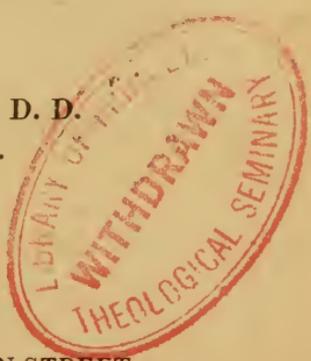


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A
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SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE
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COND ADVENT OF CHRIST;
 FROM THE
 ERRONEOUS REPRESENTATIONS
 OF
MODERN MILLENARIANS.

BY
WILLIAM HAMILTON, D. D.
 MINISTER OF STRATHELANE.



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MAURICE OGLE, 17 & 19, WILSON STREET:
AUGH & INNES; W. OLIPHANT; W. WHYTE; R. OGLE;
W. LINDSAY; J. ROBERTSON; J. LOTHIAN;
AND J. BOYD, EDINBURGH.

MDCCCXXVIII.

5CC #12, 21

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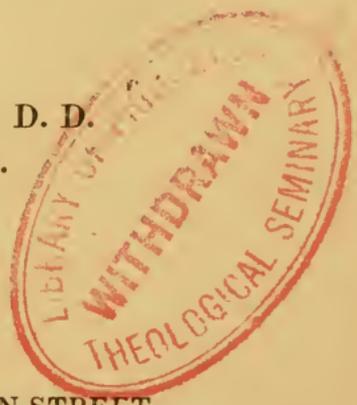
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MDCCCXXVIII.

ANDREW YOUNG, PRINTER.

TO THE
REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D.
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF EDINBURGH :

THE FOLLOWING VOLUME;

AS A MARK OF RESPECT

FOR THE
UNWEARIED AND EARNEST APPLICATION OF ALL THE
POWERS OF HIS MIND,
TO THE
ILLUSTRATION AND DEFENCE OF SACRED TRUTH;
AND
AS AN EXPRESSION OF DELIGHT AT THE SOUND JUDGMENT
AND
KIND-HEARTEDNESS WHICH ACCOMPANY ALL HIS EXERTIONS
FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF THE CAUSE OF RELIGION AND HUMANITY;

IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND AND SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.





PREFACE.

MR. CUNNINGHAME and some other Millenarians ; who express surprise and disappointment, that the revival of the principles which they espouse, has excited so little attention in Scotland, may, perhaps, be also astonished that no attempt has been made to refute them.

When Mr. Cunninghame's pamphlet appeared, it is highly probable that many of the clergy in this country, had no idea whatever of the number of those who had embraced his tenets. Amongst those who had heard of the re-appearance of these opinions ; many might imagine that there was no occasion whatever to expose the groundlessness of notions, whose falsehood and absurdity, must, to all who were possessed of the Bible, and capable of reading and understanding it, appear so manifest and glaring as to supersede all criticism or confutation.

Amongst those who might entertain a different view of the matter; and might fancy that, though the theory was utterly groundless and untenable, it possessed something plausible and imposing, various causes might prevent them from appearing before the public upon such a subject. The tone and temper of those who had then come forward in the controversy, were the reverse of what a man of piety and peace would wish to find in an opponent. Though labouring under a deplorable lack of theological knowledge, and an unusual ignorance of the elements of Biblical interpretation; few controversialists had ever displayed a greater degree of arrogance and self-conceit; or breathed a spirit of more fierce and stern disdain of all who ventured to dissent from their dogmatical dictates. And who that values either his own quiet or respectability, would like to encounter such antagonists? Some, who, in defence of Divine truth, might be willing to brave all the consequences of such an irksome conflict, might want opportunity. Oppressed with a charge of five, ten, or twenty thousand souls; how is a clergyman in such a situ-

ation, who wishes to fulfil his duty to God and man, to prepare works for the press? At a distance from public libraries, how are we, on such occasions, to procure the books, which it is necessary to consult? While one third of my brethren, and some of these too endowed with the finest talents and distinguished by the highest literary and theological attainments; to the disgrace of this age and country, are condemned to starvings of £150 per annum; after defraying the expenses inseparably connected with their station, how are they both to secure food for their families, and purchase the publications requisite for the liberal and effectual prosecution of their studies? Even supposing these difficulties surmounted, how are they to obtain command of leisure and retirement? The minister of the smallest parish, has many indispensable duties to perform, which consume a large proportion of his time: and in many painful cases, his necessary toils are sadly aggravated by needless and harassing tasks. If the population of the parish has immeasurably outgrown the capacity of the church, or his own habitation has become

ruinous, and dangerous: let the necessity for instant and generous accommodation be ever so clear, clamant, and urgent; some individual is generally at hand, ready to resist every call of religion and humanity, and willing to subject the incumbent to all the arrogance and distraction of an odious and interminable litigation, rather than submit to the performance of the most plain and indisputable obligations which he owes to God and his brethren. How many ministers have had their earthly happiness destroyed, and their lives shortened by wanton, but vexatious, actions in the courts of law; never can be known till the day shall declare them. But in this manner as much time and talent have been frittered away in vain, as might have prepared all the polyglotts and commentaries in existence.

It is a matter of regret that the service which I have attempted in the following pages to discharge, has fallen into my hands. Few of my brethren could have been more unqualified for the undertaking. Prophecy and the Millennium had attracted less of my attention than the other parts of revelation. They had sel-

dom presented themselves to my notice in the course of expounding the Scriptures weekly to my congregation. I never had found myself called on to make them the subject of particular investigation: and the little knowledge respecting them which I possessed, I had obtained exactly in the same way in which every Christian should endeavour to secure it, by examining them for the purpose of acquiring a general acquaintance with the invaluable oracles of God.

The work has been composed during a busy season of the year, when I was imperatively bound to attend to more important matters, and unable to secure the time requisite to arrange and digest my observations in a more concise and luminous form. When I began to prepare for the press, I expected that the publication would not have exceeded one-third of its present bulk. But, in spite of every effort to abridge it, by omitting some topics altogether, and shortening the remarks upon others, the work has insensibly swelled out to its present size.

Of the Millennium itself little has been said. Though to distinguish them from those who

abide by the Scriptural representations of the subject, the advocates for visionary notions respecting it, are denominated Millenarians; it has been remarked long ago that this designation is unjust.* We who reject the idea of the Redeemer's personal reign on earth, believe as firmly as our opponents in the reality of a Millennium. But it is a Millennium of righteousness and peace, of truth and holiness; when the people shall all know the Lord, love him with their whole heart, and serve him with all their strength and mind. It is a Millennium consisting of an unusual blessing upon the ordinances of religion, and a rich effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the souls of believers. The reader, who is desirous of farther information respecting that interesting era, will find on the subject many judicious observations, and of a most practical tendency, in the works of Bogue and Hopkins. Notwithstanding

* Lectures in MS. on the Book of Revelation, by the Rev. David Connell, Minister of East Kilbride. Lecture on Rev. xx. The manuscript dated 1777.

all that Mr. Maitland* has urged to the contrary; in every other case, a day, in the language of prophecy, denotes a year. Whether that happy season will be limited to one thousand years: or agreeably to the uniform analogy of the prophetic writings, each day, in the predictions relating to the Millennium, denotes a year; and the whole period of the blissful reign of righteousness will extend to three hundred and sixty thousand years, time only can determine.

On the subject of Prophecy, of which very little could be said in these pages, much information may be found in Fraser's Key to the Prophecies, Bishop Hurd's Introduction to the study of Prophecy, Bishop Newton's Dissertations, and Mr. Keith's Evidences of the Truth of the Christian Religion, derived from the fulfilment of Prophecy; in the works of Johnstone, Fuller, Holmes and Cuthbertson on the Revelation; in the writings of Mr. Ma-

* Enquiry into the grounds on which the Prophe-
tic period of Daniel and St. John, has been supposed
to consist of 1260 years.

son; but above all in the profound and masterly productions of Mr. Faber. Many of the Millenarians have displayed much learning and ingenuity in their publications on the Prophecies. In this class none are superior to Mr. Cunninghame. But their premises appear to be so wide from probability, that no dependence can be placed upon their conclusions: and, as if on purpose to render the whole ridiculous, some of them have interlarded their disquisitions upon the inspired predictions of Daniel and St. John, with comments upon the incoherent and senseless dreams of Esdras.

On the subjects discussed in this volume several excellent papers have appeared in the *Christian Observer*, under the signature of D. D. The reviewer in the *Edinburgh Theological Magazine* has twice shewn himself willing and well able to combat the advocates of Modern Millenarianism. A contributor to the *Edinburgh Christian Instructor* has furnished two judicious and dignified articles on the same topics. But nothing on the question has interested me more than the admirable

strictures of Mr. Faber, in his recent work, the Sacred Calendar of Prophecy.

Had I been aware that such accomplished and powerful writers as these would have taken up and continued the defence of this branch of revealed truth; it is very unlikely that I ever would have printed a single sentence on the subject. To controversy of any kind I have a strong aversion. Notwithstanding the utmost solicitude to avoid every thing offensive to an opponent, it is seldom possible to expose the fallacy of his reasoning and the groundlessness of his erroneous conclusions, without disturbing his self-complacency, and exciting uneasy or angry feelings. Though desirous to guard against every thing of an irritating description, it is perfectly possible that I may have sometimes failed. In combating writers, everywhere betraying the most consummate vanity and arrogance, combined with an ignorance and absurdity, which happily have been seldom equalled; it was no easy matter always to select in return the mildest and softest terms.

The Millenarians are welcome to treat this performance as they please. But as

they undoubtedly by this time have put forth their utmost strength, and have nothing new in the shape of evidence to offer; it would be extremely foolish and idle in me to continue the discussion. When once the arguments on any question are exhausted, the continuance of the controversy uniformly degenerates into wrangling and personal altercation. To such conduct I am resolved to be no party. From first to last, the present employment has been very unpleasant. The publications of the Millenarians contain very little to interest or edify. They have darkened many a precious doctrine of Christianity, and mistified many a plain text of Scripture: but it is not easy to specify any religious truth which they have simplified, or any passage of revelation which they have illustrated. Several months have been consumed in examining their writings: but never was any portion of my time so unprofitably spent: and to my dying day I fear I shall have cause to regret that so many hours have been so sadly wasted. With this volume I intend to take leave of the subject: and it will be no ordinary consideration which will induce me

to return to such a disagreeable and useless task.

At any rate, the Millenarians are very little entitled to demand farther discussion: for they evidently have not read what has been already written. One and all of them seem strangers to the unanswered, and unanswerable work of Dr. Whitby: or if they have seen it, they have shewn more good sense than to attempt a reply to his unquestionable facts, and irresistible reasoning.

W. H.

STRATHBLANE MANSE, }
September 1, 1828. }

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ERRATA.

Page 34, *line* 18, *for* Philalethos, *read* Philalethes.

— 112, — 6, — *conessions*, — *concessions*.

— 194, — 10, — Phil. iii. 4, — Phil. iii. 11.

Page 303, Note, *for* Augustin, *read* Augustini: and in the *last*
line, *dele* xviii.

Page 309, Note, *for* Eusebia, *read* Eusebii.

Page 310, Note, *for* Prolegomina, *read* Prologomena: and *last line*,
Note, *for* Augusteni de Lenitate, *read* Augustini de Civitate.

Page 331, Note, *2d line*, *for* and Letter, *read* and Mr. Cole's Letter.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS. STATEMENT OF THE SUBJECT.

WEAKNESS and imperfection are inseparable attendants on our fallen condition. Folly and absurdity in every age have possessed a wide and commanding sway: and in general none have given more deplorable proofs of the imbecility of human reason, nor wandered farther from the truth, than those who have had the greatest confidence in the strength of their own intellect, and the wisdom and excellence of their own opinions.

No situation can be more deplorable and dreadful than a state of guilt and depravity, and nothing on this side of heaven can be more desirable and delightful than freedom from the power and the presence of sin, and the possession of a soul supremely and ardently devoted to God and holiness. From the degradation and misery with which it is attended, in Scripture a natural condition is described as a state of death, and that blessed and glorious change which believers undergo at conversion is represented as a resurrection, and a passing from death unto life.

From misapprehending this language of Scripture and the preaching of the Apostles, it is probable that Hymeneus and Philetus inferred, not only that conversion is the best and noblest blessing which the Gospel confers, but the only resurrection which we are warranted to expect. They no doubt could urge many plausible arguments in support of their dogma. They could affirm that it was forced on them by the rigid literal interpretation of Scripture; that it tallied well with the general design of revelation; and gave the most honourable view of the character of God, who had such a regard to holiness, that, when this was secured, the grand and ultimate design of the gospel was gained, and there was nothing nobler nor better that it could bestow. And they too might declaim, in well set phrase, upon the theological ignorance of the age, and bewail the blindness and unbelief of the Christian world, who were so low, besotted, and grovelling, as to cling to the carnal hope of a resurrection of the body, and refuse to fix their whole desires on the blessings of a spiritual birth. But notwithstanding all the excellence of their intentions, the supposed strength of their arguments, and the firmness of their convictions of the truth of their notions; Paul enjoins Timothy to “shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness: and their word will eat as doeth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past al-

ready; and overthrow the faith of some." 2 Tim. ii. 16—18.

After delivering his farewell address to the Jews; as our blessed Lord was for the last time retiring from the temple, and bending his steps to the mount of Olives, "his disciples came to him to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. xxiv. 1—3.

After enumerating the various events which should precede the fall of Jerusalem, and the signs which should announce his coming, he added the solemn asseveration, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Matt. xxiv. 34.

These words have been very differently explained: but whatever may be their genuine interpretation, from this declaration of our Redeemer the belief immediately spread among some of his followers, that the end of all things was at hand, and that death should not seize upon the last of that generation, till he should return in glory, and lay the world in ruins.

It was in vain to plead, in opposition to this opinion, that in the very prophecy which was sup-

posed to predict the dissolution of all things, he had also affirmed, that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled, Luke xxi. 24. It was in vain to urge that Daniel had foretold the history of four successive empires, the division of the last empire into ten kingdoms, and the rise of another kingdom which should subdue three of the ten, be diverse from them all, and that the saints should be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of time, Dan. vii. 17—27. It was to no purpose to shew that the prophets had predicted a dispersion of the Jews, on account of their unbelief and other crimes, among the different nations of the earth, where they would abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: but afterwards they should return, and seek the Lord their God and David their king, and fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days, Jer. ix. 16. xxx. 11. Ezek. vi. 8. Hos. iii. 4, 5. It was useless to maintain that the Messiah was to have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth; that all the ends of the world were to remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations to worship before him, and that the whole earth should be filled with his glory, Psal. lxxii. 8. xxii. 27.

It was idle to contend that the day of the Lord would not come till all these predictions and pro-

mises were accomplished. The students of prophecy in that age, who were carefully watching the horizon of Providence, could tell that they thought they saw the signs of Immanuel's return; and point to his own plain declaration, that that generation should not pass till all that he had foretold respecting his second coming should be fulfilled; and quote the inspired commentary of Paul, that the day of the Lord was coming as a thief in the night; and that it was only by their superior information respecting the event, that the believers at Thessalonica could be preserved from being overtaken, like others, by its arrival, 1 Thess. v. 1—5.

But notwithstanding the confidence with which they asserted that the end of all things was at hand, and that time would terminate before the last of that generation could reach the grave; that generation went down to the dust, and fifty-three generations have followed them to the tomb; and yet the tide of time maintains its flow, the moon walks in brightness, the sun unwearied pours along the sky his flood of light, the seasons come regularly round, and all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. That the church might be relieved from the agitation and perplexity, into which the mistakes of their brethren were calculated to throw them, the Apostle sets himself purposely to expose the groundlessness of the notion that Christ would immediately appear. He tells them of events which were to intervene; which,

from the book of Revelation, it is evident must occupy thousands of years, before the second advent of our Lord. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way: And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." 2 Thess. ii. 1—10.

There is no end to the roving of the human mind, nor any possibility of guessing what strange

and incredible tenets may be adopted, even by some of the best and most intelligent of men. The heresy of Hymeneus and Philetus has long since sunk to rest. The expectations of Christ's immediate return, entertained by some of the primitive christians, were dissipated by the authority of Paul, and have been completely disproved by the event. But the church is just as far as ever from being secured against the agitation and distraction occasioned by mistakes relating to the second coming of our Lord. On this subject opinions as groundless, and far more extravagant, than those which disturbed the peace of the brethren at Thessalonica, have lately been advanced with an assurance and confidence, and propagated with an activity and ardour, which have seldom been equalled. It is boldly affirmed, that the Lord Jesus Christ will speedily return to the earth as judge of quick and dead; that he will at his coming raise the just to life; and reign with them in majesty and glory in this world for a thousand years. During this delightful and marvellous era, religion will flourish; vice and impiety disappear; and knowledge and righteousness, peace and happiness, universally prevail. At the close, however, of this millennium of bliss, a general apostacy will take place. The infidels will attack the camp of the saints; when the Redeemer will interpose for the protection of his followers; send fire from heaven to devour his enemies; raise the dead who have not been raised at the commencement of the thousand years of his

personal reign; bring all, who have not been previously judged, to his tribunal; banish the wicked into everlasting fire; and either carry off his people to heaven, or reign with them in this world, refined and purified by the final conflagration, for ever and ever.

Though the advocates of this theory are far from coinciding, this statement is designed to be a fair outline of the scheme, which possesses the greatest number of adherents. Some of those readers who have not looked into any of the Millenarian publications, may imagine that this description is a caricature of their hypothesis. In order, therefore, at once to remove such a suspicion, and to gratify the defenders of that system, it will be proper to allow a few of them to speak for themselves.

“This kingdom” of Christ, or his personal reign on earth, “then, will be contemporaneous with what is commonly called ‘the day of judgment,’ or ‘the day of the Lord,’ a term descriptive, not of the *ordinary period of twenty-four hours*, but the day foretold, and appropriate to him with whom ‘one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.’ At the *dawn* of this day, or rather period of time, ‘the first resurrection,’ or the resurrection of the ‘*dead in Christ*,’ will take place. These will awake fashioned after the glorious body of Christ; while the saints at that time *living* on the earth will undergo a momentous change; a change, effected not through the ordinary medium of death, but of some rapid and spi-

ritual process, which will at once assimilate them to the glorified dead, now restored to immortal life, and these saints, the dead thus revived, and the living thus changed, (and both glorified after the pattern of Christ,) these saints will ascend to meet the Lord, as he approaches towards the earth, in the mingled 'glories of his Father, and of the holy angels.' These saints, thus revived and changed, will form the ELECT CHURCH, and be presented as the glorious BRIDE to Christ, being now 'made perfect, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.' Then will the joyful hour be arrived when the marriage supper of the Lamb will be celebrated, 'because the bride will have made herself ready.' Then will the happy and redeemed church, thus united to her Lord, prepare to reign with him on the earth, and to share his millennial glory. On his approach the dreadful overthrow of impious and ungodly men will take place; at least throughout the range of that apostate Christendom, which so awfully shall have abased (abused?) its noble privileges, and slighted its gracious warnings. At this time the Jewish nation will be miraculously restored to their own land, and this long outcast people will again be honoured of God, and submit to the sway of the glorified Messiah their Prince. Satan will then be bound, and his influence over the earth be cast out during the millennial period; while the 'latter rains' of the Eternal Spirit, now no longer limited as on the day of Pentecost, but falling in gentle showers

over the whole earth, the time of the world's conversion will be arrived, and the knowledge of the Lord 'will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.'

“Over the world thus reduced to obedience, though not yet rescued entirely from death, ('the last enemy to be destroyed,') the Saviour and his glorified saints will REIGN in glory. The SUBJECTS of this kingdom will be composed of the *restored Jews*, the *converted heathen*, and the *remnant converted and saved* from the ungodly hosts who will have perished during the convulsions of the last plagues of the great judgment. During this peaceful dominion of the Messiah, the earth will exhibit a new spectacle of justice, allegiance, and felicity. The curse will be greatly mitigated, and the malignant excitements of Satan unfelt. But towards the conclusion of this great day of God, impiety will once more prevail, and Satan be permitted again to 'deceive the nations;' but a miraculous victory will finally subvert his power: the last judgment will take place; Satan and his rebellious associates will be cast into the lake of fire; death be destroyed; the curse *already taken* from the Elect Church at the first resurrection will now be removed entirely from the earth; and every foe being put down, the distinction betwixt Jew and Gentile destroyed, and the Mediatorial sceptre no longer needed, the mediatorial kingdom of the Messiah will be delivered up to the Father; God 'will be all in all,' and the earth at length be trans-

formed into a tranquil scene of happiness, an ever-enduring monument of praise to Him who shall have achieved its rescue from the terrific doom of death." *

The system is more fully detailed by Mr. Irving in his Preliminary Discourse to his translation of Ben-Ezra. It would be unjust to our Millenarian friends to withhold a few extracts from that performance.

“ The present visible church of the Gentiles, which hath been the depository of the oracles and the sacraments, and the ordinances, since the Jewish state was dissolved, I mean the mixed multitude who are baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost;—standeth threatened in the Holy Scriptures because of its hypocrisies, idolatries, superstitions, infidelity, and enormous wickedness,—with such a terrible judgment, as hath not been, nor ever shall again be seen upon the earth; in the which deluge of wrath she shall be clean dissolved, as the synagogue was heretofore in the destruction of Jerusalem, when she in like manner had filled up the measure of her iniquity:—which fearful consummation I judge to be near at hand, both by the signs of the times, and from the prophetic numbers expressly given to guide us in the anticipation of those great Gen-

* A Brief Enquiry into the Prospects of the Church of Christ in connexion with the Second Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. By the Hon. Gerard T. Noel, A. M. Curate of Richmond. pp. 31—34.

tile judgments which are mentioned in Scripture, wherever and whenever the coming of the Lord is mentioned.

“ When the Lord shall have finished the taking of witness against the Gentiles, and summed up the present dispensation of testimony in this great verdict of judgment, and while the execution is proceeding, he will begin to prepare another ark of testimony, or rather to make the whole earth an ark of testimony; and to that end will turn his Holy Spirit to his ancient people the Jews, and bring unto them those days of refreshing spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began: in the which work of conveying to them his Spirit, by the preaching of the word, he may, and it is likely, will use the election according to grace, who still are faithful among the Gentiles; though I believe it will chiefly be by the sending of Elias who is promised before the dreadful and terrible day of the Lord, and by other mighty and miraculous signs. This outpouring of the Spirit, is known in Scripture by ‘the latter rain,’ of which I deem the religious revivals of the last thirty years to be as the first droppings of the shower, and our religious works and societies to be a sickly uncertain hue of verdure which the withered stump by the scent of the waters hath put forth.” pp. 4, 5.

“ That these judgments,” a great warfare in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, when Antichrist shall fall, and his powers be broken in the battle of Armageddon, “upon the Gentile nations and all

the earth, he will finish by his own personal appearance in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; raising those who sleep in Jesus, and changing those of the Gentile church who still abide in life; and preserving the mourning Jewish church, as Goshen was preserved in the plagues of Egypt: and when the promised land shall have been cleared of all intruders, and they themselves by suffering perfected for the habitation of it, he shall lead them into it with a mighty and outstretched arm: and sit upon the throne of David, judging and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness; and send forth the law from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and rule among the nations, and be the Prince of universal peace; using in this judgment and government of the earth his risen saints, who shall be his ministers to execute whatever his pleasure is. And thus, Satan being cast out, and the Prince of light, and the heavenly Jerusalem, the dwelling place of his elect church being present, the Jerusalem on earth, with the house of Jacob, and all the nations shall enjoy that fulness of peace and joy, that millennial reign of righteousness, for which we all hope and pray, and diligently labour." pp. 6, 7.

“Now this third province of our High Priest’s work,” the redemption and purification of the earth whereon we dwell, “I find to be thus written in the Scripture. That at the coming of the

Lord there will be such a purification of the earth by fire, and amelioration of its condition by other means, known perhaps to God only, though our author," Ben-Ezra, "hath well, yea, magnificently speculated thereon, as shall realize the blessedness of that millennial kingdom, whereof some part of the delineation is set down above. This will take place by the casting out of Satan, that prince of the power of the air, and of spiritual wickednesses from their high places, with all the inferior rulers of the darkness of this world; and by the subjugation of all things to the Prince of Peace, and to the saints who shall be raised to be partakers of his government and kingdom. But forasmuch as death, generation, and corruption, growth, and decay, shall still have a place in that new earth, (Isa. lxv.) it cannot yet have received its entire purification at the hands of the Great High Priest, but looketh forward with expectation still to the end, when death the last enemy shall be destroyed. But in the meantime the earth and all the inhabitants thereof, shall possess the bright assurance of this bright consummation, by the presence of the heavenly Jerusalem, into which nothing entereth that defileth, or maketh a lie, which flesh and blood cannot inherit, which is incorruptible and unchangeable in its beauty, the habitation of the risen saints and elect church of our Priest. This material city, I say, in which the saints shall dwell, and from which they shall go forth on their errands terrestrial or celestial, shall bring to the Matter of

the earth that same assurance of an unchangable beauty and perfection yet to be, as the pure body of Christ that rose to the eternal throne doth bring at this moment to my body and to the body of the Church now living or mouldering in the grave." pp. 123, 124.

"We say that the day of the Lord which in the face of Peter's warning, they" who hold the popular creed of the church, "interpret of a natural day, but which we in the spirit of his warning, and of John's exposition, interpret of a thousand years, is the period during which this manifestation" of Christ's kingly office, "will be made. We interpret the conflagration of the earth to be its purification or baptism with fire, and not its annihilation. We doubt if annihilation be an idea contained in the Scriptures at all; nor are wicked men annihilated; nor is Satan, nor is death, nor is *αἰδης*, the place of separate spirits, which are all cast into a lake of fire. We believe that our Lord shall reign a certain limited time with his enemies under his feet, that is in a state of subjection; and afterwards that he shall reign for ever, with his enemies under the dominion of the second death. That there shall be a period of Satan's imprisonment, and of death's subjugation, and of the earth's protection, government, and blessedness, in despite of all the powers of darkness; and that after this there will be an eternity of Satan's second death, and death's second death, and the second death of all wicked

men and wicked angels, and their fruits of wickedness; which shall be to the earth an eternity of infallible blessedness, of God's immediate presence, of the concentration of his love, of the peculiar abode and government of his Son. And that this immortal earth for ever, and the redeemed saints inheriting for ever their inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and the Son of God their King, united to human nature for ever, shall be for ever the monument of God's love and mercy to believing sinners, the enduring proof unto the universe of the incredible power of faith in the word of God, which when all the un-fallen creatures of God behold, they may adore the triumphs of faith, and hold fast their allegiance, and delight in the glory of redeeming love, and in the victory of almighty grace over sin. While on the other hand the lake of the second death which burneth with fire and brimstone, where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched, where Satan, the Prince of darkness, and the angels which kept not their first estate, where the grave and place of souls accursed, with all unbelievers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and, in short, every thing in the kingdom which offendeth, are tormented for ever and ever; this hell of the second death, with all that are doomed to abide therein, shall serve the opposite purpose to all God's intelligent and un-fallen creatures, of demonstrating to them the horrors of disloyalty and disobedience to the Great King, the fearful fruits

of sin, the indestructible horrors of death, the passive and impotent misery of those who disobey the will of the Highest, the awful stability of the laws of Heaven, and the indefeasible sovereignty of the word of God. But if these theorists destroy the earth, or make of it their hell, for neither of which ideas can I find a single passage in Scripture, and against them a thousand; if they carry off the race of the redeemed men to mingle with, and be lost amongst the countless myriads of the unfallen angels, the whole end and termination of redemption is lost. And the manhood of Christ is lost. He is not God and man in two distinct natures and one person for ever. And our honour to have all put under our feet is lost; and the crowning truth of the whole mystery is lost, which is, that God's power and love is able from the dust of the ground to create a substance worthy of being incorporated with his own eternal essence; and that of the children of sin and frailty, his redeeming word and regenerating Spirit can make the kings and the priests of the universe. For I have no idea that after the purification and exaltation of this earth, those who passed through Christ's trials and attained unto his glory, shall dwell above in isolated blessedness, or be seen from afar like a solitary star in the spangled heavens; but do conceive that we shall be as it were the heralds of faithfulness, carrying in our person both the lesson and the example wherever we go; ministering to all his creatures the pro-

found mysteries of God's love to his faithful children, judging angels, ruling principalities and powers, and having all things under our feet, partakers of the prophetic, priestly, and kingly throne of Christ. This I conceive to be the mystery of the God-man, which is not a phenomenon or appearance made to the earth only, but is a reality, a substantial union of the two natures which cannot be hidden, but must be known to all creatures in and under heaven. And if this be the orthodox doctrine of Christ's humanity, who can doubt, that under Christ creatures of the same glorified humanity may be the stewards of that universal kingdom, and that the saints who are redeemed out of great tribulation, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, shall reign upon the earth, where Christ for ever reigneth, and from that as the court and centre of their government, exercise under their King universal government to the end of the world." pp. 153, 154.

“Why may it not be that the Son may administer the kingdom of all the universe by that race of kings and priests whom he hath brought through the same tribulations through which he passed himself. It may be that he may appoint the whole multitude of the ransomed for a court and ministry to the whole creation, as he appointeth the present elect church for a court and ministry to the earth.” “If angels be my ministers in this my humiliation, what in my exaltation

may not I hope to become? The Lord knows I am not ambitious of these dignities, and that I write not these things in any ambitious mood. But to justify his power and his grace, which hath already made me, a worm, to become a spiritual member of his eternal Son." pp. 162, 163.

“That there is a personal coming and reign of our Lord, at the commencement of the millennium, is not only to be proved from the passages in Acts, already referred to, but also by the 110th Psalm. This is also the period of the changing of the living, and of the raising of the dead saints. All the Gentile fulness is to be brought in now, during this dispensation; but there may be, and probably will be, a remnant of the Jewish fulness which is yet to be brought in at the time of their return, although great numbers of the Jews in the restored land may join the opposers of the Lord. The two last chapters of Isaiah seem to relate to that period. The first judgment will be on the ecclesiastical, the second on the temporal powers. I conceive the heavenly city and the bride are one and the same thing; the living stones which meet the Lord in the atmosphere; from whence Christ shall be transiently visible to all, but permanently visible only in the aerial city. It matters not to the point in hand, whether the 1000 years, mentioned as the duration of our Lord’s reign, be really that period, or a longer, as is maintained by some; the principal point expressed by it is, that it is finite. During this period it seems that

the men on earth would be in the same state that Adam was in before he fell; and the Apostles were in a state somewhat similar, between the time of the crucifixion and the day of Pentecost, previous to their being in possession of the Holy Ghost." Dialogues on Prophecy, Part V. pp. 43, 50.

"The essence of this statement" of the millenarian scheme "is, 1. a literal not a figurative coming, a personal, not an energetical manifestation of the great God and our Saviour, in his day.—We believe that he shall come as he hath never yet come, in a form of glory, the form of adorned manhood, so as to be seen and owned of men. Yet such seeing shall be transient to men in the flesh, abiding only to men in the spirit. 2. Such his coming shall be at the commencement, not the close, of his earthly reign: that new era of peace and righteousness which most christians profess to be looking for. Yet he shall come while nations are dwelling upon the earth, in their ancient form, and shall continue to maintain their existence in that form, during a limited period. 3. His raising of the blessed dead, and his changing the bodies of the blessed living, shall be simultaneous with the annunciation of his approach, and, together with the vengeance then executed upon the unbelieving members of his visible church, shall constitute a distinct integral part of his work of judging the world. Yet shall there be un-raised and un-judged ones

still; yet shall the earth have a judgment still to undergo; yet shall there be temples, and services, and an epoch to be waited for. 4. The restoration of the Jewish nation *as a whole*, shall be subsequent to, and shall be effected in quick succession to, the blessings and cursings of the instant of his coming. Yet shall that nation have received a *partial restoration* before, and individuals of 'the glorified fulness,' shall have been taken out of it; yet shall the joy of Canaan, and of the Jew, be distinct from that of the spiritual Israel. 5. Christ's spiritual empire shall be co-extensive with the earth, with the world; yet its seat shall not be earth, though communicating with it; his saints shall *reign* as well as *serve* with him, but they shall not jostle with the men of the flesh, and, though intermixing, when need be, *individually*, shall be visible only by special appointment and operation. 6. A second apostacy, a second conflict, a second resurrection, a second judgment shall follow close upon the sun-set of the millennial day; yet even these events shall not finish the transactions of earth which shall survive her conflagration, as she has survived her deluge—though the last which God has seen good to reveal by the Bible, with a very brief intimation that there are others still to come." Vaughan's Sermon on the Church's Expectation. pp. 15—17.

Some of these Extracts are abundantly curious. Others equally strange might be multiplied al-

most without end. A few more will hereafter be produced. In the meantime these must suffice.

CHAPTER II.

SPECIMENS OF THE OPINIONS OF MILLENARIANS RESPECTING PASSING EVENTS, OF THEIR UNINTELLIGIBLE STATEMENTS, AND INCONSISTENCIES.

THE advocates of this theory, like their predecessors in the primitive church who had wandered from the truth, imagine that the Scriptures are completely on their side, and that their tenets are attended with innumerable and invaluable advantages. They seem to believe that their hypothesis is possessed of paramount importance; that it is interwoven with the whole Christian system; that to withhold assent from it, is tantamount to the rejecting of revelation, and endangers the eternal salvation of the soul. Some of them mourn over our want of faith in their fancied discoveries; and others liberally pour upon us the grossest abuse, and regard us with the greatest indignation and contempt on account of our blindness and incredulity.

In the preface to his *Summary View*, page. 15, Mr. Cunninghame invites his opponents to the

amicable refutation of his views by Scriptural arguments. An opponent had embarked in this task with more speed and spirit than had been expected. Before his pamphlet left the press, a short but able article in opposition to his notions had appeared in the Edinburgh Theological Magazine: and did the same Mr. Cunninghame, who had begun by inviting discussion, thank him for his services, and request their continuance? After many angry remarks upon the writer, he concludes by exhorting him to "beware, lest in denying the plain literal meaning of the promises of the Lord's second coming," prior to the Millennium, "he should be chargeable with exalting his own carnal reason above the oracles of the living God." Summary View, page 27.

Mr. Cunninghame refers, page 5, with marked approbation to the labours of Mr. Irving in the Millenarian cause. And how does Mr. Irving, the great and indefatigable champion of the scheme, speak of the nature and importance of the subject? He tells us, that the work of Ben-Ezra is "the best gift that hath been offered her," the Church, "in these latter times." Preliminary Discourse, page 22.

The huge work of Ben-Ezra contains a lengthy attempt to expound the system: but before Mr. Irving had met with the book, he had anticipated the whole, and was master of all the parts of the theory. How had this singular event been produced? By "revelation." Mr. Irving has no pa-

tience with those who strip the figurative parts of Scripture of their metaphors, and reduce the passages to their plain and genuine meaning. See Pre. Dis. pp. 78, 142. There can be no doubt therefore that he himself uses words in their strict literal import. Yet these are his own words: "The truth which he," Ben-Ezra, "had been taught in the midst of Catholic superstition,—met with the truth which God's Spirit had, during a season of affliction, taught me, in the midst of the intellectual pride of my native country." Pre. Dis. page 17. The Lord did reveal in me the knowledge, and hope, and desire of his Son from heaven," Pre. Dis. page 74.

If this system is really revealed in Scripture, if these gentlemen are acquainted with its varied details, and able to guide the public mind in a matter, which they regard as of the most engrossing interest; it surely may be expected that they will judge correctly of events passing under their own observation, write intelligibly on their favourite theme, and preserve a perfect harmony with each other in their exposition of this wonderful hypothesis.

Now is this the case?

How do they speak of passing events?

Do you wish for a specimen of their politics? Take the following. Speaking of the occurrences of 1827, they use this language. "One of the most upright and conscientious ministers this

country ever possessed, virtually no more. The Tory administration *saute en l'air*. Mr. Canning dead. An administration of liberals formed under Mr. Robinson. An English army on the Continent. A war with Turkey brought about in violation of the laws of nations, of public faith, and justice, by an act of this country, which ever before has been the asserter and defender of that international code." Dialogues on Prophecy, Part V. pp. 11, 12.

Do you wish to have a sample of their liberality? Turn to pp. 66, 67, of the same publication, and you will find what ensues. "Since his," Andrew Fuller's, "day we have seen a union of a religious nature, between Christians and Socinians, in the Bible Society, boasted of as the perfection of Christian love."—"There is another damning fact, marking the actual extent of infidelity, which cannot be gainsaid, and that is the establishment of the London University. The present day has given rise to the first attempt which has ever been made in the history of the world to establish a system of national education without being founded on the religion of the state." What succeeds is still worse. But the above is abundantly bad. Will the writer charge the House of Commons with infidelity, because, at the close of every twelfth or twentieth speech, one of their number is not uniformly required to deliver a sermon? If there were a Divinity Chair in the London University, and this secured by a disguised

Socinian; what advantage would the religion of the state gain by the endowment? And if the professors of the liberal arts and sciences are men of piety, and the former schools of Theology open for the students who have passed through this University; what damage will the interests of Christianity sustain from the temporary want of a professor specially destined to teach the doctrines of revelation?

All who possess any information of what is passing in the religious world, know that since the Reformation, or rather since the age of the apostles, the Gospel never has been accompanied with such success as at present; and greater numbers of late, than in any former period, have given evidence of experiencing its transforming power. But how do these gentlemen speak of the present state of religion? Read what is subjoined. “Philalethos—I find that amongst those who refuse to examine into the subject of the second Advent, there prevails a strong opinion that the church is so much more numerous now than ever, and that it has produced so great an effect upon the world, that it is impossible it can be so ripe for judgments, as those who have studied most closely the prophetic Scriptures say it is: how can that erroneous opinion be met?” “Anastasius—It is rather a prejudice than an opinion, and therefore idle to contend with it.” “The very idea of the world having become better is absurd, unless they mean to contend that they have bound Satan, or made him better too;

and whenever you hear any one contend that the world has got better, you may be sure that that man's heart is in it, and he is searching for an excuse to pacify the conscience for remaining in and of it. A little observation will serve to convince you that the effect of the peace which the church has so long enjoyed has been to make her quite content with the world as it is. She has not been called to partake of the sufferings of Christ, and she has lost all wish to share his crown." Dialogues on Prophecy, Part V. pp. 63—65. Mr. Irving laments the condition of the Church of Scotland. "How surely art thou steering to the gulf of infidelity!" Pre. Dis. page 89. It has been his "hard lot to have found few bretheren in the ministry of Christ." Idem, p. 19. "Christ is not received any more by the Church as her prophet."—"You condemn Christ as a Prophet; you despise the prophetic character of his word; you make light of those who esteem it or take any account of it; and I say unto thee, thou backsliding intellectual demi-infidel church, thou knowest nothing of the prophetic office of Christ, or the prophetic character of his word." Idem, page 82. "This present dispensation of the incarnate God and the out-poured Spirit is to end, and is now ending in a desertion and apostacy, in an almost total absence of faith and eclipse of light." Idem, page 164. "In good truth, the days have grown sick, and we are grown sick in the days; the atmosphere is

unwholesome, and we are meagre skeletons of Christians. But it was not always so: it was never so in the Protestant Church till within these latter years of what they burlesque by calling it a revival." Preface to Part V. of Dialogues on Prophecy. Extract from a M S. page 7. If this really is the result of all our unions for prayer, efforts to educate the young in the principles of Christianity, to circulate the Scriptures, and evangelize the world; these religious associations have been the greatest plague inflicted on the Church for centuries. It is high time that the whole were abolished, and that matters were restored to the same state of languor and apathy, formality and indifference in which they were fifty years ago.

But have these gentlemen always entertained the same gloomy and desponding views of the present condition of the religious world? Not at all. The same Mr. Irving informs us, Pre. Dis. page 5, that the "out-pouring of the Spirit, is known in scripture by 'the latter rain,' of which I deem the religious revivals of the last thirty years to be as the first droppings of the shower." The same Anastasius, Dialogues on Prophecy, Part III, page 199, tells us: "The great sign to the church of the end of all things being at hand, is the increase of religious knowledge which has taken place within the last thirty years, and the revived attention which is now paid to the expectation of the coming Lord from heaven." "*The forward-*

ness of some speaks, in the language of preceding providence, *Christ's appearance to approach*. The fig-tree buds towards the spring. I think Christ's speech to be more than a parable, the springing of the vines notes the return of the sun. The spiritual approaches of Christ upon the souls of sober saints, is, to me, as the rising of the sap in the tree, as a clear forerunner of that summer. I have a long time thought and sometimes said, the children crying Hossanna, notes Christs' being on the way to Jerusalem. Our children are talking earlier than ourselves: I am sure the younger Christians talk as if it were day, while the more ancient and drowsy slumber."—"And really I think as the chirping of robins and lesser birds, speaks break of day, so the more than ordinary workings of Christ upon young Christians, and his gifts and appearances in them, are a providential prognostic that his appearance is at hand, and that the day thereof is dawning and is dawning." *Christ's Appearance the Second Time for the Salvation of Believers*. page 113. If ever it shall be ascertained that the preacher, the pre-facer, Anastasius, and Mr. Irving are one and the same, these contradictions, as a literary curiosity, will be possessed of still greater interest.

So much for the manner in which they judge of passing events.

Do they write intelligibly on their favourite theme?

If the subject be intelligible, and a man under-

stand it, it certainly may be expected that he will be able to communicate his ideas of it with clearness and precision. Have the Millenarians formed any conception of what they are vigorously straining to comprehend? or have they found the faculty of expressing themselves in a form capable of being understood either by themselves or others?

Can they tell any man what idea they have of "living stones which meet the Lord in the atmosphere?" of the product which arises from the compound of "the same state Adam was in before he fell," with "the somewhat similar state" the Apostles were in "between the crucifixion and the day of Pentecost?" It would be desirable to know what this is, as we have already heard that it is to be the state of the men on earth during the Millennium. See above, pp. 27, 28. Have they any conception of what they mean when they apply to the Lord Jesus Christ, the epithet "The Man-God;" Irving's Preliminary Discourse, pp. 142, 156, 157, 159, 170, 171, 172: and speak of his "anointing by the dove?" when they talk of the conversion "of the ships of Tarshish? Dialogues on Prophecy, Part III. page 196: of "the earth living in peace and blessedness?" Irving's Pre. Dis. page 65: of "an assurance brought to the Matter of the earth?" and to the "body" of the Author of the Preliminary Discourse? page 124. Can they tell us how much of the body of the church "is now living in the

grave?" and how "the grave and place of souls accursed are tormented for ever and ever," or even tormented at all? What is meant by "the glorious efflorescence of the present dispensation into a universal fulness?" Irving's Pre. Dis. page 7. How is the "burying of Satan" to be accomplished? Sermon by a Spiritual Watchman, page 5. If they understood what they were writing would they have indited sentences such as the following? "I hold it to be a great principle, which may almost be laid down as a canon of exposition, that every fundamental truth of faith should be shewn to be present under some form or other, in every part, or rather I should say, in every period of Divine revelation, unfolding itself more and more onwards unto the end?" Irving's Pre. Dis. page 14. "When besides the reason, the sense, and understanding also are to be satisfied, it seems to me necessary that the truth conveyed should be surrounded with, and, as it were embedded in the conditions of space and succession, in order that through the avenues of the bodily sense and natural understanding the pure truth may pass into the soul, and, being there redeem both soul and body from their fallen state." Irving's Pre. Dis. page 75. "In this state—in which their external glory, the glory of the bodily form of each, and consequently of all, viewed as one united mass made up of many parts, is so vast, they shall need no temple, any more than they shall need

the light of the sun: God, in the substance of the person of the Holy Ghost, residing in the inwards of the Lamb, and so making him a temple, the Lamb shall be to them for a temple, in which to present their spiritual sacrifices and offerings, and shall also be to them for a light of brightness, above that of the sun." Vaughan's Church's Expectation, page 87.

What do they mean when they say, that "the coming of the Son of God in flesh to offer himself for our sins, was only the manifestation or revelation of that which he had done from all eternity?" Irving's Pre. Dis. page 96. Do they intend to assert that Christ was an actual sufferer before his birth, and crucified before the creation? If this is their meaning, they may as justly maintain that the earth was burned before it was made, and Judas hanged before he was born. Would any man who knows the difference betwixt a narrative and a prediction, say, when addressing the modern Church: "Let me tell thy present ignorance, there is as much" prophecy "in the gospels as in the prophets, as much in the epistles as in the psalms?" Irving's Pre. Dis. page 84. When they say that "no prophecy is of a private or limited application, so as to run out before the end, but every one of them hath something in it unaccomplished:" Irving's Pre. Dis. pp. 77, 78: do they really wish to affirm that the sceptre has not yet completely departed from Judah, that Jerusalem is not completely

destroyed, nor Christ completely born? When we read, "If haply any one should think the position, that all God's word is at one and the same time prophetic and historical, too broadly stated, and refer me to those parts thereof which are purely biographical and historical, as the books of Moses, and Samuel, and Kings, and to those parts which are purely moral, as Job and Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, &c. and to others which they say are purely doctrinal; I answer, that I believe every one of those books to be both the evidence of a prophecy in fulfilment, and a prophecy itself:" Irving's Pre. Dis. page 69; it would be exceedingly important to know what were the events foretold by the conduct of Josiah at the time, 2 Kings xxiii. 15—18, when he fulfilled the things which were proclaimed by the prophet from Judah: and it would be also very obliging to instruct us in the facts of which the birth and death of Christ are either the predictions or the types.

Can they explain how "the new Jerusalem," which is a 'material city,' Irving's Pre. Dis. p. 123. "cometh down out of heaven from our God;" Irving's Pre. Dis. page 124, how "the Shechinah, or glory between the cherubim, was the emblem" of this same material city, Irving's Pre. Dis. p. 14: and yet how "the Jews are not only a type of the New Jerusalem, but they are the New Jerusalem?" Dialogues on Prophecy, III. page 177. Did they try to com-

prehend what they wrote, when speaking of our Lord's being present "in his body," they go on to say, "In his temple he may be manifested —through the Prince of the temple ruling in his power and name?" Dialogues on Prophecy, III. pp. 198, 199. Transubstantiation itself is not nearly so incomprehensible as this. The papist says that the wafer is the body of Christ. But he does not affirm that Christ manifests his body through the person or body of another.

While their writings abound with language and statements as unintelligible, as the above, to themselves and all mankind; it is time to ask if they preserve any concord in their incomprehensible assertions?

There is nothing which has given them greater surprise and delight than their harmony. They regard it as perfectly "wonderful." Irving's Pre. Dis. page 189. To people who can believe that the day of judgment is the Millennium, that the Son of God is to dwell a thousand years on the earth, and the glorified saints to be associated during that period with mortal men: to people who have powers to believe all this, that harmony must be perfectly marvellous which could excite their "wonder."

Let us look at this strange concurrence, and mark its amazing extent.

Is Christ in his glorified body to return to the earth? Yes. "His feet shall stand on mount Olivet." He shall sit "upon the throne of David,

and upon his kingdom." "It appears therefore from this great prophecy of the incarnation," Isa. ix. 7, "that the idea which was given of the Man-God, or Emmanuel, was that of a deliverer and rightful inheritor of the land, the destroyer of all its oppressors, the remover of all its bondage, the multiplier of the nation, the increaser of its joy, the occupant of its throne, and the governor of its people for ever, yea, and the monarch of a universal and eternal dominion upon the earth. These predictions concerning the Child are in this prophecy, and no others are in it." "If any one say that Jesus of Nazareth shall never sit upon David's throne, nor rule over the house of Jacob. Then I say that Jesus of Nazareth is not the person here prophesied of, but some other. If they say, yea, but he is Emmanuel born of the Virgin, who now is spiritually filling the spiritual throne of David, and spiritually reigning over the spiritual house of Jacob, and spiritually holding universal empire. Then all I have to say is, I do not know what the spiritual throne of David is." Irving's Pre. Dis. pp. 84, 142, 143. Is Christ in his glorified body to return to the earth? No. "The heavenly city and the bride are one and the same thing; the living stones which meet the Lord in the atmosphere; from whence Christ shall be transiently visible to all, but permanently visible only in the aerial city." Dialogues on Prophecy, V. page 50.

Will Christ return openly visibly and in great glory? Most undoubtedly. We have heard Mr. Irving affirming that "he will finish his own appearance in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who know not God;" and Mr. Noel declaring that "he approaches towards the earth, in the mingled glories of his Father and of the holy angels." page 17. "Having come visibly, he will remain visible; with this difference, that, at his coming he will be manifest to eyes of flesh; in his remaining only spiritual eyes will behold, or be capable of beholding him." Vaughan's Church's Expectation. page 13. "The Son of Man is revealed." "Christ comes with fire." "It is called the appearing of the glory of the great God," Dialogues on Prophecy. Part V. page 17, III. page 186. Christ's Appearance, page 38. To this advent Mr. Cunningham applies Rev. i. 7; which tells us that "every eye shall see him." Summary View, pp. 8, 9. See also the Letters of Basilicus, pp. 8, 9; Vaughan, p. 80. "The annointed Ruler, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, shall dwell in our world, not, as once, in the midst of one nation, and by the mysterious radiance of the cloudy Shechinah; but in the *wide circle* of the whole earth, and by the glorious brightness of a personal manifestation." Noel's Prospects of the Church, pp. 164, 165. See also pp. 101, 152, 153.

Well then they expect that he is to return openly, visibly, in power and great glory, so

that every eye shall see him? No. "It is possible that his reign with his saints over the unconverted world, may be carried on in an invisible manner, in the same way as Satan carries on his reign at present with his subordinate agents. Our Lord has many risen saints with him already; Enoch, Elijah, Moses, and many who rose at the same time when he himself rose, we know of; and it is not improbable therefore, that he often raises up his people to sit and reign with him." "We do not know that our Lord may not be in his body in this room, in which we are now assembled, and Moses and Elias with him; and although invisible to us, they are doubtless visible to one another. Thus he may reign with his saints in this regenerated world, he and they visible to each other, whilst to his restored Jews he may be only manifest in his rebuilt temple at Jerusalem." *Dialogues on Prophecy. Part III. pp. 197, 198.* "The appearances of the Lord to raise his saints, and again in order to save his national Israel, appear to be distant from each other by all that period occupied by the war of Armageddon, during which time the Lord may be, though on earth, yet invisible to all but his risen saints." "He may, after his second advent, remain invisible to the world, and only be manifested at the grand crisis of his ancient church." *Dialogues on Prophecy, V. pp. 22—25. Last Trump. pp. 16, 17.*

Are the saints at Christ's appearance to be

raised in visible majesty and glory? Yes. "The gathering of the wheat is explained by our Lord to be, the *righteous shining forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father*, which can be nothing but the first resurrection and changing of the saints." Dialogues on Prophecy, V. 20. "At this resurrection the children of God are *manifested*; during the present life they compose the *invisible church*, each indeed having a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving him that receiveth it." Dialogues on Prophecy, III. pp. 166, 167. See also Irving's Pre. Dis. pp. 6, 84. The Letters of Basilicus, pp. 8, 9. Christ's Appearance, page 49. Are the saints then really to be manifested at the first resurrection, and appear with Christ in glory? No. "It is the restoration of the Jews which is 'the outward and visible sign' of the invisible resurrection of the bodies of the saints." "This visibility of the saints to each other, but not to the world, is precisely analogous to that which we are told took place at the time that our blessed Lord himself arose, as related in Matt. xxvii. 52, when many saints also arose, and appeared unto many." Dialogues on Prophecy, V. pp. 22, 23, 25.

When Christ comes will fire accompany his presence, and change the substance or surface of the globe? Who can doubt it? "Christ our Lord shall come, when the *Beatum Millennium* is to begin, *εν πυρι φλογος*, in flaming fire; by the Divine and miraculous efficacy whereof the *world*

that now is shall be *refined*, and delivered from the bondage of corruption which came upon it for the sin of man." Mede's Works, 3d edition, page 618. Who can doubt it? "The third subject of the priestly office of our Lord is, the redemption and purification of the earth whereon we dwell, and which, with all that it contains, was originally put under the dominion of Adam." Irving's Pre. Dis. page 119. "Now this third province of our High Priest's work I find to be thus written in the Scripture. That at the coming of the Lord there will be such a purification of the earth by fire, and amelioration of its condition by other means, known perhaps to God only, though our author hath well, yea magnificently speculated thereon, as shall realize the blessedness of that millennial kingdom, whereof some parts of the delineation is set down above." Irving's Pre. Dis. page 123. Who can doubt it? when we are assured that "Our Lord has many risen saints with him already: Enoch, Elijah, Moses, and many who rose with him at the same time when he himself rose, we know of; and it is not improbable therefore, that he often raises up his people to sit and reign with him. When he returns to earth, a change will be effected on the material world, similar to that which has taken place on their bodies." Dialogues on Prophecy, III. page 197, and pp. 162—165.

Who can doubt it? "On the coming of the Lord Jesus in his glory and his majesty, the

heavens and the earth which now are, being entirely destroyed, new heavens and new earth shall begin to be, wherein righteousness shall thenceforward dwell." Ben-Ezra, vol. II. 231. How is this entire destruction to be produced? "According (saith St. Peter) as the heaven and earth which were before the universal deluge, perished at the word of God by means of water, 'Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished,' 2 Peter iii. 6: in like manner the heaven or heavens, and the earth which now are, shall also perish by the same word of God and by fire." "The apostle, St. Peter, spake in the most proper and natural terms, when he said, the earth and the heavens which were before the deluge, perished by the word of God and by water:—He adds, that the heavens and the earth which are now, (certainly inferior to the Antediluvian) shall likewise perish in their time, not however by water, but by fire." Ben-Ezra. vol. II. pp. 231, 233.

Can words more unequivocally proclaim their conviction that at the commencement of the Millennium, the whole substance, or at least the whole surface of the earth shall undergo a complete change by fire? But are we at liberty to imagine that they believe what their words express? and that they actually expect the world to be "entirely destroyed" "by fire?" Not at all. This would be doing them great injustice.

The same Mr. Mede who has already refined

the world by the flaming fire, that accompanies the Redeemer's descent, and who elsewhere frequently provides for the combustion of the globe to the same extent in which it was overflowed by the deluge; supposes that the lower hemisphere will escape the fire inundation, which shall desolate the upper hemisphere, containing the old continents of Europe, Asia and Africa; that this upper hemisphere will become the camp of the saints and the site of the New Jerusalem; and that from the lower hemisphere, the greater part of which, God, in his secret judgment, will never pervade with the light of his gospel, Gog and Magog will ascend to storm the city of the redeemed, Mede's Works, p. 575.

The same Ben-Ezra, after he has, vol. II. pp. 231—238, gotten the world "entirely destroyed" "by fire;" contrives pp. 239—246, to get it first entirely drowned. "This great change," the restoration of the earth to its Antediluvian state, "which we look for in our present world from evil to good, it appears to me, ought to commence according to my system, in that same way in which, in the time of Noah, it commenced from good to evil, that is to say, by the restoration of the axis of the earth to that very situation in which it stood before the deluge, or which is the same, by the union of the ecliptic with the equator." page 244. What is the consequence of this union? A universal deluge: for he informs us that it was by the loss of this union that the former deluge

was effected: and the restoration of the union most undoubtedly will produce a second deluge, and to the same extent as the first. Well, after he gets it "entirely destroyed" "by fire," and entirely drowned with water; is he done with it? Not yet. Quoting the words of Peter, "The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire;" he adds, "Whence it legitimately follows, first, that in the same manner and in the same sense in which that ancient world perished by water, this present one shall perish by fire. It follows legitimately, in the second place, that as that ancient world did not perish in its substance, but only in its accidents,—So this world which now is shall likewise perish by fire, not in respect to its substance, but shall only be changed from bad to good." page 243. And then, after having so repeatedly assured us that the destruction produced by fire is to be commensurate with the destruction produced by water, or the deluge; he has the courage at last to turn round and tell us, "That fire which is so oft announced against the great and terrible day of the Lord, cannot according to the scriptures, be a universal fire to cover all our globe, as did the waters in the time of Noah." page. 247. See also vol. I. pp. 129, 130. "Thus our author hath well, yea, magnificently speculated thereon!"

If this is not enough to remove the supposition that they believe in a general conflagration before

the Millennium, listen to Mr. Cunninghame, Summary View, pp. 21, 22; "I shall begin what I have to offer in answer to his attack," the Reviewer's in the Edinburgh Theological Magazine, "upon us, by telling this writer, that the first qualification of one who sits in the chair of criticism, particularly objurgatory criticism, ought to be *knowledge*, but of this in relation to the scheme which he condemns, he exhibits no evidence. He supposes that we hold the *general conflagration* at the commencement of the Millennium. Now I will tell him we hold no such thing. The conflagration of Sodom was not general, even with respect to the promised land of which it was a part, (See Gen. xv. 20.) Nor do we believe that the conflagration which we learn, Dan. vii. 11. and Rev. xix. 20, is to destroy the body, or territories of the fourth beast, the mystic Sodom is to be a general one, extending over the whole earth. It is probable, however, that the fire of our Lord's coming, while it destroys the beast, may have a purifying efficacy over the atmosphere of the whole earth; changing the heavens, and fitting the earth for its new state of beatitude." See also Dialogues on Prophecy, III. 168. Was the conflagration of Sodom incomplete? Do conflagrations purify the atmosphere? Did the conflagration of Sodom purify the atmosphere over the whole promised land? Has Sodom, since its conflagration, been rebuilt and re-peopled? What kind of fire is to destroy the

limited body or territories of the fourth beast, and yet purify the atmosphere of the whole earth?

The language of Mr. Cunninghame is ambiguous. Since the fire mentioned in Dan. vii. 11, and Rev. xix. 20, is generally understood to be figurative, greater explicitness would have been very desirable. The following extract will shew that his words as they at present stand, leave it extremely doubtful whether he expects a material or spiritual fire to accompany our Redeemer's advent. "It is evident from Daniel vii. 8, 9, 25, 26, that the Ancient of Days begins to sit at the end of the papal period, or 1260 days. Rev. xiv. 14, seems to describe the same sitting as Daniel: and, after this, immediately follows the harvest, from which it would appear, that the harvest begins to be reaped at the end of the 1260 days. If this be correct, the burning of the tares has been going on during the last thirty years, and is still going on in the Peninsula; as soon as it is completed, the wheat will be gathered into the garner, and the earth left for the unmingled judgment of the vintage." Then follows what has been already quoted about the gathering of the wheat, when "the righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, which can be nothing but the first resurrection, and changing of the saints." *Dialogues on Prophecy*, V. pp. 19, 20.

Will there be any wicked men on earth during

the Millennium? No. "Thy *people* also *shall be all righteous.*" Dialogues on Prophecy, III. 165. "The knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." Noel, page 33. "All the impious and sinful being exterminated thence—in every thing it," the millennial earth, "shall be at least as good as it was in its primitive state." Ben-Ezra, II. page 248. But is this really so? Not at all. The enemies of Christ and his people are not destroyed. "Thus in present peace and brighter hope, shall the earth dwell and endure the long season of the Millennium, and thus shall Christ and his saints reign over it, having their enemies under their feet, but not destroyed." Irving's Pre. Dis. page. 124. Well then, since he and they are to have their enemies under their feet, they must have enemies? No. They are to have no enemies. "In this way the Lord will be preparing for himself an ark of testimony in the Jewish nation, through whom to make the whole world one great and universal ark of faithful testimony." Idem page 7. "The elect church is the whole extent to which, for the present, the application of his righteousness is extended; and why no further? because so the order of God's wisdom willed it. But will it go farther? Yes it will. And how far? To the whole world." "When shall they be presented unto the Father? When their bodies are delivered from the power of the grave, for while there

they are underlying his curse. And when shall that be? At his coming. And then shall he present unto his Father a glorious church, 'without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.' And then another stage of the redemption is complete, the presenting of the church unto the Father; at which time shall take place those holy espousals of the second Adam to the second Eve, who was taken out of his bleeding side: when I may say, they are also in the mystery, commanded to multiply and replenish the earth; for then will the multitude of children begin to be born unto Christ. And now endeth the mystery of election which then hath its accomplishment, 'accomplish the number of the elect and hasten thy kingdom. And now the hastings of unfaithful Arminianism, ('he that believeth shall not make haste,') the blinding hopes of our present Millenarians, (but their proper name is Optimists,) will begin to be harmless, which now are ruinous; for as yet their time is not come. The dispensation of election is ended; and the dispensation of universality is begun. And then will I myself become a Wesleyan Methodist, and preach Christ the Saviour of all." Idem p. 128. "His" Emmanuel's "power, his counsel, his Divine might shall pervade every thing and make it blessed, even as Satan's power and counsel and devilish might do now pervade every thing and make it cursed." Idem p. 147. When his power pervades all things, and all the inhabitants of the world are saints and saved, is it.

possible that there can be any on earth to oppose the authority of Christ? Yes. Read the next sentence. "In which age to come there shall be a first period, during which his enemies are under his feet, trampled upon but not destroyed, imprisoned but not executed." *Idem* p. 147. Well then since these enemies are so effectually trampled upon and so securely imprisoned, will they give any disturbance and annoyance? No. "The creation shall then be pure; and the bondage of Satan shall have ceased." *Idem* p. 13. There will then be no occasion for Peace-officers or Police to keep order? More need than ever. All the Police on the globe will be unequal to the task. It will require nothing less than the whole hosts of the glorified saints to fulfil that arduous service. "These are the shining ones—by whose active ministry, by whose speedy obedience, passing too and fro at will with angelic freedom and readiness, they shall maintain that peace and blessedness amongst the sojourners of the earth, in which the Millennium will consist." *Idem* page 14.

Is the whole earth regenerated? Surely. "He," Christ, "may reign with his saints in this regenerated world, he and they visible to each other." "To his elect bride he shews himself as Solomon in all his glory; in his glorified body and ruler over the purified habitable globe." *Dial. on Proph. III. pp. 198, 199.* Is the habitable globe purified and the world regenerated? No. The world is still what it was, as unconvert-

ed as ever. "It is possible that his reign with his saints over the unconverted world, may be carried on in an invisible manner." *Idem* p. 197.

If this is harmony, it is truly "wonderful:" and nothing would be more astonishing than to witness what they would denominate discord. If to affirm that Christ is to appear in flaming fire, and at the same time to maintain that he is to continue invisible; that the saints are to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father, and yet to be raised and reign invisibly; that the earth is to be purified by fire, and its substance undergo a change like what has taken place upon the glorified bodies of Moses and Elias, and yet that it is to suffer no general conflagration; that there is no election, but the reign of universality, or the salvation of all, begins, and yet there will be enemies to Christ, and an unconverted world: if these are not the most gross and palpable contradictions, it will be impossible to find one in the whole history of human weakness and folly.

After all that they have published in support of the personal coming of Christ, the resurrection of the saints, and the universal or partial purification of the earth by fire prior to the Millennium; it is even questionable if they believe in these matters at all. If Mr Cunninghame's rule be correct that "a figurative or spiritual coming is no coming at all," there are many of them who reject the very articles for which they profess to contend. For

what better are an invisible advent, an invisible resurrection, and a fire without combustion, such as "has been going on during the last thirty years:" what better are these than a figurative or spiritual coming, a figurative resurrection, and a figurative conflagration?

There is little cause of surprise that the advocates of Millenarianism contradict each other, when we find that they are unable to preserve their own consistency. The same Mr. Cunningham, who, in his Summary View, in general pleads strenuously for "the real" "personal" and "corporeal" advent of our Lord; tells us, Preface, page 8, that "the presence of the Lord may be manifested in a manner somewhat analogous, but far more glorious than the display of the glory of the Divine Shechinah, in the Holy of Holies." A Prophetic Inquirer, Christian Observer for March, 1828, concurs with him in this notion. "I am inclined to believe that our Lord's presence with men in the future dispensation, will be manifested by a presence analogous to, but far more glorious than the Shechinah." Was the Shechinah a corporeal presence? Deut. iv. 12, 15. And will a presence analogous to that of the Shechinah, which was not corporeal, be, however glorious, a real personal bodily presence?

Time after time Mr. Irving informs us that the last Antichrist is a person. Pre. Dis. pp. 6, 31. In the 43d page, he finds it manifest

that the personal Antichrist is the eighth head of the beast, or Roman Empire, and the head or leader of the infidel conspiracy. But in page 137, he discovers clearly that Antichrist is both an individual personage, and the beast, or Roman Empire itself! "The Apocalypse, in Chap. xx. declareth that it shall continue so," as it is written, Ephes. ii. 2, "until the beast and the false prophet, that is, the personal Antichrist and the papal power, with all that follow them shall have been destroyed in the battle of Armageddon. And this we do not yet perceive, for the personal Antichrist is not yet made manifest, and the false prophet still sitteth as God in the temple of God."

In a Fast Sermon preached January 1st, 1828. p. 18, he says; "There is indeed, a controversy still maintained for the Divinity of Christ, by the quotation of texts, but seldom by any deep arguments drawn from the nature of the Godhead itself, or from the work of the redemption and regeneration of the creature; and it is maintained, not so much for its own dignity and use in theology, as for the securing of the doctrine of the atonement, which hath swallowed up almost every other doctrine, and become the great indulgence of ignorance and idleness, which in a selfish age, will ever be the case." At this rate, Paul must have been incomparably ignorant and idle, who drew no deep arguments from the nature of the Godhead, but determined "not to know any

thing save Jesus Christ and him crucified:" and, which is still more extraordinary, the angels must be as ignorant and idle as the apostles, when instead of contemplating "the personal subsistences in the Trinity," they "desire to look into" "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. But how long is it since Mr. Irving himself escaped from the charge of this criminal ignorance and idleness? Only since he published his Preliminary Discourse to Ben-Ezra: for then he thus wrote, page 12. "Such is the skeleton of that body which God hath given to his great purpose of saving the world, by that one truth the 'Incarnation of his Son, for the salvation of men, through the righteousness which is by faith.'" This single truth was then sufficient for saving the world: and are preachers bound to undertake more than the salvation of the world? In that Preliminary Discourse, dated Christmas Day, 1826, on the subject of which he had been profoundly meditating for months preceding Christmas, 1825; he frequently reprobates the idea that the earth is to be destroyed, and the redeemed taken to heaven. He again and again asserts that the world is to endure for ever, and the redeemed to have their eternal habitation here. But how long has this formed an article in his creed? Not very long. In an Introductory Discourse to Horne on the Psalms, dated May, 1825, page 27, he furnishes us with the following sentences. "It is the capital princi-

ple of all sound doctrine, that the world is to be destroyed. It is the deep-rooted source of all heretical doctrine, that the world is to be mended.”

Double or quadruple the number of cases of as gross or even grosser contradiction might be easily produced from their publications. But these must suffice as specimens of the rashness and recklessness with which they write. It has been with pain that they have been transcribed; and to push the task much farther would be not only irksome but invidious. Before these gentlemen assumed the attitude of distance, haughtiness, and defiance towards their opponents, which they have chosen, it might have been expected that they would have shewn themselves better acquainted with their own principles and more capable of expounding them to others. From the opinions which they have hazarded on passing events, from the unintelligible language which they employ, and the glaring inconsistencies into which they have fallen; the reader may judge for himself how far they are worthy of that deference which they claim, qualified to dictate to their brethren, and entitled to exact from the Christian public submission to their dictates.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE DIFFICULTIES OF MODERN MILLENARIANISM, ARISING FROM THE STATE OF THE EARTH AFTER THE SUPPOSED COMING OF CHRIST.

THE Bible is the word of God. Every sentence which it contains is founded on infallible truth, and demands the instant and unqualified assent of every mind. Nothing can be more daring nor criminal than to reject a single fact which it asserts, because we are unable to comprehend its nature, or account for its production. The knowledge of the Omniscient cannot be brought within the limits of our narrow intellects, nor the operations of his hand measured by any process within the contracted grasp of our feeble faculties. He sees the end from the beginning. Immensity with all that it contains, and eternity with all the events which it shall disclose, he has distinctly and fully in his view. With him all things are possible: and before the march of his power the mightiest mountains sink into plains, and the most formidable obstacles dwindle into insignificance and disappear. And however unable we are to trace the steps of his providence or the wonders of his grace, his unchanging faithfulness is a sufficient pledge for the reality of every article which possesses the authority of that matchless sanction.

But whilst the declaration, Thus saith the Lord, is an ample security for receiving every proposition to which it is affixed; it is no warrant for all the comments that ignorance or folly may attempt to fasten on it: and before we subscribe to any alleged averment of Holy Writ, we have a good title to know that the supposed affirmation is actually there. And whilst we have no right to hesitate to embrace any of the doctrines of revelation, because they are mysterious or incomprehensible; nothing can be more preposterous than to multiply difficulties, and renounce the tenets which are drawn from the plain, obvious, and consistent interpretation of the Scriptures, for those absurd and unintelligible notions, which are forcibly extorted from the sacred text. From the moment that Jesus assured Nicodemus that, by being born again, he meant a change of heart and life; nothing could have been more uncandid in that ruler of the Jews than to have maintained that our blessed Lord taught the absurd and monstrous dogma of a second literal birth. Though the truth affirmed by our Redeemer is free from objection; nothing could have been more fair than to have asked the Master in Israel, how such a thing as he reported could be possible? The hand of the Almighty could daily whirl the whole host of heaven as easily round our globe, as roll the earth round its own axis: but after the planetary motions have been explained, it would be difficult for folly to go

farther than to relinquish the Newtonian for the Ptolomaic hypothesis; and exchange the simple and demonstrated principles of the British Astronomer, for the whirlpools and ether of Des Cartes. And after the Bible has delivered a clear, consistent, and intelligible account of the second coming of Christ at the close of all earthly things; when the dead shall be raised, the living changed, and all judged according to their works; nothing can be more unreasonable and ridiculous than to abandon the plain statements of scripture on this subject, for opinions either incomprehensible; or as far as they can be understood, at war alike with each other and with the plainest dictates of reason and revelation.

That this is the case with the modern Millenarian theory, seems beyond the possibility of a doubt. The preceding chapter has furnished several specimens of the contradictions and absurdities which clog this fantastical scheme. In order however to afford a more adequate idea of its extravagance, it is absolutely necessary to subjoin a few additional instances of its repugnance to Scripture and common sense.

The Bible assures us that at the coming of Christ, the body which is sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption; that which is sown in dishonour, shall be raised in glory; that which is sown in weakness, shall be raised in power; that which is sown a natural body, shall be raised a spiritual body; and that he will change our vile

body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. The Bible also declares that we who are alive and remain to his coming, shall not prevent, or have any advantage over, them who are asleep; for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the dead shall be raised incorruptible; and we, the saints, who shall be alive at his second coming, shall be changed. 1 Cor. xv. 43, 44. Phil. iii. 21. 1 Thes. iv. 15—17. 1 Cor. xv. 52.

At whatever time therefore the saints shall be raised; from these passages it is evident beyond a doubt, that those who are alive shall be changed; and that both those who are alive, and those who are raised from the dead, shall be clothed with incorruptible, powerful, spiritual bodies, which shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord.

Now after the supposed resurrection of the saints prior to the Millennium, the earth must either be wholly changed, or remain what it is, or undergo a partial alteration. If it exist at all; and the Millenarians who believe that Christ is to reign personally on it for a thousand years, if not for ever, take its existence for granted; there certainly can be no alternative, but either that it

must be wholly changed, or remain as it is, or be partially altered.

I. Let us suppose that it shall be changed, and see what is likely to happen.

The general opinion among the Millenarians is, that it will be changed. As we have already seen, page 48, Ben-Ezra, in a long dissertation, endeavours to prove that the earth shall be changed, and that this change will be accomplished by bringing the Ecliptic and Equator to coincide. In the Dialogues on Prophecy, Part III. page 197; which are understood to be the result of the Conferences on Prophecy, held at Albury Park, and which embody the tenets of the principal Millenarians; Polydorus, one of the Collocutors, without contradiction or criticism, says: "Our Lord has many risen saints with him already; Enoch, Elijah, Moses, and many who rose at the same time when he himself rose, we know of; and it is not improbable, therefore, that he often raises up his people to sit and reign with him. When he returns to earth a change will be effected on the material world, similar to that which has taken place on their bodies."

Let us suppose that the Ecliptic, according to the idea of Ben-Ezra, is brought to coincide with the Equator. At present they are inclined to each other at an angle of nearly twenty three degrees and a half. This is a distance of more than 1600 miles. By such a revolution as he imagines,

every point upon the globe would undergo a change of latitude of more than 1600 miles. By such a prodigious transition, every work of human art would perish; the buildings would give way; the cities would be laid prostrate; the rivers would be stopped up; the sea would leave its channel; the continents would be overflowed; the bed of the ocean be laid dry; a second deluge would traverse the globe; and a universal destruction of animal life would follow. Neither man nor beast could escape: and no remnant either of the righteous or the wicked would be left to replenish the earth.

That all this would be the case he fully admits not only in express terms, but likewise by ascribing the deluge to the removal of the equator from the ecliptic. "The same general cause which produced over all our globe a new sea and a new dry land, did likewise necessarily change the whole aspect of the heaven: I mean to say not only the ancient order and temperament of our atmosphere, but the ancient order and disposition of the sun, of the moon, and of all the heavenly bodies, with respect to the terraqueous globe. And what general cause was this? To me it appears that no other can be pointed out, than the very omnipotent hand of the Creator, who, in his wrath against all the earth, corrupted to the last degree, caused it suddenly to move from one pole to the other, inclining its axis $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$." Ben-Ezra, vol. ii. page 241. And as the distance over which the

poles must travel is as great, when the equator returns to the ecliptic, as when it left it; it necessarily follows, as he himself concedes, that an equal change must be produced, and that a second deluge, of the same extent as the first, must ensue.

Polydorus is not at the trouble to inform us by what instrumentality "a change will be effected on the material world, similar to that which has taken place upon the bodies" of Enoch, and Elijah. But by whatever agent this marvellous alteration may be accomplished: it must, during the transition, be equally fatal, as the change of the earth's polarity, to animal life. Neither man nor beast could survive this spiritualizing process: and when it was completed, flesh and blood could no longer inhabit our planet. Earth and water, refined in the same, or even in a similar, manner to the glorified bodies of the saints, could afford neither footing nor sustenance for the present classes of the animated creation. Such a visitation would sweep every living thing from the earth; and in the succeeding ages of its duration, there could be no more marrying nor giving in marriage, than among the angels of heaven.

On either hypothesis the whole human race would be extinguished. No solitary family would be left to fill the earth with those multitudes, whom the Millenarians expect to be born to the church in these blissful ages: nor could progenitors be found for that generation of rebels who

will over-run the world before the consummation of all things. Rev. xx. 7—9. Even supposing that a family were preserved by miracle, or that a second Adam and Eve were created by a special act of Divine power, the latter hypothesis renders it physically impossible that they could, for even a single day, subsist in a world so transformed and rarified.

To the theory of Ben-Ezra it is an insurmountable objection, that it requires the earth to be destroyed with water, in direct opposition to God's own declaration, that "all flesh shall not be cut off any more by the waters of a flood, neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth." Gen. ix. 11. To the theory of Polydorus it is equally fatal that it is contrary to the scriptural representation of the millennial world; which speaks of it as possessing land, and sea, and cities, and camps, and as subject to rain. Rev. xx. Zechar. xiv. 17. And the notions of both are alike open to the objection of being inconsistent with the tenets of Millenarians respecting the state of the world during the Millennium, and the doctrines of the Bible on that subject.

The Millenarians expect that during the thousand years of our Redeemer's personal reign, there will be men in the flesh as well as men in the spirit; that there will be generation and corruption: that children will be born, and men sicken and die. Irving's Pre. Dis. pp. 13, 123. Dial. on Proph. III. pp. 172, 196. Vaughan's

Sermon on the Church's Expectation, pp. 17, 63, 64, 112, 123, note, 124.

And the Scriptures, so far from intimating the annihilation of animal life during the Millennium, evidently imply that both the human race and brute creation are to be then preserved, and that it is to be a period of uncommon felicity to man and beast. For if the numbers of our race were completed before the Millennium, and animal life cut off; how could the prophet have said, "the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox: and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den: they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea?" Isa. xi. 7—9. See also lxxv. 17—25. Is this language which could have been used respecting the earth, if its inhabitants had been overwhelmed by one general unsparing catastrophe at the beginning of the millennial era?

At the close of the world's eventful history, when the Son of man will come to bring all into judgment, impiety and violence will fill the earth. Rev. xx. 7—9. Are these impious creatures who engage in the last conflict with the saints, descendants of Adam, or not? If they are not, they have no affinity with our race, and have no interest either in the fall or redemption of man: and

the putting of this new race in possession of the earth for a thousand years could no more illustrate our Redeemer's triumph over Satan, of which the Millenarians talk so much, than the creation of another planet, and the peopling of it with a new class of creatures. But if these rebels are descendants of Adam: then it necessarily follows that no universal change upon either the substance or the surface of the earth, precedes the Millennium. The notion therefore of such an alteration upon the globe, is not only far from simplifying our ideas of the Millennium, but must even be abandoned as altogether untenable.

Let us then suppose,

II. That the earth continues as it is, and see what will be the consequence.

If it remains as it is; it may be justly asked, What end can be gained by the restoration of the departed saints to the world, which cannot be accomplished in a far superior degree by their residence in heaven? There is no service which they can perform here, but what they can render with far greater effect in that better world; and there is no felicity which they can possess below, but what they can enjoy with a purer relish and more exquisite delight in the realms above.

Confirmed in holiness and perfect in bliss; the ordinances of religion and the exercises of piety, even allowing that they were to continue after the coming of our Lord, could contribute nothing

either to their happiness or improvement. Acquitted when they were judged, and welcomed into the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; whatever may be gratuitously said of their earthly ministrations, they cannot return to the toils and trials of mortality. They have no families to rear, nor children to educate; no indigent neighbours to relieve, nor ignorant relatives to instruct, admonish, and warn. They have no social duties to discharge, nor any public services to fulfill. They cannot act as magistrates, nor ministers, as merchants, nor mechanics, as authors, nor teachers, nor engage in any employment that requires effort or is accompanied with solicitude or pain: for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.

Having their bodies fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord, and freed from hungering any more or thirsting any more; they are independent of all the comforts to be derived from building and planting, from the cultivation of the soil and the prosecution of trade and commerce. In vain for them shall the ocean roll its tide, or the earth pour forth its luxuriance, the pastures be clothed with flocks and the valleys covered with corn. To them the resources of nature would be absolutely useless, and all the discoveries of science and inventions of art utterly uninteresting and insignificant.

On the wide surface of the earth there is nothing which they could gain, but what they already

possess in a larger measure and in an incomparably higher degree in the world of bliss. But there is much that they would be compelled to lose by the exchange.

Since, on the supposition on which we are arguing, the earth remains as it is; the clouds will distil their fatness, and the ordinances of heaven retain their influences; the sun will smite by day and the moon by night; the rain will drench; the frost will benumb and chill; the tempest will spread havoc and desolation where it rages; the seasons will walk their accustomed rounds, and the night continue to tread upon the heels of day. Amidst such a war of elements, in a world where we pass so instantaneously from the fervours of the torrid-zone to the rigours of the pole; where the darkness lasts as long as the light, and the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain together; is this really a residence fit for those, who, for ages have inhabited that world where there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore? where no interruption is experienced in their sublime and delightful services, because night is unknown, and the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof?

The Millenarian hypothesis supposes, and some of its advocates allow, that a remnant of the wicked shall survive during the Millennium. We have seen that their preservation seems absolutely requisite to account for the general apostacy which

takes place at the termination of that interesting era, when Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. Rev. xx. 7, 8. This army of Gog and Magog certainly is not composed of the wicked who are raised from the dead: for at the resurrection, instead of being permitted to engage in fresh conspiracies against the Most High, they will be immediately brought into judgment, Rev. xx. 13. It has, in the wildness of conjecture, been asserted that this army consists of saints who have apostatized from the service of the Redeemer. Irving's Pre. Dis. p. 165. But this notion cannot for a moment be entertained, since it is well known that they who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, instead of revolting from his standard, grow in admiration of his person and devotedness to his cause. And as it cannot be imagined that this Satanic army is formed of men who are created at the time, and have no connection with the posterity of Adam; it appears inevitably to follow, that this army must be marshalled from the descendants of those who have lived in the successive ages of the Millennium.

But since the wicked survive, how incongruous must it be to mix glorified immortals with the carnal and ungodly. What a privation of happiness must the redeemed undergo, to be torn from

the purity and bliss of Paradise; from the society of angels, seraphim and cherubim; where no sound is heard but the notes of grateful enraptured adoration, and no sight is seen but the uninterrupted joyful efforts of every rank to perform their Creator's will and celebrate his matchless and infinitely merited praise; to be torn from a world where God is all in all, and condemned to listen to the oaths of the profane, and witness the violence and abominations of the profligate and cruel? The vile conduct and filthy conversation of the impenitent and hardened often wring our hearts, and force us to exclaim, "Woe is us, that we sojourn in Mesech, and that we dwell in the tents of Kedar! Oh that we had wings like a dove! for then would we fly away, and be at rest." And are we to suppose, that, after we have made a clean escape from their foul and hateful presence, it can be an object of desire to be replaced within the view of their impure practices and the reach of their disgusting and odious annoyances! Will the vicinity of vice be less painful and revolting, after a sojourn for ages in the regions of perfect purity and unbounded bliss? Or will the weariness and uneasiness which their detestable presence creates be diminished, because we know that, instead of terminating with a pilgrimage of three-score and ten, it shall last for a thousand years? Is such a state as this consistent with the progressive nature of the works and communications of God? When we find that the Mosaic

economy succeeded the patriarchal dispensation, and the Gospel superseded the law; that one more bright and endearing manifestation of Divine beneficence rises on another, and that the longer we cleave to our Master we see greater things than ever we beheld before: are we to believe that the kindness of the Most High is to retrograde; and that just when we expected that his generosity was to take a sublimer range, the tide of bliss is to fall? and that, after reaching the kingdom of heaven, and bearing a part in the services before the throne; instead of going on from strength to strength; we are to be sent back for ten long centuries to the scenes of our past toils and sorrows, and the seat of fresh distress and contests, where we must witness the helplessness and sufferings of infancy, the languors and pains of the sick, the debility and exhaustion of the aged, and the groans and agonies of the dying; and be doomed to sustain the heart-rending sight of the recklessness and folly, the ribaldry and filth of the impious and unbelieving, and behold their dreadful preparations for their final and desperate assault on the servants of the living God?

Is this any thing at all like what we might expect from the blessed assurances, that there remains a rest for the people of God, where the wicked cease from troubling? that they enter into peace? that they hear no more the sound of the trumpet nor the alarm of war? that they finish their course? sit down with Christ on his throne, and follow him whithersoever he goeth?

According to this novel hypothesis, death, instead of closing, only suspends their conflicts. For after returning to the earth, at the end of a thousand years, they are to be subjected to a more formidable and furious attack than ever from their foes, Rev. xx. 9.

To anticipate some of these objections, we have seen Mr. Vaughan affirming, see page 29, that the glorified saints "shall not jostle with the men of flesh, and, though intermixing, when need be, individually, shall be visible only by special appointment and operation." But this is a mere gratuitous assertion, for which no proof can be given, and for which none has been attempted. Mr. Cunningham will inform him that he regards a "spiritual" or invisible presence, of a corporeal being to be no presence at all, any more than the spiritual coming of such a being can be called an advent. After all that we have heard about "the righteous shining forth in the kingdom of their Father," "of their shining above the brightness of the firmament;" how is it possible that they can remain invisible even to "the men of flesh?" But even though they were invisible to these men, the conduct of the latter must be distinctly seen by them. And intermix with the men of the world they certainly must, if the gates of the New Jerusalem shall not be shut at all; and if the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it. How can they bring their glory and honour to

men with whom they can have no intercourse, and whose very persons are invisible?

Let us now consider another notion which has been proposed.

III. Some of the Millenarians maintain that the earth will neither remain as it is, nor undergo a total or general change; but only a limited or partial alteration.

Mr. Mede has already informed us, p. 48, that no more than the upper hemisphere of our globe will be burned at the coming of our Lord: and that he had ascertained that the lower hemisphere would escape the flames; which in itself might be so far well, but unfortunately for those who occupy it, he had succeeded somehow or other in discovering, what God had in vain attempted to conceal, that the Most High in his secret judgment has determined that the greater part of its inhabitants shall never be favoured with the light of the Gospel.

But in the genuine spirit of Millenarian inconsistency, of which he set an illustrious example, which has been faithfully copied by his worthy followers; he himself is so obliging as to refute the whim that the conflagration is to be confined to the upper hemisphere. He reiterates the assertion, and enforces it by great stores of illustration and learning; that the fire, which shall accompany our Redeemer's advent, will in its range and operation be as great as the deluge, and produce

as great a change upon our globe. Mede's Works, pp. 609—619. And he elsewhere asks, p. 776, "What may be conceived to be the cause of this rapture of the saints on high to meet the Lord in the clouds, rather than to wait his coming to the earth? What if it be, that they may be preserved during the *conflagration of the earth and the works thereof*, 2 Pet. iii. 10: that as Noah and his family were preserved from the deluge by being lift up above the waters in the *ark*; so should the saints at the conflagration be lift up in the clouds unto their *ark*, *Christ*, to be preserved there from the *deluge of fire*, wherein the wicked shall be consumed?"

And since he imagines that he has demonstrated that the conflagration will be as extensive as the flood: and that there is no safety for the saints but in being "lift up in the clouds unto their ark Christ, to be preserved there from the deluge of fire;" how can he believe that any portion of the earth or of its inhabitants can escape that conflagration?

We have also, p. 50, heard Mr. Cunningham declaring: "The conflagration of Sodom was not general, even with respect to the promised land, of which it was a part, (see Gen. xv. 20.) Nor do we believe that the conflagration which we learn from Dan. vii. 11, and Rev. xix. 20, is to destroy the body or territories of the fourth beast, the mystic Sodom, is to be a general one, extending over the whole earth. It is pro-

bable however that the fire of our Lord's coming, while it destroys the beast, may have a purifying efficacy over the atmosphere of the whole earth; thus changing the heavens, and fitting the earth for its new state of beatitude." A similar theory is advanced in the Dialogues on Prophecy, Part III. p. 168: The last Trump, p. 10: and sanctioned by Mr. Noel, p. 32.

But pray, how can the idea of a limited and partial change be reconciled with what they have elsewhere so broadly and dogmatically taught, respecting a universal change upon the surface, if not the substance, of the earth? How can a local change be rendered consistent with their own assertions that the effects of the conflagration, accompanying the descent of the Redeemer, will be as great as those produced by the deluge? Can a local and partial change ever be made to agree with the glorification of every living saint, and the death or destruction of every living sinner found on earth at the return of Christ? How can these limited and local consequences of our Redeemer's advent be made to harmonize with Mr. Cunninghame's own assertions, that Christ is then to come "in glory to judge the world," and "to judge the quick and dead?" Summary View, pp. 10, 12, 14.

Will these gentlemen, who stickle so obstinately for the rigid literal interpretation of those passages which they imagine refer to the personal coming of the Messiah before the Millennium;

seriously contend that the body or territories of the fourth beast are commensurate with the globe? that none without the pale of the visible church, are amenable to the tribunal of Christ? or that there are neither quick nor dead beyond the boundaries of Christendom? Will they really maintain that a judgment confined to the professed members of the Church, is worthy of the names which they have given it, of "the great judgment," "the general judgment," "the judgment of the world," "the judgment of the quick and dead?" Will they boldly affirm that what is local and partial, is general, unlimited, and universal? Let them assert what they please, we know that "the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." 2 Tim. iv. 1.

Does Mr. Cunninghame believe that the territories of the fourth beast bear the same proportion to those of the Christian Church, that Sodom bore to the land of promise? and that whilst the soil occupied by the Christian Church is to be preserved, that which is possessed by the votaries of Popery and Infidelity, is to be burnt up and destroyed? If this is his belief, we may well ask him and Mr. Vaughan, who speaks of "the fire which burneth as an oven in the valley of Jehosaphet, propagated by secret streams to the dwelling-houses even of Britain:" Church's Expectation, p. 110: When true and false Christians are so much intermixed, have they any idea how the

fire, which lays waste the lands and habitations of the one, will inflict no injury on those of the other? Do they imagine that the dwellings of the righteous and the fields of their possession, are to be distinguished like "the beloved city," which, at the conflagration which closes the Millennium, Mr. Vaughan, p. 132, tells us, "floats as a second ark on the surface of the fiery flood; the canopy of the saints overshadowing it?" It must require a very great alteration upon the substance of the whole earth to occasion even such an effect as that.

It is a favourite notion with the Millenarians that the world is to be eternal. "The grand work of *redemption* is to manifest the goodness of the work of creation,—to *recover* and not to *destroy*. How can a thing be redeemed which is annihilated? If it were so, Satan, and not God, would have the triumph; for he would have succeeded in the destruction of one of God's works." Cry from the Desert, p. 28. See also Noel's Inquiry, pp. 231—234; Irving's Pre. Dis. pp. 61, 62, 119—128, 154.

But if the soil of the papal and infidel part of Europe is to be burnt up, destroyed and rendered uninhabitable before the Millennium; what will Mr. Cunninghame's coadjutors say to this? If the destruction of the whole earth would give Satan great satisfaction, and afford him a complete triumph over God; the destruction of a portion of the world, even of such a part of it as Europe;

the rendering of it uninhabitable, and preventing Christ and his people from reigning over it; must defeat the fulfilment of the promises to give Jesus and his saints the possession of the whole earth, and occasion the Devil a victory and joy, equal to the proportion that the part destroyed bears to the rest of the globe.

The overthrow of Sodom and Gommorah was designed as an example of the awful, irremediable, endless punishment of the ungodly: 2 Pet. ii. 6, and Jude 7. But it is impossible to divine what connection it has with the physical change to be produced upon our planet at the second coming of the Son of God.

If no other intimation were given of a conflagration, accompanying the personal advent of the Redeemer, than Dan. vii. 11, and Rev. xix. 20; Mr. Cunninghame's reasoning from them might be possessed of some strength. But when we read of Christ being "revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel," 2 Thess. i. 7, 8; of "the heaven and the earth" being "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," of the "heavens passing away," of "the elements melting with fervent heat," and of "the earth, and the works that are therein, being burned up," 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10; his argument has no force whatever.

Many of the Millenarians themselves apply the whole of 2 Pet. iii. 7—12, to which we have just

now referred, to the second coming of Christ. Some of them indeed make very wild work of it; and seem to fancy like Mr. Fry, *Second Advent*, vol. II. pp. 279—281, that, though the events which are there foretold begin at the commencement of the Millennium, they will not be completed till its close. But whether they consent or not to apply the passage to our Redeemer's second advent; the apostle himself expressly tells us that it is of that event that he is speaking. He assures us that he is treating "of the coming of the Lord and Saviour," of "the day of judgment," and "the day of the Lord."

Now, let any man read the following words, and say if they describe a local or partial change upon either the substance or surface of our globe? "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for and hasting 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. 10—12.

Will Mr. Cunninghame seriously maintain that the elements, the heavens, and the earth, and the works that are therein, are names to denote the

body or territories of the fourth beast? If he do; Anastasius, who regards his own opinion as equally oracular, will tell him that the elements are the saints. "The saints are called 'the salt of the earth;' that is, the preservative by which alone the corruption and dissolution of the whole political body is prevented. As soon as they shall have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air, there seems to be no further reason for the preservation of the present frame-work of human society, which is only kept, in order to preserve the church, so that the very elements which compose it shall be dissolved, as well as the powers which rule it melt away." Dial. on Proph. V. 26. See also Last Trump, p. 9. And Mr. Noel, pp. 63, 64, will as positively assure him that the heavens, the earth, and the elements are "the *earthly and guilty system* under which God has been dishonoured, and sin has triumphed." "The whole rebellious system—'all that is in the world, the lust of the eye, and the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life;' the abuse of authority, the bloodshed of oppression, the havock of ambition, the cruel ravages of sensuality, the iron yoke of ignorance, these will be utterly dissolved; this system will melt in the fervent heat of the Divine indignation, and will be exchanged for the peaceful government of the Son of God."

From the language of the apostle, verses 6, 7, we know that the earth which is now reserved unto fire, is "the world that, being overflowed

with water, perished." From the comment of these expounders of the sacred oracles we learn, that the one believes that the deluge did not touch the body of the earth, but merely washed away "the earthly and guilty system under which God had been dishonoured, and sin had triumphed;" and that the other holds that, without affecting the surface of the globe, it only destroyed or "dissolved" the saints, who are the salt of the earth. And as the fire, for which the earth is reserved, is little more than a counterpart of the deluge with which it has been visited; they will inform Mr. Cunninghame that the fire will do no harm to "the body or territories of the fourth beast;" but only consume the wickedness of the world, and destroy the saints. "Thus our authors have well, yea magnificently," and yea with marvellous harmony, "speculated thereon."

After all the clamour which the Millenarians have made for the literal interpretation of the metaphorical language of revelation; it requires no ordinary degree of fortitude to affirm that the words of Peter denote only an improvement of the state of society, or a local and partial change upon the earth: and it would be exceedingly desirable to see a set of terms, which they would regard as sufficiently strong and definite to convey the idea of a universal and total alteration upon the globe. To all who admit the testimony of the apostle it inevitably follows, either that Christ will not return in person before the Millennium,

or else that the earth and all that is therein must, previously to his personal reign with the saints in this world, undergo a thorough alteration; and the notion of a partial or local change must be utterly abandoned.

It is with pleasure that the following judicious remarks on this subject are here introduced to the attention of the reader. “ He seems to think that Dan. vii. 11, which speaks of the beast being slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the *burning flame*; and Rev. xix. 20, which speaks of the beast and the false prophet being cast into the lake of *fire, burning with brimstone*, are the only passages where the final conflagration is mentioned, at least he refers to no other; yet surely he cannot be so ill acquainted with the scriptures as not to know that there are passages which speak of a conflagration very different from this, and one which shall prove commensurate at least with the limits of our globe. The flood of Noah, even Mr Cunninghame will allow, drowned the whole of the world “ which then was;” and, by “ the same word,” says Peter, “ the heavens and the earth which are now, are kept in store, being reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” Is it not a fair inference from this, that the conflagration will be as extensive as the deluge, and are we not told a little further on, that it will be much more extensive? Are we not told that the “ heavens shall pass away with a great noise, that the elements shall melt with fer-

vent heat, and that the earth, and the works which are therein, shall be burnt up?" Are we not told that "all those things shall be dissolved," the whole mundane system, and that the heavens and the earth which afterwards exist, shall be "a new heaven and new earth," in which righteousness shall dwell? This is unquestionably the conflagration destined to take place at the coming of the Lord, his final coming: And if at his coming to destroy antichrist, there is only to be a partial conflagration; such a conflagration as was prefigured by the burning of Sodom, or such as is mentioned in Dan. vii. and Rev. xix. (which some people think, and have reason to think, will be no *real* conflagration at all)—if this be the case, might not Mr. Cunninghame, or might not any reasonable man, have discernment to see, that the coming for the destruction of antichrist, and the final coming to judge the world, cannot be the same coming, but they must be different events, which shall take place at different periods, and be attended with very different concomitants?" Edinburgh Theological Magazine for May, 1828. pp. 269, 270.

CHAPTER IV.

SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES ARISING FROM
THE CHANGES BOTH IN THE NATURAL AND
MORAL WORLD.

WE have already seen some very puzzling difficulties with which this marvellous hypothesis is beset. To obtain a clearer idea of its extraordinary character, it may be proper to consider a few more of the impediments and obstacles with which it is encumbered; and which, till they are removed, will obstruct its reception among men, who are in the practice of reflecting before they assent to novel and startling theories.

I. In the absence of the ordinances of the Gospel, we are at a loss to conceive how the conversion of men can be carried on during the personal reign of the Redeemer.

It is true indeed that there are times when some of the Millenarians expect the ordinances to remain during that period. This opinion has the sanction of Mr. Noel in his *Prospects of the Christian Church*: pp. 136—146. And the reader may perhaps remember that Mr. Irving, p. 54, in the intervals of his missions to other planets,

has volunteered his services to the Methodist Conference, and engaged "to become a Wesleyan Methodist, and preach Christ the Saviour of all."

But his itinerary labours will then be superseded: for we are assured by authority as high as his own, that there will then be no occasion for either preaching or any other christian ordinance. "The apostle," says Mr. Noel, p. 10, "*saw no temple therein*, for the material type was no longer needed. The inhabitants then see face to face." Anastasius, in the Dialogues on Prophecy, Part V. p. 26, informs us that during the war at Armageddon "those who on earth will have any respect to the word of God, will be his ancient people alone, and the New Testament will have concluded its office, when those who have believed it, and have been saved by it, shall be safe in glory." See also Last Trump, p. 17. Aristo afterwards tells us that "one of the necessary properties of the Church is, that in its present state it should be invisible, which is the great key to the visible church; and all the ordinances of a church are to help us out of this condition of invisibility, and to carry on worship by visible signs." Dialogues on Prophecy, VIII. p. 214. Since "all" the ordinances of a church are to help us out of this condition of invisibility, which is the present state of the church; then, most undoubtedly, when the church becomes visible, which Aristo expects to be the case in the Millennium, the ordinances will be altogether abolished.

But whether the Millenarians admit or reject the abolition of the ordinances of religion at the second coming of Christ; the scriptures most unequivocally proclaim their entire cessation then. St. Paul informs us that prophecies or preaching, tongues, knowledge, and types or ordinances, will cease; and when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 1 Cor. xiii. 8—13. And he expressly assures us that the Lord's supper is to be celebrated only till the return of Christ. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till he come." 1 Cor. xi. 26.

From these scriptural testimonies there can be no doubt that, at whatever time our Lord returns, the ordinances will be superseded.

But we have repeatedly heard the Millenarians telling us that there will be "sojourners on earth," "men of flesh" as well as "men in the spirit," "mortal men" as well as "glorified immortals."

Now we know that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh;" that "the carnal," or natural mind, "is enmity against God," that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God;" that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God:" and therefore "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

If within the whole compass of the sacred volume there is one fact stated more plainly than another, it is that there is salvation in no other than the Lord Jesus Christ. The scriptures most dis-

tinctly assure us that he that believeth on him and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.

“ If these sojourners of the earth ” are descendants of Adam, they must be born in his own image, in his own likeness. For who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean? Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. A bitter and impure fountain cannot send forth a sweet and transparent stream: nor a sinful and depraved progenitor produce a spiritual and holy offspring. Unless therefore each of the inhabitants of the Millennial world believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be renewed in the spirit of his mind, he must be a child of disobedience, and a vessel of wrath.

The Bible intimates that the process for the conversion of the soul, from the commencement to the close of time, is uniform and unvarying. This is by the agency of the Holy Ghost through the instrumentality of the word. “ Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.” “ Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Accordingly, we are informed that it was by faith that the first saint entered the world of glory. And till time shall be no more the servants of God are enjoined to traverse the earth, and preach the Gospel unto every creature, in order that those, and those only, who believe it, may be saved.

But when the New Testament, having previously accomplished its office, is set aside, when the Lord's Supper is abolished, and there is an end to preaching; how is the renovation of the heart, and the conversion of the soul to be produced? "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

Will any tell us that their conversion will then be accomplished by the bodily presence of Christ? Multitudes of Millenarians will tell them that that is absolutely impossible. With many of them it is a leading tenet, that, though at his coming Christ will be manifest to eyes of flesh, in the words of Mr. Vaughan, "in his remaining, only spiritual eyes will behold, or be capable of beholding him." And Mr. Cunninghame who has told us that "a figurative or spiritual coming is no coming at all;" will probably inform them that an invisible bodily presence is also no presence at all: and therefore, since he will be no more visible, according to their own ideas, during the Millennium, than now, his bodily presence can no more convert the inhabitants of the earth then, than it does at this moment.

Do some of the Millenarians tell us, that the person of Christ will be visible during the Millennium; and that the sight of his glory will convert the sojourners on earth? Pray, is there a single case on record of a soul converted by an external

manifestation of the Divine glory? The experiment has been often made. At Sinai God appeared in overwhelming majesty: but though the people trembled and fled, their hearts remained more firm and inflexible than the rocks around them. His glory illuminated the camp, and rested on the tabernacle. But were the people softened or sanctified by the sight? Scarcely was there an age in their painful history, when their complaints were more frequent, and their conduct more criminal and perverse, or when they betrayed a more total want of the power of renovating grace.

The experiment was afterwards tried in the endearing form of love and tenderness. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." But did the presence of the incarnate Saviour change the heart of Judas, or convert the Jews?

Shall we be told that the case of Paul forms an exception to this rule? Then we must tell the objector that, extraordinary as it was, it forms no exception: else why was he sent into the city to enjoy the instructions of Ananias? Acts ix. 6—18.

If these remarks are not sufficient; then we must request these gentlemen to inform us, how the presence of Christ, however visible and glorious, will convert the first and the succeeding generations in the Millennium, when it does not con-

vert the last? Though as much in the world during the closing days of the Millennium as at its opening; it is evident from the immense army under Gog and Magog which attacks the camp of the saints, that his presence does not convert the last of its generations; and on what authority can it be asserted that this presence will convert those which precede?

II. It must be no easy matter to reconcile the saints to death during the Millennium.

Death must become unspeakably more terrible to believers then, than during the former ages of the world.

The Millenarians give us fearful representations of the forbidding and terrific nature of death even to Christians at present, and of the imperfect and defective happiness of their disembodied spirits. They talk of the state betwixt death and the resurrection "as a state of longing expectation, not a state of perfect blessedness—a state of desire, not a state of rest—a state of weakness and waiting for power." See Irving's *Pre. Dis.* pp. 55, 61, 115, 116.

But however far it may be inferior to the state which succeeds the resurrection; we know that it is far superior to our present condition. It secures to the believer the possession of what constitutes the perfection of his blessedness; his presence with Christ, and his view of his Redeemer's glory. "To depart, and to be with Christ, is

far better." "We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord."

But if now, when death introduces us into the immediate presence of Christ, and the general assembly and church of the first-born; into the joy of our Lord; where we shall see him as he is; walk with him in white; be made exceedingly glad in the light of his countenance; and, beholding openly his glory, be changed into the same image from glory to glory: if notwithstanding all this, these gentlemen regard death as so irksome, painful, and revolting; what language can express its horrors, when during the personal reign of Christ on earth, it shall tear the inhabitants of the world away from the place of his bodily residence, and send them into the place of departed spirits? Whether it is called paradise or heaven; still, since Jesus has removed his throne and presence; since there they can neither see his face, hear his voice, nor behold his glory; it is stripped of its best and most endearing beauty and delight, and rendered a dark and dreary abode. Whatever the saints, who now fall asleep in Jesus, may be supposed to gain by the first resurrection; a grievous inexpressible injury is inflicted on all the faithful who die during the long years of the Millennium.

How, in the face of these facts, the Millenarians can speak of death as "without alarm" and "full of peace," Noel, p. 148., is strange indeed.

Deprive it of as much as they please of the bodily suffering which it creates; since it removes the believer from the presence of him whose favour is life, and whose loving-kindness is better than life; the regret and distress which it then must occasion must be indescribable, and the loss sustained irreparable.

III. To increase the difficulties under which the Millenarian system labours, its advocates affirm that the thousand years of Christ's personal reign on earth is the day of judgment. See Mede's Works, pp. 530—537, 772, 892, 893. Noel, pp. 31, 101. and Cunninghame's Summary View, Note, p. 15, and p. 23. With these Mr. Irving and others so far coincide as to convert one day into a thousand years. Pre. Dis. p. 153. Dial. on Proph. III. 169—172.

Men, who fancy that they are possessed of the greatest talents and learning, entertain different notions respecting these momentous matters.

Mr. Bicheno very much to his own conviction demonstrated that the Millennium is only a thousand weeks, and that it would pass over this favoured generation, some time betwixt A. D. 1800. and 1822: See his *Destiny of the German Empire*, pp. 95—124.

Mr. Thom, who has an idea, as lofty as that of any man, of his own consequence, agrees with infidels and scoffers in rejecting the belief of a future judgment altogether. *Three Questions Pro-*

posed, &c. pp. 86—88. The Millenarians protract the day of judgment into a thousand years, and transform it into the Millennium.

Now here again those who have been able to adopt nothing higher than “vulgar notions” are obliged to complain that the Millenarians are completely beyond their reach. If the judgment is to sit throughout the whole of the Millennium, we cannot understand how the business of life is at the same time to be conducted, as these writers have repeatedly assured us that it shall. The pick-pocket, who persists in depredations in a criminal court, in the presence of a judge, or at the foot of the gallows where his brother is suffering the last penalty of the law for a similar offence; displays an incurable outrageous degree of wickedness. But what is all that compared with the profligacy and depravity implied in the monstrous, the incredible supposition, that whilst the transactions of the great day of decision are going on, whilst the King eternal and immortal is seated on his great white throne, and the inhabitants of the earth are mourning, and men of all its kindreds are wailing because of him; others, indifferent to the whole of the affecting realities around them, are plying their worldly affairs, marrying and giving in marriage, eating and drinking, or working unrighteousness with greediness?

But if the judgment does not sit at all during these ten centuries; if none of the wicked are raised at the descent of our Lord; if the fate

of the living wicked shall be quickly dispatched ; and the living saints and their glorified brethren who come along with him, are not judged “ until the thousand years are *finished* ;” Rev. xx. 5, 12, 13 ; so that, during the whole day of judgment, there is not a single creature judged at all, we do not understand how it has obtained the name of the day of judgment. We are accustomed to regard descriptive names as expressive of the nature of the objects to which they are applied. A day of temptation, we have regarded as a day of trial ; a day of feasting, as a festival ; a day of mourning, as a day of affliction : and we greatly need some Millenarian illumination to comprehend how the day of judgment has obtained that name from the total absence of the exercise of judgment ; and from its proving a season of delight to the inhabitants of the earth, and the long-looked for jubilee of the creation.

On the redoubtable argument supposed to be comprised in these words, “ We say that the day of the Lord which in the face of Peter’s warning, they interpret of a natural day, but which we in the spirit of his warning, and of John’s exposition, interpret of a thousand years :” Irving’s Pre. Dis. p. 153 : we have to remark that this interpretation is in the teeth of both Peter’s text and John’s commentary. When the apostle John speaks of the day of judgment, it is in language which shews that its transactions will be compressed into a short period indeed. Rev. xx. 11—15. John

v. 26—29. And with respect to the text of Peter; it is astonishing and deplorable that any man can write and print, that that apostle intimated that the day of judgment will last a thousand years. The apostle is warning his readers of scoffers who would arise in the last days. And what were these scoffers to ask? How long will the judgment last when it arrives? How long will the Judge remain when he comes? Not at all. The scoffers are men of the world, who mind earthly things, disregard the admonitions of the Most High; and from the stability of the mundane system, and the long uninterrupted course of human affairs, reject the belief of a judgment entirely; and conclude that matters will hold on as they have done, in an endless succession. “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” To such a question as this, what is the legitimate and proper answer? Is it an account of the duration of the final judgment? or a declaration of the certainty of its arrival, even though irreligious men imagine that our Lord delays his coming, and never will return? When a stranger asks his friend at St. Paul’s, how long time it will require him to walk to the Caledonian Church, Compton-street; would it be a fair and candid reply to say, the service there lasts only three hours? When in Novem-

ber, a child inquires, how many days there are till the new year: would it be a correct or rational return to the question to say, the new year will contain three hundred and sixty-five days? And when the apostle is directing his readers how to deal with the scoffers who would ask, Where is the promise of Christ's coming? is it credible that, instead of entering into an explanation how that with Him who has eternity at his command, the apparent delay of a day, a year, or a thousand years, could make no alteration upon his purposes, nor screen his enemies ultimately from their fate: Is it credible that instead of meeting and exposing the cavil of the scoffers, the apostle would enter into a disquisition respecting the length of time during which the judgment is to sit?

The apostle gives a far more appropriate and rational answer. He tells us that these scoffers shut their eyes to facts: that the world is not now what it originally was: that, notwithstanding the incredulity of the Antediluvians, the flood came, swept them all away, and created a complete change upon the earth: that, notwithstanding the unbelief of future reprobates, the day of the Lord will most assuredly come, in which the earth, to the stability of which they trust so firmly, shall be burnt up: but though the Lord is not slow to fulfil his promise of returning, he waits to be gracious and gives the most careless and hardened space and opportunity to repent. "The Lord

is not slack concerning his promise." What promise? a promise of a long judgment; a judgment to last ten centuries, and during which none of the great family of man shall be judged at all? Where is the promise of such a judgment to be found? The promise, of which the apostle is speaking, is the promise of our Lord's "coming." verse 4. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The interval betwixt the ascension and the return of our Redeemer is fitted to manifest his forbearance, and bring sinners to repentance: but since all the sinners found alive at his second advent will be instantaneously destroyed; what tendency can a judgment protracted for a thousand years have to bring them to repentance?

IV. The Millenarian hypothesis renders an attack by the wicked upon the faithful, at the end of the Millennium, incredible.

From Rev. xx. it is certain that there will be a general war against the saints immediately prior to the last judgment. On the common hypothesis, such an attack is perfectly simple and credible. After a long period of unprecedented piety and felicity, it is quite possible that a generation will arise destitute of the life and power of godliness: and that, as the integrity and spirituality of the faithful will interfere with their selfish schemes

and worldly interests, they will organize a campaign against the saints, in the vain hope of clearing the earth of their hated presence, and securing to themselves the sovereignty of the world.

But that any race of mortals will attack the Church of the redeemed, under the immediate protection of the Lord Jesus Christ, is completely beyond the bounds of belief. In every age the followers of Jesus have, to the irreligious and carnal, been the objects of dislike, reproach, persecution, and outrage. But in all their cruel treatment of the heirs of heaven, they never are aware of the real nature of their conduct, nor dream that they are embarked in a contest with their Maker. Their enmity is excited, and their hostility directed against, what they fancy, bigotry and enthusiasm, superstition and fanaticism. But they believe that they love God himself, and would be glad through eternity to enjoy his favour. Paul thought that he ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazereth; and many of those who have dyed themselves deepest in the blood of the saints, have supposed that by murdering his people they were doing him the most signal service. Mat. xxv. 44, 45. Acts xxvi. 9. John xvi. 2. And Satan himself, with all his malignity against the cause of God and goodness, has not infatuation enough to imagine that he is a match for the Almighty, nor the insanity to provoke such an unequal combat. In the days of the Redeemer's humiliation the Devil shrunk from

his presence with dread. Mark i. 24. And can we believe that there is stupidity and frenzy in all earth or hell sufficient to lead on an attack against the camp of the saints, crowded with glorified immortals, and protected by the presence and the power of the King of kings and Lord of lords?

In the last enterprise against the faithful, is it likely that the ground of hostilities will be changed? Is there any probability for believing that the wicked will either be able or inclined to attack the Church, knowing that it is the city of the living God? Granting, as the Millenarians suppose, that the faithful who are born during the Millennium, are swept away by death; the accumulated multitudes of the saints, who in all preceding ages have fallen asleep in Jesus, when raised from the dead at the commencement of that interesting period, if they retain their fidelity, will so far surpass the number of the wicked of any single generation, that the impious of that age must be possessed of more than mortal courage, if they have the hardihood to meditate a war against such fearful odds.

Notwithstanding all the attempts of the Millenarians to conceal the person of Immanuel, and to shut him up in the temple of Jerusalem; and notwithstanding all the jargon they have written about his manifesting himself as "by the Urim and Thummim," and "through the prince of the temple;" we know that when he next appears, whether at the commencement of the Millennium

or at the great day of judgment, he will come "in his own glory and in the glory of his Father." This glory is immutable. It can neither wax nor wane: but will be as bright and over-powering at the expiration, as at the beginning of these centuries of bliss. For if it undergoes an eclipse or decrease, how can the Millenarian expectations be realized that he is to "sit on the identical throne of David," and "reign before his ancients gloriously?" And can we believe that the wicked will have the blind boldness to engage in a conflict not only with the glorified immortals, but their glorious King? When he comes the wicked flee from his presence, all the kindreds of the earth mourn because of him; and the most daring and sturdy of them all cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from his presence. And when no length of time can diminish his power and glory; but millions of ages after his fancied return to the earth, it will be as dazzling and overwhelming as at the first moment when he is discerned returning to the globe: are we to believe that these guilty, trembling criminals, filled with such consternation and horror, at the blazing symbols of his eternal power and Godhead, are to rise in hostilities against him; and though they would rather be crushed beneath a mountain, or swallowed up in the convulsions that shake a dissolving world, than encounter the terrors of his frown; they will muster the audacity to wage direct and open

war against Him and the called and chosen and faithful in his train?

Several other difficulties, equally strong and insurmountable as those which have just now been enumerated, might be mentioned. But any additional exposure of this chimerical scheme may be superseded by the illustration of one general remark; which, if the task has not been already accomplished, will go far to unfold the glaring inconsistency and monstrous absurdity of the whole of the visionary system.

Throughout this chapter we have been arguing on the supposition that the human race is to be perpetuated during the imaginary personal reign of Christ on earth, and we have just now been saying, that, on the modern theory, an attack upon the saints at the end of the Millennium, is incredible. It is now time to add, that, on this notion,

V. An attack upon the saints, at the end of the Millennium, and the conversion of the world at its commencement, are impossible.

But how can these events be shewn to be impossible? Very simply and very shortly. By the plain fact that the Millenarian hypothesis clears, at the coming of Christ, the earth of all his enemies, and clothes his friends with spiritual and immortal bodies. It exterminates, consumes, and destroys every living sinner; and glorifies every living saint. Irving's Pre. Dis. pp. 5, 6,

147, 148. Ben-Ezra, vol. II. p. 248. Noel's Prospects, &c. pp. 31, 32, 46, 47, 93, 94, 101.

If the Gentile nations and the Jews are converted before the descent of the Redeemer; then they will, when he appears, be instantly glorified. If they are not converted, they must be ranged amongst his foes, and be instantly destroyed. Now after the destruction of every living sinner, and the glorification of every living saint; where are they to find "men to abide in the flesh, and be heirs of death?" From whence come the multitudes of which they speak, that shall be born to Christ, and fill the Millennial Church? There is no work nor device in the grave: and therefore the wicked dead cannot give them birth. The issue of the glorified just they cannot be: for "they who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage, for they are equal to the angels." From whence then are the multitudes to arise, who shall replenish the earth, and swell the hosts of the redeemed?

Shall we be told that a remnant shall be preserved to be the ancestors of succeeding generations? Indeed there is nothing, provided only that it is far enough removed from the regions of common sense, and the plain dictates of revelation, but what some modest Millenarian will have the simplicity to tell us; and if they believe as they write, there is nothing too absurd and

ridiculous to be beyond the reach of their belief. They have not only told us that a remnant shall escape at the coming of Christ: but Mr. Vaughan has had the wisdom to discover, and the fortitude to assure us, that, after the last judgment and universal conflagration, when "the beloved city floats as a second ark upon the fiery flood;" "Israel comes forth, a new seed for the new heaven and the new earth." Sermon, p. 132. And when, after the dissolution of the earth and the consumation of all things, they anticipate new races to arise from immortal glorified Israel; is it any wonder to hear them asserting, as they do, that a remnant will be preserved unchanged at the second coming of the Son of man? But then, have they shewn, or attempted to shew, how this is to be accomplished, or can be accomplished? When they tell us that it is "the glorious coming of our Lord to judge the quick and dead;" that then there will be "no ark, Zoar, nor Pella for the Church on earth;" that "all his chosen ones will be saved by being caught up to meet him;" that "the chief figure used for the gathering of the elect is that of harvest, at which time the wheat is gathered into the garner, and the chaff and stubble burned;" that "this figure is succeeded by another in Rev. xiv., of vintage, in which there is no separation, but every single grape is trampled to pieces;" that his coming is "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men;" that "the change made on earth by fire at his coming

will be as great as that produced by the deluge;" that "both St. Paul and St. Peter understood the term '*perish*' as only a material alteration in the outward visible form of the earth, and that can be effected by fire in the *second* destruction as it was in the *first* by water;" that the earth is to be "baptized with fire," "purified by fire;" that "a change will be effected on the material world similar to that which has taken place on" the bodies of Enoch, Elijah, and Moses; that his coming will be like that of the flood, when "the successive waves swept along the plain, the rushing torrents rolled alike over vallies and mountains, and precluded any escape from their fury;" and that "as Noah and his family were preserved from the deluge by being lift up above the waters in the ark; so shall the saints at the conflagration be lift up unto their ark Christ, to be preserved there from the deluge of fire, wherein the wicked shall be consumed:" Can they reconcile such representations as these with the possibility of preserving any remnant, whether great or small? See Cunningsham's View, p. 10; Dial. on Proph. V. pp. 16, 26, 28; Last Trump, pp. 6, 8; Christ's Appearance, pp. 103—105. Ben-Ezra, vol. II. pp. 230, 233; Cry from the Desert, pp. 29, 45; Vaughan's Sermon, p. 81; Irving's Pre. Dis. pp. 122, 123; Dial. on Proph. VIII. p. 218; III. p. 97; Noel's Prospects, p. 101. Mede's Works, pp. 609—619, 776.

They may elsewhere talk as they please of "the

preservation of a hemisphere," of "a remnant that escapes," and of "the subjects of the millennial kingdom composed of the restored Jews, the converted heathen, and the remnant converted and saved out of the ungodly hosts who will have perished in the convulsions of the last plagues of the great judgment:" but in the passages just now quoted, or referred to, they have told us that "escape" is precluded; and, what is more, they have shewn that escape is impossible. If "all" Christ's chosen ones are saved by being caught up to meet him; how can any of the saints be left to repeople the earth? Does his church contain more than "all" whom he has chosen? And if "every single grape is trampled to pieces," and if the "ungodly perish:" how can any of the wicked survive, to fill the world with a new race, and perform all that is ascribed to the sojourners on earth during the millennial reign?

But they have not only in express terms asserted the glorification of all the saints, and the entire perdition of the ungodly; but have, unconsciously indeed, but effectually, demonstrated that the preservation of any man in a mortal body is an absolute impossibility.

Except those who were in the ark, "all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land died" by the flood. The destruction was complete. No creature escaped, Gen. vii. 21—23. And when a second deluge, not of water, but of fire, shall traverse the globe;

shall "sweep along the plains, roll alike over valleys and mountains;" shall "baptize," "purify," and "spiritualize" the earth: and "no ark," "no Zoar, nor Pella" is to be found on the wide surface of our planet; when "the New Jerusalem is in the air," and not yet set afloat "on the surface of the fiery flood;" when "the elements are melting with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein are a-burning up:" How can a "single sojourner of earth," whether saint or sinner, escape this all-pervading and overwhelming visitation; or resist the strength and intensity of these devouring flames?

To the whole enlightened brotherhood of modern Millenarians we may apply the remarks of a distinguished critic, upon the speculations of one of their far-famed predecessors. "Place now the Millennium after the conflagration of the world, and all things in it; and where will you find these pious men alive, or how will you preserve them from those flames? Dr. Burnet finds a great difficulty, not common to all, as he imagines, but peculiar to his own invention, of a Millennium after the conflagration of the present earth; viz. *How Gog and Magog should get into this new earth, the wicked being all consumed in those flames.* He is not hardy enough to say that this is *the poetic tale of the Giants*, though he saith it hath great affinity with it. And therefore he produces these men, according to the philosophy of Lucretius and Mr. Hobbes, *from the slime*

of the earth, and the heat of the sun, as brute creatures were at first: but whence come these pious men that have not yet slept, into this new earth, is a fresh difficulty; and to this the doctor hath yet nothing to say: for he either thought not of them, or was unwilling to take up with the Rabbinical notion, that they had eagle's wings given them to mount up into the air whilst the earth was on fire." Dr. Whitby on the Millennium, appended to his Commentary on the New Testament, 2 edit. Vol. II. pp, 740, 741.

In the day of judgment each receives from Christ according to his works; and the sentence of the Son of God fixes unalterably the eternal condition of those on whom it is pronounced. From his tribunal the wicked "go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." 2 Cor. v. 10. Mat. xxv. 45. This conclusively closes their temporal transactions; and precludes the possibility of returning to the business of life, or the present occupations of mortals. Now after the real, personal, and glorious coming of our Lord to judge the quick and the dead;" how is it possible to perpetuate the human race, and replenish the earth with successive generations of either saints or sinners? Do the Millenarians suppose that at the second advent of our Redeemer, there will be some of the descendants of Adam who are neither alive nor dead? Unless they do; since Christ comes "to judge the quick and the dead," they inevit-

ably admit that at his appearing the number of our race is completed; and that no additions can be made either to the children of light or of darkness.

This is a conclusion which follows alike from their own language, and from their own concessions. But whether they admit or reject it; it is a conclusion irresistibly forced on all who admit the authority of revelation. Notwithstanding all the attempts to fritter away its meaning, or escape from its application, the language of 2 Peter iii. 5—12, which has already been quoted, affirms a universal conflagration at the coming of Christ, at the day of judgment, in terms too distinct and clear for any stupidity to mistake, or any sophistry to evade.

After these accumulative proofs of the termination of the present system of the world's affairs, and of the impossibility of continuing the propagation of the species after the second advent of the Messiah; the Millenarian hypothesis cuts off the possibility of removing "the blindness which has happened to Israel," and of bringing in "the fulness of the Gentiles." Rom. xi. 11—26. Often have these writers assured us that the world "never will be cleansed, except by the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of burning;" that the conversion of the nations before the personal advent of the Redeemer, is hopeless: that "this present dispensation of the incarnate God and the out-poured Spirit is to end, and is now ending in a

desertion, in an apostacy, in an almost total absence of faith and eclipse of light;" and that Satan "never will give up his reign by any preaching of the Gospel, nor by any other means than by the manifestation of Christ in person, on purpose to cast him out of this earth." Dial. on Proph. III. pp. 163, 164, 176; V. 65; Irving's Pre. Dis. p. 164. Now, if "this present dispensation is to end in an apostacy," and "Satan will never give up his reign by any other means than by the manifestation of Christ in person:" when by their own principles and the express declarations of Scripture, we find that Christ at his coming decides the everlasting destiny of every child of Adam, that he then judges the quick and dead, and births and deaths are impossible: then we are compelled to repeat the question, How can either "the fulness of the Gentiles come in?" or "all Israel be saved?" How can all the nations be blessed in Christ? and he receive "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession?" Are these promises no part of revelation? or are Millenarians regardless whether they shall be fulfilled or falsified, provided they can bolster up their own favourite but fanciful and baseless theory?

By glorifying all the faithful, who at the appearing of Christ shall be found upon earth, and destroying all the ungodly; from whence can the army of apostates, who, before the second Millenarian

judgment, attack the camp of the saints, be recruited ?

On these topics the author is glad to find that his opinions are supported by the powerful authority of the ablest modern interpreter of Prophecy.

“ According to the necessary consequence of the speculation now before us, the renovated earth, *during* the Millennial period, can only be tenanted, by *the martyrs who have been raised from the dead at St. John’s first resurrection, and by the pious corporeally changed individuals who were found alive in the day of Christ’s literal second advent.* For the universal mundane conflagration, which *attends upon* our Lord’s second coming, will have effectually destroyed *all the wicked, who shall be found alive at that epoch: and these wicked persons, together with their wicked predecessors who died anterior to the second advent,* will not be raised again to receive their final sentence until the general resurrection *subsequent* to the Millennium. Therefore clearly, by the hypothesis, there can be no other occupants of the renovated earth, than *the pious raised dead and the pious changed quick.*

“ Now, by the express declaration both of our Lord himself and of his Apostle St. Paul, persons so circumstanced can die no more: for *death will then have been swallowed up in victory.* Consequently, during the millennial period as viewed according to the present speculation, death can no longer prevail,

“ But here we are immediately encountered by another flat contradiction. St. John, by the full admission of Mr. Mede himself, distinctly teaches us, that death is *not* annihilated until the universal judgment *subsequent* to the Millennium. Therefore, if death be *not* annihilated until *after* the Millennium, it must evidently prevail *through* the Millennium precisely as it does at present: and, accordingly, we find, in matter of fact, that the confederates of Gog and Magog, though inhabitants of the millennial earth, are nevertheless slain by the descent of fire from heaven. Hence it will follow, since death prevails *through* the Millennium, and since the *only* occupants of the renovated earth are *the pious raised dead* and *the pious changed quick*, that *the pious raised dead* and *the pious changed quick*, notwithstanding the declaration of our Lord and St. Paul to the contrary, will all continue to die, exactly like ourselves, during the entire triumphant period of the Millennium.

“ Of this inconvenience, a man, like Mr. Mede, could not be insensible: but, upon *his* principles, the difficulty was, how to avoid it. The matter, however, is not given up in despair. He solves the problem by supposing, that the mundane conflagration, which confessedly *attends upon* Christ’s literal second advent, will be only partial, not absolutely universal. The collective continents of Europe and Asia and Africa will, indeed, be

subjected to its influence: and, when purified and renovated by it, will constitute what St. John calls the *parembolè* of the saints, whether raised from the dead or corporeally changed in the day of the Lord's coming. But the continents of America and of the Terra Australis Incognita will escape; for, to *them*, the conflagration will not extend: and *their* inhabitants will still be liable to death, though the inhabitants of the renovated *parembolè* of our upper hemisphere will be exempt from it.

“Respecting such a solution, which many perhaps will deem somewhat arbitrary, the only *real* question is; how far it can be reconciled with St. Peter's predictive account of that mundane conflagration, which will *accompany* the second advent of our Lord in judgment.

“Now the whole tenor of the Apostle's language, unless the very plainest expressions may be legitimately pronounced equivocal, most distinctly and precisely imports *universality*. The material atmosphere, he tells us, and the earth, which now exist, *are reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. For the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night: in which the material atmospheric heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and all the works that are in it shall be burned up.* From an impending catastrophe thus awful, he draws the inference: *Seeing, then, that all these things shall be*

dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

“Such is the language, employed by St. Peter to describe a mundane conflagration, which Mr. Mede would limit to the continents of Europe and Asia and Africa, and from which he would wholly exempt the continents of America and the Terra Australis Incognita. But this limitation is so plainly made for the mere purpose of serving the necessities of a system, and is so utterly irreconcilable with the palpably universalising language of the Apostle, that no sober inquirer, I think, can for a moment hesitate to reject it. The original contradiction, therefore, still remains in full potency: nor can it be removed by any expedient, short of an entire retraction of the theory, which would place St. Peter’s universal mundane conflagration *immediately before* the commencement of the Millennium. But, if this theory be retracted, the theory of the literal second advent at the same epoch must be retracted also: for, since the universal mundane conflagration indisputably *accompanies* the literal second advent, the two theories of *the literal premillennian second advent* and of *the universal premillennian conflagration* stand or fall together.

“Yet, even if we could justly concede to Mr. Mede his untenable expedient of an arbitrary limitation, his system would soon be found equally to halt with a new contradiction.

“ If the continents of Europe and Asia and Africa be burned up and entirely dissolved *immediately before* the Millennium, it is clear, that *none* of the wicked, within those geographical limits, whether active members of the Roman antichristian confederacy or not personally taking a direct part in its operations, can possibly escape inevitable destruction. Accordingly, Mr. Mede expressly states, that such will be their lot: for, while the saints, he remarks, will be caught up to Christ in the air, and will thus be preserved from this tremendous conflagration; the wicked will be consumed in the deluge of fire, which will then be let loose upon the whole of our upper hemisphere.

“ But this necessary result from the excellent author’s system, even as explained and limited and modified by himself, directly contradicts the joint positive attestation of Isaiah and Zechariah.

“ The former of these two prophets, when speaking of that advent of the Lord which synchronises with the restoration of Judah and with the overthrow of the Roman faction at the end of the latter 1260 years; that is to say, when speaking of that very advent which Mr. Mede would have to be the *literal* second advent; declares, that God will send those, who *shall escape* out of the general destruction of that faction, to the distant nations of the earth: when they shall celebrate his glory among the Gentiles, and shall thus be instrumental in bringing back the still unrestored

remnant of Israel from out of all nations to the holy mountain of Jerusalem.

“The latter of these two prophets, still speaking of that same advent of Christ which synchronises with the restoration of Judah and with the overthrow of the Roman faction, distinctly assures us, that certain individuals shall *escape* out of the destruction of all the confederated nations which will then come against Jerusalem.

“Now, according to Mr. Mede’s system even as modified by *himself*, the escape of *any* individuals out of the fiery destruction of the antichristian confederacy is plainly *impossible*: for, as he teaches us, Christ, in this day of his *literal* second advent, will let loose upon the wicked a deluge of fire, which will burn up and clean dissolve the whole collective continents of Europe and Asia and Africa.

“As, however, we cannot concede to Mr. Mede his untenable expedient of an arbitrary limitation of that universal mundane conflagration, which St. Peter associates with the literal second advent of the Lord: we must prepare ourselves to encounter yet another contradiction, which inevitably flows from his most infelicitous speculation.

“By the concurrent voice of Prophecy, the general conversion of the Gentiles to the faith of Christ is placed *after* the restoration of Judah and *after* the confessedly synchronical overthrow of the antichristian faction. Accordingly Mr. Mede himself most justly remarks, that, *until the*

calling of the Jews (which Daniel and our Lord definitely fix to the end of the three times and a half or to the end of the times of the Gentiles), *the general conversion of the Gentiles is not to be expected: for the receiving of Israel shall be the riches of the world; in that by their restitution, the whole world shall come unto Christ.*

“But, if the *literal* second advent of the Lord, and consequently the *universal* mundane conflagration, occur at the precise time, when, immediately before the commencement of the Millennium, Judah is restored, and the Roman faction is overthrown: it is manifestly *impossible*, that any *subsequent* conversion of the now unbelieving Gentiles can be accomplished.

“An ardent follower of Mr. Mede may perhaps remind us, that he *limits* St. Peter’s mundane conflagration to the old continents; and may thence send us to the unscathed continents of America and Australia for the predicted future conversion of the Gentiles. But, even to say nothing of the fact that America is *already* evangelised and that the Terra Australis still remains an *unknown* land, Mr. Mede’s *arbitrary limitation* of what St. Peter makes *strictly universal* has been shewn to be altogether untenable.

“One difficulty yet remains, of so very peculiar a nature, that it must by no means be silently pretermitted.

“St. John tells us, that, when Satan is liberated at the close of the Millennium, he will go out to

deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, that he will gather them together to battle, in number as the sand of the sea, that they themselves will come up on the breadth of the earth, that they will compass the *parembolè* of the saints and the beloved city, and that fire from God out of heaven will at length devour them.

“Now, on the system adopted by Mr. Mede and his followers, where shall we find *materials* for the construction of this formidable ultimate confederacy, which the Apostle collectively denominates *Gog and Magog* ?

“The venerable hierophant himself, whose ingenuity never fails him, would in strict conformity with the prophet’s own express language, *bring up* the conspirators from the lower hemisphere of America and the Terra Australis Incognita.

“This, however, is impracticable : for the mundane conflagration, which St. Peter associates with the literal second advent, is clearly *universal*.

“Dr. Thomas Burnet, who admits, what cannot be reasonably denied, the *universality* of St. Peter’s mundane conflagration, resorts to yet another expedient. According to this learned writer, the innumerable hosts of Gog and Magog, in all the four quarters of the earth, will be generated, like the classical Python, by the productive heat of the sun, from the teeming slime of the renovated earth.

“The speculation is sufficiently ingenious; but I apprehend, that few systematisers of the present

day would have nerves strong enough to adopt it in good sober controversial earnest.

“Again, then, we are constrained to ask the perplexing question: Where, on the system adopted by the literalists, shall we discover *materials*, out of which we may consistently fabricate the innumerable hosts of the final daring apostacy?”

“Truly, on this most extraordinary system, our *sole materials* are, *the holy martyrs who were raised from the dead in the day of the first resurrection, and the holy living individuals who were corporeally changed at the time of Christ’s literal second advent immediatly before the commencement of the Millennium*: for such will be the *only* inhabitants of the earth, when it shall have been first dissolved and then renovated by the grand *universal* mundane conflagration.” Faber’s Sacred Calendar of Prophecy; vol. III. pp. 445—454.

To Mr. Irving and those who coincide with him, this is no difficulty at all. They tell us, on the one hand, that the Millennium is to “end in an insurrection of the long blessed inhabitants of the earth, requiring the loosing of Satan, and that last infliction of wrath which brings on the consummation.” Irving’s Pre. Dis. p. 164. And on the other hand, they assure us that, during the Millennium, “if any sinner does arise, he will be instantly cut off.” Dial. on Proph. VIII. p. 240.

“Since then every sinner as he arises is to be ‘instantly cut off;’ there can be none left to occupy our globe but the glorified immortals, and

the faithful who are "still in the flesh and heirs of death." But since no mortal could outlive his apostasy for a single second, it follows therefore, as a matter of course, that this "insurrection of the long blessed inhabitants of the earth" must be composed exclusively of the saints, who were raised from the dead, and those who were glorified, at the supposed descent of Christ. What therefore, Mr. Faber regards as the height of absurdity, these enlightened Millenarians gravely assert to be not only a possible, but an unquestionable fact.

"Some of them may be disposed to imagine that the insurrection will be confined to the "sojourners of earth," the saints who are still "abiding in the flesh."

But this does not lessen the difficulty much. For they inform us that one of the effects of the Millennium will be "great longevity." Dial. on Proph. VIII. p. 240. They have not exactly ascertained the length of life during that wonderful era. But Mr. Vaughan, Church's Expectation, p. 123, note, has discovered that the youth of men will then extend through the first hundred years of their age. Of course their whole life must last for at least a few centuries.

From the great fertility of the earth, and the rapid increase of the species in the absence of war, sickness, and all the calamities, so hurtful to human life; the population of the world, during the last ages of the Millennium, must be immense. From Rev. xx. the conspiracy seems to be very extensive. If therefore the "insurrection of the

long blessed inhabitants of the earth," were to be limited to "the sojourners of the earth:" since the greater part of those born in the Millennium will be "still abiding in the flesh," when they are seduced by Satan, and led to embark in their dreadful conspiracy against the Most High; this hypothesis necessarily requires a prodigious destruction of our race, and renders it doubtful whether such a Millennium would prove a blessing or a curse.

Those who are inclined to espouse this opinion, will probably, on more mature reflection renounce it, and adopt the idea of their brethren, that the army of Gog and Magog will be composed of glorified immortals. This is an idea which, whether they will or not, they must adopt. For it is evident from Rev. xx. 8, 9, that it requires some time to organize the army of Gog and Magog. Now, if every sinner as he arises will be "instantly cut off;" if Gog, Magog and their followers were mortal men, they could not survive their revolt a single moment. These ungodly forces never could be mustered. Before they could march one step to attack the camp of the saints, every conspirator would be laid lifeless on the ground.

It therefore inevitably follows; from the facts that there is a conspiracy formed, an army collected, and an attempt made to compass the camp of the saints; that some time must be spent in recruiting the troops of the apostates: And since

this is absolutely incompatible with the instantaneous death of every mortal that sins, this army must consist solely of just men made perfect; and Gog and Magog themselves must be saints, who either came with Christ on his return to earth, or were found alive at his coming, and glorified at the time that the bodies of their brethren were raised from the grave.

“ Thus well, yea, magnificently have our authors speculated thereon.”

To men of the genius and learning of Millenarians, this scheme must be perfectly simple, clear, and intelligible: but to those who adhere to the “ vulgar” notions, and whom they have dignified by the names of “ moles and bats,” the whole appears utterly incredible and absurd. How can the words, “ nations which are in the four quarters of the earth,” be applied to the glorified saints? How can it be supposed that they will “ gather together to battle” against their brethren? How can the revolt either of glorified or of mortal saints be reconciled with the unvarying representations which the scriptures give us of their state and character, and the repeated assurances that they shall have eternal life, and shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of their Redeemer’s hand?

The assertions, involving these untenable conclusions, are advanced in order to free the Millenarian hypothesis from a perplexing and insurmountable difficulty, with which it has been long

beset. The doctrine of Christ's personal reign on earth has had a few votaries in different ages of the Church. But when formerly adopted, it was generally accompanied with a belief that, during this period, there would be an entire cessation from the business of life, that the number of our race would at its commencement be complete, and that during its currency there would be neither births nor deaths.

This fancy was exposed to the following unanswerable objection. "The idea of a personal reign appears to me nearly to *exclude that of a spiritual one, by leaving little or no place for it.* —It is clear that the pouring out of the seven vials is principally for the purpose of destroying the Antichristian system, and that when this is accomplished, the Millennium follows. No sooner are the beast and false prophet taken under the sixth vial, and the world, (like the temple after being polluted by Antiochus) purified from its abominations by the seventh, than the dragon is bound for a thousand years. If then this thousand years reign be personal, the second coming of Christ must immediately succeed the ruin of Antichrist. But if so, how, or when, are all those prophecies to be fulfilled which describe the prosperity of the church in the latter days? How are wars to cease in the earth, and peace to succeed to them, when as soon as the troubles of the earth are destroyed, the world will be at an end? On this principle Antichrist will reign till the heavens are

no more. The end of 1260 years will be the end of time, and the church will have no existence upon the present earth but in the wilderness? Instead of the stone after breaking in pieces the image, becoming a great mountain, and filling the whole earth; no sooner is the image broken to pieces, than the earth itself shall be burnt up. And on the destruction of the little horn, Dan. vii. 26, 27, instead of the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven being given to the people of the saints of the Most High, no sooner shall that horn be broken than the whole earth will be destroyed with it."*

The modern Millenarians may imagine that they have profited by the blunders of their predecessors, and managed matters better. They may fancy that they have gotten completely rid of this objection by retaining births and deaths, after the second coming of Christ and the first resurrection. But births and deaths will not remain for them. They cannot survive the physical changes which the Millenarian hypothesis requires, and which the scriptures declare will accompany the second advent of Christ and the judgment which he will then execute upon the quick and dead. By the awkward expedients to which our modern friends have had recourse, to give plausibility and consistency to their scheme, they have

* Fuller's Expository Discourses on the Apocalypse, pp. 348, 349.

prodigiously increased the darkness and confusion; and rendered a theory, which at the best was abundantly baseless and visionary, utterly ridiculous and absurd.

And for what purpose, we may ask, are we required to renounce the clear, intelligible, sublime, and animating doctrine of Scripture respecting the future triumphs of the Gospel, when "all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God," and when "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High;" to believe in the personal reign of Christ in this world, and all the strange and unaccountable consequences with which it must be attended? If he appear in person and fix his residence upon a particular spot, say Jerusalem or Mount Zion; what valuable end can be accomplished by such a return to the world, but what can be as effectually secured by his spiritual presence? If he were to fix his throne in the sky; the members of his church might, as the earth revolves on its axis, have an opportunity of daily beholding him. But a station in the sky surely cannot be called a dwelling with man upon earth, nor a sitting on the identical throne of David. And if he fix his abode on any spot of the earth; from its convexity and opacity his saints upon the antipodes can no more see his face, nor enjoy his personal presence, than if he were to retain his place in heaven. Their intercourse with him then,

must after all be maintained exactly as at present, by the exercise of faith, love, and obedience on their part, and on his by the communication from his fulness of spiritual life, light, strength, and joy. These blessings he now freely imparts to them who know their value, and humbly, earnestly, believingly, implore them. And if we are honoured to possess them richly and amply, we need no more. They ought to suffice till our warfare is finished, and we are permitted to see him as he is. If we would only use our privileges, much of him might just now be seen and enjoyed. We might have all and abound. We might be complete in him; made exceeding glad in the light of his countenance, and filled with all the fulness of God. If the people were all righteous; if the Gospel were embraced by all the inhabitants of the world; and every believer to avail himself of his vast and inexhaustible treasures, the Millennium would begin. We should instantly have a heaven upon earth. The earth would yield her increase; and God, even our own God, would bless us.

But without his spiritual presence, the vision of his personal glory would impart no saving benefit either to the church or the world.

Before our friends print much more about "that man's heart being in the world" who contends that "the world has got better;" and about "that annual deluge of trash which issues from the press under the name 'Practical Sermons:'" it is to be

hoped that they will be careful to keep their own hearts out of the world, and to entertain higher ideas of practical religion, than to imagine that it consists in the possession of honour and power on earth, however much the earth may be refined and purified.

In concluding these two chapters, we may ask, are these things so? If either the substance or surface of the earth shall be wholly changed; is it impossible that any flesh can be preserved? If the earth remains as it is; is it unsuitable to mix glorified immortals with mortal men, and subject them to the privations of this world, and the presence and annoyances of the irreligious and profane? If the earth is neither altogether changed, nor left entirely as it is, but undergoes merely a partial alteration; is this inconsistent with the Millenarian tenets that it is to be purified by fire, and its substance to be made like the glorified bodies of the redeemed? If after the second advent of Christ there are to be men in the flesh, how is their conversion to be accomplished in the absence of the ordinances of the Gospel? If Christ reigns in person on earth, and they who die during the Millennium are not to be raised from the grave till it close; does this greatly augment to believers the horrors of death? If the whole Millennium is the day of judgment; is it incongruous to pursue the business of life, while others under their eye are placed at the tribunal of their Judge, answering for the deeds done in

the body, and receiving the sentence which decides their eternity? But if there is only a momentary judgment at its commencement, and no more are judged till it is conclusively done, can it with no propriety be denominated the day of judgment when in fact there is no judgment pronounced at all? If Christ with his saints reign in person on the earth; is it impossible to account for the infatuation of Satan and his followers in attempting to storm the camp of the saints under the immediate protection of their glorious and Almighty Defender? If Christ comes as the judge of quick and dead, and judgment decides the everlasting condition of those who undergo it; if he glorify every living saint, and destroy every living sinner; does this render it impossible that the race can be perpetuated? and in such a state of things can neither saints nor sinners be born, nor any invasion made upon the saints at all, unless the kingdom of Christ be divided against itself, which would assuredly bring it to desolation, Mat. xii. 25? If these things are so: then this theory possesses very little indeed either of truth, beauty, or simplicity.

CHAPTER V.

THE INCONSISTENCY OF THE MILLENARIAN THEORY WITH THE DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE RESPECTING THE UNIVERSAL PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL, AND THE TIME AND MANNER OF THE RESURRECTION.

MANY may perhaps suppose that enough has been already stated to expose the groundlessness of this visionary scheme. They may regard a hypothesis, which is self-contradictory, absurd, and loaded with insurmountable difficulties, as evidently and glaringly false and incredible.

Others however may not be so easily satisfied. Many a thing which is beyond the reach of human comprehension is true; and our Millenarian friends are not startled by difficulties; nor put out of conceit with their favourite fancies, though they can be demonstrated to be impossible. You may exhaust the whole strength of demonstration on the papist. The man finds that Christ says of the bread in the Lord's Supper, "This is my body;" and in spite of all that you can urge, he clings to his fond delusion of transubstantiation. You may reason and remonstrate with a Millenarian on the obvious, moral, and physical impossibility of his tenets. The worthy man pities your ignorance,

and mourns over your unbelief and bondage to carnal reason. He reads in his Bible of the man of sin being destroyed "with the brightness of Christ's coming;" of some "living and reigning with Christ a thousand years," and of "the rest of the dead not living again till the thousand years are finished:" and having secured, as he imagines, scriptural authority for his creed, in defiance of all that you can advance to the contrary, he cleaves tenaciously to his strange and monstrous conceits.

It becomes necessary therefore to prosecute the subject farther; and to shew the utter repugnance of the Millenarian scheme to the plain and positive statements of revelation.

The Lord is not the author of confusion, but of order. The prophecies of Scripture coincide with its doctrines; and every part of the sacred volume is in most perfect harmony with the rest. If the Millenarian theory were founded in truth, we might naturally expect to find it in complete agreement with the whole word of God. But if on examination we discover it to be irreconcilably opposed to the most plain and explicit declarations of the lively oracles; we are necessarily compelled to pronounce it false and pernicious.

Now, on inquiry, what is the result we obtain? We have seen a long exposition of the scheme; and are now prepared to judge how far it agrees with what the Scriptures teach respecting the propagation of the Gospel in the world, the time and

manner of the resurrection, the nature of the final judgment, the time of our Lord's return, the consequences of his advent, and the place of the everlasting residence of the redeemed. On these articles does it coincide with the statements of scripture?

Let us see.

I. Does the Millenarian scheme agree with the scriptural representation of the manner in which religion will become universal?

The Bible holds out the bright and animating assurance that, long before the consummation of all things, the people shall be all righteous, all the ends of the world shall see the salvation of God, and the whole earth be filled with his glory.

The Millenarians too entertain the belief of such a delightful state of things. But how do they expect that their hopes will be realized? By the gradual diffusion of religious knowledge, and prevalence of Christian principles? By the blessing of God upon the reading and preaching of his word? and upon the labours of pious missionaries and philanthropists? Not at all. This is "Optimismn," and that is another name for infidelity. In as far as Millenarians can agree, they hold it as a tenet that vice can never be expelled from the globe, nor the world filled with the Divine glory, but by the personal advent and residence of Christ. "Satan will never give up his reign by any preaching of the Gospel, nor by any

other means than by the manifestation of Christ in person, on purpose to cast him out of this earth." See above, p. 113.

This is the instrument on which Millenarians rely for the expulsion of vice from the earth, and the establishment of peace and righteousness in the world. But is this the instrument which the Scriptures have taught us to expect will accomplish these blessed and glorious effects? They tell us of another, which has been long in use; often wielded with powerful energy; and fitted, in the hands of the Eternal Spirit, to work wonders, and reduce all nations to the obedience of the faith. This is the Gospel. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.—For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.—We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." "The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul." "The word of God is quick and powerful, sharp-

er than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." 1 Cor. i. 18, 21, 23, 24: 2 Cor. x. 4, 5: Psalm xix. 7: Heb. iv. 12.

By the blessing of God on the preaching of its despised and hated doctrines, the Gospel has already crowded the Church with converts, and filled heaven with a multitude, which no man can number, of happy and glorious spirits. Without the knowledge of the Gospel, and faith in the Saviour whom it unfolds, no man hitherto has been really converted, or admitted into the regions of everlasting blessedness. And have the Scriptures given the slightest intimation that, in the future ages of the world the process for converting souls is to be altered; and that when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and all nations shall serve and obey him, the Gospel shall be laid aside; and his word, instead of being clothed with power, and allowed to have free course and be glorified, shall be abolished? Is this the inference which we are compelled to draw from the assurance that "all the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord?" from the declaration that "it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it:

and many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem?" Is this the inference which we are forced to draw from the repeated assurances that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea?" and from the promise of our adorable Redeemer: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me?" Psalm xxii. 27: Isa. ii. 2, 3: xi. 9: Micah iv. 1, 2: Hab. ii. 14: John xii. 32. Is the act of "remembering and turning unto the Lord;" of "flowing unto the house of the Lord;" of the earth being "full of the knowledge of the Lord;" and of all men being "drawn unto Christ?" is this act really descriptive of Christ's appearing personally to each? of his carrying his salvation round the globe? and of converting men by the glory of his bodily presence? If the house of God were actually to travel to us, would we be represented as walking to it? And if we are to attract the personal presence of Christ to us, would he have called it his drawing of us unto himself?

The kingdom of heaven is a well known scriptural phrase for the Gospel dispensation. Our Redeemer informs us that this kingdom "is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all

seeds; but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree." He adds, that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Speaking of the same dispensation in his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel says, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces.—And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which never shall be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Mat. xiii. 31—33: Dan. ii. 34, 35, 44.

Can any man in his sober senses conclude from these passages, that the world will ultimately be brought under the authority of the Redeemer, by any other process than that by which men have hitherto been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into his kingdom? Is the full sized tree not the effect of its gradual growth? but the consequence of some foreign substance, artificially attached to the small seed, or tender plant? Is the fermentation of the whole mass, not the result of the operative energy of the leaven; but of some adventitious body, of quite an opposite nature and different properties? Did the great

mountain that filled the whole earth, possess no connection with the stone which was cut out without hands: but after this stone had grown to a certain size, and smitten the image; did its growth stop, and the great mountain in its utmost mighty dimensions, descend from heaven, and at once bury the stone, and fill all the earth?

It was the small mustard seed that grew into a tree; it was the leaven, which was hid in the meal, that fermented the whole mass; it was the stone; and let it not be forgotten, that this stone is the emblem, not of the King, but of the kingdom of the Gospel; that was cut out without hands, that became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. The last particle of meal in the outer portion of the mass that was fermented, was leavened exactly in the same way and by the same principle as the first. The last accession to the size of the tree and the stone, was produced by precisely the same process as the first. And if there be either meaning in language or consistency in the illustrations of Scripture, the last saint that is fitted for the world of glory, will be called converted and saved by exactly the same means as the first who entered the kingdom of heaven. Believers "are all one in Christ." There may be different gifts and dispensations: but all along there is "the same Spirit:" "and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God who worketh all in all." Salvation began in grace; and when the last stone is placed on the spiritual building, the shouts of,

“ Grace, grace unto it,” will be as loud, rapturous, and justly merited, as they were when the first stone was laid on the Rock of ages. The remotest ends of the earth, and the last of the generations who are saved; will be converted exactly in the same way as the regions which lie nearer, and the souls who first enjoyed the riches of redeeming love; not by the personal glory of Immanuel, but by the effectual application to their hearts through the power of the Holy Ghost, of the truths of his word and the blessings of his grace. From the commencement to the close of the sacred canon, we have no warrant to expect a revival of religion at any time, nor its unlimited prevalence in the world at last, in any other way than that in which it has hitherto prospered, and secured its present conquests. As it has been, it will continue to be, by sending labourers to the work, that the harvest will be reaped: and even when Babylon herself is overthrown, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, it will be by the “ preaching of the everlasting gospel unto them that dwell on the earth.” Mat. ix. 37, 38: Rev. xiv. 6. Instead of being filled with the personal glory of the Lord; we are assured that the earth shall be “ full of the knowledge of the Lord,” and “ filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.”

By looking at the eleventh chapter of the Romans, the reader will find this subject most feelingly and forcibly illustrated. The apostle there

speaks of the salvation of the Gentiles, and of the salvation of the Jews. He represents the salvation of the Gentiles as already partially accomplished, and speaks of its certain completion at a future period. But how has the partial salvation of the Gentiles been occasioned? By the fall of the Jews, verse 11. How is the general salvation or conversion of the Gentiles to be effected? Is this to be by a different process from that by which their partial conversion has been secured? By the personal presence of Christ? No: but by the fulness of the Jews, verse 12, 15.

The Jews were once in the good olive-tree. They are now broken off, and the Gentiles are grafted in in their room. But neither the Jews nor the Gentiles were united to the olive-tree by the personal presence of Christ. And when all the Jews and all the Gentiles shall be grafted in, shall this be accomplished in a different manner from that by which they have previously been joined to the stem? In other words, when the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, and all Israel are saved, shall this be produced by other means than those which have been employed, for the partial fulness of the Gentiles, and the primitive fulness of the Jews? From first to last the process is the same. Through the unbelief of the Jews, and by preachers of the Jewish nation, the Gentiles, who formerly had not believed God, have now obtained mercy. Even so, have the Jews also now not believed, that through the

mercy of the Gentiles, and by preachers from among them, they also may obtain mercy, verse 30, 31.

If the general and ultimate prevalence of religion and righteousness, were to be produced by other means than those by which their partial success has been accomplished, these means never would have been represented by figures descriptive of a gradual and progressive energy till they became absolutely irresistible and universally triumphant. The branches, leaves, and fruit, are part of the tree, and are unfolded and matured by its growth. But the snow with which it may be occasionally covered, is no part either of the tree or of its produce. The general conversion of men by the preaching of the same truths, by which all those who hitherto have reached the kingdom of heaven, have been saved; might justly be regarded as the natural result of the steady and progressive promulgation of Christianity, and the blissful and glorious consummation of its benign and saving efficacy. But if the conversion of the world is to be produced by the personal residence of Christ upon earth; what honour can the final prevalence of religion do to the Gospel, when in fact the unlimited reign of piety no more flows from the publication of those doctrines which hitherto have been the wisdom of God and the power of God to salvation; than snow grows out of trees, or golden helmets from the gray hairs of the human head?

The command of the Redeemer is, "Go ye

into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." If the Gospel were to be instantly preached in all the world, and instantly received by every creature; the whole world would be immediately filled with the Divine glory. Now, is God unable to produce obedience to this command? and to give universal effect to the word of his grace? If the Millenarians say that he is unable; then we ask, How could it be affirmed that with him "all things are possible?" If they say that he is unwilling; then we must ask, Why did he give the injunction, and accompany it with the gracious promise which follows, "he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved?" Would a sovereign order his officers to batter down an enemy's wall, when he well knew that all the engines they could employ, never could pierce it; and that, let them do what they would, it would remain uninjured till levelled by the bolts of heaven? And if the strong-holds of vice and impiety never can be stormed but by the personal descent of the Son of man; why have we been enjoined by the God of grace to traverse the earth with the message of reconciliation and of mercy, and to point the soul-subduing artillery of redeeming love against the most lofty massy and inaccessible of the bulwarks of sin and darkness?

In themselves these observations appear to be perfectly plain, and the conclusion to which they tend completely obvious and inevitable. Some of our Millenarian friends however will perhaps as-

sent to them the more readily when they find them supported by one of their own number. "At first the word of God is as a seed, it may be of the oak or any other plant, in which the whole majestic form and various parts of the future tree lie undisclosed, ready to reveal themselves when the times and seasons, and other conditions which God hath appointed to determine its being shall have taken their course; and there is no break, nor leap, nor start in its growth, which proceedeth by a slow, and sweet, and beautiful progression, to perfect that purpose or word of God which said at the beginning, 'And produce every tree yielding fruit whose seed is in itself.'" "Wherefore it is written both of Christ and of his church, that they shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, and have all their enemies under their footstool. Now I have not room to trace the progress of this seed sown in paradise, as it is developed in the progress of revelation, and shoots its roots into the soil of a fallen world, and spreads its branches into the atmosphere of time, until it shall possess the whole earth with its roots, and purify the whole heaven with its boughs, and all nations shall find shadow, and repose, and blessedness, under its branches." Irving's Pre. Dis. pp. 71, 72.

It will require more than the sagacity of an Œdipus to discover how these figures, borrowed from the continuous growth of a tree, which is without any "break," "leap," or "start;" can

be applied to the progress of religion, which after having gained its present state by the blessing of God upon the gradual diffusion of Divine truth, is suddenly to make a break, leap, or start, and complete its final triumphs by a process altogether different, the personal presence of the Redeemer.

Does the scheme under consideration agree

II. With the scriptural doctrine concerning the time and manner of the resurrection?

So far from warranting us to expect the resurrection of the saints before the Millennium, the Bible intimates that, whenever the grave closes upon our mortal remains, it retains them in its grasp till the dissolution of the visible creation.

Of the righteous and the wicked indiscriminately, it affirms, "Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." "The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him." Job xiv. 10—12; xx. 9.

The Scriptures invariably intimate that the resurrection of the righteous and wicked is simultaneous, and that this is at the last day.

At whatever time those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some shall awake "to

everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," Dan. xii. 2.

Martha expressed the belief of her countrymen in general; when, upon our Lord's observing to her that her brother should rise again, she replied: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." John xi. 24. Instead of correcting her mistake, which he certainly would have done if she had been labouring under an error, by telling her that her brother who was so much beloved by himself should rise a thousand years before the last day; he sanctions the truth of what she uttered, both by making no remark on what Millenarians regard as her "vulgar prejudice," and by previously applying her language to the resurrection of every believer. No words can more forcibly convey the idea of union to Christ, and an interest in the blessings of salvation, than those which speak of Christians as given to him of his Father; as seeing him and believing on him; as drawn to him by the Father; and eating his flesh and drinking his blood. And yet even these have no promise of a resurrection before the end of all things. As if on purpose to place the matter beyond a doubt, Jesus declares, no less than four times within the compass of sixteen verses, that he will raise them up "at the last day." John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

If there is meaning in words this language is absolutely incompatible with a separate resurrection of the saints prior to the Millennium; a thousand years before the first supposed resurrection of the wicked; Rev. xx. 5; and an unknown length of time, previous to the supposed third, or final resurrection, and the last day. Rev. xx. 12.

This however is far from being all. Whatever is produced by one and the same act, must certainly take place at one and the same time. The man who tells us that his brother was killed by the same thunderbolt by which his dwelling was thrown down, surely means that the events were coincident. No man would imagine that he intended to assert that days, or years, or centuries intervened betwixt them. Now the Scriptures not only speak of the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked as being at the same time, on the last day: but to mark the concurrence of the events, and prevent the supposition that the one shall be long prior to the other, they speak of them as effected by one and the same act; the voice of the Son of man. "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his," Son of man's, "voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John v. 28, 29.

St. Paul tells us that "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;"

that "in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump,—the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Thess. iv. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 52. The Millenarians are deeply conversant in the doctrine of Synchronisms. To the list which they have already invented, the following may be added. The Son of God will not lift up his voice over the graves till he come again: at least no intimation is given of a resurrection of the dead till then. But before the resurrection we find from John v, 28, 29; that the Son of God will utter his voice, and this voice will penetrate the tomb, and raise all the dead. "The trump of God" evidently synchronises with "the last trump:" for they are both sounded at the second advent of Christ, and productive of the resurrection of, at least, all the pious dead. But the voice of the Son of God is uttered also at his second advent, and is productive of the resurrection of all the dead, which includes the resurrection likewise of the whole of the pious dead. Since therefore the "voice of the Son of God" is uttered exactly at the same time at which "the last trump" and "the trump of God" are blown, it plainly synchronises with "the last trump" and "the trump of God; and since it accomplishes all that they effect, it necessarily follows that "the voice of the Son of God" is the same as "the last trump," and "the trump of God."

Now, do our worthy friends imagine that the last trump, the trump of God, and the

voice of the Son of God, will be prolonged for a thousand years? and that while the Messiah is sitting on the throne of David, or stationed in the temple of Jerusalem, reigning over the Millennial world, and carrying on the transactions of the great day of judgment, he will at the same time be calling aloud to the wicked to come forth from their graves? Do they seriously believe that, though the first sound of his voice will awaken the just and bring them forth: he who spake and it was done, who commanded and all things stood fast, will be obliged to call ten centuries before he can reach the ears of the wicked, and be able to bring them forth from their graves? "Sure," said Dr. Whitby, "that must be a long hour which lasteth a full thousand years." But "the hour" John v. 28, synchronises with the "moment" and the "twinkling of an eye." 1 Cor. xv. 52. These marvellous critics therefore extend the moment also to ten hundred years.

John v. 28, 29, completely excludes the credibility of a resurrection of the saints, preceding, by a thousand years, the resurrection of the wicked: for our blessed Lord affirms that at one and the same "hour," and by one and the same act, ALL that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and "they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." If at one hour *all* come forth, how can any of the wicked be left behind? And unless the wicked are

raised then, how can it be said that at that hour "they that have done evil" shall come forth "unto the resurrection of damnation?" By affirming that "they that have done good" and "they that have done evil" shall come forth at one and the same hour, our blessed Lord identifies the resurrection of the righteous and wicked.

It is true indeed that Mr. Irving, speaking of "those spiritual witnesses, who since the calling of Abraham have been raised up in the likeness of Christ Jesus, to preserve the testimony of the righteousness which is by faith in his blood;" very gravely informs us that these are they who "shall come with Christ to be partakers of his glory; "these are the dead who shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live." Pre. Dis. pp. 13. 14. But unless their souls were interred with their bodies; which the Spiritual Watchman, who talks of the burying of Satan will no doubt think quite practicable; how can Christ find these witnesses in the grave?

But if their souls were actually interred with their bodies, and Christ finds them in the grave at his coming; how can he be said to bring them with him? And if Christ raises none at his advent but the righteous, or those whom he brings with him; then it necessarily follows that some of the righteous come forth to the resurrection of damnation. And is this what either that gentleman supposes, or wishes others to believe?

CHAPTER VI.

INCONSISTENCY BETWIXT MODERN MILLEN-
 ARIANISM AND THE DOCTRINES OF SCRIP-
 TURE RESPECTING THE PROCEEDINGS OF
 THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, THE TIME MAN-
 NER AND CONSEQUENCES OF CHRIST'S COM-
 ING, AND THE PLACE OF THE EVERLAST-
 ING RESIDENCE OF THE REDEEMED.

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WE have discovered a complete repugnance betwixt the Millenarian hypothesis and the doctrines of scripture respecting the manner in which the gospel will be propagated in the world, and the time and nature of the resurrection of the dead. Does this scheme possess any greater harmony

III. With the scriptural account of the proceedings of the day of judgment?

Their account corresponds most exactly with the representation which, in the preceding chapter, has been given of the simultaneous resurrection of the righteous and the wicked.

Were a long interval to elapse betwixt the resurrection of the two, it would be reasonable to expect to hear of a similar space intervening betwixt the judgment of the one and of the other.

But so far is this from being the case, that no language can be employed to mark identity of time, but what is actually used to describe the judgment of the whole human race. It is affirmed to be at the same period, in the presence of each other, and for the manifestation of the justice of Jehovah unto all.

The judgment of all takes place at the same time. So far from giving the slightest intimation that the trial of the human race shall last for ages, that the righteous shall be placed before the Divine tribunal long prior to the resurrection of the wicked, and have their state determined ten hundred years before the latter are brought into judgment: the Bible declares that the parties shall be tried in each other's presence; and their sentence pronounced, not indeed in the same moment, but at the same period or day.

No matter whether this day shall last twelve hours, twelve years, or twelve centuries. See Cunninghame p. 15, note. It is the last day that shall dawn upon our globe. When it arrives, suns shall rise and set no more: the heavens and the earth shall flee away; and time be no longer. Let the duration of the period be what it will; there is one circumstance connected with the judgment, fatal to the Millenarian hypothesis; and that is, instead of the righteous and wicked being judged in the absence of each other and after a long interval, they are all judged at the same time and in the presence of each other.

What can more completely demonstrate this fact, than the uniform practice of the sacred writers calling the season of final reckoning and retribution a "day?" "the day of God?" "the day of the Lord?" "the last day?" "the day of judgment?" It tells us that God "has appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained;" that there is "a day when God will judge the secrets of men;" and that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Acts xvii. 31. Rom. ii. 16. 2 Cor. v. 10. It is a day in which mercy will be granted to some, and withheld from others: in which the real characters of men will be discovered; when many that are now first shall be last; and the last, first: in which every man's work will be made manifest; for the day shall declare it. 2 Tim. i. 18. Mat. xix. 30. 1 Cor. iii. 13.

But unless the judgment is simultaneous, why is it limited to one day? Why shall we search the scriptures in vain for two judgment days? Unless the wicked are to be brought into judgment at the same time with the righteous: how can any on that day receive according to the bad works which they have done, or be deprived of mercy? Will the Lord on that day withhold his mercy from any of the saints who have been accepted in the Beloved?

One great design of a future judgment is to display the justice of Jehovah in the boundless and everlasting blessedness conferred on those who have embraced the righteousness of his Son? and in the endless punishment inflicted on those who have neglected the great salvation, and lived without God in the world. Ps. l. 6; xcvi. 10—13; xcvi. 7—9. “Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.” 1 Cor. iv. 5. But unless the righteous and wicked are brought before the same tribunal, and at the same time; how can the wicked behold the justice of God in the gracious rewards bestowed upon the righteous; or the Redeemed see his equity in the condemnation of the profane and hardened? If they are not the spectators of each other’s trial, the justice of God could be no object of sight, but only a matter of report. But witness each other’s trial they cannot, if the one is to be in their graves ages after the state of the other has been unalterably decided. If none but the righteous are concerned in the first resurrection and first judgment; there would be no “hidden things of darkness” to be brought to light at the coming of the Lord. These deeds would for centuries remain covered with the mantle of death and the grave. But the apostle tells us that “the hidden things of darkness shall be brought to light” when the Lord comes. We are therefore obliged to conclude that the wicked as well as the righteous shall

be judged at his appearing and his kingdom; in other words, that all shall be judged together.

Unless all are spectators of each other's doom, why are we told, in the parable of the house-holder who hired labourers into his vineyard, that when the even was come and payment made of their wages; those who had been hired in the morning murmured against the goodman of the house, when they saw those, who had been engaged at the eleventh hour, receive as large a remuneration as themselves, who had borne the burden and heat of the day? Mat. xx. 1—16. The murmurers must represent the wicked: for the righteous, instead of complaining of his proceedings, will admire the equity of his decisions.

In the explanation of the parable of the wheat and tares, our blessed Lord employs the following words. "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Fa-

ther." Mat. xiii. 37—43. Our friends may make what criticisms they please upon the supposed distinction betwixt the word translated "world" and the word which they contend ought to be rendered "age." The whole structure of the parable and explanation proves that the two terms are synonymous; that the tares would continue to grow while there was any wheat upon the ground; and that the two would be cut down together, and severed from the soil by one and the same stroke of the sickle. In other words, it is affirmed that, as the growth of the grain is perfected before it is cut down, the numbers of the human race will be completed at the end of this world, or age. Do these gentlemen suppose that the same seed produces two or more crops? or that there are two harvests in the same season? Unless they do; they must admit that when this world or age terminates, there is an end to the increase of the species, and no additions shall be made to the ranks either of the just or unjust.

Mr. Cunninghame, Summary view, p. 24, has been so obliging as to inform us, "when identity in time is meant, the Greek particle used, is not *εἰτα* but *τοτε* as every one knows." Our Millenarian friends will therefore be so good as remember, that we are informed that it is exactly when "the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire:" where "there shall

be wailing and gnashing of teeth:" that "THEN τοτε shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father." Ver. 41.—43.

This certainly ought to be sufficient to remove all dubiety respecting the sameness of meaning conveyed by the words "world" and "age," and the identity of time at which the righteous and wicked are judged. But if this is not enough to remove their doubts, let these gentlemen read what follows. "Again the kingdom of heaven is like a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Mat. xiii. 47—50.

Can any language render it more clear and unquestionable, that the righteous and wicked shall be separated at the end of the world, or age; but not separated till then? And if they shall not be separated till then; how can this be reconciled with the Millenarian hypothesis, that the righteous shall be glorified a thousand years before the resurrection of the wicked? And how can Mr. Irving, Pre. Dis. p. 129, talk of the righteous being "separated in the last judgment," when on his own principles they must have been separated

by having been raised and glorified at least a thousand years before that period?

Unless the whole human race are to be raised at the same time and judged together; why do we find our blessed Lord declaring, "when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered *all* nations: and he shall *separate them one from another*, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats?" Mat. xxv. 31—46. Unless the righteous and wicked meet in the day of decision, there can be no necessity for separating them from each other as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. But they could not meet and be mixed together before the judgment seat, if the one were to be raised up, and judged centuries before the other had left their graves.

Before this article is dismissed, justice to the subject under discussion, requires that the following masterly remarks should be transcribed into these pages.

"We shall now take a look at the canon of criticism which Mr. Cunninghame lays down, p. 24. 'When identity in time is meant,' he says, 'the Greek particle used is not *εἰτε* but *τοτε*, as every one knows.' Since this canon is so universally admitted, it may not be improper to make a trial of it. Let us apply it to a single passage, Math. xxv. from ver. 31 downward. 'When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels

with him, then shall he sit—*τοτε καθισει*—on the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say to them on his right hand—*τοτε ερει*—Come ye blessed of my Father, &c. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord when saw we thee, &c.—*τοτε αποκριθονται*, &c.—Then shall he say also to those on his left hand—*τοτε ερει και*, &c.—Depart from me ye cursed, &c. &c. Then shall they also answer him—*τοτε αποκριθονται*—Lord when saw we thee, &c. Then shall he answer them, saying, *τοτε αποκριθεται*—Verily I say unto you, inasmuch, &c. These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.”

“ ‘ *Τοτε* denotes identity of time, as every one knows.’ Let Mr. Cunninghame judge, then,—let our readers judge,—what events are identified in point of time in the above quotation. The coming of the Son of Man—his sitting on the throne of judgment—his gathering all nations before him, not the just alone, not solely his elect, but elect and non-elect, sheep and goats—his pronouncing sentence on the righteous, recounting their virtuous deeds, the fruits of his own grace, and inviting them into the possession of the kingdom—his pronouncing sentence also on the workers of iniquity, recounting not what they have done, but what they have left undone, deeming

that quite sufficient for their condemnation, and driving them from his presence into everlasting fire. All this is proved, and proved irrefragably, by Mr. Cunninghame's own canon—a canon which 'every one knows.' What, then, becomes of the Millenarian theory? Either the canon or the theory must fall. Mr. Cunninghame must allow himself to part with the one or with the other. He may take his choice, but he can no more retain both than he can serve God and Mammon." *Edinburgh Theological Magazine*, May 1828. pp. 279, 280.

Unless the resurrection and judgment of the righteous and wicked are to be simultaneous, what meaning can we assign to the following words of Paul? "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you: and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus 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 from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power: **WHEN** he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day." 2 Thess. i. 6—10. From this paragraph we find, that the time for the punishment of the wicked, instead of being a thousand years posterior to the advent of Christ and the resurrection of the just, is precisely at the time, or

on the day, when he comes to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.

Does the Millenarian hypothesis agree

IV. With the account which the Scriptures give us of the time of our Lord's coming?

The Bible is replete with assurances of our Lord's second personal advent. But it most distinctly assures us that he will return only once, and that this will be at the consummation of all things. "As it is appointed unto all men to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time unto salvation." "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Heb. ix. 27, 28. Acts iii. 19—21.

"In this important passage our English translators have ill rendered the leading clause in the manner following; *Whom the heaven must receive, until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets.*

"Now, doubtless, *all the things which God hath*

*spoken by the prophets* may be ACCOMPLISHED: but it is hard to comprehend, how *all the things which God hath spoken by the prophets* can be RESTORED. A RESTITUTION of the whole *materia prophetica* is, so far as I can see, altogether unintelligible: an ACCOMPLISHMENT of the whole *materia prophetica* is what we plainly must expect, if we believe the divine inspiration of the holy prophets.

“Such, accordingly, in the present clause, is doubtless the right translation of the Greek word *Apocatastasis*: and such, therefore, was the mode, in which it was understood by the well-judging ancients. They constantly so interpret it, as to express the idea of *accomplishment* or *exhibition* or *disposition* or *final settlement*. Thus the clause, in which it occurs, is rendered by the Syriac; *Until the fulness of the time of all things*: by the Arabic; *Until the times in which all the things shall be perfected or finished*: by Irenæus; *Until the times of the disposition of all the things which God hath spoken by his holy prophets*: by Tertullian; *Until the times of the exhibition of all the things which God hath spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets*: and by Ecumenius; *Until the time that all the things come to an end*. Agreeably to this general interpretation of the word as it stands in the present context, Hesychius and Phavorinus state, that one of the senses of *Apocatastasis* is *accomplishment* or *completion* or *consummation*. On these very ample authorities, therefore, and according to the plain requisition of good sense,

there can be no doubt, that the clause ought to be rendered: *Until the times of the accomplishment of all the things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

“ From this translation, which, with the ancients, I conceive to exhibit the true sense of the original, the inference is sufficiently obvious.

“ If heaven must receive and retain Christ, UNTIL the full accomplishment of all the things which God hath spoken by the prophets, since the world began, down to the time when the Apostle uttered the passage now under consideration: then, assuredly, the literal second advent of Christ cannot take place until *after* the complete expiration of the Millennial period of blessedness. For Daniel, and Isaiah, and Joel, and Zechariah, all foretell the occurrence of such a period, as immediately following the conversion of Judah and the sychronical overthrow of the great Roman confederacy. But, according to St. Peter, heaven must retain Christ, UNTIL the accomplishment of all the prophecies which had been delivered anterior to the time when he made such a declaration. Therefore heaven must retain Christ, UNTIL all the ancient prophecies, respecting the millennial period of blessedness upon earth, shall have received their full accomplishment: and, consequently, the literal second advent of Christ cannot occur, until *after* the close of the same predicted millennial period of blessedness.

“ I am quite aware, that the present passage has been claimed as their own by Mr. Mede and his followers, and that an argument has been constructed upon it which brings out a directly opposite result: but, the mode in which they interpret the passage being utterly inadmissible, the argument framed upon their interpretation will of course be inadmissible also.

“ By the *Restitution of all things*, as the phrase stands in our common English version, they understand the *paradisiacal renovation of the mundane universe, both physical and moral*, as effected by the great conflagration which accompanies the literal second advent of Christ immediately before the commencement of the Millennium: and, from this interpretation of the phrase, they argue, that, since heaven has received Christ *only UNTIL* the times of the restitution of all things; *then, AS SOON AS* the times of this restitution arrive, or (in other words) *AS SOON AS* the Millennium is on the point of commencing, the Saviour, by the very necessity of the passage, will personally appear from heaven.

“ Such is their interpretation of the phrase: and such is the argument, which they would build upon that interpretation.

“ Now, had their interpretation of the phrase been admissible; the argument, constructed upon that interpretation, would doubtless have been perfectly conclusive. But, unfortunately, this is by no means the case. The phrase itself *is*, in truth,

contextually incapable of bearing any such sense as that of *the restitution of the universe*. St. Peter's *all things* have no sort of concern with *our terrestrial mundane system*. They are solely and simply *all the several matters which have been foretold by the prophets from the beginning of the world*. Nor, save this, can any other sense be put upon them, except, either by a *flagrant violation of grammar*, or by a *constructively impossible syntax*.

“The *former* of these two expedients has been, most unhappily, resorted to by the anonymous authors of the recently published *Dialogues on Prophecy*.

“In the clause, as it stands in our common English version, *Until the times of restitution of all things WHICH God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets*, these writers make the word *restitution* to be the antecedent to the pronoun relative *which*: and thus, in our vernacular tongue, they *compel* St. Peter to declare, what assuredly he never *did* declare, that *the alledged restitution HAS been spoken of by all the prophets since the world began*,\*

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\* “The heavens, say they, have received Christ only until the times of the restitution of all things, which HAS been spoken of by all the prophets since the world began. Dial. on Proph. convres. v. p. 194. Here they plainly refer the pronoun *which* to the antecedent *restitution*: in other words, since the original Greek runs ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων ὧν ἐλάλησεν ὁ Θεός, they make the relative ὧν agree with the antecedent ἀποκαταστάσεως.”

“ Yet a mere mechanical inspection of the Greek original will forthwith satisfy any person who takes the trouble to consult it, that the pronoun *which* is grammatically incapable of relating to the antecedent *restitution*.

“ The *latter* of these two expedients has been, less blamelessly, resorted to by Mr. Mede.

“ He would make the relative *which* agree with the antecedent *times* : and thus, more mildly, he would *persuade* the Apostle to declare, that *the times of the alleged restitution HAVE been spoken of by all the prophets since the world began*.

“ But the excellent author has not observed, that such a syntax, forced and unnatural in itself, though *grammatically* possible, is *constructively* impossible. We may properly say, *Until the times CONCERNING which God hath spoken* : but we cannot properly say, *Until the times WHICH God hath spoken*. Now, in Mr. Mede’s construction of the clause, the *latter* is that which St. Peter says really and actually : though Mr. Mede, in his translation, makes him say the *former*, which in truth he does *not* say. The preposition *concerning* is indeed necessary to make the commentator’s construction speak good sense : but that preposition is the sole and exclusive property of the commentator himself. St. Peter says simply *WHICH* ; not, what Mr. Mede would make him say, *CONCERNING WHICH* ; and, accordingly, both Irenèus and Tertullian so render the original Greek ; referring the pronoun *which*, as it doubtless ought to be re-

ferred, not to the imaginary antecedent *times*, but to its true antecedent *all things*.

“The entire clause, in short, as I have already observed, can only, with a proper regard both to sense and to grammar and to construction, be rendered in manner following: *Whom heaven must receive, until the times of the accomplishment of all the things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.* Faber’s Sacred Calendar of Proph. vol. III. pp. 454—461.

Does this hypothesis agree

V. With the scriptural account of the manner and consequences of Christ’s Advent?

When he shall next appear in person, he will come “in power and great glory:” “in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” “Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him.” This proves that they shall see him in the very act of descending; and this is rendered more certain from what follows. “Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Mark viii. 39: Rev. i. 7: Mat. xxvi. 64. But if the Millenarian system were correct, how could this and similar language be applied to the second advent of Christ? If the wicked are not to be raised from the dead till a thousand years after his return; how could it be said that “every eye shall see him,” as “he com-

eth;" and that the high priest and his company should see him, not after he had reached the earth, but in the very act of approaching it; "coming in the clouds of heaven?"

When he comes, he shall "descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God." "The trumpet shall sound; the dead shall be raised," and the living changed. I Thess. iv. 15—17: I Cor. xv. 50—54. When the trumpet sounds, all the dead shall be raised. "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth." Is the trumpet to sound, is the voice to be prolonged for a thousand years? Are centuries to elapse betwixt the commencement and the close of the act of raising the dead? No. The resurrection is to be instantaneous: "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at" what Paul calls "the last trump," and Christ "the voice of the Son of God."

And when all the dead are raised, what ensues? The judgment. "They that have done good" come forth "unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." At the very time at which "some" of those who sleep in the dust of the earth "shall awake to everlasting life" "some" shall awake "to shame and everlasting contempt." "Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of

all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." John v. 28, 29. Dan. xii. 2. Jude 14, 15. 2 Tim. iv. 1. Can any words more completely identify the general judgment with the coming of Christ? Can there ever be more in the human race, than the quick and the dead? Yet the Lord Jesus is to judge these "at his appearing and his kingdom." But if the wicked are not raised till a thousand years after his advent; how can he "judge the quick and dead at his appearing?" and at his coming "execute judgment upon all, and convince all that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds?"

Instead of reigning upon earth a thousand years after his return; we learn from the word of God, that, at his coming, Christ will abolish death, present his people to his Father, without spot or wrinkle; put them in possession of the purchased inheritance; and deliver up his mediatorial kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put

down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." 1 Cor. xv. 22—28. The word "cometh", verse 24, is not in the original: and the text would have been rendered with far greater justice, if it had been translated then "is," or then "shall be" the end: indicating that the resurrection of the dead, the end or consummation of all things, and the surrender of his kingdom to the Father, follow immediately upon the coming of Christ. While death retains the dust of a single child of Adam in the prison of the grave, and is carrying on his ravages amongst the inhabitants of the earth, he has an existence and a reign. Till therefore, the dead are raised, death cannot be swallowed up of victory. Since therefore, the apostle assures us that at the coming of Christ death shall be destroyed, how is it possible that for a thousand years after his own destruction, death can retain the wicked in his grasp, and continue to tyrannize over successive generations of the righteous?

If the end arrives at the coming of Christ, and

the resurrection of the saints will be the destruction of death, 1 Cor. xv. 54; there is no place for a personal reign of a thousand years betwixt their resurrection and the destruction of death. "Besides, if death be the *last* enemy, and this enemy be destroyed in the resurrection, how can there be a Gog and Magog army to be destroyed a thousand years after it?" Fuller on the Apocalypse, p. 351.

VI. Is the earth to be the final abode and everlasting residence of the saints?

This our Millenarian friends have frequently stated in the broadest and strongest terms.

But if their ideas are founded in truth, it would be our clear and unquestionable duty to set our affections on things on earth; and we could not begin too soon, nor prosecute too eagerly the accumulation of terrestrial wealth.

But are we really required to mind earthly things? to have our conversation on earth? to seek for ourselves great things in this world? and lay up our treasure here? Is the grand design of the Gospel to secure an inheritance on earth, and all the energies of the Holy Spirit to furnish us with a capacity for enjoying a portion on the globe? No indeed. The Bible enjoins us to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven; to set our affections on things above, not on things on earth; to have our conversation in heaven; to lay up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to

come, that we may lay hold on eternal life. It tells us that our inheritance is in heaven, and that the work of the Spirit of all grace is to make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Pet. i. 3—5.

From the earliest ages a belief was inculcated in another world, as the abode of the faithful. The translation of Enoch is related in these few and emphatic words:—"Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him." Gen. v. 24. It is not said to what province of the universe this eminent saint was conveyed: but the language most strongly implies that God who removed him took him to himself, that in his presence he might possess a purity and fulness of bliss which he could not enjoy below. "After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Gen. xv. 1. Could the possession of Canaan, and a residence, after the resurrection, in this world for ever, reach the mighty amount of this invaluable promise? In one Psalm David rejoices in this assurance. "Thou wilt shew me

the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." Psalm xvi. 11. In another, when addressing God, he says, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures: for with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light." Psalm xxxvi. 8, 9. And elsewhere we find these remarkable words: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Psalm lxxiii. 24—26. It will not weaken the force of these passages to assert that some of them are primarily applicable to Christ. For granting that they are; since where he is, there also shall his people be, his presence in heaven ensures the admission of his followers.

As we proceed in examining the sacred pages, the proof multiplies, and the conclusion becomes irresistible, that heaven is the everlasting residence of the redeemed.

Of the patriarchs we are informed that they desired a better country, that is a heavenly; and that God was not ashamed to be called their God; for he had prepared for them a city. Heb. xi. 16. The believing Hebrews had compassion of Paul in his bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that

they had in heaven a better, and enduring substance. Heb. x. 34 We read of the hope laid up for the faithful in heaven, and of their hope entering into that within the veil. Col. i. 5. Heb. vi. 19, 20.

Under the trials of life the apostle comforts his afflicted brethren, not by telling them, as Mr. Stewart in his Discourses on the Redeemer's Advent, Mr. Cunninghame and other modern Millenarians would do, that Christ would soon come to establish his kingdom upon earth and reign with them in this world; but by raising their views above it, and leading them to fix their affections on the invisible and unchanging realities of heaven and eternity. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us

for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight :) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18: v. 1—8.

Here we are pilgrims and strangers. Heaven is our inheritance and home. The world is a place of distress and trial. But at death we enter into the joy of our Lord.

If Christ is in heaven his people shall likewise be there: for where he is, there shall they also be. But in heaven he is. He "is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true: but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." "He is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God." Heb. ix. 24. 1 Pet. iii. 11. Ephes. i. 20—23. In dying he said, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." And Stephen, in the face of a violent and bloody death, cried, "I see heaven opened and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Acts vii. 56, 59. When he saw Christ standing on the right hand of God, and called on him to receive his spirit, as Christ had surrendered his own into the hands of his Father; what did the martyr expect but that Je-

sus would take his soul to himself, and place it amidst the glory and bliss that encompass his presence, as really as that Christ himself had been received into heaven, and seated on its throne?

When Jesus left the world, for what purpose did he ascend into heaven? Was it to employ an agency in his absence to fit the earth for the everlasting habitation of his friends? Not at all: but to prepare heaven for them, and to send down the Holy Spirit, by his converting and sanctifying work, to render them meet for the celestial inheritance. "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." John xiv. 2. "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Mat. xxv. 34. Pray, has the earth been prepared from the foundation of the world as the residence of the redeemed? Will Millenarians say that the earth is even yet a fit abode for the glorified followers of the Lamb? If they will make such an assertion; then, why do they talk of the necessity of casting out Satan, of purifying the earth by fire, of sanctifying the body of the earth by the direct agency of the Holy Spirit, and all the other means of its melioration, on which some of them think they have so magnificently speculated; as all requisite to convert the world into a proper habitation for Christ and the redeemed during their triumphant reign on this globe?

And when Christ returns to the world, is it to fix his everlasting habitation with the faithful on earth? It is to receive them to himself; that where he is, they also may be. John xiv. 3. xii. 26. xvii. 24. When he descends from heaven, "we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them," the dead in Christ who have been raised from the grave, "in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." And does his coming to receive us to himself, taking us up in a cloud to meet him in the air, to be for ever with him; does this really mean his coming to dwell with man upon earth, and making the world the eternal seat of his glory?

Instead of reigning on earth, either for ever, or even for a thousand years; the Bible intimates that the earth and all the things that are therein shall be destroyed: Ps. cii. 26. Isa. li. 6. Mat. xxiv. 35: and we are assured that this dissolution shall take place at the second coming of our Lord. 2 Peter iii. 7—12. It is no symbolical heaven and earth, no system of superstition, impiety and vice, of which the apostle is there speaking. It is no human invasion of the rights and prerogatives of God, which is permitted to retain its place till the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, and which is to be destroyed before the Millennium by the preaching of the Gospel. It is the identical earth which was swept by the waters of the deluge; and the heavens which

encompassed the globe when it was subjected to that wrathful visitation; ver. 5—7. And thus when in the day of the Lord, or at the coming of Christ, the earth and the works that are therein shall be burnt up; where can the bodies of the wicked find a grave during the succeeding Millennium? Where can the saints find a seat for their kingdom during the thousand years of the Redeemer's personal reign? Where can a field be obtained for the closing conflict betwixt the righteous and the wicked, when the latter shall be finally expelled from our world? And still more, where, after the earth is laid in ashes, can a locality here be found for the eternal reign of Christ and the redeemed?

It will not alter the case to tell us that the apostle speaks of our looking, according to the promise of God, "for new heavens and a new earth." By these terms he evidently designates the everlasting residence of the redeemed after the day of judgment and dissolution of this world. There can be no doubt from the unvarying tenor of Scripture that heaven is the place of their final abode. But at any rate the language of St. Peter completely negatives the idea that the present earth can have an existence then. No words can convey ideas more distinct, nor more directly opposed to each other, than the terms old and new. While the one denotes what has already possessed a being; the other is expressive of what has had no previous existence. To argue that "a new earth"

denotes the continuance and improvement of the present earth; is nearly the same as to maintain that "new wine" is old wine refined; that a "new year" is the revival of the former; and a "new planet" the restoration of an old world.

Besides if the earth were to be the everlasting habitation of the just: though it might be necessary at the coming of our Lord, that it should be renovated in order to render it a suitable dwelling to him and his people, what occasion would there be not only for a new earth, but for "new heavens?"

Now are these things so? Is it true that no man, who lieth down in the grave, shall rise till the heavens be no more? Is it true that believers themselves shall not be raised till the last day? Is it true that all who are in the grave shall be raised not only at the same time, but by one and the same act? and that this shall be at the second coming of Christ? Is it true that the proceedings of the day of decision shall display to the human race the justice of God in the government of the world? and that for this purpose all nations shall be gathered before the Judge, and every individual witness the judgment of all the rest? Is it true that at his advent death shall be abolished, and the earth and the works that are therein be burnt up? Is all this true? And who, that calmly considers the language of revelation, can for a moment doubt its truth? Then, where is there room for the wonderful events of the Mil-

lenarian scheme; two resurrections, two judgments, and the reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years betwixt them? and still more, where is there a possibility for his reigning here for ever and ever?

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## CHAPTER VII.

### EXAMINATION OF THE PROOF PRODUCED FOR THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

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WILD and extravagant as the Millenarian hypothesis is, its advocates fancy that the whole of their scheme is founded in the language of revelation: that they have established its truth by a train of reasoning that is absolutely irresistible; and that nothing but ignorance or prejudice can prevent any from acknowledging its reality and admiring its excellence.

Before closing this discussion it, therefore, becomes necessary to examine the nature of the evidence which has been advanced in its support.

A leading article in the system is a literal resurrection of the saints at the commencement of the Millennium. This tenet is thus stated by Mr. Cunninghame in his reply to the Reviewer in the Edinburgh Theological Magazine.

“The Reviewer next reasons against our views of a resurrection of the just before the unjust; and asserts, that the doctrine of the Bible is, that the resurrection of the just will be the destruction of death, and the end of all things. This, indeed, is bold assertion, in the very teeth of Rev. xx. 4, 5. As for his argument from 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24, it will be time for us to bend to its force, when he shall have critically examined, and luminously set before us the exact meaning of the Greek text, particularly of the particles of time *επειτα* and *ειτα* taken in mutual connexion. I observe, that the last of them, when it occurs in the same sentence with the first, as in 1 Cor. xii. 28, has the same force, and a like signification; therefore, as the first in chap. xv. 23, means an interval, (as we already know,) of eighteen centuries, so may the second, or *ειτα* in v. 24, signify a long period of at least 1000 years. Besides, that it signifies sequence in time, not immediate, but considerably distant, is plain from its being employed in Mark iv. 28, to express the intervals between the appearance of the green blade of the corn and the ear, and also the full ripe grain.

“When on the other hand, identity in time is meant, the Greek particle used, is not *ειτα* but *τοτε* as every one knows. And even Macknight, whom no one will suspect of Millenarian views, but who is generally an exact critic and expositor of the letter, sees that the words in verse 23 and 24,

imply a succession in the order of the resurrection. He renders the first clause of verse 23, ‘*But every one εν τῷ ἰδίῳ ταγματι in his proper band*; for *ταγμα* denotes a band of soldiers, a cohort, a legion.’ And he adds, ‘Seeing the Apostle affirms, verse 22, that all men shall be made alive by Christ, and in this verse, that every one shall be made alive in his own band; also seeing we are told 1 Thess. iv. 15, that the righteous who are alive at the coming of Christ, and who are to be changed, verse 51 of this chapter, shall not anticipate them that sleep, it is probable, as was observed in the preceding note, that they will not be changed till the righteous are raised. Their change, however, will happen before the resurrection of the wicked, who, as they are to awake to shame and everlasting contempt, will be raised, I think, last of all.’ To the above reasoning of Macknight, let me add only one observation more from myself. Since it is declared, that every one of the dead will be raised in his own *band*, *ταγμα*, and since the righteous and wicked are buried promiscuously, it necessarily follows, that they must be raised, not at the same moment, but at distinct and successive points of time; and the idea of succession being thus forced upon us, we conclude that there must be two resurrections, one of the just, the other of the unjust; and what is the interval of time which shall separate the two, we can learn only from the word of God.

“Our Lord himself also speaks, in Luke xx. 35,

of the resurrection, in such language, as to imply the truth of the doctrine we have endeavoured to prove. His words are, as the clause has been strictly rendered; *They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that age και της αναστασιως της εκ νεκρων and of the resurrection FROM AMONGST the dead, shall neither marry nor be given in marriage.* It is quite evident that he here speaks of the resurrection, as a privilege peculiar to some, and not to all. In like manner, in Luke xiv. 14, he mentions a peculiar resurrection of the just, ανταποδοθησεται σοι εν τη αναστασει των δικαιων; and let the reader here mark well the change of expression in the Greek. The meaning of these words is not, as in the former case, “*thou shalt be rewarded at the resurrection FROM AMONGST the just,*” but “*at the resurrection OF the just,*” i. e. the whole body of the just. So also St. Paul, when in Philip. iii. 11, he mentions, that to attain to the resurrection is the great object of his ambition, uses not the expression ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΝ ΤΩΝ ΝΕΚΡΩΝ which would signify, “*to the resurrection OF the dead*” (GENERALLY); but his words are ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΕΞΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΝ ΤΩΝ ΝΕΚΡΩΝ “*to the resurrection FROM AMONGST the dead.*”

“Now seeing that the just rise when Christ comes, and the rest of the dead, together with all who die during the millennial reign, not till the end of the millennium, it follows, that *with respect to them*, the last enemy will not be destroyed till the end of that dispensation. The objec-

tion of this reviewer, founded on the words, "the last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death," is thus deprived of all its strength, and like his former arguments, is proved to be founded on ignorance of the system which he opposes." Summary View, pp. 23—26.

A few remarks may be made on these passages, in the order in which they lie in the New Testament.

1. Luke xiv. 14, clearly proves that the individual who complies with the counsel of our Redeemer, shall be recompensed when the just are raised and rewarded: but it proves no more: and unless the resurrection of the just, ages before the resurrection of the unjust, can be established from other texts of Scripture, it never can be legitimately deduced from this part of the sacred writings. Though this and Acts xxiv. 15, were the only portions of the word of God in which the resurrection had been noticed at all; the last passage is of itself sufficient to negative the supposition, that the resurrection of the just will be prior to that of the unjust. For how does the apostle in that chapter speak of the resurrection? Does he use language which intimates that there will be a resurrection "from amongst the dead?" a resurrection of "a select number" long prior to that of the rest? He speaks of the resurrection of the dead in general, of the "whole body of the dead," and gives not the most distant insinuation that a single moment will intervene betwixt the resurrec-

tion of them all. And who are the dead, of whose resurrection he speaks without any notice of the lapse of an interval betwixt them? Why, they are exactly the "JUST AND THE UNJUST." "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of THE JUST AND THE UNJUST."

Any single sentence, of such a description, is sufficient to decide the question. But when we take it in connexion with all that has already been advanced, pp. 145—161, on the simultaneous resurrection and judgment of the righteous and the wicked; it manifests no ordinary disrespect for the authority of revelation, to renounce its plain and positive annunciations for a theory founded on the precarious basis of an inferential argument, at open war with its most clear and precise declarations.

2. If Luke xx. 35, had contained the only account of this conversation of our Lord with the Sadducees; and if nothing more in Scripture had been said respecting the resurrection, than what is to be found there, and in Luke xiv. 14: the Millenarians might have had some plausibility for urging a separate resurrection of the righteous, prior to that of the wicked. But this discourse is recorded by three of the Evangelists. Mat. xxii. 23—33. Mark xii. 18—28. Luke xx. 27—38. Now, while Mark and Luke use the preposition *ex*, to which our friends attach so much importance; to

shew that its presence or absence does not in the slightest degree affect the sense, Matthew omits it. Can any thing therefore demonstrate more conclusively that ἀναστασις τῶν νεκρῶν and ἀναστασις ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν are equivalent? and that, without the smallest ambiguity the two phrases may be used inter-changeably?

According to Mr. Cunninghame's own observation on Luke xiv. 14, when he says, "The meaning of these words is not, as in the former case, *"thou shalt be rewarded at the resurrection FROM AMONG the just,* but *'at the resurrection OF the just,'* i. e. the whole body of the just:" the language of Matthew shews that our Lord was speaking not of "a resurrection FROM AMONGST the dead," but a "resurrection OF the dead," i. e. of the **WHOLE BODY OF DEAD.** And as the same phraseology occurs Acts xxiii. 6; xxiv. 15, 21: 1 Cor. xv. 13, 21, 42: Heb. vi. 2; if there be truth in the canon which this gentleman lays down, these passages all prove the simultaneous resurrection of **THE WHOLE BODY OF THE DEAD.**

That in the conversation recorded by the three Evangelists our Lord was actually speaking of the general simultaneous resurrection of all mankind, is evident from the whole circumstances of the case. An objection was made to the doctrine of the resurrection by the Sadducees; who did not confine their scepticism to the denial of the first resurrection, or resurrection of the saints: but

who denied that there is "any resurrection" and affirmed that there is "neither angel nor spirit." And when the objection was proposed by such a sect, it is very unlikely that our Lord would limit his proofs of a resurrection to that of the just: and accordingly we find him closing his remarks by adding, of all indiscriminately that are in the grave, "Now that the DEAD are raised, even Moses showed at the bush."

3. An anonymous writer who has already been repeatedly quoted, has furnished a satisfactory reply to the criticisms on 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24.

"What kind of critics would Mr. Cunninghame have us to be? He calls upon us 'critically to examine,' and 'luminously to set before him,' the two Greek adverbs *εἶτα* and *επιεῖτα*, taken in mutual connection. With precisely the same propriety, might he call upon us critically to examine, and luminously to set forth, the corresponding English adverbs *then* and *afterwards*. There is exactly the same mystery in the one that there is in the other, and the critical art may be exercised with equal advantage upon both. We may tell Mr. Cunninghame, for his satisfaction, that *εἶτα* and *επιεῖτα*, as well as their English equivalents, when they happen to denote sequence of time, may denote any sequence you please,—either immediate or remote,—either that in which the events follow each other rapidly, and consequently at short intervals, or that in which they follow each other slowly, and consequently at long intervals. You

may say, properly enough, a man winked *first* with the one eye, *then* with the other, and *after that* with the other again; and you may say, with equal propriety, the world was *first* made, *then* was it drowned by the deluge, and *afterwards* it will be consumed by fire. The *then* and the *afterwards* are precisely the same in both these cases, although in the one case each interval of the sequence occupies only the twinkling of an eye, while in the other it occupies many centuries, or even millenniums. There is, therefore, nothing to be made of the stubborn adverbs. Interrogate them as you please, you are never a whit the wiser. They will not tell you either how short or how long, how near or how distant; and if you want information on these points, you must look to some other quarter. As to *ειτα*, it occurs, as Mr. Cunninghame has himself remarked, not indeed in conjunction with *επειτα*, but in a repeated form, in Mark iv. 28. The earth bringeth forth first the blade, then the ear, *ειτα σταχυον*, after that the full corn in the ear, *ειτα πληρη σιτον*, &c. Now this, to be sure, is not an immediate succession—it requires a certain time,—yet as every person knows it is for the most part completed, even in the coldest climates, in the course of a few weeks. How ridiculous, then, to refer to it when we are speaking of thousands of years? In conjunction with *επειτα*, *ειτα* occurs in 1st Cor. xii. 28, God has set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that mirac-

les, *επειτα δυναμεις*, then gifts of healing, *ετα χαρισματα*, &c. Here, however, the sequence is not of time but of dignity. The only other place we recollect of where these particles occur in conjunction, is 1st Cor. xv. and in that chapter we meet with them no less than three times. He was seen of Cephas, ver. 5, 6; *then* of the twelve, *ετα τοις δωδεκα*—*after that* he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, *επειτα ωφθη*, &c. Again, ver. 7, *after that* *επειτα*, he was seen of James; *then*, *ετα* of all the apostles. How much time intervened between our Lord's resurrection and his being seen of all the apostles and of the five hundred brethren? Perhaps we could answer this question pretty exactly, but we deem it unnecessary. We know it must have been less than forty days, for forty days formed the whole period the Saviour remained on earth after he had risen. Yet allowing it had been full forty days, or even more, what was that to a thousand years? This is all we can make of the two adverbs. We knew we should make no more of them before we began the disquisition. We began it, however, not to gratify ourselves, but to set the matter "luminously" before Mr. Cunnigham.\*

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\* These adverbs often occur in the New Testament. The reviewer might have enlarged the number of his questions, and asked, How long it was after the blind man had looked up, before Jesus "put his hands again upon his eyes?" How long is it, after the careless hear the word, before "the devil cometh, and taketh away the word out of their hearts?" How long was

“ We doubt if Mr. Cunninghame will yet be disposed to ‘ bend to the force of our argument from 1st Cor. xv. 23, 24,’ but we have something farther to add, and we hope he will yield at last. We must tell him, then, that his quotation from Macknight is a piece of drivelling. True, indeed, *ταγμα* may signify a ‘ band of soldiers, a cohort, a legion,’ but nothing could be more absurd than to render it by any one of these words, or any word equivalent, in the place under consideration. Macknight did not know, and it appears Mr. Cunninghame does not know, that the whole passage relates to the resurrection of believers, and of them alone; the resurrection of wicked men is never once thought of, nor a circumstance respecting it introduced, from the beginning of the chapter to the end. It is only the resurrection of those who are Christ’s, (ver. 23.)—those who have fallen asleep in Christ, (ver. 18.)—those of

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it after Jesus had girded himself with the towel, before he poured water into the bason with which to wash the disciples’ feet? How long was it after Jesus had said to his mother, Woman, behold thy son; before he said to the disciple “ Behold thy mother?” How many centuries elapsed, after Jesus had come, when the doors were shut, and said to the disciples peace be unto you; before he said to Thomas, “ reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands?” How many ages does the wisdom that is from above, remain pure, before it becomes “ peaceable and gentle?” Mark viii. 25: Luke viii. 12: John xiii. 5: xix. 27: xx. 27. James iii. 17. Similar questions respecting the subjects, stated in the passages where these adverbs are found, might be multiplied fourfold.

whom Christ is the first fruits, (ver. 20.)—those who shall be raised incorruptible, (ver. 52.)—those who shall inherit the kingdom of God, (ver. 50.) True, the expression *εν τῷ ἰδίῳ ταγματι* is used, but the one *ταγμα* is Christ himself, the other is his people; and who would think of calling Christ himself a ‘band,’ or a ‘cohort,’ or a ‘legion?’ Our translators saw the absurdity of such a rendering, and with exquisite judgment adopted the word ‘order,’—every man in his own order. What then becomes of Mr. Cunninghame’s supplementary remarks, ushered in with the modest introduction, ‘from myself?’ What becomes of all he has said about the righteous and the wicked being buried promiscuously, and the consequence necessarily following, that as each is to rise in his own ‘band,’ there must be successive resurrections, separated from each other by a longer or shorter interval of time? The whole depends on the supposition, that the apostle speaks of some other ‘band’ besides our Lord himself, and those who are his—a supposition not only altogether gratuitous, but contrary to fact.

“Having disposed of the criticisms of Mr. Cunninghame, and of his coadjutor, Macknight, we still affirm, that the resurrection of the just will be the destruction of death and the end of all things. We hold that the apostle teaches us, as clearly as language can teach, that all these things will be coincident, and that they will happen at the coming of Christ. That our readers may the

better see the force of the argument, we beg leave to set down the passage at length: ‘But every man in his own order, Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and all power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.’ (1 Cor. xv. 23—26. Our first remark is, that *cometh*, in verse 24, is a supplement. Instead of then *cometh* the end, it ought to be read simply, then the end—or rather, supplying the substantive verb according to the usual Hebraism, then is the end. Beza, indeed, supplies *erit*, and probably he has misled our translators. Instead of *erit*, he ought to have supplied *est*. Our next remark is, that *shall have* delivered up the kingdom, (παράδοσις) and *shall have* put down all rule, &c. (καταργησις) are both unhappy renderings, and tend to introduce a degree of obscurity. Instead of the second future, both verbs ought to have been put into the first or simple future, or rather perhaps into what may be called the prospective present, and the passage ought to have been read, Then is the end when he *shall* deliver up, &c. and *shall* put down, &c. or rather, when he is to deliver up, &c. and is to put down, &c. The original words are in the aorist subjunctive, a form of the verb which is rendered in the way we speak of, times without number. An example occurs in verse 23, and another in verse 28, of this very chapter,—

till he put *αχρεις ου αν θη*,—when all things shall be subdued to him, *οταν δε υποταγη*. Nay, the very word *παραδω* itself, has much the same force in Mark iv. 29, when the fruit is brought forth, *οταν παραδω ο καρπος*. Our translators, we suspect, have been again misled by Beza and the Vulgate. Beza has *quum tradiderit* and *quum aboleverit*; the Vulgate has *quum tradiderit* and *quum evacuaverit*; but *shall have* is not always the correct rendering of such Latin expressions. Our translators should have attended to the force of the conjunction *quum*, and should have rendered simply, *shall deliver up the kingdom, and shall put down all rule, &c.*

“The apostle says, then, that at the coming of Christ is to be the resurrection of those who are his—is to be the end—is to be the delivering up of the kingdom to God, even the Father—is to be the putting down, or final subversion, of all other power, and authority, and rule. And how naturally does he subjoin what follows in the next two verses;—‘For he must reign till he have put all enemies under his feet: the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.’ That is, as if he had said, according to the promise in the 110th Psalm, the Saviour’s reign must be continued till every enemy be subdued, but there is no need for its being continued beyond the period I now speak of, for the *last* enemy is death; and as that is destroyed in the resurrection of his people, the promise is then fulfilled, and his reign is terminated with honour. We trust our readers are satisfied that

we have made good our assertion. We trust every one sees, that the resurrection of the just is to be the destruction of death, and the end of all things. And may we not, then, put again the question we put in our former article, If the *last* enemy be destroyed at the resurrection of the just, how can there be another enemy called Gog and Magog, requiring to be destroyed a thousand years afterwards?" Edinburgh Theological Magazine, May 1828, pp. 275—278.

4. In Phil. iii. 4, the apostle says "If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

In addition to what Mr. Cunninghame has stated, it has also been asked, "What else can this be than the first resurrection? A spiritual resurrection it cannot be: for that he had received already. The resurrection of the body it cannot be: for of that he was already absolutely certain, since he knew that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. It remains, therefore, that it must be the first resurrection; and this is confirmed by the original word, which properly signifies *a resurrection out from amongst the dead.*"

If this passage is calmly viewed in connexion with the context, there is the strongest reason for affirming, that it possesses no reference whatever to the resurrection of the body. Long before this, the apostle had been made a new creature. He had believed through grace, and was clothed

with the righteousness of Christ. His spiritual enjoyments were great, and his religious progress altogether unrivalled. But mark the sublime ambition of his holy soul, and his ardent intense engrossing solicitude to secure nearer access to Christ, more close conformity to his image, and more complete and uninterrupted possession of the immense ineffable blessings of his salvation. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. And be found in him not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Ver. 8—14.

He had already found Christ. He was in him, He had received the righteousness of faith; and

was comparatively perfect. But still, he declares, that he was striving to win Christ, following after that he might apprehend that for which he was apprehended of Christ; that he had not attained, neither was already perfect. In precisely the same manner, therefore, in which he says, that, though he had won Christ and was perfect; he had not attained neither was perfect: he declares that, though spiritually alive and risen with Christ; he was not completely delivered from spiritual death, and was labouring to lay hold on all the honour and blessedness of the spiritual resurrection from the dead.

But though the context obviously determines that this was the resurrection which he had in view; even granting, for the sake of argument, that he alludes to the resurrection of the body, this would not contribute the slightest support to the Millenarian hypothesis. In that case the remark of Macknight would be perfectly just. "Since the Apostle represents the resurrection from the dead, of which he is speaking, as a matter very difficult to be obtained, it cannot be the restoration of the body simply, for that the wicked shall arrive at whether they seek it or not; but it is the resurrection of the body, re-fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ, mentioned ver. 21, which is a privilege peculiar to the sons of God, and that by which they are to be distinguished from the wicked at the judgment." Though at the resurrection all the saints shall be clothed

with glorious and incorruptible bodies; their glory will not be the same. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." And if the resurrection of the body was the object which the apostle was here contemplating; it is quite reasonable to suppose, that his heart was set on a better resurrection; and that he was anxious to secure a distinguished place amongst those, who shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.

Nor can any objection to this explanation be drawn from the peculiar form of the Greek word which the apostle employs. Though the meaning of compound words is prodigiously modified by usage; in general, prepositions not only govern the same cases in composition which they do without it, but also retain the same signification. It is quite immaterial whither we say; an in-letting, or a letting in; an out-letting, or a letting out; an out-stretched arm, or an arm stretched out. And it could not have created the slightest shade of difference, whether Paul had written *ανστασις εκ των νεκρων* or *εξανστασις των νεκρων*. In the one case the preposition is prefixed to the noun governing: in the other to the noun governed. This is the only mystery in the matter. The position of the preposition is indeed altered: but the sense is exactly the same. Mat. x. 14: Acts viii. 7.

If Polybius, III. 55, when describing the scrambling of Hannibal's soldiers, who had slipped upon the frozen snow of the Alps, to recover their feet; had used the word *αναστασις*, he would have expressed completely the object which they wished to gain, to rise or recover the use of their feet: but though he has actually employed the compound word *εξαναστασις*, he has added nothing to the idea which the simple term would have conveyed. Could they have secured an *αναστασις*, they would have risen, or regained the use of their feet: and supposing that they could have obtained an *εξαναστασις*, they could have procured no more. And if the apostle had employed the simple term, followed by the preposition, this would have distinctly expressed his desire to be raised from the dead, or the state of death: and by employing the compound term, with the preposition prefixed, he has recorded a wish for nothing more. In thousands of instances, like Mat. viii. 28. x. 12. Phil. i. 6; the preposition in composition gives no addition to the sense; and its omission does not, in the slightest degree, diminish its force.

5. With their usual ingenuity and success our friends have constructed a double argument for their theory, from 1 Thess. iv. 13—18.

St. John, Rev. xx. 5, mentions a "first resurrection" by name. In this chapter, verse 16, Paul uses the word "first." "The dead in Christ shall rise first." This can be nothing else than the first resurrection of St. John: and as it

takes place at "the coming of the Lord," verse 15; and as they imagine that they have proved that there can be no Millennium till he comes; this pins down the first resurrection to the commencement of the Millennium. Besides, in 1 Cor. xv. 23, *επειτα* "means an interval, as we already know, of eighteen centuries;" and as this identical word returns, 1 Thess. iv. 17; where the apostle, after saying that the dead in Christ shall rise first, adds, "Then we who are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air;" there can be no doubt that the word "then" *επειτα* here signifies also a long period of, at least, a thousand years.

In reply to the reasoning of these worthy men; it is sufficient to observe, that the apostle in this passage applies the word "first" to the resurrection of the saints, in contradistinction to the transformation of the believers who are alive at the coming of Christ. In other words, he merely tells us in very plain terms, that the dead in Christ shall be raised *before* the living saints shall be glorified. The resurrection of the one will not long precede the glorification of the other. For in one and the same breath he says, "The dead in Christ shall rise *first*: THEN we who are alive and remain shall be caught up TOGETHER with them."

Of all the passages in the word of God, it might have been supposed that this would have

been the last, that Millenarians would have pressed into their desperate service. In the same compass few give a more decisive negative to the leading tenets of their system. If language can express the facts, that the resurrection of the first saint will be the signal for the resurrection of the last that ever shall be raised from the dust of the earth; that when the first saint is glorified, it will be accompanied with the instantaneous glorification of all that ever will share in that marvellous and blessed transition; that all this shall be accomplished in an instant, and at the second coming of Christ: if language can express these ideas, they are expressed by the language in question. It leaves no room for the "various progressions and germinations," of which our brethren talk so loudly. It affords no space for the different manifestations of the person of the Son of God; for his appearing and disappearing; for a millennial reign betwixt the first and the last resurrection; and all the momentous revolutions which shall take place in the majestic procession of the sundry acts of their great drama of a judgment-day, prolonged to a thousand years and a few additional centuries. In terms the most distinct and clear it proclaims the simultaneous instantaneous resurrection of the believing dead, and an equally simultaneous and instantaneous glorification of ALL the living saints: and it as completely excludes the notion of years, ages, and eras intervening betwixt the commencement and the close of this consummat-

ing act of Almighty love; as years, ages, and eras, are excluded from intervening betwixt the commencement and the close of a single blast of a trumpet; or, betwixt the word and the deed, when God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Only read the verses, and say if ever a more concise and satisfactory preservative from the vagaries of Millenarianism could have been expressed in the language of mortals? "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. iv. 13—18.

From these few sentences we learn, that all that ever shall sleep in Christ shall be brought with him; that he himself will descend swiftly; that none shall have precedence of another: for all the saints that shall ever taste death shall be

raised, before one living believer is changed. But how is Omnipotence itself to reconcile these facts with the expectations of Millenarians? How can *all* the saints that shall ever die, be *brought with Christ*; if he were to come fifteen, or even five, centuries, *before* their birth? If at least ten or twelve hundred years must elapse *after* the first resurrection, *before* the last generation of the saints, who shall be subjected to death, shall die; how can *these* be raised from the dead, BEFORE *those saints, whom Christ found alive at his coming, were glorified, and caught up in the clouds to meet him?* Unless they are raised and glorified, at least, a thousand years before their death; those who were alive at the coming of the Lord, must have the start, or advantage of them. But the apostle declares that those who are alive at the coming of the Lord, shall have no advantage over any that sleep in Jesus. The word of God and of the Millenarians cannot both be true. Let all judge for themselves which ought to stand.

One passage more remains for consideration.

6. Rev. xx. 4—6. In every age this has been the strong-hold of Millenarians. It is the first fortress to which, when attacked, they retreat: and when driven from every other post, it is the last point which they defend, and which they defend with all the fury and distraction of despair.

“ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the wit-

ness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power: but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Rev. xx. 4—6.

“Can any language be more plain and precise than this? Is it not distinctly said that they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years?”

But, good friends, be not too fast. Have the kindness to tell us honestly what it was that the apostle saw, and that lived and reigned a thousand years. Was it the mortal part of believers? their bodies, which had been sown in corruption, and which were now raised in incorruption?

To ascertain the meaning of the passage, we must

#### I. Examine it for ourselves.

Now on looking at it with our own eyes, we can discover no body in it at all. The apostle tells us positively that he saw “the SOULS of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” In vain shall we

explore the whole New Testament to find the word souls applied, either to the subjects of the resurrection, or to the glorified persons of believers.

It will not do to tell us that souls is a metaphorical term to denote persons in general. For, if our friends insist that the word souls is a metaphor for persons; then we have a good right to maintain that the word resurrection is also a figure for conversion; and living and reigning with Christ, a symbolical expression for spiritual prosperity, and the wide prevalence of piety. If they explain the one half of the paragraph figuratively to please themselves; we are entitled to explain the other half figuratively, not to vex them, as Mr. Irving very lovingly proposed; but to vindicate the principles of common sense and sound scriptural interpretation.

The Greek is not such a scanty language as to be unable to furnish a separate term for each of the ideas conveyed by the words person, soul, and body. Accordingly, when speaking of the literal resurrection, the other sacred writers employ words which designate either the body, or the whole man. "How are the *dead* raised up? and with what *body* do they come?" 1 Cor. xv. 35. When therefore, the apostle, instead of saying that he saw either the bodies, or persons of those who had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus; expressly informs us that he saw their "souls," and that they lived and reigned with

Christ a thousand years; this is enough to make us pause before we adopt the notion of a literal resurrection at the beginning of the Millennium. Souls are not the subjects of a literal death, and are utterly incapable of a literal resurrection.

Besides, we may remark that the very souls whom the apostle here sees living, he saw alive long before. For he says that, when the angel had opened the fifth seal, "I saw under the altar the SOULS of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given to every one of them: and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were should be fulfilled." Rev. vi. 9—11. Millenarians may dispute about the chronology of the fifth seal: but let them fix on what date they please, they must admit that centuries have elapsed since it was opened. But when that seal was opened, the very souls which they expect to be raised in the Millennium, were actually alive, crying from beneath the altar of heaven, and clothed with white robes. These souls have been alive for ages. The fact is they never have been dead: and are as much alive, and as really clothed with white robes at this moment, as they can be during the Millennium.

This single fact is perfectly fatal to the hypothesis under consideration. The introduction of the word souls into the narrative, intimates that the whole language is prophetic or figurative, and not intended to be literally understood.

2. The apostle saw the souls of none but of those who had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus. The resurrection of which he speaks is confined to the martyrs, or at the utmost to those who have resisted the impositions of antichrist. And when the apostle says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power:" or it necessarily follows on Millenarian principles that the second death hath power on all others. The other dead, who in different ages of the world have fallen asleep in Jesus, and all who shall be born during the Millennium, are excluded from any participation in this resurrection; and must be doomed to everlasting destruction.

3. If all, who shall be priests of God and of Christ, and partakers of everlasting blessedness, shall be raised from their graves at the first resurrection; then all who shall be raised at the second resurrection, must be raised to certain perdition. But at what they regard as the second resurrection, the dead do not rise to inevitable perdition: for "the book of life" is then opened; intimating that some of those who are then raised, shall receive eternal life. And instead of deciding, as might in that case have been supposed, their

eternal state by the fact, that they had no part in the millennial resurrection; their condition is determined by the circumstance, whether or not their names were written in the book of life: and none are cast into the lake of fire, except those whose names are not written in that book. Rev. xx. 12—15.

4. The supposed second or third resurrection, ver. 11—13, possesses every mark and characteristic of a general universal resurrection. There is no preposition nor particle of any description to limit its extent to a part of our race. The apostle declares that he saw “THE DEAD, small and great, stand before God:” that “THE DEAD were judged:” that “the sea gave up the DEAD which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the DEAD which were in them.”

According to Mr. Cunninghame’s rule, lately quoted, the absence of every restrictive word, shews that the apostle is not speaking of the resurrection of a remnant of our race; or of “a resurrection from amongst the dead:” but of “the resurrection OF the dead,” i. e. of the *whole body of the dead*. Unless our worthy brethren believe that there is none of the saints who have been either small or great, and that none of the bodies of the saints have been either in death or in the grave: since all who have been either small or great, and whose bodies have been either in the possession of the sea, or of death, and the grave, shall then be raised and judged: it seems inevit-

ably to follow, that this is the resurrection of the *whole* human race; that, till then, there will be *no* resurrection of the dead; but *then* the *whole collective body of mankind*, without one exception, *shall be raised from the dead*.

5. The Bible uniformly affirms that "all shall be judged according to the things done in the body," and "receive according to their works." Long after the Millennium is ended, Jesus declares, Rev. xxii. 12, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give *every* man according as his work shall be." Either, therefore, those who are raised before the Millennium, contrary to the whole tenor of the sacred volume, do not receive according to their works; or else there is no pre-millennian resurrection at all.

The same conclusion is established by the account given of the final judgment in this twentieth chapter of Revelation. We are there assured not only that all the dead shall then stand before God, and be judged according to their works; but that they shall be judged, "*every* man according to their works." And if "*every* man," *at* the close of all things shall be judged according to his works; the conclusion is forced on us again, either that there is no resurrection nor judgment prior to the Millennium, or that those who share in the first resurrection are neither judged at all, nor receive according to their works.

6. If the first resurrection is the re-vivification

of the body; then the second death can be no more than the second dissolution of the body. No two terms can be more completely explanatory of each other, than the first resurrection and the second death. Whenever, therefore, we can ascertain the import of the one, we know exactly the meaning of the other. If the second death is merely the repetition of the act of dying; then the first resurrection, to a certainty, is the re-animation of our mortal frame, and nothing more. But is this the nature of the second death? No. It is nothing less than the destruction of soul and body in hell. "Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." Verse 14.

Finding therefore, that the phrase second death is figurative, we are driven to the conclusion, that the first resurrection is also figurative; and that the language of the whole passage is metaphorical.

7. To prevent the possibility of mistake, and place this conclusion beyond the reach of doubt; the apostle gives us an account not only of a second death, but also of a second resurrection.

We are just as distinctly told that the rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished; as we are taught that those who were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, lived and reigned with him a thousand years. "Whence of course it follows, that, so soon as the thousand years *are* finished, the rest of the dead *do* live again.

"These two particulars being thus uninterupt-

edly set forth in one and the same passage, and being thus evidently foretold in direct mutual relation, must, according to the rules of good composition, be interpreted *homogeneously*: that is to say, whatever nature the one resurrection is, whether *literal* or *figurative*, of that same nature must also be the *other* resurrection.

“ Now the resurrection of the rest of the dead takes place, we are told, at the end of the thousand years. But the end of the thousand years is not the end of the world. On the contrary, the thousand years are followed, in regular succession, first by the liberation of Satan; next, by the formation of the confederacy of Gog and Magog out of those deceived nations; next, by the going up of the confederacy to compass the holy city; next by the miraculous destruction of that confederacy through fire from heaven; and then, at length, after the lapse of some undefined period subsequent to the destruction of the confederacy, by the ultimate universal judgment of the resuscitated dead, both small and great, at the literal second advent of Christ, and at the final consummation of all things. Therefore what is called *the resurrection of the rest of the dead*, occurring as it does only at the end of the thousand years, and long before the consummation of all things, cannot be the *literal* resurrection of the dead, both small and great, both from the sea and from hades, which the prophet as might naturally be expected, determinately fixes to the unknown and

undefined epoch of the literal day of universal judgment. But, if it cannot be the *literal* resurrection *at* the literal day of universal judgment: it must be a *figurative* resurrection *before* the literal day of universal judgment. Otherwise, what is a palpable contradiction, we shall make **TWO** *general* and *literal* resurrections: the *one* general resurrection, at the end of the thousand years; the *other* general resurrection, at some undefined epoch subsequent to the destruction of Gog and Magog.

“The resurrection, then, of the rest of the dead, at the end of the thousand years, has been shewn, by the very necessity of its collocation, to be *figurative*. But homogeneity requires, that the two resurrections, the one at the end, and the other at the beginning of the thousand years, should be similarly understood and interpreted. Therefore, the resurrection of the martyrs, at the beginning of the thousand years, must be a purely figurative resurrection also.” Faber’s Sacred Calendar, Vol. III. pp. 469—471.

From these facts it is evident that we must either reject the doctrine of a literal resurrection of the saints before the Millennium; or else admit that the souls as well as the bodies of the martyrs have been put to death; that none except the martyrs shall enjoy eternal life; that all who are raised at the final resurrection, shall rise to certain perdition; that the works of the martyrs will not follow them, and that they shall not reap as they

have sown ; and that the wicked, instead of rising to shame and everlasting contempt, shall rise to enjoy themselves on the earth, and plague and persecute the redeemed for ages. But since the latter alternative is utterly incompatible with the plainest testimonies of the word of God ; we cannot for a moment hesitate to reject a tenet which entails so many falsehoods and absurdities.

But since this passage does not assert the literal resurrection of the martyred saints, we may be very properly asked,

## II. What does it really mean.

We can be at no loss to determine what is meant by the first resurrection, by attending to what is intended by the second resurrection.

From the fact that the rest of the dead as really live at the close of the Millennium, as that the saints live during it: they must be raised at the end of the Millennium, exactly in the same sense, in which the martyrs are raised at its beginning. But the end of the Millennium, as Mr. Faber has justly observed, is not the end of the world. Centuries intervene betwixt the termination of the Millennium and the consummation of all things. But as we find that the wicked when they rise, come forth to the resurrection of damnation : it is absolutely incredible that, when they are raised at the expiration of the Millennium, they will be let loose upon the earth ; and permitted, in their bodies which have been raised from the grave, to

walk the world at large, to follow the pleasures of life, and engage in molesting and injuring the just.

As it cannot be a literal resurrection of the wicked; it naturally follows that it must be a figurative one, the revival of the principles of vice and impiety. That this is the case appears undeniable on comparing the nineteenth with the twentieth chapter. In the close of the nineteenth, the apostle says, "I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant," *οἱ λοιποὶ* the rest, "were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Such is the close of the nineteenth chapter. The twentieth opens with an account of the binding of Satan, and the first resurrection: and then at the fifth verse adds, "But the rest" *οἱ λοιποὶ*, the identical remnant, who, chap. xix. 21, were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the throne; the remnant or "rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Whenever these thousand years expire, they recover the life

which they had lost. Satan is let loose. He begins to organize an army against the church of God. He goes out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth. And now the renovating influences of the Holy Spirit being restrained, the enemy of all goodness is too successful. Religion languishes. Worldliness and carnality abound. The earth is overrun with impiety and profligacy. And the dreadful apostacy ends in a general confederacy of the ungodly against the saints of the Most High. Gog and Magog, with forces numerous as the sand of the sea, go up on the breadth of the earth, and encompass the camp of the saints.

This is the resurrection of the rest of the dead; who had no share in the first resurrection; who were neither blessed nor holy; nor had their names written in the book of life. Individually they had no existence till the Millennium was ended. But by adopting the irreligious principles, and imitating the lawless practices of their antichristian predecessors, who had lorded it over the heritage of God, during the long and dreary reign of infidel, and papal tyranny, previous to the Millennium; they are branded with the same name, and subjected to a similar fate.\*

And since the second resurrection is not the res-

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\* Those who wish to see a more ample elucidation of this subject, may consult Whitby on the Millennium, Chapter III. or Faber's Sacred Calendar, vol. III. pp. 472—474.

urrection of the wicked dead to life, but the revival of wicked and irreligious principles and practices: common sense and rational consistency require us to interpret the first resurrection, not of the re-animating of the dead bodies of the martyrs, but of the general and universal prevalence of their pure principles, and devout, holy, and heavenly conduct.

This interpretation is in perfect harmony with the idiom of the sacred writings. There we frequently find a natural unconverted condition represented as a state of death. "The widow that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth." "Let the" spiritually "dead bury their" literal "dead." Conversion, on the other hand, is denominated a resurrection from the dead, and a passing from death unto life. The language of the Gospel to the careless and irreligious is, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. v. 14. Believers are addressed as having been dead in tresspasses and sins; and, by regeneration, quickened together with Christ: Eph. ii. 1—6: and are exhorted to yield themselves unto God" as those who are alive from the dead." Rom. vi. 13.

When on their restoration to Jerusalem Ezra says, "Now, for a little space, grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little *reviving* in our bondage:"

Chap. ix. 8: Does he intend to assert that he and his brethren were literally dead; and that through the kindness of the kings of Persia, they were literally restored to life? When the Psalmist says, "Thou who hast shewn me great and sore troubles, shalt *quicken* me again, and bring me up from the depths of the earth:" when in his own name and that of the church he says, "Let thy hand be upon the Man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man, whom thou madest strong for thyself: so will we not go back from thee: *quicken* us, and we will call upon thy name:" when he adds, "Wilt thou not *revive* us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?" Psal. lxxi. 20: lxxx. 17, 18: lxxxv. 7: in these and in similar cases; though the words in the Hebrew and Septuagint are still more forcibly expressive, than those in our version, of the literal communication of life; can any rational man believe that the Psalmist supposed that himself, and the church were literally dead; and were, in answer to his prayer, to be instantly restored to life?

When in the joy of his heart upon the return of the prodigal, the Father said to his elder son, "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found:" Luke xv. 32: Will any man affirm that the prodigal was literally dead, and literally restored to life? When Paul says, "If the casting away of them," the Jews, "be the reconciling of the world, what

shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" Rom. xi. 15: Will any man, except a Millenarian, maintain that the conversion of the Jews will disturb the repose of the grave, and produce a universal resurrection of the dead?

All agree that the Millennium will not commence till the seventh trumpet has sounded. But on looking into the eleventh chapter of Revelations, we find that during the blast of the sixth trumpet, which began to sound, A. D. 1301, and ended, A. D. 1697,\* the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit makes war against two Witnesses who are about to finish their testimony, and overcomes, and kills them. The beast kills them out-right: for their dead bodies lie upon the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. This event gives the most unbounded joy to the inhabitants of the antichristian world. They will not allow the bodies of these murdered men to be interred. But to their consternation and terror, after three days and a half, the Spirit of life from God enters into them, and they stand upon their feet; and great fear falls on them that see them.

Some have very strangely supposed that these two Witnesses are the Holy Scriptures, and that they were slain when Christianity was proscribed,

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\* Faber's Sacred Calendar, vol. II. pp. 430—432.

A. D. 1793, by the French convention.\* But, as has been very justly observed by Mr. Cunningham,† the calm revocation of this impious decree, and the peaceful restoration of Christian worship, A. D. 1796, is very unlike the powerful emblems employed to describe the unexpected resurrection of the Witnesses, and the consternation and terror with which that event inspired their enemies.

It is far more credible that the death of the Witnesses took place, either when the Protestant confederates of the Smalcaldic league were defeated in the battle of Mulburgh, A. D. 1547: or in the dreadful dispersion and carnage of the Vallenses and Albigenses from A. D. 1686, till A. D. 1689.

In the "same hour" in which the Witnesses arose, "there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell," or revolted from the See of Rome. This was the case at the reformation, when Britain and several other states shook off the papal yoke. And on the restoration of the exiled Albigenses and Vallenses to their native land; the Revolution in Great Britain, by which Popery was proscribed, and the Protestant faith secured, was accomplished.

But let the Witnesses be who they may, and

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\* Frere's Combined View, p. 90. Irving on Prophecy, pp. 97—118, second edition.

† Scheme of Prophetic arrangement, pp. 97—99.

let them have been put to death when they would, it is unquestionable that their resurrection is already past. And whether we refer it to the restoration of Christianity in France in 1796; to the return of the Piedmontese Christians to their valleys in 1689; or to the independence of the German Protestants in 1550: it must be admitted that their resurrection is purely figurative. If the Witnesses are considered as the holy Scriptures; as they are incapable of a literal death, so are they of a literal resurrection: and if the Witnesses are allowed to be the faithful contenders for the truth, either in France or Germany, their resurrection is equally metaphorical. Since the apostles fell asleep no authentic record attests the resurrection of a single individual. If, as the former class of interpreters maintain, the Witnesses are the holy Scriptures, and both their death and resurrection are metaphorical; they can have no just complaint when we affirm that the first resurrection, Rev. xx. 6, is also figurative. And those who believe that the Witnesses are the faithful, who resisted the abominations of Popery, and sealed their adherence to the word of God with their blood; must also acknowledge that these men, Rev. xi, have enjoyed no literal resurrection; and, that unless the context otherwise determines, the language of Rev. xx. 6, apparently expressive of a literal, may in reality denote no more than a spiritual, resurrection.

But if this is insufficient to prove that the word,

resurrection, is occasionally employed to denote a moral or religious change, let us turn to Ezek. xxxvii. Here is a description of the situation of the Jews, in their present unbelief, dispersion, and wretchedness. Language can afford no terms more forcibly descriptive of death than what the prophet actually applies to the present condition of that ancient and interesting, but guilty and miserable, people. "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about, and behold there were very many in the open valley; and lo, they were very dry." v. 1. 2. And no words can more strongly describe a literal resurrection than those which are employed to foretell their conversion to the Gospel and their restoration to their own land. "And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came

together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied, as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, 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 that I am the LORD, 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; 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."

After all however who, in his sober senses, will assert that the Jewish nation is now literally dead? and that their conversion will be accompanied with the resurrection of their ancestors? of all their ancestors, whether religious or irreligious?

Finding therefore that, when the prodigal was said to be dead and alive again; that when the receiving of the Jews is declared to be life from the dead; that when the Spirit of life entered into the Witnesses, and they stood upon their feet; and that when speaking of the conversion of the Hebrew nation, God promises to open their graves and bring them up out of their graves; no literal resurrection is intended: in the face of all that pins down Rev. xx. 6, to a figurative sense, how can we affirm that it denotes a literal resurrection?

Since the first resurrection must be understood figuratively, it may be asked

III. How the successive generations of those, who, during the Millennium, shall possess the spirit and principles of the martyred saints, can be identified with them who have been beheaded for the witness of Jesus and the word of God? In other words, How can those who merely inherit their fidelity be distinguished by their names?

These questions may be answered by others. How can we speak of a second Knox? another Cranmer? a modern Luther? Ages after the waves of desolation had flowed over the devoted cities of the plain, and their guilty inhabitants had gone to their own place; how could Isaiah, chap. i. 10, addressing his countrymen, say, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gommorrah?" And why was John the Baptist called Elias?

John was the son of Zecharias and Elizabeth. Centuries before his birth, the Tishbite had been in the world of glory. But because he possessed the same spirit, John was distinguished by the same name. "His disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias shall truly first come and restore all things. But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed: likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." Mat. xvii. 10—13. Elsewhere when speaking of the Baptist, Jesus declared, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, who was to come." Mat. xi. 14.

This saying however of our blessed Lord is not received. Our friends are quite unable to determine what to make of the prophecy of Malachi respecting Elijah: but they are perfectly certain that John the Baptist was not the Elias who was to come. Mr. Irving and Ben-Ezra expect Elijah to appear a second time in person. Irving's Pre. Dis. p. 5: Ben-Ezra, vol. II. p. 302. Mr. King is positive that Elijah was only the incarnation of an angel, who re-appeared in the person of the Baptist, and is to return a third time, before the supposed personal reign of Christ on earth. Morsels of Criticism, vol. I. pp. 221—315. The collocutors in the Dialogues on Pro-

phesy, Part III. pp. 236—239 ; have ascertained, as they imagine, that it is not the person, but the Spirit of Elias, which is to precede the second coming of Christ. This Spirit has come already. “ The spirit of prophecy has been in abeyance, as it were, ever since the third century, a period of 1500 years, until now, when it has pleased God to awaken the attention of his church again to the subject, and to excite many persons in every part of England, at one and the same time, to cry, ‘ Fear God, and give glory to him, *for the hour of his judgments is come.*’ The virgins are gone out to meet the bride; the cry is making, ‘ Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.’ This, then, is the spirit of Elias, testifying in us of the second coming of Christ in his glorified body, as it did in John of the first coming of Christ in his body of humiliation.” “ Philaethes—I think you have made out this case very clearly.”

They imagine that the prediction of Malachi could not be fulfilled in the Baptist, because the prophet connects the coming of Elias with the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and asks who may abide the day of his coming? and stand when he appeareth? This language, they suppose, cannot be applied to the first, humble, and peaceful advent of our Lord; and therefore it must refer to his second glorious appearing.

But when we remember that the writings of Malachi were primarily directed to the Jews; that

Jesus was set for the fall as well as the rising again of many in Israel; that in a certain sense, he came not to send peace on earth, but a sword; that the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews, were to the Hebrew nation a great and dreadful day; and that for eighteen years "the earth," or the land of Israel has been smitten with a curse: when we remember this, we see abundant reason to maintain, that the prophecy of Malachi refers to no other events than those which followed the first advent of Christ. This is farther manifest from the declaration that he would "come to his temple." He must therefore, have come while the temple was standing. At his second advent, there will, even on their own principles, be no temple. For since they affirm that nothing can convert the Jews but the second advent of the Messiah; at that advent the unconverted Jews can have no temple, which could be called his own, ready for his reception. This fact in conjunction with our Lord's assurance "ELIAS IS COME ALREADY," ought to decide the matter. "This is he, whom the prophet spake of, whether they receive and believe it or not."\*

In the same manner, therefore, that the Baptist by possessing the Spirit, was distinguished by the name of Elias; when the earth is filled with men

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\* Guthrie of Fenwick's Commentary on Mat. ii. 14. MS.

endowed with the faith and fortitude of the martyrs, it may be said to be peopled with those who have been beheaded for the witness of Christ and the word of God. This will be the case in the Millennium. The dark-minded ruffians, who shed the blood of the saints; the unfeeling monsters, who coolly gazed at the lamentable spectacle; the profane witlings, who dressed up the heart-rending narrative of the sufferings of Christ's devoted followers, to form a subject of merriment to modern infidels; and the baptized heathens of Britain, who had hearts to enjoy the revolting and sickening tale, and applauded the wretched creatures who had furnished them with the unhallowed sport; will then enjoy no successors nor representatives. The world will be occupied by men of another description. Those, who then shall possess the place of our habitation, will never question whether the patience, fortitude, and piety of our illustrious martyrs; or the impiety and buffoonery of their revilers have been most beneficial to society. Those who live in that delightful era will make Christ their all in all; and receive and venerate every character and deed that bears a resemblance to his glorious image. "The cause in which the martyrs have suffered will then triumph: and while the names of their persecutors will rot in execration, their labours will be in request, and their character embalmed in the memory of mankind."\*

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\* Fuller on the Apocalypse, p. 355.

So much for the separate resurrection of the saints, a thousand years before that of the wicked; an event of which no trace can be found in the sacred volume, and which exists only in the brains of our Millenarian brethren.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE FOR THE PERSONAL ADVENT OF CHRIST, PRIOR TO THE MILLENNIUM; AND HIS REIGN ON EARTH.

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THE personal advent of Christ before the Millennium, is the life and soul of the Millenarian scheme. Deprive Millenarians of this postulate, and all their learned and laborious reasoning becomes utterly insignificant and useless, and the whole of their magnificent and visionary system falls to the ground. They must then bid adieu to their physical ameliorations of the earth, to the resurrection of the just and their reign upon this globe for a thousand years, to the propagation of the Gospel through the world by the bodily presence of the Redeemer, and the other wild and chimerical dreams to which they cling with such overweening fondness.

Fully aware of the importance of this article of their creed, its advocates have exerted every effort to establish its truth; and have employed all the stores which they possess of erudition and argument to endow it with some kind of plausibility, and force it upon the easy and capacious faith of the ignorant and credulous, who are ever ready to admire what is strange, and assent to whatever is propounded with the airs of consummate self-confidence, and high scorn of men of more mighty intellect, and more exalted moral worth.

We have already seen that a personal advent of Christ before the Millennium, is utterly repugnant to the whole letter and spirit of the word of God; and cannot, for a single moment, be entertained by any man who knows the meaning of his Bible, and bows to its sacred and paramount authority. In the face of all that the Scriptures affirm to the contrary, some may be disposed to inquire, what can have induced any men who regard the Bible as the word of God, to expect the immediate return of Christ, and his reign with his saints on earth? and by what arguments do they support a notion so monstrous and incredible?

The proof which they have attempted to give of this tenet, is uncommonly tedious, and of a most multifarious description. Almost every thing in the sacred volume relating to the incarnation of Christ and his mediatorial undertaking; to his dominion over creation, and his sovereignty over his church; to the work of grace in the hearts of be-

lievers, and the glory laid up for them in heaven; the types, promises, and prophecies, respecting the religious privileges and spiritual enjoyments of believers, have been dragged into the Millenarian service, and violently compelled to prop up a hypothesis against which they loudly and earnestly reclaim.

In reviewing the evidence offered in support of their theory, we shall follow the arrangement adopted by Mr. Cunninghame; and add a few observations upon the subsidiary arguments of a miscellaneous nature which his auxiliaries have brought to his assistance.

The reader may discover the design of his pamphlet from the following avowal: "I feel no hesitation in acknowledging that wherever a future advent or presence, *παρουσία*, of our Lord is foretold in Scripture, we who believe in his personal advent and reign, do understand one and the same advent to be uniformly intended." Summary View, p. 1.

On this we have to remark, in passing, that we also believe in the personal advent of Christ, and that he will come only once. But we never dream of applying what is said of his spiritual or providential coming to his bodily presence: and whether any particular passage refers to his personal or spiritual presence, we never can ascertain in any other way, than by examining the terms employed in connection with the context where they occur.

In illustrating and confirming his leading posi-

tion, Mr. Cunninghame thinks that he has arrived at the following conclusions. 1. "That the principal passages of prophecy which speak chronologically and circumstantially of the future advent of Messiah, do one and all refer to the period immediately introductory to the Millennium. 2. That the three nouns substantive which are used to express the advent in the New Testament, do every one of them negative the idea of a spiritual coming, and do necessarily imply that the advent is real, personal, and corporeal. 3. That two of these words conjoined being used to link the advent to an event, which by the unanimous consent of the church precedes in time the Millennium, we are driven to the conclusion, that the advent which synchronises with that event is the real and personal coming of the Lord to judge the world. 4. That to maintain a spiritual advent is in direct contradiction to the angelic announcement, which was uttered at the ascension of our Lord. 5. That to maintain a spiritual advent of the Man Christ Jesus, includes in it the virtual denial of his proper and complete humanity. 6. That the return of our Lord to this earth, at the period of the restitution of all things, which must be identified with the Millennium, may be inferred from the words of Peter, in Acts iii. 19—21." Summary View, pp. 17, 18.

I. His first conclusion is, "That the principal passages of prophecy which speak chronologically

and circumstantially of the future advent of Messiah, do one and all refer to the period immediately introductory to the Millennium.”

In support of this position he states, that “The first text in the chronological prophecies wherein we find the second advent clearly predicted is Dan. vii. 13, 14. After beholding in the preceding context the judgment executed by the Ancient of days on the body of the fourth beast, or the Roman empire, in its last state, the prophet adds, ‘I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.’

“If it be asked, to what period in the general chronology of prophecy this vision belongs, the answer must be, that it clearly and indisputably is to be referred to that season when, the seventh Apocalyptic trumpet having sounded, great voices are heard in heaven, that ‘the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.’ Rev. xi. 15. In other words, the advent of Messiah described by Daniel takes place at the destruction of the fourth or Roman monarchy, and immediately before the millennium.—And that this is

the case, is now so universally admitted by the interpreters of prophecy, that to enter upon the proof of it were altogether superfluous. Let the reader who is uninformed on the general subject, only consider with care and attention the parallel passages of Dan. ii. 34, 35, 44, 45; and Dan. vii. 9—14, 18, 22, 26, 27, and then compare both with Rev. xi. 15, xix. and xx. and he cannot for a moment remain in doubt that they all refer to the same period and the same events." Summary View, pp. 3, 4.

To this a long note is subjoined, containing a severe criticism upon Scott and Maclaurin.

"It might have been thought impossible that any commentator should have so entirely mistaken the meaning and time of Daniel's vision of the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven (so often referred to in the New Testament) as to apply it to the Ascension of our Lord to heaven; and yet it appears that Maclaurin, as quoted by Mr. Scott, in his commentary, actually falls into this glaring prophetic anachronism. 'The prophet,' says Mr. M., 'does not represent him as coming in the clouds from heaven to earth (as at the general judgment) but as coming with the clouds of heaven from his former residence towards the throne of God.' There is no end of the vagaries of commentators, and certainly this is one almost of unequalled magnitude. Happily, however, the admirable precision of the scriptural language affords a sure and easy means of refuting this most

palpable error of Mr. Maclaurin, which, while it absolutely sets every principle of prophetic chronology at defiance, violates no less all the analogies of the scriptural phraseology.”—A great display of learning succeeds to shew how ascent is expressed in Hebrew and Chaldee. Though Maclaurin seems wrong in his explanation of the prophecy, Mr. Cunninghame is just as far from being right in his animadversions. But on all this erudite and useless labour, any remarks are superseded by the following observations of an acute and intelligent critic. “To us this appears somewhat amusing; and since Mr. Cunninghame possesses so much learning, and is so much inclined to meddle with criticism, we would take the liberty of hinting to him, that, in order to excel in the latter department, it is necessary to make some use of the understanding. The art of criticism, like every other art, is founded in common sense; and if a man be deficient in that gift, the mere knowledge of words will never make him a critic. In all the languages spoken by men, we presume the expressions to *go up* and to *go down*, to *come up* and to *come down*, or what corresponds to them, signify just to go up and to go down, to come up and to come down; but *to come* and *to go* simply, or what corresponds to them, signify to move in any direction you please, upward or downward, hither or athwart, from any one point in space, to any other point in space. The business, then, of a critic or an interpreter, if he would ascertain the precise direction of the

motion when such expressions occur, is simply to determine what is the place of the moving object, in relation to the object towards which it moves. If this is done, it cannot surely be difficult to say, whether the motion is upward or downward, from heaven to earth, or from earth to heaven; and in the case before us, we should think the decision is abundantly easy. The Son of Man came to the Ancient of days, or was brought near before him. The only question then is, Where has the Ancient of days his abode? Where do the Scriptures uniformly represent him as erecting his throne? If it be on earth, then the coming of the Son of Man was a *descent*, according to Mr. Cunninghame; if it be in heaven, then the coming of the Son of man was an *ascent*, according to the interpreters, Mac-laurin and Scott." Edin. Theol. Mag. May 1828, p. 267.

Passing on to the New Testament, Mr. Cunninghame refers to 2 Thess. ii. 3—12: and then to Rev. xix. 11—21: Mat. xxiv. 30: Mark xiii. 26: Luke xxi. 27: Rev. xiv. 14: Isa. lxiii. 1—9: Joel iii. 13, 14; Zech. xii. 10—12: Rev. i. 7: Mat. xxvi. 64: Mark xiv. 62. These various passages he considers as strictly synchronical, and as all foretelling the second personal advent of the Son of God, to destroy Antichrist, and judge the quick and dead.

If either he, or any other man, can prove that these passages are strictly synchronical; that they foretell one and the same event: and if he can also prove that any one of them either affirms or neces-

sarily implies, that the advent which it announces is personal: then our friends will carry their point, and all must admit that Christ will come in person to destroy antichrist, and introduce the Millennium.

But if these texts do not synchronise; if, on examination, some shall be found to refer to one event, and others to another; some to a period anterior to the Millennium, and others to an era long posterior; what will be the consequence? Why, we shall be left exactly where we were: and obliged to believe that some of them describe a personal, and others a spiritual advent.

That this actually is the case, the most superficial examination of the texts which have been enumerated, is perfectly sufficient to convince us.

1. In this list we find, 2 Thess. ii. 3—12. That this passage refers to the destruction of antichrist, and to a period prior to the Millennium, there cannot be the slightest doubt. Whether it synchronises with Rev. xiv. 14: Isa. lxiii. 1—9: Joel iii. 13, 14; we shall not stop to inquire. But with Rev. xi. 15: and xx, it clearly cannot coincide. These passages refer to a period when the people are all righteous, and the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. But 2 Thess. ii. 3—12, relates to the destruction of antichrist; and betwixt his destruction and the establishment of the reign of millennial blessedness, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and all Israel shall be saved; we learn from

Dan. xii. 12, an interval of seventy-five years intervenes.

Here then is one anachronism, as great as if we should say that an event, which shall take place in 1835, is synchronical with another which will not occur till 1910.

2. In this list we find Mat. xxiv. 30: Mark xiii. 26: and Luke xxi. 27, represented as identical with 2 Thess. ii. 3—12. But whatever may be the object which our Redeemer had ultimately in view in these texts: by the declaration with which that prediction is accompanied, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled;" Mat. xxiv. 34 compared with xxiii. 36; our Lord has rendered it unquestionable that his primary object was to foretell the destruction of Jerusalem and the termination of the Jewish economy.

Here then is a second anachronism of still greater magnitude than the former. But this is not all.

3. Mat. xxvi, 64: Mark xiv, 62: and Rev. i. 7, are also placed in the same list, and considered as synchronical with 2 Thess. ii. 3—12.

Now these texts relate to an era when every eye shall see the Son of God; when the high priest, those that pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall see Jesus, not on the earth, but in the very act of approaching it. But as none, even of the Millenarians, with the exception of Ben-Ezra, vol. ii. p. 268, expect the resurrection

of any of the wicked till the close at least of the Millennium, if not for ages after it; it is absolutely impossible that they can see Christ as he descends from heaven, if he is to come before the Millennium. But when he comes, these texts tell us that the wicked shall see him. "Behold he cometh with clouds, and *every eye shall see him.*" The advent therefore, to which they refer, is totally distinct from that to which 2 Thess. ii. 3—12 relates; and they prove the very reverse of that for which Millenarians produce them. They prove that Christ will come in person at the end of the world, at the general resurrection, and final judgment. They coincide with such texts as Mat. xxv. 31—46: Acts i. 11. iii. 19—21: 1 Cor. xv. 23—28: 1 Thess. iv. 15—17: Rev. xx. 11: xxii. 12. And unless, in opposition to the authority of Paul, Heb. ix. 27, 28, we have recourse to the desperate and audacious shift of the author of the "Cry from the Desert," p. 51, and believe that Christ is to come in person a *third* time; we shall be compelled to conclude that he will not come personally to destroy antichrist, and reign on earth during the Millennium.

Since therefore, the respectable author has thrown together texts, relating to no less than four distinct events, the destruction of Jerusalem, the overthrow of antichrist, the introduction of the Millennium, and the end of the world; events separated from each other by a long interval, some by an interval of many centuries; his attempt to

identify the personal coming of Christ with the fall of antichrist is a complete failure. He leaves the subject exactly where he found it. For though the last class of texts refer to the personal appearing of the Redeemer; yet since they refer to a period far distant from that which is announced by the texts of the second and third classes, it by no means follows that Christ will return, either at the extinction of Popery, or the commencement of the Millennium. Since he did not come in person at the destruction of Jerusalem, and his advent is represented in the same terms on the two latter occasions; the presumption certainly is that he will not come in person either at the overthrow of antichrist, or the introduction of the Millennium.

Are any inclined to ask, "If the texts that speak of the coming of Christ to destroy antichrist, are not to be interpreted strictly and literally of his personal appearing, what do they mean?" it may be answered, that they denote our Redeemer's spiritual and providential presence to overthrow vice and impiety, and clear the earth of all that opposes the progress and power of the Gospel.

That this is the case will very soon appear.

Wide as Popery has prevailed, who will affirm that it ever has been, or ever will be commensurate with the globe? And if it never has been, and never will be universal; is it credible that its overthrow will be the crisis of all nations, and the

ruin of the world? Is this consistent with the general analogy of the Divine administration? Does God involve the innocent in the punishment of the guilty? and visit the sins of a single people upon all the inhabitants of the earth? When the whole world alike participated in the heaven-daring impieties and profligacies of the antediluvians, they were visited with one general and unsparing catastrophe. But when in subsequent ages Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, signalized themselves, by successively persecuting and oppressing the people of God, did their overthrow convulse the unoffending states and empires? stop the tide of time? or shake the solid globe?

When in the last years that shall pass over this world, violence, outrage, and infidelity, shall become universal; it is but just and meet that the general combination of the ungodly shall be punished with their entire destruction, with the final judgment, and the end of all things earthly. But is it right or reasonable to suppose, that the sins of Popery will be visited upon the heads of those who never heard of its existence? and of those who hate it? who have resisted its encroachments? who have been the victims of its barbarity and treachery? and have endured dreary centuries of suffering and sorrow, while contending against its degrading and cruel impositions?

This is an opinion which bears improbability on its front; and, unless it is distinctly taught in

Scripture; is utterly inadmissible. But is it taught in Scripture?

The Scriptures contain both the prediction and the record of the destruction of many idolatrous and persecuting powers. But how is the doom of those criminal and incorrigible nations represented in the sublime and animated language of prophecy? Exactly like that of the fall of the antichristian apostacy, the mystic Babylon, by images borrowed from the transactions of the great day of decision. At death men are rewarded individually, and have their everlasting condition decided by their personal character. But nations, as nations, have, no existence in eternity: and therefore, their national crimes are punished by temporal calamities; and the punishment inflicted for their sins in their corporate capacity, is represented as their judgment-day: and the metaphors used to portray it, are derived from the proceedings of the day of final retribution.

Foretelling the destruction of the literal Babylon by the sword of the Medes and Persians, the prophet cries, "Behold **THE DAY** of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their

evil, and the wicked for their iniquity." Isa. xiii. 9—11. See also Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8. Speaking of the punishment of Egypt, the same prophet says, "Behold, the Lord rideth on a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it," Isa. xix. 1. The ruin of Assyria is thus represented. "Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from afar, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy; his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is a devouring fire.—For tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it." Isa. xxx. 27, 33. And the subversion of the Jewish state and of Judaism, are thus announced. "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.—The earth mourneth and fadeth away; the world languisheth and fadeth away.—The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard; and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall and not rise again.—Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed when the Lord of hosts shall reign

in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." Isa. xxiv. 1—23.

But though in these and in other cases, the temporal calamities of the guilty nations are described by figures taken from the second literal advent of our Lord, and the literal day of judgment; who will assert that in these instances our Lord came in person to execute the judgments which had been denounced, or that any supernatural occurrence took place? And since the event has long ago fulfilled these predictions, and explained the import of the language employed; when the fall of antichrist is foretold in words no more expressive of Christ's bodily presence, than those which are used to announce the overthrow of Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon; on what principle of rational and consistent interpretation, are we authorized to affirm his personal advent to destroy the mystic Babylon, any more than to overthrow her guilty predecessors? \* Without some specific intimation to the contrary, we are bound to believe that the destruction of antichrist will be accomplished, not by his personal presence, but by his providential agency. But instead of any such intimation, we have already seen that the Bible connects the personal advent

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\* This subject has been treated with uncommon ability by Mr. Faber in his Sacred Calendar of Prophecy, vol. I. pp. 215—239.

of Christ with the resurrection of the dead, the universal judgment, and the close of all sublunary affairs: and in the face of its repeated and clear testimony to this fact, we are prohibited from expecting his personal return till time shall be no more.

II. Mr. Cunninghame's second conclusion is, "That the three nouns substantive, which are used to express the advent in the New Testament, do every one of them negative the idea of a spiritual coming, and do necessarily imply that the advent is real, personal, and corporeal."

To do justice to his argument, it is necessary to consider this in connection with his third conclusion:

III. "That two of these words conjoined, being used to link the advent to an event, which by the unanimous consent of the church precedes in time the Millennium, we are driven to the conclusion, that the advent which synchronises with that event is the real and personal coming of the Lord to judge the world."

The three substantive nouns, to which Mr. Cunninghame alludes, are *Αποκαλυψις* revelation, *Επιφανεια* appearance, and *Παρουσια* coming, or presence. "These," he asserts, "are indiscriminately used to signify the second personal advent of our Lord to judge the world; and that it does not appear that any of them is ever used to denote the

spiritual or figurative revelation, or appearance, or advent, or presence of any object, or person, which can be the object of sense.”

Here are two assertions distinctly and broadly advanced. But there is a third, as essential to the success of the argument, which is forgotten: and that is, that these are the only words applied in Scripture to the coming of our Lord. Unless those who adopt that mode of reasoning can prove each of these three prepositions, they in reality prove nothing. If either other words are employed to denote the coming of our Lord, or if the words in question are applied to other subjects besides a personal advent, the demonstration completely fails. If the witnesses in court, are either the only persons who were present at a transaction, or the only persons who were present from the beginning to the end; the case under investigation must be decided entirely by their evidence. But if they were present only during a part of the time, or if others as credible as they were present during the whole affair; the parties concerned are entitled to the benefit of their testimony, and it is only by the evidence of them all together, that the jury can arrive at a fair and equitable verdict.

The proof produced by our opponents is defective in every respect. Part of their witnesses have been absent for a time; and other witnesses, of equal credit, who were present, can be brought into court, who give a contrary testimony. The

words in question neither uniformly denote the personal advent or presence of those objects or persons which can become objects of sense, nor are they the only words applied to the coming of our Lord.

1. They do not uniformly denote the presence of the object or person who can be an object of sense.

Let us try the experiment with *Αποκαλυψις*, the first term in the series. Does it uniformly denote the revelation appearance or presence of what can become an object of sense? No indeed. The person of Christ can be an object of sense. But though the word under consideration occurs, Luke ii. 32; who, that compares that passage with Acts xiii. 47, will be hardy enough to affirm that the Gentiles have been enlightened by the "personal presence" of Christ? The same word returns, Rev. i. 1, "*The revelation of Jesus Christ.*" But would even Ben-Ezra or Mr. Irving, who speak of the book of Revelation, being an active "revealing of Jesus Christ:" Ir. Pre. Dis. p. 32: would either of them maintain that that book contains the body, or manifests the personal presence of Christ? Whatever ideas they may entertain respecting the transmutation of the elements in the Lord's Supper; it is not likely that they are prepared to assert that the words of that book are transubstantiated into his body.

"There is one text, Gal. i. 16, which I was inclined to consider as an exception to this remark; but as we know that the discovery of

Christ to Paul was by a personal appearance or revelation, (verse 12,) the text which I thought an exception does rather powerfully corroborate the general argument." *Cun. Sum. View*, p. 13. Now it is to be observed that the apostle there tells us as distinctly that Christ was revealed *in* him, as that he had a revelation at all. But does Mr. Cunninghame believe, or can he or any other believe, that either the body, or person of Christ, was revealed *in* Paul? Yet unless he is prepared for this admission, he must allow that *Αποκαλυψις* does not always denote the personal presence or revelation of an object or person that can be an object of sense.

More need not be said on this branch of the subject. The above is sufficient to shew the total failure of the attempt to prove, that these substantives are never used to denote the spiritual, or figurative revelation, or appearance of any object or person, which can be the object of sense.

But not only do the witnesses produced by the opposite party, contradict the statements which have been made: there are also other witnesses equally competent and credible, whom our opponents have refused to call, who distinctly corroborate that contradiction.

2. The terms in question do not exhaust the subject. Other words, equally expressive of personal and corporeal presence, are applied to the spiritual and providential advent of Christ.

No words are more expressive of personal pres-

ence, than being with us, being formed in us, coming to us, abiding and dwelling with us. How can "any of those persons or objects which can be the object of sense," "be in us," "be formed in us," "come to us," "abide with us," and "dwell in us;" without bringing their presence along with them? Yet will any man seriously affirm, that when Christ says, "Lo, I am with you alway;" Mat. xxviii. 20: that when Paul speaks of Christ "*being in him*," Gal. ii. 20: and of Christ "*being in the Colossians, the hope of glory*:" Col. i. 24: will any man gravely affirm that this language is to be understood of his bodily presence? Is it of his personal presence that Paul says, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be *formed* in you?" Gal. iv. 19. Did Christ refer to his bodily presence when he said, "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will *manifest* myself to him?" "if a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will *come* unto him, and make our *abode* with him?" John xiv. 21, 23. Is it of his corporeal presence that he adds, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will *come* into him, and will *sup* with him, and he with me?" Rev. iii. 20. Is it of a personal bodily visit that the apostle speaks, when to the believers at Ephesus he says of Christ, that he "*came and preached* peace to you who

were afar off, and to them that were nigh?" Eph. ii. 17.

Judgments are denounced against some of the seven churches of Asia. Without repentance, Jesus threatens the church of Ephesus, that he "will *come* unto her quickly, and *remove* her candlestick out of its place." He threatens the church of Pergamos, saying, "I will *come* unto thee quickly, and will *fight* against them with the sword of my mouth." To Sardis he says, "If thou shalt not watch, I will *come* on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will *come* upon thee." To Philadelphia he says, "Behold, I *come* quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Rev. ii. iii.

Now has this promise been fulfilled, and these threatenings executed? It is long since the last of that generation went down to the dust. Of some of the cities and churches scarcely a vestige remains.\* If therefore, the above promise has not ages ago been fulfilled, and the threatenings executed, neither the one nor the other ever can be realized. But none of the words of Christ are allowed to fall to the ground. Soon after he uttered the preceding promise, he came in mercy to the church of Philadelphia, and received the faithful there to himself; and he came in wrath to

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\* See Holmes on the Revelation, pp. 6—13. Croly on the Apocalypse, pp. 53—64: and Mr. Lindsay's Letters in the 12th Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

the backsliding and impenitent churches, to sweep them with the besom of destruction. But will any man aver, that when he visited them with the recompense due to their works, Christ came to them in person?

Jesus was in the world. He had been in it for years. And yet when addressing the disciples he said: "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, *till the Son of man be come.*" Mat. x, 23. He had been long in the world, and had associated for years with his disciples, when he said, "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here who shall not taste of death, till they see *the Son of man coming in his kingdom.*" Mat. xvi. 28. Whether he referred to his transfiguration, to the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, or to the destruction of Jerusalem; it is evident that this also is an advent which has long ago taken place. For who will say that the apostles have not yet tasted death, but are still toiling at the task of traversing the cities of Judea?

Foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, our blessed Lord repeatedly mentions his coming. Mat. xxiv. 27, 37, 39. Many have chosen to consider this prediction, as referring to the end of all things, and others as relating to Christ's return at the overthrow of antichrist. But whatever resemblance there may be betwixt the fall of Jerusalem and the day of final judg-

ment; on examining the passage, there cannot be the slightest doubt that it was primarily, and principally, intended to describe his return to destroy the Jewish capital. It is a coming which was to be preceded by false Christs and false prophets; which was to be accompanied by the captivity of the Jews amongst all nations; and followed by the treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Luke xxi. 24. But can any expect the recurrence of these things at the future personal advent of the Son of God? When Christ comes as the Judge of quick and dead, will any escape his tribunal by hastening from his presence? Will any derive advantage from flight? Will some be taken and others left?

The advent, of which our Redeemer is there speaking, is an advent which was to arrive before all the men of that age could be gathered to their fathers; and which was to be succeeded "*immediately*" by the darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars from heaven. To look at the words of our Lord, and then say, that "immediately after," means more than eighteen centuries; and that "this generation shall not pass till *all* these things be fulfilled," signifies merely till *some* of them be accomplished; discovers no ordinary degree of critical hardihood. This hardihood has frequently been displayed. But every renewed exhibition of it, only gives fresh evidence that our Lord actually foretold a com-

ing at the destruction of Jerusalem; and demonstrates more clearly, that he did not then come in person, and therefore, that by the language which he employed, he meant a spiritual providential advent.

To the destruction of Jerusalem, the apostle also evidently refers, when he says, "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb. x. 37, compared with ver. 25.

Such injunctions as the following are often repeated, "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man *cometh*." "Watch: for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man *cometh*." And the servant is pronounced blessed "whom his Lord when he *cometh* shall find so doing." Mat. xxiv. 42—49; xxv. 13: Mark xiii. 32—37.

If "wherever a future advent, or presence of our Lord is foretold in Scripture, one and the same event is uniformly understood:" then of all the generations that have passed, or shall pass over the globe, from the ascension of our blessed Lord till he come in the clouds of heaven; none but the generation alive at his second personal advent could be affected by these injunctions. To the apostles, and to all who have hitherto succeeded them, they have been uttered in vain. The most careless and remiss in the primitive ages, and in the generations following, could neither be surprised nor punished for being off their guard at his arrival: for come he did not: nor could the

most faithful and zealous derive the slightest advantage from their utmost vigilance: for death cut them down long before their eyes could be blessed with a sight of their Lord's return.

The question then is, Were the apostles and their successors, and are we still to the present hour, bound by these injunctions, or not? If they were not, and we are not: then why did our blessed Lord declare, "What I say unto *you*, I say unto ALL, Watch." But if they and we have been all alike obliged by his express command to watch, *because we know not when he cometh*: then it inevitably follows that "one and the same advent is *not* uniformly intended;" for though he has come to the apostles and all our believing ancestors, he has not yet returned in person.

Believers are often represented as "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;" as "looking for the Saviour;" as "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour;" as "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." 1 Cor. i. 7: Phil. iii. 20: Titus iv. 13: Jude 21.

Now only one generation of living believers can witness the *personal* advent of Christ. Let all others "wait" and "look" as they will, they cannot see him coming in the clouds of heaven. It therefore again follows, either that they are encouraged and taught to entertain vain expectations; or else that the notion, that his coming

always refers to one and the same advent, is false, and must be renounced.

Do any ask, Since in the two preceding articles, the coming of our Lord does not denote his second personal advent, what can the expression mean? It means neither more nor less than the death of the believer. Elsewhere we are informed, that "he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Mat. x. 22. What end? the end of all things? No. The contemporaries of the apostles could not live to the end of the world. The end intended is the end of life. What in such texts is called "the end," and in similar passages is denominated "the coming of Christ," and "the coming of our Lord;" in other parts of the sacred writings is simply designated "death." "Be thou faithful unto *death*, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. ii. 10. Neither John nor the believers at Smyrna, could remain alive till the second personal advent of Christ. But if he and they endured unto the end; if they were faithful unto death; if till the day on which they died, they continued waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and held fast their faith and hope; were they in the smallest danger of perdition? Could any man have survived from the day on which the heavens closed on the sacred body of the ascending Saviour till the last beat of time; and unsubdued by the terrors of pagan hostility, and unshaken by all the horrors of popish persecution; stood out undaunted and invincible, and retained undiminished his at-

tachment and devotion to his adorable Redeemer, till the blast of the last trumpet: after all, he could obtain no diadem more splendid and beautiful than the crown of life; and no seat more honourable and joyous in the world of bliss, than a place on the throne of the Son of God. And if we and others only preserve our allegiance firm to the Prince of peace till the close of our pilgrimage; our safety is just as sure, and our rank in the regions of light will be just as elevated and glorious, as his. The dead who die in the Lord, are just as really blessed, as those who are alive and remain unto his coming.

Unless Millenarians are disposed to deny this fact; and willing to assert that all must everlastingly perish, except the few who are alive at the second personal coming of Christ; they must admit that the coming of our Lord, in such cases as the above, denotes no more than the time of the believer's death.

Never was there a man more fully instructed in the counsels of Heaven, nor more possessed of the faculty of distinctly and forcibly expressing the truths which he wished to convey, than the apostle of the Gentiles. And yet with the perfect knowledge that the day of the Lord would not come till the fall of the Roman empire, and anti-christ had run his bloody and barbarous career: how does Paul speak of the coming of Christ? or, which is the same thing, 2 Pet. iii. 4, 10, 12, of the day of the Lord? Exactly like the "lazy

and ignorant theologians” of the present day, who adhere to the vulgar notions on the subject. “Of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly, that *the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night*. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that *that day should overtake YOU as a thief.*”

The slightest inspection of the words proves, that “that day” was to overtake *every* individual in that and in every succeeding age. For the apostle positively asserts that it would overtake the believers at Thessalonica. But as they were waiting and looking for the coming of the Lord by death; he knew that that event would not take them by surprise. To them it would be welcome as a long-wished for and expected privilege. But to the careless, ignorant, and ungodly of that, and of every succeeding, generation; this day would come suddenly and unexpectedly. “YE, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should *overtake YOU as a thief.*”

Here again we are compelled to observe that we must either reject the testimony of St. Paul; or admit that, by the day of the Lord or the coming of Christ, “one and the same advent” is *not* uniformly intended. Centuries ago Christ

*came* to every believer at Thessalonica: but he has not yet returned in person.

This surely should be enough to convince any man, that other words as strongly expressive of a personal bodily presence, as any that Mr. Cunninghame has quoted, are employed in the New Testament to denote no more than our Redeemer's providential spiritual presence.

A prophetic inquirer in the Christian Observer, for June 1828, seems to feel the force of such reasoning as the preceding: and has made a strong effort to set aside the conclusions which necessarily must be drawn from the application of the words, which have just now been enumerated, to what is clearly and unquestionably a spiritual advent, by dwelling on a distinction which he imagines to exist, betwixt *promises* and *predictions*. When the coming of Christ is *promised*, then it means a spiritual advent: but when it is *foretold*, it means a personal advent. The *very same word*, which in a *prophecy*, denotes the *personal bodily* presence of Christ; when it occurs in a *promise*, denotes only his *spiritual* presence.

This writer does not say whether or not his rule is retrospective, and applies to every promise and every prophecy. But as there appears no necessity for making any exception, and he himself has stated none; it is likely that he wishes it to be regarded as of universal application. According then to the distinction which is supposed in all

cases to exist betwixt *prophecies* and *promises*; when a fruitful season is *foretold*, this denotes *literal* abundance: but when a fruitful season is *promised*, this denotes *spiritual* plenty. When the reign of a good king is *foretold*; this must be understood of a *literal* king: but when the same blessing is made the subject of a *promise*, it has no relation whatever to an earthly sovereign, but denotes the invisible presence of a *spiritual* and ghostly prince. Before Christ was manifested in the flesh; when his incarnation was *foretold*, that denoted a *real literal* assumption of humanity: but when it was made a subject of promise, then it denoted only a *spiritual* or *figurative* advent.

At any rate, by admitting that one and the same word, from the mere circumstance of being placed in a *promise* or in a *prophecy*, signifies *two different* things, a *personal* and *spiritual* advent; that individual has yielded the whole matter in debate. He, unintentionally indeed but effectually, proves the fact for which we are contending, that *one* and the *same* term is indiscriminately applied to a *corporeal* and *spiritual* presence. The meaning, therefore, of the term is to be ascertained from the context and the general analogy of revelation: and the wonderful truth which he has found out, and which he states with all the formality with which he would have announced the discovery of a *physical* law, merely amounts to this:—When the words in question are employed to denote a *personal* advent, they signify a *personal*

advent; but when they are used to express a *spiritual* advent, then you may be sure that they signify a *spiritual* advent.

But notwithstanding this precious piece of information, we are not a whit the wiser. The poor stupid vocables themselves never can tell us what they mean. Ask them if they relate to a literal or spiritual advent: they cannot answer you. Do they form part of a *promise* or *prophecy*? They know nothing about the matter: and can only refer you to some of their more intelligent and communicative neighbours: but they themselves can tell you neither what they are, nor what they were designed to express.

From this wonderful discovery, that the *prophecies* are to be *literally* understood, and the *promises figuratively*; the most important results may be expected. It sometimes is not easy to decide whether a particular passage is a promise or a prediction. But unless that can be distinctly ascertained, what mistakes shall we commit? The reader may apply this distinction to a thousand cases. But let him take for a specimen, Gen. viii. 22, "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Is this a prophecy? Then it is to be *literally* understood, and we are to regard it as an assurance of the continuance of the present natural order of things till the world's end. But is it a *promise*? Then it is to be *figuratively* understood; and none but a Mil-

lenarian adept can tell what it means: and you may be certain that he will find in it the pre-millennial advent. "The 'seed-time' evidently means the first resurrection; and the 'cold and winter,' the dreary state of the wicked while for a thousand years their necks are under the feet of the righteous. The 'harvest' must synchronise with Rev. xiv. 18—20, and denote the vintage of wrath. But the, 'day' is the well known representative of the thousand years judgment. The 'heat and summer' are unquestionably types of the comfort, light, and joy, possessed under the effulgence of the Redeemer's personal reign. Oh what moles are these lazy ignorant theologians, incessantly digging in the earth, and blind to all the wonders of the Millenarian system, though disclosed with all the clearness of sunshine in a single verse of the 8th of Genesis! Their stupidity is really too gross for mortal patience!"

The Millenarians ought to cling to the promises, and admit as few predictions as possible.

What has been stated in the preceding pages seems sufficient to decide the question with Millenarians on their own ground. But it is far from being the only proof that we are able to adduce. Mr. Cunninghame's first conclusion; "that the principal passages of prophecy which speak chronologically or circumstantially of the future advent of the Messiah, do one and all refer to the period immediately introductory to the Millennium:" unhappily for his hypothesis,

this conclusion has been completely demolished by finding that predictions, referring to no less than *four distinct* and far *distant* periods, were huddled together, and asserted to refer to one and the same event. In justice to the subject in discussion we are obliged to add,

3. That, in support of his third conclusion, texts relating to *no less than four distinct and independent advents* are also jumbled together, and affirmed to relate to one and the same advent.

In this list we find 2 Thess. ii. 8. Whether this is supposed to refer to the destruction of antichrist or the commencement of the Millennium, is a matter of little moment. It is at least one advent.

In his list of texts where his three nouns substantive occur, Mr. Cunninghame includes 1 Cor. i. 7: 1 Thess. v. 23: 1 Tim. vi. 14: 1 Pet. i. 7, 13. Here then is a second advent, which takes place on the day of the Christian's death. For these texts speak of faith being "found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Christ:" of "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;" of keeping "the commandment *until* the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." But the most obedient and devoted believer cannot survive till the second personal advent, and can keep the commandment only till he dies. And if our faith is not found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at death, it will not be possessed of these properties on the day when the

Son of man is revealed from heaven. For as the tree falls, there it must lie.

Mr. Cunninghame's list also contains Mat. xxiv. 27, 37, 39; and James v. 7, 8. Now, do these passages relate to the coming of Christ to destroy antichrist? We have already seen that the former refers to the destruction of Jerusalem; and the latter relates to the same event. Here then we have a third period, and a third advent, totally distinct from the two which have been already noticed.

But this is not all. The same list comprises a number of texts that relate to a fourth period, the final universal judgment. Of this description are 1 Cor. xv. 23: 1 Thess. iii. 13: iv. 15: 2 Thess. i. 7: 2 Tim. iv. i: 2 Pet. iii. 4, 12. These passages belong to the time when Christ shall come to be "admired in *all* them that believe;" when he shall come "with all his saints;" when he "shall judge the quick and the dead;" when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise; and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." Now, without a long repetition of what has been already stated; it may be simply asked, How can Christ "come with ALL his saints," and be admired in ALL them that believe;" if the one-half of the saints have not then received an existence? How can he judge THE quick and THE dead; which, according to Mr. Cunninghame's excellent critical canon, signifies the quick

and the dead in a body, or *all* that shall ever *live*, and *all* that shall ever *die*; when the one-half of the human race have not been born? And how can Christ and his saints have a kingdom on earth, after “the earth and the works that are therein are burnt up?”

Where now are Mr. Cunninghame’s first three marvellous and overpowering conclusions? Why, we have seen that the prophecies, which he fancied one and all synchronical with the downfall of anti-christ, actually refer to no less than four distinct and far distant events. We have seen that the very first word which he produced, in support of his assertion, that the three “nouns substantive, used to signify the advent, are never used to denote the spiritual or figurative revelation of any object or person which can be the object of sense;” is repeatedly used to denote the spiritual or figurative revelation of what can be an object of sense. We have seen that other words, as strongly expressive of personal presence as any of the three substantive nouns, are again and again applied in the New Testament to the figurative coming of Christ. We have also seen that various texts which he has quoted, in order to identify the personal advent of Christ with the destruction of anti-christ, refer to no fewer than four distinct events; the time of the believer’s death, the destruction of Jerusalem, the overthrow of Popery, and the consummation of all things. And since these several

texts are the passages where his three nouns substantive occur; it follows, on his own shewing, that unless he can believe in four personal advents besides the incarnation, that the three substantives do not uniformly nor necessarily denote the bodily presence of Christ in the cases in which they are applied to him: and unless Mr. Cunninghame believes in four personal advents, he has no evidence at all for our Redeemer's personal presence to destroy antichrist.

But has not Mr. Cunninghame told us that "the coming of our Lord to destroy the Man of Sin, in 2 Thess. ii. 8, is expressed by the union of two of the above nouns? And if neither of them, when used singly, can denote a spiritual advent; how is it possible that this can be the case when they are conjoined? Now what reply can be made to this?"

The answer to this need not be very long. A thousand blacks will not make one white. None of Mr. Cunninghame's substantives, taken singly, necessarily denotes the bodily presence of Christ; and though the whole were united, they could no more necessarily denote a bodily presence, than in a state of separation.

The coming of Christ to destroy the Man of Sin, is no more bodily; than the manifestation of this Son of perdition has been corporeal. Accordingly, the destruction of antichrist is ascribed as much to the Spirit of Christ's mouth, or the word

of God, Eph. vi. 17; Rev. ii. 16; xix. 15, 19; as to the brightness of Christ's coming.

If each of the words singly denote a personal corporeal manifestation; how would they look when translated according to that interpretation? "Then shall that Wicked one be *bodily* revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the sword of his mouth, and shall destroy with the BODILY APPEARING of his CORPOREAL COMING?"

IV. Mr. Cunninghame's fourth conclusion is, "That to maintain a spiritual advent, is in direct contradiction to the angelic annunciation, which was uttered at the ascension of our Lord."

The angelic annunciation merely assures us that Christ will as really return in person, as that he ascended in person, but it gives no intimation whatever of the time of his return. The spiritual presence of Christ to destroy antichrist, to convert the nations, and fill the whole earth with the Divine glory; no more contradicts the angelic annunciation, than the doctrine of his incarnation contradicts his promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

"Moreover, our Lord, in Spirit or as to his divine nature, has never been absent from the world." Sum. View, p. 16. Very true. But pray, Has he been at all times alike present in spirit in the same place? Is he now as powerfully spiritually present in Stewarton, as he was from 1625 to

1630? \* Mr. Cunninghame goes on to talk of Christ's omnipresence. But does he really suppose that we believe that Christ will be present on earth during the Millennium, in no other way than he is now in the place of woe? If this is his belief, he deserves our pity. But if it is not his belief, he might have spared his remark, for it is immensely remote from his purpose.

Mr. Cunninghame refers to Dan. vii. 13, as coinciding exactly with the period to which he supposes that the angelic annunciation relates. But Dan. vii. 13, no more coincides with Acts i. 11; than the effusion of the first vial, Rev. xvi. 2, synchronises with Samuel's anointing of Saul, 1 Sam. x. 1. See above, pp. 231—237.

V. "To maintain a spiritual advent of the Man Christ Jesus, includes in it the virtual denial of his proper and complete humanity."

To maintain the personal advent of Christ at the close of all things, and his spiritual advent before the Millennium; no more subverts his humanity, than the assertion of his personal advent before the Millennium, overturns his Divinity.

If after all that we preach and print to prove the personal coming of Christ to judge the quick and

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\* Fleming's Fulfilling of the Scriptures, vol. i. p. 355. Glasgow edition, 1801; and Gillies' Historical Collections, vol. i. pp. 306—308.

the dead; any Millenarian believes that we deny the reality of our Lord's second advent: he is utterly unqualified to write a single sentence on the subject, and not entitled to the least notice from any whom he would wish to convert into opponents.

VI. "The return of our Lord to this earth, at the period of the restitution of all things, which must be identified with the Millennium, may be inferred from the words of Peter, in Acts iii. 19—21."

The words of Peter assure us that Christ will return when every prediction of the prophets is fulfilled. If the Millennium has been no subject of prophecy: then, if nothing else were said about Christ's return than what Peter has stated, we might expect the personal presence of Christ before the Millennium. But since the Millennium has been made a subject of prophecy, and Peter tells us that every prediction must be fulfilled before Christ's return; the words of Peter forbid us to expect the Redeemer's advent till the Millennium is finished, and every prediction accomplished. See above, pp. 161—167.

So much for Mr. Cunninghame's arguments and conclusions.

## CHAPTER IX.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE MISCELLANEOUS PROOF  
OF THE MILLENARIAN HYPOTHESIS FROM  
THE LANGUAGE OF SCRIPTURE, THE TYPES,  
AND THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

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I. THE proof produced from the language of Scripture.

This proof is of an uncommonly multifarious description, and it is no easy matter to reduce it into any regular form. The larger proportion of the Bible has been violently pressed into this service: but the greatest reliance seems to be placed on such topics as the following. The promise that the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent: the prophecy of Enoch, that the Lord will come with ten thousand of his saints: the assurance given to Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed: Job's expectation that his Redeemer will stand at the latter day on the earth: the promises that Christ shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; that he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth: that he shall have the throne of his father David; that Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the

Lord; that his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives: that the whole earth shall be filled with his glory: and the petitions, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. With proofs of equal potency the writings of Fry, Irving, Noel, and others of the same school abound. On the strength of these, and similar texts, they challenge the Christian world to the combat, and boldly defy all that can assail them to dislodge them from their position. Who can have the presumption to encounter them when fortified by the declarations that "Christ shall have the throne of his father David, that Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the Lord, and his feet shall stand upon the mount of Olives?"

To be sure, if we allow them to read the Scriptures for us, and refuse to look at the word of God with our own eyes; we may admit any thing. But if we exercise our privilege as Protestants, to read and judge for ourselves; it will require something more than their own word to extort our consent to their wild and chimerical assertions.

Let us look at a few of these passages with our own eyes, and see what is the result.

Because the prophet has said, Zech. xiv. 4, "his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives:" our learned and enlightened friends infer that Christ must return in person, and remain on earth for at least a thousand years. It requires rather a large stride from such premises to reach such a conclusion. When they hear Isaiah, lx.

14, speaking of Zion, or the church of the redeemed; saying, "all they that despised *thee* shall bow themselves down at the soles of *thy* feet:" do these worthy men suppose that, during the Millennium, the whole collective body of believers will be mounted upon a single pair of legs, and that their enemies shall bow down at the soles of these feet? When God said to Nathan, 2 Sam. vii. 6, 7; "Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle: in all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel, spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, Why build ye not me an house of cedar:" do these worthy men believe that from everlasting till the Exodus, the Most High had, with reverence be it spoken, occupied a stone palace? and that from the Exodus he had literally walked in a tent and in a tabernacle, and walked with all the children of Israel? When we read of "darkness" being "under his feet;" and as it were "a paved work under his feet:" Psal. xviii. 9: Exod. xxiv. 10: do they imagine that God is possessed of a human form, and has a body with the same organs which ours possesses? If they interpret the one passage literally, they are bound in consistency to interpret the others literally. But if they understand these figuratively, as denoting no more than the spiritual presence of God with his people, and the gracious

guidance and protection which he afforded them: they are required by every principle of sound criticism to consider Zech. xiv. 4, as also descriptive of his gracious interposition in behalf of the Jews when attacked by their enemies. And that this is the case is evident from the manner in which the language is introduced by the prophet. "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations *as when he fought in the day of battle.*" Zech. xiv. 3. In connection with the overthrow of Pharaoh and the conquest of Canaan, we read of the wars of the Lord. But where will our good friends find an instance, in which the Lord engaged in a corporeal form in battle? In that day, however, he is to fight in no other manner than he has fought before.

But are we not told that Christ shall have "the throne of his father David? and that he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness?" Luke i. 32: Isa. xvi. 5: ix. 7. Very true. But then we are also told that "the children of Israel shall return, and seek DAVID their king." Hosea iii. 5. And if our literalists will insist that Christ is to sit on the literal throne of David; they must also affirm that the *literal David*, the Son of Jesse, is again to *reign* over all the tribes of Israel. For we are expressly assured that "they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king." God says, I "will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David:"

and “my servant *David* shall be their prince for ever.” Hosea iii. 5: Jer. xxx. 9: Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24: xxxvii. 24, 25. If therefore, our literalists will affirm that Christ is to sit on the literal throne of David: they must also maintain that, though he shall have the *throne*, and be steward of the palace, Rev. iii. 7: the literal *David* shall have the *kingdom*, and be their *prince for ever and ever*.

The texts must be interpreted consistently. They either speak of a literal David and a literal throne, or a spiritual David, and a spiritual throne. Our friends may take their choice: but they have no right to make the throne literal, and David spiritual. If they literalise “the greater part to please themselves;” we must literalise the lesser part; not like Mr. Irving, Pre. Dis. p. 143, in his great magnanimity, “to vex them,” but to give consistency and rotundity to their system.

We are told that it is in reference to the Millennium that it is said, “At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem.” Jer. iii. 17. And unless Jesus is to sit on the throne of David, how can Jerusalem be called the throne of the Lord?

But if the whole of Jerusalem, as this prophecy implies, is to be the throne of the Lord; how can it also be at the same time, as the Millenarians assert, the capital of the restored Jews? the seat of the church of the converted Jews and

Israelites, and the metropolitan church of the world? We have yet to learn that two or more bodies can occupy the same space.

From the time that the temple was reared; we learn from the same prophet, that Jerusalem was the throne of the Lord. "A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary." Jer. xvii. 12.

Few men have been more worthless and impious than the successors of Josiah. But these gentlemen, who make such a noise about Christ's sitting, during the Millennium, on the literal throne of David, and on the throne of Jerusalem; should remember that, according to their own canons of interpretation; when the throne of David was occupied by an ungodly and persecuting wretch, Jesus also must have been seated beside him: for the prophet prays, "Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory." Jer. xiv. 21. But are they prepared to say that Christ then sat on the throne of David? and made the sons of Josiah his assessors?

"The temple of Jerusalem was called the house of God, and the place of his rest, or residence; the visible symbolical appearance of God, which the Jews called the Shechinah, was in the most holy place, between the wings of the cherubim, above the ark. This was considered as the throne of God, presiding as king over the Jewish state; and as a footstool is a necessary appendage of a throne, the ark was considered as the foot-

stool of God ; and is so called. Psal. xcix. 5 : 1 Chron. xxviii. 2." Jones' Biblical Cyclopedia Footstool.

Christ will no more sit in person, during the Millennium, on the throne of David, and on the throne of Jerusalem, than he did during the Old Testament dispensation. And accordingly the prophet speaks of the converted Jews, being gathered to Jerusalem, not on account of "the throne," but of "the name of the Lord;" or the manifestation which he will there afford of the perfections of his nature in promoting the holiness, peace, and comfort of his people.

Before his incarnation, corporeal actions were ascribed to Christ, when we know that he had no body. The same phraseology is continued by the same writers in reference to his providential dispensations after his incarnation: and in precisely the same sense. Nay, the writers of the New Testament speak of Christ's government of the church and of the world, in a manner exactly similar. Rev. i. 16, 17, 20: ii. 1: Acts ix. 34: Eph. ii. 20. For specimens of still bolder figures, see 1 Cor. vi. 15: Eph. v. 30: 1 John i. 7.

Having thus disposed of the proof from the soles of his feet standing on the mount of Olives; of his having the throne of his father David; and of making Jerusalem his throne; let us for a few minutes look at the other texts, and see what our erudite brethren can make of them.

If they imagine that the first promise, the seed

of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent; Gen. iii. 15; argues the literal personal reign of Christ on earth: then they must also suppose that Satan is possessed of a literal head, a head of skin, flesh, bones, and brain. For what occasion can there be for a literal foot to crush a spiritual head? And if this bruising is yet future, and cannot be accomplished till the Millennium; why do the sacred writers represent it as already past? “Having *spoiled* principalities and powers, he *made* a shew of them openly *triumphing* over them” on the *cross*. Col. ii. 15: Psalm lxxviii. 18: John xii. 31. Pray, whether do they imagine that we are to follow them? or the “holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?”

It is true that Enoch prophesied of the coming of the Lord with ten thousand of his saints. But then our worthy friends will be pleased to remember that this advent is to be, when he will “execute judgment upon *all*, and convince *all* that are ungodly among men of *all* their ungodly deeds.” Jude 14, 15. But how can judgment be executed upon ALL the ungodly a thousand years *before* the ungodly are raised from their graves? and more than a thousand years before some of them are born, or have committed one unworthy deed?

If the promise given to Abraham, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;” never can be fulfilled till Christ reign in person in our world: why have the apostles represented it

as already verified in the experience of every believer? "The scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they who be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. If *ye* be Christ's, then are *ye* Abraham's seed, and *heirs according to the promise.*" Gal. iii. 8, 9, 29.

"But does not Job say, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the *latter day* on the earth?" chap. xix. 25. Most undoubtedly. But we would like to know what this has to do with the Millennium. He does not say that his Redeemer will stand *during* the latter thousand *years*, but at the *latter day* upon the earth. And what man of sound mind can mistake a *day* for a *thousand years*? We can be at little loss to ascertain what Job means by the *latter day*, when he has, chap. xiv. 12, told us that "till the heavens be no more, they," the dead, "shall not be raised, nor awake out of their sleep."

An argument has been drawn from the eighth Psalm for the personal reign of Christ on earth. In that Psalm, the goodness of God in the works of creation, his condescension and kindness to man, and his liberality in investing the human race with the sovereignty of the world; are celebrated in plain, but powerful language. But it is truly difficult to discover what connection these subjects have with the Redeemer's personal reign on earth.

In support of this opinion; our friends desire us to turn to Heb. ii. 5—9. “Here Christ is described to be greater than the angels, and to have the promise of the dominion over the world to come. This subjection of the world to come to his sway, is explained by the apostle to be precisely the original grant of the heirship of the earth to Adam, as depicted in the 8th Psalm; a circumstance which identifies Jesus Christ, in a sense truly emphatic, to be the second Adam, the true heir of the earth, in its restored state, called the world to come: an expression identical with the new heaven and the new earth, both of St. Peter and of the Apocalypse.”

There can be no doubt that the *world to come*, of which St. Paul speaks, is identical with the *new heavens and the new earth*, of St. Peter and of the Apocalypse. But the question is, Are their *new heavens*, and their *new earth*, the *earth* in its *restored* state? Is it customary to give the name of *new* to what is only *restored*? Is an *old* friend restored from abroad, a *new* friend? Are *old* goods restored by the house-breaker, *new* goods? Is the *old earth* restored to its *original* and *primitive* state, a *new earth*? If this is the case, it would have been more german to the purpose, to have called it the *old*, or *ancient earth*: but *new* it certainly never would have been named.

Did the *old heavens* also constitute a part of the *primitive earth*? And are they again to be included *in this earth*, and form a *part* of it, in its *restored*

state? If this is the supposed fact, then such doctrines are as novel in philosophy as in divinity.

The new heavens and the new earth, of which St. Peter and St. John speak, are a state of blessedness and glory prepared for the redeemed, when *these* heavens and *this* earth have fled away, and *no* place is found for them. 2 Pet. iii. 10—14: Rev. xx. 11. xxi. 1: Psalm cii. 26: Isa. li. 6. *Old* and *ancient* are the appropriate names for any object, which, after having been deteriorated, has been restored to its pristine condition. Writing to us, in our fallen and depraved condition, with hearts by nature deceitful and desperately wicked; the Apostle exhorts us to put off the “old man,” or our natural dispositions and tempers; and to put on the “new man,” or the gracious principles and practices which the Holy Spirit produces in them who believe. But if he had been addressing Adam, who was made in the image of God, and whose first was his best state; in inculcating the same duty which he presses upon us, he would have been obliged to have reversed the terms, and to have enjoined him to put off the “new,” and put on the “old man,” which after God was created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. iv. 22—24. If the sacred writers had expected the *restoration* of the earth to its primitive condition, and believed that the *renovated* earth was to have been the residence of Christ and the glorified saints; they would have *reversed* their epithets. They would have called

the *present* system the *new earth* and the *new heavens*: and they would have designated this globe, in its future ameliorated condition, the *old* or *ancient* earth; and these heavens, in their improved form, the *old* or *ancient* heavens. But by reversing this application of the terms, they have told us as distinctly as language can express it, that the future habitation of the redeemed is to be a *new*, that is, *another* heaven and *another* earth; with which the present earth and heaven have *no* connection, and of which they shall form *no* part.

In Heb. ii. the apostle says not one word of secular power, nor of an earthly dominion. From beginning to end he speaks of a spiritual salvation: a salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord: which God attested by signs and wonders: which was purchased by the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ: which produced sanctification, and admission into the family of God: a salvation, which it is infinitely dangerous to neglect from the Divine dignity of him who procured it: and which is laid up in heaven; for it is thither that the Forerunner has entered, that hope follows him, and that the believer goes to enjoy it. Heb. vi. 19, 20: x. 36.

“But unless he means a personal reign of the Messiah on earth; why does the apostle speak at all of a *world to come*, and talk of all things being put in subjection under the feet of Christ?” Just in order to exclude the possibility of supposing that ever the Redeemer would in person erect a

kingdom upon earth. For if by the "world," he had intended either the earth or the dispensation of the gospel: he certainly would not have added the epithet "to come:" since the gospel was even then fully introduced, and the earth had existed from the creation. And if by the sovereignty to which he refers, he had understood a personal reign over the renovated earth; since the amelioration had not commenced, he could not have represented that kingdom as begun. But he positively avers that the reign of which he was speaking was not only begun, but far advanced. "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all things in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not all things yet put under him: but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, *crowned with glory and honour.*" But the personal reign on earth, so far from having then commenced, is not even yet begun.

"But if by the world to come, the apostle does not mean the renovated earth, what does he mean?" He means heaven; that better country which was promised to Abraham and his spiritual seed; and which the patriarchs sought even when in the heart of Canaan. Heb. xi. 16. In travelling to Canaan, the Israelites were placed under the guidance of an angel. Exod. xxiii. 20. In travelling to the celestial Zion, angels are only ministering spirits to believers. Jesus himself; who

is the way, the truth, and the life, and the Captain of their salvation, is their leader and commander: and he does not conduct them to a rest on earth, but to a place in glory. Heb. ii. 11.

“ But argue as you will, Christ teaches us to pray, Thy kingdom come: and his kingdom can never come, till he return in person to the earth, and reign in glory here.” “ Not Christ, but Satan, the enemy of Christ, still ruleth over the powers of this world, whose kingdoms are not yet become the kingdoms of our Lord. In no sense can Christ, therefore, be said to have been invested with the kingdoms of this world. Satan in his hearing said, These, the kingdoms of the earth, and all the glory of them, are mine; and Christ did not challenge the usurpation; if indeed it may be called usurpation, for Satan had achieved them by his potent subtlety.” Irving’s Pre. Dis. pp. 136, 137.

But if Satan is king of the world, why does he flee when believers resist him? How had the disciples power to tread “ over *all* the power of the enemy?” How are Christians “ more than conquerors?” How has Satan fallen “ as lightning from heaven?” How did Christ on his cross “ spoil principalities and powers, and make a shew of them openly triumphing over them?” How are believers already a *royal* priesthood? and made not only *priests*, but *kings* unto God even the Father?

○ If Christ is in “ no sense” invested with the

kingdoms of the world: why is he said to be “set King upon Zion?” to be “Lord of all?” to be made “head over all things to the church? to have a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father?” And why did he say to Pilate that he was a king? Ps. ii. 6, compared with Acts xiii. 33: x. 36: Eph. i. 22: Phil. ii. 9—11: John xviii. 37.

If, in the Lord’s prayer, the words, “Thy kingdom,” denote the *personal* reign of Christ on earth: are we also, in Mat. xi. 12, to read “From the days of John the Baptist until now, *the personal reign of Christ on earth* suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force?” And are we also in John xviii. 36, to read, “Jesus answered, *My personal reign is not of THIS world?*”

“Oh for power to redeem the church of Scotland from its bondage to the babes who are become her instructors! Have these idiots not sense and discernment enough to see that Christ says, *My kingdom is not NOW of this world*; implying that the hour was coming, when it **WOULD BE of this world?**”

Indeed brother? This is not even so good as West India logic; which argues, from the precept, Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy: six days shalt thou labour, and do **ALL** thy work:

“ THEREFORE the work which is not done within the six days *must* be done on the seventh.” Our blessed Lord was stating an unquestionable fact to Pilate. The servants, or subjects of earthly kings, fight for them. If his kingdom had been of an earthly nature, his servants, or subjects would have taken arms in his defence. Since therefore, no attempt was made to rescue him, it was evident that his kingdom had no connection with this world. “ My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” The word “ now ” marks the natural inference from the truth which he had stated, and is the same as *therefore*. See 1 Cor. vii. 14: xii. 20: Heb. xi. 16.

“ But the personal reign of Christ on earth may be inferred from the petition of the dying penitent, and from the answer to it which our Lord returned; when they are properly translated and understood aright. The thief says, Lord, remember me when thou comest *in* thy kingdom: and Christ replies, Verily I *say* unto thee *this* day, Thou shalt be with me in paradise.” True. One of these gentlemen has very laudably spent only fourteen closely printed octavo pages, in misplacing the comma in our Lord’s answer, to preserve us from the dreadful heresy of supposing that our Lord had spoken these words on the day before, or a year preceding the time on which they were ut-

tered. It might otherwise have been supposed perhaps, that this brigand was an accomplished divine; that he had anticipated the discoveries of the nineteenth century; and from making merely a small mistake in the chronology, had expected the personal reign to begin immediately, and having rashly headed the troops who were by force to make Christ a king, John vi. 15; his army had been routed, and he himself made prisoner, and brought to the cross.

Now, was it not very much worth while, merely at the expense of misplacing the comma, to preserve us from all these dangerous heresies? But still, notwithstanding the misplacing of the comma, the soul of the penitent would on that very day be with Christ in paradise. 2 Cor. v. 8.

“ We are compelled to infer a personal reign on earth from the frequent contrast betwixt this world or age, *αιων*, and the world or age to come.” Indeed? But unless eternal life be shorter than eternity, your *age to come* can do you no service: for the Bible recognizes no world nor age to come to Christians, but the one where they shall enjoy *eternal* life. Till that is ended, the redeemed will not trouble themselves with seeking other worlds or ages to come. Mark x. 30: Luke xviii. 30. Do our friends also expect *another life* besides the life that now is, and that which is to come? 1 Tim. iv. 8.

“ We are taught to pray, Thy will be done in earth, even as it is in heaven: and are assured

that the whole earth shall be filled with his glory. But how can his will be done on earth as it is in heaven, or the whole earth be filled with his glory; till he return to it in person, and establish his personal reign amongst men?"

Good learned and pious gentlemen, have you really no higher idea of the glory of Christ, than that it consists in the manifestation of his bodily presence? When we are told that the heavens "declare the glory" of God, and that "his glory covereth the heavens;" do you actually believe that the heavens shew his body; and that his body is spread over the heavens? And when you read that the earth shall be filled with his glory, do you seriously believe that his body is to encompass and occupy the globe? If this is your opinion: then how can this earth be a habitation for his people? Are they to dwell in his body? or on it? If his glory be his body: then he can possess no glory but where his body extends. If his body shall be confined to the earth, his glory also must be limited to the globe: but if his glory pervade all space, then his body must likewise fill immensity.

Is it of the body of Christ that the apostle speaks, when he talks of our "obtaining the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and when he says, "We all with open face beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory?" 2 Thess. ii. 14: 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Will Christ's personal residence on earth enable his people to do the will of God on earth, even as it is in heaven? And can his will never be done on earth till he himself reign in person here? Is his will not done when he "works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure?" Is his will not done on earth when his "people are made willing in the day of his power?" Is his will not done on earth, when his "grace is made sufficient for us?" when he strengthens us "with might by his Spirit in the inner man?" when we "glorify him in our body and spirit which are his?" when "we live not to ourselves but to him, who died for us, and who rose again?" when we walk even as he also walked, and have the same mind in us which was in him?" Phil. ii. 13: Psalm cx. 3: 2 Cor. xii. 9: Eph. iii. 16: 2 Cor. v. 15: 1 John ii. 6: Phil. ii. 5.

"But unless Christ is to reign in person on the earth, how can this world be the everlasting residence of the redeemed?" Yea? Is this world to be their final abode? "Yea verily. For Christ says, Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth: and in heaven the glorified saints sing, Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall *reign* on the *earth*."

But if the meek are to "inherit the *earth*;" the poor in spirit, and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, are to have "the *kingdom* of HEAVEN." And that is at least as good as the earth.

And if the song of the glorified saints proves that they are to reign personally on earth: then, on precisely the same principle, the language of Paul, “*We* who are *alive* and *remain* unto the coming of the Lord;—*we* shall not all die, but we shall *all* be changed:” 1 Thess. iv. 15: 1 Cor. xv. 51: must also prove that he and all his believing contemporaries are not yet literally dead; nay that they shall never literally die, but remain alive till the second advent, and be changed at the coming of Christ. But if it be true that Paul and his believing contemporaries are literally dead, and that they shall survive to the coming of Christ only in the persons of their believing successors: then, it is as true, that the glorified saints will never pass another day on the globe, nor reign on the earth in any other form than in the persons of those who possess their faith, love, and zeal.

“ But all along you have shut your eyes against a most simple but irresistible argument. St. Paul informs us that the dead shall be raised, and Christ will come, at ‘the last trump.’ 1 Cor. xv. 52: 1 Thess. iv. 16. Now, we know of no prophetic trumpets but the seven mentioned by St. John: Rev. viii. The seventh is the last in that series. At its blast antichrist is overthrown, and the kingdoms of the world made the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. Rev. xi. 15—19. In other words the seventh trumpet of St. John clears the earth of the enemies of God, and intro-

duces the Millennium. But the ‘last trumpet’ of St. Paul is no other than the ‘seventh’ the last ‘trumpet’ of St. John. Since therefore, the ‘last trumpet’ of St. Paul is accompanied by the resurrection of the dead and the personal advent of Christ: this identifies the resurrection of the dead, and the descent of Christ, with the ‘seventh trumpet’ of St. John, and proves that those events are synchronical with the fall of Popery, and the commencement of the Millennium. Thus the language of St. Paul casts a cross light on the words of St. John: and the whole of revelation bears a harmonious and overbearing testimony to the momentous fact of the immediate appearing of the Messiah, and the resurrection of the believing dead: and nothing but the blindness and obstinacy of the evil men in these evil days on which we are fallen, can prevent them from seeing the overpowering lustre of the truth, which shineth around them like the sun at noon-day.”

But good Sirs, you have only said that the seventh trumpet of St. John coincides with the last trumpet of St. Paul. You have forgotten to prove your assertion. Do you also suppose that the first trumpet of St. John synchronises with the giving of the law? Rev. viii. 7, compared with Exod. xix. 16, 19: xx. 18. These two trumpets have a much greater resemblance than your two. When you have disproved the synchronism of the first trumpet of St. John with the promulgation of the law at Sinai, it will be time

enough to refute the supposed synchronism of the seventh trumpet of St. John, with the last trumpet of St. Paul.

Let us now proceed to another branch of the proof which has been offered in support of this incongruous theory,

## II. The types.

If there is one fact on which we can rely with greater confidence than another, it is the absolute and unbroken harmony of every part of the word of God with itself. No system can derive the slightest support from the figurative language and typical institutions of revelation, which stands condemned and reprobated by the plain, express, and repeated declarations of Scripture. The Millenarian hypothesis is at open war with the most clear and solemn statements of the sacred volume: and no ingenuity, which man has at his command, will ever succeed in demonstrating, from the allegorical application of the words and facts of the oracles of God, the truth of what these oracles, in terms the most distinct and emphatic, pronounce false; openly, and glaringly false.

But allow a man of fancy free scope to his imagination, and the unlimited liberty to twist and pervert words and facts according to his pleasure: and there is no conclusion so monstrous and revolting, which he will not draw from the sublime, the holy, and the instructive dictates of inspiration. Only grant the Valentinians that the

different hours, at which the householder went out into the market-place to hire labourers into his vineyard, were intended to represent the number of Æons in the Divine fulness: and then you must inevitably admit that their total number is exactly what the heretics affirmed, thirty. For one, and three, and six, and nine, and eleven, make neither more nor less than thirty.\*

Only allow one of my worthy expounders of the Apocalypse, that the image on the plains of Dura was the symbol of Popery: that the sixty cubits in the height of this image, multiplied by the ten horns of the beast: and that the six cubits in the breadth of this image multiplied, not like the height simply by the ten horns, but by the ten horns and the *last head* of the beast, were intended to represent the number of the beast: and then you must of course concede that the long-sought for solution of the number of the beast, is found to a unit. For in multiplying the height of the image by the ten horns, we have six hundred: and in multiplying the breadth by the ten horns and the last head, we have sixty-six: the two together amount precisely to six hundred and sixty-six. Now, the number of the beast is declared to be six hundred and sixty-six. There never was a calculation more correct, nor a demonstration more complete!

And only permit our modern Millenarians to

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\* Irenæi Opus cura Grabe Lib. i. cap. 1. p. 9.

assume that Noah was a type of Christ: that Noah's being *raised* from the earth to the summit of the waters, is a type of Christ's *descent* from heaven: that *water* is the emblem of *fire*: that a *universal* deluge is the figure of a *partial* conflagration: only permit them to assume in each of their arguments a few points of little greater consequence than the preceding, and then you are bound to receive the whole of their system in all its length and breadth. But if you consent to the assumption of no more than what is sanctioned by the letter and spirit of the sacred writings: these men will prove no more from the types, than from the doctrines and prophecies of the word of God.\* Wherever the Holy Spirit has in the New Testament illustrated or confirmed any doctrine from the history of the church, or the typical institutions of the Jews; we are bound to embrace the information with gratitude. But where the Holy Spirit has been silent, we have no right to speak in his name; nor impose our comments upon the facts of sacred history, as the dictates of inspira-

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\* The reader will find some judicious remarks upon the typical arguments of the Millenarians in the Edinburgh Christian Instructor, for July 1828. They appear to proceed from a correspondent, who has furnished to that work many contributions which would do honour to any name: and it is a matter of deep regret that he has not hitherto favoured the world in a more permanent form, with those profound and comprehensive views of scriptural truth, which he knows so well how to express with a most enviable simplicity and precision.

tion. If any man imagines that he is possessed of such a privilege, others are unquestionably warranted to claim the same. If the Millenarians can produce types to prove their theory, it is easy to produce ours to overthrow it, and establish the contrary. But to rest a system, which is destitute of all other support, upon fanciful types and allegories, is the consummation of weakness and folly.

It only remains to take notice of the appeal which is made to,

### III. The testimony of the Christian Fathers.

From the days of Mede down to the last anonymous Pamphleteer, almost every Millenarian talks loudly of Antiquity: boasts that his own notions are no novel opinions; but merely the revival of the tenets of the ancient Fathers, which were universally adopted in the first times of Christianity; and which in every age have flourished or fallen, as religion has prospered or declined. He studiously labours to impress his readers with the belief, that his own creed has been the creed of the primitive ages, and of the best and purest portion of the Christian church.

If they had simply affirmed that their creed was ancient; or at least, that there has been an ancient expectation of a supernatural Millennium; they would have asserted a notorious and indubitable fact. But when they say that their notions, respecting the Millennium, prevailed in the prim-

itive church, and prevailed in the best and purest ages of the church; they either betray a childish ignorance of the history of the Christian church, or a deplorable want of Christian truth and candour. The fact is, that from a very early period an expectation was entertained of our Redeemer's personal reign on earth. But then it is likewise a fact that that opinion was *never* general. It was embraced only by a few of the Fathers. It never was universally received. And it was widely different from the modern edition of that hypothesis.

To enable the reader to judge of the truth of these positions, it will be necessary to illustrate and prove them.

An expectation of Christ's personal reign on earth was entertained from a very early period in the Christian church: but the notions which then prevailed on the subject differed greatly from those which now prevail; and they never were generally received either in the primitive church, nor in any subsequent age.

After repeatedly and loudly appealing to Antiquity, in defence of their theory, have any of our modern Millenarians distinctly and honestly told us what were the ideas which these Christian Fathers who believed in a Millennium, entertained on the subject? No indeed. On looking into the last publication on the subject,\* it might

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\* Reply to various criticisms on Mr. Irving's Course of Lectures in Edinburgh, 1828; pp, 50-56; and Appendix, pp. 83-90.

be supposed that there was nothing much more extravagant in the ancient, than in the modern Millenarian hypothesis. But how is this inference produced? By a fair and full transcript of all that the Christian Fathers have transmitted to us on the subject? Nay. No modern Millenarian ever has had the honesty and courage to do any such thing. He will roundly tell you that his principles are identified with those of the Christian Fathers: but catch him telling you what the Fathers really believed.

One and all of them quote fully from those Fathers, who, without explaining their creed, merely assert in general terms that they expect the personal reign of Christ with his risen saints on earth for a thousand years. From such writers they quote *all* that they say. But from those authors who have given a detailed view of the system in all its absurdity and deformity: do they make extracts equally copious and complete? No indeed. But some may say that these writers were beyond their reach, and that they had no opportunity of seeing and consulting them. But this apology will not suffice. They must either have seen and consulted the authors; and given manufactured and garbled extracts to suit their own ends, or they must have been guilty of the baseness of quoting, at second-hand, from authors, whose works they have never seen. For passages, exposing the *whole* theory to disgrace and ridicule, lie in the very heart of the chapters and pages

which they profess to quote: but of these formidable passages they say not one word.

Just look at the following paragraph. “Lactantius, who lived in the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century, in his ‘Book of Divine Institutions’, says, ‘But when he, (i. e. Christ,) shall have destroyed wickedness, and restored the just to life, he shall be seen among men a thousand years, and with most righteous government shall rule them. And at that same time shall the prince of the devils be bound with a chain, and kept in prison during the thousand years of the kingdom, while justice shall reign on the earth, that he may not attempt evil against the people of God.’ Again, ‘at the end of the Millennial kingdom, Satan shall again be loosed, and then shall be that second and public resurrection, in which the unjust shall be raised to eternal pains’. ‘This’, says he in concluding, ‘is the doctrine of the holy prophets, which we Christians follow; this is our wisdom.’”\*

The above is almost an exact transcript from bishop Newton, on Rev. xx. 1—6. Now, what inference would any individual naturally draw from such a paragraph? That this is all that Lactantius has stated on the subject. But does this really unfold the whole of what he held on the Millennium? It is but a *part*, and but a small part too. But perhaps the remaining part of his

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\* Reply to various criticisms, &c. p. 53.

millenarian creed might lie in a remote corner of his works, and not be easily found by one who had not carefully perused all his writings? No indeed. It does not lie very far remote. It is just as easily found as the preceding: for it lies in the same *chapters*, and it is *interposed betwixt* the different parts of the above quotations on the subject. We cannot give his opinions at full length. But we shall insert a few which these writers have passed over. “When he shall have destroyed wickedness, and executed the great judgment, and restored to life those who, from the beginning, had been righteous; he shall be conversant amongst men a thousand years, and with most righteous government shall rule them. This is what the Sibyl elsewhere in her impassioned prophecy proclaims,

‘Ye mortals, hear: The King eternal reigns.’

Those who at that time are living in the body, shall not die; *but during these thousand years shall produce an infinite multitude of children*: and their offspring shall be holy and beloved of God. But those who shall be raised from the dead, will, as judges, rule over the living. The nations, however, shall not be altogether destroyed: some of them shall be left for a conquest to God; that *the just may triumph over them, and subject them to perpetual bondage.*”  
 “After his, (Christ’s) advent, the righteous shall be gathered together from the whole earth: and the judgment being finished, the holy city shall

be built in the midst of the earth: in which its builder, God himself, shall dwell along with the reigning righteous. It is to this city the Sibyl refers, when she says,

‘ God’s city, which he reared, he made  
T’ outshine the sun, and moon, and stars.’

Then that darkness, with which the heaven is overspread and obscured, shall be removed. The moon will acquire the brightness of the sun, and wane no more. The sun will become seven-fold brighter, than he is at present. The earth will disclose her fertility; and spontaneously produce fruits in the greatest abundance. The rocks will drop honey: *wine will run in streams; and the rivers overflow with milk.* In fine, the world itself will be glad: and all nature, rescued and freed from the dominion of evil, impiety, and error, will rejoice. During this time, the savage beasts will not live on blood, nor ravenous birds on prey: but all things shall be peaceful and gentle.” After some quotations from Virgil and the Erythræan Sibyl, and some speculations about the duration of the world, and the time of the Millennium, he goes on to describe the last effusion of the wrath of God against the nations, when he shall destroy them all to a man. “ But first he will most powerfully shake the earth: by which commotion the mountains of Syria shall be cloven asunder. The hills shall sink. The walls of the cities shall fall. God shall, for three days,

restrain the sun from setting. He will set it on fire: and a scorching heat and a mighty burning, with showers of sulphur, hailstones, and sparks of fire shall descend on his enemies and the wicked. Their spirits shall melt with heat, and their bodies be bruised with the hail. They shall wound each other with swords: and the mountains shall be filled with their bodies, and the valleys covered with their bones. But during these three days, the people of God shall be hidden in the caves of the earth, till the wrath of God against the nations, shall close the last judgment. Then the righteous shall come forth from their concealment, and find all things covered with carcasses and bones. But the whole race of the wicked shall totally perish; and there shall no more be any nation in the world, except the single nation of God. Then for seven whole years the forests shall remain untouched; and no wood shall be cut down from the mountains. But the weapons of the nations shall be used for fuel: and then there shall be no war, but everlasting peace and rest.

· “When the thousand years shall be finished; the world shall be renewed by God; the heavens shall be folded up; and the earth changed. And God shall transform men into the likeness of angels: and they shall be as white as snow: and live continually in the presence of the Almighty: and sacrifice to their Lord, and serve him for ever. At the same time shall be the second and public resurrection of all, in which the wicked shall be

raised to everlasting pains." It is of all this, and more of the same description, and not of the garbled, mutilated, and manufactured extracts, which our friends have chosen to give us: that Lactantius in conclusion says, "This is the doctrine of the holy prophets which we Christians follow: this is our wisdom."\*

This attempt to make the world believe that Lactantius entertained no other opinions respecting the Millennium, than what they have transcribed, is a most culpable suppression of the truth. And yet it is the work of bishop Newton, within two pages of the severe lecture which he has written against Dr. Middleton, for a supposed misrepresentation of the sentiments of Justin Martyr. The Bishop might have spared his censure, and looked to himself: for notwithstanding all his attempts to exculpate him; Justin, as you shall soon see, has left enough on record to justify the worst that Dr. Middleton has said.

Does the reader wish for additional specimens of the good faith and fair dealing of these gentlemen? Let him turn to the writings of Irenæus. It is not easy to tell how often, in this controversy, excerpts have been made from the 35th chapter of his fifth book against Heresies. But is that all that that venerable Father has left us on the subject? Our friends would be glad that we

should believe that it is the whole. But any man who has read his writings, knows the contrary. If we are required to submit to the authority of Ir-enæus, we are entitled to his whole testimony. Now, what is it that he has actually stated? He informs us that "Some Elders, who had seen John the disciple of the Lord, relate that they had heard from him; that our Lord, speaking of these times, (the Millennium,) said, the days shall come in which —— a single grain of wheat shall produce ten thousand ears: and each ear shall yield ten thousand grains; and each grain shall yield ten pounds of pure white flour: and the other fruits, seeds, and plants, shall possess a corresponding fertility." A return of 1,000,000,000 pounds of pure white flour in one season from a single grain of wheat; is surely as much as any farmer can desire. The produce of a few such grains would soon render Britain independent of foreign supplies.

But if this is not abundantly marvellous, let the reader take another sample of the credulity of this honest champion of Millenarianism. It immediately precedes the extract which has just now been given. "The days shall come, in which vines shall grow; each having ten thousand branches; and each of these branches shall have ten thousand smaller branches; and each of these branches shall have ten thousand twigs; and each of these twigs shall have ten thousand clusters of grapes; and each of these grapes, being pressed, shall give

twenty-five measures of wine." "That is," Dr. Whitby says, "according to the mildest computation, 275 gallons of wine." Really we might think 2,750,000,000,000,000,000 gallons of wine! no bad vintage at all from a single vine: and that this might have been amply honourable to his millennial vines, without any additional recommendation. But is this all that the good man has to say in their favour? No: the best is yet to come. The grapes are endowed with perception and reason, speech and piety. For this patriarch of the creed goes on. "And when any of the saints shall take hold of one of these clusters, another will *cry* out, 'I AM A BETTER CLUSTER: TAKE ME; AND BY ME BLESS THE LORD.'"\*

The most distinguished ancient Millenarians were Barnabas, Papias, Irenæus, Nepos, Justin Martyr, Lactantius, Apollinarius, Tertullian, and a fictitious writer who assumed the name of Clement, and who, by the Defender of Mr. Irving, is regarded as the companion of St. Paul. No ancient writer takes notice of more than one epistle written by the genuine Clement. This is what is generally called his first epistle to the Corinthians:

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\* Irenæi Opera. Lib. v. cap. 33. Grabii ed. Oxonii 1702. The good Father adds, "These things are credible to those who believe. But Judas, the traitor, not believing, and asking how the Lord could cause such productions? the Lord answered, They shall see who reach those times."

and the best informed in such matters, consider all the other writings that are circulated under his name, as spurious.\*

Such stuff as that, which has just now been quoted from Irenæus, uniformly forms part and parcel of the ancient Millenarian creed, wherever it is given in detail. That such were the notions of Justin Martyr, is evident from his quotations, from Isaiah lxx. 17—25, in support of his views of the subject. The application of the whole of that passage to the Millennium, proves that he expected that great part of the happiness then possessed, would arise from sensible enjoyments; and his version of the 23d verse, “ Mine elect shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth children for a curse,” distinctly intimates that he expected the inhabitants of the millennial world, not even excepting the risen saints, would continue to marry and be given in marriage.†

From his declamation about the land flowing with milk and honey, the ruling over the earth, and the possessing dominion over the fowls, fish-

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\* Vide Testimonia Veterum de S. Clementis Epistolis apud Cotolerii Patres Apostolicos. Tom. i. pp. 128—131. Grabii spicileg. Tom. i. pp. 265—269. Cavii Hist. Liter. p. 18. Lardner's Works, 4to, vol. i. pp. 290—293: and vol. v. pp. 432—446. Memoires Ecclesiastiques par Tillemont. Tom. ii. pp. 292—300.

† See the Paris edition of the Works of Justin Martyr, Folio, 1636: pp. 306—308: or Thirlby's edition, pp. 310—315.

es, and beasts; Barnabas seems to have had as sharp an eye after the good things of this world as his brother Justin.\*

The writings of Papias, Nepos, and Apollinaris, on the Millennium, have perished. Dr. Cave† has preserved a small fragment of Victorinus, containing merely a single allusion to the subject. In his brief notice of the matter in his work against Marcion, where he shews that his own notions were not superior to those of his brethren, Tertullian refers us to his Treatise on the Hope of the Faithful, where he had fully discussed the question.‡ But this work has also fallen a sacrifice to the wreck of time. If however, we are to confide in the testimony of those Fathers who had read their works, we must believe that these all entertained the most carnal and degrading ideas of the nature of the Millennium. The following are the words of Jerome. “ If we understand the Revelation of John literally, we must judaize; if spiritually as it is written, we shall seem to contradict many of the ancients; amongst the Latins, Tertullian, Victorinus, and Lactantius; and amongst the Greeks, to omit others, Irenæus Bishop of Lyons, against whom, Dionysius, Bishop of the church of Alex-

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\* Vide Barnabæ Epistol. cap. vi. apud Cotolerii Pat. Apostol.

† Historia Literaria, p. 104.

‡ Tertulliani ad Marcionem Lib. iii. cap. 24.

andria, a man of uncommon eloquence, wrote a curious piece, deriding the *fable* of a thousand years, and the terrestrial Jerusalem adorned with gold and precious stones; the rebuilding of the temple, bloody sacrifices, sabbatical rest, circumcision, child-births, nursing of children, delicate feasts, and the servitude of the nations: and again after this, wars, armies, triumphs, and slaughters of conquered enemies, and the death of the sinner a hundred years old. Him Apollinarius answered in two volumes; whom not only the men of his own sect, but a very great multitude likewise of our own people follow in this article." \* In the opinion of Jerome, which is corroborated by the testimony of Origen, Augustin, and Gennadius; † Apollinarius, Irenæus, Tertullian, Victorinus, and Lactantius, adopted the same notions of the Revelation. The carnal, or Jewish ideas of Irenæus, Lactantius, and Tertullian, are placed beyond a doubt by their own writings. Apollinarius, the defender of Irenæus, certainly must have coincided with his principal. And if Victorinus deserved to be included in the same class with Apollinarius, Lactantius, Tertullian and Irenæus, his creed must have been very little better than that of his companions.

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\* Hieronymi Comment. lib. xviii. in Esaïam præcem.

† Origenes in Mat. cap. xxii. Augustin de civitate Dei, Lib. xviii. xx. cap. 7.

So much for these five. Let us try to ascertain the creed of Nepos and Papias, two noted men amongst the ancient Millenarians.

Speaking of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, Eusebius informs us, that “ he composed two books concerning the Promises. This was occasioned by Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, who taught the saints that the promises were to be fulfilled in a Jewish sense, and maintained that there would be a thousand years of bodily pleasure upon earth. Fancying that he could establish his notion from the Revelation of John, Nepos composed a book upon this subject, and entitled it, ‘ A Refutation of the Allegorists.’ This Dionysius, in his work upon the Promises, opposes.” After relating the reluctance of Dionysius to engage in the controversy; the historian goes on transcribing the words of Dionysius concerning Nepos. “ But since a book has been published which some think conclusive; and some teachers undervaluing the law and the prophets; neglecting the gospels; and despising the epistles: boast of the doctrine of this book, as containing some precious hidden mystery; and will not allow our more simple brethren to expect any thing sublime and great; neither the glorious and truly divine appearing of our Lord, nor our resurrection from the dead, nor our gathering together, and conformity to him: but persuade them that *nothing but mean mortal things, such as we at present possess*, are to be hoped for in the kingdom of God: it is neces-

sary for me to enter into a discussion with my brother Nepos."\* Of Papias, the author of the notion, and from whom Irenæus seems servilely to have copied it, we shall perhaps hear afterwards. But from what Irenæus has stated, no doubt can exist that the notions of Papias were of the most abject, unworthy, and ridiculous description. †

Since therefore, almost every ancient Millenarian has left us an explanation of his views, and each who has explained them, shews that he entertained the most gross and contemptible ideas of the nature of the Millennium; we are compelled to conclude that these carnal notions were universally held by all who embraced the system; and that they were uniformly regarded as entering into its very essence.

Now, our modern Millenarians either know this fact, or they do not. If they know it: then where is their candour in suppressing such an important and characteristic part of the ancient system? But if they are ignorant of it: then how is it possible that they can have read the writings of the primitive Millenarians, where such carnal representations are invariably incorporated with every description which they have given of their sentiments? And if they pretend to quote authors whom they have neither seen nor consulted: then

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\* Eusebii Hist. Ecclesiast: Lib. vii. cap. 21.

† Vide Irenæi contra Hæreses Lib. v. cap. 33.

what reliance can be placed on their truth and honour?

It will not excuse them to say that they may have seen the original writers, yet the passages now produced, may have escaped their notice. For unless they began at the end, how could they arrive at the *thirty-fifth* chapter of the fifth book of Irenæus, without reaching the *thirty-third*? And whether they began at the beginning or the end; how could they miss the extracts from Lactantius, which lie in the heart of the chapters to which they refer, and are mixed up with the very paragraphs which they profess to translate from his pages?

And since these gross and carnal ideas uniformly formed an essential part of the Millennium which the ancients expected; unless our modern Millenarians have adopted, or are willing to adopt, all the nonsense and absurdity, the grovelling and disgusting detail of the ancient theory: for what purpose do they appeal to the Christian Fathers? Unless their tenets coincide with those who advocated Millenarian principles in the first ages of the church, an appeal to them is altogether irrelevant.

But whether their tenets coincide with those of the ancients, who held Millenarian notions, or differ from them: a more important question remains to be considered. Were Millenarian principles, of any description, embraced by the primitive church? or by the church in any age?

After the specimens which we have lately seen of the real nature of the ancient form of the system; is there a reader, in his senses, who can believe, that such childish, wild, and ridiculous trash could obtain the sanction of the apostles, or of any men imbued with the spirit of the apostles, and who knew that the kingdom of God cometh not by observation; that it is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost; that they who shall be counted worthy to obtain the resurrection to life, neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels; and that they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more?

How are we to prove that any particular opinion never formed an article of the belief of the Christian church? Can this point be established by shewing that it never formed an article of any of the creeds, or formularies of the church? that it was rejected and opposed by the most eminent men, whose opinions were held in the highest estimation? that rather than admit the tenet, they questioned the inspiration of the parts of the scriptures which were *supposed* to countenance it? and that its advocates complain that it has been resisted and rejected? Will the establishment of such things as these, prove that the tenet in question was no article of the Christian church? If it will, no long process is necessary to evince that the principles of Millenarianism *never* were embraced by the church.

1. These principles never obtained a place in any creed, confession of faith, or formulary of doctrine of the primitive church. If any assert the contrary, let them produce the document in which these principles are contained.

2. So far from being acknowledged as sound, the principles of Millenarianism were opposed and rejected by the most eminent Fathers of the church. With the exception of Barnabas, the person who assumes the name of Clement, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Nepos, Apollinarius, Lactantius, and Tertullian; they were rejected by almost every Father of the Church; and openly opposed by Dionysius, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Gennadius, Jerome, and Augustin: men whose piety equalled, and whose learning and talents far surpassed, any in the first centuries of the Church.

It can be no difficult matter to ascertain the sentiments of the Fathers upon the Millenarian notions of their contemporaries. Gennadius, of Marseilles, who flourished A.D. 495,\* as cited by Whitby,† declares, “ In the Divine promises we believe nothing concerning meat and drink, as Irenæus, Tertullian, and Lactantius teach from their author Papias; nor of the reign of a thou-

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\* *Cavii Hist. Liter.* p. 376; and *Lardner's Works*, 4to London, 1815; Vol. iii. p. 41.

† *On the Millennium*, p. 720.

sand years on earth after the resurrection, and the Saints' reigning deliciously with him, as Nepos taught." Speaking of Papias and his works, Eusebius uses the following language:—"The same author has published some other things, which he had obtained by report. For example, some strange parables and discourses of our Saviour, and some other things *more fabulous*. Among which, he says there will be a Millennium after the resurrection from the dead, during which the Kingdom of Christ will be corporeally established upon this earth; which I suppose he expected from misapprehending the discourses of the Apostles, by not understanding what they had figuratively spoken. For he was a man of a *very slender judgment*, as may be conjectured from his publications. However, he was the cause why very many ecclesiastical persons, from regard to his antiquity, adopted the same opinion, as Irenæus, and any other who has professed the same tenets."\* Origen, who inflicted a greivous injury upon religion, by setting an example of wild extravagant allegorising of the Scriptures, repeatedly reprobates the system. In one place he says, it was a doctrine that was embraced only by "some silly people." Elsewhere he adds, "They believe that, after the resurrection, we shall, according to the chief promises of the Gospel, eat and drink;

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\* Eusebia Hist. Eccles. Lib. iii. cap. 39.

and, as some of them say, shall have children. If these things should be divulged among the heathen, they would bring a great reproach for folly upon Christianity: for many of the heathen entertain a far better belief.”\* Jerome’s opinion may be easily discovered. “If we understand the Revelation literally, we must judaize; if spiritually, as it is written, we shall seem to contradict many of the ancients.”† And Augustin, who informs us that he himself had once embraced the tenets of the sect, says, that their notions might be tolerated, “If they mentioned any spiritual delights which the saints might enjoy by Christ’s presence: but since they affirm that those who shall then rise shall indulge in carnal banquets, not only without modesty, but beyond belief, none but carnal men can believe such things.”‡

While these men employ such language, is there any necessity for adding another word respecting their sentiments concerning the system?

3. The absurdities of the Millenarian doctrines, led some of the ancients to call in question the inspiration of the book of Revelation.

On this subject, a few sentences may be produced from Eusebius. “We have heard that at the

\* Prolegomina to the Canticles and Philocalia, cap. 26, p. 99, added to Spencer’s edition of his work against Celsus.

† Hieronymi Proem, in Esaiæ lxxv.

‡ Augusteni De Lenitate, Dei. Lib. xx. cap. 7.

same time one Cerinthus was the founder of another heresy. Gaius, whose words I have already quoted, in a disputation which is still circulating, writes of him as follows: ‘Cerinthus, by revelations, as if they had been written by some great Apostle, has published some marvellous tales, which he pretends were communicated to him by angels: saying, that after the resurrection, the Kingdom of Christ will be earthly; and that men living again in the flesh at Jerusalem, will be subject to desires and pleasures. Being an enemy to the Sacred Scriptures, and wishing to seduce into error, he says there will be a thousand years spent in marriage festivity! Dionysius also, who in our time was chosen Bishop of the church of Alexandria, in his second book concerning the Promises, speaking from ancient tradition of the Revelation of John, says, “Cerinthus, the founder of the heresy which bears his name, wishing to give a respectable name to his forgery, was the *author of that* book. For this was one of his tenets, that the Kingdom of Christ would be terrestrial: and being a licentious gluttonous man, he dreamed that it would consist in those things which he himself loved: that is, in meat, and drink, and marriage; and that he might provide these things with a better grace, it would consist in feasts, sacrifices, and the killing of victims.’”\*

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\* Eusebii Hist. Ecclesiast, Lib. iii. cap 24. See also more to the same purpose, book vii. chap. 25.

Does it follow from these statements, that the Church was possessed of Millenarian tendencies, either in the age of Eusebius or in any preceding period? Was the rejection of the Apocalypse itself by some, from the sanction which it was supposed to give to the system, any proof that Millenarian tenets were generally adopted by the Christian world.

4. The early Millenarians were obliged to write in support of their principles, and to defend them from attacks.

Nepos, believing that he could prove from the Revelation of St. John, that the promises were to be literally fulfilled, and that there would be a thousand years spent in sensible enjoyments upon earth, wrote a book, entitled a Refutation of the Allegorical Expositors, or those who explained the promises relating to the Millennium figuratively.\* And Irenæus endeavours to confute these expositors, by shewing the inconsistencies and contradictions, in which he imagined that they involved themselves. †

But if the whole Christian world had adopted Millenarian tenets, would there have been occasion for any such arguments and discussions at all?

Each of the former proofs that was offered for

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\* Eusebii Hist. Ecclesiast: Lib. vii. cap. 24.

† Irenæi Operum Lib. v. cap. 35.

the establishment of the modern Millenarian theory, upon examination was found to give way. This appeal to antiquity is really as unsuccessful as any of its predecessors. The notions adopted by the ancient Millenarians differed widely from those held by the moderns. They were never admitted into any creed. They were rejected by the most eminent Christian Fathers. The aversion to them was so general and strong, that some questioned the inspiration of the Book of Revelation on account of the sanction which it was supposed to give them. And the ancient Millenarians themselves by their language, and by their efforts to secure disciples to their tenets, demonstrate that their system never had gained a general reception.

It is needless to say one word more to shew the groundlessness of the assertions, that Millenarianism was the universal belief of the primitive church, and that the modern doctrines are merely the revival of the faith of the first ages of the Christian world.

## CHAPTER X.

RECAPITULATION: AND CONCLUDING  
REMARKS.

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OUR wearisome and irksome task is now near a close. As we have proceeded, we have had abundant evidence of the melancholy facts with which we commenced these observations. "Weakness and imperfection are inseparable attendants on our fallen condition: and in general none have given more deplorable proofs of the imbecility of human reason, nor wandered farther from the truth, than those who have had the greatest confidence in the strength of their own intellect, and the wisdom and excellence of their own opinions."

Seldom have any class of men come before the public more big with pretension; who more unblushingly asserted their own infallibility; and who breathed a spirit of more stern defiance of all who dare oppose them, and of proud and heartless contempt for those who refuse or hesitate to subscribe to their dogmas. From men of such wonderful promise, it was only natural to expect some respectable performance. The least that could have been anticipated, was that they should be masters of their own system, thoroughly conversant with its varied details, and cordially united

upon its leading articles. Nor was it extravagant to hope, that they would be able to expound their theory in a clear and intelligible manner, and support it by arguments, which, if not fitted to carry conviction, would at least command our admiration of their theological attainments, and intimacy with biblical criticism.

But on examining their writings, have these just and reasonable expectations been realized? Every one of them has been most miserably disappointed. Darkness, confusion, and inconsistency, pervade their works. Few seem to have any clear conception of the object for which they are contending. The mass of unintelligible jargon, with which their publications abound, give sad indication of their own utter incapacity to comprehend their subject: for no man who is possessed of any ideas at all on the theme which he proposed to illustrate, would expose himself by committing to paper stuff, unspeakably worse than nonsense. Of such pure nonsense, however, we had samples in abundance.

And as for their harmony, though this is a cause of their own vast self-complacency, rarely have we encountered such total anarchy and irreconcilable contradiction. There is scarcely a single topic on which any two, who have not servilely copied one the other, can be found to coincide. Do you affirm that any particular tenet which you find most distinctly and broadly asserted in their writings, forms an article of their

creed? Instantly some of its abettors will turn round: and reprobate your ignorance and presumption for judging of a matter of which you know nothing: and produce some high authority to prove that they hold exactly the reverse. Do you say, That they expect Christ to reign visibly upon the earth in power and great glory? One will instantly assure you that that is a gross misapprehension of their notions: for they expect that after his second advent, he will “remain *invisible* to the world, and only be *manifested* at the grand crisis of his ancient church.” Well then: do you try to acquire their creed, to speak as they dictate, and say, You hold that Christ is to remain invisible to the world, and only be *manifested* at the grand crisis of his ancient church? Immediately you shall find that you are farther wrong than ever; and be told that that is a gross and malicious calumny. “The anointed Ruler, the King of kings shall  *dwell* in our world, not, as once, in the midst of one nation, and by the mysterious radiance of the cloudy Shechinah; but in the wide circle of the whole earth, and by the *glorious brightness* of a PERSONAL MANIFESTATION.”

In short, quote what you please, and produce ten who have asserted what you state: it is possible that some of the defenders of the system will confront you with eleven who roundly and obstinately deny it.

Nor are they at war merely with each other.

Every one that has written largely, or rather every one that has written on the subject at all; either broadly or virtually contradicts himself, and furnishes you with arguments and illustrations in support of the most opposite tenets: so that, notwithstanding the most scrupulous solicitude to do them justice, if you attempt to give a general outline of their scheme, the probability is, that one and all will complain of prejudice and misrepresentation, and insist that you have wilfully traduced and studiously perverted, and vilified their views.

Our best effort to comprehend, what they themselves evidently found incomprehensible; and to collect something like the elements of a regular system from the mass of their discordant and repugnant materials; probably is utterly in vain. But if they really hold that Christ is to come in person before the Millennium, to raise the departed saints, to change the righteous who are alive, and reign with these glorified immortals on the earth for a thousand years: this is a theory which must be pronounced altogether unscriptural and false.

It is a theory which labours under multiplied and insuperable difficulties.

We have seen that at whatever time the saints shall be raised from the grave, the saints who are alive shall be changed; and both shall be clothed with incorruptible, powerful, spiritual, bodies,

fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord.

After the supposed resurrection of the saints, prior to the Millennium, the earth must either be wholly changed, or remain as it is, or be partially altered.

If it is wholly changed: it is impossible that any of our race could survive the transition, or that the world, in succeeding ages, could be the seat of animal life. But the Millenarian hypothesis supposes that a remnant of the wicked shall be preserved; and the Bible assures us that the animal creation will remain during the Millennium, and that the army of Gog and Magog which shall attack the camp of the saints, long after the Millennium is ended, will be composed of wicked men in mortal bodies. And so far from teaching us to expect a total change either on the substance or surface of the earth before the Millennium; the Scriptures intimate that the physical condition of the globe will remain as it is, till the last of its generations have finished their course. "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Gen. viii. 22.

If the earth continue as it is, it must subject the glorified saints to many a privation to reside on it for a thousand years, and it is exceedingly incongruous to mix them with mortal men, and

expose them to the odious and disgusting society of the wicked.

To assert that the earth is to undergo only a limited and partial alteration, contradicts the plain and repeated declarations of the word of God; which assures us that Christ, when he comes, is to be revealed in flaming fire; that from his presence the heaven and the earth shall flee away; and the earth and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.

We know that at whatever time Jesus shall return, the Gospel and its ordinances will be abolished. It has been by the Gospel hitherto, that conversion has been carried on. The Millenarians expect that, during the personal reign of Christ on earth, there will be men in the flesh, men in mortal bodies. These men must, by nature, be corrupt and depraved; and, before they can be fit for the kingdom of God, must be born again. But when the Gospel and its ordinances are abolished, how can their conversion and regeneration be accomplished?

If Christ has his personal residence on earth, how painful must death prove to his people, when it removes them from a world where he is, to one from which his presence is withdrawn?

To increase the difficulties under which the system labours, its advocates maintain that the thousand years of the Redeemer's personal reign on earth, is the great day of decision; and that, whilst the eternal state of men is under determin-

ation, multitudes, unaffected by all the solemnities of the scene, are deeply engaged in the business of life, or keenly pursuing its pleasures.

The language of inspiration announces an attack, by the wicked, upon the camp of the saints and the beloved city, after the termination of the Millennium. But if Christ is to reign in person in the midst of glorified immortals on the earth, such an attack is rendered altogether incredible.

If, as Millenarians admit, and the Scriptures proclaim, Christ at his coming shall glorify every living sinner; the conversion of the world at the commencement of the Millennium, and the invasion upon the saints by Gog and Magog after its close, are rendered absolutely impossible. The long series of prophecies proclaiming the universal prevalence of piety, is falsified; and antichrist is, on this hypothesis, supposed to reign till the numbers of our race are completed, and the everlasting destiny of the children of men irreversibly decided.

We have seen that this system not only labours under insurmountable difficulties; but is also at open war with some of the most plain declarations of scripture. This is the case with all that the Bible records respecting the future history of our race, and the nature and end of our Redeemer's second advent.

The Bible declares that the people shall be all righteous, and that the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God. Millenarians imagine that

this never can be accomplished but by the personal presence of Christ, and the restoration of the just, made perfect, to our world. But, by assuring us that the kingdom of heaven, or the Gospel, is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which, though the least of all seeds, groweth up into a tree; that the stone cut out without hands, becomes a mountain and fills the whole earth: the Bible intimates that conversion in future will be produced as it has been in time past; and that all nations and all the earth will be filled at last with the glory of God, exactly as the souls of individual believers, and of the congregations of the faithful in this and former ages, have been filled with his glory; by his plenteously blessing the ordinances of religion, and imparting to them freely and fully, the riches of his grace.

So far from authorizing us to expect a resurrection of the saints before the Millennium, the Bible forbids the hope of the resurrection of any till the heavens and the earth be no more. It tells us that at the time at which some awake to everlasting life, others shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt. It tells us that when those who have done good come forth to the resurrection of life, those who have done evil shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation. And so far from indicating that years and ages shall be spent in the process of raising the dead; it teaches us to regard the resurrection of all as simultaneous, the work of an hour, the act of an instant, as accomplished in a moment, in the

twinkling of an eye; as the effect of the single voice of the Son of man, at the sound of the last trump.

So far from representing the final judgment as a tardy and tedious gaol-delivery, in which the individuals of our race, are successively brought up to the tribunal, and the state of all decided before the last solitary captive of death is dragged from the grave: the Bible describes the transactions of that decisive day, as conducted in the presence of the whole inhabitants of the earth. The parties are confronted with each other. The men of one country and of one generation, rise up in the judgment with those of another country and another generation. The judgment is appointed for the manifestation of the equity and righteousness of the Most High, that all flesh may see his glory. And accordingly, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, *before him shall be gathered ALL nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.*

Unless the Millennium is no subject of prophetic annunciation, Christ will not come before the Millennium: "For the heavens must receive him until the times of the accomplishment of *all* things which God hath spoken by the mouth of *all* his holy prophets since the world began." If it is a subject of prophecy; then he will not come till it, as well as all the other predictions is fulfilled.

When Christ next appears in person, he will come in power and great glory: and every eye shall see him, not only after his advent, but in

the very act of descending. But how can every eye see him in the act of approaching the earth; if, at his coming, the wicked are in their graves, and a large proportion of the human race are not then born?

So far from reigning on the earth for ever and ever, or even for a thousand years; we are led to believe that when he comes, he will abolish death, deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to the Father, and destroy the earth and the works that are therein.

On proceeding to examine the evidence for this system, which its advocates contemplate with such matchless veneration, and regard as so clearly and indisputably entitled to the instant and cordial reception of the Christian church: did we find the system fixed on a firm foundation, and built on a rock of adamant? On exploring its strength and stability; the rocks crumbled into dust, and the fancied firm foundations on which they imagined that they had reared it, proved more soft and yielding than snow.

We looked at their proof for a first resurrection, the resurrection of the saints before the Millennium. And what did we find? A literal resurrection, like that of Christ when he left the dead? or like that of the human race at the close of all? Why: the first resurrection, Rev. xx. 5, on which they suppose that they never can lay too great a weight; is no more literal than the second resurrection in the 5th, 8th, and 9th verses of the

same chapter; than the resurrection of the Witnesses, Rev. xi. 17; or that of the Jews on their return from their captivity in Babylon. Ezra ix. 8. The other passages, which they have produced to prove their notion, only proved the general universal resurrection of the dead.

We looked at their proof for the personal advent of Christ, prior to the Millennium. And did we find this rendered clear as sunshine, and established with all the obvious and irresistible cogency of demonstration? Did the chronological prophecies respecting the future advent of the Messiah, all refer to the period immediately introductory to the Millennium? In the idea that they were all synchronical; we found predictions relating to no less than four separate events, the destruction of Jerusalem, the fall of antichrist, the commencement of the Millennium, and the end of the world; all heaped together, and averred to belong to one and the same event.

Did we find that the words specified, as expressing Christ's advent, negative the idea of a spiritual coming, and imply that his advent before the Millennium is personal and corporeal? This was asserted. But was it proved? No indeed. The words specified are applied elsewhere to his spiritual presence: and other words, as expressive of a personal presence, were mentioned, which are repeatedly and unquestionably applied to his spiritual presence. We were obliged to take notice of a distinction affirmed to exist betwixt promises and predictions. We were told

that the same word which, when it occurs in a prophecy denotes a personal advent, when it occurs in a promise indicates a spiritual coming. We found that if there were any reality in this ideal distinction, the language of every prediction must be interpreted literally, and of every promise figuratively.

Did we find that two of the words, supposed to imply a personal presence, being conjoined, and used to link the advent to an event which precedes the Millennium; that therefore the advent which synchronises with that event, is the personal coming of the Lord to judge the world?—No, indeed. We found that the words which were believed to denote a personal advent, and to relate to *one* event, are applied to no less than *four* separate events: the destruction of Jerusalem, the death of believers, the overthrow of Antichrist, and the end of the world.

We found that their miscellaneous proof from the Sacred Scriptures, was exactly of a piece with those to which we have just now referred. Some of those passages which they have pressed into the service, are so remote from any thing connected with the purpose to which they have been applied, that the only difficulty is to understand how any man could conceive that they are capable of the application which they have received; and the rest, when interpreted according to the plain and obvious meaning of the words, will prove any thing rather than the points for which they have been produced.

Finding the theory destitute of the shadow of support from the plain language of revelation, and in direct opposition to its most clear and unquestionable declarations, we judged it needless to spend time in examining their arguments from the supposed types of Scripture: for no doctrine can be entitled to our belief, which is repugnant to the express authority of the word of God, and supported merely by imaginary types and fanciful allegories.

Their appeal to antiquity might have been dismissed in the same cursory manner. But to prevent misapprehension of our motives, we found it necessary to show that the creed of the ancient Millenarians was still more grotesque, revolting, and carnal, than even that of their modern representatives; and that Millenarianism never in any form was embraced by the church. It has a place in no ancient creed. It was resisted by the most eminent of the christian Fathers. Its existence led some of the primitive believers to question the Divine authority of the book of Revelation, because it was perverted to support the Millenarian hypothesis. And so far from being universally received, Millenarians were obliged to defend their system, and write against those who rejected their notions.

After a patient examination of the principal proofs which they have advanced, we must affirm, that, so far from being able to shake the belief of any man who is able to judge of evidence, they have not produced a single argument capable of

exciting a moment's doubt or suspicion. Their efforts have neither been few nor feeble to force their opinions upon the public mind. But every renewed exertion fails more miserably than its predecessor, and contributes to display more fully the utter hopelessness of their cause, and the absolute folly of attempting to support it.

No reverie of a lunatic was ever more baseless and visionary. But still, notwithstanding all its ineffable and matchless silliness, absurdity, and impiety, from the zeal, the ardour, the bitterness, and vehemence, with which they plead and strive for its prevalence, there can be no doubt that its advocates believe in its reality. And if they are as sincere as they appear, they administer a loud admonition to all, not to lean to their own understanding; but to be humble, teachable, devoted to the study of the scriptures, and persevering in fervent believing prayer, to be taught and guided by the God of grace. They afford a lamentable proof that, without his teaching, there is no delusion too gross and groundless for the human mind to digest.

Had we been told a few years ago, that in this century, amidst all the scriptural knowledge that is possessed, and surrounded with the blaze of British literature and science, a dozen of men capable of reading the Bible in English; and still more, a dozen of men favoured with the advantages of a liberal education, could be found capable, not only of swallowing all the nonsense and jargon of Millenarianism, but actually of avowing before

the church and the world their belief of such pure and unmingled absurdity; the intelligence would have been scouted as a burlesque upon our countrymen, and a libel upon human nature. Time, however, has more than realized the worst part of this startling and humbling intimation. It is not easy to reckon the number of those who, in such an age as this, have become the dupes of this delusion.

And after men of their piety and worth—of their learning and talents, have not only, without evidence, but in opposition to the plainest dictates of revelation, actually become, in sober earnest, the votaries of such a childish, stupid, and groundless theory; we have little cause to marvel at the wide sway of ignorance and error, and the tenacity with which others adhere to the doctrine of transubstantiation, the Pope's infallibility, and all the dogmas of the Romish faith. Let those who have been preserved from these and other anti-scriptural tenets, give the praise to the Father of lights, and the giver of every good and perfect gift; and let all take care not to trust to their own sagacity or wisdom, but to seek direction and counsel from the Most High.

It is impossible to express how much we have reason to lament their awful perversion of intellect and industry. Talents and zeal like theirs, under God, might have rendered the church the most signal services. But in the direction which they have given them, they are worse than useless. Whilst they are employed in chasing phantoms,

and combating their fellow-servants, they leave the kingdom of darkness uninjured, and cause Satan to rejoice that such an amount of energy and activity is withdrawn from the invasion of his dominions, and spent in harassing and annoying the subjects of Him whom he hates. Infidels exult in the broils and contests amongst the professors of our common faith. Fools and fanatics are encouraged, when perverting the Scriptures from their genuine meaning, and forcibly twisting them to support dogmas, and practices the most directly opposed to the real import of the word of God, to shelter themselves behind the shield of their mighty name. Allow any set of men to follow the lawless example of interpretation which Millenarians have set them; allow them to spiritualize what is literal, and to give a literal meaning to all that is figurative, and then they will find it easy to undermine the foundations of the Christian system, and wrest from us our highest hopes and dearest joys. There is not one article in the whole scheme of revelation that could survive such a process. We could not point to a single prediction that has been fulfilled. No creatures corresponding to the metallic image of Nebuchadnezzar, the beasts seen in vision by Daniel and John, have appeared. There is not a single fact in sacred history which we could prove; nor one declaration in the word of God on which we could rely. One class of men would set aside the doctrine of the incarnation, and another would reject the belief of a future judgment.

This system cherishes secular and carnal principles; feeds the love of superiority; and even cherishes a spirit of fierce, unchristian, and relentless warfare; annihilates all that is sublime, elevating, spiritual, and transforming in the Gospel; and brings us back to the worldly services, and carnal expectations of the Jews. It is totally unlike that sacred system, which was announced by the angels on the plains of Bethlehem; and proclaimed by Him who said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bound, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

It is seldom that any error comes alone. When men depart from the faith once delivered to the saints, one delusion generally is adopted after another, till their folly becomes manifest to all. Mr. Thom has already nearly gotten rid of all that is essential to Christianity, and reached the horrid confines of complete apostacy. And many Milenarians are rapidly following him. When we find men publishing to the world such sentiments as the following, it is evident that they are either far gone from the way of truth, or fully prepared to adopt tenets the most opposite to the word of God. "To establish election, it was *necessary* that the *whole* world should worship the creature, which is the worship of the devil." "It is an eternal necessary truth, that the creature, before it can wor-

ship the Creator, *must* pass into the bondage of sin, and be delivered out of it.”—Dial. on Proph., viii. 221, 222. If sin is necessary and unavoidable, it is no longer sinful: and men may live as they please: for if they cannot resist sin, they cannot be justly blamed or punished for its commission. When Aristo, Dial. on Proph. iii. 176, says Satan “will never give up his reign by any preaching of the Gospel, *nor by any other means* than by the manifestation of Christ in person, on purpose to cast him out of this earth;” he rejects by implication the divinity both of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. For if he admitted them to be Divine, he would discover no greater difficulty in expelling Satan by the preaching of the Gospel, than by the personal manifestation of Christ. Is any thing too hard for God? When Anastasius, Dial. on Proph. v. 65, declares, “The very idea of the world having become better is absurd, unless they mean to contend that they have bound Satan, or made him better,” he broadly insinuates that the wickedness of the world is not owing to the depravity of man, but to the strength and subtlety of Satan; and that the devil has the graceless portion of our race as completely at his disposal, as a planter his negroes. And when Mr. Irving preaches the natural mortality of Christ’s body, and speaks of Christ “*feeling the perfect identity of fallen manhood in all its points;*”<sup>\*</sup> there is no greater injury

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\* See Irving’s Ancient Purity, &c. ; A Sermon preached Jan. 1st 1828, p. 21, 22: and Letter to the Rev. E. Irving in Refuta-

that he can inflict on our holy faith. Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean? If the human nature of our Lord had not been absolutely holy, he never could have done one action that was perfectly good. He never could have finished transgression, nor brought in everlasting righteousness. The salvation of a single soul would have been an absolute impossibility; and the whole human race must for ever have remained under condemnation, and exposed to all the horrors of utter ruin.

From errors of such dreadful magnitude, may God speedily rescue his church! "Arise, O God, plead thine own cause. O send out thy light and thy truth. Be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause thy face to shine upon us: that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let thy kingdom come: thy will be done on earth, even as it is in heaven: and the whole world be filled with thy glory."

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tion of the Doctrines of the sinfulness, mortality, and corruptibility of the Body of Jesus Christ. The argument in this Letter is conducted with the clearness and cogency of a geometrical demonstration.

THE END.





