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LITERAL *versus* MYSTICAL :

OR,

FRIENDLY STRICTURES

ON

THE REV. R. W. Mc. ALL'S LECTURE

AGAINST THE

PERSONAL REIGN OF CHRIST,

In a Letter to that gentleman,

BY ARTHUR AUGUSTUS REES,

AUTHOR OF "THE PERSONAL REIGN OF CHRIST ON EARTH DEMONSTRATED," AND "THE DEATH OF WELLINGTON AND THE RESURRECTION OF NAPOLEON."

"Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf."—JOB XXXVI. 2.

"In settling truth, we know that the votes are WEIGHED, and not numbered."—H. BONAR.

"Their seeing 'eye to eye' makes for the PERSONAL REIGN of Him whose feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives."—
DR. CHALMERS.

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ADDRESS TO THE CHRISTIAN PUBLIC.

ALTHOUGH I rejoice that, for the sake of truth, my friend Mr. Mc.All has been induced to print his Lecture, as I shall thus be enabled to give an effectual reply, without trusting to second-hand information ; yet I regret that we are thereby presented to the town in the light of public theological opponents.

Whatever evil there may be in this, it lies not at my door ; for, in the open difference *between my friend and me*, he alone is the aggressor. I did not attack him *personally*, nor any other minister in the borough ; I merely assailed a system of interpretation on one particular chapter, nor was I supposed to know what were the opinions on that chapter of any individual in the town. On the contrary, Mr. Mc.All takes my Lecture into the pulpit, and, with an *animus* in which I must say I am disappointed, holds it up to ridicule ; at the same time going out of his way to caricature my views of the French Emperor, which have nothing whatever to do with the question in hand. Had he, like his fellow ministers, been contented with denouncing what he believed to be error, and even criticised my pamphlet "*to his own congregation*," without first placarding the town with announcements, and afterwards publishing his attack—in that event the public would not again have heard from me on the subject ; but as the case now stands, I am compelled to assume the defensive ; and all I ask from you, in order that you may be fair judges of the debate, is that you do not read garbled quotations either from my Lecture or my opponent's, but that you spread the 14th of Zechariah before you, and then read first, my exposition—second, Mr. Mc.All's criticism—third, my reply. I shall then have some respect for your decision.

TO THE REV. R. W. McALL.

"Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."—1 KINGS xx. 11.

MY DEAR SIR,

Without any preliminary remarks, I shall plunge at once "*in medias res*," and set myself to rebut every argument by which you have assailed my position; for believe me, you have not yet loosened a single stone in my fortress, much less made a breach, mounted it, and won for yourself the mural crown. You have indeed disentangled the Gordian knot, but only by cutting it with the sword of Swedenborgian interpretation; you have unclosed the iron door, but only by picking the lock, and thus leading the example to "Jews, Turks, heretics, and infidels," with the same unlawful instrument, to break open the plainest narratives in Scripture, and find nothing within but their own egregious delusions; you have "played fast and loose" with the word of God, by literalizing one half, and spiritualizing the other, of the same simple verses; and all this you have done, I am sure, with a perfectly good conscience.

It is a main point with you to prove the past accomplishment of Zechariah's siege, for if you can do this, the descent on the Mount of Olives, &c. &c. with which it is immediately connected, must be past too, and must therefore be spiritually understood. But really, my dear Sir, there was no need to take this trouble, for, by the process of "*quidlibet ex quolibet*" which you employ, you could transmute the Mount of Olives, the earthquake, the flight, the coming of the Lord with all his saints, &c. into any thing you please, whether the siege be past or not. You could metamorphose this honest passage into a hundred different forms as easily as you have changed "the throne of Christ's (*earthly*) father David" into "the throne of the majesty in the heavens;" or, "all nations going up to Jerusalem *from year to year* to worship the king," into all nations *staying at home* to worship God *every day*; or, "running waters (See Levit. xiv. 5. Hebrew)

going out from Jerusalem, *half of them* toward the Dead sea, and *half of them* toward the Mediterranean," into "the hallowed influence" of the restored Jews, extending *in every direction*; or, "the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" *after* "the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" into Titus coming to Jerusalem with a Roman army *before* the first century had elapsed, (See Luke xxi. 24—27.) But I must stop here, and proceed to demonstrate that the siege in question has never yet been accomplished. You commence your attack by assuring us (p. 7) that "you shall not adduce one quotation, or mention one name in this mode, lest you should foster the hurtful principle of reposing on human authority in religious matters,"* and yet in p. 12, on a main point in the controversy, you quote Dr. Henderson on a purely historical question, which every man can decide as well as he. Why did you not go to the source at once, viz., Josephus, who is the only authority in this matter that has a right to speak? If you had drunk at that fountain, you would have discovered that Dr. H.'s assertion is impure water—in other words, *that it is not true*. Both myself, and a friend, have closely examined the Jewish historian, and *we utterly deny* that he affords the slightest warrant for such a statement. What Josephus *does* say is this, "Now as soon as the army had *no more people to slay or plunder*, because there *remained none* to be the objects of their fury (for they *would not have spared one*, had there remained any other such work to be done,) Cæsar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple * * * * so that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited."—Book vii. c. 12, Jewish Wars. How does this agree with the Prophets' assertion that "the residue of the people (i. e. *the half*, as I shall show in spite of your criticism) shall not be cut off from the city?" Let any candid reader study the siege of Titus, as it is recorded by Josephus, and he will be convinced, as Mr. Bonar truly remarks, that it does not agree with the siege of Zechariah *in any one point*. Just compare the following words of the Prophet, "half the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city" with the statement of the Jewish historian (Book vi. chap. ix.) "Now the number of those that were carried captive during this whole war was collected to be 97,000, as was the number

* I quoted Chalmers, Gill, &c., *not* "to repose on human authority," as you insinuate, for I had previously proved my point from the Word of God alone; but to convince the people of Sunderland, that there are others besides fools, and fanatics, who hold the doctrine of the Personal Reign.

of those that perished during the whole siege 1,100,000," so that the multitude that were "cut off from the city" were more than ten times as numerous as those who were led captive! Yet you, dear Sir, affirm that the latter was the fulfilment of the former.

But even if Josephus *had* written what he has not, I would not have believed him in opposition to the plain words of our Lord with reference to the siege of Titus. "Thine enemies shall lay thee even with the dust, *and thy children within thee*, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another." (Luke xix. 44.) How does this agree with "the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city?"

Good Thomas Scott, who is quite your man, cannot get over this difficulty, and therefore he honestly allows that at the siege of Titus, "the residue of the people *were* cut off from the city;" how then does he interpret the Prophet? Be astonished while you hear, and tremble at the very touch of mysticism. "A very large proportion of the inhabitants were destroyed &c., numbers also having been converted to christianity, *became citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem*, and thus 'were not cut off from the city' of GOD!!" What is this but interpolating the Bible? The other verses he treats in the same way, that is, *in your way*; he literalizes what suits him, and mystifies, that is, *mis-interprets* the rest.

There is another striking discrepancy between the two sieges of Titus and Zechariah; in the one, the whole city, including the magnificent temple, is razed to the foundation; in the other there is not a word about the destruction of a single house, much less of the glorious sanctuary itself. In short, these two sieges are so unlike each other that some of the most learned anti-millenarians deny their identity. Brown, for example, the learned author of the celebrated Dictionary of the Bible, thus writes on the word "Olivet"—"Its removing half towards the South and half towards the North may signify"—then he gives a mystical interpretation *different from yours*, so that this good and erudite divine, though not a pre-millennialist, does not see with your eyes when you say, p. 17, "The heaven-guarded flight of those early christians to Pella, is a fulfilment of Prophecy, which in its striking exactness, *could scarcely be surpassed*." I am amazed, I confess, at this, when such men as Thomas Scott, Brown of Haddington, Faber of Sherburn House, and many more of equal celebrity, all post-millennialists too, are against you. But to proceed, the learned author above quoted goes on to say, "Perhaps some such event," i. e. as the removal of the Mount of Olives, "may take place at the Turkish siege

of the city in *the beginning of the Millennium*.—Zech. xiv. 4." Brown, then, you perceive, both favours a literal interpretation of the earthquake in v. 4, and takes for granted that the siege in v. 3, is yet future; and yet I do not suppose you deem him to be "little short of insane," p. 11. Thomas Scott, too, and Dr. Henderson admit, that Zech. xiii. predicts a future siege of Jerusalem, conducted not "by a few well-disciplined British soldiers" but "by all the peoples round about."—v. 2. Is it then such "insanity" as you suppose, to believe that Jerusalem is to be re-constructed, re-peopled by the Jews, and besieged by Napoleon, or any other monarch, not "in less than ten years," (I never said so, though you have repeatedly put the offensive words in my mouth, for which you certainly deserve reproof) but at some future time? And here I must take the opportunity of censuring you for so ungenerously mis-representing my Lecture on Napoleon. Why do you again and again force a *must be* into my lips, when I only gave utterance to a *may be*? I never said that Napoleon was to effect this siege, or that he was the Anti-christ—what I affirmed was, (and you knew it) that "If he be the eighth head of the beast, THEN he is the man of sin. I say *if he is*, for I do not pretend to be infallible, I leave the evidence I have adduced to the judgment of students of prophecy."—(p. 12, Lecture on Napoleon.) Could any thing be more modest than this? and yet you go out of your way to excite a smile, by repeatedly talking in this strain:—"I need not add that Napoleon III. *is to effect this siege*." "Jerusalem is to undergo a change so unprecedented that in less than ten years from this present time, *it shall be* worth that Emperor's bringing all nations against it." (pp. 8, 9.)

Perhaps, however, it will moderate your ridicule if I tell you that there are thousands of students of Prophecy besides me, including the venerable Faber, now eighty years of age, and the well-known J. H. Frere, who believe that Louis Napoleon *may be* the eighth head of the Beast,—Rev. xvii., that is, the last ruler of the Roman Empire. In a recent work by Mr. Faber, published since the delivery of my Lecture, he expressly advocates this view; and mark me, though a strong anti-millenarian, he is so staggered by that passage in Zech. xiv., which you so easily get over, that he thus writes, "From some prophecies, particularly that contained in the last chapter of Zechariah, *no person can be blamed* for expecting a *literal* though only *temporary* manifestation of our Lord on the summit of the Mount of Olives." If you, my friend, could be brought to believe this, I suspect

you would go a little further and admit the Personal Reign at once.

Again, "The particular locality in Palestine marked out for the destruction of the Anti-Christian powers, is the vicinity of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives, and the Dead sea."—(French Emperorship Revived, pp. 49, 50.)

Having thus proved the futurity of the seige, let me now expose the futility of your interpretation of the following verses :—

Zechariah's prediction—"AND HIS FEET SHALL STAND IN THAT DAY UPON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, WHICH IS BEFORE JERUSALEM ON THE EAST; AND THE MOUNT OF OLIVES SHALL CLEAVE IN THE MIDST THEREOF, TOWARD THE EAST, AND TOWARD THE WEST, AND THERE SHALL BE A VERY GREAT VALLEY; AND HALF OF THE MOUNTAIN SHALL REMOVE TOWARD THE NORTH, AND HALF OF IT TOWARD THE SOUTH. AND YE SHALL FLEE TO THE VALLEY OF THE MOUNTAINS, FOR THE VALLEY OF THE MOUNTAINS SHALL REACH UNTO AZAL; (What does this mean, Mr. Mc.All?) YEA, YE SHALL FLEE, LIKE AS YE FLED FROM BEFORE THE EARTHQUAKE IN THE DAYS OF UZZIAH KING OF JUDAH: AND THE LORD MY GOD SHALL COME, AND ALL THE SAINTS WITH THEE."

Now let me hear your gloss—"A *literal flight* of the Christians of Jerusalem, we learn from the testimony of Eusebius, took place on the breaking out of the Jewish war " [that is, my friend, a considerable time *before* the seige, whereas the flight in the text is *after* the seige is over]." They sought safety thus in accordance with the warning of Jesus. 'Then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains.' [Yes, "in *Judea*," but did the Mount of Olives stand in the way of the christians' flight from Judea?] "And escaped to Pella a city beyond Jordan. Now Olivet lay in their route. Hence it is beautifully figured as cleaving into two halves [You say in your note, p. 30 that the word does not necessarily mean half, but *any portion*] to *make a passage* for them." * * * The heaven-guarded flight of those early christians to Pella, is a fulfilment of prophecy, which in its striking exactness, could scarcely be surpassed, pp. 16, 17." So then you think that all this talk about the little Mount of Olives, over which Jesus walked every night from Jerusalem, means nothing more than the removal of all impediments to the flight of christians from the city! I confess that I am so far from discerning either the "beautiful figure" or the "striking exactness" of the prophecy, that when I compare the alleged fulfilment with the prediction, it looks very like

a *literal* example of the proverb, "LABORAT MONS, *parturitur ridiculus mus.*"

Next I pray you, hear the gloss of Thomas Scott, that you may see that I am not alone in being unable to recognize this "striking" fulfilment.

"The ceremonial law * * * which obstructed the admission of the gentile into the christian church, as the surrounding mountains did their entrance into Jerusalem (!) was then virtually removed. The peculiar privileges that Jerusalem had enjoyed (of which the pleasant and fruitful Mount of Olives was an apt emblem,) were taken from her and divided among the heathen nations."—see comment, in loc.

Now for gloss No. III. Brown of Haddington, "The Mount of Olives removing half towards the south, and half towards the north, may signify the marvellous removal of all impediments of the gospel, and the Apostles, after receiving their commission in Mount Olivet separating into different quarters of the world."—Dictionary of the Bible *voce*, Olivet.

Next comes gloss No. IV. "The *siege* is that by Antiochus Eupator, the *going forth of the Lord* is the frequent successful sallies of the besieged. *His feet*, the feet of Bacchidas, the commander, who pitched his camp on the Mount of Olives."—*Grotius*.

Jerome, Clarius, and Dr. Urwick, give us interpretations of this passage, which not only vary from each other, but all the preceding, including yours, so that we have no less than eight different expositions by learned commentators, and yet you tell your congregation that the christian flight to Pella was a fulfilment of the prediction which "in its striking exactness cannot be surpassed."

Now, my dear Sir, had I not some reason for speaking strongly in my lecture against such mystifying as this? and have I not substantiated my charge that, with your "*quidlibet exquoilibet*" process, you could easily metamorphose this passage into anything you please.

And here I must censure you for your unfairness, in never once noticing a whole page of reasons in my lecture which I adduced for the express purpose of justifying a literal interpretation of Zech. xiv. I refer to page 6. You have given abundance of garbled extracts from other portions, but you have omitted to quote a single line of the important part above mentioned.

I shall now call your attention to the formidable "feast of tabernacles," and shall place your gloss in juxtaposition with the Prophet's simple words—

“AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERY ONE THAT IS LEFT OF ALL THE NATIONS SHALL EVEN GO UP FROM YEAR TO YEAR TO WORSHIP THE KING THE LORD OF HOSTS, AND TO KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. AND IT SHALL BE THAT WHOSO WILL NOT COME UP OF ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH UNTO JERUSALEM TO WORSHIP THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS, EVEN UPON THEM THERE SHALL BE NO RAIN.”

Now mark, my friend, what follows, and spiritualize it if you can,—“And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain, there shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen, that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.” Now for your gloss: “A world-wide state of holiness is shadowed forth, in which the christians of Jerusalem and Judea, from *their central situation* (!) and notable conversion occupy a distinguished position. [What has a ‘central situation’ to do with a distinguished position in a world-wide state of holiness? In other words, what connection has the *site* of Jerusalem with “a state of holiness?”] The purity, concord, piety of that favoured period [In half-a-dozen places, which I shall notice by and by, you assure us that “that favoured period” *may never come!*] are indicated under the similitude of ‘all nations’ joining in sacred commemorations [*what* sacred commemorations?] and the emblazoning of the inscription “Holiness unto the Lord,” (p. 20.) This is another illustration of the “*mons laborat, &c.*” You have, however, not told us, 1st.—what is meant by Egypt, as distinguished from other lands. 2nd.—What is intended by the “no rain” on all countries, except that which is watered by the Nile? 3rd.—What is the peculiar plague of this singular territory? The truth is, that your spiritualizing method must either leave out half the details of such prophecies as this; or else, as in the case of Jerome, Grotius, and others, make sheer nonsense of them; to avoid the latter you have done the former.

On this remarkable passage I have to observe, that although I understand the “feast of tabernacles” literally, yet if I took it as a figure, it would not destroy my argument; for it is an inflexible rule of hermeneutics, that it is only where the letter *cannot* be maintained, that we are to resort to a figure. Suppose, then, that, as you say, this feast *must* be spiritually understood; you will yet have to *prove* that the earthquake of Olivet, the descent of the Lord God with all his saints, and the running waters *cannot be* literal, otherwise I must take these prophecies as they stand, and still arrive at the

conclusion of the Personal Reign. But as we both admit a literal coming of the Lord with his saints, at some time or other, and cannot deny the *possibility* of a literal earthquake at his appearing, you must allow that the prophecies in question *may be* literally understood, and if so, that the "*onus probandi*" lies on you to show that such an interpretation is not true.

That you have not shown this, and *cannot show it*, is obvious from the immense variety of glosses which you, and your friends, have put upon the passage.

Even Dr. Henderson (whom I perceive you follow up to this point, and then forsake) admits quite enough on this knotty subject to upset your argument against me. "I cannot," says he, "but take the meaning to be that the nations in question *will go up to Jerusalem in the persons of their representatives*, just as in former times the Jews resident in foreign countries, had those who went to the annual festivals in their name, or on their behalf." * * "It is worthy of notice that the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths is the only one of all the Jewish Festivals which is represented in this prophecy, as being observed at the period therein specified: no mention is made of the great day of Atonement, the Pass-over, the Pentecost, &c. * * It may, however, be asked, Why should the Feast of Tabernacles form an exception? To this it may be replied, first, that such a festival may be observed, *without any compromise of the principles of the New Dispensation*. * * * * The believing Gentiles who may go up to the festival, can find no difficulty in celebrating it with the Jews to their mutual edification. That the sacrifices which were offered at the feast, or any other animal sacrifices, will then be renewed, is a position to maintain which, would be to counteract the express design, and contradict the express declarations of the dispensation of grace."

Here then, you see that this learned Dr. admits the literality of the entire passage, in everything *except the sacrifices*. He does not make a *figure* of it at all, and consequently, he allows me, on your own showing, if I adopt his interpretation of the feast, to literalize, without any inconsistency, the whole preceding part of the chapter.

As to that portion of the feast which consisted in sacrificial rites, I cannot see that it would be "mockery, insult, and vile idolatry," (p. 11.) to immolate animals, *if God commanded it as a commemoration of the past*. In this view there is nothing more incompatible with the Epistle to the Hebrews, than there is in the Lord's Supper. *In principle*, I repeat it,

there is no difference between breaking bread, and pouring out wine, *in commemoration* of the broken body and shed blood of the Lord; and sacrificing live victims, *in remembrance* of the same blessed atonement. I need not, however, insist on this, as Dr. Henderson has removed the difficulty, and left my argument untouched. I shall only notice, as a striking example of the force of traditional interpretation, that amidst the ridicule you heap on the idea of a return to sacrifice, you apply the expression "treading the wine-press alone" (p. 11.) to the sufferings of Christ, whereas the slightest attention either to the figure itself, or to the context in the Prophet, would have taught you, that the terrible judgments of the second advent are intended. See Isaiah lxiii. 1, 4, compared with Revelation xix. 15.

Having thus disposed of your interpretations, I shall now first handle your criticisms; next, correct your mis-representations; and lastly, expose your contradictions.

What I am about to notice amazes me more than anything in your lecture, especially as you introduce it with exultation and contempt.

"Look at verse 3. 'Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations,' that is according to the strong wall theory, Jesus Christ in person will literally fight against them. Ah! here is another clause, possible overlooked, '*as when he fought* in the day of battle.' That is, Jesus Christ on some occasion before Zechariah wrote, and observe, centuries before he appeared the babe of Bethlehem, actually went in person into some earthly battle and fought!" Really, my friend, it requires no ordinary measure of self-restraint to avoid characterizing this passage as it deserves, but I shall forbear, and be contented to ask you these solemn questions. Are you a Socinian? Do you deny that Jesus Christ existed before he was "a babe in Bethlehem?" I know you do not. Is it not allowed by all sound divines that every anthropomorphous manifestation of the godhead, under the Old Testament, was an appearance of the Son of God, in token of his future assumption of our nature? Did he not "in person actually go into some earthly battle" when he displayed himself to Joshua as "the Captain of the Lord's host," "with a drawn sword in his hand," and commanded him to do what none but a divine person could require, viz., "to loose his shoes from off his feet, because the place whereon he stood was holy ground?" Joshua v. 13, 15. Did he not, in person, repeatedly interfere for the deliverance of Israel in many of their wars?

And now observe, how this very passage upsets your application of the prophecy to the siege of Titus. I admit that the Hebrew word rendered "then" in the version, simply signifies "and;" but I maintain, with the translators, that, in this connexion, it requires that the "going forth of the Lord" should *immediately* follow the siege. And, indeed your own interpretation of the subsequent verse demands it; otherwise you make the fulfilment of v. 4 to be a century prior to the accomplishment of v. 3, though both are linked together, as well as with the prophecy of the siege in v. 2, by a number of copulative conjunctions. You say that the Lord went forth against the Romans more than a hundred years after the siege of Titus, and then fought against them "*as in the day of battle.*" But when did he fight against the Romans as in times past he fought against the enemies of the Jews? It was *characteristic* of his fighting for his people, that he *miraculously* interfered in their behalf; whereas Gibbon tells us, that from the death of Domitian A. D. 96, through the successive reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines, down to A. D. 180, there was prosperity in the Empire scarce to be paralleled in history, and that it was only by a *gradual* "decline" *after* this period, that Rome "fell" into the hands of the barbarians. Yet you tell us, that the Lord went forth and fought against them, "*as when he fought in the day of battle.*" If you had only looked at c. xii. 4, you would have learned what is meant by the expression "as when he fought in the day of battle." You would have seen that a *miraculous* interposition is foretold; see too v. 8, 9, of that chapter.

Having already proved the futurity of Zechariah's siege, I need not notice your criticism on "all nations." I shall only remark that the Hebrew is "all the Gentiles," and I leave my readers to judge whether this expression can fitly apply to a Roman army assisted by a few eastern auxiliaries. How would it suit the allied army at Waterloo?

To get over the difficulty of the plague against the nations "that fought against Jerusalem" (for no such plague was inflicted on the Romans), you allow your readers the choice between a most unnatural interpretation, and a very false criticism. "We may either understand that, though after the lapse of many centuries, the nations which of old fought against Jerusalem *being still ungodly and rebellious*, their strength and glory (*in the persons of their remote posterity*!) shall be destroyed in the spiritual reign of Emmanuel." p. 14. Such is your interpretation, and I need make no comment on

it to convince any candid reader "that the difficulty is (*not*) only the surface." Let us now hear the criticism:—"Dr. Henderson proposes to read in the place of 'have fought' (v. 12,) '*shall fight*,' and in the place of 'come' (v. 16,) '*shall come*.'" No doubt he proposes to "*read it*" in the future tense, to avoid the difficulty above noticed, but I am quite sure that the prophet did not *write it* in that tense, for his word is לָבַח , which every tyro in Hebrew knows, is the only tense *he could use* if he wished to speak of the past, whereas he could have used another, if he had wished to speak of the future. And so it is rendered both by the Greek Septuagint, and the Latin Vulgate, thus *ιστοσπαρέυσαν* and *pugnauerunt*. I therefore reject this unlawful criticism, and abide by the correct version of our translators.

Your criticism on "the residue of the people" (p. 30,) is equally at fault. "It designates," you say, "the total number (however large or however small) of those who continued in the place, after not *exile* merely, but the *flight* spoken of [at the siege of Titus there was no *exile* as distinct from "*flight*"] and the fearful ravages of *death* had done their work." This last sentence is unpardonable. The prophet says, "half of the city shall go forth into captivity;" and you most unwarrantably include in this half (for they cannot be included elsewhere) the 1,100,000 on whom "the fearful ravages of death had done their work!" implying, that if there were but a dozen poor wretches "left among the ruins," these would be quite sufficient to fulfil the prediction, that "the residue of the people shall not be cut off!" But I totally deny your interpretation of the Hebrew word יֶצֶק *

You affirm that the verb signifies *to divide*, but this is only "half" the truth; its primary meaning is, as Gesenius tells us, „to divide into two parts, *to halve*;" and, I do not hesitate to declare that wherever the word "*half*" occurs in our version, the above Hebrew noun is the original. [As I was writing these lines a Jew entered my room, to whom I pointed to the word in question; "What," said I, "does this mean?" Without a moment's reflection, he drew one hand across the other and said, "One half!"] But let us see how your criticism will stand the test of the well-known passage in 1 Kings iii. 25, where the *very same Hebrew word* is employed. "And the king said divide the living child in two, and give *half* to the one, and *half* to the other." According to you, the

* The Septuagint is "*το ημισυ*" The Vulgate "*media pars*."

command of Solomon would have been perfectly obeyed if the executioner had given the *toes* of the child to one mother, and *all the rest* to the other! The same remarks will apply to the "time, times and a *half*," of Daniel xii. 7, and to many other places where the word is found. See, then, dear Sir, to what a *wresting* of the word of God you have been led by your effort to make the *circle* of the siege of Titus, fit into the *square* of Zechariah's prediction. The prophetic chronologists will not thank you for telling them that Daniel's "half a time" does not necessarily mean "just one half."

Again, you "fearlessly assume" (p. 17) that Matthew xxiv. refers *primarily* to the destruction of Jerusalem. I "*fearlessly*" deny your "assumption," and maintain that in accordance with the two distinct questions put by the disciples to our Lord (v. 3), it refers to the two distinct events, of the coming siege, and the second advent. But to the proof. You assert that "the coming of the Son of man in the clouds, &c." was, in some sense, accomplished when Jerusalem was destroyed (p. 18). Let us see how this will stand the following test. "Immediately *after* the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened * * * and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven." (v. 29, 30.) Now you will admit that Jerusalem was not destroyed *after* "the tribulation of those days," because the principal part of that "tribulation" consisted in its destruction. But Jesus says that the Son of Man appears when the tribulation is *over*, i. e. when the siege is *past*, and consequently, "his coming" could not be as you pretend, at the time of the siege itself. Luke is still more explicit; he informs us, c. xxi. 24, that the Son of Man will not come in the clouds "till the Jews have been led captive into all nations, and the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"; and I hope you will allow that all this was not accomplished in "that generation," nor even up to the present day. And yet the assurance of our Lord, "that this generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled," v. 32, comes *after* the above prediction. How, then, is this to be understood? Nothing is more obvious to my mind than that, in these words our Saviour exclusively referred to his answer to the *first* question of the disciples, "when shall these things be?" i. e. when shall Jerusalem be destroyed? So that this criticism, like the rest, falls to the ground.

I now pass to your mis-representations, and at the head and front of all I place Mis-representation No. 1. "Many members of the congregation recently listened to a public

lecture intended to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is coming to reign in person on earth, accompanied with the intimation that his arrival may be looked for within, *at the utmost, nine or ten years.*" (p. 3.) And this you repeat again and again in the Lecture.

Mr. Mc.All! I solemnly deny the charge, and publicly censure you for making it. Nothing has more grieved me and my friends than this reckless assertion. My open enemies mis-represent me more than enough (and I rejoice at it, for I know the reason why. Matthew v. 11). You, who are my friend, should have been more tender of my reputation. Your only *shadow of a ground* for propagating this mis-statement is in p. 24 of my lecture, where the following words occur. "The near approach of the seventh millenium of the world, the great Sabbatic rest, after 6,000 years of toil, COMMENCING, ACCORDING TO THE LEARNED MR. CLINTON AND OTHERS, at about 1862."

Where is there a word here about "Christ coming to reign on earth within nine or ten years?" Where even do I MYSELF maintain that the seventh millenium will begin at this period? It is your *inference*, Mr. Mc.All, and *not* my assertion. Mr. Clinton is a great chronologist, and, for aught I know, may be an anti-millenarian; nor was it my purpose in mentioning HIS OPINION to throw out any hints as to the *date* of Christ's coming; but merely, as the whole context shows, to mark one of the *signs of the times*.

Every one who is accustomed to my preaching, is well aware that I teach them to look for Christ daily, and that I strongly deprecate all attempts to specify the time of his coming.

Mis-representation No. II. In page 16 you frame a piece of sophistry yourself, attribute it to me, and then call it "loose reasoning," condescending at the same time to an "*ad captandum-vulgus*" illustration about the coming of Napoleon III., evidently with a view to cast ridicule on my views respecting that Emperor. Was this kind? *My* argument is this:

Zechariah foretells an *earthquake* at the Mount of Olives: And informs the Jews that they shall flee from *it* as they fled from a *literal* earthquake in the days of Uzziah.

Ergo—the predicted earthquake at the Mount of Olives is to be *literally* understood.

The *true* parallel would be as follows:—Zechariah foretells a threatened invasion of England by Napoleon III.

And informs the English that they shall be panic-stricken

by this threat, as they were panic-stricken by the *literal* threat of invasion of Napoleon I.

Ergo—the threatened invasion of Napoleon III. is not to be *mystically understood*, but interpreted in its plain literal import; otherwise, the teachers of the people will mistake an awful reality for a harmless phantom, and “cry peace, peace, when there is no peace.”*

Mis-representation No. III. “Literally to reign with Jesus at the *earthly* Jerusalem” (p. 8.) How could you say so, when in page 15 of my Lecture I have expressly said, “at the *heavenly* Jerusalem”!

Mis-representation No. IV. “All the buried impenitent shall come out of their graves, *and deluge the earth* * * * they shall come back to the old world *and revel and triumph in it* (!!)” (pp. 23, 24.) I never knew a pre-millennialist who entertained such an absurd notion, and I challenge you to name one.

Mis-representation No. V. In pp. 26, 27, you construct an ugly idol, ascribe it to me, and then dash it to pieces before the people. “What mean they?” you say, “to convince us (marvellous attempt) that the agency which won its victory on the day of Pentecost [how long did it last?] must be *helped and supplemented*, or it will never *convert the world*” (!)

This, dear Sir, is very unfair; for you knew that in the passage from the Last Vials, to which your declamation refers, “*human government*” was the question, and not “*conversion*”. My object in adducing this extract was to show the “moral necessity” of Christ’s presence as a *ruler*, and not as a *Saviour*. Let any one read pp. 11, 12, 13, of my Lecture and judge whether such was not my meaning. I will only further observe on this point, that the celebrated John Foster, who was no millenarian, held much stronger views than I do on the necessity of miraculous interference for the universal happiness of the world. See his *Life*, vol. 1, p. 91.

Mis-representation No. VI. “The question as to a personal or non-personal reign * * * is now made to a great extent, *the staple and central point* of preaching by a large number of truly devoted ministers.” p. 28.

I utterly deny it both for myself and for my brethren. Let my congregation judge whether “Christ and him crucified” be not the “*staple and central point of my preaching*.”

But here I really must stop, though there are several other misrepresentations of which I might convict you.

* See the *Bulwark* for February, Article, “Threatened Invasion;” and, also, Mr Bamber’s speech at Gateshead, as noticed in that periodical.

I now pass to your palpable contradictions :—

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MR. MC.ALL.

I may be deemed unwise to oppose the *favourite theory*. (p.4.)

I might be a *gainer* in *eclat* and popularity by its adoption. (p. 6.)

At this point I am *satisfied* the prediction of the millenium commences; and Christ's spiritual reign over the earth—it is agreed that this portion of the prophecy is *unfulfilled*. (p. 14.)

We *fully admit* a spiritual coming and a spiritual reign. (p. 21.)

The universal spread of the Gospel is *unquestionably* predicted, but to be ushered in, if I read God's word aright, by his *spiritual* coming. (p. 37.)

We *believe* that happy period has not yet set in * * already I have expressed my *belief* in the approaching millenium. (p. 37.)

You hold it because you love to be *singular*. (p. 6.)

I lay my head upon my pillow to night *not knowing* but, ere the morning, from a *world in flames*, he may send * * some blessed angel convoy to waft me upward that I may meet him in the air, and even this vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body." (p. 40.)

All our calculations concerning coming events may be *entirely erroneous*: THE MILLENIUM MAY BE CLOSING INSTEAD OF COMMENCING (!) (p. 39.)

He will at his second Advent surprise *some*: why should he not surprise *you and me*? (p. 40.)

The *pre-millenialists* say, 'He may be looked for to reign on earth in about ten years:—*we* say, 'Baffling all our calculations, and yours also, with thief-like advent, he may be here as judge *this very night!*' (p. 21.)

I might have multiplied instances of such contradictions; but it is unnecessary. I must, however, observe that if, as you say, (p. 5) "You are anxious that your trumpet should not even seem to give an uncertain sound," you had better have left the millenium alone; for it is impossible to tell what you really *believe* about it. If the conversion of the world is "unquestionably" foretold, then it must be "unquestionably" fulfilled; but as you postpone the second Advent until this event is accomplished, i. e. until hundreds of years have elapsed, how can Christ's coming "surprise you and your hearers *to night?*" He who says he believes two contradictory propositions, cannot be trusted to believe either; so that whether your "trumpet sounds" peace or war, it is impossible for your congregation to decide; and, accordingly, you seldom spoke more truly than when you told them in your Lecture (p. 5.) "that into the very thickest of that darkness you were actually about to lead them."

As for me, I can with perfect consistency tell my hearers to prepare for the Lord's coming at any moment, because I believe in no preceding millenium, and look for the accomplishment of no particular events, till the saints are "caught up to meet him in the air."

My concluding remarks will be of a more desultory kind. I observe another mis-representation in page 29. "Should the events of a few following years [the events of a *hundred years* would not alter my opinion of the Personal Reign] show those brethren from whom I dissent, that their anticipations were unfounded, then, I doubt not, they will be prepared, with me, to seek earnestly the advancement and triumph of his *spiritual* kingdom." As if we were not seeking its advancement now! this *compels* me to remark that the millenarian church meeting at Bethesda is the only dissenting community in the borough that sustains, by itself, a Town-Missionary.

You complain of my "loose reasoning" about the earthquake; but let the public judge whether the following example be not much more worthy of the charge. "Is Jesus on David's throne now?" asks the Demonstrator. "I answer yes! FOR [mark the word "FOR"] 2,000 years have passed since they wrote over him "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." How conclusive! It might as well be said, that because James II. maintained, when he was in exile, that he was King of England; THEREFORE he sat on the throne of the Stuarts all the days of his life. A little below, too, you interpolate the Bible by inserting "are" where neither the original nor the version contains it. I refer to the words "On his head ARE many crowns." I deny totally that there "are" many crowns on his head, but I believe firmly that there *will be*.

Permit me to suggest, that it would have been wiser had you not attempted to explain Rev. xx., for I question whether any one can understand your meaning, and I am quite sure you are ignorant of the true pre-millenialist exposition.

In page 25 you quote John v. 28, 29, and remark, that "if we take the first resurrection literally, included in the 'hour' here spoken of, we have a *clear interval*, during which there could be no resurrection whatever, of more than a thousand years!" The answer is easy: How long has the "DAY of salvation" lasted? (2 Cor. vi. 2) At least 1,800 years; why then should not the "hour" referred to consist of 1,000 years; and why should not the first resurrection occur at its commencement, and the second at its close?

In page 29, you say, "our business as Christ's ambassadors, is not to unfold coming battles, &c." Indeed! How does this agree with Ezekiel xxxiii. 2-6, and the entire Book of Revelation, which is throughout a prediction of fearful judgment?

In the Sermon, you join in the world's cry of "progress." How does this agree with the following texts, 2 Timothy iii. 1-5, and 2 Peter iii. 2-4, both of which, and many more, apply exclusively to professing Christians?

The true rendering of the passage on which you ground your Sermon, would upset its entire reasoning: it should be read thus: "on whom the ends of the AGES (not 'world') are come;" that is, the end of the *old dispensation*, as is evident from Hebrews ix. 26, where the same original word occurs; for surely Christ did not die, either at "the end," or the beginning of the *new dispensation*; and the old can scarcely be said to have terminated until the destruction of Jerusalem, that is until many years *after* Paul wrote to the Corinthians.*

In page 6 you assure us that prejudice has nothing to do with your rejection of the Personal Reign, *because you are an Independent!* I should say, that *for that very reason*, prejudice had *much* to do with it; because Independents as a *body* being anti-millenarians, the "*esprit de corps*", that is, the power of *class opinions*, would be quite sufficient to restrain the "*independency*" of your judgment. What would the learned Doctors Vaughan, Raffles, Liefchild, Alexander, &c. &c. say if Mr. Mc.All were to become a millenarian!

Remember, I do not assert that you *are* restrained by your connexions, but he must know little of human nature who would deny the power of such ties. Certainly, some people are deaf to all argument, and "*surdo narras fabulam*."

In the same page, you tell us "you are *proud* to learn that in your denomination the theory (it is no *theory*, it is a *doctrine*, you might as well call the doctrines of heaven and hell a *theory*) from which you dissent has found scarcely a supporter." You are a little premature in your rejoicing, for you will be surprised to hear that the celebrated Dr. Samuel Clark, the intimate friend of Drs. Watts and Doddridge, all first-rate independents, was a thorough-going millenarian, See his well-known "Scripture Promises."

In the appendix section xx, there is the following title: "Promises relative to THE PERSONAL REIGN OF CHRIST WITH HIS RISEN SAINTS OVER THE EARTH" and what will you say, my friend, when I tell you that he quotes Zechariah xiv. 1-9, as

* In Matthew xiii. 39-40, there is a *later* "end of the age" (Greek) than that to which your text refers, and consequently all your reasoning from this expression goes for nothing.

one of his chief proofs? Was he "little of short insane" too? or was he *superannuated* like Dr. Chalmers? (p. 6. of "Personal Reign Theory.") The fact is, that Zechariah xiv. is the very *cruz* of post-millennialism.

A word more on "the throne of David." In 1st Kings ii. 12, we read, "Then sat Solomon on the throne of his father David." This, you all allow, means what it says, i.e.—you understand it *literally*. But when the angel Gabriel promises the Virgin Mary in precisely the same language, and without the slightest hint of a mystery, that her son "shall sit on the throne of his *father David*," you understand him to mean the throne of *his Father God!* As to the words "for ever," see Numbers xxv. 13. and many other passages for an all-sufficient answer. Milton understood the angel's promise literally, as is evident from numerous allusions in his "Paradise Regained."*

And now, a few words on the comparative style of our Lectures (page 5). I am ready to allow that there are two or three sharp expressions in my pamphlet, which it had been better to omit; but, dear Sir, there is all the difference in the world between attacking a *system*, and assailing a *person*. Had I been writing against *you*, moderate as is my language, in comparison of yours, it would have been more moderate still. I have, to use Rehoboam's figure, "chastised" your *system* "with whips," but you have "chastised" ME "with scorpions;" your "*little finger*" "has been thicker than" my "*loins*."

I have indeed spoken *confidently*, because I am confident; but I have neither spoken, nor felt, a whit more confidently than Independents speak and feel, when they denounce "Church and State,"—or than Churchmen, when they denounce Dissent— or than Calvinists, when they denounce Arminianism— or Arminians, when they denounce Calvinism— or Baptists, when they denounce infant sprinkling. The truth is, that men like dogmatism well enough, when it is all *on their own side*; and if you both think and say, not that Churchmen *may be* wrong, but *are* wrong, in their views of Establishments—in other words, if you tell them plainly that they are "in darkness" on this point, why may not I, who hold the Personal Reign, as strongly as you hold Independence—tell the Dissenters that on *that subject* "they are in darkness, whilst Churchmen are in light?"

In conclusion; although the public papers have commended

* See too Paradise Lost, Book xii.

"He shall ascend
The throne hereditary."

The Bishop of Winchester, the translator of Milton's *Treatise on Christian Doctrine*, fully allows that he was a Millennarian.

you, and your fellow-ministers have congratulated you, on your successful attack; yet here I stand still, in perfect good humour, and "like a giant refreshed with wine," on the battlements of my "strong wall," unshaken and erect. On the one hand, I defy a siege (witness the demolition of your engines), but on the other, if you will step up to the top of one of your broken battering-rams, I will gladly stoop down, and shake hands with you.

I am, my dear Sir, yours very faithfully,

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS REES.

P.S.—For a thorough refutation of all that has been either said or written against the Personal Reign, I refer my readers to the following works:—"Redemption Draweth Nigh," Rev. A. Bonar; "The Coming, and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus," Rev. H. Bonar; "The Last Things," the Rev. W. Wood (I particularly recommend this volume); and Mr. Ryle's Tract, entitled, "Watch." All to be had at Nisbet's, London.

For unlearned readers, I here translate the Latin quotations:—

"*In medias res*"—Into the midst of the subject.

"*Quidlibet ex quolibet*"—Any thing out of any thing.

"*Laborat mons, &c.*"—The mountain is in labour, and lo! a contemptible mouse is born.

"*Onus probandi*"—Burden of proving.

"*Pugnaverunt*"—They fought.

"*Ergo*"—Therefore.

"*Ad captandum vulgus*"—To catch the crowd.

"*Surdus narras fabulam*"—You tell a tale to the deaf.

"*Cruz*"—Cross, or torment.

