lord’s words, “Ye have heard that *it hath been said*, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth: *but I say unto you*, that ye resist not evil,” &c.? Was the “heir differing nothing from a servant, though lord of all,” under the same dispensation as he to whom the apostle says, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son: and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ?” (Gal. iv.) Can it be all one and the same dispensation in which Jews and Gentiles were separated by a “middle wall of partition,” and in which, that wall having been broken down, and peace having been made by the blood of the cross, Jew and Gentile are both one in Christ? It is to differences like these, that the phrase “differ-

ence of dispensations" is applied. Call them by what names you please, who can deny their existence, or the stress laid upon them in God's word? And while the proof of this point would require more time and space than would befit my present communication, proof is not wanting of a *future* change of dispensation. When suffering is exchanged for triumph, Satan bound, and Christ and His saints filling the place for good which he and his angels have done for evil and misrule, surely a change of dispensation of no small magnitude will have taken place.

Christ sits, you say, "at the right hand of God till his enemies are made his footstool. He therefore sits there all through the millennium." Not so: God's making Christ's enemies His footstool is evidently distinct from Christ's subjugation of His foes by His own power. The effect of Christ's enemies being put as a footstool under His feet is, that Zion becomes the earthly centre of His power in judgment, the rod of His strength being sent out of Zion, while He rules in the midst of His enemies. Once He was crucified through *weakness* (2 Cor. xiii. 4). Now, He waits in *patience*, "expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." (Heb. x. 13.) Ere long, His people shall be willing in *the day of His power*. (Ps. cx. 3.) And He who is *now* at Jehovah's right hand "shall strike through kings *in the day of His wrath*." (ver. 5.) "The heavens must receive him until the time of restitution of all things." On this you remark, "from what we have seen of the nature of the millennium, there is then no restitution of all things, though great

progress is made towards it. This restitution, if any where, is described in 1 Cor. xv. 24—"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God," &c. Had Peter said "whom the heaven must receive till all things have been restored," there might have been some force in this argument; but his language was "until *the times* of restitution of all things;" and surely these are millennial times. How all things can be restored when the heavens and the earth flee away, and no place is found for them, it would be difficult to explain.

Having replied at large to Dr. Brown's remarks on Acts ii. and iii. (see Plain Papers, pages 448—454), I must refer you to what is there advanced as my answer to what you give on those chapters, acknowledging your obligations to Dr. B.

No one supposes that the destruction of death is premillennial; but the swallowing up death in victory is decided to be so by Isa. xxv. as we have already seen. The fact is, that the whole millennial period, and the little season which succeeds, are characterized by Christ's actively subduing, by *His own power*, the enemies who are put as a footstool under His feet at the moment He arises from Jehovah's throne. The last of these is death, which is not destroyed till after the judgment of the great white throne.

Nor have I the least idea that the conflagration of 2 Pet. iii. is pre-millennial. That "the day of the Lord," "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," includes the whole millennial period is sufficiently evident, I think, from many passages. And it is a day

“*in the which*” the universal conflagration will surely take place. But Peter says nothing to decide in what part of the day, whether in its early dawn or at its close, this solemn event occurs. A comparison of his statements with Rev. xx. xxi. seems to me to make it plain that it is at the very close of the day. The new heavens and the new earth of Rev. xxi. 1 seem to follow at once on the events foretold at the close of the previous chapter: and between these events and some of which Peter treats there is surely a close resemblance, if not absolute identity. But it is the day *as a whole*, with the succeeding post-millennial state, for which Peter says we wait.

No doubt, “the trump of God” (1 Thess. iv.), and the “last trump” (1 Cor. xv.), denote one and the same signal of the resurrection and translation of the saints at the coming of the Lord. But we have seen that the Holy Ghost authoritatively associates these events with the fulfilment of a prophecy assuredly premillennial: and unless there be mention made of the sound of a trumpet in some passage undeniably treating of post-millennial events, this declaration of the apostle ought surely to over-rule all objections founded on the expression “the *last trump*.”

“The expression ‘the last day’ simply conveys to our minds,” you observe, “the idea of the termination of time.” To this I do not know of any sound objection. But be it remembered that for all of whom Christ says (in John vi. repeating the statement four times) “I will raise him up at the last day,” *time has terminated*, and it is not to another time-state—to

natural life—that they are restored, but everlasting life, as to their bodies, as well as their souls. But to assume that time has therefore terminated *with all mankind* is certainly to beg the question, which in part at least is this, Whether, during the millennium, there be not two departments of blessedness, heaven and earth, the one bearing all the characteristics of a dispensation *in time*, the other *eternal* and without change. Scripture does testify, that it is the purpose and counsel of God in the “dispensation of the fulness of times to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him” (Eph. i.) Has not “Christ the first-fruits” entered personally on His eternal and unchanging state? And has He no present connexions with the world and time? Why should not the harvest, of which He is “the first-fruits,” similarly enter on a state of perfect, unchanging, eternal blessedness and glory, and yet for a thousand years be ministers of light, healing, liberty, and joy, to those who are still in a mundane state?

Believing in no “millennial Adamics” different from all who bear the image of the first Adam, and need to receive, in regeneration and resurrection, the image of the second, I feel myself under no obligation to defend what may have been advanced on such a subject by others.

I know not how to understand your intimation (page 123,) that the Saviour’s words “this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled” referred to the accomplishment of that entire prophecy, Matt.

xxiv. in the destruction of Jerusalem and its attendant events. You seem so definitely to quote Daniel's prophecy of the time of unequalled trouble, repeated by our Lord in this chapter, *as yet to be fulfilled* in the approaching crisis of nations, that I was unprepared for such an interpretation as that now referred to. You do indeed, on this same page, speak of Christ's coming "upon the Jews, and the analogous one upon the Gentile nations, which is generally expected." But the Saviour's words are much too precise to admit of a double interpretation like this. If "this generation" meant the succession of men then living upon earth, and if our Lord thus affirmed that the men then living should not die till everything He had foretold should be accomplished, any application of His words to yet future events, is clearly out of the question. And yet it does appear to me that he must be a bold man, who would undertake to prove that all included by our Lord in "these things" was fulfilled during the life-time of His contemporaries on earth. But this is a subject too wide to enter upon here.

As to Luke xvii. if the heavenly saints who are, at Christ's coming, to be caught up to meet Him, and so be for ever with Him, were the only persons recognized as His people; if there were to be no Jewish saints spared throughout the unequalled tribulation; no elect for whose sakes those days are to be shortened; I could understand your argument drawn from the directions not to flee, &c. These are evidently designed for Christ's earthly Jewish disciples, the Jewish remnant in the approaching crisis, not for the Church,

which at a previous stage of his descent, will have been caught up to meet Him in the air. "One of the days of the Son of man" will doubtless be the object of intense, longing desire, to that deeply tried remnant; and for a while their desire will be unfulfilled, drawing forth from them the well-known prophetic utterance, "Lord, how long?"

Millenarians do not question the sufficiency of God's word and Spirit for the conversion of any; nor do they suppose that any will be converted otherwise than by the Spirit and word of God. But God's government of the world is something entirely distinct from His gracious operations in converting souls. Souls have been converted through all the changing forms of the divine administration, in regard to the government of the world, and will, doubtless, in greater numbers than ever, be converted during the millennial age. All who will then be converted will owe their regeneration to the Holy Spirit, who will then, as now, act by the word.

But the government of the world will not be then by secret providence as it has been ever since the fall. It will not be a theocracy, administered as in Israel heretofore, by mere fallible human agents; much less will it be the imperial Gentile rule which began with the permitted overthrow of the Lord's throne at Jerusalem. It will be the reign of Christ and His heavenly saints, to whom (Satan being bound and all obstinate rebels having been destroyed) will be committed the administration of the world's government for a thousand years. Happy period! Happier still the portion

of those, who, having been partakers of Christ's sufferings, shall then be the sharers of His throne, and companions of His joy.

I fear you have greatly misunderstood millenarians, if you suppose that we overlook the spiritual operation involved in Israel's conversion, or that we deem the agency of the Holy Ghost insufficient to effect it. But if there was nothing inconsistent with these foundation truths in the peculiar circumstances attending the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, why should they be thought to be impugned by those who see in scripture (or think they see) that Israel's conversion will be attended by their literally looking on Him whom they have pierced? Will the spiritual view be less efficacious because of His being revealed to their mortal gaze? That their unbelief, like that of Thomas, should demand such proof, is doubtless to their reproach. "Because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed." Such is the superior blessedness to which we have been called by sovereign grace. But how touching the grace, which in convincing Thomas and subduing Saul, by means of that which appealed to the senses, as well as to the conscience and the heart, afforded a type of the mercy yet to be extended to Israel after the flesh.

As to 2 Thess. ii. believing, with many others, that Antichrist is a person, the use of the word *παρουσία*, as to him, is with me no presumption against its being used personally of our Lord, in every instance of its occurrence as to Him, both in that and in the former

epistle. And it does seem to me that the means used to evade the proof afforded by this chapter of Christ's personal, pre-millennial coming, are such as would not be tolerated in regard to any other book than scripture.

As I once wrote elsewhere—"Suppose a mere human author to write two treatises, the latter intended to throw further light on the subject of the former; suppose that a certain term or phrase occurs more frequently than any other in these writings, and that this phrase is always used in one fixed determinate sense; suppose that it has been thus used twelve or thirteen times without one exception, and that this is acknowledged by all who read the writings in question. There is however, a fourteenth instance in which the phrase occurs. There is no intimation on the part of the writer that he uses it in a different sense. There is nothing in the immediate context to require that it should be understood in a different sense. So far from this, it is employed in the usual sense at the commencement of the paragraph in which it again occurs in the instance supposed. What should we think of any one who would contend, in a case like this, that the phrase is to be understood in a different sense, the fourteenth time of its occurrence, from that in which it is used in all the former instances?" Now this is what you do with Paul's two epistles to the Thessalonians: and it is the only way in which you can evade the demonstration afforded by chap. ii. second epistle, of the pre-millennial *personal* coming of Christ.

But you urge that Antichrist is said to be "consumed by the breath of his mouth," as well as destroyed by the brightness of His coming! But *ἀναλίσκω* strictly means "to take away"—"to destroy." Liddell and Scott, though giving the sense "to use up, lavish, squander" when applied to *money* or *substance*, say "(ii.) of PERSONS, to *kill*, to *destroy*." It is the word used in Luke ix. 54, where the disciples inquire, if they may ask fire from heaven to *consume* the Samaritan villagers. Its use in 2 Thess. ii. cannot therefore be allowed as an argument for the *gradual* weakening of antichrist by the truth, or gospel, prior to his complete destruction by the brightness of Christ's coming. Further, "the breath, or spirit of his mouth" does not, as far as I can gather from scripture, mean "the gospel" or the "saving influences of the Spirit." Job iv. 9; xv. 30; Isa. xxx. 28; also 33: all use the phrase of *judgment on the wicked persons*, not of converting influences on men's souls.

As to your closing argument from Rev. xix. that the nature of the case forbids the thought of mortal men turning their puny weapons against the Lord, personally revealed from heaven, I answer: First, that it is impossible to say to what amount of hardihood human wickedness, inspired to madness by Satan's utmost power, may extend. Think of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. If after the ten plagues, and the miracle of one person dead in every house of the Egyptians, while not one of the blood-sheltered Israelites fell: if after all this, and the equally miraculous opening of the Red Sea to let the redeemed hosts

pass through, they *could* and *did*, and that too, *in the face of the pillar of cloud and fire*, pursue Israel into the bed of the Red Sea, there to meet a watery grave, it is hard to say what human wickedness may not attempt. But, secondly, it is a purely gratuitous assumption, that the heavenly and earthly armies are arrayed in each other's sight, like two mere human hosts; or that the beast, false prophet, and their armies see anything of Christ and His heavenly followers, till the moment they are smitten with destruction by the overwhelming apparition. They are "gathered together to make war against his army;" but surely this language does not imply that they *do* or that they *can* carry out their intent after He and His army appear. Was not Saul of Tarsus fighting against Christ—kicking against the pricks—albeit he had not seen Him, and could not bear to behold Him when He appeared? It was in *mercy* that Christ appeared to him, though even thus he was smitten to the ground, and blinded for three days. It will be in *judgment* that He appears to the anti-Christian confederacy, the heads of which will be cast alive into the lake of fire, while their followers are *slain*, not converted, by the sword of Him that sat upon the horse.

From the Old Testament I have no doubt that it is against Christ, *in His connexion with Israel and the holy land*, that the anti-christian forces will be gathered.

It will assuredly be in ignorance of what awaits them, that for their own purposes of ambition and hatred to God, they will have assembled there. "Now

also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. *But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel; FOR HE SHALL GATHER THEM AS THE SHEAVES INTO HIS FLOOR*" (Mic. iv. 11, 12). True, that in the prophet, the daughter of Zion is exhorted to "arise and thresh," and Israel will, doubtless, be used as executioners of the divine vengeance; but the Apocalypse shows, as well as certain Old Testament passages, as Zech. xiv., Isa. lxvi., &c., that the overthrow of the ungodly confederacy will, first of all, be by the sudden, unlooked for, descent of Christ and His heavenly hosts.

Excuse, my dear Sir, this hasty sketch, and believe me, with sincere christian regards.

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CHAP. VIII.

“PRESENT STATE OF CONTROVERSIES ON
APOCALYPTIC INTERPRETATION.”

To the Editor of “The Bible Treasury.”

DEAR BROTHER,

The above, as you are doubtless aware, is the title of a Fourth Appendix to the recently published volume of “Warburtonian Lectures” by the Rev. E. B. Elliott. A considerable part of this Appendix is occupied with a review of the Futurist controversy, in reference to which Mr. E. notices, among other works, a volume of mine, the title of which he misquotes, and the authorship of which he attributes to another. May I ask a page in “The Treasury” for the purpose of correcting these mistakes? In doing so, I would further, if I may, make a remark or two on Mr. E.’s quotations from the book referred to, as well as on the general question of Apocalyptic interpretation.

The title of the volume quoted by Mr. Elliott is “Plain Papers on Prophetic and other Subjects.” Mr. E. calls it “Plain *Tracts* on Prophetic Subjects,” and attributes it (with the qualifying clause, however, “as I believe”) to “Mr. Macintosh.” The fact is, the volume was published anonymously, without the least desire on my part for its authorship to be known; but as the French translation of it in two volumes,

by M. Recordon, was, without my knowledge, published with my name, their remains no motive for longer withholding it in this country. And as I perceive the "London Monthly Review" has attributed the work to my valued friend, the author of "Outlines of Typical Teaching," a series of papers now appearing in that Review, it seems desirable, once for all, to acknowledge that the sole responsibility for the work devolves on your unworthy correspondent, whose name will be found at the close of this letter. I have no complaint to make of any one; I am only ashamed to have occupied so much space with so insignificant a subject.

The subject of Apocalyptic interpretation, however, is far from being insignificant; and whatever may be the amount of present differences of judgment among prayerful, diligent, students of prophecy, we may well rejoice in the amount of attention which is being directed to it, and we may surely trust the great Head of the Church to bless the calm, dispassionate discussion of points on which differences exist, to the gradual clearing up of the subject, so that seeing light in His light, we may see "eye to eye" with one another also. It ought to be easy to us all to consider what may be advanced against those views which may have commended themselves to our own minds; and should such counter-arguments have real weight, it should be equally easy to acknowledge our mistakes, and bow to the truth by which our views are corrected and enlarged.

Mr. E. re-asserts, in the Appendix above-named, the objection urged by him in former works to that

which is known as "Futurism" in the exposition of the Book of Revelation, and states his conviction that they have not been answered in any works on the subject which have since appeared. Would it not have been well for him, as he does quote "Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects," and has evidently read the volume, to notice the reply afforded by the following paragraph to one of his chief reasons for the historical mode of interpretation? His omitting to notice what follows is the most remarkable, as he does, for another purpose, quote the very context of the paragraph itself:—

"The weightiest argument urged by those who maintain the exclusively historic application of chaps. iv.—xix., is, that to interpret them of the future, leaves an interval between the days in which they were written, and the commencement of their application, longer than we can suppose would have been left without any information as to the events by which it should be marked. The whole force of this argument rests on the assumption that it is in chaps. iv.—xix., alone, that such information is to be sought for or expected. *We have the information in chaps. ii. and iii.* The argument is, therefore, without value and without force. Nay more, it suggests an argument of real weight in favour of the futurism of chaps. iv.—xix. Seeing that we have, in chaps. ii. and iii., that which applies to the whole period from the apostles' days to the excision of the professing body, why should we have it repeated in the succeeding chapters? Further, chap. ix. begins the declaration of 'things which

must be after these;’ and as ‘the things which are,’ exhibited in chaps. ii. and iii. are still in existence, it is clearly not in the present or past—not in a period contemporaneous with ‘the things which are’—that we must look for ‘the things which must be after these.’” (Plain Papers, &c., pp. 350, 351).

Now, who that has read the fourth edition of Mr. E.’s *Horæ*, and especially his “Review of the Futurists’ Apocalyptic Counter Scheme,” in the latter part of vol. iv., does not remember that his first argument is “The supposed instant plunge of the Apocalyptic prophecy into the distant future of the consummation.” With such a “plunge” the futurism of “Plain Papers,” &c., is not chargeable; and here I must beg the reader to remember that the paragraph just quoted from the volume is merely a statement of the position maintained, not of the reasonings by which it is supported. For these reasonings I must refer to the work itself; especially the paper on “Apocalyptic Interpretation,” commencing from page 341.

It is from that paper Mr. E. quotes, in representing me as strongly asserting “the principle that a prayerful scripture student, ‘entirely unacquainted with the details of profane history,’ or ‘the vicissitudes of political and ecclesiastical affairs, during the last eighteen centuries,’ may ‘equally with the most learned’ study and understand prophetic scriptures, in so far as they concern ‘Christ’s glory, in His relation to the Church, to Israel, or to the world.’” To his charge of inconsistency with myself on this point, I hope shortly to advert. Had the whole passage been transferred to

Mr. E.'s pages, instead of a clause here, and another there, his readers would have seen that I am far from denying that human learning is of *any* use in prophetic studies, or from affirming that history may *never* with propriety be referred to in their prosecution. What I maintain is, that the Christian is not necessarily *dependent* on such resources. These are my words :—

“ If the glory of Christ be the object, the things of Christ the subject, and the Holy Ghost Himself the communicator of prophetic instruction, the Christian *cannot be dependent* for the possession of it on human learning. A man *might* possess vast stores of erudition, and be able with ease to quote every page of this world's dark history, and not be in the least better prepared for the study of God's prophetic word. The humble Christian, unable to read the scriptures in any language but his own, and entirely unacquainted with the details of profane history, may, nevertheless, prayerfully study the prophetic scriptures. Equally with the most learned, he may count on his Father's faithful love to enable him, by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, to understand and receive what these scriptures unfold of the diverse glories of Christ, the Son, whether in His relation to the Church, which is His body, or to Israel, the world, and creation, over the whole of which His rule is yet to extend. It is in the establishment of this blessed universal sway, and in the dealings of God, whether in judgment or in grace, by which it is immediately preceded, that we have *the great* subjects of prophecy, and especially of

the Apocalypse—not in those vicissitudes of political and ecclesiastical affairs throughout the last eighteen centuries, with which the pages of historians are filled.” (Plain Papers, &c., pp. 343, 344).

Mr. E. seeks to prove me inconsistent with myself on this point by adducing instances in which I have referred to well-known historical facts and epochs, in illustration of certain subjects, or in support of certain arguments. Had I maintained that human learning and historical information were absolutely useless or invariably mischievous, his proof of inconsistency would have been complete, and I must have pleaded guilty to the charge. But when all that I have affirmed is, that these qualifications are not indispensable—that “*the great* subjects of prophecy” are such that the uneducated, but humble and prayerful, student of scripture may become acquainted with them, I see nothing in such a position to interdict my own use of any acquaintance with history I may possess, or to forbid my appealing to well-known historical facts, especially in controverting views which mainly depend on historical evidence. Such a use of history bears no real resemblance to that made of it by Mr. E. in his “*Horæ*,” and in his Lectures. The results of historical and antiquarian research, and that on the most gigantic scale, form the staple of his Apocalyptic exposition. These results must either be taken on trust—and this Mr. E. would scarcely desire,—or they must be tested by those competent to judge of their accuracy. The qualifications for this are possessed by few indeed: and can we suppose that it is to such a few that ac-

quaintance with God's revelation of the future is designedly restricted? Mr. E. may seek to identify his principle of historic interpretation with the very occasional and subordinate allusions to history made by writers of futurist views; but there is no more real identity between them than exists between Paul's quotation from a heathen poet, in his address to an Athenian audience, and the sermons of certain preachers of past generations, who made quotations from the Greek and Latin classics the staple of their pulpit ministrations.

Had Mr. Elliot deemed the volume worthy of a fuller notice, or even this single paper on "Apocalyptic Interpretation," his readers would have found that there is a kind of "futurism" held by some, entirely distinct from the Tractarian futurism of Dr. Maitland, and differing in several important aspects from that of Mr. Molyneux. They would have found it supported, moreover, by a class of arguments such as Mr. E. has certainly not met, nor attempted to meet, either in his older or more recent writings on the subject. The distinction between the course of providential events, with which history is concerned, and that solemn final crisis, to which prophecy in general seems to point; our Lord's own three-fold division of the book of Revelation, the one part succeeding the other, instead of their being contemporaneous; the possibility of chapters iv.—xix., being rightly understood, both on a protracted scale, and as having their definite fulfilment in a short future crisis; the difference between the divine names and titles in the Apocalypse and in

the other apostolic writings; the judicial character which attaches to heavenly scenes and personages in this book, so strikingly contrasting with the full unmingled grace of the present dispensation; as well as the marked differences between the cries for vengeance which characterize the Apocalyptic sufferers and the prayers for forgiveness of their enemies, by which Christ and christian martyrs are distinguished,—are all arguments for the futurity of Apocalyptic scenes, with which it would be well for the esteemed author of the “Horæ” and the “Warburtonian Lectures” to grapple, when he again writes a review of the Futurist controversy. On one point, if not trespassing too largely on your space, I should be glad to furnish another extract from the Paper on “Apocalyptic Interpretation.” It is in reference to the systems, such as Mede’s, Bishop Newton’s, and Mr. Elliott’s own, “which tie down the Apocalyptic visions to a supposed fulfilment in historic details.”

“It would be easy, from the contrariety of these systems to one another, to show that they are mutually destructive of each others’ claims definitely to explain the particulars of what they all allege to be fulfilled prophecy. But though this forms no part of our object, it may be well, in adverting to this topic, to point out to the reader a distinction of no small importance. Twenty students of the Apocalypse, agreeing in this, that from chap. iv. it is as yet unfulfilled, may have different interpretations of this unfulfilled prophecy to suggest. Such differences do but prove that the prophecy is as yet far from being understood.

The partial or total ignorance of the expositors accounts for such differences. But suppose twenty expositors should agree with each other in maintaining that these chapters, or most of them, are absolutely and finally fulfilled, and yet have twenty conflicting theories of interpreting them,—what do such differences prove? Not only that the expositors are mistaken in their theories, but also that the basis on which they all proceed is a mistake. What claim can a prophecy have to be a fulfilled one, when twenty can suppose it to have been fulfilled in twenty different events? . . . Scripture does contain fulfilled prophecies; but no such obscurity hangs over them. There are not twenty ways in which godly people suppose the prophecies of our Lord's birth, earthly parentage, miracles, betrayal, and crucifixion, to have been fulfilled. And had the Apocalyptic seals, trumpets, and vials been actually accomplished, there would not have been among expositors so many conflicting methods of explaining them." (Plain Papers, &c., pp. 352, 353.)

The writer of "Plain Papers" has never represented Antichrist as "both enthroned within the city (of Jerusalem) and besieging the city from without at one and the same time." The truth seems to be that Antichrist, in league with the apostate portion of the Jews who will have returned to their own land, will be in possession of Jerusalem, and himself besieged there by "the king of the North," (Dan. xi. 40, 41) when the Lord appears, to the destruction of the wicked both among besiegers and besieged.

Mr. E. notices, as a peculiarity in "Plain Papers,

&c.," that they "make the two sackcloth-robed witnesses' three and a half years of witnessing to precede, instead of being identical with, Antichrist's three and a half years of supremacy in Jerusalem, the one being the first half, the other the second half, of Daniel's last hebdomad." "But," objects Mr. E., "unfortunately Apoc. xi. 2 expressly defines the two witnesses' three and a half years as the three and a half years of the Gentiles treading down the holy city." I have turned, since reading this, to Rev. xi. 2, and can find no mention in it of the two witnesses. They are not named before the 3rd verse; and it certainly seems to me open to serious question whether the "thousand two hundred and threescore days" of verse 3 are the same period as the forty and two months of the previous verse. But the question of Daniel's last hebdomad, and its connexions with the Apocalypse, is much too wide for a communication like the present.

The Lord give to all His people humbly and prayerfully to search His word, and vouchsafe to us a good understanding in all things.

Believe me, my dear brother,

Yours faithfully,

WM. TROTTER.

THE PREMILLENNIAL CONTROVERSY.*

PLAIN men are apt to think that if the premillennial advent of our Lord be the true doctrine, it ought to be made as plain as possible to the whole body of the Church. That is reasonable. But the objection that the majority of the Church at present are against the doctrine is no good reason against it. The majority, perhaps, may not give heed to the light of prophecy; they may not humbly invoke the Spirit of prophecy to their aid. "Do not interpretations belong to God?" Balaam, a bad man, was a true prophet; and a good man may be a false interpreter of prophecy: a good man may not be good in all respects. In these benevolent but bustling times, a minister who has little leisure may be so little learned on this important point, that some of the flock may have the advantage of him. Even with great leisure and application, we find that on this, as on other subjects, a single fundamental error in the premises will vitiate the whole argument. One of the signs of our times ought to arrest the attention of the whole Church, namely, that of the prophecy of scoffers in the last days, saying, Where is the promise of His coming?

[* The above paper, from the pen of a respected and venerable brother in Christ, we insert, though attaching much less weight than he does to the formularies of the fourth and following centuries, when the Church had fallen low indeed. Neither do we think that the English reformers had any light to speak of on "that blessed hope."—ED.]

This implies a prominent preaching of the advent on the very eve of it, and such a preaching is now in progress. It is worse indeed to be a scoffer, but it is not good to be unwise.

There was a time, and that the earliest, when the majority of the Church was not against this doctrine. It was believed and taught by the most eminent fathers of the age, next after the apostles, "that before the end of the world Christ should reign upon earth for a thousand years, and that the saints should reign under Him in all holiness and happiness." This doctrine was by none of their contemporaries opposed or condemned, and therefore it was the catholic doctrine of the Church of that age ; it was taught as such, and not as a matter of private opinion. None denied that it was the tradition of the Church, clearly derived and authentically delivered. Up to the middle of the third century this doctrine had prevailed and met with no opposition ; but thenceforth it began to decline—principally, says Mosheim, through the authority of Origen, who opposed it because it was incompatible with some of his favourite sentiments. "It was overborne," says Chillingworth, "by imputing to the Millenaries that which they held not ; by abrogating the authority of St. John's Revelation, as some did ; or by derogating from it as others, ascribing it not to St. John the apostle, but to some other John, they knew not whom ; by calling it a Judaical opinion, and yet allowing it to be probable by corrupting the authors for it."

It is objected that the creeds drawn up in the early ages of Christianity, the Apostles', Nicene, and Atha-

nasian creeds, show that the Church of those days confessed that Christ would judge all men, both the quick and the dead, at the time of His coming. They did so, grounding that article of their faith on such scriptures as Acts x. 42; 1 Pet. iv. 5; 2 Tim. iv. 1. But as Augustine said truly, speaking of the particulars of eternal judgment, "All these things, it is to be believed, shall come to pass, but in what manner and in what order they may come to pass, experience of the things themselves shall then teach us, rather than the understanding of man can perfectly attain to it at present." The general doctrine of universal judgment was all that was intended to be confessed in the creeds, not the particulars.

I must add one fact connected with this subject, showing the opinion of our Reformers in England. The prophecy, Jer. xxiii. 5—8, compared with its parallel Jer. xxxiii. 16, all foretells our Lord's reign on earth at the time when the Jews shall be restored to their own land; which reign on earth is elsewhere expressed by His sitting on the throne of David (2 Sam. vii. 12, 13; Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4; Isa. ix. 6; Luke i. 32, 33; Acts ii. 30). But when He shall sit on that throne, He will give rewards of grace to His servants. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. iii. 21). Now the Church of England annually anticipates the second advent of our Lord in its advent services, introducing them always by reading that prophecy, Jer. xxiii. for the epistle, on Sunday next before advent. The collect

for that day was taken out of St. Gregory's Sacramentary, but the *epistle* and gospel were both newly selected by our Reformers in the reign of Edward the sixth.* Surely, then, the objection that the majority of the Church of Christ in the present day are opposed to the doctrine of His premillennial advent is not so formidable as the fact itself is to be regretted.

H. G.

* See Comber on the Common Prayer, Vol. i., Part 1, Sec. 20.



