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THE
SPIRITUAL EXPOSITION
OF THE
APOCALYPSE;

AS DERIVED FROM

THE WRITINGS OF THE HON. EMANUEL SWEDENBORG,

ILLUSTRATED AND CONFIRMED

BY

ANCIENT AND MODERN AUTHORITIES.

BY THE

REV. AUGUSTUS CLISSOLD, M.A.

FORMERLY OF EX. COL. OXFORD.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

“According to the opinion of many (in the Church) the Apocalypse must altogether be incomprehensible without an especial revelation from God.”—PERERIUS, *Prol. Disp. i.*

“All things which are written in this prophetic book are written concerning the Last Judgment, but by representatives and correspondences.”—SWEDENBORG, *Apoc. Ex., art. 260.*

“Most of the ancient Fathers and of the earlier Commentators on the Apocalypse followed the system which explains the whole book as concerning the Last Judgment.”—CALMET, *Apoc. art. ii.*

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PREFACE.

THE method which Swedenborg adopts in his work, entitled '*The Apocalypse Revealed*,' and which forms the subject-matter of the present volumes, is first to present the chapter in the Apocalypse; secondly, a short interpretation of every verse; and thirdly, a larger interpretation founded on the shorter.

In the present volumes the shorter interpretation only is retained, and in the place of the larger are substituted the authorities of which the present volumes mainly consist.

The Apocalypse Revealed, which was published in 1766, has now been for upwards of eighty years before the world; in the course of which time numerous works on the Apocalypse have appeared and many disappeared; some of them meeting at first with extensive reception, then as gradually declining in reputation, and not a few finally sinking into oblivion. The contrary has been the case with Swedenborg's *Apocalypse Revealed*. Beginning only with a small circulation, it has been gradually extending its sphere of reception: instead of sailing down for a time with the stream of popular favor, it has always been sailing up against it; and by the innate force of its statements, has made its way in the minds of thousands through every opposition, gathering fresh strength the farther it goes. It has now stood

June 30, 1842 Hf

the test of upwards of eighty years, and time so far from weakening has only added to its authority. The Latin edition is scarcely to be procured, two English editions have been sold, and a third is just published.

In the meanwhile the question of interpretation has been gradually coming to a crisis. "It is impossible," says Mr. Harrison at the opening of his first Warburtonian Lecture, "to observe with any attention the signs of the present times, and not to perceive that we are arrived at what may be termed an era, not only in regard to events affecting intimately the welfare of the Christian church, but also especially—and as arising naturally out of such a crisis—in regard to the *interpretation of sacred prophecy*." In fact, it may with truth be affirmed that the argument upon this subject has been well nigh exhausted. It would seem as if nothing further could be said, even by the best writers, than what has already been said; and still the interpretation of the Apocalypse is a *desideratum*, and both in the Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Oriental churches may be regarded as an open question.

Although, however, it is generally admitted that Commentators have failed to give any such interpretation of the Apocalypse as may upon the whole be regarded as the true one, yet a knowledge of Swedenborg's exposition will lead us to admit that every author of eminence in the Church from the earliest ages of Christianity down to the present day, who has in any degree been enlightened in the *spiritual* sense of Scripture, has contributed his own share to the true exposition; and that in this way the writings of ancient and modern authors, instead of being an indigestible mass of useless and contradictory comment, may be made to come out in orderly and symmetrical array, each author contributing his own portion to the confirmation of the truth, and therefore being entitled to his own share of our esteem. Hence it is that by a principle of in-

duction, applied not to Scripture but to the interpretations of Scripture, we are led through an immense mass of testimony ultimately to the exposition of Swedenborg, by the very authority of the Church itself; so that he who rejects the one must reject the other; and he who receives the one must, to be consistent, receive the other.

That which has been chiefly wanted in the Church has been a clue to the real design of the Apocalypse; for this being attained, a clue is given to the interpretation, which directs us to something true in every spiritual exposition. The case is similar to that which oftens occurs in natural science. Thus when in the natural world a phenomenon occurs which nothing has hitherto been able fully to explain, abundant hypotheses may be offered, all perhaps differing from one another, yet all professing to account for the phenomenon; and when the true cause is finally discovered, something in every hypothesis perhaps may be found agreeable to the truth, and thus all may be more or less reconciled to each other. So in regard to the exposition of Swedenborg, we are not bound to reject altogether the labors of those who in bygone years have toiled in the discovery of the spiritual sense; for although before the truth be known all may be said to be wrong, yet after it is known, many may in various respects be found to be right, and to have left behind them numerous valuable confirmations of the truth *after it has been finally discovered*: and certainly no system has hitherto appeared which is enabled to combine and harmonize in its favor so great an amount of testimony, both ancient and modern, as that of Swedenborg.

It may be replied that there is no difficulty, out of such a multitudinous medley of materials as is presented in works upon the Apocalypse, in finding something or other to sanction the views even of the wildest fanatics; and that it is easy to concoct a system out of different authorities, so as to make out any mean-

ing an author may please; nay, further, that such a method is unfair, as it is making use of authorities in a way which was never intended.

In reply to this it is granted, that like every other good thing the system may be abused; yet nevertheless it may be employed as a just and legitimate method of exposition; nay, further, it is itself the very plan which some of the most eminent commentators have already adopted. Wherever Calmet, for instance, perceives an author advocating his own views of the meaning of a passage, he has no hesitation in quoting him, although on other points the two may entirely disagree; and indeed unless a liberty of this kind were granted, it is doubtful whether a single exposition of the Bible now extant could be admitted; certainly it would condemn to oblivion the greater part of the best commentaries upon Scripture, both ancient and modern.

Calmet, for instance, observes in his Preface to the Apocalypse, art. ii.; "We have not deemed it to our purpose to give in full, at each particular verse in our Commentary, the explications of every one of these authors. Such a detail would be almost impossible amid such a crowd of interpreters whose views and methods are so different. . . . Experience makes me see, that the *exposè* of these varieties of explications produces in general only confusion of ideas in the reader, and uncertainty in his mind. One wishes to be fixed: *it is for the author to take upon himself the labor of examination and of discrimination between the several opinions.*"

A similar method has been followed, though not always acknowledged, in a very large portion of the Commentaries which exist; every commentator availing himself of the liberty of choosing that which he thinks best calculated to illustrate and explain, and rejecting whatever he considers to mislead. What he rejects is not supposed to invalidate what he approves, nor

what he adopts to countenance what he rejects ; even though both proceed from the same author ; nor is any unfairness presumed to be shewn to an author by another selecting from his writings only what he approves, and regarding him as an authority for the passage which is cited, and for the sense in which it is cited.

Such then and no other is the liberty which is taken in the present volumes ; and which has been requisite, in order to avoid confusion and preserve uniformity of interpretation.

There is however a circumstance which it is here important to notice. A great difference exists between the *interpretation* of a prophecy and its *application*. Commentators may agree in the interpretation, while they differ in the application, and *vice versâ*. The difference between Swedenborg and other commentators is often not so much in the interpretation as in the application ; hence where the application of the prophecy is different, yet if the interpretation be the same, the author, or rather, compiler, has felt himself justified in quoting the testimony. For example ; one expositor, when treating of the *smoke* coming out of the bottomless pit, maintains that it refers to Gnosticism ; another, to Arianism ; another, to Mahomedism ; another, to Romanism ; another, to Protestantism ; yet however differing in this respect, they all agree in the interpretation, namely, that it signifies *false doctrine*. So in the comments on the Eleventh Chapter of the Apocalypse, one expositor affirms that the opening of the Temple refers to the restoration of the Church in the time of Dioclesian ; another, to its establishment in the time of the Apostles ; another, to the Protestant Reformation ; another, to the age of the Millennium, and so forth ; but they all agree in this, that it signifies a revelation of the mysteries of the Incarnation and of the Scriptures. In the ensuing pages, therefore, their testimonies are quoted in favor of this interpretation, however authors may differ in regard to the application.

On the other hand, where the application has been the same, we have not hesitated, in some cases where it may be done, to quote the authorities in favor of the application adopted by Swedenborg, although they may differ from him in regard to the interpretation. The question is, in this case, whether the adoption of such a plan originates an incongruous system of exposition. It is answered that so far from this being the case, the plan has been adopted with a view to maintain uniformity of interpretation and the order observed in the Apocalypse, the continuity of which is accordingly never once interrupted; the whole being thus regarded as one consecutive prophecy, and the interpretation and application being consistent and harmonious: in fine, it may be justly affirmed, that, whether true or untrue, no exposition has ever yet appeared characterized by so complete a continuity of order, and uniformity of interpretation, as that of Swedenborg.

There is another topic connected with this part of the subject which is of great importance; viz., that of *doctrine*. It is a commonly received maxim of the Church, that while the meaning of a symbol may be an open question, yet the doctrines of the Church are not open questions. Consequently, that while authors may differ in regard to the interpretation and application of symbols, the Church allows them no liberty to differ in regard to doctrine; that new interpretations and applications of prophecy there may be, but new doctrines there must not: besides, it is also a received maxim, that symbolical theology is not argumentative.*

The best reply to this remark is an actual perusal of the present work. As to symbolical theology, which is peculiar to the Scriptures, why may it not stand upon as high ground as the metaphysical theology peculiar to the schools? Perhaps in respect of its being symbolical, not argumentative, it may claim

* See Petavius, Theol. Dogmat., vol. i., book i., chap. v.

the superiority ; for it will certainly cut short a great deal of scholastic reasoning, and teach us that the highest truths of theology are not argumentative, but intuitive ; and that the way to true ideas of God is by the path of analogy presented by symbol, rather than by the logic or metaphysics of the schools.

It may be objected that there is nothing more generally admitted, or more clearly stated in the Scriptures, than that in the Last Days there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and that our Lord has warned us not to go after them ; that the apostles Paul and Peter also have repeated these predictions concerning evil men and seducers, deceiving and being deceived ; and that hence it is added, “Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.”

But however true such a statement may be, it is not the whole truth. For the whole truth is, that among the false prophets which were to abound, there would arise also some one or more true prophets whose office would be to interpret prophecy, and to warn and admonish the Church.

So certain is this considered to be, that to reject it Bellarmine considers to be almost a heresy. It is indeed admitted, that, both in the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, authors variously modify their opinions on this subject ; some conceiving that there will be only one teacher, such as Elias ; others, that there will be two, such as Moses and Elias, or Enoch and Elias ; others, that the one teacher, or the two, are only the type of a larger class of enlightened expositors of Scripture, to whom in the latter times God will make known the hidden mysteries of his holy Word. But whether regarded as one, two, or many, it is nevertheless a tenet maintained by the Church as part of her traditionary teaching, that she is destined to receive instruction from some enlightened individual or individuals, either before or at the Second Advent of the Lord. This is the teaching both of

the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, which has therefore induced some to interpret the Two Witnesses as being those individuals; nay, Ribera goes so far as to say that in the Last Days this office of prophetic instruction will devolve upon some one individual, who may come not in the authority of the Church, but in a private capacity, or as "*privatus homo.*"

Thus in chap. viii., 13, on the words, 'I heard the voice of one* eagle flying,' Ribera observes, that,—

"Inasmuch as he says not *an* eagle, but *one* eagle, a great suspicion enters my mind that *some individual* of that time remarkable for his sanctity is indicated; whether of the order of preachers, or *some private individual*, whom God will then inspire thus to prophecy; for the just are called 'eagles' by the Lord in Luke xvii.; 'Wheresoever the body is, thither shall the eagles be gathered together.' And he is called an eagle, since he will swiftly, as we have said, and with great power, proclaim to men the impending destruction. Nor ought any one to wonder if both in this and other passages in the sequel, we say that in the Last Times there will be prophets who will announce beforehand the coming evils. For even if long before the ten tribes were led captive by the Assyrians, and before Jerusalem was overturned by the Chaldees and afterwards by the Romans, God sent so many prophets to admonish that people that they might not be ignorant of the calamity about to befall them; if also, at the siege of the city, Jeremiah prophesied in order to prepare the city either for repentance or else for its certain and imminent destruction; if, a little before the city was laid waste by the Romans, Christ and John the Baptist foretold its desolation and captivity; if also, a little before the siege and while the city was beset by the Romans, there was announced, both by prophecy, by many and great prodigies as related by Josephus, that which shortly afterwards took place; who can doubt that in so great a difficulty of the times and of affairs, in so unwonted a perturbation of all things, and calamities so great that all the preceding compared with it will seem to be as none, the merciful God will illustrate many by the

* The reading adopted by Ribera.

spirit of prophecy, the pious be confirmed by them to endure all things to the end, and the impious excited by a salutary fear to repentance? This great prophet, of whom the apostle now speaks, he justly calls an *eagle*; as elevating himself aloft by sanctity of life, and beholding the things of heaven; and because by the similitude of an eagle presented to the mind of John, God declareth his love toward his children—a love which in the eagle towards its young is remarkable, as Moses teaches in Deut. xxxii.”

So likewise Bishop Walmisley, another Roman Catholic writer, speaking of the times of Antichrist in his General History of the Christian Church, p. 272;—

“But if the Almighty through his special mercy to the *Jews*, appoints them a teacher in Elias to bring them back into the path from which they have so long strayed; it is not to be imagined he leaves *the rest of the world* without the same kind of assistance. *A teacher of extraordinary power and virtue* will be the more wanted; as iniquity will abound in these times, and even the good will be exposed to dangerous and most severe trials. To meet this exigency, the all-bountiful God will send another agent, namely, Enoch.”

Others again, in the Church of Rome, are of opinion that the prophecy of Malachi, as referring to the times of Antichrist, is not concerning Elias the Tishbite in his own proper person, but “*men who are endued with the spirit and power of Elias*; that is, a chorus of prophets, heralds, and ministers of the Word of God, who are to come in the time of Antichrist before the advent of the Lord to judgment.” With whom St. Jerome also agrees; “The Lord shall send in Elias (who is interpreted *my God*, and is of the town of *Tishbi*, which indicates conversion and penitence) a whole chorus of prophets.” Thus Jerome. *Malvenda, De Antichristo*, p. 462.

Pererius, also, says that Enoch and Elias are to come; whose office will be “to lay open, and undo the frauds of Antichrist, to impugn his doctrine, repress his rage, repel his efforts, con-

firm believers in the faith of Christ, and recall to the truth those who had been deceived by the error of Antichrist." *Disp.* x.

A similar interpretation is mentioned by Gaspar a Melo, as having been given by some writers to 'the angel of the waters' in chap. xvi. ; where he says, that by the *waters* are signified the *Scriptures*, and by the angel of the waters, "*some messenger of God who is sent to explain the Scriptures.*" Cornelius a Lapide suggests a similar interpretation in chap. xix. of the angel standing in the sun, and asks whether he is a type of *some preacher of the Gospel*: whether as the sun illuminates the whole world with his light and fecundates it with his heat, so in like manner *this evangelical preacher will illuminate by his words the blind minds of mankind*, and inflame their disorderly wills by his examples.

True it is that these are not the interpretations of the respective passages in the Apocalypse which are given by Swedenborg; but they serve to shew nevertheless the expectation prevailing even in the Church of Rome respecting some interpreter of the Scriptures who is to be raised up in the Latter Days to throw light upon their meaning; an expectation founded partly upon the general tradition concerning the coming of Elias, or of Enoch, or both.

Thus Ambrose Ansbert on Apoc. xxii., 10, '*Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book*;'—

"Then will this Apocalypse be forbidden to be sealed when Enoch and Elias appearing, the eyes of the faithful will be purged from the darkness of ignorance. Nor is it any wonder if, as the future Judgment approaches, the mystical truths of Scripture shall be presumed to be more largely opened than at present, when false teaching every where impugning the truth is raising its yell throughout the whole world. This event will take place under a Dispensation distinguished by great piety; so that the light of truth will shew itself more manifestly at that time than it does now, when in the minds of the wicked the dark night of universal falsehood is obscuring the world."

This topic has indeed been treated of at large by various Roman Catholic writers, especially by the author of a work, entitled *A Defence of the Opinion of the Holy Fathers and Catholic Doctors upon the future return of Elias, and the True Understanding of the Scriptures*; also by Father Lambert, the author of a work entitled *The Predictions and Promises made to the Church*. In the former, the reader will find a catena of Fathers and Roman Catholic writers who maintain the opinions above stated; in the latter, he will find the peculiar office of the expected Elias more largely treated of; as, for instance, in vol. i., p. 149, where the fifth chapter is devoted principally to the coming of Elias, and to shew that when he comes he will be unknown and rejected by the entire moral body of Gentile Christians.

After observing that the advent of Elias is taught by all the Fathers and all Catholic interpreters, he thus continues, p. 155,—

“Nevertheless there are found in the bosom even of the Church, certain rash spirits who have dared to treat as illusion and fanaticism, the expectation prevailing wheresoever the Church is, of the powerful aid which this holy prophet is destined to convey to it. But these persons are Catholics only in name, and their ignorant audacity* has excited only the contempt of all those who sincerely respect Scripture and tradition. Others there are less hardy (but no better instructed in the scheme of Jesus Christ in regard to his Church, the abounding of her evils, the resources which her spouse has in preparation for her), and who, by a necessary consequence of their blindness and insensibility, listen to or read only with disgust what is said concerning the ministry of Elias. Having only false ideas concerning the blessings and calamities which have attended the Christian religion, and of the deplorable state to which it is reduced at this day (A.D. 1806), they have no longer any inclination to occupy their thoughts with the *grand renovation* which is promised to it in the Latter Times. They are pleased to

* The reader must pardon this language, for it is not mine; it comes from a writer of the Church of Rome.

put off to the end of the world and to the approach of the Last Judgment* the coming of this prophet and the exercise of his ministry. They are even tempted to regard as enthusiasts and *illuminati* those of their brethren, who, being vividly touched with the evils with which the Church is inundated, sigh after the coming of a powerful restorer, who is to re-establish all things, and renew the youth of the Church as that of an eagle."

"Oh! that for a moment they would come out of their indifference; that they would begin to feel a lively interest in the destinies of religion; that they would judge of its goods and evils not by the senses but by faith; and, justly alarmed at the perils which menace it and the great scandals which dishonor it, would demand with a holy inquietude, whether there are not in the Holy Scriptures some means for placing it in a state of safety, some remedies to restore it to its pristine vigor and ancient glory; that, deeply impressed with the subject, they would open their minds and hearts to the promise which is made to it of powerful succour in a day of storms and trials so terrible that even the very elect would perish if such a calamity were possible. They will see with humble acknowledgment that it is neither illusion nor blind enthusiasm, but a considerable part of Christian piety, to occupy our thoughts with the *renovation of the Church*, to make it the *continual object of our prayers*; to *desire with ardent aspirations* the coming of the holy prophet, who is destined to be the minister of *a revolution so astonishing and so desirable*."

But when this minister of a revolution so astonishing and desirable comes; what kind of reception, according to Father Lambert, is he to experience from the greater part of the professedly Christian Church? In a somewhat hyperbolic style he continues, p. 168;—

"In order to know how this precursor will be treated, we have only to see how *He* has been treated for whom he came to prepare the way. If you except some small number of disciples, and moreover very obscure, who recognized Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the whole

* In which respect are they not right?

body of the nation rejected him with scorn and pronounced an anathema against him as a blasphemer, a sacrilegious usurper of the title of the Son of God."

. . . "Christian nations will fall into the same scorn with regard to his holy prophet. Corrupted a thousand times more by pride, by the presumption of a false righteousness, by impiety, by a life of ease, by all the passions which agitated the synagogue, they will be far from reverencing as a distinguished minister, the greatest of prophets, the precursor and herald of the Son of God,—a man, who both in his latter ministry and his first mission, will be endowed with nothing but what is of low esteem in the eyes of the flesh."

"Who knows, even, under what other veils the Divine Justice may conceal him? Justly aggravated by our pride and unbelief, He will in his wrath be always furnishing us with pretexts of increasing plausibility for rejecting his messenger. He will not be sparing in the darkness he sends, because we ourselves shall have preferred darkness to light. We have only too much deserved the snares which await us, and which are occasioned not merely by persuading ourselves into error, or rendering it inevitable, but by his clothing his minister outwardly with a character so humble, that the crowd of evil Christians will be entrapped and deceived by it. The lowly and upright hearts, however, though small in number, will recognize under veils so mean and repulsive, a man of God. All the rest will regard him with horror and disdain, as an impostor, a disturber of the Church and State, and with one applausive consent will sentence him to condemnation and punishment."

. . . "The text of the Evangelist above cited offers still further relations between that which happened to Christ, and the lot reserved for his minister. It was not in a mere popular commotion that the Saviour of the world was put to death: it was by public authority that his life was taken away. It was not merely the civil power which condemned him: he was declared to be a blasphemer, sacrilegious, impious, and as such worthy of death, by the grand council of the people of God. *It was the Sovereign Pontiff presiding over the college of Priests who launched against Jesus the last anathema.* Thus did each of the two

powers unite to proscribe him, and by this means was completed the ignominy of the adorable victim."

It is in a similar strain that Father Lambert proceeds to say that this prophet will be unknown, rejected with scorn by the great tribe of Priests, Pastors, Pontiffs of the true religion, and the immense multitude of Christians seduced and misled by their chiefs.

It may be objected that, to say the least, this language is too highly wrought, and the entire picture overcolored and exaggerated; as is usual with Roman Catholic illustrations of the times of Antichrist. Be it so; yet after being deprived of its hyperbole, what is the simple fact that remains? That the Church is in expectation of some person or persons whom in the latter times God will raise up to throw a new light upon the Scriptures, and that the knowledge of the Scriptures thus taught and proclaimed, will not be received by the great body of professing Christians.

Cocceius indeed on Malachi iv., says, that when Elias is announced as preceding the Second Advent of the Lord, it does not follow that he is necessarily to come in person any more than he did at the First Advent; but that he may come in the way of analogy, since "God has reserved it to his own power whether he will send as his public herald Elias, or one similar to Elias."

That some interpreter will appear and throw a new light upon Scripture, and hence upon human nature, is a conviction which has taken possession of many minds which seem to have had the smallest possible tendency to enthusiasm. Thus in the calm and contemplative works of Mr. Knox, (*Remains*, vol. iii., p. 218, *Letter to Mrs. Hannah More*,) we find the following remark;—

"Probably I shall not live to see what I am wishing for, but *I have not the smallest doubt of its taking place*, and that at no very

distant period. *Some interpreter*, 'one of a thousand,' will come forth and throw so *new* and so *bright a light* both upon human nature and upon *Scripture*, and will so convincingly demonstrate that there is a genuine philosophy (most profound in its principles, most sublime in its results, yet when laid open so self-evident as to be irresistible) which is common both to human nature and *Holy Scripture*, and which constitutes the most exquisite harmony between them; that capable minds (and such are multiplying) will yield themselves to the view thus opened upon them with a fulness of satisfaction and a completeness of acquiescence never, as I believe, till then exemplified. Some pious persons have supposed the probability of a second Pentecost, and that nothing short of this could effect the promised extension of righteousness and peace: I own it strikes me very differently. I believe the full establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom will grow out of the *perfect ascendancy of good sense* on the one hand (towards which many unprecedented movements of Providence are advancing us), and *a right understanding of revealed truth* on the other; which blessing, as I said, will, I suppose, appear the result of extraordinary penetration in the mind of the discoverer; nothing very wonderful, except wonderful felicity of discernment, seeming to accompany it. I do not say that the discovery will as expeditiously run over Europe as Galileo's did in his *Sidereus Nuntius*; but *most confident I am that the truth will spring forth*, and will be diffused, and will meet a reception worthy of itself and of the errand which God has sent it from heaven to earth."

The simple fact, then, that in some age or other of the Church during the Antichristian confederacy, some one or more individuals shall arise who will be divinely instructed upon the subject of prophecy; that the teaching of these will be rejected by the great mass of professing Christians; that it will be received by only a few whose principles will be held in aversion; may be regarded as the undeniable teaching of Catholic tradition, whether in the Church of Rome or the Protestant Church.

Such being then the conviction which has widely prevailed both in ancient and modern times, it may be asked what is the

cause of it? Is it merely tradition? or is it the result of a just interpretation of Scripture? or is there any like rational argument in its favor? Here then we come to an important question. For, on looking to the authorities cited in the present work, we find it distinctly affirmed, that the same Spirit which presides over the inspiration of the prophets presides also over their interpretation.

Thus in the exposition on Philadelphia, vol. i., p. 422, Pererius says, "The knowledge of the Scriptures the Lord imparts to whom he will." p. 423; "No one can understand the Divine Scriptures as he ought, unless God shall open to him its sense and meaning." "As the Divine Scripture is the production not of man but of the Divine Spirit, so it is by no other than the Divine Spirit that one can understand and interpret it rightly as he ought."

So likewise De Lyra, p. 424;—

"He hath the key of David, the power of opening the meaning of the Scriptures: because no one can hinder from understanding the Scriptures those whom he wills to instruct, nor can any one understand them unless he first open."

So again in the exposition of the Seven Sealed Book, vol. ii., p. 55, Origen says; "It is true of all Scripture, that the Word who shut it must open it;" and again, that "we should not only study to learn the Sacred Scriptures, but also pray to the Lord and beseech him day and night that the Lamb of the tribe of Judah may come and himself take the sealed book and vouchsafe to open it."

Bossuet expressly remarks in his Preface to the Apocalypse, art. 18, that "the same Spirit which presides over the inspiration of the prophets, presides also over their interpretation;" that "God inspires them when he will, and gives an understanding of them when he will."

Moreover Ambrose Ansbert more than once distinctly affirms

that in his own interpretations of the Apocalypse he was guided often by divine inspiration. Thus on the words in chap. xix., 9, ‘These are the true sayings of God,’ he observes ;—

“The same thing is said by divine inspiration (*divinitus*) to the Church, when the Word of God is revealed to it, and the same truth which is here recorded. For there are as it were words of God addressed to man, when the same Lord gives instruction to him by an internal inspiration (*aspiratione*) affecting the motion of the heart, and without any sound of the voice. And, if I may judge from my own experience, I remember with thankfulness that in the course of my present undertaking this has happened to myself, who am the least of all, pressed down by the weight of sin, and slow to understand. For, if the case be in any manner such as I have (*interiorly*) heard, then have I heard that the words of this revelation are true, in so far as following the Spirit which giveth life, and not suffering myself to be killed by the letter, I pursue only the mystical senses. Though myself unwise, yet have I thus understood the Apocalypse, and thus have I taught it.”

Now whatever may be thought of the interpretations of Ambrose Ansbert, there is perhaps scarcely a single instance in which a charge of enthusiasm or fanaticism has been urged against him on this account. Where indeed the Apocalypse is literally interpreted, such a claim to divine inspiration may be regarded as unreasonable ; but that the inspiration of the Spirit is requisite in order to discern spiritual things, only an unbeliever can deny. If the Apocalypse relates primarily to the spiritual world, how can it be otherwise than that in order to understand the Apocalypse, an interpreter must have the spiritual world open to him ? It may be denied that it does relate to the spiritual world : be it so : and on this ground it may be conceded that extraordinary inspiration is not required in order to understand it ; but it would have been inconsistent in any one to say that it does, as Swedenborg says, and yet not to lay claim to extraordinary inspiration.

Indeed this argument is virtually conceded by Calmet, in the Preface to his *Literal Commentary on the Apocalypse*, art. 4. "For," says he, "when I commenced my labors upon this book, I was in no way prepossessed in its favor. I considered it to be an enigma, *the explication of which was impossible to man without a particular revelation*. I regarded all commentators who had undertaken its explanation, as persons who being in the midst of darkness, move on at adventure whithersoever their good or ill fortune may lead them." On closer investigation of the matter however, Calmet thought that the difficulties mostly disappeared. That it was only requisite, as he says, to despoil the figures of the Apocalypse of their prophetic and enigmatical air, to give to things their veritable names and their natural face, in order to make the Apocalypse a veritable history. It was clear then that the alternative, in Calmet's opinion, was between his own historical interpretation and the necessity of a particular revelation. And yet how few even in the Roman Catholic church, to say nothing of the Protestant, regard Calmet's explanation as the true one. And under any circumstances, if the only alternative now remaining is between a satisfactory historical explanation of the Apocalypse on the one side, and the necessity of a particular revelation on the other, may it not be asked whether any such historical explanation has yet been given so satisfactory, as to shew beyond a doubt that there is no necessity for a particular revelation in order to explain it? And if the necessity of a particular revelation may be considered at least uncertain or dubious, why is an interpreter to be set aside merely because he claims it?

If it be replied, that the objection to Swedenborg's exposition is not on the ground of his laying claim to inspiration, but on the ground of its untruth; I reply, untrue in what respect? In respect of interpretation? But the present volumes demonstrate that he has the highest authorities in the Church, both

ancient and modern, in his favor. In respect of the application? Here is the real difficulty. No Church likes to be condemned; and naturally seeks to make the Apocalypse prophecy smooth things concerning itself.

As however this subject is treated of in the course of the present work, it is unnecessary now to pursue it further.

With these prefatory remarks it may be desirable to set before the reader a general view of the exposition of the Apocalypse, as given in the present volumes.

First, then, the whole Apoealypse is regarded by Swedenborg as one consecutive prophecy. The argument in favor of this view of the subject is contained in the First Preliminary Discourse: it is taken, for the most part, from the work of Alcasar, and is given at considerable length in consequence of this portion of his work being comparatively little known.

In the Second Preliminary Discourse, the doctrine of the Incarnation has been treated of in referenee to the interpretation of some parts of the Apocalypse; and in the Third Preliminary Discourse, the doctrines of Mediation and of the Mediatorial Kingdom, as connected with the former; for although symbolical theology, as such, is not argumentative, yet if any one should therefore presume that it is not doctrinal, this would be a great mistake; since we shall find from beginning to end, in the Apocalypse, the most important doctrinal truths and heresies set before us in symbolical forms.

The more immediate introduction however to the present work on the Apocalypse is contained in the Supplement to Chapter XX., Vol. IV.,* p. 362, which treats of DIVINE ORDER; and the argument of which is as follows;—

* At the commencement of this work the author expected that he should be able to comprise the whole in Three Volumes, and accordingly he has occasionally referred to the subject of DIVINE ORDER, as occurring in the *Third* Volume, whereas he has been obliged to reserve it for the *Fourth*. The author mentions the error here that the reader may correct it, wherever it occurs.

First ; that before the First Advent all things had fallen into disorder ; that our Lord became incarnate that by Redemption he might reduce all things to order ; that this was effected by a process of Judgment and Creation, constituting that *ἀνακεφαλαίωσις* or gathering together into one, in the fulness of times, which was spoken of by the apostle Paul in Eph. i., 10 ; the result of which was the making of all things new at the First Advent, such as New Heavens, a New Earth, and a New Church.

Secondly ; that after this reduction to order the Church fell again into disorder, till, having lost its unity, it lost its being ; that this was foretold by our Lord in Matthew xxiv., in which chapter he likewise promised to come again in clouds, and a second time to restore all things to order ; or, in other words, in the fulness of times again to gather them together into one or under one head ; so that the Apocalypse relates to an *ἀνακεφαλαίωσις* of the same kind with that mentioned in Ephesians i., 10. Hence,

Thirdly ; that this second *ἀνακεφαλαίωσις* was in like manner a process of Judgment and Creation, and that it is in reference to this that our Lord assumes the title of the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last.

Fourthly ; that this judgment and new creation were accomplished by a Second Advent of the Word or of Divine Wisdom coming in clouds of glory, which are those of the Scriptures ; and which imply a new manifestation or revelation of Divine Wisdom.

Fifthly ; that the scene of the *ἀνακεφαλαίωσις* at the Second Advent, in the Apocalypse, lies primarily in the spiritual world and subordinately in the natural ; in like manner also as at the First Advent.

And lastly ; that the result of the whole process of judgment and creation are New Heavens, a New Earth, a New Age

or Economy, and a New Church, called in the Apocalypse the New Jerusalem ; so that the First and Second Advents are parallels one to the other, which is the reason of the two being so frequently blended together in Scripture, as to appear sometimes to be almost inseparable.

In this manner then are determined the *subject matter* of the Apocalypse, or warning, judgment, and creation ; the *Agent* in this process, or the Word of God ; the *scene* in which it is accomplished, or the spiritual world primarily, the natural subordinately ; the *time* of the process, namely, a crisis ; the *result* of the process, namely, a New Church.

This being the general argument of the work, we proceed farther into particulars. The first three chapters of the Apocalypse relate to the Seven Churches, that is, to the Catholic Church ; in which its several states are announced, and warning is given to desist from its evils and falses, as the coming of the Lord to Judgment is at hand.

The Fourth and Fifth Chapters relate to the preparations for this coming, and especially to the opening of the Book by the Lamb ; which Book signifies primarily the Scriptures, and secondarily the states of those who are to be judged from out of the Scriptures.

The Sixth Chapter relates to the first process of the *Judicium Discretionis*, or the opening of the seals by the Lamb ; *i. e.*, the successive manifestations of the states of the Catholic Church from out of the Seven Sealed Book.

The Seventh Chapter relates to the several classes of the good, who, in the process of judgment, are first separated from the evil who are about to be tried and examined.

The Eighth and Ninth Chapters relate to the second act of the *Judicium Discretionis* or sounding of the Trumpets, or the successive developments of the character of the wicked more especially in relation to truth ; *i. e.*, of those who have been pro-

fessed members of Protestant churches, and have believed themselves to be justified by faith alone notwithstanding their wicked lives.

The Tenth Chapter relates to the descent of the Lord, and his declaration that the state of the Church is such that its time shall be no longer.

The Eleventh Chapter treats of the Church in relation to the Two Witnesses or the Two Tables of the Law, which are the essentials of the New Church.

The Twelfth Chapter relates to the beginning of a New Church before the old one is finally destroyed.

The Thirteenth Chapter, to the Protestant Church as existing respectively among the laity and clergy.

The Fourteenth Chapter, to the state of those who are to be saved; warning to those who will perish; and an announcement of the last act of the *Judicium Discretionis*.

The Fifteenth and Sixteenth Chapters, to final and full developments of the states of the Reformed Church, as manifested by an outpouring of the Vials.

The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Chapters, to final and full developments of the states of the Roman Catholic Church in still remoter bounds of the spiritual world, as manifested after the devastation of the Protestant Church.

The Nineteenth Chapter, to the coming of the Word, or the new revelation of Divine Truth, to combat error, and establish a New Church.

The Twentieth Chapter, to the manifestation of the evils of those who are in the extreme boundaries of the spiritual world, designated by Gog and Magog; the release of the good who were there held in captivity, the final *Judicium Condemnationis*, and hence the Reduction of all things to Order.

The Twenty-first and Twenty-second Chapters, to the New Dispensation and the New Church to be established.

More generally still; the first part of the Apocalypse relates to the visitation and warning of the Catholic Church; the second, to the opening of the Seals or successive manifestation of its states; the third, to the sounding of the Trumpets, or the development of its states more particularly in regard to truth; the fourth, to the outpouring of the Vials, or development of its states more particularly in regard to good; the Twentieth Chapter, to the Judgment of condemnation; the Twenty-first and Twenty-second, to the new Creation; so that the principal topics of the Apocalypse, are Visitation and Warning, Examination and Judgment, Restoration and Creation; or again, Warning, Judgment, Creation; or most generally, the Old Heaven and Earth and the New Heaven and Earth, the Old Church and the New Church.

Thus it may be observed that the first three chapters relate to warning to the Catholic Church; the next seventeen, to the developments and separations of the evil and the good; and the two last chapters, to the New Creation.

Having thus stated the design of the Apocalypse as explained by Swedenborg, it is desirable to make a few remarks on the authorities which are substituted in the present work in the place of his larger exposition.

The design of the present work, then, is to form an introduction to the spiritual meaning of the Apocalypse as given by Swedenborg, and also to vindicate his interpretations, which, as far as regards the testimony of the Church, the impartial reader will admit to be completely justified. Not that the authorities adduced can ever supersede the interpretations of Swedenborg, but that they demonstrate that no objection can be made to the one without equally involving the other; that they constitute therefore a *primâ facie* reason for a serious and devout study of his interpretations, and an appeal to those Bereans among us in the present day, of whom in former times it is said, ‘they were

more noble than those in Thessalonica, and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so,' Acts xvii., 11.

The reader, moreover, will perceive in many parts of the present work, that it does not argue from the writings of Swedenborg to those of other interpreters, but from these to the writings of Swedenborg; and although this method has its disadvantages, and restricts the argument to the use of expressions which, examined by the principles of Swedenborg, are not strictly accurate; yet the expressions may be regarded as containing approximations to his principles, of such a nature as to negative all other teaching of an opposite kind, however popularly received, and to be concessions of a most important character.

In other respects I must appeal to the indulgence of the reader. The work has been of so extremely arduous a nature, that the attention of the author has been for the most part obliged to be confined to one thing, viz., the collection and arrangement of authorities; he has consequently been obliged to omit in general the subject of critical readings of the original, and critical translations of passages in Swedenborg. He has for the most part taken both as he found them; leaving to a future period whatever corrections in this respect may be thought necessary, and the making of which will of course depend upon the estimate which may be formed of the present work, and its degree of utility.

To Him who has sustained me throughout this long course of investigation, and enabled me to bring these efforts to a close, even the only wise God our Saviour, is my devout and grateful adoration due. To his Church are these humble efforts dedicated; trusting that whatsoever is untrue in these volumes I may be willing to acknowledge and correct, and that whatsoever is true in them may contribute to make ready the way for the descent of 'the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which cometh

down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.'

Reader ! if you have ever been prepossessed against the theological writings of Swedenborg in consequence of any persuasion that his interpretations are fanciful or arbitrary, you have now the opportunity of comparing his interpretations with those of the most distinguished writers, whether Patristic, Roman Catholic, or Protestant, of which the Church can boast : judge therefore for yourself, and may the Spirit of Truth alone guide you in your judgment.

Stoke Newington,
Oct. 7, 1851.

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THE SPIRITUAL
EXPOSITION OF THE APOCALYPSE.

FIRST PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

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THE difficulty of the interpretation of the Apocalypse has become almost proverbial among theologians, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant.

Thus, in his *Fifth Proemial Remark*, Alcasar, treating of the obscurity of this book, presents to the reader the following opinions of authors belonging to the Roman Catholic communion ;—

“ Dionysius of Alexandria, as cited in Eusebius, *book vii. Hist., chap. 23*, plainly asserted; that ‘ he did not understand the Apocalypse; and that the things which are written therein exceeded and surpassed the limits of his apprehension.’ ”

“ Richard of St. Victor, in his *First Prologue*, observes; that ‘ he could not attain to the marrow of the mysteries in this

book; and that he aimed only to gather some of the things which he saw lying on the surface.’”

“Cajetan, at the end of his *New Testament*, says; ‘I confess I do not understand the Apocalypse; let him explain it to whom God shall give the power to do so.’”

“Hentenius in giving his opinion asserts, that ‘it is not possible that in any given exposition, every particular should exactly coincide; and that it is sufficient if we hold to the general contents of each chapter.’”

“Pannonius, in his *Preface*, says, that ‘the Apocalypse is a work of immense difficulty.’”

“Arias Montanus, in his *Prologue*, asserts, that after thirty years study of the Sacred Scriptures, it was his custom to say; ‘that the reading of the Apocalypse was understood by himself better than by any of the commentators whom he had happened to read; since they proceeded to explain it as if they understood it, and then, by their varying expositions, rendered it only the more obscure; whereas he himself confessed that he did not understand it at all.’”

“Gagneus, in his *Preface*, says; that ‘the abstruse arcana of this prophecy were known only to St. John; and that to divine what is in them was not for himself to undertake, but for the person who should be inspired by the Holy Spirit.’”

“Salmeron, in his *Fourth Preludium*, observes; that ‘the exposition of the Apocalypse is like the quadrature of the circle; of which we are accustomed to say, that it is knowable but not yet known;’ and *fol. p. 451*, he adds, that ‘the Apocalypse is inaccessible;’ and in his *First Preludium* asserts, that it ‘is a bold and rash thing to promise an exact and perfect explication of it.’ This however he does not appear to say as condemning others; but for the purpose only of excusing himself, since he subjoins; that his own remarks on it would be only general; and that as to the remaining portions of which he was greatly in doubt, these he left to persons who were more able to explain them; for that to apply the details of exposition to the details of prophecy was a burden too heavy for his own shoulders to carry.”

“Pererius, in his *Prologue, Disputation i.*, affirms; that ‘many were of opinion, that THE APOCALYPSE MUST BE ALTOGETHER IN-COMPREHENSIBLE WITHOUT AN ESPECIAL REVELATION FROM GOD;’

and in *Disputation* iii., he treats at large concerning the great obscurity of this book, and acknowledges that no genuine exposition of the Apocalypse appeared as yet to be found out.”

“Ribera, in his *Proemium*, affirms; that ‘the Apocalypse is a great and wide sea, full of storms and tempests . . . in which all human wisdom is swallowed up.’”

“Viegas, in a letter to Odoardus, observes; that to the Apocalypse agrees that passage in Ecclesiasticus, vi., 21, *She will lie upon him as a mighty stone of trial, and he will cast her from him ere it be long.* And again, in the prophet Zecharias, xii., 3, *All that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces*; like that most ponderous stone of which Jerome treats in his remarks upon that passage. And as I have happened to make mention of so great a doctor, let him bring up the rear of these authorities, and say what he himself thinks upon this matter. Addressing himself to Paulinus, he says; ‘In the Apocalypse a book is exhibited sealed with seven seals, which if you give to the learned man to read, he will answer to you, I cannot, for it is sealed. Of how great moment do persons think it in the present day to be learned? Yet they hold a sealed book; nor can they open it, unless He first unseal it who hath the key of David; who openeth and no one shutteth, and shutteth and no one openeth.’ Thus far Jerome. From all which it readily appears, how toilsome and difficult a task we undertake.”

To these opinions cited by Alcasar we may further add those of Calmet, who in his *Preface to the Apocalypse*, *Article* i., observes; that the little success which had attended the greater part of other commentators had operated as one among other reasons which had increased his fears, his aversions, and, if he might venture to say so, his despair in interpreting the Apocalypse; which he had been accustomed to regard as absolutely inexplicable; and that had he not found himself under an engagement to write upon all the books of the New Testament, he would not have hazarded his labours in an enterprise so difficult. Although, however, he thinks he ultimately succeeded in

removing some of the difficulties, yet in so doing he does not claim for his interpretations more than a certain degree of probability, but in his views he is opposed by a more recent writer of the Roman communion, namely, Pastorini.

Moreover, in p. 122, vol. i., of the Review of the Principles of Apocalyptical Interpretation may be seen the corresponding opinions of modern Protestant divines; such as Maitland, Clarke, &c., to which also we may add those of Wittsius, in his *Miscellanea Sacra*, vol. i., p. 640, on the sense of the Apocalyptic Epistles;—

“That the Apocalypse of St. John is indeed an august and divine writing, and is involved in a very great and dense eloud of enigmas; and that it not only exercises but wears the ingenuity of the most acute interpreters; nay, sometimes plunges them into a despair of attaining to its genuine sense, is the *common complaint* both of ancient and more recent interpreters.”

Such are the difficulties of a true interpretation of the Apocalypse.

With regard to those arising from literal interpretation, we have shewn that, as to principles of literal interpretation, there are none; and of course it is difficult to interpret any book when there are no principles upon which to interpret it. Moreover there are but few, if any, interpreters strictly literal; for although they profess to be so, yet, when necessity requires them to abandon this method, they have recourse either to the figurative or spiritual. Thus Calmet professes to write a literal Commentary on the Apocalypse; yet, in order to avoid difficulties, is frequently obliged to resolve the Apocalyptical language into figure, and to instruct his readers that it is to be considered as metaphor, nay, sometimes hyperbole: which indeed would be self-contradictory, were it not, that, the figurative is included in the literal by Roman Catholic writers.* The li-

* See also Alcasar on the Apocalypse, *Proemial Remark*, xx., 3. Also *Proemial Remark*, xxiv., 3.

teralist maintains that literal interpretation is easy, because the words are taken in their common acceptation; and that spiritual interpretation is obscure and arbitrary, because perplexed by uncertain secondary meanings. But, to say nothing of the absurdities of a merely literal interpretation, which have already been fully considered, the difficulty which the literalist avoids in one shape he encounters in another.* Thus how few if any literalists of modern times abide by the order observed by St. John; transposing sometimes, as they do, whole sentences, sometimes whole chapters, to arrive at the order required by their own theory! The extent to which this system has been carried on, is thus adverted to by Alcasar; in the words of a writer of his day upon the Apocalypse;—

Ninth Proemial Remark, n. 10. “It is common to this prophecy with others of the Old Testament, neither in any orderly series of visions nor in the treatment and explanation of any one vision, to observe any straightforward, distinct, and constant order, whether of times, or places, or circumstances, or dignity of subject, or of persons; but frequently to make use of anticipations and recapitulations; that is to say, things which are before to place after, and things which are after to place before, to make use of frequent and sudden transitions from one thing to another, either like or unlike it; to pass from the figure to the thing meant by the figure, or *vice versa*. And when any topic has begun to be mentioned and set forth, suddenly to drop it and go on to something else, and before the latter has been perfectly propounded, to return again to the former. This change and perturbation of order and discontinuous treatment of subjects, greatly obscure our opinion as to the things which are treated of, and disturbs and confounds the understanding of readers. This however in the prophecies is done on purpose; in order that without that Spirit of God, by which the prophecies were given, they might to mortals be im-

* Alcasar observes, in his *Sixth Proemial Remark*, n. 10, that the *early* millenarians, untrue and absurd as were their interpretations, yet did not offend against the order of the Apocalypse like subsequent writers.

penetrable; and that no divine prophecy might be considered as the invention and institution of any human faculty, reason, or wisdom. Not content with one mention of this remark, he afterwards says in *Disput.* ix., . . . ‘It is desirable to repeat, that this prophecy, or the visions which are narrated in it, are not written in this book, in any perpetual and direct series, nor according to the order either of time or circumstance; but that not unfrequently things posterior are treated of as prior, and things prior as being posterior. Nor is it always the case that when the narrative of a vision is commenced, it is continued on to the end; but it is sometimes interrupted by other and very different topics, and after this there is a return to the vision which had been previously entered on. In this book therefore there are frequent anticipations, recapitulations, transitions, and retrogressions; as also repetitions of the same topic, and of same treatment of the topic; and likewise sudden translations.’”

Whatever may be said of these views by their advocates, it is certain that to many sober-minded persons, they have the appearance of being a mere burlesque upon the true principles of interpretation. This subject however will be reverted to in the sequel. Meanwhile we observe that not only has the order of the Apocalypse been disturbed by professedly literal and even other interpreters; but, in like manner also, the order of history. For after the interpreter has taken as it were the Apocalypse to pieces, and put it together again in such a series as may suit his own theory, yet he seldom if ever finds a continuous chronological history adapted to this order; on the contrary, he is obliged to sort out the events of history to be enabled to accommodate them to his own peculiar system; and yet, with all this license in regard both to history and interpretation, how little satisfaction has resulted!

Now we have mentioned these circumstances with the view of contrasting the literal interpretation with the system of Swedenborg, illustrated and confirmed in the ensuing pages; and who, so far from interfering with the

order observed by St. John, follows it out even much more strictly than Aleasar himself, as will be shewn in the sequel.

If we turn from literal to figurative interpretation, we find the interpreter availing himself of a similar license; and if in so doing he cannot fix upon any historical events to suit the details of the prophecy, he assumes the language to be poetry, not prophecy, and the writer to be indulging in the sports of imagination instead of being under the influence of the Holy Spirit; while others go so far as to say that it is under the very influence of this Spirit that the prophet describes as real what is unreal, and that he had no intention that the reader should regard as prophetic what is purely rhetorical and ornamental.

On this subject Aleasar thus writes in his *Fifteenth Proemial Remark*, n. 8;—

“What we have hitherto said concerning the perfection of symbol, obliges us to believe, that in every individual figure of the Apocalypse no part should be left, however small, which is not explained as contributing its share to the enigmatical sense. Perhaps, however, some one may say, that it savors of over-nicety, to wish to assign a distinct application to every particular. Nor will this opinion be without its patron; since a certain sensible and learned writer, in prescribing rules for understanding the Apocalypse, has among other things recently propounded the following. ‘In treating,’ says he ‘of the visions of this book we are not to suppose that every particular is to be referred to some corresponding reality, nor are we to scrutinize into all the smallest minutiae, nor too rigorously and anxiously to stop at every word, nor to labor unnecessarily to accommodate every particular to the subject we have in view and design to inculcate. That this method is to be likewise pursued in treating the parables, Chrysostom has informed us in his *Observations on Matthew* xxv. It will therefore be sufficient to point out the scope to which the whole vision is directed, and to shew that its principal parts are aptly and agreeably accommodated, and well correspond to the subject to which we apply them.’ Such are the sentiments of this author. Beside the Sixty-third Ho-

mily of Chrysostom upon Matthew, above referred to, Theophylact on *Luke* xvi. observes, ‘ We must not too curiously enquire into all the parts of the parables, but only into such as contribute to the end in view. All the rest are to be omitted as forming the texture of the parable but not conducing to its design.’ In addition to these remarks, Augustin, *De Civitate Dei*, book xvi., chap. 2, toward the end, observes, ‘ That those things which signify nothing are interwoven into the parable for the sake of those which signify something. For the earth is ploughed only with the ploughshare ; but in order to plough, all the other parts of the machine are necessary. In harps, it is only the strings which are adapted to song ; but in order for them to be so, how many other things are there in the machinery of these instruments which never experience the touch of the performer, but which yet are in connection with the sounding parts of the instrument ? So likewise in prophetic history, some things are mentioned which signify nothing, while the others with which they are connected are the real significatives.’ ”

“ To the same purport might other remarks be adduced. But in my judgment they are greatly in error who think that what is said of parables may with like reason be extended to enigmatical visions. For the case of parables is altogether different. . . . With respect however to enigmatical visions, whoever thinks that the Holy Scriptures add things which conduce nothing to the signification of the mystery, assuredly derogates from the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. For who doubts that any given enigma would be much the more perfect, if it contained nothing which was destitute of some portion of the mystery ? Or who can be ignorant that, to introduce into an enigma certain minute details, conducing nothing to the signification, is no other than to stuff the passage with useless and empty expressions ? For what man of any understanding would venture to propound any enigma, certain parts of which were of no use and contributed nothing to the signification ? And why should that be attributed to the Holy Spirit which we think to be altogether unworthy of the wisdom and skill of any man of understanding ? When we know not how to explain or apply a thing, how much wiser would it be plainly to confess that there is some great and

abstruse mystery in it, which our small and slender wits cannot attain to, than rashly and boldly to maintain that there is no mystery in it; an opinion far different from which was that of Augustin, whose words are as follow, in the *Proemium to Psalm eviii.*, when treating of its exposition; ‘The plainer it appears to me, the deeper also it seems, so that how deep is indeed more than I can shew,’ &c. In my opinion therefore it savors more of wisdom, in imitation of Augustin, so long as there remain any of the parts which cannot be explained and applied, to believe that we have not attained to the scope of the vision, than to persuade ourselves that it is sufficient to assign an application to the prominent parts, and that we ought not to seek any for the more minute. Certainly it is better to make confession of our ignorance, than to throw the blame of it upon Scripture. For if in the case of any enigma proposed by a person of an acute and clear understanding, we do not undeservedly deride him who boasts that he has attained to its true sense, when nevertheless some parts of it still remain neither understood by himself nor applied; so do we no injustice in deriding him who affirms, that he understands any enigma of the Sacred Scripture, only because he has given an application to what appeared to him to be the principal part of it, leaving out the other parts wholly intact.” . . .

. . . “ To return to Chrysostom and Theophylact. I conceive it to be probable that it was not their intention to affirm that in the parables there were any superfluous words; but only that whosoever could not attain to the meaning of all the parts, should be content with understanding only the principal; and endeavoring to perceive in them useful instruction; nor be solicitous so much with respect to any new inquisition into mysteries, as rather to derive profit from what he already understands. In this view of the case, there is no denial that every particle of the parables, however small, abounds in recondite meanings; but preachers are only prudently admonished, to give heed rather to the profit of their audience, than to any shew of ingenious research.”

“ Whatever may have been the design of Chrysostom and Theophylact, it is certainly beyond a doubt; that he who can apply aptly and symmetrically every part of an enigmatical

vision, imparts to all persons much more satisfaction than he who applies only those which appear to him to be the more prominent. When therefore any exposition is discovered which admirably fits together all the parts, even the most minute, it is shewn to demonstration, that the interpretation which could not give the application of all the parts, was not the true and genuine one."

Who can doubt that, as Alcasar here remarks, it is much better for a person to confess his ignorance, than, through the medium of pretended interpretations, to profess to know that of which after all he is ignorant; particularly when these interpretations throw no light upon the subject, but resolve the narrative into metaphor, fiction, and unreality? In the foregoing observations, therefore, Alcasar answers not only those writers in his own church who pretend to a knowledge they do not possess, but those also among Protestants whose sentiments upon this subject may be seen at large, and the Reply to them, in the Review of the Principles of Apocalyptical Interpretation, vol. i., chap. 4.

That every word in the Apocalypse is full of meaning has been the conviction of many eminent writers besides Alcasar. Jerome asserted that "in the Apocalypse of John there are as many mysteries (*sacramenta*) as there are words," and this opinion of Jerome is quoted and adopted in the *Glossa Ordinaria*, p. 241, the *Biblia Maxima* of De La Haye, p. 723, the *Comments* of Rupertus (in the Prologue), and of A. Lapide, p. 34, and others. Among Protestant writers, Bishop Horsely observes; *—

"The more I read this wonderful book (the Apocalypse) the more I am convinced that the precision of the phraseology is little short of mathematical accuracy. The language seems highly adorned, but the ornaments are not redundancies; they are not of that sort, that the proposition would remain the same if the epithets were expunged. And in passages which

* *Habershon's Symbolical Dictionary*, p. 116.

may seem similar, there never is the smallest variation of style, but it points to something of diversity either in the subject or the predicate.”

Again, Wordsworth observes in his *Exposition of the Apocalypse*, p. 162 ;—

“Every sentence of this book is pregnant with meaning. The more it is studied, the more will this be found to be the case. Not a word ought to pass unnoticed ;” (and again in a note ;)
 “The learned Henry More says very truly, *Book v.*, 15 ; ‘There never was any book penned with that artifice as this of the Apocalypse ; as if every word were weighed in a balance before it was set down.’”

These views of the inspired language of the Apocalypse, are those which are adopted in the present work ; in which the *spiritual* sense of the Apocalypse is explained, illustrated, and confirmed by ancient and modern authorities.

In treating of this spiritual sense, we shall begin by pointing out some of the obstacles to its general reception ; and then proceed to arguments in its favor.

With regard to these obstacles, we observe that they arise chiefly from the strong prepossessions which prevail against spiritual truth, in consequence of the prevailing tendency to pure naturalism, and of inability to distinguish between spurious and genuine spirituality.

Thus a modern writer observes in his *Sermons on the Conversion and Restoration of the Jews*, p. 32 ;—

“That is *spiritual*, which agrees with the mind of the spirit—that is carnal, which is the offspring of the unaided human imagination. The grammatical principle of interpretation, therefore, as agreeing with the mind of the spirit in the predictions respecting the birth, death, and resurrection of the Lord, is *spiritual* ; and the figurative interpretation, as being opposed to the mind of the spirit in all those passages, is not spiritual, but carnal.”

Now, according to the foregoing argument, all those who saw our Saviour in the flesh believed in a spiritual

truth, because having seen, they believed in the historical fact of the death and resurrection of the Lord; and this, it would seem, constitutes a spiritual believer; inasmuch as this, and no more, is what the Spirit intended.

Other authors, however, are willing to accept a higher and spiritual sense of prophecy, provided the literal also be conceded. But by the literal sense they understand the literal destruction of the enemies of the Jews, the literal massacre perpetrated by the saints at Armageddon: and so forth. In reply to which we observe that two such senses are wholly incompatible; the literalist must not seek to unite things holy and profane, but repudiate all such profanations before he can see the things which pertain to the kingdom of God.

Not only, however, has spiritual truth been identified with natural, but literalists have proceeded still further, and made it *subordinate* to natural.

Thus a modern writer observes in his work on the *Restoration of the Jews, Introductory Remarks*, p. 18;—

“Let us first notice, as a general principle of interpretation, that the Scriptures are written in a plain and intelligible way, (Prov. viii., 8, 9,) adapted to those to whom they were first addressed, and to all ages. Where a literal sense involves no absurdity or manifest figure, it is, in the first place, to be held as the true and right sense; and no farther deeper meaning should be allowed to shut out this *first* sense, which must be true, whatever else may further be drawn from it. God means fully, what to the people He addresses, He plainly says.* Here is the sure foundation of all Christian faith, and let us not be moved from it.”

Again, p. 24;—

* Mede says, “I cannot be persuaded to forsake the proper and usual import of scripture language, where neither the insinuation of the text itself, nor manifest tokens of allegory, nor the necessity and the nature of the things spoken of (which will bear no other sense) do warrant it. For to do so were to lose all footing of divine testimony, and instead of Scripture to believe mine own imaginations.” He then applies this principle to Rev. xx. See *Works*, 770.

“We must not, we need not, rob them, the Jews, nor weaken their interest in the literal, entire, and complete fulfilment of the prediction in ages to come, when they shall nationally turn to the Lord; and still less should we do it under the pretence of exalting the Scriptures by comprising the whole in a *merely spiritual sense*.”

“The prophecies seem to be expressed, as specially to guard us against mistakes; for it is impossible in many prophecies, at least with our present knowledge and experience, to sustain a figurative interpretation throughout with consistency; while a literal interpretation, admitting there may be a future fulfilment, is easy, perspicuous, and profitable. Hence we judge all such *merely* figurative interpretations fail of the full and primary meaning of the Holy Spirit, in giving the prophecies for the edification of the church.”

In the figurative the author includes the spiritual; and by *primary* meaning he seems to signify a meaning primary not only in order but in importance; the spiritual sense being considered secondary because subordinate.

Another modern writer takes a similar view of the subject in his *Elements of Prophecy*, p. 129;—

“We may now pass on to notice another principle to be observed in the interpretation of prophecy; and that is the *adherence to the literal signification* of the words of the text, in all cases; unless there be some clear intimation in the text or context, or some warrant from the general use of particular phrases, to the contrary.”

“Very important considerations are involved in this matter. It seems to be a device of satan, when he cannot hope to lead men altogether from the faith of Scripture, to become ‘an angel of light,’ and in that character to lead them to some subtlety in the way of the interpretation or application of Scripture, which virtually renders it useless: and among these modes, is that of setting the ingenuity to work to find out what is called a *spiritual* meaning, in sentences and expressions where the Holy Ghost probably never intended it. Such interpretations may be justifiable in the way of an *accommodated* and

secondary sense; provided they be not allowed in any way to interfere with, or to supersede the literal; but if they be allowed to become unwarrantably the *primary* sense, they then have practically the effect of drawing off our attention from the real instruction which the Holy Spirit designs to give us, and thus, of rendering void the word of God."

Both these and other writers profess to admit the existence of a spiritual sense; nay, profess occasionally a great veneration of it; but maintain that, for the most part, in the interpretation of prophecy it must be regarded as subordinate to the literal sense.*

Not only, however, has the spiritual sense been made subordinate to the literal, but the very existence of a spiritual sense has been virtually denied.

This denial is obvious wherever the spiritual sense is maintained to be an unreality; and numerous writers maintain this opinion, *making no difference between a true and a*

* In reply to this, Woodhouse observes in his work on the *Apocalypse*, p. 220;—"The learned writer above quoted (Mede) was aware, that the fates of the Roman Empire were beneath the dignity of this sacred book. For, having dispatched that part of his work which he supposes to contain them, 'We now proceed,' says he, 'to another and much the *most noble* prophecy, because it contains the history of religion and of the church.'"

Again, Mr. Horne in his *Introduction to the Scriptures*, vol. ii., p. 450, observes;—"The literal sense, it has been well observed, is, undoubtedly, first in point of nature, as well as in order of signification; and consequently, when investigating the meaning of any passage, this must be ascertained before we proceed to search out its mystical import; but the true and genuine mystical or *spiritual sense excels the literal in dignity*, the latter being only the medium of conveying the former, which is more evidently designed by the Holy Spirit. For instance, in Num. xxi., 8, 9, compared with John iii., 14, the brazen serpent, said to have been lifted up, in order to signify the lifting up of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world; and consequently, that the type might serve to designate the antitype."

In these remarks it is admitted, that wherever the spiritual sense exists, so far from being subordinate to the literal, the literal is subordinate to the spiritual, since the literal sense is only the medium of conveying the spiritual, which is the sense more evidently designed by the Holy Spirit. Either therefore in any given passage, the spiritual sense does not exist at all; or if it exist, it is of primary and not subordinate importance.

false spiritualism; but comprehending both in one and the same indiscriminate reprobation. A modern writer observes in his *Lectures on Prophecy*, p. 3, lect. ii. ;—

“Once more, we all know what havoc the allegorizing system of Origen made with the Scriptures;—by not only diverting men from the plain and literal sense, but by opening a door for anything to be taught as God’s word, which the imagination of the expositor might choose to call its allegorical meaning;—a system, therefore, which has justly been condemned, and still is condemned, by all Protestant expositors. But it is forgotten that the *spiritualizing system*, which has obtained in our own times, is obnoxious to precisely the same objection, that it is a mode of interpretation defined by no fixed and clear principles;—supported in general by no warrant from Scripture;—subject to the caprice of any sportive or extravagant imagination;—equally leading men from the truth and turning them unto fables;—converting the pure and substantial glory which is to be brought to us at the appearing and kingdom of Christ, into that meagre and corrupt shadow of it, which we now behold in the visible church;—robbing the Jew of all the promises made to him, and giving them to the Gentiles;—besides being guilty of many other errors, which time will not permit me to enumerate.”

Again let the reader remark the very cheap estimation in which all professedly spiritual interpretation is held in the following passages by a millenarian writer on the *Popular Objections to the Pre-millennial Advent*, p. 70 :—

“On this great question of interpretation, hang suspended all the differences between millenarians and anti-millenarians. The former assert that these passages, which are merely specimens of the general style of all the prophets, can only be satisfactorily and consistently understood, in the simple, obvious, straightforward meaning of the language. If forced into a figurative application to the Gentile church, as involving only *spiritual blessings*, to the exclusion of the great literal events themselves; they necessarily lead to mere *vague generalities*, and positive inconsistencies and contradictions.”

In other parts of the work, the author proceeds in a similar manner to refer to spiritual interpretations as mere nonentities and unrealities ; holding in the lightest possible estimation the spiritual sense of Scripture, while the literal is professedly venerated. The literal sense is said to be the primary, the spiritual the secondary ; the literal sense the one intended by the spirit, the spiritual for the most part the one intended by man ; the literal is definite, the spiritual vague ; the literal is a reality, the spiritual a nonentity.*

Many of these writers, notwithstanding, profess to receive a spiritual sense ; but then either it is a spiritual considered as identical with the natural, or as so depreciated in importance, as to make it a matter of indifference whether it be received or not.

Not only, moreover, has the spiritual sense been virtually *denied*, but unhappily it has even been *execrated*. A writer, before quoted, in his *Sermons on the Restoration and Conversion of the Jews*, observes, p. 37 ;—

“The main part of the controversy with the Jews is a question of interpretation. The Jewish prophets predicted the coming of a Redeemer. They described his person and his offices—they furnished criteria whereby, when he appeared, he might be known. All this the Jews admit, but deny that Jesus was the person. Our business, therefore, is to shew them how the life, and death, and history of Jesus exactly agreed with

* “It is an old charge against the opponents of their (the millenarian) hypotheses, among whom in every age the church has numbered some of its best and wisest sons, that they allegorize Scripture and do away with its *realities*—as if the future blessedness and glory of the church were not *realities* ; and such as faith now feels and knows to be so, though its conceptions of them are poor and faint—as if the actual triumph of the church already, in its earthly growth, were not a sublime *reality*—as if a *spiritual* Israel inheriting the name and essence of the seed of Abraham, and from which no promise of God’s love and favor is separable, were not a glorious *reality*—as though the earthly senses, and what they see and touch and taste, were other than ministrant to the higher faculties ; or the material beauties and riches of this lower world unfit images for the intellectual and spiritual wealth of the heavenly kingdom.”—*Garbett’s Bampton Lectures*, vol. i., p. 334.

the prophetic descriptions. But to do this we must fix the principle of interpretation; we must lay down at once either the grammatical or the *spiritual*, as that by which the claims of Jesus are to be tried. They will not allow us to take either the one or the other, as may suit our convenience,—they will not consent that we should interpret the passages which we bring grammatically, and the passages which they bring *spiritually*. A choice we must make, and by that choice we must abide—*choose the spiritual interpretation and Christianity is lost*.—Every one knows that the 22nd Psalm and the 53rd chapter of Isaiah are most important to prove the truth of Christianity. The Jews interpret both *spiritually** of the Jewish people suffering under the oppression of the nations. God's righteous servant is the whole nation. He was cut off out of the land of the living, means their political annihilation. The only possible method to convince them of error, and to establish the truth of Christianity, is to assert and to establish the grammatical principle. Admit the opposite here, and we lose the strongest evidence for the confirmation of our own faith, and for the conviction of the Jews; nay, admit the principle, that God meant what He did not say, and said what He did not mean, and what confidence can be placed in any one of the divine promises, and what becomes of our hope of everlasting life? It is mere folly and trifling with the most important interests of our souls and the world, to take any other view of it. God has positively and repeatedly promised, that He will gather the Jews, that He will plant them for ever in their land; and that there they shall enjoy great temporal and spiritual advantages. Now, if these promises, so frequent as to occupy almost one half of all the prophetic writings, and so express as to be evaded only by substituting another sense, are never to be fulfilled, where is the warrant for our faith or hope! Our eternal interests all rest upon the veracity and fidelity of God; but if the great majority of his promises are never to be fulfilled to those to whom they were given, what idea can be formed of the divine veracity? *If the Jewish rabbis had ever asserted anything half so daring, they would have been held up to the*

* This is not a spiritual, but a figurative interpretation. Bishop Marsh falls into similar errors.

execration of the Christian church as blasphemers, and abhorred as the most profane of men. Indeed, infidelity itself has never said, and can never say, anything worse of the prophecies than this; that they never have been, and never will be fulfilled—that they are obscure and ambiguous enunciations, and can be made to signify anything. How do we meet such infidel objections at present? By pointing out the distinction between the vagueness of the heathen oracles, and the minute particulars of prophecy. But if, in a thousand or two thousand years hence, when, as some suppose, all these prophecies shall have been fulfilled *spiritually* to the church, an infidel shall arise, and point to these prophecies as still unfulfilled, how is his objection to be met? He will require an answer as satisfactory as that which can be furnished by the history of the sons of Ishmael, or the dispersion of the Jews; but no such answer will then be possible. *The prevalence of the spiritual interpretation will make prophecy the scorn of the Jew and the infidel, and harden them in their unbelief.* A principle, therefore, which *undermines the foundations of our faith and hope, which gives the lie to the divine promises and represents God as an equivocator, must surely be rejected as false.*”

Again, p. 58, speaking of Ezek. xiii. 15;—

“The prophet is addressing the mountains, the valleys, the rivers, and the ruined cities of Israel. Now, I defy the most ingenious *spiritual* interpreter to give any consistent sense to the passage. What do mountains, valleys, and rivers stand for spiritually? If, for instance, we say that mountains signify the high and mighty, and valleys the humble, in the Christian church, or amongst its enemies, what is the meaning of the words which immediately follow, ‘I will multiply men upon you; all the house of Israel, even all of it; and I will multiply upon you man and beast?’ There is in this chapter a difficulty which it is impossible to evade or to get over. Either this passage is to be taken grammatically, and then the Jews are to be restored; or we must confess that the prophet’s words have no meaning, and that this and a large portion of the prophetic Scriptures contain insuperable difficulties, and are, as the Roman church says, not only unnecessary, but even mischievous to the majority of readers. And hence it is that very many of the most zealous

advocates for the universal diffusion of the Scriptures, do nevertheless practically adopt the Romish principle—omit the study of a large portion of the Bible, and in their preaching and their expositions keep it entirely out of sight—and by denying the grammatical principle of interpretation, shut out the laity also from promises which were written, that we, through faith and patience, might have hope. But to conclude; I believe that the Jews are to be gathered from all the ends of the earth, and restored to the land of their forefathers; and there to be a great, and religious, and happy people, because the text and many other Scriptures, if taken in their plain grammatical sense, affirm it. And I believe that the grammatical sense is to be preferred to the *spiritual*, because the latter is opposed to the judgment of* the primitive church—*confounds all distinction between sacred and profane writings—robs us of our main evidence for believing that Jesus is the Messiah—is devoid of all Scripture authority*—and deprives the Jewish people of those privileges promised to them in the Old Testament, and confirmed to them in the New: whereas the former is proved by past experience, has the sanction of our Lord and his apostles, both with reference to the past and the future, and makes all Scripture profitable for reading and meditation.”

We have now seen, according to the foregoing writers, the progressive doom of spiritual interpretation. How—first, the spiritual is *identified with the natural*; then is made *subordinate to it*; then treated as a *nonentity*; and then lastly declared to be positive *blasphemy*. We now proceed secondly to point out a few authorities on the opposite side.

Alcasar observes in his *Proemial Remark* xxiv., 4, that Jerome reprehended the Millenarians, for their too great literality of interpretation; and that it was his own opinion with regard to the Apocalypse, “either that the whole book must be spiritually understood, or that we must acquiesce in fables,”—*omnis ille liber aut spiritualiter accipiendus est*;

* The Millenarians.

aut fabulis acquiescendum: that the same was the opinion of Epiphanius, who, in chap. ii., book 51, expressly teaches that the whole of the Apocalypse must be referred to the *spiritual* dispensations of God. Dionysius the Areopagite, in chap. iii., on the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, calls the Apocalypse a hidden and mystical vision throughout. Haymo, in his Preface to the Apocalypse, says, that in this book nothing is to be understood historically. The same was the opinion of Tychonius. Accordingly the comments upon the Apocalypse by Primasius, Bede, Ambrose, Ansbert, Anselm, Richard of St. Victor, Viegas, &c., abound in mystical interpretations.

Among writers of the Protestant church, Dr. Wordsworth observes in his Hulsean Lectures on the Apocalypse, p. 165;—

“I cannot disguise my opinion, that in recent times the literal mode has been often carried too far, and has produced low and unworthy notions concerning this glorious book. . . . Through the abuse of the literal method of interpretation, the spiritual uses of the Apocalypse have often been in danger of being lost.”

Dean Woodhouse observes on the principles of interpretation in his *Treatise on the Apocalypse, Introduction*, p. 15;—

“A third controlling principle seemed also requisite, arising from a consideration of the nature and kind of that kingdom, which had thus appeared to be the grand object of the prophecies. It is a kingdom, not temporal, but *spiritual*; ‘not a kingdom of this world,’ not established by the means and apparatus of worldly power and pomp, not bearing the external ensigns of royalty; but governing the inward man, by possession of the ruling principles; ‘The kingdom of God,’ says our Lord, ‘is within you.’ Such a kingdom may be in a great degree independent of the fates and revolutions of empires; affected only by those changes in the political world, which are calculated to produce the increase or decline of religious knowledge, and of pure profession and practice. Wars, therefore,

and conquests, and revolutions of vast extent, and of great political import, may be supposed to take place, even in the Christian world, without becoming the proper object of Christian prophecy. The inhabitants of the Christian world may be subdued by a ferocious conqueror; the sufferings of the vanquished may be such as result from ferocious conquest; the faithful servants of Christ may undergo their common share in this calamity, may suffer grievously in their property and in their persons: yet, in such times of general distress, if their religion be not denied them; if they enjoy those consolations, which, under such afflictions, their religion is designed to bestow; if, corrected by the awful visitation, not only they, but Christians of looser practice, and the inhabitants of the earth in general, shall be seen to turn to their God, and allow to his purifying religion its divine influence on their hearts and lives:—shall we expect that such a revolution should be predicted as a calamity, as a woe? Our conception of the nature of Christ's kingdom, (the object of such prophecy,) will determine us to answer in the negative. But if such a conqueror, after having subdued the bodies of men, should proceed to extend his usurped dominion over their souls; should require them to renounce their allegiance to the heavenly King; to deny their God and Redeemer;—then will succeed a conflict of another nature, and a resistance deserving the notice and interference of divine prophecy. Then will be employed those arms, which properly belong to this *spiritual* warfare; then will the kingdom of God be truly advanced or diminished. I describe this imaginary conquest, succeeded by such *spiritual* conflict, only as what may happen; not advertng to any similar instances which have occurred. I mention them to shew with what previous notions I formed the rules of interpretation, for which I deem myself accountable.”

“In adopting the rule now under consideration, I have been obedient to the direction of holy Scripture; which has required a *spiritual interpretation of its mysteries*: they are not to be taken according to the bare *letter*, nor in a carnal or worldly acceptation. The warfare of the Christian kingdom, (the subject of these prophecies,) is not to be carried on by worldly arms and battles; they, who entertain such notions of this re-

ligion, ‘know not what manner of spirit it is of.’ As the Captain of our salvation conquered by suffering, and refused the sword of Peter, and the legions of angels, ready for his defence, so neither by external force must his followers expect to prevail. The kingdom of God is not advanced by crusades, nor is the sword of man employed successfully to seat the Messiah on his throne. To obtain his destined dominion, Christ must reign in the hearts and consciences of his far-extended subjects. His reign is advanced when Christian principles, when faith, and righteousness, and charity abound. It is retarded when ignorance, impurity, idolatrous superstition, infidelity and wickedness prevail.”

Pearson also observes in his *Prophetical Character and Inspiration of the Apocalypse*, p. 53;—

“The last remark which was made connected with the prophecies of the Old Testament, was with regard to the *spiritual* character of ancient prophecy. And if it is necessary to keep this subject continually in view, in order that we may form an accurate judgment of the true genius and character of ancient prophecy, how much more when it is considered with reference to the prophecies of the Apocalypse,—which derives its greatest beauty and interest from its connexion with the progress and prospects of religion to the end of all things; and from the assurance, which it gives us, of the future triumphs and glories of the church; subjects which are described in sublime, though dark and mysterious language, by the prophets under the old dispensation, but of which the more complete development was suited to that book, of which the great object was to give a prophetic view of the progress of the great scheme of man’s redemption to its final completion in the glories and the happiness of eternity!”

“Such appear to be the principles by which we must arrive at the true meaning and purport of the prophecies of the Apocalypse: and surely it opens a sublime and magnificent view of this mysterious book, when we regard it as a continuation of the great scheme of ancient prophecy, as it is connected with the kingdom of the Redeemer, from the beginning of the divine dispensations; and as carrying it on to the time ‘when the

mystery of God shall be finished.” Such a view of this wonderful book,—at the same time that it enables us to avoid the difficulties which encumber the opinions of those persons, who would apply it to objects unworthy of such a revelation,—affords the best answer to the charges of *inconsistency*, which may be reasonably urged against the systems of those persons who apply the prophecies of the Apocalypse to temporal objects; and to events, which, however great in themselves, must be regarded as of *minor importance*, when they are considered with reference to the fates and fortunes of that kingdom which is from everlasting to everlasting.”

“Compared with these objects, the destinies of the greatest empires sink into nothingness in the sight of Him, ‘with whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day;’ and, on the other hand, what we account as nothing, may, for reasons unknown to us, be deemed by the Almighty Father worthy of the attention of his prophets from the foundation of the world. ‘Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the dust of the balance.’ Indeed, we appear to degrade the scheme of prophecy below the station which it occupies in the oracles of God, and to involve the application of it in great uncertainty, when,—overlooking that which is the great end and object of prophecy, and the intimate connection and uniformity which we may believe to pervade this, as well as all the other divine dispensations,—we apply the prophecies of the Apocalypse to persons and objects, which do not appear to have been intended to be comprehended in it, or to have any necessary connection with that religion, of which the great, and indeed the sole object, is—the *spiritual* happiness and the eternal destinies of man.”

Dr. Arnold, moreover, observes in his *Sermons on Prophe- tical Interpretation*, p. 45;—

“But if it be asked, why then was the language of prophecy so strong, if it was *not* meant to be *literally* fulfilled? I answer, that the real subject of the prophecy, in its highest sense, is not the historical but the *spiritual* Babylon; and that no expressions of ruin and destruction can be too strong when applied to the world which is to be dissolved, and utterly to

perish. And it will be found, I think, a general rule in all the prophecies of the Scripture, that they contain expressions which will only be adequately fulfilled in their last and *spiritual* fulfilment: and that as applied to the lower fulfilments which precede this, they are and must be hyperbolical.”

Daubuz observes, in the *Preface* to his work, p. 49;—

“But to go to the bottom of the thing; the foundation of all this is built upon that principle of all mysteries, that the intellectual world is an original copy and idea of the visible; and that there is such an union and affinity between these two, that nothing is done in the visible, but what is decreed before and exemplified in the intellectual. That therefore in a prophecy which is to declare the decree of God, both positive and permissive; that is, what He is resolved shall be performed in his kingdom, both intellectual and visible, and what He will permit to be done in that of Satan to obstruct his designs, but in reality to his glory the more: in a prophecy I say, wherein the prophet is caught up in the Spirit to see the first springs of events, it is sufficient, and much more lively to set down, what is done in the intellectual world: for the symbols, that describe those events, must by consequence describe those of the visible.”

Nay, further, if the maxim be true that, *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*, then the very foundation of the intellectual world is laid in the sensual, and ideas derived from the senses express by analogy the things of the intellectual world; as in the very terms idea, substance, conception, deliberation, intellection, imagination, and so forth, so that the very doctrine of divine analogy itself takes for granted a true correspondence between the world of mind, and the world of matter.

Daubuz also observes, in the *Preliminary Discourse* to his *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, p. 25;—

“The first and chief principle for the understanding of the symbols of the first kind, (viz., such as are borrowed from the Mosaical dispensation,) is to be found in the works of Irenæus, a disciple of the apostolical fathers. His words are these: ‘The

whole progress of the people out of Egypt, by God's appointment, was *a type and image of the future progress of the church from the Gentiles* : for this reason also bringing it out in the end into his inheritance, which not Moses indeed, the servant of God, but Jesus the Son of God, shall bestow upon the inheritance. But if any one attend diligently to those things which are said by the prophets of the end, and whatsoever John the Disciple of the Lord saw in the *Apocalypse*, he will find the nations universally receiving the same plagues, which Egypt in particular then received. A certain old man of the ancients, by the recital of such things, instructed us.' To which may be added another passage of the same author, which not only proves the same thing, but shews also that the celestial things and the ecclesiastical are antitypical, and that the Mosaical economy was a proportional type between both. The words are these : ' And that the former Testament was not given idly, nor in vain, or by chance ; but that they might serve God, to whom it was given, and for their advantage : shewing also a type of celestial things, because man was not yet able with his own sight to see the things of God : and images of the things which are in the church being prefigured thereby, that the faith which is according to us, might become firm ; and that it might contain a prophecy of future things, that man might learn, that God is the fore-knower of all things.' These two passages, together with the whole drift of his discourse, are of great importance towards the understanding of the *Apocalypse*. For, first, they give us a key to understand and explain all the allusions made to, or symbols fetched from the Mosaical economy, and the rest of the prophetic Scriptures. They shew us also the reason, why the Holy Ghost made use of types and symbols borrowed from them ; and consequently fully determine, that *they are only to be applied to the Christian church* ; and by that means confute, without any possibility of reply, all those who have understood those types and symbols of the end of the Jewish dispensation : as if the types alluding to or borrowed from it, were to be fixed upon, and had their full accomplishment within, that land and nation ; and had not rather a quite different and more noble aspect, to describe the state, constitution, and fates of the Christian eco-

nomy, the new and *spiritual* Israel, of which the carnal, with all its attributes, were but the slender representations. But Irenæus was better informed, and knew the true state of both, having better teachers than our new doctors."

"That, therefore, we may be convinced of this truth and of the importance of it, let us consider a little from whom we have it. This presbyter, or old man, as we have translated the word, is undoubtedly no other than Polycarpus, that holy martyr and disciple of St. John himself; who was preceptor to Irenæus, as appears from his Epistle to Florinus, cited by Eusebius: from which it is evident, that Irenæus did use to call him so, as it is customary to speak thus, not only now, but in former ages, of fathers and masters; and also that he had received several instructions and traditions from him, as coming from St. John himself. Now these very places are part of these instructions Irenæus had from this master: and perhaps we may not be mistaken if we assert, that the first came from *St. John* too: for so we may very properly understand the words *enarrans de antiquis*: which being compared with what is said concerning Polycarpus in that epistle, about his conversing with St. John and the rest of those who had seen the Lord, and what Polycarpus had learned from them, and thus transmitted to Irenæus, makes it amount almost to a demonstration, that if this very principle comes not from St. John himself, which nevertheless we have reason enough to believe, yet at least it is the sense of an apostolical father and disciple of the writer of the *Apocalypse*: and that, too, what kind of man I beseech you?—even such a one as was then one of those very angels or bishops, to whom the *Apocalypse* was directed as a very sacred depositum, by the special command of our Saviour himself; whom by that direction it did most particularly concern, that they should understand what was revealed. Yea, he is the only angel of the seven, in whom our Saviour finds nothing blame-worthy. If this be not sufficient to convince any unprejudiced man, we shall, I hope, make it appear afterwards, that this principle is not only authorized by many other prophetic hints found in the New Testament, but even by the whole tenor of the *Apocalypse* itself. So that this firm principle coming from good hands is beyond all other conjectures, none of which suit with

the prophecy like this ; and are, therefore, not to be any more heeded. But I shall even go further upon occasion, and shew, that this very principle is suitable to the general and particular notions and method of the hieroglyphical character."

It is upon the principles of a *spiritual* interpretation that Swedenborg explains the book of the Apocalypse. Consequently, he views the book as confined to the spiritual state of the church ; in other words, the dissolution of the existing church, and the establishment of another symbolized under the New Jerusalem.

Thus he observes, *Apocalypse Explained*, vol. i., p. 3;—

“There are several who have expounded this prophetic book, which is called the Apocalypse, but none of them have understood the internal or spiritual sense of the Word, and therefore they have applied all its contents to the successive states of the church with which they have acquainted themselves from the histories concerning them ; they have, moreover, applied many things to civil states ; hence it is that those expositions are mostly conjectures which never can appear in such a light as would admit of their being confirmed as truths ; wherefore as soon as they are read, they are rejected as among matters of opinion. The reason why the explications that are extant are of this description, is, as hath been said, because they who gave them knew nothing of the spiritual sense of the Word ; when nevertheless all things which are written in the Apocalypse are written in a similar style with the prophetic parts of the Old Testament ; in general in a similar style with the whole Word, and the Word in the letter is natural, but in its bosom is spiritual, and being such it contains in itself a sense which does not at all appear in the letter.” . . .

“From these considerations it may be manifest, that the Apocalypse, as well as the propheticals of the Old Testament, cannot in any wise be understood, nor anything therein, unless the spiritual sense be known, and unless there be given also a revelation from heaven, where the whole Word is understood according to that sense.”

In these remarks of Swedenborg, there are two things

which we would especially notice; one, that writers who had previously commented on the Apocalypse knew nothing of the internal and spiritual sense of the Word, and the other, that it could not be known without a revelation from heaven.

With respect to the first assertion, that writers on the Apocalypse had hitherto known nothing of the internal or spiritual sense of the Word, Mœhler observes in his *Symbolic*, vol. ii., p. 304, speaking of Swedenborg;—

“The higher the estimation is in which he holds the latter (viz., the allegorico-mystical interpretation of Scripture) the greater the earnestness wherewith he asserts that it was all but unknown, as well among the Jews on account of their carnal sense, as among the Christians of the first three centuries, on account of their too great simplicity; and among those of subsequent ages, from the general corruption. He insists that it was only by a special revelation he was made attentive to it, or at all events favored with a true key for its right use. But what is his distinction between the various senses of holy writ, other than the *Sod (body)*, the *Derusch (soul)*, and the *Phaschuth (spirit)* of the Cabala?—senses which themselves correspond to the *σωμα*, *ψυχη*, and the *πνευμα* of Philo? And wherein do the Swedenborgian correspondences between heaven and earth so essentially differ from the celestial and terrestrial Jerusalem (*the ανω and the κατω Ιερουσαλημ*), the carnal and the spiritual Israel (the *Ισραηλ σαρκικος* and *πνευματικος*) with which the same Philo has made us acquainted? And what shall we say to the astounding assertion, that in the first centuries of the church the allegorico-mystical exegesis was unknown! Just as if Basilides, Valentinus, and Origen, had lived in the sixth century! That Swedenborg should have possessed any acquaintance with the writings of Gregory the Great, of Alcuin, of Richard of St. Victor, or with the description of the three senses given by Thomas Aquinas and others, it would be too much to require of him, &c., &c.”

It is not desirable to divert the attention of the reader from the main subject under consideration, by entering into

all the questions which Mœhler has here raised, and which after all are very superficial. It will be sufficient for the present purpose to observe that; admitting the foregoing authors to have been in possession of the allegorico-mystical principles of interpretation; the real question is, whether either these or any other writers, of the same school, in the church of Rome, have succeeded in interpreting the Apocalypse? We have seen that they have not. Neither Origen, nor Gregory the Great wrote any commentary upon the subject; that of Alcuin is not extant; Richard of St. Victor did indeed write upon it, but acknowledged, as we have already perceived, that he was unable to penetrate through the mystery, and therefore that he kept merely upon its surface. As to Thomas Aquinas, there is a work upon the Apocalypse extant under his name; but which, however excellent in many respects, yet, like all which have preceded it, has failed to give satisfaction to the church of Rome; as is evident from the number of other and contrary comments which have since been published by writers of that communion. Indeed, notwithstanding all the attention which the church of Rome has given to the subject, it is to this day without any authorized interpretation of the Apocalypse; and we have already seen that, according to the testimony of Pererius, many of that church were of opinion that *the Apocalypse is altogether incomprehensible without a special revelation from God.*

There is, however, another question suggested by Mœhler; namely, whether there is anything common to the allegorico-mystical interpretation of the early fathers, and the spiritual interpretation of Swedenborg. We answer there is; and if, as Mœhler intimates, Swedenborg had no acquaintance with the writings of these authors, it is certain that wherever they agree with him, or he with them, the testimony of the two in favor of the interpreta-

tion is so much the stronger from the very circumstance of its being independent ; and that very strong independent, nay, unanswerable testimony of this kind is to be found, the ensuing pages are designed to demonstrate.

The next question is, whether there is any difference between the allegorico-mystical exegesis of the early fathers and other writers of the Church of Rome, and the spiritual interpretations of Swedenborg. To this it is replied ; if the correspondences are essentially the same, as Mœhler insinuates, then all the foregoing authorities sanction the interpretations of Swedenborg ; if they are not the same, or if the application be different, then Mœhler's objection amounts to nothing ; for it is by no means a strange thing that Swedenborg should claim a special revelation for the knowledge of that which many members of the Roman church have themselves declared to be hitherto unknown, and to be unknowable, without a special revelation, notwithstanding their acquaintance with the allegorico-mystical principles of interpretation.

What then is the ground on which Swedenborg stands in common with the allegorico-mystical writers of the church of Rome ? The common ground is this ; first, that the interpretations of the symbols are, for the most part, substantially the same, though far from being equally precise. Secondly, that there are parts of the Apocalypse which writers have professed themselves to be unable to understand without some special revelation from God ; that Swedenborg equally with these writers declares the same thing, and affirms that he has been favored with that revelation ; thirdly, that notwithstanding he has only in a few places given an interpretation of separate symbols which is not confirmed by allegorico-mystical writers ; fourthly, that he has applied the interpretation of the Apocalypse to the *Last Judgment*, which, according to Calmet, the early fathers

maintained to be the only true and proper application ; fifthly, that the inevitable result of this interpretation and application is, that the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches are seen to have come to an end ; and that a New Church, designated in the Apocalypse as the New Jerusalem, is raised up in their stead ; as will be perceived in the sequel.

The next question is, what is the difference between the allegorico-mystical writers and Swedenborg, in the interpretation of the Apocalypse. The difference is, first, that although the early fathers, according to Calmet, declared the WHOLE of the Apocalypse to apply to the *Last Judgment*, still that no allegorico-mystical writer had as yet strictly so applied it ; secondly, that no one could have done so correctly, without an especial revelation ; because he could not otherwise have known the nature, particulars, and order of that Judgment ; thirdly, that although the general interpretation of the symbols was given by some writers, and the application of the symbols to the *Last Judgment* was acknowledged by others, yet, as the nature, particulars, and order of that Judgment were unknown, they were incapable of interpreting the symbols in one continuous series, and so of eliciting one continuous spiritual sense, and applying it to one continuous process of judgment ; fourthly, that in consequence, no one author supplies the allegorico-mystical meaning of all the symbols, but each one contributes only his own individual share ; fifthly, that no one author therefore has hitherto known the spiritual sense of the Apocalypse, which is the meaning of Swedenborg's affirmation in relation to this part of the subject.

Thus we see that the interpretations of Swedenborg are at once new and old ; they possess both antiquity and novelty. On this subject, however, may very aptly be quoted the observations of Aleasar. When it was objected

to him that, in his explications of the Apocalypse, he was introducing novelties, he thus replies; *Proemial Remark* xvii., 3;—

“Nevertheless that is not always really new, which appears to be so at first sight. Marcus Tullius notices this circumstance in his book on the *Perfect Orator*, where he says; ‘Some will blame us, because we search out unfrequented paths, and leave the trite ones. And indeed I think to myself that I often seem to say what is new, when all the time I am saying only what is very old, but what most persons have not previously heard.’ For it happens, that to some persons certain things appear to be new and unheard of, only because they have not before given the subject their serious consideration; things which nevertheless have such a solid foundation in the common and assured teaching of all, that they are nothing more than the weighing out anew of an old mystery, a new remark upon an old doctrine, and (in ethics) a new comparison of one virtue with another.”

Hence again, Alcasar observes, in his *Proemial Remark* xix., 3, speaking of new explications founded upon this principle:—

“We see that the Fathers have severally introduced many new explications of the same kind. If any one be ignorant of this, it sufficiently shews that he is but little versed in patristical reading. Indeed, if our holy doctors had never added to the old any new explication of sacred Scripture; how great, both in multitude and magnitude, would have been the wealth and riches of interpretation of which they had defrauded the church! If then in these, we can so highly and indeed so deservedly, commend, the new elucidations of the meaning of Scripture which they gave to the world; what sort of wisdom does it argue, to turn into a fault, in the more recent imitators of the ancient Fathers, what in these Fathers themselves was accounted to be worthy of praise and honor? Just as if it was antiquity alone that could commend any exposition as being the preferable. Shrewdly, therefore, did Horace thus write in *Book* ii., *Epistle* i., to Augustus:—

‘ Si meliora dies, ut vina, poemata reddit ;
 Scire velim, pretium chartis quotus arroget annus ;
 Scriptor abhinc annos centum qui decidit, inter
 Perfectos veteresque referri debet, an inter
 Viles atque novos ? . . .

Even the fathers themselves in different passages inform us, that they have done the same thing ; and among these we need refer only to Gregory the Great, who, in his *Proemium* to the *Book of Kings*, has the following passage ;”—

“ ‘ Inasmuch as in different works of the holy fathers, are found different expositions of the testimonies of this book, the reader ought to observe that, in treating of them, I sometimes follow the meaning they have given, sometimes my intention is to explain the history otherwise ; so that the work, which under the hope of divine inspiration I have undertaken, may both be strengthened by the authority of the ancient fathers, and may by no means be objectionable to the reader ; when among old things which the reader already knows, it sets before him also new things which he does not know ; to which expression of my own opinions I am sometimes led by necessity. Because had the venerable fathers explained seriatim what they have only touched upon in part, they could by no means have pursued that course of observation which they have seemed to do. In passing over, therefore, the meaning assigned by the holy fathers, sometimes I do so from necessity, sometimes for the greater advantage ; inasmuch as I remove from the reader’s attention all cause of objection, and in discussing every thing seriatim, many suggestions occur to me in such a way as not to permit me to adopt their opinions.’ Thus far Gregory.”

“ Not only do the fathers testify that they have afforded these explications, but they likewise exhort us to make new explications of the same kind. For Vincent of Lirens, who seemed so greatly to deter the faithful from novelty of explanation, yet in the same chapter (xxvii.) subjoined, that he had been speaking of the preservation of the talent of the catholic faith ; and shortly after he thus expresses himself—‘ O Timothy,’ says he, ‘ O priest ! O tractarian ! O doctor ! if indeed the divine gift hath made thee fit in regard to capacity, discipline, and doctrine ! Be thou the Bezaleel of the spiritual tabernacle ;

do thou shape out the precious gems of the divine dogmas ; do thou faithfully put them together ; do thou adorn them wisely ; add to them splendor, grace, elegance ; and by thy exposition let that be understood more clearly which before was thought to be obscure. Through thee may posterity welcome as understood, what our ancestry venerated before as not understood. Still, the same things which thou hast learned do thou so teach, that when thou speakest them after a new manner thou sayest not that which is new.' Thus far Vincent. As if he should say more expressly ; Let not the doctrine be new but old ; but be thou not reluctant to adorn it with the illustration of new exposition. Afterwards, however, he adds : that ' He is invidious to man and hateful to God who endeavours to stop the progress of religion ; such a progress as shall indeed be a progress, not a change of the faith.' Thus far Vincent. Now if expositors of the sacred Scripture be signified by Bezaleel, as he says ; consider what that is which is said of Bezaleel in Exod. xxxv., 35 : ' Both of them hath he filled with wisdom, that they might do the work of the engraver, and the embroiderer, and weaver in blue and purple, and scarlet twice dyed, and fine linen, and might weave all manner of things, and find whatsoever is new.' " (*Vulgate.*)*

"Chrysostom excellently expresses himself to the same effect, and is adduced by Turrianus in his prologue on the Eucharist, where he himself also admirably does the same. In like manner, Rupertus in his *Prologue on the Apocalypse*, and Ribera in the *Proemium* to his work on the twelve prophets."

"Christ himself, moreover, is our voucher when praising those authoritative teachers, who with ancient doctrine conjoin new explanation. For he says, Matt. xiii. 52 ; '*Every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.*' And to this alludes possibly the passage in Canticles vii., 13 : '*At our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.*'"

. . . . "Do we not all acknowledge that sacred Scripture is an inexhaustible ocean ? Does it not argue the dignity and excellency of Scripture, that like an immense sea its waters can

* See Origen, in his *Twelfth Homily upon Numbers*.

never be exhausted? Who then is he who would dare to set bounds to the Deity, and to confine him as it were within a certain pale, lest he should ever after inspire into any one a new explication, however conducive to the catholic faith? Surely this is nothing else than to stop the progress of religion; an evil which Vincent of Lirens so cordially execrates."

"Perhaps, however, this they may concede to the Deity, that into whomsoever he will he may inspire a new explication of an ancient truth, although they may not believe that it is inspired into me, which indeed I may willingly concede; but still it is the part of a wise man to imitate St. Thomas in this matter, of whom it is said that he was always willing to be taught by any one; because truth, be it spoken by whom it may, is from the Holy Spirit. It is, however, agreeable to the divine Providence to be always reserving something for a later age, in order that the faithful may employ their endeavors in the study of the sacred Scriptures, not only without disrelish, but also with the greatest delight. And further I add, that such a course frequently conduces to the strongest confirmation of our faith."...

... "Moreover, it is one thing to doubt whether I have hit the meaning of a passage (concerning which I contend not), and another to dispute in general whether a new explication, agreeable and subservient to the catholic faith, ought to be refuted only because it is new. This controversy is one of no small moment, and in which I crave the discreet opinion of those who desire to be discreet. For, as already has been sufficiently proved, when a new expositor explains any thing without the fathers, which nevertheless aptly coheres and agrees with the catholic faith, in this case he is more obsequious to the will and admonition of the fathers, than if he should be always giving the same explanations with their own. Let, therefore, the censor of novelty and admirer of antiquity beware of calling any one audacious and licentious, who derives from the fathers not only the liberty, but exhortation and example in favor of explications of this kind."

"Moreover, in passing the censure now alluded to, prudence seems to be desirable; fearing as some do, where no fear is. For what danger can there be in conceiving that catholic truths are signified literally in sacred Scripture, in many places in which

hitherto they had not been conceived to exist? Nay, who does not see that if a given passage be adduced as exactly agreeing with a received truth, it redounds to the honor of the truth itself and to the consolation of the faithful? And that in the same ratio Scripture is illustrated and the glory of God increased." . . .

. . . . "Finally, of all those who object against us novelty of explanation, I would desire to ask whether they confess that it is the general opinion of all our doctors, that of the received expositions there is not one which does not leave the seven-sealed book still shut up? Now if this be the case, as it certainly is, then to require that there shall be no new exposition brought to light, seems to be no other than to contend that this book shall always remain closed, and that no light shall ever be thrown upon its obscurity."

"Hitherto we have been treating of those censors who look down with despite upon every thing new. It cannot, however, be denied, that some persons there are who are too studious of novelty, and who are so much pleased with new things that the mere novelty itself highly delights them; although the explanation itself be unsuitable. In new explications, therefore, I confess that there is need of the most careful consideration; lest, through novelty of appearance, we be deceived by that which has no solid foundation. I add, moreover that in any ancient and received understanding of a passage, the same diligent care is not required. For we must so far concede to the authority of the ancients as to allow it of itself to stand as a foundation. But where the weight of strong and received authority is wanting, it is necessary that the exposition itself be weighty, solid, and strong; and so apt and suitable as to obtain our assent, and be seen to cohere with the faith, without any assistance from external authority. The faithful too will find the greatest consolation in passages explained at last as relating to the mysteries of the Christian faith; and which, after the most diligent examination, are found so agreeable to catholic truth, that the authority of no dictum is required in their behalf; the beauty of the explication, and a strong foundation in reason and aptitude, conciliating for them sufficient favor and authority."

Now Alcasar intimates two kinds of new interpretation; one, that which is entirely, the other, that which is partly,

new. That which is entirely new, is such as is found neither expressed nor adumbrated by the ancients. Hence he observes ;—

“This kind of new exposition is like a new house which is at length raised up from the foundations, not having before been even begun. There is, however, another kind like that of a new house which is called new, only because it is recently repaired, put into perfect order, and as such finally completed : not that it is raised from new foundations, but from the old, which were laid down long before, and on which a superstructure has now been built and carried up to its summit. Therefore it is not altogether new, but is partly new, partly old. New, because newly built upon the old foundations ; old, because built upon foundations laid long before.”

Hence Alcasar thus concludes his *Nineteenth Proemial Remark* ;—

“It is worthy, therefore, of great attention, that in one and the same method of exposition, the discoveries of genius conspire in a remarkable manner with the authority of the fathers ; and novelty with antiquity.”

Hence also, in the *Proemial Remark* xxi., n. 4, Alcasar further speaks of that kind of novelty which is antiquity renovated, and novelty based upon antiquity. That in some sense or other, and that, too, a genuine sense, the Apocalypse announces that which is *new*, is evident from the frequent introduction of the term. Thus in chap. ii., 17, there is a *new* name written ; and again in chap. iii., 12, as also a *new* Jerusalem. In chap. v., 9, there is a *new* song ; and in chap. xiv., 3, as it were a *new* song ; in chap. xxi., 1, a *new* heaven and a *new* earth ; in chap. xxi., 2, the *new* Jerusalem again ; and in chap. xxi., 5, *all* things are *new*. Whether this newness consists in new discoveries in religion, or a new religion, or a new form of Christianity, will be seen in the comments of the ensuing work, on the twenty-first chapter of the Apocalypse.*

* See Wordsworth's *Hulsean Lectures on the Apocalypse*, p. 108.

In general, then, we may observe, that the principles above advocated by Alcasar, are the same with those which may be claimed for the expositions of Swedenborg; both in regard to interpretation and application. As regards interpretation, they have a strong foundation in the expositions of interpreters, both ancient and modern, Roman Catholic and Protestant; and in this respect are placed beyond all possibility of contradiction. In their application likewise, they are built upon old foundations; for, according to Calmet. . . .

“The greater part of the ancient fathers, and of the first commentators upon the Apocalypse, have followed the system which explains the whole of this book as concerning the last judgment. It is thus that St. Justin, St. Irenæus, St. Victoire, of Petau (a town of ancient Pannonia, situated on the Drave, in Syria), who lived at the end of the third century of the church; also that St. Hypolitus, Bishop of Porto, at the commencement of the third century, in his book on the end of the world; that the millenarians; that Papias; that Nepos, bishop of Egypt; Andreas, of Cesarea; and Aretas, bishop of the same town, in the sixth century; that Primasius, Bishop of Adrumetum (a city in the province of Byzacium); that the venerable Bede; that St. Ambrose (or rather Berengaud, under the assumed name of St. Ambrose); that St. Anselm (or the author cited under his name), and numerous others of later date, have all, or nearly all, referred the Apocalypse to the last judgment. I except the first three chapters, which interpreters generally explain in the literal sense, as referring to the seven churches of Asia.”—*Literal Commentary, Article ii., Method of Commentators on the Apocalypse, Preface, p. 912.*

Now as Swedenborg himself interpreted the Apocalypse as relating to the last judgment, there is a body of testimony in favor both of his interpretation and application which perhaps cannot be surpassed, if indeed equalled, by that of any other system; and which will be found to be as universal as it is remarkable.

Considering, however, that almost every interpretation and application have been adopted in regard to the Apocalypse, it may be asked how it has happened that the two which are the subject of the present work have been so frequently omitted? One reason is, that they never could have been cordially adopted by Roman Catholics; because, as will be seen in chapters xvii. and xviii., it would inevitably involve the condemnation of the church of Rome. All agree that the Apocalypse relates to the downfall of one form of religion of some kind, and the establishment of another. But the church of Rome regards itself as indefectible, consequently as not included in that form of religion whose downfall is predicted. A large number of Protestants consider the Catholic church as such to be indefectible; consequently these also, as members of the Catholic church, regard their own form of religion as not included in the Apocalyptic judgments. Others consider the Catholic church, though not indefectible, to be yet unerring; these likewise, as members of that church, exclude themselves from being involved in the Apocalyptic condemnation. The same is the case with every denomination of Christians; each considering the condemnation to apply to others, but not to itself. It is a fundamental doctrine of the church of Rome, that Christ has entrusted to it the keys of heaven and hell; therefore, every interpretation militating against this doctrine must be rejected by Romanists. It is a fundamental doctrine of the Lutheran church, that man is justified by faith alone; therefore, every interpretation which militates against this also must be rejected by Lutherans. It is a fundamental doctrine of many religionists, that the Humanity of Christ is not divine, and that the worship of the Humanity is idolatry; therefore, every interpretation militating against it, these also must reject. The Calvinist, the Arian, the Socinian, all have their

distinguishing doctrines; and as each would interpret the Apocalypse in favor of his own, so each would reject any interpretation by which they were not sanctioned. Upon this principle there must be as many interpretations as there are Creeds. Take the case of the church of Rome. On the words, *Blessed is he that readeth and heareth the words of the prophecy of this book*; Alcasar observes, in his *Thirteenth Proemial Remark*, n. 7: ‘But to confess the truth, I am at a loss to perceive what blessedness men can derive from the suspicion that Rome will apostatize from the faith.’ Therefore says he again, when some of the learned of his own church had applied chapters xvii. and xviii. to Rome as it is to be, ‘I wonder they have not been afraid of affording to heretics, who detest Rome and her religious worship of the images of the saints, a handle for cavilling against us; and for boasting that, even among our very selves, learned men are to be found, who affirm that the perversion of Rome and its return to idolatry have been predicted in the Apocalypse.’ *Fourteenth Proemial Remark*, n. 4. It was this fear of giving a handle to heretics that would have compelled him, even were there no other cause, to apply his mystical interpretations to Pagan and not to Papal Rome; for had he applied them to Papal Rome, the result would have been an acknowledgment of its present apostacy, and of its future conversion to true Christianity.

We may find an illustration of the same principle among Protestant interpreters. Many of them allow that the doctrines of the Laodicean church were false and corrupt; others, as Vitringa, Wittsius, and Brightman, &c., that the Laodicean church depicted the state of the Reformed; but as this would be to condemn the doctrines of the Reformation as false and corrupt, it was requisite that interpreters should here divide off; one admitting the interpretation only, the other admitting the application only; that is to

say, the one admitting the doctrines of the Laodicean church to be corrupt, but not to designate the state of the Reformed; the other admitting the Laodicean church to designate the state of the Reformed, but not that its doctrines are corrupt. We see the same principle still further illustrated by Cardinal Bellarmine and Bishop Walmisley on the one side; and by Bishop Newton on the other. 'Come out of her, my people,' says Bishop Walmisley; for this means abandon the Reformed church and all other adherents of Antichrist. 'Come out of her,' says Bishop Newton; for this means abandon the church of Rome and all her Antichristian idolatries. The locusts are Lutherans and Calvinists, say Bellarmine and Walmisley; the locusts are swarms of priests and monks, says Bishop Newton; in both cases the abstract interpretation being the same, while the application is different. The result is, that many, in order to avoid these mutual criminations, affirm either that the prophecy has yet to be fulfilled, thus transferring it to some remote future; or else gain the same end by referring it to an equally remote past, and applying the whole to the downfall of Pagan idolatry, and the introduction of the Christian religion.

So long as motives of such a kind are allowed to operate, any genuine interpretation of the Apocalypse is utterly hopeless. It is in vain to enter into critical readings, grammatical or symbolical significations, elaborate rules of interpretation, classifications of synchronisms, deep researches into history; and all professedly with the view of unfolding the mysteries of the Apocalypse; while all the time preconceptions are entertained which must for ever keep the book closed; or open only in those passages where the condemnation of others is involved, and shut up where our own is pronounced. These remarks are confirmed by Wittsius, who in his summary of the difficulties which

stand in the way of a true interpretation of the Apocalypse, observes in his *Miscellanea Sacra*, vol. i., p. 642, that, ‘prejudices also hinder many from perceiving those things which otherwise would not be so very obscure;’ and therefore, together with certain other commentators of his own times, he is far more candid in his observations upon the state of Protestantism than some of a more recent date. No mere partizan, therefore, of any particular church, is a fit person to undertake to resolve the mysteries of the Apocalypse. He ought to give his consent to the principles of interpretation and application, upon their own intrinsic merits; and, be the result what it may, he ought to abide by it. For this reason it is, that, in the ensuing comment, we have availed ourselves of the labors not of one, but of all classes of interpreters, both in the Roman Catholic and Protestant communions; and the result is one uniform, coherent, and compact system of what has been called *mystical*, but is more properly called *spiritual* interpretation; an interpretation which carries with it its own *internal evidence*, and which we now proceed to consider as exhibited;

First, in the *intrinsic nature* of the symbol;

Secondly, in its *coherence* with the context;

Thirdly, in the *general order* and consecutive meaning arising out of the narrative as a whole when thus interpreted.

First we consider the internal evidence arising out of the *intrinsic nature* of the symbol.

We have already noticed the distinction between metaphor and symbol. It has, however, been assumed by some writers, that symbol is used by the prophets in the same manner as metaphor by the poet. Whereas the relation of symbol is that of analogy, and is fixed; the relation of metaphor is that of fancy or imagination, and is arbitrary,

When a poet employs metaphor, we know at all events the subject of which he is treating; and hence the notion he designs to convey. But in the Apocalypse the subject is unknown till the symbol is interpreted; and if, therefore, the symbol was chosen by a mere play of imagination, and the like imagination has again to interpret it, there arises a twofold imagination; the one in the choice of the symbol, the other in its interpretation. Now in the place of this twofold imagination we proceed to substitute a twofold truth; the one in the mind of the Divine Author, the other in the mind of the interpreter as guided by the Spirit of Truth.

Alcasar observes in his *Fifteenth Proemial Remark*, ii. 2;—

“The greatest perfection of symbols consists in the greatest proportion of the symbol to the thing which it is used to signify, and in the greatest beauty of allusion of the one to another. But he does an injustice not to John only but to Christ also and to the Holy Spirit, who believes that the symbols of this book possess not the highest perfection. The author of these symbols is Christ; and it was not possible that of those things which are known to man and out of which the symbolic signification was to be selected, such as were the most apt to signify the proposed mystery should escape the knowledge of Him who is the Highest Wisdom. Nor is it consonant with reason that, when he foresaw the symbols which are much the most apt, he should nevertheless have chosen such as were the least so.”

“From these remarks it is obvious, that the interpreter has not discharged his office properly who has found out for a symbol of sacred Scripture only mediocrity in respect of application. For we think unworthily of the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in presuming that he has made use of a symbol which is not the most apt to the signification intended. For if Virgil himself would never adduce a comparison which was not sufficiently appropriate, how is it credible that the Holy Spirit should use a symbol which any man of accomplished mind would blush to

put forward as his own? It is, moreover, to be considered that symbol is commonly under the same conditions as poetry; in which mediocrity is worthless, as Horace well observes in his *Ars Poetica*;—

. ‘Hoc tibi dictum
Tolle memor: certis medium et tolerabile rebus
Rectè concedi: consultus juris et actor
Causarum mediocris abest virtute diserti
Messalæ, nec scit quantum Cascellius Aulus;
Sed tamen in pretio est. Mediocribus esse poetis
Non homines, non Dii, non concessere columnæ.
Ut gratas inter mensas symphonia discors,
Et crassum unguentum, et Sardo cum melle papaver.
Offendunt, poterat duci quia cæna sine istis;
Sic animis natum inventumque poema juvandis,
Si paulum a summo decessit, vergit ad imum.’”

“For this reason ought no wise and skilful author to put forth any symbol or enigma which is not fitted in the best possible manner to signify what he intends. And hence also it may be certainly inferred, that no one has attained to that meaning of the symbols which was intended by Christ, who is not aware that every symbol has the greatest possible aptitude to its own signification. He therefore does not fulfil the office of interpreter, who on the casual discovery of any faint proportion between the two, readily adapts any figure or symbol to any semblance of pious meaning which may at first suggest itself. For were this all that is requisite to enable us to ascertain the true meaning of a symbol, then the more difficult the Apocalypse, the more easy its exposition; for obscurity gives rise to variety. But beside the difficulty of finding out a continuous meaning, and of connecting the symbols together in one series, there is a great discrimination to be observed among the symbols in their application; nor do we seem to have done any thing to the purpose, until each particular symbol has been so applied as to make its aptitude appear to have been wonderfully designed. If, now, in any application which duly connects all the parts, we discern in each symbol the highest degree of perfection, then does the very beauty of the symbolical signification strongly confirm the conclusion, that such was the very meaning intended and avouched by Christ Himself.”

“In order, however, for a symbol to be in its relation per-

fect and complete, and also in the best manner adapted to the signification for which it is employed, it is not enough that the comparison be apt only in part; but it is requisite that, on a due survey of all the circumstances, it should be obvious to the understanding, that the thing which is chosen as the symbol was made or created with a view to represent the truth to which it is applied. It is a common saying with regard to comparisons, that *they do not hold good in every particular*. Now although this observation may, after its own manner, be extended to symbols; still, in the case of a thing which was made chiefly for the very end of its representing another thing, there ought to be a much fuller and more perfect proportion. And indeed it is worthy of notice, that the complete relation of symbol is not found in those things only which art has invented to signify other things, but in those also which God made from the beginning for this purpose, independently of the proper end to which, according to the forces implanted by nature, each of them subserves (as in the case of fire to give warmth, of the sun to give light, and so forth). Independently of this proper end, I say a profound philosophy teaches, that in the creation of things, it was the intention of the artificer and builder, that in those objects of creation which come within the reach of our vision, men might also be in possession of wonderful symbols and hieroglyphics serving to point out to them mystically such lessons as would most highly concern them; namely, true instruction in faith and morals. Nor is this done in the manner in which an effect points out a natural cause; for this manner is not obscure but clear, nor in this case is the signification mystical but manifest; but in the manner in which a symbolic figure represents the thing figured. This arcanum God unfolds to those whom he desires to renew and recreate, by means of their contemplation of his wonderful providence; and by the great proportion and congruity of corporeal things with spiritual. These are they whom to this end he enriches with that ample store of spiritual books, with which fields, mountains, seas, and vast uncultivated solitudes, and in fine the whole world is abundant. This kind of instruction is acquired by conjoining the knowledge of things natural with an attentive consideration of the mysteries of faith; and by beholding the marvellous proportion and similitude, so

appositely corresponding to some one of these mysteries, which God hath implanted in every single object of creation. And those who are studious of this acquirement are never at a loss for books, never without an eagerness for study; for from the very knowledge of the things which they learn, the ardor of reading and learning increases continually and acquires additional vigor. For this reason do they daily find such great elegance and beauty in the wonderful meaning with which God hath invested the elements, plants, animals, metals, and the very stones themselves: so that it is evident to them, that, the proper and natural powers contained within each one of these things, form but the smallest part in it of what they find to be worthy of their knowledge. For this reason Origen, a man highly versed in mystic lore of this kind, in his *Third Homily* on the Canticles, observes; ‘Since, for example, there are in a grain of mustard seed numerous virtues which are images of things celestial; so the ultimate and extreme use of it is that of which man avails himself in its ministry to his body. The same holds true of all other things, whether seeds, offshoots, roots, or living creatures: they furnish indeed their use and ministry to men, but they contain images of things incorporeal, by which the soul may be taught and instructed to contemplate the things which are invisible and celestial. This says Origen is that true knowledge which the wise man relates as being the most excellent gift which he had received of God. ‘For he hath given me certain knowledge of the things that are, namely, to know how the world was made, and the operation of the elements: the beginning, ending, and midst of the times; the alterations of the turning of the sun, and the change of seasons: the circuits of years, and the positions of stars: the natures of living creatures, and the furies of wild beasts: the violence of winds, and the reasonings of men: the diversities of plants, and the virtues of roots: and all such things as are either secret or manifest, them I know. For wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me; for in her is an understanding spirit, holy, one only, manifold, subtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man, steadfast, sure, free from care, having all power, over-

seeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure and most subtil, spirits.'” *Wisdom of Solomon* vii., 17—23.

“In these words observe, that according to the language of sacred Scripture, the true and solid knowledge of natural things is that which subserves both to faith and to right morals. And for this reason it is, that the wise man here conjoins the natures of living things and the furies of wild beasts, with the secret thoughts of the human heart, and with those mysteries which he calls hidden and unsuspected. To this end he asserts, that assistance was afforded him by the divine Spirit which was subtle, sweet, and penetrating; which he calls both one and manifold, by reason of the variety of innumerable things which it joins together in such proportion and harmony, that they are all wonderfully consentaneous among themselves. Origen, after pursuing the subject in a beautiful train of reasoning, concludes at last with the following words, ‘Therefore may all things be referred upward from the visible to the invisible, from the corporeal to the incorporeal, from the manifest to the hidden; so that the objects of the world may be understood to be created by divine wisdom according to such a divine dispensation, as from visible things, by means of the things and exemplars themselves, teaches us the invisible, and transfers us from earthly things to those which are of heaven.’ Thus far Origen; who doubts not that, in the creation of things corporeal, it was the principal design of the divine Artificer that they should be symbols and traces, as it were, of the mysteries of our faith. Therefore the merely natural office proper to every particular thing, in virtue of which it ministers to other bodies, and in which the philosophy of Aristotle rests, by no means satisfies the infinite wisdom of God, and his especial providence in the salvation of souls; nor indeed his own wonderful counsel whereby he hath determined to raise us from the corporeal to the incorporeal. It is probable, therefore, that the omnipotence of God, when He had the power of making infinite species of souls, plants, and stones, selected and created out of the infinite things which he had in his power such as were the more apt to signify the mysteries of our salvation, and a conformably moral instruction. And this was accomplished in such a manner, that the universal mechanism of things created should maintain a most beautiful

harmony with the wonderful counsel of God in the salvation of men, and that things corporeal should subserve to the representation of those which are spiritual.”

“With these views of Origen, Tertullian is in agreement, in his book on *The Resurrection*. For he considers that, since the Author of nature is one and the same with the Author of things supernatural proceeding from grace; so likewise He ordained certain natural things to represent, as by an open exhibition, the order of things supernatural. Nor did God, the most wise Artificer of this world and Framers of all things, any otherwise design the architecture of the universe than that it should bear the impress of his divinity, and the most beautiful image, aspect, and very fingers of his Christ. Nearly after a similar manner we find it related in the book of Aristotle, *De Mundo*, chap. vi.; that upon the statue of Minerva, Phidias had with so much skill, and so much illusive symmetry, contrived to impress the image of himself, that if any one wished to separate the one from the other, he could only do so by destroying the likeness, and the artistical work of the statue itself.”

“In attentively considering, therefore, the signification of things, the mind becomes possessed by it to such a degree, as to judge not without reason, that many of the objects presented to the human sight, although they might be of no use to man in other respects, would still be of use enough, and more than enough, if that inward meaning in them were discovered which they were ordained to indicate; so that even in this respect alone, the production of them would appear to be most perfectly suited to and highly worthy of the Deity. This I say not from any supposition, that there is any created object whose nature is of no use or good to man, or to the other living creatures of which man is in need. For of this the wise will entertain no doubt. But this I affirm, that supposing such a use to be excepted, the symbolical signification innate in things themselves is sufficient to make it appear that it was the highest wisdom which created them. For, according to the divine counsel, it is of far greater moment that to the minds of men the visible creation should fulfil the office of a spiritual book, than that it should serve only to the natural convenience of the bodies of men. Now if, in affording this convenience, natural

philosophy so admires the wisdom of the divine Creator, and this independently of any representation of spiritual things ; how great will be the admiration of those, who, penetrating through the corporeal dimensions of things, behold in the same objects the more occult wisdom of God ! Although, however, by His infinite providence and wisdom, the Deity in the creation of this world consulted the welfare of men both in body and soul, who will doubt that he regarded the edification of the mind as of more consequence than the nurture of the body ?”

“ This, indeed, was the principal end which God had in view in the events which happened to the people of Israel, and which is visible in their very external aspect. Thus Paul teaches, 1 Cor. x., 11, that ‘ *All these things happened unto them in a figure.*’ And, indeed, a still greater and more excellent instance we behold in this ; that the very miracles of Christ our Saviour are themselves full of the recondite meaning of mysteries ; as is evident from the opinions of the holy fathers. ‘ For the miracles of Christ, if understood, have their own language ;’ as Augustin acutely remarks in *Treatise* xxiv., upon John. See also the same author, *Treatise* xlv. ; and Gregory, in *Homily* ii., upon the *Gospels*. It is, however, clear, both in the figures of the Old Testament and in the miracles of Christ our Lord, that the beauty of the signification consists in this ; that divine Providence uses the very symbols which He exhibited to view in the primeval constitution of the world. For by putting together the things requisite to the purpose, so that each shall exercise its own proper signification, a new representation is produced. By its own proper signification, I mean that which, by reason of the implanted similitude, the nature of each represents. And this similitude the divine Architect imparted to it, to the end that he might afterwards use it to indicate ulterior mysteries, and that it might be a source of consolation and delight to his servants. Therefore, the primigenial symbols and emblems are properly those, which, in such marvellous variety, God produced in the first construction and exhibition of the world ; and from these is derived all that is good, ornamental, and beautiful in the other symbols, whether ancient or modern, used by man ; for no hieroglyphic can be sufficiently pertinent which is not

founded on some natural proportion, to which God has assigned and annexed the signification of the mystery.”

“If the foregoing remarks be duly considered, we may readily understand, that the proper symbol of any thing is that which has received a nature to signify that thing. Who, moreover, will doubt, that the entire beauty of a symbolical signification consists in the excellency of the marriage of the symbol with the truth to which it is applied? That is to say; that in order to adumbrate that mystery, we are unable to discover any other symbol so apt and congruous; and that the very symbol itself we cannot so aptly apply to any other signification? This, moreover, is that height of symbolical perfection at which he ought to aim, who explains the symbols of the Apocalypse. For example; *clouds* are applied to the preaching of the Gospel; *a rod of iron*, to the reign of Christ; *a lion*, to strength and fortitude, &c. . . . In all these cases the office of the interpreter ought to be to shew, that in no other way can symbols of this kind be so correctly and coherently distributed, that they could not be so aptly accommodated to other significations, nor could any other symbols be put in their place equally conducing to the same meaning. The same regard ought to be had by the interpreter in the case of those symbols or allusions which are derived from the histories of the Old Testament; since, as it is written, ‘*All things happened to them in a figure.*’ For if, in those symbols which the Apocalypse derives from natural objects, reason compels us to believe that the symbolical perfection exists in the highest degree; who can be ignorant that the same must be said in regard to those hieroglyphics which have relation either to historical events in the Old Testament, or to the vaticinations of the prophets?” . . .

Alcasar then proceeds, in his *Sixteenth Proemial Remark*, to comment upon the internal force and efficacy of the perfect symbol; intimating that;—

“When the symbol is rightly applied, much more is embraced within one word or the other, than could otherwise be expressed by a long periphrasis. Great and perspicacious minds are wont sometimes to express, in a short sentence, much more than others can comprise in a large volume; a faculty which is

like that of comprising, in some measure, the sea in a nutshell. In nothing does the energy of language exhibit itself more than in this, and in well-adapted symbols; for these being placed before the eyes of the mind, frequently comprise in a single word what might suffice for the subject matter of a whole book. For since they received their entire nature with a view to signify some one particular thing, so all the forces and faculties they possess, minister to the increase and perfection of this one signification."

In the application of this remark to the symbol of *clouds*, Alcasar observes;—

"When it is affirmed, that by *clouds* are indicated the preachers of the Gospel; if, besides the natural qualities of clouds, (which themselves afford such a harvest of reasonings,) we fix our attention upon those clouds in which the Deity formerly designed to testify his majesty and presence; such as the pillar of cloud in the wilderness; and when on mount Sinai, at the promulgation of the law, a cloud covered the mountain; also when at the dedication of the tabernacle and of the temple of Solomon, in the one case a cloud covered the tabernacle, and in the other a cloud filled the house of the Lord; lastly, at the transfiguration and ascension of Christ, when in the first a bright cloud overshadowed them, and in the second case a cloud took him up from their eyes. If, I say, in the clouds of the Apocalypse, regard is had to all these clouds, who could comprise in words what is contained in the single symbol of *clouds*? The task would be well nigh infinite, to go through other symbols of the same kind; and to consider what fecundity and fertility pertain to the signification proper to each particular symbol."

"Besides, however, their fecundity, symbols possess this singularity; that although they comprise much in the shortest possible compass, nevertheless that their brevity is accompanied with the highest degree of perspicuity. Some, perhaps, may, at first sight, conceive that this cannot be true: for that as Horace rightly observes, *Brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio*. How, therefore, can there be clearness, when the instruction of a whole book is comprised in a single word? In answer to this;

I do not deny that before they are applied, symbols are not duly perceived ; but are very obscure, and like a difficult enigma. But when once they are accommodated in their best manner, all their obscurity dissolves into great clearness. For as, according to Aristotle, *Nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*, so hence it is that we ascend through the comparison of things corporeal, to the knowledge of things spiritual. The better, however, the comparison, the greater the light and clearness it introduces. Now if this be the case, by no words can the truth of any thing spiritual be more clearly explained, than by symbols ; which of all comparisons are the aptest and most excellent ; since they are selected from out of those things whose very nature was produced with a view to signify that to which they are applied.”

“I observe, moreover, that (as indeed is obvious to every one) the knowledge of spiritual things does not derive its clearness from faith ; for of itself faith is obscure. With such a faith, however, it is quite consistent that the faithful should gradually progress in the knowledge of things supernatural, and become illustrated by a gradually better perception of the divine truth believed, by a more perspicacious apprehension, and a higher estimation of the things which faith teaches ; which excellence of knowledge we may call a clearness, in its own way. It is well known, that the more significant comparisons very much contribute to this clearness ; that they effect a fuller and brighter conception of the truth known ; as also that the truth is more perfectly apprehended by the intellect ; not being perceived so distinctly without comparisons. But since, among other comparisons, symbols possess a peculiar eminence, there is no doubt of their being of the utmost use in adding to the weight and estimation of the truth. The great necessity of symbols or comparisons to the setting forth of spiritual things, the masters of spiritual life have made a subject of much consideration ; and they confirm it by the teaching of Dionysius the Areopagite, and by that of Paul himself. Indeed without comparisons, say they, the arcana of Christian philosophy can scarcely be explained. It is evident, therefore, that to spiritual teaching and knowledge there is derived a great accession of light from symbols, when they are of the best kind ; namely,

when the interpretation perfectly adapts the symbol to the truth signified by it."

"Now if these things be so, as they really are, then inasmuch as the symbols of the Apocalypse are so preëminent in excellency and beauty ; it cannot be denied, but that the true exposition of the Apocalypse will throw a great light upon spiritual teaching." . . .

. . . "In those things which relate to moral instruction also, there is no less clearness derived from these symbolic significations. For with respect to what pertains to the affections of the human heart, of which the teachers of spiritual life so sagely and so copiously treat, great is the light which accrues to the whole of their moral philosophy, from chap. ix. of the Apocalypse, when, under the figure of deceitful locusts are signified the desires of the heart ; and under that of furious horses, the passions of anger and rage ; which are the syrens and the furies, as it were, of this mighty and marvellous tragedy. What is observed of these symbols by way of example, may in like manner be said of all the rest. Finally I conclude, not only that great is the beauty of the symbols of the Apocalypse, and wonderful their force ; but, what is still more wonderful, that bright in the extreme is the light which Almighty God has concealed within these symbols. And indeed it is marvellous, that out of a book so obscure should be deduced such great illustration. Yet most certain it is that such is the case. Nor indeed is it unusual with the Deity, to cause the light to shine out of darkness. *See 2 Cor. iv., 6.*"

We have now spoken of that internal evidence of symbolic interpretation which arises out of the origin, nature, and signification of the symbol considered by itself ; we proceed to speak, in the next place, of that which arises out of the *coherence* of the symbolic sense with the context.

Now it is impossible for this coherence to exist, so as to originate any internal evidence, if the Apocalypse be in itself incoherent ; nay, in this case the very coherence would be an evidence against its being the true method of interpretation. What reason then have we to presume

that the Apocalypse is one continuous and coherent narrative?

On this subject Alcasar observes in his *Ninth Proemial Remark* ;—

“Among interpreters it is not yet sufficiently evident, whether the whole Apocalypse of John be exhibited in a single ecstasy, or in several. The more ancient interpreters seem to have acknowledged only a single vision, because they have made no mention of any division; as Victorinus, Ticonius, Andreas, and Aretas. Others, although they divide the Apocalypse into various parts, as into four, seven, or even seventeen, (for to this number the divisions have been extended by Ederus, on the authority of Athanasius,) still, many of them perhaps made this division for the sake of distinction, rather than because they thought there was more than one ecstasy; just in the same manner as many distinguish the Lord’s Prayer (which no one doubts to be one single prayer) into several petitions, for the sake of distinction and convenient teaching. Still, some there are who expressly observe, that the Apocalypse consists of numerous ecstasies of John; and that for this reason we are not to require in them any continuous series. Of this class of interpreters are Ribera and Caponsachius. But they adduce no other proof than this, that they think it impossible that there can be an unbroken line of argument from beginning to end. Similar is the opinion of Pererius, *Disputation vii., Cause 5*, and *Disputation ix., Rule 4.*”

“And indeed from the mere circumstance that John designated his book the Apocalypse; in the singular number not in the plural, as *revelations*; no solid argument can be derived to justify the affirmation that the ecstasy or revelation is only one. For in Isaiah also we meet with the expression, the vision of Isaiah, in the singular number; when nevertheless it consisted of several visions, which occurred respectively in the days of Osias, Jothan, Achaz, and Hezekiah.”

“There is more strength of argument to induce us to believe the Apocalypse to be one vision, in this; that, in the exordium John designates the place and the day—*In the Isle of Patmos—On the Lord’s day*; when no similar expressions are

to be found elsewhere throughout the book. For it was the custom of the prophets, at the commencement of any new vision, to introduce some sign by way of marking the distinction. Such as—*The burden of Egypt; the burden of Moab; the year in which Osias died*; or else to designate the month of the year—a frequent practice with Ezekiel.”

“Perhaps some one may argue, that it could not be that John should have several visions on one and the same day; and that, although it were granted that the Apocalypse was a single vision, this does not oblige us to the conclusion that the line of narrative is unbroken from the beginning to the end of the book; for that, as in the same epistle, may be contained many heads of discourse quite unconnected with each other; so likewise in the same ecstasy, topics may be exhibited to the prophet, diverse and unconnected one with the other. This evasive argument, however, is unsatisfactory. For we must all confess, that whatsoever is done in the Apocalypse is prophetic of the Christian church; so that it is necessary that all the parts should relate to one only argument, namely, the one concerning the church. If, therefore, the vision be one and the same, not many, then must all the various things have been exhibited to John, in one perfect series and legitimate order. Nor is it credible that this order should have been disturbed by him, whether it were natural or artificial. Just as in the case of any finished poem or comedy; it is necessary that it should have a perfect connection and concatenation of the parts one with the other.”

“Moreover, even though we should feign that the whole of this vision had not been exhibited to John in one day, but different parts of it in different days; still, if the argument itself be one, it is expedient that all the parts fit together and coalesce; that is, observe a perfectly orderly series. Just as when a very lengthened transaction or tragedy be divided into two or three days; the thread of the argument is not therefore broken; but rather is continued on, and only carried out to a greater length; as in a drama, when the second act is connected with the first, and the fourth with the third; not to mention that of itself the greater probability is, that the whole Apocalypse is but one ecstasy.”

“Indeed, even to the very persons who think that the Apocalypse is not one continued series, it would be very desirable that a perfect continuity should be found in the several parts. It is only by the force of necessity that they divide it into several visions; and that for this reason they excuse the disturbance of the order in their own expositions. Ribera, for instance, persuades himself that the conflagration of Rome, treated of in chap. xviii., will take place before the subversion of Jerusalem, treated of in chap. xi.; consequently that the last plagues, treated of in chap. xv. and xvi., will take place previously to the plagues mentioned in chap. viii., ix., and xi. But who can doubt that his exposition would be much more agreeable and probable, had the Apocalypse itself placed the plagues of the vials and the burning of Babylon first in order; and after this the plagues of the trumpets, and the fall of Jerusalem.”

“Other perturbations of order there are, not unlike these, which are all swallowed both by Ribera himself and by other interpreters. As, for instance, the thousand years of peace, spoken of in chap. xx., are to be really fulfilled before the beast, mentioned in chap. xiii., ascends out of the sea. And indeed, in my opinion, the millenarians proceeded more in accordance with the sequence of the narrative than do these writers; for, although they thought that the beast ascending out of the sea is Antichrist, still they placed the thousand years of peace after his death. And Seraphinus de Fermo, Pammoni, and Bullinger follow the same opinion; although in contracting the thousand years of peace within a much shorter period than the expression indicates, their expositions do too much violence to the original.”

“The common interpretation is guilty of less violence; for this begins to enumerate the thousand years of the binding of the devil from the passion of Christ. In this case, however, there is a great confusion and perturbation of order; because, when in the Apocalypse the binding of the devil is described in chap. xx., that is, at the end of the prophecy concerning the church, the interpretation of this binding refers it nevertheless to the beginning of the early church.”

“From all confounding and disturbing the order in this manner, our own method is extremely abhorrent; for no tragedy could be designed, the series and continuity of which are more

coherent and congruous than the course of events pursued in our argument. And if the application of the whole context to the sense which I propose, be apt and suitable; doubtless from the very sequency and consequentiveness discovered in our method, may be derived a strong argument to prove that the Apocalypse itself was constructed upon the principle of this sequency. For it would not be possible, that in a book written confusedly and promiscuously, that is, disorderly, all the parts should be respectively capable of a most exact application to one single line of argument; and that in this manner there should be found in them a legitimate order, and an uninterrupted sequency. *That which is not, is not known*, as Aristotle shrewdly observes; nor could any man or angel, by any force of genius, in explaining the enigmas one by one, make every thing perfectly quadrate throughout a series of twenty-two chapters of an enigmatical book, by a beautifully developed line of argument, but very foreign from the intention of the author; nor could he connect them together by any uninterrupted links of communication which could be possibly dreamed of."

"I confess, indeed, that a set order and series is not to be esteemed of any great moment, where the application is not sufficiently apt. Whether in regard to my own work, I may have made all the parts square with one another, is not a matter on which my opinion ought to be taken; nor will the wise regard what I think upon the subject, to whom alone the decision pertains. One thing, however, I may affirm, that if there were any exposition of such a kind, as, while it preserved the order and coherence of the parts, should, at the same time, make them all perfectly square with each other; such a circumstance ought to prove to wise men, that this is the genuine meaning of the sacred writer; and consequently that those who had not arrived at a continuity of this kind, had not arrived at the genuine meaning of the writer; since they had not perceived the consecutive order proper to the book throughout. Indeed, in the interpretation of the sacred Scripture, it is worthy of particular observation, that when all that goes before and comes after, aptly coheres and forms a continuous series from beginning to end, it does not allow the interpreter to wander from the single end in view; as indeed was well observed by Turrianus in the

Proemium to his Treatise on the most Holy Eucharist; and long before by Athanasius, in two places of his *Third Oration* against the Arians.”

“And although, as a general observation, the comprehension of the sequency of the parts is of great moment; still some instances there are in which it is of still greater; both with a view to the true understanding of the whole, and the gratification it conveys. As, for instance, in any ingenious plot and train of circumstances in a tragedy; where he who has not gained a perception of the whole order and argument of the story, does not see the best and most beautiful part of it. The same observation may be made in the case of the parts of the human body; which, although they are each most perfect of their kind, still would never exhibit their genuine and expressive appearance of beauty, and their proportion, but from the wonderful consentaneity of the parts, and the apt composition and concinnity of the members; which, as it constitutes true beauty, so it likewise endows them with greater charms and commends them by additional grace and elegance. What should we say of the parts of a house, or what of the several divisions of an oration, however ample the one or eloquent the other, if in either case they were separated and viewed apart from each other? Could they present any striking beauty of appearance, without being combined into one whole, in which the admirable putting together and coherence of the parts could be seen, and in which case alone are beauty and dignity given to the object of contemplation? They, therefore, who fail to notice the unity and integrity of this book, arising out of the formation of many symbols into one general feature (and that too of the most beautiful kind), even though they bestow considerable attention on the details of the prophecy, yet seem to have had no view of its beauty as a whole.”

“Since therefore, in the case of the Apocalypse, the continuity of the book throughout is of so great importance, it is for this reason that we have taken so much pains to develop it. The opinions, however, formerly noticed in our *Sixth Proemial Remark*, take a contrary view of the subject. For the first cuts short the thread; as if to cut short and untie were one and the same thing. The second has no regard to continuity, in

order that a freer scope might be allowed for philosophizing. The third takes indeed some pains to elucidate the continuity; but owns that it cannot carry it on from beginning to end; *i. e.*, cannot carry on the application down to the end of the events which befall the church. The fourth carries on indeed the application, but so slender is the thread of the continuity as to be frequently broken. Would that a fifth had been given by Ariadne as a clue, as the fable relates."

"Thus far had I written, when there came to hand a commentary upon the Apocalypse, recently published by a very learned and great friend of mine; whose words, in the *Prologue to Disputation* vii., are as follow."

Instead of repeating the quotation already given and to which the reader is referred, in p. 5 of this Discourse, we shall present one to the same effect from *Lectures on the Apocalypse*, recently published, p. 166;—

"To speak now of the plan of the Apocalypse."

"First, then, let me declare my conviction, that the Apocalypse is not a progressive prophecy, flowing in a continuous stream of historical sequence."

"The design of the writer appears to me to be this. He traces a rapid prophetic sketch, which carries him from his own age to the eve of the consummation of all things. Hastening onward to the conclusion, he slightly touches, or wholly omits, many things which will afterwards engage his attention. He then returns to the point from which he had started; he expands what he had before contracted; he fills up what he had drawn in outline; he treats the same period in a new relation; he turns aside from the main track into digressions and episodes; he reverts from these by-ways into the high road, and again moves onward: and in this manner he arrives at the same point as that which he had reached in his first journey; and thus at several times proceeding from the same initial point, he travels downward, not in parallel lines, but in paths more or less devious or winding, and in roads of a different kind: some presenting a view of suffering; some of judgment; some displaying a prospect of the history of the Word of God; some of the church of God, both visible and invisible; some opening, as it were,

a wide panorama of afflictions under the tyrannous sway of a proud and prosperous apostacy ; others exhibiting the downfall of this mysterious empire, and of all its adherents ; and the final subjection of all terrestrial and infernal powers to the dominion of Christ." . . .

. . . "The author having been brought, in the manner we have described, by several tracks to the same glorious catastrophe, re-ascends, once for all, in the twentieth chapter, and gives in one glance a brief summary of what had been done by Christ for his church, even from his incarnation to the end. He shews that Christ came from heaven in order to bind Satan ; that He did bind him, and gave men power to overcome him ; that He made them partners of his victory, and inheritors of his glory." . . .

. . . "He also shews that nothing can harm those who are sealed with the seal of God ; for they are united for ever with Christ ; they are enthroned in heaven with Him. And having thus given the moral of the whole Apocalypse, he then at length takes a step which he had not taken before. He crosses the gulph which separates time from eternity. He displays the Last Judgment. He mounts from the earthly church to the heavenly city. He unfolds the glories of the New Jerusalem. And thus he exhibits the immensity of God's love ; and excites the courage and invigorates the faith of Christians in every age, with a view of eternal joy."

"Such, I apprehend, is the plan of the Apocalypse."

Let the reader compare it with the account already presented in page 5 of the present Discourse.

Again, says the same author, p. 177 ;—

"Here we pause to remark that, as was before noticed, the inspired writer, in the very beginning of the revelation, hastens to the end ; then he returns, as we have seen, and addresses spiritual admonition, in seven epistles, to the universal church ; then he reverts again, and reveals to the church a rapid view of her own history in seven pictures, displayed under the seven seals."

In p. 170, *ibid.*, the following observation is added ;—

"In illustration of this view, I might remind you, that the

same mode of treating a similar subject is pursued by the ancient Hebrew prophets, whose footsteps St. John follows very closely; for example, by Daniel, who hastens to the end of his prophecy, and then returns to exhibit it in wider expansion and minuter detail."

In confirmation of the same view of the subject, the author, in a note, quotes a remark of Horace; as also of Bossuet; and in p. 169, he quotes, to the same purpose, Victorinus, Primasius, Lightfoot; and in p. 28, Bede; where also the same author observes, that the Apocalypse is not a consecutive prophecy, but is to be regarded rather as a synoptical system of coordinate prophecies, consisting of frequent anticipations and recapitulations.

In the foregoing statement of the plan of the Apocalypse, the reader naturally asks on what ground are these divisions made; and the only answer which is returned, is, that such are the convictions of the writer; such his persuasion, his apprehension. But although the authority of an eminent writer be considerable; yet as there are other considerable authorities which might be cited on the other side, the reader is only the more anxious for obtaining that information, as to the reasons producing the conviction, which the *Lectures* do not supply. True it is, that, by way of illustration, appeal is made to the ancient Hebrew prophets, and among these, especially to Daniel; but some of the best divines have been inclined to regard the Apocalypse as the key to Daniel, rather than Daniel as the key to the Apocalypse; to say nothing of the difference between a collective number of visions, as in Daniel, and a continued vision, as in the Apocalypse.

It is indeed observed in the *Lectures*, p. 168, that the several parts of the Apocalypse are closely connected together; that a beautiful harmony pervades the whole; that the transitions seem to be abrupt, but are natural and easy; and that every portion is joined to the rest with exquisite

grace and consummate skill. And it is so far satisfactory to find, that the *Lectures* acknowledge the importance of these characteristics; but if, upon the foregoing plan, the parts of the Apocalypse are closely connected together, who has connected them? the prophet or the interpreter? Certainly not the prophet; all the harmony, all the connection, all the grace and skill are entirely those of the interpreter; as exhibited in, first, totally demolishing the order observed by St. John, and then re-constructing the whole prophecy upon the plan approved by the interpreter himself.

Let us, however, in reply to the foregoing view, proceed with the argument of Alcasar;—

“And besides the authority of the writer above quoted, which is considerable, he opposes to us the custom of the prophets and the suitableness of the thing itself, so that prophecies may be impenetrable without the spirit of God. I know that some, when treating on the Book of the Canticles, have patronized the same sentiments; adding, that it is more worthy of sacred Scripture to despise order, and to prefer those conceptions of the mind which are not only not connected and coherent, but scattered and dispersed; as may be seen in the case of the Proverbs of Solomon.”

“Those who are of this opinion; who, on the one hand, assert that, in the Apocalypse or the Canticles, no order or continuous series is to be sought for; and on the other, that in the application it is not requisite that there should be exactness as to *all*, but that it is sufficient to apply only *particular* parts of any figure or enigma;—such persons I would, in the first place, intreat to consider, whether Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* might not in the same manner be applied to the mysteries of our faith. For if there be no need of order, nor of a perfect application of all the parts, what story of Ovid might not be found which might not be aptly accommodated to something or other in the mysteries of our faith? Thus the apologue of Actæon, who, being converted into a stag, became food for the dogs, might be appositely applied to the mystery of the Eucharist. And the same I may say of the rest of Ovid’s stories. But who can

be so satisfied with such a method of explanation, as that his understanding shall acquiesce in it as the genuine interpretation of the enigma?"

"In the next place; as to the observation, that it is the custom of the prophets to observe no order in what they say; I answer, if each one of the prophetic visions, or each of the addresses be separately taken, many there are which may be found among them, in which a most appropriate account might be given of their order and continuity from beginning to end; which no one will doubt, who will strenuously devote his endeavors to the understanding of the prophets."

"Thirdly; although we must often admit a transition from history to prophecy, still it is not so abrupt as to have no relation to the preceding history; rather the connection between the two is exceedingly apt. Thus, for instance, we see spiritual men, in the course of familiar conversation, frequently passing, upon any given occasion, from corporeal to spiritual things; and in such a manner, as not to have broken off the thread of their remarks, but rather to have ascended to a higher consideration of the subject. To a full understanding, therefore, of the spiritual instruction to which they have made the transition, it is necessary to recur to the subject previously treated of; whence it may appear how consentaneously and becomingly, how skillfully and beautifully, the latter part of the discourse is connected with the former. Thus in John iv., 33: *Hath any one brought him meat to eat? Jesus said, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me.* Observe the transition; in which by no means ought the context to be neglected. Of the same kind are the transitions which occur in the prophets. To most persons, however, they seem to be abrupt; since through an ignorance of the context, they cannot perceive the aptness and coherence of the two. Of this transition of the prophets, Acosta treats in his remarks on *The Last Times*, book i., chap. 11, from the authority of Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustin, and Tichonius. Also Ribera, on *Hosea* ii., 34, 35; where he adduces a passage from Jerome, proving that the transition is not abrupt. Jerome Prado also upon Ezekiel treats of this subject. To these remarks I add, that where there is no transition, there is sometimes reason to suspect that this name is resorted to as a pretext

for the person's ignorance of the continuity. Certainly wherever the prophets pass from one topic to another, wonderful are the skill and connection conspicuous in the transition. But as to what our foregoing author asserted, namely, that in the narration of the visions of the prophets, the Scripture disturbs and confounds the order; that the last it places first, and the first, last; that it cuts short the topic once begun, and passes on to others without the slightest order; I say, that I wonder that any man of sense should attribute such a thing to sacred Scripture; for were any one else to speak in this manner, there is no one but would impute it to him as a defect; and most deservedly would he be esteemed by others as a man of very disorderly and confused ideas. And though he should dispute very acutely and subtilely, yet would every one deservedly condemn his disturbance of order, and confused hashing up of his several topics. Some things there are, nevertheless, in which it is of no consequence whether this or that order be observed; and in these cases, it is no wonder if Scripture should disregard it. But where the declaration of things in due order is of great consequence to the understanding of the subject treated of, it is not probable that, in a book written with so great wisdom, this order should be wanting. As to what is added, that the observance of order of this kind savors of human invention, reason, and skill; I reply, that, in men who speak with distinct and well-arranged ideas, it has rather the appearance of their following the example and the footsteps of divine wisdom. Because, *Rom. xiii., 1*; *The things that are of God are all arranged in order.***

“Fourthly; it cannot be denied, but that if the Apocalypse be as it were a drama and a tragedy, and the Song of Solomon be a single poem; if also the argument of each book be of the most lofty character, it would be much more congruous that there should be no such abrupt saltus or transition, as we have above mentioned; for in a prophecy, the transition to a topic more spiritual and sublime should be of the most easy kind. But if all the topics are themselves of the highest dignity, in this case it is unsuitable to interrupt the thread of the discourse. To this we may add; that if there be any book which invites

* This is not the reading generally adopted.

and allures an attentive consideration of the order of the subjects of which it treats, that book is assuredly the Apocalypse. For it establishes many divisions, it institutes many septenaries; and under seven and no more than seven seals, it enumerates the particulars of the narrative in their order, from the beginning to the end; prefixing to them the numbers, *The First, The Second, The Third, &c.*; all of which is a plain proof, that this book is written so as to observe a great order and connectedness in the topics of which it treats. In the case of the plagues, also, who can be ignorant that a similar order and series are preserved?—that those are placed first which are the less severe; then that the more severe follow; and that before the three last, are repeated *woe, woe, woe*, answering respectively to the three last plagues; in all which likewise are preserved the same order and gradation; so that the fifth plague is severe, the sixth still more so, the seventh most of all. In like manner, there is a similar order in the phials, and the twelve foundations of the city. For unless John were exhibiting great care in observing an orderly series and distribution, there would be no reason why he should say, *The first foundation was a jasper, the second a sapphire, the third a chalcedony, &c.*

“Fifthly; as to what is added, that it was but proper that all the particulars of the narrative should be written promiscuously and without any order, with the view that they might be the more difficult, and indeed be impossible to be understood, without the aid of that Spirit by which they were written; to this may be given the easy reply, that rightly to understand the series and coherent order of the circumstances is a much more difficult thing. For let the notion once gain possession of the mind, that in the exposition of the Apocalypse order is not to be regarded; but that it is sufficient to apply every particular part separately to its own particular mystery; and then, by this very admission, a great portion of the difficulty is removed. So true is this, that the very author, who before depriving the Apocalypse of its order considered its difficulty to be so great, adds; that by the two rules concerning the neglect of order, and not being too particular in regard to the several details, the application becomes not so difficult as some imagine; an opinion, which indeed would be true enough, if the two

rules themselves were not of Lesbian origin. For when all obligation to observe order and to fit all the parts one to another, is at once abolished, I cannot see what difficulty remains.”

“Sixthly; the forementioned rules, to confess the truth, are not so much evident methods to lead us to a true interpretation; as rather evasions by which those seek to solace themselves, who cannot succeed in finding out the continuity and perfect application of the Apocalyse. For the very persons who prescribe to us these rules, would regard their own explanation as of much greater value, and that not undeservedly, if the thread of their argument were continuous, and the application of every part so complete as to omit nothing.—Who can deny this? If therefore any interpretation should appear, which in their own judgment should contain a more noble kind of argument than their own, and never interrupt the continuous thread of the narrative; and if the application should be, on every hand, more apt than the one which they themselves had excogitated; without omitting any particle of the narrative; then must they all confess, that those expositions which observe no order, which fail to make all the parts fit one into the other, are not those which are the true and genuine. For it is not possible that a continuous thread of argument, and a perfect application of all the parts should be found, where none had been intended by the author. On the other hand, if they were intended and have hitherto not been discovered; then assuredly an inquiry into a true interpretation must not stop short in its course by declining the difficulty of making the discovery, but must endeavor to surmount it.”

We have hitherto spoken of the internal evidence of interpretation arising out of the internal *nature* of the symbol, and the *coherence of its meaning* with the immediate context. We now proceed to the additional evidence arising out of the continuity, harmony, and *general order* of the whole.

It is observed by Mr. Williams, in his Study of the Gospels, p. 265 ;

“If we take separate emblems in Holy Scripture, and find them frequently used in one sense, so as to indicate and mark

some definite meaning ; and that this our opinion of its mystical sense is confirmed by the opinion of great and good writers, so as to be sure that we are using it in a reasonable and safe manner : and if we put many of these together as thus explained, we shall find, I think, that they will afford something like a system, as if all external nature was systematically expressive of things spiritual and invisible, through a very extensive analogy.”

On this subject, however, Alcasar is somewhat diffuse. Thus, in his *Tenth Proemial Remark*, he observes ;—

“ If the application of every symbol to that which is designed to correspond to it, were not apt, little would be the advantage perceivable in any continuous argument of the Apocalypse viewed as a whole ; as before observed. But if in the accommodation of each, they so aptly and symmetrically square with the thing signified, that in the judgment of the wise, in every symbol taken apart is found an exact proportion to the thing which it is made to signify, and one worthy of a higher order of intellect ; then doubtless great would be the utility which would arise from the orderly application of the whole book to the successes of the church. Nor do I mean to say this with the intention of arrogating any thing of this kind to my own application ; but only to prove that any exposition is to be esteemed of great value, which can apply the several symbols of the Apocalypse in this orderly manner. Because from so doing would result the two following most advantageous consequences.”

“ In the first place ; great would be the solace of the faithful, and the pleasure derived from a manifest understanding of a most beautiful enigma, and in which the mind may entirely acquiesce. For in enigmas the greater the obscurity and difficulty before the solution is found, the greater the clearness and pleasure of illustration arising, after unveiling the mystery and perceiving the beauty of the covering which involved it. This being the case, how much and how great must be the pleasure derived from overcoming the difficulty of that book which of all others is the most difficult ; and when thus overcome, of being able to read the book with great facility and delight ; a facility arising from this, that the whole of the dif-

difficulty of the enigma is now at length removed! For if any still remains, then the enigma is not yet explained; the entire series of the application being not yet brought out into view. Assuming the removal, then, of every difficulty, great is the pleasure necessarily perceived, both from the evidence of the truth that had been concealed, and from the contemplation of the wonderful proportion of the symbols to the things they are employed to signify."

"Some person may object, that so great a degree of clearness cannot possibly be produced. For that although all the symbols should be aptly applied by the reader according to the intention of the interpreter; still that the application of each particular symbol cannot be evident, but, at the best, only probable and not unlikely; but that probability and conjecture cannot give rise to the perspicuity and pleasure above mentioned. To this, however, I reply, that in the explanation of enigmas a great singularity occurs; because from out of only a probable and coherent exposition of each of the parts is formed an evident meaning of the whole. In arguments, indeed, the case is far otherwise; for in these the force of the conclusion is dependent on the weaker part of an antecedent proposition; so that if either of the premises do not go beyond probability, then from both together it is only probability that can be derived into the conclusion. In the explanation of enigmas, on the other hand, we proceed in a very different way. Because from those things which we assume, not as clear and certain but only as probable, we proceed to the highest degree of clearness, and to an evident solution of the whole enigma; the application making all the parts to square with each other, and their coherence shewing a wonderful harmony among them. Nor is it any objection, that in the application of the several parts the interpreter is sometimes in doubt and uncertainty; and that he assumes some things of which he is not sufficiently certified, until he perceives the perspicuous solution of the whole. For in this case, the same thing occurs as in the explanation of the secret characters, called ciphers, which some persons use. Thus, an epistle is placed before my eyes, written in certain new and unusual characters, which the writer has invented according to his fancy; having, instead of an alphabet of the ordinary kind,

substituted marks of his own; the ordinary letters of the alphabet being turned upside down, or changed at the writer's discretion. Now, in order to distinguish the several characters used in this epistle, and to perceive their meaning, I neither can nor ought to proceed from what is evident and known, to a plain comprehension of the epistle; I can only make such assumptions as may enable me to form some conjecture; and by the observance of rules known to the masters of this kind of interpretation, out of the characters of the epistle itself I form a varied and multifarious alphabet. Suppose, for example, the letter M is put for A, the letter Q for L, and so forth. Being as yet in an uncertain state of mind, I attempt the reading of the epistle; and go on, till after various changes of the letters or characters, I at length find out an alphabet of which words can be formed, sentences can be composed of words, and an entire sense out of sentences; till at length I have read through the whole letter with a perfectly suitable and consecutive meaning. In this case, after having proceeded in a state of doubt and inconstancy in forming conjecture; yet, solely from the circumstance of the probability attaching to the several parts, I suddenly emerge into such a degree of evidence, as to leave not the vestige of a doubt that I have arrived at a complete understanding of the meaning of the writer. So that if, according to my method of reading, the epistle should be found containing heretical assertions, I cannot doubt the intention of the writer to have committed them to alphabetical characters of this description.”*

“The same thing I find occurring in the exposition of enigmas; for in these cases, when the rules of explanation are exactly observed, and nothing is forced in the application, but a due proportion is observed between the two, we are by no means to require of the interpreter that what he at first assumes, be plain and well known (though indeed this is justly to be required in philosophic argument), but only that he suggests nothing which is silly or improbable. And if, pursuing this method, the interpreter arrives at a fitting and coherent exposition of all the parts of the enigma; at a meaning entire and perfectly adapting all the particulars to each other, so that

* See the same argument further elucidated in *Proemial Remark*, xi., 5.

they all cohere together and coalesce into a unity of argument ; then, indeed, he manifestly perceives that he has hit the meaning of the writer ; nor does the least scruple of doubt upon the subject remain in his mind. Moreover, the perspicuity, which arises out of the harmonious coherence of the parts thus connected with each other, removes whatever doubt might otherwise have existed in particular instances ; especially in those enigmas in which there is no coherent solution, when differently explained. Thus all distrust being now removed, the interpreter has a certain and evident knowledge, that in such and no other manner ought the several parts to be interpreted ; while before he only conjectured that this might be the explication ; although in those few cases, in which different interpretations do not alter the sense of the enigma or the continuity of the book, as a whole ; it is no wonder if, after the solution of the enigma, there should still remain certain minor doubts, and in minutiae of lesser moment a possibility of different interpretations. In the exposition then of an enigma, we are not to proceed as in a method of argumentation ; but only to take care that every thing is well fitting ; and wherever this is the case, doubt is immediately transmuted into evidence. Indeed, to shew that in every part of an enigma the meaning and sense of the author have been divined, the best possible proof is, that all the parts perfectly harmonize ; and by a compact connection mutually coalesce into a beautiful structure : just as when in the interpretation of the characters above spoken of, there was no previously certain knowledge of the value of each particular letter considered by itself, (as, for instance, of M or L), nor until the manifest sequency of words and sentences had made it obvious ; when it became evident, that for M was substituted a character, which, in point of figure, bore no resemblance to it."

"From these considerations we are led to see the manner in which we are to understand the common axiom of theologians derived from Dionysius, in his Epistle to Titus ; namely, that *symbolical theology is not argumentative* ; inasmuch as, in the explication of symbols, we proceed from the obscure to the clear ; but in arguments, on the other hand, from the more to the less clear ; a circumstance which, nevertheless, does not

prevent our being able clearly and evidently, in the case of enigmas, to recognize the meaning of the author; for here the apt and coherent accommodation of all the parts so efficaciously illustrates the understanding, as to give it entire satisfaction, and to affect the lovers of truth with the greatest delight.”

“To explain the matter more at large, let us take into consideration our every-day experience in explaining enigmas. If any one presents to me an enigma in which, among other symbols, I find that of the *sun*; then, in order to explain it, I am not at liberty to force the symbol into any far-fetched signification; but, among those which are evidently apt and probable, I may select the one which the most favors my object: I may, for instance, apply it to Christ, to reason, to wisdom, to a king, &c. Now if, with the signification which I assume, all the other parts cohere with equal probability, and nicely conjoin one with the other; I have then no longer any doubt that I have manifestly explained the enigma, and attained to its true and genuine exposition. Nor is it the interpreter only who enjoys this clearness of evidence; but likewise all others who hear the interpretation, however moderate their abilities; SUPPOSING THEY ARE FITTED TO RECEIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THIS KIND.* For (in this case) if those who hear the interpretation, cannot persuade themselves that they have attained to the meaning of the author; the fault is not to be imputed to them, but to the interpreter. For it is manifest, that a true explanation of an enigma generally gives satisfaction to all; and, therefore, he has not yet explained the enigma, in whose explication all do not acquiesce. Since, therefore, the Apocalypse may be reduced to one single enigma composed of many others; it is certain that the explanation, in which the minds of the hearers do not acquiesce when it is set before them, is by no means the true solution of the enigma.”

“Now in prophetic enigmas it is manifest, that the interpretation which brings all things into harmonious order (so that the events themselves correspond to the orderly series of the parts of the prophecy aptly applied) clearly demonstrates, both that this is the genuine sense of the enigma; and that the

* That is; *morally* as well as intellectually fitted; which they would not be in any case in which the mind was strongly prejudiced against, or judicially blinded to, the truth brought to light in the explication.

enigmas themselves are to be held in high estimation, as being veritable prophecies. On the other hand, if the series of events do not correspond to the order of the symbols; either the prophecy will be derided; or a doubt may be entertained as to its authority; or at least it will become evident, that the mystery of the enigma has not as yet been divined. We may cite as an apposite example, the book or prophecy, concerning the Popes, attributed to the Abbot Joachim; in which, if it were evident that the symbols or enigmas corresponded to the Popes in the same order in which the latter succeeded one another, so that thirty symbols were seen to answer to the same number of Popes in succession, it would then be obvious that the writer of this book was a prophet, and that the book itself was worthy of the highest religious esteem. If, however, in the course of the application, there should appear to be a great disturbance of this order; then must every man of sense readily pronounce, that the book is obviously nugatory. Moreover, from the circumstance that any one symbol is capable of application to any one particular Pontiff; any other, to any other; or if several agree to several, yet not in any orderly series, but only in a perverted and confused succession; from this circumstance, I say, can be elicited no argument to make us believe the writer to be a prophet. For wherever a license is assumed of perverting the order, then, in consequence of the very obscurity and variety of the symbols, one or the other may seem capable of application to some one or other of the Pontiffs. Just as in the case of students of general literature; many and varied may be the observations they quote from the ancient mysteries, especially from the fables of the poets; which they readily accommodate to any subject upon which they desire to express praise or blame; when no one for a moment imagines that this was the original intent of the story, although they have thus applied it. If then, from out of the fables of the poets, some things may be ostensibly adduced, capable of adding grace to the relation of some particular event; what wonder if something or other might be adduced from the Apocalypse capable of a like symbolical signification, although very foreign to the intention of the writer? especially since in that book there is so great a variety of symbols and enigmas; especially also, as in

enigmas of this kind, the more obscure and difficult they are, the more can they be twisted to various senses, and be applied either to one thing or the other. It is, indeed, for this reason, that astrologers, to prevent any easy detection of their fraud, utter only obscure oracles respecting the future. And the same thing occurs in the book of prophecy above mentioned, concerning the Popes; which is covered over with such a veil of obscurity, that it is easy for any one of the enigmas, or rather raving effusions, to be applied to Sextus V., Gregory XIII., or any one or other of the Pontiffs."

"Justly, however, do wise men deride a book, containing alleged prophecies, which cannot be applied to the Pontiffs in any order. If, indeed, they were capable of any perfect and ordinate application, then would the difficulty be overcome, and the book itself be held by all in the highest veneration. Whence I infer, that it is of great importance to apply the whole Apocalypse in an orderly series, to the theological history of the church; to the end that the very persons who had before doubted the authority of the book (when they find an apt and suitable correspondence of the Apocalypse to the argument set before them, or a sequency in the prophecy) may, by this, be brought to the conviction that this prophecy is of the Holy Spirit; and be compelled to acknowledge it to be worthy of the highest veneration; since it contains a most noble prophecy concerning the church; while the series of the symbols, manifestly corresponding with the truth of history, (for it is evident that the book was written before the triumph of the church over Rome,) may entirely confirm those who had hitherto been doubtful, and no longer permit a doubt concerning its authority."

"What greater consolation then could be offered to the faithful; what more magnificent contribution to the authority of the Apocalypse; than the one which results from an ordinate and suitable application of this book to the foregoing argument? Since this alone would suffice to cause the book to receive the highest estimation among all, and to be believed to be written by divine inspiration; even though it had not been before so decreed by the church, and nothing had been known concerning its writer? What, moreover, could be of greater importance, than that (with regard to an enigma which had proved a stum-

bling-block to so many grave authors, either in their being led to derogate from its authority, or to give it a fabulous interpretation) it should manifestly appear either that it had been rejected, or else perverted into fictitious comments, only because they had not yet attained to its meaning, and to that genuine interpretation which harmonized every thing, and which the sons of the church of Rome, and theologians in particular, so earnestly desiderate?"

Thus far Alcasar: and the internal evidence which he has shewn to arise out of the intrinsic nature of symbol; the coherence of the symbolic meaning with the context; and the consequent general harmony and order of the whole; no author, that we are aware of, has yet denied. Indeed, as Alcasar observes, even those whose theory requires them to abandon the order observed by St. John, evince great anxiety, nevertheless, to follow it wherever they can. Thus Cornelius a Lapide, who, as we shall soon perceive, objects to the natural order of the Apocalypse, yet, in chap. xvii., p. 271, observes, that after the fall of the Roman Empire;—

“Then will follow the battle of Gog and Magog, and the slaughter of these and of Antichrist. Then the day of judgment, and the resurrection and glory of the elect; which John here recites in their order, so that he closes the Apocalypse with the glory and felicity of the heavenly Jerusalem. For, this, the *plain and orderly narration* of John seems to require; and thus we avoid many hysterologies involved, troublesome, and ambiguous, and therefore plainly uncertain and fictitious.”

Such, then, is the deference which Cornelius a Lapide felt himself bound to pay to the general principle advocated by Alcasar. Let us, however, now proceed to state his objections to Alcasar's system. In his Prolegomena to the Apocalypse, he observes, p. 10;—

“Alcasar assiduously urges the sequency, or consecutiveness and connectedness of the Apocalypse; which he considers to be a coherent narrative, drawn out into one continuous thread,

as it were. But this continuity is not to be urged every where in the prophets, as I have shewn in my remarks upon them, and shall further shew in the sequel. For that, in the Apocalypse, there is a hystorology on some occasions, or a disturbance of the order of the times, Alcasar cannot deny; since the thing speaks for itself; as in chap. xiv., 8, where it is said, '*Fallen, fallen is Babylon,*' when nevertheless the fall and destruction of Babylon are afterwards described in chap. xviii. So also in chap. xiv., verses 14, 16, 19; judgment is said to be performed and completed, the earth to be reaped, and the wicked to be cast into the great lake of the wrath of God; when nevertheless the prophet afterwards subjoins in chap. xvi., seven plagues preceding the judgment; and in chap. xvii. and xviii., the destruction of Babylon; and in chap. xix., the slaughter of Antichrist, of Gog and Magog, &c., and in chap. xx., the loosing of Satan, &c.; all of which go before the day of judgment, and the consummation of the age, as is manifest. Now if this sequency cannot be preserved, as Alcasar contends it should, in that general sense in which he admits it, and which in his own work he presupposes to be, as it were, the grammatical; why should it be preserved in the enigmatical or parabolical sense, which is founded upon the grammatical, and ought justly to correspond with it? Thirdly; what sequence is there in joining the beginning to the end, passing over the intermediates, and seeking out a comparison from the last times of the world, to explain events which occur in the first ages of the church? . . .

Thus far Cornelius a Lapide upon Alcasar. Without however entering into the question with respect to the justness of all these remarks, it may be admitted that in some at least which he urges there seems to be reason; for Alcasar considers the Apocalypse in its beginning to relate to the seven churches of Asia, more especially to the bishops of those churches then existing; and then in chapter iv., is obliged to make the prophecy retrospective, and to go back to the first establishment of Christianity. Then after chapter xviii., which he supposes to relate to the conversion of Rome, there is a hiatus in the narrative, ex-

tending through a long indefinite period, till the days of Antichrist preceding the last judgment. In this respect, therefore, the continuity advocated by Alcasar does not exist; nor does he justice to his own principles.* His abstract arguments concerning the advantages and even necessity of an orderly sequence are, indeed, unanswerable; but his application of the prophecy to the actual events, does not satisfy the conditions he himself has required; and, therefore, upon his own shewing, his own application is not the true one; not to mention, that to adapt the prophecy to his own order of events, he has been obliged to have recourse to very far-fetched interpretations, and to do violence to the natural meaning of numerous symbols. In saying thus much, we say only what we believe would be confirmed by many theologians of the church of Rome, however much they might value his treatise.†

Now none of these errors can be imputed to Swedenborg; according to whom, the order observed in the Apocalypse is strictly consecutive; and the events to which it applies, strictly consecutive also; consequently no where presenting any hiatus; no where separated by intervals, whether long or short; but strictly answering to all the conditions laid down by Alcasar. And although Cornelius a Lapide affirms, that on the very face of the Apocalypse there is a visible disturbance of order, in the passages to which he refers; yet this entirely disappears when they receive their proper interpretation; inasmuch as some of the passages do not refer to that to which A Lapide has taken for granted that they do refer. What the order

* For a general view of the plan of Alcasar's work, see his *Proemial Remark* xiv., 2, 3, 4, &c. Also the whole of *Proemial Remark* vii.

† Calmet, in his catalogue of writers, speaks of Alcasar's *prodigious* work upon the Apocalypse; and Bayle says, in his Dictionary, that it is one of the best that Roman Catholics have produced upon the subject. This is what Nicolas Antonio says of it; who, nevertheless, will not vouch for the interpretations.

more particularly is which is observed by Swedenborg, will be seen in the sequel.

It is obvious then, that upon the principles we have mentioned, all interpretations and applications of the Apocalypse, whether literal, figurative, or professedly spiritual, which do not observe the order presented by St. John, are not the genuine; and as, at the time of writing these remarks, no work upon the Apocalypse has appeared, fulfilling the conditions which have already been laid down, except the works of Swedenborg; we have thus an *a priori* argument which entitles them to the serious consideration of the reader; concentrating as they do within themselves, first, the same subject matter which the early fathers declared them to treat of; secondly, the same or similar symbolical interpretations, on which a considerable body of the fathers, and even of Protestant interpreters, have agreed; and lastly, that perfect order and sequency of the parts which constitutes, as Alcasar says, an internal evidence of the truth both of the interpretation and application.

Now it has already been observed, that while some interpreters consider the Apocalypse to be absolutely unintelligible without an interpreter divinely inspired, there are others who consider there is little or no difficulty in the interpretation; such as either the ultra-literalists, or those who found their interpretations upon the destruction of the order observed by St. John, or the sequency of the narrative. But, as Alcasar observes, let it once be granted that the order observed by St. John is the true order, and then the genuine difficulty begins; which is also further increased by admitting the subject matter of the Apocalypse to be the spiritual state of the church. In the former case, an interpreter divinely inspired is requisite to unfold the Apocalypse, in the latter, a reader duly prepared in order to understand and receive it.

With regard to the divine inspiration of the interpreter : this we have seen to have been plainly considered a requisite by many in the church of Rome. “*For many in the church of Rome,*” says Pererius, “*were of the opinion that the Apocalypse is altogether incomprehensible, without an especial revelation of God ;*” and Pastorini admits, in his General History of the Christian Church, p. 272, that in the last times, “a teacher, of extraordinary power and virtue, will be wanted.” We have likewise seen numerous admissions of a similar kind made by Protestant writers.* Upon this principle, Swedenborg’s claim to divine guidance and inspiration is so far from being a *prima facie* argument against him as an interpreter, that it is the very reverse. Even, however, if he were not inspired, or if divine inspiration were considered unnecessary, still it might be replied in the words of Aleasar, *Proemial Remark* xix., 7 ;—

“Perhaps, however, this they may concede to the Deity, that into whomsoever he will, he may inspire a new explication of an ancient truth, although they may not believe that it is inspired into me, which indeed I may willingly concede ; but still it is the part of a wise man to imitate St. Thomas in this matter, of whom it is said that he was always willing to be taught by any one ; because truth, be it spoken by whom it may, is from the Holy Spirit.”

As to the due preparation of the reader in order to receive the truth, it ought to be remembered, that when the Apocalypse is revealed, there is no promise that it shall be revealed to *all*, but only to the *servants* of God, as expressly stated in the first verse of the first chapter. For, as Wittsius observes in his *Miscellanea Sacra*, vol. i., p. 642 ;—

“Very much of the cause of the difficulty of this book, is to be found in man himself. For since the fall, we all labor under such hebetude of mind, that in regard to divine and

* Review of the Principles of Apocalyptical Interpretation, vol. ii., p. 322.

heavenly things we are both dark and blind. Moreover, there is in many a supine slothfulness, and a contempt of the hidden treasures of divine wisdom, which are not to be found except by digging and diligent search. Some there are, who, declaring themselves content with the manifest dogmas of Scripture and the common faith, think they are by no means called upon to pry into the secrets of prophecy, which withdraw themselves even from those who most diligently endeavor to search them out. Others who, after applying themselves to the reading and meditation of some one of the sacred prophecies, are alarmed by the almost boundless labor required in the investigation of phrases, symbols, prophetic enigmas, affairs of the church and history of the world, and a comparison of them with the prophecies. Many also are hindered by *prejudices* from discerning things which otherwise would not be so very obscure.” . . .

Notwithstanding these obstacles, Wittsius insists on the duty of those who teach others, to examine the Scriptures with care and attention; referring them to Daniel, to whom was given, by an angel, the spirit of understanding; and adding, in the words of Chrysostom, ‘Truth in the Scriptures is not entirely hidden, but is only in obscurity; not that they may not find, who seek it; but that they may not find who are unwilling to seek it; in order that it may be to the glory of those who have found it, because they desired, and sought, and therefore found it; and to the condemnation of those who find it not, because they neither desired, nor sought it, and therefore did not find it.’*

Accordingly Pererius in his *Prolegomena* to the Apocalypse, *Disputation* vii., observes;—

“It is the will of God that the prophecies should remain hidden, and not plainly understood, until the time in which the things prophecied of must be fulfilled and consummated. For this reason, the angel said to Daniel, chap. xii., v. 4: *But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of*

* See also the whole Proemium of Ribera.

the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased; and a little afterwards; Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. When, however, the time shall approach in which those things are to happen which are foretold in the Apocalypse, then shall God send forth prophets and teachers, to forewarn the church and his people, and to guard them against the coming evils. Then shall a true judgment be formed of the expositions of previous interpreters, and then will be clearly known the genuine interpretation of the visions of this book, from its agreement with the things and events themselves.” . . .

But . . . “It is the will of God that his prophecies should not be obvious to every one, either because it is not right to *give that which is holy unto dogs, and to cast pearls before swine*; or because it is not right that the prophecies should be understood by every one, lest those against whom many perilous prophecies are spoken, should be the more vehemently aggravated and exasperated, and should the more cruelly rage against the people of God.”

De Lyra on Daniel, chap. xii., verse 4;—

“*But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book.* As if he should say, ‘The divine secrets which are revealed to thee do thou involve in enigmas, and leave unexplained; and this in order that the malignant should not have matter for derision, and that those who desire it, may have matter for consideration.’”

When it is said that knowledge shall be increased, De Lyra interprets it as referring to the manifold expositions of prophecy which shall be put forth in the last times.

A Lapidé also observes on Daniel, ch. xii., ver. 10;—

“*The wicked shall not understand.* Wicked and anti-christian people shall not understand this prophecy, even when they see the things come to pass which are here spoken of. For their prosperous circumstances they shall refer to the power of antichrist, and the counsels of man; their adverse, to chance fortune, and other natural causes. *But the wise shall understand; i. e.,* Pious and wise Christians shall understand the mysteries of this prophecy; because then, acknowledging the

providence of God, they shall lift up their heads, and know that their redemption draweth nigh, and that the prophecy of Daniel is fulfilled, as in like manner they were warned by Christ. Matt. xxiv., 15." . . .

. . . "*Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.* Blessed will he be; because then the priests and preachers, coming out of their hiding places, will collect together the faithful, and preach to them; and by producing penitence will restore those to the church who had fallen under Antichrist; while they will excite the unbelieving to the adoption of the Christian faith, as these will then perceive that, under Antichrist, they had been deluded."

We next proceed to consider the subject of *Christ* and *Antichrist*.

SECOND PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

CHRIST AND ANTICHRIST.

ORDER OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE INCARNATION AND THE TRINITY—IMPORTANCE OF THIS ORDER—THE DOCTRINE OF THE INCARNATION A FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE—TESTIMONIES PROVING THAT THE HUMAN NATURE IS THE SON OF GOD—TESTIMONIES DENYING THIS DOCTRINE—TESTIMONIES THAT THE HUMAN NATURE IS THE SON OF GOD, ONLY IN THE SAME SENSE AS ADAM—TESTIMONIES THAT THE TITLE CHRIST SIGNIFIES THE HUMAN NATURE—DENIAL THAT CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD—ANTICHRISTIAN CHARACTER OF THIS DENIAL—MEANING OF THE WORDS GENERATED AND BEGOTTEN.

THERE are four principal ways in which men have proceeded to treat of the knowledge of God. First, they have begun with things divine, and from these attempted to reason to things divine. Secondly, they have begun with things divine, and from these descended to things human. Thirdly, they have begun with the attributes of fallen humanity, and from these attempted to ascend to the Divinity. Lastly, they have begun with the Humanity of the Lord, and from this ascended to His Divinity.

Let us furnish a few illustrations of these four methods of proceeding. With regard to the first we observe, that men have begun with things divine, and from these attempted to reason to things divine. As when the title ‘Son of God’ is considered to apply to the Second Divine Person, and to signify an eternal generation of Divinity from Divinity; whence the expressions God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God. Thus when in St. John we read that *the only Begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father hath declared Him*, and this only Begotten

is said to be the Son as *eternally* generated ; then the eternal Son is said by some to be the manifestation of the eternal Father, the express image of his person ; and hence as we can know the Father only in and through the Son, and consequently the Divine Person of the Father only in and through the Divine Person of the Son, so have these theologians argued from one Divine Person to another, from Divinity to Divinity. Hence the doctrine of the Voluntary Economy, and the relations of the Tripersonality *ad intra*.

But if we can ascend to things divine only through the medium of things human, or to things spiritual, as maintained by some theologians, only through the medium of things natural, it is obvious that the foregoing process of reasoning is a perversion of the true order, and can lead only to hallucinations, however set forth in imposing metaphysical language ; for we can no more form any true and direct ideas of the eternal Son than we can form any true and direct ideas of the eternal Father ; the one being in this case necessarily as unknown as the other. In other words, we can know nothing of the eternal generation but through the medium of the miraculous conception. For as we can form no true idea of things spiritual except from things natural, so we can form no true idea of the Divinity except from the Humanity. To speak, therefore, of what the Second Person of the Trinity did before he assumed Humanity, much more to treat of the essential relations, *ad intra*, of his own Divinity to the Divinity of the Father, or of his consubstantiality, prolation, generation, and so forth, is only to mistake phantasies for truths. For the Son in his Divine nature considered apart from his Human, is as unknown as the Father considered apart from the Son. It is the Humanity alone that is the revelation of the Divinity ; and this is the reason of the correspondence between the Humanity and the Divinity ; a correspondence which in the

person of the Lord while upon earth, existed to a degree of perfection beyond what is attainable by any creature ; so that now that the Humanity is exalted to the right hand of God, to sit on the throne of the Father. it is itself one with the Father.

When, therefore, persons speak of the eternal relations or the voluntary economy between the Eternal Father and the Eternal Son, of the consecration of the Eternal Son by the Eternal Father, of the everlasting compact, and the consultations between them from all eternity ;* to what does the whole system lead ? To any spiritual sense of Scripture ? assuredly not ; but rather, on the one hand, either to metaphysical subtleties concerning eternal generation, ingeneration, co-ingeneration, prolation, filiation, consubstantiation, participation, communication, co-inherence, circumincession, simplicity, and such like ; to say nothing of homoousian, exuention, originate, unoriginate, co-unoriginate, suppositum, intelligent agent, pure act, coeternity, and so forth ; or again, on the other hand, to mere sensuous conceptions of the Deity.

Secondly, we observe that the mind has begun with things divine, and thence descended to things human. Thus as the Son of God is called Mediator, Priest, Prophet, &c., so Mediation, Intercession, Satisfaction, Propitiation, Pacification, Oblation, Reconciliation, being considered by some as so many divine offices in which the Eternal Son engaged from all eternity, these words, in their merely natural signification, have been taken to signify things divine, without any change, or elevation of their merely natural meaning ; because expressing directly without analogy the offices of Christ. Hence the most degraded views have come to be advocated as divine doctrines. Indeed, had not this been the case, a large portion of

* See *Hervey's Aspasio Vindicated*, Letter viii. ; Wittsius on the Covenants ; &c.

Christendom, ignorant of metaphysics, would have had no ideas at all concerning these offices; and hence it is that not unfrequently those who have denounced the metaphysical school have fallen into the merely sensuous. These are they who separate the Divinity from the Humanity; who argue from the Divinity to the Humanity; in other words, from the eternal sonship to the temporal; from the eternal generation to the miraculous conception; whence the miraculous conception is made a subordinate truth, or altogether set aside. For, as the great end of this doctrine is to prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, so is it predetermined by theologians that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, long before the miraculous conception; whence the miraculous conception is virtually rendered useless.

A third method of proceeding has been that of those who argue from our own fallen human nature to the divine in God. These likewise set aside the doctrine of the miraculous conception; consequently as in Christ alone we are enabled to pass from the human to the divine, so, inasmuch as some theologians think they can do this by passing at once from their own ideas to the attributes of God, (as is often the case in regard to what they call the natural attributes of the Deity,) they come to the conclusion either that after all there is nothing in God answering to human ideas, hence that we can know nothing of God; or else that all the attributes of God are the same in kind as those of the human mind. But if Christ be the manifestation of the Godhead, then is the Humanity the manifestation of the Divinity. Other ways of access to the Divinity there are not, nor other manifestations of the Divinity, to the true Christian. Therefore to argue from our best human ideas to the attributes of the Divinity is pure ethnicism. Our only way, as Christians, to arrive

at a true knowledge of God, is to ascend not from humanity as it is in us, to pure Divinity; but from our regenerated humanity to the Lord's glorified or Divine Humanity. For it is not we who can proceed from humanity to pure Divinity, it is Jesus Christ alone; in whom alone Humanity can approach, and be united to Divinity; and whose Humanity alone can hold intercourse with pure essence, infinite, and eternal, or, the Father everlasting.

It is no wonder then that by so many classes the spiritual sense of Scripture should be rejected. For as they have no *spiritual* but only abstract or sensuous ideas of God, and yet as the Bible is the Word of God, so they can have no spiritual ideas of the Word of God; and hence prophecy, which is a part of the Word of God, has either in their estimation no meaning at all, or else only an imaginative or historical meaning, relating to anything rather than to Christ the Son of the living God, to the spiritual truths of Christianity, and to the spiritual state of the church.

Once grant the doctrine of the miraculous conception to be of supreme importance, and the spiritual sense of Scripture is a necessary consequence; for, as Swedenborg observes in his *Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Sacred Scriptures, Art. xvii.*, "The Lord spake by mere correspondences, in consequence of speaking from the Divinity which was in Him and which was His; and it is on this ground that his words are spirit and are life."

There being then this connection between the miraculous conception and the inspiration of the Scriptures, it is but natural to expect that if the first should be virtually denied so should the second; that if the first should be degraded in importance so should the second; that there should be as many controversies concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures as concerning the miraculous conception

—that the one in fine should run pallel with the other ; and when the Humanity of Christ is separated from the Divinity, that the literal sense of Scripture should be separated from the spiritual, that consequently each in its turn should be denied and rejected, or considered to be a matter of secondary importance. For were it possible for us to ascend directly from fallen humanity to pure Divinity, the incarnation would be useless.

Since then we can approach to the Divinity only through the Humanity, it follows that, as Christians, we can ascend to the doctrine of the Trinity only through that of the Incarnation. Thus that the doctrine of the Incarnation is the first in order, the Trinity the second ; that the miraculous conception must be contemplated before the eternal generation ; Christ, as the Son of the living God, before approaching the doctrine of the Trinity. This is the true order of these subjects in respect of our contemplation ; any other necessarily leading to those sensuous conceptions, or useless speculations already referred to.

Hence it is well observed by Archdeacon Wilberforce in his work upon the Incarnation, p. 9 ;—

“ An enquiry respecting our Lord’s nature might be conducted in two ways : either we might consider what he was at first, and what he subsequently became ; or we might view Him as He was manifest upon earth, and then pass from the apparent to the hidden characteristics of his being. In the first case, we should begin with his Godhead ; in the second, with his manhood. And the latter is perhaps the most natural course, because *his incarnation is a central point*, from which we may approach the eternity which preceded, as well as that which follows it.”*

* It would have been well if all theologians, not excepting the author of the Athanasian creed, had adopted this rule ; they would not then have offered their speculations upon the Trinity before treating of the Incarnation. Whether this order has been *always* faithfully observed in the work above mentioned, it is foreign to the purpose at present to enquire. The reader may here consult Alcasar’s Commentary on the Apocalypse, chap. iv., verse 8 ; part ii.

With these observations, we now proceed to the more immediate subject of the present chapter, namely, the doctrine of the Incarnation.

The Apocalypse opens with the following title ;

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, &c.

On this title Dean Woodhouse observes, “ The scheme of the Christian Revelation is mediatorial throughout. God giveth to the Son, dispensing knowledge and favor through Him.”

As this interpretation is the one universally adopted, it is unnecessary to add further quotations in its confirmation.

Since then the scheme of Christianity is mediatorial throughout, it is of the first importance that we form right ideas of the *mediatorial* office, or of the character of Christ as *Mediator*.

Presuming then that it will be granted, that it is Christ the Son of God who is the true Mediator, it will be necessary to enquire into the meaning of the titles *Son of God* and *Christ*, before we arrive at the true interpretation of the mediatorial character, and are hence enabled to perceive how the scheme of Christianity is mediatorial throughout.

This enquiry will lead to the subject of Antichristianism ; and it is obvious that we cannot tell what is *Antichristianism*, before we have determined what is *Christianity* ; that we cannot tell who or what is *Antichrist*, before we have determined who or what is *Christ*.

In the Gospel according to St. Matthew, chap. xvi., verse 13, occurs the following passage ;—

“ *When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am ?*

“ *And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist ; some, Elias ; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.*

“ *He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am?* ”

“ *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* ”

“ *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* ”

“ *And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* ”

That Christ is the Son of the living God is then a fundamental doctrine. It is also said in the Athanasian creed concerning the catholic;—

“ FURTHERMORE IT IS NECESSARY TO EVERLASTING SALVATION, THAT HE ALSO BELIEVE RIGHTLY THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

Bishop Horsley likewise, in his Sermon on the Incarnation, makes the following observations, which are quoted in the Family Bible on Matt. i., 18, “ *She was found with child of the Holy Ghost.* ”

“ The miraculous conception of our Lord, here announced, is the foundation of the whole distinction between the character of Christ in the condition of a man, and that of any other prophet. Had the conception of Jesus been in the natural way; had He been the fruit of Mary’s marriage with her husband, His intercourse with the Deity could have been of no other kind than the nature of any other man might equally have admitted; an intercourse of no higher kind than the prophets enjoyed, when their minds were enlightened by the extraordinary influence of the Holy Spirit. The information conveyed to Jesus, might have been clearer and more extensive, than any imparted to any former prophet; but the manner and the means of communication must have been the same. . . . The Holy Scriptures, however, speak a very different language: they tell us, that the same God who ‘ spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these latter days spoken unto us by his Son,’ (Heb. i., 1;) evidently establishing a distinction of Christianity from preceding revelations, upon a distinction between the two characters of a prophet of God, and of God’s Son. . . . And lest

the superiority on the side of the Son, should be deemed a mere superiority of the office to which He was appointed, we are told, that the Son is ‘higher than the angels,’ being the effulgence of God’s glory, ‘the express image of His person,’ ‘the God whose throne is for ever and ever; the sceptre of whose kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness;’ and this high dignity of the Son, is alleged as a motive for religious obedience to his commands, and for reliance on his promises. It is this indeed which gives such authority to his precepts, and such certainty to His whole doctrine, as render faith in Him the first duty of religion. Had Christ been a mere prophet, to believe in Christ had been the same thing as to believe in John the Baptist. The messages indeed, announced on the part of God by Christ, and by John the Baptist, might have been different; and the importance of these different messages unequal; but the principle of belief in either must have been the same.”

It is universally admitted that our Lord, in Matt. xvi. 13, refers to a fundamental doctrine of Christianity—namely—that **JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD**, and that it is upon this doctrine, as upon a rock, that his true church is built. Consequently any church that is not built upon this rock is not a true church.

The object of the present chapter is to shew that the existing churches are not built upon this rock; inasmuch as while nominally receiving they have really rejected the doctrine; first, by depreciating its importance, and substituting another doctrine in its place; next, by denying; and then by denouncing it.

We shall first enquire into the meaning of the title *Son of God*; secondly, into the meaning of the title *Christ*; thirdly, into the meaning of the title *Antichrist*; and lastly, into the origin and nature of the prevailing views on the subject of the Incarnation.

SON OF GOD.

The title *Son of God* has been applied to the *Divine* Nature of our Lord, to the *Human* Nature, and to *both* these together. We shall begin with the writers who maintain that the title *Son of God* is applicable to the *Human* Nature as well as to the *Divine*; and thus display to the reader the *external* profession made by the church or churches, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

On this subject Petavius observes, in his *Treatise on the Trinity*, vol. ii., lib. 3, chap. vi., p. 150;—

“The letter of the New Testament both very frequently and very diligently inculcates, that the *man* who was called Jesus, and who suffered death for us, was the veritable *Son of God*.”

Maldonatus, vol. iii., p. 228, having observed on *Luke* i. 35, that some consider Christ to be here called the *Son of God* because of the eternal generation; others that He is here called the *Son of God*, because his humanity is united by temporal generation hypostatically to the Divinity, observes;—

... “I, however, am of opinion, that there is yet another sense, so that the passage may be understood not of Christ as God, *nor as man conjoined to the divine person*, but of Christ solely in regard to *conception and human generation*; as if the angel should say, he shall be called, that is, he shall be, the *Son of God*; because he shall be generated not by man, but by God, through the power of the Holy Spirit. For the angel was not speaking of the nature of Christ, but of the mode of his generation.” . . .

Calmet on *Luke* i. 35, after having stated that certain writers explained the title *Son of God* in this passage as derived from the eternal generation, proceeds to notice the opposite view, and observes, p. 444, that;—

“Some explain it thus: The fruit which shall spring from

thee being produced in thee by the power of the Most High, and uniting together in its single person the Divinity and Humanity, shall be justly, in this sense, called the *Son of God: without speaking of his eternal generation from the substance of the Father* ;* which renders him in a manner still more exalted the only Son of God, his wisdom, his word.”

In confirmation of this view, Calmet refers to Gregory the Great, and to Bede. Thus on *Luke* i., 46, Bede observes, p. 292 ;—

“ Let there be conception without the seed of man in the virgin ; let there be born (*nascatur*) of the Holy Spirit that which is holy throughout the entire flesh ; that which shall be born of a human being as mother, without a human being as father, shall be called the Son of God.”

The comment of Gregory the Great is to the same effect.

Bishop Bull admits that the *Human* Nature of our Lord is the Son of God. Thus, vol. vi., p. 102, referring to four different modes in which, according to Episcopius, Christ is called the Son of God, he admits that ;—

“ Christ is there as *man*, called the Son of God, by reason of his conception in the womb of the Virgin by the Holy Spirit.” . . .

In his Letters addressed to Candidates for Holy Orders, Skinner observes, p. 7 ;—

“ The title, *Son of God*, is frequent in Scripture. But we have the highest authority (*Luke* i., 35) to apply it to the *human* nature of our blessed Saviour : and I can find no passage in Scripture which decisively restricts the title, Son of God, to Deity.”

Potter, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, in his *Vindication of our blessed Saviour's Divinity*, p. 142 ;—

“ We maintain him to be the *Son of God* not only by a complete communication of essence and perfections (though chiefly upon this account), but also as being *begotten* and formed

* These words are placed in italics, in order that the reader may compare them with the counter-statements of Petavius and others in the sequel.

by a divine power and virtue in the *womb of a virgin*; without the assistance of an earthly father; and as being sanctified and sent into the world as the *Messias*.”

Bishop Pearson in his work upon the Creed, on the article *His only Son*, Art. ii., p. 172;—

“First, then, it cannot be denied that Christ is the Son of God, for that reason, because he was by the Spirit of God born of the Virgin Mary; for that which is conceived (or begotten) in her, by the testimony of an angel, is of the Holy Ghost; and because of Him, therefore the Son of God. For so spake the angel to the Virgin; *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee* (or which is begotten of thee), *shall be called the Son of God*. And the reason is clear, because that the Holy Ghost is God. For were he any creature, and not God himself, by whom our Saviour was thus born of the Virgin, he must have been the Son of a creature, not of God.”

Lord King in his History of the Creed, p. 126;—

“Now Christ is on several respects called the *Son of God* in Scripture, as he is so called on the account of his *temporal generation*, being conceived in an extraordinary manner in the Virgin’s womb, by the power of the Holy Ghost; whence the angel told the Virgin Mary, *He should be called the Son of God*.”

The same author thus continues;—

“And he is also so called by reason of his resurrection from the dead, whereby he was, as it were, begotten to another life by God his Father, who raised him, as in Acts xiii., 32, 33: *And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*. And, he is likewise called the Son of God, by reason of that high office whereunto he was called by the special designation and immediate will of God: *Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?** As

* John x., 36.

also, by reason of his great dignity and authority, being next in order to the Father, and sat down on his right hand of the Majesty on high, whereby he hath the actual possession as heir of all. Heb. i. : “ *God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds ; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they ; for unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee ? And again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a Son.*”

Bishop Burnett likewise maintains that the *human* nature of our Lord is the *Son of God*. Thus he observes, on the second Article of the Church of England, p. 56 ;—

“ It is here to be noted, that Christ is in two respects the *Son*, and the *only-begotten Son of God*. The one is, as he was *man* ; the miraeulous overshadowing of the blessed Virgin by the Holy Ghost, having, without the ordinary course of nature, formed the first beginnings of Christ’s *human* body in the womb of the Virgin. Thus that miracle being instead of a natural begetting, he may in that respect be called the begotten, and the *only-begotten Son of God*.”

Dr. Horbery in his works, vol. i., p. 92 ;—

. . . “ It must be allowed, that angels, that Adam, and other men, are sometimes in Scripture called *sons of God* ; and yet we never think of ascribing any proper divinity to them, since the title is sufficiently accounted for by their creation or adoption. But in the case before us, we must go further, because the same holy writings speak of one who is the Son of God in a far more transcendent and peeuiliar manner ; of one who is his well-beloved, his *only*, and his *only-begotten Son*. There are indeed several distinct grounds and reasons of this high appellation : he is the *only-begotten Son of God*, as he was *conceived by the Holy Ghost*, and *born of the Virgin Mary* ; &c.”

Macknight, in his paraphrase and commentary on the harmony of the gospels, p. 310 ;

“He shall be called God’s Son, because thou shall conceive him by the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost causing him to exist in thy womb.”

“With respect to the second fact, on which the authority of the Gospel, as a revelation from God, is built, namely, that the *man* Jesus, by whom it was spoken, is the *Son of God*, the apostle, instead of proposing the direct proofs whereby that fact is ascertained, judged it more proper to answer the objections advanced by the doctors for disproving it.”*

Scott, in his Annotations upon the New Testament, observes on *Luke* i., verse 35 ;—

“This child might therefore be called ‘that holy thing,’ or holy child: and even in respect of his *human* nature, he should be acknowledged to be ‘the Son of God;’ as well as in his

* The passage thus continues ;—“And the rather, because the particulars of which the direct proof consisted, had all been exhibited in the most public manner in Judea, where the Hebrews dwelt, and were well known to them, Acts x., 36—42 ; namely, that God himself, in the hearing of many witnesses, had declared *Jesus of Nazareth* his son, by a voice from heaven at his baptism ; and by a like voice at his transfiguration ; and by a third voice in the hearing of the multitude assembled in the temple. Also, that Jesus had proved himself the Son of God, by many miracles performed in the most public manner, during the course of his ministry, and had often appealed to these miracles, as undeniable proofs of his pretension. Above all, that his resurrection from the dead, after the rulers had put him to death as a blasphemer, for calling himself Christ, the Son of the blessed, demonstrated him to be the Son of God. Farther, these proofs had often been appealed to by the Apostles ; Acts x., 38, 39. And to their appeals God himself continually bare witness, by signs, and miracles, and distributions of the Holy Ghost. The Hebrews, therefore, being well acquainted with the direct evidence on which our Lord’s claim to be the Son of God rested, when the apostle affirmed that *in these last days God had spoken by his Son*, he in effect told them that he had spoken by *Jesus of Nazareth*, and at the same time called to their remembrance all the proofs by which *Jesus of Nazareth’s* claim to the dignity of God’s Son was established. Nor was it necessary to enter into that matter more particularly, for the sake of others who might read this epistle ; as these proofs were soon to be published to all, in the evangelical histories. In short, if the Hebrews in Judea were not convinced that *Jesus of Nazareth* is the Son of God, it was not owing to their ignorance of the proofs by which his claim to that dignity was established, but to the objections urged against it, which it seems had much more influence to make them reject Jesus, than the multiplied miraculous attestations above described, had to make them acknowledge him as the Son of God.”

We have subjoined the foregoing passage of Macknight, which is to the same effect as others in Pearson, Tillotson, &c. ; in order that the reader may afterwards see how the whole is virtually denied by some of the advocates of the Eternal Generation.

divine nature, and his mysterious person, as ‘God manifest in the flesh.’—The *Man*, Christ Jesus, being called ‘the Son of God,’ because conceived by the operation of the Holy Spirit, is a full proof of the Deity of that sacred agent.”*

Barnes on *Luke* i., 36 ;—

... “*Shall be called the Son of God.* That is spoken in reference to the *human nature* of Christ. And this passage proves beyond controversy that *one* reason why Jesus was called the Son of God, was because he was begotten in a supernatural manner.”

Dr. Samuel Clarke, *Sermons* (n. 70), p. 133, vol. i., fol. ;—

“The other character of our Saviour, his being the Son of God was given him first upon account of his being *born miraculously* of the Virgin by the immediate power of God.—*Luke* i., 35, &c.”

Dr. Pye Smith, in his *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. ii., p. 50, under the article *Son of God by human birth*, when explaining *Luke* i., 35 ;—

“Here it is manifest, that the production of the Messiah’s *human nature*, by the immediate operation of God, is assigned as the reason of the appellation (Son of God). The words of the passage are evidently selected with a view to convey, in the most emphatical manner, the idea of such a miraculous production.”

Again, p. 320 ;—

“He was described by the voice of inspiration as being the Son of God, the Son of the Most High ; in reference to his *miraculous birth*, and to his royal dignity and power, as the sovereign of a new, spiritual, heavenly, and everlasting dispensation.”

Parkhurst likewise maintains that the *human nature* of our Lord is the Son of God ; for he observes in his Dictionary, under the article *υιός*, that Christ is styled the Son of God in respect of his *miraculous conception* by the Holy Ghost, &c.

* Compare *this* interpretation with *that* in the Commentaries of Matthew Henry and the Tract Society, which refer the title to the *Eternal* generation.

Jones of Nayland observes, in his *Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity in Unity*, vol. i., p. 136 ;—

“The *man* Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God and the Son of the Highest, was so called because he was begotten of the Holy Ghost.”

Lastly, Archbishop Tillotson observes in his *Sermons*, vi., 62 ;—

“First, upon what account, Christ, as *man*, is said to be the Son of God. And, for our right apprehension of this matter, it is very well worthy our observation that Christ, as *man*, is no where, in Scripture, said to be the Son of God, but with relation to the divine power of the Holy Ghost, *some way or other* eminently manifested in him; I say the divine power of the Holy Ghost, as the Lord and Giver of life, as he is called in the ancient creeds of the Christian church. For, as men are naturally said to be the children of those from whom they receive their life and being; so Christ as *man*, is said to be the Son of God, because he had *life communicated to him from the Father*, by an immediate power of the Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost. First, at his *conception*, which was by the Holy Ghost. The conception of our blessed Saviour was an immediate act of the power of the Holy Ghost, overshadowing, as the Scripture expresseth it, the blessed mother of our Lord. And then at his resurrection, when, after his death, he was, by the operation of the Holy Ghost raised to life again.”

“Now, upon these two accounts only, Christ, as *man*, is said, in Scripture, to be the Son of God. He was really so, upon account of his *conception*; but this was secret and invisible; but most eminently and remarkably so, upon account of his resurrection, which was open and visible to all.”

1. “Upon account of his *conception* by the power of the Holy Ghost: That, upon this account he was called the Son of God, St. Luke most expressly tells us, Luke i. 35, where the angel tells the Virgin Mary, that ‘*the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the Highest should overshadow her, and therefore that holy thing which should be born of her, should be called the Son of God.*’ And this our Saviour means by the Father’s sanctifying him, and sending him into the

world; for which reason he says he might justly call himself the Son of God, John x., 35, 36, ‘*If he call them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken: Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?*’ If there had been no other reason, this had been sufficient to have given him the title of the Son of God, that he was brought into the world by the sanctification, or divine power of the Holy Ghost.”*

Upon reviewing the foregoing quotations in proof that the human nature, assumed in the womb of the Virgin Mary, is the Son of God; we see it maintained that it rests on the testimony of the angel Gabriel, on the testimony of a voice from heaven at the baptism of Christ and the transfiguration, on the testimony of Christ himself, both by his word and miracles, to say nothing of the testimony of the Apostles. Hence to evade or subvert this testimony, is to evade or subvert the evidence of Christianity.

We now proceed to counter-statements; and to shew the manner in which this doctrine, while nominally acknowledged, has been first evaded, then denied, and then denounced.

As it has been allowed to be a fundamental, if not *the* fundamental, doctrine of the Christian church, it might naturally be expected to hold a prominent station in the creeds and authorized expositions of the doctrine of the church. Yet what do we find? It does not once occur (according to some of the advocates of the eternal generation) in the Apostles’ Creed†; nor once in the Nicene Creed; nor once in the Athanasian Creed; nor once in the thirty-nine Articles; nor once in the Homilies; nor once in the Church Catechism; nor once in the Catechism of

* See also Doddridge on *Luke* i., 35; Dr. Burton’s *Sermons*, p. 263; Mortlock’s *Sermons on the Trinity*, p. 136.

† See Wheatly on the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, p. 209.

the Council of Trent ; nor once in the shorter and longer Catechisms of the Russian Church ; nor once in the Assembly's Catechisms and Confession of Faith ; nor once in we know not how many others. Could it be said to exist in any of these, it would be in the Apostles' Creed. But the expressions used in this Creed are *only Son, conceived* ; and although differently from the other creeds, it might seem to refer the expression, *only Son*, to the temporal generation, —yet instead of the word *begotten*, it uses the word *conceived* ; a change which, according to some, is of a very significant nature, as will be seen in the sequel.

One is naturally led to inquire into the cause of this silence concerning a fundamental doctrine of Christianity ; particularly in those works where all the fundamental doctrines of Christianity are professedly treated of ; and in pursuing this enquiry, we are first led to the earlier ages of Christianity.

Beginning then with the Arians, we find that in the time of Athanasius, the doctrine was the subject of the most violent dispute. Without, however, entering into the history of the controversy, we might naturally expect to find at least the reputedly orthodox, such as Athanasius, maintaining the doctrine, setting it in its true light, and vindicating it from the perversions of the Arians. Yet in this case again, what do we find ? In some of his treatises against the Arians, he certainly evades, if not virtually denies, the doctrine altogether.

Archbishop Tillotson observes, that if there were no other proof of our Saviour being the Son of God, the miraculous conception by which the human nature could be called the Son of God would be alone sufficient ; yet the omission of this kind of proof in the works of Athanasius is very remarkable. He seems intent upon the *eternal* generation to (almost, if not altogether) the entire exclusion

of the *temporal* generation, or the miraculous conception; as may be seen in his *Fourth Discourse, Subject vii.*, the contents of which are thus given by Mr. Newman; p. xiv., part ii., p. 530:

“Since the Word is from God, He must be Son. Since the Son is from everlasting, He must be the Word; else either He is superior to the Word, or the Word is the Father. Texts of the New Testament which state the unity of the Son with the Father; therefore the Son is the Word. Three *heretical hypotheses*.* 1. That the man is the Son; refuted. 2. That the Word and Man together are the Son; refuted. 3. That the Word became Son on His incarnation; refuted. Texts of the Old Testament which speak of the Son. If they are merely prophetic, then those concerning the Word may be such also.”

Such is a specimen of the method in which the controversy was then carried on against the Arians. A fundamental article of the Christian faith, evidencing the divinity of Christ, was either overlooked or denied, in order ostensibly to prove that divinity, and a plain doctrine of the Scriptures set aside, in order to make way for a doctrine of Athanasius; in fine, the temporal generation was disparaged or denied, in order to make way for the eternal.

The same course is pursued in the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*; the temporal generation is omitted in order to make way for the doctrine of the eternal generation.

Thus in the article of the Apostles' Creed, *His only Son*, it is observed, p. 20;—

“In these words are yet higher mysteries proposed to the belief and contemplation of the faithful, concerning Jesus, to wit; that he is the Son of God, and true God, as the Father himself is, who *begot him from all eternity*.” . . .

. . . “But when we hear that Jesus is the Son of God, we ought not to imagine any earthly or mortal thing of his birth;

* “His four Orations against the Arians have remained as a rich mine of truth for all subsequent generations.” *Wilberforce on the Incarnation*, p. 157.

but we ought constantly to believe, and with the greatest devotion and affection of mind to honor that birth, whereby the Father *from all eternity* begot the Son; which to comprehend by reason, or perfectly to understand, we can by no means do: but as amazed at the wonderfulness of the mystery, we ought, with the prophet, to say, ‘*Who can declare his generation?*’ Isaiah liii. 8. This, therefore, we ought to believe, that the Son is of the same nature, of the same power and wisdom with the Father; as we confess more largely in the Nicene Creed: for it says, ‘*And in Jesus Christ, his only-begotten son, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.*’” . . .

. . . “It is better to contemplate what faith proposes, and with a sincere heart to believe and confess that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, BEGOTTEN, indeed, as God, of the Father, *before all ages and generations*; but as man, BORN* in time, of his mother, the Virgin Mary.”

It is very remarkable that, in this catechism, upon the article *Only Son*, not a syllable is said concerning our Saviour, as the Son of God by temporal generation, or miraculous conception, any more than in the Athanasian Creed.

A celebrated writer, Bishop Brown, is of opinion that after the time of Athanasius, the most considerable controversy upon this subject which had taken place in the Christian Church was in the time of Waterland and Clarke, when it was conducted on each side with all the ability which learning and talents could bestow. It is well known that Waterland was the champion of the Athanasian or orthodox doctrine; and that what Athanasius was to Arius, that Waterland was to Clarke. As then, according to Athanasius, the human nature could not be called the Son

* BIRTH not being considered as entitling to the name of Son, but only BEGETTING. See here the *Letters of Skinner*, p. 64; also *Assembly's Annotations on John i.*, 14; *Scott, ibid.*

of God by generation ; we naturally find Waterland treading in the same footsteps, and denying the human nature of our Lord to be the Son of God. Thus, referring to Dr. Clarke's Exposition of the Church Catechism, Dr. Waterland observes, vol. v., p. 399 ;—

“The *Exposition* proceeds, p. 56, to the second article of the Creed : *And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.* And here the author tells us, (p. 68,) that ‘Christ is in a singular, in a higher and more peculiar manner, (than angels, Adam, or good Christians,) the Son, and, therefore, the only Son of God.’ Here is some confusion in this account, making *Son* and *only Son** equivalent and tantamount, as we shall see in the sequel. But the author goes on : ‘and that likewise upon different accounts : first, upon account of his being conceived of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner, and, ‘*therefore,*’ (said the angel to the blessed Virgin,) ‘*He shall be called the Son of God,*’ Luke i., 35. To which I answer, that supposing the truth of the fact, that he is called Son of God, on that account, yet he is not therefore called *only Son*, as in the Creed, which answers to *only begotten* (*μονογενής*), as appears by the Greek copies. In the respect here mentioned,† *Christ was not Son of God in a higher or more peculiar manner than angels or Adam.* But besides that, I may, upon the authority of many of the ancients, assert, that the Power of the Highest (*δύναμις ὑψίστου*) is a name of the *Logos*, who before his incarnation was Son of God ; and therefore also that holy thing, after the incarnation, was called, and was Son of God. This construction prevailed for many centuries, and may be met with in Christian writers, as low as Damascene and Theophylact ; and how much lower I need not inquire. If this interpretation takes place, then *the pretence of Christ's being called Son of God, on account of his being miraculously born of a virgin, falls of course.*”

Again, in page 401, Waterland observes ;—

“Upon the whole, then, we see, that none of the reasons assigned, sufficiently or certainly account for Christ's being

* See Petavius on the Trinity, vol. ii., p. 151.

† The miraculous conception.

called *Son of God*, much less for his being called *only Son*, or *only-begotten*, as here in the Creed. In truth, *there is but one account which will fully answer for either, or at all answer for the latter ; and that is, his being begotten of the Father before the world was.* This the Exposition at length comes to, expressing it faintly, in low and lessening terms ; ‘having been from the beginning, in the bosom of the Father, a divine person.’ But St. John was not thus shy and reserved ; he said, plainly, ‘*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,*’ John i., 1. The Son, therefore, from the beginning was God of God : and *this* is that peculiar, that high, that singular and Divine Sonship which the Creed speaks of, under the title of only Son, and on account of which he is as truly God, as any son of man is truly man.”*

Again, p. 408 ;—

“If the common construction be insisted upon, that Christ is called Son of God, because conceived by the Holy Ghost, then the consequence is plain, that the Holy Ghost is God, as I before intimated. And if it be hereupon asked, why then is not Christ in his human nature called the Son of the Holy Ghost? the answer is, because Scripture has not so called him. And if it be further asked, why Scripture has not? it may be answered, because Scripture, by calling him rather Son of God, thereby intimates to us, that the Holy Ghost is God, which is one good reason : and another is, because Christ being Son of God (the Father) in a higher capacity, it was the more proper to express both the Sonships by one and the same name. This, I say, on the supposition that the common interpretation of Luke i., 35, be admitted ; *though*, as to my *own* part, *I incline rather to the ancient construction above mentioned* : which, though it deprives us of this argument for the divinity of the Holy Ghost, yet accounts better for the name, Son of God, and makes Scripture more uniform, as to the giving that appellation to our Saviour Christ.”

From these remarks nothing can be clearer than that, like Athanasius, whom he professed to follow, Dr. Water-

* See also vol. i., p. 95, 114, 115.

land discarded the doctrine that the human nature of our Lord was the Son of God.

Thus we see, that in the two great Arian controversies which have broken out in the Christian church, the doctrine that the human nature of our Lord is the Son of God has been rejected; and this has been virtually the practice of the church from Arius to Clarke, or from Athanasius to Waterland, and from Clarke and Waterland down to the present day.

Moreover, the Puritan theology seems to be founded mainly upon a rejection of this doctrine.

Thus Dr. Owen observes, in his works, vol. viii., p. 265;—

“Christ on the mother’s side was the Son of David; that is, according to the flesh, of the same nature with her and him. On the father’s side he was the Son of God, of the same nature with him.”

Again;—

“He who was actually the Son of God, before his conception, nativity, endowment with power or exaltation, *is not the Son of God on those accounts*, but on that only which is antecedent to them.” . . .

Again, p. 266;—

“Christ was so the Son of God, that he that was made like him was to be without father, mother, or genealogy; Heb. vii., 3, ‘*Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like the Son of God.*’ But now Christ, in respect of his conception and nativity, had a mother, and one, they say, that supplied the room of father; had a genealogy that is upon record, and beginning of life, &c. So that *upon these accounts he was not the Son of God*, but on that wherein he had none of all these things, in the want whereof, Melchisedec was made like to him.”

Again, p. 283, in the Racovian Catechism occur the following question and answer;—

“ Q. Is therefore the Lord Jesus a pure (or mere) man ? ”

“ A. By no means ; for he was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, and therefore from his very conception and birth was the Son of God : as we read in Luke i., 35, that I may not bring other causes which thou wilt afterward find in the person of Christ, which most evidently declare, that the Lord Jesus can by no means be esteemed a pure (or mere) man.”

To which Dr. Owen replies ;—

Ans. 1. But I have abundantly demonstrated, that *Christ neither was, nor was called the Son of God, upon the account here mentioned, nor any other intimated in the close of the answer, whatever ; but merely and solely on that of his eternal generation of the essence of his Father.*”

Thus, like Athanasius and Waterland, Dr. Owen rejects the doctrine that the human nature of our Lord is the Son of God.*

Archbishop Usher, in his *Body of Divinity*, likewise denies that the human nature is the Son of God by generation. Thus he observes, p. 195 ;—

“ We call him the only-begotten Son of God, because he is the alone Son of God by nature, even ‘ *the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,*’ (John i., 14 ; iii., 18.) For though some be the sons of God by creation, as Adam was, and the angels, (Job. i. 6 ;) others by adoption and regeneration, as the saints ; and the man Jesus Christ in another respect, namely, by hypostatical union ; yet none is his Son by natural generation, but the same Christ Jesus ; and *that in regard of his Godhead, not of his manhood* ; according to the Apostle, who saith that he is without father, according to his manhood, and without mother, according to his Godhead, (Heb. vii., 3.)”

“ *He is the natural Son of God only in regard of the eternal generation ;* † otherwise there should be two sons, one of the

* See also Hook’s *Lent Lectures*, p. 214. *Note 9.*

† This is affirmed also by Vasquez and Suarez, &c. ; while on the other hand, Maldonatus, Perrone, Petavius, A Lapide, Alcasar, &c., affirm the contrary. See here Dr. Owen’s works, vol. viii., p. 248.

Father, and another of the Holy Ghost; but he is therefore called the Son of the Highest, (Luke i., 35,) for that none could be so conceived by the Holy Ghost, but he that is the natural Son of God. And by the words *conceived by the Holy Ghost*, we mean, that the Holy Ghost, by his incomprehensible power, wrought his conception supernaturally, which fathers do naturally in the begetting of their children."

Dr. Sherlock, Dean of St. Paul's, in his Scripture Proofs of Christ's Divinity, boldly denounces the doctrine that the human nature of our Lord is the Son of God. Thus he observes in chap. v., the title of which is, "That Christ is called the Son of God only on account of his Eternal Generation," p. 161;—

"That our Saviour is in Scripture called the Son of God, and the Son of the Highest, in such an eminent and peculiar manner, as belongs to no other man in the world, is universally acknowledged; the only question is, Upon what account he is so called? The Catholic church has always believed him to be the Eternal Son of God, his only-begotten Son, of the same nature and substance with his Father; which is the plain and obvious sense of Scripture: but there are some, who professing to believe themselves that Christ is the Eternal Son of God, do yet so far comply with the *enemies* of our faith, as to assert that he is frequently in Scripture called the Son of God upon other accounts, without respect to his eternal generation. *This is the common refuge of heretics*,* which some orthodox Christians are not sufficiently aware of; that were this point well settled, that *Christ is never in Scripture called the Son of God, but with respect to his eternal generation*, there must be an end of this controversy; for his eternal Godhead then would be as undeniable, as his title and character of a Son: for which reason, I shall particularly examine those other accounts they give of Christ's being called the Son of God, without respect to his eternal generation; and they are four.

"1. His miraculous conception in the womb of the Virgin.

"2. His advancement into his kingdom, being made the Christ and King of God.

* Yet this was the opinion of Gregory the Great, Bede, Maldonatus, &c.

“3. His resurrection from the dead.

“4. That he is made heir of all things.

“1. The first *pretence* is, that Christ is called the Son of God upon account of his *miraculous conception*; and this they think the angel’s answer to the Virgin Mary a plain proof of, Luke i., 35: ‘*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*’”

“Now this is but one single text, and the whole proof depends upon the use of these two particles, *διὸ τὶ*, which are rightly enough translated *therefore also*; but not rightly applied as the reason of this name, why Christ should be called the Son of God, but serve only to unite both parts of the angel’s answer to Mary, concerning the miraculous conception, and the character of the child to be born of her; ‘*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;*’ and, therefore, this shall not be an ordinary birth, but the Holy One, who is the Son of God, shall be born of thee. In Scripture, *to be called* very commonly signifies to be; to be called the Son of the Highest, and the Son of God, is to be the Son of the Highest, and the Son of God; and this Son of God was to be born of her, who is the *τὸ ἅγιον*, the Holy One, which title is never given absolutely to any but God, who is essentially holy.”

“There are two things very wonderful in the angel’s message to the Virgin; viz., how she should conceive, being a virgin, and why a virgin should conceive. Mary expressly inquires only concerning the first, but the angel gives her an answer to both: she should conceive by a divine power, and the reason why she should so conceive, was because the *τὸ ἅγιον*, the Holy One, even the Son of God, should be born of her. For when the Son of God becomes man, for the redemption of mankind, though it were necessary he should have a woman for his mother, there were many as necessary reasons, why he should not have a man for his father.”

“That this is the true reason of the angel’s answer, that therefore she should conceive by a divine power, because the Son of God should be born of her, *not*, that therefore *the child*,

which should be born of her, should be called the Son of God, because she should conceive by a divine power, I think is very evident."

"For, first, the angel in delivering this message to Mary, gives this character of his person, without any mention of the manner of his birth: before he told her by what power she should conceive, he told her how great a person should be born of her, and gives this as the reason of his surprizing salutation, *'Hail thou, thou art highly favored, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women,'* Luke i., 28. And when Mary was troubled at the appearance of the angel, and at this new manner of salutation, which she could not understand the meaning of, *'The angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God; and, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his Father David,'* ver. 30, 31, 32. This is the peculiar grace and favor God bestowed on her, this made her blessed among women; not that she should conceive by a divine power, without knowing a man, but that the Great One, the Son of the Highest, their long-expected Messiah, should be born of her."

"Thus St. Matthew understood it; for he says, this was the accomplishment of that prophecy, *'Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us,'* Matt. i., 23: that is, God dwelling in human nature, as St. John speaks; *'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,'* tabernacled in our flesh; *'and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father,'* John i., 14. And I must observe by the way, that we may as well say, that Christ was born of a virgin only to fulfil an ancient prophecy, because St. Matthew says, *'All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us;'* as to say, that therefore he is called the Son of God, because he was born of a virgin; whereas the one signifies no more, but that this was the accomplishment of that prophecy; and the other,

that this was the reason of that miraculous birth: many such expressions occur in Scripture, which all agree, must be expounded according to the reason and nature of the subject."

"And thus Elizabeth understood it, when upon the salutation of Mary, *'She spake with a loud voice, saying, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb; and whence is this, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?'* For *Κύριος*, Lord, is the name of God, and by the Greek interpreters was used for the name Jehovah. And thus Mary understood it in her prophetic hymn: *'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour; for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for he that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is his name.'* Was all this transport for conceiving by a divine power, or for the birth of a mere man? Or could she mean any thing else by God her Saviour, than that child, which should be born of her, whom the angel had named Jesus, or Saviour, *'for he shall save his people from their sins.'*"

"Secondly: as for those who believe Christ to be the eternal Son of God incarnate, *it is downright heresy in them to assert, that he is called the Son of God upon account of his miraculous conception.* Son is the name of a person; and though there are two natures in Christ, he is but one person; and the eternal Word is that person, and therefore that Son of God, who was born of the Virgin. *To say, that the human nature of Christ, which was miraculously formed in the womb of the Virgin, is, upon account of that miraculous conception, called the Son of God, is to make a person of it, and to divide Christ into two persons, which is Nestorianism;* and to say, that the eternal Word and Son of God, which was made flesh, and was incarnate in the womb of the Virgin, is therefore called the Son of God, is to say, that the eternal Son of God is therefore called the Son of God, because he was made man; which is so manifestly absurd, that it needs no confutation."

"The angel tells the Virgin, that she should bring forth a Son, and that this Son should be *μεγας*, the Great One, and should be called, or should be, the Son of the Highest; so

* As if one so conceived and born would have been therefore a mere man!

that these characters of the Great One, and the τὸ ἅγιον, the Holy One, and the Son of the Highest, belong to that Son, whom Mary should bring forth. Who then was the Son? Was it not that eternal Word, which was incarnate in the womb of the Virgin, which took flesh of her substance, and was born of her, or, as St. Matthew observes, the ‘*Emmanuel, or God with us*?’ This hath always been the Catholic faith, in opposition to Nestorius, who denied the Virgin to be Θεοτόκος, but only Χριστοτόκος; denied her to be the mother of God, and allowed her only to be the mother of Christ: though St. John tells us, it was ‘*the Word that was made flesh, and dwelt among us* ;’ and St. Paul, that ‘*God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.*’ The human nature of Christ is not the Virgin’s Son, but the eternal Word made flesh is the Son, who was born of the Virgin, and therefore *the Son of God, not by a human conception, how miraculous soever, but by eternal generation.*”

“Thirdly: there is no appearance of reason to say, that Christ was called the Son of God upon account of his miraculous conception, by a divine power, in the womb of the Virgin, when in fact, *he never was called the Son of God for this reason.*”

“Christ often calls himself the Son of God, and always speaks of God as his Father, but *never mentions his miraculous birth*, which was a great secret in those days, and known to very few; and therefore the people could not understand him, nor could he intend to be understood, that he challenged this relation of Son to God, upon account of his birth, which how wonderful soever it was, they knew nothing of: but on the contrary, our Saviour expressly challenges an eternal relation to God, as his Father, antecedent to his coming into the world, as I have proved at large.”

“Nay; *with respect to his birth and human nature, he is so far from calling himself the Son of God, that he always calls himself the Son of Man*; the same person, indeed, is both the Son of God and the Son of Man, the Son of God being made man; but when he calls himself the Son of God and the Son of Man upon such *different* accounts, we ought not to assign that as the reason why he is called the Son of God, for which alone he calls himself the Son of Man. This distinction St. Paul carefully observes, that ‘*Jesus Christ was the Son of David ac-*

ording to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness,' or his divine nature, as I have already explained it : whereas, if his miraculous conception made him the Son of God, then he is the Son of God, as man, according to the flesh, *contrary* to the constant language of Christ and his apostles."

"This is sufficient to prove, that *Christ is not called the Son of God upon account of his miraculous conception and birth* : and yet this is the most plausible pretence for Christ's being called the Son of God, if we set aside his eternal generation ; for a true and proper Sonship must be founded in nature and being : he only is a true and proper Father, who begets in his own nature, and of his own substance ; and such a Son is *γνησιος* and *ιδιος υιος*, his own genuine, true Son, and if he beget but one, is the *μονογενης*, the only-begotten Son ; all which titles are given to Christ, and can belong only to an eternal generation."

In the Commentary of the Tract Society, there is likewise a virtual denial that the human nature is the Son of God. Thus on Luke i., 35, it is said ;—

"The child she shall conceive is a holy thing ; he must not share in the common corruption and pollution of the human nature ; and he shall be called the Son of God, as the Son of the Father by *eternal generation* ; as an indication of which, he shall now be formed by the Holy Ghost. His human nature must be produced so, as it was fit that should be, which was to be taken into union with the divine nature."

At the present moment, the most recent work published upon this subject is by a writer of the Wesleyan denomination, who, in his enquiry into the doctrine of *The Eternal Sonship*, p. 181, likewise denies the Lord's human nature to be the Son of God.

Thus he says ;—

"1. That the title, 'Son of God,' has no express and peculiar connexion with the actual economical work of Christ. In other words, that he is not thus described, either in reference

to his *incarnation*, his Messiahship, his resurrection from the dead, his mediatorial glory, or his coming to judge the world."

The whole tenor of this work is to deny that, in any sense whatever, the title, *Son of God*, is applicable to the *human* nature of our Lord. So that what, according to some of the best theologians, is a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, a palpable demonstration of our Saviour's divinity, attested by the angel Gabriel, by the voice of the Father at the baptism of Christ, by Christ himself in his miracles and doctrine, and finally, by the preaching of the Apostles, has at last come to be denounced as absurd, false, and heretical. Indeed, the whole state of the controversy, inreference to the title, *Son of God*, is thus described by Mr. Treffry, p. 50;—

"It is not disputed that every other appellation of our Lord has some precise and well-understood acceptation. Is it probable, therefore, is it conceivable, that this alone, certainly not the least eminent, is an exception? And yet the ordinary modes of exposition leave it at the merey or fancy of the reader; since by assigning to it, in the several places where it occurs, designs widely and irreconcilably diverse, they deprive it of every thing like distinctness and precision. In one case, it is represented as the appellation of our Lord's humanity; in a second, it is a periphrasis of the Messiah; in a third, it signifies a peculiar favorite of heaven; in a fourth, it is descriptive of the resurrection of Christ; in a fifth, it refers to his mediatorial honor. Here it is a Jewish phrase, and means a divine person; there it is a Gentile title, and signifies a heathen demi-god. Nothing can be more illustrious than its purport in one passage; nothing more trivial than its signification in another. It would seem as if an expositor of this class, in the early part of his labors, fixed upon some arbitrary interpretation of the phrase, but on coming to a second passage, and finding the former definition inappropriate, was under the necessity of devising another. A third case in which it occurs is not answerable to either, and he therefore takes refuge in a third sense; and thus is the title bandied

about, irreverently enough it must be confessed, until, at length, ordinary readers come to regard it as susceptible of almost every signification, and as, in general, a mere redundancy. That it is so in the hands of some theologians, is most certain; and were it blotted out of the New Testament, far from leaving any blank in their system, one can hardly suppose but that they would rejoice in getting rid of a phrase so indeterminate and vexatious.”*

Upon considering the first class of quotations from Petavius, Bishop Pearson, Lord King, &c., in proof of the doctrine that the human nature of our Lord is the Son of God, one might be disposed to imagine that, notwithstanding the remarkable defection from this doctrine, there yet remain in the church a considerable body of eminent writers who maintain it, so that the defection cannot be charged upon the church as universal.

We now, therefore, proceed to shew that, whatever be the differences of theologians upon the subject of the Incarnation in other respects, they are *generally* agreed in maintaining that the miraculous conception is no proper proof of the divinity of Christ; inasmuch as though, in virtue of this conception, he might be admitted to be the Son of God, yet in this respect, he was no otherwise the Son of God than Adam himself was the Son of God, nor was God properly the Father of that nature.

Thus Maldonatus, on *Luke* i., having explained how Jesus was the Son of God by miraculous conception, not as Petavius affirms, by union, but by actual generation; observes;—

“To prove that that which was to be born of the Virgin would be the Son of God, in that sense in which I have explained it, most suitable was the reason assigned by the angel, because he was to be conceived not of man, but solely of God. Therefore, even though Christ had not been God, still, consi-

* The subject is passed over in utter silence by Bloomfield, Whitby, and others, in their comments upon *Luke* i., 35.

dering the manner in which he was begotten, he was deservedly called the Son of God, not merely as other holy men, of whom it is written, ‘*I have said ye are gods, and ye are all the sons of the Most High,*’ but in a certain, peculiar, and proper manner, because he had no other than God for his Father, being generated from no other than He. *Altogether in the same manner in which Luke iii., 38, calls Adam the Son of God; because he was begotten, not by man, but by God.*”

Now that there is any authority in this passage to justify the opinion that the first Adam was begotten by God, in the same manner as the second, other divines might doubtless justly deny. The passage, however, is here quoted to shew how the doctrine of the miraculous conception is made use of only to place Jesus Christ, as to his humanity, upon the same level with Adam; and in the sequel it will be seen, how others maintain that the humanity of Christ is even below that of Adam, as respects its origin.

Bishop Pearson, on the article, *His Only Son*, p. 174, speaking of the fourfold generation of Christ, in which is included miraculous conception, observes, that they are all insufficient to prove his proper divinity, and hence argues as follows;—

“But beside these four, we must find yet a more peculiar ground of our Saviour’s filiation, totally distinct from any which belongs unto the rest of the sons of God, that he may be clearly and fully acknowledged the only-begotten Son.* For although

* On this passage Skinner thus writes, in his Letters addressed to Candidates for Holy Orders, p. 69;—

“I cannot refrain from expressing my surprize, that in so valuable a work as Dr. Pearson’s Exposition of the Apostles’ Creed, after having confirmed by Scriptural authorities Christ’s fourfold right to the title, ‘*Son of God,*’ the learned author should have added, ‘Besides these four, we must find yet a more peculiar ground of our Saviour’s filiation,’ &c., &c. As if any of the four particular sources of right, which he justly ascribes to our Saviour, had ever belonged to, or had ever been claimed by, any other being, to have rendered the task, which the expositor here binds himself to discharge (*‘we must find’*) necessary. Nor are the terms in which Dr. Pearson announces his mode of discharging this necessary task, less calculated to excite our surprize than the task itself.’. . . “In his two first positions, our

to be born of a Virgin be in itself miraculous, and justly entitles Christ unto (the name of) the Son of God ; yet it is not so far above the production of all mankind, as to place him in that singular eminence which must be attributed to the only-begotten. We read of Adam, the son of God, as well as Seth, the son of Adam : and, surely, the framing Christ out of a woman *cannot so far transcend the making Adam out of the earth*, as to cause so great a distance as we must believe between the first and second Adam."

Dr. Waterland, in a quotation previously given, makes a similar remark. Thus, in respect of the miraculous conception, he says, vol. v., p. 399 ;—

" In the respect here mentioned, *Christ was not Son of God in a higher or more peculiar manner than angels or Adam*. But besides that, I may, upon the authority of many of the ancients, assert, that the Power of the Highest (*δύναμις ὑψίστη*) is a name of the Logos, who before his incarnation was Son of God ; and therefore also that holy thing, after the incarnation, was called, and was Son of God. This construction prevailed for many centuries, and may be met with in Christian writers, as low as Damascen and Theophylact ; and how much lower I need not inquire. If this interpretation takes place, then the pretence of Christ's being called Son of God, on account of his being miraculously born of a virgin, falls of course."

Bishop Bull likewise, in his *Judgment of the Catholic Church*, vol. vi., p. 102 ; in reply to Episcopius, who maintained that the title, Son of God, belonged to the human nature by way of eminence ; says ;—

" What I reply is this ; that in that passage, Christ is said to be the Son of God by reason of his conception in the womb of the Virgin by the Holy Spirit, but he is not there said to be the *only* or the *only-begotten* Son of God. But, says Epis-

author talks of '*clearly proving*' and '*demonstrating*' FROM SCRIPTURE ; in the two latter, he simply undertakes to '*shew*' and '*declare*,' and *that* without mentioning a word of Scripture. What a falling off is here ! But such must always be the case, when in religious investigation, we seek to find what Scripture has not to bestow."

copius, this præminence (viz., that through which he was formed by the power of God in the womb of the Virgin) is proper to Jesus Christ as man, to whom no other has been, or ever will be, similar. I reply that this is not true; for what, if the flesh of Christ was conceived and formed by the divine power and virtue without a father in the womb of the Virgin! Was not the first man formed without father and mother, by the hands of God himself? Is he not therefore, in Luke iii., 38, expressly said to be the Son of God? Therefore, it is not in this that is placed that præminence of Jesus Christ, by which he is called the only or only-begotten Son. Nay, *in this respect, the first Adam is in some measure superior to the second*, since the former was made by God without father and without mother, the latter without father only.”

Dr. Fiddes observes, in his *Body of Divinity*, vol. i., p. 447;—

“Christ was not the Son of God the Father, with respect to his temporal generation, how miraculous soever, in a proper sense, *any more than Adam*, who is expressly called the Son of God, could be called so from his being formed by the immediate action of God, out of the dust.”

Wheatly, on the Creeds, maintaining that the titles, *Only Son*, or *Only-begotten Son of God*, do not pertain to Christ as *man*, observes, p. 209;—

“Not first as being born of a Virgin only, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, without having any man to his Father; because *Adam*, having neither father nor mother according to the flesh, *was more immediately the Son of God than He*: and is accordingly, for that reason, expressly called the Son of God.”*

Poole, in his *Recensio Synoptica*, on *Luke* i., 35, observes;—

“That very thing, says the angel, shall be called the Son of God; viz., as the second Adam. For the *first Adam* also is called the *Son of God*, *Luke* iii., 38; because God endued him

* See also Smith's *Scripture Testimonies to the Messiah*, vol. ii., p. 51.

with what other fathers endue others, as Justin remarks.”—*Grotius*.

Dr. Scott observes in his works, vol. v., p. 275;—

. . . “For though it cannot be denied, but in Scripture he is called the Son of God, sometimes upon the account of this his divine generation in the Virgin’s womb, and sometimes upon the score of his being ordained by God to the Messiahship; sometimes because he was raised by God from the dead, and sometimes because he was installed by him into his mediatorial kingdom: yet *upon neither of these accounts can he be properly called the only-begotten Son*; for upon the three last accounts sundry *others have been as properly begotten by God as our Saviour*; some having been installed by him into great and eminent offices, others raised from the dead, others truly ordained by him his messiahs, or anointed ones: so that upon neither of these accounts can he be styled the only-begotten Son, *others having been thus begotten as well as himself*. And as for the first, his being conceived by the Holy Ghost in the virgin’s womb, *this was not sufficient neither to entitle him the only-begotten*, because, though it was indeed a miraculous production, yet was it not so much above the production of the first man, as to place him in that singular eminence. For the forming of Adam out of the substance of the earth, was altogether as miraculous a production as the forming of Christ out of the substance of the woman: and therefore since Adam is called the Son of God, Luke iii., 38, because God immediately formed him of the substance of the earth, *he had thereby as good a right to the title of God’s only-begotten Son as Christ himself had*, because God immediately formed him of the substance of a woman. Wherefore his peculiar right above all others, to this glorious title of God’s only-begotten Son, must necessarily be founded upon some higher reason than this; that is, upon some such reason as is wholly peculiar to himself. For if he be really and truly God’s only-begotten Son, all other persons whatsoever must necessarily be excluded from that claim; and consequently he must be so begotten of God as no other person is, or ever was; and to be so begotten of God is to be begotten by him, by a proper and natural generation;

which is nothing else but a vital production of another in the same nature with him from whom it is produced; even as a man begets a man, and every animal begets another of the same kind and nature with itself: and thus to be begotten of God is to be begotten into the same divine nature with himself; to derive or communicate from him the infinitely perfect nature and essence of a God. And in this sense *only* our blessed Saviour is the only-begotten Son of the Father, as being generated by him from all eternity into the same nature, and communicating from him his own infinite essence and perfections; in which sense he is truly the only-begotten Son; because in this sense, and in this *only*, none is, or was, or ever shall be, begotten of the Father, but himself."

Macknight also observes on *Hebrews* i., 5, vol. v., p. 36;—

"*My Son thou art: To-day I have begotten thee.* The emphasis of this speech lieth in the word *begotten*, importing that the person addressed is God's Son, not by creation, but by generation. It was on account of this speech that the Jews universally believed the person called, Psalm ii., 2, *the Lord's Messiah*, or *Christ*, to be really the Son of God. And in allusion to this speech, our Lord took to himself the appellation of God's only-begotten Son, John iii., 16. It is true, because the angel said to his mother, Luke i., 35, '*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee. Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God;*' some contend that the words, *My Son, thou art*, &c., are a prediction of our Lord's miraculous conception. But on that supposition the argument, taken from the name, falls; for *instead of proving Jesus superior to angels, his miraculous conception does not make him superior to Adam*, who was as much the immediate work of God as Christ's human nature was the immediate work of the Holy Ghost."

Turretin observes in his works, vol. i., p. 327;—

"Now if the Son were so called only on account of the gracious communication of existence and glory, in respect of the human nature, whether in his miraculous conception, or in his resurrection and exaltation, or in his calling, he could not be

denominated either the proper or only-begotten Son of God; because this filiation might pertain to others also; if not in the same degree, at least in the same kind. For the angels likewise are called *sons*, on account of the excellency of their nature; as also magistrates, on account of the dignity of their office; and *Adam*, on account of his miraculous creation; and the faithful, on account of their adoption and regeneration, as also their resurrection.”

Vogan likewise observes, in his Bampton Lectures on the Trinity, p. 235;—

“Now on inquiring in what respect our Lord Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of God; it is to be noticed, that this title is exclusive, and shuts out all others from the Sonship thus attributed to Him. This Sonship belongs to Him alone. *It has no reference, therefore, to his humanity,* for we all share it with Him; nor to his piety, for all pious persons are said to be begotten of God. It has no reference to his miraculous human birth; for the births of Isaac and John were also miraculous, though as we would apprehend, not in so high a degree as his: and the production of Adam, who, on account of his creation, is called the Son of God, was yet, as we again would apprehend, more miraculous than his. It has no reference to his Messiahship, since the Word of God came to others as well as to Him; and his being the Messiah was the consequence, and not the reason, of his being the Son of God; as He himself most clearly intimates in the parable: ‘Having yet, therefore, one son, his dearly beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son:’ and as is also necessarily implied in the following out of many other passages: ‘The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world;’ that is, sent the Son to be the Messiah or the Christ. Nor is He the only-begotten Son in respect of his resurrection or exaltation; for He called himself by this title at the very beginning of his ministry, saying to Nicodemus: ‘God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ He is, indeed, the first-born or first-begotten from the dead; but ‘many bodies of the*

* See here Lord King on the Creed, p. 127.

saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves, after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many :’ so that He is not the only begotten from the dead. And his exaltation to his kingdom and inheritance was the privilege, and not the foundation, of his sonship. Nor is it in respect of any supposed angelic nature or capacity, that He is called by this title ; for though the angels are called the sons of God, he is the only Son, the only-begotten of the Father.”

Holden also observes, in his *Scripture Testimonies to the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ*, p. 393, referring to Luke i., 35 ;—

“ It is worthy of observation, that our Lord, in this passage of St. Luke’s gospel, is not called the only Son, the only-begotten, or first-begotten Son, but simply the Son of God ; and he is so called, in respect to his humanity, because of his conception in the womb of the Virgin, by the operation of the Holy Ghost. But this does not constitute the only præminence of Christ, designated by the title, Son of God, for *in this respect, he is not much superior to Adam*, who was the immediate work of God, as Christ’s human nature was the immediate work of the Holy Ghost.”

Finally, we may add the testimony of Dean Sherlock, who, in his *Scripture Proofs of our Saviour’s divinity*, observes, p. 171, speaking of the eternal generation ;—

“ That which is next to this, and which alone can entitle creatures to the natural relation of Sonship to God, is to receive their being immediately from God, in the likeness and resemblance of his own nature. Thus angels are called the sons of God, and so is *Adam, who was immediately formed by God in his own image and likeness* ; and thus some think that Christ, who was as immediately formed by a divine power in the womb of the Virgin, as Adam was of the dust of the earth, is for this reason called the Son of God ; and had he been a mere man, this might have given him as good a title to this Sonship as Adam had ; but it was not a mere man, but the eternal Son of God, which was born of the Virgin, and the eternal Son of God could not be made the Son of God by being made man.”

Thus while some orthodox Athanasians omit the temporal generation altogether, and some deny it: yet even those who maintain it, maintain also that, by miraculous conception, Christ is not the Son of God in any higher sense than a creature. Maldonatus affirms, that as to the humanity, “Christ was the Son of God altogether, as Adam was the Son of God;” Waterland, that “Christ was not the Son of God in a higher or more peculiar manner than the angels or Adam;” Bishop Pearson, that Christ, by the miraculous conception, “was not so far above the production of all mankind, nor did so far transcend the making of Adam out of the earth, as to entitle him on that account to the peculiar eminence assigned to him;” Bishop Bull, that “in this respect, the first Adam is in some measure *superior* to the second;” Dr. Fiddes, that “Christ was not the Son of God the Father by miraculous conception, any more than Adam;” Wheatly, that “Adam was more immediately the Son of God than Christ;” Grotius, that “the second Adam was called the Son of God in the same manner as the first:” Dr. Scott, that “others have been as properly begotten of God as our Saviour, and that Adam had as good a right to the title of God’s only-begotten Son as Christ himself had;” Macknight, that “instead of proving Jesus equal to angels, his miraculous conception does not make him superior to Adam;” Turretin, that “angels and Adam, on account of his miraculous creation, were called sons of God for the same reason as Christ;” Vogan, that “the production of Adam as the Son of God was *more* miraculous than the conception of Christ;” Holden, that “in this respect, Christ is not much superior to Adam;” Dean Sherlock, that if, by miraculous conception, Christ was the Son of God (which he denies) this “*might* have given him as good a title to his Sonship as Adam had.” . . . &c.

Now most of these writers are reputedly orthodox Athanasians; yet thus it is they profess to believe that the miraculous conception, effected nothing more for the humanity of the Saviour, than the alleged miraculous creation effected for Adam.

On reviewing, then, the foregoing quotations, we think the reader will admit, both that the doctrine that Jesus is the Son of God according to the human nature, has come to be very generally denied, and that the miraculous conception as a proof of Christ's divinity, has come to be almost universally denied; and if it shall be shewn, that the very doctrine which is thus denied is no other than the rock upon which Christ has declared that his church should be built, it will be clear that some other foundation for the church has been laid, than the one which Christ himself has laid; and that consequently a church so built must fall.

In the confession of St. Peter, '*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;*' we have enquired into the meaning and application of the title, *Son of God*; and proceed in the next place to enquire into the meaning and application of the title, *Christ*.

CHRIST.

From the authorities about to be adduced, it will be seen that the title *Christ*, as signifying *Anointed*, has primary if not exclusive application to the *humanity* assumed by the WORD.

As this is a most important subject, we shall quote the following remark of Petavius on the *Incarnation*, book ii., chap. viii., vol. vi., p. 56;—

“Perhaps there may not fail to be some who may think that, on a subject admitting of no doubt, and capable of proof by so many arguments and testimonies, our labor in this respect is superfluous. For who cannot easily understand, that in Christ it was solely from the *manhood* being anointed, *i.e.*, sanctified,

not the *Godhead*, that the appellation of Christ was derived? If, however, he will consider, that both certain heretics, as also CATHOLIC THEOLOGIANS, have imputed the title Christ, and the unction signified by it, to the divinity alone, before it was joined to the human nature; that others have assigned the name Christ to the humanity only; that others have attributed it to each separately, as also to the two conjointly; if he will consider this, he will find no fault with our careful consideration of this subject; nay even, as will the better be perceived from the sequel, he will judge it to be absolutely necessary.”

Athanasius maintains, that the title, Christ, has exclusive reference to the humanity; thus he observes, in his First Treatise against the Arians, p. 248;—

“And if, as the Lord himself has said, the Spirit is his, and takes of his, and He sends it, it is not the Word, considered as the word and wisdom, who is anointed with the Spirit which He himself gives, but the *flesh* assumed by Him, which is anointed in Him and by Him; that the sanctification coming to the Lord as *man*, may come to all men from Him.”*

On this passage is added the following note by Mr. Newman;—

“Elsewhere Athanasius says; that our Lord’s Godhead was the immediate anointing, or chrism of the *manhood* He assumed. ‘God needed not the anointing, nor was the anointing made without God; but God both applied it, and also received it in that *body* which was capable of it.’ in *Apollin*, ii., 3; and *το χρίσμα ἐγὼ ὁ λόγος, τὸ δὲ χρυσθὲν ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος*. *Orat.* iv., § 36, *vid. Origen, Periarth.* ii., 6; n. 4. And St. Gregory Nazianzen, still more expressly, and from the same text as Athanasius: ‘The Father anointed Him ‘with the oil of gladness above his fellows,’ anointing the *manhood* with the Godhead.’ *Orat.* x., *fn.* Again: ‘This [the Godhead] is the anointing of the *manhood*, not sanctifying by an energy as the other Christs [anointed], but by a presence of Him whole who anointed, ὅλου τοῦ χρίοντος; whence it came to pass, that what anointed was called *man*, and what was anointed was made God.’ *Orat.* xxx. 20. ‘He himself anointed Himself; anointing as God the

* See Wilberforce on the *Incarnation*, p. 203.

body with his Godhead, and anointed as *man*.' *Damasc.*, *F. O.* iii. 3. *Dei Filius*, sicut pluvia in vellus, toto divinitatis unguento nostram se fudit in *carnem*. *Chrysolog. Serm.* lx. It is more common, however, to consider, that the anointing was the descent of the Spirit, as Athanasius says at the beginning of this section, according to *Luke* iv., 18; *Acts* x., 38."

Suicer also has furnished authorities who maintain that the title, Christ, has exclusive reference to the humanity. Thus under the article, *Χριστος*, in his *Thesaurus*, it is observed;—

"In what sense and why is the Messiah called Christ, that is, Anointed; since he was not anointed with material oil? By anointing are understood the gifts of the Holy Spirit most abundantly poured out upon the *human nature* of Christ."

"Again, Theodoret, in his *Epitome of the Divine Decrees*, chap. ii., p. 279, observes: 'It is manifest that Christ is so called by reason of the unction of the Spirit. But he was anointed not as God, but as *man*.' The same writer, in his *Epistle* cxlvi., p. 1032, observes: 'Christ is so called, as being anointed by the most Holy Spirit as *man*, and called our High Priest, Apostle, Prophet, and King.'"

Again;—

"Chrysostom, in his first Homily on the *Epistle to the Romans*, page 6, observes: 'Christ is so called because he is anointed, which anointing was of the *flesh*.'"

Petavius likewise maintains that the title Christ is applicable exclusively to the humanity. Thus, when treating of the Incarnation, he says, vol. 6, p. 54;—

"If, therefore, it can be proved from the testimony of the ancients, that this unction in the *man* Christ was the Divinity itself, we shall have succeeded in showing what we proposed, that it was the divinity in him (in the stead of grace or holiness) whereby he was made holy; or what is the same thing, that it was the Holy Spirit himself."

This Petavius shews from Gregory Nazianzen, Damascen, and others; and in p. 55, quotes Cyril of Alexandria in his second book against Nestorius, as follows;—

“The name of Christ and the thing it signifies, can by no means pertain to the Word, barely considered and understood by us as without the flesh. If he be said to have emptied himself, and to have descended in the form of a servant, and to have been like us in the flesh, he will be likewise called Christ, since he is anointed. For God the Word is not anointed in his own proper nature; but rather it is in the *human nature* that the unction itself is effected.”

To the same effect Petavius quotes Fulgentius, Tertullian, and Peter the Deacon, &c.

Alcuin maintains that the title Christ applies to the humanity. Thus in his works, vol. ii., p. 500, he says;—

“Christ, *Χριστος* is so called in the Greek language. In the Latin, *Unctus, or Anointed*. The Son of God is anointed according to the *humanity*; not with visible oil, . . . but with the fulness of divinity and the gift of grace,* which is signified by that visible unguent, by which the church joins to itself the baptized.”

Alcuin then proceeds to observe that this unction of the humanity first took place at the miraculous conception, whereby the humanity was joined to the divinity.

Thomas Aquinas also observes on *Luke* iv., 14, in his *Catena Aurea*, p. 155, quoting Cyril;—

“In like manner we confess Him to have been anointed, inasmuch as He took upon Him our *flesh*, as it follows, ‘*Because he hath anointed me.*’ For the divine nature is not anointed, but *that which is cognate to us*. So also when He says that He was sent, we must suppose Him speaking of His *human nature*. For it follows, *He hath sent me to preach the gospel to the poor.*”

Lauretus furnishes other authorities from the fathers, in proof that the title Christ belongs exclusively to the humanity. Thus, under the article *unctio*, it is observed;—

* As a distinction is made by some writers, between the Divinity itself and the gifts of grace proceeding from the Divinity; the former being that with which the manhood of Christ was anointed; the latter, that with which Christians in general are anointed; it would have been well if this important distinction had been more clearly observed in the foregoing passage.

“The head of Christ was anointed when the humanity was joined to the divinity, and a communication of properties was effected.”

. . . “The first unction designates the unction of Christ in the womb of the virgin, when he was conceived of the Holy Spirit. The second, is the unction of Christ in baptism, the Holy Spirit coming upon him in the form of a dove. The third unction, designates the resurrection of Christ, when all power is said to be given him in heaven and in earth.”

. . . “Christ is anointed, as a vessel containing the ointment; others are anointed as receiving the odour of this ointment. The anointing, however, belongs to Christ according to the *humanity*.”

The Longer Catechism of the Russian Church, p. 56, after defining Christ to signify *Anointed*, thus proceeds;—

“Q. Why then is Jesus the Son of God called the *Anointed*?

“A. Because to his *manhood* were imparted without measure all the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and so he possesses in the highest degree the knowledge of a prophet, the holiness of a high priest, and the power of a king.”

Jones of Nayland, in his Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 39;—

“1 Cor. xi., 3. *The head of Christ is God*. The name *Christ* does here stand, as in other places out of number, for the *man* Christ,” &c., &c.

Lord King in his Critical History of the Apostles' Creed, likewise maintains that the title Christ belongs to the humanity. Thus he observes, p. 118;—

. . . “That the *Man* called Jesus, who lived at Nazareth, is *Christ*; that is, is the Messiah, or the anointed of God; that very person who was designed and appointed by Him to be the Instructor, King, and Saviour of mankind, &c., &c.”

Again, p. 121;—

“Wherefore, when we repeat these words in the creed, *in Jesus Christ*, we thereby declare our sincere and unfeigned belief, that that *Man* who was called Jesus of Nazareth is the *Christ*; which word signifies in Greek, *Anointed*, as Messiah doth in Hebrew also.”

Again, p. 124;—

“He who anointed our Saviour was God the Father; and the oil with which he performed it was the Holy Ghost. ‘In the word Christ,’ saith Irenæus, ‘there is understood the Anointer, the Anointed, and the Uncction; the Anointer is the Father, the Anointed is the Son, and the Uncction is the Spirit; as he saith by the prophet Isaiah, *‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me;’* signifying the Father who anointeth, the Son who is anointed, and the Spirit who is the oil:’ which oil was chiefly poured upon him at his *conception* and baptism; and, as Origen observes, is to be referred to his *human nature*, in which he was anointed by God to be both Lord and Saviour.”

Bishop Pearson on the Creed, in the second article concerning *Jesus Christ*, likewise maintains that the title *Christ* belongs exclusively to the humanity. Thus he observes, vol. i., p. 161;—

“St. Peter teacheth us *‘how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.’* Now, though there can be no question but the Spirit is the oil, yet there is some doubt when Jesus was anointed with it. For we know the angel said unto the blessed virgin, *‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.’* From whence it appeareth that from the *conception*, or at the *incarnation*, Jesus was sanctified by the Holy Ghost and the power of the Highest; and so, consequently, as St. Peter spake, he was anointed then with the Holy Ghost and with power.”

Again, p. 162;—

. . . “Jesus, *the Son of David*, was first sanctified and anointed with the Holy Ghost at his *conception*, and thereby received a right unto, and was prepared for, all those offices which belonged to the Redeemer of the world; but when he was to enter upon the actual and full performance of all those functions which belonged to him, then doth the same Spirit which had sanctified him at his conception visibly descend upon him at his inauguration. And that most properly upon his

baptism, because according to the customs of those ancient nations, washing was wont to precede their unctions: wherefore Jesus, ‘*when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove.*’ As David sent Solomon to be anointed at Gihon: from whence arose that ancient observation of the Rabbins, that kings were not to be anointed but by a fountain.”

“Now as we have shewed that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost, lest any should deny any such descension to be a proper or sufficient unction, we shall farther make it appear, that the effusion or action of the Spirit, eminently containeth whatsoever the Jews have imagined to be performed or signified by those legal anointings. Two very good reasons they render why God did command the use of such anointing oil, as in respect of the action. First, that it might signify the divine election of that person, and designation to that office: from whence it was necessary that it should be performed by a prophet, who understood the will of God. Secondly, that by it the person anointed might be made fit to receive the *divine influx*. For the first, it is evident there could be no such infallible sign of the divine designation of Jesus to his offices, as the visible descent of the Spirit, attended with a voice from heaven, instead of the hand of a prophet, saying, ‘*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*’ For the second, this spiritual unction was so far from giving less than an aptitude to receive the *divine influx*, that it was that *divine influx*, nay, THE DIVINITY ITSELF, the Godhead dwelling in him bodily.”*

In the Family Bible it is maintained, that the title Christ belongs exclusively to the humanity. Thus it is observed on *Heb. i.*, 8; ‘*God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows;*’—

“It is manifest that these things can be said only of that person, in whom the Godhead and the manhood are united; in whom the *human nature* is the subject of the unction, and the elevation to the mediatorial kingdom is the reward of the *man* Jesus: for Christ, being in his divine nature equal with

* See also p. 170.

the Father, is incapable of any exaltation. Thus the unction with the oil of gladness, and the elevation above his fellows, characterize the *manhood*; and the perpetual stability of the throne, and the unsullied justice of the government, declare the Godhead. It is, therefore, with the greatest propriety, that this passage in the Psalmist is applied to Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and made an argument of his divinity; not by any forced accommodation of words, which in the mind of the author related to another subject, but according to the true intent and purpose of the Psalmist, and the literal sense, and only consistent exposition of his words.—*Bishop Horsley.*”

Finally, Ambrose Serle in his *Horæ Solitariae* maintains that the title *Christ* refers exclusively to the humanity. Thus he observes, i., 25;—

“It will scarce be disputed, but by Jews, that this title, in the emphatical sense, pertains to Jesus of Nazareth, who, with respect to his *human nature*, was anointed and consecrated by Jehovah to be the Saviour and deliverer of his people, and, therefore, took upon him this name of *unction*, as a person authorized and qualified fully for that design.”

Again;—

“The weakness of the human nature was made equal to every undertaking, through its conjunction with the divine; for his essential divinity both strengthened and purified the humanity. As the holy oil, under the law, consecrated certain persons to particular offices, so the holy unction of Christ’s divinity communicated to his *humanity* all those glories and perfections, which exalted the name of Jesus above every name, and qualified him to be a fit mediator between God and man. The consecration of Christ, for the work of redemption, is beautifully conveyed to us under this image of pouring forth oil upon his *human nature*; for as oil insinuates itself into the minutest pores of the substances which it touches, till it has entirely diffused itself through them; so *the divine nature wholly possessed the human form*, called Jesus, and induced a most perfect union of both; which union, or consummation, became that wonderful *Θεανθρωπος*, called Christ.”*

* See also the Assembly’s Annotations on *Acts* x., 38; *Heb.* i., 9. Scott’s

From these observations it appears that the title CHRIST belongs exclusively to the *human nature* of our Saviour.

Now with regard to this human nature, we have hitherto seen one or other of these two propositions prevailing; either that the human nature or Christ is the Son of God only as Adam is the Son of God, (and according to some, not by generation, but by union,) or that the human nature is not the Son of God in any sense whatever. Hence as the title Christ applies exclusively to the human nature, we find it asserted that Christ is the Son of the living God, only as Adam is the Son of the living God, or else that Christ is not the Son of the living God at all.

Both propositions are an open denial of the divinity of Christ, as the Son of the living God, and one proposition an open denial that *Christ* is in *any* sense the Son of the living God.†

Annotations on *Acts* iv., 27; x., 38. Gill *in loco*. Also the theological works of Dr. H. More, p. 69. Waterland v., 350. Boyse, 139.

† No wonder, therefore, that Dr. Hey, Norrisian Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, should observe in his Lectures, vol. ii., p. 360;—

“As it seems to be of great consequence, that we speak the same thing, and as men are generally more affected by sounds than ideas, we might propose it as a question, whether the word God in such expressions as ‘God the Son,’ and ‘God the Holy Ghost,’ could be omitted, in our offices, without a material fault. Though Christ *seems* to us to be called God in several places, yet there is *some dispute on that head*; and, for the sake of unity, we would pay all possible respect to the opinions of our adversaries. I should imagine that such an omission would tend, almost as much as anything, to mollify and conciliate. *There is not perhaps any express command to invoke Christ under the title of God.* The early Christians used to invoke Christ, and Pliny says, *tanquam Deum*; yet Pliny’s idea of a God was not confined to the one supreme invisible Being. St. Stephen addresses Christ, but does not use the word God, though it is found in our translation, in italics; and his address is the ejaculation of a man dying in a Christian cause. If Christ was to be worshipped on earth, he must be a proper object of worship when ascended into heaven; but it may be considered whether he might not be entitled Mediator, Intercessor, Judge, Head of the Church, *instead of God.* The equality of Christ to the Father was most perfect in his preëxistent state:—In his state after his ascension, in which he now exists, he deigns to be called man in some sense; he has not entirely put off his human nature.”

ANTICHRIST.

Now if the title *Christ* signifies *Anointed*, the title *Anti-christ* signifies *Anti-Anointed*; and if the title *Anointed* refers to the human nature, the title *Anti-Anointed* refers to the human nature, and consequently signifies that which is in the stead of, or is opposed to, the anointing of the human nature of Jesus.

We have seen that the doctrine of Christ himself is, that the human nature is divinely anointed; hence the doctrine of Antichrist is that the human nature is not divinely anointed, so that Antichrist signifies a denial of the divine anointing of the human nature.

That in this sense of the term the whole of Christendom in the present day is Antichristian, is one of the fundamental principles of Swedenborg; and how far this statement is founded on fact the reader may already have seen, and will further perceive in the course of the present work.

Malvenda, in his *Treatise on Antichrist*, insists that the preposition *αντι* signifies *opposition*, not *substitution*; hence that Antichrist signifies one *opposed* to Christ, not one *in the stead* of Christ, or a Vice-Christ, which sounds too much like a vicar of Christ to be agreeable to Roman Catholic ears. He says, however, p. 4;—

“In like manner as this name *Christ* is sometimes general in the sacred Scriptures, *embracing universally all men consecrated to God*, and anointed to a public function by the solemn rite of holy oil and ointment; such as kings, prophets, priests; which use of the title occurs frequently in the Books of Kings, and in which sense of the term as applied to David it is understood by all—*Touch not my Christs*, Psalm civ., 15; and sometimes is used properly to signify some one individual and preëminent Christ or anointed one, of whom all the other Christs were types or precursors; as when by antonomasia Jesus of Nazareth only is called Christ, . . . so by parity of reason, regarding

only the general etymology of the name, the appellation of Antichrist belongs to *all those universally** who, for whatever reason, have been opposed to Christ the Lord, especially to those who among others feigned themselves lyingly to be true Messiahs and Christs." . . .

In like manner, according to Suicer, under the title *Antichrist*, we find that this name was given by Damascen and Œcumenius to *false prophets, false apostles, and heresies* in general; also that Antichrist will sit in the temple of God, which, according to Chrysostom, is *the church of God, or all the churches everywhere*, and that Theophylact and Theodoret give the same interpretation; that Augustin also says that the temple of God means the *Christian church*; and Gregory Nyssen, that Antichrist will adulterate the Scriptures.

Esthius also, on 2 *Thess.* ii., 5, 6, says, that by the temple of God is signified the church or churches of God; and that this is the interpretation of Jerome, St. Thomas Aquinas, the Glossa Interlinea, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and other Greek writers. The interpretation of Cajetan is affirmed to be to the same effect.

The Glossa Ordinaria likewise observes (on 1 John ii., 18; "*Even now are there many Antichrists*;) that by Antichrists are signified heretics, 'because being baptized and anointed with chrism, by means of which they may the better deceive, they are contrary to Christ and his church.'"

Now that the title *Antichrist* has relation to the doctrine of Christ as the Son of God is admitted by Athanasius, in a treatise against the Arians, where he observes, according to Mr. Newman, *Discourse* i., p. 177, that "the denial of the divinity of the Son of God is the harbinger of Antichrist." Indeed it is in relation to the doctrine concerning Christ as the Son of God, that both St. John

* The same is maintained by Pererius in his Commentaries on Daniel, Book xiv., *Preface*, p. 211.

and the early fathers make use of the expressions Antichrist and Antichristian ; the question in the church whether Antichrist was a person, or a body of people, or abstractedly a doctrine, making no difference in this respect.

In accordance with these remarks, Archdeacon Brown observes in his Charge to the Clergy, p. 6 ;—

“ He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son the same hath not the Father. Sir Isaac Newton, speaking of the apostatical spirit which arose even so early as in the days of the Apostles, says, that ‘ it began to work in the disciples of Simon, Menander, Carpoerates, Cerinthus, and such sorts of men as had imbibed the metaphysical philosophy of the Gentiles and cabalistical Jews, and were thence called Gnostics ; John calls them Antichrists, saying, that in his days there were many Antichrists.’ These men therefore, were not, strictly speaking, infidels : but, they were dangerous corrupters and perverters of the truth ; they either supplanted or opposed Christ in some of the offices which He sustained in the work of man’s redemption ; they propagated fundamentally erroneous opinions respecting his nature and person ; and thus they virtually and constructively denied Him.”

Again, after quoting several passages in St. John’s Epistles, p. 9 :—

“ Comparing these passages together, must we not arrive at the conclusion, that the term ‘ Antichrist ’ is of a complex, generic nature, including different varieties of heretical opinion—but all directly or indirectly subversive of the Gospel of Christ ? Must we not infer, by analogy, that any system of errors, which has a manifest tendency, though in a different way, to defeat the great end, for which Christ died, and rose again, and sitteth at the right hand of God, may truly and appropriately be termed Antichristian, &c.”

Again, p. 58 ;—

“ ‘ St. Augustin saith, ANTICHRIST SHALL NOT ONLY SIT IN THE CHURCH OF GOD, BUT ALSO SHALL SHEW HIMSELF IN OUTWARD APPEARANCE, AS IF HE HIMSELF WERE THE CHURCH ITSELF.

Non in templo Dei, sed, in templum Dei sedeat; tanquam ipse sit templum Dei, quod est ecclesia. Not that he sitteth in the temple of God, but he sitteth as the temple of God, as if he himself were the temple of God, which is the church. . . .’”

“‘The author of the fragment of an exposition of St. Matthew, attributed to Chrysostom, and admitted by the Romanists themselves to be the work of no mean hand, speaks thus, and a very remarkable passage it is;—it is on the words,—‘*When ye shall see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place,*’ then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains, which our author thus expounds, ‘That is, WHEN YE SHALL SEE THE IMPIOUS HERESY, WHICH IS THE ARMY OF ANTICHRIST, STANDING IN THE HOLY PLACES OF THE CHURCH, then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; that is, let Christians betake themselves to the Scriptures. . . . The mountains are the scriptures of the apostles or prophets. . . . And why does he bid all Christians at that time to betake themselves to the Scriptures?—BECAUSE AT THAT TIME, WHEN HERESY HATH GOT POSSESSION OF THOSE CHURCHES, THERE CAN BE NO PROOF OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY, NOR ANY OTHER REFUGE FOR CHRISTIANS, WISHING TO KNOW THE TRUE FAITH, BUT THE DIVINE SCRIPTURES. For, *before*, it was shewn in many ways which was the church of Christ, and which heathenism; but *now*, it is known in no way to those who wish to ascertain which is the true church of Christ, but only through the Scriptures?—Why?—Because all those things which are properly Christ’s in the truth, those heresies have also in their schism;—churches alike, the Divine Scriptures themselves alike,—bishops alike and the other orders of the clergy,—baptism alike,—the eucharist alike, and every thing else;—nay, even Christ himself, (*i.e.* the same in name.) Therefore, if any one wishes to ascertain which is the true church of Christ, whence can he ascertain it, in the confusion arising from so great a similitude, but only by the Scriptures? . . . Therefore, the Lord, knowing that such a confusion of things would take place in the last days, commands on that account that Christians, who are in Christianity, and desirous of availing themselves of the strength of the true faith, should betake themselves to nothing else but the Scriptures. OTHERWISE, IF THEY SHALL LOOK TO OTHER THINGS, THEY SHALL

STUMBLE AND PERISH, NOT UNDERSTANDING WHICH IS THE TRUE CHURCH. AND THROUGH THIS THEY SHALL FALL UPON THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION WHICH STANDS IN THE HOLY PLACES OF THE CHURCH.’ ”

“ ‘Surely,’ observes Mr. Goode, ‘he who wrote this was a prophet indeed. Well might the Romish Inquisition put this work in their index of prohibited books, and raze this passage, as far as they could, by Bellarmine’s own confession, out of even the manuscripts.’—*Goode’s Divine Rule of Faith and Practice*, vol. ii., pp. 128, 129.”

Origen also observes on Matt. xxiv., 5, as quoted by Aquinas in his *Catena Aurea*, p. 802;—

“For every discourse which professes to expound Scripture faithfully, and has not the truth, is Antichrist. For the truth is Christ; that which feigns itself to be the truth is Antichrist. So also all virtues are Christ, all that feigns itself to be virtue is Antichrist; for Christ has in himself in truth all manner of good for the edification of men, but the devil has forged resemblances of the same for the deceiving of the saints. We have need, therefore, of God to help us, that none deceive us, neither word nor power. It is a bad thing to find any one erring in his course of life; but I esteem it much worse not to think according to the most true rule of Scripture.”

Lastly, in his Sermons on the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, p. 407, after quoting various passages from the Second Epistle of St. John, Wheatly observes;—

“From all which, we can do no less than infer that, even in Scripture account, ‘it is furthermore necessary to everlasting salvation, that a man believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ For the Scripture you see, declares this again to be the doctrine of Christ; the doctrine in which, *whosoever transgresseth and abideth not, has not God; he hath neither the Father nor the Son*; he loses even the good things he does, and receives no reward: he is a deceiver and an Antichrist; and he that preaches the contrary to this (the Athanasian) doctrine, must be reckoned amongst those false teachers, who, St. Peter also prophesied, should privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and by doing so, should

bring upon themselves swift destruction. Observe here, I beseech you, that heresies are damnable, and bring upon the authors of them swift destruction; and what does that mean but speedy damnation?"

Had this author been further acquainted with the real state of the Athanasian Church, in regard to the doctrine of the incarnation, he might have deemed it prudent to exhibit a less exclusive spirit. For what can be thought of such censures after the exhibition, in the present chapter, of the state of this church, in regard to the doctrine of the incarnation? Might not some readers be disposed to remember the words, *mutato nomine fabula de te narratur?*

BEGOTTEN.

Having now seen the two doctrines most generally prevailing in the church, with regard to Christ as the Son of God; the one that Christ, as designating the humanity, is no otherwise the Son of God than Adam was the Son of God, the other, that he was not the Son of God in any sense whatever; we proceed in the third place to trace their origin to the principles, first, that the *human* nature of Christ was not *begotten*; and secondly, that even if begotten, the humanity had no Father, and hence was not Son.

There is nothing more common in theology than the maxim, that every son is of the same nature and substance with the father; hence that the title *Son of God* implies the same nature and substance with God, and *son of man* the same nature and substance with man.

Thus in a note upon a treatise of Athanasius against the Arians, it is observed by Mr. Newman, p. 16;—

“Elsewhere, St. Basil defines father, ‘one who gives to another the origin of being according to a nature like his own;’

and a son, ‘one who possesses the origin of being from another by generation.’—*Contr. Eun.* ii., 22.”

It is in this sense that Athanasius observes, p. 22 ;—

“Now as to the season spoken of, he will find for certain that, whereas the Lord always is, at length in fulness of the ages He became man ; and whereas He is Son of God, He became Son of Man also.”

Again it is observed by Petavius, vol. v., p. 328 ;—

“There is, however, no true generation, except of the substance of the begetter, nor can any one be properly called son, unless he be begotten and propagated from the very substance itself of the begetter.”

Again it is observed by Bishop Pearson, in his Exposition of the Creed, art. ii., p. 220 ;—

“Now that the communication of the divine essence by the Father (which we have already proved) was the true and proper generation by which he hath begotten the Son, will thus appear : because the most proper generation which we know, is nothing else but a vital production of another in the same nature, with a full representation of him from whom he is produced. Thus man begetteth a son, that is, produceth another man of the same human nature with himself ; and this production, as a perfect generation, becomes the foundation of a relation of paternity in him that produceth, and of filiation in him that is produced. Thus after the prolific benediction, ‘*Be fruitful and multiply,*’ Adam begat in his own likeness, after his image : and by the continuation of the same blessing, the succession of human generations hath been continued. This, then, is the known confession of all men, that a son is nothing but another produced by his father in the same nature with him. But God the Father hath communicated to the Word the same divine essence by which he is God ; and consequently he is of the same nature with Him, and thereby the perfect image and similitude of Him, and therefore his proper Son. In human generations we may conceive two kinds of similitudes ; one in respect of the internal nature, the other in reference to the external form or figure. The former similitude is essential and necessary ; it being impossible a man should beget a son, and that

son not be by nature a man: the latter accidental; not only sometimes the child representing this, sometimes the other parent, but also oftentimes neither. The similitude, then, in which the propriety of generation is preserved, is that which consisteth in the identity of nature: and this communication of the divine essence by the Father to the Word, is evidently a sufficient foundation of such a similitude; from whence Christ is called ‘*the image of God, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.*’”

Again it is observed by Dr. Waterland, ii., 198;—

“The ancients are unanimous in understanding Christ’s sonship of his *divine* nature. To call him the *only-begotten*, or the *Son*, of God the Father, was in their account, declaring him to be of the same nature* with God the Father; as truly God, as the son of man is truly man.”†

Again in a note, there is a passage from Novatian;—

“For as nature herself hath prescribed that he is to be believed to be man, who is of man; so the same nature prescribes also, that he is to be believed to be God, who is of God.”

Wheatly on the Creeds also observes, p. 404;—

... “Exclusion from life, the wrath of God, and condemnation (by which is meant eternal damnation) are all expressly denounced on those who do not believe on the Son of God; *i.e.*, on all that believe him not to be his Son, his begotten Son,

* The same opinion is maintained by Bull, and perhaps the greater number of Roman Catholic and Protestant writers.

On the other hand, Parkhurst, under the word *μονογενης*, observes in his Dictionary; “Though I am not ignorant how strenuously some great and good men have insisted that this term relates to the *divinity* or *divine* nature in Christ, yet truth obliges me to declare, that I apprehend it strictly and properly refers to his *humanity*, which, as it was begotten of God, was therefore the Son of God. Luke i. 35.” That this title was applicable to the humanity, was the opinion of Bishop Pierce, Bishop Burnett, Archbishop Tillotson, Archbishop Secker (Lectures on Catechism), and numerous other writers. Among Roman Catholics, it was the opinion of Maldonatus. See his Comments on John i., 14, &c. See also Pererius on *ibid*, who seems to quote Basil, Damascen, and Gregory Nyssen, as admitting that the title *only-begotten*, may be applied to the *humanity*. And yet, as Waterland justly says, this title is appealed to as an evidence of our Lord’s *divinity*. The only way to reconcile the two is by the doctrine of the *divine* humanity.

† See *Archbishop Wake’s Catechism*, Sec. ix.

and his Only-begotten ; that is, a Son of the same divine nature with the Father who begat him : the notion of begetting (by what means soever it is effected) necessarily implying in it a person of the very self-same nature with him who begets. And therefore is the condemnation laid on the not believing in the name of the only-begotten Son of God : a phrase, which, I apprehend, implies that the object is to be believed in as God : as God of God, because begotten of God ; and very God of very God, because of the very same nature and essence with the Father who begat him.”

This position having been once established, it became an important question how the *human* nature could be called the *Son of God*, when it is acknowledged that the human nature is not divine ; for it is held that the humanity of Christ was and is of the substance of the Virgin, and the divinity of the substance of God, making two whole and perfect natures, and not merely one.

Petavius, in attempting to answer this question, maintains, that the human nature is not *generated* by God, so as to have God for a Father, but that it is *called* the Son of God, and this not by *generation*, but by *union*.* That is to say, the human nature is united to the divine, which is the Son of God ; and in consequence of this *union* (not *generation*), is called the Son of God, though not strictly such.

Thus it is observed upon the Incarnation, vol. v., p. 342 ;—

“ But the same Augustin elsewhere observes, that Christ is not said to be born of the Holy Spirit, but conceived. ‘ Conceived,’ says he, ‘ of the Holy Spirit ; born of the Virgin Mary.’ The reason of which he afterwards subjoins. ‘ For Christ,’ says he, ‘ is not conceived of the substance of the Holy Spirit, but of (by) his power ; not by generation, but by commandment and benediction.’ In these words he indicates that Christ is not said to be ‘ born of the Holy Spirit ;’ because nothing is

* See also Turretin, i., 329.

properly and naturally said to be born of any thing, except that which is begotten of its substance. Therefore we nowhere read, that Christ, as he is man, is born of the Holy Spirit. What is said in the first chapter of Matthew, and which is referred to by Augustin, *that which is born* (natum) *conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit*, is not to be so understood, as if it was said he was born of the Holy Spirit in any natural manner: as he was naturally born of the blessed Virgin. But the passage has this sense; that it is of the Spirit, that is, of the Holy Spirit operating not begetting, that is said to be that which is begotten and born of the Virgin Mary.”

. . . “This trifling (!) controversy being settled, another awaits us, a little more troublesome than the former, and to be treated with more subtlety; namely, how it is that Christ, as *man*, can be or be called the *natural Son* of God. For if no one can be called the son of any one, unless he be begotten of his substance; and if for this reason, as above stated on the authority of Augustin, Christ is not the Son of the Holy Spirit, because not conceived of his substance, but by his power; it does not seem as if Christ, as *man*, is the *natural Son* of God the Father; since, as man, he is not begotten of his substance. Or if in any manner He be, as man, the natural Son; then since Christ is one with the natural, and naturally begotten Son, (inasmuch as the very circumstance of his being one with the Word, was effected by *union*; and of this not only the Father, but together with Him the Holy Spirit and the Son also himself, was the author and efficient, since the works of the Trinity are inseparable,) in this case, Christ as man, is not more the Son of God the Father, than of Himself, and of the whole Trinity.”

“Verily, however, hath this New Man taught us something new and unusual, which human wisdom could never have attained to, nor indeed have surmised. And the first thing to be laid down is this, that in the notion of *son* are contained two things, without which the sonship cannot be understood: the one, that there is some communication of substance, or nature, made by a true generation; the other is the very property or *relative form* of the term produced, in which regard is had to the principle of the origin. This being granted, we learn

from the mystery of the Incarnation, that there is a twofold way and method by which both are obtained, that is, both the communication of nature, and the form or relative property which they call filiiety. The first mode is, when the term itself which is called *son*, receives to himself that nature communicated to him, from which he derives his denomination by a generation true, and properly so called; so that he is said to be *physically*, as they speak in the schools, and *formally* begotten, or possesses being. Thus in the Trinity, the Word receives his essence communicated from the Father by a true generation; by which he is individually God (*hic Deus*), and is generated formally, and is therefore properly called Son—a characteristic found universally also in all created sons. . . The latter mode, the knowledge of which is conveyed to us by faith in the Incarnation, is by a substantive union and application to a term of the former kind; when a nature otherwise foreign, and not transfused by a true generation, receives from this term the property of *son*, because it is naturally and substantively conjoined with the true and natural Son, that is, with the divine nature modified, by the property of divine filiiety, into one person, and therefore one and the same son. Thus the human nature of the Son does not proceed, or is not communicated, from the Father by that generation; *nor is Christ, as man, begotten by God*, nor does he bear the natural likeness and image of God, as the condition of Son requires. But being conjoined by natural copulation with the Word, he, by the same *union*, obtains the Divinity communicated to him, and the mode or property of the Divinity of which the Word consists, which is called filiiety. He is, therefore, properly called and is the natural Son of God, not by *generation*, but by *union*, in so far as He is considered as man.”

“Since, however, the divine person of the Word, as indeed every other person, is not only a relative property, but is especially and principally that nature itself which is determined and modified by that relative form; *it is necessary that to the humanity of Christ divinity also should be communicated*, and indeed by generation; consequently that generation itself should be communicated; for the generation of the Word is always and never interrupted. But it does not receive that Divine

Nature in the same manner as the Word, by generation, *formally* so to speak, but by *unitio* with the same Word, that is, with his nature and personal property, and likewise with the very divine generation itself of the Word. For this also is communicated with the whole person of the Word. Hence with respect to Christ as man, we may use the following expressions. This Man is God, and the Son of God, and the Word, and proceeds from the Father, and is begotten; which last could not be said, unless there were a communion of generation as well as of the other properties. This I have said may be enounced of Christ as he is individual man (*hic homo*), but not of Christ as simply man, or of Christ *according to the humanity*, as I perceive some theologians speak. For expressions of that kind contain the precise signification of *nature* only; not of person or *unitio*, which is the fountain and root of the divine filicity in the human nature of Christ."

This argument of Petavius is quoted and adopted by Perrone: we shall revert to it in the sequel. At present we observe, that according to this view of the case, the humanity of Christ was not *really* begotten, was not *really* generated by God, and therefore cannot be said *really* to have God for a Father; there is, therefore, between the humanity and divinity, no *real* and proper relation such as exists between Father and Son; hence paternity and filicity are both relationships, in *reality*, only between divine natures and not between the divine and human. Consequently when Christ is thus called by theologians the Son of God, he is not admitted to be *really* Son as to the human nature, but only in an improper or inferior sense. Inferior we say, because the relationship of a human son to a human father is far superior; for, in this case, the one is said to be of the same substance as the other, whereas in the case of our Saviour, it is denied that even the glorified humanity is of the same substance with the divinity; whence the relation of the glorified humanity to the divinity, is of course far inferior to the ordinary relation of a son to a

father. The *union*, however close, however magniloquently set forth, is low, poor, and meagre, when compared with the relationship of common life: nay, it is not a *real* union, nor does it originate any thing *real*; inasmuch as it originates no *real* communication of properties, but only an *enunciation* and *predication* of properties.

Bishop Beveridge follows out the same principle, and in his *Treatise on the Thirty-nine Articles*, observes, vol. i., p. 115;—

“And what Scripture affirms, reason cannot but subscribe to: as first, that the Son was begotten of the Father, is plain, otherwise He would not be a Son, nor the other a Father. Secondly, that He was begotten from everlasting, is plain, otherwise he would not be God; God, as I have shewn, being everlasting, both from and to eternity. But, thirdly, that Jesus Christ is God, very God, is as plain as either of the former. For as he could not be called a Son, unless he were begotten, so he could not be called Jesus, unless he were very God.”

It is manifest that Bishop Beveridge here considers the circumstance of *begetting* to imply *paternity*, so that where there is no *begetting* there is no paternity, no father and hence no son. Accordingly he observes, p. 104;—

“‘This human nature he took in the Virgin’s womb of her substance.’ As he was God, he had no mother; *as he was man, he had no father*; as God, he had his divine nature from his Father; as man, he had his human nature from his mother, whose womb was as the bride-chamber wherein the marriage knot betwixt the two natures was tied, never to be divided. Neither did he only take the human nature in the Virgin’s womb, but of her substance, so that his human nature was as really of the same substance with his mother Mary, as his divine nature was of the same substance with his father God. And as he was begotten of his Father, without a mother from eternity, so was he born of a mother *without a father*, in time. His mother being a virgin after he was born, as really as she was a virgin before he was conceived. I say, before he was conceived; for though he was not begotten of the Virgin by man, yet he

was conceived in her by God, even by God the Holy Ghost miraculously overshadowing her. The manner of which conception is as difficult to be understood by men, as the truth of it is evidently avouched by God. Only this we know, that he was not so conceived by the Spirit, as to have the Spirit for his father, as he had the Virgin for his mother: for though he was *conceived* by the Spirit, yet it is not said he was *begotten* of the Spirit: and therefore the Spirit cannot be said to be *father* to him, *generation being the ground of paternal relation*. But only he was so conceived by the Spirit of God, as not to need to be begotten by man.”

From what is here said it is obvious that by the humanity having no father, is meant no father divine or human; inasmuch as the *human* nature is said to be not *begotten*, and the act of begetting is said to be an act proper to a father. Whence the humanity having no father divine or human could not be called *son*; inasmuch as father and son are correlative terms; and, as in the present case, where there is no father there can be no son.

On this subject Dr. Gill is very explicit. Thus in his Comment on *Heb.* vii., 3, p. 414, speaking of a tradition concerning Melchizedek;—

“Some Greek writers say he was of the lineage of Sidus, the son of Ægyptus, a king of Lybia, from whence the Egyptians are called: this Sidus, they say, came out of Egypt into the country of the Canaanitish nations, now called Palestine, and subdued it, and dwelled in it, and built a city, which he called Sidon, after his own name: but all this is on purpose concealed, that he might be a more apparent type of Christ, who, *as man, is without father*; for though, as God, he has a Father, and was never without one, being begotten by him, and was always with him, and in him; by whom he was sent, from whom he came, and whither he is gone; to whom he is the way, and with whom he is an advocate: yet, *as man, he had no father*; Joseph was his reputed father only; nor was the Holy Ghost his father; nor is he ever said to be *begotten* as *man*, but was *born* of a virgin.”

Again, on John i., 14, he observes concerning the Only-begotten of the Father, p. 745, that,

“This cannot be said of Christ as man; for as such he was not begotten at all,” &c., &c., &c.

Thus when it is affirmed that the human nature was without father, the reader is led to presume that there was no father to the humanity, either divine or human; so that the only alternative is to understand the title Son of God in that inferior sense which has been explained by Petavius, and which, as already observed, is a denial that Christ is the Son of God in the primary and true sense of the words.

The foregoing authors, however, were only following out the opinion of St. Augustin, which we have already noticed, as quoted in the works of Petavius, vol. v., p. 342. And in accordance with the same views Aquinas observes in his *Catena Aurea*, quoting from Augustin, on Matthew i., 20, p. 49;—

“But shall we therefore say that the Holy Spirit is the Father of the man Christ, that as God the Father begot the Word, so the Holy Spirit begot the man? *This is such an absurdity, that the ears of the faithful cannot bear it.* How then do we say that Christ was born by the Holy Spirit, if the Holy Spirit did not beget Him? Did He create Him? For so far as He is man He was created, as the apostle speaks; *He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.* For though God made the world, yet is it not right to say that it is the Son of God, or born by Him, but that it was made, or created, or formed by Him. But seeing that we confess Christ to have been born by the Holy Spirit, and of the Virgin Mary, how is He not the Son of the Holy Spirit, and is the Son of the Virgin? It does not follow, that whatever is born by any thing, is therefore to be called the son of that thing; for, not to say that of man is born in one sense a son, in another a hair, or vermin, or a worm, none of which are his son, certainly those that are born of water and the Spirit none would call sons of water; but sons of God their father, and their mother the

church. Thus Christ was born of the Holy Spirit, and yet is the Son of God the Father, not of the Holy Spirit.”

The foregoing views of the subject leave no room for any controversy as to who was the father of the human nature, whether the Holy Spirit alone, or the first person of the Trinity, or the Logos, or the Trinity collectively;* for where there is no *filiety* in the proper sense, there can be no *paternity* in the proper sense; if the human nature was not son, it is idle to enquire who was the father; for in this case where there is no son, there is no father. Indeed, according to Sherlock and others, a greater heresy could not exist than, in the primary and proper sense of the terms, to call Christ the Son of the Living God; *i. e.*, assuming the title Christ to designate the humanity.

We have thus far spoken of those who deny that the humanity was *begotten*, and hence maintain that it had no father; we now come to speak of those who acknowledge that the humanity was *begotten*.

It has been distinctly admitted, that begetting or generating is the foundation of paternity; that where there is a real begetting or generation there is a real paternity. Consequently if it be shewn that in the production of the humanity there was a real begetting or generation, then it will be shewn also that the humanity was Son by *generation*; and if Son by *generation*, then not by *union* only

* Wheatly on the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds makes the following remark, p. 340;—

“Let it suffice that we are well assured, since it was of necessity that the Son, the eternal Son of God, who is consecrated the High Priest and Mediator of the New Testament for evermore, should have somewhat to offer, that somewhat he had; even a body which God himself had prepared him. But though prepared by the Father, and conceived by the operation of the Holy Ghost; yet *neither had the Father nor the Holy Ghost the same right and property in it which the Son had*. For the Son, by the assumption of it into his Godhead, made it his own in such a manner as *it was not theirs*: his own by a peculiar and incommunicable property of personal union; and which therefore when offered must be satisfactory to the Father, because it was a free-offering of the Son, and of his own.”

as described by Petavius ; that in fine all the metaphysics of Petavius upon this point are mere hallucination.

Petavius on the Incarnation, vol. v., p. 342, notwithstanding his metaphysics, is himself obliged to make the following admission ;—

“Ea porro Sancti Spiritus efficientia seminis instar fuit. Ideo de Spiritu Sancto concepisse Virgo dicitur, secundum vulgatam istius Verbi constructionem, ut cum de mare concipere femina dicitur ; qua locutione principalis causa generationis, hoc est, seminator ac sator exprimitur. . . .” Again ; “Verum melius est ut ipsammet efficientiam Spiritus Sancti sementivæ instar virtutis fuisse, cum Hilario putemus.”

Petavius also quotes the author of the imperfect work upon Matthew found in Rupertus, and who upon this subject uses the expression,

“Divinitate ingrediente pro semine.”

And Tertullian *De Carne Christi*, p. 373, chap. xviii. ;—

“Ergo jam Dei filius ex Patris Dei semine ; *i.e.* Spiritu, ut esset et hominis filius, caro ei sola erat ex hominis carne sumenda, sine viri semine. Vacabat enim viri semen apud habentem Dei semen.”

Now with regard to the derivation of the soul into the external body, it is admitted by Archdeacon Wilberforce in his work upon the Incarnation, p. 43, that Traducianism has on its side an overwhelming amount of probabilities. According then to the foregoing view of the case, the efficiency of the Holy Spirit is that in virtue of which the Divine Substance as a soul passed *ex traduce* into the Humanity ;* and this was the first anointing of the Humanity

* See the extract from Dr. Scott, vol. v., p. 275, in which he uses the expression *divine generation*, as applied to the origin of the humanity ; Bishop Pearson also admits of a divine influx into the humanity, and says that this divine influx was the divinity itself.* And we have seen that some of the fathers held that the humanity was anointed with the divinity, which divinity was the sevenfold spirit. But all this is contravened by the doctrine, which maintains that the humanity was anointed

* See also the extract from Ambrose Serle ; and Wilberforce on the Incarnation, p. 207.

with the Divinity; not with gifts and graces from the Divinity, as Adam, and as maintained by the received theology, but with the Divinity itself; and this too was the first divine influx into the Humanity; the source, origin, and first principle of all those other influxes of Divinity which afterwards took place, and of the first claim to the title Christ, the Son of the living God.

Now that the human nature of our Lord was begotten, and as such is the Son of God, Bishop Pearson himself is obliged to admit. Thus in his notes on the Second Article of the Creed, vol. ii., p. 115, he observes;—

“For the original is (Matthew i., 20,) τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθέν; and it is the observation of St. Basil, ἐκ εἶρεται, τὸ κυηθέν, ἀλλὰ, τὸ γεννηθέν. Indeed the vulgar translation renders it, ‘quod in ea natum est,’ and in St. Luke, ‘quod nascetur sanctum;’ and it must be confessed this was the most ancient translation. For so Tertullian read it; ‘Per virginem dicitis natum, non ex virgine, et in vulva; non ex vulva, quia et Angelus in somnis ad Joseph, Nam quod in ea natum est, inquit, de Spiritu Sancto est,’ (*De carne Christi*, cap. 19.) And of that in St. Luke, ‘Hæc et ab Angelo exceperat secundum nostrum Evangelium, Propterea, quod in te nascetur vocabitur sanctum, filius Dei,’ (*Adv. Marcion.*, lib. iv., cap 7.) Yet ‘quod in ea natum est’ cannot be proper, while it is yet in the womb; nor can the child first be said to be born, and then that the mother shall bring it forth. It is true, indeed, γεννᾶν signifies not always to beget, but sometimes to bear or bring forth; as ἡ γυνή σε Ἐλισάβετ γεννήσει υἱόν σοι, Luke i., 13; and verse 57. Καὶ ἐγέννησεν υἱόν. So τῷ δὲ Ἰησοῦ γεννηθέντος ἐν Βηθλεὲμ, Matth. ii., 1, must necessarily be understood of Christ’s nativity; for it is most certain he was not begotten or conceived at Bethlehem. And this without question must be the meaning of Herod’s inquisition, Πῶς ὁ Χριστὸς γεννᾶται, where the Messias was to be born. But though γεννᾶν have sometime the

with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, not with the Holy Spirit or the divinity itself. The former is the doctrine now generally prevailing, not the latter: that is, the humanity is generally said to be anointed, as Adam and other created human beings.

signification of bearing or bringing forth ; yet τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν cannot be so interpreted, because it speaks of something as past, when as yet Christ was not born ; and though the conception was already past, and we translate it so, *which is conceived* ; yet St. Basil rejects that interpretation ; γεννᾶν is one thing, συλλαμβάνειν another. Seeing then the nativity was not yet come, and γεννηθὲν speaks of something already past, therefore the old translation is not good, ‘quod in carnatum est.’ Seeing, though the conception indeed were past, yet γεννᾶν signifieth not *to conceive*, and so is not properly to be interpreted, *that which is conceived* ; seeing γεννᾶν is most properly *to beget*, as ἡ γεννητικὴ *the generative faculty* : therefore I conceive the fittest interpretation of those words, τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν, *that which is begotten in her*. And because the angel in St. Luke speaks of the same thing, therefore I interpret τὸ γεννώμενον ἐκ σοῦ, in the same manner, *that which is begotten of thee.*”

Now in many of the preceding quotations in the present Discourse, the authority of some of the best theologians in the Roman and Protestant communions has been adduced as shewing that the humanity of Christ is directly begotten. How then can the confession be evaded, that if thus begotten, it must be potentially divine ? It is most instructive to mark the line of argument upon this subject, as it manifests the inextricable difficulties in which the common theology is involved. With every possible respect to the memory of Bishop Pearson, the following has too much the semblance of equivocation, after he had made (as above) so plain an admission to the contrary.

In the article on conception by the Holy Ghost, he observes, p. 263 ;—

“ But as he, Jesus Christ, was so made of the substance of the Virgin ; so was he not made of the substance of the Holy Ghost, whose essence cannot at all be made. And because the Holy Ghost did *not beget* him by any communication of his essence, therefore he is not the father of him, though he were conceived by him. And if at any time I have said, Christ *was*

begotten by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary; if the ancients speak as if he generated the Son; *it is not so to be understood, as if the Spirit did perform any proper act of generation, such as is the foundation of paternity.*”

But we have already seen that to *beget*, is to communicate the paternal essence; and upon this very meaning of the word is founded the argument for the Divinity of the Son by eternal generation. Deny this signification, and the Divinity of the Son by eternal generation is denied. Confuse or depreciate the proper signification of the word *begetting* or *generating*, and the argument for the Divinity from the eternal generation is equally injured. Where there is no communication of essence, there is no begetting: therefore to beget without a communication of essence is to beget and not to beget, to generate and not to generate.

Dr. Waterland affirms* that the ancients maintained there was a threefold *generation* of Christ, and Bishop Pearson that there was a fourfold *generation*, exclusive of the eternal generation; † in both of which cases it is admitted that one of the generations was the *temporal generation* of the humanity; so that according to Bishop Pearson the Holy Ghost supplied the place of a father to the humanity, *begot* the humanity, *generated* the humanity, and yet the humanity was not properly Son, nor the Divinity properly Father; for says he, art. iii., p. 264;—

“And if at any time I have said, Christ was begotten by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, if the ancients speak as if he generated the Son, it is not so to be understood, as if the Spirit did perform any proper act of generation, such as is the foundation of paternity.”

Bishop Beveridge openly and at once maintains that the humanity was *conceived* by the Holy Ghost and not

* Vol. iii., p. 290.

† Article ii., *Only Son*, p. 174.

begotten; Bishop Pearson maintains* that the humanity was not conceived by the Holy Ghost but *begotten*, then not begotten but conceived; then so conceived by the Holy Ghost that not he but the Virgin Mary conceived it. For says he in the third article treating of conception by the Holy Ghost, p. 260;—

“For though Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost, yet the *Holy Ghost* did not conceive him, but said unto the Virgin, *Thou shalt conceive*. There remaineth therefore nothing proper and peculiar to this second part, but that operation of the Holy Ghost in Christ’s conception, whereby the Virgin was enabled to conceive, and by virtue whereof Christ is said to be conceived by him.”

Again, p. 276;—

“For we are here to remember again the most ancient form of this article, briefly thus delivered, *Born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary*; as also that the word *born* was not taken precisely for the nativity of our Saviour, but as comprehending in it whatsoever belonged to his human generation; and when afterward the conception was attributed to the Spirit, the nativity to the Virgin; it was not so to be understood, as if the Spirit had conceived him, but the blessed Virgin by the power and operation of the Spirit.”†

We have now presented to the reader the state of the

* See also Fiddes’s *Body of Divinity*, vol. i., p. 447.

† The following remarks are contained in a note, p. 63, of a work on *The Ministry of the Body*, by the Rev. Robert Wilson Evans.

“1 John iii., 9; 1 Pet. i., 23. From these and the other passages in St. John’s epistle, some confusion has arisen, owing to the Greek word expressing both begetting and bearing. The former is surely the sense, and indeed, in 1 Pet. i., 3, where the latter is too obviously absurd, our version gives the former. But it is very inconsistent, as may be seen in the single passage, 1 John v., 1. Considering what interpretations have been introduced, it is singularly unfortunate that our translators should have so violated the precision of our language in favor of the ambiguity of the Latin and Greek, as to have applied to God the Father, a term which is strictly appropriate to a female. St. John calls Christians, as all other sons are called, after their Father only.” See also, Heathcote’s *Sermon on the Practical Doctrine of the Incarnation*, p. 30.—What in this case is to be thought of the expression in the Nicene Creed, and occurring in the Roman Missal, “*Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum?*”

argument with regard to the meaning of the terms begetting, generating, and conceiving; and next proceed to observe, that when the Athanasian Creed affirms that it is necessary to everlasting salvation that we rightly believe in the Incarnation, may it not fairly be asked, with regard to the right belief, Does not the Athanasian Creed itself, though expressly treating upon the Incarnation, and professedly laying down the right belief, altogether omit the doctrine, that Christ is the Son of the living God by miraculous conception? And was not that omission deliberately intended, as founded upon a deliberate denial of that very doctrine? And that doctrine being either neglected or denied, what else could ensue but that which has ensued? For as this Creed, in laying down the *right belief* of the doctrine of the Incarnation, makes mention only of the Son of God by eternal generation; so “It must be confessed,” says Dr. Waterland in his Second Defence, vol. iii., p. 296, “that the Catholics themselves were for some time pretty much divided about the question of eternal *generation*; though there was no question about the eternal *existence*.” “It is doubted,” (observes Scott, in his Comments on John i., 17,) “by many who steadfastly maintain the doctrine of our Lord’s deity, and of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, whether the title of the *Son of God* relates to any thing more than his *human nature*, his miraculous conception, and his mediatorial character and work; and the opinion of former orthodox divines on this subject seems to be given up by them as unscriptural.”*

* ‘*What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He?*’ Matt. xxii., 42.

Lord King, in his Critical History of the Creed, p. 152, admits, that the Holy Ghost “supplied the place of a Father, and begat the holy child Jesus.”

Jones of Nayland, in his Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity, vol. i., p. 74, that the reason given why Christ was called the Son of God in Luke i., 36, was “this and this only, because he was begotten by the Holy Ghost;” and “that the person in God whose Son Jesus is said to be in this place, is the Holy Ghost;” and p. 136,

From a review, however, of the various quotations in the present Discourse, we are enabled to perceive, that in the early ages of the church there began to prevail a denial that the human nature was really and truly the Son of God; and we have seen how, both in the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, this denial has gradually come to be almost universal.

Consequently if, in any true sense, the title *Son of God* is applicable to the human nature, and we have seen that it is; if in any true sense, the title *Christ* is applicable to the human nature, and we have seen that it is; then it must be granted that there is one sense, and that a true one, in which it has been denied that Christ is the Son of the living God. And again, if the confession that Christ, or the human nature, is the Son of the living God, be a confession of his divinity, then the doctrine that Christ, or the human nature, is the Son of the living God only in the same sense as Adam and others of the prophets, is a denial of that divinity. Yet into these two classes nearly all Christendom is divided.

Now if it is upon this rock, viz., that Christ is the Son

that the “man Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, and the Son of the Highest, is so called because he was begotten of (by) the Holy Ghost.”

Ambrose Serle, in his *Horæ Solitariæ*, vol. ii., p. 86, that “Christ as to his human nature is the Son of the Holy Ghost.”

Treffry, in his work on the Eternal Sonship, admits, p. 127, “that *if* our Lord be Son as to the human nature, then in the same respect in which our Lord is the Son, the third person of the Trinity is the Father,” and p. 129, in a note, that “the production of our Lord’s humanity is attributed solely to the Holy Ghost; . . . and that an actual producer alone has any claim to the relation of paternity.”

Archbishop Secker, in his *Lectures on the Catechism*, that one reason for which our Saviour is the only Son and the only-begotten Son of God, is, that being born of a virgin, he was begotten of God by his Holy Spirit.

Wheatly on the Creeds, in a note, p. 209, that if Christ was the Son of God, because he was begotten by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, he must have been Son of the Holy Ghost.

Bellarmino, in his *Disputations*, vol. i., p. 297, that “if Christ be therefore the Son of God because he was conceived in the womb of the Virgin by the operation of the Holy Spirit, he might for the same reason be said to be the Son of the Holy Spirit.” . . .

of the living God, that the Lord builds his church, then any church which is not built upon this rock is not his church. The promise of stability is only to that church which is built upon this rock, and it is only to a church thus built that the assurance is given, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. A church, then, which is not built upon this rock, is not the church of Christ, neither has it any claim to that title, nor to the promise of Christ; consequently sooner or later it arrives at its consummation; and this consummation it is, which, as will be seen, is the subject of the Apocalypse.

If, however, the doctrine that Christ is the Son of the living God be the foundation upon which the church is built, if it is from this doctrine that a church derives its character, nay, its very existence; then, whenever the Lord returns to judgment, it is from this doctrine that the church will be judged; consequently, in any revelation concerning the Last Judgment, we might naturally conclude that this doctrine would hold a prominent place.

Accordingly, when we come to the interpretation of the symbol of the *Lamb* which opened the book with seven seals, it will be seen that this *Lamb* signifies Christ; that the symbol designates the *human* nature, that it is the one prominent symbol of the Book of Revelations—that it is repeated, in twenty chapters collectively, more than six and twenty times—that every thing there represented as said and done, is said and done only with reference to the *Lamb*, that is to say, with reference to the glorified *human nature* of the Lord,—that the Lamb* has seven horns and seven eyes, or is endowed with omnipotence and omniscience—that the opponents of this doctrine of the divine humanity are those who make war with the Lamb; that these opponents are finally overcome, and their dominion, as being Antichristian, utterly destroyed.

* The glorified Humanity.

Hence it is observed by Stevens, in his “Plain and Easy Calculation of the Name, Mark, and Number of the name of the Beast,” p. 15 ;—

“The name of the *Beast* and the number of his name are directly opposed to the name of the *Lamb*. It is well observed by modern expositors, that in the whole body of the prophecy there is a direct antithesis and contraposition between the *Lamb* and the *Beast* ; the kingdom of the *Lamb* and the kingdom of the *Beast* ; the followers of the *Lamb* and the followers of the *Beast* ; those that have the name of the Father written in the forehead, and those that have the mark of the *Beast*. Therefore, if we can understand what is meant by the *Lamb*, and those that have his Father’s name written in their foreheads, we may by these be guided to the knowledge of the *Beast*, his name, mark, and those that have the number of the name.”

Dr. Wordsworth observes, in his Lectures on the Exposition of the Apocalypse, p. 278 ;—

“A second beast is next described by St. John, which has two horns like a lamb, and speaks as a dragon. The word Lamb occurs twenty-nine times in the Apocalypse, and is always applied to Christ. This second beast, therefore, with its horns like a lamb, combines an outward semblance of Christ with the fierce spirit of the evil one. This beast, then, cannot be a heathen or infidel power, but *represents some form of Christianity.*”

In conclusion; as God alone is, and is the only reality, so not only are his words truth itself, but his acts and operations reality itself; nothing, therefore, is so real as Himself, and hence as what He says and what He does. Accordingly the Incarnation being an act of God, is consequently a divine reality, and as such is opposed to figments of every kind. The language, therefore, expressing it, ought to signify ultimately what is real, not what is merely nominal or verbal; what is true, not what is fictitious or artificial; what is a divine fact, not what is a mere logical technicality. Now we have seen Petavius, and after him Perrone, affirming that to the Humanity is communicated Divinity. Thus

Perrone observes, in his *Praelections*, on the Communion of Properties, vol. i., p. 1099 ;—

... “The communication of properties is that by which each nature, and the properties of each nature, are so *enun-
ciated* of Christ, that those things which pertain to man are attributed to God, and those which pertain to God are *predi-
cated* of man. The foundation and proximate cause of this *mutual communication of properties* is the hypostatic union of the two natures ; for this being withdrawn, such a communica-
tion could have no place.” . . .

Accordingly, Gregory Nyssen observes, *ibid.*, 1101 ;—

“By reason of the exact unity of the flesh assumed and the divinity assuming, the names are mutually changed ; so that the human is predicated of the divine, and the divine of the human.”

If, however, according to this view of the *mutual com-
munication of properties*, any one should speak of the om-
nipotence, ubiquity, or omnipresence of the glorified Human nature of Christ, he is immediately met with the following remark, *ibid.*, 1103 ;—

“Since the divine attributes are one with the divine essence, one attribute cannot formally, as they say, be communicated without another, no, nor without the divine essence ; therefore immensity, and ubiquity or omnipresence, *could not be commu-
nicated* to the human nature of Christ, without communicating to it eternity and divinity itself. But this is and implies an absurdity.”*

But if this is and implies an absurdity, does it not imply an equal absurdity to say of Christ, “This man is God, and the Son of God, and the Word, and proceeds from the Father, and is begotten ; which latter could not be said, unless there were a communication of generation and of all the other properties,” meaning divine properties. (And pray what is the meaning of communicating genera-
tion ?) Besides, says Perrone, in his *Treatise on the Incar-*

* See also Bellarmine's *Disputations*, i., 485.

nation, *part ii., chap. iv., proposition ii.*; “In no way can a communication of properties in the abstract be admitted, nor consequently can omnipotence, ubiquity or omnipresence be attributed to the humanity of Christ.” Thus the humanity may be called the natural Son of God by generation; but really so to consider it, would be heresy; for the humanity, it is said, is not the Son of God by nature, but only the divinity; the humanity was not generated, but only the divinity. Divinity, filiation, as said to be communicated to the humanity, are all unrealities; are all said to be as improperly attributed, as when we speak of God shedding his blood, dying upon the cross, and being buried. Thus the whole doctrine of the Incarnation is involved in a cloud of fictions; not a sentence, not a word is to be trusted as meaning that which it seems to mean. The humanity is not divine, though divinity may be predicated of it; the humanity is not generated, though we may predicate of it that it is generated; the humanity is not the Son of God, though we may predicate of it that it is the Son of God; there is no communication of divine properties to the humanity, though we may predicate of it that there is this communication. For, as Dr. Owen observes in his works, vol. ii., p. 179, “There was no transfusion of the properties of one nature into the other, nor *real* physical communication of divine essential excellencies unto the humanity. Those who *seem to contend for any such thing*, resolve all at last into a true assignation by way of *predication*, as necessary on the union mentioned, but *contend not for a real* transfusion of the properties of one nature into the other.” Hence, also, as the humanity is not Son, is not generated, is not divine, but Sonship and generation and divinity properly belong to the Second Person of the Trinity before the Incarnation, as likewise the title Christ is said by many to belong not to the huma-

nity but to the divinity, and the symbol of the Lamb itself not to designate the humanity, but the second and complex person of the Trinity; so by one or the other theologian, the manhood, humanity, or human nature has been robbed of every thing, till at length it is placed upon the same level as that of Adam, or even below it. In this manner has the Lamb or glorified humanity been slain from the foundations of the world or church; and for this reason it is, that it has been made so prominent a symbol in the Book of Revelations.

Indeed the Apocalypse, at the very first opening, and in the very first vision, involves the consideration of the subject, as will be seen in the sequel, and has been the arena of controversy between the Ubiquitarians and their opponents. On the one hand it is affirmed, that the Glorified Humanity of the Lord is there described, on the other hand Vitringa, in his work on the Apocalypse, affirms, p. 23, that we are by no means there to think of the humanity, nor is any regard to be had to it, because the attributes there described are those of a divine and heavenly being. The result is confusion at the very outset; a circumstance which is of the greater importance, because it is acknowledged to be in reference to those very attributes or perfections that the seven churches themselves are admonished, and their spiritual state determined. This subject, however, will be resumed in the sequel.*

* Wilberforce on the Doctrine of the Incarnation, observes, p. 286;—

“When we speak therefore of our Lord’s spiritual presence, the word presence which we employ is a figurative term certainly, because it is borrowed from the world of matter; but it is not the less a reality, that some peculiar presence or power of our Mediator, the God-man, is exerted *through the intervention of his Deity*, in those places, times, and manners, to which his presence is pledged in the Kingdom of Grace.”

Again, p. 287, the author observes in reply to the presence of Christ at the Holy Eucharist being considered as figurative;—

“Doubtless it were so, if his body were a human alone; but because He is

The present discourse we shall now conclude with observing that Pererius, on *John* i., 14, expressly admits, that the titles *Only-begotten*, *Only Son*, are applicable to the Saviour as to his humanity; and that Christ was the Son of God and only Son, by *temporal* as well as eternal *generation*; and whereas theologians have generally maintained that as to the humanity the Second Adam was the Son of God only as the first Adam was the Son of God, Pererius declares that the mode of each generation was proper to Christ alone, and was communicable to no other.

Heylin likewise, in his *Summe of Christian Theology*, as contained in the Apostles' Creed, asserts the same doctrine. After having admitted a twofold generation, he thus proceeds, p. 167;—

“We will first speak of that which is last in order, his generation in the womb of the Virgin Mary, in which he was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, and was ‘*made flesh, and dwelt amongst us*’* for a season, that we might live with him for ever. For being *begotten* and conceived in the Virgin’s womb, after such a *supernatural* and wonderful manner, by the Almighty power of God, he is in that regard (if there were no other) God’s own Son, or his Son by nature, his Only and his Only-begotten Son, take which phrase we will. The angel Gabriel doth affirm this twice for failing; ‘*Behold, thou shalt conceive and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus; he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest.*’† And then unto the Virgin’s query he returns this answer, ‘*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born*

Divine also, it has likewise that other *medium of communication*, which does not depend upon local contiguity, but upon spiritual power.”

Hence, p. 288, the author proceeds to observe, that the “Sacred Manhood . . . has a real *medium of presence through the Deity* which is joined to it. . . .”

According to Swedenborg all this is exactly inverting the true order, and making the Divinity a *medium of presence*, to the Humanity; instead of making the Humanity a *medium of presence*, to the Divinity. But such is the doctrine of Hooker.

* *John* i., 14.

† *Luke* i., 31, 32, 35.

of thee, shall be called the Son of God? What? called the Son of God only, and not be so really? Not so, but that being really and truly the Son of God, he shall declare the same by such several means, ‘*ut sic merito ab omnibus vocetur,*’* so that he shall be called and counted over all the world: for that he was really and truly the Son of God, by this his generation in the fulness of time, the miraculous manner of his conception, without any other Father than the power of God, doth most assuredly evince. A son begotten in that manner, may very well be called, ‘*natura filius, non tantum beneficio filius,*’† a son by nature, not by grace and indulgence only, saith the learned Maldonate; ‘*Quia non ex viro, sed ex solo Deo concipiendus,*’ because begotten not by man, but by God alone. Nay, so peculiarly doth this miraculous manner of his generation entitle him, to be the true and proper Son of Almighty God, that so he might be justly called and accounted of, had he not been the Son of the living God, by a preceding generation even before all times. And so doth Maldonate resolve it in his Commentaries on *St. Luke’s Gospel*, though otherwise a great assertor of the eternal generation of the Son of God: whose words I shall put down at large for the greater certainty:‡ ‘*Etiamsi Christus Deus non fuisset, illo tamen modo genitus quo genitus fuit, merito Dei Filius vocatus fuisset; non solum ut cæteri viri sancti, sed singulari quadam ratione, quod non alium quam Deum haberet patrem, nec ab alio quam ab eo generatus.*’ So he, I think exceeding rightly to the point in hand. His instance or exemplification in the case of Adam, who is called the Son of God by the same *St. Luke*,§ ‘*quia non a viro sed a Deo genitus erat,*’ because he was begotten by God and not by man, I cannot by any means approve of: the production of our father Adam, not being to be reckoned as a generation, but to be esteemed of as a work of creation only. But to proceed, as Christ is properly and truly the Son of God, by this his generation in the womb of his Virgin-mother: so in the same respect is he called in Scripture, the only, and the only-begotten Son of God the Father. I know that generally the style or attribute of the only-begotten Son of God, is used

* *Estius* on *Luke* i.† *Maldon.* on *Luke* i. 31.‡ *Maldon.* on *Luke* i., 35.§ *Luke* iii., 38.

for an argument or convincing reason, to prove that Christ our Saviour is the Son of God, by an eternal generation long before all worlds. But by their favors I conceive, that he is called God's only-begotten Son, either in reference to this his generation in the womb of the virgin, because the only Son of God which was so begotten; or else because he was most dearly loved of his heavenly Father, as commonly an only Son is best and most affectionately beloved of an earthly parent. To the first sense I have the testimony of Ursinus, a divine of the reformed churches, who though he hold that CHRIST is principally called the only-begotten Son of God, 'secundum divinitatem suam,' according to his divine nature: yet he concludes that 'aliquatenus,' after a sort, he may be called so in his human nature.* His reason is, 'Quia etiam secundum hanc tali modo est genitus, quali nunquam quisquam alius, ex Virgine nimirum incorrupta vi Spiritus Sancti;' that is to say, because according to that nature he was begotten in such a manner as never any had been before or since, as being conceived of a pure Virgin by the Holy Ghost.

Here then it is distinctly asserted that Christ is the Son of God, and the Only-begotten Son, by temporal *generation*; and we cannot conclude this discourse without expressing surprise, at seeing the professedly orthodox generally abandoning this doctrine of the temporal generation, and denouncing Socinians for maintaining it; and, above all, at the reason assigned for this course of proceeding, namely, that the temporal generation, or miraculous conception, is no argument for the essential Divinity of Christ: thus first despoiling the doctrine of the divine truth it contains, and then handing it over to the deniers of the Lord's Divinity; first killing the truth, and then anathematizing Socinians for honoring its remains!

We say then with Dr. Waterland, vol. iv., p. 294;—

“Much depends upon our having true and just sentiments of the Incarnation, in which the whole economy of our salva-

* Ursin. Catech., part i., q. 33.

tion is nearly concerned. To corrupt and deprave this doctrine is to defeat and frustrate, in a great measure, the gospel of Christ which bringeth salvation : wherefore it is of great moment, of everlasting concernment to us, not to be guilty of doing it ourselves, nor to take part with those that do."

With respect to the Eternal Generation, the reader will find this treated of in the Appendix to the present volume.

THIRD PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

CESSATION OF THE MEDIATORIAL KINGDOM.

THE CONSUMMATION OF THIS KINGDOM AS ALLEGED BY EXPOSITORS—CESSATION OF THE OFFICES OF PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING—ERRONEOUS NATURE OF BOTH THESE DOCTRINES—ITS AGREEMENT WITH THE VIEWS OF MARCELLUS AND OTHERS—GENERAL REPUDIATION OF THE LORD AS MEDIATOR AFTER THE LAST JUDGMENT—EXCEPTIONS TO THE GENERAL RULE.

WE have seen it to be the prevailing doctrine of the church either that Christ is not the Son of God in any proper sense, or else that Christ is not the Son of God in any sense whatever; in fine, that Christ, or the Anointed, is not the Son of the living God.

We now come to follow out this doctrine, as exemplified in the Arian views which are generally entertained concerning the Mediatorial kingdom; and to shew,

First, that the Mediatorial office and kingdom, according to the received interpretations, are to pass away;

Secondly, the reason assigned for their cessation.

First, we proceed to shew that, according to received interpretations, the Mediatorial kingdom and office are to pass away. The reason of this circumstance is supposed to be contained principally in 1 Cor. xv., 24 to 28;—

— “*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.*”

Now with regard to the opinion of the Church of Rome on this passage, Calmet observes that at the consummation of the age there are three senses in which the Son will be subject to the Father; the first is that of filial subordination as a Son generated from eternity; the second is that in which the Son is supposed to mean the church, as the mystical body of Christ; the third is that in which the human nature will be subject, as being of itself of an order ‘*infinitely inferior*’ to the Divinity.

In regard to the first; that the Son will be subject to the Father because of his filial subordination as a Son generated from all eternity, this we are told by Esthius, in his commentary upon this passage, was the opinion of Chrysostom, Theophylact, Œcumenius, and Ambrosiaster; for says Esthius, p. 147;—

“The opinion therefore of these is, that the Son is said to be subject to the Father in respect of the divine nature, because he received from the Father, as begetting him, his being (*esse*) and power (*posse*) and all things. But this language, namely, that the Son is subject to the Father in respect of the divine nature, however it may be explained in a catholic sense, is no less offensive than if it should be said that the Son is less than the Father in respect of the divine nature; as Hugo Victorinus confesses in his questions upon this passage.”

In this view of the subject A Lapede also agrees, and therefore both of them reject it as the doctrine of the Catholic church. We dismiss it therefore for the present, and shall revert to it in our remarks upon the death of the *Two Witnesses*.

The second opinion, viz., that it is the *church* which is here called the Son, was, according to Esthius upon this passage, the opinion of Athanasius, Theodoret, Gregory Theologus, Ambrose, and others; to which may be added the authority of Petavius. Both Esthius* and Bellarmine† however repudiate the interpretation; inasmuch as they consider the titles Father and Son to be correlative, and both of them to signify persons.

The third opinion, therefore, that the Son signifies the human nature, is the one adopted by Esthius, A Lapede, Calmet, and others, and is the one most generally prevailing in the church of Rome, as well as among Protestants.

The doctrines of subordination and mediation, as connected with this topic, will be considered in our observations on the *Two Witnesses*. We confine ourselves at present to the subject of the mediatorial kingdom, and shall advert to the former only in their more immediate relation to the latter.

With respect to the mediatorial kingdom, which, as we shall see, Protestants popularly maintain is to pass away, a large class of Roman Catholic and some few Protestant writers entertain far more correct opinions. For by the delivering up of the kingdom to the Father, they understand, the subjugation of all the enemies of Christianity to the Father by the power of the word of Christ; whence so far from any kingdom being surrendered or passing away, they regard it rather as eternal, in conformity with the article in the creed, “whose kingdom shall have no end.”

* *In loco*.

† Disputations, vol. i., p. 363.

We shall first present a variety of expositions of the passage above quoted from 1 Cor. xv., in order to shew the general prevalence of the Arian doctrine they convey, and then add the exceptions. As the extracts are many of them diffuse, it will tend to the clearness of the argument if we present in this place only a summary of their meaning, and reserve the extracts themselves for the Appendix, to which the reader is referred, and where they will be found strictly to confirm the summary we now proceed to give.

The substance of Calvin's exposition of the passage, already quoted from 1 Cor. xv., 24, as given in his *Institutes*,* is, first, that the office of Mediator pertains not to the divine nature alone, nor to the human nature alone, but to both together; secondly, that as Mediator, Christ is now the delegate of God the Father; thirdly, that this office of delegate shall cease after the Last Judgment; when the temporary mediatorial power and dominion which Christ has received from the Father he shall restore back again; fourthly, that Christ shall then be content with the glory which he possessed before he was Mediator; and lastly, that *there shall then no longer be any intervening medium of communication between God and man*, as we shall then see the Deity face to face.

These views of Calvin we shall see further developed and confirmed as we proceed.

The Family Bible adopts the exposition of Whitby; the substance of which is, first, that all power is now given to the Lord as to his humanity as a reward for his sufferings; secondly, that after the judgment, as to the humanity, he shall cease to enjoy this reward, and consequently to be endowed with all power in heaven or in earth, or to be all in all as he now is; thirdly, that he shall then become subject to the Father as other saints and angels; fourthly, that the kingly, priestly, prophetic, and hence the entire me-

* Book ii., chap. xiv., art. 3.

diatorial office ceasing, *there shall no longer be any mediator or medium of communication between God and man, but man shall have immediate access to the Godhead.*

The substance of Matthew Henry's exposition is the same with that of Whitby; as, first, that Christ as Mediator *does not so explicitly sustain the character of God, but a middle person between God and man*, and that in the whole of the present or Christian dispensation Christ acts not as God but as Mediator; secondly, that at the end of this dispensation the mediatorial power and authority shall be given up, and the man Christ Jesus, who now appears in so much majesty, shall then be seen to be a subject of the Father, a subject of God, and no more than a glorious creature.

The substance of the exposition of Witsius* is this, first, that as *at the Last Judgment all men are to give an account of the deeds done in the body*, so likewise *after the Last Judgment Christ himself is to give an account to God the Father of his whole mediatorial office, or of what he has done in the body as Mediator*; secondly, that after giving this account he is to resign this mediatorial office; thirdly, that the human nature, having no longer anything to do, will then betake itself to an *honorable retirement* from the laborious duties of sovereignty (*laborioso imperio*), and become *subject unto God as one of the brethren*; fourthly, that the human nature will still continue to be the head or most noble member of the church; and lastly, that there will then be no longer any use of a Mediator, for that man will then enjoy the privilege of *immediate access to the Godhead without being obliged to apply to a Mediator*; so that between God and man there will *no longer be any medium of communication*, but a *direct* intercourse with Deity.

The substance of Calamy's exposition† is, first, that

* In Symbolum, p. 179; De nomine Christi.

† Thirteen Sermons on the Trinity; Sermon 3.

Christ is only the Father's deputy; secondly, that as such, after the judgment, he must *give up a sort of account to the Father of the mediatorial office* committed to him;* thirdly, that the human nature shall be subject to the Father as other saints and angels; fourthly, that between God and his creatures there will be *no longer need of an interposing mediator, or no intermediate governor* to exact obedience; but they shall enjoy the privilege of receiving their happiness *directly* from God, and of beholding his perfections without any intervening medium.

The substance of Bishop's exposition, as given in his *Concio ad Clerum* and his *Bampton Lectures*, p. 88, is much the same with what has already been stated; as first, that the Son had acted upon earth as the ambassador of his Father, and therefore must return to *deliver an account of his embassy*, resign his commission, and receive his reward; secondly, that the mediatorial kingdom is then to cease, since Christ is to give up his own church and mediatorial authority into the hands of the Father; thirdly, that *he is no longer to be the medium of communication with the Father, the access to whom is to be direct*.

The substance of Hervey's exposition† is, first, that the Son will entirely resign his administration of the mediatorial kingdom with all the functions pertaining to that office; secondly, that *he will no longer be the medium of access to the knowledge and enjoyment of the Father*, for that the people of God will see the Deity face to face.

The substance of Macknight's exposition is, first, that after the Last Judgment the human nature shall cease to be king and Mediator, both of which offices will become

* To regard one person of the Trinity as sitting in judgment upon another and summoning Him to give an account of the manner in which He had discharged his own share of the duties in the voluntary economy—is a view which, supported by whatever eminent authority, one can scarcely treat of or mention without an appearance of profaneness.

† Author of *Theron and Aspasio*, &c. See Letter 26.

unnecessary; secondly, that the Son shall nevertheless hold a station superior to that of angels, which superiority will be a kind of reigning; and lastly, that there shall *no longer be any medium of communication between God and man*, as it will no longer be required.* Thus it would seem that the very humanity itself will become a superfluity.

Such is a specimen of the expositions given by some of the principal commentators in the Protestant church.

“The interpretation,” (says Barnes in his Notes upon 1 Cor. xv., p. 317,) “which affirms that the Son shall then be subject to the Father, in the sense of laying down his delegated authority, and ceasing to exercise his mediatorial reign, has been the common interpretation of all times.”†

Indeed upon this view of the subject it is that both Owen‡ and Waterland§ have founded the argument for not worshipping Christ as Mediator; the sentiments of these writers in this respect being the same with those of nearly all Athanasian writers in the Protestant church. Nor in this particular is it easy to see how they differ much (if indeed at all) from those of Origen, Marcellus of Ancyra, and Eusebius, &c., in the early ages of Christianity. For as Petavius observes in his Treatise on the Incarnation, vol. vi., book xii., chap. xviii., art. v., p. 135;—

“Marcellus ‘believed that after a certain lapse of time the kingdom of Christ would cease, as also his economy, that is, his incarnation, which seemed to him to have been nothing more than a certain kind of temporal administration, which having completed, like an actor in a drama, he would lay aside his character.’”

* See also the note of Macknight in his Harmony of the Gospels, p. 309; also on Ephesians iii., 21, vol. iii., p. 309.

† “The authority which the Mediator now possesses, as Incarnate Son by gift, may then *perhaps* be merged in that which he possessed before all worlds, as Only-begotten Son by nature.”—*Wilberforce on the Incarnation*, p. 221.

‡ Owen’s Works, vol. viii., p. 511.

§ Waterland’s Works, vol. ii.; Preface, p. 36. See also Illustrations of the End of the Church, chap. vi.

And it is well known that it was against this view of the subject that the article was introduced into the creed—‘whose kingdom shall have no end’—meaning, we presume, his mediatorial kingdom, though others seem to deny that it is the mediatorial kingdom which is here meant.

Having now set before the reader the alleged orthodox views which at present generally prevail with regard to the mediatorial kingdom and office, we next proceed to consider the modifications which these views have undergone.

There are not wanting some who have not hesitated to declare the foregoing expositions to be a compact but disguised system of Arianism.

Daubuz observes in his Interpretation of the Seventh Trumpet, p. 546;—

“But the Arians and some Socinians since, *followed therein by some others unwarily*, pretend, that the kingdom of Christ is to cease or end at the general resurrection: being grounded upon these words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv., 24.”

After shewing that the end or consummation here referred to by the Apostle is not one of annihilation but of completion or perfection, Daubuz observes;

“As to the delivery of the kingdom, and the submission of the Son again to the Father: it appears, that this kingdom is the power to destroy enemies, in order to submit all things to God; which when submitted, Christ delivers up that power, that is, *suspends* the execution thereof, as being any further unnecessary. So Bishop Bull out of Peter Martyr.”

Now Bishop Bull maintains that the power is not merely to be suspended, but is to be delivered up, and the office of Mediator to cease for ever; as will be seen in the sequel.

Daubuz, however, thus proceeds, p. 547;—

“But take also the words of Hilary:—‘Tradet ergo regnum Deo Patri, non utique tanquam tradens potestate careat, sed quod nos conformes gloriæ corporis sui facti, regnum Dei erimus. Non enim ait, tradet suum regnum, sed tradet regnum, effectos

nos per glorificationem corporis sui regnum Deo traditurus ; regnans itaque regnum tradet.' And as to the submission of the Son, it is only to govern under the Father, which he not only hath always done, but is also to do in the state of glory. Upon which account he is in this book called the Lamp of the New Jerusalem, whilst the glory of God is the prime luminary.* Now as the Holy Ghost discovers to us no end, or annihilation, of that New Jerusalem ; neither can we suppose, that Christ's kingdom therein will ever cease." . . . "The greatest difficulty in those words of St. Paul is to know, why Christ is said to reign, and then by the words at first sight, seems to cease from that office : which, however, is easily answered by observing, that during the whole Christian dispensation, Christ is chief Actor, and reduces the kingdoms of this world ; for so is the divine economy between the Father and the Son. The christian economy is the revelation which the God the Father hath given unto him ; it is the book, whose seals he is to loose and read.† By this economy Christ reduces the kingdoms of the world to the obedience due to his Father and Himself, and by this delivers up the kingdom : for when all things are thus subdued, Christ must still be subject or subordinate to the Father, that the Father, as such, may always have the præminence."

There are a few other Protestant writers who interpret the *delivering up* of the kingdom in the same sense as Daubuz. But if Daubuz considers the ordinary views upon this subject to be the same with the Arian and Socinian, it is not easy to see how he himself avoids a similar kind of error on the subject of the eternal subordination, subjection, and even *submission* of the Son to the Father ; for the very same things are said above concerning the *divine* nature which are said concerning the *human*. The Son reigns eternally with the Father, but does not cease, therefore, to be subordinate, subject, and submissive to the Father. This topic, however, is reserved for our remarks on the *Two Witnesses*.

* "Upon which see our notes, chap. xxi., xxiii."

† "See John iii., 35 ; Matthew ii., 27, and chap. xxviii., 18 ; Luke x., 22 ; John v., 22 ; and our notes upon chap. i., 1, A., and chap. v."

Mr. Irving places the relation of the Son to the Father in a different light. In his *Preliminary Discourse* affixed to the Treatise of Aben Ezra, p. 172, and perhaps following out the opinion of Maldonatus on Mark xvi., 19,* he conceives that Christ, as God-man, is at present more than equal to the Father; that he is at present actually his superior, by reason of the superadded office of Mediator; whence, by laying down this office, he will return to his original obedience;—

“He shall give up that sceptre of the complete Godhead, which God hath placed in his hands, and become as the God-man, *the same obedient Son which heretofore he was in the days of his flesh as the Man-God.*”

Let us, however, see how far the resignation of this office and kingdom is attempted to be reconciled with the words of the Lord in Matt. xxviii., 16; *All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.*

Aquinas, in his *Catena Aurea*, quoting from Chrysologus, p. 987, observes;—

“The Son of God conveyed to the Son of the Virgin, the God to the man, the Deity to the flesh, that which He had ever together with the Father.”

By *all power*, it is obvious that Chrysologus here understood Divine Omnipotence; and that this omnipotence was actually conveyed by the Deity to the humanity, or by the Deity to the flesh; but as this would be to understand omnipotence as a divine attribute, and thus to make the humanity divine,† so the interpretation is rejected by other

* See on this subject *The Finished Mystery*, by the present Duke of Manchester.

† Perrone observes, in his Treatise on the Incarnation, Theological Prelections, vol. i., p. 1103;—

“Since the divine attributes are one with the divine essence, one attribute cannot *formally*, as they say, be communicated without another, nor indeed without the divine essence; therefore immensity, and ubiquity, or omnipresence, could not be communicated to the human nature of Christ, without communicating to it eternity, nay, even the divinity itself; but this is and implies an absurdity.”

The question of course here arises, what then is the meaning of the *influx of the divinity into the humanity*, as maintained by various authors in our Second

writers of the Church of Rome, and the expression, *all power is given*, is considered to refer to the divinity, or the communication of divine attributes by the eternal generation; or else it is interpreted not to signify omnipotence.

Bellarmino is much perplexed upon this point.* To the expression, *all power*, he first gives two interpretations; viz., *omnipotentia*, if applied to the divinity, *summa potentia*, if applied to the humanity. So that the literal meaning of *all power*, is infinite power and finite power, or power both finite and infinite; *i. e.* to say, he gives two literal contradictory meanings to one and the same word—*all*. Again he observes, that if preferred, the interpretation of the passage may be, that omnipotence is received by the man Christ, but not by Christ as man; for according to his metaphysics, there is a vast difference between *Christus homo* and *Christus qua homo*. We have already seen, however, that the title *Christ* pertains to the manhood, humanity, or human nature assumed by the WORD. At present we shall only observe, that this subject will be further illustrated in the sequel, and that as Bellarmine allows the choice of two interpretations, we select that which regards omnipotence as given to the man Christ. As to any subtleties the metaphysical distinctions above mentioned are supposed to involve, these are negatived by the view of the Incarnation already propounded, and by the interpretations of the symbol of the *Lamb*, which will be found in the sequel.

Bede, however, maintains that our Lord spoke these words in relation to his *humanity*; and the language of some Protestant writers on this subject is sufficiently strong. Thus the *Family Bible* observes;—

“ *All power is given unto me.*] Jesus, in his divine nature,

Preliminary Discourse. Can there be an influx of divinity without a communication of divinity?

* Disputations, vol. i., De Christo, book i., chap. viii., p. 323.

had this power from all eternity : but it was now to be exercised in his *human nature* also, which, from a state of humiliation, from ‘the form of a servant,’ was soon to be exalted to the highest dignity, and placed at the right hand of God. Accordingly St. Paul informs us, God has set our Lord ‘at his own right hand in the heavenly places,’ &c. Ephes. i., 20—23, and again, Phil. ii., 9—11. In the same magnificent language He is spoken of in the Book of Revelation, chap. v., 12, 13. Such is the dignity of the Lord and Master whom we serve, and such is that authority with which, in the two concluding verses of this chapter, He gives his last command to his Apostles.—*Bishop Porteus.*”

In the Annotations of the Assembly it is also observed ;—

“*All power.*] Absolute power without restraint and limitation, all dominion and authority to rule and govern. *Is given unto me.*] God the Father hath given it to me ; and I have now received it as man, who as God had *the same power with the Father from eternity*, (Phil. ii., 7,) and now unto me did he give the same in the fulness of time : now I have put off the form of a servant, wherein I was to suffer death for man’s redemption ; therein I was obedient, but now God hath highly exalted me, and given me a name above every name, &c. Phil. ii., 8, &c. *In heaven.*] Which comprehendeth power of sending the Holy Ghost, Acts ii., 33 ; power over angels, Phil. ii., 10 ; Heb. i., 4 ; Col. i., 16 ; power to give heaven to all his, ch. xxv., 3, 4. *In earth.*] Power to gather a church out of all nations.”

On this subject Scott likewise observes, in his Annotations, quoting partly from Whitby ;—

“This authority is given to Christ, as Emmanuel, as the Son of Man, and as Mediator : but did He not possess all divine perfections, how could He exercise it ? ‘He to whom any office is committed, must have sufficient power and wisdom to discharge that office. Now to govern all things in heaven and earth, belongs only to him who is the Lord and Maker of them. . . . To have power over death, and to be able to raise the dead, is to have that power which is *proper to God alone* : and to have power over the souls of men, and the knowledge of all hearts, belongs to *God alone.*’—*Whitby.*”

“Verses 19, 20. After this solemn declaration of his sovereign authority over all creatures, received in *human* nature from the Father; our Lord proceeded to give his commission to the Apostles especially, but certainly to his other ministers and disciples also, according to their several stations in the church, to propagate his religion ‘among all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’”

Here the power to which our Saviour refers is said by Whitby to be that power which is *proper to God alone*; but according to both Whitby and Scott, it is a power exercised by the *human* nature.

Wesley evidently is of the same opinion. Thus he observes upon the same passage:—

“All power is given to me—even as *man*. As God, he had all power from eternity.”

All the foregoing authors, therefore, evidently understand the words, *all power*, to mean the divine perfection signified by omnipotence, and consequently that our Saviour in these words declared his humanity to be omnipotent.

It is not, however, to be presumed that any of them considered that our Lord’s humanity was to *remain* omnipotent. On the contrary; they considered the omnipotence to be only delegated, and as such, after the judgment-day destined to be given up.

Other authors would seem to be aware of the absurdity of the notion of resigning a divine perfection, and therefore maintain that our Lord was speaking of the humanity, but that *all power* does not mean omnipotence.

For instance, Dr. Gill observes, that by *all power* is meant all power and authority for settling the affairs of his church and kingdom, for appointing offices and officers in it, &c. According to this interpretation, by *all power* is meant all THE power which is requisite for certain special ends and purposes; that is to say, all *mediatorial*

power, which as such is distinguished from *divine* power, nay, by some, from human power also. The same remark applies to the attributes omniscience, and omnipresence; which are supposed to mean, not essentially divine attributes, but only the knowledge and presence requisite to all mediatorial purposes. Thus Maldonatus, p. 470;—

“He speaks not of that power which he had as God, nor of that which he had as man, but of that which he had as Redeemer of men, and which he had procured to himself by his death and resurrection.”

Accordingly Professor Stuart maintains, that even now Christ is not supreme King, but is in a state of dependence on the Father. Thus on Rev. i., 1, he observes, vol. ii., p. 3;—

“*Ἐδωκεν*, imparted, communicated, which is the appropriate shade of meaning in this case, inasmuch as information, instruction, is concerned with it. See the same shade of sense in John xvii., 7, 8, thrice, and also Acts vii., 38. With the particular meaning of this verb, there is indeed no difficulty; but the sentiment of the whole passage is a question of difficulty, if there be any; for this appears to represent the Redeemer, even in his glorified state, (for such it was when the Apocalypse was written,) as *dependent on the Father* for revelations of such a nature. But let the reader now compare John v., 19, 20: vii., 16; viii., 28; (where *ἐδίδαξε* is said of the Father in respect to the Son, which well explains *ἔδωκεν* in our text;) xii., 49; xiv., 10; xvii., 7, 8; Matt. xi., 27; Mark xiii., 32; Acts i., 7, (in connection with Mark xiii., 32.) Most fully does Paul exhibit his belief in the sentiment of *mediatorial dependence* in 1 Cor. xv., 24—28. By this last passage it appears, that Christ remains in the state of *Viceregent* merely until the consummation of all things, when his delegated dominion will be given up. The texts in Mark xiii., 32, and Acts i., 7, (compare Luke ii., 52,) show, that Christ as to his human nature was progressive in knowledge, and of course, that there were some things not yet known to him in this nature before his ascension to glory; and among these things was the particular and exact

time of his coming. The ἔδωκεν of our text would seem, however, to imply, that even after his exaltation the Mediator received those disclosures from the Father, which are made in the Apocalypse. This is perfectly congruous with the view given by Paul in 1 Cor. xv., 24—28, which necessarily implies *the dependent state of the Mediator* until the final consummation of all things, and that his dominion as Mediator is only a delegated one.”

On the other hand, Daubuz, following the interpretation of De Lyra and others, is of opinion that *all power* was spoken of in relation to the humanity; but that it was a power in *right*, not in *fact*. Thus he observes, in his work on the Revelations, p. 675;—

“So Christ immediately upon his resurrection says, all power in heaven and earth is given to him: in *right*, though not quite in *fact*. Such a right and power therewith, that in *due time* he will be in actual possession of all his just rights.”

Zanchius labors to prove* that all power does not mean omnipotence, but all authority; or all the limited authority and power which may be sufficient to carry on the government of the church in heaven and earth.

Macknight, as we have seen, informs us, that all the power given to the humanity of Christ makes him only *superior* to angels, and that this superiority is a kind of reigning.

Bishop Bull, in like manner, attempts to shew that to *reign* means to *excel*, and that as after the judgment-day the human nature of Christ will excel that of the angels, so in this respect it may be said to reign. Thus on *Primitive Tradition* concerning the Divinity of Jesus Christ, vol. vi., p. 332, he observes, concerning 1 Cor. xv., 28;—

“In my opinion, Peter Martyr in his *Loci Communes* has excellently well reconciled this place to those which attribute an absolute eternity to the reign of Christ. To *reign*, says he, is sometimes understood as if it meant to *excel*, to be *eminent*

* De Natura Dei; cap. vi., vol. i.

above others, and to occupy the highest place; and in *this* sense of the word, Christ will perpetually reign. If, however, we say that to *reign* is the same thing as to exercise the offices of king, to fight, to defend, to conquer, and other things of the same kind, then *Christ will not always reign*; for when we shall have been made perfect and complete, *there will then be no need of these aids of Christ*. When he came into the world he preached, he taught, he died for our salvation; now also he is interceding for us with the Father; he protects us from impending evils, and never desists from the offices and actions of Mediator. But at the end, when all things shall have been restored to peace, he will *resign* those offices to the Father; as there will no longer be any occasion for them. Just as when some powerful king sends his only son to some province of his kingdom which suffers from seditions, tumults, and rebellion; and this son sets out with the supreme command and a strong army; and when he has allayed the sedition and brought the rebels to subjection, he returns to his father as conqueror in triumph, and delivers up to him the pacified province, and has no longer resort to military rule, or to legions of soldiers, &c.”

According to this account, to *reign* means only to *excel*, to be *eminent* above others, to *occupy the highest station*; and thus the humanity may be said to reign when it excels, though it be no longer King; thus also may the kingdom of Christ be said, according to the Creed, to have no end, although at the same time in reality it had long previously come to an end.

It is true that Bishop Bull afterwards adds, vol. vi., p. 332;—

“And indeed that Christ, after delivering up to the Father the mediatorial kingdom, will not be deprived of his *divine* honor, empire, and dignity, but is together with the Father to be adored by all the saints, and therefore by the very angels and arch-angels, to all eternity, many are the testimonies of Scripture which teach us.”

Thus he will not be deprived of his *divine* honor, empire, and dignity, but he will be deprived of his *media-*

torial honor, empire, and dignity, while even his title to divinity in any sense will, as will be shewn in the chapter on the Two Witnesses and in other places, be regarded as more than questionable.

On the other hand Scott observes, that the mediatorial kingdom shall indeed come to an end, and Christ shall cease to be King; yet that he shall retain a certain excellence in honor, dignity, and beatitude; that the *effects* of his sovereignty shall still continue; and that in these respects He may be said to reign though he is no longer King.

Bishop Pearson adopts a yet different method. By *all power* he understands not omnipotent, but *plenary* power. This *plenary* power he previously distinguishes from *divine*; the latter being absolute and independent, the former being imparted or derived; the right of judicature being part of this power. Hence he observes, art. ii., p. 241;—

“This dominion thus given unto Christ in his human nature was a direct and *plenary power* over all things, but was not actually given him at once, but part while he lived on earth, part after his death and resurrection. For though it be true that Jesus knew, before his death, that the Father had given all things into his hands; yet it is observable, that in the same place it is written, that he likewise knew that he was come from God, and went to God: and part of that power he received when he came from God, with part he was invested when he went to God; the first to enable him, the second, not only so, but also to reward him.” See here *Waterland*, vol. iii., p. 81.

Having afterwards observed, that our Lord was for and after his death instated in a full power and dominion over all things, even as the Son of Man, Bishop Pearson thus continues, p. 242;—

“Now as all the power given unto Christ as man had not the same beginning in respect of the use or possession; so neither, when begun, shall it all have the same duration. For part of it being merely economical, aiming at a certain end,

shall then *cease* and *terminate*, when that end for which it was given shall be accomplished: part being either due upon the union of the human nature with the divine, or upon covenant, as a reward for the sufferings endured in that nature, must be coeval with that union and that nature which so suffered, and consequently must be eternal.”

“Of the first part of this dominion did David speak, when by the spirit of prophecy he called his son his lord; ‘The Lord said unto my lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool:’ where the continuation of Christ’s dominion over his enemies is promised to be prolonged *until* their final and total subjection; for ‘he must reign *till* he hath put all things under his feet.’ And as we are sure of the continuation of that kingdom *till* that time, so are we assured of the *resignation* at that time. ‘For when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power, then shall he deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. 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.’ ”

It would be unaccountable that, after speaking of the *cessation* of the dominion of Christ as man, the Bishop should proceed to speak of the certainty of the *eternal* dominion of Christ as man, were it not for his theory of a *modified* eternity, and the distinction between this and a *complete* eternity; a distinction in virtue of which we are enabled to call that eternal which is to come to an end, and which differs little from the opinion of Macknight, who observes on Luke i., 33: “The epithet everlasting, when applied to Christ’s kingdom, may be taken in a popular sense, for a duration to the end of time, in opposition to the short continuance of earthly kingdoms.” Hence it is that after having spoken of the certainty of an eternal dominion of Christ as man, Bishop Pearson observes, art. vi., p. 426;—

“The regal power of Christ, as a branch of the mediatorship, is to continue till all those enemies be subdued. ‘For he

must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.' 'But now we see not yet all things put under him.' Therefore he must still continue there: and this necessity is grounded upon the promise of the Father, and the expectation of the Son. 'Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool,' saith the Father; upon which words we may ground as well the continuation as the session. Upon this promise of the Father, 'the Son sat down at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.' Seeing then the promise of God cannot be evacuated, seeing the expectation of Christ cannot be frustrated, it followeth, that our Mediator shall exercise the regal power at the right hand of God till all opposition shall be subdued."

"When all the enemies of Christ shall be subdued; when all the chosen of God shall be actually brought into his kingdom; when those which refused him to rule over them shall be slain; that is, when the whole office of the Mediator shall be completed and fulfilled, then *every branch of the execution shall cease*. As, therefore, there shall no longer continue any act of the prophetic part to instruct us, nor any act of the priestly part to intercede for us, so there shall be no farther act of this regal power of the Mediator necessary to defend and preserve us. The beatifical vision shall succeed our information and instruction, a present fruition will *prevent oblation and intercession*, and perfect security will need no actual defence and protection. As, therefore, the general notion of a Mediator *ceaseth* when all are made one, because 'a Mediator is not a Mediator of one;' so every part or branch of that Mediatorship, as such, must also *cease*, because that unity is in all parts complete. '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 when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that hath put all things under him, that God may be all in all.'"

"Now though the Mediatorship of Christ be then *resigned*, because the end thereof will then be performed; though the regal office, as part of that Mediatorship, be also *resigned* with the whole; yet we must not think that Christ shall cease to be

a King, or lose any of the power and honor which before he had. The dominion which he hath was given him as a reward for what he suffered : and certainly the reward shall not cease when the work is done. He hath promised to make us kings and priests, which honor we expect in heaven, believing we shall reign with him for ever, and therefore for ever must believe him King. ‘The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever,’ not only to the *modified eternity of his Mediatorship*, so long as there shall be need of regal power to subdue the enemies of God’s elect ; but also to the *complete eternity of the duration of his humanity*, which for the future is coeternal to his divinity.”

“Lest we should imagine that Christ should ever cease to be King, or so interpret this Article, as if he were after the day of judgment to be removed from the right hand of God, the ancient fathers added these words to the Nicene Creed, ‘whose kingdom shall have no end,’ against the heresy which then arose, denying the eternity of the kingdom of Christ.”

The substance of the foregoing observations is simply this ; that Christ as man may be said to be invested with a *plenary* power ; *part* of which was conferred upon him at one time, *part* of it at another time. These two parts are both eternal ; one has a *modified eternity*, and as such is to come to an end ; the other has a *complete* eternity, and as such is never to cease ; for ‘certainly the reward shall not cease when the work is done,’ although, according to Whitby, the reward also can have only a *modified eternity* ; for says he : “Why this reward should not cease when the work is done ; why, *v. g.*, his dominion over death should not cease when death is destroyed ; his power of giving eternal life, or judging when all are judged, and none are left to be crowned, I confess I do not understand.”

Such, however, is the nature of Bishop Pearson’s explanations, who, by the aid of the theory of a *modified*

eternity and a *complete* eternity, and three orders of kingly offices, one for the Divinity, one for the hypostatical union, and one for the Mediatorship, undertakes to oppose effectually the heresy of Marcellus. These lucubrations, however, do not appear to have very brightly illuminated the mind of Dr. Hey, the Norrisian Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, who observes in his Lectures, speaking of Christ, vol. ii., book iv., art. iv., sec. 20, p. 413 ;—

“I own this connexion with humanity and enjoying rewards to be above my comprehension.”

Again, book iv., art. ii., sec. 32, p. 345 ;—

“We own that we cannot reconcile Christ’s divine qualities with his human.”

Again, p. 343 ;—

“I confess I do not understand how the divine and human natures are joined in him.”

Enough has been quoted to shew the nature of the mediatorial offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, as commonly interpreted, and that all are to come to an end. Considered apart from its various modifications, this is the genuine and substantive doctrine of the existing Protestant church ; and the reason of it is founded upon the alleged limited, and hence creaturely, nature of the Lord’s humanity, as already quoted from Bishop Bull, in his Treatise on the *Primitive Tradition* concerning the divinity of Jesus Christ, vol. vi., p. 333 ;—

“Certainly, indeed, it is impossible that the human soul of Christ, illustrated with whatever degree of divine light, can at one and the same time know and understand the supplications and prayers which are made by so many myriads of men in so many places, at so great a distance from each other, and which are daily at the same moment poured out to the name of Christ.*

* “No Catholic ever thought that *the saints* of themselves knew our wants, or even the desires, on account of which we secretly address prayers to them.”—*Dublin Review*, June, 1844. The passage is quoted from Bossuet’s Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church.

The mind of the man Christ, who is now exalted to the right hand of the Father, hath been brought to perfection in marvellous ways; still it is not infinite, so that its intelligence should be able to reach to all places, and all the persons by whom at the same moment his holy name in either hemisphere is invoked, and that the inmost recesses of the hearts of his worshippers should at the same time be seen through."

Such is the doctrine of Bishop Bull, the reason for which he afterwards adds, as follows;—

"For if omniscience of this kind were communicated to the soul of the man Christ by divine revelation, then could no proper reason be assigned why also the souls of the saints could not partake of such knowledge, and in their way be veritable participators in it."

Thus, according to Bishop Bull, it signifies not with what degree of divine light the humanity of Christ is illustrated. No; all this signifies nothing; the human nature never can know, never can understand all the prayers and supplications which are made at one and the same time, by so many myriads of men, in so many places, at so great a distance from each other. And may we not ask, If the soul of the man Christ never can understand ALL the prayers and supplications made at one and the same time, what assurance we have that it can understand any given one of them? Whether in so great a multiplicity, our own may not be among the number necessarily overlooked, and consequently unanswered; not because there is any thing wrong either in the prayers, or in the manner of offering them, but because the humanity to which they are offered, can attend only to a given number at a given time; and, therefore, the petitioners are required to be more importunate, or to wait, or to turn away altogether, and apply to the Son of God in his divinity, or to some other person in the Trinity?

Moreover, says this prelate, if we could suppose that

omniscience was communicated to the humanity, no sufficient reason could be assigned why the souls of the saints should not be equally participators in this omniscience. Thus, not even the miraculous conception—nor the resurrection—nor the ascension—nor all these three together, could be any sufficient reason why the souls of the saints should not be equally participators in omniscience, if Christ himself were admitted to be omniscient. No wonder therefore, that, as we shall see, divine worship is refused to the humanity; no wonder that the humanity should resign the regal office; or, if continuing to reign, should continue to do so only in the sense of *excelling!*

Nor does the Church of Rome, notwithstanding its professed veneration of the Lord's humanity, essentially differ from the foregoing views of Bishop Bull. Bellarmine maintains that the human nature of the Saviour is still creaturely, and as such, that there can be no true communication of divine properties. For in his Disputations he observes, vol. i., chap. x., p. 484;—

“First; if the things proper to the one nature were truly and really communicated to the other, and *vice versa*, the properties would not remain distinct and unconfounded; for how could they remain distinct if the human nature had divine properties, and the divine nature human properties? Moreover, if they are communicated, they are no longer properties but communities. For how can that be proper which is made common? Moreover, the properties of these natures are for the most part incompatible, such as to be created and uncreated, finite and infinite, every where and not every where; therefore, if the divine nature receives human properties, it must then lose its own; and if the human nature receives divine properties, the human nature must lose its own. And how could the Incarnation take place so as to preserve the two classes of properties?”

And we may ask, how could the Incarnation have taken place, if the two classes of properties had been incompatible—*impossibiles?*

Bossuet, however, in like manner maintains that the human nature of the Saviour is creaturely, and consequently cannot exercise divine perfections. Thus in the *Variations* he observes, book viii., art. xlv. ;—

“True it is, the holy soul of Jesus Christ can do all it will in the church, since it wills nothing but what the Divinity wills who governs it. True it is, this holy soul knows all that regards the world present, since all therein hath a relation to mankind, whereof Jesus Christ is the Redeemer and Judge, and the angels themselves, who are the ministers of our salvation, are subject to this power. True it is, Jesus Christ may render himself *present wherever he pleases, even according to his humanity*, and with respect to his body and blood ; but that the soul of Jesus Christ knows, or can know, all that God knows, is attributing to a creature an infinite knowledge, or wisdom, and equalling it to God himself. To make the human nature of Jesus Christ be necessarily wherever God is, is giving it an immensity not suitable to it, and manifestly abusing the personal union ; for it ought to be said for the same reason, that Jesus Christ, as man, is in all times, which would be too open an extravagancy, but which, nevertheless, would follow as naturally from the personal union, according to the reasoning of the Lutherans, as the presence of Jesus Christ’s humanity in all places.”

From the foregoing account it will be seen, that Bossuet differs from Bull in regard to the knowledge of Christ. Bossuet conceives that the glorified human nature must know all that pertains to the church ; Bishop Bull conceives this to be impossible ; it never can understand, he says, all the prayers and supplications that are made to it at one and the same time, for this would imply infinite knowledge, or omniscience. It is upon the same principle that the omnipresence or ubiquity of the human nature of the Saviour is generally denied, and hence that the Divinity has been regarded as the medium through which the humanity is present at any given place ; thus making the Divinity serve as a medium to the humanity, instead of the humanity as

a medium to the Divinity; in other words, making the Divinity subordinate to the humanity.

So much for the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence.*

In conclusion, then, of this part of our discourse, we add the following quotations.

First, Vogan observes in his Bampton Lectures, p. 332;—

“Again: when St. Paul says; ‘then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father:’ our opponents themselves will acknowledge, that it is the mediatorial kingdom of Christ, of which the apostle speaks;—that kingdom, in which one of his objects is, to ‘put all enemies under his feet.’ When this shall have been effected, and all things shall be subdued unto Him; ‘then shall He deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father;’ committing his faithful subjects to the Father’s love, and yielding up the disobedient to his immitigable and eternal justice. ‘Then shall the Son also himself’ continue as He ever was and ever will be, because He is the Son, ‘subject unto Him that put all things under Him:’ and having accomplished the purposes of his mediatorial kingdom, and presented his people, ‘holy, and unblameable, and unreprouceable,’ to the Father, *his office of Mediator will cease*; ‘the just, made perfect,’ shall ‘see the face of God and live;’ they shall ever dwell in the *immediate* presence of the Most High, contemplating and adoring the *unveiled* glories of his majesty; and ‘God,’ for ever reconciled, ‘will be all in all.’ Nevertheless, we learn, that it is ‘the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ’ into which his people shall then have entered; and that ‘He shall reign for ever and ever:’ so that, though his reign as Mediator shall be terminated, it will be only by his entering upon or resuming one of still greater glory, which shall have no end.”

* The terms, multipresence, and multiscience, have been used by some authors by way of distinction from the corresponding divine attributes, omnipresence and omniscience. The distinction drawn by some of the schoolmen is, that the soul of Christ knows all things that are, but not all things that are possible.

Secondly, Dr. Hey observes in his Lectures on Divinity, vol. ii., book iv., art. iv., sec. 20, p. 413;—

“The general judgment is at a distance not to be defined by us: but it will happen, and then is the end of time, ‘the last day:’ but a proper eternity follows; and one, to our views, unvaried. When judgment has been executed, (so I understand,) ‘then cometh the end;’ the end of God’s dispensation towards man; the end therefore of all Christ’s mediatorial offices; *as prophet, He will no longer instruct; as priest, He will no longer avert punishment; as king, He will no longer protect.* Sitting may be no longer ascribed to Him:—yet, as God the Son, He may reign for ever: nay, He may, though it be *unintelligible* to us, *still retain some connexion with humanity;* still enjoy the rewards of his sufferings and obedience. *I own this to be above my comprehension; and I believe it to be above the comprehension of every man:* but I can see clearly, that it is our business to keep in view, at the same time, what St. Paul delivers to the Corinthians, and what St. John teaches in his Book of Revelation: the joint effect of which passages I can no better express than by saying, after the last day, God ‘shall be all in all;’ shall rule *no more by a Mediator, but immediately;* Christ, as He who was Mediator, shall be subject, shall no more retain even his kingly office; yet, as God the Son, He ‘shall reign for ever and ever,’ King of kings, and Lord of lords.”

Thirdly, Treffry* observes in his Treatise on the Eternal Sonship, p. 388;—

“And when the purposes of the mediatorial kingdom shall have been completed, and its functions shall consequently cease, —*when the revelations of Deity to the mind of the glorified saint shall no longer be through the medium of our Redeemer, but directly and without intervention,* then shall our Lord be manifested in his subordination to the Father; not, as hitherto, in the character of the great High Priest of our profession, for his sacerdotal work will have been consummated; nor in that of Sovereign to his church, for his kingdom will have been delivered up to the Father; but in the character of the Son,

* See also Boyse in his Vindication of the True Divinity of the Blessed Saviour, p. 41. Also Calamy’s Thirteen Sermons on the Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 93.

resuming the position which he occupied from eternity; that God,—pure Sovereign, *unveiled* Deity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—may be all things in all the places of the heavenly world, and in all its beatified inhabitants.”

Fourthly, Calvin observes on 1 Cor. xv., 27, p. 452;—

“*He is excepted which did put all things under Him.* He insists upon two things, that all things must be brought into obedience to Christ, before He restores the government of the world to the Father; and that the Father has thus given all things into the hands of the Son, so as to retain to himself at the same time the primary right over them. From the former it follows, that the hour of the Last Judgment is not yet; from the second, that Christ is now such a medium between us and the Father, that He will at length bring us to Him. Therefore he afterwards adds, ‘*after He shall have subjected all things to Him, then shall the Son also himself subject himself to the Father;*’ as if He should say, let us wait with equanimity till Christ the conqueror of his enemies bring us under the dominion of God, and consummate the kingdom of God within us. But apparently we find repugnant to this opinion, what we every where read in Scripture concerning the eternity of the kingdom of Christ. For how do these two views agree? ‘*Of his kingdom there shall be no end,*’ (2 Pet. i., 11;) and, ‘*He also shall be made subject?*’ The explanation of this question will open to us more clearly the sense of St. Paul. First, we are to observe, that all power was given to Christ, inasmuch as He was manifested in the flesh. So great a majesty would not suit a mere man; still in the same nature in which He was humiliated, the Father exalted Him, and gave Him a name at which every knee should bow, (Phil. ii., 9, 10.) We are next to observe that He was so constituted Lord and King over all, that, in governing the world, He is as it were the Father’s *Vicar*; not that He is active and the Father inert; for how could that be when He is the Wisdom and Counsel of the Father; of one essence with Him; and therefore the same God? But Scripture therefore testifies that Christ now possesses the government of heaven and earth in the place of his Father, in order that we might not think there is any other Governor,

Lord, Defender, and Judge of the dead and the living; but that we should fix our vision on Him alone. We acknowledge God to be our ruler, but in the face of the man Christ; but then Christ shall give back the kingdom which He has received, that we may yield our perfect adhesion unto God. Nor will He in this manner abdicate the kingdom, but will in some way *transfer it from his humanity to his glorious divinity*, because then a way of access will be open from which our infirmity now keeps us. Such is the way then in which Christ will be subject to the Father; because then the veil being removed, we shall openly see God reigning in his majesty; *nor will the humanity of Christ any longer intervene to restrain (cohibere) us from further vision of God.*"*

Thus, according to the views of the foregoing authors, after the Last Judgment the office of Mediator will cease! Christ will no longer be prophet, priest, or king! The revelations of Deity to the mind of the glorified saint shall no longer be through the medium of the Redeemer! The kingdom shall be transferred from the Humanity to the Divinity! The saints shall then behold the Divinity without the intervention of the Humanity! The Humanity of the Son shall no longer restrain us from a further vision of God! The Son shall still however retain *some* connection with the humanity! But what that is, confesses the Norisian Professor at Cambridge, "I own to be above my comprehension; and I believe it to be above the comprehension of every man!"

Now the reader is requested to bear these interpretations in mind, because they lead to the second subject of consideration, namely, the end for which the mediatorial offices are resigned.

According to Vogan, the end is that we may ever dwell in the *immediate* presence of the Most High, *i. e.*, that there

* Whitby and Scott inculcate similar views. Moreover, both maintain that Christ is a king for ever in the same sense in which he is a priest for ever; and that Christ is a priest for ever in the sense, that after the priesthood has *ceased* it is not to be succeeded by any other.

may be no Mediator, no medium between us and God, but that we may contemplate and adore the glories of his majesty unveiled—glories which by a Mediator are necessarily veiled. This view of the subject is the one *most generally* adopted, as may be seen from the first class of quotations made in the present chapter; and upon this principle Calvin is right when, as we have seen, he *pronounces the humanity to be a positive obstacle, after the judgment, to our knowledge of God and our access to Him.*

Here, however, we may ask, where, throughout the whole book of the Apocalypse, is this surrender of the mediatorial kingdom—this resignation of the mediatorial office—this virtual deposition of the human nature, to be found?

It may be replied by some, though not by all, that the surrender of the kingdom takes place only after the day of judgment, that the Apocalypse extends only to that day, and consequently does not tell us what is to come after it. This answer, however, is of avail only upon the principle that the order of the Apocalypse is not to be observed. It has, however, already been shewn* that it is to be observed, and that no interpreter is at liberty to disturb it.†

Besides, how marvellously strange is it that eminent theologians should instruct their readers to look forward

* First Preliminary Discourse, p. 67.

† Even Scott, who assumes this liberty, when transposing the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters, and placing them before the passages treating of the Last Judgment in the twentieth chapter, observes on chap. xxi., verse 1;—

“Some interpreters, especially among those who hold a literal resurrection at the beginning of the Millennium, and the personal reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years, understand these concluding chapters principally of the state of the church on earth at that time. But they come in order *subsequent* to the account of the general judgment; and we can never attain to a satisfactory understanding of prophecy, if imagination or conjecture be allowed to carry us backward or forward without any fixed principles. The method which we should take of clearing up the evidence of the divine inspiration of Scripture from the accomplishment of prophecy, (and this is no doubt one principal weapon with which to defend Christianity against all kinds of infidels,) must be, by shewing, that there is order and arrangement in the predictions, and a coincidence between them and known facts: and that

with rapture to a time when Christ shall no longer be Mediator; no longer be prophet, priest or king; no longer interpose between them and the vision of God; no longer obscure or darken the glory of the Father by being the inadequate, incompetent medium of communication between God and man; since the saints will be able to behold the glory of the Father so much better without Him than with Him! Ought not this alone to astound every thoughtful Christian? But as usual, intimations may be occasionally found in the received theology, of the folly and futility of all such interpretations. We may see, for instance, Daubuz, Turretin, and Scott, maintaining that the Humanity is the sole medium through which the Divinity is visible; and consequently Gill maintaining that it is only the Humanity through which the Divinity will be visible to all eternity. Thus, for instance, Turretin observes in his *Institutio Theologiæ*, part ii., p. 536, that the functions of the mediatorial office will be perpetual;—

“Because Christ is the bond of our perpetual communion with God; for since the creature cannot of itself approach to God, nor continue in his communion, it is necessary that after the same manner in which it has once approached to God through Christ, so must we continue our adhesion *through the same Christ*, and by his virtue and power, *to all eternity*. Nor can the members of Christ’s mystical body derive life and glory except by influx from the head, to which we must remain united to all eternity.”

Daubuz observes, p. 75;—

“For the Lamb in these visions represents visibly the Son of God, the Word of God, even Jesus Christ, which *according to his divine nature would otherwise be invisible*; were it not that the Word of God having taken human nature upon Him,

a regular series of events is foretold, some of which are already fulfilled; and the rest cannot be so, because the order of the prophecy shews them to be yet future. But, in order to this, we must carefully adhere to the proposed arrangement in our interpretations; not deviating even from the appearance of it, without evident reason.”

and having thus suffered, and been slain as a lamb sacrificed, whereby He comes to be called the Lamb of God, became thus *visible* by his adjuncts of *human* nature, and his being sacrificed as a lamb; whence in these visions He is represented sometimes as Son of Man, and sometimes as a Lamb."

Scott observes on 1 Tim. vi., 13;—

"*The invisible God is revealed to us, only in and through the human nature of Christ; as 'the only-begotten Son' of the Father, (notes, Matt. xi., 27; John i., 18; Col. i., 15—17; Heb. i., 3, 4.) And this display of the divine glory will be rendered most illustrious, when Christ shall be seen as Man, exercising all the power, authority, and perfections of God, by the whole assembled universe.*"

Again on Col. i., 16;—

"It seems evident that Christ is not called 'the image of God,' in respect of his divine nature, as many, especially the ancient expositors, supposed; and so, by their illustrations, weakened or perplexed the argument for his real Deity; for the divine essence is no more visible in the person of the Son, than in that of the Father; and therefore the one cannot be 'the image,' or visible representation of the other, (note, 1 Tim. vi., 13—16.) But the person of Christ, as God in human nature, is the visible or sensible discovery of the invisible God; and 'he that hath seen him hath seen the Father.'"

Again on Col. i., 18;—

"For 'it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.' It seemed good to him, that all the plenitude of divine power, authority, wisdom, knowledge, holiness, justice, truth, mercy, grace, even all 'the fulness of God,' should dwell in the person of Christ; and be exercised and communicated, through his *human* nature, by virtue of the union of the Deity and humanity in his mysterious person; that believers, from his fulness, might receive the rich supply of their various and urgent wants."

Conformably with these views, Gill observes on Revelation, chap. xxi., v. 22, p. 863.

"For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it; God will be immediately present with his people, whose

face they shall see, and whom they will serve in the most pure and spiritual manner; and *Christ in his human nature, in the temple of his body, that tabernacle which God pitched, and not man, which is filled with the train of the divine perfections, and in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, will be the only medium of the divine presence, and of the communications of glory to men, and of the saints' praise to God, which will be the service they will be employed in; and the Lamb being joined with the Lord God Almighty, shews his deity and his equality with his father.*"

These views are entirely in accordance with the interpretations of Swedenborg, who maintains that the glory of the Father can be seen only in the face of Jesus Christ; and that if the humanity should cease to be a medium of communication or intuition, there could ensue no vision of the Divinity; nothing but darkness, misery, horror, and even annihilation itself; in fine, the heavenly state would altogether cease, and would be converted into hell, and creation return into nonentity.

To maintain, therefore, as is done by so many writers of repute, that the humanity is destined to cease to act as Mediator, is to maintain an Antichristian doctrine.

But Dr. Smith observes, in his *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. iii., p. 238;—

“Imperfect and obscure as must be our conceptions of the termination of the mediatorial reign, it is self-evident that it can, in no respect, diminish the honors of the Redeemer, or abate the regards of the redeemed. To suppose this, would be to suppose the loss of memory itself in those pure and blessed minds. We are assured with regard to the felicity of the heavenly state, that ‘the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it;’ that ‘the glory of God will enlighten it, and the Lamb be the light thereof;’ and that its ‘pure and ever-flowing bliss, the river of the water of life, proceedeth from the throne of God and of the Lamb.’ The connexion of Christ and his saints is indissoluble: neither things present nor things to come shall separate them from his love: and the final state

of true Christians is expressly called, an ‘entering into the *eternal* kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.’”

Here it is said, that imperfect and obscure as must be our conceptions of the termination of the mediatorial reign, it is self-evident that ‘it can in no respect diminish the honors of the Redeemer, or abate the regards of the redeemed.’ The question is then, what are the honors which are now ascribed to the Redeemer? Dr. Smith expressly affirms, that the human nature of our Lord is not to be worshipped; consequently, when the mediatorial kingdom is given up, it can be no *diminution* of the honors of the Redeemer to continue to refuse to Him those which had previously been refused. ‘The connection of Christ and his saints is indissoluble,’ it is said; true! but the connection of the glorified humanity with the saints, according to the generally received theology, is not indissoluble; for *now* the humanity serves as a mirror in which the saints behold the glory of the Father, but *then*, we are told, it is to serve as a mirror no longer; the existing medium of connection between the Redeemer and the redeemed is to be removed for ever. What other medium of communication then is to be substituted in its place? None whatever. Even at present we are told by reputedly the most orthodox divines, that the humanity is not to be adored, but only the Divinity in the humanity. Hereafter, however, even the Divinity, it is said, is not to be adored as existing in the humanity. And when all conceivable offices of the humanity are made to terminate; when the humanity glorified is no longer prophet, priest, and king, and has no longer any known relation to the church in heaven, except as a member of that church!—a superior member, it is true, but yet a member as other saints and angels; can it, we say, be said, even with the slightest plausibility, that it is self-evident that the honors of the Redeemer are in no respect diminished;

and consequently, that in no respect will there be an abatement of the regards of the redeemed? Certainly, if the redeemed refuse to worship the glorified humanity now, it is no abatement of honor to refuse to worship the glorified humanity then, and in this case, the saints could but remember that they were then doing only the same thing which they had always done before.

But what becomes of all this exposition, if the Divinity can be known and be accessible only through the medium of the humanity? Must not all such expositions be essentially antichristian?

There are, however, some who do not conceive it to be self-evident, that when the humanity returns to a private station, there is no abatement of the honors of the Redeemer.

Dr. Smith indeed observes, vol. iii., p. 235, in reference more particularly to 1 Cor. xv., 26;—

“These and similar testimonies represent the kingdom of the Messiah as a constitution, establishment, or systematic arrangement; originating in the divine wisdom, righteousness, and benevolence; and administered, pursuant to the will and appointment of the Father, by the Son of God, whose office in this respect is figuratively described by the ancient mode of expressing the highest dignity, *next* to that of the Sovereign himself, the being seated on the right side of the throne. These passages further declare, that this kingdom derives not its authority from any earthly institutions, nor is supported by external force or any other human sanctions: that its authority is supreme and its power universal, extending to all created beings and their operations, heavenly, earthly, and infernal; to the minds, motives, and moral actions of men; to all the events of providence, and all the influences of religion; to death and to the future state: that, among its special acts, are the giving and enforcing of religious laws, the diffusion and success of the gospel, the heavenly intercession, the operations of divine grace, the vanquishing of all antichristian and other inimical powers,

and the adjudication of eternal rewards and punishments: that its unfailing result shall be the most illustrious display of the infinite divine excellency and glory, the Lord Jesus being glorified and admired, and the Father being glorified in him: that, when all its designs are accomplished, the mediatorial system, as to all these modes of its exercise, shall cease; Christ will no longer have to act as a Redeemer and Saviour; the number of his elect will have been accomplished, and his church presented perfect and complete to himself and to his divine Father; as a *faithful ambassador* whose commission is finished, he will *honorably give it back* to Him who appointed him, and will return to his own personal station as the divine and eternal Son: and that then will a new order of the moral universe commence, and the unspeakably vast assemblage of holy creatures, delivered and for ever secured from sin and misery, shall possess the nearest and fullest fruition of the Father. In his sovereign love, the scheme of mediatorial redemption originated; and its blessed completion shall be, in the most sublime and eternally admirable manner, ‘unto the praise of his glory.’ God will be all things, in all those happy beings.”

Now, let us connect this passage with the following note of Dr. Doddridge, on 1 Cor. xv., 28, in the *Family Expositor*, vol. iii., p. 605;—

“I hope I shall be forgiven, if, after the best attention I could use, I have missed the true and exact sense of this most difficult text. It is surprising to find authors of such different sentiments, as Wittsius and Crellius, agreeing to speak of Christ as returning, as it were, to a private station, and being ‘as one of his brethren,’ when he has thus given up the kingdom. The union of the divine and human natures in the person of the great Emanuel, the incomparable virtues of his character, the glory of his actions, and the relation he bears to his people, with all the texts which assert the perpetuity of his government, prohibit our imagining that he shall ever cease to be illustriously distinguished from all others, whether men or angels, in the heavenly world through eternal ages. To me it appears, that the kingdom to be given up is the rule of this lower world, which is then to be consumed; and that it may not seem as if

a province of his empire were destroyed, his administration, undertaken in avowed subservience to the scheme of redemption, (Eph. i., 10,) and completed in the resurrection of all his people, shall *close in a decent and honorable manner*; God will declare the ends of it fully answered, and the whole body of his people shall be introduced by him into a state of more intimate approach to and communion with God, than had been known by the spirits of the blessed in their separate state."

According then to the foregoing theology, after the Last Judgment our Lord is to divest himself of the office of Mediator; his commission being finished, He will, as a faithful ambassador, *honorably give it back* to God who gave it Him, and thus will He close the whole mediatorial economy in a *decent and honorable manner!*

Thus after all, there is but little difference between the views of Crellius and Wittsius and those of the school of Doddridge; for the latter admit that Christ is to cease to be Mediator, *i. e.* Prophet, Priest, and King; and that the intuition of God by the saints shall be direct, without the intervention of the humanity.

It is however refreshing to find Turretin maintaining in his *Institutio Theologiæ*, vol. ii., p. 536, that the mediatorial kingdom of Christ will continue for ever, and as such, directly contradicting the whole tenor of the preceding theology. Out of various reasons which he assigns for the eternal duration of the mediatorial office and kingdom, we select the following;—

“The various functions of the mediatorial office will be perpetual. First, in respect of prophecy, because it is said he will give light to the blessed to all eternity. *The city shall have no need of the sun or the moon, for the glory of the Lord shall enlighten it, and the Lamb shall be the light thereof*, Apoc. xxi., 22, 23; and the Lamb is said to *feed them, and to lead them forth to living waters*, Apoc. vii., 17. Secondly, in respect of his priesthood, by the continual representation of his sacrifice as the foundation of the glory we shall possess, not only of that

which is acquired, but which is also to be preserved to all eternity ; for things are preserved by the same ways and means by which they are acquired. Whence the priesthood is said to be that which shall not pass away ; Heb. vii., 24. Thirdly, in respect to his reign, because he shall always reign over the church as its head and spouse by an indissoluble union ; *not as God only, but also as Mediator*. Whence it is set before us distinctly as the kingdom of God and of Christ ; Apoc. vii., 15 ; and xii., 10 : and the consummation of the marriage is proposed in the nuptials of the Lamb with the church ; Apoc. xix., 7 : and as this must be eternal and indissoluble, so likewise it supposes the eternity of the operation and relation of Christ as Mediator, and of the Bridegroom toward the church as the Bride.”

A corresponding observation is made by Petavius, in his Treatise on the Incarnation, book xii., chap. xviii., art. vii., p. 136 ; where, in proof of the eternity of the kingdom of the Saviour as man, he observes ;—

“ Most perfectly strong, likewise, is that proof, which is derived from the Apostle, in favor of the eternity of the priesthood of Christ, and which pertains to Him in his character as man. For in the seventh chapter of Hebrews, among other endowments in which the pontificate and the priesthood of Christ excels those of Aaron, that of eternity is adduced ; verse 23 : ‘ *And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death : but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.*’ ”

Again, art. xiii., p. 137, *ibid.*, with regard to the reign or kingdom of Christ ;—

“ Wherefore that the kingdom of Christ, that is, of the incarnate Word, which began with the assumption of the flesh, *shall never cease to all eternity* ; and that the conjunction with the flesh shall be perpetual, we have sufficiently and abundantly demonstrated from theological principles, that is, from the Scriptures, from the decrees of councils, and thus from the holy fathers, &c.”

Petavius then proceeds to refer to the authority of Gregory Nazianzen, Augustin, Jerome, Epiphanius, Pru-

dentius, Gelasius, and others, in support of the same views, and which are those maintained by Swedenborg, and advocated throughout the present volumes on the Apocalypse.

We have now treated of the doctrine of the Incarnation, and of the Mediatorial kingdom as immediately connected with it; and as the system of Christianity is allowed to be mediatorial throughout, it is obvious that we have been treating of vital doctrines which immediately concern the character of Christianity as a revelation of divine truth. This we have been induced to do, because the Exposition of the Apocalypse we are about to offer does not relate to external historical events, but to spiritual truths, which open to view the divine perfections of the Lord, as the WORD, and the state of the church in its relation to them. We have already shewn that the title Christ has relation to the Humanity, hence that Antichrist signifies that system of professed Christianity which is opposed to the Lord's Divine Humanity, and which has consequently falsified more or less every doctrine of Christianity which is founded upon it. This will be further considered in the sequel, when we come to treat of the death of the Two Witnesses. At present we proceed to the Exposition of the Apocalypse, premising that as Antichrist had at length effected his coming, it was necessary that this coming of Antichrist should be met and counteracted, in the day of consummation, by a corresponding coming of Christ—a coming in glory and majesty.

Now all those who believe that the coming of Antichrist and his seductions have been, are, or will be accomplished in a way of which the church is not aware, must likewise believe that the corresponding coming of the Son of Man will itself also be accomplished in a way and at a time of which the church is not aware. Aben Ezra, speaking of

the snares and seductions of Antichrist, thus observes upon this subject, in his work on the Coming of the Messiah, vol. i., p. 178;—

“Now, my friend, does it appear to you easy, that the whole world should fall into this snare and give in to a universal seduction, if they had beforehand clear ideas and sure notices of Antichrist? Does it appear to you credible, that seeing him and knowing him, the whole world should yield themselves to him; the whole world should suffer themselves to be deceived? I for my part protest that I do not understand nor can conceive it. . . . The immediate cause of that perdition can, it appears to me, be nothing else than the not knowing this Antichrist.”

Page 182, *ibid.*;—

“It ought to be set down as a truth that no man can know the origin of Antichrist, but by express revelation of God; forasmuch as no one would have known that Antichrist was to be, if God had not deigned to reveal it.”

We have already observed that we cannot know who or what is Antichrist, until we know who or what is Christ. The revelation therefore of Jesus Christ will discover to us the nature and character of Antichrist on the subject of this revelation.

Hooper on the Apocalypse, observes, p. 22;—

. . . “We gather from the Scriptures, that from the creation of the world, and under every dispensation, a revelation has invariably preceded every great act of God. Not one instance can be adduced to the contrary. In every case his people were informed of what He was about to do, and none of them were ignorant of it, or unprepared for it, who observed that revelation; those only were in darkness who disregarded it, and wickedly closed their eyes and ears to the light and instruction which God gave them.”

“Now if God was not to instruct his church concerning the appearing and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ—if we were to be left in ignorance of the times and the seasons which relate

to his advent, it would be contrary to his dealings with his people in all past ages. Such a supposition therefore cannot be entertained for a moment—it *cannot* be; for He remaineth the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

THE SPIRITUAL
EXPOSITION OF THE APOCALYPSE.

CHAPTER I.

THAT THIS REVELATION IS FROM THE LORD ALONE, AND THAT IT WILL BE RECEIVED BY THOSE WHO SHALL BE IN HIS NEW CHURCH, WHICH IS THE NEW JERUSALEM, AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE LORD AS THE GOD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH. THE LORD ALSO IS DESCRIBED AS THE WORD.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' chap. i., verse 1;—

“ ‘The revelation of Jesus Christ,’ *signifies*, predictions from the Lord concerning himself and his church, what the quality of the latter will be in the end, and what will be its quality afterwards: ‘which God gave unto Him to shew unto his servants,’ *signifies*, for the use of those who are in faith originating in charity.”

. . . “By the revelation of Jesus Christ, are signified all predictions; and forasmuch as these are from the Lord, it is called the revelation of Jesus Christ; that they relate to the Lord and his church, will appear from the explanations. The Apocalypse does not treat of successive states of the church, much less of successive states of kingdoms, as some heretofore have believed; but the subject treated of therein from beginning to end, is concerning the last state of the Church, in the heavens and in the earths, and then concerning the Last Judgment, and afterwards concerning the New Church, which is the New Jerusalem. That this New Church is the end and object of this work,

is evident ; wherefore the things which are first premised, treat of the state of the church, and what the nature of that state is, proximately before the rise of the New Church.”

Pererius on the Apocalypse, Disputation i., p. 773 ;—

“This prophecy of the blessed John is called the Apocalypse, that is, revelation, because it is supernatural, and altogether concealed and hidden, and incomprehensible to man ; nor can it otherwise be known to him than by the revelation of God.”

Bossuet on the Apocalypse, Preface, art. iii. ;—

“In the Gospel we behold Jesus Christ as a man conversing with men, humble, poor, feeble, suffering ; all that is there tells us of a victim about to offer himself as a sacrifice and of a man appointed to suffering and death. But the Apocalypse is *the Gospel of Jesus Christ raised from the dead* : he there speaks, and there acts as the conqueror of death, as he who marches forth from hell which he has despoiled, and who enters in triumph into the place of his glory, where he begins to exercise the omnipotence which his Father hath given him in heaven and in earth.”

Aben Ezra, vol. i., p. 200, on The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty ;—

“This divine book, let others call it what they please, is an admirable prophecy directed wholly to the times immediate upon the coming of the Lord. In which are announced all the principal matters which shall immediately precede ; in which is announced, in a manner the most magnificent, the very *coming of the Lord in glory and majesty* ; in which are announced the admirable and stupendous events which shall accompany that coming, and which shall follow it. The title of the book shews well to what it is all directed ; what is its argument, and what its determinate end : *the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ, the revelation of Jesus Christ.*”

“This title till now has been taken only in an active sense, as if it only meant a revelation which Jesus Christ makes to another of certain occult and future things. But I read these same words very often in the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Paul, and never find them in an active sense, but always in a passive

sense, and capable of no other than this—the *revelation or manifestation of Jesus Christ in the great day of his second coming*. Only once, with a different object in view, doth St. Paul say that he received the gospel which he preached, not from man, but by revelation of Jesus Christ, Gal. i., 12. With this single exception, the word revelation of Jesus Christ always signifies the coming of the Lord, which we are expecting: *in the day of his coming*, or *in the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ*, are two ordinary words which the apostles use indifferently, as signifying one and the same thing. And why may they not retain this same sense in the title of a book, directed wholly to the coming or revelation of Jesus Christ."

"I say that this divine book is *wholly* directed to the coming of the Lord: which although in a great part the expositors allow, yet in the whole it becomes difficult to them. Forasmuch as they have always striven, some in one way, and others in another, to verify some or many prophecies of this book, in the events of the church already passed; thinking that every thing should be announced herein, though under obscure metaphors. But the little or no fruit which these their efforts have produced, is the proof that in reality there is in the book nothing of that which they have been seeking, or which they pretend to have found."

Ibid., p. 201;—

"Seeing this prophecy of the Apocalypse, as we have just observed, has for its primary and principal object the revelation of Jesus Christ, or his coming in glory and majesty, we find therein collected, united, explained, and with wonderful wisdom cleared up, all the things which are met with in the Scriptures, pertaining to this revelation or coming of the Lord."*

Hyponoia, or Thoughts on a Spiritual Understanding of the Apocalypse, or Book of Revelation, p. 680;†—

"The work is entitled by its divine author, the unveiling (*apocalypsis*) of Jesus Christ: that is, as we have considered it, the revelation of his character, offices, and doctrine—the un-

* See also the work entitled, *Hyponoia*, p. 680, to the same effect.

† A remarkable American publication, which has been much praised in one of the Reviews, but is far from advocating the doctrines of Swedenborg.

veiling of the anointed Saviour. This is the purport or design of the whole book.”

“The source whence this revelation is derived having been stated by the apostle in the commencement of the first chapter, it is said in allusion to that source, Jesus, ‘Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him,’ &c.; leaving the inference to be fairly drawn, that the coming spoken of consists in the unveiling now about to be made; that it is in the symbolical revelation here made that Jesus is to be seen coming as in the clouds.” . . .

. . . “In the introductory addresses dictated to the apostle, the reason is given for the revelation about to be made. Certain errors exist, calling for a peculiar manifestation of truth—a manifestation spoken of by Christ as his coming quickly or suddenly. . . . The form of the announcement, however, serves the purpose of indicating the design of the advent; viz., that of correcting certain errors of doctrine; and it is important for us to keep this design in view, that we may better understand the revelation about to be made.”

According to Daubuz, the word *revelation* may be taken in two senses; in the first, “Christ is to be, according to this prophecy, revealed in the same sense as the man of sin is to be revealed;” in the second, Christ makes a revelation or discovery of his designs towards the church. Swedenborg says that it signifies predictions from the Lord concerning himself and his church. But as these predictions concerning himself are found to contain revelations concerning himself, so the active sense of the word revelation, in which Jesus Christ is the revealer, comprehends the passive in which he is also the subject of the revelation, and thus the two interpretations are comprehended in one, and whichever we take the same thing is ultimately signified.

Pareus on the Apocalypse, p. 21;—

“The types of the revelation do not represent the foregoing (or antecedent) history of the Israelitish church, but the future state of the New Church.”*

* Pareus supposes this New Church to be the Christian church, succeeding the

"*The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him.*"—By way of more strongly marking the contrast, we shall present the two classes of interpretation of this passage; first, the interpretation of Aquinas as given by Ribera, and adopted by Rupertus; and secondly, the interpretation of Ribera himself, &c.

Ribera on the Apocalypse, p. 10;—

"From these words arises the question, how St. John says the Father gave this revelation to Christ our Lord, just as if he was speaking only of some one of the prophets, or of some angel who came to announce the prophecy." . . . "Thomas (Aquinas) thus replies: 'It is not to be understood as if these things were only then revealed to him, so as to imply that he was previously ignorant of them; but it is said, 'he gave,' for this reason, to shew that the man Christ received not these things from *nature*, but from *grace*.'"

A similar interpretation is given by Rupertus, who says, p. 350: that "the power of revealing to his servants, which Jesus Christ had not by nature, the humanity received by way of gift."

In answer to this interpretation of Aquinas, Ribera observes, p. 10;—

To our previous question "it is better to reply, that this revelation is said to be given, not as if he then received that which he had known from his *conception*, but that it was then made known to men; as to John through an angel, and to all others through John." . . . "The Father gave to Christ this revelation, not at that time in which he signified it to John through an angel; but at the time *when he was first conceived* he taught him to make known these things to the churches in their due season. After the same manner does the Lord speak every where in the Gospel according to St. John. As in chap. iii.: 'We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen;'

Jewish dispensation. Abundant testimony will be introduced to shew that the establishment of this New Church, as spoken of in the Apocalypse, has relation to the times of the *second* coming of Christ, not to those of the first;—as indeed we have seen already asserted by Aben Ezra. The subject will be amply treated of in Ch. xxi.

chap. v. : ‘The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things whatsoever he doeth ;’ chap. xviii. : ‘The cup which my Father hath given me shall I not drink it?’”

Cornelius a Lapide, on the Apocalypse, p. 13 ;—

“ ‘*The revelation of Jesus Christ* ;’—as if he should say, This is, or here begins, the prophecy of Jesus Christ, revealed from God the Father not enigmatically, but publicly and openly. For the Father speaks to Christ his Son clearly. ‘*Which God gave unto Him*,’—*i. e.*, to Christ, in his *conception* and *incarnation* ; for from this was Christ full of all knowledge, wisdom, grace, and virtue. ‘*To shew*,’—that is, to publish and reveal, not openly, but in enigmas and symbols, to his servants.” . . . “Hence, therefore, it is evident, that the Apocalypse was first revealed to the soul of Christ in his *incarnation*, and that clearly and perfectly, and to him alone, not to the prophets, nor even to angels.”

Esthius ; Biblia Maxima of De La Haye, Apocalypse, p. 708 ;—

“The revelation made *by* Jesus Christ, not that made *to* Jesus Christ.” . . . “The revelation was not made *to* Christ by the Father, as if he did not know it before, but it was given him from the Father, (for the Son has received all things from the Father) in order to reveal it to his servants. Whence it is that Christ does not give the Father thanks, for having revealed hidden mysteries to himself, but, ‘I thank thee, O Father ! because thou hast revealed them unto babes.’ Matt. xi.”

Calmet on the Apocalypse ;—

“ ‘*Which God gave unto Him*,’—He received it not as God ; because in this quality he possesses every thing, and knows every thing ; but he received it as man, who as such received from God all light and all grace in the moment of the *hypostatical union* of the Word with the human nature. The words read as if he received it at the time in which he discovered it to St. John, because previously it was concealed and unknown, and because in relation to us the Son has not received it, nor revealed it to us, but under the circumstance of a certain lapse of time.”

On the words in Matt. xxviii., 18, “All power is given

me in heaven and earth,” Cornelius a Lapide observes that it was given Him at the miraculous conception, *inchoatively*; and, after the resurrection, *completely*. But if one divine gift were communicated at the miraculous conception only inchoatively, so must all. The inchoation, therefore, of the influx of Divinity was at the conception; the perfection or completion of the influx after the resurrection, when the humanity was filled with *all* the fulness of the Godhead. Hence observes Petavius on the Incarnation, book x., chap. vi., art. i., p. 16;—

“Whatsoever excellency of dignity had redounded, as we have said, to the flesh of Christ, from its being in consort with the Divinity, finally accrued to him in a *perfect* degree, when, after having been dead, he raised himself to a new life. For then all blemish and infirmity being laid aside, he entered upon a new state; and *the whole man was in some way or other* (quodammodo) *absorbed into God*. Of which circumstance marvellous things are said by Gregory Nyssen, in the passages quoted in the first chapter of this book; and which by setting them forth in their true light, which it was necessary to do, we have cleared from the suspicion of heretical taint, such as that of the Apollinarians, and after them the Eutychians. I will not repeat them here, but remind the reader that they amount to this, that he is to understand, that, after the resurrection, the human nature in Christ approximated more nearly to a certain participation of Divinity, *i. e.*, was received into a communion of its glory, brightness, immortality, and other ornamental endowments; nor did he cease to be that which he was, namely, man, or experience any loss of that which was natural to and implanted in him.”*

* Nelson, in his Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 44, thus observes;—

. . . “In Rev. xxii., 6, he is called the Lord God of the Holy Prophets, as will appear from the context: ‘The Lord God of the Holy Prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.’ Now the person who sent the angel for this purpose is Jesus Christ; v., 16: ‘I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches;’ which is confirmed in chap. i., ver. 1: ‘The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to shew (that he, Jesus, might shew) unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he (Jesus) sent, and signified by his angel unto his servant John.’ If then God the Father did not immediately send the angel himself, but revealed the

Richard of St. Victor, on the Apocalypse, p. 197 ;—

“ ‘*To his servants ;*’ not to proud philosophers, not to unbelieving Jews, not to impure Christians. For holy things must not be given to dogs, nor pearls be cast before swine. Dogs are unbelieving persecutors of the holy faith, and who themselves bark against it. Swine are false Christians, having a faith sufficient to make them credulous, but defiling themselves with sordid vices after the manner of swine. From both these, therefore, sacred mysteries are to be concealed ; from the former, in consequence of the blindness superinduced by wickedness ; from the latter, in consequence of their polluted life. To the servants of God, however, divine things are to be purposely made known, because the instructions given to them they patiently hear, and what they hear they devoutly practise. As therefore divine good is not given to be manifested to the evil, so likewise from those who are good it ought by no means to be concealed. And as it is a serious fault to reveal sacred mysteries to the wicked, so also it is a serious fault to hide them from the elect. Let not therefore the useless servant feel secure, who grows torpid in his duty of teaching ; because in the day of judgment he will have to give an account of the gain he has derived from the talent committed to his care.”

SWEDENBORG, ‘*APOCALYPSE REVEALED,*’ ch. i., ver. 1 ;—

“ ‘*Things which must shortly come to pass,*’ *signifies,* that they will certainly be, lest the church perish.”

Eichorn, in his Commentaries on the Apocalypse, (see Todd’s Six Discourses on the Prophecies relating to Anti-christ, p. 65 ;)—

“ For—*δει αυτα γενεσθαι*—they will come to pass, God being their author and disposer . . . and therefore they will be proved by their *most certain* eventual occurrence ; *εν ταχει*, that is, *ταχυ* ; chap. xxii., 6. For the prophets are accustomed to set forth great changes in things, as if they were already mature, in order to express their *certainty*. So Isaiah xxvi., 20 ; liv., 8 ;

secret to Jesus Christ, that he as Mediator might have the honor of sending it by his angel to his servant John ; it will follow, that the Lord God of the Holy Prophets, who sent his angel, is Jesus Christ, and if he be the Lord God of the prophets, he is questionless of the church also.”

Malachi iii., 1, 2; Haggai ii., 6. So also Isa. x., 22, 23—*interritus festinans est certissimus.*" So likewise Heinrichs and others.

Pyle's Paraphrase on the Revelation, p. 2, note;—

"Or else, which will as *certainly* and *assuredly* come to pass as if they came this moment. So Christ says, 'Behold, I come quickly,' i. e., *certainly*; chap. xxii., verse 7 of this book. And Isaiah lx., 22; 'I, the Lord, will hasten it in his time.' The same with the apostle, Heb. x., 37; 'He that cometh will come, and will not tarry; *χρονιῆτι* will not outstay his time.'"

Commentary of the Tract Society, Matthew xxiv., 29;—

... "It is usual in prophetic style to speak of things great and *certain*, as near and just at hand, to express the greatness and *certainty* of them."

A similar meaning to the word, *short*, or *shortly*, is given by some authors to the following passage of the apostle Paul, in Rom. ix., 28; "He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." This passage is the septuagint version of Isaiah x., 22, 23. Our common English translation is, "... the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of the land." For consumption many* read consummation, and for decreed and determined, abbreviated or shortened, which is the rendering also of the apostle Paul: Vatablus also here understands the shortening to mean *certainly* determined; † and the Assembly, in their Annotations on the same passage, "infallibly, unfailably, irrecoverably decreed."

According to Swedenborg, in the word *shortly*, allusion is made also to the shortening of the last days; Matt. xxiv., 22; "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." See also Mark xiii., 20.

Thus Bede, in his Exposition of Mark xiii., 20, p. 203, refers the tribulation there mentioned to the last days;—

* As the Vulgate, A Lapide, &c.

† Pool's Synopsis; Rom. ix., 28.

“But for the elect’s sake whom he hath chosen he hath shortened those days. For this tribulation, the heavier it is in its weight of pressure than those which have preceded it, the more moderate will it be in the shortness of its duration.”

Aquinas ; *Catena Aurea* ; p. 262 ;—

... “The only refuge in such evils is, that God, who gives strength to suffer, should abridge the power of inflicting. Wherefore there follows, ‘and except that the Lord had shortened those days.’” See also *De Lyra*, Luke xviii., 7.

Ibid. ; p. 262 ;—

“But some persons more fitly understand that the calamities themselves are signified by days, as evil days are spoken of in other parts of Holy Scripture ; for the days themselves are not evil, but what is done in them. The woes themselves therefore are said to be abridged, because through the patience which God gave they felt them less, and then what was great in itself was abridged. Augustin.”

Ibid. ; p. 263.

“But the tribulation shall be great and the days short, for the sake of the elect, lest the evil of this time should change their understanding. Pseudo-Jerome.”

Ibid., p. 813, Matt. xxiv. ;—

“We must understand it of their being shortened not in measure, but in number, lest the faith of believers should be shaken by lengthened affliction. Jerome.”

Lauretus, art. *Brevis* ;—

“The shortening which the Lord makes, is the sudden punishment which comes to the wicked at the time in which they expected it not ; Isaiah xxviii. Jerome.”

“The shortening of the days of Antichrist designate the cutting off of errors by the dogmas of truth. Origen, Jerome.”

“To shorten the days of Antichrist is to hasten the kingdom of Christ.”

Lauretus moreover, under the article *Accelerare*, furnishes several examples, in which *hastening* designates promptitude, earnest desire, coming unawares, &c. thus ;—

“*Swift* enemies may designate the *unexpected* punishment of God, and they are said to be swifter than eagles. And the

times hasten to be present when the day of death comes unexpectedly. And in like manner God hastens the time, of death for instance, or judgment.”*

The way in which commentators refer the things mentioned in Matt. chap. xxiv., to the last days, or consummation of the age, may be seen in our remarks on this subject, Chap. XXI., Vol. III.

Now that it is of the consummation of the age, the last days, or days of Antichrist, that the Apocalypse in general treats, is the opinion of Ribera, Nicholas Collado,† Aben Ezra, all the authorities we have previously quoted from Calmet in the First Preliminary Discourse, p. 38, Girdlestone, the editor of the Investigator, as will be seen below, and of the whole school of the Futurists. The very commencement of the prophecy, moreover, presents the links of connection; for the coming quickly has relation to Matthew xxiv., 22, where the days are said to be shortened;—the time is at hand—to the summer being near, and the fig-tree putting forth its leaves, Matt. xxiv., 32;—the Son of

* In the passage quoted above, p. 211, from Isaiah x., 22, the Glossa Ordinaria, and De Lyra interpret the shortening to signify a short or brief space or time; and Toletus, from some of the fathers, (Pool’s Synopsis, Heb. ix.,) ‘in compendium rediget.’

Dr. Todd observes in his Six Discourses, p. 65; “The revelation of Jesus Christ is said to have been given unto him by his Father, ‘to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass;’ *α δει γενέσθαι εν τάχει*—which must come to pass in a brief space; and the same words occur also at the conclusion of the prophecy, ‘these sayings are faithful and true; and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done, . . . which must be done in a short space.’ In these words, there is nothing to indicate the point from which the time which is spoken of as short is to take its beginning,” &c.

Dr. Todd is of opinion that the period begins with the day of the Lord, mentioned in verse 10.

Daubuz, p. 68, considers the words, coming quickly, to signify the same as coming unawares, unexpectedly, or suddenly; “the things which shall shortly come to pass signify the things which shall happen when men are not aware of them;” and De Lyra, on Luke xviii., 5, 7, that although the coming of the Lord to avenge his elect may seem to be tardy according to human judgment, yet that in truth it is not so but speedy.

† See Parcus on the Apocalypse, p. 23.

Man coming in clouds—to the same in Matt. xxiv., 30 ;—the kindreds of the earth wailing because of him—to the tribes of the earth mourning, Matt. xxiv., 30 ;—the tribulation—to the great tribulation in Matt. xxiv., 21 ;—companionship in patience—to endurance to the end, Matt. xxiv., 13, and also in patience possessing their souls. To say nothing of the symbols of the sun and moon, earthquakes, famines, falling by the sword, wars, the powers of heaven being shaken, and the Lord avenging his elect, which are common to our Saviour's description and to various parts of the Apocalypse, as will be seen in the sequel. Indeed, it was the obvious connection between the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew and the Apocalypse in general, that led Ribera to affirm in the Third Disputation of his work on the Apocalypse, that the subject matter of the Apocalypse was nothing else but certain commentaries on those words of the Lord.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 1 to 4 ;—

“ ‘ And he signified sending by his angel to his servant John,’ *signifies*, the things which are revealed from the Lord through heaven to those who are in the good of life from charity and its faith: ‘ who witnessed the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ,’ *signifies*, who from the heart, and thereby in the light, receive divine truth from the Word, and acknowledge the Lord's Humanity to be Divine: ‘ whatsoever things he saw,’ *signifies*, their illumination in all the things which are in this Revelation: ‘ blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein,’ *signifies*, the communion of those with the angels of heaven who live according to the doctrine of the New Jerusalem: ‘ for the time is at hand,’ *signifies*, that the state of the church is such that it cannot persist any longer, so as to have conjunction with the Lord.”

Parkhurst's Greek Lexicon, under the article *σημαινω* to signify, to intimate;—

"Kypse shews that the Greeks apply this verb to the prophetic but somewhat ambiguous and obscure oracles of their gods, and he particularly cites from Stobæus and Plutarch, De Pyth. Orac., p. 404, D., the saying of Heraclitus, that the king, to whom belongs the Delphic Oracle, *επε λεγει επε κρυπτει, αλλα σημαινει*, neither declares nor conceals, but intimates."*

Woodhouse, p. 6;—

"*Signified them*; expressed them by *σημεια* signs significative, for *σημειον* has precisely this meaning in chap. xii., 1."

According to Primasius and others it signifies to denote, manifest, declare. See Pererius on the Apocalypse, p. 775; also Ribera *in loc.*

Pareus, p. 5;—

"We need not restrain the word *signified* to a typical and dark manner of revelation, but rather it noteth a plain and manifest discovery made unto John; because that which is here said to be signified, is in the fore-alleged place expounded by the words shewing, and testifying, &c." . . . So also Grotius *in loc.*

Hyponoia, p. 2, Apocalyptic Introduction;—

"The character of the revelation about to be contemplated, then, is that of a development of doctrinal truth—a development set forth in figurative language, and illustrated by a variety of imagery to be understood only in a spiritual sense. The

* Cornelius a Lapide, Apocalypse, p. 34;—

"It is for one reason that enigmatical and symbolical visions are called mysteries or sacraments, for another that the sacraments of the new law or Christianity are likewise so called. The former are called mysteries and sacraments because they secretly signify things sacred, supernatural, and mystical; for they are as it were images, the whole intent of which is to signify and represent the things themselves, just as an image of Cæsar is no other than a picture or likeness representing Cæsar. The latter, however, are so called because they both signify and exhibit things sacred, and are not empty as those of the old law, but efficacious as those of Christ."

Without being committed to that theory of the sacraments which is received in the church of Rome, we may here adopt the definition of *σημαινω* as including signification and representation. Similar remarks to the foregoing occur in the *Biblia Maxima* of De La Haye, p. 723.

period of this understanding we suppose to be that of Luke xvii., 30, as the day when the Son of Man is revealed, *αποκαλυπτεται*, or unveiled; an opposite development is alluded to, 2 Thess. ii., 8, as the uncovering of the mystery of iniquity, ‘and then shall that wicked be revealed or unveiled.’ The revelation of the Son of Man spoken of in Luke, being an opposite of that of the man of sin predicted by Paul; events to be understood in the same sense, and probably to take place contemporaneously.”

Grotius on the word *angel*, in his works, vol. iii., p. 1159;—

“Sending by his angel; sometimes by one angel, sometimes by another, whom he sent.”

Pererius here observes, p. 775;—

“It may likewise be said that there are many angels; for Christ is not here said to have sent one angel, but *angel*; nor is it unusual in the Sacred Scriptures to use the singular number for the plural.”

Hyponoia, p. 3;—

“The Greek term translated angel is literally a messenger, and any means by which the divine will is communicated, may be said to be a messenger of God. . . . Sometimes we may consider the communication itself as the angel; they are all ministering spirits, and a spirit revealing the things of Christ must be a ministering spirit. We must form our judgment of the kind of angel alluded to in Scripture, by the circumstances of the case in which the term is employed.”

That like the word* *Devil* and *Satan*, the word *angel* may be a collective noun, or noun of multitude, will be further seen in the sequel.

Lancaster, pp. 16, 17, Perpetual Commentary; *John*;—

“During the prophetic ecstacy the very actions and words of a prophet are symbolical, as is rightly observed by Irenæus. . . . The actors in the Revelation being symbolical, the person of St. John himself, wherever he is any ways concerned in

* See Parkhurst’s Greek Lexicon.

the action, must be also symbolical. He is not only the spectator commissioned by Christ to see the visions, but also the mediator, angel, or deputy to transmit them to the church, and must therefore in them bear the part of the church—of all the faithful contained therein—in whatsoever station or time he is represented as acting in any part of the visions."

Elliott; *Horæ Apocalypticae*, chap. vii., ver. 2, p. 160; *—

"That the Evangelist saw, heard, and acted too as a *symbolic man* on the scene of vision, I have already hinted. . . . Suffice it for the present to observe that it is a principle of interpretation recognized by almost all the older interpreters, for example, by Primasius, Andreas of Cæsarea, Ambrosius Ansbertus, &c. . . . For if St. John saw as a symbolic man (I beg the reader's careful attention to my argument) and the vision seen by him was one figurative, so as was here the case, not of events cognizable in real life by mortal eyes, or the actors of a *visible Providence*, but of certain *invisible and spiritual* actings by Christ himself, or his Divine Spirit, then his seeing this must have indicated a perception, on the part of such apostolic men of the depicted æra as he was then impersonating, of those self-same spiritual actings of Christ: in other words, (supposing those actings to have been not for the particular age or occasion only, but constantly,) then of the *offices of Christ* so exemplified. And where the vision might be exhibited with the super-added circumstance of an extraordinary efflux of light arising therewith on the Apocalyptic scene, so as was here† also the case, then the further fact must be regarded as presignified thereby of this doctrinal revelation concerning Christ being one remarkable, and that would be attended with light to his true church, correspondently, at the æra prefigured."

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 4;—

"'John to the seven churches,' *signifies*, to all who are in the Christian world, where the Word is, and by it the Lord is known, and who accede to the church: 'which are in Asia,' *signifies*, to those who from the Word are in the light of truth.' . . . Also in the *Apocalypse Explained*,

* First Edition.

† Implied in the angel coming from the East.—Apoc., chap. vii., ver. 2.

vol. i., p. 20 ;—'The ground and reason of such idea concerning Asia is, because the church was there in ancient times, being then extended through many regions in that quarter, and therefore they who are from thence in heaven are in the light of intelligence, &c.'

Brightman on the Apocalypse, p. 9 ;—

"The persons to whom it is written are the seven churches in Asia, namely, all churches in general that be in all places whatsoever, as Aretas and Bede, and all interpreters, as I suppose, do with one consent determine, and that aright."

Investigator and Expositor, vol. v., p. 151 ;—

"On the whole, though we consider that these epistles may be *accommodated* in the manner just stated, to the circumstances of the church in various successive ages, yet are we disposed to conclude that their *main* design is, to set forth the state of the church at some one particular period of its history, and *that* the period of its great crisis, immediately before and in 'the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth.' At this time we conceive that there will be found, in different sections or communities of the professing church, characteristics answering to those which are here described ; and that there will then be a special need of the exhortations, warnings, and promises given to these typical communities of Asia Minor. Our first reason for this conclusion is, that the typical churches were all co-existing at the time when the messages were sent ; and that all the circumstances to which attention is invited, whether for blame or praise, were to be found within the radius of a hundred miles from Sardis. Our second reason is, that the promises given to these churches have a special reference to the advent of the Lord and to the glory which is to be revealed in the millennium. To these reasons we may add two others which are independent of internal evidence ; viz., thirdly, that the early Christians (as may be seen in Cyprian ad Quiren. ii. 19) were thus led to conclude that these churches were emblematical of the whole church in their age ;—an opinion which has been extended by subsequent writers, who consider that they are designed to describe the circumstances of the church

in any age. And our fourth reason is, that it would be no difficult task to point out the parallels to the characteristics, given in these epistles, in the church at the present day, either already manifested, or beginning to develop themselves in a very striking manner."

Girdlestone's Notes on the Apocalypse, p. 4;—

"The editor of the Investigator, in a critique on an exposition of the seven Apocalyptic epistles, . . suggested a fourth opinion, and one to me absolutely new—namely, that the historic sense should be combined with the prophetic, neither according to its general nor according to its periodistic exposition, but *by expounding it with special application to the great crisis of the last days*. Having digested the hints of my friendly reviewer, but not till some time after nor without some difficulty—so hard it is to relinquish an opinion once deliberately formed—having also discovered, though much later, some new and, as I think, effective arguments in favor of this fourth opinion, I finally embraced it, and now feel myself constrained to confess my former error, and to submit my new arguments."

Ibid, p. 8;—

"It is a certain fact that there does exist an *intimate connection between the seven epistles and the entire compass of the Apocalypse*, which is indicated by constant references throughout; not only by those references at the head of each epistle to the heading vision, nor only by those at the foot of each epistle to the concluding visions, which are obvious to every body; but also by other references in the body of each epistle to those visions which are included in the whole body of the prophecy—visions on all hands acknowledged as relating to the destinies of the Holy Catholic Church. So extensive is this connection that very many profounder students of the prophecy, struck by its multiplicity, thence began to devise various schemes of exposition and fell into various errors: these errors again were seen through by others, but there they rested content, without seeing into the true intent and meaning of the connection itself. Yet let us persevere, each of us applying to himself the following just observation:—'When the mind has long entertained and dwelt on certain views, it insensibly habitu-

ates itself more and more to overlook and forget the flaws and weaknesses of the supposed sustaining evidence; and at length so to mistake its own creations for realities, as to be for a time at least, almost incapable of receiving, or fairly considering, that which would destroy the illusion. Hor. Apoc., pref. 15—by Elliott.”

Wittsius in his *Miscellanea Sacra*, vol. i., p. 650, presents to view the various arguments of those who contend that the whole Apocalypse is to be esteemed as one epistle, addressed to the Catholic Church.*

Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible, art. *Asia*.

“We are not acquainted with the true etymology of the word *Asia*: this name occurs only in the books of the Maccabees and in the New Testament. *Asia* is regarded as that part of the world which has been most favored. Here the first man was created, &c. . . In *Asia* Jesus Christ appeared; and here he wrought salvation for mankind; he died and rose again; and *from hence the light of the Gospel has been diffused over the world*. Laws, arts, sciences, and religions, almost all had their origin in *Asia*.”†

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verses 4 and 5;

“ ‘Grace be unto you, and peace,’ *signifies*, divine salutation: ‘from Him Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come,’ *signifies*, from the Lord who is eternal and infinite, and who is Jehovah: ‘and from the seven spirits which are in sight of his throne,’ *signifies*, from the universal heaven, where the Lord is in his divine truth: ‘from Jesus Christ,’ *signifies*, the divine humanity: ‘himself the faithful witness,’ *signifies*, that he is divine truth itself: ‘the first-begotten from the dead,’ *signifies*, that he is divine goodness itself: ‘and himself the prince of the kings of the earth,’ *signifies*,

* Here the reader may consult also Bingham's ‘*Dissertationes Apocalypticæ*,’ p. 68. Daubuz, *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 20. Woodhouse on the Apocalypse, p. 3. Brightman, p. 20.

† See Wittsius *Miscellanea Sacra*, vol. i., p. 650, on the symbolical meaning of places and persons.

from whom proceeds all truth originating in good, in the church."

We have here three descriptions given us, 1. He who is, and who was, and who is to come. 2. The seven spirits which are in sight of his throne. 3. Jesus Christ.

That the first description is equivalent to the name Jehovah is universally admitted. That the second is equivalent to the name *Elohim* is evident from this, that the seven spirits are generally taken to signify the Holy Spirit, who is septiform, that is, who comprehends all wisdom and truth; but, in the present case, who descends from Jehovah to Jesus Christ, or from the divinity to the humanity; according to the words of Isaiah, xi. 2; 'The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,' &c.

Cornelius a Lapide upon the Apocalypse, p. 17;—

"Do you ask who are these seven spirits? We answer in the first place, Arethas, Primasius, Haymo, Bede, Rupertus, Ansbertus, and Thomas Angliens, understand by them the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, *i. e.*, the Holy Spirit himself who is the author of the seven gifts. For John does not here pray for peace and grace from seven gifts, but from the Holy Spirit. It is thus interpreted by Eucherius in his questions on the New Testament. See the last. 'These seven spirits,' says he, 'are those enumerated by the prophet Isaiah, chap. ii., 2.' The spirit of wisdom and understanding, &c." (See Rupertus, 367, 370, where the seven spirits are interpreted as signifying all the treasures of divinity dwelling in Christ bodily.)*

Gagneus; Biblia Maxima of De La Haye, p. 711; Apocalypse;—

"And from the seven spirits which are in sight of his throne, *i. e.* from the septiform spirit of which Isaiah thus speaks, chap.

* Alcasar says, p. 148, that it is as absurd to say that seven spirits mean one Holy Spirit, as that seven Christs mean one Christ. But if so, may not a similar objection be urged against the word *Elohim*? We may here add the observation of Pareus, p. 8: . . . "Seldom the name of God or of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost, is found in the Revelation, in express words; but John, speaking of God, useth for the most part prophetic descriptions."

xi., 2; ‘And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.’ This spirit, however, simple in substance, is multifold in his gifts; in sight of the throne of God, that is, of the angels and the blessed who are called the throne of God, because God may be said to sit, to dwell, and to reign in them.”

In the next place the same is said of this septiform spirit as of Elohim. Esthivius says it is a question whether the seven spirits are created angels or the uncreated septiform spirit who is called in the plural number seven spirits, by reason of the multiplicity of his gifts; as God is also called in Hebrew by a noun of multitude *Elohim*; (*Biblia Maxima in loc.*)

It is certain, however, that a considerable number of the best writers* regard the seven spirits as signifying the septiform spirit, and that the same is said of this septiform spirit as of Elohim. For the septiform spirit is said to be one in itself, but multifold in its influxes; just as God is one in essence, but multifold in regard to distinct perfections. Bishop Horseley observes in his *Biblical Criticism*, vol. i., p. 25;—

.. “That Abarbanel, however absurd his etymology of the word may be, has given the true sense of the word when he says, that as the word Jehovah is to be expounded of the divine essence in itself, Elohim on the other hand is to be understood in relation to external things; that it is a name of God with respect to effect, production, creation, and influence upon all things in the universe, which receive from God their being, are maintained by him in a state of well being, and in the vigor of their respective natures.”

And again, p. 24;—

.. “Elohim as a name of the true God is so constantly used

* See above, p. 221.

as a term of relation, that it is reasonable to think the idea is involved in the very meaning of the Word.”*

Hitherto then the two descriptions we have been considering are equivalent to the name Jehovah Elohim. Now the third or title Jesus Christ is derived from the Incarnation, and is applied to designate the Word made flesh or Jehovah Elohim Incarnate. That this is the case is intimated by Cornelius a Lapide and others, p. 16, who say that the title belongs to Christ as man, as is also evident from the context, in which it is said that he hath washed us in his blood.

When Swedenborg says, therefore, that the seven spirits signify the universal heaven where the Lord is in his divine truth, he explains himself afterwards as meaning primarily or abstractedly the Lord himself as to the divine truth which is in him, and which is septiform, when considered as comprehending in himself the whole assemblage of divine perfections, and as also variously received by the heavens, or the angels, according to their states.†

Here then we find the whole Trinity in the single person of the Lord Jesus. For first the whole Trinity made this revelation to the humanity. For says Gilbert, *Glossa Ordinaria*, p. 239½, “The whole Trinity made this revelation to Christ according to the humanity.” So likewise affirms De Lyra, in his exposition of this passage of Gilbert; adding that Christ, in so far as he is God, made this revelation to himself as man. So likewise the *Glossa Ordinaria*, p. 241, in the Remarks on the Prologue of Jerome; and De Lyra says on chap. i., verse 1, that although it was an angel who appeared to John in the Apocalypse, instructing him, yet that angel sustained the character (or person) of the Son of God in human form;

* See Ambrose Ansbert on this passage, and Robertson.

† See Calmet’s Dictionary, article *Elohim*; Taylor’s Additions.

and Ambrose Ansbert frequently asserts that in the person of that representative angel was the whole Trinity, the angel himself being representative of the Incarnate Word.

Moreover, in the *Biblia Maxima* of De La Haye, on Rev., chap. iv., p. 757, to the question who it is that sits on the throne, Menochius and Trinus answer that it is the most Holy Trinity or the Triune God in a human appearance and a regal form, as Lord of heaven and earth; and this is the interpretation of Richard of St. Victor, Viegas, Ribera, and others. The *Glossa Ordinaria* also says, p. 246½, on that chapter, that the one sitting on the throne, is the same with the one walking amidst the golden candlesticks; and De Lyra, in one passage, that it is Christ, in another, the Triune God.

Cornelius a Lapide, likewise, observes, p. 17, that the whole Trinity will come to judgment, and will judge the world not by itself, but by the man Christ. Now this writer remarks, p. 25, on Rev., chap. i., that the one appearing to John was Christ, or that it was an appearance representative of Christ; and although, on chap. iv., p. 80, he says that the one sitting on the throne was not Christ, yet he admits that it was God in a human and kingly form sitting upon the throne: God absolutely; the three one God, or the Holy Trinity, in reference to whom the *Sanctus* is three times repeated, Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit. These three most holy are the very primæval, uncreated, essential, unbounded sanctity. These are his own words.

Pererius says on the Apocalypse, chap. iv., disputation ii., that Ambrose conceived that the one sitting upon the throne, chap. iv., was Jesus Christ; and although Pererius himself thinks that it was the Father, yet he says that it may be affirmed that under the figure of the one sitting upon the throne was designated the whole of the most holy Trinity.

Bishop Horsley acknowledges in his *Biblical Criticism*

vol. i., p. 29, that the second person singly, to whom the word Elohim is sometimes applied, is the representative of the whole Trinity. Dr. Moberly, in his Sayings of the Great Forty Days, observes, p. 204;—

“Nor must it be forgotten that the later Scriptures speak of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as it were by himself, as a great, mysterious, and saving name, which doth not exclude, but rather includes, and in its own mysterious comprehensiveness declares, the entire name of God.”

Dr. Moberly proceeds also to observe, that according to the doctrine of many of the fathers, “in the name Christ is the confession of all the Trinity, for it exhibiteth the Father the Anointer, the Son the Anointed, and the Holy Ghost the Sacred Uncction;” that “there are many passages in which the name of the Lord, and the name of the Lord Jesus, must needs signify the name of the Holy Trinity;” so that “being baptized into the name of the Holy Trinity, we are shortly said to be in Christ.”

It has already been seen that the name God, Elohim; and Father, Jehovah; signify the same divine being in two different respects. That two persons are not signified in the expression God and his Father, is also maintained by Ambrose Ansbert and others.

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 5;—

“‘Who loveth us and washeth us from our sins in his blood,’ *signifies*, who out of love and mercy reforms and regenerates men by his divine truths from the Word: ‘and maketh us kings and priests,’ *signifies*, who giveth those who are born of him, that is, regenerated, to be in wisdom from divine truths, and in love from divine goods: ‘to God and his Father,’ *signifies*, and thereby images of his divine wisdom and his divine love: ‘to Him be glory and strength to ages of ages,’ *signifies*, to whom alone belongeth divine majesty and divine omnipotence to eternity: ‘amen,’ *signifies*, divine confirmation from the truth, thus, from himself.”

With respect to the symbol *blood*, which frequently occurs in the Apocalypse, it will be amply explained in the sequel. We shall at present only remark that Mr. Horne, in his Index to the Symbolical Language of the Scripture, observes that in Apoc., chap. vii., verse 14, a passage parallel to the present, “It evidently signifies the *doctrines of the cross*, which are the great means of purifying the believer’s heart.”

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 7 ;—

“ ‘Behold he cometh with the clouds of heaven,’ *signifies*, that the Lord will reveal himself in the literal sense of the word, and will open its spiritual sense at the end of the church : ‘and every eye shall see him,’ *signifies*, that all who are in the understanding of divine truth from affection will acknowledge Him : ‘and they also which pierced him,’ *signifies*, that they also will see which are in falses in the church : ‘and all the tribes of the earth shall wail,’ *signifies*, that this will be when there are no longer any goods and truths in the church : ‘even so, Amen,’ *signifies*, the divine confirmation that so it will be.”

Ambrose Ausbert, on the Apocalypse ; Magna Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum ;—

“Great is the mystery which we believe to be signified by the word *clouds*, mention of which we see frequently made by the Holy Spirit in Divine Scripture. For it was with a *cloud* that the omnipotent God went before the children of Israel in their exit from Egypt, and led them to the land of promise ; it was with a *cloud* that He descended upon the tabernacle of testimony. In a *cloud* it was that his glory appeared to men. Upon the holy mount, before three of his disciples, when the Incarnate Word of God shone forth in the glory of his majesty, a bright *cloud* overshadowed Moses and Elias, and from the same *cloud* sounded forth the voice of the Father, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ It was with a *cloud*, when the apostles were beholding him, that he entered into the heavens, and it is in a *cloud* that he shall come in the end of the world, as it is written. . . . Inasmuch however as in this

revelation we must not readily conceive of any thing according to the letter, let us speak of those *clouds* which we know to be introduced mystically in the divine volumes, and with which we doubt not the Lord will come to judgment."

After shewing that by these *clouds* are meant preachers, or the clemency of God, or the body of Christ, he adds;—

"Sometimes by the name of the same *cloud* is designated the illumination of the just and the obsecration of the wicked, as in Exodus we see fulfilled historically, and which is to be fulfilled figuratively, for the angel of the Lord went before the people of Israel in a cloud when coming out of Egypt, and the Egyptians pursued after them, &c.; 'And the pillar of *cloud* went from before their face, and stood behind them, and it came between the camp of the Egyptians, and the camp of Israel; and it was a *cloud* and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.' A very marvellous circumstance! If the *cloud* was dark, how gave it forth light by night, except by giving the light of its brightness to the people of Israel, and blinding the eyes of the Egyptians, just as with the righteous and internal judgment of God, we see to be the case daily at present, and we believe will also be the case in the last days, so that from the same source from which the elect derive illumination, the reprobate will derive only darkness."*

First with regard to the *cloud* that is spoken of in the Old Testament, or the *Shekinah*.

On this subject Dr. Allix observes in his *Judgment of the Jewish Churches*, p. 179, speaking of the Israelites;—

"A month after their coming out of Egypt, they murmured for want of bread against Moses and Aaron; at which God shewed himself so much concerned, that he made his glory appear to them in the *cloud*, Exod. xvi., 7. 10. That according to the sense of the ancient church this was the *Shekinah of the Word*, has been just now newly shewed, both from Philo and from all the Targums; and the same we find here in this place,

* See also Aretas upon the Apocalypse, verse 7, and Williams on the Study of the Gospels, p. 98, to the same effect.

ver. 8, where Moses tells them, ‘Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Word of the Lord,’ according to Onkelos and Jonathan.”

Again, p. 181 ;—

“In the ark were contained the tables of the law. Upon it was placed the mercy-seat, overshadowed with the wings of two cherubims that stood on the two ends of the mercy-seat, Exod. xxxvii., 9, looking each of them toward the other, and both of them toward the mercy-seat. This provision being made for the place of his *Shekinah*, the *Word*, who shewed himself before in a *cloudy pillar* by day and in a fiery pillar by night, that stood over the camp; now from thence came to take possession of his royal seat in the tabernacle over the ark; from whence, out of the void space between these cherubims, it was, that the *Word* used to speak to Moses, and to give him orders from time to time for the government of his people, according to the paraphrasts on Exod. xxv., 22, xxx., 36; Numb. xvii., 4, and especially Numb. vii., 8, 9, as has been above mentioned.”

Again, p. 222 ;—

“Let it be observed, that the Sanhedrim calls the Messiah the Son of God, Matt. xxvi., 63, and when Jesus applied to himself a prophecy of the Messiah in Dan. vii., 13, ‘Hereafter shall you see the Son of Man coming in the *clouds* of heaven,’ Matt. xxvi., 64; we are told by St. Luke what they replied, ‘Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God?’ Luke xxii., 70; which is an argument that though the title of Son of man did very well express the humble estate of the Messiah, yet they were not ignorant that the *Λόγος* should be the Messiah, and that the Messiah should be the proper Son of God; such a Son as for whom, the clouds, the chariot of the Divinity, should be prepared to attend his triumph, in the time when he should reveal himself from heaven.”

“2. That this notion is so deeply rivetted into the minds of the Jews even since Christ’s time, that because the word *anan*, the *clouds*, is spoken of in this passage of Daniel, therefore they have asserted, in consequence of this opinion, that the Messiah shall be called by this name. This we see in the Targum on 1 Chron. iii., 34, where speaking of the children of

Elioenai, it adds, the seventh, which is *Anani*, is the King Messias. And thus it is explained in Sanhedrim, fol. 62, in the comments of Saadia and Jarchi on Dan. vii., 13, and in Jalkut on Zech. iv., 7."

Again, p. 268 ;—

"Jesus Christ saith, John v., 22 and 26, that 'God gave all judgment to the Son,'—that 'the Son hath the life in himself.' All that according to the style of the Jews touching the *Λόγος*. For they refer those words to the Shekinah, 'He shall judge the world in righteousness.' R. Men., fol. 46, col. i.; and fol. 122, col. 4."

Again, p. 270, alluding to St. Paul ;—

"He calls God, Heb. x., 27, and xii., 19, a consuming fire ; and applies to Jesus Christ that very idea. But he speaks so after the Jewish manner, for they believe that the power of judging the world belongs to the *Shekinah*, and they refer to him what is said in Deut. iv., 24, that God is a consuming fire. R. Menach., fol. 6., col. 4 ; and fol. 8., col. 3.

With regard to the New Testament, commentators admit that the *cloud* which appeared at our Saviour's baptism, and at the transfiguration, was no other than the *Shekinah*—the ancient *cloud of glory* which is mentioned in the Old Testament ; and hence analogy would lead us to presume that the cloud which received our Lord at the ascension, and the cloud in which he comes at the last day, is a cloud of exactly the same description. Indeed on this subject we have direct testimony.

Mr. Fleming, in his *Christology*, observes, vol. i., p. 301 ;—

"After Christ's ascension we read of more than one instance of his representing himself with the *glory* of the ancient *Shekinah* ; so he did to Stephen, who, looking up stedfastly into heaven, saw there the *glory* (or *Shekinah*) of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of the same. Something of this sort we read of in the case of Ananias and Peter : for both of them saw something of the *glory of the Lord* though it was in

a vision or trance only; and to both of them Christ is said to have spoken. But the most illustrious manifestations of Christ, as the *Shekinah*, were to Paul and John. As for Paul, we have a threefold account of the extraordinary manifestation of Christ this way to him; of which he gives this remarkable account to Agrippa. ‘At mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me, and them which journeyed with me,’ &c. Now we find not that he saw Christ in human shape, tho’ he heard a human voice: and yet we find that he looks upon this as the seeing of him. For, as it is essential to the character of an apostle to have seen Christ, so as he might be a witness of his resurrection, (for the disciples agree upon this as a necessary qualification in any that was to be chosen into that order :) so we find the apostle Paul giving this proof of his apostleship; ‘am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?’ But when and where did he see Christ? Take his own answer in that place where he expressly proves the truth of the resurrection; where, after he had told us how often Christ had appeared after his resurrection, and to whom; he adds, ‘and last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.’ So that it is plain, that Paul never saw Christ as man, but as the *Shekinah*. And yet he calls this the seeing of the Lord Jesus. And well he might; seeing this was his ancient and most glorious form or way of manifesting himself. But, however, I take notice of this chiefly upon this account; that we may see hence, that the apostle reckoned that he had seen Christ as really as any of the other apostles had done; and consequently, that it was his opinion, that the seeing of the *Shekinah*, though without the appearance of human likeness, was the seeing of Christ, as much as if both had been seen; as was the case of Stephen.”

Again, Archbishop Tenison, in his *Treatise on Idolatry*, observes, p. 378;—

“But whatsoever men may conceive of the space possessed by Christ’s mere body, they ought not to think of his *Shekinah* as of a confined light in some one quarter of the heavens, but as a glorious lustre filling all heavens, and shining towards this

earth as a circumference of glory on a single point. They ought to lose their imaginations in an abyss of light."

"From this heavenly throne Christ will come at the day of judgment in a *Shekinah of clouds* and flaming fire," &c.

"This *Shekinah* in milder, but most inexpressible lustre, I suppose to be that which the schools call *the beatifick vision*, and which the Scripture intendeth in the promise of seeing God face to face."

Of what nature, then, is this *Shekinah* or heavenly cloud?

Bishop Patrick affirms that it was an *emanation from the Deity*. Thus on Exodus xiii., 21;—

"By the Lord we are here to understand the *Shekinah*, or divine majesty, which appeared to Moses in the bush, iii., 2, when he gave him commission to bring his people out of Egypt, and directed him all along in his embassy to Pharaoh, and his treaty with him, vi., 1, &c., and now appeared in a *glorious cloud* to conduct them, and assure them that he would take care of them. For this *cloud* was a symbol of his gracious presence with them, and special providence over them; it being an *emanation from Him* (saith R. Levi ben Gerson), which was a sign (as others of the Jews speak) that God was night and day with them, to keep them from all evil."

Matthew Henry, on 1 Kings viii., 11, calls the *Shekinah*, or *cloud*, a visible *emanation of the divine glory*.

The same view of the subject is repeated in the *Comment of the Religious Tract Society* on the same passage.

Scott considers that it is not easy to distinguish between the cloud and the divine glory; while Bishop Heber in his Bampton Lectures, p. 237, 239, says that the *Shekinah*, or the *cloud*, was not a symbol of the presence of God, but was God himself, and the same with the Holy Ghost.

Macknight observes, in his *Harmony of the Gospels*, vol. ii., p. 622, on the words; "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"

“(It seems they looked up stedfastly after he was gone out of sight, expecting, perhaps, to see him come down again immediately :) ‘This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven ;’ he shall come in the same glorious manner in which you have now seen him ascend. The angels spake of his coming to judge the world at the last day, a description of which Jesus in his life-time had given ; Matt. xvi., 27 : ‘For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels.’ Wherefore the *cloud* whereon the Lord now ascended being the same with that in which he is to come again, was more bright and pure than the clearest lambent flame ; for it was *the glory of the Father*, that is, the *Shekinah*, or visible symbol of the divine presence, which appeared to the patriarchs in ancient times, which filled the temple at its dedication, 2 Chron. vii., 3, and which, in its greatest splendor, cannot be beheld with mortal eyes ; so for that reason is called the light inaccessible, in which God dwells, 1 Tim. vi., 16. It was on this occasion, probably, that our Lord’s body was changed, acquiring the glories of immortality, perhaps in the view of the disciples, who looked at their master all the time he was mounting, Acts i., 10.

Hitherto, then, we have seen the *Shekinah* regarded as the Word ; the cloud as an emanation from the Word, or as the *Holy Spirit*, or as the glory of the Father. With this view of the subject coincide the following interpretations given by the fathers, and quoted from the *Sylva Sylvarum* of Lauretus ;—

“The *cloud* protecting the Hebrews, that is, the faithful, may be said to be the *Holy Spirit* ; but blinding the Egyptians.”

“The bright *cloud* overshadowing the disciples may be said to be the eternal *Power*, or the *Holy Spirit*.”—Origen.

“The *cloud*, composed of an extremely thin and lucid air, and emitting light, signifies *Christ*, or the divine and shining beauty of *truth* in Christ.”—Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome, Cyril, &c.

“The very *humanity of Christ* is the *cloud of day*, in which God led forth his people from Egypt.” . . .

"The *cloud* between the Hebrews and Egyptians is the *Word of God*, gently dropping the dews of *wisdom* upon minds endowed with virtue—a *wisdom* free from all ills."—Philo, Georgius Venetus.

"*Cloud* is likewise called apostolical *doctrine*, in which Christ appears as a bow in the clouds, which designate the *figures* of the Old Testament."—Hilary, Isychius, Augustin, Bede, Jerome.

"It is with these *clouds* that God covereth the heaven. They are dark clouds by reason of their obscurity, but gave out light to the night of the ancient people. The *depth of Scripture* is likewise called a *cloud*; Matt. xxiv., 26." . . .

"Our forefathers were said to be baptized in a cloud, because they were baptized in a *figure*." . . .

"The *grace* of God, the divine *protection*, divine *consolation*, and *heavenly blessings* may be also called a *cloud*, as long as the *cloud of grace* was in the tabernacle of the covenant."—Origen, Gregory, Tertullian, Gregory Nyssen.

"The *cloud* in which the Son of Man will come will be a *consolation* and *protection* to the good." . . .

Again, Article *Nebula*;—

"The cloud into which Moses entered may signify the secrets of the divine power and wisdom."—Gregory, Jerome, Eucherius.*

In the *Catena Aurea* of Thomas Aquinas on Matthew xxiv., 30, p. 825, occurs the following remark;—

"And one may say, that as in the creation of man, God took clay from the earth and made man; so to manifest the glory of Christ, the Lord taking of the heaven, and of its substance, gave it a body of a bright *cloud* in the Transfiguration, and of bright *clouds* at the Consummation; wherefore it is here said, in the *clouds of heaven*, as it was there said, of the clay

* "A *cloud* is also the confusion of unquiet *thoughts* in the mind, by which, being overcast, it is hindered from the vision and contemplation of divine things." . . .

. . . "A *cloud* intervening is when the mind is overshadowed by a certain thick darkness and obscurity of *blindness*, lest it should be illustrated by a ray of divine contemplation." . . .

. . . "A *cloud* also is the great *darkness* and *blindness* which man incurs by means of sin." (Dictionary, Laetus.)

of the ground. And it behoves the Father to give all such admirable gifts to the Son, because he humbled himself; and He has also exalted him, not only spiritually but bodily, that he should come upon such *clouds*; and perhaps upon *rational clouds*, that even the chariot of the glorified Son of Man should not be irrational."

Again;—

"And He shall send his angels, who from the four quarters of the world shall gather together his elect. All these things He does at the last hour, coming in his members as in the *clouds*, or in the whole church as in one great *cloud*, as now he ceases not to come. And with great power and glory, because his power will seem greater in the saints, to whom He will give great power, that they may not be overcome of persecution. Origen; or He comes every day with great power to the mind of the believer in the *clouds of prophecy*, that is, in the *Scriptures* of the prophets and the apostles, who utter *the word of God with a meaning above human nature*. Also we say, that to those who understand He comes with great glory, and that this is the more seen in the second coming of the *Word*, which is to the perfect. And so it may be, that all which the three evangelists have said concerning Christ's coming, if carefully compared together and thoroughly examined, would be found to apply to his continual daily coming in his body, which is the church; of which coming he said in another place, 'Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the *clouds of heaven*,' excepting those places in which He promises that, his last coming, in his own person."

Aquinas quotes a similar interpretation by Augustin on Luke xxi., 27, p. 687;—

"But the words, *Coming in the clouds*, may be taken in two ways. Either coming in his church as it were in a *cloud*, as He now ceases not to come. But then it shall be with great power and majesty, for far greater will his power and might appear to his saints, to whom He will give great virtue, that they may not be overcome in such a fearful persecution. Or in his body, in which He sits at his Father's right hand, He must rightly be supposed to come, and not only in his body, but also in a *cloud*,

for He will come even as he went away, 'and a *cloud* received him out of their sight.'"

Augustin observes in his works, vol. i., p. 837, on Gen. ii., 5;—

"God had not yet rained upon the earth. Because now also God maketh the green thing of the earth, but this by raining upon the earth; that is, He maketh souls to become revirecent by means of his word; but He waters them from the *clouds*, that is to say, from the *Scriptures* of the prophets and apostles. And rightly are they called *clouds*, because, when to those words which sound and die away in the vibration of air, there is added the *obscurity of allegories*, being thus involved in thick darkness as it were, they become as *clouds*. And when in treating of the *Scriptures* these words are uttered, then does, as it were, a shower of truth fall down into the minds of those who rightly understand them."*

Alcasar upon the Apocalypse, note vii., chap i., ver. 7, after discoursing upon the natural history or philosophy of clouds in the visible world, and the prominence of the symbol in the *Scriptures*, thus observes;—

"Since, therefore, it was highly expedient that the providence of God should have been concealed, for that very reason the symbol of clouds was a most beautiful one to be chosen to signify that providence; for on the one hand they indicate the presence of God, and on the other they cover the heaven, and intercept the light from reaching the eyes. And to indicate this arcanum, it was an act of great wisdom that the cloud in which God exhibited his presence at the dedication of the tabernacle and temple, so filled the temple, that the priests could discern nothing whatever. From which we infer, that it was the design of God to shew that his providence is most intimately present, and most profoundly hidden."

"Clouds, therefore, partly by veiling and partly by unveiling, appositely figure forth the providence of God. Hence we observe, that clouds themselves may be thought of in two ways.

* This signification of a shower will be further followed out when explaining the symbol *hail*, in the sequel; where it will be seen that as rain denotes *truth*, so hail denotes *falsity*.

First, as a chariot or seat, which does not prevent our view of the one that comes in the clouds; secondly, as a covering, within which any one is concealed so as not to be seen. With the former agrees what is said in the Apocalypse xiv., 14, Sitting upon a white cloud; and Psalm civ., 3, ‘Who maketh the clouds his chariot.’ With the latter, what is said in Psalm xviii., 11, ‘His pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies;’ Psalm xcvii., 2, ‘Clouds and darkness are round about him;’ Ezekiel xxxii., 7, ‘I will cover the sun with a cloud;’ Exod. xl., 34, ‘A cloud covered the tabernacle:’ with other passages of the same kind.

“In the transfiguration and ascension of Christ and in the day of the last judgment, we have a still more apt method of philosophizing concerning clouds; so that they may be understood as clear signs to shew that Christ is the supreme Lord and Governor of the world. For the proper signification of clouds is the exhibition of divinity in him who is as it were the Lord of the clouds, for he makes use of their services to indicate his providence, and either to conceal or reveal it, according as it may conduce the more to his glory. Therefore it is that the Scriptures make such frequent mention of clouds at the last judgment. This signification has such force in it, that even *although Christ should not come to judgment in a material (corporea) cloud, it might nevertheless be truly and beautifully said that he would come in clouds* according to the language of sacred Scripture. Not that I therefore would deny that there will be true material clouds at the day of judgment; for I have no mind to innovation in what pertains to teaching; I only mean to assert that *the symbolical signification of clouds is so beautiful and apt, that although there should be no clouds, properly so called, Christ might nevertheless most truly and most significantly be said then to come in the clouds of heaven.* And this I wish to say, the rather in order that it may be noted, that *in the symbol of the clouds there is latent a much greater and more excellent mystery than any one might think, who considered only the grammatical sense of the word; a sense to which I see that some persons are too much addicted.*” . . .

After shewing that the humanity of Christ, angels,

preachers of the Gospel in the church, are all designated by clouds, he adds;—

“The doctrine of the Gospel is a cloud which manifests the glory and the presence of God in the very darkness which it effuses upon the eyes of human reason, while concealing those things which nevertheless it affirms to be perfectly true; as was prefigured in the dedication of the tabernacle and temple. For the preaching of the mysteries of the trinity, incarnation, eucharist, and death of Christ, is indeed to God himself a most glorious cloud, yet of such a kind as most perfectly conceals from us the very thing which it testifies, and brings the understanding in captivity to faith. . . . Now if that cloud was perfectly dark in which God shewed himself to be present when he descended on Mount Sinai to promulgate the law, much more obscure and glorious is the cloud of the preaching of the Gospel. And in this is most truly fulfilled the words of Solomon, ‘The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the cloud;’ in that cloud, I say, which on the one hand convinces us, so that we believe the mysteries of our faith to be most certain and plainly divine, while on the other hand, by reason of its darkness and majesty it requires of us a mighty reverence and veneration of God, in believing those great mysteries while the veil is upon our eyes.”

Moreover, “clouds receive into themselves the brightness of the sun, and are highly illuminated from above; but they accommodate this brightness, and transmit it attempered to our vision. St. Dionysius intimates this when speaking of the celestial hierarchy, chap. xv., although he is there speaking of the angels; but it is true also with respect to the angels of the hierarchy of the church.”

In consequence of this symbolical meaning of the clouds, Alcasar thus paraphrases the passage, ‘Behold he cometh in clouds, and every eye shall see him;’—

. . . “Behold the Apocalypse sets before us the advent of Christ in the clouds of the preaching of the Gospel; by means of which God pours down his heavenly shower, that is, the spirit of grace and of prayers; and thus will it come to pass that the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and they shall look

upon Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith.—*See also the Commentary.*

Glossa Ordinaria, p. 241 ;—

“Him ought ye truly to glorify, because he it is who, to reward us, is to come—*with clouds*—*i. e.*, with holy men who have been clouds, by showering upon others *doctrine* and performing miracles.”

Viegas presents similar interpretations. Mede suggests the opinion that the opening of the temple, in Apoc. chap. xi., ver. 19, and the exhibition of the ark there mentioned, may be the revelation of Christ and the coming with clouds, spoken of in the verse we have been considering. But this opening of the temple and exhibition of the ark are referred by other writers to times when the bright clouds of scriptural light are to break in upon the church ; as will be seen in the sequel.

Moreover, Hammond on Acts i., ver. 5, &c., and Professor Lee, in his Enquiry into the Nature, Progress, and End of Prophecy, p. 108, obviously incline to similar interpretations, though applied to another period. Indeed the latter observes, p. 109 ;—

“To take refuge in a strictly literal interpretation of this place, and so to extract a personal appearance of Christ, is contrary to the manifest intention of Scripture, and to every fact of these times, and deserves not a moment’s further consideration.”

Dr. Gill observes on Heb. ix., that the glory in which Christ will appear at his second advent, will be the same with that which appeared between the cherubim ; thus he observes, p. 434 ;—

“And as to these cherubims of glory,* they are very glorious creatures, and in the glory of *them* will Christ come a second time.”†

* According to Jerome, the word *cherubim* signifies a multitude of knowledge.

† On Isaiah iv., 5, Dr. Gill has the following comment ;—

“And as the pillar of fire was to give light to the children of Israel, and direct

Matthew Henry on Matthew xvii., 5, observes ;—

“This *cloud* was intended to break the force of that great light which otherwise would have overcome the disciples, and have been intolerable ; it was like the vail which Moses put upon his face when it shone. God in manifesting himself to his people, considers their frame. This *cloud* was to their eyes as parables to their understandings, to convey spiritual things by things sensible, as they were able to bear them.”

In Poole’s *Synopsis*, on the same passage it is admitted that the *bright cloud* signifies *Gospel truth*. Thus it is observed, p. 435, on Matthew xvii., 5 ;—

“A *cloud* is a sign of the divine presence, Exod. xl., 34 ; also Exod. xvi., 10 ; Num. xi., 25 ; as also of the divine majesty of Christ (Grotius, Bruno, Maldonatus). The *cloud* was *bright* by way of discriminating it from the old law, which was given in a cloud thick and dark, Exod. xix., 9, and xx., 21, by which we are given to understand the different economy of the different times (Grotius). It was a proof that now was exhibited the thing itself and the clear *truth* ; as also love and benevolence.”

Hyponoia, p. 12 ; —

“Behold, &c.’—Here the apostle, as if carried away by the transport of his feelings, anticipates apparently the great

them in their passage through the wilderness in the night time, so Christ will be the light of his people, by the very great illuminations of his spirit, and the clear preaching of the Gospel, which will give both light and heat ; and from both which will arise such a bright shining light, as shall drive away the night of affliction, darkness, desertion, and sleepiness, which shall precede this glorious day ; see Isa. lx., 1, 2. And this will be all the Lord’s doing, a work of his almighty power, and therefore signified by a creation ; it will be a new, strange, and marvellous work ; wonderful in the eyes of the saints, and in the eyes of the world, that those who have been forsaken and hated should be made an eternal excellency, and the joy of many generations, Isa. lx., 15, and lxxv., 17, 18 : for upon all the glory shall be a defence ; the glory of the churches in the latter day will greatly consist in the presence of God and Christ ; in the pouring forth of the Spirit upon them ; in the purity of Gospel doctrine, worship, and discipline among them ; in the holiness of their lives and conversation ; and in the peace, harmony, and unity, that shall subsist with them ; and the defence of this glory will be partly the ministers of the Gospel, in the pure administration of the word and ordinances, as means, but principally the Lord himself, who will be a wall of fire about them, and will appoint salvation as walls and bulwarks to them, Zech. ii., 5 ; Isa. xxvi., 1.”

subject matter, as we apprehend it to be, of the revelation committed to him ; that of the second coming, or manifestation of his Master ; as if he had said, In the revelation about to be made, the coming of the Lord is to be found. He that loved us is there about to unveil himself. He that hath done so much for us is now, amidst the types and shadows and figurative language of this book, as amidst the *clouds*, about to manifest himself ;—to reveal his love and the mysteries of the work of his salvation. Here, in this revelation spiritually interpreted, he is coming to the understanding.”

Again, p. 13 ;—

“ God is said (Ps. cxi., 7, 8) to cover the heaven with *clouds* : clouds being represented as a veil spread over the heavens. The heavens, it is said also, display the glory of God, and the firmament his handy-work. Analogous to this we suppose the heavens, in a spiritual sense, to be that exhibition of divine sovereignty which manifests the glory of God, in his goodness towards a lost world ; and his power in the work of redemption. As the *clouds*, in a *literal* sense, veil the material heavens, and partially or entirely prevent our contemplation of celestial objects ; so, in a *spiritual* sense, we may give the appellation of *clouds* to whatever conceals, wholly or partially, from the human understanding the wonders of redemption. Such concealment is undeniably produced by the types and symbols and figurative language, in which a large portion of divine revelation is handed down to us.”

“ ‘ I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot hear them now,’ (John xvi., 12,)—this was said even to the most favored disciples of our Lord, and so probably it might have been said to his followers ever since that time. Our mental vision is not yet capable of sustaining the brightness of a full manifestation, or shining forth of the Sun of righteousness. God in mercy has covered his revelation of truth with a cloudy veil ; we see as yet only through a glass darkly, (1 Cor. xiii., 12,) but no doubt we are permitted to see as much as we are able to bear.”

“ Previous to the coming of Christ in the flesh, the *cloud* may be said to have been one of thick thickness (Joel ii., 2,

and Zeph. i., 18). But the light of divine truth has since been progressively revealing itself, becoming brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. In the present day, the understanding of the symbolie language of revelation is much advanced. The heavenly exhibition is still veiled by a figurative mode of expression, but partially understood. We may say, however, perhaps, with the prophet, (Zech. x., 1,) 'The Lord hath made bright *clouds*.' In the account we have of the transfiguration upon the mount, where Moses and Elias were seen ministering to Jesus, it is said, 'Behold, a bright cloud overshadowed him,' Matt. xvii., 12. So, when we see the law and the prophets ushering in a development of Gospel mysteries, our Redeemer may be spoken of as veiled only with a cloud of brightness. On the other hand, when the understanding has no perception of Jesus, as the sun of righteousness, it may be said to be a day of thick clouds."

"But while the figures and symbols of Scripture are the instruments of a temporary veiling or concealment of the mysteries of divine goodness, they are also the instruments of handing down and of promulgating the knowledge of this goodness. The knowledge of the Lord is to cover the earth, and this result is to be brought about by the use of these means; so it is said, Ps. iv., 3, 'He maketh the *clouds* his chariot.' These types and figures, when properly understood, become the vehicles of setting forth the true character of Jehovah. This proper understanding we suppose to be comprehended under the figure of his coming in, or with the clouds."

"19. 'And every eye shall see him,'—that is, intellectually, corresponding with the petition of the Apostle, Eph. i., 17, 18, 'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation (*αποκαλύψεως*) in the knowledge of him, that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' To every one, possessing this spirit of wisdom, or thus enlightened, Christ may be said to come intellectually, or to be seen coming as in the clouds, or with clouds."

In harmony with this interpretation, we may here mention that Dr. Henry More here says, that ‘according to Aristotle, the eye of the soul is the understanding or intellect, so that it is plain the eye is an iconism of knowledge, as darkness and blindness is of ignorance, an expression frequent in the Scripture;’ p. 541.

Moreover on Matthew xvii., in the *Commentary of the Religious Tract Society*, it is observed, p. 107;—

“While Peter spake, ‘a bright *cloud* overshadowed them;’ an emblem of the divine presence and glory. Not like the tremendous display at mount Sinai, nor the thick darkness by which the Lord took possession of the temple, but a bright *cloud*, denoting the introduction of a clearer and more encouraging discovery of the divine glory by the Gospel.”

In the *Symbolical Dictionary* of Daubuz, by Habershon and Lancaster, it is likewise admitted that *clouds** signify *wisdom*; thus it is said;—

* In his work on the Apocalypse, Robertson observes, p. 456, speaking of the New Jerusalem;—

“The appearance of this city is described in two kinds of expressions,

“(1.) One proper, ‘having the glory of God,’ v., 11. This is a description of the presence of God, and alludes to the cloudy indication thereof, often in the tabernacle, and sometime in the temple; but here the whole city is filled therewith. We had the glory of the divine justice represented by smoke, chap. xv., 8; here we have his glory without smoke, yea, without a cloud; which says, Then there will be no dark types or ceremonial discoveries of God, as in the old dispensation. And therefore, when this is amplified, ver. 22, 23, it is said, ‘I saw no temple therein,’ *i. e.*, no particular spot sequestrate for the divine manifestations: for the glory of God will be diffused through the whole city. The same is said of Ezekiel’s city, Ezek. xlvi., 35. ‘The name of that city from that day, shall be Jehovah Schamma, *i. e.*, The Lord is there.’ Then will be completely fulfilled that prophecy of our Lord, John iv., 23, ‘The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth:’ which will be plainer from the (2.) Expression, which is by comparison, or a similitude, ‘Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.’ God’s gracious presence is often expressed by light, Psalm xxvii., 1: ‘The Lord is my light and my salvation;’ and when the Psalmist prays for God’s favor, he useth the same expression, Psalm iv., 6: ‘Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us;’ Psalm xxxvi., 9: ‘In thy light we shall see light.’ The presence of God was dark and *cloudy* under the law; but, in this state of the church, there will be a clear and full manifestation of God.”

"Clouds, by the Indian interpreter, c. 163, are explained of *wisdom*."

Again ;—

"A dropping showery *cloud*, was, according to the ancients, a symbol of *wisdom* ; because, as showers fructify and make beautiful the natural world, so wisdom and knowledge the moral and intellectual. Hence Moses says, 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain ; my speech shall distil as the dew,' &c. ; Deut. xxxii., 2."

"*Clouds* also signify *spiritual teachers*, as in Isa. v., 6 : 'I will also command the *clouds* that they rain no rain upon it ;' *i. e.*, the spiritual instruction of the prophets shall be withdrawn from the people."

In a similar manner, according to Swedenborg, by the clouds of heaven in which the Lord is to come, nothing else is meant but the Word in its literal sense ; and by the glory in which they will see him, the Word in its spiritual sense. That this is the case, is, he says, difficult to be believed by those who do not think beyond the literal sense of the Word ; with such, a cloud is a natural and material cloud, and thence comes their belief, that the Lord will appear in the clouds of heaven.

We have thus seen that the second coming of the Lord is his coming with clouds ; that these clouds are those of the Shekinah, the Word, or the Scriptures.* We further remark, that this coming is the principal subject of the Apocalypse.

Pyle observes in his Paraphrase, p. 6 ;—

"Let it be observed then, that the main scope of all these prophetic visions is, to give a full assurance and a sufficient description of the second coming of Christ." . . .

The same is the opinion of Aben Ezra, in a passage already quoted ; and Dr. Todd observes in his Six Discourses, p. 68 ;—

* See here the sermon of Dr. Hickee, on The Moral Shekinah.

“Upon the whole, if the views I have been endeavoring to establish be correct, we are to regard the Apocalypse as a prophecy, the scene of which, if we may so speak, is laid in the great and terrible day of the Lord; a prophecy whose main and principal subject is the coming of Messiah, in glory and majesty, to fulfil all that is written of Him; and we are therefore to look for the fulfilment of its predictions, not in the early persecutions and heresies of the church, nor in the long series of centuries from the first preaching of the Gospel to the end of time, but in the events which are immediately to precede, to accompany, and to follow the second advent of our Lord and Saviour.”

In his ‘*Catholicæ Doctrinæ, or a Word in Season,*’ by the Rev. J. Hooper, p. 612, it is observed, that the sign of the Son of Man appearing in heaven, as spoken of in Matthew xxiv., 30,

...“Is the unfolding of prophecy, the opening and confirming the prophetic Scriptures, Christ revealing himself by his Spirit unto the hearts of his people, giving them to apprehend by faith what is contained in his Word concerning his appearing and coming, so that they cannot but speak of Him as near.”*

Again, p. 604, *ibid.*;—

“As the time draweth near, the signs of the Lord’s advent thicken around us. Look where we will some sign is observable, telling us that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh! There are signs in the heavens, such as the spiritual alone can discern; and there are signs on the earth such as the earthly may see; so that every one shall be left without excuse who does not take timely warning, and turn unto the Lord and prepare to meet Him.”

“One of the great outstanding signs of the times in the present day is, the *general* expectation that prevails throughout the baptized nations of the coming of the Lord. At various periods of the Christian dispensation, there has been a revival of the blessed hope. Some at one time, and some at another, some here and there, in this or that part of the earth, have

* See our Appendix.

proclaimed it; but never until now has the expectation been universal." . . . "There has been nothing like it before—history affords no parallel, save the universal expectation which accompanied our Lord's first advent; and though he came not then in the way in which he was expected to come, yet he truly came and fulfilled that which was written of him."

The same author afterwards proceeds to observe, that the subject contained in Matthew xxiv., Mark xiii., Luke xxi., in its first and immediate application related to the mighty changes which took place in the Jewish church and nation at the passing away of the Mosaic dispensation: we shall see in chapters xxi. and xxii., similar changes foretold with regard to the present churches of Christendom.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 8;—

"'I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending,' *signifies*, who is the self-subsisting and only-subsisting from the principles of things to their ultimates; from whom all things proceed; therefore, who is the self-subsisting and only-subsisting Love, the self-subsisting and only-subsisting Wisdom, and the self-subsisting and only-subsisting Life in himself; and, consequently, the self-subsisting and only-subsisting Creator, Saviour, and Illuminator from Himself; and thence the All in All of heaven and the church: 'saith the Lord, Who was, and Who is, and Who is to come,' *signifies*, Who is Eternal, Infinite, and Who is Jehovah: and 'Almighty,' *signifies*, Who is, lives, and hath power from Himself, and Who governs all things from their principles by ultimates."

Again, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' art. lxx.;—

"Since the Lord alone is acknowledged as the God of heaven and earth, by those who are of his New Church in the heavens, and by those who will be of his New Church upon earth, therefore, in the first chapter of the Apocalypse, the Lord alone is treated of; and in the two following

chapters, it is He alone who speaks to the churches, and He alone who will give the felicities of eternal life.”*

The titles above quoted are so universally regarded as signifying the absolute Divinity of the person to whom they are applied, that it is unnecessary to introduce authorities upon this subject. Still, however, two important questions are here suggested; first, whether if these words imply divinity, they also imply self-existence; that is to say, whether if Christ be God, he be God *per se*, (that is, *αυτοθεος*,) or self-existent. The consideration of this question we are obliged to reserve for our remarks on the Two Witnesses. We shall only observe, that it is very generally denied by those who profess to believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ, that, as to his Divinity, he is self-existent. In this point of view, therefore, the exposition of Swedenborg would be condemned by one class of theologians, although we shall find it vindicated by another. But of this, more in the sequel.

The second question is, whether these divine perfections were meant to be predicated of the humanity. To call the glorified humanity of the Lord self-subsisting, would generally be considered highly absurd; nevertheless that these words are predicated by the Lord concerning himself as man, may be concluded from the following considerations;—

First, that the Lord, or his representative, speaks as the Son of Man; and the Son of Man is a title generally considered to designate the humanity.

* Scott in his notes on this verse observes;—

“As the Lord Jesus was evidently spoken of in the preceding verse; it is obvious to conclude that the Lord who speaks in this, is the same person; nor can any sufficient reason be assigned why it should be understood of the Father personally; except that men are reluctant to honor the Son, even as they ought to honor the Father that sent him.”

Secondly, that the coming in clouds is interpreted to refer to the Last Judgment; and it is generally admitted that at the Judgment, (although, absurdly enough, not afterwards,) the Humanity shall make some very signal display of divine perfections.

Thirdly, that according to some theologians, such is the union between the divine and human natures, that there is a communion of properties, and the divine may be predicated of the human. Thus in his Sayings of the Great Forty Days, Dr. Moberley observes, p. 276;—

“The eternal Son of God took man’s nature upon him in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance; and, behold, the *human nature* in him is at once, both by the sacred Lord and his inspired apostles, spoken of in terms not inappropriate to the *divine*.”

In the Investigator, vol. iii., p. 257, a correspondent observes;—

“Jesus Christ is Lord of all; and we are taught by inspiration, that to Him gave all the prophets witness. To inspired men we do well to take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place; and it is worthy of special note that all their predictions relate to the *humanity*. The Deity, abstractedly considered, can be the subject of no promise. The divinity of Christ is clearly revealed in the sacred Scriptures, and he is often referred to as Immanuel God with us, yet the titles and attributes of the Godhead are ascribed to his *human person*.* ‘To the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.’ The Child born and the Son given, foretold by Isaiah, has ascribed to him the attributes of Deity: ‘The mighty God and everlasting Father.’ To the Virgin it was said, ‘That holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.’”

This subject will be further considered in the sequel.

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 9;—

“‘I, John, who am your brother and companion,’ *sig-*

* Rather, human nature.

nifies, those who are in the good of charity, and thence in the truths of faith: ‘in affliction and patient expectation, and in the kingdom of Jesus Christ,’ *signifies*, which in the church are infested by evils and falses, but which will be removed by the Lord at his coming: ‘I was in the Isle called Patmos,’ *signifies*, a state and place in which he could be illuminated: ‘for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ,’ *signifies*, that divine truth from the Word might be received at heart, and so in the light, and that the Lord’s humanity might be acknowledged to be divine.”

That John was a symbolic person has already been seen, and will be further shewn: the character of those of whom he was symbolic, will also be seen in the sequel.

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 10;—

“ ‘I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day,’ *signifies*, a spiritual state at that time from divine influx.”

And again, art. xxxvi. ;—

... “ ‘On the Lord’s day,’ *signifies*, influx then received from the Lord, for in that day the Lord is present because the day is holy; from which it is evident, that by being in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, is signified a spiritual state at that time from divine influx. Concerning the prophets it is written, that they were in the spirit or in vision, also that the Word came to them from Jehovah: when they were in the spirit or in vision, they were not in the body, but in their spirit, in which state they saw such things as are in heaven; but when the Word came to them, then they were in the body, and heard Jehovah speak; these two states of the prophets are carefully to be distinguished; in the state of vision the eyes of their spirit were opened, and the eyes of their body shut, and then they heard what the angels spake, or what Jehovah spake by the angels, and also saw the things which were represented

to them in heaven ; and then they sometimes seemed to themselves to be carried from one place to another, the body still remaining in its place ; in such a state was John, when he wrote the Apocalypse ; and sometimes also Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Daniel, and then it is said that they were in *vision*, or in *the Spirit*.”

Ribera, on the Apocalypse, p. 23 ;—

“ Haymo observes : ‘ Hence it is now clearly shewn that the blessed John saw this vision not after a corporeal manner (or in the body), but in the spirit. Not as if he was in a dream, but as wrapt into an ecstasy, as was the case also with Ezekiel, who, when he was sitting in his house, and the elders of Judea were sitting before him, was in spirit led to Jerusalem. This is the view of the subject taken also by Ambrose and others. But we may ask further, why such a form of expression is used. John is said to be in spirit in order, as I think, to express the contrast to being in the body. For to be in the body is to live after a corporeal manner, and to use the members and the senses of the body. But John is said to be in the spirit, not because he was out of the body, but because while he was then in the body, he nevertheless did not make use of the body or of its senses, but was wrapt and elevated above the body. Rightly, therefore, did Haymo say, that he saw nothing, heard nothing, perceived nothing, understood nothing through the body ; that he entirely forsook the flesh when he saw this revelation ; that for the purpose of his instruction his spirit was taken up by the Spirit who was teaching him, in order that he might behold things high and mystical.’ ”

Richard of St. Victor on the Apocalypse, p. 203 ;—

“ ‘ I was in the spirit,’ *i. e.*, in spiritual vision, ‘ on the Lord’s day ;’ for as Gregory testifies, the quality of things is wont to be denoted by the time. Abraham saw an angel at mid-day, because he was fervent in faith. Adam beheld him sustaining the person of God after mid-day, because he had fallen from the warmth of innermost love. Lot, at the perdition of Sodom, beheld him in the evening, because the perdition of this city was soon to come. Solomon received wisdom at

night, as not being long to continue in it. In the present case, John was in spiritual vision on the Lord's day, as if he should say, he was in a state of open illustration. As, therefore, the person, the place, and the cause commend the truth of holy love, so also does the character of the time; for the more sacred the day, the more suitable is it to divine revelation; and the more tranquil it is by reason of cessation from outward labor, the more calculated is it, by the rest it imposes, for profound internal contemplation." So also Bede.

That day sometimes signifies the understanding of truth, divine illustration, the light of knowledge, &c., see the *Sylva Sylvarum* of Lauretus, art. Dies.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' ver. 10, 11;—

“‘And I heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet,’ *signifies*, a manifest perception of divine truth revealed from heaven: ‘saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last,’ *signifies*, as above, &c. &c.”

Cornelius a Lapide on the Apocalypse, p. 24;—

“Do you ask why this voice is represented to John as being behind? . . . Ambrose, Thomas Anglicus, and Ribera reply, that John heard this voice from behind because he was about to hear things which were unknown to the church; since that which is behind us is considered to be unknown to us because no one can see it’ . . . (Ribera says, p. 25;—‘John, therefore, heard this voice behind him, because hitherto he had not possessed a perfect knowledge of the mysteries which were then revealed to him.’) . . . This voice was heard from behind to signify, first, that this was a revelation from the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is not seen by men; and, therefore, when he presents himself to them as a teacher and monitor, he seems to cause the ears to hear a word *behind* them, Isaiah xxx., 21. Secondly, because God, here speaking to John, cannot in this life be seen clearly face to face. Whence in Exod. xxxiii., he said to Moses, ‘My back parts thou shalt see, but my face thou canst not see.’ . . . Mystically—rightly is the providence of Christ described as being behind us; because though we discern him not, he nevertheless discerns us, keeps us always

before his eyes, defends and protects us. Thus also Origen and Jerome on Ezekiel iii., 12.”

“Tropologically, the faithful are here warned to turn from earthly things, and be converted unto God and heavenly things.”

De Lyra; Biblia Maxima De La Haye, p. 718;—

“By this turning we understand that in the apprehension of divine revelation, the mind must be turned away from earthly things, and be turned towards heavenly.”

Dr. Gill on the parallel passage in Isaiah xxx., 21;—

“This voice *behind* is by the Jews interpreted of Bath Kol; and by others of the voice of conscience; but it rather intends the Spirit of God and his grace, though it seems best to understand it of the Scriptures of truth, the Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice; the language of which is saying, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it;’ it directs to Christ the way, and who is the only way of life and salvation to be walked in by faith, and to all the lesser paths of duty and doctrine, which to walk in is both pleasant and profitable, and which is the right way;’ . . . the words are a promise of being led right . . . ‘when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left,’ through ignorance or inadvertency, through the prevalence of corruption or force of temptation; and as it is promised there should be such a voice, so they should have ears to hear, their ears erect to attend to what is said, to observe it, and act according to it.”

Matthew Henry on *ibid.*;—

“‘Thine ears shall hear a word *behind* thee, calling after thee as a man calling after a traveller that he sees going out of his road.’ . . . We are very apt to miss our way; there are turnings on both hands, and those so tracked and seemingly straight, that they may easily be mistaken for the right way; there are right-hand and left-hand errors, extremes on each side virtue; the tempter is busy courting us into the by-paths. It is happy, then, if by the particular counsels of a faithful minister or friend, or the checks of conscience, and the strivings of God’s Spirit, we be set right and prevented from going wrong.”

Menochius; *Biblia Maxima* of De La Haye, p. 715;—

“‘I am Alpha and Omega.’ It is the whole Trinity that is speaking and which inspired into John these words, ‘Behold, he cometh with clouds,’ &c. And as he had strongly affirmed it, saying also Amen, he now gives the reason of it, as if he should say, ‘In like manner as I am the first of all and have created all men, so also I am the end to whom all shall come to be judged, and to receive according to their works;’ which will then be brought to pass when Christ shall appear at the end of the age; to whom God hath committed the power of judging.”

Cornelius a Lapide observes, p. 22, that Alcasar, Rufinus, Idacius Clarus, Phœbadius, all consider that it is Christ who is here speaking; but A Lapide thinks that it is God who is here speaking, as common to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and he affirms that Athanasius, Nazianzen, and others understood the words in a like sense.

Ribera, p. 22, likewise maintains that it is the whole Trinity which is speaking; and in p. 13, observes that of Jesus Christ is predicated the words ‘who is to come,’

... “Because it is the whole Trinity which will judge man at the end of the age by Jesus Christ. For truly and properly it is the judgment of the Holy Trinity, which exercises judgment by Christ, to whom as he is man, the Trinity hath given this power.”

Alcasar affirms, on verse 8, that Augustin and Epiphanius explain the titles Alpha and Omega of the twofold nature of Christ, the divine and human; and Pererius, that by Alpha is signified the divinity of Christ, and by Omega the humanity; as in the parallel expressions *First* and *Last*.

Moreover, Andreas, Aretas, Rupertus, and Pannonius all interpret the title *First* as applying to the divinity, and *Last* as applying to the humanity.

Durham says, p. 21, of the description ‘I am Alpha

and Omega,' that it is our Lord asserting his own Godhead, and that this assertion of Godhead is the reason why the description is so often repeated.

Now if the titles Alpha and Omega, First and Last, are predicated by our Lord of himself as the Son of Man, and hence of himself as man; they are predicated of the humanity; and inasmuch as they are said to imply absolute divinity, they imply the divinity of the humanity.

Notwithstanding, however, these interpretations we shall have occasion to shew, in our remarks on the 'Two Witnesses,' that the doctrine of Christ's Godhead has been entirely denied, and that in its place Arianism has become almost universally dominant; while the divinity of the Lord's humanity, as implied in the foregoing interpretations, is a doctrine which has partaken of a similar condemnation.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 12;—

“ ‘And I turned to see the voice that spake with me,’ *signifies*, inversion of the state of those who are in good of life, with respect to the perception of truth in the Word, when they turn themselves to the Lord.”

(See above, p. 250.) Richard of St. Victor says, on this passage, to *see* spiritually is to *understand*.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 12, 13;—

“ ‘And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks,’ *signifies*, the New Church, which will be in illumination from the Lord out of the Word: ‘and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man,’ *signifies*, the Lord as to the Word, from whom that church is.”

Ibid., art. xlv. ;—

“ It is well known from the Word that the Lord called himself the Son of God, and also the Son of Man; that by the Son of God he meant himself as to his divine humanity, and by the Son of Man himself as to the Word. . . . Now forasmuch as the Lord represented himself unto

John as the Word, therefore as seen of him, he is called the Son of Man.”

Bishop Horsely, Eighth Sermon, on the Incarnation, p. 84 ;—

“Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? *Son of God* is a title that belongs to our Lord in his *human* character, describing him as that man who became the Son of God by union with the Godhead ; as *Son of Man*, on the contrary, is a title which belongs to the *Eternal Word*, describing that person of the Godhead who was made man by uniting himself to the man Jesus.”

Ibid., Sermon xiii., p. 155 ;—

“The Son of Man and the Son of God are distinct titles of the Messiah. The title of the Son of Man belongs to him as God the Son ; the title of the Son of God belongs to him as man.”

Bishop Pearce and Parkhurst take the like view of the title Son of God ; while on that of the Son of Man, Parkhurst admits in his Greek Lexicon, art. *υίος*, that the title Son of Man may, by a communication of properties, signify the Divine Nature.*

Hence also Mr. Tolly in his Explanatory View of the Doctrine of the Trinity, remarks, p. 61 ;—

“On the whole, then, the chief use which I would make of the expositions given by these eminent critics, is, to avail myself of the weight of their opinions, that the titles in question as applied to our Lord, express not what they are commonly supposed to do, but directly the reverse ; that is, that the title of the Son of God is descriptive of the human nature, and that of the Son of Man of the divine. I do not, however, adopt the explanation altogether, as I think that there is an inaccuracy in thus separating the divine and human natures in the person of our Lord. Strictly speaking, if the divine and

* *i. e.*, as the same author says under the article *Λόγος*, the divine and substantial Word of God.

human natures were united in his person, either of the titles, as applied to him, must contain a reference to both the natures. But yet there seems to be this distinction, that though each of the titles equally refers to both natures, yet in each case respectively there is a leading allusion to one or the other. In this way then, I apprehend that the phrase of the *Son of God* relates to the *human nature made divine*, and that of the *Son of Man* to the *divine nature made in a certain sense human*."

The remarks of the foregoing authors now bring us to those of Petavius.

We have already quoted an observation in which Petavius regards *the humanity as absorbed into the divinity*; that is to say, into the WORD; and as this great authority lays it down as the doctrine of the Catholic Church, that the *human nature is made divine* by absorption into divinity, this can only mean by the absorption of the flesh into the Word; whereby, as the Word is man, so man is the Word; and thus that by the Son of Man in the present vision is signified the Word. Hence we see the origin of some of the expressions used by the fathers, and quoted by Petavius in Book x., chap. 2, upon the Incarnation. Thus Cyril calls the body of Christ *life-giving (vivificum)*. He says that it is "most highly illuminated by the divine glory, and must be understood by us to be the body of God; hence that if any one should call it *divine* in like manner as the body proper to man may be called human, he would not recede from right reason; for, (says he) since it is a body proper to God, as I have said, it transcends all human bodies." Hence he says, that it not only bestows Light, but is Light; and again; "Since the life-giving Word of God dwelt in the flesh, he transformed it into his own proper good, namely, into life, and being united to it by an inexplicable kind of conjunction, he made it life-giving; *such as the Word itself is in its own nature*." Cyril says also, that "it is the flesh of Christ alone which

is life-giving, because it is flesh proper to the Word alone ; which Word is the life proceeding from the Father, and which is life-giving, and which therefore makes his flesh also life-giving, as being the body of that life which quickens all things or bodies.” The same thing Petavius affirms that Cyril repeats *passim*, and that ‘ Christ accommodated his flesh, its contaction, and efficacious power to the performance of marvellous works, such as raising the dead to life, and other things of this kind, in order to shew that his very flesh also could impart life, and be made, as it were, a one with it.’ And Cyril again observes, “ that the Saviour touching the leper healed him, shewing that the Spirit which was in him healed diseases, and that his Body, by contact, bestowed sanctification.” It should also be remembered that Cyril is here only confirming the doctrine of Maximus. Moreover Chrysostom observes, that “ Christ therefore touched the leper in order to shew that his flesh was holy, and possessed the virtue of imparting sanctification to those who might touch him.”

“ From the whole of this disputation,” says Petavius,* “ I think it is evident that the human substance of Christ, and his flesh, received a certain wonderful virtue from its intercourse with divinity ; so that by his voice, or touch, or whatever might be the way, he performed certain stupendous and extraordinary works : not those only which relate to the life and health of the bodies of men, but also works that were spiritual, and which being above nature are called supernatural, such as is sanctifying grace.” . . .

In the first chapter of the same Book, art. iv., Petavius having admitted that the flesh of Christ was the flesh of God the Word, says, that from this it follows that the operations of the flesh or the man must be esteemed as proper to God and the Word, and to proceed from Him as the agent, which would not be the case if the flesh were

* Book x., chap. ii., art. viii.

not proper to Him, but alien and disjoined from Him. Moreover he says, that the same *humanity*, which is every where comprised under the name of flesh, is *deified*, and *has wholly passed*, as by absorption, *into divinity*; and lastly, that by its own proper right it finally obtained the virtue of vivifying, that is, of imparting the virtue and efficacy, not only of corporeal but also of divine and spiritual life.

Petavius also observes in book x., chap. i., art. v., that the holy fathers teach, that in Christ, by reason of the intimate and marvellous conjunction with the Word, *the human essence was made divine*, and was in some way or other translated into a different state; and that the Greeks commonly expressed this by the words *θεωθῆναι*, *ἀποθεωθῆναι*, and other expressions of the same kind, &c.

Now although this doctrine of the fathers has fallen into neglect and become obsolete, yet traces of it may be found in some few writers of the day. Williams, in his *Study of the Gospels*, p. 9, speaks of the "*divinely human works*" by the man Christ; Garbett in his *Bampton Lectures*, vol. i., p. 9, of the "*divine humanity*" of Christ Jesus, and again in p. 139, of the blood of the "*divine humanity*;" and again in p. 144, of the "*divine man*;" and again, in p. 463. Archdeacon Manning in his *Sermons before the University of Oxford*, p. 124, speaks of the "*divine manhood*" of Jesus Christ as a "direct and immediate revelation of God's presence;" and again, p. 125, of the manhood being "arrayed with uncreated light;" and again, p. 136, of the glorified manhood of the second Adam, the image of God. Moreover, in his *Sayings of the Great Forty Days*, Appendix, p. 276, Dr. Moberly speaks of the "divinely assumed manhood."

However this doctrine, then, may have fallen into disrepute in these last days, it seems to be admitted that

when the Lord comes to judgment, there is to be an exhibition of its truth. For in his Lectures on the Second Advent, p. 303, Mr. Burgh observes;—

“The same expectation—the appearance and kingdom of Christ—affords one of the most powerful arguments for his divinity. A spiritual reign may assert the divine power in general, but the reign of Christ on the throne of David is Christ *in human nature* exercising all the power of divinity, and proves that the Man Jesus is also very God. At the first advent the Son of Man was seen only in humiliation; at the second, the Son of Man shall be seen coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. At the first advent THE WORD OF GOD was seen veiling his divine majesty—placing in abeyance his divinity that he might truly suffer; at the second, this is the name by which he shall be called and proclaimed, his divinity being then as manifest as it was before concealed.”

Again Dr. M'Caul, in his Plain Sermons on Subjects Practical and Prophetic, p. 268, having observed that “the mystery of the second advent is Man revealed in the glory of the Godhead,” thus continues: “At the first advent God appeared as man; at the second, Man will appear as God; for it will be the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The same author afterwards affirms, p. 272, that then, but not until then, will all men honor the Son even as they honor the Father.

The divinity of the Lord's humanity seems thus far then to be plainly affirmed; but we must make a distinction between the truth itself and the reasons assigned for it. The mode of divinizing the humanity seems to have been represented by Gregory Nyssen in three different ways, viz., commision, temperation, and absorption; while some represented it as a change not unlike a transmutation. While, therefore, the fact itself of the divinity of the humanity is acknowledged by Swedenborg, he distinctly repudiates the

foregoing methods of accounting for it. Thus in his Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord, art. xxxv., he expressly observes;—

“That the Lord possessed both divinity and humanity, divinity from his Father Jehovah, and humanity from the virgin Mary, is well known. Hence he was both God and man, having a divine essence and a human nature, a divine essence from the Father, and a human nature from the mother, whence he was equal to the Father as touching his divinity, and inferior to the Father, as touching his humanity: and further, this human nature from the mother was *not transmuted* into the divine essence, *neither commixed* with it; all which is taught by the doctrine of faith, called the Athanasian Creed. Indeed, *such transmutation of the human nature into the divine essence, or commixtion therewith, is impossible*. Still the same Creed teaches that the Divinity or Godhead took, that is, united to itself, the humanity or manhood, just as the soul is united to its body, so that they were not two, but one person. From these two positions then must follow this conclusion, that the Lord put off the humanity taken from the mother, which in itself was like unto the humanity of another man, and consequently material, and put on a humanity from the Father, which in itself was like his divinity, and consequently substantial; so that the Humanity also was made Divine. Hence it is, that in the prophets, the Lord is called, even with respect to the Humanity, Jehovah and God; and in the evangelists, the Lord, God, the Messiah or Christ, and the Son of God, in whom we must believe, and by whom we are to be saved.”

It is well observed, moreover, by Petavius, ch. i., art. xiv., that we must take care lest we run into the error of supposing that the human nature so passed into the divine, as to become entirely abolished and extinguished, and to leave

nothing but the nature purely divine ; which was an error considered to have an apparent sanction in the language of some of the fathers. In this case the doctrine of a divine humanity could not be consistently held, but only the doctrine of a divinity to the exclusion of the humanity ; whereas the genuine doctrine of Swedenborg is that of a divine humanity, declared by Petavius to be the true Catholic doctrine.

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verses 13—16 ;—

“ ‘Clothed with a garment down to the foot,’ *signifies*, the proceeding divine sphere, which is divine truth : ‘and girt about the paps with a golden girdle,’ *signifies*, the proceeding and at the same time conjoining divine sphere, which is divine good : ‘and his head and his hairs white as wool, like unto snow,’ *signifies*, the divine love of the divine wisdom in first principles and in ultimates : ‘and his eyes were as a flame of fire,’ *signifies*, the divine wisdom of the divine love : ‘and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace,’ *signifies*, divine good natural : ‘and his voice as the voice of many waters,’ *signifies*, divine truth natural : ‘and he had in his right hand seven stars,’ *signifies*, all knowledges of goodness and truth in the Word from him : ‘and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword,’ *signifies*, the dispersion of falses by the Word, and by doctrine thence from the Lord : ‘and his face was as the sun shineth in his power,’ *signifies*, the divine love and the divine wisdom, which are himself and proceed from himself : ‘and when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead,’ *signifies*, a defect of his own proper life from such presence of the Lord : ‘and He laid his right hand upon me,’ *signifies*, life then inspired from him : ‘saying unto me, Fear not,’ *signifies*, resuscitation, and at the same time adoration from the most profound humiliation.”

The particulars of this description will be more fully considered when we come to treat of the seven churches: at present only some general remarks will be offered.

Lauretus, *Sylva Sylvarum*, art. *Vestis*;—

“The vestments of Christ, which were made white as the light, designate the Scriptures in respect of their announcements concerning him; and which are thus made bright. As also the discourses and writings of the Gospels, which manifest his glory, or his life shining in the Gospel. And the garments with which Christ is clothed are the prophecies, the theme and announcements of which relate to one thing throughout: these garments heretics divide, who first strip him and then clothe him with false dogmas. For the garments of Christ are the words of holy Scripture. . . . The holy Scripture is a garment in which is written King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”—Origen, Basil, Ambrose, Rupertus.

Viegas, p. 76, interprets the two *paps* to signify the universal attributes of God, mercy and justice; Pererius, the mind and the will; the one being girded by the gold of wisdom, the other by the gold of love.

That the *girdle* is a bond of union, is stated by Viegas, p. 77, the *Glossa Ordinaria*, &c.

Alcasar, in his *Commentary* on this passage;—

“White hair is a most excellent symbol of wisdom. ‘The beauty of old men is the grey head,’ Prov. xx., 19: namely, because of the wisdom which white hairs intimate. . . . ‘With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days understanding,’ Job xii., 12. ‘Wisdom is the grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age,’ Wisdom of Solomon iv., 9. And in my opinion that passage in Daniel vii., 9, 13, 22, ‘The Ancient of days did sit,’ has reference to the wisdom of God. For there the passage is treating of God as the chief governor of all things by his infinite wisdom.”

Cornelius a Lapide, p. 28, says that the *white hairs* signify omniscience, omniprudence, omniprovidence. A similar interpretation is given by Tirinus (in the *Biblia*

Maxima of De La Haye), Rupertus, Joachim, Viegas, Durham, and Pareus. Ribera says, the *head* signifies that in Christ which is the highest, and the feet that which is the lowest ;

Thus on the Apocalypse, chap. i., p. 30 ;—

“As the head of Christ signifies that which is highest in Christ, *i. e.*, the divinity; so the feet indicate that which is the lowest, *i. e.*, the human nature. His feet, therefore, as Abbe Rupert beautifully inculcates, are said to be like brass (*aurichalchum*); because, as by the intense action of fire this metal is brought to the color of gold, so also the humanity, by the many tribulations of the passion and death, is brought to the glory of divinity.”—See also Durham, p. 24.

Alcasar, Apocalypse, chap. i., p. 194 ;—

“‘His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace’—an excellent symbol to represent that they would kindle the fire of true religion throughout the world; which likewise they did. This is also the fire with which Babylon is burned.”

De Lyra says that the *burning feet* here signify ‘fervor of affection in procuring the honor of God, and the salvation of the neighbor.’ That *feet* relate symbolically to the natural mind, see what is said on the church of Thyatira.

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ ver. 17, 18 ;—

“‘I am the First and the Last,’ *signifies*, that He is eternal and infinite, therefore the only God: ‘and am He that liveth,’ *signifies*, who alone is life, and from whom alone life is: ‘and was dead,’ *signifies*, that He was neglected in the church, and his Divine Humanity not acknowledged: ‘and behold I am alive for ages of ages, *signifies*, that He is life eternal: ‘amen,’ *signifies*, divine confirmation that this is truth: ‘and I have the keys of hell and death,’ *signifies*, that He alone has power to save.”

(I was made dead); not *ην*, but *εγενεομην*; not *mortuus fui*, but *mortuus factus*. This version is noticed in the Biblia Maxima of De La Haye as that of Arias Mon-

tanus ; it is noticed also in Pool's Synopsis, p. 1688. The reading has reference not to the literal crucifixion of Christ, but to the spiritual, mentioned in the remarks on verse 10 : 'They also which pierced him.'* Thus, 'being made dead' has reference not to a natural but a spiritual transfixion, as may be seen at large in the epistle to the church of Smyrna. Now as the life of the Lord is the life of the church, so also when he is made dead the church is made dead. The consequence is, that in the expression 'I was made dead,' is represented also a corresponding state of the church.

Tirinus ; *Biblia Maxima*, De La Haye, p. 723 ;—

"As I have returned from death to life, and am risen in glory, so will I cause my church and her sons, from the tribulations by which they seem to be overwhelmed and extinguished, to rise in glory, to increase in growth, and to accomplish the more splendid triumph."

Cornelius a Lapide repeats the same illustration, and adds, p. 33 ;—

... "For this I merited by my death, and therefore have I exhibited a type and specimen of it to the world in my death and resurrection."

Alcasar, in his paraphrase on the passage ;—

"Whatever remarkable thing is denoted in the person of the priest (here presented to view) is all to be referred to those events befalling the Christian church, which are contained in the Apocalypse ; for this person who first appeared to John acts the prologue to the whole spectacle, and thus places before the eyes the argument of the whole Apocalypse." (Alcasar in his Commentary also observes, that similar things to those represented in the Lord's person will happen to the church, which is in the likeness of his death and resurrection.)

* Gascoigne's *New Solution of the Seals and Trumpets*, p. 8 ;—

"Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him ; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.' These expressions imply the near approach of a general departure from the faith ; there will be those who crucify him afresh in every land, and the advent consequent to it will be on a very extensive scale."—See Durham, p. 15.

Williams on the Study of Gospels, p. 220 ;—

. . . “Whatever is fulfilled in Christ is found in some analogous form in his church, and also in individual members of his church.”—See also Daubuz, p. 89.*

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ ver. 19, 20 ;—

“ ‘Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter,’ *signifies*, that all the things which are now revealed are for the use of posterity : ‘the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks,’ *signifies*, arcana in visions concerning the New Heaven and the New Church : ‘the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches,’ *signifies*, the New Church in the heavens, which is the new heaven : ‘and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches,’ *signifies*, the New Church upon earth, which is the New Jerusalem descending from the Lord out of the new heaven.”

These things will be explained in the sequel.

On the candlesticks, Durham in his Commentary on the Book of Revelation, p. 32, observes ;—

. . . “The candlestick is that which properly the light is set into ; and it is fitted for receiving of light, though it have none of its own : so the visible church is that wherein Christ Jesus sets his lights ; 1 Cor. xii., 28 : ‘God hath set some in the church ; first apostles ; secondly, prophets,’ &c. The church is as it were the candlestick to the candle, the proper seat of the apostles, prophets, and ministers after them.” . . . “(Question) How can these churches be called gold, seeing many of them are of so little worth, that they could scarce abide the trial, as Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, &c., and Laodicea is so corrupt that she hath no commendation at all? (Answer) Our Lord Jesus designs the visible church or churches, not according to the plurality, but according to the better part ; and when

* Also Perrone, Theological Prelections, on the Constitution of the Church of Christ, vol. ii., p. 708.

there is any gold he counts by it, even as any one may call a heap a heap of corn, though the greatest part of it be chaff.”

Pearson in his *Prophetical Character and Inspiration of the Apocalypse*, observes, p. 83 ;—

. . . “ We derive from the spiritual character of the addresses to the seven churches, which are contained in these chapters, a powerful argument in support of the belief of the spiritual character of the whole prophecy. These addresses relate principally to matters either of faith or practice,—to the purity or the corruption of life and doctrine, which most distinguished those churches. The rewards which are promised to the one are entirely spiritual. The judgments which are denounced upon impenitence and unbelief are spiritual also. To the one are promised the greatest rewards of heaven, and the highest glories of immortality. To the other are threatened the withdrawing of the divine countenance, and everlasting exclusion from the favor of God and the happiness of the blessed.”

Wordsworth’s *Lectures on the Apocalypse*, p. 164 ;—

“ I cannot doubt that St. John wrote these epistles for the edification of all churches ; and that every church may see herself reflected, as in a mirror, in one or other of these epistles.”*

* See also pages 172, 173, 494, of the same work.

CHAPTER II.

TO THE CHURCHES IN THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.—TO THOSE THEREIN WHO PRIMARILY REGARD TRUTHS OF DOCTRINE AND NOT GOOD OF LIFE, WHO ARE UNDERSTOOD BY THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS—TO THOSE THEREIN WHO ARE IN GOOD AS TO LIFE, AND IN FALSES AS TO DOCTRINE, WHO ARE UNDERSTOOD BY THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA—TO THOSE THEREIN WHO PLACE THE ALL OF THE CHURCH IN GOOD WORKS, AND NOTHING IN TRUTH, WHO ARE UNDERSTOOD BY THE CHURCH IN PERGAMOS—TO THOSE THEREIN WHO ARE IN FAITH ORIGINATING IN CHARITY, AS ALSO TO THOSE WHO ARE IN FAITH SEPARATED FROM CHARITY, WHO ARE UNDERSTOOD BY THE CHURCH IN THYATIRA—ALL OF WHOM ARE CALLED TO THE NEW CHURCH, WHICH IS THE NEW JERUSALEM.

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ chap. ii., ver. 1. ;—

“ ‘Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write,’ *signifies*, to those and of those who primarily respect truths of doctrine, and not good of life : ‘these things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand,’ *signifies* the Lord, from whom by the Word proceed all truths : ‘who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,’ *signifies*, from whom all illumination is received by those who are of his church.”

Burgh, in his work on the Apocalypse, remarks, p. 79 ;—

“ We may observe in all these epistles, and particularly in the rewards that are held out to those who overcome by the great Head of the church, a very manifest allusion to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ ; the language in which the Lord words his encouragements, rewards, and threatenings, being taken generally from the circumstances of that event : as though it were a prospect at all times applicable for the purposes either of warning or encouragement.”

We have already observed that *seven* signifies universality; whence *seven churches* signify the whole church; *seven angels* all the angels, and consequently the whole heavens.

Hence to send to the angels of the seven churches, is to send or communicate to all the heavens: for the angels constitute the church in heaven, as holy men constitute the church upon earth. Here then is a communication from the Lord through the universal heavens above, to the universal church below.

Andreas, in his Commentary on the Apocalypse;—

“He addresses the Church through an angel; somewhat in the same manner as if any one should address a pupil who is undergoing instruction, through the medium of his teacher; since teachers are sometimes wont to transfer to themselves what pertains to their pupils, whether it be their errors or their distinguished actions; for they endeavor to render their disciples as far as possible like to themselves. It is, however, probable, that, in this passage, the *seven stars* or *seven angels*, which elsewhere Irenæus and Epiphanius express by the name of the *intelligent heavens*, signify the governance of the whole universe, which is placed in the right hand of Christ; as are all the ends of the earth itself. Since He it is, who, according to his promise, walketh in the midst of the churches, and carries on his administration of the world through the medium of his holy angels.”—A similar interpretation is given by Aretas.

We have already seen that by the seven churches is meant not the world, but the universal church. This being the case, the foregoing interpretation may be adopted. For as seven churches mean the universal church, so seven angels mean the angels universally, or the universal angelic heaven. Here, however, reference is made not to the angelic heaven universally, but to the angel of the church of Ephesus specifically. Now that the word *angel* is here a noun of multitude, is maintained by Ambrose Ansbert, who conceives that the word is indicative not of one person,

but of an order or body of persons ; in fine, of a church. Joachim also observes, that seldom or ever is the word *angel* in the Apocalypse used in its own proper sense, but stands at least frequently for an *order* of persons ; various instances of which may be seen quoted in the Symbolic Commentaries of Brixianus ; and Durham says, in his remarks on the word *angel*, Apoc. xiv., p. 379, that it ought to be taken *collectively*, and that it is no extraordinary thing when the Lord uses more ministers than one, to speak of them as one. In the present case, according to Swedenborg, the angel of the church of Ephesus means the angelic body or angelic heaven corresponding to the church of Ephesus ; the church above as corresponding to, and also as superintending, the church below, and through the medium of which the church below is instructed.

It is generally admitted that our Lord's appearance, as described in the first chapter, has a relation to the seven churches ; and that the divine perfections specifically indicated to each particular church, have a specific relation to the state of that church. Thus it is observed by Vitringa, p. 61, that the Lord adduces attributes which are not promiscuous ; but with the wisest view, selects such as are suited to the state and condition of each particular church, &c. See also an observation of Burgh, p. 42, to the same effect.

Daubuz likewise observes, p. 107 ;—

“Jesus Christ assumes in every epistle some peculiar title, which is always different in some circumstance from all the rest, but suited to the matter of the epistle.”

Again, p. 108 ;—

... “The titles which our Saviour takes upon him have all some difference from each other ; and are all drawn from the characters which are given of him in the former part of the vision ; and those too with very little difference from what is contained therein ; that so our Saviour might have those attri-

buted to him by parcels, which had been bestowed upon him collectively before."

Not only, however, has the state of the church a specific relation to those perfections, but it is likewise described by symbols corresponding to them; so that the two mutually interpret each other; and not only this, but the reward promised to each church has the same continued relation to the two former; so that all three, namely, the specific divine attributes, the spiritual state of the church in relation to these, and the reward promised, mutually correspond to and interpret each other. To proceed:

"These things saith he, that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks."

Gagneus; *Biblia Maxima*, De La Haye, p. 739;—

"By the morning star we may understand either Christ, or the *clear knowledge of divine things*, which Peter calls the day-star: 'Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day-dawn and the day-star arise in your heart,' 2 Eph. i., 19."—So also Alcasar, chap. i., ver. 16.

Glasse, in his *Philologia Sacra*, observes, p. 1671, that star signifies—

"The *light of doctrine* which the ministers of the church adduce, which is brought from heaven and derived solely from the heavenly Word." The symbol will be further explained in the sequel.

Hence by *seven stars* are meant all the truths of the Word of God, all divine doctrine, or divine wisdom.

The right hand, says Cotterus, is "the symbol of kindly affection."—See Pool's *Synopsis*.

Lauretus under the article *Dextra*;—

"The right side of the ship on which the fishes were taken (St. John, chap. xxi.) is that on which are charity, piety, love, pity, benignity, and other qualities of the same class. The

same thing is designated by the seven stars in the right hand of Christ.—Augustin, Georgius Venetus, Cyril.”

‘Walking amid the seven golden candlesticks’ is universally allowed to signify the Lord’s presence in his church. Rupertus on the Apocalypse, p. 368;—

. . . “The same as if he should say, he who walketh in the midst of you scrutinizes the hearts and the reins of each. . . . Since therefore he walketh amidst candlesticks of this kind, he watches the light of each to see how it shines, lest haply without the oil of charity, without works of love, the faith of the church should be that of the dead, and give out smoke instead of light, (*fumiget.*)”

De Lyra; Biblia Maxima, De La Haye, Apocalypse i., ver. 20;—

“The candlesticks are called *golden*, because that which is signified by gold ought to be from *charity*; because as gold excels all other metals, so does *charity* all the other gifts of God; 1 Cor. xiii., ‘The greatest of these is charity.’”

Alcasar, chap. i., ver. 13, note 12;—

“Among the symbolic significations of gold, I find none which is more exactly suitable than that perfection of holiness which consists in perfect *charity*.”

Similar interpretations may be found in Lauretus, from Augustin, Gregory, Hilary, Richard of St. Victor, &c. Hence also *spiritual wisdom*, as being derived from love, is called *gold*, as may be seen in Lauretus, Brixianus, Rabanus Maurus, Glasse, &c.

Ribera, on Rev. i., 12;—

“The candlesticks are called golden because of their strong and durable nature, and because of the excellency of charity and of celestial doctrine, which has no admixture of false doctrine, like that of the philosophers.”

Moreover it is universally admitted, that by *candlestick* is meant the church, which is not the light, but only receives the light.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' ch. ii., verses 2, 3;—

“‘I know thy works,’ *signifies*, that He seeth all the interiors and exteriors of man at once; ‘and thy labor and thy endurance,’ *signifies*, their study and patience: ‘and how thou canst not bear them which are evil,’ *signifies*, that they cannot bear to hear evils called goods, and *vice versa*: ‘and hast explored them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars,’ *signifies*, that they scrutinize those things which are called good and true in the church, which nevertheless are evils and falses: ‘and hast borne and hast endurance,’ *signifies*, patience with them: ‘and for my name’s sake hast labored, and hast not fainted,’ *signifies*, their study and endeavor to attain the things which belong to religion and its doctrine.”

Rupertus upon the Apocalypse, p. 368;—

“Obviously these works are to labor in the rule of the Catholic faith, to exercise patience in this labor, even when disputing against perverse dogmas, the wicked fabricators of which are so many and so loquacious, that thou canst not endure them; such as were Marcion, Cerinthus, and many other heretics. Thy works I say indeed are good in trying those mendacious teachers, and convicting them as false apostles; but yet it is not in this that perfection consists, whatever patience thou mayest have in enduring them and not fainting, if thou art without the primary ornament of charity. For, says the apostle, ‘Though I had all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and though I gave my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.’ And the apostle James says, ‘Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?’ For, however it may seem to work, faith is dead unless it work by love.”

Hammond on the Apocalypse, p. 920;—

“‘*I know thy works,*’ &c.] I observe and approve thy labor and great industry in the Gospel, and thy constant perseverance in the faith, and thy resistance to the vicious men that creep

in amongst you ; and ye have put false teachers to the test, examining their doctrine and commission, and have found them to be ‘ liars.’ ”

SWEDENBORG, ‘ APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 4 ;—

“ ‘ But I have against thee, that thou hast left thy first charity,’ *signifies*, that this is against them, that they do not consider good of life as primary.”

Rupertus on the Apocalypse, p. 368 ;—

“ As if he should say, This indeed is in thy favor, and acts in thy favor, that thou thus workest ; yet this is against thee, that in this work thou hast left thy first love. For the first, that is, the principal good, is charity ; which is also, according to the apostle, the more excellent way. This is almost the one only sign of perfection, and the testimony of true virtue, as elsewhere is said : ‘ In this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.’ By this sign was Stephen, the first martyr, known ; for when in his own labor and patience he could not endure the evil whom he had found guilty and convicted as liars, such patience he possessed, such endurance for the name of God, that when dying he prayed for them and said, ‘ Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,’ &c.”—See also Lowman and Durham.

Woodhouse on the Apocalypse, p. 45 ;—

“ Verse iv. : ‘ *Thy former love.*’] It seems justly remarked by Grotius on this passage, that *πρωτην*, as in John i., 15, has the force of *προτερην*. Tertullian thus understood it, ‘ desertam dilectionem Ephesiis imputat.’ The church is accused of having forsaken that warm and extensive communication of charity which characterised Christianity in its infancy, and which in the days of Justin Martyr and of Tertullian, is described to be its distinguishing ornament. To fail in this, is to fall from primitive purity ; and the fall is great ; *ποθεν εκπεπτωκας* ; and the punishment threatened, naturally follows ; for the church, which is defective in Christian charity, cannot long remain ‘ a shining light ;’ her lamp-bearer is removed.”

We thus see that in leaving its first love, the church of Ephesus is represented as declining from charity.

Some writers have been of opinion that by *love* is meant only *zeal*; hence that the church of Ephesus, by leaving its first love, had failed to oppose error with that zeal which at first distinguished it; but as there may be a zeal without knowledge, so there may be a zeal without love; and hence the state of the Ephesian church was not as some suppose indifference to error, since it is commended for opposition to error, even in its declining state; nay, it might have been in a state of burning zeal against false doctrine, and yet have left its first charity, or that Christian quality which is symbolized by gold, out of which the church or candlestick is made.

To illustrate the case, let us take the following example from Tertullian, as cited by Vaughan, in his history of the *Corruptions of Christianity*, p. 264;—

“An almost ludicrous illustration of the remark just made by Tertullian, occurs in the commencement of his work against Marcion. This person was a Gnostic, and a great corrupter of Christianity; but nevertheless a man of learning, and the advocate of maxims which procured his followers the reproach, among their countrymen, of being Christians. That the reader might be prejudiced as much as possible against the heresy of Marcion, Tertullian indulges in the most elaborate abuse of the native country of that heresiarch. The Pontus Euxinus is described as the most inhospitable of regions, its inhabitants as roaming about in movable cabins, the sexes as indulging in the most promiscuous intercourse, and both as accustomed to wield the battle-axe in war, and to feast on human flesh. The very elements are made to partake of a strange and ominous character. There are no winds, except from the north; no seasons that do not belong to winter. The rivers consist of ice, the mountains of snow, and the heavens are blackness. The cold and the lifeless are everywhere, nothing being warm, nothing living except what is atrocious. But the greatest reproach of Pontus is, that it should have given birth to Marcion,—‘more ferocious than a Scythian, more unsettled than the homeless savage, more inhuman than the Massagetæ, more

daring than the Amazon, more gloomy than the clouds, more cold than winter, more brittle than ice, more deceptive than the Danube, more fitted to inflict sudden destruction than Caucasus.”*

“It hardly need be said that the state of mind which this language indicates, is far removed from the spirit of Christianity. Such outbreaks of passion always bespeak a kind of intoxication; and it were as reasonable to expect that a thoroughly inebriated man should be competent to the more difficult transactions of life, as that minds liable to such hurricanes of wrath should escape those snares in matters of opinion with which all mortals are beset. Nor should it be forgotten, that the men who, from this ascendancy of the passions are peculiarly exposed to error, are just the men who are impelled to act, and with their characteristic energy, as the propagators of the tenets it may have been their humor to adopt. It is the temptation, moreover, of such minds, to judge of their own religious pretensions by the degree of their displeasure on account of the real or supposed irreligion of others:—an easy and a common, but a most fallacious course of arriving at a state of fond assurance on the subject of personal religion.”

We thus see that there may be zeal without charity; and that to leave our first love does not mean to leave our former zeal, but our former charity. Let us now examine the principles upon which the champions of the church in Ephesus profess to assign to purity of doctrine the pre-eminence.

Dr. Waterland observes in his works, vol. v., p. 103;—

“Some have seemed to wonder why commonly a warmer zeal should be shewn against heresies, than against ordinary immoralities: the wonder will presently cease if the case be but rightly stated. Ask whether one that commits fornication, or one that teaches and inculcates it as lawful practice, is the wickeder man? Here the case is plain, that the heretic who takes pains to spread such dissolute doctrine, and to debauch

* See also the controversy on the Trinity, as conducted by Dr. South, where the *odium theologicum* is not arrayed in such pomposity of language.

the principles of the age, is incomparably a viler man than he that barely perpetrates the sin. So then it must be allowed, that an heretic in morality is infinitely a greater sinner, than one who, through his lusts and passions, merely leads an immoral life."

"So as to faith, ask whether a man that perverts any material article, either carelessly or through some prejudice, but lets it go no farther, or one that does the same thing, and then takes upon him to teach and inculcate the erroneous doctrine to others; I say, ask which of the two is the wickeder man? The latter, undoubtedly. He is an heretic in teaching and patronizing a corruption of faith, while the other who corrupts it only for himself is no formal heretic, as I conceive, in strict propriety of speech, though not a good man. Thus, while we compare an heretic in morality with a man merely immoral; or an heretic in faith with a man that is merely a misbeliever; it is obvious to perceive, that there is much greater malignity in those that teach or espouse what they ought not, than in those that merely believe wrong or do wrong: because the leaders and abettors of any ill thing diffuse the mischief all around; the other let it die with them. Thus far, I presume, is plain and clear."

Again, alluding to the sentiments of others, p. 355;—

"*'A wicked life the worst heresy'*—which is scarce sense, &c. At the best, it is a strong figure, or a turn of wit, and the thought not just upon the whole. But something of it may be traced up as high as to St. Bernard of the twelfth century, who argued that vicious persons were seducers by their bad example, and therefore were a kind of heretics in practice, corrupting more by their ill lives than heretics, properly so called, could do by their bad doctrines: and he applies it particularly to wicked clergymen; not to extenuate the guilt of heresy, but to enhance the guilt of such bad example. The thought was not much amiss, if he had not carried it too far. He should not have suggested, that bad example is worse than heresy, properly so called. It is true, that bad example commonly will do more harm than sound preaching will do good; because such example runs in with corrupt nature, and the other is

contrary : but if the doctrine be on the same side, it will do infinitely more mischief; and one loose casuist will debauch more than a hundred others shall do who are only loose in their lives. Bad example under the check and discountenance of sound doctrine taught by the same person, carries its antidote along with it. But bad doctrine is a very dangerous snare : it is not merely breaking a law, but loosening the authority of all. Therefore Bernard strained the thought too far : and so did Dean Colet after him ; who is the first man I have met with that ventured formally to say (for Bernard had not expressed the figure so boldly) that a bad life was a heresy, and the worst heresy. However, neither of them intended to extenuate the guilt of heresy at all, but to magnify another kind of guilt, as still greater according to their way of reasoning, or rather rhetoricating.”

“ Archbishop Tillotson glances upon the same thought, but gives a very different turn to it ; and cannot, I think, be reasonably understood of heresy, strictly and properly such, but of what some have wrongly called so. Bishop Taylor, a very moderate man, in a treatise written on the side of liberty, may be a very proper arbitrator, to clear and determine the whole dispute.”

“ ‘ Men think they have more reason to be zealous against heresy than against a vice in manners, because it is infectious and dangerous, and the principle of much evil. Indeed, if by heresy we mean that which is against an article of the creed, and breaks part of the covenant between God and man by the mediation of Jesus Christ, I grant it to be a grievous crime, a calling God’s veracity in question, and a destruction also of a good life ; because upon the articles of the Creed obedience is built, and it lives and dies as the effect does by its proper cause : for faith is the moral cause of obedience. But then heresy, that is, such as this, is also a vice, and the person criminal, and so the sin is to be esteemed in its degrees of malignity. And let men be as zealous against it as they can, and employ the whole arsenal of the spiritual armour against it. Such as this is worse than adultery or murder ; inasmuch as the soul is more noble than the body, and a false doctrine is of greater dissemination and extent than a single act of violence

or impurity. Adultery or murder is a duel, but heresy (truly and indeed such) is an unlawful war; it slays thousands. *The losing of faith is digging down a foundation; all the superstructure of hope and patience and charity fall with it.* But then concerning those things which men now-a-day call heresy, they cannot be so formidable as they are represented. And if we consider that drunkenness is certainly a damnable sin, and that there are more drunkards than heretics, and that drunkenness is the parent of a thousand vices, it may be better said of this vice than of most of those opinions which we call heresies, it is infectious and dangerous, and the principle of much evil, and therefore as fit an object of our pious zeal to contest against,' &c. Thus far Bishop Taylor."

"In the sum of the matter I entirely agree with him. The result, I think, is, that nominal heresy, or an error in slight matters, not affecting the foundation, not hurting the vitals of Christianity, is not so bad as real immorality: and it is equally true on the other hand, that nominal immorality is not so bad as real error in religion, though in the slighter doctrines. But supposing the error and the maintaining of it to amount to real heresy, it is then a vice, and the greatest of vices: so the whole will turn upon the nature, quality, and tendency of what is charged as an heresy. Invincible ignorance will equally excuse any other vice; and so is wide of the purpose."

Again, p. 105;—

"Let it not therefore be imagined, that false teachers are to be numbered among the smaller offenders, or that they are not, generally speaking, the greatest of sinners. Accordingly, we find our blessed Lord never shewed a keener resentment against any men whatever than against false prophets, or those who taught false doctrines in opposition to divine truths. I interpret false prophets so as to include false teachers, such at least as corrupt sound doctrine in any fundamental article: and so Grotius and Hammond interpret, like judicious and knowing men."

Again, p. 107;—

"As our Lord himself made use of a particular sharpness of expression against false teachers, or heretics, so also did his

apostles after him. St. Paul has done it very often against those grievous wolves, (as he calls them,) which may appear in some measure from what has been cited above: I shall only refer to some noted texts to avoid prolixity; but observing also in passing, that though St. Paul delivered an immoral man over to Satan for his incontinence, yet he did not use so strong an expression as anathema, or accursed, which he pronounced upon heretics. St. Peter is exceeding tart against some false teachers of his days, who ‘privily brought in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.’ They also taught men to sit loose from all decent rule and order, and, under pretence of Christian liberty, to run riot in luxury and dissolute behaviour. They were heretics in morality as well as in faith, and of the worst kind: and therefore what is said of them is not applicable to other false teachers in the same degree, but in proportion to the malignity of their respective heresy. The Nicolaitans, I suppose, were the men whom St. Peter pointed to. I hinted that they were heretics in faith, because their doctrine relating to God and Christ was much the same as that of Cerinthus, as Irenæus testifies of them: and thus we may easily understand why St. Peter says of them, that they ‘denied the Lord that bought them.’ St. Jude expresses himself with uncommon warmth against the same false teachers whom St. Peter had before censured. St. John, who was all love, and meekness, and charity, yet severely lashes the heretics of his times, either such as denied Christ’s humanity, or such as impugned his divinity; which I shall show in due time and place. The names which he bestows on them are as follows; antichrists, liars, seducers, false prophets, deceivers. He scrupled not to go wandering upon the mountains in quest of a wicked robber, a captain of a gang, in order to recover him to Christ; and he did recover him: but with the heretic Cerinthus, a corrupter of the truth, he would not stay under the same roof: by which it may appear, how much he detested heresies above common immoralities. His disciple Ignatius, an apostolical man, was exactly of the same sentiments. ‘For,’ says he, (speaking of them that commit adultery, and the like,) ‘they that corrupt (debauch) families, shall not inherit the kingdom of God: therefore, if they who do such things ac-

ording to the flesh, perish; how much more he, who by his pernicious doctrine corrupts that divine faith, for the which Jesus Christ was crucified! Such a man so defiled shall go into fire unquenchable; and so also shall he that hearkens unto him.' See from hence how this holy bishop, soon after a martyr, abominated heresies beyond even great immoralities, as being of more diffusive and more lasting malignity, and not destroying men's bodies, but subverting their souls. His scholar Polycarp, another eminent bishop of those times, was a man of exemplary severity against all kinds of sinners, but against none so much as against Marcion, a noted heretic, whom he calls the firstborn of Satan. I shall mention but one authority more, the very pious and holy St. Cyprian, of the third century. He argues the point at length, that a heretic is a much wickeder man than one that lapsed into idolatry under persecution. He states the comparison to this effect: 'This is a worse crime than that which the lapsers may seem to have committed, who yet do a severe penance for their crime, and implore the mercy of God by a long and plenary satisfaction. The one seeks to the church, and humbly entreats her favor; the other resists the church, and proclaims open war against her. The one has the excuse of necessity, the other is retained by his own wilfulness only. He that lapses only hurts himself; but he that endeavors to make a heresy or schism, draws many after him. Here is only the loss of one soul; but there a multitude are endangered. The lapses is sensible that he has done amiss, and therefore mourns and laments for it; but the other proudly swells in his crime, pleases himself in his misconduct, divides the children from their mother, draws away the sheep from the pastor, and disturbs the sacraments of God: and whereas a lapses sins but once, the other sins daily.' "

Hence Dr. Waterland concludes, p. 110;—

"Heresy lies not merely in the inward thought, but in the overt acts, either teaching pernicious doctrines, or supporting and encouraging them that do. Heresy, so considered, is evil doing, and is condemned among the works of the flesh. So then, instead of saying, that a wicked life is the worst heresy,

which is scarce sense, I should choose rather to say, what is both sense and truth, (generally speaking,) that a life of heresy is a most wicked life: it is joining with Satan and his emissaries in a formed opposition to God and his church, is complicated impiety and immorality."

Now, on this subject we observe first, that granting heresy to be the most heinous offence, and to be all that it is here described to be; granting that one of the primary duties of the church is to oppose and, if possible, to extirpate it; yet in the case of the church of Ephesus, whose truth of doctrine was admitted, and whose zeal against heresy was conspicuous, it was not the heretics who were rebuked and threatened with retribution, but the church; so that the church might do all that an Ephesian teacher maintains it ought to do in opposition to heresy, and might yet herself become heretical, have her candlestick removed out of her place, or cease to be a true church, because in its manner of opposing heresy it had left its former love and charity. How this is effected will be seen in the sequel.

Granting, therefore, heresy, in its worst sense, to be the same with immorality, that to destroy the spiritual life of others is spiritual murder; that to falsify Scripture is spiritual lying, adultery, or fornication; that consequently the most grievous woes are denounced against it by the Saviour and his apostles; yet it is to be observed, that these evils are described in the Apocalypse not as committed by heretics against the church, but as committed by the very church itself.

Secondly, the defect in Bishop Taylor's argument is the following (see above, p. 277); —

"The losing of faith is digging down a foundation: all the superstructure of hope and patience and charity fall with it."

Here faith is said to be the foundation, and charity the superstructure; faith, to be the first in order; charity, the

second; which is precisely the doctrine of the church of Ephesus, for maintaining and acting upon which, it was predicted that its candlestick should be removed out of its place.

Moreover the remark is exactly of the same kind with the following by Alcasar, on Apoc., chap. iii., verse 13;—

“As corporeal light is the first principle of corporeal heat, so also spiritual light is the first principle of spiritual heat. And thus properly speaking is he altogether cold who is destitute of knowledge, by which good desire is inchoated, and he is tepid who had begun to grow warm. For the inchoation of good desire follows immediately upon celestial light.”

This is the doctrine of the church of Ephesus, and an inversion of the true order. Light is not the first principle of heat, but heat is the first principle of light. If Alcasar's doctrine were true, then Luther's doctrine of faith without charity would be true, and Alcasar would oppose his own church, in the doctrine of charity and faith.*

Thirdly, Ephesian teachers are too apt to overlook the principle contained in the following remarks.

Waterland, vol. viii., p. 124; note;—

“Persons admitted by covenant into baptism and erring fundamentally, but with an honest mind and under some unavoidable infirmity or incapacity, we exclude not even from covenanted mercies; for they that are unavoidably, unaffectedly blind, are not chargeable with sin so far; and a man shall be accepted according to what he hath or might have, not according to what he hath not and could not have. This rule is a Gospel rule and so makes a part of the Christian covenant.”

Mr. Howe in his Fifth Sermon on the Vanity of a Formal Profession of Religion, p. 639;—

“For indeed amongst those who are members of the church of Rome, not only charity but justice obliges us to distinguish thus far: that as it is possible for a man to hold very good

* See Perrone, Theological Prelections, vol. ii.; Constitution of the Church of Christ, part i., chap. ii., art. i.

principles, which have no good influence upon his spirit and practice, so it is possible also that men may in speculation hold some very bad principles which have not that poisonous influence on their spirit and practice, to which they naturally tend.”*

Again, p. 638 ;—

“As to the main purposes of religion, it is plainly no great matter what religion a wicked man is of. It is all one whether he be of a false religion, or falsely of the true; except only that his case on this latter account is worse. . . . Though a man cannot be saved under any religion, yet he may perish under any one. What a poor pretence is it when one has nothing to trust to and rely on, as the ground of his eternal hope, but only that he is an orthodox man! an orthodox son of this or that church! So far it is well. But what does it signify to be an orthodox drunkard, an orthodox swearer, an orthodox sabbath-breaker? If such would but admit one to reason soberly with them, I would ask them, What! do you not believe, that holiness is as essential to Christianity as truth? Do you not think that the decalogue is of as good authority as the articles of your creed?” . . .

Moreover, we shall have occasion to see in the sequel that, according to the church of Rome, charity is the life, the soul, or essential principle of justifying faith; that according to the Protestant church, charity is only the fruit or effect of faith; hence that justifying faith is without charity; consequently that faith is first and charity second; which is declared by the church of Rome and admitted by many of the most reputed Protestant writers, to be of all heresies the worst. So that in order to oppose heresy, Ephesian writers begin with it.†

* The reader is here referred to Dr. Calamy’s Sermon on Truth and Love, which bears directly upon this subject.

† Bishop Beveridge on the Twelfth Article of the Church of England, vol. ii., p. 29, quotes Clemens Alexandrinus as saying, ‘charity with love to faith makes believers; but *faith is the foundation of charity*, bringing forth well doing.’ This is the doctrine of the church of Ephesus; but afterwards is added the following extract from Proclus concerning faith and charity, “They both go together; for faith is the glass of charity, and *charity is the foundation of faith*.” This again is inverting

Dr. Hales also observes in his *Chronology*, speaking of Constantine's endeavors to restore peace in the church, vol. iii., p. 602;—

"But Constantine's pacific endeavors proved fruitless; he was drawn into the vortex of controversy himself, and became a decided persecutor of the Arians; against whom the Nicene Creed was hastily framed. His son, Constantius, was furious against the Athanasians; so that both sects were persecuted in turns. One council was called to annul the acts of another; and having lost sight of Scripture, in their metaphysical subtleties and distinctions, they converted the church into a great slaughter-house!"

"'Since the Nicene council,' says Hilary, A.D. 354, 'we do nothing but write creeds; and while we quarrel about words; while we raise questions about novelties; while we fight about ambiguities and strive about parties; while we anathematize each other, scarce any one is Christ's! And while we bite one another, we are consumed one of another!' 'Christianity,' says Episcopius, 'became a mysterious, dark, incomprehensible, unintelligible religion, loaded with human inventions.' And during the following period of the four war trumpets, superstition and idolatry, hatred and persecution, raged among zealots and fanatics, calling themselves Athanasians, Arians, Euty-chians, Novatians, Nestorians, &c.; anything but fellow Christians!"*

"Alas! how applicable to the present most woeful period is this!"

— Mutato nomine, de Te
Fabula narratur!"

Woodhouse on the *Apocalypse*, p. 157;—

"Augustin, in his epistle to Vincentius, says, that he has found reason to change his opinion concerning the application of force in the conversion of heretics, perceiving it now to be useful. But still there seems to have been no capital punish-

the doctrine of the church of Ephesus and returning to the true apostolical doctrine,—"the greatest of these is charity."

* See the sermons of Dr. Clarke, vol. i., p. 424.

ment for that which the church should deem heresy before the twelfth century; when a court of inquisition was erected against the Albigenses and Waldenses. In the thirteenth century it was enacted, by the Fourth Council Lateran, that heretics should be delivered to the civil power to be burned. At which time, during a lamentable period of forty years, above a million of men are said to have suffered by capital punishment for what was deemed heresy, or in what was called Christian warfare.—*Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!*”

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ ver. 5;—

“ ‘Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen,’ *signifies*, remembrance of their error: ‘and repent and do the first works,’ *signifies*, that they ought to invert their state of life: ‘or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent,’ *signifies*, that otherwise illumination certainly will not be given them to see truths any longer.”

Again *ibid.*, art. lxxxv.;—

“By quickly is signified certainly,* art. iv., p. 947, and by candlestick the church with respect to illumination, art. xliii., p. 66; hence by removing it out of its place, is signified to remove illumination, that they may not see truths in the light thereof, and at length that they may not see them any longer. This follows from what was said above, art. lxxxii., namely, that if truths of doctrine are respected primarily, or in the first place, they may indeed be known, but not seen interiorly, and loved out of spiritual affection, wherefore they perish successively; for to see truths from their own light, is to see them from the interior mind of man, which is called the spiritual mind, and that mind is opened by charity; and when it is open, light and the affection of understanding truths out of heaven from the Lord flow in, thence comes illumination. The man who is

* “*Quæ ex decreto divino certissime eventura sunt,*” &c. Eichorn’s Commentary on the Apocalypse, vol. i., p. 6. See above, p. 210.

in this illumination acknowledges truths as soon as he reads or hears them, but it is not so with the man whose spiritual mind is not opened, who is one that is not principled in the goods of charity, howsoever he may be principled in the truths of doctrine."

We have seen how, according to some, charity is the foundation of faith, or the first principle from which a perception and acknowledgment of the truth is derived; therefore remove this first principle, and the truth may remain, and even be received and professed for a while; yet not from any internal perception, but only from *external authority*.

In process of time, however, the truth itself disappears and the church ceases to be able to distinguish false doctrine from true: hence it mistakes one for the other; like persons in the dark, who can distinguish nothing correctly, in consequence of the candlestick holding the light having been removed: whence arise, also, disputes and divisions.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ." 1 Cor. i., 10.

Alcasar is of opinion that it is this kind of division, though developed into heresy, which is here designated by the expression, 'I will remove thy candlestick out of his place,' or the church shall be brought into a state of intestine commotion and perturbation. Thus on chap. ii., part. i., he observes;—

"And first this is the explication of Victorinus, who thus explains the words; 'I will remove thy candlestick out of his

place,' I will disperse thy lay-members (*plebem tuam*). Andreas, however, has perhaps explained the words still more aptly as follows: 'I will remove thy candlestick,' *i. e.*, I will throw the church into billows and storms. The explication of De Lyra looks the same way; I will withdraw from obedience to thee those who are under thy authority; an explication evidently relating to a disturbance of the peace of the church. This exposition, therefore, by Victorinus, Andreas, and De Lyra, I judge to be the truest." . . .

And again;—

. . . "If the candlestick be the church, what else can the moving of the candlestick designate, than the moving and perturbation of its commonwealth?"

And Dr. Henry More in his works observes on this passage, p. 727;—

"I will produce yet another sense which pleaseth me best of all, in which Victorinus, Andreas, Lyranus,* and Alcasar do all agree, who interpret the removing of the candlestick out of its place, of the commination of some commotion or storm that should overtake the church, not that this church should be carried quite away, but moved or agitated as in a storm or earthquake."

Now whether this be the primary meaning of the passage or not, it is certainly comprehended within the one which regards it as indicating the removal of the church from a state of internal illumination from the Word, inasmuch as it presents the natural and necessary consequence of this removal, *viz.*, internal dissension. For the Lord, as we have seen, is in the midst of the seven candlesticks as the Word; to remove therefore the candlestick out of its place, is to remove it from the Word as the source of its illumination; to remove it from its office, which is to receive the light, not to originate the light; for as Viegas says, p. 66, the light of the seven candlesticks is the sun itself, and the *Glossa Ordinaria*, Apoc. i., 12, interprets

* De Lyra introduces the interpretation as not his own, but that of others.

the seven golden candlesticks as the seven churches burning and illuminated with the wisdom of the Divine Word. The candlestick being thus removed, darkness supervenes; order is destroyed, and disorder introduced.

In what way, then, is the church catholic removed out of its place in regard to the Word?

First, let us take the case of the church of Rome.

This candlestick is removed out of its place, because it has changed places in regard to the Word, having removed itself to the centre, and the Word to the circumference. Thus in his Hulsean Lectures upon the Apocalypse, Dr. Wordsworth observes, p. 132;—

“The church of Rome, you are aware, would persuade us that we owe the Scriptures to her, and that if we would believe in their inspiration, we must acknowledge her authority. She even affirms that Scripture derives its validity from her sanction. It is Scripture, she says, because she has canonized it. So that according to her theory, the Word of God owes its existence, as such, to the church of Rome.”

Again, p. 491;—

“The candlesticks do not give light to the olive-trees, but the olive-trees pour oil into the golden pipes of the candlestick. The church does not give authority to the Word; but through the church the Word illuminates the world. You claim to be *the* universal candlestick. This you are not. You are indeed a candlestick, a candlestick in danger of removal. And by presuming to say that you alone are *the* one candlestick, and that you give light to the olive-trees of God’s Word; and by affirming *that** to be the oil of the divine olive-trees which *is not*, you disobey and dishonor Him who *walketh in the midst of the candlesticks*, and you provoke Him to remove you from your place.”

This part of the subject will be more fully treated of in Chap. XVII. and XVIII. Now for the consequences.

Archdeacon Manning on the Unity of the Church,

* *i. e.*, the Apocrypha.

speaking of the eastern and western churches, p. 358;—

“Although for some time they still continued partially to communicate with other churches, yet at the last they were completely divided. The Christian world was sundered; and the two great members had no third or common body to unite them. They were in point of extent so nearly equal that each claimed to be the greater; and no one can venture to award between them. They mutually charged each the other with heresy and schism; and history abundantly proves that they were both in fault—the Greeks by violence, the Latins by ambition: the Greeks denouncing the addition of the words ‘filioque’ as heretical, which they are not; the Latins requiring the acceptance of them as if they had the sanction of a general council, which they do not possess: but be the faults of the Greek churches never so great, they cannot be laid in the balance against the usurpation of a supreme pontificate by the Bishop of Rome. This attempt of the Roman patriarch to subject the four eastern patriarchates to his exaggerated jurisdiction is a claim which, so long as persisted in, must throw upon the Roman church the sin of keeping open an inveterate division.”

The church of Rome being removed from its place in regard to the Word, what is the case with regard to the Protestant church?

In his work on the Causes of the Present Corruption of Christians,* Ostervald having first stated that he shall say nothing but what must needs be owned by all the sensible divines of any party, proceeds to observe, p. 297;—

“Almost all the authors who have writ of divinity, have made of it, upon the matter, a science of mere speculation. They establish certain doctrines, they deliver their opinions, they prove them as well as they can; they treat of controversies, and confute their adversaries; but they do not seem to have meditated much upon the use of the doctrines they teach,

* This work is said to have been highly esteemed by Bishop Burnett; and was republished by Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, in his collection of Theological Tracts, from which edition the present extracts are taken.

with relation to piety and salvation. They are very short upon this head, which yet is the chiefest of all; they are not by half so solicitous to assert the *duties*, as they are to maintain the *truths* of religion. Now this is not teaching divinity. The design of religion is to teach men how they ought to serve God, and to make them holy and happy." . . . "Instead of those simple and clear ideas, which render the truth and majesty of the Christian religion sensible, and which satisfy a man's reason, and move his heart, we meet with nothing in several bodies of divinity but metaphysical notions, curious and needless questions, distinctions, and obscure terms. In a word, we find there such intricate theology, that the very apostles themselves, if they came into the world again, would not be able to understand it, without the help of a particular revelation. This scholastic divinity has done more mischief to religion than we are able to express. There is not anything that has more corrupted the purity of the Christian religion, that has more obscured matters, multiplied controversies, disturbed the peace of the church, or given rise to so many heresies and schisms. This is the thing which confirms so many ecclesiastics in their ignorance and prejudices, and which keeps them from applying themselves to the solid parts of divinity, and to that which is proper to sanctify men."

Again, *ibid.*, p. 214;—

"All Christian societies boast that they profess the truth; and that very thing is enough to shew that many of them are in error, since they do not agree among themselves about the articles to be believed. I will not enlarge on this head, because it would lead me into many particulars, and, in some respect, into controversy. I shall only say, that if we did judge of what is to be believed in religion, by that which ought to be the principle and rule of faith among Christians, I mean, the Holy Scripture, we would soon perceive on which side the truth lies. We might observe in that society which vaunts itself to be the purest of all, and even which pretends to be infallible, and the only true church exclusive of all other, absurd tenets and monstrous doctrines, equally repugnant to Scripture and reason, and we should be convinced, that the doctrine of those

churches which did separate from that society, is much more consonant to the Gospel.”

“We must have a very mean notion of Christianity, if we can believe that holiness, which is the second character of the church, is to be found among Christians at this time. The complaint of the last ages was, that religion wanted to be reformed in doctrine, worship, discipline, and manners. It was reformed in part by the rejecting of those errors and abuses, which were crept into doctrine, worship, and discipline; but the reformation of manners is still behind. The people have not as yet been reformed in this regard, except perhaps in those times and places where they have been persecuted. As for the rest, they have scarce changed anything besides their belief and worship; this alone proves that the state of the church is yet imperfect. Holiness is the scope of religion, it is the chief character of Christianity; so that where holiness and purity of manners is not, religion must be very defective.”

“Union, peace, charity, as was said before, are one of the essential marks of the disciples and church of Christ. But where is this character to be found? The church at this day is rent into factions and parties. We cannot say, that there is but one church; we must say that there are many religions and churches. Christians divide not only upon lawful grounds, which make separation necessary, but about things of small consequence. Upon the least diversity of opinions, they pronounce *anathema* against one another, form different sects and communions. Even those churches which might have a common belief and interest are not united. Those men who by their office should be the ministers of peace, are but too often the firebrands of division. I desire no other proof of this, but that zeal which most divines express about the disputes of religion, and that little disposition which is found among them, to sacrifice some opinions, or expressions, to the peace of the church.”

Archbishop Tillotson, Sermon 206, vol. ix., p. 36; under the head of, “The want of peace and love.”—

“How full of factions and divisions are we? and these managed with all imaginable heat and animosity toward one

another; as if the badge of Christianity were changed, and our Saviour had said, Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye hate one another."

"All the differences among Christians of what denomination soever, are sadly to be lamented; but I almost despair as to the difference between us and the church of Rome, because the reconciliation is impossible, unless they renounce their principles. They cannot come over to us, because they think they are infallible; and we cannot pass over to them, because we know they are deceived; so that there is a great gulf between us and them. We must not only renounce the Scriptures, but our reason and our senses, to be of their mind. We cannot communicate with them in the sacrament, because they have taken away one half of it, which is as plainly instituted and commanded as the other part, which is left. We cannot worship the virgin Mary, and the saints, much less their images, because it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.' In short, several of their articles of faith are such as no credulity can swallow; and several parts of their worship are such as no piety can join with."

Again, Sermon 204, p. 6; under the head of, "An orthodox profession of the Christian faith."—

"This is another form of religion, which the more knowing and inquisitive sort of men are apt to take up and rest in. And this is that which, in the Jewish religion, the apostle calls a form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law."

"And this is good as far as it goes. But then it must not rest only in the brain, but descend from thence upon the heart and life: otherwise a man may have this form of godliness, and yet be a denier of the power of it. St. Paul puts this very case, that a man may have the theory and knowledge of religion, and yet if it do not produce the fruits of a good life, it is nothing worth: 1 Cor. xiii., 2, 'Though I have the gift of

prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.’ And the reason is plain, because the knowledge of religion is only in order to the practice of it; and an article or proposition of faith is an idle thing, if it do not produce such actions as the belief of such a proposition doth require.”

“There are many persons in the world very solicitous about an orthodox belief, and mightily concerned to know what the Scriptures, but especially what the councils and fathers have declared in such a matter; and they are nice and scrupulous in these things, even to the utmost punctilios, and will, with a most unchristian passion, contend for the Christian faith: and yet, perhaps, all this while they can allow themselves in plain sins, and in the practice of such things as are in Scripture as clearly forbidden to be done, as anything is there commanded to be believed. Whereas religion does not consist so much in nicety and subtilty of belief, as in integrity and innocency of life; and the truest and most orthodox persuasion in matters of religion, is but a mere form and image, if it be not accompanied with an answerable practice; yea, like the image represented to Nebuchadnezzar in his dream, whose head was of fine gold, but the legs and feet were iron and clay.”

Again, p. 10; under the head of, “A great zeal for some particular party, or opinions, or circumstances of religion;”—

“This form is frequently assumed, because men find the greatest shelter and protection under it. He that declares zealously for a party or opinion, and is fierce and eager against those that oppose it, seldom fails to gain the reputation of a religious and godly man; because he hath the vote of the whole party, and a great number to cry him up. And if he be guilty of any miscarriage, unless it be very gross and visible, he shall never want those that will apologize for him, and be ready to vindicate him at all turns. Either they will not believe what is reported of him, but impute it to malice; or they will extenuate it, and ascribe it to human infirmity: but still they cannot but think he is a religious man, because he is so zealous for that

which they esteem to be so considerable a part of religion. Nay, such is the horrible partiality and injustice of parties, that a very bad man that appears zealous for their way, shall easily gain the esteem of a holy and religious man, though he have many visible and notorious faults; though he be passionate and ill-natured, censorious and uncharitable, cruel and oppressive, sordid and covetous; when another, who quietly, and without any noise and bustle, minds the substantial parts of religion, and is truly devout towards God, just and peaceable, and charitable towards men; meek and humble, and patient, kind and friendly even to those that differ from him, shall hardly escape being censured for a lukewarm, formal, moral man, destitute of the grace of God and the power of godliness."

Dr. Henry More in his works also observes, p. 347;—

... "This is one great scandal and effectual counterplot against the power of the Gospel, the vilifying and despising of moral honesty by those that are great zealots and high pretenders to religion. This does advance atheism and profaneness very much. But there is another miscarriage which I have hinted at already as epidemical and universal, and at least as effectual to this evil purpose as the former. There is scarce any church in Christendom at this day that does not obtrude not only falsehoods, but such falsehoods that will appear to any free spirit pure contradictions and impossibilities, and that with the same gravity, authority, and importunity that they do the holy oracles of God. Now the consequence of this must needs be sad. For what knowing and conscientious man but will be driven off, if he cannot profess the truth without openly asserting of a gross lie? If he sees good wine poured out of one bottle, but rank poison out of another into the same cup, who can persuade him to drink thereof? This is a heavy sight to the truly religious, but the joy and triumph of the profane, who willingly take this advantage against the whole mystery of piety, as if there were no truth at all in it, because that so gross falsehoods are urged upon them with the same indispensableness, with the same solemnness and devoutness, as those things that (were it not for the serious impudence of

the priest in other open falsities) might pass with them for true. But they being not at leisure to perpend things to the bottom, but it may be not altogether indisposed to receive a faithful report from an honest man, they finding the relater foully tripping in some things that he so earnestly urges, discredit the whole narration, and so become perfect atheists and unbelievers; though, for their own security, they juggle with the jugglers, that is, comply and do outward reverence and devotion, though they cannot but laugh in their sleeves at either the ignorance or cunning deceitfulness of their ghostly leaders. And that I may not seem to slander the state of Christendom, I mean of the whole visible church, in what nation soever under heaven; if we may believe historians, there is none, neither Greek nor Roman, neither Lutheran nor Calvinist, but will be found guilty of this fault.”*

This brings us to another interpretation of the words, ‘I will remove thy candlestick out of his place.’ Durham speaks of this removal as meaning the same with the church, ‘unchurching itself by its unbelief, confusions, and errors;’ secondly, with being disowned by the Lord as a church, so that in his divine providence he transfers the church; from them to others, as in Matt. xxi., 43, where the kingdom of God was taken from the Jews and given to others: a third way of removing the candlestick is, he says, when both these happen together.

Lancaster’s *Vindiciæ Symbolicæ*, p. 321, chap. i.;—

“The question, of late much agitated, respecting creeds and articles of doctrine, is one which involves the very being of Christianity. I say not this, as if there were any reasonable fear for the duration of the Gospel: that is everlasting: nor yet, for the stability of the catholic church: † for that too is everlasting, and fixed on an everlasting rock: the gates of hell will never prevail against it. But it is not thus with regard to *our participation* in the Gospel and in the church: there is no

* See also Scott’s Annotations on this subject.

† Which is the company of *all faithful* people, and answers to the clect gathered out of the four winds.

warrant of perpetuity here : the ark itself will float in safety, while *we* may be overwhelmed. We may find a warning in the present state of those seven churches, to which the apocryphical mandates were sent ; there is no security that the church of this land shall not one day mourn under a like desolation."

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 6 ;—

“ ‘ But this thou hast, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate,’ *signifies*, that this they know by means of their truths, and thence are not willing that works should be meritorious.”

Again, art. lxxxvi. ;—

“ That the works of the Nicolaitanes are meritorious works, hath been given to know by revelation. The reason why it is said that they hate these works, is, because the church from the truths of its doctrine knows, and thence is not willing, that there be merit in works, wherefore it is said, *this thou hast*. Nevertheless all those make works meritorious, who put the truths of faith in the first place, and the goods of charity in the second ; but not those who put the goods of charity in the first place : the reason is, because genuine charity will not have any merit attributed to itself, for it loves to do good, inasmuch as it is in good, and from good it acts, and from good it respects the Lord, and from truths it knows that all good is from him, wherefore it hath an aversion to merit. Now because they who respect the truths of faith in the first place, cannot do any works but what are meritorious, and yet know from their truths that such works ought to be detested, therefore this follows after it was said, that if they do not consider charity in the first place, they do works which ought to be held in aversion.”

See this subject treated of in the remarks upon the church of Pergamos.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 7 ;—

“ ‘ He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit

saith unto the churches,' *signifies*, that he who understands ought to obey what the divine truth of the Word teaches those who are to be of the New Church, which is the New Jerusalem."

Poole's Annotations on the Holy Bible, vol. iii., p. 953;—

"'He that hath an ear,' &c. It is a form of speech which Christ often used, when he would quicken up people's attention, Matt. xi., 15; xiii., 9, 43; Mark iv., 9, 23; vii., 16; we shall find it again in these two chapters six times; from which some would conclude that in these epistles there is something mysterious, parabolical, and prophetic, it being a form of speech prefixed to many parables."

Pererius on the Apocalypse, Disputation i., chap. ii., p. 790;—

"In these words is signified that it is not all who have spiritual ears, such as they ought to have, to hear the Word of God. As saith Isaiah (xlii., 20) of certain people, 'Who is blind, and who is deaf but my people who have eyes open and see not, and ears open and hear not.' Matthew also says that our Lord exclaimed, 'He who hath ears to hear let him hear.' Moreover interior and spiritual hearing consists of three things. First, the application and attention of the mind to the Word of God: that which is preached is to be heard and understood. Next an inclination of the understanding to believe it. Then a pious affection and propensity of the will to love and embrace it," &c.

Ribera on the Apocalypse, p. 39;—

"He means a spiritual ear, ready to understand and obey, as in Matthew xiii.: 'He who hath ears to hear let him hear.' Where Jerome remarks, 'We are called to understand what is said, as often as we are admonished in these words.' And Bede on Mark, chap. iv.: 'Ears to hear are the ears of the heart and the interior sense; ears to obey and do the things which are commanded.'"

Viegas on the Apocalypse, p. 130;—

"We must know, therefore, that in Scripture, account is taken of two kinds of ears, one exterior, the other interior, which latter signifies interior intelligence, and also obedience."

So also Richard of St. Victor.

Dr. Samuel Clarke, in his Sermons upon this verse, gives a similar interpretation, and adds, vol. i., p. 403, Sermon 65;—

. . . "To have an ear, in the Scripture sense, means to have an understanding free and unprejudiced, open to attend to, and apt to receive the truth. Which is a qualification including probity and fairness of mind, and is therefore highly commendable in the moral sense."

This author afterwards enumerates the obstacles to spiritual hearing, such as carelessness or want of attention, prejudice or prepossession, perverseness and obstinacy, and a love of vice.

He also observes, vol. i.; Sermon 68, p. 424;—

"When the object of zeal is not the searching after truth and the practice of moral virtue, but the inconsiderately and rashly promoting, violently, and by all means, some unexamined or imagined truth; it often comes to pass that even zeal itself for truth, degenerates into the most inveterate prejudice, and most incurable obstinacy against it, and puts men upon the most unrighteous methods of propagating (as they think, but indeed of opposing) it. 'They shall put you out of the synagogues, saith our Saviour,' John xvi., 2: 'yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service.' The reason follows, ver. 3; 'These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me;' that is, because they have no true notion, either of natural religion, or of Christian. The malignity of this sort of prejudice is set forth to us under a most lively and expressive figure, Acts vii., 57. '*They stopped their ears*, and ran upon Stephen—and stoned him.' They took effectual care not to be convinced by what he should say. They were, as the Psalmist expresses it, 'like the deaf adder that *stoppeth her ears*; which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.' Our Saviour describes the unreasonable prejudices of the Pharisees, by the same figure of speech, John viii., 43: 'Why do ye not understand my speech? even because *ye can-*

not hear my word.' His meaning is, their vicious and corrupt inclinations would not suffer them to hearken to the truth. And elsewhere in the same gospel, he more than once expresses the same thing again, by styling them blind."

Scott, in his notes on Isaiah xlii., 20 ; the passage above referred to by Pererius ;—

"Alas, how many professed Christians and nominal ministers are more blind than even the benighted heathens, so that whilst the voice of God causeth the deaf to hear and the blind to see, those who think they do see, and are proud of their knowledge and virtue, are given up to judicial blindness and obstinacy ; and all instruction and arguments tend to increase their enmity and guilt."

A similar comment upon the same passage occurs in Matthew Henry ;—

"It is a common thing, but a very sad thing, for those that in profession are God's servants and messengers, to be themselves blind and deaf in spiritual things ; ignorant, erroneous, and very careless. Blindness and deafness in spiritual things are worse in those that profess themselves to be God's servants and messengers than in others. It is in them the greater sin and shame, a greater dishonor to God, and to themselves a greater damnation."

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 7 ;—

"'To him that overcometh,' *signifies*, to him who fights against evils and falses, and is reformed : 'I will give to eat of the tree of life,' *signifies*, appropriation of the good of love and charity from the Lord : 'which is in the midst of the Paradise of God,' *signifies*, interiorly in the truths of wisdom and faith."

Robertson on the Apocalypse, p. 31, observes, concerning the Tree of Life ;—

"It is spoken of wisdom, Prov. iii., 18, 'She is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her, and happy is every one that retaineth her ;' and it is applied to the reward of righteousness, Prov. xi., 30 : 'The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life.' This can be nothing less than Jesus Christ, all that he is, and all

that he has purchased. This, some think, was mainly designed by the sacramental tree of life in the garden of Eden: but, whatever be in that, we are sure Christ is called a Tree; John xv., 1: 'I am the true Vine.' He is also called Life; John xiv., 6: 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life;' where certainly eternal life is pointed out, which eternal life is in Christ; 1 John v., 11, 20. Yea, he is expressly called eternal life. He is called a Tree for these reasons, his stability, his strength, his beauty, and he is always disclosing new treasures of fruit."

Gagneus; Biblia Maxima of De La Haye, p. 728;—

"The tree of life is The Wisdom of the Father, the Only-begotten Son of God, of whom Solomon says, Prov. iii., 'Blessed is the man who findeth wisdom; she is a tree of life to them who lay hold of her,' &c.

Ambrose, Bede, Alcasar, Hammond, Rupertus, &c., all regard these words as applying not merely to the wisdom attained in the world to come, but to that which is attainable even in the present world.

Thus we see that it is not *knowledge* that imparts life, but *wisdom*; for we read of the tree of *knowledge* and the tree of *life*. The tree of life was wisdom itself, or love and knowledge united; so that love is the life of knowledge, as charity is the life of faith. The church of Ephesus was in the *science* of good and evil, and in the zeal of that science, or in knowledge without love; hence the Lord threatens the removal of the light of knowledge itself; so that if it continued to leave its first love, the church should be left in darkness, or cease to give light, and consequently cease to be a church.

On the other hand, if right dispositions of the heart be cultivated, and carried out into practice, thus, if we do the will of God, and lead others by our example to do the same, then will both be in that state in which truth can be seen in its own light.

Dr. John Edwards, in his Free Discourse concerning

Truth and Error, especially in matters of Religion, thus observes, p. 468;—

“We are assured by the Scriptures of truth that holiness is the best guide of the rational faculties, and that we shall have farther discoveries of what is true and right if we live according to those things we know. I will begin with the Psalmist’s words in Psalm cxi., 10: ‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,’ a holy life is the way to heavenly wisdom: ‘a good understanding have all they that do his commandments,’ keeping of God’s laws and living uprightly do very much conduce to the enlightening of the mind and clearing the understanding. And this he declareth from his own experience, Psalm cxix., 100: ‘I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.’ I have (saith he) arrived to greater knowledge than those who far exceed me in years; and I must in a great measure impute it to my conscientious observing the laws of God. Nay, he assureth us in Psalm xxv., 14, that ‘the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant.’ Those who truly fear God and walk in his ways shall be blessed with extraordinary communications of truth. If there be any *secrets* and *mysteries* which are useful for them, they shall be acquainted with them, and the covenant of life and salvation, which contains the greatest secrets and mysteries imaginable, shall be unlocked to them: they shall be permitted to look into the *ark*, they shall be honored with wonderful discoveries, and their understandings shall be illuminated in a way different from other persons. Solomon goes higher, and lets us know that ‘they that seek the Lord understand ALL things,’ Prov. xxviii., 5. There is no part of knowledge whatsoever, that may be any way useful to them, shall be kept from them. Daniel (another inspired penman of Scripture) joineth these two together, TURNING FROM OUR INIQUITIES and UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTH, (Dan. ix., 13,) and thereby informeth us that the understanding of God’s will and all saving truth is the companion of hearty repentance and a godly life. And again, speaking of the great mysteries which were to be revealed in a short time, he saith that ‘none of the wicked shall understand them, but the wise (who are opposed here to the

wicked, and therefore are the *godly* shall understand,' Dan. xii., 10. Let us pass to the Scriptures of the New Testament, and there if you consult John vii., 17, you will find those words an evident proof of this matter, 'If any man will do his (*i. e.*, God's) will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.' Let a man seriously set himself to the practice of religion, and he shall certainly have a clear insight into the doctrine of it. And this seems to be our Saviour's meaning when he saith, 'He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life,' John viii., 12. He that liveth according to my laws and precepts (that is, *following* of Christ) shall be truly enlightened with all spiritual knowledge that is necessary to life and happiness. His practice shall advance his knowing of God's will. And this may be the import of Christ's words in John viii., 31, 'If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' They that *practice* what is delivered to them by Christ in his Word (for that is *continuing in his Word*) shall be *learners* indeed, they shall experimentally know all saving truths, and this knowledge shall make them *free*, viz., from their former ignorance and blindness."

Ibid., p. 477 ;—

“ ‘He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he shall be loved of my Father, and I will manifest myself to him.’ This divine manifestation is annexed to keeping the commandments, living a holy and virtuous life. *This* is the peculiar blessing which attends the practice of Christianity, viz., a wonderful sagacity of diving into and even fathoming the depths of religion. This was eminently seen in the apostles and primitive Christians. Those poor men were harmless and innocent in their conversations, and God rewarded their integrity with a surpassing knowledge of divine and heavenly truths. They had better apprehensions and righter conceptions of things than the learned. As their conversations were more innocent, so their knowledge was more clear. They discovered the greatest secrets and mysteries in the world, and such as those of vast abilities and acquirements could not con-

ceive. As by a good and holy life they refined their minds, so there was a singular blessing which effected this. And the like is to be experienced by all those who truly fear God and walk in his ways. To such as labor to do the will of God sincerely, He will vouchsafe great discoveries of truth, He will reveal those things to them which at present perhaps they have but slender apprehensions of. For this they may depend upon, that a sincere practice of what they know inviteth God to increase their talent of knowledge, according to the tenor of that promise, 'To him that hath, shall be given.' And thus whether you look at the thing itself, or the promise of God, it is evident that a good life is the best advancer of knowledge, and that a religious practice is an excellent furtherer of truth."

"Be fully persuaded then of this, and let it have an influence on your lives. Be encouraged to practise truth, to resign yourselves wholly to the guidance of it, if you are desirous to improve your knowledge, and to attain to the best notices of things in religion. Those are excellent words of Gregory Nazianzen, 'Wouldest thou be skilled in theology, and even worthy of divinity? Keep the commandments, walk in God's precepts, for *practice* is the way to come to *theory*.'"

Ibid., p. 479 ;—

"First purify your lives, and then your understandings will be thoroughly illuminated. A practical Christian hath a great advantage above others of gaining right apprehensions of things. These two do mutually help and forward one another, viz., good principles and holy practice ; for as good principles are the ground of holiness, so on the other side holiness and living a good life will promote our good principles. Truth and goodness are companions. The *Urim* and *Thummim* go together : *light* and *integrity* advance each other. Purity and righteousness are the best keys to open the secrets of religion, and unlock the mysteries of Christianity. Therefore that you may increase in divine knowledge, it is especially requisite that you exercise a good conscience, and act nothing against your reason and against the revealed will of God. Follow the conduct of *piety*, and that will infallibly lead you into the way of *truth*."

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 8 ;—

“ ‘And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write,’ *signifies*, to those and concerning those who are in goods as to life, but in falses as to doctrine : ‘these things saith the First and the Last,’ *signifies*, the Lord in that He is the only God : ‘Who was dead and is alive,’ *signifies*, that He is neglected in the church and his Humanity not acknowledged to be Divine, when nevertheless with respect to that also He alone is life, and from Him alone is life everlasting.’ ”

With respect to the nature of these goods as to life, or of this good life, Swedenborg observes, art. xcvi. ;—

. . . “Forasmuch as they who are principled in good as to life, and in falses as to doctrine, are here treated of, and such know no other than that they are in good, and that their falses are truths, it may be expedient to speak more particularly concerning such. All good of worship is formed by truths, and all truth is formed from good, wherefore good without truth is not good, neither is truth without good, truth ; they appear indeed in their external form to be so, but are not : the conjunction of good and truth is called the heavenly marriage ; from this marriage is produced the church in man, and it is heaven in him ; if therefore there are falses instead of truths in man, then he doeth the good of a false principle, which is not good, for it is either pharisaical, or meritorious, or natural connate good. But examples will illustrate this : He who is in this false principle, that he thinks he doeth good from himself, because he hath the faculty of doing good, the good of such a man is not good, because he himself is in it, and not the Lord. He who is in this false principle, that he can do good which is in itself good, without a knowledge of what is evil in himself, consequently without repentance, such a man when he doeth good, doeth not do good,

because without repentance he is in evil. He who is in this false principle, that good purifies him from evils, and who doth not know anything of the evils in which he is, such a man doth no other good than spurious good, which is inwardly contaminated by his evils. He who is in this false principle, that there is a plurality of Gods, the good which such a man doeth is divided good, and divided good is not good. He who is in this false principle, that he believes the divinity in the Lord's humanity is not like the soul in the body, cannot do good from Him; and good not from the Lord is not good, for it is contrary to these words of the Lord, '*Except a man abide in me and I in him, he cannot bring forth any fruit; for without me ye can do nothing; if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a dried branch, and is cast into the fire and burned,*' John xv., 4, 5, 6; and so in many other instances; for good derives its quality from truths, and truths derive their essence from good. Who doth not know that the church is no church without doctrine, and doctrine must teach how a man is to think of God and from God, and how he is to act from God and with God, wherefore doctrine must be derived from truths, to act according to which, is what is called good; whence it follows, that to act according to falses is not good. It is thought, that in the good which a man doeth, there is not any thing derived from truths or falses, when nevertheless the quality of good is not derived from any other source, for they cohere together like love and wisdom, and also like love and foolishness; it is the love of the wise man which doeth good, but the love of the fool doeth what is like good in externals, but totally unlike it in internals, wherefore the good of a wise man is like pure gold, but the good of a fool is like gold inclosing dung within it."

Mayer, in his Expositions upon the Revelation, p. 262,

observes, that 'the church of Smyrna figureth out the state of the church when heretics got the upper hand, as in the days of the Arians,' &c. See also Gill on this church.

Bishop Pearson; Exposition of the Creed, art. ii., His only Son, vol. i., p. 203;—

"He which is expressly styled Alpha* and Omega, the *First* and the *Last*, without any restriction or limitation, was, after and before any assignable time, truly and essentially God. For by this title God describes his own being, and distinguishes it from all other; see Isa. xli., 4; xlvi., 12; xlv., 6. But Christ is in various passages of the Revelation styled expressly the *First* and the *Last*; see verses 11, 17; chap. ii., 8; xxii., 13, &c. And in all these places the title is attributed to Him absolutely and universally, without any limitation, in the same latitude and eminence of expression, in which it can be attributed to the supreme God. Whence it follows, that Christ is declared to be the Supreme, Almighty, and eternal God."†

Jones of Nayland; Works, vol. i., p. 3; Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity;—

"Isaiah xlv., 6: 'Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of Hosts, I am the First and I am the Last, and besides me there is no God.' Rev. xxii., 13: 'I, Jesus, am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.' . . . These titles of the First and the Last are confined to him alone, besides whom there is no God. But Jesus hath assumed these titles to himself: therefore Jesus is that God besides whom there is no other. Or thus: there is no God besides him who is the First and the Last; therefore besides Jesus there is no other God."

Pareus on the Apocalypse, p. 16;—

"Ribera supposeth that these are the words of the holy

* Doddridge observes in his Family Expositor, vol. iv., p. 574;—

"I cannot forbear recording it, that this text has done more than any other in the Bible, towards preventing me from giving in to that scheme which would make our Lord Jesus Christ no more than a deified creature."

† See also Dr. Waterland's works, vol. ii., p. 139.

Trinity. But the coherence sheweth it is Christ that speaketh, who is described in the foregoing words; and the epithet Lord is to be understood of Christ, as appeareth also from the eleventh and seventeenth verses, and more clearly from chap. xxii., 13; so that without all question Christ saith of himself, ‘I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending.’ . . . Christ, therefore, in calling himself Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, and that absolutely, therein doth assume to himself absolute perfection, power, dominion, eternity, and divinity.”

That the whole Trinity is in the single person of Christ, so that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ comprehends the entire name of God, has already been shewn, p. 223, to which therefore the reader is referred.

Daubuz on the Apocalypse, p. 102;—

“‘*And he that liveth.*’] This is an attribute of God the Father, of which the Son participates, John v., 26: ‘For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.’ Which expression seems to be used to prove what was said before, verse 21: ‘As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.’ God is said to *live*, in opposition to the idols and pretended gods of the Gentiles; and it signifieth, that God is able to act as a God, whereas they cannot. For to live, in Scripture phrase, signifies to be in a state or power to act. See John vi., 51; and what hath been cited out of Hebrews iv., 12, where ζῶν, living, and ενεργης, efficacious or powerful, are put together as synonymous, and explaining each other. That Christ can, as well as the Father, give life or power to act, is also proved from his own words, John x., 28.”

Durham on the Apocalypse, p. 28;—

“‘I am the living,’ that is, I am the living God, who had life from all eternity of myself, and gave life to all creatures that have life,” &c.

Vitringa likewise observes, p. 24, on the words, ‘He that liveth;’—

“Who am the living one, that is to say, the living God,

the truly living. Although I was dead in the human nature—‘and behold I truly live for ever and ever.’ Here we have a manifest allusion to the title living for ever, which God attributes to himself; Dent. xxii., 40.”

From these remarks it is clear, that by *The Living One* is signified the *One who Lives*, or *who hath Life in Himself*. But we have already* seen it maintained, that the flesh also of Christ hath life in itself, and is capable of imparting life to others; that the body of Christ is the body of God, and is Light itself; that this body is made divine, and hence that the humanity is divine. We further observe, that by reason of the communication of properties the divine may be predicated of the human; hence that as the divine is uncreated, so the divine human is uncreated; in other words, that as the body of God the humanity does not exist as a creature. This was the doctrine maintained by Epiphanius; who, says Petavius,† seems to admit that in no way can the Son of God be called a creature; no, not even as man. A similar doctrine seems to have been held by Proclus. Mr. Newman says, in his *Select Treatises of Athanasius*, p. 344, that it is a question in controversy, whether the manhood of the Saviour can be called a creature; and he affirms that Petavius conceded thus far, that, viewed as deified in the Word, it does not exist as a creature.

Nevertheless this is not the doctrine generally prevailing: we accordingly proceed to interpret the words, ‘and was made dead,’ and to shew how that which is divine and hath life in itself is said to be made dead.

Lauretus; article *mortuus*;—

“The death of Joshua designated that Christ is dead in those who are in sin, but is alive in the saints.”—Origen.

“I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Gal. ii., 20.

“To me to live is Christ.” Phil. i., 21.

* See above, p. 255.

† Book vii., on the Incarnation; chap. vi., art. viii.

“They crucify the Son of God afresh.” Heb. vi., 6.

Again, under the article *crucifigo*, Lauretus observes ;—

“They crucify Jesus who anathematize him and endeavor to take away his doctrine. Christ is crucified in unbelievers and heretics.”—Origen, Ambrose.

It is this view of the subject that has led theologians to the use of the term *Deicidium*, as signifying sin or unbelief; and hence *Deicida* is defined to be *qui Deum cœdit*, which nevertheless is a killing not of God, but of the life of his love, or wisdom in the soul; so that in the soul of the sinner, the Living One is said to be dead. Corresponding to this interpretation we find the following remarks of Woodhouse, p. 20 ;—

“ ‘They who have pierced him’ are not only the Jews, who demanded his crucifixion of Pilate, but likewise all those who wound him by transgressions, who ‘crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame.’ ”

Grotius on this passage ;—

“Who have vexed him and his church in all manner of ways.”

Again, on the same passage in Zech. xii., 10 ;—

“They are said to pierce God who make use of reproachful language in regard to Him; for the word *nakab*, which is properly to *perforate*, is put for the word *blaspheme*, Lev. xxiv., 11.” (See Calmet on this passage, and Poole Syn. Lev. xxiv., 11.)

Alcasar, on chap. i., ver. 6, Commentary ;—

... “ ‘They who pierced him’ expresses those who, by their crimes and wickedness, as with spears, wounded Christ, who suffered for them.”

Robertson on the Apocalypse, p. 9 ;—

“But then every eye shall see him, friends and foes; not only those who pierced him on the cross, but those who pierce him in heaven with their sins, shall see him.”

Robertson likewise observes, p. 191, on Rev. xi., 8 ;—

“ ‘Where also our Lord was crucified.’ This expression has moved many to take this as meant of literal Jerusalem,

because our Lord was really crucified there. But still, in my opinion, we are to take the words spiritually, and so there is no need to dream of a crucifixion at Jerusalem: the Scripture helps us to another meaning of the expression, which will agree to this context, Heb. vi., 6: 'They crucify to themselves the Lord of Glory, and put him to open shame.' This is expressly asserted of all apostates, or such as against light refuse the message of the Gospel; which we will find fully verified of spiritual Babylon. This is to be meant of a spiritual crucifixion; for these, as much as in them lies, rob him of his threefold office, obscure the truth of his Word, and wound him in his mystical members."

Woodhouse, speaking of the death of the Witnesses, chap. ii., p. 296, observes;

"Add to this, that the death of the witnesses is also to be taken in a spiritual sense.* Such interpretation agrees best with the succession of witnesses, which, as before observed, must necessarily take place in so long a duration of time. They do not all die, and again rise from the dead; but if their religion and the power thereof be first extinguished, and then raised again, the prophecy seems to be accomplished."

Daubuz on the Apocalypse, p. 1041;—

"Every eye shall see him, even they also who pierced him; even the Jews who crucified him, and all they who have again crucified him afresh by blasphemy against him in all those ways which are specified in this prophecy."

Glasse also observes in *Philologia Sacra*, p. 1839;—

"Those apostates are said to crucify the Son of God, Heb. vi., 6, who, impiously revolting from the doctrine of Christ crucified, pursue it with hatred, and persecute its real members."

Remarks to the same effect may be found in Scott, Vitringa, Matthew Henry, and other authors. Whence we perceive that *The Living One* is said to be crucified, pierced, or to be made dead in us, when the true knowledge of him is rejected or perverted.

Now the true knowledge of him is the knowledge of

* Our Lord is the faithful and true Witness.

all his perfections ; but in the present case the particular perfections specified are, that He is *the First and the Last* ; and consequently, it is the rejection or corruption of some doctrine relating to Christ as the First and the Last, as The Living One, or Jehovah himself, which is specifically pointed out to the church of Smyrna, and in consequence of which He is said to be made dead.

The question therefore is, has there been or is there in the church, any rejection or corruption of any doctrine relating to Christ as the First and the Last ?

Mr Skinner, in his Letters addressed to Candidates for Holy Orders, vol. i. p. 89, observes, —

“ Messrs. Whiston and Clarke stand justly charged with perverting the Scriptures to make Christ a creature. Dr. Bull is, however, equally chargeable, since he has laid down a thesis (to prove which only the semblance of authority is adduced) the subject of which consists in this — that the Son is less than the Father : in other words, that Christ is less than God : therefore in fact a creature, be his pitch of exaltation or our conceptions of it what they may. This conclusion from the premises of Dr. Bull is too obvious to have escaped logicians, such as Messrs. Whiston and Clarke have proved themselves to be, and on their plan they were well entitled to use it as they have done : while the orthodox were and are entitled to complain that Dr. Bull should have afforded such countenance to heretics, in *crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh*. This, Mr. Nelson informs us, was the case : and he particularises Dr. John Edwards, of Cambridge, as one who, in animadverting on Dr. Clarke’s Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, lamented that Dr. Bull had hurt the doctrine of the Trinity, by urging the inferiority of the Son to the Father in respect of his divinity.”

Poole’s Synopsis, Isaiah xlv. 6 —

“ ‘ I am the First and I am the Last,’ &c. Thus the Hebrews thus explain : —

“ ‘ The First, nor is there any beginning of his beginning’ Grotius. Right, if rightly understood. But these craftily op-

pose the divinity of Christ, because he is not the first but the second from the Father. But one of the divine persons is not here opposed to another, but God to his creatures. Besides, the Son, as to his essence, is not less the First than the Father, nor has he any beginning of essence: because it is the same in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: but only of person."—Lud. de Dieu.

"Trinitarian Controversy Reviewed," p. 165.—*

"In my comments upon some passages in the Revelations, I took notice of Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, as a character applied to Christ, Rev. i. 11, 17, and offered my reasons why this title cannot be understood in as high a sense, as when applied to the Father."

"Upon this you observe, that no person of common sense can conceive two Firsts and two Lasts," p. 65."

"*Ans.*—Yes, certainly, any person of common sense may conceive First and Last in different senses, and the context plainly determines an essential difference in the application: but pray, Sir, does not your scheme necessarily imply two Firsts and two Lasts? for surely, the Father is one person, and the Son is another person, who are both styled First and Last, and, consequently, the absurdity you would fix upon the notion of two Firsts and two Lasts, falls upon your own hypothesis: which should induce you, for the honor of Scripture, to interpret these words in a different sense, when applied to the Father and the Son, as, indeed, we are warranted by the passages themselves, and which entirely removes all appearance of absurdity."

Now Dr. Waterland admits that the person, essence, and hence the attributes of our Lord are all derived; hence also Dr. Randolph, afterwards Bishop of London, observes, in common with the rest of the orthodox, in his *Vindication of the Worship of the Son*, part ii., p. 25.—

"I shall only add, that we acknowledge Christ not only to be inferior to the Father in respect to his human nature, but also with respect to his mediatorial office: and still farther, with

* The anonymous author is said to have been an Arian; perhaps he is here giving an answer to an Arianist.

regard to his divine nature, as God of God, there is an inferiority of order, but not of nature.”

The same author, however, in his *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 21, thus observes ;—

“The Son is, by all the ancient writers, held to be in some sense inferior to the Father, and that even with regard to his divine nature.”

Dr. Hales, in his work entitled *Faith in the Holy Trinity*, vol. i., p. 224, quotes Dr. Clarke, as thus faithfully stating the true orthodox Athanasian doctrine which ought by all to be received ;—

“The supreme self-existent Cause and Father of all things did before all ages, in an incomprehensible manner, by his almighty power and will, beget or produce a divine person styled the Logos—the Word or Wisdom or Son of God, God of God (*Θεος εκ Θεου*), in contradistinction to *Αυτοθεος*, in whom dwells the fulness of divine perfections, EXCEPTING absolute supremacy, independency, or self-origination, being the image of the invisible God, the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person, having been in the beginning with God, partaker with him of his glory before the world was, the upholder of all things by the word of his power, and himself over all by communication of his Father’s glory and dominion God blessed for ever.”

In consequence of this inferiority of order, even as to the divine nature, our Lord, in respect of that order, is not regarded as the First; consequently even as to his divine nature prayers are not generally addressed *to* him as the Supreme God, but only *through* him, as will be shewn in the remarks on the *Two Witnesses*.

We thus perceive how the First and Last has been made dead with regard to his Divinity: we next proceed to shew how He has been made dead with regard to his Divine Humanity.

We have seen that the divine humanity is acknowledged by some to be vivific, to be life-giving, because the divine

humanity as such hath life in itself.* To deny that it hath life in itself, hence that it is divine, is to deprive it of its own proper life, thus to make it dead. Now that a general denial of the divinity of the Lord's humanity prevails in the church, has already been shewn in the chapter upon the Incarnation. Moreover it is very generally admitted that in the first chapter of the Apocalypse our Lord is revealed in the character of Prophet, Priest, and King; but in the chapter on the Mediatorial Kingdom we have seen it maintained that all these offices are to be swept away; that as Prophet, he is not to instruct; as Priest, he is not to mediate; as King, he is not to rule; hence that the humanity is to be divested of the glory in which it is here exhibited to the church of Smyrna, and to be reduced to a state of perpetual subjection to the Father; while, as will be seen in the sequel, it is denied that the humanity is justly the object of divine worship. It is this which is meant by blaspheming the tabernacle of God, as will be shewn in its proper place.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 9;—

“‘I know thy works,’ *signifies*, that the Lord seeth all their interiors and exteriors at once: ‘and affliction and indigence,’ *signifies*, that they are in falses and thence not in goods: ‘and the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not,’ *signifies*, the false pretence that there are with them goods of love when nevertheless there are not: ‘but are the synagogue of Satan,’ *signifies*, because they are in falses as to doctrine.”

Dr. Pye Smith; Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, vol. iii., p. 162;—

“The message to each of the seven churches is accompanied with the solemn assurance, ‘I know thy works,’ and the knowledge thus claimed is clearly shewn, in the connexion of each of the passages, to include the most perfect acquaintance with

* See above, p. 255.

the sincerity or hypoerisy of individuals, and with all the complication of human feelings and actions. This property, which in fact amounts to a real omniscience, is again inserted in terms than which nothing can be plainer and stronger; terms in the interpretation of which we cannot be mistaken, since they are borrowed from one of the most express assertions of the exclusive attribute of Divine Omniscience and heart-scrutiny that occur in the whole volume of revelation, Jer. xvii., 9. ‘All the churches shall know that I am he who searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give to each of you according to your works.’” Rev. ii., 23.

“By *blasphemy*,” says Lauretus under that article, “is meant to speak evil, by attributing anything to any one injuriously, or by taking away that which belongs to him, and it is used especially in regard to God.” Rupertus also says, that blasphemies are heretical dogmas. This will be further explained in the sequel. At present we observe, that the term *blasphemy* signifies the taking away from our Lord that which belongs to him, whether in regard to the divinity or the humanity. See above, p. 308.

Menochius; Biblia Maxima, De La Haye, p. 729;—

“Who say they are Jews and are not; viz., not true Jews, since they do not confess Christ to be God, whom the ancient patriarchs of the Jews and the prophets worshipped and foretold.”

Thus far we see that by “the blasphemy of those who say that they are Jews and are not,” is signified the rejection of the doctrine of the Lord’s divinity, and also of his divine humanity, by the professed teachers of the truth. There is yet a further application of the words, “blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not.”

Thus Dr. Gill on this passage;—

“Who asserted themselves to be the true Israel of God, Jews that were so inwardly, regenerate persons or truly Christians; for the Christians, baptized persons, were by the heathens called Jews.” . . .

Their assertion being a false one, it is likewise here involved in the term blasphemy. Moreover those who affirm the doctrines here condemned, are also affirmed to be not of the church of Christ, but of the synagogue of Satan; that is to say, of that school of teaching which is adverse to the truth, the word Satan meaning an adversary. The consequence of such teaching is, that many who are otherwise in external good of life are seduced into error; the devil will have power over them to east them into prison. It is to these, who, though in error, are capable of being reformed, that the subsequent words apply.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 10;—

“‘Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer,’ *signifies*, despair not when ye are infested by evils and assaulted by falses: ‘behold, the devil shall east some of you into prison,’ *signifies*, that their good of life will be infested by evils from hell: ‘and ye shall be tried,’ *signifies*, by falses fighting against them: ‘and ye shall have affliction ten days,’ *signifies*, that it will last its full time: ‘be thou faithful unto death,’ *signifies*, reception of truths until falses are removed: ‘and I will give thee a crown of life,’ *signifies*, that they will then have life everlasting, the reward of victory.”

Cruden observes under the article *prison*, that it signifies “that spiritual thralldom and bondage in which sinners are kept by Satan and their own lusts;” and again under the article *captivity*, “‘That the Lord turned the captivity of Job,’ that is, he brought him out of that state of bondage in which he had been so long held by Satan and his own spirit, and out of all his distresses and miseries.”

And again, Rabanus Maurus, under the article *carcer*, observes, that “*prison signifies the weight of our corruption.*”

Glasse in his *Philologia Sacra*, p. 1832,

“That by bringing the soul out of durance or prison, is signified its divine liberation from evils and dangers, and its gladness after sufferings.”

Lauretus under the article *carcer*, that it signifies—

“Hell and the shadow of death (Origen); also temptations, tribulations, and the calamities of this life (Augustin, Gregory, Arnobius); also a state of sin, which Lucifer does not open but shut, lest men should repent; also that it designates the darkness of ignorance.”—Jerome.

Aquinas, *Catena Aurea*, Luke iv., 18, p. 156;—

“The word captivity has many meanings. There is a good captivity, which St. Paul speaks of when he says, ‘Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.’ There is a bad captivity also, of which it is said, ‘Leading captive silly women laden with sins.’ There is a captivity present to the senses, that is, by our bodily enemies. But the worst captivity is that of the mind, of which he here speaks. For sin exercises the worst of all tyrannies, commanding to do evil, and destroying them that obey it. From this prison of the soul Christ lets us free.”—Chrysostom.

Suicer, article *αιχμαλωσια*;—

“Captivity in an evil sense (as where Paul writes to Tim. iii., 6) is when heretics or false teachers are said to lead captive those whom by their evil and fraudulent arts they reduce into the slavery of error and false doctrine; or whom, being drawn away from the profession of pure doctrine, they lead astray into heresies, and at length into eternal ruin.”

Such then is the state of captivity and imprisonment here designed; and not external persecution under any of the Roman kings; it is purely that state of spiritual bondage and trial which arises from spiritual ignorance and error.

Pyle’s *Paraphrase on the Revelation*, chap. ii., 10;—

... “The number *ten* in the Scripture language very often signifies no more than *many*; as may be seen in abundance of instances. As Mr. Daubuz, and Mr. Lowman from him, have justly observed.”

According to De Lyra, *ten* signifies here what is *perfect* and *complete*; according to Primasius, Bede, and Rupertus, it signifies *all*. That *day* means *state* has already been observed; a state of joy or grief, illumination or darkness, depending, as before, on the context.

But it is said, "let no man take thy *crown*."

Among the Pythagoreans, according to Scaliger, a *crown* signified *law* and *government*, whence the phrase, *rend not the crown*, signified that the *law* was not to be violated. *Brixiani Symb. Dict., art. Corona.*

Under the article *crown*, Dr. Henry More observes, p. 539, that crown signifies "the brightness of divine *doctrine* or truth."

Lauretus, that "the locusts are said not to have crowns, but as it were crowns; because heretics have not the *truth*, but the counterfeit of *truth*."—Augustin.

That a *crown* signifies *wisdom* is confirmed by Alcasar, chap. iv., verse iv., Com. 1; by Robertson on the Apocalypse, p. 91, where he says it means "wisdom, valour, and victory;" and by the Glossa Ordinaria, p. 247, where it is said to mean "victory, by wisdom and charity towards enemies." See also Daubuz.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 11;—

"'He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,' *signifies*, here the same as before: 'he that overcometh,' *signifies*, he that fighteth against evils and falses and is reformed: 'shall not be hurt of the second death,' *signifies*, that afterwards they shall not sink under evils and falses from hell."

Calmet, Apocalypse ii., 11, p. 932;—

"The first death is that of the body; the second death is that of the soul." Victorinus, Andreas, Bede, De Lyra, Haymo, &c., &c.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' art. xlii., p. 84;

“ Before man turns himself to the Lord, and acknowledges him as the God of heaven and earth, he cannot see divine truth in the Word ; the reason is, because God is One, both in person and in essence, in whom there is a Trinity, and that God is the Lord ; wherefore they who acknowledge a Trinity of Persons, look up primarily to the Father, and indeed to the Holy Ghost, and rarely to the Lord ; and if they do look up to the Lord, they think of his humanity as of a common man. When a man does this, he can by no means be illuminated in the Word, for the Lord is the Word, inasmuch as it is from Him, and of Him ; for this reason, they, who do not approach the Lord Alone, see Him and his Word behind them, and not before them ; or at their backs, and not before their faces. This is the arcanum which lies concealed in this passage, ‘ That John heard a voice *behind* him, and that he *turned* to see the voice, and being *turned* saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of them the SON OF MAN ;’ for the voice, which he heard, came from the Son of Man, who is the Lord. That the Lord Alone is the God of heaven and earth, he now teacheth in a manifest voice, for he saith, ‘ *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, which Is, and which Was, and which is to Come,*’ verse 8 ; and here, ‘ *I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last,*’ verse 11 ; and afterwards, ‘ *I am the First and the Last,*’ verse 17, and chap. ii., 8.”

SWEDENBORG, ‘ APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 12 ;—

“ ‘ And unto the angel of the church in Pergamos write,’ *signifies*, to those and concerning those who place the all of the church in good works, and not anything in truths of doctrine : ‘ these things saith He which hath the sharp two-edged sword,’ *signifies*, the Lord as to the truths of doctrine from the Word, whereby evils and falses are dispersed.”

Commentators seem to be unanimous in regarding the two-edged sword as signifying the Word of God.

Richard of St. Victor on the Apocalypse, p. 212 ;—

"These things saith he who hath the sword with two edges, who if you desire to be corrected is powerful to aid, to lay openly defects both in body and spirit ; and who, if you desire not to be corrected, is powerful to condemn you in both. The sword with two edges is the Word of God living and efficacious, and more penetrating than any other ; which not only lays open to view the corrupt deeds of the body, but likewise the corrupt thoughts of the heart, and condemns those who in both remain incorrigible."

The sword is two-edged, as well for other reasons as because, says Ambrose Ansbert, it lays open not only the faults of works, but also unlawful thoughts. A Lapide, Alcasar, Joachim, and others, interpret the passage as intimating that the church in Pergamos ought to be like Christ, having a sword, *i. e.*, the Word of God, coming out of its mouth ; and employing it against the errors and evils peculiar to that church, namely, those which are signified by the doctrine of the Balaamites and Nicolaitanes. See also Mayer upon this passage, p. 273.

Andreas says that by the two-edged sword is meant the doctrine of the Gospel, which circumcises the hearts of believers, and separates believers from unbelievers.

Woodhouse upon the Apocalypse, p. 31 ;—

"This is the weapon by which our Lord and his followers are to conquer at the last ; and therefore is again described in chap. xix., 15, 21. In an eminent passage of the evangelical prophet, confessedly prophetic of our Lord, it is said, 'He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.' Agreeably to which, the 'sword of the Spirit' is called by St. Paul 'the word of God,' and is the weapon with which, according to the same apostle, even 'with the spirit of his mouth,' the Lord shall destroy the man of sin. And the powers of this weapon are

again described: 'The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.' These quotations from holy writ cast considerable light upon the passage before us, and shew the nature of the arms by which our Lord and his church are to gain their victories; not by the usual instruments of human warfare, but by the preaching of the Word in evangelical purity and power."

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 13:—

"'I know thy works,' *signifies*, as before: 'and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is,' *signifies*, their life in darkness: 'and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith,' *signifies*, when nevertheless they have religion and a worship according to it: 'even in those days when Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth,' *signifies*, when all truth was extinguished by falses in the church."

On the word Satan, Calmet in his Dictionary observes, that this Hebrew word is often translated adversary in the Septuagint.

"Where thou dwellest" is frequently taken to signify the state of a person's life; place being considered as signifying state. Hence on the words, "Adam, where art thou?" Gen. ii., 9, Ambrose observes, chap. xiii., on Paradise: "Where art thou? I ask not in what *place*, but in what *state*?" This is the interpretation also of Menochius; and the same likewise is adopted in the Commentaries of A Lapidé.*

The throne of Satan may signify either his throne as king, or his seat, *sedes, cathedra*, as teacher. In either sense it refers to a state of spiritual darkness; but in Scrip-

* Matthew Henry, on this passage in Genesis, observes, that it means "not in what place, but in what *condition*." Poole, in his Comments: "In what place or in what *condition*." Scott, in his observations upon this passage: "It is very useful for us frequently to propose to ourselves this question—*Where* art thou? In a *state* of safety or peace? or in the broad road to destruction?" &c. The Commentary of the Religious Tract Society pursues the same idea.

ture darkness is of two kinds, the darkness of ignorance or the darkness of false knowledge, both of which kinds are here referred to. First there is the darkness of ignorance; to those who are in this ignorance the Lord comes with a two-edged sword, to awaken and instruct. Secondly, there is the darkness of false knowledge; to those who are in this state of error or heresy, the Lord comes with a two-edged sword to combat and overcome, either by conviction or condemnation. The Word of God, then, as proceeding out of the mouth of the Saviour, has relation to both these states.

Poole's Synopsis, Isaiah ix., ver. 2; —

"The people that walked in darkness, or without light;—denoting a defect of consolation, and their danger. By *darkness* understand here, that of calamities; or the spiritual darkness, ignorance, and idolatry of sinners," &c.

Lauretus observes, that Satan is taken for the devil, and for his body, which is the multitude of the evil. Moreover, as righteousness and judgment are the establishment of the throne of God, so the throne of God is an emblem of righteousness and judgment—hence of the divine law. In like manner the throne of Satan is an emblem of unrighteousness, and of the absence of all judgment, or else of the presence of corrupted judgments only. Again, the true church is called the throne of God, hence a false church is the throne of Satan.

Thus a throne has reference to law; a chair or seat to rules, government, and instruction. Hence we read in Suicer, that a throne is put for an ecclesiastical government or administration; whence the ecclesiastical seats at Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, are called catholic and œcumenical thrones.

"Where God is said to give unto Christ the throne of David, we are," says Suicer, "to understand his spiritual reign over the church." "When," says Theophylact, "you hear of the throne of David, you are not to imagine a king-

dom cognizable only to the senses, but a divine kingdom by which he reigns over all nations through the medium of a divine preaching. Hence the words throne, seat, chair, are emblems of instruction. Thus Lauretus observes, under the word *cathedra*, that it hath the authority of one teaching or governing, and as such is likewise called a throne.

“The seat (*cathedra*) of Moses signifies the doctrine of the law, which afterwards became the seat of Christ; it likewise signifies the power of teaching.”—Rupertus.

“The seat (*cathedra*) of the pestilence may signify confirmed habits of vice; likewise the perverse doctrine of heretics, which is truly pestilential. The seat of the beast is the church of the evil and the throne of the devil, which is to the north. The seat of the beast is also a very lie itself, upon which devils and heretics rest themselves.”—Basil, Clement, Hilary, Jerome, Augustin, Eucherius.

Hence likewise Cruden observes;—

“The seat of Moses upon which the Scribes and Pharisees sat, is to express the authority of the doctors of the law and the office of teaching, which was granted to them, or which they took upon themselves.”

Hence again in the Family Bible, where it is said the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat, it is observed, “that by this is meant that they are the received interpreters of the law of Moses; or are your lawful rulers, having authority over you, succeeding Moses and the seventy elders.”

Again in the same Commentary, on Apoc., chap. ii., ver. 13;—

“‘*Where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is.*’] That is, I consider the temptations of the place where thou livest, where the powers of darkness and corruption have a numerous and powerful party.”

“*Thou holdest fast my name.*”] “This,” says Rupertus, p. 372, “might be saying somewhat greatly in favor of this church, did not the negligence, or the works which follow, throw a shade over this confession of the name.” By hold-

ing fast the name, therefore, is signified holding fast to a public confession of the name. Thus Richard of St. Victor, p. 212: "The name of the Lord and the faith of the Lord we understand as being one and the same, for what is it to be baptized in the name of the holy Trinity, but to be baptized in his faith? for as a thing is made known to us by its name, so God is made known to us by faith." Moreover, the name of the Lord is the Word of God; thus Apoc. xix., 13: "His name is called the Word of God." A similar view of the subject is taken in the work entitled *Hyponoia*, p. 59: "'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus (Rom. x., 9), and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' This holding fast the name of Christ may correspond with the confession of that name spoken of by Paul," &c.

Some writers consider that by Antipas is meant Christ, the faithful and true martyr and witness. Thus Primasius: "For Christ," says he, p. 154, "is slain among many; viz., either among those who believe not that he rose again, or those who deny him by their damnable crimes, where Satan dwelleth." In this sense Antipas, as a witness to the truth, or as a martyr, was spiritually slain by a denial or rejection of the truth; or he was made dead in the sense already explained under the church of Smyrna. Hence also Bede observes, that by Antipas some understand "Christ the Lord, who even now is slain by the unbelieving as much as in them lies." Ribera says, that he can find nothing of Antipas* in ecclesiastical history; but Swedenborg, in the *Apocalypse Explained*, vol. i., p. 182, admits, with other writers, that a person of that name formerly existed, and was put to death for his testimony to the truth; only that the name is here used symbolically for that truth for which he died.

* "Respecting this martyr, no account whatever has been preserved to these times."—Dean Woodhouse.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 14;—

“ ‘But I have a few things against thee,’ *signifies*, that the following things are against them: ‘that thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and commit fornication,’ *signifies*, that there are some among them who do hypocritical works, whereby the worship of God in the church is defiled and adulterated.”

Cornelius a Lapide on Numbers, chap. xxii., ver. 7;—

“Balaam, therefore, was a simoniae in selling, as well as Balak in buying, this malediction, at least in his own mind and conscience; since they both expected it from Baal, whom they supposed to be the true God.”

Again on Numbers, chap. xxiii., verse 1;—

“Balak . . . signifies the devil. Balaam, that is, the people of vanity, signifies the Scribes and Pharisees, who, under the impulse of a demon, wished to curse and destroy Christ and Christians, who are the true Israelities; but God converted their curse and the death on the cross into a blessing and glory. So Rabanus.”

Again on Numbers, chap. xxiii., verse 5;—

“Like to Balaam and Saul are those Christians who live in concubinage, hatred, drunkenness, the possession of goods unjustly acquired; and yet at the season of Easter, or at the hour of death, experience contrition, and propose to themselves amendment of life; and then again straightway after the festival, or after recovery from danger, return to their concubinage, their hatreds, their cups, and unjust possessions. Let these fear for themselves; and let them await such an end and catastrophe as befel Saul and Balaam.”

. . . Verse 9;—“ ‘Let me die the death of the righteous,’ &c. The sense is as if Balaam should say, Would that it were my lot to die the same joyful and happy death which faithful and just Israelites will die, who know that they are passing on to a better life, to a blessed immortality. So speak also in the present day the wicked, atheists and politicians, when they are seriously

and sincerely considering the present and future state of man : so great is the force of truth. All the wicked, therefore, seek a good death, but shun a good life ; because to die well is a happiness, but to live well is a labor. Yet one is not granted us without the other. Eternity depends upon death ; death upon a life good or evil. Make your choice : to perish once at death, is to perish for ever."

Again verse 10 ;—

"St. Gregory in book xxxiii., moral. xxvii., beautifully teaches from this example of Balaam, that no prayer has the weight of true virtue, which does not also retain it by the perseverance of a continued love. For as soon as the time of compunction was over, Balaam took counsel against the life of those very persons whose death he had expressed a wish to resemble ; and as soon as he found the opportunity for gratifying his avarice, immediately forgot all his previous wishes concerning an innocent life."

Again, Numbers, chap. xxiv., verse 4 ;—

"Gregory, in his ninth Homily on Ezekiel, thus remarks : ' Balaam falling had his eyes open : he saw what it was right to say, but had a contempt for acting rightly ; falling, that is to say, into perverseness of action, and yet having his eyes open in the preaching of holiness. For as St. Augustin observes : In giving a blessing, that is true confession in which the mouth and the heart give utterance to the same thing ; but to speak well and to live ill, is no other than to condemn one's self with one's own voice.'"

Rupertus on the Apocalypse, p. 372 ;—

"What, as we learn from history, was the doctrine of Balaam ; and in what manner it is held or imitated by many at the present day, who are seen to be in the church, the passage before us admonishes us more attentively to consider." . . . &c.

"Having the power or efficacy of blessing and cursing, Balaam is the figure of those priests who, while they are evil, have nevertheless in virtue of their office the power of communicating or excommunicating. Hence also Balak says to him, ' Come and curse me this people ; for I know that whomsoever

thou blessest is blessed, and whomsoever thou cursest is cursed ;' 'having also the knowledge of God,' and hence conscious that in vain does the priest heap maledictions upon him whom his own guilt or culpability does not subject to curses. And yet who, so often going and enquiring through motives of avarice, if perchance it might please God that he should curse this people, manifestly expresses in figure those who make a sale in the church of their blessings and curses, and do everything for the sake of lucre." . . .

"Thus divided, thus double-minded, Balaam in tinkling words pronouncing the blessing of God in public, while conceiving deceit in secret, and giving counsel to the impious king for the destruction of the people of God—does not he depict in himself beforehand the intolerable hypocrisy of venal priests? Are not all places full at this day of the intestine plague of these sacrileges?"

"Let us, however, speak of Balaam in a general point of view, that is, of all those who everywhere, under the name or office of the priesthood, follow after avarice, and love the rewards of iniquity. Whosoever then he may be who comes to the priestly office in this manner, is in truth led hither to curse, and in his heart detests Israel; because he loves vices and hates virtues, though in public he dares not utter his detestation, he dares not openly curse with his voice so as to teach otherwise in the church than according to the rule of faith. So in like manner did Balaam desire, on account of promised rewards, to curse Israel; but the Lord prohibiting him, he durst not; but on the contrary, blessed them; declaring according to the truth, for the happiness of that people, the same things which Moses and the other holy prophets piously and faithfully announce: 'A star shall arise out of Jacob, and a rod out of Israel; and shall smite the leaders of Moab;' of the mystical sense of which I have not here the leisure to treat in particular. So likewise do these not dare, although they wish, to go beyond the rule of faith; and although in heart they wish to deprive the people of the fear of future judgment, in order that they may have the greater number to encourage their iniquity, and many fellow companions in their perdition, still they recite their lections, and sing the testimonies of the Lord's passion,

resurrection, and ascension, and of the last day. In this faith they pronounce their blessing, baptize, and consecrate. And when they have done this in public, then in private they turn to their evil counsel and conversation, in which they corrupt good morals."

St. Bernard; Tenth Sermon upon the Canticles, vol. i., p. 1292;—

"How many in this day shew that they are otherwise affected. I speak of those who have taken upon themselves the guidance of souls. For—it is not to be spoken without a dismal groan—the insults, the spittings, the scourges, the nails, the spear, the cross, and the death of Christ—all these they prepare again in the furnace of their avarice, and lavish them away in exchange for the acquisition of base lucre, and hasten to clutch in their hands the price of a world; differing forsooth from Judas Iscariot only in this, that he regarded himself as compensated by the emolument only of a few pence, while they with a more voracious swallow demand money without end. For this do they gasp with a desire insatiable; this they are in fear to lose; when they lose it, they grieve; in the love of it they are at rest, but only in so far as they are free from care in preserving or increasing it."

Again, On the office of Bishops, vol. i., chap. vii., p. 472;—

"The clergy of all ages and ranks, the learned and unlearned alike, are running after ecclesiastical cures just as if, when they had come to their cures, they were to live without cares (cures). Nor can we wonder at it in those who have had no experience in these matters. For these, seeing that others who have submitted their shoulders to the envied burden, not only do not groan under the weight but desire even to be laden the more, are themselves not deterred by dangers which through the blindness of their cupidity they are unable to discern; and indeed are only the further provoked by those favors which they so envy in others. Oh! ambition ever without end, and avarice insatiable! For when they have earned for themselves the first degree of honors in the church, . . . they are not at rest therefore in their hearts, but are ever boiling up with redoubled

desire, by which they gasp with the wider mouth for further possessions, and become elated with the prospect of still higher dignities. When any one, for instance, is made a deacon in a church, or president, archdeacon, or anything else of this kind, not contented with one honor at one church, he busies himself after more, as many as he can get, both in a single church and in many others besides. And then, in preference to all these, when the vacancy offers, he would like the single dignity of bishop. But will this satisfy him? When made a bishop, he desires to be archbishop. When perchance he has got this, then dreaming after something or other, I know not what, that is still higher, with laborious journeys and sumptuous retinues he resolves on frequent visits to the palace at Rome, in order to get up a friendly acquaintance to forward his own interested purposes. Were these things done for the sake of spiritual profit, the zeal would be praiseworthy; presumption however must be corrected."

"Some there are who, when they cannot do these things, betake themselves to another sort of ambition, in which they betray the lust of domination which they possess. For when they preside over very populous cities, and inclose, so to speak, whole countries within the boundary of their single diocese, as soon as occasion is offered, in virtue of some ancient privilege, they are busy in subjugating to themselves adjacent cities; so that two are brought under the power of one priest, for the care of which formerly scarcely two presidents were enough. Now, I ask, what odious presumption is this? what is all this mighty ardour of domineering over the earth? this unbridled lust of princely power? Verily when you were first conducted to the episcopal chair, you shed tears, you held back, you entreated support, saying how much it was for you to undertake; too much for your own single strength; crying out that you were a miserable unworthy person; that you were not fit for so sacred an office; not sufficient for such great responsibilities. Why then is it that now, setting aside your modest fears, you spontaneously aim after more? nay, with irreverend audacity, not content with your own, you invade the rights of others? Why is this? Is it that you may save the more souls? But to thrust your sickle into another's man's harvest, is doing an

injustice. Is it that you may be of use to your church? But such an increase of one church to the detriment of another, cannot be pleasing to the spouse of the church. Oh! ambition, cruel, and incredible, if one did not see it with one's own eyes! Scarcely do their hands desist from literally fulfilling that which is read in the prophet, 'They have ripped up the women with child at Gilead, that they might enlarge their own border,' Amos i., 13."

"Where is that terrific curse, 'Woe to you who join house to house and field to field?' Is that woe to be dreaded only in such smaller matters as these, and not when city is joined to city, and province to province? Nay, but let them reply, if they will, that they are only imitating the example of Christ the Lord, making one fold out of two, bringing sheep from different pastures that there may be one fold under one shepherd. To this end they have no hesitation with frequent steps to wear the threshold of the apostles (at Rome), in order to find there (which is the more to be lamented) those who may favor their unrighteous designs. Not that their Roman friends mightily care which way the business terminates, but because they are in love with gifts, and follow after rewards. I speak openly of open things; I do not reveal what shame conceals, but protest against shameless practices. Would that these things were done privately, and in secret chambers! Would that we were the only persons who saw and heard these things! Would that no one would credit our words! Would that the modern Noahs had left to us, wherewithal to conceal the shame of their nakedness! But now when the whole world sees the story realized, shall we only be silent! My brain is confused as if by a blow: fain would my head seem to be bleeding at every pore. Bind it as I will, the swathe will be only saturated with blood; but greater would be my confusion from wishing to conceal that, which after all cannot be concealed."

Matthew Henry on Jeremiah, chap. ix., verse 6;— "Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit," illustrates the passage by a reference to the church of Pergamos: "I know thy works and where thou dwellest." In that chapter, however, reference is made to deceit and hypocrisy

among the people, which is thus described by Scott in his observations on the passage ;—

“ Whilst all men are offended at the imputation of being liars, all in one way or other have been guilty of lying ; and multitudes, in every rank of society, use their tongues almost wholly for this purpose. The whole social intercourse of thousands and millions is a mere interchange of dissimulation : now they lavish deceitful compliments, professions, and panegyrics ; and shortly they deviate as widely from the truth, in slander and back-biting, and perhaps in respect of the very same persons ! In trade, a similar system of falsehood is prevalent ; and buying and selling are often conducted by the same interchange of deceit as visiting and conversation ; but with still more atrocious iniquity. In short, men are everywhere seeking to accomplish their selfish designs by *concealing* them ; and to prey on one another by fair professions, and with smiling countenances ; and as nothing is so prolific as lies, they ‘ proceed from evil to evil,’ wander more and more from God and truth, and employ all their ingenuity, industry, and even intrepidity, in venturing upon daring schemes of deception. So that there is need for every one to ‘ take heed of his neighbor,’ and to be cautious how he trusts even the nearest relation, lest he should be supplanted and circumvented. But whilst men thus lie in wait for their neighbors, Satan takes their souls in his snare, and ‘ God sends them strong delusions ;’ the state of their hearts indisposes them for true religion : if they pretend to any, they are mere hypocrites ; ‘ not liking to retain God in their knowledge,’ they are left to some foolish scheme of superstition, enthusiasm, or scepticism ; and so become perhaps the instruments of the devil, in propagating and strenuously contending for lies, instead of being ‘ valiant for the truth upon the earth.’ But, however corrupt any part of the visible church may become, or however God may visit and avenge himself on guilty nations, who are called by his name, he will always have a people upon earth. And he will either utterly cast off professing churches, which become thus corrupt ; or he will melt and try them ; and putting away numbers as dross, he will bring forth a few as ‘ vessels of honor,’ fitted for his use.”

Now the particular evils stated in the description of the spiritual condition of the church in Pergamos, are said to consist in holding the doctrine of Balaam, which consisted in teaching others to *eat things offered unto idols, and to commit fornication.*

Parkhurst observes, that "Plato used the word *idols* for universal ideas or conceptions of the mind."

In like manner Scapula observes, that, according to Plutarch and Homer, it signifies "the form and appearance of a thing as conceived in the mind."

In a bad sense, therefore, an idol signifies false ideas, and this, as we read in Suicer, it signifies in Scripture, where it stands for inanities, vanities, and lies.

In a similar sense Lord Bacon uses the term when he speaks of idols of the tribe, idols of the den, idols of the forum, and idols of the theatre; of all which he observes, *Novum Organum*, n. 38;—

"The idols and false notions which have long occupied the human understanding, and profoundly inhere within it, not only so block up the minds of men as to render the access to truth difficult, but even after this access has been given and conceded these idols will again occur, even in the very renovation of the sciences, and prove to be troublesome; unless men being forewarned, fortify themselves as much as possible against them."

Dr. Gill; *Exposition of the Old Testament*; Amos ii., ver. 4, p. 486;—

. . . "And their lies caused them to err;' either their idols, (as the Vulgate Latin version renders it), which are lying vanities, and deceive, and by which they were made to err from the pure worship of the living and true God to superstition and idolatry; or the words of the false prophets, as Kimehi; the false doctrines they taught contrary to the word of God." . . .

Cruden says it means "all human inventions thrust into the worship of God."

And Lauretus that—

“Idols are the errors and heresies which are said to be the subtle idols with which the earth is filled. The idols of Egypt and Memphis are the inventions of philosophers and heretics. The idols of Jerusalem are the sins of those who are in the church. The idols of Samaria are the sins of heretics. The idols of the house of Israel are the errors in the church, which deceive the simple under the false name of knowledge.”—Gregory, Origen, Ambrose, Isychius, Bede.

Mede observes in his works, discourse xii., p. 49 ;—

. . . “Idols in Scripture are termed lies, as Amos ii., 4 : ‘Their lies have caused them to err, after which their fathers walked :’ the Vulgar hath, ‘seduxerunt eos idola ipsorum,’ their idols have caused them to err. And Isa. xxviii., 15 : ‘We have made lies our refuge.’ ”

Bellarmino also in his Disputations, vol. ii., p. 945 ;—

“Jerome on Habakkuk, chap. ii., and Zeehariah, chap. xiii., and elsewhere *passim*, compares heresies with idols, because as an idol is a false image, so is a heresy a false imagination. . . . An idol is properly, as Eustathius explains in the second book of the Odyssey, an empty image, such as is seen in a man’s shadow, and such also as are phantasies, that is, the images which we fabricate in our imagination, and to which frequently there is nothing that corresponds in reality. . . . Jerome also, upon Hosea, chap. vii., says, that an image is opposed to God as a lie is opposed to truth, because an image represents a false God.”

But what is the meaning of *eating* of things sacrificed to idols ? It is observed, in the Key to the Symbolical Language of Scripture, by Wemyss, under the article *eat* ;—

“To eat, in the symbolical language, signifies to meditate and to digest divine truths. The metaphor is a very obvious one. As food nourishes the animal frame, so truth and knowledge are the nutriment of the soul. ‘Thy words were found,’ says Jeremiah, chap. xv., 16, ‘and I eat them : and thy message was to me the joy and delight of my heart !’ ‘Son of man,’ says the divine voice to Ezekiel, chap. iii., 1, ‘eat that which thou findest ; eat this roll, and go, speak unto the house of

Israel.' Our blessed Lord uses the same expression several times in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel, when he speaks of himself as the bread of life. And in Rev. x., 9, the angel says to John, 'Take the little book, and eat it up;' *i. e.*, consider it carefully, and digest it well, and thou shalt find, in the events it shall reveal to thee, matter of comfort and joy, of grief and sorrow.

"Hence, in Joshua i., 8, it is said, 'This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night.' And hence the frequent expression of the Psalmist, about the meditation of God's law, Ps. exix., 99: 'Thy testimonies are my meditation;' and verse 103: 'How sweet are thy words to my taste; yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!' And Philo calls eating the symbol of spiritual nourishment; the soul being nourished by the reception of truth and the practice of virtue.

"Plautus says, 'I eat your discourse with a vast deal of pleasure;' and 'that is meat to me which you tell me.' And so to taste, signifies to make trial of anything, as in the same writer, 'I had a mind to taste his discourse.' And many other examples may be found in Greek authors. So we say sometimes, I devoured your letter with avidity, meaning, I read it with the greatest satisfaction."

To eat things sacrificed unto idols is, therefore, to receive and appropriate the evil and the false, instead of the good and the true; the result of which is spiritual fornication, or the adulteration of the Word of God.

There are then in the church of Pergamos hypocritical teachers who regard the souls committed to their care only according to the amount of gain to be thence derived, and who seduce them into error and evil whenever it may serve their own interested purposes; who yet, like Balaam, hold fast the external profession of the faith, and do not deny the name of the Lord. These are they who, for the sake of their own worldly interests, are ready to bless those whom the Lord hath not blessed, and to curse those whom the Lord hath not cursed.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 15;—

“ ‘So also hast thou them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate,’ *signifies*, that there are some among them also who make works meritorious.”

Pyle's Paraphrase on the Book of Revelation, p. 13, note;—

... “It were worth considering whether the word in the text is intended to denote any heresy derived from one Nicolas, or be not rather a mere technical word denoting a wicked set of men, like those of Jezebel and Balaam in these chapters.”

Woodhouse on the Apocalypse, p. 45;—

“It is observed by Mosheim, that our knowledge of the sects and heresies of the first century is very incomplete. And doubts have arisen whether, in the accounts given of the Nicolaitanes by Irenæus, Tertullian, Clemens, and others, they did not confound the Nicolaitanes mentioned in this passage, with another sect afterwards founded by one Nicolaus.”

Girdlestone in his Notes on the Apocalypse, p. 47, considers both Antipas and the Nicolaitanes to be symbolic;—

“ ‘Thou holdest fast my name (now), and didst not deny my faith (formerly), in those days in which Antipas was my witness, my faithful one, who was slain among you where Satan dwelleth.’ That some conspicuous martyr who suffered at Pergamos previous to the date of the Apocalypse might be referred to by this passage, taken in its *historic sense*, is highly probable; but it is very questionable whether his proper name was Antipas. The legend of the martyrdom which goes under the name of Antipas, is scarcely by any one defended as genuine. We are enquiring after the *prophetic sense*; and . . . it has been questioned by many, and with great reason, whether in all the seven epistles there be one single literal proper name. Balaam and Jezebel are figurative; the Nicolaitanes is probably fictitious and significative, like Apollyon (ix., 11).”

Vitringa repudiates altogether the tradition concerning the dissolute life of Nicolas the deacon, and he with others regards it as a mere fable without the slightest foundation,

and considers the name to be altogether mystical. Both he and Pyle however seem to think the Nicolaitanes to be the same with the Balaamites. Mayer and Robertson express themselves uncertainly as to what the name precisely signifies; while Wittsius says that if they are not the same, they are similar.

Now these Nicolaitanes are mentioned in the epistle to the Ephesian church; "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the *works* of the Nicolaitanes." In the present epistle, mention is made of those who hold the *doctrine* of the Nicolaitanes; because according to Swedenborg the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes was a doctrine of works, and they designate those in the Christian church, who teach morality to the neglect of doctrine, works in opposition to faith, and hence that a man is saved by what they call a good or meritorious life, without reference to any creed, party, or even fixed principle of action. The Nicolaitanes then are related to the Balaamites in this respect, that both have relation to works; the Balaamites to hypocritical, the Nicolaitanes to meritorious works.

Diary of Swedenborg, art. 575;—

"There are those who in life had lived morally well and done no injustice to any body, but in civil life were reputed as good. They also gave to the poor and needy, and thought that they merited something thereby. But although they knew that Jesus Christ our Saviour is the way and the only one to be adored, because the only Mediator between man and God, thus the only Lord, nevertheless they pass Him by, and in their hearts believe that it is sufficient to acknowledge one God the Creator of the universe, whom they understand by the Father; wherefore they doubt concerning our Lord, or rather deny him, and thus they despise his sole mediation."

According to this view of the subject, the author of

Hyponoia observes in reference to the Nicolaitanes, Introductory Epistles, p. 62 ;—

“ In a spiritual sense, he who places his hopes of salvation upon any other merit than that of Christ, makes such merit, or the source from which such merit emanates, an idol or object of religious worship. If he trust to his own righteousness, he must necessarily ascribe his salvation to his own merit. In doing so, he depends upon himself and upon his own ability for that salvation, the glory of which he takes to himself, feeling indebted to himself alone even for his eternal happiness. While working out his salvation, as he considered it, he was actuated by no motive but that of serving and glorifying himself; and now having, as he supposes, effected this object, his obligations of gratitude and love, in his estimation, are to himself. His own self is his idol of worship; and all his works, however good they may appear outwardly, are but so many sacrifices offered to his idol.”*

Let us now see how these principles have developed themselves in the church.

We shall have occasion to perceive that the error of the church of Thyatira was the error of faith without works; here the error is that of works without faith. Accordingly, the doctrine condemned in the eighteenth article of the church of England harmonizes with that of the Nicolaitanes. Thus it is said;—

“ They also are to be held accursed that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved.”

* Nicolas was one of the seven deacons, Acts vi., 5, originally appointed by the Apostles. The office of these deacons was that of performing certain *works* of charity, while that of the Apostles was preaching *doctrine*. Nicolas was a proselyte, *i. e.*, as some think, had been a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and to the *works* of the law. Might there have arisen in some persons, and among them Nicolas, a natural tendency to dwell more upon works of charity, than upon truth of doctrine; in the same manner as there was in some a tendency to dwell more upon faith than upon works?

On which Dr. Hey observes, vol. i., p. 61 ;—

“Probably at the Reformation many took up this mode of talking ; it signifies but little whether you are a Papist, or Protestant, or Puritan, or even a Jew, if you are a good man. And many might float about as a kind of nominal Christians, without paying much attention to any reasonings on religious subjects.”

The doctrine of works without faith became further developed in the times of Dr. Waterland, who writes upon it as follows, vol. v., p. 488 ;—

“There was a time when the Antinomians and Solifidians, being near akin, joined forces to cry up faith and external religion, in opposition to good works, to the great prejudice of Christian morality. They made a shew of sanctity, and great professions of the love of God, while shamefully deficient in the known and plain duties between man and man. In short, many of them had a form of goodness, and nothing more, knowing little of the true power, or life, or spirit of it. To correct this folly, soberer men saw the necessity there was of insisting strongly upon the importance of moral duties, in which they certainly judged right. And had they pressed moral duties in opposition only to exterior performances, (the shell and carcass of religion,) they had done well and wisely ; as it is easy to see now, though it was not so easy at that time. But unhappily confounding exterior with positive, (which is widely different,) the doctrine ran in favor of morality, as opposed to positive duties, which was stating the case wrong, and following a false scent. For indeed the Antinomians were as deficient in positive duties, all but the external part, as they were in moral. Had they been really and truly affected with the love of God, and had they sincerely practised the duties of the first table, those duties must of course have drawn after them universal righteousness. There was no occasion at all for depreciating positive duties, but for recommending true, and sincere, and solid piety in all duties, both moral and positive, in opposition to hypocrisy and mere external performances.”

“However, as I then said, the turn then taken was to preach up moral duties in opposition to positive. This naturally

tended to bring in low and disparaging notions of the two venerable sacraments of the Christian church: which notions have prevailed too much, and have done great disservice to true piety and godliness. But what is still worse, Deism has sprung up out of the same doctrine about moral and positive institutions. For it was not long before men of corrupt minds took advantage of it, first to join in the same cry, that positive institutions were of an inferior nature to moral, as means only to an end; next, to look upon the whole Christian religion, or all instituted religion, as positive ordinance, and subservient only to morality; and lastly, for the finishing stroke, to give broad hints that the means might conveniently be spared, since the end, they imagined, might be obtained without them. Thus Deism has been grafted upon the framed distinction between moral and positive duties: and this is the most prevailing topic of the Deists to go upon at this day. I have seen the proposals of a treatise now preparing, in two volumes quarto, with this title, 'The Gospel a republication of the Law of Nature.' And among several other wild positions, these are advanced: that 'the religion of nature is a religion absolutely perfect,' and that 'external revelation can neither add to nor take from its perfection;' and that 'the supposing things merely positive to be ingredients of religion is inconsistent with the good of mankind, as well as the honor of God.' From hence may be seen, that the fashionable plea for infidelity is to extol morality, and to run down all revealed religion under the notion of external and positive institutions. So from one extreme, as it is natural enough, we are tossed and driven to another. The Deists who thus extol morality in opposition to faith, are only doing the same thing, in effect, with what the Antinomians before did, in extolling faith in opposition to morality. Those are only different ways of coming at the same point. Corrupt nature is at the bottom of both: and the contrivance of both is nothing else but this, to lighten as much as possible the task which God has set them, to alter his terms, to get off from religious restraints, and, under one pretext or other, to live as they please. Be it Antinomianism or be it Deism, (as there are more ways than one of coming to the same thing,) the necessity of living a good Christian life is equally defeated by either:

and however the two extremes may seem to be at odds upon their first setting out, they can amicably meet at last, for the destruction of all true and solid piety."

"Had those good men who first opposed Antinomianism by extolling morality, lived to see the turn that has been since taken, they would now have extolled positive institutions as much were it only to secure true morality: for it is demonstration to every thinking man, that morality can never stand in practice, but upon a Scripture foot." . . . "And the reason which I before gave, and now repeat, is a very plain one, viz., that Scripture once removed, there will be no certain sanctions to bind morality upon the conscience, no clear account of heaven or hell, or a future judgment, to enforce it: from whence we may easily infer how precarious a bottom morality will stand upon, and that natural religion, in practice at least, will soon be what every man pleases, showing itself in little else besides natural depravity. They therefore that pretend to be advocates for morality, in opposition to instituted religion, are really betraying it. It is like extolling liberty in opposition to law and government, the best securities of it: which is betraying liberty and introducing licentiousness; as the other is undermining morality, and paving the way to immorality."

Again, vol. viii., p. 120;—

"There is one pretence more which I have reserved for the last place, being as loose as any, and yet carrying so fair a face with it, that it may be most apt to deceive. It is to throw off all concern for a right faith, as insignificant, and to comprise all fundamentals in the single article of a good life, as they call it; to which some are pleased to add faith in the divine promises. Well: but can we say anything too much, or too high, in commendation of a good life, the flower and perfection of all religion, and the brightest ornament of every rational mind? I do not say that we can ever think or speak too highly of it, provided only that it be rightly understood: but the more valuable a thing it is, the greater care should be taken to understand what it means, and not to repose ourselves on an empty name, instead of a real thing. There is not a more equivocal or ambiguous phrase than this of a good life: every different

sect almost has its own peculiar idea of it: and though they may perhaps agree in some few generals, yet none of them agree in all the particulars that should go in to make up the one collective notion or definition of it. Jews, Turks, pagans, and infidels, as well as Christians, all talk of a good life, and each in their own sense: and the several denominations of Christians, as papists and protestants, believers and half believers, the soberest churchmen and the wildest sectaries, all equally claim a title to what they call a good life. But do they all mean the same thing by it? No, certainly: and there lies the fallacy. To be a little more particular, it is observable, that the infamous Apelles, of the Marcionite tribe, in the second century, (a man that discarded the prophecies of the Old Testament, and who denied the real humanity, or incarnation, of our blessed Lord) yet, pleaded this for a salvo, or cover for all his execrable doctrines, that a good life, together with a reliance upon Christ crucified, was sufficient for everything. It is certain that he left out of his idea of a good life one essential ingredient of it, viz., a sincere love of truth, accompanied with an humble submission of his own conceits to the plain and salutary doctrine of the Gospel. So again professed Deists have put in their claims, along with others, to the title of a good life, and have valued themselves upon it, under a total contempt of all revealed religion. It is manifest, they must have left out of their idea of a good life the best ingredient of it; namely, the obedience of faith. No doubt but moral probity is in itself an excellent quality, and I should be apt to value even a Turk, a Jew, or a pagan, who enjoys it in any competent degree, more than the most orthodox Christian, who is a stranger to it: but still it is but a part (though an essential part) of a good life, in the proper Christian sense; for nothing comes up to the true and full notion of a good life, but universal righteousness both in faith and manners. A right belief (in fundamentals at least) is implied and included in true obedience, as believing is submitting to divine authority, and is obeying the commands of God. It is a vain thing, therefore, to speak of a good life, as separate from saving belief, or knowledge, where such knowledge may be had. The pretence to it carries this two-fold absurdity along with it: it supposes the end already attained

without the previous necessary means, and makes the whole to subsist without the essential parts. In short, there is no judging of a good life, but by considering first what it contains, and whether it answers its true idea or definition, or means only a partial obedience. A belief of fundamentals ought to make part of the idea, ordinarily at least; which, therefore, must be determined before we can form a just estimate of a good life. To deny or disbelieve the fundamental articles of Christianity, is a contradiction to the very nature and notion of true Christian obedience, and will always be a stronger argument against the supposition of a good life, than any other circumstances can be for it. Or if we may sometimes charitably hope or believe that such and such persons, erring fundamentally, and propagating their errors, are yet strictly honest men, and accepted by the great Searcher of hearts, as holding what is sufficient for them, and as doing the best they can; yet this can be no rule for the church to proceed by, which must judge by the nature and tendency of the doctrines, what is fundamental in an abstract view to the Christian fabric, as before intimated. As to what is so in a relative view to particular persons, God only is judge, and not we; and therefore to him we should leave it."

Again, in a note, p. 121;—

"Salmeron, Costerus, Acosta, are so ingenuous as to confess expressly, that a life apparently good and honest is not proper to any one sect, but common to Jews, Turks, and heretics: and St. Chrysostom is as plain and large to my purpose as any of them. It is too plain that, arguing from the pretended holiness of men's lives to the goodness of their cause or opinion, is a paralogism which hath advanced Arianism, Pelagianism, and other heresies of old, Mahometanism, Familism, and Anabaptism of late; and, unless God of his infinite mercy prevent, may ruin Christendom now."

Other causes of the neglect of the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity, and the cultivation of good works alone or of what is called a moral and harmless life, are thus referred to by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 1758, in his First Charge to the Clergy, p. 78;—

"The truth, I fear, is, that many, if not most of us, have

dwelt too little on these doctrines in our sermons: and by no means, in general, from disbelieving or slighting them; but partly from knowing, that formerly they had been inculcated beyond their proportion, and even to the disparagement of Christian obedience; partly from fancying them so generally received and remembered, that little needs to be said, but on social obligations; partly again from not having studied theology deeply enough, to treat of them ably and beneficially: God grant it may never have been for want of inwardly experiencing their importance. But whatever be the cause, the effect hath been lamentable. Our people have grown less and less mindful, first of the distinguishing articles of their creed, then, as will always be the case, of that one which they hold in common with the heathens; have forgot in effect their Creator, as well as their Redeemer and Sanctifier; seldom or never worshipping him, or thinking of the state of their souls in relation to him; but flattering themselves, that what they are pleased to call a moral and harmless life, though far from being either, is the one thing needful."

Ostervald, on the Causes of the Present Corruption of Christians, p. 125 (A.D. 1785);—

"I shall not scruple to say, that there are prodigious numbers of people, who scarce have any knowledge at all of the doctrines of religion. If all Christians were obliged to render an account of their faith, if they were examined upon the articles of their belief, or the main facts related in sacred history; there would appear in most of them such an astonishing ignorance, or such confused and intricate ideas; that one would hardly think them more knowing than if they lived in the darkness of heathenism."

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' VER. 16, 17;—

"'Repent,' *signifies*, that they should take heed of such works: 'or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth,' *signifies*, if not that the Lord will contend with them from the Word: 'he that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,' *signifies*, here as before: 'to him that

overcometh,' *signifies*, here as before: 'will I give to eat of the hidden manna,' *signifies*, the appropriation then of the good of celestial love, and thus conjunction of the Lord with those who do works: 'and will give him a white stone,' *signifies*, truths affirmative, and united to good: 'and in the stone a new name written,' *signifies*, that thus they will have good of a quality such as they had not before: 'which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it,' *signifies*, that it doth not appear to any one, because it is written in their lives."

"'Come unto thee quickly,' that is, at the final judgment."
—De Lyra.

Brixianus; Symbolical Commentaries; art. *manna*;—

"'The manna rained down or descending from heaven signifies the teaching which comes from God' (Valerian)." . . .

Also (Poole's Synopsis);

"'A more exact knowledge not only of the precepts of God, but of his dispensations' (Grotius). 'Spiritual consolation arising from the practice of the Christian virtues' (Hammond). 'Jesus Christ the true bread from heaven' (Gagneus, Pareus, &c.)."

Cornelius a Lapide on the Apocalypse, p. 48;—

"According to Ambrose the *white stone* is the pure and bright uncontaminated doctrine of Christ."

Horne's Index to the Symbolical Language of Scripture, art. *stone*;—

"Precious stones are the doctrines of the Christian religion, or the mode of teaching them."

Ribera on the words, *my new name*, p. 44;—

"Things derive their name from that which they are; and every one has his name from the good he possesses. When therefore we shall be the sons of God, coming to the promised inheritance after a new manner, then we shall have a new name from that which we then begin to be. For that is called new which is made anew, and which begins in a new manner; John xiii., 34, 'A new commandment give I unto you; that ye love one another as I have loved you.' There was indeed an

old commandment of love; but the manner, ‘as I have loved you,’ was new, as Cyril teaches, and indeed the common interpretation. So also 1 John, chap. ii., calls the same commandment old and new. So also in Isaiah lxx., 17, ‘Behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered.’ These remarks are all confirmed by Isaiah lxii., 2, where it is said to the church, ‘And thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.’ This new name is the church, as is observed by Jerome and others; a name which nevertheless is often found in the Old Testament; but after the advent of Christ it began to be held in a new manner, since at that time a faithful people possessed it which before possessed it not.”

Cornelius a Lapide says, p. 48, that by *a new name* St. Bernard understands “a *new thing*, a new and unheard of gift, consolation from heavenly goods and their abundance.” Daubuz understands by it a new quality or state.

Rupertus, p. 373;—

“‘He that hath ears to hear,’ &c. In this passage to hear what the Spirit says, is, not to cease from sound doctrine in order to destroy the doctrine of Balaam, and to exercise a holy knowledge, and always to remember the sentence of the Lord pronounced in the Gospel, ‘Woe unto you, lawyers, because ye have taken away the key of knowledge! Ye have neither entered in yourselves, and those which were entering in ye have forbidden.’ For those who, under the name of Christianity, either cherish sins or suffer them to be cherished, thinking that a divine name alone will suffice to salvation, (as did they who, trusting in the words of a lie, proclaimed ‘the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we,’ and who yet had made that temple a den of thieves,) have never entered into a true knowledge. For if they had entered in; if they had carefully attended to the words of Holy Scripture, or had been willing to do so, they would have known that the profession of a divine name is of no avail; but that, as in the case of Balaam, it may be supplanted by wickedly teaching others to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.”

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 18 ;—

“ ‘ And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write,’ *signifies*, to those and concerning those who are in faith grounded in charity and thence in good works, and also to those and concerning those who are in faith separated from charity and thence in evil works : ‘ these things saith the Son of God who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire,’ *signifies*, the Lord as to the divine wisdom of his divine love : ‘ and his feet like unto fine brass,’ *signifies*, divine good natural.”

Dr. Bennett ; Discourse on the ever blessed Trinity in Unity, in answer to Dr. Samuel Clarke, p. 200 ;—

“The angel told the blessed Virgin Mary, that her Son should be called the Son of the Highest, and the Son of God, that is, the Son of the self-existent Being, Luke i., 32, 35. And for what reason? Why for that reason which the angel expressly gave, when he said, ‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.’ You see therefore the man Jesus Christ is therefore the Son of the Most High God, because the Holy Ghost begat him.” . . .

“The self-existent God is therefore the Father of the man Christ Jesus by a special paternity, . . . and the man Christ Jesus is accordingly the Son of the very God by a special filiation of which there is no other instance. And for this reason is he called God’s only-begotten Son. This necessarily imports that the self-existent God was his Father in some sense in which He was not a father of any other mortal. He was therefore the immediate Father of the man Christ Jesus ; that is, He begat him not by the immediate operation of a being different from himself, (for in that sense He is every whit as much your Father or mine,) but by his own immediate act, even as a man is the father of his own child.”

Hartley Frere ; Original Essays on the Interpretation of the Apocalypse, Investigator, vol. v., p. 124 ;—

“Christ here appears to reveal himself, especially in refer-

ence to his human nature, as the only-begotten Son of God, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven.”*

Skinner; Letters addressed to Candidates for Holy Orders, p. 16;—†

“It is moreover observable, that St. John, who uses the title *Son of God* more frequently than all his brother evangelists, yet in the admirable introduction to his gospel, when he describes this great one as God, under the characters of *Logos*, Light and Life of men, the Maker and Proprietor of all things, does not speak of him as Son, till he had informed us that the *Logos* was made flesh; when he immediately brings in the ‘Only-begotten of his Father;’ as if that designation had not belonged to him till the grand event of his incarnation was accomplished.” (See our Second Preliminary Discourse.)

Alcasar on the Apocalypse; chap. ii., verse 18. Commentary, part iv.;—

“Who knows not that the name of Son of God imports the highest wisdom. For if great wisdom be denoted by the name of angel, (as in 2 Kings xiv., 20,) how much more is it denoted by the name Son of God, who is himself the wisdom of the Father!”

Pererius on the Apocalypse; chap. i., Disputation xviii., p. 784;—

“‘His eyes were as a flame of fire.’ These words Richard

* The same idea respecting the title Son of God, is carried out by the same author in the observations immediately following.

“The terms Son of Man and Son of God both, as it appears to me, here describe Christ in reference to his assumed human nature and mediatorial character, as we find them blended together in the annunciation of his future birth into this world made to the Virgin Mary, which also states on the authority of the heavenly messenger the grounds upon which the title of the Son of God, as well as that of the Son of Man, and the name of Jesus are given to him. ‘He shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his Father David.’ . . . ‘And the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.’ . . . ‘Thou shalt call his name Jesus or Saviour, for he shall save his people from their sins.’”

The author afterwards adds, that the title Son of Man is used, even where the divine perfections are spoken of.

† An eminent theologian of the episcopal church of Scotland, and father of the late Bishop Skinner.

of St. Victor interprets thus; 'The flame of fire shines and communicates heat, strikes terror and burns. The eyes of Christ are therefore as a flame of fire, because when looking upon his elect, he illustrates them with the light of wisdom, and warms them with the love of righteousness. But when he looks upon the reprobate, he terrifies them by the fierceness of his commination, and burns them with the fire of damnation.' Thus he. We however would say, that in these words is set forth the exact care and perfect providence which Christ exercises towards his church. His eyes flaming like fire, denote three things; brightness and heat, and power of burning and consuming. The brightness signifies the most perfectly clear knowledge of Christ, and his foreknowledge of all things which are either done or are ever to happen in the church; he likewise illuminates and glorifies the church by teaching it whatsoever it is right for it to know. And inasmuch as he knows and can do all things, he accordingly feeds, governs, and defends it; and by the warmth of his Holy Spirit, cherishes, gladdens, fructifies, and vivifies it. On the other hand, the wicked and impious, he burns and consumes as a fire, dissipates all their counsels, brings their efforts to naught, and causes them to die in eternal punishments."*

Eichorn on the Apocalypse, vol. i., p. 181, says, that eyes are an emblem of wisdom and perspicacity.

Vitringa on the Apocalypse, p. 209, observes that 'every where in scripture eyes symbolically signify wisdom, knowledge, &c.' But these eyes are said to be like unto a flame of fire.

Now with regard to the signification of *fire*, Glasse observes, p. 1684;—

"By a flame of fire is designated *love*; Cant. xii., 6, 'All the angels burn with divine love.'"

Again, p. 1685;—

"We must look to the virtue and efficacy of fire in shining and giving light—to which also belong the things which

* How this latter part of the interpretation is to be understood, will be seen in Chapter VIII.

are said concerning light in the mystery of our conversion and salvation, as likewise in inflaming. The word of Christ inflames the hearts of men with the *love* of God, devotion, celestial desires, &c.”

Hooper observes in his Treatise on the Apocalypse, p. 46, that “*fire* is an emblem of *love*, Cant. viii., 6, 7; and that eyes being like a flame of fire shew the love with which Christ beholds his people; and that He also discerneth the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Lauretus also observes under the article *ignis*;—

“By fire is sometimes signified love, which fire Abraham carried when he went to sacrifice his son, Gen. xxii. It is this fire which God wishes should always burn upon the altar of our heart. And the fire which Ezekiel saw in the wheels, is the divine love, from which God designed to frame the world.”—Origen, Ambrose, Georgius, Venetus, Augustin, Gregory.

The same interpretation is given by Alcasar, who has considered this symbol at large; also by Cornelius a Lapide, Rabanus Maurus, Ambrose Ansbert, and other authors too numerous to mention.

“His feet like unto fine brass.”

Vitringa says, p. 103, that *feet* signify either the state of the person, or his *actions*. In the latter sense, that the footsteps of God denote every where the acts of his providence, by which his administration is carried on in the world and the church.

Glasse observes, in his *Philologia Sacra*, p. 1802, on the meaning of the word *feet*, that “in relation to things internal and spiritual, inasmuch as the life of man and the exercise of piety is compared to walking or running along a path, *feet*, when referred to the mind, denote holy desire and effort, even as exterior running and speed, from one place to another, are performed by the feet.”

Again, Lauretus says, under the article *feet*, that “*feet* may signify the humanity of Christ; as also all the things

which pertain to the incarnation, and to the works of the Christian economy."—Augustin, Damascen, Bernard, Bede, &c., &c. "Also that the outermost life of Christ in the world may be called his feet."—Clemens Alexandrinus. (See Brixianus.)

Upon the same principle the outward dispensations of the Lord and his providence are called his feet. Thus, Lauretus ;—

"Feet signify that power of God which is put forth in preserving and governing all things."—Eucherius, Cyril, Augustin, Origen, Jerome, &c.

Now as the providence of God is exercised chiefly with regard to his true church, which is his own work, therefore it is that the church also is called his feet; and also the apostles and preachers, the feet of Christ and of the church, which is his mystical body.

Thus Brixianus says ;—

"Feet like unto fine brass, as in the Apocalypse, signify the Apostles."

"The feet of Christ our Lord signify Christians, and particularly the Apostles," &c.

Lauretus ;—

... "The extremities of the church also are its feet, such as the poor and infirm; also apostles and preachers."—Origen, Ambrose, Jerome.

"Filth upon the feet sometimes means sins in the teachers."—Gregory. Glossa.

"The feet of Christ are the peacemakers who run to make peace."

Moreover by *feet* are meant the external affections, thoughts, and actions, or what the apostle calls the natural man, and his outward behaviour, life, and conduct. Hence it is, that by *feet* are also signified *works*, as being the outermost and ultimate life of man.

Lauretus observes, under this article ;—

“To wash the feet is to remove all earthly affections, and take our flight to heavenly things (Origen, Basil, Ambrose). It is likewise to cleanse our *actions*, which are called feet, after the same manner as the prophets have been accustomed to call the world a path.”—Isychius, Philo.

“Feet sometimes signify works, and the very principle of working; and feet that are greaved are good works accompanied with their due circumstances.”—Cyril, Isychius.

. . . “The feet of Aaron and his sons are their good works.”

Brixianus also observes, in his Symbolical Commentaries, under this article;—

“Foot signifies the completion and perfection of a work. Hence we are accustomed to say, *opus ad calcem pervenisse*, when we would speak of our business being accomplished.”—Valerian.

“Feet that suffer from any ill affection, are wicked works, depraved and iniquitous devices.”

Aquinas, *Catena Aurea*, John xiii., 6—11, observes, p. 426;—

“(Origen) ‘If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.’ Let those who refuse to allegorize these and like passages, say how it is probable that he who, out of reverence for Jesus, said, ‘Thou shalt never wash my feet,’ would have had no part with the Son of God, as if not having his feet washed was a deadly wickedness. Wherefore it is our feet, that is, the affections of our mind, that are to be given up to Jesus to be washed, that our feet may be beautiful, &c., &c. . . . Jesus answered and said, ‘He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; but ye are clean, but not all.’ (Augustin) Clean all except the feet. The whole of a man is washed in baptism, not excepting his feet; but living in the world afterwards, we tread upon the earth. Those human affections, then, without which we cannot live in this world, are as it were our feet, which connect us with human things, so that if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves. But if we confess our sins, he who washed the disciples’ feet forgives us our sins, even down to our feet, wherewith we hold our converse with earth. (Origen) It was impossible that the lowest parts and extremities

of a soul should escape defilement, even in one perfect, as far as man can be; and many, even after baptism, are covered up to their head with the dust of wickedness; but the real disciples of Christ only need washing for their feet."

Poole, in his *Synopsis*, gives the same interpretation of this passage, and observes;—

"By feet he understandeth those affections of the human mind which are engaged upon things earthly, and hence contract sin."—*Lucas Brugensis, Simplicius.*

Gill also, on *John xiii., 3*;—

"By his feet may be meant . . . the affections of the mind, which are that to the soul as feet are to the body; and when they move right, move heavenward, Godward, and Christward; but sometimes they are inordinate, and cleave to the things of this world; or the outward life and conversation is meant, which is attended with daily infirmities, and each of these need washing in the blood of Christ. His hands may design all his actions, works, services, duties and performances; the hands being the instrument of action, and not only the hands of wicked men, but even of saints, need washing; their best righteousness being as filthy rags. By his head, may be meant doctrines and principles imbibed in the mind, and expressed by the lips, which were not free from mistake and pollution, and needed purging and cleansing; for the disciples were not as yet clear from the prejudices of the Jewish nation, especially relating to the nature of the Messiah's kingdom."

By feet as burning brass, Grotius understands "actions pure and shining." As we have seen gold to signify good, or love, and hence wisdom, so brass signifies the same as it exists in the natural mind, or symbolically the feet; and hence it signifies what is good in a lower degree.

Let us now put together these several significations.

The Lord appears to the church of Thyatira as to his eyes and feet, both of which are pervaded with fire; so that fire pervades the whole divine body. Fire denotes love; the eyes, intelligence, and, as being in the head, first principles; feet denote the lowest principles, hence

external affections, actions, or outward life and conduct ; or what is commonly called works. Thus what is signified to the church in Thyatira is, that love or charity should inflame and enkindle truth of doctrine, and pervade the whole being from first principles to last or to outward actions. This is likewise the substance of the interpretation of Viegas, as given in his work on the Apocalypse, p. 177.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' chapter ii., verse 19 ;—

“ ‘I know thy works,’ *signifies*, here as before : ‘and charity and service,’ *signifies*, the spiritual affection which is called charity, and its operation : ‘and faith, and thy endurance, *signifies* truth, and the desire of acquiring and teaching it : ‘and thy last works to be more than the first,’ *signifies*, the increase thereof from the spiritual affection of truth.”

The Vulgate renders the passage thus, “I know thy works, and faith, and thy charity, &c.” De Lyra : “Thy works in effect, thy faith in understanding, thy charity in affection, thy ministry in serving God devotedly, thy patience in tribulation, thy last works to be more than the first by progressing from good to better.”

Estius ; Biblia Maxima of De La Haye, p. 735 ;—

“ ‘Thy last works to be more than the first.’ Note ; that from the multitude of works is inferred the increase of charity ; because charity is operative, and the more so, the greater and more enlarged it is. Otherwise (were there no increase of charity) it would not absolutely follow, that the more works a person did the greater would be his charity, or the greater the reward he would receive. Because any one might live a shorter life, and consequently do fewer good works, who yet might be more holy, and more fervent in charity, than another who lived a long life, and did many more good works, and yet had not arrived at such excellence in charity.”

Anselm, Ambrose, Ansbert, and Richard of St. Victor,

although they admit the order of the words to be works, charity, faith, ministry, patience, works; yet in their interpretations undertake to change it, and to place faith before charity. Thus Ambrose Ansbert observes, that the divine writings frequently change the order of things, of which the present is an instance. For "first come works, then charity, after this faith is inferred; when nevertheless the first thing is to believe, afterwards what one believes to love, then that which belief and love compel us to do, namely, to work." We have already observed upon this subject, in p. 280, when considering the church of Ephesus, and shewn that this is the inversion of the true order; and it is at least satisfactory to find, that, with the view to establish the principle which is founded upon it, writers have been obliged to change the order of the words as they occur in the original. This circumstance is the more important, because it is upon the order of the words that a great principle is attempted to be founded, a great question attempted to be settled, namely, whether charity be first and faith second, or whether faith be first and charity second. We have already seen it to be the doctrine of the Ephesian church, that faith is first in order and charity second, or that truth is first and love second; the consequence of which was, that it fell from its first love, or from love as the first in order. To introduce the same order here would be to introduce and commend the doctrine of the Ephesian church; as also to contravene the order laid down in the Apocalypse itself, in which charity or love is placed before faith.* Following then the text, as it occurs also in the improved versions published by Dr. Wordsworth, the order is as follows: first works, then charity, then faith, then

* "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." Gal. v., 6. This translation of the original makes faith the active power, and love to be instrumental or passive. Whereas

ministry, then patient abiding in these according to this order, and patient endurance of opposition and temptation, and then, as the result of all, the increase of works, or general progress in Christian life. The Ephesian church had fallen from this state, or had not patiently continued in it; hence the patient continuance of the church of Thyatira in the present case and her consequent progress, is the more to be noticed.

Now the actions of a man are the man acting; the works of a man, the man working; so that to know the works of a man is to know the whole man himself from first principles to outward actions, or as we say, from head to foot. This knowledge, however, our Lord claims in regard to *all* the churches; consequently it does not express the distinctive character proper to any one church; which in the present case, therefore, as in all others, must be gathered from other parts of the narrative. Now we have already seen that this specific character is presented in the words which follow, according to their order; viz., love or charity, faith, ministry,* patience, increase of works. Consequently the characteristic of the church in Thyatira is their regarding love as first, faith as second, works as the third in order; their patient continuance in this life, under every temptation and trial, and hence their progress in love, truth, and good works.†

Thus we see that reference is here made by the Son of

the original inverts this order; for *there* it is not love which is made active, energized, or animated by faith, but faith which is made active, energized, or animated by love. So that love is the primary, faith the secondary, in the order of the Christian life. Estius has clearly shewn this in his Comment upon this passage; and Whitby admits this to be the true rendering of the passage, for it is the one which he himself adopts.

* *Διακονίαν*: the office of deacon was that of works of charity.

† In giving this interpretation, I have followed the order of the words occurring in the edition of Scholtz, and confirmed by the more ancient manuscripts; not the order of the words as given in the edition used by Swedenborg; and this because it

God to the charity, faith, and good works of Thyatira ; but she permitted the doctrine of Jezebel ; clearly indicating that the doctrine of Jezebel was one which had relation to charity, faith, and good works, and that it was on this subject that it had deceived so many ; and that although she called her teaching the deep things of God, yet that they were no other than the depths of Satan.

We likewise see the correspondence between the Lord's appearance to the church, and the state of the church itself ; for we have seen the flame of fire to signify love or charity ; eyes, knowledge, understanding, or wisdom ; feet, external life and conduct, activity, or works : whence feet as burning brass, signify works burning with charity.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 20 ;—

“ ‘ Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee,’ *signifies*, what follows : ‘ because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel,’ *signifies*, that among them there are some in the church who separate faith from charity : ‘ who calleth herself a prophetess,’ *signifies*, and who make the doctrine of faith the sole doctrine of the church : ‘ to teach and to seduce my servants to commit whoredom,’ *signifies*, from which it comes to pass that the truths of the Word are falsified : ‘ and to eat things sacrificed unto idols,’ *signifies*, the defilement of divine worship and profanations.”

Woodhouse on the Apocalypse, p. 73 ;—

“ *Adultery.*] In scriptural language, nations, and cities, and communities are frequently expressed under the emblems of women, virgins, &c. ; nor has this mode of representation been confined to the ancient or eastern nations. In our times and country Britannia is personified, and is seen as a woman upon our coins ; as are Judea, Rome, &c., &c., on those of ancient days. The nation of Israel, or the church of God under the

appears, that the former more explicitly enounces to the general reader the principle which Swedenborg himself had in view, namely, the precedence of charity to faith ; although either version coincides in establishing the same principle.

Old Testament, is constantly represented under this symbol. In the times of her purity she is a virgin ; in her happy prospects, a bride ; in her impure connections, a harlot. And conformably to this figure, the great Being who especially protects her, was pleased to represent himself as the husband who espouseth her, and who, for her wickedness, divorces her. For by a continuance of the metaphor, she is described as ‘treacherously departing from her husband,’ committing adultery with stocks, stones, and idols ; but after chastisement and repentance, she is restored to favor and matrimonial distinction, and becomes fruitful in children, the multitudes of the Gentiles. The reader may see this imagery produced into allegory, in the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel. Agreeably to this, in the New Testament, our Lord, the head of the church, is represented as the bridegroom, and her apostacy from him is called adultery.”

“Now in the passage before us, adultery may be taken either in a literal, or in this its figurative sense ; accordingly as we understand Jezebel to represent either literally a woman, or figuratively a sect. If taken in the figurative meaning (which seems most probable), then her sons to be slain are the followers of her religious institutions ; and they who commit adultery with her are the Christians, who are seduced to her doctrines and practices, from the duty they owe to their Lord.”

Vitringa on the Apocalypse, p. 105 ;—

“The words are thus to be understood. The Lord could scarcely endure that the angel of Thyatira should give the power to the spiritual harlot Jezebel, who called herself a prophetess, of disseminating her profane doctrines, and seducing many to superstition and profligacy.”

“My servants,” says De Lyra, mean simple Christians.

Many commentators having thought that the name *Jezebel* was that of some female at Thyatira, Vitringa observes, that the title is altogether mystical, and no more signifies literally a person, than the Nicolaitanes and Bileamites signify people known by that name ;—

“The book of the Apocalypse is written mystically for the use of grown-up Christians, and the church will never arrive at

a true understanding of it in my opinion, if the exposition of the book be not carried out according to this rule."

By a spiritual harlot, therefore, Vitranga understands false teachers in the church; and by her sons, the disciples of those teachers.

Alcasar on the Apocalypse, Commentary, chapter ii., verse 20;—

. . . "To me it is highly probable, that this Jezebel was not an individual female, but some people or sect. This opinion is not new, but is expressly followed by Tichonius, Epiphanius, Heres. 51, Andreas, Aretas, Haymo, Bede, Aureolus, Richard, Albertus, Thomas, and Seraphinus. These and other authors, although differing from each other in designating the people or sect, here called by the name of Jezebel, nevertheless agree in this, that she was not any particular woman, but a people or sect."

Alcasar therefore considers *Jezebel* to designate *false apostles*; thus not an individual, but a class; and the words, "who calleth herself a prophetess," to refer to the "office of preaching, and to the understanding of holy Scripture." In like manner Cotterus considers the title to apply to the whole class of doctors who taught the doctrines here condemned (see Poole's Synopsis). Gagneus also, *Biblia Maxima*, De La Haye, p. 736, observes, on the words, "who calleth herself a prophetess," that "it is proper to heretics to vindicate to themselves the spirit of God and true teaching, and the knowledge of the holy Scriptures."

Pererius and Viegas understand here by fornication, not corporeal but spiritual, such as heresy and idolatry.

Hammond calls the heresy itself Jezebel; whence the sons of Jezebel are the other heresies derived from it.

Bishop Bull observes in his Works, vol. iv., p. 233, that—

"Some of the ancients understand this Jezebel to have been

a certain woman, the wife of a bishop, who, in the church of Thyatira, by her scortation and perverse doctrine, drew many aside into impiety. Others, and in my opinion more rightly, understand Jezebel mystically as the Gnostic faction; those monsters of men who, by their horrible doctrine concerning the lawful perpetration of fornication, and eating things sacrificed to idols (against the express decree of the apostles), and by their detestable practice of crimes, had prostituted the virgin church of Christ, which had recently been betrothed to him by the Apostles.”

Now Scott connects these Gnostics with the Antinomians, or those in the Christian church who separated faith from works, and considered themselves to be saved by faith alone independently of works;—

“They turned the grace of God into ‘lasciviousness,’ and taught others to do the same, and were the Antinomians of the primitive church; a heresy which, in one form or other, has always hitherto sprung up, when the true Gospel of Christ has been successfully preached; being a kind of tare which the enemy will at all times sow among the good seed as far as he is permitted.”

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 21;—

“‘And I gave her time to repent of her whoredom, and she repented not,’ *signifies*, that they who have confirmed themselves in that doctrine will not recede, although they see things contrary to it in the Word.”

“It is well known that in consequence of the epistle of James being apparently contrary to that of Paul in the estimation of Solifidians, they have either esteemed it lightly, or altogether rejected it, as did Luther.

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verses 22, 23, 24, 25;—

“‘Behold I will cast her into a bed and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation,’ *signifies*, that therefore they will be left in their doctrine with falsifications, and that they will be grievously infested by falses:

‘except they repent of their deeds,’ *signifies*, if they will not desist from separating faith from charity: ‘and I will kill her children with death,’ *signifies*, that all the truths of the Word will be turned into falses: ‘and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts,’ *signifies*, that the church shall know that the Lord sees the quality of every one’s truth, and the quality of his good: ‘and I will give unto every one of you according to your works,’ *signifies*, that he gives unto every one according to the charity and its faith which is in his works: ‘but unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine,’ *signifies*, to those with whom the doctrine of faith is separated from charity, and those with whom the doctrine of faith is joined with charity: ‘and which have not known the depths of Satan,’ *signifies*, they who do not understand their interiors, which are mere falses: ‘I put upon you none other burden,’ *signifies*, only that they should take heed of them: ‘nevertheless that which ye have hold fast until I come,’ *signifies*, that they should retain the few things which they know concerning charity, and thence concerning faith from the Word, and live according to them until the Lord’s coming.”

Cornelius a Lapide, p. 50;—

“Ansbert and Primasius say that *bed* denotes security and impunity in sinning; in which state the sinner, being as it were at ease upon a soft couch, rushes from one sin to another, and at length into damnation.”

The same interpretation is given by Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Lauretus; article *lectus*;—

“The bed of the harlot signifies quiet in pleasure or in errors, and the blandishments of heretics.”—Gregory, Jerome, Augustin, Ambrose, Bede.

Robertson also observes, p. 44, that “some by *bed* understand security.”

Cruden on the cognate word *pillow*, says that,

“Figuratively it betokens ease, rest, and quietness; such did the false prophetesses make that they might be signs to the people of ease and rest; and they thus endeavored to render them secure, Ezek. xiii., 18, 20.”

Hence he assigns a corresponding signification to a *bed*, viz., a secure or slothful frame of mind.

Again, on the word *pillow* (cervical), Lauretus observes, that it signifies “the soft words with which one fosters another in his vices.”—Origen, Jerome, Gregory.

On the like word, the Family Bible observes, Ezek. xiii., 18;—

“‘*That sew pillows to all arm-holes,*’ &c.] That speak pleasing and plausible words to all hearers, and fit every man’s humor with their flattering divinations.—Bishop Hall.”

Matthew Henry likewise observes, Ezek. xiii., 17, &c.;—

“Now observe,—1. How the sin of these false prophetesses is described, and what are the particulars of it.”

“1. They told deliberate lies to those who consulted them, and came to them to be advised, and to be told their fortune; ‘You do mischief by your lying to my people that hear your lies; and because you humor them in their sins, they are willing to hear you.’ Note, it is ill with those people who can better hear pleasing lies than displeasing truths; and it is a temptation to them who lie in wait to deceive to tell lies, when they find people willing to hear them, and to excuse themselves with this, *Si populus vult decipi, decipiatur*—If the people will be deceived, let them.”

. . . “You have strengthened the hands of the wicked, and emboldened them to go on in their wicked ways, and not to return from them, which was the thing the true prophets called them to. You have promised sinners life in their sinful ways; have told them that they shall have peace though they go on, by which their hands have been strengthened, and their hearts hardened.”

“They mimicked the true prophets, by giving signs for the illustrating of their false predictions, as Hananiah did (Jer.

xviii., 10); and they were signs agreeable to their sex; they sewed little pillows to the people's arm-holes, to signify that they might be easy, and repose themselves, and needed not to be disquieted with the apprehensions of trouble approaching."

. . . "Or, perhaps, the expressions are figurative; they did all they could to make people secure, which is signified by laying them easy, and to make people proud, which is signified by dressing them fine with handkerchiefs, perhaps laid or embroidered on their heads."

. . . "God's people shall be delivered out of their hands; when they see themselves deluded by them into a false peace and a fool's paradise, and that though they would not leave their sin, their sin has left them, and they see no more vanity, nor divine divinations, they shall turn their backs upon them, shall slight their predictions, the righteous shall be no more saddened by them, no, nor the wicked strengthened; the pillows shall be torn from their arms, and the kerchiefs from their
 heads, the fallacies shall be discovered, their frauds detected, and the people of God shall no more be in their hand, to be hunted as they had been."

Waterland observes in his Works, vol. vi., p. 197;—

"As to false prophets in general, it is no marvel that there should be such men. Prophet is a name of honor, and carries dignity along with it: and therefore where there are true prophets, there will be pretenders also, raised up perhaps by their own vanity or avarice, or other corrupt motives. Where there are prophets and pastors to guide and instruct honest and faithful men, there will be anti-prophets and anti-pastors, to misguide and seduce those that will be misled by them. As long as there are persons in the world that love to be soothed and flattered in their follies or vices; while they 'say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:' I say, as long as the world loves flattery, there will be flatterers; and as long as they love deceit, there will be deceivers: and so while false prophecy or false doctrine is more acceptable than true, there will of course be false prophets or false teachers, as the very nature of the thing shows, and as the experience of

all ages abundantly proves. The true prophets and pastors, under the Old Testament, often complained of those false teachers and seducers, those loose casuists, that studied little else but how to contrive palatable doctrines for all tastes, or to ‘sew pillows to all arm-holes.’”

As an illustration of the foregoing signification of the symbol *bed*, and the cognate symbol *pillow*, we may quote the following from the Antinomian Sermons of Dr. Crisp, vol. ii., p. 469;—

“Consider we now what blessedness that is which attends such a believing as secludes sight: there is a threefold special blessedness attending it.”

“1. A blessedness of present sweet repose, or rest, in all conditions, without disturbance. I need not contend, I know, to make this good, that it is a blessed condition indeed to sleep on such a pillow as evaporates all cares out of the head, and drives away all anxieties of heart, and dispels all tossing turbulent fears; so that he who lays his head on it, can sleep as securely in a storm as in a calm, in a prison as in a palace, in the most pinching penury as the greatest plenty: now such, yea, and far more excellent a pillow, is this faith in Christ alone.”

Again, p. 187;—

“There is not one sin, nor all the sins together, of any one believer, that can possibly do that believer any hurt, real hurt, I mean; and therefore he ought not to be afraid of them.”

Again, p. 191;—

“Christ was wounded for the transgressions of his people, he was bruised for their sins; the chastisement of their peace was upon him, Isa. liii., 5. What hurt can there be to whom there is peace from God, and nothing but peace? It is true, our sins themselves do not speak peace; but Christ, bearing the sin and wrath that they deserve, speaks peace to every believer, whose transgressions he did bear. Therefore beloved, be not afraid, ye that are believers and members of Christ, of wrath breaking down from heaven upon you for such and such sins, which you have committed; for all your sins together can do

you no harm; all the sting and poison of them was spent upon Christ."

Again, on Isaiah xli., 10, p. 214;—

"In this text, the Lord is pleased to provide a pillow (as for a king) for the heads of his people, or a staff for their trembling hands, to support their sinking spirits; they are apt to be discouraged; it seems the Lord is pleased to take their condition into his hand, to speak to the occasion of their trembling, and to give out such words that may be a stay, that they may stand fast, though blusterings grow greater than they are."

Again, p. 215;—

"They must not fear for their own sins; I do not say, they ought not to fear to commit sin, but they ought not to fear what hurt their sins can do them, seeing they are blotted out. If a man have subscribed, and sealed an hundred bonds, and all these be quite cancelled, he need fear no hurt they can do him: Paul, in Rom. vii., complains indeed of a body of death, and the power of sin; but in the close, he shews how little he fears anything that sin could do: 'Thanks be unto God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' What doth he thank him for? that though his sins were so great, yet they could not do him any hurt; nor any of God's people."

Again, p. 400;—

"Therefore, know for certain, for your everlasting consolation, that there is nothing shall be able to separate you from the love of God in Christ, or make a breach between God and you, who are his people. Every sin which, in its own nature indeed, makes a breach, was taken into the agreement that Christ made with the Father; and if there should be such an objection rising in your hearts, when you have committed a sin, now God is at controversy with me for this, ask your hearts this question, was the sin brought into the agreement of reconciliation, or was it left out? Did God accept of the reconciliation when this transgression was in the agreement? how can He then fall out again for this that was in his thoughts when reconciliation was made?"

On the words "depths of Satan," it is observed in Poole's Synopsis;—

“They called them the depths of knowledge (Grotius), profound mysteries of religion, and true felicity (Piscator); a doctrine subtle and marvellously deep (Mede, Ribera, &c.); a knowledge of most abstruse divine things (Bede), comprehensible only to themselves (Lacunza); an abstruse wisdom and far more perfect than the apostolical (Pareus), thinking that they perceived what others could not; that to commit fornication and eat things sacrificed to idols were matters of no consequence.”

Glasse also observes, p. 2023;—

“Those heretics called their doctrines depths or profound mysteries, as if it comprised the profoundest knowledge of divine things; but John adds the name of Satan, calling them the depths of Satan, as they really were.”

Woodhouse on the Apocalypse, observes, p. 75;—

“Our interpretation of the word Jezebel in a figurative sense seems to be confirmed. She had a doctrine, and taught deep mysterious knowledge, calling it perhaps with St. Paul, *τα βαθη των Θεων*, the deep things of God; but it is declared to be *τα βαθη των Σατανων*, the depths of Satan. Traces of such philosophizing sects are to be seen in the writings of the apostles, and of the apostolical fathers. And the Gnostics, who dealt eminently in these *βαθη*, thus afterwards entered and corrupted the church.”

Cornelius a Lapide on the Apocalypse, p. 51;—

“Heretics are wont to call their own doctrine most deep and profound, and comprehensible to none but themselves and their disciples, as Vincentius of Lirens teaches in his golden little book against heresies, . . . *as they say*; that is, as heretics are wont to speak and boast, namely, that their dogmas are the depths of God, when in truth they are the depths of Satan, as John himself here interprets them.”*

A like interpretation is given by Menochius. Again

* See “*The Deep Things of God*,” by Sir Richard Hill, in which it is taught, art. 130;—“That every elect sinner is a partaker of the gospel salvation, and is brought into a state of reconciliation whilst ‘he is in his blood,’ totally unconverted, an enemy to God, ungodly, without strength, without faith, without repentance, or any one holy disposition.” With much more of the same kind.

Tirinus, on the same words, as signifying deep, sublime, and most profound mysteries, observes;—

“It is under such false colors that they disguise the foulness of their hearts, and set aside all laws divine and human, as a superfluous and intolerable burden.”

A similar interpretation is given by Ribera, p. 47, who says that “the depths of Satan are the deep and cunning counsels which the enemy of the human race hath devised and inspired into his members, unto the perdition of many.”

With regard to these depths, we may quote Dr. Crisp in his Antinomian Sermons, vol. i., p. 293;—

... “Though St. Paul condescends to the weakness of this (the Corinthian) church, being but babes in Christ, as he speaks of them; yet he would have them know, (though he did, by exercising his ministry in so low and plain a style for their sakes,) nevertheless, when he deals with those that are perfect, that is, higher grown, he can rise in a higher flight, and deal in more grown and riper mysteries than he did with them; and, in verses 7, 8, he illustrates what depths there were in those mysteries that he preached to those that were capable of seeing them; and that is quoted out of Isaiah lxiv. 4. ‘Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him.’”

Again, p, 299;—

“The things freely given of God, are the things the wise of the world cannot reach; they are hid from them: they are revealed and communicated unto babes. What are those things, you will say? I can give you but a touch; for if I dive into the depth of the things, there will be no end; I should never come to the bottom.”

Now as the apostle Paul speaks of the deep things of God, 1 Cor. ii., so the Apocalypse speaks of the deep things of Satan; and as the former was referring to those inward spiritual truths which the natural man could not understand, so, in a corresponding sense, the deep things of Satan

signify the same truths falsified. (See also Scott and Gauntlett on this passage.)

Now the subject of the present epistle has already been determined to be that which is concerning either the union or separation of charity, faith, and good works.

Are there then, or have there been, any depths of Satan in the Christian church; any licentious, false, and corrupted doctrines, in regard to this subject? And have these doctrines, or have they not, when allowed to prevail, adulterated every truth in Scripture? To these questions the following extracts may return a reply. Be it observed, that we do not here treat of the subject at large; but offer only such remarks as may serve to illustrate the point immediately under consideration; reserving a more ample illustration for the chapter on *The Two Witnesses*.

It is well known, that the separation of charity and works from faith, or justification by faith alone, was a fundamental article of the Protestant Reformation. Thus Luther, in his Commentary on the Galatians, chap. i., verse 16, p. 113;—

“This is the true mean of becoming a Christian, even to be justified by faith in Jesus Christ, and not by the works of the law. Here we must stand, not upon the wicked gloss of the schoolmen, which say, that faith then justifieth, when charity and good works are joined withal. With this pestilent gloss the sophisters have darkened and corrupted this and other like sentences in Paul, wherein he manifestly attributeth justification to faith only in Christ. But when a man heareth that he ought to believe in Christ, and yet, notwithstanding, that faith justifieth not except it be formed and furnished with charity; by and by he falleth from faith, and thus he thinketh, If faith without charity justified not, then is faith in vain and unprofitable, and charity alone justifieth; for, except faith be formed with charity, it is nothing.”

“And to confirm this pernicious and pestilent gloss, the

adversaries do allege this place (1 Cor. xiii.), 'Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have no love, I am nothing.' And this place is their brazen wall. But they are men without understanding, and therefore they can see or understand nothing in Paul; and by this false interpretation they have not only perverted the words of Paul, but have also denied Christ, and buried all his benefits. Wherefore we must avoid this gloss as a most deadly and devilish poison, and conclude with Paul, 'that we are justified, not by faith furnished with charity, but by faith only and alone.'"

... "Wherefore since we are now in the matter of justification, we reject and condemn all good works; for this place will admit no disputation of good works. In this matter therefore we do generally cut off all laws and all the works of the law." ...

"Verse 16. That we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law.'

"Paul speaketh not here of the ceremonial law only, as before we have said, but of THE WHOLE LAW."

Eyre on Free Justification, p. 147;—

"There is not the same reason of our being sinners, and being righteous; seeing that sin is our act, but righteousness is the gift of God. A man is not a sinner before he do commit sin, either by himself or representative, which necessarily supposeth a law; 'For sin is the transgression of a law.' 1 John iii., 4. But a man may be righteous before he doth works of righteousness, and consequently before any law is given him to obey. Indeed, if we were made righteous by our own personal inherent righteousness, then our justification would necessarily require a law; forasmuch as all our righteousness consists in a conformity to the law. But seeing we are justified by the imputation of another's righteousness, what need is there that a law should first be given unto us?"

Let us now see the depths of Satan to which this separation of faith from good works, and from all law human and divine has led.*

* Dr. Mill, in his Notes to his Five Sermons on the Nature of Christianity, presents the following letter of Luther, p. 130, in answer to Melancthon's query,

The Sermons of Dr. Crisp open up some of these depths in the following manner, vol. i., p. 301 ;—

“Now in the giving of Christ there is to be considered, first, the gift of his person ; secondly, the gift of all the fruits

in which he consults Luther, concerning a dispensation to bigamy, which had been solicited by the Landgrave of Hesse ;—

“Writing, as I do, not to an adulterous Pope, or a murderous inquisitor, or any other monster of iniquity, but to the virtuous Philip Melancthon, from my friendly confinement in the Wartburg, this June 29th, A.D. 1521, calmly desiring to set right my over scrupulous friend, who fears it is a sin to communicate only in one kind,—I therefore, after speaking to that question, write thus. If thou art a preacher of grace, grace being meant for sinners, why deal with such artificial peccadilloes, such make-believe sins as this about which thou wouldst consult me, instead of the real downright awful sins, such as every awakened man knows to cleave to him? As a preacher of grace, preach a real, not a sham grace: and if grace is real, bear about thee, not a sham, but a real sin. Depend upon it that God saves not sham sinners. Out with thy pitiful scruples, therefore, about the sacrament. Be a sinner, and sin stoutly ; that is to say, confess thyself a sinner, not in such matters as these, but real sins, and be of a good heart notwithstanding thy sin: trust but the more strongly and rejoice in Christ, who is the conqueror of sin, death, and the world. Here we must sin as long as we remain ; there is no help for it. It is not in this life, but hereafter, that the apostle bids us look for the new heavens and the new earth, in which righteousness dwells. (Here) it is enough that, through the riches of the glory of God, we have known the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world. From Him sin shall not separate us, *though we commit whoredom or murder a thousand thousand times in one day.* Thinkest thou that the price and redemption offered for our sins by this divine Lamb is so small that it cannot avail to cover your sham sins? Pray boldly and instantly, for thou art a very great sinner.”

On which Dr. Mills thus observes ;—

“Making every allowance in my power for the *intention*,—wishing also to admit such excuses as adversaries (like Moehler), as well as advocates (like Coleridge), suggest for the excitement under which the reformer wrote, . . . being, moreover, most fully convinced, . . . that Luther did not mean to prompt his sober friend what to *do*, but rather what to *teach* in respect of fornication and homicide,—still I must repeat, and most deliberately, and in the fear of God, repeat, that which, (my opponent) ‘calls my sin.’ I must denounce this passage, however softened, as a most flagrant and revolting outrage on the infinite grace which it professes to magnify. The repugnance, the utter contrariety of its whole tone and spirit throughout, to that in which Holy Scripture meets the selfsame topics (for which I need point no more than to the places quoted by Luther himself in 2 Peter iii., Romans vii., and 1 John ii.) must be, I am persuaded, apparent to the veriest babe in Christ who compares them ; and certainly no less so to every well-exercised Christian, whom a determinate prepossession for the author as a reformer, or as a hero, has not made willing to disguise the thorough contrariety from himself.”

that redound from the participating of his person. First, God gives the person of Christ to men; as much as to say, God gives him to stand in the room of men, and men stand in his room. So that in the giving of Christ, God is pleased, as it were, to make a change; Christ represents our persons to the Father; we represent the person of Christ to Him; all the loveliness the person of Christ hath, that is put upon us; and we are lovely with the Father, even as the Son himself. On the other part, all that hatefulness and loathsomeness in our nature is put upon Christ; he stands, as it were, the abhorred of the Father for the time, even the forsaken of the Father, as he represented our persons, bare our blame, sustained our wrath, and drank the dregs of our cup. Here is the gift of the person; that which is Christ's, is our's; that which is our's, is his. There is an admirable expression in 2 Cor. v., 21; 'He was made sin for us, that knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' It is plainly manifested, that which we were, Christ became, sin for us; then that which Christ was, we became, that is, the righteousness of God; for we are made the righteousness of God in him."

On the words, "abhorred of the Father," it is said in a note;—

"That is while he bore the sins of his people, sustained the wrath of God, and was made a curse for them; nor should this seem harsh to any, especially as the doctor has qualified it; for he does not say he stands the abhorred, but, as it were, the abhorred of the Father; though, had he said he was abhorred for a time, it is no more than the Scripture says, Psalm lxxxix., 38; 'Thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed, or with thy Messiah;' which words are understood of Christ, by several interpreters, ancient and modern. Christ indeed, as the Son of God, was always the object of his Father's love; and so he was in his state of humiliation, and even under his sufferings and death; John x., 17; as the celebrated Wittsius observes; 'Christ was represented not only under the emblem of a lamb, a foolish beast, and prone to go astray; but of a goat, lascivious, wanton, and of an ill smell; yea, of a cursed serpent, and on that account

execrable, and cursed of God; not for the taking of our sins upon him, which was an holy action, and most grateful to God; but for the sins which he took upon him, and for the persons of the sinners which he sustained.'—Animad. Iren., c. iii., s. v., p. 43."

Again, p. 451;—

"Indeed, let us not make God so childish: if he laid iniquity on Christ, he passed this real act upon him, and the thing is thus really as he disposes of it; and therefore, in brief, this laying iniquity upon him, is such a translation of sin from those, whose iniquity he lays upon him, that by it he now becomes, or did become, when they were laid, as really and truly the person that had all these sins, as those men who did commit them really and truly, had them themselves. It is true, as I said before, Christ never sinned in all his life; he did no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth; but this hinders not, but that there may be on him an absolute transaction; so that by laying iniquity on him, he becomes the sole person in the behalf of all the elect, that truly hath iniquity upon him."

Again, p. 428;—

"It is iniquity itself, even the sins themselves of those whom God intends shall reap benefit by Christ, that are laid on him. Satan hath raised a foul mist to darken the glorious light of this admirable truth. At first looking on it, you may think there is nothing in it more than in other ordinary truths; but you shall find in the close, that all the comfort you can take, concerning your freedom from sin, will hang upon this point, that it is iniquity itself that is laid upon Christ. But, many are ready to think, that the guilt (such as they call so) and the punishment of sin lay upon Christ indeed; but that simply the very fault that men commit, that is, that the transgression itself is become the transgression of Christ, is somewhat harsh: but when the text saith, 'The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;' the meaning is, that Christ himself becomes the transgressor in the room and stead of the person that had transgressed; so that in respect of the reality of being a transgressor, Christ is as really the transgressor, as the man who did commit it was, before he took it upon him. Beloved, mis-

take me not, I say, not that ever Christ was, or ever could be, the actor or committer of transgression, for he never committed any; but the Lord laid iniquity upon him; and this act of God's laying it upon him, makes him as really a transgressor, as if he himself had actually committed it: and this I shall endeavor to clear by manifest scripture, that simply, without any equivocation, not in any figure, but plainly sin itself was laid upon Christ; I shall then clear some objections, and shew the necessity of the thing."

"Look but into Isaiah liii., 11, 12, there you shall find three words all expressing this one thing, that it is sin itself, and deviations that are laid on Christ: 'He shall bear their iniquities,' verse 11; 'He was numbered among the transgressors, and he bare the sins of many:' mark it well, I pray."

Again, p. 435;—

"I beseech you consider of it seriously; we know not what times are growing upon us, nor what may abide us; we may be cut off from the land of the living, and be in the Jews' condition, subject to bondage all our lives long, through fear of death and hell; and what is the occasion and ground of it? It is to have sin lie close upon your spirits: separate sin from the soul and it hath rest, in the worst condition: being in the Jewish condition you will never have full satisfaction and settled quiet of spirit, in respect of sin, till you have received this principle, that it is iniquity itself that the Lord hath laid on Christ. Now, when I say with the prophet, it is that itself that the Lord hath laid on him, I mean as he doth; it is the fault of the transgression itself, and to speak more fully, that very erring and straying like sheep, is passed off from thee, and is laid upon Christ: to speak it more plainly, hast thou been an idolater, a blasphemer, a despiser of God's word? a trampler upon him, a profaner of his name and ordinances, a despiser of government, and of thy parents, a murderer, an adulterer, a thief, a liar, a drunkard? Reckon up what thou canst against thyself; if thou hast part in the Lord Christ, all these transgressions of thine become actually his, and cease to be thine; and thou ceasest to be a transgressor, from that time they were laid upon him, to the last hour of thy life: so that

now thou art not an idolater, a persecutor, a thief, a murderer, an adulterer, or a sinful person; reckon what sin soever you commit, when as you have part in Christ, you are all that he was, he is all that you were: 2 Cor. v., 21; ‘He was made sin for us, that knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.’ Mark it well, Christ himself is not so completely righteous, but we are as righteous as he was; nor we so completely sinful, but he became, being made sin, as completely sinful as we; nay more, the righteousness that Christ hath with the Father, we are the same, for we are made the righteousness of God; and that very sinfulness that we were, Christ is made before God; so that here is a direct change, Christ takes our persons and condition, and stands in his stead, we take his person and condition, and stand in our stead. What the Lord beheld Christ to be, that he beholds his members to be; what he beholds them to be in themselves, that he beholds Christ himself to be.”

“So that if you would speak of a sinner, supposing him a member of Christ, you must not speak of what he manifests, but of what Christ was.”

“If you would speak of one completely righteous, you must speak of him, and know that Christ himself is not more righteous than he is; and that that person is not more sinful than Christ was, when he took his sins on him; so that if you will reckon well, beloved, you must always reckon yourself in another’s person, and that other in your’s; and until the Lord find out transgressions of Christ’s own acting, he will never find one to charge upon you.”

Now let us penetrate further into these depths, and see their relation to Christian life and conduct.

Dr. Crisp observes, p. 570;—

“Let me tell you, beloved, I conceive people are much mistaken, and exceeding trouble their own spirits in vain, about the time when the Lord should give them their possession of this grace of laying their iniquities upon Christ. It is thought by some, that in case such a person should happen to die before God call him to grace, and give to him to believe; that he had been damned; and that elect persons are in a damnable estate,

in the time they walk in excess of riot, before they are called. Let me speak freely to you, and, in so doing, tell you, that the Lord hath no more to lay to the charge of an elect person, yet in the height of iniquity, and in the excess of riot, and committing all the abominations that can be committed; I say, even then, when an elect person runs such a course, the Lord hath no more to lay to his charge than he hath to lay to the charge of a believer; nay, he hath no more to lay to the charge of such a person, than he hath to lay to the charge of a saint triumphant in glory."

"It is true, such an one, not called, is never able to know individually of himself that he is one that God hath nothing to charge upon him; because, till calling, God gives not unto men to believe, and it is only believing that is evidence to men of things not seen. Things that are not seen are hidden, and shall not be known; I mean, the things of God's love shall not be known to particular men till they believe; but, considering their real condition, the Lord hath not one sin to charge upon an elect person, from the first moment of conception till the last minute of his life; there is not so much as original sin to be laid on him; and the ground is, the Lord hath laid it on Christ already. When did he lay sins on him? When he paid the full price for them. Now, suppose this person, uncalled, commits iniquity, and that this is charged upon him, seeing that his iniquities are laid upon Christ already, how comes it to pass they are charged upon him again? How come they to be translated from Christ again, and laid upon him? Once they were laid upon Christ it must be confessed: 'for the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin,' (1 John i., 7;) 'and by one sacrifice he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' Heb. x., 14. Was there, by one act of Christ, the expiation of sins, and all at once, that are committed from the beginning of the world to the end of it? How comes it to pass that this and that sin should be charged upon the elect, when they were laid upon Christ long before? He did, by that one act of his, expiate all our sins, or he did not: if he did not expiate them fully, then he did not save to the uttermost all that come to God by him; but, if he did, then all iniquity is vanished and gone; he extracted it out. As some plaister of excellent virtue

extracts out the venom of a plague sore ; so Christ, by once offering up himself, took away all the sins of the elect at once."

With regard to *confession*, Dr. Crisp observes, vol. i., p. 357 ;—

"But you will say, suppose a believer falls into some scandalous sins, and notorious sins, it may be to commit murder and adultery together, as David did ; surely now there is some cause of suspicion, that if he come presently to Christ after he commits these things, he will send him packing. I answer, if this be true, there must be a putting in of this exception into the text,—If thou that art a believer, commit such and such a sin, though thou comest to me, I will cast thee out ; and if it be so, Christ must cut off that large expression of his, 'I will in no wise cast thee out.'"

"You will say, this is strange doctrine : suppose a believer commit adultery and murder, may he presently look upon Christ, and in him see a discharge of his sins, and reconciliation by him, and part in him, at that very time he commits them ? Surely there must be large humiliation and confession of these sins ; and there must be a long continuance in this too ; he must not apply comfort presently ; there must be more brokenness of heart yet, and more yet, and more yet : this is the objection of the world."

"I answer, I confess the crime is great in its kind, and, for the present, it may silence the voice of truth itself ; but whatever becomes of it, that Christ may have the glory of his grace, and the glory of that fulness of redemption wrought all at once ; let me tell you, believers cannot commit those sins that may give just occasion of suspicion to them, that if they come to Christ he would cast them out. Let me not be mistaken in that I say ; I know the enemies of the Gospel will make an evil construction of it ; yet a believer, I say, cannot commit those sins that can give occasion to him to suspect, that if he come presently to Christ, he would cast him off."

"But must not he confess first, and be afflicted in his soul, before he can think he shall be received if he come?"

"For answer to it ; I deny not, but acknowledge, when a believer sins, he must confess these sins ; and the greatest end

and ground of these confessions is, that which Joshua speaks concerning Achan, Joshua vii., 19, 'My son, confess thy faults, and give glory to God.' A believer in confession of sin gives glory to the great God of heaven and earth; and that must be the glorious end of the confession of his sin, that God may be owned as the sole and only Saviour: except we acknowledge sin, we cannot acknowledge salvation: we cannot acknowledge any virtue in the works and sufferings of Christ; he might have saved his labor, and never come into the world; all that he did could not be acknowledged to be of worth to us, if there had not been sin from which he should save us: he that indeed confesses his sin, confesses he had perished if Christ had not died for him; nay, he confesseth that nothing in the world, but Christ, could save him."

"Secondly, I grant, a believer should be sensible of sin, that is, of the nature of it; but this is that I mainly desire to imprint upon your spirits, that he may certainly conclude, even before confession of sin, the reconciliation that is made between God and him, the interest he hath in Christ, and the love of God embracing him: in a word, before a believer confesses his sin, he may be as certain of the pardon of it as after confession. I say, there is as much ground to be confident of the pardon of sin to a believer, as soon as ever he hath committed it, though he hath not made a solemn act of confession, as to believe it after he hath performed all the humiliation in the world. What is the ground of the pardon of sin? 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own name's sake:' here is pardon, and the fountain of it is in God himself. What is it that discharges a believer? The rise of it is God's own sake: if this be the ground of pardon, then this being held out, a believer may be assured of pardon as soon as he commits any sin, and may close with it. Pardon of sin depends upon the unchangeableness of God, and not on the stability of the creature: all the pardon in the world that any person shall enjoy, is revealed in this word of grace: and it is the most absurd thing in the world to think that the soul may fetch out a pardon any where but in the word of grace. Is pardon held out in it, and held out to sinners, as they are sinners? And

doth God hold out his love to persons before good or evil be done by them, that the purpose of God may stand according to election, not of works, but of grace? And doth a believer find it thus in the Word of grace, and may not he rest upon it when he finds it? I beseech you, consider; either Christ did not reckon with the Father for all the sins of his people one with another, when he did offer up himself, or he did; if he left out such and such a scandalous sin when he reckoned with him, then Christ did not save to the utmost all them that come to God by him; then there must come another Saviour to reckon for that which he left out."

With regard to *repentance*, Dr. Crisp observes, p. 530; "Beloved, it may be the just complaint of the Lord to the sons of men; I have laid the iniquities of you all upon Christ, and everything almost runs away with the honor of it; as if something else did ease you of the burthen of them, and I am neglected. Now so long as you have these vain conceits in you, that anything you do becomes your ease, and the lightening of the burthen of your sins, they will go away with the praise that is due to God. To whomsoever we apprehend ourselves beholding, as we say, for such a courtesy, such a one shall go away with the praise of it. 2 Sam. xvi., 1, 2: I remember how Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, Saul's son, came to David with the stolen goods of his master, and pretended that it was his own courtesy to David that he had brought so many mules, and a large quantity of provision: David asked for his master; he belies his master, and tells him he abides at Jerusalem, hoping that Israel would set the crown upon his head. But mark it well: whilst that David is possest that Ziba is he that hath done him a courtesy, he shall go away with the glory of it, and Mephibosheth shall be neglected; and David gives all the land of Mephibosheth to Ziba upon this mistake, and so he carried away all the praise of the courtesy from Mephibosheth. And so it is most true, beloved, as long as we reckon our own holy duties, *repentance*, and enlargement in prayer, &c., as the bringers of refreshment to our spirits, and the unloaders of our hearts from our transgressions, that are the burthen of the soul; so long these are exalted above mea-

sure. Hence these strange epithets and expressions are fixed to them; 'Oh! the omnipotency of *repentance*, and of meeting with God in fasting and humiliation! Oh! the prevalency of tears to wash away sin!' They, supposing that these ease us of the weight of sin, go away with the glory. Oh! who is omnipotent but the God of heaven! What washes away the sins of men but the blood of Christ? Shall we give the glory to Ziba that is due to Mephibosheth? In 2 Sam. xix., 24, you shall hear how Mephibosheth makes his apology for himself, and pleads his sincerity to the king, and declares how his servant had abused him; and then David restored half his lands again to him; but yet Ziba must share with him still."

"Oh! beloved, I desire you to deal more equally with God; let Him have all the praise; let not Ziba and Mephiboseth divide the land; let not your performances share with God in the praise of his grace, in laying iniquities upon Christ."

"It is God alone that lays your iniquities upon Christ, and your performances (repenting, fasting, humiliation) cozen you, while they tell you that they ease you of your burthens, and lay it upon him. Oh! turn them out, and let them not share with the Lord in the praise due to his name."

The sum of all this teaching is, that while yet sinners, persons are said to be in a state of reconciliation and union with God; which union the author represents, p. 425, as a marriage union between Christ and a monster, thereby shewing the condescending love of Christ in becoming thus united, and the great faith of the believer in believing it!

After this method of teaching, can we be surprised at the following observations?

Dr. Henry More; Works, p. 265;—

"I have now abundantly shewn how plainly and explicitly Christ and his apostles urge all men that are hearers of the Gospel to be careful and conscionable doers of the same, that they should be holy even as Christ was holy in all manner of conversation; that they are bound to endeavor and aspire after the participation of the divine life and all the branches thereof, humility, love, and purity, hating even the garment spotted by

the flesh, as the apostle Jude speaks. And how this holiness and righteousness is required of them with no less seriousness and earnestness than upon the forfeiture of their eternal salvation, if they do not act according to those precepts. Insomuch that I stand amazed while I consider with myself that hellish and abominable gloss that some have put upon the Gospel, as if it were a mere school of looseness, and that the end of Christ's coming into the world was but to bring down a commission to the sons of men whereby they might be enabled to sin with authority, I am sure with all desirable security and impunity; nothing being required on their part but to believe that Christ died for them, and upon no other condition than bare belief; as if Christ did not give himself to redeem us from sin, but to assert our liberty of sinning; which is the most perverse and mischievous misconstruction of the grace of God revealed in Christ that possibly could be invented, and point-blank against the end and design of his coming into the world. For he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

"Yet as repugnant and irrational as this error is, it had attempted the church betimes; as appears by sundry monitions of the apostles, when exhorting their charge to holiness of life and real righteousness, they often intimate their proneness of being deceived in thinking they had leave to be remiss in these matters. Some instances you may have observed already; to which you may add that of St. James, 'Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls.' But that of St. John is most express and emphatical; 'Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous;' that is, even as Christ was righteous, who was not putatively and imaginarily righteous, but really so indeed: though it seems by this caution there were that went about in those times to persuade it might be otherwise. And *I could wish that this error were not so taking in the church as it is at this day*; than which notwithstanding no greater, I think, can be committed, nor more dangerous, it rendering this admirable engine (as I have termed it) which

God has set up in the world, for the advancement of life and godliness, altogether invalid and useless."

Dr. Samuel Clarke, Sermon 40; Works, vol. i.;—

"With regard to erroneous notions concerning every man's own private duty in the government of himself: every opinion that gives license to any sort of debauchery; that gives men encouragement to sin in hopes that grace may abound, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, as the apostle expresses it, and making Christ the minister of sin; every such opinion, I say, is a root of bitterness, and brings forth fruit unto death. Of this sort is that desperate notion which has prevailed so much in the church of Rome; a relying upon repeated confessions and absolutions for the pardon of sins, in the practice of which they still however continue. And of the same kind is that dangerous expectation even among Protestants too; when men of loose and debauched lives flatter themselves, that without any real virtue or holiness they shall be accepted of God, upon their performing on a bed of sickness and at the approach of death some of those external duties which were instituted on purpose to be obligations and assistances to holiness of life. But our rule is one and plain, he that doeth righteousness is righteous."

Ostervald on the Causes of the present Corruption of Christians, observes, p. 145;—

"A modern author very well observes; 'That people are not only very little acquainted with the extent of that purity which the gospel requires; but that they are besides full of maxims, incomparably more pernicious, than errors of pure speculation.' These maxims do the more certainly produce corruption, because they are used to authorize and countenance it. And in fact, men's blindness and licentiousness are come to that pass, that not being contented with the practice of vice, they do besides plead authority for an ill life. They proceed so far as to defend the cause of corruption; they dispute with those that condemn them, and they vent such maxims and sentiments, as (if we believe them) will justify, or at least excuse all their disorders. I could not omit here the examining

of those maxims, since their effect is so pernicious; I shall therefore observe them as the third cause of corruption."

"The maxims and sentiments which favor corruption are of two sorts. Some are visibly profane and impious; such are a great many maxims of the libertines, which go for current in the world: but there are others which men pretend to draw from religion. I shall insist particularly upon the latter, because as they are taken from religion itself, they are by much the more dangerous. When profane people undertake to defend vice with maxims which are manifestly impious, we stand upon our guard against them, and we may confute them by the maxims of religion. But when they employ religion and the truths of it, in the defence of vice, the danger of being seduced is infinitely greater."

"I shall reduce the maxims which are made use of to authorize corruption to these four orders."

"I rank those in the *first* order, by which men endeavor to prove that holiness is not absolutely necessary."

"The *second* order contains those which tend to shew that the practice of holiness is impossible."

"The *third* comprehends those which insinuate that it is dangerous for a man to apply himself to good works.

"The *fourth* and the *last* includes those which are alleged to excuse corruption."

"But as it is not less necessary to know the remedies against corruption, than to discover the causes of it; I shall not only mention, but as I go on confute those maxims."

"Although nothing is more clearly asserted in the Gospel, than the necessity of good works; yet Christians entertain many opinions which destroy this necessity, and which consequently open a door to licentiousness. The necessity of good works cannot be overthrown but one of these two ways; either by saying that God does not require them, or else by maintaining that though God requires them, yet a man may be saved without the practice of them."

"In order to prove that God does not require sanctity and good works, as a condition absolutely necessary to salvation, these two maxims are abused. 1. *That we are not saved by our*

works. And, 2. *That faith is sufficient to salvation.* The first of these maxims is intended to exclude good works; and by the second men would substitute another mean for obtaining salvation."

Again, p. 300;—

"I cannot help saying, in the first place, that there are books of devotion which are capable of introducing corruption of manners, and diverting Christians from the study of holiness. We may easily apprehend how there should be books of this kind, if we consider that many, even among divines, think it dangerous to insist upon good works, and to press morality: and there are books of devotion, which were made on purpose to maintain so strange an opinion. Some authors have taught that true devotion and solid piety, is not that which consists in the practice of good works; they have writ that the doctrine which represents good works as a necessary condition in order to salvation, overthrows the doctrine of justification by faith; that works cannot be looked upon as the way to heaven; that all we have to do now under the Gospel-covenant, is to receive and to accept of the salvation purchased for us; and that the Gospel requires works, only from the motives of gratitude and love. Nay those authors enter into dispute; they attempt to refute the arguments drawn from the exhortations, promises, and threatenings of Scripture which might be urged against them, and they tax with Pharisaism or Pelagianism those who are of an opinion contrary to theirs. I cannot think the authors of such books did publish them with ill intentions, but I could wish they had abstained from writing things which give such mighty advantages to libertines, and which may blast the fruit of all the books of morality, and of all the exhortations which are addressed to sinners. And yet these books are printed, and which is more surprising, those divines who are so rigid and scrupulous in point of books and sentiments, do not oppose the publishing of such works, but they suffer them quietly to pass for current in the world."

Again, p. 302;—

"But we ought to be particularly cautious when we comfort sinners and give them assurances of the divine mercy; for if

this is not done with great circumspection, we may easily harden and ruin at the same time that we are comforting them. This is the mischief of those books, which speak but little of repentance and insist much upon confidence, whose only design it is to encourage the greatest sinners, and to exhort them to a bold reliance upon God's mercy, without fearing either the heinousness, or the multitude of their sins. Such consolations are capable of a good sense; but if they are not proposed with due explication and restrictions, vast numbers of people will abuse them. That which has been writ by some authors in books of devotion, concerning sin and good works, is apt to lead men into this fancy, that good works signify nothing in order to salvation, and that sin does not obstruct it. Under pretence of answering the accusations of the devil and of the law, these authors enervate the strongest arguments for the necessity of good works, they confute the declarations of Scripture concerning sanctification, and they destroy as much as in them lies the sincerity and truth of the precepts and threatenings of the Gospel. For what they call the accusations of the devil and of the law, is sometimes nothing else but the just apprehensions of a guilty conscience, which are inspired by the Gospel, and which should be cherished and fortified to bring sinners to repentance, instead of being removed by ill-dispensed consolations."

Archbishop Tillotson, Sermon 104, vol. v., p. 272;—

"If our Saviour came not to dissolve and loosen the obligation of moral duties, but to confirm and establish it, and to enforce and bind the practice of these duties more strongly upon us, then they do widely and wilfully mistake the design of Christianity, who teach that it dischargeth men from the obligation of the moral law; which is the fundamental and avowed principle of the Antinomian doctrine, but directly contrary to this declaration of our Saviour in the text, that he 'came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to perfect and fulfil them,' (for to take away the obligation of a law, is plainly to destroy and make it void;) and contrary to the apostle's resolution of this matter, Rom. iii., 31; 'Do we then make void the law through faith?' that is, doth the Gospel destroy and take away the obligation of the law? 'God forbid, yea,

we establish the law;’ the Christian religion is so far from designing or doing any such thing, that it gives new strength and force to it.”

“But surely they that teach this doctrine, did never duly consider that terrible threatening of our Saviour after the text, which seems to be so directly levelled at them: ‘Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven:’ for how can men more effectually teach the violation, not only of the least, but of the greatest of God’s commandments, than by declaring, that the Gospel hath set men free from the obligation of the moral law? which is in effect to say, that Christians may act contrary to all the duties of morality, that is, do the most impious things in the world, without any offence against God, and notwithstanding this, continue to be his children, and highly in the favor of God.”

“And all the security they have against this impious consequence, is that weak and slender pretence, ‘that gratitude and love to God will preserve them from making this ill use of the grace of the Gospel, and oblige them to abstain from sin, and to endeavor to please God as much as any law could do.’ But then they do not consider the nonsense of this; for there can be no such thing as sin, if the obligation of the law be taken away; for where there is no law, there can be no transgression, as the apostle and common reason likewise tells us; so that the law being removed and taken away, all actions become indifferent, and one thing is not more a sin or offence against God than another. And what then is it they mean that gratitude will oblige men to, or preserve them from? when there can be no such thing as sin or duty, as pleasing or offending God, if there be no law to oblige us to the one, or restrain us from the other.”

“And what is, if this be not, to ‘turn the grace of God into wantonness,’ and to make Christian liberty a cloak for all sorts of sins? A man cannot do a greater despite to the Christian religion, nor take a more effectual course to bring it into contempt, and to make it to be hissed out of the world, than to represent it as a lewd and licentious doctrine, which gives men a perfect discharge from all the duties of morality, and

obligeth them only to believe confidently, that Christ hath purchased for them a liberty to do what they will, and that upon those terms, and no other, they are secured of the favor of God in this world, and eternal salvation in the other. This is the sum and the plain result of the Antinomian doctrine, the most pernicious heresy, and most directly destructive of the great end and design of Christianity, that ever yet was broached in the world. But ‘ye have not so learned Christ; if so be ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning your former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts: and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness.’ ”

We have already seen how Jezebel is said to be cast into a bed; but it is added, “and them that commit adultery with her, into great tribulation.”

Now those who commit adultery with her are those whom Jezebel has seduced, and who are called “my servants,” *i. e.*, says De Lyra, “simple Christians,” who in the simplicity of their ignorance had been unwarily seduced by the subtle arguments of Jezebel. These are therefore not so confirmed in their error as Jezebel herself. For Jezebel is the prophetess, the professedly authorized teacher; the others are only her sons or disciples, and the disciples are not so deep, so confirmed in the error as the teacher, and hence are not, like her, given up to a reprobate sense. The result is, that these disciples do not sleep so securely in their doctrine, but are thrown into great tribulation; for as on this subject Dr. Henry More observes, p. 286;—

“This imaginary righteousness does rob us of tranquillity and peace of mind. For he that acts unrighteously is in actual rebellion against right reason and the spirit of God; and he that is only imaginarily righteous, will not fail to act unrighteously; for real unrighteousness will have its real effects, as

well as poisonous plants their fruit, and serpents their spawn. Wherefore he that has no more than imaginary righteousness, carries a kingdom of rebellion in himself; and unless he be given up to a reprobate sense, the peace and tranquillity of his mind cannot but be shaken. For verily the rational soul of man is not so utterly estranged from all virtue and goodness, nay, indeed, there is that congruity and connaturality betwixt them, that it will be a hard task utterly to break off that ancient league. For virtue is natural to the soul, vice and immorality extraneous and adventitious; else why do they call the cleansing of the soul from vice the purging of her? For purgation is ἀφαίρεσις ἀλλοτρίῃ παντός, as the Platonists well define it, the taking away of what is unnatural and improper. Wherefore seeing that virtue is natural to the soul, it is reasonable to conceive it is better rooted than to be expunged quite of a sudden by any one fancy or opinion, and that the sense thereof will not easily be washed out. And therefore it remaining there, and yet a man acting according to some unnatural or irrational conceit that he has taken up he knows not how unawares, he acting, I say, against this noble and innate sense of the soul, he must needs be wounded and disquieted."

Again, p. 287;—

"For what peace or faithfulness can there be amongst men where the professed mystery of their religion is the explosion of real righteousness? Or what can possibly take place instead thereof but fraud and falsehood, foul lusts, frantic factions, rude tumults, and bloody rebellions? To which you may cast in the loss of our very hopes that the world should ever grow better, or that the holy promises of God should take effect. For there is not a more cruel or butcherly weapon for *slaying of the Witnesses*, nor a more impregnable fort against the approaching kingdom of Christ, and that millennial happiness which many good and faithful Christians expect, than this hell-hatched doctrine of Antinomianism."

Dr. Hey observes, in his *Divinity Lectures*, vol. iii., p. 264;—

"The Puritans always wished to depart farther from the church of Rome than the generality did; and one doctrine, in

which they thought this desirable, was justification by faith. They were constantly laboring to answer this end; and, in the time of Charles I., they got into power. They were not, however, able to get their notions kindly received by our nation at large. They had thrown every thing into confusion; their manners were unpleasing, and their doctrine itself disgusted plain reasonable people. The restoration came on; nothing was more natural than running into the opposite extreme: for some ascribed even the political confusions, previous to the restoration, to the great stress laid on the doctrine of justification by faith; on the idea that it lessened men's esteem for virtue, and made them easily give up any duty of the man or the citizen, when they were earnest in any pursuit, where such duty stood in their way."

"I am he who searcheth the reins and hearts."

"That is," says Viegas, "the most hidden secrets of the heart of Jezebel and her most secret thoughts. . . . Hence is evident the divinity of Christ, for God alone is the knower of the heart and scrutinizes the reins and hearts of men." Thus also Alcasar, p. 242, and Gagneus and Estius (see *Biblia Maxima*, p. 738). . . . "Concupiscences and evil thoughts" (*De Lyra*). See also Ribera, p. 46.

Mayer on the *Apocalypse*, p. 278;—

. . . "Jezebel is said to be masked under the vizard of a prophetess, so that men could not discover her; but when the Lord should thus make her a spectacle of his judgments, it should appear that all her fair pretext was but dissimulation, and that she had a vile heart colored over with sanctity."

"I will put upon you none other burden," signifies, says Daubuz, that no new exhortation or charge was to be given them, but only the advice to persevere as they had hitherto done.

Pyle's *Paraphrase on the Apocalypse*, p. 23;

"As to the rest of Christians, who have courage enough to withstand these corruptions and keep themselves clear from the influence of these diabolical delusions, I have nothing farther to say, but only to commend them for their steadfastness, and

exhort them to continue in it; in full assurance that the time will come, wherein my church shall triumph over all these corruptions and corrupt men; and wherein all sincere Christians shall meet with a happy and full reward."

In the church in Thyatira there prevailed two kinds of doctrine. First, that in which charity was the essential, then faith made active by charity, and then, consequently, good works. This doctrine was held by those in Thyatira who had not followed the doctrine of Jezebel. The other kind of doctrine was that of Jezebel herself. Therefore, that which they had and which they were to hold fast until the Lord's coming, was the former evangelical doctrine concerning the inseparable union of charity, faith, and good works; the result of which would be that they would have power over the nations, and at the second coming of the Lord would receive the morning star.

"Until I come," *i. e.*, to the last judgment: *Biblia Maxima*, p. 739; *Menochius*. To judgment against Jezebel (*More*), or to a fuller reformation of the world, and opening of the doctrine of the Gospel (*Brightman*). See *Poole's Synopsis*, p. 1705.

How far the Church of England is itself involved in the principles here assigned to Jezebel, will be seen in the remarks upon the death of the Second Witness.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verses 26, 27, 28, 29;—

"'And unto him that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end,' *signifies*, those who are in charity and thence actually in faith and remain in them to their lives' end: 'I will give power over the nations,' *signifies*, they will overcome the evils in themselves which are from hell: 'and he shall rule them with a rod of iron,' *signifies*, by truths from the literal sense of the Word, and at the same time by rational principles derived from natural light: 'as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken,' *signifies*, as of little

or no account : ‘ Even as I also received from my Father,’ *signifies*, this from the Lord, who when he was in the world procured to himself all power over the hells, from his divinity which is within him : ‘ and I will give unto him the morning star, *signifies*, intelligence and wisdom in such case : ‘ he that hath an ear to hear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches,’ *signifies*, as before.

Lauretus, art. *natio* ;—

“ Demons are called nations, which are the nations from afar, and a nation strong and ancient, and the rich nations gathered together against the church.”—Arnobius, Jerome, Isychius.

“ The nations cast out, or to be cast out, are vices. The nation which is not holy are evil thoughts and concupiscences, &c.”—Hilary, Origen, Arnobius, Cassian, Augustin, Gregory.

“ Nation rising against nation are heretics rising against heretics.” . . .

“ The deceitful nations gathered together against the church are heretics.”—Origen.

. . . “ The nations which God left among Israel are the lesser vices with which we must fight.” . . .

Viegas on the Apocalypse, p. 187 ;—

“ Others betake themselves to the tropological sense, such as to have power over the nations, is to reign over the evil appetites of the sensual and natural mind.”

This sense, says Viegas, he prefers to the literal sense.

With regard to *a rod of iron*, Gill observes, p. 705 ;—

“ Either with the Gospel, which is the rod of Christ’s strength, and is the power of God unto salvation, and by which the kingdom of Christ is enlarged, and the power of the church of Christ over the antichristian party is increased ; or it may design great strictness and severity, with which the man of sin will be used by the saints of the most High, when they shall take away his dominion from him ; ‘ as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers ;’ which may be expressive either of the breaking of rocky hearts in pieces at conversion, and of making souls humble and contrite ; or of the irreparable ruin

and destruction of Antichrist, when the saints shall consume and destroy him," &c.

In Poole's Synopsis we find that it signifies the "rod of the Word;" and in Apoc. xii., 5, p. 1852, that it signifies "the Word of God."

Dr. Hammond also says, Apoc. xii., 5, that the "rod of iron is the Word, that is, the spiritual sword or sceptre of Christ, with which he manages his spiritual kingdom."

Pearson on the Apocalypse, p. 84;—

"In the same manner, the weapons with which the enemies of the truth, and the corruptions of the true faith are to be destroyed, are entirely spiritual. It is with reference to this idea, that the Redeemer is described in the first chapter, when it is said, that 'out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword.' In like manner he announces himself to the church of Pergamos as 'having the sharp sword with two edges;' and he commands those who were guilty of maintaining false doctrines to 'repent; or else he would come unto them quickly, and war against them with the sword of his mouth.' 'This,' observes Dean Woodhouse, 'is the weapon by which our Lord and his followers are to conquer at the last; and therefore is again described in chap. xix., 15—21.' In an eminent passage of the evangelical prophet, confessedly prophetic of our Lord, it is said, 'He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.' Agreeably to which 'the sword of the Spirit' is called by St. Paul 'the word of God;' and is the weapon with which, according to the same apostle, even 'with the spirit of his mouth, the Lord shall destroy the man of sin.' And the powers of this warfare are again described: 'The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.'

"These quotations from holy writ cast considerable light upon the passage before us, and shew the nature of the arms by which our Lord and his church are to gain their victories; not by the usual instruments of human warfare, but the preaching of the Word in evangelical purity and power. We may add also, that they shew the way in which the great corruptions of Christianity and the abominations of heathenism are to be

destroyed, namely, by the propagation of that pure and holy faith which is built on the foundation of eternal truth,—‘Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.’ In perfect conformity also with this doctrine, is the object for which, as upon individuals, so also upon churches, the divine judgments are inflicted, namely, to lead them to repentance and reformation. How much tenderness, and yet what solemnity, is contained in the warning addressed to the church of the Laodiceans: ‘As many as I love I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent.’

“I will give unto him the morning star.”

According to Gagneus, a star signifies a clear knowledge of things divine, especially of the Scriptures. See also Cornelius a Lapide, p. 53; Viegas, p. 189; Poole’s Synopsis on this passage.

Cruden’s Concordance, art. Star;—

“Day star;—*a more full, clear, and explicit knowledge of Christ, and the mysteries of the Gospel, which, in comparison of the dark shadows and prophetic writings, was a morning star, bringing a fuller manifestation of the truths of God than the prophets did, whose predictions are now accomplished.*”

Woodhouse on the Apocalypse, p. 76;—

“A star is a teacher; our Lord is eminently such, and such he entitles himself in chap. xxii., 16, ὁ ἀστὴρ ὁ λαμπρὸς καὶ ὀρθρινός, ‘the shining and morning star.’ As such he was foretold in Numbers xxiv., 17; and a star, in the eastern and morning quarter of the hemisphere, preceded his birth. As this star, seen by the wise men, signified to them his first coming; so by the star, promised in this passage, we must probably understand the signs denoting his second coming, a knowledge of ‘the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,’ and of its approach in power. Saint Peter, speaking of prophecy, whose office it is in part to reveal these mysteries, recommends us to attend diligently to this ‘light shining in a dark place,’ until some clearer manifestation shall be revealed: εὼς ἡμέρα διαυγασε καὶ φωσφορὸς ἀνατελεῖ ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν, until the day shine forth, and the day star (or morning star, for so it should be translated) shall rise in your hearts; until that time when

the prophetic information, imperfect in its nature, being 'done away,' that perfect knowledge shall succeed, which is like knowing 'face to face.' But beside this time of perfect consummation to which both these apostles may be thought principally to refer, there is a time promised when the Divine power shall 'remove the veil spread over all nations' and the earth 'be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' This glorious and extensive reign of Christ and of his religion is the subject of many sublime prophecies, and is copiously prefigured in the sequel of this book. To those, whether they be churches or individuals, who, in full assurance of faith, resist the temptations and surmount the difficulties of their Christian warfare, looking forward to the accomplishment of the divine promises with spiritual discernment, to such shall be granted the dawns and first light of these happy times; they shall see them though afar off, and seeing, they shall rejoice; and this joy no one shall take from them."

Pearson on the Apocalypse gives an interpretation of the passage to the same effect. Gill also observes that the morning star signifies the dawning of the latter day of glory; Burgh, that it indicates a participation in the second advent kingdom; and Dr. Henry More, p. 745, that it means a considerable dawning towards that greater day of the illustrious reign of Christ upon earth, in his saints by his Spirit.

Mayer on the Apocalypse, p. 279;—

"For the morning star it fitly answereth to their not knowing the depth of Satan as they call it, for which it is likely they were counted shallow and weak of understanding, in that they could not see into such a profound point of the liberty of Idolatrytes, &c. For though they were in this regard for a time contemned as void of that light which was in others of Jezebel's sect, yet they should have a far brighter light bestowed upon them, namely, the morning star as a token of the true light wherein they then were, when as the other indeed had more on light than could come from Satan's dark dungeon."

Thus we see the suitability of the reward; those who

were in charity, faith, and good works, would be enabled to discover the evils and fallacies within themselves, to contend with them out of the Word of God, and to subdue them; which they who are in faith alone do not; for the one class is cast into a bed of security, the other into great tribulations, wars, and tumults of mind, nor can they succeed in obtaining any genuine and lasting peace, so long as they continue to follow the teaching of Jezebel. Moreover, perseverance in the old path of charity, faith, and good works, is promised to be rewarded with a spiritual discernment of the new light diffused by the morning star.

Pyle; Paraphrase on the Apocalypse, p. 23;—

... “So let every Christian assure himself, that whoever overcomes the temptations, endures the hardships, and avoids the corruptions of the times he lives in, shall be a member of that happy and glorious kingdom which Christ, the true light, the bright and morning star, shall enlighten with all truth, adorn with the fullness of peace, and every instance of virtue and true happiness, after a complete victory obtained over superstition, idolatry, and vice.”

“And thus let the whole Christian world bear testimony, that the Spirit of God has not been wanting to give all careful and early cautions, all proper denunciations and divine threatenings against seducers, corruptors, and arbitrary imposers and persecutors, under the specious names of *guides* and *governors* in the church. As also against all those—whether princes, pastors, or people—who shall at any time neglect to do their best endeavors to withstand these Antichristian powers, and lose the happy opportunity afforded by divine Providence for *reforming* such abuses.”

CHAPTER III.

CONCERNING THOSE IN THE CHRISTIAN WORLD WHO ARE IN DEAD WORSHIP, WHICH IS WORSHIP WITHOUT CHARITY AND FAITH, WHO ARE DESCRIBED BY THE CHURCH IN SARDIS. CONCERNING THOSE WHO ARE IN TRUTHS ORIGINATING IN GOOD FROM THE LORD; WHO ARE DESCRIBED BY THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA. AND CONCERNING THOSE WHO BELIEVE ALTERNATELY, SOMETIMES FROM THEMSELVES AND SOMETIMES FROM THE WORD, AND SO PROFANE THINGS SACRED; WHO ARE DESCRIBED BY THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA. THAT ALL THESE ARE CALLED TO THE NEW CHURCH OF THE LORD.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' chap. iii., ver. 1;—

“ ‘Unto the angel of the church in Sardis write,’ *signifies*, to those and concerning those, who are in dead worship, or in worship which is without goods appertaining to charity, and without truths appertaining to faith; ‘These things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars,’ *signifies*, the Lord from whom proceed all truths, and all knowledges of good and truth.”

For the meaning of *the seven spirits*, see p. 223, where the expression is seen to signify abstractedly and in a supreme sense the divine truth itself, and in a secondary sense, all in heaven who are in that divine truth. That by *stars* are signified abstractedly *heavenly knowledge*, or *divine illumination*, see pp. 269, 389.

As by *seven* is meant *all*, so by *seven stars* is meant in a primary sense *all divine knowledge*, and secondarily, as recipient of knowledge, the universal church in heaven; from which descends the new church or New Jerusalem, as will be further seen in the sequel.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' ver. 1 ;—

“‘I know thy works,’ *signifies*, that the Lord sees all their interiors and exteriors at once : that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead,’ *signifies*, ‘that it may seem and be believed by themselves and others that they are spiritually alive, when, nevertheless, they are spiritually dead.’”

In chap. i. the seven stars are mentioned in conjunction with the seven candlesticks. The seven candlesticks are the seven churches upon earth, which are not the light but only recipients of the light. The light itself is the seven stars which, in the supreme sense, is the light proceeding from the Lord ; in a derivative sense, the universal church in heaven, as receiving that light. In the present case, the candlestick had withdrawn itself from this heavenly light, and consequently stood empty. Somewhat similarly, Alcasar observes ;—

“The office of a star is to be, as it were, a light always living and shining, and of this kind ought to have been the one whom Christ had delegated to the office of star. He was, however, now become extinct, and had remained as a dead star which emitted no light, whether of excellent example or doctrine.”

Cornelius a Lapide, p. 55 ;—

“I know thy works both good and evil ; I know thy morals ; I know thy state, that thou seemest to live and to do many good works ; when in reality thou art dead ; and thy works are also dead, not living. See here how the judgment of God differs from the judgment of men.”

“Observe, thou art dead, *i. e.*, thou hast fallen from the life of grace by sin. For, as observes St. Augustin, and from him also Isidore, lib. i., on the chief good, “The life of the body is the soul ; the life of the soul is God ; and as the body is dead without the soul, so the soul is dead without God.”

Gagnæus ; Biblia Maxima de la Haye, p. 742 ;—

“Thou hast a name that thou livest, *i. e.*, thou art considered to be alive by reason of the faith of which thou makest profession ; and thou art dead because thou doest not works

corresponding to faith, and faith without works is in itself dead," &c.

We may likewise add, that as faith without works is dead, so faith without charity is dead.

"The name of anything," says Daubuz, p. 138, "signifies its state or quality, whether acting or suffering." Therefore, by Sardis having a name to live, signifies that the state or quality of this church was regarded as that of a living not of a dead church.

Pyle ; Paraphrase on the Apocalypse, p. 25 ;—

"Tell the clergy and people of Sardis, then, from me, who send forth all those ministering spirits that minister to them who are heirs of salvation, who am the dispenser of all divine gifts and blessings to the church of God, that though their church makes a great figure, and carries a mighty name in the world for numbers, and show, and ceremonies, for zeal in many external forms and modes of worship, and for high pretences to knowledge, power, and præminence ; yet all this is not to live in the purity of Christianity, but to be really dead to all the true virtue and power of it."

Gauntlett on the Apocalypse, p. 40 ;—

"The state of this church was far from such as Christ could approve. They had a name to live, but they were dead.* Notwithstanding their Christian profession, they were 'alienated from the life of God, and were dead in trespasses and sins,' they professed the truth and had the ordinances and forms of religion, they had been baptized, they met together for public worship, and partook of the Lord's supper, but they were not spiritually regenerate. They might consider themselves so, and imagine that they were vitally united to Christ as living branches in the living and true vine, but he who had 'the seven spirits of God,' knew that in general they were not so. He saw many of them 'dead in trespasses and sins,' and others of them in a dull, and torpid, and lifeless state. The church in general was more like a dead corpse than a compact symmetry of living members of the mystical body of Christ. Hence our Lord admonishes

* See the state of this church as appropriately described in Matthew Henry.

them to awake from their supineness, to be vigilant against their enemies, to look to Him who had ‘the seven spirits,’ that they might obtain strength and vigor to the remains of those good things which still existed, though in some of them like dying embers. In this manner the lamp which was ready to expire, might be trimmed again and burn bright. It is observable that the fault of the church of Sardis was not heresy or corruption of doctrine, but spiritual death in some of its members, and negligence and supineness in others.”*

Woodhouse on the Apocalypse, p. 81 ;—

“The fault of Sardis was not heresy or corruption of doctrine, it was negligence and supineness.”. . .

Dr. Henry More also observes, p. 744 ;—

“Here is nothing of Jezebel in this church, nor any mention of the eating of things offered to idols, nor in the two following epistles, &c.” So likewise Gill.

Thus the fault of the church in Sardis was that of apathy, torpidity, supineness, indifference, insensibility to spiritual truth ; hence an ignorance of it ; and hence a state of spiritual death.

On these words Woodhouse observes, p. 79 ;—

“In the same figurative language, our Lord commanded his disciples to ‘let the dead bury their dead.’ The word *νεκρος*, a dead body, is used in its metaphorical sense ; ‘dead,’ as St. Paul expresses it, ‘in trespasses and sins ; alienated from the life of God.’ The same metaphor† occurs frequently in Scripture. A person living in the defilements of the world, in whom the spiritual life of Christ hath little or no vigor, is said to be ‘dead while he liveth ;’ as, on the contrary, of him who meets death in the discharge of his Christian duty it is pronounced, that ‘he liveth though he die.’ ‘The use of this metaphor has been so common with the Jews, that, as Maimonides informs us, they proverbially say, *Impii etiam viventes vocantur mortui*. The wicked are dead even while they are alive ; for he, saith Philo, who lives a life of sin, *τεθνηκη του ευδαιμονα*, is dead as to a life of happiness : his soul is dead and even buried in his

* See the Works of John Wesley, ser. 134, vol. 7.

† Not a metaphor, but a correspondence.

lusts and passions. And because the whole Gentile world lay more especially under these unhappy circumstances, whence the apostle styles them sinners of the Gentiles, it was proverbially said by the Jewish doctors, *Populi terrarum, i. e., Ethnici, non vivunt*, 'The heathens do not live.' An attention to this use of the words, death, die, dead, &c., in the figurative language of Scripture, will tend to illustrate many passages otherwise obscure. Such are Matthew xxii., 32; iv., 6; Luke i., 79; Rom. vi., 2; viii., 6; 2 Cor. i., 9, 10; iii., 6; 1 Pet. iv., 6. So likewise in the sequel of this prophetic book, where it is reasonable to expect that such words will be used in this their acknowledged metaphorical sense, as in this expression of our Lord to the church of Sardis, which serves as a clue to the rest. For the whole is his prophecy or revelation, given to him and delivered by him. We find also that the early writers of the church, who succeeded the apostles, applied these words in the same figurative meaning. In this acceptation, Ignatius uses the word death. In the persecution of the Christians, under M. Aurelius, some had denied the faith; these are styled *νεκρα*, dead: but being afterwards enabled to profess their belief in Jesus, even in the face of torture and of death, they are then said to be restored to life. The passage is expressive, and may be seen at length in Euseb. Hist. Eccles., lib. v., cap. i. Tertullian has frequently used the words death and die in this figurative sense; 'Mortuus es qui non es Christianus. Apostoli de mortuis vivos faciebant, hæretici de vivis mortuos faciunt.'"

Cornelius a Lapide, *Apocalypse*, p. 55;—

"Many there are who externally appear to be kind, affable, eminent, because they pay great attention to the *external worship* of the church, the ornaments of the altar, the splendor of the architecture, large eleemosynary donations, &c.; but their own internal state, such as their vices, their ignorance, their hazards of salvation, they pay no attention to; although this is the principal office of a bishop."

Dr. Samuel Clarke, *Sermon 68*; vol. i.;—

"The primary and proper object of a Christian and good zeal is the promoting the practice of virtue and righteousness. But because right practice can hardly be built, at least can

never be built with any certainty and steadiness, but upon the foundation of *truth*; therefore the object of zeal first in the order of nature, is the knowledge of truth. And zeal for searching after and discovering of truth can never possibly be excessive. ‘The price of wisdom (Job. xxviii., 18) is above rubies; the topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.’ ‘Buy the truth,’ saith Solomon, ‘and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding,’ Prov. xxiii., 23. The like phrase is used by our Saviour in the words immediately following my text, ‘I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that is, to enquire diligently after the uncorrupted doctrines of the gospel, (which will bear the trial of the most impartial examination;) ‘and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see;’ that is, lay aside blind prejudices and corrupt affections, which hinder men from discerning the truth; and search the Scriptures with an unbiassed understanding, that in them you may find the words of eternal life. This zeal, therefore, zeal for enquiring and searching after the truth, zeal to know perfectly the will of God, can never possible be faulty in excess. All faultiness upon this head, is only and always on the *defective* side; a want of zeal, a coldness and lukewarmness, a careless and indifferency in men, whether the things they profess to believe, be *true* or *not*. They receive things ignorantly and negligently at all adventures; they take their religion upon trust, upon the authority of common repute; without being at all solicitous to *understand* it, or to *know* whereof they affirm. As if it was nothing more than the custom of the country, or the fashion of the place they live in.”

Dr. Samuel Clarke, moreover, observes in his Sermons, vol. i., p. 255; —

. . . “Truth, in matters of religion, is always of the greatest importance, as being the foundation and the support of right practice. Men upon erroneous principles may do what is right by chance; or the general probity of their temper may overrule the ill influence of mistaken principles: but there can be no certain, there can be no steady rule of good practice, without a foundation of truth. All error is founded in imagination

only, it is a shadow without a substance, it is generally nothing else but a careless following of other men's opinions, or pretended opinions; a lazy and formal adherence to the customs of the age men live in, or the notions which happen to prevail, like other fashions, in particular places, and among certain sects or parties of men. Principles of which kind can be no better a foundation of practice than mere chance; and religion built upon such a quicksand, is, in the several nations of the earth, nothing at all more than the custom or fashion of the country. Religion acceptable to God, who judges the heart, must be in the mind of every particular person a love of *truth* and *right*: a love of that truth and right, not which is esteemed such upon mere vulgar and customary acceptance, but which the mind itself perceives and feels, and upon examination finds to be so in reality."

The principal causes of opposition to the truth, says Dr. Clarke, are ignorance, carelessness, prejudice, and vice; meaning here by ignorance, not a bare want of knowledge. Thus p. 257;—

"There is a *presumptuous* ignorance which despises knowledge; and this makes men oppose the truth before they understand anything of it. 'Seest thou a man that despiseth instruction? there is more hope of a fool than of him.'"*

* In Bishop Watson's edition of Taylor's Scheme of Scripture Divinity, occurs the following remark; p. 178, vol. i.:—

"The full knowledge of Christ most people presume they have attained long ago, and to talk of knowing more of Christ or in a clearer and more rational way, is perfectly shocking to them. They have somewhere or other fixed the precise standard of divine knowledge, and either more or less than that standard of theirs is impious and heretical. How then can they grow in the knowledge of Christ? How can they set themselves to understand the Scriptures, who in another way, as they think, have already gained the whole sum and body of spiritual understanding? See Rom. xv. 4. 'Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, for our instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.' We have hope through that patience and comfort which is taught in the Scriptures; but the grounds and reasons of that patience and comfort must be understood, otherwise we cannot establish in our minds a sure and solid hope. Hence it is that the Christian hope, that faith, and hope which overcome the world, is so great a rarity; therefore so few rejoice in hope, because so few understand the Scriptures, which are the ground of the Christian hope. Lastly, because the Scrip-

“Another cause of men’s opposing the truth is *carelessness*. They blindly, and without any consideration, follow the customs of the place where they happen to live; and the knowledge of truth, seems to them of no great importance. They take up their religion at adventures, not from the consideration of the laws of nature or of revelation, but merely from the company they chance to be educated amongst; and thus all religions are put on an equal foot, varying according to the accidental tempers of the persons among whom they prevail. Men of this disposition, careless of finding out the truth, and consequently having indeed no religion at all, but barely the name and profession of it; generally prefer any degree of ignorance before the carefullest study either of the nature of things or of the laws of God.” . . .

“A further cause of men’s opposing the truth is prejudice. They are not perhaps naturally ignorant; nor yet of so lazy and careless a temper, as to oppose the truth merely to avoid the trouble of studying it. But their prejudices are so strong that the clearest light cannot overcome and dissipate so thick a cloud. They have accustomed themselves to build their belief entirely in an implicit reliance upon other men, instead of building it upon the evidence of things themselves, which is the foundation of truth.” . . .

“But the last and greatest reason of men’s setting themselves in opposition to the truth, is the wickedness and corruption of their manners, the love of unrighteousness and debauchery, the desire of power and dominion, the concern they are under for the defence and support of a sect or party, without having any knowledge how far they are or are not in the right. These are things which make men to shut their eyes against the light, to love and choose darkness rather than light, and wilfully to stop their ears against all the means of being better informed.” . . .

In his treatise on the Causes of the Present Corruption of Christians, Ostervald says, p. 193;—

“A man who will neither eat nor drink, must needs die in
tures are but little understood, therefore they are so little valued. We delight not in them, because we know so little of them.”

a little time. And so the spiritual life will soon be extinct, if the only means which can support it are not used."

"Let us now see, whether these cares and means which I have shewn to be necessary, are made use of. It is so visible, that they are almost totally neglected, that I need not be very large upon the proof of it."

"Men take little care of being instructed and of getting information and knowledge about religion. The far greater part either cannot read, or never apply themselves to any useful instructive reading. Few hearken to the instructions that are given them, and fewer yet examine or reflect upon them. Carnal lusts and secular business, do so engross them, that they seldom or never give themselves to searching the truth. They generally have an aversion to spiritual things. Hence it is, that in matters of religion, they will rather believe implicitly what is told them, than be at the pains of enquiring whether it is true or not. And they are every whit as careless about exercises of devotion. Many would think it a punishment if they were made to read or to meditate. They never do those things, but with reluctancy, and as seldom as they can. They go about prayer especially with a strange indifference, and a criminal indevotion. In short, very few take the necessary care to preserve themselves from vice, and to behave themselves with regularity and caution; very few seek the opportunities of doing good, and avoiding the temptations to which the common condition of men, or their own particular circumstances, expose them: and the greatest number are slaves to their bodies, and wholly taken up with earthly things. One of the most sensible and fatal effects of this negligence, is that those persons use no manner of endeavors to know themselves. It is very seldom, if ever, that they reflect upon what passes within them; upon their thoughts, their inclinations, the motions of their hearts, and the principles they act upon; or that they take a review of their words and actions. They do not consider whether they have within them the characters of good men, or of wicked and hypocritical persons. In a word, almost all of them live without reflection."

"Men's carelessness about religion is therefore extremely great. But they proceed otherwise in the things of the world,

about which they are as active and laborious as they are lazy and cold in reference to true piety. They will do every thing for their bodies, and nothing for their souls. They spare no industry or diligence, they omit nothing to promote their temporal concerns. If we were to judge by their conduct, we should think that the supreme good is to be found in earthly advantages, and that salvation is the least important of all things."

"I need not say what effects such a negligence must produce. The greater part of Christians being ignorant in their duty, having no knowledge of themselves, declining the use of those means which God has appointed, and without which he declares that no man can be saved; and wearing out their lives in this ignorance and sloth, it is not to be imagined, that they can have any religion or piety; and so there must be a general corruption amongst them. I say, it must be so; unless God should work miracles, or rather change the nature of man, and invert the order and the laws which he has established."

"But because it might be said that Christians do not live like atheists, and that their negligence is not so great as I represent it; let us consider a little, what sort of care they bestow upon the concerns of their souls. Certainly there are some persons who are not guilty of this negligence; but excepting these, what is it which the rest of mankind do, in order to their salvation? Very little or nothing. They pray, they assist sometimes at divine service, and at the public exercises of religion; they hear sermons, they receive the sacrament, and they perform some other duties of this nature. This is all which the religion of the greatest part amounts to. But first these are not the only duties which ought to be practised; there are others which are not less essential, and which yet are generally neglected; such as meditation, reading, self-examination, to say nothing here of the duties of sanctification. So that if some acts of religion are performed, others are quite omitted. The reason of this proceeding may easily be discovered. There is a law and a custom, which oblige all persons to some acts of religion; to pray, to receive the sacrament, and to go now and then to church: if a man should entirely neglect these external duties, he would be thought an atheist:

but there is neither custom, nor law, nor worldly decency, which obliges a man to meditate, to examine his own conscience, or to watch over his conduct, and therefore these duties being left to every one's direction, are very little observed."

"As to the other duties which Christians perform in some measure, the want of sincerity in them, does most commonly turn them into so many acts of hypoerisy. They perhaps say some prayers in the morning; but this is done without devotion, hastily, with distraction, and weariness, and only to get rid of it; after, they think no more of God all the day, but are altogether busied about the world and their passions; and in the evening they pray with greater wandering of thoughts than in the morning. If it so fall out that they go to church, or hear a sermon, they do not give a quarter of an hour's close attention to anything that is said or done in the public assemblies. In many places the whole devotion of the people consists in being present at some sermons, which are as little instructive as they are minded or hearkened to. The use which is made of the sacraments, especially of the eucharist, converts them into vain ceremonies, and makes them rather obstacles, than helps to salvation. As to the mortifying of the body by reasonable abstinence, fasting and retirement, it is an unknown duty. The indifference of Christians is therefore but too palpable. What they do upon the account of religion is very little; and yet they do that little so ill, that it is not much more beneficial to them, than if they did nothing at all."

Again, *ibid.*, p. 280;—

"Matters of faith should not be subjected to the tyranny of custom. Religion does not depend upon men's fancies and opinions: the truths of it are eternal truths, it is founded upon an immutable principle, and it is not more liable to change than God who is the author of it. And yet we see but too frequently, that in religion, as well as in worldly affairs, example is more prevalent than either reason, justice, or truth. Men do scarce ever examine things in their own nature, but custom is the rule of their faith and sentiments: by this rule they determine what is true or false, what they are to believe or to reject. And this prejudice is so strong, and men have carried it so far, that multitude and custom are looked upon as a proof and cha-

raeter whereby Christians are to distinguish truth from error, and to judge what side they are to choose in matters of religion.”

“What is the reason why so many people do not perceive that certain doctrines are palpable errors and monstrous tenets? We wonder how it is possible, in so learned and refined an age as this is, that the grossest fables and extravagances should still go down with men of parts, for divine truths and adorable mysteries. A time will come, when posterity will hardly believe that ever such opinions were received, or that ever men did in earnest dispute for or against such or such a tenet. It is only the prejudice of example and multitude which do blind men at this day: they have been nursed up and educated in those persuasions, they see them obtaining among numerous societies, and that is the occasion of their obstinacy in error.”

“Nothing but this inclination of men to follow custom, keeps up in the church those disputes which rend it into so many different sects. The principle and design of most disputes is no other but that men will maintain, at any rate, the sentiments of their party; and by this means, those who are in error, instead of being undeceived, are more and more confirmed in it. Every body swallows without chewing all that is professed in the society or communion in which he lives, and condemns without examination the opinions which are maintained by small numbers, or by persons of another country or society. Those who are prepossessed do not so much as make it a question, whether they may not be mistaken, and whether the truth may not be on the other side. It is to no purpose to allege to such people the most invincible reasons, to press them with express declarations of Scriptures, or with unanswerable objections; for either they do not attend to all this, or if they examine those reasons and objections, it is with a mind full of prejudices, and resolved beforehand to think them frivolous, and not to alter their sentiments. They satisfy themselves with some sorry argument, or wretched answer. If any scruples and difficulties remain, they shake them off in a trice, and set their conscience at rest with this consideration,—that they follow the common opinion; they make no doubt but that they are safe as long as they side with the greater number. Besides, the advantages of the world, which may be obtained by adhering

to the general opinion, would fully determine them, if they were not determined before; and they easily persuade themselves that their spiritual welfare and the truth are to be found in that party, which agrees best with their temporal interest."

Archbishop Tillotson has made various remarks to the same effect; observing, (Sermon 206;)—

"There was hardly ever any age, wherein the forms of religion did more abound, and there were greater variety in them; and it is to be feared that there was never less of the power and efficacy of it."*

Howe on Regeneration, Sermon 38, speaking of the belief that Jesus is the Christ;—

"This believing that Jesus is Christ must carry with it an understanding and a judicious assent of the truth of the affirmation, that so he is; that he is indeed the Christ. An understanding and judicious assent: it cannot be less. Faith concerning this so important a thing is not the act of a fool, it must be an act suitable to an intelligent, apprehensive mind; and therefore if this be not assented to with the understanding and judgment, it is as if it were not assented to at all. To assent to this, understandingly and with judgment, is to apprehend some valid and sufficient ground upon which it is to be assented to. I pray consider this well; ungrounded faith is no

* See also the Second Charge to his Clergy, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 1762; Wesley's Sermons, vol vii., p. 434. A similar observation is also made by Scott in his Annotations on the Church in Sardis. The remarks of Durham upon this subject are also instructive.

Speaking of the state of theology in his day, Ostervald, who died A.D. 1747, and whose work on the corruptions of Christianity, is recommended both by Bishop Burnett and Bishop Watson, observes, p. 143;—

"For what may we not say of the present state of Christianity? There is in many places an ignorant and superstitious clergy and people; whose whole religion consists in ceremonies, and in devotions, which are merely external, and often ridiculous; above all, there appears in those places a deluge of immorality. Is it then to be wondered at, that quietism and fanaticism should rear up their heads in such places? These gross abuses do not indeed prevail every where; but generally speaking, there is but little of true piety among Christians, there is scarce any order or discipline left amongst them; men live as they please; the sacraments are profaned; the precepts of the Gospel are trampled under foot; charity and honesty are almost entirely banished. No man sets about the redressing of these disorders; churchmen make it their capital business, to maintain their disputes and their tenets, and they apply themselves but faintly to the reforming of manners."

faith : if there be never so clear and demonstrative ground upon which this truth is in itself founded—that Jesus is the Christ, if it be not at all apprehended by me, if I believe this at random, if men will call that believing when I believe and I cannot tell why and I care not why, I believe as a matter of common hearsay or of uncertain report, I take it up from the people amongst whom I live. Such an ungrounded faith as this is a nullity—a perfect nullity,—it goes for nothing ; it is not believing, it is but a hovering, fluttering opinionation,—a vague opinion only I met with by chance,—a thing that falls in my way ; my religion, as I am a Christian, is to me a casualty. I am a Christian, but upon the same terms upon which they who live in the same country are Mahometans, and of the Jews where they are of the Jewish faith, or infidelity rather. And this is all that the most have to say for their being Christians : that religion which was the religion of my forefathers, which is the religion of the country where I live, which is the religion established by law, which is the religion that most suits my external conveniences to profess. I could not commodiously (it may be, not safely) live in the country where I live, save on this profession, and not continuing this profession. That which is the ground of the belief of the most that go under the name of Christians, is but just the same, *mutatis mutandis*, that is the ground of their faith and religion who inhabit the pagan world, in all the most dark and dismal quarters of it ; they take their faith the same way. The Mahometans, though less gross pagans, take up their faith the same way. And so have the Jews done their faith the same way ever since Judaism came to be opposed to Christianity : therefore there must be some great flaw in this matter.”

Dr. John Edwards ;* Free Discourse of Truth and Error, p. 441 ;—

“ My Lord Verulam hath well observed, that there is in the common way of delivering of sciences a kind of contract of error between the deliverer and the receiver ; for the former labors to dictate those things which may be most easily believed, and the latter is greedy of present satisfaction, and so makes

* Formerly Master of Clare Hall, Cambridge.

not a sober and industrious enquiry into the things which are delivered. Hence proceed error and mistake. You cannot but take notice that it is the fashion to receive some doctrines of course, and it is reckoned want of manners to suspect them. Opinions are handed from one to another, and one writer follows another, as Theophylact follows Chrysostom. It is thought too bold and daring an attempt to offer anything against them: you must take them on trust, and believe them with an implicit faith. How is it possible that some men should come at truth, when they pursue it so coldly and faintly? How do some persons content themselves with *empty forms* of knowledge, without any power and life of truth in them? To these I may apply the observation of that noble person before named, that sciences, when they are peremptorily reduced into a nice and precise model, receive afterwards small or no augmentation. This is more especially true in divinity, where, when points are brought to a nice form, there is no likelihood of a proficiency in truth. This cramps all knowledge, and causes a wonderful decay in divine learning. When a *ne plus ultra* is engraven on the Pillar of Truth, as on those of Hercules, there must needs be a stop to the finding out and discovering of many excellent notions. How faulty is the Christian world as to this particular! Men study to be *formal* in their knowledge, and to bound their apprehensions: they stiffly fix upon this or that hypothesis, and then bring all phenomena to be solved by it; and they must be solved by that alone, whatever comes on it. They would have such a scheme as they have taken up to be acknowledged without scruple, and to be as undeniable as first principles. To enquire further, and much more to determine otherwise, is voted as a rash thing. And when you are proceeding in your enquiries, they endeavor to retard and discourage you: they fright you by crying out, 'there is a lion in the way;' there are insuperable difficulties to be encountered with. Hereupon, men generally desist, and lay aside their pursuits; and thus, by their own *carelessness and sloth*, and I may add, willingness to be cheated out of the truth, they are really and indeed so."

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' ver. 2, 3, 4;—

“ ‘Be watchful,’ *signifies*, to be in truths, and in a life

conformable thereto: ‘confirm the things which remain which are ready to die,’ *signifies*, that the things appertaining to their worship may receive life: ‘for I have not found thy works full before God,’ *signifies*, that the interiors of their worship are not in conjunction with the Lord. ‘Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard,’ *signifies*, that they should consider that all worship at first is natural, and afterwards by means of truths becomes spiritual, besides other things that are hereby signified: ‘and observe and repent,’ *signifies*, that they should attend to these things and vivify their dead worship: ‘if therefore thou shalt not watch,’ *signifies*, as above: ‘I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee,’ *signifies*, that the things which are of worship shall be taken from them, and that they shall not know when and how this is done.”

Lauretus, *Sylva Sylvarum*, article *Vigilare*;—

“Sometimes to watch is to study; and they watch in the morning for wisdom, who with an ever renewed application of mind exercise themselves in attaining to the vision of Christ, Prov. viii. (Bede.) The heart of one reposing is watchful, when he does not employ his hours in encouraging sloth, but in perceiving wisdom, Cant. v., 2. (Augustin, Gregory.) He also watches who exercises good works, and is solicitous concerning the truth of faith, lest he should fall into opinions which involve him in darkness, &c., &c.” (Origen, Arnobius, Ambrose.)

Bede, *Exposition of St. Mark*, chap. xiii., p. 209;—

“Now he is watchful who keeps *the eyes of his mind open to behold the true light*. He is watchful who by working retains what he believes. He is watchful who drives away from himself the darkness arising from torpidity and negligence.”

Aquinas, *Catena Aurea*, Matt. xxiv., 42, p. 836;—

“(Chrysostom.) He would have them ever ready, and therefore he says, Watch. (Gregory.) To watch is to keep the *eyes open, and looking out for the true light*, to do and to observe that which one believes, to cast away the darkness of sloth and

negligence. (Origen.) Those of more plain understanding say that he spoke this of his second coming; but others would say that it applies to an intellectual coming of the Word, into the understanding of the disciples, for as yet he was not in their understanding as he was to be."*

Gill on the Apocalypse, p. 707;—

"Be watchful—or be awake; which shews that both ministers and churches are asleep, or much inclined to it; which is the present case of both in this period of time." . . .

'I have not found thy works perfect or rather full before God.'

Cornelius a Lapide; Apocalypse, p. 58;—

"Ambrose says that the works were not *full*, but empty, because they were not filled with charity; Haymo, that the works although good in themselves were not *full*, because not performed from a good intention, but, as Joachim says, from an appetite for empty praise and glory."†

Pererius upon the Apocalypse, p. 807;—

"What is it for the works of a man not to be *full*? Victorinus and Primasius interpret the passage to mean that the persons here alluded to are like a tree, full of leaves and blossoms, but bringing forth no fruit;‡ for such is a fair profession of the Christian religion and discipline, but which is barren of good works."

Poole's Synopsis, Apocalypse, p. 1707;—

"*Full*, or perfect, complete, implete; *i. e.*, works not sincere (Pareus, Durham); proceeding from a sincere mind and a just zeal (Piscator); but feigned and *empty* (Cluverus); void of spirit and of charity" (Tirinus).

Bossuet on the Apocalypse, p. 87;—

"I have not found thy works *full*: not that the works were bad, but that they were not full, they did not form good in its entirety, and this was enough to cause it to die."

* See the Rev. I. Williams on the Passion, p. 26, who adopts both senses.

† See the comment of Viegas, who illustrates the passage by a reference to Gen. i., where the earth is called void; and Gen. xli. Also Richard of St. Victor.

‡ Or rather bringing forth fruit which has a fair outside, but is hollow inside.

Matthew Henry, and Comment of the Religious Tract Society, p. 572;—

“I have not found thy works perfect before God, not filled up; there is something wanting in them: there is the shell, but not the kernel; there is the carcass, but not the soul; the shadow, but not the substance. The inward thing is wanting, thy works are hollow and empty; prayers are not filled up with holy desires, alms-deeds not filled up with true charity, Sabbaths not filled up with suitable devotion of soul to God; there are not inward affections suitable to outward acts and expressions; when the spirit is wanting, the form cannot long subsist.”

We read of Zacharias, Elizabeth, Stephen, Paul, Barnabas, Peter, &c., being full of the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of Truth; of the church being ‘filled with all the fullness of Christ;’ of the saints being ‘filled with the fullness of God;’ of ‘the wisehearted, whom God had filled with the spirit of wisdom;’ of ‘Bezaleel as filled with the spirit of God in wisdom and in understanding, and in knowledge;’ lastly, of the church and the saints being filled with the fullness of Christ; on which, says Cornelius a Lapide, Theophylact and others observe, it is as if the apostle should say, ‘That ye may be full of all wisdom, virtue, and perfection, particularly charity, of which God himself is full; or that ye may be filled with the knowledge and love of God, and with the fullness of all divine goods.’ Eph. iii., 19.

Of this knowledge of God the church in Sardis was destitute, by reason of its torpid indifference to spiritual truth; and therefore as we shall afterwards find, they were ignorant of the time of the coming of the Lord; for our Lord says in the sequel, ‘Thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.’

Moreover by the words, ‘remember how thou hast received and heard,’ is signified, as Swedenborg observes, “that they should recollect that all worship in its com-

mencement is natural, and afterwards by means of truths out of the Word, and a life conformable to them, becomes spiritual; besides other things that are hereby signified." These other things are mentioned in article 161; as, that "every one may know from the Word, from doctrine out of the Word, and from preachings, that truths ought to be learned, and that by means of truths man hath faith, charity, and all things appertaining to the church. . . That all worship in its beginning is natural, and afterwards by means of truths from the Word, and a life conformable to them, becomes spiritual, is well known; for man is born natural, but he is educated that he may become civil and moral, and afterwards spiritual, for thus he is born again."

'Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard.'

Cornelius a Lapide, *Apocalypse*, p. 58;—

"How thou hast received, that is, been initiated and instructed. For the Hebrew word, *lecac*, that is *reception*, signifies teaching received from a preceptor. For 'after what manner,' *qualiter*, the Greek word is *πως*, *i. e.*, how, *quomodo*. But *πως* is put for *ποια*, that is, *qualia*, what kind of things."

Professor Stuart on the *Apocalypse*, vol. ii., p. 87;—

"*Ειληφας* (from *λαμβάνω*) is sometimes employed for receiving in the way of a learner, *e. g.*, *Diod. Sic. ii., 29*; and in *1 Cor. ii., 23*; *xv., 3*. Allegorically the same meaning is given to *παραλαμβάνω*. So *lacac* in Hebrew; also *lecac*, doctrine, knowledge,—*ληψις* as it were. So the converse of *λαμβάνω*, *i. e.*, *διδωμι*, often means to impart instruction. *Ηκβσας* refers to the oral instruction which had been imparted and which they had heard."

Ribera, on the *Apocalypse*, p. 53;—

"Remember how thou hast been instructed, and what kind of life they taught thee to live who baptized thee." . . . So also Menochius.

Richard of St. Victor, *Apocalypse*, p. 216;—

. . . "Bear in mind after what manner thou hast received

from God by the infusion of spiritual grace, and hast heard from man by the preaching of the Gospel.” . . .

Eichorn ; Apocalypse, vol. i., p. 126 ;—

“Remember how thou hast been taught, *i. e.*, what precepts and duties were enjoined upon thee, and express them in thy life ; from which it will then appear that thou hast returned to a state in which better fruits are brought forth.”

Durham says that the Sardians are here put upon self-examination, to see whether their spiritual state answers to their original engagements and resolutions, and whether there be not reason to repent of their declinings. (See the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. v., ver. 11, &c., and the different comments upon it.)

Jones, Lectures on the Apocalypse, p. 97 ;—

. . . “The first step was to call to remembrance how they had received and heard : that is, to retrace in their recollection the circumstances attending their first hearing and reception of the Gospel ; how it found them dead in trespasses and sins ; addressed them as with the voice of thunder saying, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” . .

‘I will come upon thee as a thief.’ Aquinas, Catena Aurea, Matthew xxiv., 44, p. 836 ;—

“(Origen.) The master of the household is the understanding, the house is the soul, the thief is the devil. The thief is also every contrary doctrine which enters the soul of the unwary by other than the natural entrance ; breaking into the house, and pulling down the soul’s natural fences, that is, the natural powers of understanding, it enters the breach, and spoils the soul. Sometimes one takes the thief in the act of breaking in, and seizing him, stabs him with a word, and slays him. And the thief comes not in the day time, when the soul of the thoughtful man is illuminated with the sun of righteousness, but in the night, that is, in the time of prevailing wickedness ; in which, when one is plunged, it is possible, though he may not have the power of the sun, that he may be illuminated by some rays from the Word as from a lamp ; con-

tinuing still in evil, yet having a better purpose, and watchfulness that this his purpose should not be broken through. Or in time of temptation, or of any calamities, which is the time when the thief is most found to come, seeking to break through the house of the soul." See also Chrysostom on this passage.

Rabanus Maurus, *Allegory*;—

"A thief is any occult enemy. . . By thieves are meant wicked spirits; as in the Gospel, where it is said, 'where thieves break through and steal.'"

Upon this subject Swedenborg observes in the *Apocalypse Revealed*, art. 164;—

. . . "It is attributed to the Lord that he will come like a thief, but in the spiritual sense it is understood that hell will take it away and steal it. The case herein is the same as when it is said in the Word, that God doeth evil to man, destroys him, revenges, is wroth, leadeth into temptation; when nevertheless it is hell that doeth these things; for it is so expressed in consequence of what seems to man to be the case."

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' ver. 4, 5, 6;—

"'Thou hast a few names even in Sardis,' *signifies*, that among them there are also some who have life in their worship: 'which have not defiled their garments,' *signifies*, who are in truths and have not defiled worship by evils of life and falses thence derived: 'And they shall walk with me in white,' *signifies*, that they shall live with the Lord, because they are in truths from Him: 'He that overcometh shall be clothed in white raiment,' *signifies*, that he who is reformed becomes spiritual: 'And I will not blot out his name in the book of life,' *signifies*, that he shall be saved: 'And I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels,' *signifies*, that they will be received who are in divine good and in divine truths from the Lord. 'He that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches,' *signifies* here as before."

Anselm on the Apocalypse, p. 477 ;—

“He says *names*, because in like manner, as by names we know the properties of things, so the Lord knows all works and their properties, as if by their names. *In Sardis*, by which are meant those who are truly in Sardis, because those begin to be beauteous who had not defiled their garments, &c.”

Aretas also considers *name* to signify nature and property.

Wemyss, Key to the Symbolical Language of Scripture ; art. *Name* ;—

“The name of person or thing according to the Hebrew style frequently imports the quality or state thereof. . . A new name signifies a new quality or state, a change of the former condition, as in Isaiah lxii., 2. Hence the custom of changing names upon any remarkable change of condition.”

Taylor also observes under the article *Name* in Calmet’s Dictionary, that, ‘as converts among the Jews were supposed to undergo such an entire change as amounted to death, they might on returning to life be known under another name, (the *new name*, Rev. ii., 27 ; iii., 12,) importing an entire regeneration and newness of life.’

‘He that overcometh the same shall be clothed with white raiment.’ For the meaning of this symbol, see above, p. 261. We here further add from Lauretus, *Sylva Sylvarum* ; art. *Vestimentum* ;—

. . . “The golden clothing of the queen-spouse of Christ designates the beauty of the senses of Holy Scripture, and the mysteries of their doctrine, variegated in various languages, but with the gold of wisdom.” (Jerome.)

“The nuptial garment is faith and charity, with which he who is not clothed is sent into outer darkness ; or rather it is charity itself ; because through faith we enter into the nuptials, but without faith, are rejected. . . . The garment of Christ, which is undivided, is the faith, which is not to be rent asunder. The golden garment of the queen is the ornament of faith and charity.” (Ambrose, Origen, Jerome, Gregory.)

“To be clothed with the bysse of Jerusalem, is for the church

to be adorned with the profundity of the senses of the Holy Scripture. (Gregory, Origen, Jerome.) The garments which the heretic, or hypocrite prepares as the clay, (Job. xxvii., 16,) are the testimonies of the Holy Scriptures, which they mix up with their errors. With these garments the just man is clothed, who, full of true faith, makes use of these testimonies for the support of the truth, which every perverse person endeavors to adduce against the truth."

Daubuz observes, under the word *garments*; Habershon's Dictionary;—

"Philo makes the garment the symbol of our reason; in which he does not take the symbol, as the Onecirocritics generally do, by its consequences, but ascends up to the principle; as the mind of man by its free will is the disposer of his fate. Now as reason is given to direct our actions; so as that stands, or is taken away, or disposed by prejudices, are our actions good or bad. Hence, to observe one's garments, is, according to this, to make reason the rule of one's actions, and to become by them good or bad, and by consequence happy or miserable. To keep the garments, Rev. xvi., 15, is to preserve our faith and Christian virtue, pure, whole, and entire, because as garments cover and adorn the body, so do these the mind, 1 Pet. iii., 4."

Dr. Henry More, p. 747;—

"He that hath ears to hear let him hear. . . Reformed Christendom especially, she is so much concerned therein. . . . This I thought fit to add, to stop the preposterous proneness of some toward the Roman Church, from the consideration that all things are not so perfect in the Reformed Churches as might be desired." See Vitringa to the same effect, Scott's Annotations, Gill, Wittsius, &c.

We may close these remarks on the church of Sardis by observing, that although its primary fault was not corruption of doctrine, yet where there is unconcern for *spiritual* truth, the consequences will be shewn by the introduction of the fallacies of the merely natural mind, and hence ultimately by false teaching.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verse 7 ;—

'And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,' *signifies*, to those and concerning those who are in truths originating in good from the Lord: 'These things saith He that is Holy and True,' *signifies*, the Lord with respect to divine truth: 'Who hath the key of David, and openeth and none shutteth, and shutteth and none openeth,' *signifies*, who alone is omnipotent to save."

Richard of St. Victor, Apocalypse ; p. 217 ;—

"These things saith He that is Holy and True. Holy in goodness, True in promise." . . . Similar is the interpretation of Viegas, and Richard of St. Victor.

Andreas, Biblia Magna, p. 506 ;—

. . . "Christ is called Holy and True, as if of himself he were Holiness itself and Truth itself."

Aquinas ; Catena Aurea, John xvii., 19, p. 536 ;—

(Augustin.) . . . "That they also might be sanctified through the truth, *i. e.*, in me ; inasmuch as the Word is truth, in which the Son of Man was sanctified from the time that the Word was made flesh. For then he sanctified himself in himself, *i. e.*, himself as man, in himself as the Word ; the Word and man being one Christ." The same interpretation is given by the Glossa Ordinaria.

The foregoing passage of St. Augustin is likewise introduced by A Lapide in his comments on John xvii., 19, where he explains it to mean, "I, who am the Son of God, sanctify the human nature assumed by me, that through it I might sanctify the apostles."

Also on the title in the Apocalypse *Holy and True*, De Lyra says, "*i. e.*, who is the Holy of Holies, Dan. ix., and the Truth itself," John xiv. ; and Tirinus regards the title Holy as signifying here an absolutely perfect holiness.

Moreover, A Lapide, on Luke i., 35, ('that holy thing which shall be born of Thee,') applies the epithet holy to the *human* nature, to indicate that "Jesus would be

holy with a holiness altogether perfect and connatural, by reason of the hypostatical union (Suarez, p. 3., disp. 18., sec. i.), that is, would be the *Holy of Holies*, that is, the *Most Holy*, nay, in the way of eminence *Holiness itself*; as if he should say, Jesus, who shall be born of thee, shall be the *Most Holy* one, nay, *Holiness itself*." Again;

"Moreover, the *humanity* of Christ is most holy, not only by the eminent habitual grace infused into him, but also by the Deity itself hypostatically united to him; as Suarez, Vasquez, and others teach, p. 3, q. vii. and clvii." See also the comments of A Lapide on Acts ii., 27.

De Lyra also on Acts ii., 27, "neither shalt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," observes that the epithet *holy* applies to the sanctified body of Christ; in virtue of which sanctification the body saw not corruption. Hence St. Bernard also in his fourth homily, on the words *Missus Est*, vol. i., p. 751, observes, that "whatsoever that might be which the Virgin conceived, was without doubt holy, and holy in a peculiar sense (*singulariter*), both by the sanctification of the Spirit, and assumption by the Word."

A similar interpretation is given by Poole in his Annotations on Luke i., 35; where he says, that which was conceived by the Virgin, *i. e.*, the flesh or humanity, was holy by the sanctification effected by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit; in which passage he remarks, that "no reference is made to the *eternal* generation." A similar application of the epithet *holy* may be found in the Catena Aurea of Aquinas, Luke i., 37, in quotations from Athanasius and Gregory Nyssen; and also in the Harmony of Lightfoot. (See the Second Preliminary Discourse on the Incarnation, p. 91 and 111.)

On the words, "anoint the Holy of Holies," in Dan. ix., 24, it is observed by Cornelius a Lapide, p. 1356;—

“Namely, that Christ may be consecrated by the Holy Spirit to be a most holy Priest, King, Prophet, Teacher, Legislator, and Redeemer of the world. The Hebrews, as we shall presently observe, render the passage thus; ‘and that the *Sanctity of Sanctities*, or the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, or the *Sanctuary of Sanctuaries*, be anointed, who is no other than the Messiah who is the sanctified of the sons of David,’ says R. Barnahaman, (see Fimus, Book v., Flagelli, chap. v.) And R. Moses Gerundensis says, ‘The Messiah is called the *Sanctuary of Sanctuaries* because in him, according to the *humanity*, were to reside all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and He himself was to be anointed above every creature with the oil of grace, and divine favor (*beneplaciti*). Hence deservedly is he called in Hebrew *Messias*; in Greek, *Christus*; in Latin, *Unctus*.’ So again the same writer, in Galatin, book iv., chap. xviii. Hence Aquila renders the passage thus: ‘to anoint the *Sanctified of Sanctifiers*,’ the Syriac version, ‘seventy weeks shall rest upon thy people to perfect the vision, and the prophets, and Christ, the *Sanctum Sanctorum*.’ Where the word *Sanctum* is not an adjective but a substantive, *i. e.*, who is the *Sanctum* or the *Saucta Sanctorum*. Whence both Arabic versions render it thus: ‘Christ, who is the *Purity of Purities*, or the *Sanctity of Sanctities*.’”

“Observe. The nature (*ratio*) of sanctity consists in the adequation and conformity of a man’s will and works to that eternal law which is in the mind of God; for he is holy, that is, just and perfect, who conforms his life to this law. Hence holiness is unblemished purity, says St. Dionysius, in chap. xii., on the Divine Name. It is likewise love and conjunction with God; for the more a person recalls his mind from things earthly and impure, and lifts it up to God, the more holy is he. Now Christ, as God, is uncreated, immense, and essential sanctity itself: as man, he is *most holy*, not only by grace infused into his soul; in which respect he far surpasses and transcends all angels and holy men; but also by the grace of the hypotactical union, through which there dwells bodily in the *humanity* of Christ a fulness as well of divinity, as of holiness; which is a wonderful and incomprehensible sanctification, as constituting the fountain of expiation and sanctification from God to the

human race. 'Of his fulness have all we received,' and that which remains is sufficient for washing away the sins of a thousand worlds, and sanctifying an infinite number of souls. Hence from eternity were we predestinated in Christ, to be holy and without spot in the sight of God, Eph. i. The holiness of Christ therefore is the efficient, meritorious, archetypal, and final cause of all the holiness of men. For all our sanctity ought to be conformable to the sanctity of Christ as its exemplar, and to be directed to his glory as its end: so that in all who are redeemed and sanctified by him, he may be honored, praised, and glorified to eternity. Moreover, with this grace of union he was anointed, *i. e.*, sanctified and consecrated at the incarnation; and with the same was he anointed publicly, that is, declared and promulgated to the whole world, in his baptism. Hence we all owe to Christ the highest reverence, gratitude, love, obedience, imitation, and obsequiousness."

Cornelius a Lapide, Commentaries, John x., 35; p. 410;—

... "Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, &c. Christ as *man* the Father hath sanctified by the hypostatical union; for precisely by this the *humanity* of Christ is most highly sanctified; for in that the hypostasis of the Word, which is itself uncreated and infinite sanctity, assumed the humanity and hypostatically conjoined it to itself, he plainly sanctified it, and infused into it the eminent holiness of charity, grace, and all the virtues of the soul. Thus also Hilary; Jesus, says he, is sanctified to be a son, as St. Paul says, 'he was declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness;'. . . Rom. i., 14. So Chrysostom; and Athanasius in his book on the Incarnation of the Word, at the beginning. *Sanctified*, therefore, is the same with *sealed*."*

Aquinas, Catena Aurea, John x., 36, p. 363;—

Augustin. "Sanctified; that is, in begetting gave him holiness, begat him holy."

De Lyra on the expression Dan ix., 24, that the Holy of Holies may be anointed;—

* See what is said upon this subject in chap. iv.

“That is Christ, who in his *humanity* is anointed with the oil of grace above his fellows.”

Poole’s Synopsis, Dan. ix., 24;—

“He teaches that the anointing of the sanctuary under the law, was a mere figure; but that in Christ was the permanent exhibition of the thing itself; and that this perfect and truly spiritual unction was deferred till his advent. (Calvin.) By the word *unction* he alludes to the name *Christ*, Messiah; both of which names signify *anointed*. (Polanus, Helvetius.) But he was anointed, not according to the divine nature, but according to the *flesh*. (Helvetius.) Moreover he was anointed with the spirit and with power. . . Priests, prophets, and kings were anointed. The anointing of Christ was threefold; prophetic, regal, and sacerdotal. (Polanus.) By anointing moreover he here understands the most superabundant conferring of the Holy Spirit and all his gifts. (Gegerus.) Moreover he denotes not, here, the consummate gifts habitual in Christ, but especially that fulness of the Godhead which dwelt in him. (Helvetius.) This anointing was made first at the first moment of the conception (Helvetius), and at the instant of the personal union (Gegerus); when, in the womb of Mary, the Son of God united to himself the human nature which was sanctified and conceived by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit and the supervention of the Most High (Helvetius), . . . or secondly, at baptism, . . . or thirdly, at the resurrection, ascension into heaven, and session at the right hand of God.” . . . (Capon-sachius, &c.)

The same observations are to be found in the Annotations of Poole upon this passage; where the title *Holy of Holies* is applied to the *Humanity*, as typified by the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle.

This we have more particularly enlarged upon, because, in this title “*Holy and True*” as assumed by the Lord in relation to the church of Philadelphia, the application of the title *Holy* to the *Humanity* is omitted altogether by some commentators upon this passage, and is confined to the

divinity, or to the person of the Mediator as distinguished from the humanity; while many regard the title as designating the office, not the person; so that, as we have seen, if the office ceases, in the same respect must the title.

If now, in the present case, the title *Holy and True* be predicated of the *glorified humanity*; if moreover it signifies, as we are told it signifies, essential divinity, and if this title can be predicated of no other nature than that which is divine, then is it declaratory of the doctrine of a divine humanity; and we shall see in the sequel, that this doctrine is no other than that which is contained in the new name which the Lord writes upon the Philadelphian church, on his entry into the New Jerusalem. For that there yet remains to be made to the church upon earth some signal display of the divinity in the humanity, by which the Man Christ shall be more clearly seen to be God, is the opinion of many writers, who conceive that this is the meaning of the Son of Man coming in the glory of the Father;* although others, as we have seen, are in favor rather of the doctrine of the deposition than of the exaltation of the humanity.

* Gilpin, Prebend of Salisbury, in his Exposition of the New Testament, on 1 Cor. xv., 28, thus paraphrases the words, "that God may be all in all;"—

"After this great subjection of everything to Christ, except the Creator himself, hath taken place, then *the Messiah*, depositing his mediatorial office, *shall be united fully with God.*" . . .

And in a note, he says, though with great diffidence;—

"Our Saviour is represented in Scripture, as sitting at the right hand of God and making intercession for us. Till the conclusion of this world, therefore, his mediatorial office continues. Time is nothing with Him with whom a thousand years are but as one day. When this great event, the conclusion of all things, shall take place, then *God and Christ become one.* It is possible that St. Paul may allude to this great event, when he says, Heb. ii., 8; 'We see not yet all things put under Him'"

Now the Divinity and Humanity, God and the Lamb, are already perfectly united, as we shall see in the sequel, so as to be one thing (*unum*). The change, then, which is to take place, is not in the relation between the Divinity and Humanity, but in *our apprehension* of it; and this change in apprehension is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Philadelphian church, and the converts to it.

Now we shall find this title *Holy and True* again occurring in chap. vi., 10; ‘How long, O Lord Holy and True, dost thou not avenge our blood,’ where it is applied to one who is called *Lord*. Doddridge renders the title thus, *the Holy One and the True One*; and observes that—

“This is so peculiarly the prerogative of God, that I have sometimes wondered no greater stress should have been laid upon it, in proof of the Deity of our blessed Redeemer, by many writers who have pressed other texts of a much more dubious nature to serve in the cause.”

“Who hath the key of David.” By the possession of the key of David, says Aretas, ‘He who here speaks, claims to himself *Omnipotence*; as one by whom alone all the treasures of wisdom are opened.’ Pererius enumerates three different interpretations of the symbol *key*, p. 812; thus;—

“Some (Rupertus, &c.) interpret the key of David to be the knowledge of those mysteries which are latent in the sacred Scripture, especially in the Psalms of David, who after the books of the law was the first of the prophets wonderfully to prefigure many of the mysteries of Christ both in his deeds, sayings, and songs. This knowledge of the Scriptures the Lord imparts to whom he will, and this is to open the Scriptures to him: and to whom he wills not, he also imparts not this knowledge, and this is to shut the Scriptures to him. Similar to this is what the Lord said in the Gospel, ‘Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes.’ To hide is to shut, to reveal is to open. Others (Andreas, Aretas, &c.) by the name of the key of David, in this place, have thought that the regal power of David is signified, according to which David in various ways wonderfully prefigured the power and empire of Christ our Lord. Wherefore the archangel Gabriel said concerning him, ‘And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever.’ For which reason many things are said in the Holy Scriptures concerning the *power* and empire of David and Solomon, which fully and

perfectly correspond to them only in part; but to Christ the Lord, whom they prefigured, they agree fully and perfectly; as we may evidently see in Psalms ii. and lxxi. By a key then of this kind, that is, by this power, Christ opens and shuts, to whom he will, his house and kingdom, which is the church militant of the faithful upon earth, and the church triumphant of the blessed in heaven. He opens to those whom he admits into his church, by giving them faith, remission of sins, and other gifts of his grace. He shuts to those whom he admits not into his church, but whom by a just judgment he abandons to their infidelity and blindness. Lastly, some there are (Ambrose Ansbert, Haymo, &c.,) who have interpreted the key of David to be Christ himself as *man*, or his *human nature* received from the root of David, according to which he was born, conversed with men, died for man, was raised from the dead, and exalted into heaven, and is set down at the right hand of God the Father, and appointed judge of all men." . . .

Pererius then proceeds to state his own interpretation, and to confine the signification of the symbol *key* to two things; first, the opening of the hidden meaning of the Scriptures; secondly, any remarkable *power* of doing anything. From the first signification it appears, he says, that;—

"No one can understand the divine Scripture as he ought, unless God shall open to him its sense and meaning. This meaning of the divine oracles, David most fervently desiring, importunately besought of God in these words, 'Give me understanding and I will search thy law.' And in another place, 'Give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments.' And in another place, 'Open thou mine eyes and I will consider the wonderful things of thy law.' In his admiration of these words of David, St. Jerome, in his epistle to Paulinus, concerning the instruction of a monk, observes, 'If in the investigation and knowledge of the mysteries of the Scriptures, so great a prophet could confess the darkness of his ignorance; with what a night of ignorance must we babes and sucklings be surrounded! For as divine Scripture is the production not of man but of a Divine Spirit, so it is by no other than the

Divine Spirit that one can understand and interpret it rightly, and as he ought. For no prophecy in Scripture, says the blessed Peter, 'is of private interpretation, for it came not by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit.'"

In a similar sense, Richard of St. Victor, Primasius, and De Lyra, maintain that it is the Lord alone who possesses the key of Scripture, and can open it to man.

Thus Richard of St. Victor; p. 218;—

"And lest thou shouldest believe that any other hath the same power, hear thou that it is He alone who is able, 'Who openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth.' He openeth the hearts of men to the understanding of faith; he openeth their mouths to the preaching of the Word; he openeth the affection to a state of love; he openeth the tongues of preachers, teaching them how to preach; he openeth the hearts of the people to believe. And as what he opens to his chosen, he shuts to the reprobate, it is rightly said 'he shutteth and no man openeth.' Wherefore when he openeth no one can shut, as testified in the Acts of the Apostles; 'We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.' And a little afterwards, speaking of the Jews, 'They could not resist the wisdom and spirit with which he spake.' When however he shutteth to the wicked those things which are right, their sins requiring it, no one can open; because whom he disesteems, no one can correct." Thus also Ambrose Ansbert.

So likewise Primasius;—

"The secrets of the Divine Law are opened to the faithful, and shut to the unfaithful, by the power of Christ alone. He opens and no one shuts, he binds and no one looses." This is also the interpretation of Bede.

So likewise De Lyra;—

"He hath the key of David, the power of opening the meaning of the Scriptures (Luke xxiv); because no one can hinder from understanding the Scriptures those whom he wills to instruct, nor can any one understand them unless he first open."

Gill, Apocalypse, p. 710;—

... "He opens the Scriptures which are shut to a natural

man, as he did in his own personal ministry when here on earth, and now by his spirit: and none can shut them, either men or devils, or hinder the spread of light and knowledge by them; he opens the door of the Gospel and gives an opportunity to preach it, and liberty of mind and expression to his ministers, and a door of utterance to them, and of entrance for it into the hearts of men, which none can shut or hinder: he opens the door of the church which is himself, and lets in his sheep into the sheep-fold, into a gospel church state, and the ordinances of it: and he opens the door of heaven by his blood and righteousness to enter into the holiest of all, and brings many sons to glory in spite of all the opposition of men and devils,” &c., &c. . . Similar is the interpretation of Poole in his Annotations.

Rupertus on the Apocalypse, p. 379;—

. . . “What is this key, but the key of the Holy Spirit? For he himself is the illumination of the heart, he himself is the declaration of the words of God, which gives light and understanding to the simple. Whence the apostle says, ‘But unto us God hath revealed them by his spirit; because the spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God.’ And commending the power and efficacy of this key, he immediately subjoins, ‘Who openeth and no one shutteth, and shutteth and no one openeth.’ This likewise we ought indubitably to know, and knowing, in humility to fear. For whensoever this key-bearer opens to any one, by a spirit of understanding, the truth of God which is contained in the sacred Scriptures, no one shuts up the mouth of that person, or convicts him of lies or the artifices of false arguments. For always having the door open, he runs into the interior, and there hastening to take up the ready testimonies of Scripture, like a good archer he directs his unfailing arrows against the enemy. While on the contrary, whensoever the Lord closes the door against any one, that he may not understand the words of truth, this he does by a just judgment. For in this case, that swine may not trample under foot the pearls which are thrown before them, no one can understand, let him make what noise he may please outside, in his declamation and teaching.”

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' verses 8, 9;—

“‘I know thy works,’ *signifies*, here as above: ‘behold, I have set before thee an open door,’ *signifies*, that heaven is open to those who are in truths originating in good from the Lord: ‘and none can shut it,’ *signifies*, that hell cannot prevail against them: ‘Because thou hast little power,’ *signifies*, because they know that they can do nothing from themselves: ‘and hast kept my Word,’ *signifies*, because they live according to the Lord’s commandments in his Word: ‘and hast not denied my name,’ *signifies*, that they are in the worship of the Lord: ‘I also will take some of the synagogue of Satan,’ *signifies*, those who are in falses with respect to doctrine: ‘which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie,’ *signifies*, who say that the church is among them, when nevertheless it is not: ‘behold, I will make them to come and worship at thy feet,’ *signifies*, that many who are in falses as to doctrine will receive the truths of the New Church: ‘and they shall know that I have loved thee,’ *signifies*, that they shall see that they are loved and received into heaven by the Lord.”

Bede, Apocalypse, p. 353;—

... “‘An open door.’ The gate of heavenly knowledge, which Christ hath opened to his church, cannot be closed by the force or effort of any one.”

Richard of St. Victor, Apocalypse, p. 218;—

“What else is the door opened, but the free course of the Word? For as we enter into a house opened, so by the Word freely preached we penetrate into the human heart, and we draw out our old enemy or friend; and the maker of the heart we cause to be the inmate of the heart. Or otherwise: ‘I have set before thee an open door,’ *i. e.*, I have opened to thee thine understanding for the knowledge of the Scriptures; thy mouth I have opened to preach them, and the hearts of hearers to believe them. Behold, I have set before thee an open door, which, when I open, no one can shut; for wherever I will that divine wisdom should operate, no one can hinder me.”

De Lyra ;—

“‘I have set before thee an open door,’ *i. e.*, to understand the Scriptures ; ‘which no one can shut,’ *i. e.*, no one can hinder thee from truth of doctrine.”

This, says Viegas, is the general interpretation of expositors ; and this door, says Ambrose Ansbert, “the Jews endeavored to close, when, having scourged the apostles, they forbad them to preach in the name of Christ.”

Pyle’s Paraphrase, Apocalypse, p. 29 ;—

“Tell them I look upon them to be what their name signifies, *viz.*, a society of Christians eminent for their *faith, charity,* and *good works* ; lovers of God, and remarkable for affections toward one another. That it is they now, and such as they hereafter, that shall promote and advance my kingdom of righteousness, against all the opposition of deceitful and impious men. That though comparatively their numbers may be but small, yet their courage and perseverance is such as shall, in God’s due time, prevail toward that noble and great end.”

“Because thou hast little power ;” Primasius, *Biblia Magna*, p. 156 ;—

“This church does not confide in its own strength ; and confessing that it has not even its own little strength in itself, it glories in its redemption by the Lord.”

Glossa Ordinaria ;—

“‘Thou hast little power,’ *i. e.*, in thine own opinion ; but in reality great power : because the truly humble think little or nothing of themselves. Luke xvii. : When ye have done all, say ye are unprofitable servants.”

The sense is, says Aquinas, “you acknowledge that you can do but little, that of yourself you have but little strength, and you place your trust not in this, but in God.”—See Poole’s Synopsis.

Alcasar ; p. 261 ;—

“Primasius, Haymo, Bede, and Albert, understand this as referring to that humility of the Philadelphian church which acknowledges that its own powers are small, and which accord-

ingly does not confide in them, but in God. And to the same view of the subject incline Thomas and the Interlineal Observations, which affirm, that to have small power is the same as not to be proud. . . . Another explanation is, that the *little power* means no other than that human strength is of itself unable to open that door which God willed should be open to the Philadelphian angel. And this appears to be the exposition of the Glossa, Albertus, and Zegeus."

"Who say that they are Jews and are not." Vitringa, on the Apocalypse, p. 137;—

"A Jew denotes a confessor of the truth. Jews in the Apocalypse are Christians, confessors of the name and doctrine of Christ."

Poole's Synopsis;—

"In the Apocalypse we may everywhere observe that the Jews or Israelitish synagogue represents the character of the true church of Christ, as gathered out of the Gentiles. Thus in chap. vii., the assembly of the Christian church is exhibited under the type of the 144,000 who were sealed out of all the tribes of Israel; nor without reason, because the church, which from the time of the rejection of the Jews is hitherto collected from out of the Gentiles, succeeded into the place of Israel, and is as it were surrogated Israel." (Mede, on the Seals, book iii., p. 454.)

Poole's Annotations, Apocalypse;—

"'Them of the synagogue of Satan,' so he calleth all Jews that opposed Christianity; or all pretended but not real professors. 'Which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie;' for he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, &c. By this term also he may mean all false and hypocritical professors, who would make themselves the church, the only church of God, but are far enough from it; hating, maligning, and opposing those who would keep stricter to the rule of the Gospel."

Dr. Henry More, Exposition of the Seven Churches, p. 729, 749;—

"The Jews signify the Christian church; there is nothing more frequent in the apocalyptic style than that."

“Those who say that they are Jews and are not, but do lie,” signify those who profess to belong to the Christian church, and to uphold true Christian doctrine; when they are not of the true church, nor confessors of true doctrine. In other words, they are those who belong to a false church, and who profess doctrines which are untrue: and when it is said “they lie,” Gagneus observes, that they did not say what they knew to be false, but what they believed to be true, for they verily thought within themselves that they were true Jews; but the Spirit says they lied, because the Judaism of the heart did not belong to them. And Richard of St. Victor, p. 218, takes the same view of the subject; for he says, “that perhaps they did not this out of any hatred arising from wickedness, but were induced to it from a zeal for their law through ignorance, and therefore he promises that such should be converted to the faith.” This however was not the case with all; and therefore the passage properly does not refer to all.

“Behold, I will make them to come and worship at thy feet.” Anselm on the Apocalypse, p. 477;—

“I will cause them to come to the faith and *adore*, venerate thy teachers, as Joseph did his brethren.”

Richard of St. Victor, Apocalypse, p. 218;—

“I will cause them to come to the faith by believing in me, and they shall adore at thy feet by humiliating themselves, venerating thee, and sincerely entreating to be baptized by thee, instructed and placed under thy rule. And they shall know that I have loved thee. They shall know, when converted, what now they know not as averted; they shall know as friends what they knew not as enemies; they shall know when in the church what they knew not out of it. They shall know that I have loved thee with a true love; which indeed they know not so long as I permit thee to be tried by tribulation; the cause of which love he then adds, ‘because thou hast kept the word of my patience:’ thou hast kept the Word, my precept, when patiently sustaining adversities for my sake. For this same cause,

after the subjection of thy opponents, he promises the aid of his protection in temptation.”

Rupertus, Apocalypse, p. 379;—

“Be not downcast, says he, or disturbed at the multitude of thine adversaries. The glory which thou possessest in the opening of that door which I have opened to thee, is followed by ill will. But fear not. The same lot especially fell to me. When I had understanding according to the words of the prophet, ‘Behold my servant shall understand, he shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high,’ they said among themselves, ‘Whence knoweth this man letters, not having learned them? Is not this the son of the carpenter? Whence came he by all these things? These were they of the synagogue of Satan, who said they were Jews, and were not; who said they were the seed of Abraham, or that they had one Father, even God, and yet who were of their father the devil. Those who imitate them, who say they are Jews, *i. e.*, confessors of God, and are not, but do lie, and are rather of the synagogue of Satan, when they hear that by reason of the door being opened, thou art become intelligent, or when they read thy writings, shall say, what man is this, and in ill will shall speak detraction of thee. Fear not their face, for I am with thee. Some of those, when grown weary of their calumnies, shall be converted unto thee, shall cease to detract, shall be brought to favor thy views, and shall come and adore at thy feet, if not when thou art living, at least when thou art dead; and in controversy with them thine arguments shall win their approbation.”

Matthew Henry; Exposition of the Old and New Testaments, Apocalypse;—

“Christ would make this church’s enemies subject to her. . . Their subjection to the church is described; ‘they shall worship at thy feet;’ not pay a religious and divine honor to the church itself, or to the ministry of it, but shall be convinced that they have been in the wrong, that this church is in the right and is beloved of Christ, and they shall desire to be taken into communion with her, and that they may worship the same God after the same manner. How shall this great change be wrought? By the power of God upon the hearts of his ene-

mies, and by signal discoveries of his peculiar favor to his church. They shall know that I have loved thee.”

Durham on the Apocalypse, p. 119 ;—

. . . “These corrupt Jews do now calumniate thee, as if thou wert not of my church, nor beloved by me ; but, saith he, by my inward power I will so move and incline them, as they shall willingly come and worship before thy feet, and know indeed that I have loved thee.”

This says Durham “may be understood of sincere conversion, and so the meaning is, I will convert many of these blasphemers ; and, as an evidence thereof, make them come and worship before thy feet, that is, really worship God in the assembly with thee ; like that Word, Isaiah lx., 14 : ‘The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and they that despise thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet, and they shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.’ ”

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 10 ;—

“ ‘Because thou hast kept the word of my endurance,’ *signifies*, because they have fought against evils : ‘I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth,’ *signifies*, that they will be protected and preserved in the day of the Last Judgment.”

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience.”

Rupertus, Apocalypse, p. 380 ;—

“That is, the word for which I suffered ; and what is that but love ? Because thou hast kept my love, they shall know that I have loved thee.”

Cornelius a Lapide, p. 62 ;—

. . . “He means patience, as also endurance of injuries and persecutions, and especially long-suffering and constancy under them.”

Moreover, according to Durham, Poole, Pareus, Robertson, and the Assembly in their Annotations, the word

of patience means patient continuance in the Word of God, or the doctrines of the Gospel, as a rule of life.

Ambrose Ansbert, p. 351;—

“The word of endurance is that which the Lord himself has shewn by his example; when upon the cross he prayed for his persecutors, and which he inculcated in these words, when speaking to all in general, ‘In your patience possess ye your souls.’ . . . In this passage we must know that temptation is put for the fall which arises from deception. Thus, when it is said, ‘I will keep thee from the hour of temptation,’ it is as if he should say, let not the hour of temptation seduce thee, *i. e.*, worldly temptation. For that the elect are preserved from this hour of temptation, is, because when God keeps them they cannot be deceived by any temptations occult or manifest. Hence, when we daily pray, ‘lead us not into temptation,’ understand it as that he would not suffer us to be deceived by temptation. And the elect are therefore tempted, and are yet preserved from the hour of temptation, because they are tempted to this end; that being proved they may receive the crown, not that being seduced, they may be condemned. ‘Since thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will keep thee also from the hour of temptation.’ As if he should say to the church of the elect, Because I perceive that thou art vigilant in observing the word of my patience, I do not permit thee to succumb to any temptations. Now that we are in this passage to understand the hour of temptation to mean the fall produced by deception, He himself has instructed us (if we notice the words), by shewing that the temptation applies to those who inhabit not heaven but this present earth. Thus speaking of this temptation, he concludes in these words, ‘which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth;’ as if he should say, them that seek earthly things, that are disturbed with worldly desires, that subserve to carnal pleasures. In contrast with whom the blessed apostle says of the saints, ‘Our conversation is in heaven;’ and again, ‘Who hath raised us up and made us to sit in heavenly places.’ But because this same hour of temptation is foretold as not having yet arrived, or not yet present, but as being yet to come, it is better if we

understand by this hour of temptation more especially the *time of Antichrist*. For then shall come that temptation (or trial) which shall search not merely parts of the world but the whole. . . Whence not inaptly it is said by the Lord before that time, 'Then shall there be tribulation such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be.' How this is, do thou, O Lord, point out to us;—'For then shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall give forth great signs and wonders, so that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect.' "

Rupertus, *Apocalypse*, p. 380;—

"This trial is one arising from heresies; which must be, as the apostle says, 'that they who are approved may be made manifest.' From that trial who is preserved uninjured, but he who has the truth of Scripture on his side? This now is promised to the angel of Philadelphia for the merit of his love; or we understand it to be given in the open door or the key of David, which He possesses who is Holy and True. 'Therefore because thou hast kept my love, I also will keep thee,' saith he, 'from the hour of temptation;' that thou fall not into temptation, that thou be not seduced, nay, that thou mayest be able to give a reason to every one that asketh, of that faith in my name which is in thee."

Bede on the *Apocalypse*, p. 353;—

"Since thou hast followed my example in enduring adversity, I also will keep thee from the impending troubles; not that thou shalt not be tempted, but that thou shalt not be overcome by adversity. And although the church may be always exercised by adversity, yet in this passage may be signified the hour of temptation and humiliation of the Jews occurring in the time of Antichrist; and as in the sequel this period very often occurs as the sixth in order, so likewise here may be designated the last persecution under the sixth angel. In which some of the wicked Jews are to be deceived and will be also deceivers; while others will be led by the warnings of the great prophet Elias to a spiritual understanding of the law, and being incorporated as members of the church, will, it is believed, courageously overcome their enemy."

Similar is the interpretation of the Glossa Ordinaria, Haymo, Gagneus, Anselm, Andreas, Arctas, Primasius, who all consider this hour of temptation to be applicable either to the times of Antichrist immediately preceding the judgment day, or to the judgment day itself.

With regard to the nature and design of the temptation, it is observed in the Biblia Maxima of De la Haye, p. 747, in the Concordance and Literal Exposition, that some read the passage thus; "I will keep thee from the hour of *explorations*." So the Arabic version instead of *temptations* reads *explorations*, and this not inaptly; because by temptations *our quality is explored*. Hence Poole in his Synopsis, p. 1713; "It is observed by Beza, that the hour of temptation is the hour of *exploration*; because it is that in which men are *explored* by God; and that it refers to the judgment day." Piscator also says, that the temptation is for the purpose of *exploration*.

The Assembly in their Annotations on this passage say that the temptations are designed to try "Who be sound, and who unsound (as 1 Cor. xi., 19); who will stick close to the truth (chap. ii., 13, and xii., 11, 17, and xiv., 12; Psalm xlv., 17); and who flinch, and fall off (Matt. xiii., 21; 2 Tim. iv., 12); times of trouble are times of trial (Psalm lxvi., 10; Rom. v., 3, 4; Jam. i., 2, 3, 12; 1 Pet. i., 6, 7, and iv., 12)."

In the work entitled Hyponoia it is observed, that "the trial is a trial of doctrines, principles, and elements of doctrine."

Hooper also remarks in his work on the Apocalypse, p. 199, that "by the hour of temptation is meant a time of spiritual trial, in which the evil put forth in these days will assume such a semblance of the truth of Christ, that men listening to the tempter's voice will be beguiled by his subtlety and led to believe a lie."

Burgh, in his exposition of the Book of Revelation, on the words "I will keep thee from the hour of temptation," observes, p. 92, that "the great reference of this promise of the Lord is to that time of trouble which shall immediately precede his second coming."

Dr. Henry More, *Exposition of the Seven Churches*, p. 749;—

"I will keep thee from the hour of temptation that shall come upon all the world. Namely, at what time all the world be in an hurly burly, and cast into manifold straits and calamities. Which is in the last vial, when the three unclean spirits go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty; and when there shall be so great an earthquake as has not been since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. In this mighty tempest and hurry of things, will I preserve thee from danger, and thou shalt carry it safe through all. Thou shalt escape better than any party of men, by reason of thy conspicuous innocency, sincerity, and exemplarity of life, and unexceptionable apostolicalness of doctrine, and singular love to me and all mankind; because thou art mild, and courteous, and benign, and beneficent to all; because thou art a lover of unity, un-selfinterested, a foe to nobody, and only an enemy to the vices and miseries of men; this, with my singular favor to thee, shall protect thee in that great confusion and high fermentation of men's spirits under the last vial. Who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?"

Dr. Henry More, p. 750;—

"Behold I come quickly.' Thou art already in that period of time wherein this great judgment will come upon the earth; namely, under the first thunder. Or rather, because the Philadelphian church is not supposed to be in distinct being or appearance till the last vial, the last vial must be this period. And then this coming in respect of that time will be quickly indeed."

Moreover Vitringa refers these words to the last advent

of Jesus Christ, and says that any other signal advent to the church of Philadelphia, no commentator will very easily explain.

But what is the nature of this second coming? It has already been shewn that it is a coming in clouds. But what are these clouds? The symbol of *clouds* has been fully explained in p. 226, to which therefore the reader is referred. But we may here further quote the testimony of Dr. Wordsworth, in his Hulsean Lectures, and of Dr. Taylor, in his Scripture Scheme of Divinity.

In his Hulsean Lectures, p. 144, speaking of the prophets and patriarchs, apostles and evangelists as clouds, the former observes ;—

“Such are the clouds on which the DIVINE COMER, Jesus Christ, came, comes, and will come; the clouds in the heaven of his church, from which he pours down the spirit of grace and supplications upon his people, and makes them turn their eyes and hearts, in penitential love, to Him; and by which he sends a gracious rain upon his inheritance and refreshes it when it is weary.”

The author quotes also Augustin and Aquinas in favor of the same interpretation.

Now we have already seen when treating of the symbol *clouds*, that these clouds are considered to be primarily those of the *Shekinah*; on which subject Dr. Taylor observes in his Scripture Scheme of Divinity, p. 71 ;—

“The *glorious truths of the Gospel* revealed by Jesus Christ are our *Shekinah*, shining from him upon our minds, and filling them with comfort, joy, in the assured hope of his present care and blessing, and of the possession of glory, honor, and immortality in the future world. And this is to us a *Shekinah*, infinitely preferable to the visible appearances in the church of old.”

The second coming of the Lord then announced to the churches in general, and in the present case to the church of Philadelphia in particular, is a second coming in the

glorious truths of the Gospel, and thence in the teachers, members, or saints in general of the Philadelphian church. Hence we see the aptness of the symbol of the key in opening the Word of God, and thus also the kingdom of heaven to all true believers.

"No other coming of Christ," says Poole, in his Annotations, "but his coming to the last judgment, can be here meant;" and upon this passage it is observed by Andreas, "He says appositely, Behold I come quickly, since, as we read in the Gospel, the Judge is to come immediately after the affliction of those days; wherefore also he seriously admonishes us to preserve the treasure of our faith inviolate, and to give our diligent endeavors not to lose the crown of patience." Aretas also observes, I come quickly, "*i. e., after that affliction I come quickly, i. e., immediately, and without any delay. Quickly, as if I were following immediately upon the steps of these afflictions as soon as they begin to gather around you.*" Eichorn, on this passage observes that coming *quickly* means that 'the return of Christ is *most certain.*' See above, p. 210.

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' ver. 12, 13;—

"'Him that overcometh,' *signifies*, they who persist in truths grounded in good: 'will I make a pillar in the temple of my God,' *signifies*, that truths grounded in good from the Lord, with those in whom they abide, sustain the church: 'and he shall go no more out,' *signifies*, that they shall remain there to eternity: 'and I will write upon him the name of my God,' *signifies*, that divine truths shall be written in their hearts: 'and the name of the city of my God, which is the New Jerusalem,' *signifies*, that the doctrine of the New Church shall be written in their hearts: 'which cometh down out of heaven from my God,' *signifies*, which will be from the divine truth of the Lord such as it is in heaven: 'and my new name,' *signifies*, the

worship of the Lord alone, with other new things which were not in the former church: 'he that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches,' *signifies*, as before."

Professor Stuart, Commentary on the Apocalypse, vol. ii., p. 96;—

"To me it seems more natural and easy to adopt the familiar of Paul and Peter which represents Christians as parts of a great temple or spiritual building, of which Christ is the chief corner stone. If the metaphor is carried through with consistency, such a temple must of course be supposed to have pillars. These are a conspicuous, ornamental, and highly useful part of the temple. What pillars are, then, to a temple literally considered, the like will such Christians as those in Philadelphia be, in the spiritual temple built by our Saviour."

Hence Stuart regards the symbol as signifying steadfastness; A Lapide, firmness and stability; Primasius and Pareus, support, strength, and ornament.

Richard of St. Victor, Apocalypse, p. 219;—

"What a column is in a material temple, such is he in the spiritual building, firm through faith, straight through equity, upright as to intention, lofty in contemplation, sustaining some by the word of consolation, some by the aid of his prayers, some by the example of his life. In this building in which all who are perfected are columns, some are columns of stone through the firmness of their belief, some columns of brass because of the sound of their preaching, some columns of silver in virtue of their eloquence, some columns of gold by reason of their wisdom."

Ribera, Apocalypse, p. 60;—

"A pillar in a house is itself firm and immoveable, and by it the other parts are sustained, and remain in their state of stability. He therefore who overcomes will be in the church as a pillar, for he himself will be made strong, and by his word and example he will sustain others and preserve them in their stability."

Similar is the interpretation of De Lyra, Andreas,

Anselm, Viegas, &c. And Chrysostom on 1 Tim. iii., 15, observes, that "truth is the pillar and ground of the church;" on which it is remarked in the Library of the Fathers, p. 87, that "the truth in itself supports the church, the church through it supports the world;" for says Chrysostom, "the church is the pillar of the world." And Jerome, as quoted by Cornelius a Lapide upon this passage, "The church is the pillar and ground of the truth, because in it alone stands the truth in its strength, which alone sustains the edifice of the church." That which makes therefore any one to be a pillar in the church, or which makes the church itself a pillar, is truth or wisdom. See Poole's Synopsis, 1 Tim. iii., 15. Glasse's *Philologia Sacra*, *art. columna*, and Suicer's *Thesaurus*.

For the meaning of *name*, see above, p. 323; that the New Jerusalem signifies a new church, or a new state of the church upon earth, see what is said on chapters xxi. and xxii. in the sequel. At present we shall quote only the following remarks upon this subject.

Pyle, Paraphrase on the Apocalypse, p. 31;—

"'I will write upon him my new name.' These expressions are taken from the prophet Isaiah, lxii., 2, 12. 'And those,' speaking of *The Reformed Church of God*, 'shall be called by a *new name* which the mouth of the Lord shall name, viz., the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord.' See also Isaiah lxi., 6, and those words of the same prophet, Isaiah lxiii., 16, spoken in the person of God's *Reformed Church*, whether of the Jewish or *Gentile* part. 'Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting.'"

Now this Reformed Church, as it is ultimately to be, Pyle does not consider to be the same with the present Protestant Church, but to be a reformed state of the whole Church Catholic itself; hence a reformation which has never

yet arrived. Dr. Henry More takes a similar view of the subject; for he says, p. 750; that “the inscription of the Philadelphians that they are called the New Jerusalem, &c., in the very words in which it is described afterwards, Apocalypse xxi., is a notable indication, that by the church of Philadelphia is meant that succession of the church that is under the second and third thunder, but was emerging in the last vial; for it is the New Jerusalem which cometh out of heaven from God;”—and we have already seen that his own conviction was that the present Reformed Churches themselves, as well as the Church of Rome, stood in need of reformation. This subject, however, will be amply treated of in the sequel, chap. xxi., xxii.

Brightman, Apocalypse, p. 121;—

“But as touching this New Jerusalem, we shall shew in the proper place, that it is not that city which the saints shall enjoy in the heavens after this life, but that church that is to be looked for upon earth; the most noble and pure of all other that ever have been to that time.”

Durham, upon this passage, observes, that the New Jerusalem is no other than a *New Church*, although according to his theory, it is the church triumphant, not militant; and we have already observed, and shall have further to shew, that Pareus also continually repeats that the New Jerusalem means a *New Church*. Now Alcasar, Richard of St. Victor, and other Roman Catholic authors expressly declare it to signify the church upon earth; while others who think it applicable to the church triumphant, nevertheless regard it as including the church militant also.

“My new name.” Alcasar, Apocalypse, p. 214;—

“If the subject was here concerning the letters which are written by ink, the new name of Christ could not be distinguished from that of others who were previously called by the same name. But inasmuch as the subject is concerning that writing which is traced by the finger of God, therefore it is

beautifully said of the title inscribed upon the column of which the passage treats, that the name of Christ which is written is new; because in the admirable perfection of this column shines out the truth that it was erected by him who is called Saviour in *a new and plainly divine manner*. To this I add, that the passage treats not only of the *new manner* in which Christ even before his passion was called Saviour, but of the *new manner* in which he was possessed of the name of Saviour after his resurrection. For previous to this the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. But when Christ rose again, he went forth from the sepulchre as the Son of God in power, according to the spirit of sanctification, Rom. i., 4; that is with a power and excellency most plenary and efficacious in the sanctification of men." . . .

"Since, however, this newness of the name of Christ, we date from the mystery of the resurrection, some perhaps may think that the words of Paul to the Ephesians refer to this subject, chap. ii., 9; 'For which cause God hath exalted him and given him a name which is above every name.' Hence when it is said, 'I will write upon him my new name,' the meaning will be, in the excellency of this column will shine forth the glory of the name of Christ. This sense assuredly differs but little from our former explication; for Paul in Philippians ii., does not seem to treat only of the power of sanctification, but also of monarchy over the universe, and the dignity of supreme Ruler."

Cornelius a Lapide also admits that "the new name relates not to the faithful only, but especially to the glory of Christ."

While, however, the *new and plainly divine manner* in which the name of Christ shone out, Alcasar dates retrospectively or from the time of the resurrection; Dr. Henry More dates it prospectively, or from the vision of the white horse in the Apocalypse, chap. xix. Thus in his Exposition of the Seven Churches, p. 750;—

"'And I will write upon him my new name.' It is expressly said, Apoc. xix., 6, that Christ has a name written upon his vesture and upon his thigh, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

This name Grotius would have understood here. And there is no small reason for it; that name being so particularly and pompously set out for a special name of his. And though he has ever had a right unto it, yet because the *getting into possession* of this right will be *new and fresh* in this Philadelphian interval *after the battle of the heroes on the white horse*, it is rightly termed *a new name*, and very fittingly writ upon these Philadelphians, because they are so instrumental in its achievements. These are the Boanergeses thundering over the great city divided into three parts, and also those horsemen on white horses, as I intimated before. Christ therefore, through these, becomes King of Kings and Lord of Lords, or rather he has made them the greatest kingdom upon earth. . . . ‘The mountain of the Lord’s house is exalted upon the top of the mountains, and all nations flow unto it,’ &c., &c.”

Daubuz also says, p. 143, that it is to his entrance into the New Jerusalem that the new name of Christ refers; for that it is then that He . . .

“Puts on his new, secret, or wonderful name of King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And that is because he hath then wholly changed his state, and entered upon a new one, secret, never known, but wonderful, great, and glorious.”

A similar view of the subject is taken by Gill, who however observes, p. 712, concerning this new name, that it may not import a change of state on the part of Christ himself, but rather a change in the church, arising from the new *manifestation* of his name. Thus, concerning this new name he says that it is . . .

. . . “The name of King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Rev. xix., 6, which Christ will now acquire; or *at least, this will now be made more manifest* upon the destruction of Antichrist, in this church-state; in which conquest he will make all his people sharers, and they shall now more openly appear to be kings, and to reign with him in his spiritual kingdom.”

This church-state Gill had previously explained to be a *new* and glorious state of the Gospel church in the latter day glory.

Now it is to be observed, that to whatever period the assumption of this new name be referred, it is regarded as especially applying to the Humanity. Some, considering the name to be either Son of God, or Christ, or Jesus, refer it to the period of the Incarnation; such as Gagneus, Pererius, Ribera, Primasius, &c.; and thus to the *Humanity* then assumed. Some, as Grotius, Vitringa, More, Daubuz, Pyle, Gill, &c., refer it to the period of the victory over Antichrist, and hence to the title King of Kings and Lord of Lords; but even this title is regarded by numerous authors as especially applying to the Glorified *Humanity*: as will be seen in the remarks occurring in chap. xix. Now from the writing of this new name or knowledge upon the Philadelphians, arises a new state of the church. Thus, Family Bible; Isaiah lxii., 2;—

“*To be called* signifies in the sacred dialect *to be*; and the new name here promised signifies a new condition, a change for the better. No particular name is pointed to; several appropriate to the altered state of Jerusalem are to be met with in the prophecies; see verses 4, 12 of this chapter. Compare Rev. ii., 17; iii., 12.”

Moreover Ambrose Ansbert, Ribera, Daubuz, Family Bible, Vitringa, Pyle, Brightman, all regard the writing of the new name as alluding to the period of the New Jerusalem, whatever that may be, and hence to that of making all things new. And although some authors are of opinion that this New Jerusalem refers to the church militant as at first established; some, that it refers to the church triumphant in heaven as it is to be; some to both; yet we have already partly seen, and it will be further shewn in the remarks on chapters xxi. and xxii., that the New Jerusalem refers to a New Church or new state of the church upon earth, under a new dispensation; and that this interpretation has a vast amount of authority in its favor, among commentators of all shades of opinion.

Now says Gagneus, by “writing the name of my God, the new Jerusalem, and my new name,” is understood, according to the Greek Scholia, the glory of God, and any remarkable *knowledge* of him ; so also Aretas and Richard of St. Victor : and Joachim implies as much when he says that it means the *knowledge* of the Father and the Son. But the name of God signifies that which he is ; by *writing* this name, therefore, is signified the knowledge of that name ; but as the name is new it signifies a new knowledge, or a knowledge of Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, under a new aspect. Hence a change in the state and condition of the Philadelphians ; for, as Bishop Lowth observes, Isaiah lxii., 2 : “Giving new names to persons, denotes an alteration in their state and condition.”

The same is the interpretation of Vitringa on Isaiah lxii., 2, where he says that the *new name* given to the church signifies a “*change of condition for the better ;*” whence he calls the church in that chapter a *New Church*, or a church under a new economy. So that the revelation of Jesus Christ at this period conveys a new knowledge of him, and produces a new church, or new state of the church. The introductory remarks of Rupertus upon this church may not inaptly be here presented, p. 379 ;—

. . . “Upon this angel the Son of God very largely pours out his affections, and the Spirit, which in this place is to be heard by the churches, is the spirit of understanding, which is written in its order after the spirit of counsel. The work proper to this Spirit is to open as he will the mysteries of the Holy Scriptures, and those things which are hidden from the wise and prudent to reveal unto babes ; for the most part without the aid of a teacher, and in the same manner as, when Jesus was glorified, He illustrated all the prophets and holy apostles, who, before the Spirit was given, were simple and illiterate persons. The same in the present day he ceases not to do, according as he wills ; revealing to babes, as we have said, the things which are hidden from others ; *i. e.*, revealing them

to the humble and the kindly, according to the proportion which they possess individually of brotherly love; because they love the humbler brethren, and what little of wisdom or knowledge they perceive they willingly impart to them."

Mr. Frere observes, in his *Original Essays on the Apocalypse*, on the subject of the *new name* predicted to the church in Philadelphia, *Investigator*, vol. v., p. 140;—

"To the importance of the future revelation of Christ in his regal character, in which the saints are in this epistle especially promised a participation, the church have been till lately entirely insensible, and are as yet only partially awakened. For as the Jews refused to recognize Christ in his priestly character, and in his *humiliation*, and looked only for a king and conqueror; so the Gentile church, having received him in the former character, are themselves indifferent to the promises of his future *exaltation* upon earth, and his revelation in power to take place within the limits of time."

Mayer on the Revelation, p. 292;—

"Why to this church the reward is thus propounded, I find nothing amongst expositors, but the reason I take it is plain; because they were a long time of little strength, and much wronged and disgraced: but they should be strengthened as a brazen pillar, and honored with the highest titles conferred by the Judge of the whole world. Let this then comfort every one's heart that mourneth in Zion for the tyranny, oppressions, and opprobriums of persecutors; they shall be set as pillars, &c."

On the words, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," Pyle observes, p. 32, under the church of Philadelphia;—

"Hereby, then, let the Christians of all ages of the church know and remember, that the divine love, favor, and protection will never fail to accompany such as preserve themselves in integrity and virtue of life; that to oppose spreading corruptions, and to promote a reformation of all false doctrine and worship, has all the foregoing promises annexed to it; and lays a foundation for their certain felicity in the future and glorious kingdom of their Lord and Master." See also Lowman *in loc.*

Brightman on the Apocalypse, p. 122;—

“Hear, therefore, O Philadelphia, and rejoice. Thou art little and lowly, but God shall exalt thee. Only go forward constantly, and bend thy study and care more earnestly; give not again one whit, neither care for the scoffs of the wicked, who shall by this means pull woeful plagues upon themselves; but they shall bring thee a crown of glory. The end of thy warfare is coming shortly; in the meantime we will pray for thy peace and prosperity. Do thou join the mutual wishes and prayers to God with us and for us, that those things which Christ hath so greatly approved in thee he would vouchsafe to grant to the rest of thy brethren. Farewell. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with thee, Amen.”

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 14;—

“‘And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,’ *signifies*, to those and concerning those in the church who alternately believe sometimes from themselves and sometimes from the Word, and so profane things holy: ‘These things saith the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness,’ *signifies*, the Lord with respect to the Word, which is divine truth from Him: ‘the Beginning of the work of God,’ *signifies*, the Word.”

Cornelius a Lapide, *Apocalypse*, p. 68;—

“. . . ‘He who is the *Amen*, *i. e.*, who is steadfast, true, constant, faithful, and is stability itself, TRUTH ITSELF, and faithfulness itself. . . . Moreover Christ is here called the *Amen*, not only as he is God, as if he should say, ‘These things saith Christ, who is God, whose epithet is the Amen, *i. e.*, the True One, or TRUTH ITSELF; but rather as he is *Man*; because as Man he was true and faithful, as well in his doctrine, and his testimony to the truth, as in his promises.’ . . .

Rupertus, *Apocalypse*, p. 381;—

“Amen, that is, true, or the TRUTH ITSELF.”

The same is the interpretation of Estius, Menochius, Lacunza, Camerarius, &c.; but these all apply the title to the divinity. We have seen, however, that the Humanity is anointed with the Divinity.

Alcasar, after observing that many had referred the title *Amen* to the divinity alone, says;—

“To me it appears more suitable to refer it to the truth of those things which he affirms. Because, by way of explanation, it is immediately added, ‘The faithful and true witness,’ as Ambrose remarks. Now a witness is one who testifies and confirms anything; and truth of doctrine most truly agrees with Christ even as he is man.”

Viegas, Apocalypse, chap. i., 5, p. 22;—

The Faithful and True Witness. . . . “A second and larger exposition is that of Primasius, Haymo, and De Lyra, who say that Christ is called the Faithful Witness, because he faithfully gave testimony concerning the Father and his nature, according to John xvii., 26: ‘And I have made known to them thy name, and will make it known;’ which testimony he gave in his works when he said, John xiv.: ‘The Father who abideth in me, he doeth the works.’ And John iii., 16: ‘God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son.’ And for this reason Christ is called in the Holy Scriptures the Face of the Father; because as we know a man by his face, so we know the Father by Christ.”

Ibid, p. 24;—

. . . “Christ is eminently called a witness for many reasons, which belong to him in a peculiar manner.”

“The first is, because since he is the Word of the Father, and therefore proceeding from Him by an act of the divine intellect, he is able, in virtue of his procession, to testify and speak the things which are of the Father’s intellect. Which reason Christ himself assigned in John iii.: ‘Amen, Amen, I say unto you, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness.’ And in the same place John the Baptist, speaking of Christ, says: ‘He who cometh from heaven is above all; . . . and what he hath seen and heard that he testifieth.’ And in John viii., 38, Christ says: ‘I speak that which I have seen with my Father.’ Where observe by the way, Christ is both an eye-witness and an ear-witness, and therefore a most faithful witness, as being one who has seen and heard the things which he speaks. Now he is said to see because he sees truly his own essence, which is

that of the Father; to hear, because he possesses knowledge from the Father. The second reason is, because all things which he told to others as the Word of the Father, he testified and sealed by his own death and blood. In larger exposition of which, we must know that the faithful, as believing in the revelation of God and adhering to him, are called witnesses, because by their faith they as it were set to their seal that God is true, as John the Baptist, when speaking of the faithful, teaches in express words: ‘He who receiveth his testimony,’ *i. e.*, the testimony of Christ, ‘hath set to his seal that God is true;’ *i. e.*, by his faith, as by a seal, hath confirmed the veracity of God. . . . But then are they witnesses most rich in evidence, when, by suffering and death, they confirm the same thing, and seal the seal of faith with their blood. Whence they are simply called martyrs, *i. e.*, that is, witnesses. For *martyr* in Greek is the same as *testis* in Latin. Since, therefore, in a much more eminent manner, Christ the Lord set his seal to the truth by his passion and death, he is rightly by way of eminence said to be The Martyr or Faithful Witness.” . . .

It is for a similar reason that being a Martyr or Witness is referred to the prophetic office of Christ, *i. e.*, his office as a prophet or teacher, and that after him all are called faithful and true witnesses who teach his *Word* faithfully and truly; and all who, through the pride of self-intelligence or the lusts of self-will, falsify that word in doctrine and life, are said to bear false witness against him; thus to be false witnesses, or false Christs and false prophets. Accordingly we shall see how this applies to the prophetic office of the church in Laodicea.

“Faithful and true Witness.” Primasius, p. 152, Rev. i. ;—

“In the human nature which he assumed, he gave testimony to the Father, when preaching he said, ‘I have made known thy name, and will make it known;’ but when shewing that heretofore it was denied to the Jews, he says, and ‘my name, Adonai, have I not shewn unto them.’ For when we believe in the Son, the knowledge of the Father also is revealed; for

the Son would not be specified unless the Son had the Father; nor would the Father, unless he had the Son. The one, therefore, is known by the preaching of the other, because the Father is in the Son, and the Son is approved as true in the Father; for he who honors not the Son, honors not the Father who sent him. Hence says the same St. John in his Epistle, 'He who believeth in the Son of God hath the testimony of God in himself; he who believeth not the Son hath made him a liar, because he believeth not in the testimony which God hath given him of his Son.'"

"'And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness;' for when he suffered, he by his blood released us from sin; and rising again he is justly preached as the first-begotten from the dead, who hath made us a kingdom and priests unto God and his Father."

Ambrose Ansbert; Rev. i., 5, p. 316;—

"In this passage, also, the Son may especially be called the Faithful Witness, in his assumed humanity; because for the testimony of the truth he underwent even the death of the flesh." So likewise Haymo.

Ribera on the Apocalypse, p. 64;—

"These things saith the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, who delivered to us only that which he received from the Father, and all the things which he delivered are most true and immutable."

Hence our Lord is the Faithful and True Witness in the flesh, as being the Word made flesh.

Skinner; Works, vol. i., p. 18;—

"St. John's failing to introduce the title Only Begotten* of the Father, until after he had informed us that the WORD was made flesh, seems to indicate that no such designation belonged

* Scott; Annotations on the Bible, John i.;—

"'No man hath seen God at any time, the Only Begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' It is doubted by many who steadfastly maintain the doctrine of our Lord's Deity and of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, whether the title of the Son of God relates to anything more than his human nature, his miraculous conception, and his mediatorial character and work; and the opinion of former orthodox divines on this subject seems to be given up by them as unscriptural."

to him till the grand event of his incarnation was accomplished." So also Dr. Bennett in answer to Dr. Samuel Clarke.

Richard of St. Victor ; Apocalypse, chap. i., 5, p. 199;—

“‘The Faithful and True Witness, the first begotten of the dead,’ &c. He reverts to the person of the Son, because it is he of whom the sequel must be considered as especially treating; and he places before us those things especially which pertain to the human nature and the economy of human redemption, so that when we hear how much he sustained for us in the assumed nature of our flesh, we might consider how much we ought to love him. . . . ‘Who is ‘The Faithful Witness’ by the preaching of the truth, by rising as the first begotten of the dead, by reigning in heaven as the prince of the kings of the earth. The Faithful Witness, because he gave a faithful testimony of all things which were to be testified by him in the world. The Faithful Witness, because whatsoever he heard from the Father he faithfully made known to his disciples. The Faithful Witness, because he taught the way of God in truth, nor cared he for any man, nor regarded the persons of men. The Faithful Witness, because he denounced damnation to the wicked and preached salvation to the elect. The Faithful Witness, because the truth which he taught in his words he confirmed by miracles. The Faithful Witness, because the testimony given by the Father he denied not in his death. The Faithful Witness, because he will give a true testimony of the works of the good and evil in the day of judgment.’”

Similar to this is the comment of Cornelius a Lapide on Rev. i., 5, where the fidelity of the witness is referred to the testimony concerning the Father, as delivered in the humanity to the world.

“Beginning of the creation,” &c. Bede on the Apocalypse, p. 354 ;—

“*Amen* is interpreted to signify truly or faithfully. Christ therefore, who is truth in the essence of the Divinity, declares that he became the Beginning of the Creation of God by the mystery of the incarnation, that he might by these means conform the church to the endurance of his own passion.

“By the Beginning of the Creation of God,” says Pri-

masius, "we may aptly understand Christ the Lord by reason of the mystery of the Incarnation." Bullinger also refers this title to the humanity. The same title occurs in Col. i., 18, "He is the Head of the Body, the *church*; who is the Beginning, the First Born from the dead, that in all things he might have the preëminence." On which passage Cornelius a Lapide observes, "that Christ, as he is *Man* and the Head of the *church*, is the Beginning; first, in situation, because being raised above all the heavens he is as it were first and highest. . . Secondly, in dignity, whence Cyril says that he is the Beginning, *i. e.*, the Head and Chief. . . Thirdly, he is the Beginning in point of time and causality; for he made and formed the body, that is, the *church* to himself, and in it and in ourselves as members of the *church*, he is the Beginning and cause of all virtues and good works." Estius gives a similar interpretation, stating that Christ is the first fruits in respect of the *church*, being the first who rose from the dead to life immortal, and being also head of the *church*." So also De Lyra, who observes that Christ is the First as being the first cause of our own resurrection. So likewise Menochius and Tirinus.

Alcasar observes upon this passage in the Apocalypse;—

. . . "There are many passages in the New Testament in which the name creation or *creature* is taken for a spiritual and divine work in the souls of men, performed by the power of Christ, 2 Cor. xv., 17. If, therefore, any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, Gal. vi., 15; Eph. vi., 10; Col. iii., 10; James i., 18. Moreover, the addition of the word God in the genitive case, as when it is said the beginning of the creation of God, is beautifully added in the phraseology of Holy Scripture, to denote some excellent work pertaining to the glory of God in a peculiar manner; or perhaps creature of God is the same with divine creature, because it is a new thing to be divine, which is attributed to man. Moreover, Christ is said to be the Beginning and the End, as in chap. i., inasmuch as he himself began the work of the Christian church, and himself will glo-

riously bring it to completion. In like manner he may be said to be the Beginning and the End of the Creation of God, because from him is the beginning of the new creation, and from him is the end or completion of this creation."

Thus, as the Lord here refers all things to himself as the beginning or fountain head, so the church in Laodicea referred all things to herself, as being herself the beginning or fountain head; not to the Amen, or to the teaching of the Lord as the Faithful and True Witness, or Word of God. The whole, therefore, has reference to the prophetic office of the Lord as contrasted with the state of Laodicea, in respect to her own prophetic office as a church; and in respect to her sons and daughters as her own creation, or as members of that church. And as it will appear in the sequel that she failed in this office, so allusion is further made to a subsequent and new creation, or as Gill says, to "the Lord as Father of the world to come, or of the new age and Gospel dispensation, the Maker of the New Heaven and Earth, and so a very fit person to be the Judge of the whole world, to summon all nations before him and pass the final sentence."

Rupertus on the Apocalypse also thus writes, vol. iii., p. 381;—

"In this passage, what is it that is signified by the creation of God? Assuredly the new man, or the regeneration and re-creation of man, walking by good works in newness of life. For it is hence that the Apostle says that this is 'the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.' Here he says 'in Christ Jesus;' *i. e.*, we are renewed by faith in Christ Jesus, and as such we are the creature of which he speaks elsewhere, Rom. viii., 19. 'For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the

creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God ; for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, and not only they but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit.' To what purpose, then, was it said to this angel concerning the Faithful and True Witness that he was the Beginning of the Creation of God, unless it was in order that he might know that his whole recreation and all that he had or seemed to have of holy newness of life he ought not to attribute to himself but to the former? For He it is who is the New Man, who is the Beginner of sanctified newness, and from him also is both the beginning and the end, or consummation of this new creation in which we now live, in which we have passed from death unto life, and in which from children of wrath we are made children of grace, and being purified from dead works we have served the living God."

Ribera on the Apocalypse, p. 64 ;—

"These words may not inaptly be explained in various ways. For the word *Beginning* is expressed by $\eta \alpha\rho\chi\eta$, which word signifies equally beginning, and headship ; and the passage may therefore be rendered 'the headship of the creation of God,' *i. e.*, ruling over all the creatures of God as Creator ; in which way Aretas also first interpreted it. Still, according to our translation it may be rendered the 'Beginning of the creation of God,' since he is the cause of all creatures and the exemplar after which they are made ; which also is the sense of Aretas. I think, however, that in these words there is a sense more recondite, which may be rightly understood if we consider that sometimes in Scripture, especially the New Testament, by 'the creation of God' is signified *man* only ; not such as he was by nature, if indeed he were so created ; nor such as he was made by sin ; but such as he is when renovated by the grace of Christ. He is here said to be a new creature, a new man, and the creation of God. Or, to speak properly, the reparation and renovation itself is called new, or the creation of God. Moreover, after the manner of the Hebrews, creation is put for the thing created, *i. e.*, for man as repaired and renovated by the grace of Christ, 2 Cor. v., 17, 'Therefore if any man be in Christ he

is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new;’ Gal. vi., 15, ‘For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature;’ James i., 18, ‘Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures;’ Ephes. ii., 10, ‘And put on the new man, who according to God is created in righteousness, and the holiness of truth;’ Col. iii., 9, ‘Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.’ In the same sense do we here understand the creation of God; and that Christ is said to be the Beginning of the creation of God, as being the author of all our holiness and our reparation; by whom, and according to whose likeness, we are all renewed. For this reason He is called in Isaiah ix., ‘the Father of the age to come,’ as if from him began a new race. Therefore also it is said in Col. iii., 10, ‘and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.’ And I Cor. xv., 48, ‘As is the earthy, such are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly.’ But for what reason is the title the ‘Beginning of the creation of God’ introduced here? For this; ‘I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich,’ that thou mayest learn to hope in Christ, and to flee to him in order to be renewed and be made the new creation of God. ‘As many as I love, I rebuke,’ &c., that, when afflicted by Christ, thou mayest not despair or doubt of his promises, but understand that he doeth this as the author of renovation, that by means of these afflictions thou mayest be renewed.”

Woodhouse, *Apocalypse*, p. 92;—

“This seems to refer to the new creation, new building, where in Christ all things are made new. There is a new commandment, a new worship, a new temple, a new city not of this building, of which Christ is the corner stone and foundation,” &c.

Thus in the titles Amen, Faithful and True Witness, Beginning of the creation of God, there is a gradation; the

first relates to what is, the second to what is revealed or communicated, the third to what is in consequence effected. (See Gill *in loc.*)

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' ver. 15, 16 ;—

“ ‘I know thy works,’ *signifies* here as before: ‘that thou art neither cold nor hot,’ *signifies*, that they who are such sometimes deny that the Word is divine and holy, and at other times acknowledge it: ‘I would that thou wert cold or hot,’ *signifies*, that it is better for them either from the heart to deny the holy things of the Word and of the church, or from the heart to acknowledge them: ‘Therefore because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth,’ *signifies*, profanation, and separation from the Lord.”

Again, *ibid.*, article 126 ;—

“There are some in the church who believe and do not believe; as for example, they believe that there is a God, that the Word is holy, that there is such a thing as life everlasting, and other matters appertaining to the church and its doctrine, and yet do not believe them: they believe them when they are in their sensual natural state, therefore they believe them when they are in externals, consequently when in society and in conversation with others; but they do not believe them when they are in internals, consequently when they are not in society with others, and in such case are in discourse with themselves. Of these it is said that they are neither hot nor cold, and that they shall be spued out.”

Alcasar, *Apocalypse*, p. 220 ;—

“In these words not only is it signified that lukewarmness is adverse to the stomach, but it is therefore adverse because it is neither cold nor hot, but a partaker of both extremes; and in this consists the force of the metaphor. Moreover this view of the subject is the one which best accords with the greater number of interpretations, &c.”

Ibid, p. 224;—

“*Neither cold nor hot.* Zegerus remarks that this was a proverb; as also another ‘*Neither in, nor out.*’ See Irenæus, book i., chap. ix. Our own proverbial saying is like it, ‘*Neither fish nor flesh.*’”

Pererius, Apocalypse, Disp. xx., p. 819;—

“This is a well-known saying, and has become proverbial, deriving, from the very nature of the thing itself, its force and confirmation from fact. For potions which are very cold or very hot, inasmuch as they have the power of highly contracting and constricting the stomach, effectually keep off a tendency to vomiting; while on the other hand, lukewarm potions excite and provoke it, because they relax and loosen the stomach; a circumstance from which, by reason of a certain agitation and fluctuation as it were of its contents, exists a tendency to vomiting.”

“*I would,* is the expression of one desiring; but how is it that it is desirable to be cold, when in itself it is an evil? Assuredly it is not that it is in itself desirable, but only in comparison with lukewarmness, which is the more pernicious evil of the two; for it is a lesser one in comparison with a greater, and in the opinion of philosophers and theologians, assumes a certain relative character of good. Moreover the word hot does not signify any degree of heat whatsoever, for lukewarmness is in some degree hot; but it signifies that which is vehemently hot or fervid, for this is the signification of the Greek word ζεστος. To be lukewarm, also, does not signify, according to the design and meaning of the Lord in this passage, a middle state imperfectly partaking of hot and cold; for thus it would be signified that he who is imperfectly good and imperfectly evil is worse than he who is perfectly evil and had nothing of good, which is manifestly false. But lukewarmness is here taken in such a sense as to signify that which is contrary to the stomach, exciting it to nausea and vomiting, and in this respect is worse than what is cold or hot.”. . .

The real meaning of *lukewarm* seems to be this; neither exclusively hot nor exclusively cold, but a mixture or medley of hot and cold, so as to be neither one thing nor the other.

Pererius proceeds to point out the character of the lukewarm as given by different interpreters, and on the authority of Victorinus observes that ;—

"The lukewarm are simulators and dissemblers in matters of religion ; either professing or denying it, according as they perceive it conducive to their own selfish and worldly interests ; such as are those who in our own age are commonly called politicians, and who are neither openly heretics, nor openly catholics."

Cœlius Pannonius gives an interpretation, the account of which we take from Pererius, p. 821 ;—

"The lukewarm are hypocrites, who are neither truly good nor openly wicked, who well dissemble the wickedness they do possess, and falsely simulate the virtues they do not possess ; a kind of class which is in itself of the worst order and pernicious to many, and which, as we read in the Gospel, was very frequently reprehended and condemned by our Lord in the most grave and severe language."

Gagneus, *Biblia Maxima*, De la Haye, 751 ;—

"Neither cold, nor hot or fervid ; for this it is which is properly signified by the Greek word ζεστος. He is said to be cold who is plainly destitute of the grace and illumination of the Holy Spirit : he is said to be fervid, who is fervent in spirit ; as Paul says in Rom. xii., 11, 'Fervent in spirit.'"

"On the other hand, he is said to be lukewarm who has indeed the grace of the Holy Spirit, but who through the care and pursuit of worldly things suffers it to die and become extinct, whence says Paul, 'Quench not the spirit.' Or he is cold who has obviously not the fire of faith ; he is fervid who possesses a distinguished faith ; he is lukewarm who has indeed faith, but does not dare to profess it when there is need."

Estius, *Biblia Maxima*, p. 751 ;—

"Some understand that he is cold who has never known the way of truth, and hot who is sincerely faithful, and lukewarm who is a wicked Christian. But the circumstances of the description appear to intimate, that by hot is signified the truly good, by cold the manifestly wicked, by lukewarm the hypocritical, who to himself and others appears good and holy,

and who, since pride is mostly predominant in him, is worse than if he had fallen into open sin. For it is added ‘thou sayest that thou art rich and in need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and poor, and blind,’ &c. Similar to this is what the Lord said to the Pharisees, ‘Would that ye were blind, but now ye say that ye see, therefore your sin remaineth,’ John ix., 41. Those who are there called blind, are here said to be cold, that is, manifest sinners, of whose conversion there is greater hope than of those who make a shew of sanctity. The lukewarm person is worse than the cold, because a pretended sanctity is a twofold iniquity.”

Haymo, Apocalypse ;—

“There are those who part with their worldly wealth, and betaking themselves to some monastery, put on the outward garb of religion ; then afterwards becoming torpid, they imagine that sufficient has been done toward their salvation, because they have parted with their worldly goods, and because the various crimes which the worldly commit, they who have assumed the religious habit do not admit among themselves. For this reason they sleep, and eat, and drink, and live at their ease ; and when they do this, they are lukewarm. Now it had been better for such to have remained in the world, (where they might have discovered their sins, and where being at some time or other by the mercy of God brought to compunction and to the procurement of pardon, they might have pursued good works,) rather than remaining in the monastery to have desisted from them. . . . The lukewarm person is wont to consist of hot and cold ; for some who have been converted from the cold of infidelity do not pass over to the heat of righteousness ; others who before were fervent with the heat of righteousness, turn back in disposition and action to the former cold of iniquity. We all know by experience that what is cold or hot is easily admitted into the body, and what is lukewarm is rejected from the mouth with nausea and vomiting. The mouth of God are holy preachers ; whence the prophets are wont to say, ‘the mouth of the Lord spake this.’ For so great was the sanctity in them, that God dwelt in their hearts, and spake by them as if by his mouth. The mouths of God therefore are the evangelists and other teachers by whose ministry God daily

admits into his body, that is into the church, those who are hot, that is fervent, while by divine preaching they are daily rendered better; and those who are cold, that is infidels, as whenever Jews or Pagans are converted to Christ by the preaching of the faith, and numbered among the society of holy men. . . . The lukewarm, however, they do not convert, because these despise their words, having grown torpid in security. Hence they cease from exhorting them, and abandon them as unfruitful ground, because they see it is impossible to reform them and bring them to a better state of life. For it is easier to bring any pagan to the Christian faith than to recall such persons from torpor to fervency of spirit."

Vitringa, p. 155;—

"*To be cold* is without any doubt to be ignorant of true religion, and not to cultivate it. *To be hot* is to be engaged in true religion with diligence and intense zeal."

If, says Vitringa, we interpret the words as relating to hypocrites, p. 156; "the passage may be understood absolutely thus, that God is more greatly offended by hypocrites in the Christian church, than by heathens who hitherto have not received the true faith in Christ; hence that Jesus Christ, who hates every sin, is yet more averse to the lukewarmness of hypocrites, than the coldness of heathens."

Alcasar on this passage, p. 223;—

. . . "Hypocrisy is of two kinds; the one is of those who wish to deceive others by the simulation of sanctity, but who do not deceive themselves, for they are conscious of their own wicked character; the other is of those who first deceive themselves, when they think themselves righteous, and then wish to appear to others such as they appear to themselves. The first kind of hypocrisy, however subtle it may seem, is too gross to escape detection, nor does the contagion of it spread very far. The second kind is much more subtle and common. For what more cunning fraud of the devil can there be, than for him to deceive a deceiver, and make him believe that his hypocrisy is not deceit but true righteousness? This

evil, moreover, is so common, that among those who are not openly wicked and delivered over to effrontery, scarcely any thing is more prevalent. For to embrace a true and perfect sanctity is the endeavor of but few; but to be deceived with a certain shew of righteousness and forthwith to repute themselves righteous, and to wish to be so reputed, this indeed is a thing which has become familiar, and whose existence is much to be apprehended in our very monasteries; nor will any one doubt that this is the kind of deception referred to in that lukewarmness, concerning which we have interpreted this epistle. To some perhaps it may seem a novelty to say, that they are hypocrites who deceive themselves. I however think otherwise; namely, that this is that very hypocrisy of which Christ the more frequently speaks in the Gospel. For the more widely this evil spreads, the more frequently are the faithful to be admonished to beware of it. It is moreover evident that by Christ they are called hypocrites, who, under a false outward shew of righteousness, yet consider themselves to be righteous. Consider those words of Matt. vii., 5, 'Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.' From the words in the beginning of Matt. vi., Jerome infers, that he who seems to himself righteous when he is not, is a hypocrite. And in Book ii. against the Pelagians, chap. v., he says, 'although we may be without other vices, yet not to have upon us the blot of hypocrisy is the case of few of us, or of none.' Therefore when Jerome explains the name of lukewarm as being that of the hypocrite or simulator of religion, it is to be understood as relating entirely to that species of hypocrisy which we now refer to; as is evident from the context. For the Laodicean is reprehended for this, that whereas he was poor, blind, and naked, he knew not that he was blind, &c. Just as was the case with him to whom it was said, 'Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye.' From which it is evident that this kind of hypocrite does not see, and yet is unconscious of his blindness."

Again, *ibid*, p. 223;—

“Vain glory is of two kinds: the one is that by which a

man attributes to himself the most perfect sanctity ; the other, that in virtue of which, being deceived by a certain shew of righteousness, he reposes himself to be righteous, and wishes to be so reputed by others ; although he manifestly rejects the pursuit of the more perfect life. The first kind of pride, therefore, belongs but to few, while the other is more frequent, as we have already said."

From these remarks we may see that *lukewarmness* arises from a mixture of hot and cold ; consequently that the Laodicean church is a compound of the two, of good and evil, love and aversion, light and darkness, sanctity and secularity, religion and profaneness, certainty and doubt, belief and unbelief, Christianity and atheism, heaven and hell, God and Mammon, Christ and Belial.

Now Vitringa in his Commentary upon Isaiah, refers the sixty-fifth chapter of this prophecy to a description of the Laodicean state, which according to him and other commentators was designed to apply not only to the Jewish but to the Christian church ; for, says he, "under analogies the Spirit designed whatsoever was analogous." Hence, he continues, according to the mind of the Spirit, all false, adulterous religion, invented by the carnal man and imputed to God, of whatever kind it may be, and all the false worship of hypocrites, however otherwise the worship may be commanded by the law, is to be understood as implied in those representations. Hence that all who seek other means of purification than those which are appointed in the Scriptures, or other means of access to God and of worshiping him ; or who attend more to the traditions of men, or opinions concerning the faith which have been enounced by doctors who were obviously devoid of all true life and light ; or who professed a religion which taught them to conjoin communion with God and remission of sins, with a life of sin, lusts, and worldly defilements ; pretending indeed to live in sanctity, but inwardly burning

with hatred and ill-will against Christ Jesus and his disciples and teachers of the truth; these and all other profanations of the like kind, Vitringa considers to be described in the chapter above mentioned, concluding his comments upon the fourth verse with the following observations, vol. ii., p. 1045; Isaiah lxx., 4;—

“Would that the Christian church which has gradually become corrupted, both in the East and the West, had not furnished to the world a similar example in every one of its features! In whatever profession and sect of the Christian religion (I except not our own) we find men who, being wholly given up to impurity of mind, void of love, burning with hatred and ill-will, persecuting their brethren, and in the mean time externally pretending, through hypocrisy, to a severer observance of discipline, and on that account bepraising themselves in public; solemnly cultivate this religion with all its sacred rites; these all run into the very sins described by the prophet. What can present a more plausible aspect, and more strikes the senses than what the eyes of all behold in that most corrupt and polluted Romanistic sect, its monks and regulars of the severer order, (I am not here speaking of *all* of them,) who although inwardly unclean, and far worse than the Pharisees of old, polluted with the worst vices and crimes, stained with the blood of the pious confessors of evangelical doctrine, and thirsting to drink it, nevertheless wish to appear more sanctified than others; who, in dress, ceremonies, and discipline of life, set up a distinction between themselves and others; who, neglecting the Word of God, greedily follow the traditions and ordinances of men; who confirm their errors and superstitions by fictitious and false apparitions of the dead, and seek the cleansing of the soul by lustrations of an external and most superstitious description.”*

* The Laodicean duplicity of character may be illustrated by the following anecdote.

It is recorded of Pope Leo, that while at dinner, two disputants in the character of philosophers were engaged to argue before him on the immortality of the soul, one undertaking to affirm, the other to deny it. The disputation being ended, the settlement of the question was referred to the Pope, who gave his opinion as

But Vitringa does not confine his illustrations of the Laodicean church to the Church of Rome; in his comments on Isaiah, chap. lviii. and lix., he gives a description of the state of the Protestant Church, and in chap. lvi., p. 845, thus observes;—

“It may be urged against us, that it seems a hard thing to apply the argument in chapters lviii., lix. to the Protestant Church. I reply that upon this subject I wish to proceed with timidity and caution. Would that the vices of that church were not such as are there recited! Is anything more said there than what the Lord commands us to see in the image of the church in Laodicea? What if those things did not present an image of the Protestant churches such as they now are, (would that they did not!) may you not justly fear with me their still further collapse? It is a great thing to know one’s own faults. There are, however, learned and holy men who see in the various larger communities of the Protestants, both these very things themselves, and others which are still worse.”

Again, on Isaiah lviii., 1, p. 895;—

“I touch here upon no ulcers of the church, except those which are palpable. He who has no wish for them to be touched, has no wish for them to be cured. He who fears not to recognize his own faults, rejects not a looking-glass. I shall certainly take diligent care not to enlarge beyond its just limits the corruption pertaining to Protestant people, lest I should extenuate the blessings of Divine Providence and grace, which we have hitherto enjoyed. Therefore what the heavenly voice

follows; addressing the one who affirmed the soul’s immortality; “Although your reasons are beautiful and good, nevertheless, I approve of the opinion of this disputant who denies it, as being the more solid opinion of the two, and putting on a good appearance.” Alluding to the same Leo, Picus, a relation of Picus Count of Mirandola, observes, “We remember a Pope, who was in high repute and adored, who having no belief in a God, exceeded the highest pitch of infidelity; as his most iniquitous actions in the purchase of the pontifical office, and also every kind of iniquity testify; and as is confirmed also by his most iniquitous sayings. For it is affirmed that he confessed to some of his domestics, that sometimes when he was occupying the pontifical chair he had not believed in the existence of a God.” (See *Miscellanea Sacra* of Wittsius, vol. i., p. 831.) There is something in Rankes’ *History of the Popes*, vol. i., p. 74, with regard to the priests of Italy in general, during the reign of this Pope, to the same purport.

here commands to faithful teachers, that they should cry aloud and spare not, and lift up their voice like a trumpet, you must consider as addressed to those teachers and preachers in public, who have the care of the churches, and have accomplished their divorce from adulterated Rome.”

In fine from the observation of Vitringa in his Commentary upon Isaiah, and his work upon the Apocalypse, it is clear that he considered either that the Protestant churches had arrived at their consummation, or that the time was fast coming in which it would be effected. Hence in p. 895, he observes on Isaiah lviii., 1 ;—

“The figure used in this address teaches, that the apostacy, the sins, the vices of the people of God, here treated of, had arrived at such a pitch, that they could no longer be endured. That they were highly displeasing to God and provoked his bitterest indignation. That the people of God to whom this argument pertains, were a people great and numerous, but whom no conviction could reach without a loud and long continued cry. That the same people were every where so persuaded of their own meritorious condition, that unless one cried aloud in the name of God, and rebuked the vices of the people in a strain very lengthened and sharp, no result could be looked for, the teachers could effect nothing, and not even gain a hearing. That among the ministers of God there are those who, through indolence or fear, hold their tongue when they ought to cry out, and in this respect fail in the performance of their duty.”

Again in p. 896, after referring to the Reformation and the eminent men who had been raised up from time to time, both in the Church of Rome and in the Protestant Church, to be witnesses against the general corruptions of Christianity, Vitringa thus proceeds ;—

“Among all the people, almost without number, who have separated from Rome, there are extant cases of rebuke not only oral but written and publicly read, and this rebuke too conveyed in a style of sharpness, by which, after the manner here confided to faithful ministers, all the vices of Protestants are

held up to reproof. If you look to the subject matter of them, well might they put the church to shame; but on further consideration, you will be enabled from the very fact itself to collect, that the reproofing Spirit of God remains still with the church, and that God has not yet abandoned it. To this day do those churches continue in the same state, although it is here made a subject of most just complaint. For if it be to the Divine grace we owe the mighty blessing, that in the churches there yet remain those who are willing or bold enough to raise their voice, and in this respect to discharge their duty strenuously; yet alas, how great is the number of the indolent and slothful, who are too much given up to their own interests or pleasures, and being themselves timorous, are silent when they ought to speak; and lest they should give offence to those who are living at ease, speak in a subdued voice when they ought to cry aloud."

After describing the state of the people, as exhibited in Isaiah lviii., 2; with respect to external religion; "Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinance of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God;" Vitringa observes that there are four virtuous characteristics true or feigned, under which the professing people of God are here described. 1. '*They seek me daily,*' i. e., in worship, and the observance of the public ordinances of the church as purified from their previous corruptions, and this with a degree of earnestness and in large assemblages. 2. '*They delight to know my ways;*' namely, from the reading of the Word of God, commenting upon it, explaining it, laboriously illustrating it with the aids of learning, comparing passage with passage, reducing the doctrine contained into a systematic form and accurately digesting it, inculcating the same doctrine with all earnestness, refuting the false opinions opposed to it, reducing the doubtful parts to the smallest proportions, and bringing the obscure into a state of clear-

ness, and the whole wisdom of God into open day, both orally and by writing, as far as they are enabled by the limits of the human understanding and the knowledge of revelation; and all this with great affectation of solicitude for the truth and for the discharge of their own duty. 3. *'They ask of me the ordinances of justice,'* which signify in general all definitions of doctrine and religious discipline, or every divine constitution which settles the rule of faith and conduct, although it has especial relation to the latter. 4. *'They delight in approaching to God,'* *i. e.*, especially in those religious acts by which man is thought to be united to God; namely, prayers, fasting, praises, and singing of hymns, and the celebration of the Lord's supper.

Having given the foregoing interpretations of the words of Isaiah, Vitringa proceeds to the following remarks on their fulfilment in the Protestant churches;—

“That this is a true image of that people who have gone out of mystical Babylon, and separated from it, and who make profession of a pure and chaste religion as derived from the Word of God, there is no man of impartial judgment who will deny. Wherefore, although there is subject matter here for discoursing at length upon each of these heads, I have resolved here to make no such attempt. The only question which will here be raised, is, how the prophet, or God himself, who originates this rebuke, designs to be here understood; whether it was the whole people, as presenting these characteristics, that were in the leaven of hypocrisy; or whether it was many of the people, and the larger part? In the next place, what kind of hypocrisy this was, whether open and manifest, or occult, and of a more comprehensive description. With respect to the first question I observe, that it is not probable that this divine address is to be understood of the whole people who presented these characteristics; for these words may be taken of every time and state of the church, whatever it may be, which answers to this description. For where there is a very large multitude of people presenting the outward appearance here described, it is not credible but that among them there

must be many, and a good number, to whom the laudable pursuits and efforts above described, are matters of care. Certainly, wherever a religion is in public celebrated with purity, the Word of God taught without any serious error, and both are well attended, these things are not without their fruit. Nay, from the section which follows, where is exhibited the confession made by this church, chap. lix., 9, it is perfectly clear that in this multitude there were many who grieved over the general decline of the people. Consequently this reproof must be understood with respect to the larger proportion of those who were called the people of God. Hence we may easily resolve the other doubt, namely, whether in describing the larger portion of the people by these externally praiseworthy qualities, God is charging them with hypocrisy. I answer, this may be rightly said, if only it be rightly understood. There is one species of hypocrisy, truly and properly so called, by which a person falsely assumes a character, and knowingly and wilfully pretends and professes to be a different one from that which he is; a kind of hypocrisy which I do not recognize as existing in the larger number of this people. Nor does God so recount their qualities as if he were altogether disapproving them; indeed, on the contrary, he seems to concede something to the people addressed. For if they were conscious to themselves of this detestable hypocrisy, which is justly classed among the worst of vices, with what assurance could they consider God as being in some sort a debtor to them in respect of their observance of religious worship? which false persuasion appertained to them, as is abundantly evident from the next sentence. But in things divine, every action which in itself may be good and praiseworthy, yet which does not originate from that principle which God requires in him who does it, is called hypocrisy. All worship of God which originates from ignorance, custom, thoughtless conformity, impetuous feeling, or prejudice, is hypocrisy; although the persons who observe this kind of worship, do not perceive it in themselves as any fault. All study of the Word of God, all the actions which have relation to it, such as those of teaching, preaching, commenting, disputing; if not proceeding from an interior love of the truth, or from a view to the divine glory,

but only from a prevailing regard to honor and personal interest, or from their being esteemed as the drudgery and routine of an office which we are obliged to discharge, or merely from a regard to victory; these things, though not performed by men who are of the worst stamp, nor altogether devoid of love and reverence toward God, are yet in the court of heaven hypocrisy. Every action, however good and holy and praiseworthy in itself, yet conjoined with any reigning sin, such as lust, pride, self-love, injustice, avarice, is in the court of heaven equivalent to hypocrisy; although the persons themselves who are in this state may be unwilling to regard themselves as hypocrites. Thus the people in general, thus the learned among the people, and men engaged in commercial pursuits, who in other respects are by no means to be despised, are yet many of them in a state of hypocrisy; having their hearts divided between God and the world, however they may persuade themselves that their state before God is without reproach. This is the hypocrisy here denoted as existing in the larger part of the people of God. There was in them some desire after truth and religion, and delight and progress in religious pursuits; but it was conjoined with vicious affections, and predominating sins, for which cause their works were not found to be full before God.”

The following note of Barnes on the foregoing passage from Isaiah, appropriately describes the Laodicean character;—

“They ask of me the ordinances of justice. Their priests and prophets consult about the laws and institutions of religion as if they were really afraid of violating the divine commands. At the same time that they are full of oppression, strife, debate, and wickedness, they are scrupulously careful about violating any of the commands pertaining to the rites of religion. The same people were subsequently so conscientious, that they did not dare to enter the judgment hall of Pilate, lest they should disqualify themselves for partaking of the passover, at the same time that they were meditating the death of their own Messiah, and were actually engaged in a plot to secure his crucifixion, John xix., 28. And it is often the case that hypocrites are most scrupulous and conscientious about forms,

just as they are meditating some plan of enormous guilt, and as they are accomplishing some scheme of deep depravity."

Bishop Lowth observes, that nothing is more usual than for the prophets to describe the state of the Christian church by representations taken from the Jewish temple and service; and in Isaiah chap. lvi., that what Calvin saith upon the place, 'The prophet uses such expressions with relation to the Gospel times as are taken from the usages of his own time,' . . . is a good rule of explaining the idioms of the prophetic writings. With this rule before him, Scott makes the same application of the prophecies of Isaiah to the Protestant church as Vitringa, Gill, and others, and in the same strain.

"I will spue thee out of my mouth." Laetus, article *Vomere*;—

"God is said to vomit out those who have faith without works, as being lukewarm, and by no means agreeable to himself. (Ambrose.) The tables of heretics and of the Jews also, their whole teaching and all their mysteries, are full of vomit and filth, when they digest not the food of the Holy Scriptures, nor cause them to give life to the whole body, but cast them out as undigested and fœtid, so that God finds no place in them. (Jerome.)

. . . "He is said to vomit out the food which he had eaten, who detests the errors which he had learned, or who suffers for them in infernal torment." (Bede.)

Poole's Synopsis, Isaiah xxviii., 7;—

"They also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink; they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment; for all places are full of vomit and filthiness, 'so that there is no place clean.' Wine and strong drink are here spoken of metaphorically, for he does not speak of common drunkenness, against which he had inveighed at the beginning of the chapter, but rather says that they are like to the drunken, because as the whole context teaches, they were

deficient in a right understanding. (Calvin.) They have erred in vision, that is, in prophecy or doctrine. They care not what they teach, so that they patronize licentiousness and please the people. (Anglicæ Annotationes.) They have followed false prophets. . . The prophets and priests, the two lights of the Jewish people, have erred, (Musculus;) those whose order was illustrious and who derived their testimony from the Word of God, were not only corrupt in their morals, but erred in reason and judgment, as is here shewn. Wherefore nothing is more futile than, under the pretext of a titular office, to exempt impious priests from the danger of erring, (Calvin;) . . . by tables full of vomit are meant tribunals full of corrupt judgments.” (Grotius.)

Vitringa, Commentaries, Isaiah xxviii., 8;—

“ ‘All tables are full of filthy vomit.’ No wise man, and who is skilled in the Word of God, will understand these things literally; for it is foreign to reason and the usages of human life, to suppose that human beings, whatever state they might be placed in, were so destroyed by indulgence as to fill all places with their vomit, without any place being left free. Now, lest any inconsiderate reader should deviate from the meaning of the prophet, the latter interprets himself in the sequel, ver. 9, 10. By *tables* are here understood the public places in which a public profession is made of the teaching of religion; such as schools of celebrity, lecture rooms, public auditories, in which teachers authoritatively promulgate, expound, and commend for adoption their doctrines to their hearers; and these hearers, if they receive and participate in them, are said to eat and to drink. But as he who loads his stomach with too large a quantity of food and drink, is compelled by a feeling of distress, to unload it by vomit, which in the case of the glutton brings back the excrements with a disgusting appearance, and rebukes his intemperance; so in this place the prophet by this apt and instructive metaphor teaches two things, 1. That Pharisaical teaching, highly commendable to carnal prejudices and affections, was by many of the disciples of the learned Pharisees most greedily and, so to speak, gluttonously swallowed; as in that teaching there was a speciousness not to be despised. 2. Consequently that the dis-

ciples would very copiously reproduce the doctrine they had swallowed, and give it back to others in their turn, and this with a great zeal for their party; a circumstance which happens whenever the disciples of these teachers, after their promotion to professional or synodical chairs, from those principles of false doctrine which they had greedily swallowed in the schools, with pressing and zealous impetuosity eject and spout out similar doctrines or opinions, which they first received when they drew them in from their teachers, and which then becoming ejected, are here called vomit and filthy excrement by reason of their foulness and fœtor; for the doctrines and opinions were putrid and fœtid, and ought, had they been rightly considered, to have excited nausea and disgust among all. Certainly the prophet saw them as such, and he saw with a right eye. In the metaphor, as I have explained it, there is nothing either of affectation or novelty. It occurs entire in Prov. ix., 1, where Supreme Wisdom by her maidens, that is, teachers of the Gospel, invites all people to partake of the food and drink which she had provided upon her plenteous table. The precepts of wisdom are understood by those who have the privilege to cultivate her friendship. In both cases the similitude is the same; except that, in Proverbs, true doctrine is spoken of; and in Isaiah, that which is false. Poets, however, and writers, other circumstances apart, when they speak of learning derived from a teacher or perceived by inspiration from the Deity, use the words to swallow, to drink, to taste. Nothing is more common."

Bede, Apocalypse, p. 354;—

"'Neither cold nor hot,' &c. Thou art neither fervent in faith, nor yet altogether without faith. Now wert thou still without faith, there would be some hope of converting thee. But now since thou hast known the will of God, and doest it not, thou shalt be cast forth from out of the viscera of my church." See also Ribera.

Lauretus, article *Os*;—

"The mouth of God signifies his WORD and precepts, particularly the precept of charity." (Bede, Jerome, Augustin, Gregory, Eucherius, Ambrose, Rupertus.)

“That is to say,” observes Vitringa, Apocalypse, chap. iii., “he will in disgust separate them from himself, to as great a distance as possible, as being persons who excite in him a feeling of nausea.” We have already seen that our Lord is speaking as the Amen, The Faithful and True Witness, or the Truth itself, and the Witness of the truth to his church. Therefore when he says he will spue them out of his mouth, it indicates that the truth rejects them; hence that although they profess to teach it, their teaching is nauseating; that as The Faithful and True Witness he rejects their testimony, denies their claims to be True and Faithful Witnesses, and declares the necessity of their whole church being created anew by himself, as The Amen, or The Truth, or The Word.

Hot and cold, however, have relation more especially to the will and its affections; which are those from which the Lord formed his judgment of their whole character, and hence of their professed and orthodox doctrine as a church. It appears, however, that the church of Laodicea judged of herself, not only from the state of her will, but especially from the nature of her wisdom; hence from her intellectual powers, and professedly sound teaching.

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 17;—

“‘Because thou sayest I am rich and increased with goods,’ *signifies*, that they think that they possess in all abundance the knowledges of what is good and true, which are of heaven and the church: ‘and have need of nothing,’ *signifies*, that they have no need of more wisdom: ‘and knowest not that thou art wretched,’ *signifies*, that the things which they know concerning heaven and the church do not at all cohere: ‘and miserable and poor,’ *signifies*, that they are without understanding as to what is true, and without will as to what is good.”

Grotius, Apocalypse, p. 3;—

"There is here a gradation. It is *much* to be rich; it is *more*, when one is rich, to be still further increased in goods; it is *most of all* to be plainly in want of nothing. Such do they appear to themselves who perceive within themselves any degree of faith, and make profession of Christianity, and when they possess these things suppose that nothing is now wanting to their salvation; see James ii., 25. A figure of these we see in the ten tribes of the Israelites, who also themselves said that they were *rich*; Hos. xii., 8."

Alcasar, p. 281;—

"The lukewarm, to excuse their lukewarmness, say that Christ is very rich, and that he has no need that the faithful should much harass themselves in performing obedience to him."

... "The name of *riches* is to be referred either to boasting in the riches of Christ, viz., because the Laodicean thought that he was rich, and increased in goods from this, that he was a Christian, and could enjoy the riches of Christ; or perhaps it is to be referred to the possession of *wisdom*, in that he thought himself wise and in need of *no different doctrine*; or it is to be referred to the riches of his own virtue."

Glossa Ordinaria;—

"Cleansed in baptism, or *rich in divine or worldly knowledge*."

"De Lyra. Rich in knowledge and virtue—falsely boasting of your merits."

Richard of St. Victor, Apocalypse, p. 220;—

"Rich and increased in wealth is the same thing; but is pronounced twice, that the quantity of the wealth may be the more highly extolled. 'Thou sayest I am rich, and increased in wealth;' namely, either by the *knowledge of science*, or by the preaching of Scripture, or by the splendor of worldly eloquence, or by the administration of the sacraments, or by the dignity of the pontifical elevation, or by the empty praise of the public."

Cornelius a Lapide, 1 Cor. iv., 8;—

"'Now ye are full, now ye are rich.' Full, that is, of *wisdom*, grace, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in which ye boast of being not so much Corinthians as rather authoritative teachers; as if nothing more remained in Christianity for you to learn,

but that ye were as perfect teachers, when ye are yet searely the learners of *true and perfect wisdom*.”

Estius, 1 Cor. iv., 8 ;—

“ ‘ Now ye are full.’ An ironical address in which he derides those teachers, who not only glory in themselves and not in God, by reason of the goods which they possess, but who ascribe to themselves an abundance and a superexcellence of goods which they do not possess. Now says he, ‘ Ye are full ;’ *i. e.*, ye are full to satiety of *wisdom* and other gifts. For so thought they of themselves.”

“ ‘ Now ye are rich,’ or have grown rich ; *i. e.*, so abounding in wealth, that ye are enabled to pour out your gifts upon others also. Against those who are rich in their own opinion after this manner, the Spirit thus speaks in Apocalypse, chap. iii. : ‘ Thou sayest that thou art rich and increased in goods, and in need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’”

Vitringa observes, p. 156, that the church of Laodicea

“ Boasted that she was rich and increased in goods ; *i. e.*, that she excelled in spiritual blessings, especcially in a belief of the truth and a profound knowledge of the mysteries of salvation. That allusion is here made principally to a *sublime knowledge of the dogmas of religion*, appears to me evident. For it is in this sense that St. Paul manifestly made use of this notion previously to the Corinthians ; 1 Cor. i., 5 ; iv., 8.”

Gill also observes upon this passage, p. 713, that it may mean that the Laodicean church thought she was rich and increased “ with outward peace and prosperity, with much natural and *divine light and knowledge*, with the purity of Gospel ordinances, even beyond the former church-state in her own imagination ;” &c., &c.

Thus Alcasar says, the Laodicean considered himself to be in the possession of wisdom, and to be in need of no different doctrine ; the Glossa Ordinaria, to be rich in divine knowledge ; De Lyra, to be in possession of knowledge, &c., of which he boasted falsely ; Richard of St. Victor, to be proud of knowledge, preaching, pontifical elevation, &c. ;

Cornelius a Lapide, to be a perfect teacher, as if nothing remained for him to learn ; Estius, to be full of wisdom to satiety ; Gregory, to arrogate to himself great sanctity ; Vitringa, to lay claim to a sublime knowledge of the dogmas of religion ; and Gill, to lay claim to much natural and divine light.

If now we consider Laodicea to represent a church, then will all this represent a church in contrast with that of Philadelphia. Since Philadelphia made but very humble pretensions ; regarding her own powers as very feeble, and placing no confidence in them, as we have already seen. Thus when to the Philadelphian church it was said, "These things saith He who is Holy and True," that church was seen to ascribe holiness and truth to the Lord alone. It would have been, therefore, inconsistent with the Philadelphian church, but not inconsistent with the Laodicean, to comment on this title, as A Lapide does, in Dan. ix., in the following words : "Hence the Roman Pontiff is called Our Most Holy Lord, or His Holiness, because he represents Christ, who is the Holy of Holies, and because by this title he is reminded of what sort of pastor and bishop he ought to be over so many millions of souls, that he may lead them all to the sanctity and salvation imparted by Christ." We do not find that the church in Philadelphia required to be thus reminded ; or that she regarded her own feeble powers as representative of omnipotence.

It should also be observed, that in like manner as the church in Philadelphia derived her wisdom from the Word of God, and ascribed to Him alone the possession of the keys, it would have been equally inconsistent with that church, though consistent with the church in Laodicea, so to interpret our Lord's claim to the key of David, whether in opening the Scriptures or the gates of heaven and hell, as to maintain that these keys are delivered to herself, and

that consequently she herself possess the power either solely by herself, or in participation with the Lord, of opening the Word of God and the gates of heaven and hell.

Upon this point, however, we are at present silent, in order that the church of Rome may speak for herself, and give her own interpretations of the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters of the Apocalypse in the sequel. We proceed, therefore, with illustrations of the state of the Protestant churches, as given by Protestant writers.

Now in Holy Scripture it is said of the church, “Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God.” Accordingly we read (as in Wordsworth’s *Theophilus Anglicanus*, chap. iii., on the Dignity and Glory of the Church) that she is there called the body and spouse of Christ, the king’s daughter, the queen at the right hand of the Messiah, the Lord’s vineyard, the kingdom of heaven, of God, of grace, of light; the mountain of the Lord to which all nations shall flow; the house built on a rock, the pillar and ground of the truth, the city of God, the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all.

The church of Laodicea then having degenerated into a state in which she is puffed up with herself as a teacher of the truth, and tenaciously retains the titles of a true church, is represented as producing in her Lord and Saviour the same nausea and vomiting which a false friend produces by great professions of fidelity. We are sick of him. And if Laodicea represents the last state of the church, as it does according to some, then is the last state of the church the most self-satisfied, self-laudatory, and self-sufficient. “I am rich and in need of nothing.” . . . “I sit as a queen and shall know no sorrow.” . . .

Wittsius, *Miscellanea Sacra*, vol. i., p. 664;—

“The Laodicean church represents the condition of the latter times; and the commencement of that inculpatèd age the pious

witness with grief in England, France, Belgium, and indeed where not?" . . .

. . . "But to what purpose do we seek elsewhere what is so rife in Belgium? where, as writes an author, a desire after truth draws scarcely a single breath; and, what is the head of our offence, life does not correspond to doctrine, but differs from it *toto celo*. There, even the persons who are reputed as patrons of the truth have more fear for themselves and their own fame, lest it should suffer detriment, than they have for the truth. So that if you examine their words and deeds, instead of a pure and sound theology you meet with nothing but time-serving shiftings and shufflings, by the aid of which they endeavor to make their escape unharmed, only being not absolutely reckless concerning the truth. For this reason, or else for others which, as in a drama, we mention only aside. . . . We in the meantime *seem to ourselves to be rich*, and our pulpits are frequently sounding forth that the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord; that in our doctrine nothing remains to be amended, nothing to be added," &c.

But there is another sense in which the title *rich* has been interpreted. Thus Haymo, Apocalypse, chap. iii.;—

"Many there are who say this, 'I am rich in faith; for the Lord says, Whosoever believes and is baptized shall be saved; and I am increased in wealth, because I both teach rightly, and am not a servant to any evil works.' Another says, 'I am in need of nothing;' because while rightly believing he not only does not perpetrate crimes, but performs even some good works, although not for the sake of God: whence also it is added, 'and knowest not that thou art *wretched*,' because while deceiving yourself, you think you can be *saved by faith alone*, when it is written, Faith, if it hath not works, is in itself dead; and *miserable*, because you perceive not that you are deluding yourself; and poor, because you have not works with which to be enriched in heaven, nor a right knowledge; *naked*, because you are destitute of virtues; and blind, because you have not the light of knowledge." See also Alcasar.

This view of the subject is confirmed by the following interpretation from the Family Bible;—

“Many are the professed Christians in all countries, as well as in Laodicea, who, contented to be named after their Redeemer, are indifferent to their actions and their consequences. Supposing themselves rich in his merits, and wanting nothing, they fall into a sort of lifeless Christianity, which must needs be disgusting to that zealous Master who suffered so much for them, laying so fair a foundation for their active exertions. Here He calls upon such persons to examine their situation; they are poor instead of rich, naked instead of clothed, and blind, that is, wilfully ignorant.—Dean Woodhouse.” See also Jones.

Ostervald on the Causes of the present Corruption of Christians, p. 135;—

. . . “It is believed by many that God requires nothing else of men but *confidence*, and that if they are in that disposition they cannot come short of salvation. They think that in order to salvation, it is enough to acknowledge that they are miserable sinners, and to trust in the divine mercy and in the merits of Jesus Christ.”

Ibid., p. 136;—

“As to *confidence*, it is spoken of in such a manner as makes people conceive it is the more effectual to salvation the firmer it is, and the more removed from doubt. The greatest sinner relies boldly upon the mercy of God, and does not question but that he has a right to apply to himself all the promises of the Gospel provided he believe; that is to say, as it is meant, so he has but *confidence* enough.”

Ibid., p. 162;—

. . . “Men place faith in *confidence* alone, and many define it by that.”

Ibid., p. 246;—

“A minister speaks to a sick person of the pardon of his sins; he exhorts him to leave the world with joy, he discourses to him of the happiness of another life, and fills him with the most comfortable hopes: and perhaps this sick person is a man loaded with guilt, a wretch who has lived like an atheist, who has committed divers sins for which he has made no satisfaction, who has not practised restitution, who never knew his religion, and who is actually impenitent. Such a man ought to tremble,

and yet such consolations from the mouth of his pastor makes him think that he dies in a state of grace."

"But if this way of visiting and comforting the sick betrays them into security, it has the same effect upon the standers by, who, when they hear the consolations which are administered to persons whom every body knows not to have led very Christian lives, make a tacit inference that the same things will be said to them, and that their death will be happy whatever their past life may have been."

Dr. Samuel Clarke observes in his works, vol. i., p. 252 ;—

"Every opinion that gives licence to any sort of debauchery, that gives men encouragement to sin, in hopes that grace may abound ; turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, as the apostle expresses it, and making Christ the minister of sin ; every such opinion, I say, is a root of bitterness, and brings forth fruit unto death. Of this sort is that desperate notion which has prevailed so much in the church of Rome, a relying upon repeated confessions and absolutions for the pardon of sins, in the practice of which they still however continue. And of the same kind is that dangerous expectation even among Protestants too, when men of loose and debauched lives flatter themselves that without any real virtue or holiness they shall be accepted of God, upon their performing on a bed of sickness and at the approach of death some of those external duties which were instituted on purpose to be obligations and assistances to holiness of life. But our rule is one and plain ; he that doeth righteousness is righteous."

Fletcher of Madely, *Check to Antinomianism*, p. 10, (8vo. edition,) concerning the state of Protestantism in his own day ;—

"Others, quietly settled on the lees of the Laodicean state, by the whole tenor of their life say, They are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; utter strangers to hunger and thirst after righteousness, they never importunately beg, never wrestle hard for the hidden manna : on the contrary, they sing a requiem to their poor dead souls, and say, ' Soul, take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up (in Christ) for many years,

yea, for ever and ever ;' and thus, like Demas, they go on talking of Christ and heaven, but loving their ease, and enjoying this present world."

"Yet many of these, like Herod, hear and entertain us gladly ; but like him also, they keep their beloved sin, pleading for it as a right eye, and saving it as a right hand. To this day their bosom corruption is not only alive, but indulged ; their treacherous Delilah is hugged ; and their spiritual Agag walks delicately, and boasts that the bitterness of death is past, and he shall never be hewed in pieces before the Lord : nay, to dare so much as to talk of his dying before the body, becomes an almost unpardonable crime."

"Forms and fair shows of godliness deceive us : many, whom our Lord might well compare to whited sepulchres, look like angels of light when they are abroad, and prove tormenting fiends at home. We see them weep under sermons, we hear them pray and sing with the tongues of men and angels ; they even profess the faith that removes mountains ; and yet, by and by, we discover they stumble at every mole-hill ; every trifling temptation throws them into peevishness, fretfulness, impatience, ill humor, discontent, anger, and sometimes into loud passion."

"Relative duties are by many grossly neglected : husbands slight their wives, or wives neglect and plague their husbands ; children are spoiled, parents disregarded, and masters disobeyed ; yea, so many are the complaints against servants professing godliness, on account of their unfaithfulness, indolence, pert answering again, forgetfulness of their menial condition, or insolent expectations, that some serious persons, prefer those who have no knowledge of the truth to those who make a high profession of it."

"Knowledge is certainly increased ; many run to and fro after it, but it is seldom experimental ; the power of God is frequently talked of, but rarely felt, and too often cried down under the despicable name of frames and feelings. Numbers seek by hearing a variety of gospel ministers, reading all the religious books that are published, learning the best tunes for our hymns, disputing on controverted points of doctrine, telling or hearing church news, and listening to or retailing spiritual

scandal. But alas! few strive in pangs of heart-felt convictions; few deny themselves, and take up the cross daily; few take the kingdom of heaven by the holy violence of wrestling faith, and agonizing prayer; few see, and fewer live in, the kingdom of God, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. In a word, many say, Lo! Christ is here; and lo! he is there; but few can consistently witness that the kingdom of heaven is within them."

"Many assert that the clothing of the king's daughter is of wrought gold; but few, very few, experience that she is all glorious within; and it is well if many are not bold enough to maintain that she is 'all full of corruptions!'" . . .

"The consequences of this high, and yet lifeless profession, are as evident as they are deplorable. Selfish views, sinister designs, inveterate prejudice, pitiful bigotry, party spirit, self-sufficiency, contempt of others, envy, jealousy, making men offenders for a word, (possibly a scriptural word too,) taking advantage of each other's infirmities, magnifying innocent mistakes, putting the worst construction upon each other's words and actions, false accusations, back-biting, malice, revenge, persecution, and a hundred such evils prevail among religious people, to the great astonishment of the children of the world, and the unspeakable grief of the true Israelites that yet remain among us."

"But this is not all. Some of our hearers do not even keep to the great outlines of heathen morality: not satisfied practically to reject Christ's declaration, that it is more blessed to give than to receive, they proceed to the pitch of covetousness and daring injustice, as not to pay their just debts; yea, and to cheat and to extort whenever they have a fair opportunity. How few of our societies are there where this, or some other evil, has not broken out, and given such shakes to the ark of the Gospel, that had not the Lord wonderfully interposed, it must long ago have been overset! And you know how to this day the name and truth of God are openly blasphemed among the baptized heathen, through the Antinomian lives of many, who say they are Jews when they are not, but by their works declare they are of the synagogue of Satan. At your peril, therefore, my brethren, countenance them not: I know you

would not do it designedly, but you may do it unawares; therefore take heed;—more than ever take heed to your doctrine. Let it be scripturally evangelical: give not the children's bread unto dogs: comfort not people that do not mourn. When you should give emetics, do not administer cordials, and by that means strengthen the hands of the slothful and unprofitable servant. I repeat it once more, warp not to Antinomianism, and in order to this, 'Take heed: O! take heed to your doctrine.'"

Again, p. 59;—

"Is not Antinomianism of hearers fomented by that of preachers? Does it not become us to take the greatest part of the blame upon ourselves, according to the old adage, 'Like priest, like people?' Is it surprising that some of us should have an Antinomian audience? Do we not make or keep it so? When did we preach such a practical sermon as that of our Lord on the mount, or write such close letters as the Epistles of St. John? Alas! I doubt it is but seldom. Not living so near to God ourselves as we should, we are afraid to come near to the consciences of our people. The Jews said to our Lord, 'in so saying thou reproachest us;' but now the case is altered; and our auditors might say to many of us, 'in so saying you would reproach yourselves.'"

Again, p. 60;—

"How few of our celebrated pulpits are there, where more has not been said *at times* for sin than against it! With what an air of positiveness and assurance, has that Barabbas, that murderer of Christ and souls been pleaded for!"

Again, p. 61;—

"And suppose some of us preach against Antinomianism, is not our practice contrary to our preaching? We are under a dangerous mistake, if we think ourselves clear from Antinomianism, merely because we thunder against Antinomian principles. For as some who zealously maintain such principles, by the happiest inconsistency in the world, pay nevertheless in their practice a proper regard to the law they revile; so not a few, who profess the deepest respect for it, are so unhappily inconsistent, as to transgress it without ceremony. The God

of holiness says, 'Go and work in my vineyard;' the inconsistent Antinomian answers, 'I will not be bound by any law; I scorn the ties of duty;' but nevertheless he repents and goes. The inconsistent legalist replies, 'It is my bounden duty to obey; I go, Lord;' nevertheless he does not go. Which of the two is the greater Antinomian? The latter, no doubt; his practical Antinomianism is much more odious to God and man, than the speculative error in the former."

"The Lord God help us to avoid both! Whether the hellish wolf comes barefaced or in sheep's clothing; or, what is a still more dangerous disguise, in lamb's clothing; in the clothes of the shepherd, covered from head to foot in a righteousness which he had imputed to himself, and sings the syren song of finished salvation."

Cornelius a Lapide, Apocalypse, p. 72;—

"Beautifully does St. Gregory, book xxxiv., Moral, chap. iii., explain these words in the Apocalypse. 'He asserts himself to be rich as it were who is self-extolled by arrogating sanctity to himself; but who is rebuked as being poor, and blind, and naked. *Poor*, because he possesses not the riches of virtues; *blind*, because the poverty he experiences he does not see; *naked*, because he has lost his primitive garment, and what is worse, does not know that he has lost it.' . . . There is a golden sentence of St. Augustin, num. xxvii.; no one says he can be so learned, no one so well taught, as not to need illustration from above. For no increase of divine goods in any one can suffice to prevent something or other always remaining, which the rational mind desires both to understand and to put into practice."

Richard of St. Victor, Apocalypse, p. 221;—

"*Poor*, through the loss of charity; for without charity any one is poor, even though he possess all other goods. *Blind*, through the loss of knowledge, because he who in his knowledge possesses not the truth, sees neither himself nor what is conducive to his welfare. *Naked*, through the loss of good works, because he whom the devil denudes of good works, hath nothing with which to adorn himself before his neighbor or to cover his nakedness. He was therefore *miserable*, and appeared

to be miserable, because having lost the virtue of charity, the knowledge of truth, the garment of good works, he had remained poor, and blind, and naked.”

See also Alcasar, p. 282.

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ verse 18;—

“‘I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich,’ *signifies*, an admonition to acquire to themselves the good of love from the Lord by means of the Word, that they may become wise: ‘and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed,’ *signifies*, that they should acquire to themselves genuine truths of wisdom: ‘that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear,’ *signifies*, lest the good of celestial love should be profaned and adulterated: ‘and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see,’ *signifies*, that their understanding may be healed.”

Pererius, Apocalypse, Disp. xxiii., p. 822;

“That which in this passage is called gold tried in the fire, many interpret to be wisdom; whether it be that which is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, or that which contains the knowledge of the divine Word and the Holy Scriptures. So it is understood by Ambrose, Andreas, B. Gregory, and Primasius. Others under the name and similitude of gold conceive that fervent charity is signified, &c., or Christ himself as burning with the fire of the passion. Let the reader hear how Ambrose interprets wisdom. ‘By gold,’ says he, ‘is understood wisdom,’ as it is written, ‘In the mouth of the wise is a desirable treasure.’ It is said to be tried, because those whom wisdom possesses it renders approved and perfect. It is therefore called ‘gold tried in the fire,’ because the minds of those in whom wisdom dwells it inflames into a love of God and the neighbor. And because true wisdom accrues from the divine Scriptures, so in like manner are the sacred words of God called pure words, and silver tried in the fire, and separated from earth, and purified sevenfold.’ . . . Nor unlike to this is the interpretation of Andreas. . . . The interpretation of the blessed Gregory also looks the same way. . . . ‘What ought we

to understand by gold but wisdom? of which Solomon says, 'In the mouth of the wise is a desirable treasure;' for he saw that wisdom is gold, which he therefore called a treasure; rightly indeed is wisdom designated by the name of gold; for as with gold we buy things temporal, so with wisdom we buy the goods that are eternal.' . . . In agreement with this, Rupertus on this passage writes; 'It is expedient that you should know this, said the Lord to the bishop of Laodicea; Know thou, that it is I who am rich and that in me are hidden all the treasures of wisdom, but thou art poor. If thou knowest this, buy of me the gold of wisdom tried in the fire of love, and proved by a faith working through love.' . . . To the same view of the subject pertain the observations upon this passage made by Joachim. . . . 'Love,' says he, 'is the true fire proceeding from this ignited gold, *i. e.*, from the divine ignited word of which the Psalmist spoke, 'Thy Word is vehemently on fire, and thy servant hath loved it.' He seems to confine the gold to wisdom, the fire to love; that like as we understand heat to proceed from the rays of the sun, so love proceeds from wisdom. For this is the gold ignited, &c.; this is the shining precept of the Lord, giving light to the eyes: this is the garment which covers a multitude of sins; the wisdom, I say, not of this world which inflates the mind with pride, but the wisdom which is from God, which cannot inflate the soul, because it has love conjoined with it; and charity edifieth and dissipates all inflated notions arising from pride.' . . .

Dionysius the Carthusian (Pererius, p. 823);—

. . . "In like manner according to Job the gift of wisdom cannot be worthily valued at any earthly price of gold, silver, or precious stones; Solomon also affirming this, who observes; 'Wisdom is more precious than riches, and all the things which can be desired cannot be compared with her.' There is a way, however, in which it may be said to be bought of God at a certain spiritual price; namely, by diligent and pious prayers, by ardent desires, by works of justice, mercy, and penitence; by a voluntary poverty, a contempt of all earthly goods, denial of self-will, and continued study after evangelical perfection, and the imitation of Christ.' . . .

Poole's Synopsis, p. 1718; observes that according to Menochius and Simplicius, &c., "*gold* means *burning charity*; and according to Grotius it signifies the *permanent affection* with which God and the neighbor are loved."

"And anoint thine eyes with eyesalve."

According to Swedenborg eyesalve or *collyrium* was an ointment made of flour and oil; because flour is the truth of faith, and oil the good of love.

Piscator says that *eyesalve* means *celestial doctrine*; Primasius, that it means *celestial wisdom* derived from a contemplation of the attributes of God, &c.

Glossa Ordinaria;—

"The eyes are anointed that we may see, when by the medicament of good works we assist the eye of the intellect in perceiving the clearness of the true light."

Robertson, p. 64;—

"In a spiritual sense, it must signify the illumination of the Holy Ghost, Eph. i., 18. 'The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling.' And yet more plainly, if anything can be so, this same apostle tells us of the anointing that we have received of Christ, 1 John ii., 27. The design of this is, that they might see. In all these three, it is very plain that a sense of our misery is necessary to our cure." See also Lyranus to the same effect.

Glasse also observes, p. 1792; that—

"Eyesalve is a symbol of the saving *Word*, by which man is illuminated."

Scott likewise writes to the same effect, as follows;—

"So Christ directed them to 'anoint their eyes with eyesalve, that they might see:' let them examine themselves by the rule of his Word, and pray earnestly for the teaching of his Holy Spirit, to purge away their pride, prejudices, and worldly lusts; that they might learn their own real character and situation, and the nature and preciousness of his salvation, and value it in a more suitable manner."

SWEDENBORG, 'APOCALYPSE REVEALED,' ver. 19, 20 ;—

“ ‘As many as I love I rebuke and chasten,’ *signifies*, that because in such case they are beloved, they cannot but be admitted to temptations : ‘be zealous therefore and repent,’ *signifies*, that this should be done from the affection of truth : ‘behold I stand at the door and knock,’ *signifies*, that the Lord is present to every one in the Word, and is there pressing to be received, and teacheth how : ‘if any man hear my voice and open the door,’ *signifies*, whoso believeth in the Word and lives according to it : ‘I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me,’ *signifies*, that the Lord joineth himself with them, and them with himself.”

“Behold I stand at the door and knock.”

Poole's Synopsis, p. 1719 ;—

“*At the door*, namely, of thy heart, (Cluverus, &c.) *i. e.*, of thy intellect and will. (Tirinus.) . . . *I knock* : by frequent illuminations and internal and external awakenings. (Tirinus.) *To knock* ; is by words of internal inspiration to seek to be admitted. (Ribera, Menochius.) Christ knocketh both outwardly by the preaching of the law and the Gospel, by crosses and afflictions, and inwardly by his grace illuminating the minds of men and opening their hearts, &c. (Pareus.) He shews that Christ is solicitous and importunate to do this. . . . (Durham.) The loud calling and knocking here signify those thoughts which are infused by God to warm the conscience of the sinner, &c.” (Grotius.)

Burnett, Thirty-nine Articles, p. 422 ;—

“When the Jews were offended at the hardness of Christ's discourse, he said, ‘It is the spirit that quickeneth ; the flesh profiteth nothing : the words I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life ;’ which do plainly import, that his former discourse was to be understood in a spiritual sense, that it was a divine spirit that quickened them, or gave them that eternal life, of which he had been speaking ; and that the flesh, his natural body, was not the conveyer of it.”

“All that is confirmed by the sense in which we find eating and drinking frequently used in the Scriptures, according to what is observed by Jewish writers; they stand for wisdom, learning, and all intellectual apprehensions, through which the soul of man is preserved, by the perfection that is in them, as the body is preserved by food: so, buy and eat; eat fat things; drink of wine well refined.”

“Maimonides also observes, that whensoever eating and drinking are mentioned in the Book of Proverbs, they are to be understood of wisdom and the law: and after he has brought several places of Scripture to this purpose, he concludes that because this acceptation of eating occurs so often, and is so manifest, as if it were the primary and most proper sense of the word; therefore hunger and thirst stand for a privation of wisdom and understanding. And the Chaldee Paraphrast turns these words, ‘ye shall draw water out of the wells of salvation,’ thus; ye shall receive a new doctrine with joy from some select persons.”

“Since then the figure of eating and drinking was used among the Jews, for receiving and imbibing a doctrine; it was no wonder if our Saviour pursued it in a discourse, in which there are several hints given to shew us that it ought to be so understood.”

Pyle’s Paraphrase, Apocalypse, p. 35;—

“I cannot here omit observing, that the pious and learned Vitringa applies these characters of the Laodiceans to the Protestant churches of these latter times; and that the reflections he makes upon, and the comparisons he draws between them, are exceedingly pathetic and instructive.”

Again, p. 35;—

“Let this be received then, as a universal warning to Christians, and to Christian churches, whose reformation from the false and superstitious doctrines of former times, whose deliverance from persecution for conscience sake, and whose outward peace and prosperity, instead of being thankfully improved into a more zealous love of Christian truth, a spirit and courage to propagate it, and a care to gain it honor and reputation in the world by the exercise of all practical virtues;

terminates only in a soft indolence, and loose indifference to all true principles, and a disregard to purity and holiness of manners. Let them hence learn the danger of such a condition, and the divine judgments that await such a people."

Vitringa accordingly observes, *Apocalypse*, p. 161;—

"Of the mystical sense of this epistle who can think without shame and profound humiliation before the Lord? For, if those former hypotheses stand good, on which I have founded* the spiritual sense of the other epistles, what remains for us to say of the Laodicean church, than that in this as in an image is exhibited to us the state of the *Protestant churches* which proximately preceded those notable judgments by which God hath recently punished the church and his enemies; with a view to chastise it and purge it from the faults which it had contracted, but to blot out and destroy its enemies, and in this manner to advance his church to a happy and more glorious state upon earth, as foretold by the prophets of olden time; a state which was to be closely conjoined with that of the *last affliction* of his church. In this opinion there is nothing, as far as I see, which is dissonant from reason, or from the parallelism of the other prophecies; if we are only able to shew that the characteristics of the Laodicean church do exist in a church having such a condition and in such an age as we have already noticed."

Accordingly, though reluctantly, Vitringa proceeds to apply his interpretations concerning the Laodicean church to the state of the Protestant church in general, and in the course of his remarks makes the following observations, p. 166;—

"People of our time do not appear to make religion a matter of any importance. Religion indeed is every where cultivated either from hypocrisy or custom, but not from the love of it. The behaviour and the manners of men assumed in the public acts of worship, bear testimony to their supineness and unconcern. The thing is plain and meets the eyes of

* Vitringa in other places does not found his remarks upon any hypotheses concerning the successive eras of the church, but upon the actual condition of the church as answering exactly to certain descriptions in the Bible.

every one. The superstition, which we witness with grief, inspires its devotees with zeal; but our own religious pursuits are lukewarm. Those Princes who patronize the Roman Catholic superstition, whatever may be their cast of mind or morals, yet manifest a zeal in the cause of that religion which they profess; on the other hand but few of those Princes and chiefs who have attached themselves to the Reformed religion shew that they have any real care or cordiality in the matter; while it often happens that they treat both sacred things and the ministers of things sacred, with pride and contempt; having nothing else in view but the pursuit of worldly things, and the promotion of their own interest—a very different state from that which prevailed when the light of reformed doctrine first shone upon Europe. Nor is this the fountain head and seat of the evil we deplore. The principal fault lies in the very pastors of the churches themselves, many of whom (and let the good who by the blessing of God still remain among us, have their full meed of praise) are either destitute of spiritual judgment, or not affected with true zeal in the cause of God. By the fault of these men it has come to pass that the restraints of discipline being loosened, the world has poured itself into the church; and the church at this day appears in such an aspect, that it is very evident that the priests can scarcely any longer distinguish, or that they have the skill or inclination to distinguish, between what is pure and impure, between what is holy and profane. They will hereafter have to render an account to Christ of this most miserable performance of their duties. For even supposing the doctrine of a church to be sound and whole, yet it is upon its discipline that entirely depends its salvation; and were this discreetly exercised, according as prescribed by the canons of the early church near the apostolic age, those men would learn to revere the church who now despise it. But what fruit would be reaped from the lengthened complainings in which I might here indulge, but ill-will? This our lukewarmness, however, is intolerable to the Lord. ‘I would,’ says he, ‘thou wert either cold or hot.’ For what is more intolerable than that men, who are called Reformed or Protestants, should not make of more account that greatest of blessings which in former ages God hath given to the church,

in a purified doctrine and worship. To what purpose has the blood of so many martyrs been shed, and so many calamities been suffered by our ancestors; if, after all, the whole matter is not of sufficient moment for us to treat it with warmer regards? Have they left us such great blessings only for us to throw away?"

"This same Laodicean church of ours, however, boasts itself of being 'rich and increased in goods.' We are said, forsooth, to be Reformed and Protestants—no small praise to be sure. We possess a pure confession of faith.* Nay, we are rich in many other respects. For when the light of the Reformation arose, learning of all kinds began signally to flourish and to be diligently cultivated. The stores of antiquity were laid open to view. The largest libraries were established for these purposes, and provided at a costly expense. The systematic doctrine of divine wisdom was completed both in the schools and academies, and in order to its more successful study, the pursuits of philosophy were cultivated. The scholastic teaching which had brought barbarism into Europe, and had corrupted many good minds, was by certain doctors recalled into the schools of Protestants, who boasted of its achievements with mighty applause. The Word of God itself was critically illustrated by various commentaries of learned men. And what is more, both pious and learned men, with great diligence and labor mastered its contents by meditations, in order more clearly to expound the ways of God, and to solve the dark enigmas of prophecy. Moreover the art of teaching, and speaking, and public haranguing, as exercised by preachers in the churches, was brought to great perfection. Such are the riches of the Protestant churches. In these do they glory and pride themselves. And indeed in these there is great good, which deservedly challenges our esteem; if only those other goods which are the most highly necessary had in the mean time not been neglected by very many who in the former expended their lives."

"And this is the fault with which the Lord taxes the Laodicean church, when he says, 'that it is miserable, and wretched, and poor, and blind, and naked.' So that the case is altoget-

* Query.

ther like that of Martha, 'One thing is needful;' which one thing is doubtless a true faith, embracing the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel, unfolding itself out by charity, and by the aim and pursuit of every Christian virtue. Of this one thing the Protestant churches are destitute; very many of its members care nothing about and neglect it, who yet possess the riches of the church of the present day, as above mentioned. For the study of virtue and holiness, (which is that which makes, adorns, and enriches the Christian man,) true self-denial, true humility, simplicity, and zeal, (which are the goods that are most highly necessary,) are cultivated only among very few. If learning, eloquence, great talents, diligence, and labor alone commended man to God, He might enumerate many in the church who were both rich and increased in wealth. But if these exist without charity and aiming at true holiness, then, although they are otherwise to be accounted of great importance, they leave a man worthless in the sight of God, as said the Apostle. Now since these were the goods wanting to by far the greater number of members of the Laodicean church, the Lord was unwilling to commend them for their riches. Their efforts he saw to be all preposterous. Things necessary were neglected; things unnecessary were made the objects of great emulation. Such is the vice of our own age. Studies otherwise excellent in themselves are not pursued with that moderation and in that order which they ought to be. The last things are put first. Learning, and eloquence, and other attainments are regarded in the first place; true piety and holiness, in the last; as we witness with grief. In the kingdom of Christ, however, nothing availeth but a new creature."

Vitringa, after other observations to the same effect, concludes in the following manner, p. 168;—

. . . "But these perhaps are but the beginning of sorrows. The affairs of the world seem gradually coming to such a pitch, that Protestants will scarcely escape that *great tribulation* of which mention was made in the preceding epistle, and which is more distinctly treated of in other places in the Apocalypse. God however will bring the matter to its own issue: for 'when the nations are angry his wrath is come,' *Apoc.* xi., 18."

Scott, Annotations, Isaiah lvii., 14 ;—

“The absurd and wild opinions which are propagated ; and the crimes which are committed, by men professing the doctrines of the Gospel ; the multiplied controversies acrimoniously agitated among them ; the horrible injustice and profligacy of men called Christians, in every quarter of the globe ; *the corrupt state of almost the whole visible church, in doctrine, discipline, and practice* ; and the idolatry, imposture, and enormous covetousness of the church of Rome, have long been stumbling-blocks to infidels, Jews, Mahomedans, and Pagans all over the world. The Lord calls upon Christians and ministers to remove these scandals as much as they possibly can ; and we should unite in constant and earnest prayer to Him to raise up instruments who may do it effectually.”

Again it is observed by Scott, on the church of Laodicea ;—

“Alas ! how many are there of the Laodicean stamp in every place ! Did we suppose these Epistles to be prophetic as to the church in general, we might be induced to conclude that *the end of the world was nigh* : for amidst the abounding of iniquity and infidelity, the love of many waxes cold ; and the state of religion even in this highly favored nation, too much resembles that of this seventh church.”

Hildrop ;* God’s Judgments upon the Gentile Apostatized Church, p. 117 ;—

“That Antichristianism should be so far confined to the church of Rome, as to exempt all the other different communions of Christendom from that charge, is hardly justifiable. It might be reckoned an invidious design to offer to expose and lay open the failures and deficiencies of the Reformed Churches as to their constitution and discipline, many of which we lament, and wish to reform ; but the iniquity of the times will not suffer it ; whilst policy and worldly wisdom make men unreasonably afraid of giving scandal by the restitution of that discipline which others were not afraid to give by abolishing it. However this may with too much justice be said, and is too evident to be denied, that the spirit of Antichristianism reigns at this

* A.D. 1713.

day far and wide among much the greater part of the members even of the best constituted and purest church, and other congregations of the Reformation.”

After speaking of the outward duties and forms of religion, the author thus proceeds ;—

“With these outward duties and forms, as they make them, of Christianity, (though few do observe even these,) men are amused and made to believe that they are good Christians, though really in their hearts they have not one of the qualities of the spirit of Jesus Christ. This is a truth too melancholy to be insisted upon, and too plain to be denied.”

A similar observation had already been made by Cardinal Cajetan, with regard to the state of the Church of Rome, and of Christendom in general. Thus in his annotations on Luke xviii., 8, “When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?” he observes ;—

“This question concerning the interposition of God in quickly vindicating his elect, he puts in contrast with that of a diminution of the faithful, which is so great that at the time of the glorious advent of Christ, scarcely any of the truly faithful are found. As if he had very openly said ; although God should have so great care of his elect as quickly to vindicate their cause, nevertheless the number of the faithful would be diminished, men would not recognize so great a blessing ; or, when they ought to increase in number, they will be diminished, so that when the Son of Man comes to judge the world, scarcely any faithful will be found.”

“From this passage I fear that the diminution of the Christian faith which we now behold, not only begun but extended to a very great length, is not to be reversed by any restoration, but is rather to be extended still farther. I am indeed no prophet nor the son of a prophet, but yet I see that the way to the verification of this prophecy has been very much travelled. Since a great portion of the world is Mahomedan, and the small part remaining to Christians is so replete with heresies, schisms, and corrupt usages, that there appear to be at present but a small number of the faithful. For I call those the faithful who are professors of the Christian faith in words and deeds.”

A similar view of the subject was taken by another Roman Catholic writer, Bishop Walmisley, A.D. 1771; who was led to believe that the last age of the world would commence in about fifty years from that period, and who in his General History of the Christian Church observes, p. 465; after speaking of the lessons to be derived from considering the behavior of the primitive Christians in times of trial;—

“Besides the reasons we have given above, the necessity of beginning to inculcate the preceding lessons to the present rising generation, appears the more when we consider *the general decay of religion which now prevails*. So little is the practice of morality attended to, so little even is religion thought of, that we see already no small progress made toward that apostacy, as St. Paul calls it, or toward that general defection from faith and that degeneracy of morals which will take place before the great minister of Satan, Antichrist, appears. . . . When a tide of irreligion and infidelity has broken in, and is seen to swell every day, what wonder if the period approach, when God will bring all to the test, and try them as metal in a fiery furnace, in order to discriminate between the good and the bad, and to separate the sound from the unsound grain?!”*

SWEDENBORG, ‘APOCALYPSE REVEALED,’ VERS. 21, 22;—

“‘To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me in my throne,’ *signifies*, that they will have conjunction with the Lord in heaven: ‘as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne,’ *signifies*, as he and the Father are one and are heaven: ‘He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.’”

The expression, *My Father*, we propose to explain in conjunction with a former expression, *My God*, which was

* It is objected, by some persons, to statements of this kind; that writers in every age think their own age the worst, and are consequently always predicting the near approach of the last judgment. It would, however, be well if these objectors would take into their serious consideration the fable of the Wolf.

before used in chap. iii., 2, and occurs three times in chap. iii., 12. Accordingly we observe that the interpretation of the expressions, *My Father*, and *My God*, depends entirely upon the doctrine of the Incarnation. If that doctrine be rejected, then the expressions must be interpreted according to their signification in relation to us; in which case the Supreme Being is God and Father to Jesus Christ in the same sense in which he is God and Father to us. On the other hand, if God became man by a divine generation of the Humanity, and if as such the Divinity is Father, and the Humanity Son, then must the titles Father and Son be understood in an eminent sense, not as signifying two persons; for then in Christ would be two persons, one of the Divinity, the other of the Humanity; but the Father as the Divinity, the Son as the Humanity, and the Father in the Son as the Divinity in the Humanity, or the soul in the body. We have already seen that the doctrine of a divine generation in which the Divinity is Father, and the Humanity Son, has been maintained by Pererius, Heylin, Skinner, Bennett, and numerous other writers.*

If then, in the sense we are now considering, the title Son does not signify a distinct person, so neither does the title Father; and hence as the word Father is generally taken to signify the inmost essential principle in the Godhead, which is Divine Love, so the expression *My Father* signifies my Divine Love. Hence for the Humanity to sit

* We may also here further observe that the passage in Isaiah liii., 8, which in our version is translated who shall declare his *generation*, was admitted by Athanasius*, to refer to the Incarnation; as also by Tertullian in his Tractate against the Jews, and by Justin in Question lxxvii. to the Orthodox.

A Lapidé also admits in this chapter, that Augustin, Jerome, Procopius, Cyril, and others, explained it of a twofold generation; one of the Divinity, *the other of the Humanity*; thus admitting a *generation* of the Humanity, which unhappily we have seen *denied*.

Cajetan also speaks of the Holy Spirit at the Incarnation, *loco seminis*.

* See his Treatise on the Incarnation of the Word.

down with the Father is for it to reign in conjunction with the essential Divinity, or as one with it.

This being the case we arrive at the meaning of the expression, *My God*. For the title *God* is generally admitted to answer to that of *Elohim*; but we have seen the title *Elohim* to answer to that of the Septiform Spirit, and we have seen it admitted that this Septiform Spirit answers in the primary sense to the divine graces or divinity with which the manhood was anointed; such as the spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, &c.; consequently as the title *God* signifies the complex of all these, so the expression *My God* is equivalent to my Divine Wisdom, &c.

This view of the case harmonises the otherwise contradictory views of writers. For we have seen that all the titles assumed by our Saviour in his addresses to the seven churches, are referred by the writers we have quoted primarily and specifically to the Humanity. On the other hand, that they signify nothing short of essential Divinity and are wholly incapable of any secondary or inferior sense, is the opinion of all who adduce these titles to prove against Arians and others the Lord's essential Divinity, and who maintain that such a meaning of the words admits of no evasion.

The denial of the divinity of the Lord's humanity has however already been traced to its principal source; namely, the denial of the divine generation of the Humanity, consequently the denial of the Father and the Son; because where there is no real generation it is admitted that there is no real Father or Son; where there is a fictitious generation, there is only a fictitious paternity and filiation. It is however certain that Alcuin held the doctrine of a real divine generation of the Humanity; and he quotes Gregory the Great and Jerome as holding the same doctrine; in answering the objections to which, Alcuin observes in his works, p. 814;—

“Jerome also, a doctor honorable to the whole church of Christ, in his exposition of the ninety-eighth Psalm, was not ashamed to profess on the subject of this generation his ignorance. See, says he what a thing I venture to say! I adore the footstool,* which formerly was, as I adore the throne. For even though we had known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him not according to the flesh. He had perchance a footstool before death, before his resurrection, when he ate, when he drank, when he experienced our affections; but after he rose again and ascended into heaven as victor, I do not understand the person sitting to be one and the footstool to be another, but the whole in Christ to be the throne. He asks me, and says, What is your reason, what is your reason? I answer, How it is I know not, yet that so it is, is my belief. Ought I to wonder at being ignorant of the mystery of the divinity when I know not myself? You ask me how it is that it is so, and how the divinity and incarnation are one (*unus*), when I know not how it is that I live. For us to have understood God, is to have believed in him; for us to have known God, is to have honored him. Sufficient for me to know that thus it is written; sufficient for me to know that I believe. More I neither wish nor desire. For if I wished to know, then I should begin to lose what I believe. We are called faithful, not rational. Finally, it was said also by the Lord, ‘Believest thou that I am able to do this?’ And to the woman it was said, ‘Thy faith hath saved thee;’ not reason, not inquisition, not the why or the wherefore of that which was done. She believed that it might be done, and it was done.”

Thus we see Alcuin and Jerome replying to the objections against a divine generation of the humanity with the very same arguments which are commonly employed to meet the objections against the Tripersonality. An objector may say that the doctrine of a divine humanity is inconsistent. Is it more inconsistent than that one individual being is three distinct persons, having three sets of distinct

* *Scabellum*, which he interpreted as signifying the flesh assumed in the Virgin’s womb.

personal properties? But we need not shroud the doctrine in the mystery to which Jerome resorts. Sound faith and sound reason are not inconsistent. We do not cease to be faithful, because we are called upon to be rational. The doctrine of a divine humanity has reason upon its side as well as Scripture; true philosophy as well as revelation; which indeed would be shewn in these pages were it not that they are dedicated solely to what has been said upon the subject by the Scripture and its interpreters.

But the language of Alcuin himself upon this subject is equally strong with that of Jerome. Thus p. 719;—

"It remains therefore that it is the soul of Christ which received the Spirit; which he received not according to measure, because he received it *whole*. For where there is said to be no measure, there is found the fulness of perfection and the perfection of fulness. By which it is manifest that he had the fulness of divine knowledge (fulness of the Spirit). For in the same measure in which the Spirit is given to any one of the saints, in the same only is the knowledge of the divinity received from Him."

Again, p. 726;—

"So therefore is Christ full of grace and truth, that as the fulness of the humanity was assumed by the divinity, so in the humanity there is a fulness of the divinity; as the apostle testifies who says, 'In whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.'"

Again, p. 729;—

"Man passed into God, not by convertibility of nature, but by unity of the Divine Person."

Nay, so strongly does Richard of St. Victor advocate similar views, that in part i., book ii., p. 306, on the subject of Emanuel he observes;—

"What wonder if man is become as God, since man is made true God. Certainly if the man Christ be God, nay, for the very reason that he is truly God, he hath the same divinity which the Father hath and the Holy Spirit, therefore also he

hath the same power and therefore also the same wisdom. Therefore the man Christ is wise in the same manner in which the Father is wise and also the Holy Spirit.”

Before concluding this chapter we would observe with regard to the seven churches, that all the promises made to them have a reference to the subject treated of in the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters. This has been noticed by various writers; as by the Investigator, by Mr. Girdlestone, and more recently by Dr. Wordsworth. Thus in p. 174 of his Lectures on the Apocalypse, he observes, that these epistles are impressed with what we may call the anticipatory character of the Apocalypse, and after shewing this peculiarity as manifested in various promises to the churches, the author remarks that these expressions appear obscure at first, but they are cleared up by others in subsequent portions of the Apocalypse; hence that the earlier parts of the Revelation anticipate the latter, and the latter explain the former.

Thus what the New Jerusalem is, and what the nature of the promises concerning it, as made to the churches in general, on condition of their repentance, are both to be found in the last chapters of the Apocalypse, where the expressions will be seen to signify a New Church, and the felicities to be derived from an admission into its gates.

We have now completed the consideration of the first vision in the Apocalypse, viz., the vision of the Son of Man in relation to the seven churches. This vision or this appearance is represented as having been made for the purpose of communicating certain messages to the churches, that is, to the whole of Christendom. The period at which this communication is understood as being made more especially, is, as we have seen, that of the last days, or the days of Antichrist, in which the whole Christian church is represented as to its spiritual states by the seven churches.

This view of the subject we have seen directly maintained by modern writers; who found their opinion upon the intrinsic evidence of the Apocalypse itself, arising out of the close connection between the beginning and the end of the Apocalypse, as also upon the testimony of those ancient interpreters who referred the whole series of transactions in the Apocalypse to one age or period. And moreover this view of the subject is confirmed by Sir Isaac Newton, who in his observations upon the Apocalypse of St. John, p. 286, refers *all* the epistles to the seven churches to *the latter times*; for says he, "they relate to the church when she began to decline, and contain admonitions against the great apostacy then approaching." Although however Sir Isaac Newton, Dr. Henry More, Bede, and others, are nevertheless of opinion that some of these epistles refer to the times of the fifth and sixth seals, yet we have already seen that they have all an earlier reference. In fact they are the initial subject from which the whole Apocalypse proceeds in one continuous uninterrupted narrative. They convey to Christendom a declaration of its spiritual states before God; a warning to repentance before the second coming, as John the Baptist did before the first coming.

This first vision then contains a visitation and communication to the whole church catholic, an inspection and declaration of its condition, a warning to repentance and preparation for judgment; and a sevenfold repetition of the words, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

APPENDIX.

NOTES TO VOL. I.

p. 2. *Cajetan at the end of the New Testament, &c.*

The words of Cajetan are not exactly those which are given by Alcasar, but are as follow ; vol. v., p. 401 ;—

“ Apocalypsim enim fateor me nescire exponere *juxta sensum literalem*; exponat cui Deus concesserit.”

p. 2. *Pererius in his Prolegomena, &c.*

The words are quoted as they are given by Alcasar, but the more correct translation of the passage in Pererius is the following : alluding to the Apocalypse ;—

. . . “ A book which of all the Sacred Scripture is of the most abstruse meaning, and (as is the opinion of many) altogether incomprehensible without some particular revelation from God. ‘ *Librum videlicet Sacræ totius Scripturæ, abstrusissimæ intelligentiæ, et (ut multorum fert opinio) absque singulari quâpiam Dei revelatione, prorsus incomprehensibilem.*’ ”

p. 29. *Neither Origen nor Gregory the Great wrote any commentary upon the subject.*

Origen promised a commentary, but it is not extant : the various notices of the Apocalypse scattered throughout the works of Gregory the Great have been collected together by Alulphus, a monk of Tournay, and are not unfrequently referred to in the present volumes.

p. 49. *I mean that which by reason of the implanted similitude the nature of each represents.*

“*Implanted similitude*” is not a correct expression. There may be no similitude where there is nevertheless a real analogy or correspondence. See Dr. Coplestone’s *Inquiry into the Doctrines of Necessity and Predestination*, p. 122.

p. 59. *A great and learned friend of mine.*

Whom I presume to be Pererius, in whose *Disputations* the passages are to be found.

p. 74. *Objects to the natural order of the Apocalypse.*

The reader is here referred to what Cornelius a Lapide has further said upon this subject, p. 350, under the title of *Chronotaxis & Ordo Apocalypseos*, p. 352, where he observes; “From what has been said, it is easy to see how direct and exact is the sequence observed by St. John, and also the order both of the things themselves and of the time; as also how rare in the Apocalypse and how few in number are the hystero-logies.”

p. 75. *For that in the Apocalypse there is a hystero-logy on some occasions, or a disturbance of the order of the times, Measar cannot deny, since the thing speaks for itself; as in chap. xiv., 8, where it is said, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon,’ when nevertheless the fall and destruction of Babylon are afterwards described in chap. xviii.*

According to Swedenborg there is no hystero-logy in this passage; for he expressly observes, *art.* 631, that the mention of Babylon follows in its proper order, and he assigns the reason; but as it involves an explanation of the laws of the spiritual world which are unknown to those not acquainted with his writings, and which must be studied before they can be understood, it is sufficient here to refer the reader to the original.

p. 117. *It was indeed a miraculous production.*

Dr. Ogden justly observes in his sermon on the Incarnation, and Cornelius a Lapide has somewhere made a similar remark, that “when we say that Jesus, our Redeemer, was born of a virgin, who was found

with child of the Holy Ghost, we mean something more than that his birth was *miraculous*, and brought to pass by the extraordinary power of God.”

p. 140. *That which is born in her is by the Holy Spirit.*

See Suarez upon the subject, *Commentariorum ac Disputationum in Tertiam Partem Divi Thomæ, Tomus Secundus, Quæst. 32, art. i., sec. ii.*: also *Quæst. 35, art. i.* Also Aquinas on Matthew i., 20, where he makes the following observation; “*Nota quod in conceptione aliarum mulierum, in semine viri est virtus formativa, cujus subjectum est semen; et per hanc virtutem formatur fœtus, et vegetatur in corpore mulieris. Hanc autem supplevit virtus Spiritus Sancti; et ideo aliquando invenitur dictum a sanctis, quod Spiritus Sanctus fuit ibi pro semine: aliquando tamen dicitur quod non fuit ibi semen. Et hoc est quod in semine viri sunt duo; scilicet ipsa corrupta substantia que descendit a corpore viri, et ipsa formativa virtus. Dicendum ergo quod Spiritus Sanctus fuit pro semine quantum ad virtutem formativam; sed non fuit ibi pro semine quantum ad corpulentam substantiam: quia non de substantia Spiritus Sancti facta est caro Christi, vel conceptio ejus: et ideo patet quod Spiritus Sanctus non potest dici Pater Christi: quia nec secundum divinam naturam, nec secundum humanam. Secundum divinam naturam quidem, quia quamvis Christus sit ejusdem gloriæ eum Spiritu Sancto, Filius tamen secundum divinam naturam nihil accipit a Spiritu Sancto; et ideo non potest dici filius ejus: filius enim aliquid accipit a Patre. Similiter nec secundum humanam, quia pater et filius debet convenire in substantia: Christus autem quamvis sit conceptus virtute Spiritus Sancti, non tamen de substantia Spiritus Sancti.*”

The saints here referred to by Aquinas are Anselm, Maximus, Tertullian, Damascen and Chrysostom. See Suarez on the Incarnation, *Quæst. 28, art. i., disput. v., sec. i.* We further add that the *virtus formativa* is the soul or spirit.

p. 162. *With respect to the Eternal Generation, &c.*

In the year 1689, 1690, Herm. Alex. Roell wrote two tracts in Latin in answer to Vitringa, to prove that the terms *Generation* and *Son*, as applied to the Second Divine Person in the Trinity, are to be understood not in a proper but an improper sense; and that with respect to the mode of generation, the Reformed Church had determined nothing; thus that in the proper sense there was no such thing as Eternal Generation.

In 1794, the Rev. Charles Hawtrey, (Bampton Lecturer and also Vicar of Bampton, Oxfordshire), wrote a work entitled, *Theanthropos, or*

an Appeal to the New Testament in proof of the Divinity of the Son of God; in which he maintains, that, according to the New Testament, the title *Son of God* was then first assumed when the Logos was made flesh; thus rejecting the doctrine of Eternal Generation. See also the Sequel to his work.

The celebrated scholar, Mr. Bryant, in his work (published 1797) on *The Sentiments of Philo Judæus concerning the Logos or Word of God*, observes, p. 253;—

“They who entertain the notion of an Eternal Generation, seem to be misled by a term, of which they can have no determinate knowledge. It was introduced merely as an help towards solving a supposed difficulty, which, I think, never existed. In short it is a greater mystery, than that which it is brought to explain. A person might just as reasonably insist upon an eternal creation: and it would appear to many equally plausible. But at this rate it would be found, that the world was formed by divine wisdom, and yet never had a beginning: which is as absurd as it is untrue. They remove the object as far as they can out of sight, in order to have a better view. But the whole is a fallacy. It is therefore idle in them, like the schoolmen formerly, to make use of terms without any precise purport, more especially words of no meaning at all, to explain what they do not comprehend. We can never obtain light by returning into darkness: nor remedy one difficulty by introducing another much greater.”

“This is verified in the doctrine mentioned above concerning Eternal Generation: which seems calculated to perplex rather than instruct, and implies a contradiction. We have seen that the Logos proceeded from God, and was begotten of the Father. But how could he have been begotten, or have proceeded, if he never had a beginning? Who first produced this mode of argument, I know not: but it seems to be founded in mere metaphysical sophistry.”

Mr. Faber, in his *Hore Mosaicæ*, vol. ii., p. 171, (A.D. 1818);—

“Whenever a person or thing passes into a new state, he or it is said, by an easy metaphor, to be born or begotten into that new condition. Thus the re-establishment of Israel in a living body politic is described as the birth of the nation: thus, when a man passes from a state of nature to a state of grace, he is said to be begotten again of God or to be born again of the Holy Spirit: and thus, allusively to his resurrection, our Lord is styled ‘the first-begotten of the dead:’ a mode of speech, which of course implies that all his faithful followers will be similarly begotten of the dead. Such being the case, the term only-begotten or begotten, when applied to the Word with reference to his pre-existing state, does not inevitably relate to his supposed Eternal Generation or filiation, nor

indeed to any generation or filiation whatsoever. It may, according to the strict analogy of scriptural language, denote only his taking upon himself an office, immutably predetermined indeed in the counsels of God, but yet actually commencing in time. Should this be the import of the term, the office in question would clearly be that of the agent or spokesman or messenger of Jehovah: and the Word would then be begotten, when he proceeded from what the apostle calls the bosom of the Father for the purpose of executing that office. Now, that he so proceeded in order to create the world, we are expressly assured: and accordingly we are told, that he was the first-born of the whole creation, or rather born previous to the whole creation. But this does not require us to suppose any emanation of the Word from the essence of the Father: it imports no more, at least it does not necessarily import more, than that he left the bosom of the Paternal Deity in his office of an organ or messenger, that in consequence he is metaphorically said to have been begotten or born into that office, and that the use of this metaphor led to the use of the relative terms Father and Son. Our Saviour's own language seems to confirm such a view of the question. 'I proceeded forth and came from God: neither came I of myself, but he sent me. No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven; the Son of man, which is in heaven. The Father himself loveth you; because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.' These expressions clearly do not refer to any emanation or generation from the divine essence, but to the Son's leaving the bosom of the Father that he might fulfil his high purposes of mercy in the quality of his Angel or Messenger."

The Rev. John Skinner, in his *Letters addressed to Candidates for Holy Orders*, A.D. 1809, rejects the doctrine of Eternal Generation altogether, as may be seen in the extract given in our Third Volume, p. 85.

Mr. Murray, in his *Clear Display of the Trinity*, published A.D. 1815, equally rejects the doctrine of Eternal Generation; as may be seen in the extract given in our Third Volume, p. 90.

Professor Stuart, in his *Letters on the Divinity of Christ* addressed to Dr. Channing, observes, p. 13;—

“After all, I am unable to conceive of any definite meaning in the phrase, Eternal Generation. Generation or production, like creation, necessarily implies in itself beginning, and of course contradicts the idea of absolute eternity. In so far as Christ is divine, consubstantial with the Father, he must, for aught that I can see, be necessarily regarded as self-existent, independent, and eternal. A being to whom these attributes do

not belong, can never be regarded as God, except he be called so by a figurative use of the term: The generation or production of the Son of God, as divine, as really and truly God, seems to be out of the question, therefore, unless it be an express doctrine of revelation; which is so far from being the case, that I conceive the contrary is plainly taught. If the phrase Eternal Generation, then, is to be vindicated, it is only on the ground that it is figuratively used, to describe an indefinable connection and discrimination between Father and Son, which is from everlasting. It is not well chosen, however, for this purpose, because it necessarily, even in its figurative use, carries along with it an idea which is at variance with the self-existence and independence of Christ, as divine; and of course, in so far as it does this, it seems to detract from his real divinity."

"I cannot therefore understand what 'God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,' means; nor can I think that any definite and positive ideas ever were or could be attached to these phrases. That the Nicene Fathers meant to contradict Arius, is sufficiently plain to any one conversant with the history of the Council of Nice. But, that they have made out a positive, or affirmative and intelligible definition of the distinction between Father and Son, I presume no one, at the present day, will hardly venture to assert."

Dr. Adam Clarke, in his Commentary on Luke i., 35, observes;—

"The doctrine of the *Eternal Sonship* of Christ is, in my opinion, antisciptural and highly dangerous. . . . This doctrine of the *Eternal Sonship*, as it has been lately explained in many a pamphlet, and many a paper in magazines, I must and do consider as an awful heresy; and mere, sheer Arianism; which in many cases has terminated in Socinianism, and that in Deism. From such heterodoxies and their abettors may God save his church! Amen."

In his Notes Explanatory and Practical on the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, by the Rev. Edward Barnes, he observes, Heb. i., 3, p. 38;—

"I do not see any evidence in the Scriptures of the doctrine of Eternal Generation, and it is certain that that doctrine militates against the proper eternity of the Son of God."

p. 166. *Reserve the extracts themselves for the Appendix.*

Johannis Calvini, Institutionum Christianæ Religionis Libri Quatuor., lib. ii., cap. xiv., art. iii., p. 124;—

"In eundem quoque sensum accipere convenit, quod apud Paulum habetur, Christum peracto judicio redditurum esse regnum Deo & Patri. Regnum sane Filii Dei, quod initium nullum habuit, neque finem habiturum est: sed quo modo sub carnis humilitate delituit, & seipsum exina-

nivit acceptâ servi formâ, depositâque majestatis specie, Patri se obedientem præstitit, ac ejusmodi subjectione defunctus, tandem gloriâ & honore coronatus est, atque evehctus in summum imperium, ut coram ipso flectatur omne genu: ita tunc & nomen ipsum & coronam gloriæ, & quicquid à Patre accepit, Patri subjiciet, ut sit Deus omnia in omnibus. Quorsum enim data ei potestas est ac imperium, nisi ut per ejus manum Pater nos gubernet? Quo etiam sensu dicitur ad Patris dexteram sedere. Hoc vero temporale est, donec *præsenti divinitatis aspectu* fruamur. Atque hic excusari non potest veterum error, qui dum ad Mediatoris personam non attendunt, totius fere doctrinæ, quæ in Evangelio Joannis legitur, genuinum obscurant sensum, seque implicant multis laqueis. Sit igitur nobis hæc reetæ intelligentiæ clavis, neque de naturâ divinâ, neque de humanâ simpliciter diei, quæ ad Mediatoris officium spectant. Regnabit ergo Christus, donec prodierit mundi judex, quatenus pro infirmitatis nostræ modulo Patri nos conjungit. Ubi autem consortes cælestis gloriæ Deum videbimus qualis est, tunc *perfunctus Mediatoris officio*, desinet Patris *legatus* esse, & eâ gloriâ *contentus* erit, quâ potiebatur ante mundum conditum. Nec alio respectu peculiariter in Christi personam competit Domini nomen, nisi quatenus medium gradum statuit inter Deum & nos. Quo pertinet illud Pauli, Unus Deus ex quo omnia, & unus Dominus per quem omnia; nempe, eui temporale imperium à Patre mandatum est, donec *facie ad faciem* conspicua sit *divina* ejus majestas: cui adeo nihil deeedet, imperium Patri reddendo, ut longe clarior emineat. Nam & tunc desinet caput Christi esse Deus, quia Christi ipsius *deitas ex se ipsâ* fulgebit, quum *adhuc velo quodam sit obtecta.*"

Paraphrase with Annotations, by Dr. Whitby, 1 Cor. xv., p. 180;—

"Verse 28. *Ἰνα ἦ ὁ Θεὸς πάντα ἐν παντί*, 'that God may be all in all.' He saith not that the Father, mentioned ver 24, but that God may be all in all; and so he seems to lead us to that interpretation of the Godhead which comprehends Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and then the import of the phrase, that God may be all in all, will be this, that the Godhead may govern all things *immediately* by himself, *without the intervention of a Mediator between him and us, to exact our obedience in his name, and convey to us his favors and rewards*, we being then to tender all our duty *immediately* to him, and derive all our happiness *immediately* from him. So that as now Christ, Theanthropos, God-man, is all in all, Col. iii., 11, because the Father hath put all things into his hands, does all things, and governs all things by him: when this economy ceases, the Godhead alone will be all in all. as governing and influencing all things by himself *immediately.*"

"Moreover, the Jews say, 'That the kingdom of the Messiah shall

return to its first author,' and so saith the Apostle here; for, though it shall have no *such* end as the preceding monarchies had, Luke i., 32, 33, by giving place to a *succeeding* kingdom: for till the world last, *ὡς παρελεύσεται*, it shall not pass away or be dissolved by any other kingdom, Dan. vii., 14, but shall be an eternal kingdom in the sense in which He is a priest for ever, and hath *τὴν ἱερωσύνην ἀπαράβατον*, a priesthood that doth not pass away, Heb. vii., 24, 25; and so He is able to intercede for ever for us; yet as that priesthood must needs *cease* when the subject of it ceaseth, and He hath none to intercede for, so must his kingly office cease, when all his friends have that eternal life conferred upon them for which this power was committed to him, John xvii., 2, and all his enemies are become his footstool, Psalm ex., 1, when there is no more an house of Jacob to reign over, or a throne of David to sit on, Luke i., 32, 33; Rev. xi., 15; and the whole office of a Mediator must then cease, when God and man are made completely and indissolubly one."

"For farther explication of this matter, let it be observed,

"1st. That this Mediatory kingdom was given to our Lord by the Father, for He hath put all things in subjection to him, ver. 27; and that, after his resurrection; for it was given as the reward of his sufferings, and so could not be given till they were accomplished: 'He humbled himself, and became obedient to the death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,' Philip. ii., 8, 10, 11. Accordingly, after his resurrection He speaks to his disciples thus, 'All power is given to me in heaven, and in earth,' Matt. xxviii., 18. But *why this reward should not cease when the work is done, why, v. g., his dominion over death should not cease when death is destroyed; his power of giving eternal life, or judging, when all are judged and none are left to be crowned; I confess I do not understand.*"

"2dly. Seeing the human nature only suffered, and seeing the divine nature is capable of no such exaltation, or new dominion, it is certain that this kingdom could be given to Christ only according to his human nature; for though the Godhead could alone enable him to execute his kingly office, yet was He thus exalted, this power and judgment was conferred upon him, because he was the Son of man. John v., 27. He intercedeth still in heaven by virtue of his blood, all favours are granted to the church through him, 'and God will judge the world by the man Christ Jesus.'

"3dly. During this reign of Christ, God the Father immediately

‘judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men might honor the Son, (by owning his authority,) even as they honored the Father,’ John v., 22, 23, by owning his authority over them. He made him Lord of all things, to punish and reward according to his wisdom, will, and pleasure; and so his human nature, or Christ as man, though subject to the Father, as his *viceroi*, acting by the authority of him who ‘put all things into his hands, and set him over the works of his hands,’ Heb. ii., 7, 8, and doing all to the glory of God the Father, yet seems not now to be in the same order of subjection to the Father as are other creatures, *i. e.*, so as to act by his immediate command in all particular transactions, as the holy angels do, ‘obeying his commands, and hearkening to the voice of his word,’ Psalm ciii., 20. They are all ministering spirits, Heb. i., 13, 14, but He is set down at the right hand of God, in full possession of his Mediatory kingdom. Whilst He continued on earth, and acted only as a prophet sent from God, He always owned, that He could do nothing of himself; but as the Father gave him commandment, so he did, and so he spake, John v., 30, and viii., 38, and xii., 49; but being once exalted to be Lord of all things, He acteth as a Lord in all things which relate to his kingly office over his church, giving laws to all, as being Lord of all, and rewarding and punishing according to his will.”

“4thly. *The exercise of this authority He shall then lay down* when all things are subdued to him; no other kingdom or dominion being to be exercised in the celestial state, but what is essential to the whole Godhead: and though He shall ever so far reign, as to be still at the right hand of God, highly exalted in honor, dignity, and beatitude, and to have still religious *respect* and veneration from all saints, who then are to reign with him, 2 Tim. ii., 12, and be owned by them as their king; and though the *effects* of his kingly power shall continue for ever, his enemies being destroyed, and his saints reigning in bliss for ever; yet *the exercise of that kingly power shall then cease, and He as man shall be then subject to the Father, as other saints and angels will be*; that so as Christ before was all in all, Col. iii., 13. with reference to his church, and from his fulness did they all receive, so now the Godhead may be all in all, and fill all things *immediately* by himself.”

Commentary on the Bible by Matthew Henry, 1 Cor. xv. ;—

“This is the scope of the argument; but the apostle drops several hints in the course of it, that will be properly noticed; as, (1.) That our Saviour as Man, and Mediator between God and man, has a *delegated royalty*, a kingdom given; ‘All things are put under him; he excepted, that did put all things under him,’ v. 27. As man, all his authority

must be delegated. And though his mediation supposes his divine nature, yet as *Mediator* he does not so explicitly sustain the character of *God*, but a middle person *between* God and man, partaking of both natures, human and divine, as he was to reconcile both parties, God and man; and receiving commission and authority from God the Father, to act in this office. The Father appears, in this whole dispensation, in the majesty, and with the authority, of God; the Son, made man, appears as the minister of the Father, though he is God as well as the Father. Nor is this passage to be understood of the eternal dominion over all his creatures, which belongs to him as God; but of a kingdom committed to him as Mediator and God-man, and that chiefly after his resurrection, when, having overcome, he sat down with his Father on his throne, Rev. iii., 21. Then was the prediction verified, ‘I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion,’ Ps. ii., 6, placed him on his throne. This is meant by the phrase so frequent in the writings of the New Testament, of ‘sitting at the right hand of God,’ Mark xiv., 19; Rom. viii., 34; Col. iii., 1, &c.; ‘on the right hand of power,’ Mark xvi., 62; Luke xx., 69; ‘on the right hand of the Majesty on high,’ Heb. i., 3; ‘on the right hand of the throne of God,’ Heb. xii., 2; ‘on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,’ Heb. viii., 1. Sitting down in this seat, is taking upon him the exercise of his Mediatorial power and royalty, which was done upon his ascension into heaven, Mark xvi., 19. And it is spoken of in Scripture, as a recompence made him for his deep humiliation and self-abasement, and in becoming man, and dying for man the accursed death of the cross, Philip. ii., 6—12. Upon his ascension, He was made Head over all things to the church; had power given him to govern and protect it against all enemies; and in the end destroy them, and complete the salvation of all who believe in him. This is not a power appertaining to Godhead as such; it is not original and unlimited power, but *power given and limited to special purposes*. And though he who has it, is God, yet, inasmuch as he is somewhat else beside God, and in this whole dispensation acts not as *God*, but as *Mediator*, not as the offended Majesty, but as one interposing in favor of his offending creatures, and this by virtue of his consent and commission who acts and appears always in that character. He may properly be said to have this power given him; He may reign as God, with power unlimited, and yet may reign as Mediator with a power *delegated* and *limited* to these particular purposes. (2.) That this *delegated royalty* must some time be delivered up to the Father, from whom it was received (ver. 24), for it is a power received for particular ends and purposes: a power to govern and protect his church *till* all the members of it be gathered in, and the enemies of it for ever be subdued

and destroyed, ver. 25, 26. And when these ends shall be obtained, there is *no need that the power and authority should be continued*. The Redeemer must reign till his enemies be destroyed, and the salvation of his church and people be accomplished; and when this end is attained, then will He deliver up the power which He had only for this purpose; though He may continue to reign over his glorified church and body in heaven: and in this sense it may, notwithstanding, be said, that ‘he shall reign for ever and ever,’ Rev. xi., 15; that ‘he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end,’ Luke i., 33; that ‘his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,’ Dan. vii., 14; see also Mic. iv., 7. (3.) The Redeemer shall certainly reign till the very last enemy of his people be destroyed, till death itself be abolished, till his saints revive, and recover perfect life, never to be in fear or danger of dying any more. He shall have all power in heaven and earth *till* then; ‘he who loved us, and gave himself for us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood;’ he who is so nearly related to us, and so much concerned for us. What support should this be to his saints in every hour of distress and temptation! ‘He is alive who was dead, and liveth for ever, and doth reign, and will continue to reign, till the redemption of his people be completed and the utter ruin of their enemies effected. (4.) When this is done, and ‘all things are put under his feet, then shall the Son become subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all,’ ver. 28. The meaning of which I take to be, that then the man Christ Jesus, who has appeared in so much majesty during the whole administration of this kingdom, shall appear upon the giving it up, to be *a subject of the Father*. Things are in Scripture many times said to be, when they are manifested and made to appear; and this delivering up the kingdom will make it manifest, that he who appeared in the majesty of the sovereign King, was, during this administration, *a subject of God*. The *glorified humanity* of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all the dignity and power conferred on it, *was no more than a glorious creature*. This will appear when the kingdom shall be delivered up; and it will appear to the divine glory, that God may be all in all, that the accomplishment of our salvation may appear all over divine, and God alone may have the honor of it. Note, though the human nature must be employed in the work of our redemption, yet God was all in all in it. It was the Lord’s doings, and should be marvellous in our eyes.”

Wittsins in *Symbolum*, Exercitatio x., art. xlii., p. 177;—

“Dissimulandum tamen non est, exstare nonnulla apud Paulum quæ eo nos ducere videntur, quasi aliquando *abdicaturus* se regno Christus sit: imprimis 1 Cor. xv., 24—28. Qui difficilis sane locus est: in quo illu-

strando, & cum antedictis conciliando, plurimorum insumta est opera. Nos quoque aliquid conemur: cā methodo, ut primo exponamus quid de aeternâ Regis Christi, & regni illius gloria ἀναμφισβήτητον sit, cui ideo nequaquam hic Paulus obloquatur: dein, quo tamen sensu Paulus dicat, finem fore, & regnum Deo ac Patri tradendum esse, & Filium ipsum subiectum iri ei qui subiecit ipsi omnia, ut *non* tam *Mediator*, quam *Deus* ipse *immediate*, omnia sit in omnibus.”

“Certum est. I. Regnum Christi Divinum, Essentiale, Naturale, aeternum esse. Dan. iv., 34. II. Humanam Christi naturam semper personaliter unitam fore cum Divinitate, eoque nomine gavisuram esse gloriâ quæ creaturarum omnium gloriam longissimo intervallo superet. Nam & illa quoque pro suâ parte consors est nominis illius supra omne nomen, quod, in præmium antecedentis humiliationis, Mediatori ἐχαρίσατο ὁ Θεός. Phil. ii., 2. III. Christum semper fore caput, id est *longe nobilissimum membrum Ecclesiae*, & ut tale ab Ecclesiâ agnoscendum, venerandum, celebrandum. Rom. viii., 29. IV. Regnum ipsum Mediatorium aeternum fore quoad effectus suos gloriosos, tam in capite, quam in membris. Quales sunt, in Christo, Divinæ Majestatis effulgentia in personâ Θεοανθρώπου luculentissime splendens, cui nihil unquam deeedet: in electis, plena libertas, subjugatio omnium hostium, totalis abolitio peccati, quoad reatum, dominium, reliquias, omnemque molestam ejus sequelam, & gaudium ineffabile ex intimâ communione Dei resultans. Quæ in aeternum agnoscentur & celebrabuntur, ut beneficia Regis Christi, & emanantia ex inhabitatione Spiritus illius qui nunquam non Christi Spiritus est, Gal. iv., 6. Atque eatenus aeternum est Regnum Christi, tantumque abest ut iis rebus Paulus hic obloquatur, ut è contra ipse eas copiose docuerit.”

“Attamen inficiandum non est, post novissimi judicii diem, aliam plane Regis Christi, ac Regni Mediatorii, rationem fore. Etenim I. Tunc *cessabit* Oeconomica Regni istius gubernatio, qualis nunc est, per ministerium Ecclesiasticum, & Auctoritatem Civilem tuendæ Ecclesie inservientem, quum ‘ut inane sustulerit omne imperium, & omnem auctoritatem & potestatem.’ 1 Cor. xv., 24. II. Totius numeris sui Mediatorii, ut perfectissime consummati, non in iis modo quæ ad salutem impetrandam, sed & eandem universæ Ecclesie perfecte applicandam, pertinent, *rationem Deo Patri, post novissimum judicium, Christus reddet*; sistens ei Ecclesiam suam plane gloriosam, sine rugâ aut maculâ ullove simili defectu. Quod indicio est, nullâ se parte mandato numeri defuisse. Et huc referri potest quod dicitur, ‘Tradet Regnum,’ id est Ecclesiam consummatam, ‘Deo ac Patri.’ III. *Eâ ratione redditâ, ipsa se Deitas, sine interventu Mediatoris, ejus, sublato plane peccato cum omnibus reliquiis & consequentiis, nullus amplius usus esse videtur, immediate cum beatis communicabit*;

eodem ferme modo quo se communicat cum Angelis: hoc solum discrimine, quod beati hanc *immediatam* Divinitatis communicationem Christi meritis æternum se debere grati profitebuntur. Et hoc est quod dicitur, ut Deus sit omnia in omnibus, v. 28. IV. Tum etiam Christus quoad humanam naturam, sine ullâ muneris Mediatorii functione, *Deo subiectus erit, sicut unus ex fratribus*, in omnimodâ gloriâ, & quidem excellentissimâ, sine ullâ illius gloriæ immiutione quâ nunc fruitur. Sicuti Filius aliquis Regis, qui à Patre, cum summâ potestate, ad rebelles domandos, civesque à tyrannicâ quorundam usurpatione vindicandos, missus, ad libitum Patris, omnibus feliciter peractis, *laboriosoque imperio, cujus nullus nunc amplius usus est, defunctus, in honesto otio*, aulæque Regiæ delitiis, secure vivit. Atque hoc iis verbis innui videtur: ‘Postquam vero subjecta ei fuerint omnia, tunc & ipse Filius subjicietur ei qui subiecit ipsi omnia.’ V. Atque hactenus Regni Mediatorii, cujus functio imperfectionem aliquam in Ecclesia supponit, finis erit. v., 24. Qui finis adeo *non cum dedecore* Christi Regis conjunctus est, ut contra ad gloriam ipsius faciat. Juxta id quod dicitur. 1 Cor. xiii., 10. ‘Quum venerit perfectum, tunc quod ex parte est abolebitur.’ Finis ejusmodi est *τέλος τελειότητος, τέλος ουκ ἔχον.*”

Thirteen Sermons on the Trinity, by Dr. Calamy, Sermon iii., p. 84;—

“1. We should consider what that is that is to be resigned. ’Tis not the Deity, but the mediatorial kingdom. At the end of that admirable dispensation that was calculated in order to our redemption, shall the kingdom be delivered up. The kingdom to be resigned is not the rule of the Deity, nor any of the perfections necessary to the exercise of universal government, but that kingdom which commenced in Paradise, and is to be continued till all opposite powers are subdued and vanquished, and all the hearty subjects of it are fixed in complete felicity. From the very going forth of the first promise did God administer all things by his Son, as universal Lord and King; and ’tis the grand design of the Holy Scriptures to give us an account of that administration. Man having shamefully revolted, God would not any longer govern him alone, or immediately as He had done before, but He would have a *president-general* to *manage* for him, or in his name, and by authority and power derived by *commission* from him. This commission He executed before He was incarnate; but his executing it was more visible, after He assumed our nature, and therein suffered and died, and then had ‘all power given him in heaven and in earth, and a name above every name.’ This kingdom was given him by *commission*, in consideration of his intended humiliation; by which He afterwards acquired a right to it, because of his fulfilling the conditions upon which the grant was made. This kingdom was not natural to Christ, but *adventitious*, and given him by the Father; and

the power he exercises in it was derived from him. Our Lord often declared this, saying, 'All things are delivered unto me of my Father. I am come in my Father's name.' And 'it is my Father that honoreth me, of whom ye say that he is your God.' And after his ascension to glory, He plainly declared to the Asian churches that as to his peculiar power, 'twas received of his Father. And I must own I take it for a direct inlet to Arianism, and the very thing that has led several aside that way both formerly and lately, that they have taken those texts that speak of the conveyance and grant of the Mediatorial authority, under limitations, as meant of the conveyance of the divine nature from Father to Son."

"But, be it as it will as to that: this received and delegated power that was communicated to Christ in order to our salvation, (it is intimated by St. Paul in the text objected,) is, when that is accomplished, to be at last delivered up; at which *we have no occasion to be surprized*. For why should a *commissionary* power be retained any longer, when the end for which it was communicated is fully answered? When then the honor of the divine government is fully secured, and our salvation entirely accomplished, *it could answer no end*, either with respect to our blessed Saviour, or as to us, *for him to keep his commission any longer*."

"2. We may also consider, who it is that is to make this *resignation of the kingdom*. 'Tis the eternal Son, who had an original power as God, and was in possession of all divine perfections from eternity, as well as had a *commissionary power*, which he received upon man's apostacy. And of him we may observe, that seeing it was his human nature that properly suffered, and his divine nature was incapable of being exalted, or having a new dominion, 'tis evident that the kingdom granted him, that is at last to be *resigned*, could be given him according to his human nature only. For tho' the Godhead alone could enable him to execute the kingly office to any purpose, and He had been wholly incapable of it if that were wanting, yet He had this authority given him, because He was the Son of Man."

"And it is also worthy of our notice, that tho' for a time, in order to our salvation, He was pleased to humble himself, and appear in our nature as an inferior, and act in subjection, yet He can as well cease to be at all, as quit or lose any part or branch of his original excellence. So that it is He that was at first the receiver, that is to be at last the *resigner* of the *commissionary* power received, when the purposes that were to be thereby served are fully answered. The resigner is the very person that before reigned in his human nature in the right of his sufferings and death. He that had all things put under his feet by God, in the human nature assumed, when his Mediatorial work is finished, is to *resign his subordinate*

power. *It could not be taken from him by force, or without his consent. He will deliver it up freely; and that at the time, 'when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power;' i. e., when he shall either have converted or destroyed all opposite powers. The end for which our Saviour's Mediatorial kingdom was erected, was to subdue a rebellious world to God; and captivate men to a free subjection to his heavenly will; or if they will not yield, to make them the triumph of his everlasting vengeance. And this end will be fully accomplished at the last judgment. By that time, he will either have reduced his enemies by the power of his grace, and brought them voluntarily to prostrate themselves before him; or have trampled them under his feet. And when once things are brought to this pass, the end and reason of the Mediatorial kingdom will wholly cease; and therefore it will be resigned. And then,"*

"3. We may farther consider, to whom this *resignation* is to be made. 'Tis to the Father, from whom the kingdom was at first received; but who as he ever was a Father, and never without a Son, so can no more cease to have a Son, like himself in all his essential perfections, than He can himself cease to be. The kingdom is to be delivered up to God, even the Father; who tho' greater than his *deputy* acting as his *commissioner*, yet had not more of the power and glory that is essential to the Deity, than He who for a while and in order to the serving of the highest purposes, condescended to act by his *commission*. And indeed, into what hands could it so fitly be resigned, as into those from which it was at first received? And what can appear more natural, than for the Father, who therefore gave our Lord Jesus, in his humane nature, the government of the universe, that there might be nothing in the whole compass of it capable of successfully opposing him in his design; to reassume the power entrusted, when the end of fixing this *viceregency* is accomplished? But it is easy to observe, (and it is fit we should observe,) that in the great work of our redemption, when the Father is spoken of, we are to look upon the whole Trinity as having a *joint concern*; as well as to reckon the Father concerned, when either the Son or Spirit are particularly spoken of in anything relating thereunto. So that in this case of the *resignation of the Mediatorial kingdom*, which is designed to bring things to that pass, that God may be all in all; tho' the Father is mentioned, yet should not the Son and Spirit be reckoned unconcerned. For He to whom the resignation is made, will not be more all in all after it is over, than either the Son that makes the *resignation*; or the Spirit, to whose efficacy it is to be ascribed, that the ends of the Mediatorial authority were so far answered, as that there could be room for such a resignation. And now,"

"4. Let us consider what this *resignation* implies and carries in it.

It imports no accession of power to him to whom the resignation is made, who had no rival before, any more than He will have afterwards. Nor does it intimate any real diminution of the resigner, as to anything essential: for He will always continue in himself as great and glorious, and as divine a person as ever. All that it properly implies, is, that there will be *a laying down of the commission received*, when the ends of it are sufficiently answered. There will be a ceasing of the Gospel dispensation, or of Christ's exercise of his Mediatorial kingdom, in the rule and government of his church and people, and his subduing his and their enemies. *The Son will give up a sort of an account to the Father of the office committed to him.* And as the dispensation began with an act of subjection to the Father from the Son, (who though he was under no antecedent obligation, yet was so ready to undertake the great work of our redemption, that, as the Apostle observes, when he came into the world, he said, 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God;') so it will also conclude with a like act, when the Son returns the kingdom into the hands of him that gave it. And this last act of the dispensation may not unfitly be compared with several of those that went before it; as with our Lord's incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, and the last judgment."

"By his incarnation the Son took our flesh upon him, and consecrated it in his own person. By his death, He satisfied divine justice, and opened us a way of access to the Divine Mercy. By his resurrection, He became the *depository and trustee* of that life that He has purchased for us. Upon his ascension, He went to take possession of the heavenly glory in our room, and became capable of communicating the same to us. And at the last judgment, He will entirely deliver us from the power of all our enemies, to that degree that we shall never be molested by them more. So that when we shall be together taken up to heaven, and *the Mediatorial kingdom shall be resigned*, this last act will be the consummation of the whole work. For we shall not then any more be consecrated by the first-fruits of the flesh, as at our Lord's incarnation; nor will there be a bare redemption in a way of right, as at his death; nor a mere reaching life by proxy, that it may be hid with Christ in God, as at his resurrection; nor a simple possession of heaven in the person of our Head, as at his ascension; nor a mere deliverance from the hands of our enemies, as at the last judgment; but there will be a full and perfect communion of the whole church, head and members, with the blessed God, and that without interruption, to all eternity."

"5. Let us also consider, what will be consequent upon this resignation of the Mediatorial kingdom and government. 'Tis said, that the Son also himself, will then be subject to the Father. That is, he will be so in

his human nature, which he will still retain. ‘And God shall be all in all.’ That is, the divine excellencies will most illustriously shine forth in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, *without any farther need of an interposing Mediator*; though the glorified human nature of our Saviour will still continue a bright mirror of the divinity.”

“The Son himself will then be subject to the Father. He is subject to him now, in the possession and management of the kingdom that will at last be delivered up. He acts by *deputation* from the Father; and what He does, is in his name, and by his authority: but hereafter he will be otherwise subject to him than now. His human nature shall transmit the rays of his Father’s glory through it, to perpetuity, to the ravishing and transporting of all beholders. Before, He chiefly exerted the Father’s regal power, according to his *commission* received; but that being resigned, all the other parts of the divine glory shall shine forth in the same human nature of Christ, which will for ever continue the temple of the Deity. *The Son himself then laying down that power which He now exercises as Mediator*, shall as man, together with the church He has redeemed, be subject to that government, which He that put all things under him shall set up. Our Lord indeed shall ever continue in his glorified humane nature at the right hand of God; He shall be always highly exalted in honor, dignity, and beatitude; always having religious *respect* and veneration paid him; and the effects of this kingly power shall for ever continue; his enemies being destroyed, and his saints reigning in consummate bliss through everlasting ages: and yet as man, He shall then be subject to the Father; in the same manner with saints and angels.”

“However, we should in this case take heed of separating the Father and the Son, and of opposing the one to the other. We should remember that the Father reigns in the Son, and the Son also will reign in the Father. As to this, I cannot but much approve of a passage in St. Basil: ‘If (says he) the Son will be subject to the Father with respect to his divinity, then was he subject to him from the beginning of his being God: but if He was not subject to him from the first, but will be subject to him at last, (which is the very thing St. Paul intimates,) this subjection will respect his humanity, and be for our sakes, and not respect his divinity, or be on his own account.’”

“’Tis added, ‘God shall be all in all.’ All power and dominion will from thenceforward be *immediately* exercised by the Deity, that is, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The variation of the person in this part of St. Paul’s discourse should be carefully noted. He does not say, Then shall the Son also himself be subject to him that did put all things under him, that the Father, but that ‘God, may be all in all.’ When the Son

has resigned his kingdom, *He and the Holy Ghost will not sit still*, and leave the Father to reign and act alone; but no power or dominion shall be exercised, except what is essential to the Godhead, in which the Son and Holy Ghost subsisting together with the Father, shall for ever reign together with him. God will then be all in all. He will rule and govern all things *immediately by himself*, and his immediate will shall reign alone in all, and be the proximate guide of all the inhabitants of the blessed world above. So that there will then be *no intermediate governor between him and us, to exact obedience from us, and to convey his favours to us*; but we shall render all our duty to him *immediately*, and receive our happiness from him *directly*."

Moyer Lectures, Sermon iii., by Dr. Bishop, p. 87;—

"By the counsel and voluntary agreement of the ever-blessed Trinity, a method was resolved upon, by which the miserable effects of the disobedience of our first parents might be prevented, that mankind might be saved from ruin, and admitted into a better covenant. For these blessed purposes the Father, as principal in the economy of our redemption, sent his Son into the world; and the Son condescended to become man, as was most suitable to his eternal relation of Sonship; and dwelt amongst us, and published the glad tidings of salvation, and was mighty in word and deed. But his disciples, through human frailty and the too eager desire of present and temporal prosperity, mistook the nature of his kingdom; and upon any extraordinary display of his power and majesty, entertained swelling hopes that He intended to establish his kingdom upon earth, and to enter upon the exercise of his sovereignty. To destroy these vain expectations, and rectify their opinion concerning the true nature of his kingdom, and the royal state in which he was to be invested by the Father; He informs them that it was *concerted between them*, and therefore necessary, that He should first suffer (which they were all along averse to hear of) and then enter into his glory. He had acted upon earth as the *ambassador* of his Father, and therefore must return *to deliver an account of his embassy, and resign his commission*, and receive the rewards which had been annexed to the faithful discharge of it. The nature of this dispensation of grace would not permit him to continue still with them upon earth; nor could He, without violating or disannulling it, set himself up for a king, or ascend the throne by his own authority. He must depart out of the world, and return to the Father in that nature and condition of humanity in which he purchased redemption for us; and by the assumption of which only he could be said to have left the Father, and been sent into the world. Then the Father as principal, and chief ruler in this economy, was to crown his missionary, and recompence his subjection and obedience, and confer upon

him that transcendent dignity which was reserved for him; whereupon they also were to be enriched with many precious gifts and endowments, which they could not obtain during his state of humiliation. So that the comparison is plainly between the meanness and abasement of the Son by his condescension of office, and the pure and unmixed glory and splendor in which the Father remained, while the Son emptied himself by a personal union with a created nature, when he was found in the appearance and fashion of a man, and that superior part assigned to the Father in effecting our redemption, He being the head to whom the Son ministered and submitted himself."

Ibid., *Concio ad Clerum*, p. 18;—

"In presenti œconomiâ omnia, & in omnibus est Christus, secundum Apostolum, *Epistolæ ad Colossenses capite tertio commate undecimo*; & implet omnia in omnibus, uti legimus *Epistolæ ad Ephesios capite primo, commate vicesimo tertio*: id est, *Ecclesiæ suæ dona confert, & gratiam omnimodam largitur; benedictiones super nos copiosissime effundit, quotquot ad virtutem & pietatem ad sanctimoniam, & spirituale solatium, & hilaritatem in Domina, vel necessariæ sint vel utiles in hujus vitæ curriculo*: sed in vitâ futurâ in æternum duraturâ Deus Pater, erit omnia in omnibus. Erga omnes tunc effluet paterna benignitas, omnes ab illo diademate immarecensibili redimiti erimus, & in gaudium ejus intrabimus: Gloriam, & lucem suam, cui sustinendæ ob peccatorum reatum impares sumus, & quam ob facultatum hebetudinem, & imbecillitatem percipere nequimus, in tempus velo carnis per Mediatoris interpositionem obumbrare visum est; at in Paterno Regno, cum satis firma fuerit mentis acies propius adstantes eum sicut est videbimus, non amplius per speculum, & in ænigmate, sed facie ad faciem, & cognoscemus sicut & cogniti sumus. *Omnia ab ipso Patre accipiemus, quæ nunc ad nos per Filium solummodo descendunt, & quasi per rivum a fonte deducuntur*. Sol æternus radios suos in nos directè immittet, augebitur nobis scientia in quantum possibile erit attingere, & summa felicitas cujus fruendæ capaces erimus in nos conferetur. Forsau etiam melius dispiciemus quomodo Spiritus atque Filius sint ejusdem naturæ, & substantiæ cum Patre, & quænam sit eorum subordinatio, & mutuæ inter se invicem relationes; quæ in hâc ignorantie caligine post accuratissimas disquisitiones intellectum humanum longe superabunt: De quibus igitur tutissimum erit, nihil definite supra quod scriptum est, hoc est, supra quod vel disertis verbis in sacro codice continetur, vel perspicuâ & necessariâ consequentiâ inde probari potest."

Rev. James Hervey, *Works; Collection of his Letters*, Letter xxvi., vol. v., p. 412;—

"The Apostle affirms, that at the consummation of terrestrial things,

when the state of human probation ends, and the number of the elect is completed, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him; that God may be in all; *i. e.*, according to my judgment, the Son, at the commencement of that grand revolution, will *entirely resign the administration* of his mediatorial kingdom; *He will no longer act as an advocate or intercessor*, because the reasons on which this office is founded will cease for ever; He will no longer, as a *high priest*, plead his atoning blood in behalf of sinners, nor, as a *king*, dispense the succours of his sanctifying grace, because all guilt will be done away, and the actings of corruption be at an end: *He will no longer be the medium of his people's access to the knowledge and enjoyment of the Father*, because then they will stand perpetually in the beatific presence, and see face to face, know even as they are known. I may probably mistake the meaning of the words; but whatever shall appear to be their precise signification, this, I think, is so clear as not to admit of any doubt, that it relates to an incarnate person; relates to him, who died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. And can the surrender of all authority made by the man Jesus Christ, be any bar to his unlimited equality as God?"

Macknight on the Epistles; vol. ii., p. 264;—

“Ver. 24. ‘Deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father;’ deliver up his mediatorial kingdom, called Matt. xxviii. 18, ‘all power in heaven and in earth,’ that is, power over angels as well as over men, administered by the Son for the good of his church. See ver. 27. This kingdom our Lord received in the human nature, as the reward of his humiliation, and was solemnly installed in it after his resurrection, when he ascended into heaven, and was invited by God ‘to sit at his right hand till he should make his enemies his footstool.’ Farther, because it is said, Col. i. 17, ‘He is before all things, and by him all things consist;’ and because we are told, Heb. i. 3, that the Son, while he spake the Gospel, ‘upheld all things by the word of his power,’ it is believed, that, besides the *Mediatorial kingdom* which the Son administered in the human nature, and which *he will deliver up to the Father* after the judgment, He possessed the government of the universe from the beginning in his character as Creator. In like manner, when Christ prayed to his Father, John xvii., 5, ‘Glorify thou me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was,’ it is thought by many, that He referred to the glory of governing the angelical hosts, which He enjoyed with the Father before our world was created; and that after the Mediatorial kingdom is delivered up, the kingdom which He holds as Creator will remain with him as from the beginning. So that after the judgment, the righteous shall enter still into ‘the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ,’ as they are represented to do,

2 Pet. i., 11. See the note there. But to this opinion, ver. 28 of this chapter is opposed: where we are told, that when all the enemies are subjected, then shall even the Son himself be subjected to the Father, that *all government may be administered by God himself, and all obedience and homage be directed immediately to Him.*"

Page 266; verse 28;—

"1. 'Are subjected.' In the preceding verse, the apostle speaks of God's constituting Christ universal Lord; in this, he speaks of his actually subduing all things to Him: this distinction the Apostle himself hath made, Heb. ii., 8."

"2. 'Then even the Son himself shall be subjected to him.' This subjection of the Son to the Father, is generally understood of his subjection in the human nature, wherein formerly he governed the mediatorial kingdom. But the Arians affirm, that if this had been the apostle's meaning, he would have said, Then shall even Jesus himself be subjected, &c. There are in Scripture, however, passages where the Son signifies the Son in the human nature, Heb. i., 1."

"3. 'That God may be over all things in all places.' *ἵνα ἡ ὁ Θεὸς* (supp. *ἐπί*, see Luke xii., 14), *τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσι*, (supp. *τόποις*). Because the apostle hath used the word God here, and not Father, Whitby thinks he leads us to the Godhead, comprehending Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who, when the kingdom is delivered up, will in union govern all things *without the intervention of any Mediator*. But on supposition that the Son, in conjunction with the Father and Spirit, is to govern, two questions will occur; First, How the apostle came to speak of the Son's subjection to the Father, seeing he is to reign in conjunction with the Father? Next, How the Son under the government of the Godhead can be subject to himself? To remove these difficulties it is generally said, that the Son is to be subject to the Father in his human nature only.—In the present state of mankind, it is suitable to the majesty and purity of God, that all his intercourses with them, whether in the way of conferring blessings on them or of receiving their worship, be carried on by the intervention of a Mediator. But after sinners are completely reconciled to God, and made perfect in holiness, and are introduced into heaven, God will bestow his favors on them, and receive their worship *immediately, without the intervention of a Mediator*. And thus *the offices of Mediator and King becoming unnecessary, shall cease*. Yet even in this state, the Son in the human nature, though no longer king, will still retain the glory of having created all things, described Col. i., 15; Heb. i., 2, 3, and the glory of having saved mankind, and of having destroyed the kingdom of Satan, and Satan himself. So that in respect of personal perfection, and of the veneration

tion due to him for the great things He hath accomplished, He will continue superior to the highest angels, and be acknowledged by them as their *superior* through all eternity. Now this *superiority being considered as a kind of reigning*, it is perhaps what the apostle meant when he told Timothy, 2 Ep. ii., 12, 'If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.' See also Rev. iii., 24."

p. 220. *Asia . . . from hence the light of the Gospel has been diffused over the world.*

So Dr. Hales, in his Analysis of Sacred Chronology, vol. iii., p. 641, speaks of Asia as being the country "*whence the light of the Gospel dawned on mankind from the Dayspring on high.*" Malte-Brun also says in his Geography, vol. ii., p. 1, that "*it was in Asia that arts and civilization had their origin.*" Hence it is that according to Swedenborg *Asia* signifies "those who are in the light of truth from the Word." That Asia has in this passage a symbolic meaning, is affirmed by Ambrose Ansbert, the Glossa Ordinaria, Berengaud, &c., who interpret it to signify *elation*; Cardinal Hugo, *progressing*; signifying that the Catholic Church or Seven Churches is *exalted* in the virtues, or pre-eminent in the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit in which the true church is always *progressing*. That Swedenborg has here given the most natural and easy interpretation is obvious; since he regards *Asia* as only signifying that for which Asia was distinguished. With respect to Patmos, see Apoc. Rev., art. 24.

p. 250. *That day sometimes signifies the understanding of truth.*

The Master of the Sentences, Peter Lombard, thus writes, book iv., distinct. 43;—

"There are many passages in which authors attest that the advent of Christ is called *The Day of the Lord*, not by reason of quality of time, but quality of things; because then the thoughts and counsels of every man will be made manifest. Whence in Daniel vii.: 'The Ancient of Days sat, and the books were opened before him,' The books are the consciences of persons which will then be laid open to others. And then shall be fulfilled the prophecy, 'There shall nothing be hid which shall not be revealed.'"

p. 257. *Divinely-human works.*

Daniel Hervey, of Nantes, "Priest of the Oratory of our Lord Jesus Christ," in a work on the Apocalypse dedicated to Pope Innocent XI., A.D.

1684, p. 33, thus writes; "Verum ubi Christus vitam *Divino-humanam* eximiâ charitate profudit ad gloriam immensam Patris," &c.

p. 253. *And I turned to see, &c.*

Albertus Magnus, Apocalypse i., 12;—

"(Et conversus vidi). Et pro quia? non enim potest videre aversus. Exemplum de Maria Johan. 20, quæ conversa vidit Dominum, & cognovit, & dixit Rabboni."

Alexander de Hales, Apocalypse i., 12;—

"*Conversus sum*, scilicet, retro ab ignorantia ad intelligentiam & scientiam. *Conversus igitur sum ut viderem*, id est, intelligerem, *vocem quæ loquebatur mecum*, id est, interius, sine strepitu soni exterioris." Similar is the interpretation of Richard of St. Victor.

p. 341. *It is too plain that arguing from the pretended holiness of men's lives, &c.*

Upon the whole it would have been better to omit this passage, as it savors too much of the Ephesian spirit. See moreover the extract from this author, given above, p. 281. There is a great difference between *honesty* and *pretence*; or between *sincerity* in religion and *pretended* holiness. The reader is here referred to our Second Volume, p. 210, in the observations on the tribe of Dan, where this point is explained.

p. 349. *By feet are meant the external affections.*

See Cornelius a Lapide, Canticles, p. 233.

p. 408. *The heart of one reposing, &c.*

This translation is corrected in the *errata*. It is the mystical interpretation of Canticles v., 2, "I sleep, but my heart waketh."

p. 427. *Because thou hast little power.*

See also the explanation by D. Hervey.

p. 473. *Rich in divine or worldly knowledge.*

See also the interpretation of D. Hervey, p. 102; and of Gaspar a Melo.

ERRATA.

- p. viii., l. 19 (Preface), for 'in full,' read *in distinct portions*.
p. 2, l. 3 from the bottom, for 'Prologue,' read *Prolegomena*.
p. 5, l. 4 from the bottom, for 'disturbs and confounds,' read *disturb and confound*.
p. 55, l. 7 from the bottom, for 'be divided,' read *is divided*.
p. 75, l. 19, for 'and which in his own work he presupposes to be, as it were, the grammatical,' read *and which being as it were the grammatical sense, he places in order before his own* (viz., the enigmatical).
p. 158, last line (note), for 'a human alone,' read *a human body alone*.
p. 168, l. 12, for 'Bampton,' read *Moyer*.
p. 206, l. 4 from the bottom, after 'Pareus on the Apocalypse,' insert, *Preface*.
p. 210, l. 7, for 'credulous,' read *believing*.
p. 222, for 'Esthius' here and in other places, read *Estius*.
p. 243, l. 22, for 'appear in the clouds,' read *appear in the material clouds*.
p. 269, l. 6 from the bottom and in other places, for 'Cotterus,' read *Cotterius*.
p. 314, l. 3, for 'inserted,' read *asserted*.
p. 348, l. 16, for 'Georgius, Venetus,' read *Georgius Venetus*.
p. 368 (note), line 16 from bottom, for 'Dr. Mills,' read *Dr. Mill*.
p. 408, l. 21, for 'the heart of one reposing,' &c., read *the heart of the sleeper is watchful when he employs not his leisure in the indulgence of sloth, &c.*
p. 462 (note), for 'Pope Leo,' read *Pope Leo X*.

Note.—In about one or two places the *Glossa* may have been put for *De Lyra*.



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