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ARTICLE I.

THE SOURCES OF THE NILE.

The Albert N'yanza, Great Basin of the Nile, and Explorations of the Nile Sources. By SAMUEL WHITE BAKER. With Maps, Illustrations, and Portraits. London: Macmillan & Co. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1866. Pp. 509. 8vo.

To the present generation belongs the honor of having solved two great geographical problems that had baffled the researches of the civilised world for more than two thousand years. One of these is the discovery of the source, and the other the discovery of the outlet, of the two great rivers of the continent of Africa. The causes which retarded these discoveries for so long a period have always been the same, viz., the insalubrious nature of the African climate; the savage character of the people; the want of the ordinary facilities of travel; and the perpetual disturbances occasioned by the foreign slave-trade. Most of these causes still exist; but the achievements of science and the indomitable perseverance of the age have surmounted them.

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crossing this slender boundary. But the light that streams from the inspired volume modifies the darkness of human imagination, and the Christian student should be able to distinguish between the true light of the world and the *ignes fatui* of human fancy.

ARTICLE V.

THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL.

It was while Paul was a prisoner at Rome, and Christians generally were the objects of oppression and cruel persecution, that he warned the Colossian believers of the peril of being "moved away from the hope of the gospel." Such is the proneness of our false hearts to lapse from the truth, that both prosperity and adversity have a tendency to work in us the same bad result; and the most precious part of the truth, the blessed hope which it sets before us, is what we most readily doubt, modify, or forget. The former condition of our people was one of unprecedented prosperity. Our actual condition must, therefore, in some respects, be one of unprecedented calamity; and the general depression of our hearts bears witness to the fact that, as Christians, we have cherished hopes which the word of God does not warrant, and which he, "all whose ways are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies," in his merciful providence has blighted. Our trials will prove an immediate as well as an ultimate blessing, if they serve to fix our hearts on "the hope that is laid up for us in heaven," a hope which maketh not ashamed. Never was it more needful to keep this hope, in all its length and breadth, habitually and distinctly before our eyes; and to make it the object of our daily contemplation, till these heavy and long-continued afflictions appear but light and momentary. What,

then, is the hope of the gospel, and what are the sure promises of "good things to come," all which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus?

There is a class of most estimable Christian people, who imagine that a vague and general hope of salvation is quite enough for us; and that the practical doctrines which have reference to the obtaining of that salvation, are those alone with which we have any special concern. But God is wiser than man; and he has set that hope before our eyes, clear, tangible, and distinct in all its grand outlines, in order to wean our affections from things present, and animate our zeal in pursuit of things not seen as yet, and that we might find in it an exhaustless source of strong consolation. It is true that the hope of the gospel, in its reality, transcends our highest thought, even when divinely assisted; but it is no less our duty than our privilege to search out and treasure in our hearts all that God has been pleased to reveal with regard to it. This hope, (the object of our hope,) we propose to investigate, not, perhaps, as we may have apprehended it when peace and plenty smiled upon us, but *as it is set before us in the gospel*, and as it was apprehended by those who first embraced it in a great fight of afflictions. Should it be so, which none will regret more sincerely than we, that the reader does not consent to some of our conclusions, we beg his indulgence and his considerate forbearance till he shall have searched with us the oracles of God. As it may likewise serve to disarm the prejudices of some, we will say at the outset, that we shall contend for nothing which was not regarded as indubitable by the great fathers of the Reformation; and that, because the Scripture reveals it in the simplest and most emphatic forms of human speech.

It will be of assistance to us, in searching for clear and definite views of the hope of the gospel, to separate therefrom all that is extraneous, or that has merely a temporary bearing upon it. And this it is the more important to do, as there have been many hopes popularly cherished, as more or less identified with it, which, whether well or ill founded, have little or nothing to do therewith.

The hope of the gospel brings us no assurance of peace, prosperity, and security in this present life. The normal condition of the people of God, under both covenants, has been one of "suffering, affliction, and of patience;" and the brief seasons they have enjoyed of worldly prosperity, have always proved a leaven of corruption. Whether it was due to the belief that liberal institutions, a free press, and an open Bible, had inaugurated a new era, in this country at least, and were ushering in the period when there should be "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men," or whatever else were the cause, the opinion widely prevailed that we were authorised in believing that now at length, pure religion, material prosperity, and well-regulated liberty, were destined to a long ascendancy and to lasting triumphs. Now, therefore, that we find that men, and even religious men, are at heart as fierce and unrelenting as they were of old, we are disposed to complain "as though some strange thing had happened unto us." Yet we only suffer as others in like circumstances have suffered before us, in other lands. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man." "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

The hope of the gospel, viewed either in relation to the Church or to individual believers, (it is the same to both,) does not involve the conversion of the world. Whether the world, as such, is to be converted or not, the hope of the gospel is not at all affected thereby. That popular expectation is based on a particular interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, and therefore may or may not be realised. In our view it will not. "Christ gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." Gal. i. 4. In the manifold afflictions that have befallen us, this is our consolation: "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." The world is already foreadjudged to condemnation. It is possible that many nations, or even all nations, may yet be christianized; and yet it will be none the less true that the world has been, is, and to the judgment and condemnation of it will be, in

uncompromising hostility, open or covert, to holiness and God. It is a confusion of earthly and heavenly motives and principles, to say that the assurance of the world's conversion is the great incentive to missionary effort. It is our most solemn and bounden duty to obey Christ's command, and "go into all the world, preaching the gospel to every creature;" not that all men (or even most men) will ultimately "believe, be baptized, and be saved"—Christ himself says they will not—but that our Lord, by his word and Spirit, may renew and sanctify "all that the Father hath given him." No such hope of the world's conversion seems ever to have animated the earliest and most successful missionaries of the cross. Let papal Rome outstrip the zeal and dauntless energy of pagan Rome, in battling for the subjugation of the world,—it will be enough for us to say with Paul, "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." 2 Tim. ii. 10.

The hope of the gospel has nothing to do with the "millennium." Whether there be reserved for the Church, either before or after the second advent of our Lord, a period of blessedness and glory of limited duration, corresponding to what this word is supposed to imply, or whether there be not, the hope of it finds no expression in the New Testament Scriptures. True, millenarians insist that Christ is coming to inaugurate the period of millennial glory and peace; but we find nothing of the kind in the Bible we have diligently studied. And in truth, whether it be supposed to precede or follow the second advent, we are never once taught to labor with a view to it, to watch, pray, hope for, or expect it. Whatever support may be claimed for it in the Old Testament, it is never set before us in the New Testament, (if, indeed, in any part of Holy Writ,) as the Church's hope, or our own, or any part of that hope. By our present humiliations, sufferings, and sins, God seems to be teaching his people, North and South, in painful lessons, that we should build our expectations only on his express and faithful promises.

We ask the indulgence of some of our readers, while we suggest that the expectation is not a wholesome one, even in its

popularly accepted form. Though this form of it dates only from the seventeenth century, it has long been held that the millennium would begin some where about this time, not suddenly, but like the opening day. And if it be so, as the most ardent advocates of the system maintain, that during that period Christianity is to permeate and sanctify all the relations of life, social, civil, and political, and all government is to be administered by Christ in the person of holy men, how can we blame the Northern churches for their political alliances, and for their endeavors to penetrate and infuse into state legislation their own peculiar religious principles? If such is to be the order of things then, and if, as they imagine, the day is at its dawn, what harm in "hastening unto" it? A Northern minister once told the writer that he had found an unanswerable argument against slavery: it was, that since slavery could not exist in the millennium, it must be of more than doubtful propriety now, and should therefore be abolished. We are not surprised, therefore, at seeing it proclaimed at the North, that the events which have bowed us to the dust, are sure harbingers of the millennial dawn. Another Northern man, and a wiser than the other, said that he had tried hard to be an abolitionist, but had found his way completely stopped by the statement of St. John, that in his vision of the great day of wrath, he saw "every *bondman* (slave) and every freeman" calling to the rocks and mountains to cover them; whence he concluded, that if slavery would exist till then, it was not worth his while to be angry about it now.

The hope of the gospel, the hope that is laid up for us in heaven, is not that of the salvation of the souls of dead men. This is, indeed, a part of the promise, and is an unspeakable consolation when we die, or when our friends depart this life in hope of a better; but *it stops short of the hope itself*. If we are determined to hold fast the great Protestant and Scripture principle that nothing is to be added to or taken from the written word of God; and if, on this subject, we will apply it as rigorously as when we are in controversy with Roman Catholics, we shall be forced to admit that too great stress is popularly laid on the state after death, and far too little on that into which we

are not to be admitted until the last day. In a former number of this Review,* we endeavored to rescue the doctrine of the resurrection of the body from the neglect and forgetfulness into which many Christians allow it to fall, and to place it in that true central position which Holy Scripture assigns to it; and if, in the discussion on which we are now entering, we appear to take anything for granted, we refer the reader to the former article for a fuller statement.

We repeat, therefore, that the hope of the gospel is not that of the salvation of the souls of dead men, precious as that salvation in its season is. It may perhaps be objected to the form of this statement, that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." But it is to be observed that our Saviour does not make this declaration to prove that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were not dead men, nor yet to teach the immortality of the soul, but expressly to prove what the Sadducees denied, to wit, the resurrection of the body; and he adds "for all live *unto him*"—unto him "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which are not as though they were"—unto him, to whom the past and the future are alike present. To all others they are yet dead. There is truly a blessed sense in which believers, inseparably united to him who is himself the Resurrection and the Life, do not, cannot die. Yet, in the ordinary use of language, it is of the last importance to believe that all the faithful who have gone before us, excepting only Enoch and Elijah, and perhaps Moses, are yet dead men. "David is not ascended into the heavens"—"he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." Acts ii. 34, 29. "Abel, being dead, yet speaketh."

If it be the statement itself which is objected to, we ask the reader that he will at least suspend his judgment till he shall have complied with the request we now make. It is that he will open his New Testament, and rapidly, but carefully, scan its pages, drawing a colored line in the margin against every passage that refers to the second advent of our Lord; every one

* September, 1866. Art. IV. Death, the Resurrection, and the Intermediate State.

that treats of the last day, the day of Christ, the day of redemption, and of judgment, and of wrath, the day of the perdition of the ungodly, and of the manifestation of the sons of God, "that day," "the day," "the great day," "the day of God," as distinguished from all other days; every one that refers to the resurrection of the body, and of "the grace which is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Let him now return, and mark with a common pencil every passage which speaks of the blessings which await the believer, and the woes that overtake the unbeliever (for the one always suggests and implies the other,) *at death*. Of the former class he will find more than one hundred and fifty; he cannot be less than surprised at the paucity of the latter. There are, we say not in the New Testament, but in the whole Bible, not more than eight or ten passages which throw any light on the abode and condition of disembodied spirits. These few are sufficient to show that the souls of the wicked are in hell, beyond hope of amendment, reserved unto judgment; and that the perfected spirits of the just are with Christ's bodily presence in heaven, waiting for the redemption of their bodies. But they also show how little God has been pleased to reveal to us of the disembodied state, how little stress he lays on the immortality of the soul, and how persistently he refers us to an object of more absorbing interest, fixing our attention on the resurrection, and "the judgment of the great day." Acts xvii. 30, 31. We cheerfully admit that two references to Christ's coming can only be understood, so far as we can see, of the destruction of the ungodly Jewish state and nation, (Matt. x. 23, and xvi. 28,) but Christ himself makes that a type of the day of judgment and perdition of an ungodly world; from which, in fact, it was his purpose that, at that time, it should be hardly distinguishable. (See Dr. J. A. Alexander's Sermons, Vol. I., Sermon xxi. p. 395.) If the result of this inquisition be one half as surprising to the reader as it was to the writer, we have no fears that he will further object to the statement made.

Richard Baxter makes his "Saint's Rest" to begin with the resurrection and the day of judgment: a fact which many of his

most ardent admirers seem to overlook. The second chapter treats of the PREPARATIVES to the saint's rest; of which Baxter enumerates four: 1. The second coming of Christ. 2. The resurrection of the body. 3. The general judgment—the saints judged first, then Christ and his saints judging the world. 4. Their solemn coronation and receiving the kingdom. There is, indeed, a blessed "rest from their labors" that belongs to "THE DEAD that die in the Lord;" but that is not the heritage of THE LIVING, when, like Christ, "being raised from the dead they die no more." It is not that rest of which the apostle says, "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense—to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction—when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." 2 Thess. i. 6–10.

Though it is foreign to our present purpose, we will take notice in passing, that in the scripture just quoted, St. Paul grinds to powder that dangerous tenet of most millenarians, that at Christ's coming he will destroy only the leagued and banded opposition of anti-Christian powers; and that the Jews and pagans are to be converted during the subsequent millennium. The expression "them that know not God and that obey not the gospel," covers them all. Peter is no less explicit in 2 Pet. iii. 9: all who are then impenitent will perish. Against two such express declarations, were there no others, every opposite opinion, based on the uncertain details of unfulfilled prophecy, must go to the ground.

The hope of the gospel, then, is not that of DEATH, it is that of LIFE; it is not that of life in death, but of "life from the dead;" it is not that of life through the intervention of death, but of life in spite of death. We inherit it, not because we die, but because "Christ died, yea rather, is risen again." "It is" *not* "appointed unto" *all* "men once to die." "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all

be changed." Death is not the gate of life, the door of salvation. The death of our body has no necessary intervention in the matter; it does not enter into the scheme at all, except as a disturbing element, which, though it is truly a part of the curse entailed on us by sin, ["though Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin,"] yet God, who ever brings good out of evil to his children, is pleased to convert that curse into a blessing to those who must needs die before the day of redemption dawns; making it "far better to depart and to be with Christ" than "to abide still in the flesh." Thus the temporary separation of soul and body is made to accrue to the common benefit of both. The holy dead are blessed *even as dead men*; their perfected spirits are with Christ, rejoicing in his presence, free from every care, and delightfully conscious in themselves that every possibility of coming short of "eternal life" is forever past. They rest from their labors; they "have fought a good fight, they have finished their course, they have kept the faith; henceforth there is *laid up for them* the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, *the righteous Judge*, shall give them AT THAT DAY; and not to them only, but unto all those that *love his appearing*." 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; but we have no reason to believe that they are made perfect in anything else. Paul, who longed with such groaning for "the redemption of his body," when living, surely has not become indifferent to it, now that he is dead! Nor have we any good reason to believe that the soul is capable of attaining to the highest perfection of its own nature and powers while separate from the body. The philosophy of Plato may teach it, but the gospel of Jesus Christ does not. That, indeed, would be in open contravention of the order which God has established among his creatures. Man is neither an angel nor a spirit, but a creature of an entirely different order. "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground;" and though, after the resurrection, the just will be "equal unto the angels," yet neither sin nor redemption will make them either less or more than men.

Except in God's unalterable purpose, the pious dead are safe rather than saved. Otherwise than this, dying brings us no nearer to "salvation;" else why should Christ "appear the second time without sin unto salvation?" The spirits of just men made perfect do actually "inherit eternal life" no sooner than the just who dwell on the earth; for, in scripture usage, "eternal life" is not merely eternal happiness of one sort or another; the dead "awake to eternal life;" it is life in the body—the same body that lives now this forfeited mortal life, which we derive from Adam—the same body, quickened now by a principle of animal life, and dependent, like others of the animal creation, on "the meat which perisheth" for a precarious and temporary maintenance, and organised with reference to that mortal life; but *then*, renovated and quickened by the spirit of Christ, and deriving its maintenance from his "flesh and blood" which he gave for the life of the world—his human nature, (once "crucified through weakness, but now living by the power of God,") in which alone is found the eternal life of man's dying race. "Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;" "made perfect," not merely in respect of his mediatorial work, but as regards his person also, and that "likeness of sinful flesh" which he assumed, in order that we, forswearing our first father Adam, and renouncing his broken covenant of works, "with purpose of heart might cleave unto the Lord," and be made the members of his body, of *his* flesh, and of *his* bones;" that so we might die with him, and therefore live with him, might suffer and therefore reign with him, partakers of his endless life, and companions with him in a deathless immortality! That life is now "hid with Christ in God."

"The crown of life" will be bestowed by "the great Shepherd when he shall appear," on all his servants, the living and the dead, in one and the same day. The great birth-day of eternal life is the same to all. The true Israel; whensoever they may have entered it, accomplish the passage of Jordan in one glorious host. Paul distinctly teaches that at the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, the living have no advantage

of the dead—"shall not prevent them that are asleep." In order to the salvation of both classes, the primeval curse of mortality is cancelled and abolished, for both alike, in the self-same day, hour, moment: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." This we conceive to be the real purport of the apostle's words in Hebrews xi. 39, 40; so that classing him, and all the other holy dead, with the glorious company of the ancient worthies to whom he specially refers, we may say, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us *should not be made perfect.*" That this is the scope of "the promise" which he has in view, will be made evident by a reference to the next verse, but three, preceding: "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection."

So far is the resurrection of the body from being, as many seem to regard it, an ultimate and almost incidental benefit flowing from redemption, that (together with the blessings comprised in and accompanying it) it is itself the hope of the gospel, "the hope that is laid up for us in heaven." All other blessings are incidental or accessory. "This is the promise which he hath promised us, even eternal life." The resurrection of life is the very substance of salvation itself. It is the great distinguishing doctrine of the gospel, towards which all the others look, to which they all contribute and are subordinate, and without which all the other doctrines of the Christian system, and all the other parts of redemption, are of no effect. Paul calls it emphatically "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body;" and our Saviour says, "They are (shall be) equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Luke xx. 36. So Paul also teaches that if the dead rise not, the gospel is a fable, the future life a dream, Christ is not risen, our preaching is vain, your faith is also vain, the saints of former times who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished, those who do and suffer most for Christ's sake and the gospel's

are of all men most miserable, and they are truly wise who say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." 1 Cor. xv. 16-19, 32. If, then, the falsity of this doctrine be attended by such disastrous consequences, if its denial involve the renunciation of all the hopes of the gospel, we cannot afford ever to lose sight of it, especially when tempted to complain of the hardships and losses of this life, or to sell our birth-right for a mess of pottage.

We have known devout Christians, who, owing to a misapprehension of the nature of the hope set before us, habitually afflict themselves with fears of perdition, because they cannot love the dreaded visitation of death; they think they ought to desire to die, but they cannot bring themselves to do it. There is a sad mistake here. The love of death is the abhorring of life; and God neither directs us to hate life, or to love death. True, death is a desirable refuge from the storms of this disordered and sinful world; but to be precious, it must be seasonable; and when the season comes, our God does make it precious to the most timorous of his people. Not till life, from one cause or another, becomes a burden, or is demanded as a sacrifice to Christian principle, should any Christian desire to lay it down. "No man," says Paul, no sane man at least, "ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church." Here, as elsewhere, faith's sole foundation is the word of truth; and this accounts it no virtue to desire to die; and awards no promise of life, of a kingdom, of a crown, to those who "long for death, and dig for it more than for hid treasures, who rejoice exceedingly and are glad when they can find the grave;" but rather "to all them that love his appearing," who, at his coming, will finally and forever "abolish death and bring life and immortality," not merely *to light*, but to blessed actuality and to glorious and unfading manifestation.

The aged Paul, worn out with manifold labors and temptations, said, "I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better;" yet, even then, he said he was in a strait betwixt two, and knew not what he should choose. Phil. i. 21-23. And even in the scripture where he most clearly expresses the joyous

truth that when "absent from the body we are present with the Lord," his mind instinctively turns to the resurrection of the body: "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon"—with yearning desire not so much to die, as truly to live—"that mortality (an attribute of the body in its present state) may be swallowed up of life." "Wherefore we labor, that whether present [in the body, at his appearing,] or absent [from the body,] we may be accepted of him. For we must all [the living and the dead] appear before the judgment seat of Christ." 2 Cor. v. 4-10.

"Jesus and the resurrection" was the watch-word of the Apostolic Church. Peter and his companions began their apostolic mission, "preaching, through Jesus, the resurrection of the dead." And it cannot be reasonably doubted, that the gospel would in our day be far more a gospel of power, comfort, and sanctification, if this blessed hope held the same prominent place in our hearts and ministrations.

These two first principles of the doctrine of Christ, the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment, need to be kept *constantly in mind*, if we would avoid a narrow, contracted, and distorted view of the divine revelation. They shed a flood of light over the whole Bible, and, as we are persuaded, over no part of it more conspicuously than over the Old Testament, and especially the Old Testament prophecies. It has been questioned, indeed, whether the saints of those days knew anything of the hope of the resurrection. Such a doubt could hardly be raised except by one holding the erroneous and superficial opinion that the salvation of the soul at death is the principal part of redemption. On the contrary, it was the intermediate state of death which perplexed and distressed the saints of those days: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." The hope of the gospel has been always the same, and has been substantially apprehended by the faithful, in all ages. God has neither changed his plan, nor altered his promise. Righteous Abel had no proper conception of physical death, and of necessary consequence, he could have no adequate idea of

the resurrection from the dead; but the substance of the doctrine, to wit, "the redemption of our body," was no doubt a marked feature of that hope of the gospel on which his faith was fixed. His ideal of salvation, (and it was probably not very wide of the truth,) would almost necessarily be that of restoration to the state of favor and blessedness which his parents had once enjoyed, when God and man walked in familiar converse and holy friendship. Nor could he tell how long it would be before it might please God to effect that restoration by the promised "seed of the woman."

It will be interesting to trace the hope of the gospel as it presents itself in the Old Testament Scriptures; and it may perhaps assist us to a better understanding of the New. We shall avoid, however, all intricate and symbolical prophecies; for however great the interest which attaches to some of them, we are persuaded that their true meaning can never be accurately known before their fulfilment. We will also foreadvise the reader, that we are fully warranted in expecting to find the hope of the gospel—the final and unchangeable state of salvation into which God will in due time bring his people—clearly revealed in the Old Testament. In Acts iii. 21, Peter speaks of "the times of refreshing," and of "the restitution of all things, (when the Father shall again send Jesus Christ,) which God hath spoken *by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*" Paul testified before Agrippa that in his preaching of the gospel, its glorious hope, and the means ordained by God for its accomplishment, he was "saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." Acts xxvi. 22. Peter again tells us that the final salvation of believers *at the second advent of Jesus Christ*, was the burden of Old Testament prophecy: "Of which salvation [that which is 'ready to be revealed in the last time,' and 'at the appearing of Jesus Christ,' verses 5 and 7,]—of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently—searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow;" which also were the things

which the apostles "reported unto us" in their preaching of the glad tidings, and the things into which "the angels desire to look." 1 Pet. i. 10-12. "The sufferings of Christ—τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα—the sufferings until Christ, in reference to Christ, or on his behalf," or all combined. Thus Moses "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, having respect unto the recompence of reward." Calvin says, "Peter does not treat of the personal sufferings of Christ, but he speaks of the state of the Church universal." Luther takes the same view of it. (See Brown on 1st Peter. Discourse iv. and note A.) The aged Zacharias, filled with the Holy Ghost, sums up the mercy promised to the fathers, and the oath which God swore unto Abraham, in these words: "As he spake by the mouth of *his holy prophets which have been since the world began*, that WE [the aged Zacharias being one of them,] should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; that he would grant unto US, that WE, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Luke i. 70-74. The life of God's children, the life of promise, the life which is yet "hid with Christ in God," is a long one: "I give unto them eternal life."

We now request that the reader will read again, and ponder the preceding paragraph. Many persons construe and limit the plain prose of the New Testament in accordance with their views of Old Testament prophecies, as we ventured to point out in our former article: not a safe procedure, we think, by any means. There prevails a popular opinion that God has revealed much of better times yet to come before the end of the world, and but little or nothing of the happy and heavenly state beyond, except the general assurance of the inconceivable and perfect blessedness of his people. We, on the contrary, have been led by the Scriptures above quoted, to think that the case is about reversed; that God has spoken guardedly, "opening his mouth in parables," of events yet future in this world, and that the happy era, so long foretold in clear prophetic utterances, has to do with the everlasting life of the people of God, and the future

state of eternal salvation. The fact is established by the New Testament scriptures just cited, that all the prophets have borne an uninterrupted testimony to the times of restitution, or restoration, of all things at Christ's second coming; that they have spoken of the glory that is to follow the present sufferings, which are to continue "until Christ;" and that they have all predicted a future state of salvation, when *we*, and all the holy dead, (Zacharias among them,) being saved from *all our enemies*—from evil men and evil spirits, from sin, and death, "the last enemy"—shall serve our God with a perfect heart, in holiness and righteousness forever. Now, we find in the Old Testament the written testimony of many of the prophets who have so spoken, in which, with one or two exceptions, they all predict a corresponding state of things. The common belief in our day is, that these predictions point to "the millennium," and to the conversion of all nations. We would modestly but firmly express our belief that the common opinion is a mistaken one. As all the prophets do bear testimony to such a coming state of things, and as that is the only period materially differing from the present, of which they do all speak, we think we have a divine warrant for believing that they refer to the life everlasting; but in terms familiar to men in this present mortal life.

The hope of the gospel took fast hold of the hearts of the faithful from the very beginning; while those void of a true faith had as little regard to it then as now, intent only upon temporal blessings. But as regards the person, work, and offices of the Redeemer, and the time and manner of his appearing, and the manifestation of the glory of his kingdom, their ideas were doubtless very meagre and confused. They trusted to the promise, and diligently applied themselves to a use of the means then ordained for its fruition in due time. Even John the Baptist seems to have labored under much doubt and uncertainty; while the disciples of our Lord needed often to be upbraided with their dulness of comprehension, their unbelief and hardness of heart.

It is the opinion of many commentators that Eve's exclamation at the birth of Cain, "I have gotten the man Jehovah," or "from Jehovah," implies her belief or hope that the promised

seed was born. If so, it was a lamentable mistake! Enoch, the seventh in lineal descent from Adam, who also was translated that he should not see death, had a clear intimation of the approach of the glorious and dreadful day of God, in which, of course, he would save his people, as well as take vengeance on his foes. "Behold, the Lord cometh, with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment," etc. Jude 14, 15. The primary reference no doubt was to Noah's flood; yet Enoch could not have known but that the impending judgment would be the final catastrophe of the world, which was at that time portentously wicked. He probably thought so; and Christ assures us that it was a figure of "the wrath to come." When Noah was born, his father called his name Rest (Noah,) saying, "This same shall comfort us (or cause us to rest,) concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." The days were evil: but neither the promised rest, nor he who giveth it, were so near. Still Noah and his ark, and the perdition of the world of the ungodly, and the new earth after the flood, scoured and cleansed with water, (as it will one day be purged with fire,) because of the former abominations of men, and occupied by none but those who had been housed with Noah in the ark, do strikingly foreshadow Christ, the everlasting destruction of his foes, and the final salvation of his people. Nor is it a chance coincidence; God's plan has been one from first to last: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

The flood was soon forgotten; men grew bold in sin; God lapsed from all their thoughts. Abraham, the father of believers, was chosen out of an idolatrous family, and called; and to him were the promises made. The promise to Abraham was "that he should be the heir of the world," and his children with him, (Rom. iv. 13,) and that "in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed." But "what manner of time was signified," God reserved in his own keeping. There was indeed a promise of deliverance, in four hundred and thirty years, from bondage in a strange land in which his seed had endured affliction, and of a quiet and peaceful home in the land of promise.

Yet the sequel showed that this was but "a figure of the true." And Moses, the renowned deliverer, who yet failed to bring the people into Canaan, spoke of a coming Prophet, who should in all things be believed and obeyed, whatever he ordained, whatever he abolished: enforcing the obligation with the solemn declaration, "And it shall come to pass that every soul, [Jew or Gentile,] that will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people;" of which destruction the excision of the unbelieving Jewish Church and nation was a notable type.

As Joshua had not given the promised rest and inheritance, the Holy Ghost often spoke, by the mouth of David and the other prophets, of another day and another rest, the peculiar heritage of true believers, the children of Abraham, "according to promise." Heb. iv., and Gal. iv. 28. We select but one passage from the writings of David, the 37th Psalm, written expressly to sustain God's suffering people under persecution and unrighteous oppression, when faith, patience, and hope, are all like to fail: "Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity; for they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb." Verses 1 and 2. As yet, the evil and the good, the persecutor and the persecuted, are cut down alike. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him; cease from anger and forsake wrath; fret not thyself in anywise to do evil; for evildoers shall be cut off, but they that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while [Heb. x. 37] and the wicked shall not be, yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be; but the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall *delight themselves with the abundance of peace.*" Verses 7-11. Six times over is this statement made. Lest this should seem too strange for men to believe, too much for troubled saints to hope, David draws on his own experience and observation for subordinate but similar examples of the divine procedure, and presses the encouraging exhortation—"Wait on the Lord, and keep his way; and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land (Heb. earth); *when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.*" Verse 34. This thing will not be done in a corner, nor while we "sleep."

David himself expected to be there, and enjoy the blessing promised, as well as witness the vengeance; for of himself he says it, as well as of David's greater Son, "My flesh also shall rest in hope." "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the just!"

In the same way does Solomon enforce his precepts to fear God and hate evil: "For the upright shall dwell in the land (Heb. earth,) and the perfect shall remain in it; but the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors *shall be rooted out of it.*" Prov. ii. 21, 22. For fear that any reader should imagine that we are making an unauthorised use of language which is commonly spiritualized, so as to express a sentiment which men more readily assent to, we pause here a moment to observe that this is the identical argument which Peter presses in his powerful exhortation to repentance a few days after Pentecost: "Repent, therefore, and be converted; be pardoned, be saved; that ye may be refreshed when the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ. Believe and obey that Prophet, that he may bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities, lest, as Moses truly said, ye be destroyed from among the people." Acts iii. 19-25. The reader will do well to examine the whole passage carefully for himself.

This remarkable passage is embarrassed with one difficulty. Calvin suggests that if the common rendering be retained, we must supply an ellipsis: "Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, [that so ye may be refreshed,] when the times of refreshing shall come," etc. But he intimates that a better rendering is that on which critics are now agreed, to wit, "Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; *that so* the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, *and he may send* Jesus Christ, whom the heaven must receive, [or who must receive and occupy heaven,] until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Peter instances Moses as one of them; David and Solomon are of course included. Thus understood, the

argument would be, "Repent, etc., that the number of believers may be completed, and the kingdom of glory may be ushered in;" which agrees well with the reason assigned by the same apostle for the Lord's apparent slackness concerning the promise of his coming: "He is long-suffering to us-ward, [towards us, his elect, the heirs of salvation,] not willing that any [of us] should perish, but that all [of us] should come to repentance." 2 Pet. iii. 9.

We have purposely reserved till now the case of Job. Under the stress of his overwhelming calamities, he passionately exclaims, "O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me in secret, *till thy wrath be passed*; that thou wouldst appoint me a set time and remember me." Job xiv. 13. The good man "knew that his Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth;" and that though devoured by worms, "yet in his flesh he should see God, whom he should see for himself and not another." He knew also "that the wicked are reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth in the day of wrath." Job xix. 25-27; xxi. 30.

Isaiah speaks repeatedly of a coming "day" when Christ's rest shall be glorious; when peace and amity shall dwell among men, while war and contention forever cease; when the knowledge and glory of the Lord shall fill the earth, and all shall be taught of God; when there shall be new heavens and a new earth, which are never to pass away; when violence shall *no more* be heard in the land, wasting nor destruction in its borders; when the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, when the lame man shall leap as an hart, the tongue of the dumb shall sing, and the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick; when God himself shall dwell among his people, wipe away all tears from their eyes, and take away their reproach from off all the earth; when they shall be all righteous, and shall inherit the land (Heb. earth) forever—a state of things which God "the Lord will hasten in his time." The prophet, too, expresses his confidence that he himself will be there, when the days of mourning shall be ended, and the

indignation forever be overpast: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, shut thy doors about thee, hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isa. xxvi. 19-21.

In these days of confusion and uncertainty and apprehension, we sometimes feel that it would be a privilege to lie down and sleep in unconsciousness, until the excited and vindictive passions of our conquerors are calmed, and some measure of order and stability bless the troubled land again. Far better than this the Lord designs when "he giveth to his beloved sleep"—a "blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep;" a "peaceful rest, whose waking is supremely blest!"

Jeremiah speaks of the new covenant which God will make with his people: a covenant already ratified and sealed under the Christian dispensation, but not yet executed. And this is the covenant: "I will (after those days) put my law in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people." This is no more true under the Christian dispensation than it was under the Mosaic. "And they shall *teach no more* every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sins no more." Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. There will be no more preaching nor exhorting to righteousness then; nor will there be any more sin, suffering, or death; for when sin is no more remembered, its penal consequences must be all abolished. "The body is dead because of sin."

All this is yet more clearly stated by Ezekiel. "Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you

into the land of Israel. And ye shall know [*i. e.* ye shall have ocular demonstration,] that I am Jehovah when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, (Rom. viii. 11,) and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it and performed it, saith the Lord." Ezek. xxxvii. 12-14. We are aware that these words are understood by many of a "spiritual resurrection," to wit, the national conversion of the now unbelieving Jewish people, which Paul is supposed to teach in Romans xi. We have no intention of denying that the prophecy may have such a *partial* fulfilment, though we are by no means sure of it, believing that the prophet and the apostle have direct reference to "the resurrection of life." Peter tells us that Ezekiel was one of those by whom God had been uninterruptedly testifying of these things, ever since sin and death entered the world; and it will be pertinent to inquire, If Ezekiel does not speak of it here, where does he? The latter part of the same chapter is conclusive: "Neither shall they defile themselves *any more* with their idols, nor with their detestable things, NOR WITH ANY OF THEIR TRANSGRESSIONS." "And I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them *for evermore*. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Verses 23-27. This can only be true of the heavenly state, and of the Israel of God, (the language being accommodated to the then existing condition and the then existing form of the Church,) including believing Gentiles as well as believing Jews: there being a sure promise of restoration to the former, as truly as to the latter—to the whole, as well as to a part of his people.

But we must leave the other prophets' for the reader's private examination. As Peter says, the Old Testament prophecies have this as their burden, "The sufferings until Christ, and the glory that should follow;" or as Paul expresses it, "The sufferings of this present time, and the glory which shall be *revealed in us*." The prophets sometimes draw their illustrations from the present condition and pursuits of men, which is natural, almost unavoidable; and they sometimes, though very rarely,

present a scene of good mingled with some evil, which is not singular when we reflect that *they viewed the advent blessings of Christ as a whole, and had no power of distinguishing between his first and second comings.* We will cite but one passage more, which we are unwilling to overlook. After saying that, "in that day" the Lord will make a covenant of peace for his people with all irrational creatures, the prophet adds, "And I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." Hos. ii. 18-20. Whether that good day will cast its shadow before, in the form of the expected "millennium," which nevertheless is to close in an apostasy darker, more damning, and more universal than any formerly known, before the true and unfading day of promise shall dawn, it is not our purpose to inquire. But this we know, that what most enhances the preciousness of these sure predictions of "good things to come," of which Christ is to us the faithful High Priest, is the fact that they are made to us, to our fathers, and to our children, rather than to the possible generations of a far distant future; and that on the face of them all it is distinctly expressed, or as distinctly implied, that this state of repose and blessedness is to continue, not for one thousand years, but "forever, even for ever and ever."

"What manner of time was signified," none knew. At one time it seemed as if deliverance from Babylonian bondage was to be signalized by the beginning of the long expected period of rest from sins and sorrows. And when Daniel's earnest and tearful petitions for building up Zion's broken walls were rewarded by a partial revelation of "the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power," it seemed as if the builders must make good speed, to complete the work in the "seven weeks and three score and two weeks," or else "the Messiah the Prince" might find them in the midst of their unfinished labors. And yet, together with the promise of finishing the transgression, making an end of sins, and bringing in everlasting

righteousness, there was a confused report of desolation, and destruction, and a flood, and war, and overspreading abominations. Dan. ix. 25-27.

“The sufferings until Christ, and the glory that should follow!” How can we wonder at the joyous haste with which Philip made the eager announcement, “We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph!” The chilling reply of the more cautious Nathanael is quite as true to life, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Yet, when the disciples became fully assured that this was indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Saviour of the world, how could they restrain their eager inquiries among themselves as to when or how he would set up his kingdom and manifest his glory? Many thought “that the kingdom of God should immediately appear;” which gave occasion to the parable of “a certain nobleman, who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.” We are not surprised that the apostles themselves could understand nothing of his sufferings, death, and resurrection, or the trials in reserve for themselves. Had not Christ come, and were not the sufferings until then? We wonder not that their faith and hope well nigh perished at the cross, and were quite buried in the tomb of Joseph. Nor is it strange that, gladdened beyond all expectation at seeing him really alive again from the dead, they were sadly cast down when he led them out as far as Bethany, and bade them farewell. Should any one say that it is incredible that they should have failed to understand his oft-repeated declarations of his approaching death, resurrection, and departure from them, we reply, that it ought not to be regarded as incredible, at least by those, who, with his finished revelation in their hands, do not scruple to assert of a large part of his plainest statements and most stringent commands, that it is impossible to understand them according to the literal sense of his words. No, we are not surprised at anything of the kind; and in that moment of heart-breaking bereavement, how could the anxious inquiry be any longer repressed, “Lord, wilt thou not, at this time, restore again the kingdom to Israel”—

the true Israel?* receiving as their only direct and satisfactory reply, the assurance of the two men in white apparel, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts i. 11. Christ had just assured them that "it was not for them to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in his own power," and on former occasions he had purposely and repeatedly drawn the same veil of uncertainty over the time of his return as had concealed the "what manner of time" which the old prophets had so earnestly but so vainly endeavored to ascertain. Thenceforward the coming of Christ "in his own glory and of his Father" occupied their hearts and hopes even more intently than his coming, in the abstract, had engaged those of former saints. Many of Christ's sayings which appeared dark and enigmatical before, were now seen in a clear light. Though heralded at his birth by the angelic song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men," he had shocked their hopes with the admonition, "*Think not that I AM COME to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.*" Matt. x. 34. "Suppose ye that *I am come* to give peace on earth? I tell you nay, but rather division." Luke xii. 49. The apostles now understood that "the sufferings" were to continue till Christ appeared, not as a servant, but as a sovereign; not as a sin-offering, but "unto salvation." They now joyfully took up the burden of Old Testament prophecy—"the sufferings until Christ, and the glory that shall follow"—"The grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath

* It is often gratuitously asserted that our Saviour corrected their misapprehension as to the nature of his kingdom; but his answer has reference to the times and seasons connected with it, rather than to any expectation which their words expressed or implied. "The question shows neither an absolute misapprehension of the nature of Christ's kingdom, nor a perfectly just view of it; but just such a mixture of truth and error as might have been expected, from their previous character and actual condition. That the kingdom of Israel was to be restored, they were justified in thinking, by such scriptures as Isa. i. 26, and ix. 7; Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 15, 17, etc. *They were only mistaken, if at all, in expecting it to be restored in its primeval form.*" Alexander on Acts i. 6.

appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world [age or dispensation, of which Satan is "god" and the spirits of darkness are the rulers,] looking for that BLESSED HOPE, and the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us *from all iniquity*, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, [a people for himself,] zealous of good works." Titus ii. 11-14. This purpose finds its consummation only at the last day, and in the future life. So Peter: "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace which is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; [Peter once thought it passing strange;] but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, *that when his glory shall be revealed*, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Pet. i. 13; iv. 12, 13. "What manner of persons ought ye to be,—looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12. So John: "And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." 1 John ii. 28. So James: "Be ye patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James v. 7, 8. So Jude: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Jude 20, 21.

There are many who believe that the glowing pictures of better days to come, in the old prophecies, have reference to the Christian dispensation in general, or to a supposed future and improved state of it in particular. We believe, and have endeavored to show, that those prophecies have, mainly at least, been misapplied. In no essential respect does the Christian dispensation differ from the Mosaic. Then, the Church was

restricted to one nation ; now, it embraces all. Then, its rites and restrictions were burdensome ; now, its forms are simpler and its service more spiritual. Then, they walked in comparative darkness ; on us shines 'the light of God's finished revelation, while the Spirit of God is granted in larger measures. The foundation of their salvation was future ; the foundation of ours is past. But let it be observed, that as the object of their hope was future, so is ours : their joys, sorrows, temptations, and dangers, and ours, are the same ; and dying, they did not enter into rest otherwise than as do we. In some respects the Church is to-day less zealous of good works than it was in the times of David ; and it has, since Christ, been as corrupt and idolatrous as it was in the days of Isaiah ; nor have we any guarantee which the early Church had not, that it may not again depart from the faith : while, as regards "the sufferings," they have under the Christian dispensation been much more general and severe than ever before. It is then in the second advent, when Christ appears in his glory as the Redeemer of his people, that all the lines of our holy religion meet, as in their true centre. Prophets and apostles announce to us the same truth. "The latter-day glory" is never to be darkened by sins or sorrows ; and has to do with the "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us," and "ready to be *revealed in the last time.*" 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.

But some reader may inquire, how far it is proper for us to understand literally *the accompaniments* of this hope of immortality, as portrayed in the Old Testament. This we shall best answer by inquiring what light Christ and his apostles throw on the subject.

In the form of words which our Saviour has given us, to direct thereby our daily devotions, the first petition runs, "Hallowed be thy name!"—not in heaven, but on earth, where "continually every day it is blasphemed" by the words and works of men. In the second, "Thy kingdom come," we pray, among other things, as says the Shorter Catechism, "that the kingdom of glory may be hastened ;" or, as it is expressed in the Larger Catechism, "that Christ would reign in our hearts here, and

hasten the time of his second coming and of our reigning with him forever." "Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead *at his appearing and his kingdom.*" 2 Tim. iv. 1. The third petition, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," cannot refer to any period of the Church in which sins continue to mar the acceptableness of our personal services, nor in which the tares are growing together with the wheat. But "in the end of this world (age or dispensation) the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and them that do iniquity; *and then* shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. xiii. 41, 43. This petition of the Lord's prayer certainly teaches us to expect, while we daily pray for it, the time when this now revolted province of God's dominion, the earth and its redeemed inhabitants, will be fully restored to sinless holiness and to God; and when Christ will be proclaimed and acknowledged, "THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD."

In the beatitudes, the design of which is to set forth the real and *future* blessedness of Christians, as contrasted with their apparent condition and present trials, Christ says, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." We have already seen how David uses the same assurance to strengthen the hearts of the suffering people of God; and here Jesus gives it his own emphatic and unqualified repetition. The change in the covenant works no change in the covenanted promise. "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers; and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy." And "the promise that he should be the heir of the world, (*τοῦ κόσμου,*) was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Rom. xv. 8, 9; iv. 13. It is not, therefore, an old, decayed, and perished Jewish hope we are exhuming, but one in the highest sense Christian, and therefore imperishable. This is by far the most striking of all the beatitudes; contrast here reaches its climax. Christ enjoined on his disciples the law of meekness: "I say unto you that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." The common objection raised against these and other like commands of Christ, is that a strict compliance with them would leave us a prey to rapacious, overbearing, and unmerciful men. The promise was evidently framed to meet this precise objection, which had even greater force in that day than in our own. The insurance more than covers the damage. They will lose their little earthly all, you say? Nay, says Christ, "they *shall inherit the earth*;" and the spirit of prophecy adds, "But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it." Prov. ii. 22.

To us the uniform teaching of Scripture seems obviously to be this: That *the earth was made for man, and man for the earth*. The devil, who long has ruled over it, is a usurper, and the wicked have no legitimate or long possession here. "They shall be destroyed from among the people." "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, *he created it not in vain*, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is none else." Isa. xlv. 17, 18. This plainly refers to the state of "everlasting salvation wherewith Israel shall be saved in the Lord, in the world without end." The psalmist says of the heavens and the earth which are now, "*Thou shalt change them and they shall be changed*." Jesus says, "They shall pass away." But God says, "The new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me." Isa. lxvi. 22. The new earth is as manifestly a renovation of the old, as the renovated body is "this mortal" when it has "put on immortality." This being so (the soul renovated, yet the same; the body renovated, yet the same; the earth renovated, yet the same—the same, yet each how gloriously transformed!) we ought not to allow ourselves to imagine that this class of promises, insuring long life, peace,

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and prosperity, must be fulfilled, in some modified, accommodated, and unsatisfactory sense, now in this present life, or never.

We have already quoted what St. Peter says about the restitution of all things, and the exhortation to repentance and the blotting out of sins which he bases thereon. In Rom. viii. 16–25, Paul teaches that at the time of “the redemption of our body”—“the day of redemption” whereunto we are “sealed” by the Holy Spirit—“the creature,” “the whole creation” shall, after its manner, and according to its proper nature, “have part in the glorious liberty of the sons of God;” for that the material creation is with us to partake of a better state. We have given the sense of the passage as expounded by Calvin. The same is substantially or fully concurred in by Doddridge, Scott, Henry, Burkitt, Hodge, and all other sound commentators with whom we are acquainted. We cannot quote Luther’s opinion, but we know certainly that this was his ideal of the kingdom of God. Let the passage itself be carefully weighed: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God.” We greatly need this witness of the Spirit, for as yet all appearances go to falsify the high pretension. “And if sons, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, *if so be we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.* For I reckon [it is my sober and deliberate estimation] that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD—*because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.* For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, [in this life we have only the firstfruits of the Spirit,] even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by (or rather, in) hope: but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not,

then do we with patience wait for it." This, therefore, was what Paul hoped and waited for.

Peter is even more circumstantial in his exposition of things unseen as yet, but confidently and by patience waited for. "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved [the time whereof no man knoweth,] what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, *looking for* and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, *according to his promise*, LOOK FOR new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye *look for* such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." 2 Pet. iii. 11-14. If we do not "look for such things," it is manifest that in Peter's day Christians looked for one thing, as the hope set before them, while we look for another. Peter evidently expected that at or after "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" there would be a new earth, inhabited by none but the righteous. Gen. i. 7, 8, will probably furnish the best commentary on the new heaven or heavens, always mentioned in connexion with the new earth. The apostle also makes a threefold division of time that is very noteworthy: 1. The heavens and the earth before the flood (v. 5,) "the world that then was," which "perished, being overflowed with water." 2. "The heavens and the earth which are now," and which are "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 3. "The new heavens and the new earth" which are to be hereafter, and for which, according to God's promise, believers are looking.

Many objections may be raised against this scriptural view of the hope of the gospel; but we are persuaded that they are merely specious and have no real force. No mere objection can set aside the plain and positive teachings of Scripture, only a part of which have been presented, and which are uncontradicted by anything in Holy Writ. It cannot be said that this view is a novelty, for it is undoubtedly the oldest in the Christian Church; it was regarded as unquestionable by the fathers of the

Reformation, and is held by the most learned and pious men of our own day. It cannot be said that it is unprofitable, unless we would impeach the wisdom of Him who has said so much about it in his word, setting it before us as a definite object of ardent expectation and hope, and teaching us in our daily devotions to pray for its speedy accomplishment, on the strength of his own promise, "I the Lord will hasten it in his time." Isa. lx. 22. Some may, indeed, call it idle conjecture and useless speculation; but if this be conjecture and speculation, we are at a loss to know what is reality and truth. We have heard the allegation that the Father Almighty cannot speak plain enough for his children to understand him, too often from the lips of Romanists, to pay any regard to it now. Let it be granted (yet under protest,) that we can draw no certain conclusions as to the future state, the world to come, from the Psalms and the Prophets; yet what will the objector say to the plain prose of the New Testament, the simple didactic statements of our Lord and his apostles, not merely in regard to that state itself, but also in regard to the testimony of the old prophets concerning it? If these cannot be unhesitatingly believed, unless the Church, or some other human authority, (our own sense, for example, or that of others, of what is congruous and fit,) vouches for their truth, or for our right understanding of them, then the foundations of all our faith are shaken, nay, subverted. If we are to believe only what seems to be probable, or what men will readily assent to, then our faith is utterly vitiated, and we might as well give up our Bibles to those who would burn them. In this enlightened and scientific age, it is currently reported that the day of miracles is past: a statement so widely construed and so generally concurred in, that many Christians seem to have forgotten that the great miracle of time, of which Christ's former miracles were only types—minor exhibitions of the authority and dominion that was given him over all flesh, over all the powers of nature, over all the spirits of darkness, and to which his past sufferings and present exalted mediation are only preliminary—is truly the great event of the future, and the object of our individual hope: a miracle to be wrought, not before carping

and incredulous Jews, but before an admiring and astonished universe; not on behalf of a few sick, famished, or dying folk, but in bestowing eternal life and everlasting salvation on as many as the Father has given him, on as many as have trusted in his gracious power and mercy!

If it be urged that the plainest prose of human speech can only figuratively set forth the eternal realities of the heavenly state, we consent that with due limitations the statement is just; but granting all that is claimed, we conceive that it is the part of wisdom to cleave to what our Saviour and his inspired apostles have given us as the nearest approximation to the reality, rather than try, by our own skill, to improve upon it. The general scope of the promise is clear; of its details we know little or nothing. If it be said that the Church has no doctrine upon the subject of this final restitution, we reply that the Church has never questioned it; and in any case, faith asks no warrant from man to believe the promise of God.

Some there are, we know, who assert that the Bible constantly affirms that heaven, as locally distinguished from earth, is and is to be the eternal abode of redeemed men. We apprehend that this is an entire mistake—that no such statement can be found in the word of God. The souls of departed saints are in heaven, for Christ is in heaven; but their bodies are still on earth, awaiting “the redemption of the purchased possession.” We are assured that “them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him” at the last day; they come back, then, to be reunited with their bodies; and it is no where intimated that, afterwards, they will be transported to another sphere. The Bible tells us very little about “heaven;” and the expressions it uses where we would say heaven, to wit, “the kingdom of God,” “the kingdom of Christ,” “the kingdom of heaven,” (as having reference to redeemed men,) have to do, as we are fully persuaded, with our own, rather than with any other part of the universe. Here sin has abounded, but grace shall much more abound; here by one man’s offence death reigned over all, but here also “they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall *reign in life* by one, Jesus Christ.”

“The wicked shall be cut off from the earth, but the perfect shall remain in it.”

But, it may be asked, What then becomes of the treasure we have laid up in heaven, the better and enduring substance we have there, the inheritance reserved for us in heaven, the Jerusalem that is above, the city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God? We should convict ourselves of folly, did we pretend to the gift of making all things plain. On the other hand, we maintain that the Scriptures are to be understood in their simple and obvious import, even though we may not be able satisfactorily to adjust their relations to others seemingly in conflict. But we will suggest to the reader that Revelation xxi. 1-5, and also iii. 11, 12, seem to have been written with a view to solving these doubts and removing even the appearance of conflict in the passages referred to. In this vision, subsequent to that of the general judgment, John saw new heavens and a new earth; he saw also the holy city, New Jerusalem, freighted with all the treasures reserved and laid up there, “*coming down from God out of heaven,*” etc. Let the reader examine the passage for himself, giving due weight to the words, “Behold, I make all things new”—the restitution of all things—“and he said unto me write; *for these words are true and faithful.*”

After what we have now said, we would not refer at all to another objection, to wit, that this view is too materialistic and unfriendly to spirituality of heart, except for the fact that there is a very common misapprehension in reference to this matter, on the part of many devout minds. If, indeed, spiritual-mindedness consists in the habitual contemplation of things abstract and immaterial, then the mystics of all ages and religions (who have been not a few,) must bear off the palm of spirituality against all competitors. But it is not so: the scriptural antitheses are not things material and things immaterial, but rather things seen and things unseen as yet; things present and things to come; things carnal and things spiritual. “They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.” Rom. viii. 5. “The

flesh" is our fallen nature, moral as well as physical; "the things of the flesh" are those with which our fallen nature is conversant, and in which it delights. "The things of the Spirit" are those which have to do with our holy religion, the things which are revealed to us by the Spirit of God in his word; who also works in us an aptitude to receive them, and without whose influence, we neither believe the glad tidings, nor take one step in pursuit of the promised good. This, while including many present spiritual blessings, consists chiefly of "good things to come," whether in their nature material or immaterial or both; for they have to do with both body and soul. The testimony of these things, "the natural man receiveth not, for they are foolishness unto him;" things seen and temporal bound his faith and hope. It is the same fatal lack of faith in God, which leads so many professed Christians to make sure of all they can get of present good, (often of very doubtful quality,) and risk as little as possible upon the uncertain chances for the future. The religion of many is but a miserable calculation of chances. To make some provision against the doubtful future, is as far as such miscalled faith will venture. To the child of God, to him who has a true faith, there is no venture about it, nor any calculation of chances: the future is certain, the present only is doubtful. Life itself cannot be *risked* for Christ's sake: "he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal."

The hope of the gospel contemplates the highest perfection of our whole nature, physical, intellectual, and moral: the countless hosts of these redeemed and perfected men dwelling in their most appropriate habitation, in social converse with each other, amid the unveiled glories of the everywhere present God, and in unrestricted and visible companionship with Jesus Christ, God manifest in our flesh; a state in which every power of our renewed nature, physical and moral, will be in the most delightful activity, doing in all things his will, as angels do it in heaven; a state in which, without the abatement of one jot or tittle of the exceeding broad commandment, we shall love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and strength and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves; nor account it strange, as we now do,

that our fellows have as good and full a claim upon our affections and cheerful service as our children or ourselves. Then, but we imagine not till then, will clashing interests, with consequent strife and contention, come to an end, and "wars shall cease under the whole heaven." Earth will then be heaven, a part of God's holy and happy empire. "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is with men*, and he shall *dwell with them*, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." Rev. xxi. 2-5. If a continual regard for, and a confident and holy rejoicing in this "hope of the gospel," with a daily preparation for and reference to it in all our plans, arrangements, recreations, and duties, worldly and religious, be not spirituality of heart and heavenly-mindedness, then we have misconstrued the whole matter, and are in darkness until now.

As the opinions of great and good men have weight with Protestants as well as with others, we will, for the gratification of some readers, refer briefly to those of a few of the greatest the modern Church can boast. Calvin closes his comment on Matt. v. 5, with the remark that "after the resurrection, the meek (or the righteous) will be put in everlasting inheritance of the earth." On Isa. lxi. 7, he says, the passage refers to the state after the resurrection. See also his remarks in his treatise on the Resurrection, Institutes, Book III. ch. xxv. sec. 11. The following expression of Luther's views will suffice: "How Luther, when excited by the beauties of nature, still held fast by *his thought of the kingdom of God*, Mathesius shows in the following statement: The spring of 1540 was very beautiful, everything was green and blooming. The Doctor said to Mr. Justus Jonas, If sin and death were away, we might be well satisfied to remain in such a paradise. But it will be far lovelier when the old

world and the old skin are renewed, and an eternal spring arrives which shall continue forever." Henry's Life and Times of Calvin, Vol. I. p. 307. The views of Chalmers will be found, expressed with characteristic grandeur of diction and illustration, in his sermon on the New Heavens and the New Earth. Compare Tholuck on Psalms, xxxvii. 7-11; Hodge's Commentary (unabridged) on Rom. iv. 13, and viii. 18-25; Candlish's Life in a Risen Saviour, p. 101.

All things earthly are fleeting and unstable; the hope of the gospel alone is lasting and secure. Let us then redeem the time, because the days are evil. Our present lot, instead of lading us with a perilous burden of "the cares of this life," should excite us to unwonted activity in our Lord and Master's service. Our past losses, instead of making us more than ever solicitous to lay up treasure on earth, for ourselves and for our children, should the rather teach us wisdom for the future; that by more careful sacrifices of time and toil, by benefactions to the poor, and particularly to Christ's poor saints, by an enlightened zeal for the Lord's house, and by larger and more hearty offerings made to his treasury, we may "provide ourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens *which faileth not*, where neither thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth"—"a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold upon eternal life." Let us mend our broken fortunes; yes, but then let us invest more wisely than in time past. Drafts against the treasury of heaven will stand us in better stead than the best "foreign exchange" in these uncertain times, or in any other. We shall need them in "the time to come." "He shall receive an hundred fold, and inherit eternal life."

Let no man complain of the loss of political privileges; we have a "citizenship," a "*πολιτευμα*, state relations, in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour," (Phil. iii. 20,) of which man cannot disfranchise us, and in comparison with which all other citizenships are paltry and contemptible. If we have been so impoverished that our children may not enjoy the benefits of a finished education, they may have that which is of infinitely more value, and of which it is written, "All thy

children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." In THE LIFE TO COME, they will readily make up their present deficiencies. They who begin in the school of Christ, will hereafter begin where the wisest philosophers have left off. They who now are apt to learn the rudiments of knowledge there taught; (the knowledge of their own sin and of Christ's salvation,) insure to themselves, in due time, a solid proficiency in every other department of useful knowledge: "The fear of the Lord [true religion] is the beginning of knowledge." Prov. i. 7. Let us meditate on these things, let us give ourselves wholly to them. Let us be content, not so much with the unhappy present, as in patient expectancy of the blissful future. If God, in his providence, permit us to remain here, it is better so; if we be driven elsewhere, we may go without fear, even though, like the father of the faithful, we know not where: "for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." God gives us but one sure title here—"the possession of a burying place" in the land of our inheritance, wherein, like Abraham, we have lived and died as strangers.* We shall have enough to do, here or elsewhere, in training our children and

* The unwillingness of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, to be buried elsewhere than in their own possessions, the tenacity with which in death, even more than in life, they clung to "the place which they should after receive for an inheritance," (Heb. xi. 8,) Calvin regards as indubitable evidence of their faith in the resurrection of the body, and in the profound significance of the promise made to Abraham. Institutes, Book III. ch. xxv. 8. How much may be comprehended in the sure promise of restoration (not of believing Jews only, but of all the children of Abraham, "according to promise,") the event alone can disclose. Yet, "why should it be thought a thing incredible by any, that God should raise the dead," fulfilling thus the "hope of the promise made unto the fathers?" Acts xxvi. 6-8. Or, how can it be denied, that, in a sense obscure enough now, but perfectly intelligible then, Abraham may yet dwell at home, in the land wherein he lived and died a stranger; and of which God said, "To thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever?" Gen. xiii. 15. The supposition is not necessary to acquit our God of the charge of unfaithfulness; but the whole preceding discussion, as well as Paul's coupling the resurrection of the dead (that is, "of dead men,") with "the hope of the promise made to the fathers, unto which promise the twelve tribes hoped to come," leads us to believe that the second advent, the resurrection of the body, the awards of the last judgment, with the order, holiness, and peace, imperturbable and eternal, which are thenceforth to reign on earth, where the kingdom of God will be forever and gloriously established—that these events, repeatedly and plainly predicted, and to which God's word is as

our households after us, that we may be "heirs together of the grace of life."

Saved, then, in hope, and hoping for that we see not, let us in patience possess our souls. Let us neither antedate our true and promised blessedness; nor, on the other hand, let us commit our Lord to a time of our own appointing; but by patience wait for it in his own time; persuaded that "yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry."

[ADDENDUM.]

ON THE MILLENNIUM.

In the foregoing article, and in that on the Resurrection, which preceded it, we have briefly adverted to several matters which deserve a more special consideration. It is the prevalent belief in the Church in our day, that there are three events to be confidently expected before the end of the world: 1. The restoration of the now dispersed and unbelieving Israelitish na-

fully committed as to anything else, furnish us the key to the Old Testament prophecies of better times to come; and to those frequent promises of restoration, given, as we conceive they only could be given, in forms of speech accommodated to the present condition and pursuits of men. Yet, because we know that some will regard this principle of interpreting the old prophecies as extravagant, although so strongly sustained by the express statements of the New Testament, we will add yet one more: "The promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Therefore, it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure *unto all the seed*, not to that only which is of the law, but to that which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations;) before [*i. e.* in the sight of] him whom he believed, even God, *who quickeneth the dead*, [*i. e.* dead men,] *and calleth the things that are not as though they were.*" Rom. iv. 13-17. Now, why is the resurrection of the dead brought into view,—why the fact that God looks upon future things as already present, except for the reason, that in the light of these truths, we are to view and understand the promise to Abraham, that through a son, yet unborn, he should be the father of a multitude of nations, (evidently "the nations of them that are saved." Rev. xxi. 24,) who with him should be the heirs of the world? And if the promise is to be thus understood, why not the prophecies, which do but expand, by divine inspiration, the same promise, and picture to us its fulfilment?

tion to the favor of God. 2. The conversion of the world to a pure Christianity. 3. "The Millennium"—we use the word without any reference to Rev. xx. 1-6,—the supposed period of the greatest glories of the Church militant, and its most splendid triumphs over idolatry, error, and sin. The two former are generally included in the last.

We have no right nor any wish to deny that these may be part of God's gracious purposes toward our lost race, preceding, in order, the final and full redemption of the body of Christ. All that we would suggest is, that these purposes are not clearly revealed; and that should it please God at any earlier day to "finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, making a short work upon the earth," (even while we imagine that the good work is only fairly begun,) the error would be altogether our own; since God has purposely concealed the day; and since, even before their fulfilment, the promises and prophecies will bear a very different sense.

I. It is commonly supposed that Rom. xi. clearly reveals God's purpose of the future restoration of the Jewish people, as such, to the faith of the gospel. That sense agrees well with a large part of what the apostle says; but it is beset with very great difficulties. 1. Paul says that "partial blindness has happened unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." V. 25. As God is now "visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name," (Acts xv. 14,) the most natural understanding of Paul's language would be, "until God has gathered his elect among the Gentiles, and sealed them with his Spirit." Another sense, indeed, may be put upon the words, viz., that the Jewish nation is not to be converted until after all the Gentile nations have embraced Christianity. 2. But this is in manifest conflict with the opinion, also held, that the accession of the Jews to the Christian Church will infuse into it a new life, that will carry it triumphant over all the earth: an opinion based on verse 15: "What shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" *i. e.* a revival of religion such that it may be called a spiritual resurrection. This spiritual resurrection is supposed to express the true sense of "the first resur-

rection" in Rev. xx. 4, 5, and will then occur after "the hindermost of the nations" has come in. This ill agrees with the belief that that gracious revival is to inaugurate the conversion of the nations. The Reformers, on the other hand, understood Paul to speak of the resurrection of the body, (Hodge on Rom. xi. 15,)—"what shall the receiving of them be, but the eternal life of the people of God": so that the reference would be to the heavenly state, the natural but believing children of Abraham, raised up and owned as his, forming one of "the nations of them that are saved." So in Ezek. xxxvii., with reference to the same event, when the people said, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost," God replies, "O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel;" and instead of a disheartened few, there stood up "an exceeding great army" of Israelites indeed. 3. The glorious conclusion at which Paul arrives, "*And so all ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED, as it is written,*" etc., whether reference be had to all believing Israelites or to the whole "Israel of God," seems to us to look the same way. The two scriptures to which Paul alludes in confirmation, determine that more fully as his intent: "The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee [Jacob] and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, *from henceforth and forever.*" Isa. lix. 20, 21. And again, "But this shall be my covenant, etc.; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall *teach no more* every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me," etc. etc. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. It is only after the resurrection, when "he that is perfect shall be as his Master," that we shall "teach no more every man his neighbor," etc.

II. The day is certainly coming when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and of his glory; and when peace shall dwell in all the habitations of men: but that it will be so

before the work of redemption is complete, at Christ's appearing, when "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," is not perfectly certain, to say the least. What casts most doubt on the common opinion is the fact that the prophecies in reference to that period leave no room for the "little season" of disorder and satanic apostasy that is to follow; they all bear on their face the impress of perpetuity; they shall teach *no more*, sin *no more*, war *no more*. It is frequently said that the conversion of the world is necessary, in order to make up the innumerable hosts of the redeemed out of all the nations and tribes and kindreds of the earth. But if the prevailing belief among us be well-founded, that all who die before their personal accountability begins, belong to the class of "elect infants, dying in infancy," it will probably be found in the day of redemption that more than half of all the nations that sit in darkness, have been snatched as brands from the burning, through the intervention of that untimely death which others have deplored; and are waiting now "the manifestation of the sons of God." We have maintained that the glorious Old Testament prophecies ought to be read in the light of the resurrection; and whether all nations be ever converted or not, it seems to us that those innumerable millions of the redeemed, never reckoned among the sons of Zion, are indicated in Isaiah xlix. 21: "Then shalt thou say in thine heart, *who hath begotten me these*, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, and a captive, and removing to and fro? And *who hath brought up these?* Behold, I was left alone; *these, where had they been?*" "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight!" It was when Zion is represented as bemoaning her arduous and unprofitable labor—"We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have, as it were, brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; *neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen*"—that the prophet exclaims, "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in

dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. xxvi. 18, 19. "At the resurrection of the just," the saying will be literally fulfilled, that "*the earth shall be made to bring forth in one day, and nations be born at once.*"

III. If there is to be a "millennium," then both the above expectations will doubtless have a double fulfilment, one in this world, a glorious foreshadowing of that hereafter. It may be so that there are far better times in store for the Church in its militant state; we dare not deny it; we would not do so presumptuously, if we dared. But has God clearly revealed any such purpose? We think not; else it would not have escaped the keen vision of the leaders of the Reformation, to mention no others. That purpose certainly is not revealed in Rev. xx. 1-6; and we have seen that the old prophets refer to something far higher and better. The endless disputes also among good men, about its relation to the second advent, suggest the inquiry whether the "millennium" itself may not be the most doubtful point involved in the controversy; and yet it is always taken for granted by both the parties in dispute. The doubt is increased by the fact that, till the last two hundred or two hundred and fifty years, whenever the subject came up, the parties in controversy were not, as now, pre-millenarians and post-millenarians, but millenarians and *anti-millenarians*. This continued so till long after the Reformation. There are some, indeed, who imagine that the Reformers were but babes in the knowledge of such matters, as compared with ourselves. But there has been no new revelation given since their day; and as we do not belong to the modern school of religious progressionists, we imagine that they were as well qualified in all respects to ascertain the mind of the Spirit as we; and in some respects better, for their daily conflicts with error kept all their senses awake, led them more jealously to scrutinize the word of eternal truth, and to contend far more earnestly for the obvious and literal sense of the divine oracles.

The various and contradictory opinions held by the best of men, as to that mysterious period of a thousand years, which

gives name and occasion to the controversy, leads us to the same conclusion, to wit, that God has taught us nothing with certainty on the subject. St. Peter tells us that the old prophets did not understand the import of many of their own predictions; for the most part they were to them very dark; and we have no idea that St. John was an exception to the rule, or that he knew any more about the "millennium" than the least of us; probably not so much in his own esteem. The old millenarianism, which is substantially one with the modern premillenarianism, rose in the second century, engrafting a Jewish theory on the guardedly expressed words of the Apocalypse, and giving the more plausibility to their opinions by mixing up therewith the doctrine of the final and eternal "restitution of all things" which was plainly taught by the apostles. The Church always rejected this theory, as it does to-day; but then, till recently, it rejected the millennium along with it. Of the Reformers, so far as we can learn, Luther thought the thousand years began with the time of the prophecy; Melancthon, and others, that it dated from the accession of Constantine, and the downfall of paganism. Calvin, instead of regarding it as a period of peace and tranquility, a figure of the heavenly rest, says, "It refers not to the heavenly rest, but to the *various agitations* which await the Church in its militant state on earth." Institutes B. III. ch. xxv. 5. By some, it has been supposed that the thousand years refers to the day of judgment, or that part of it during which Satan and the spirits of darkness are in close confinement, awaiting their own judgment: Gog and Magog, then, are ungodly and condemned men, transformed from mortal to immortal, who league with Satan and his angels to disown and resist the authority of the Judge. This theory, which is as plausible as any, is based on 2 Pet. iii. 8, which is regarded, not as accounting for the Lord's delay in fulfilling the promise of his coming, (that the apostle does in the next verse,) but as referring to "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" mentioned in the preceding verse. And last of all, we have the now currently received theory. Each of these theories may be plausibly accommodated to the brief outline given in Scripture; yet each of

them is attended with very great difficulties, as all candid advocates of them must admit. For our own part, we imagine that if God had intended us to hold any settled opinions on the subject, he would have told us just what we are to believe.

But, not to extend this note too far, we will suggest as briefly as possible five arguments against one or both of the theories which make it the great period of the Church's great conquests and ingathering of sinners.

I. Whereas nineteen chapters are occupied with the various conflicts and fortunes of the Church in this world, covering, as is supposed, a period of eighteen hundred or two thousand years, it seems to us inconceivable that the whole period of the Church's most splendid achievements, and greatest peace, purity, and prosperity, covering a space of one thousand or three hundred and sixty thousand years, should be passed over in the brief compass of six verses (Rev. xx. 1-6)—these verses bringing to our knowledge but two facts: 1. That Satan is bound, and shut up in the bottomless pit, that he may deceive the nations no more for a thousand years; and 2. That a certain class of persons, who are pronounced blessed and holy, (because they have part in the first resurrection, and over them the second death shall have no power,) shall reign with Christ a thousand years; but where or under what circumstances the record does not say, whether in heaven, or on earth, or "in the air" on Christ's judgment-seat. Of all things else, material or immaterial, not one word is spoken. Now, it seems to us incredible that in a symbolical representation of the period when all nations are to be converted, the Jews restored to Christ, and universal peace and blessedness refresh the groaning earth, no reference whatever is made to any such things: the only two events mentioned occurring at the beginning, and the whole period itself presenting an *ominous blank*.

II. Both theories imply that we are not to expect the great triumphs of grace, till Satan is placed under some new restraint; as though Christ must lay hold on the adversary and still further cripple him, before his word and Spirit can effect their signal victories over the fatal perverseness and obduracy of men.

III. In Scripture, Satan is said to be "the god of this world" or "age"—this disordered state of things which sin has introduced; so that "the course of this world" is essentially "according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," who "also deceiveth the whole world." When, therefore, Satan is cast out, when his supremacy is overthrown, and this disordered state of things comes to an end, it seems obvious that it will be the end of "this present evil world" or "age." And whatever interpretation be put upon the symbolical language of the Apocalypse, it appears to us, that any state of things of which it may be said that Satan is bound, cast into the bottomless pit, shut up, and a seal set upon him, that he may deceive the nations no more for a thousand years, must be essentially a different state of things from the present, and cannot therefore be a part of "this present evil world" or "age," of which fallen angels are said to be the spiritual rulers. The apostle admonishes us to take to us the whole armor of God, because we contend not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers; against the rulers of the darkness of this world—the rulers of this dark and disordered world or age,—against spiritual wickedness in high places. Now when this exhortation becomes obsolete, because Satan is placed under close restraint, we cannot believe, without an express divine warrant for it, that the offer of salvation will be either made or accepted. If it be said that we must take God's testimony to the contrary, we reply that the passage does not even hint that, during the thousand years Satan is bound, one sinner will come to repentance, much less all nations.

IV. The darkest feature of the whole is, that the prevalent theory now asserts what before was only implied: to wit, that Satan, when once released, is able in "a little season" to undo the glorious work of a thousand or three hundred and sixty thousand years; filling the peaceful earth with error, confusion, and discord, till faith is scarce left among men; as Christ says, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

V. The only other argument we need offer against the popularly received interpretation of the passage, is, that the judgment which comes subsequent to the thousand years, and to the little season of direful confusion and conflict, is not a judgment of "the quick and the dead" at all; it is emphatically a judgment of *the dead*—of men who have come up out of their graves and out of the depths of the sea. The subjects of this judgment are *four times over* declared to be "THE DEAD," and no reference whatever is made to any of the living. The twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse evidently covers a period of transition between this world and the world or age to come, "the world without end;" but its details are purposely involved in an impenetrable darkness.

In respect of the events which are to fill up those thousand years, the passage appears to us to be the most non-committal in the Bible. In this matter, it seems to have been God's purpose to hide wisdom from man. As regards that mysterious period, he has not bound himself by any pledge or engagement; but has left himself free to fill up those thousand years, which are to him, and mayhap will be to us, as one day, with judgment or mercy or both, as is most in accordance with his studiously concealed and inscrutable purpose.

"As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin, *and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity*: so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may *shake off all carnal security*, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen!" Conf. of Faith, ch. xxxiii. 3.

"As to the circumstance that Paul speaks in the first person, ['we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord,'] he means by this to arouse the Thessalonians to wait for it; nay, more, to hold all believers in suspense, that they may not promise themselves some particular time. For, granting it was by special revelation that he knew that Christ would come *at a somewhat later time*, (2 Thess. ii. 3,) it was necessary that this

doctrine should be delivered to the Church in common, that believers should be prepared at all times." Calvin on 1 Thess. iv. 15.

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." Paul : 1 Thess. v. 4.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

The Rock of our Salvation : A Treatise respecting the Natures, Person, Offices, Work, Sufferings, and Glory of Jesus Christ. By WILLIAM S. PLUMER, D. D., LL. D. Published by the American Tract Society, New York : pp. 519 : 12mo. 1867.

The theme of this book is the most glorious that ever occupied the tongue or the pen of man. An aged and faithful minister of the gospel, who has spent all his life preaching Christ, could not better employ his ripest and maturest powers than in recording his testimony concerning the adorable Redeemer. A learned and eminent professor of theology could perform no more profitable service for the Church, than to compose in plain and simple words his profoundest, most instructive, and most convincing lessons relative to God incarnate for human salvation. This volume contains the marrow of the gospel. It is all about Christ, and is full of unction. The wisest man that ever lived might read it with benefit, whilst the simplest and most ignorant can not fail to understand every sentence and every word. It is a book which must live; for it is full of undying truth, and such as mankind must ever need, and the Church ever busy herself in pro-