

The Second Advent Before, not After, the Millennium

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Bible Treasury 17: 137, etc.

Scripture is not only the mine, but the standard, of truth. Error cannot stand before the inspired word. Not that the believer is competent of himself either to draw out or to apply aright; our sufficiency is from God, Who also made us sufficient, says the apostle, as ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

Every Christian cites 1 Thess. 1: 10; 1 Thess. 2: 19; 1 Thess. 3: 13; 1 Thess. 4: 16, etc.; 1 Thess. 5: 2; 2 Thess. 1: 6-10; 2 Thess. 2: 1, 2, 8; 2 Thess. 3: 5, to prove that Christ's coming, or παρουσία, is our hope, and that His day will bring judgment on the world. With all this, it is allowed, the apostle's later Epistles agree, as do those of James, Peter, John, and Jude. It is not otherwise with the Gospels.

But it is a strange position to except the Book of Revelation, especially Rev. 20: 1-8, unless we concede the synchronism of vv. 8, 9, with 2 Thess. 2: 8! Even so it is confessed that the very great difficulty is involved of a preliminary victory over Satan earlier than the final victory. "But possibly," says professor Beet, "the events of Rev. 19: 11, Rev. 20: 4, may take place without any interruption of the ordinary course of human life" (p. 30)! Let the Christian read and judge.

To what is all this unbelieving perplexity owing? To the notion that Christ's coming cannot possibly be followed by the millennium and its subsequent conflict, and must therefore follow these events. But is this true? What saith the scripture?

The Lord taught the disciples, not merely that He was to return from heaven, but that they were to be as men looking for him. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; and be ye yourselves like unto men looking for their lord, when he shall return from the marriage feast; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may straightway open unto him" (Luke 12: 35, 36). Of a millennium to intervene first, not a word. What is said rather excludes it; for will it be a "little flock" as now, when "Jehovah's people shall be all righteous," and "all nations shall flow" unto the mountain of Jehovah's house? Christ's coming was not a mere doctrine assented to, nor a prophetic event at such or such a date. A living hope was bound up, with His coming — they knew not how soon. The Lord laid the utmost stress on their state of habitual expectancy — that when He comes and knocks, they may open *immediately* unto Him. "Blessed are those (He adds, v. 37) Whom the lord when he cometh shall find *watching*." This goes far beyond mere acquiescence that He will come at some distant date.

Prof. Beet treats this attitude even now, and of course *à fortiori* of old, as a mistake. "It was near to the thought of the early Christians"; yet he agrees with the infidel that it was an error. "It must be at once admitted that we cannot, with reasonable confidence, expect a return of Christ during the lifetime of men now living. Still less can we daily expect His return" (pp. 149, 150). This with a vengeance is the higher criticism of modern thought.

It is really bolder than any man should be with (not apostles only but) the Lord of all. Did not He know the truth? Did He deliberately set His own to watch in a way open to Gibbon's sneer or Mr. B.'s correction? Did He not encourage them to watch for His coming from heaven as the only right state of soul? His teaching is uniformly to this end: so much so that He characterized the evil servant in Matt.

24: 48 by saying in his heart, "My lord tarrieth," the prelude to beating his fellow-servants, and to eating and drinking with the drunken. In accordance with this the Lord presents the virgins in the following parable as gone forth to meet the bridegroom. Such in fact was the position of the early Christians, the wise and the foolish alike. The Lord warned that during His delay they would all go asleep, as they all did. This was but partially "in the days of the apostles"; but it became worse and worse not long after. Certain it is, as He predicted, that soon "they all slumbered and slept." But the Lord also indicates that "at midnight," when all was darkest, there is a cry, Behold the bridegroom! Come (or, Go) ye forth to meet him. Then what activity! all arose and trimmed their lamps. It is this cry that awakes slumbering Christendom. When the foolish are in quest of the grace they lack, the wise resume the original place so long abandoned by the saints, the bridegroom comes, and those that were ready go in with him to the marriage feast. The foolish and unready come to find the door was shut. It is false that our Lord's return was not expected as a constant outlook "by His better informed followers."

Nothing was revealed in prophecy to blunt the edge of that hope. The Lord seems to have expressly provided that His own, however intelligent, might be kept, expecting Him as habitually as the simplest. Thus, as far as parabolic language goes, none could infer that the same saints should not go out to meet Him, fall asleep, wake up, go out afresh and in with Him to the wedding. On this principle are all the parables constructed: the wheat-and-tarefield, the mustard-seed, the leaven, and the rest in Matt. 13, in no way forbid but fall in with waiting for Him in their lifetime, whatever may be the filling up of the sketch as He tarries. It was the due posture of hope, which all the truth strengthens instead of weakening. Our Lord did predict in Luke 21, as well as in ch. 19, the near approaching destruction of Jerusalem: did this hinder it? Why, it also was in that one lifetime; and the next event described is His judicial dealing with mankind when seen coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

Even Peter's death, and John's survival, are carefully so presented in John 21 and 2 Peter 1 as not to interfere with watching for Christ. A special revelation of the apostle's death left all open for the heart, and Peter recalls it only when about to depart. But he does more. In the same ch. 1 of his Second Epistle he distinguishes between "the prophetic word," and the "day-star arising in the heart." The former they had known, even in their unconverted days; and they did well to pay heed to it still. But now they had, or at least ought in the gospel to have, a better light than the lamp of prophecy, shining in the "squalid place" of the earth as it is. As Christians they should enjoy the heavenly light that shines through the rent veil, and Christ Himself as the morning star for the heart's hope, before the sun of righteousness cannot be hid from the world. It is therefore ignorance of scripture, and a misuse of prophecy, to let any supposed intervening events check the hope of Christ's coming. The Lord, and the apostles, down to the last chapter of the Book of Revelation, always and strenuously make the hope independent of prophecy, not by a fanciful sentimentality, but by a revealed difference in nature and character. The hope is of Christ for heaven. Prophecy treats of events for the earth; which a better knowledge of the word learns to be subsequent. There is no earthly sign revealed to intercept the hope of Christ's coming for us, to receive us to Himself.

Now there are no Epistles of St. Paul so full of the hope as those to the Thessalonians. There, therefore, we may surely look not merely for better information, but for the unerring light of God.

Did the apostle then lead the saints in Thessalonica to look for the millennium before Christ's coming? He taught them, turning from their idols, as a part of their conversion, to wait for God's Son from heaven as well as to serve a living and true God (1 Thess. 1: 10). And so filled was he for himself with this bright hope that in his labors this is his one unailing joy, not any proximate prospect for European Asia or the world at large, but "Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus Christ at His

coming"? So he prays that the Lord would give them to abound in love to the establishing of their hearts in holiness before our God and Father at our Lord's coming with all His saints. He will not, does not, sever "that day" from the actual moment in his desires for them and all. Then ch. 4 is worthy of close attention. The Christians at Thessalonica were so intent on the immediate coming of Christ, that they grieved excessively over one or more of their number who had died. This was just the occasion to tell them, as so many do, that death is to all practical purposes the coming of Christ to that individual. Whatever analogy people may frame, the apostle presents our Lord's coming as the divine comfort and remedy for, or rather His triumph over, it. But he does this in a way which demonstrates the fundamental antagonism of post-millennialism to the true hope. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep" (1 Thess. 4: 15). The same formula he carefully repeats in vv. 16, 17: "and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air" etc. If the express intention of the Holy Spirit had been to set the apostle with the saints, then living, in looking for Christ always, assured of His coming soon but not knowing when, could any words be conceived more suited to the purpose? How easy to have put "those who might be alive" when He comes, in the third person, — to have said "they," as he did say of the deceased.

Nor is it here and now only that the inspired writer so speaks. In 1 Corinthians, written after both those to the Thessalonians, we find precisely the same thing in his great vindication of the resurrection, when he adds a secret as to the saints found alive at the advent. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed . . . for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15: 51, 52). Compare also 2 Cor. 5: 1-10, converging on the same point. It is therefore the clearly maintained principle of a proximate, not an ultimate, hope. The language of scripture joins issue with the theology of the schools. Christendom has lost the tongue of Canaan, because the truth is no longer a living reality for men. The apostle put no date, and made not a shade of error. Like his Master, he in the Spirit would have the saints ever waiting and looking for Christ's coming.

Beyond controversy the early part of 1 Thess. 5 speaks of the day of the Lord in a way wholly different from that which prevails among our "negative " brethren. It is judicial for the world which it will overtake as a thief in the night, but not the Christian who certainly ought not to be in darkness, that that day should overtake him so. How could it surprise any suddenly if it cannot be before a thousand years of peace beyond example? The coming of the Lord rightly held presupposes the believer resting on redemption, sealed with the Holy Spirit of God, and already meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Those who confound the Lord's coming and His day are as the rule in a like confusion as to the soul; they rarely distinguish aright the work of Christ for them and of the Spirit in them. In such a condition they rather dread, than welcome, the coming of the Lord, and willingly drop into the illusion of great progress and of indisputable improvement, both in the churches and in society at large . . . To these must be added the many triumphs of the foreign mission field. Before our eyes Christ . . . is going forth conquering and to conquer (p. 151). How averse such minds are and must be from the solemn warnings of divine judgment! Yet how plain and sober is scriptural truth! Hear the scriptures that speak of God's purpose to fill the earth with His glory and the knowledge of it: Num. 14: 21; Isa. 11: 9; Hab. 2: 14. In all these the connection is with His judicial dealings, not with our preaching the gospel. Nothing is so blinding, and self-exalting, as unbelief.

Could a better informed follower of Christ say that the Thessalonians, "like so many others since, had misunderstood St. Paul to teach that the Great Day was close at hand"? (p. 150). Really such misunderstanding, both of St. Paul and of the Thessalonians, is discreditable, though a too prevalent

error. It is no opinion but a fact, now recognized by the Revisers (of 1881), as well as by all recent translators and reliable commentators, that the ground of such an impression is a mere blunder, though it misled every body for more than a thousand years. I pointed it out to my friend Dr. D. Brown many years ago, while he lived in Glasgow, before exposing it in public. Yet there it stands uncorrected still in the sixth edition of his *Second Coming* (pp. 4, 5, 42-51, 425-433), though he has not ventured to controvert, as I am persuaded neither he nor any other can fairly overthrow, the evidence of it. The delusion which alarmed the Thessalonians was the cry that the day of the Lord was actually come (ἐνέστηκεν); and the apostle beseeches them by, or for the sake of (ὕπὲρ), the reassuring hope of the Lord's coming and our gathering together unto Him, not to be shaken about that day (2 Thess 2: 1). First, it was the disturbance of fear, and this through the false alarm that the day had come, not at all excitement about the blessed hope; which hope on the contrary is appealed to as a reason by the way to comfort them against their groundless alarm. Secondly, the true text and translation of the last clause in 2 Thess. 2: 2 is, beyond doubt, "as that the day of the Lord is present."

Dr. Brown and Prof. Beet are under a delusion here about God's word less excusable than that of the Thessalonian saints. Not only do they wholly mistake what was at work then and there, but they set thereby the apostle at war with himself. For their misunderstanding makes him explode here what he urges later on the Romans (Rom. 13: 12), that the day is at hand (ἤγγικεν). Compare too Phil. 4: 5, Heb. 10: 37. James speaks similarly (James 5: 8); and so substantially Peter (1 Peter 4: 7). Indeed the Lord had Himself impressed His coming suddenly as a motive for all to watch in the early Gospel of Mark (13: 35-37); and none other is what we may call, pace Prof. Beet, His last word closing the Apocalypse. It seems clearly meant to hinder that fatal misuse of the prophetic visions, which enfeebles, if not frustrates, the divinely given hope of His coming. "He which testifieth these things saith, Yea, I come quickly." Did John cavil or correct his Master? He answered, "Amen; come, Lord Jesus."

The apostle next explains that the day — for this was the question, not His coming to gather us to, Himself on high, but His day or judicial dealing with the world — cannot be till the evils are completely developed, which that day is to judge. Of these he specifies the apostasy, the falling away from God's truth after being once professed; and further the revelation of the lawless one, as the consummation of the mystery of lawlessness already at work. Once the actual hinderer was removed, the lawlessness doing its secret evil would culminate and be manifested in the lawless one whom the Lord Jesus shall slay (or destroy) with the breath (or spirit) of His mouth, and shall bring to naught by the shining forth (or appearing) of His coming — not by His coming simply, but by the appearing of it (2 Thess. 2: 8). Now when Christ, our life, shall be manifested, then (τότε, not εἶτα) shall we also with Him be manifested in glory (Col. 3: 4). It is the moment of His and our appearing, after we have been caught up to Him.

Prof. Beet abandons the Protestant interpretation (reformers and also historicism) of the apostasy or at least of the man of sin. What unbiased Christian can wonder?

There is nothing now corresponding in the least degree to the tremendous antagonist of God and man described in 2 Thess. 2: 4 (p. 150). This may be true as to the person, but the principles are latently at work; and it is unwise to speak as he does of the slow development in modern times of forces bad, if not of good. The passage itself, if we were not living in an age of movement intensely rapid in every sense, most naturally prepares us for the most sudden display of the son of perdition, depending as this does simply on the removal of him that restraineth now. Undoubtedly the worst evil, the lawless person (Antichrist), must be revealed before that day which is to annul him; but to say that the day is not near is flatly to contradict the word of the living God, as well as ignorance of what the text here teaches.

Only Mr. B. is to be congratulated for breaking loose from the post-millennial argument, under which others still lie, that the παρουσία of our Lord in 2 Thess 2: 1 is His personal advent, in v. 8 is only figurative. This sleight of hand Prof. B. repudiates (p. 22). He owns it is the same throughout; but where then is his millennium before Christ comes? The text reveals a continuity of unbridled willfulness, already working as leaven, till it rise (on the removal of an existing barrier) into a revealed head, the lawless one to fall under the Lord Jesus in His day. How then possibly foist in there the millennium before that day? The Thessalonians, misled as they were by the delusion of a judgment-day already come, fell into no such a preposterous dream as this truly strange doctrine.

It is unfounded then, as a commentator ought to have known, a mere vulgar error, that the Thessalonians had misunderstood St. Paul. He himself gives quite a different source of the mischief. He speaks of either a word, or spirit, or epistle as from us, *i.e.*, pretending so to be (2 Thess 2: 2). It was not his First Epistle misunderstood, but a spurious communication that is meant; for the apostle never taught anything in the least resembling it. The misleaders must have insinuated a figurative day of the Lord under the gospel, answering to such partial or germinant applications of that day as we have in Isa. 13, 19, etc., on Babylon, Egypt, etc. For the Thessalonian saints were passing through sore trial and persecution; so that he had sent Timothy even before his First Epistle, lest by any means the tempter had tempted them to the compromise of their faith and of his own labor. He foresaw their danger of being moved by these afflictions. It seems to have been just in this way that Satan was now working.

Before the First Epistle they were so enthusiastic as to be cast down exceedingly because some fell asleep; for they imagined that these would thereby lose their place at Christ's coming. This was dispelled by the assurance that these also put to sleep by Jesus will God bring with Him; for, when He descends from heaven with an assembling shout, the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we the living that remain shall be caught up together with them. But the more serious error corrected in the Second Epistle is about the living on whom the false teachers sought to bring the terror of the day of the Lord, availing themselves probably of their sore trials as indicating that the day was come. Not so says the apostle in 2 Thess 1. In that day the trouble will be to the persecutors and other wicked men; the righteous are to rest. Their blessed hope of being gathered to the Lord at His coming ought to have guarded them from such a panic. Besides, that day can only arrive when secret lawlessness is replaced (the barrier being gone) by the openly lawless one whom the Lord Jesus will destroy by the appearance of His coming. Not misunderstanding but positive deception marked the misleaders. They were Judaizers; and they wrought by fear of that day as come, not by the hope of the Lord's coming, as not a few imagine. Beyond doubt a previous millennium can find no place either in the thoughts of the Thessalonians or in the apostle's words.

It is hard to understand why 1 Cor. 1: 7, 9, or 2 Cor. 15: 23, 52, or 2 Cor. 5: 10, should be adduced pp. 22, 23). They are appropriate and forcible for those who believe in waiting for the coming of Christ in His day; but how do they even appear to furnish the shadow of an argument for an antecedent millennium of earthly blessedness? Is there any reality or even show of proof in the Synoptic Gospels to which we are next turned (p. 23)? Where is there a millennium before Christ's coming in Matt. 13? 16? or 24? What evidence there is is clean opposed to the post-millennial plan. The tares sown among the wheat are never removed till the harvest; and the harvest the Lord explains as the completion of the age (σ. τοῦ αἰῶνος) *not* the end of the world, which "world" is expressly distinguished only in the verse before (Matt. 13: 38, 39). Where is the millennium here before the second advent?

The same objection applies with yet more force to the use made of Matt. 16: 27. Does this text prove a millennium before it? When the Son of Man comes, He awards to each according to his doing. Is this only to be cast into the lake of fire?

Prof. Beet, indeed, allows the just force of συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος to be "completion of the age." Now Matt. 12: 32 speaks of "the age to come," as well as of "this age," which was to end with His coming. What is meant? Does it not signify the future age when the Messiah should reign, as distinguished from the age of the law not yet come to its close? Blasphemy against the Spirit shall be forgiven in neither. Whatever may be pardoned in either age, that cannot be. That is, this age and the coming one are two dispensations. The nature of the case excludes the eternal scene where there is no question of either sin or its forgiveness. If there be an αἰὼν to come after this which is closed by the Lord's coming, what can it be but the millennium? Heb. 6: 5 confirms this. The powers of the "age to come" mean samples of such power over Satan, disease, and the like, which the disciples wrought when Christ was here and subsequently; of which the age to come will be the full theatre, and display to God's glory, when Satan's overthrow will be manifest all over the earth.

But there is yet more to observe in Matt. 13: 41, 42. Does anyone doubt that it is of the harvest-field, the world, our Savior speaks as His kingdom, whither at His coming His angels are sent to gather out all offences (or trap-falls) and those that practice lawlessness? On the other hand, who can question that, when the earth is thus purged (not yet dissolved or destroyed) for the Son of man's kingdom, then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father? It is the age to come before eternity, the millennial age, wherein are the glorified on high, and the earth delivered from the usurper and blessed under the reign of Christ. For, as the Lord taught in the Fourth Gospel, God's kingdom comprises, not only "earthly things," as to which Nicodemus was so dull, but "heavenly things," (John 3: 12) which only came to full light when Christ was glorified, and the Spirit could lead into them those who enjoyed redemption through His blood.

A King reigning in righteousness will characterize the new age. Now the Lord sits on the Father's throne (Rev. 3: 21); *then* He will sit on His own throne and will rule with a rod of iron, shattering all that rebel as the vessels of the potter. So it will be in the age to come or millennium. How absurd to apply this to the eternity that succeeds! As it has been well remarked, righteousness dwells in the new heavens and new earth when the promise is fulfilled absolutely and for ever. It is no question then of righteous government which represses or punishes evil, as in the millennial day. Neither is it this "evil age" when grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 5: 21). Now the Lord asks, or prays, not for the world, but for His own, the gift of the Father (John 17: 9). By and by, when this age is to close, and the coming one to dawn, He asks the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. It will be no question then of the mysteries of the kingdom during which He is the rejected but glorified Son of Man. Having received for Himself the kingdom (Dan. 7, Luke 19), He returns. During His absence His servants, according to the parable, trade with the money entrusted, and on His return receive according to fidelity; as the citizens who hated Him and would not let Him reign over them are slain before Him. Here is without doubt the coming of Christ, but not a hint of a millennium before it; whilst the character of the judgment executed at His coming perfectly suits a millennium, not an eternity to follow.

The same lesson flows from Luke 17, where the days of Noah and of Lot are by Himself compared with the day when the Son of Man is revealed. Here is not the smallest resemblance to the loosing of Satan and the war of Gog and Magog in Rev. 20, any more than to the past siege of Jerusalem by Titus (A.D. 70). Before the Lord appears in judgment it will be so, as we may see in 1 Thess. 5. When His day comes as a thief, it will overtake them eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building, marrying and given in marriage. How strange to apply Luke 17: 31 to the dissolution of all things! or even to the destruction of Jerusalem! It is neither an indiscriminate judgment in providence, with which vv. 34, 35 stand in marked contrast, nor yet the last judgment, with which not a feature tallies. It is

simply and only the Lord's appearing, with the millennium to follow this judgment of the quick which it cannot precede.

But we must not omit Matt. 25: 31-46. How any sober Christian can turn this scene into the counterpart of Rev. 20: 11-15 is inexplicable, if one knew not the power of prejudice. The latter is expressly a judgment of the dead, without one living man; the other not even of all living men, but only of all the Gentiles or nations, the Jews being before us in the early part of Matt. 24 and professing Christians in the parables that close ch. 24 and go on to Matt. 25: 30. Hence it is the King as such Who judges the Gentiles on their treatment of His envoys, His brethren; and they are set as sheep on His right or as goats on His left accordingly. This is wholly foreign to the judgment of the dead at the end of all in Rev. 20, the "resurrection of judgment"; as vv. 4-6 gave us the previous "resurrection of life," answering to John 5. That of the righteous only is before us in John 6, 1 Thess. 4, and 1 Cor. 15. As this is a resurrection *from among* the dead, it is necessarily prior, like Christ's, to that of the remaining dead. And εἶτα "then" may be a long interval as easily as a short; just as "hour" and "day" may last a thousand years and more, as the context proves. But where in all these texts, or in any of them, is Prof. B.'s millennium before the Second Advent?

Throughout St. Paul's Epistles and the Gospels, to which we might add the Book of Acts and the Epistles of James and Peter and Jude, we find everywhere the same metaphors and the same phraseology (p. 26). So say those opposed. But let us read on. The early Christians were looking for Christ's sudden and visible return from heaven, to raise the dead, good and bad, to judge all men, and to bring in eternal retribution. Really this is a perplexing argument from one whose theme is that Christ's coming must follow the millennium. Rev. 20: 1-8 is therefore the millstone around the Professor's neck, which must be somehow got rid of and cast into the sea, if possible.

Now it is wholly denied that the blessed manifested kingdom of Christ rests on that passage only of the N.T., while the O.T. prophets are full of it, yea law, Psalms, and Prophets. Take Acts 3: 19-21, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and He may send Jesus Christ, Who hath been fore-appointed unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, of which God spoke by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Seasons of refreshing were to come from the Lord's presence, Who would send Jesus that had been fore-appointed for them (Israel's repentance being in full view, as usually for the millennium). Heaven must receive Him till times for restoring all things according to prophecy. That is, Jesus will be sent to bring in these blessed times when all things shall be (not destroyed, as in Prof. Beet's scheme, but) reconstituted, as the prophets of old testified. Christ will come from heaven to earth in order to establish millennial blessing. The Greek must be wholly altered to bear the meaning "till all be accomplished." Christ is on high till times come of restoring all, not till all shall have been restored. Having received the kingdom, He returns in it, and must reign till He has put all His enemies under His feet; for He is to abolish all rule, and all authority, and power, before He gives up the kingdom at the end of all. The repentance of Israel, the return of Jesus, the restoring of all things, besides fulfillment of the prophetic word, point to the millennial kingdom.

Again, Luke 20: 34, 35, is entitled to great weight on this head, as it also confirms what has been already said on Matt. 12, 13, and Heb. 6. "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage; but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead," etc. Before eternity arrives "that age" is to run its course, as well as "this age" to close. And "that age," or dispensation, is characterized here by "the resurrection of the just," those counted worthy to have part in that age and the resurrection from the dead. How contrasted with the dead who, unworthy and

unblessed and unholy, are only raised, after "that age" is over, for a resurrection of judgment and the lake of fire! Scripture never speaks of a general resurrection but of two distinct risings — of life, and of judgment, separated by the kingdom of Christ and those who reign with Him, the only age when these thousand years of blessing for the earth that now is can be in consistency with Scripture. Compare Phil. 3: 11, 20, 21. To say that the resurrection from the dead is not as peculiar by priority of time as well as in nature, accompaniments and issues, is to give up the force of language as well as description and context. The phrase itself is so weighty that one of the ablest, stumbled by faulty premillennialists, made the wrong vulgar reading in Phil. 3: 11 a chief ground of objection, as Griesbach strangely accepted it. It is now exploded by all critics. What would the late Mr. Gipps have said now?

The more one weighs Prof. B.'s words on the Book of Revelation generally, and on Rev. 20 especially, the less one can accept them.

"That this event" — "the one definite event for which the early Christians were waiting," (Christ's return) "is less conspicuous in the Book of Revelation (!) than in the rest of the New Testament (!!)" excites no surprise" (p. 27)!!! To ordinary Christians this seem as surprising a deliverance as one has heard for a long while. The reason is as peculiar as the conclusion. The other writers leave us outside the veil (which is untrue); the Revelation takes us within, and portrays the unseen world before, and during, and after, the coming of Christ. And therefore! in a book which is thus instinct with what is before, and during, and after Christ's coming, this event is less conspicuous than elsewhere, where it is touched on for the most part practically, and but occasionally if we except 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Q.E.D.

"The question nevertheless remains, Where, amid the many and various visions of this mysterious book, shall we place the great event," [etc.] Yes, this is just Prof. B.'s difficulty, because he is not content to believe it where God has placed it and written it for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope. "The only answer" to this question which seems good in his eyes is, that we must not leave it where "this mysterious book" gives it, and we must "place" it, where this book testifies that Christ does not and cannot come. In Rev. 20: 11 there is total and manifest contrast with Christ's coming found in the Gospels and Epistles, save the fact of Christ's sitting on a throne (which is true generally of His reign for a thousand years and more, to say nothing of His present seat on His Father's throne). Is it seriously contended that the twelve sitting as assessors on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, symbolizes with the eternal judgment of the dead? Then is the time when 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3 will be fulfilled; not the outrageous confusion with the judgment of the dead, where are no thrones nor assessors, whatever commentators may dream and say. And so in Matt. 24 the powers of the heavens are shaken, and all tribes of the earth mourn, and the angels gather together His elect (which the context here limits to Israel) from one end of heaven to the other. But all these statements describe a time different from and anterior to the fleeing away of the earth and the heaven when no place will be found for them. They abide in Matt. 24, but not Rev. 20: 11.

The other collocations of scriptural texts in p. 28 have been already shown to be unsound and imaginary, doing violence to Scripture at every turn. And all this to blot out the appearing of Christ from Rev. 19: 11-21 where it is revealed, and to foist it into Rev. 20: 11 where there is no coming described, for the very plain and decisive reason that He will have come already! Nor is it too much to say that, unless Christ come before, it becomes no longer possible thenceforth; for Christ's coming means to this earth whence He ascended (Acts 1). Now before the white-throne judgment the first heaven and the first earth passed away. As nobody pleads for coming to the heaven and new earth of eternity, it is demonstrable that He must have come before "the end," when the elements are dissolved

with fervent heat. Christ's coming therefore must be before, not after, the millennium. What avail our notions of difficulty, or facility, or safety (pp. 29-31), against the word of God? Matt. 25: 32 at the beginning of the kingdom is in no way inconsistent with Rev. 20: 7-10 at the end. The camp of the saints and the beloved city (Jerusalem) may be compassed; but not a saint is hurt, and not a sinner escapes: fire from God out of heaven comes down and devours the bad. Surely if there was affliction for the oppressors, and rest for the oppressed, proved gloriously at the Lord's revelation from heaven (2 Thess. 1: 6, 7), there is nothing in that to reconcile with divine judgment falling on the unconverted of the millennium, who had rendered feigned obedience, till at the end the temptation of Satan proves the irremediable evil of man not born of God, in presence of glory then so long familiar, as now in contempt of God's grace.

Nor is there any such strange confusion as adversaries feign. The risen saints reign with Christ over (not "on") the earth; the saints threatened come together as such, consisting of saved Israel and the godly Gentiles. Only the wicked die at that time under God's hand (Isa. 65). On the Holy Mount the Lord had once shown a vision of His power and coming, where on the one hand men appeared in glory, and on the other men in their unchanged bodies, and Christ the head of both. Was not this a little sample of the kingdom that is to be? It does not answer either to this age, or to eternity. Why is it judged incredible with you (alas! in Christendom), if God does what He says? It was, for men who had not tasted of death in this age, a vision of the kingdom of God coming in power (Matt. 16: 28-17: 13; 2 Peter 1: 16), the beautiful and impressive foreshadowing of that which shall be at the advent, when the glorified shall reign over the earth, and Israel and the nations are here below. It pleased Christ: surely nothing but extreme prejudice, not to say the carnal mind, makes it displeasing to Christians. The kingdom of God comprises "heavenly" as well as "earthly things" (John 3: 3, 5, 12); and the sooner this is learned the better for souls.

Here indeed our men of allegory are deplorably astray. There is no complaint of the Fourth Gospel; but why speak so ungratefully of the "most mysterious book of the New Testament" (p. 137)? Many an unbelieving assault has been made on the Gospel; why then remind the unwary reader of the difficulties which surround the authorship of the Apocalypse? Prof. B. has ill-will enough to point out its "startling grammatical forms and entirely different modes of thought" (p. 38), in order to cast doubt or discredit on it. Yet he well knows how Paul and Peter and James have been each and all attacked more or less. But is it in him quite honest? He may not be aware that the peculiarities of form and thought belong to its prophetic character, and are wholly independent of its date and authorship, which are as certain as anything of the kind can be for all fair and competent students. But does he not himself believe that John the beloved, the Patmos prisoner of Domitian, wrote the book, even though here only he assumed the Hebraistic style and rough garment of a prophet? This was just as much in keeping with its revelation of judgment, as the Epistles and Gospel called for, and have, another mould of thought and speech for their design.

Let me say that Genesis in its noble simplicity is no more admirable an introduction to the Bible, than the Apocalypse is its suited, worthy, and profound completion. The wrestling-ground for contending commentators of every school, and hence open to the sneer of worldly men, divines or sceptics, too indifferent to God's word, and too disposed to lay the faults of its misusers on the book itself, there it stands, still pronouncing the blessing of the Lord on him that reads its words, and on those that hear and keep them; "for the time" (whatever unbelief may cry) "is at hand." And in fact where is the inspired book which, especially in difficult and dangerous times, has wrought more powerfully for good in grave Christian men, notwithstanding many a mistake through haste or prejudice? It is idle to expect that comprehensive and deep understanding of the Apocalypse should

exist where there is not familiar acquaintance with all the prophets, as well as with the distinctive ways of God which the New Testament reveals. For where the Old Testament prophets are discursive in the main, and little beyond Daniel and Zechariah is consecutive, and even these have separate visions of no great length or variety, St. John was enabled by the Holy Ghost to communicate a systematic, connected, and complete view of the things which should be after "the things which are," or the church-state (Rev. 2, 3), till time melts into eternity under the judicial hand of our Lord and of His Christ.

No doubt some men of marked piety and general learning, and many with little of either, have written on the book; but even when they were so (marked by learning and piety), this is far from being all that is required to write competently and profitably on it. More than any other book, it openly presses into its service, or subtly refers to, almost every part of the Old Testament; yet is there a characteristically mystic use which is adapted to the New Testament and convicts the mere literalist of a wholly mistaken principle. Originality, after a divine sort, appears throughout; The most able and erudite of its expositors have been in no way distinguished for spiritual intelligence, and are often the devotees of a foregone conclusion, so that they can be entitled to little weight in such a question. And what is the object of alleging mere and evident extravaganzas, from whatever quarter they may come? Is it to commend truth? or to merge God's word in men's uncertainties? It is the opprobrium of commentators, and of none so much perhaps as the prophetic, that they search, not for God's mind, but for the support of their own preconceived ideas; and that the repute of some draws a long train of followers; as their transparent fallacies provoke another crowd of opponents. Yet the truth remains, sure and acceptable in God's grace to those who have faith to depend on the Lord for it.

But surely John 17, on Prof. B.'s confession, belongs to "the solid platform" of the N. T. writers. Can it then be denied that in vv. 22, 23, we have in weightiest correlation those who are glorified on the one side, and on the other men alive on earth, whether yet to die or not (p. 31)? The glorified, and the unchanged are there in presence one of another, as the Lord teaches us, and with blessed result (in a prayer of His own heart), which these believers do not believe, and therefore venture to stigmatize as "mixed together in strangest confusion" (p. 31). It is really distressing unbelief on their part, who do not apprehend this the third unity — of glory. For there are three. The first (John 17: 11) is the united expression before a hating world of the Father's name, given to Christ, and now to keep those who were then around Him. The second is in view of those who should believe through their word, unity of communion in the Father and the Son, that the world might "believe" (John 17: 21). The third is the closing unity of glory, where therefore alone they are perfected into one; and, as it would be manifested, it is for the world to "know." The demonstration will be before their eyes; for Christ and His own are to be displayed from heaven in the same glory.

With this agrees Rev. 21: 9-22: 5: a retrogressive vision introducing the relation of the Bride to the kings and nations after Christ comes; just as Rev. 17 is to show how the great Harlot stands toward the kings and nations before He comes. In both cases it is a return to give what was not before described. This is undeniable in the case of Babylon whose fall had been given in Rev. 14: 8, and Rev. 16: 19. Then Rev. 17 explains why, closing with the dirge in Rev. 18. So Rev. 21: 1-8 is the everlasting state which is altogether distinct, the Lamb not being seen as such, but "God all in all." It is the conclusion chronologically of the series that began in Rev. 19, 20 and in fact the end of all, if we can so designate the everlasting state. As you can have nothing subsequent to eternity, the Holy Spirit helps us here as before by a mark (Rev. 21: 9), strikingly similar to that which introduced the retrogressive description of Rev. 17, 18; so that we might discern a like retrogressive description of the Bride (not merely in heaven, as in Rev. 19, nor as in the new heavens and earth of Rev. 21: 1-8 but) in its millennial aspect. That this is the truth appears clearly and certainly from "the nations" (Rev. 21: 24, 26, Rev. 22: 2), and

"the kings of the earth" (Rev. 21: 24), which are not and cannot be in eternity, as surely our opponents must admit. As it is not this age, any more than eternity, what can it be but the age to come, the millennium, or "the kingdom"? Prof. Beet therefore ought to see that his idea of "the everlasting splendor pictured in Rev. 21, 22" (p. 28) needs the corrective of the text itself more maturely and accurately weighed. Still less true is his statement in p. 34 that "there is nothing to prevent us from reading the glorious visions of the prophets as descriptions of the final glory." Let him or Dr. Brown face Zech. 14 squarely, to take but a single text, and say whether such a chapter can be fulfilled either now or in eternity. When then? This is but a sample from the prophets, who in truth support nothing but premillennialism.

It is frankly acknowledged that the principle of new heavens and a new earth is laid down in Isa. 65, 66. But the remarkably abstract form of the Hebrew construction is not to be overlooked, not the relative and indicative, but the present participle, which seems a favourite way of describing an action apart from a specified actual time. There is another consideration which any observing Christian reader can see; — that the context restricts its application here to Jerusalem, and the land and the people of Israel. None can deny that the state of things portrayed is not eternity, any more than things as they ever were or are now, or can be, save in a different age. So even Dr. J. A. Alexander allows (Comm. in loco) that "it is a promise or prediction of entire change in the existing state of things; the precise nature of the change, and the means by which it shall be brought about, forming no part of the revelation here". It is true that this change he, in his usual manner, inclines to believe moral or spiritual only. But this is a mere opinion: he admits an "entire change," to which the Apocalypse gives the fullest scope, far beyond O.T. or Jewish limits, now that Christ is come and the Holy Spirit given that we might have the mind of Christ, and enter into the boundless counsels of God. It is sorrowful where such grace is not appreciated.

Thus then we have the symbol of the glorified church, the holy city Jerusalem (not the earthly one), but coming down out of heaven from God; yet there are "the nations," and "the kings of the earth," contemporaneously connected and blessed here below. It is in vain to cry What a mongrel state of things is this! What an abhorred mixture of things inconsistent with each other! (Brown's Second Advent p. 392). It is no answer to speak of "the transient glimpses at the Transfiguration," etc. The thesis is that God reveals a long millennial period, widely different from all that has been, and in many respects from the eternity which follows, to which those glimpses are a partial testimony. To the earth Christ will come in His own glory, and of the Father, and of the holy angels: there may be difficulties beyond what is revealed; but the opposite scheme, in the desire to delay His coming, and to deny the true character of the kingdom, makes His coming an impossibility; for it is imagined to be, when the earth and the heavens will have fled away. Now Christ is to come here again.

Take another instance, which the system of these brethren furnishes of the havoc it works for all the practice as well as the truth of the church. Indisputably Christians are called to be unworldly, suffering, separate, and subject like the crucified Lord here below. Now if Dan. 2: 44 (p. 140) is thus misapplied to the kingdom *already set up*, the church has to subdue and destroy the imperial powers, or "anti-Christian systems," as they are styled. That is, it must, like Popery, subjugate and overthrow all opposing powers that be. Thus does the church, through that error, become a rebel in Christ's name, instead of a holy sufferer, as Christ and His servants taught and practiced. Take it as God's kingdom when Christ comes "in the days of these kings," the ten toes of the statue, and all becomes true, plain, and consistent. No need then to metamorphose the instant and irreparable destruction of the powers into the slow dealing of providence, any more than to rob Christ of His prerogative of filling the whole earth with indisputable authority, immediately consequent on His judgment of the quick. Dan. 7

confirms this as the only true interpretation. The Ancient of days comes when judgment is given to the saints of the high or heavenly places. Then they will safely and holily reign with Christ to God's glory. To attempt it now is a sin and a lie; it is in theory if not in fact to play the part of fifth-monarchy men, whether Papists or Protestants, Covenanters or Roundheads.

The truth is that all is vague on this human scheme, which grew up as men neglected scripture, and hope in man supplanted faith in God. Christ personally recedes into the distance; and "His cause," identified with the efforts of men (of ourselves or persons like us), takes the place of Himself with His own. This may please and flatter our nature; but it betrays that sad decay of proper bridal affection which characterized the decline and fall of the church since apostolic days, through the darkness of medieval times, and which, in no way retrieved at the Reformation (however blessed as far as it went), has well-nigh vanished away in the isolating though busy unchurch-system of our century. I regret that I in speaking what is in my judgment unquestionable, one must wound the susceptibilities of many brethren I love and esteem highly. But let God be true, and Christ's honour above all; and the rather, as it is in their highest interests that, if the truth, it should be spoken out. I repudiate a party or school of doctrine to cry up, and yet more the petty spite or vanity of crying down, those dear to the Lord.

Again, it ought not to be a light thing that the hope of Christ's coming, while owned in word, should become for children of God no more than a dead letter. This it must be where men look and labor avowedly, before Christ can possibly come, for a vainly expected universal diffusion of revealed truth, universal reception of true religion and unlimited subjection to Christ's scepter, universal peace, much spiritual power and glory, inbringing of all Israel, ascendancy of truth and righteousness, and great temporal prosperity over all the earth for a thousand years or more, perhaps much more, as a previously certain and revealed barrier. They may indeed love the Lord's appearing, and long for Him to break the usurper's spell over the world, and establish for rebellion peace, and for wretchedness blessing to God's glory. But it is unreal to profess waiting for One, Who, as you are assured, cannot possibly come yet, nor for a long while, according to this hypothesis. The hope ceases to be a present reality in the soul, as it is supposed to be a mistake of scripture. Watching for Him becomes a poetical idea, an amiable or pious enthusiasm, which, notwithstanding the positive and known hindrances from prophetic light, veers from long to short, and anon from short to long in a seesaw truly marvelous. So apologizes Principal Brown. Prof. Beet speaks with more open plainness of speech.

If we have no reliable proof of the nearness of the visible return of Christ, to speak of it as near is in the last degree dangerous(p. 36). He knows the danger of what the Lord recommends! It represses missionary effort!

To the early christians, although the day of Christ was *known to be not close at hand* etc. (p. 152)! This error has been already refuted. The apostles speak in a way which a post-millennialist must in honesty avoid.

Like the Master, also the servants will die (p. 154). Not so, says St. Paul, but rather, "We shall not all sleep (die), but we shall all be changed." It is appointed unto men, indeed, once to die, but after this the judgment. Faith in Christ and His work alters all for us. That was lost man's sad portion; what is the Christian's? Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for Him shall He appear a second time without sin unto salvation. The soul's want was provided for at His first advent, as the body's will be when He shall be seen a second time.

Christ is the Life as well as the Resurrection, and the saints so profit thereby, that according to scripture we ought to wait, as the early Christians did, not for death, but for Christ's coming habitually. It was to be not only a sure goal of their hopes one day, but a practical constant outlook, confirmed, not

corrected, even in both the Epistles to the Thessalonians, where, quite different misapprehensions were cleared up. But the divine light vouchsafed then shone brightly on that blessed and living hope, not only not setting it aside, but joining the inspired apostle with the saints alive on earth, as the "we" that wait (for aught that was made known) for His coming. A post-millennialist, if he expressed his creed, must say, *They* that shall be alive, that remain unto the coming of the Lord; he could not truly and intelligently say, "We." Either he knows better than the apostle, *or* he ought (as is the truth) to infer that his own system is false. None who holds this system can, *ex animo*, join the apostle and say, "We that are alive, that remain," etc.

There is another fatal issue of post-millennialism. It presents the kingdom when supposed to be triumphant without the King. It abuses the present abnormal phase of the kingdom to deny its future regular form according to the Old Testament prophets as well as the New. *Now* the King, rejected by His earthly people is hid in God above, seated on the Father's throne, not on His own (Rev. 3: 21); and hence we have its "mysteries" made known, as in Matt. 13, to explain its singularities, till this age ends, and the new age displays it and the King reigning in righteousness, times of restoring all things, as God declared from the beginning. But this glorious exhibition before the universe for a thousand years is just what unbelief leaves out: an irreparable blank in God's revealed plan, which cannot be without also introducing confusion every where else. Thus Christ's person is absent from the scene of His exaltation, and the church is no longer to fast but enjoy honour and glory, where He was crucified without. It can be no longer true for the thousand years that His members suffer with Him. They are in idea, what the apostle said as a reproach and not without irony, — they are reigning "without us," yea, without Christ. But, said the large and true-hearted servant, "and I would that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." When the day really comes, Christ will reign and all His risen saints. The Corinthians had practically dropped into a figurative reign of His cause.

But the word is, as long as there is a member of Christ, "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him." "If so be that we suffer together, that we may be also glorified together." And as they wrongfully exclude Christ from their millennium, so do they keep Satan in the face of positive scripture. The reasoning on 1 John 3: 8-10; Heb. 2: 14, 15, and Rom. 16: 20, is as weak and false as the unbelief of Rev. 20: 1-3, 7, is painful and complete. The issue is worthy of such grounds — the melancholy fable of the church in Christ's hand not only defeating Antichrist, but for a thousand years never permitting the devil to gain an inch of ground to plant his foot on over the wide world! It must never be the truth of Christ reigning personally. I can conceive no interpretation of Rev. 20 more perverse, nor more at issue with the New Testament throughout. But indeed all that these believers say on the millennium is mere incredulity, a muster of cavils against its revealed character, and a substituted fanciful exaggeration of the present, but no real reign of Christ and the glorified saints, no personal exclusion of Satan, no true deliverance of the groaning creation, though Dr. Brown does admit a sort of restoration of Israel to their land, which ill assorts with his other views.

Nor is there any less loss for the soul now. For the hypothesis of a general resurrection and of a simultaneous universal judgment undermines the distinctive peace, joy, and assurance of salvation for the believer. Confound the two resurrections, enfeeble the resurrection of the saints from among the dead; and the consciousness of present union with Christ is impaired if not lost, and all is confusion as to the future. Christ's coming, and His appearing, the great day and the white-throne judgment, are all huddled together in one lump, so that the poor heart oscillates between hope and fear, the joy of meeting our Lord and the anxiety of judgment. In scripture how different! The saints even now live of the life of Christ risen from the dead (John 20: 20; Col. 3: 4); and accordingly life and salvation in His name both point to those spoken of as quickened with Him, raised up together, and seated together (not

yet with, but) in Him in the heavenly places (Eph. 2). Christ has borne the believer's judgment; and so he comes not into judgment, but has passed from death into life. Undoubtedly he will give account of all done in the body (2 Cor. 5: 10), and receive accordingly, no less than the unbeliever who, rejecting Christ, has neither life nor fruits of the Spirit, as the believer has. Hence for the one it is judgment, for the other it is not. And any Christian has but to consider and see the absurdity of being judged *after* you are *justified*, and of God too. Yea, the believer is *glorified* at Christ's coming before he renders an account, which supposes that he is saved, but determines the special position he is to receive in the kingdom. The resurrection of the just is therefore a resurrection of life, as that of the unjust is one of judgment. Believing in Christ, the saints had life here and now; they will be raised when He comes again, to have that life applied to their bodies which they already know for their souls since He first came. And it is as distinct in time as in principle and results; like His own it is a resurrection from among the dead, even if we were not told that there is an interval of at least a thousand years.

Nor is that interval without grave moral significance. It is a reign over the earth, but of heavenly glory with Christ, for those who suffered with Him, as all saints do till He comes again. The millennial saints do not thus suffer, and hence do not share in this special reign, but enjoy its benefits to the full. In another sense all saints are to reign in life (Rom. 5: 17, millennial with the rest), throughout eternity. It is no question of suffering for Christ, or being martyrs, as many have gathered from a hasty view of scripture, and especially of Rev. 20: 4, though the passage itself leaves ample room for all that had suffered with Christ. For if children, heirs also — heirs of God and joint-heirs with Him; if we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified with Him (Rom. 8: 17). So, if we endure (and in the millennium it is enjoyment, not endurance), we shall also reign together (2 Tim. 2: 12). Such shall be "accounted worthy to obtain, that age" (whatever they might suffer in this age), and the resurrection from among the dead. They are sons of God being sons of the resurrection. The wicked have no such spiritual relation, and are compelled to rise for judgment at the appointed hour, when that special reign is over, and a large addition is made to their already large ranks from all ages.

But we may go farther. The distinctness of time as well as of character is therefore a weighty part of revealed truth. But it is even to be gathered from a book as ancient as Job (14 and 19). For thence we learn that unlike any vegetable ever shooting "afresh," sinful man as such "lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Not a word of the Lord's coming then; but there is the very significant synchronism of no more heaven, though it be ordinarily less shaken than the earth: the negative and the positive marks precisely agree with Rev. 20: 11, 12. It is the end, not of "the age," or "this age," but of the kingdom and of the heavens and earth that now are. Then, and not before, "man" shall be raised. How different that which we read of the saint in Rev. 19! "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand up at the last on the earth (or dust); and after my skin hath been thus destroyed, yet from (or in) my flesh shall I see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." This is, we may perhaps say, what is appointed for the saint, and evidently before the heavens and earth are no more. It is the first resurrection, as the other will be the second death. To the greatest of all prophecies, closing (as no other book could so well) the canon of scripture, we are indebted for the exact measure of the kingdom in time; but the difference of the two resurrections, and the priority of that of the saints, are as certainly to be gathered from one of the earliest books of the Old Testament, as from the latest of the New. Even the Pharisees did not question a resurrection of both just and unjust. It was reserved for Christendom to confound both in one general resurrection, though Christ (John 5) and scripture so carefully discriminate them. We have seen by the way, how inexcusable is the assumption that the premillennial advent is taught only in one chapter; but of this perhaps enough has been said already.

Now where is even an approach in any text adduced for the desired inference that the millennium precedes the advent? Not a hint of it appears either here or in any other scripture: let it be produced, if there is one. Every one of these texts admits of the millennium after Christ's coming; not one intimates such a thing before it. Instead of so blessed a change for the earth, we are warned of a spoiled crop till harvest-time in the end of the age (Matt. 13), of days like those which brought the judgments in the days of Noah and of Lot (Luke 17), of departure from the faith in the latter times (1 Tim. 4), of seducers waxing worse and worse in the last days, of men having a form of godliness, but denying the power (2 Tim. 3), and of a mystery of lawlessness to work up, on the removal of a restraint, into the lawless one revealed, who draws down, as Mr. B. confesses, the Lord Jesus personally appearing in judgment (2 Thess. 2). If the Gentile did not abide in God's goodness (and who would dare to say he does?), cutting off would ensue, says Rom. 11, not the millennium. To unsophisticated minds such continuous and prevalent iniquity, till the Lord judges the quick at His advent, excludes a millennium, such as scripture describes, or even Dr. Brown's imaginary amelioration of this age before that day. Nay, some of those very scriptures, with a crowd of others, imply the millennium only when Christ is come.

Again, our Lord and His apostles never once speak of a millennial issue of preaching or the like. Where the millennium is spoken of, prophecy invariably declares that divine judgments introduce it. Compare Isa. 1: 24-31; Isa. 2; Isa. 4; Isa. 9: 4-7; Isa. 11: 4-9; Isa. 24-25; Isa. 59: 16-21; Isa. 60-66; Jer. 10: 7-25; Jer. 23; Jer. 30; Ezek. 20; Ezek. 38; Ezek. 39; Dan. 2; Dan. 7; Dan. 11; Dan. 12; Hosea 2; Hosea 3; Amos 9; Obadiah 15-21; Micah 4; Micah 5; Nahum 1; Hab. 2; Hab. 3; Zeph. 3: 8-20; Haggai 2: 6-9, 22, 23; Zech. 2: 8-13; Zech. 10; Zech. 12; Zech. 14; Mal. 4. The Psalms as well as the Law might be cited; but this will suffice. The gospel was to be preached in the world for a witness unto all the nations; but for this age not a sound of the world being converted or even brought as yet to a universal profession of the Lord's name. This is at best unauthorized enthusiasm, the fruit of unconscious presumption in neglect of scripture, which alone can decide the "how" as well as the "what." That the earth is to be full of the knowledge of Jehovah's glory is certain; that preaching or the church is to effect it is not only without, but against, God's word. It is an honour reserved for Christ in person, Who will execute judgment on His enemies, destroy idolatry, expel Satan, bring Israel and the nations to repentance, bless all creation, and reign in power with His glorified saints till the last foe is annulled, when He will give up the kingdom to Him Who is God and Father, that God may be all in all. The eternal state is not the delegated kingdom, though there will be everlasting glory in the new heavens and new earth.

The gospel mission, as it is of God's grace, could not be other than universal in its scope and call; and the infinite work of Christ's atonement demands nothing less. This for the responsibility of the disciples was to disciple all the nations (Matt. 28), but what a very different thing from the effect in man's hand or from God's counsels! Simeon related (says Acts 15) how first God visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. To this agrees the clear and general testimony of the N. T. It is in vain to oppose vague statements, or fanciful interpretations of "the tree" and "the leaven," as if scripture could contradict itself. Our Lord expressly anticipates some as believing, and some as disbelieving (Mark 16); and such was the fact according to the inspired history (Acts 28). God is not in this age proposing universal blessing under Christ's government in power and glory over the earth; He gathering for heaven saved souls, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, that, when all things are in fact put under Him, they too may be manifested with Him in glory (Col. 3). This will be the millennium. The world-kingdom of our Lord and His Christ will have come (Rev. 11: 15).

But the N.T. is made completely inapplicable, if the millennium come ere this age closes and the

day of the Lord arrives. For its habitual language is essentially distinctive, and supposes, not all nations flowing to Zion, exalted above the hills, but "sheep in the midst of wolves," who have to "beware of men" (Matt. 10), a people purified to Himself for His own possession (Titus 2), "a chosen generation" (1 Peter 2), "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation" (Phil. 2), "all that will live godly suffering persecution" (2 Tim. 3) — the very opposite of reigning in righteousness, peace, and glory; expressly suffering with Him now, and looking to reign with Him only in "that day." As the Lord had said in John 16, "in the world ye shall have tribulation." To him that overcomes now, the promise is by and by to sit with Christ on His throne (Rev. 3), as we see verified in Rev. 20; but this is the millennium of His day. Even when the final testimony in this age goes forth *i.e.* the everlasting gospel (Rev. 14), the solemn warning that accompanies it is, "for the hour of His judgment is come" (Rev. 14: 7). Alas! for the self-flattering unction, that we, or any like us, are the men to make good the millennium by our efforts! This is truly a carnal and unscriptural expectation, which takes fire at true testimony as paralyzing missionary zeal, though obliged to own that none in fact are more zealous than those who look for Christ's coming before the millennium. In principle, the waiting for the Lord to come in grace and in judgment ought on the face of it to add urgency to our love and labors.

Further, it is a mistake to suppose that the N.T. (save in Rev. 20) is silent about the millennium, if we mean the thing and not the mere word; if only the latter, it is but illusion. The following are but a selection of N.T. scriptures which apply to the millennial day rather than to any other: Matt. 19: 28; Luke 1: 70-79; Acts 17: 31; Rom. 8: 19, 23; Rom. 11: 26-31; 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3; Eph. 1: 10; Phil. 2: 10, 11; Col. 1: 20; 2 Thess. 1: 5-10; 2 Tim. 2: 12; 4: 1; Heb. 2: 5-8. The O.T. had so fully described the millennium, and shown it to hinge, not only on the Messiah's presence, but on terrific judgments as introducing it, that there was the less need for the N. T. to dwell on what had been revealed already. To hold out the Lord's coming was therefore the exigency of the truth, if the millennium follows, but scarcely comprehensible if it be conceived to precede. For His coming in due time brings in the heavenly glory, as well as the peaceful reign over the earth, when the war-judgments have overwhelmed the wicked. And the Revelation is exactly the place to give particulars; for only in such a prophetic book could we intelligently expect the full, detailed, and relative order of these stupendous events. This we accordingly find with a precision and completeness, as well as unity, found nowhere else in the compass of inspiration, whatever rationalism may object to. No wonder it is called The Revelation. But dark unbelief casts its shadow over its pages, and would, if it could, convert it into the enigma of man, instead of owning it the solution of our Lord Jesus.

Why too, in comparing the Fourth Gospel with the Synoptists, refer to John 14: 18 (p. 24), and say nothing of the opening of the same chapter, where Christ's proper coming is set forth, not with earthly signs, but with heavenly blessings beyond any other? One might as fairly set Matt. 16: 28, Mark 8: 38, Luke 9: 27, against the prophecies of His advent in each Gospel and say that "His words here are not accompanied by any of the many and constant associations which mark, both in the Gospels and Epistles, the visible return of Christ at the last day." Is mystification sought? What else is the aim? In John 14: 1-3 the truth of His coming is revealed in its strict personality and heavenly aspect as our hope at least as distinctly as elsewhere. In John 5: 28, 29, the resurrection had been shown to be, not simultaneous, but fundamentally distinguished as twofold, a resurrection of life, and a resurrection of judgment, whilst ver. 25 is decisive that "hour" may be long enough to let in a thousand years and more. So in John 6 (not to speak of John 11: 24) "last day" can be no difficulty. And where is a previous millennium supposed in any of these scriptures?

It may have been the unhallowed wish of the multitude in John 6, who owned Jesus as the prophet that should come, and desired to make Him a King, as the fulfiller of Ps. 132: 15. But what would it

have been but a carnal millennium on this side of death? Now it is the very aim of the Lord Jesus to make known that, instead of any present blessing by His reign now, He was come from heaven, and incarnate, to give the believer eternal life and resurrection at the last day, feeding meanwhile on His flesh, and drinking His blood. Thus a millennium is excluded till the last day comes and the righteous join Christ, for the display of His glory in the universe according to prophecy; as the apostle connects the raising of the saints with inheriting the kingdom (1 Cor. 15), where the words rendered "then" simply indicate subsequence; whether long or short, depends wholly on other facts or statements, as do the words "hour" and "day." So 1 Thess. 4 speaks only of the dead and living saints at Christ's coming; but how does any one of these scriptures, I say not involve, but admit of, the millennium before the second advent? If the millennium follow, their bearing is plain enough, though man's mind can easily suggest difficulties.

It may not be unseasonable to repeat that the N.T. says so much the less of the millennium, because it occupies so large a place in the O.T. The promises to the fathers (Genesis passim) suppose that time as the season of their most manifest fruition, however truly faith takes them up now in Christ. But it will hardly be contested that the Abrahamic inheritance of the world will then be enjoyed more distinctly than at any other period. So, in the prophecy of Jacob (Gen. 49), the gathering or obedience of the peoples to Shiloh looks onward to that day. Without dwelling on more debatable witness in the types of Ex., Lev., Num., etc., we may refer to the Psalms as running over with intimations beyond mistake. Take, among others, Ps. 2, 8, 22, 45, 72, 93-101, 110, 117, 118, 132, to say nothing of the concluding Hallelujah Psalms.

Still richer thus, if possible, were the prophets. Isaiah is almost too familiarly known in this connection to call for many words. But we may notice that, after appeals to conscience and heart, Isa. 1: 24-31 speaks of the Lord suddenly intervening in judgment to bring in righteousness for the chosen people; as Isa. 2 shows it will be the same principle and result for the nations. It is the kingdom by and by, not the gospel now, idolatry vanishing only in that great day. Is it possible that spiritual men can confound with the gospel "the spirit of judgment," and the "spirit of burning" (Isa. 4) by which the Lord is to purge the blood of Jerusalem? Then follows manifested glory upon Zion. Such will be the character of that future reign. Meanwhile, Israel having stumbled at the Stone of stumbling — Messiah in humiliation, the testimony is bound up, the law sealed, among His disciples — the children given to Christ Whom the prophet represents, signs and wonders, while Jehovah hides His face from Jacob (Isa. 8). If this, according to Heb. 2, applies now, Isa. 9 is no less explicit that the end of the age will see the intervention of His glorious power, when He breaks the rod of the oppressor, and Israel rejoice before Him. Then will they wake up from their long and fatal sleep, and joyfully own "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful," etc. And so one might pursue the theme throughout.

A mourner over Judah's sins and judgments as Jeremiah was, none the less does he point to the kingdom fully in chs. 3, 16, 23, 30-33. Ezekiel too is not silent on this head: chs. 16, 17, 20, 28, 34, 36, 38. Daniel shows us, as the issue of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and of his own visions, the kingdom of God consequent on a judgment that extirpates the Gentile powers, rather than a description of that kingdom. On the so-called Minor Prophets we need not dwell. Speaking generally, they bear witness to the same glorious result on earth, as does the O.T. as a whole. It is neither heaven nor eternity, but Messiah's reign.

The N.T. confirms the Old in this fully; but it does more and better. To us it opens heaven and higher hopes, which gradually grew into brightness in the rejected Messiah glorified as man on high, and there made head over all things to the church which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all

in all (Eph. 1: 22, 23). Hence, save for special purposes, it is the heavenly side of the kingdom, on which the O.T. is all but silent, whereas it becomes the prominent and characteristic testimony of the N.T. The earthly side was in no way denied, but rather disappeared in the incalculably superior glory of what has now come fully to view. Yet, painful to say, it is this special privilege for the Christian to enjoy in hope, consequent on Christ's accomplished redemption and the gift of the Spirit, which appears to stumble some of our brethren. For the N.T. says no more than is requisite of the earth by and by: the aim is to insist on heaven in a way and measure which is quite new; and therefore Christ's coming, to receive us to Himself and give us a place with Himself in the Father's house above, becomes the distinctive keynote. But the Christian does not therefore lose his part in the kingdom, though the heavenly hope helps to explain more clearly the exalted relation he is to have in reigning with Christ at that day.

The Father's kingdom will come where the risen saints shine like the sun; and His will be done on earth as in heaven, because the glorious Son of man will hold the reins of power (Satan being bound), and the angels of His might gather out of His kingdom (clearly the earth) all scandals and those that do lawlessness (Matt. 13). Then, and then only, are the saints to judge the world, yea, angels (1 Cor. 6), as the apostles sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19). It is a state of things surely to be fulfilled, but as surely neither in this age nor in eternity, but in the age between, when all things, the habitable world to come among them (Heb. 2: 5-8), will be seen put under Christ, as they cannot be now or when the kingdom is given up (1 Cor 15: 25-28). It is to be feared that those who find it incredible that God's kingdom should consist of earthly and of heavenly things to be displayed together at Christ's manifestation, when we, too, shall be manifested together with Him in glory (Col. 3: 4), fall into the kindred unbelief now of excluding from their hearts and their teaching such unearthly and glorious motives. The apostle counted the letting in of this heavenly light on common matters most desirable, wholesome, and influential. It did not occur to him that real Christians would object to the divine scheme of the kingdom, because Christ will be the displayed Head of all things in heaven and of all things on the earth (Eph. 1: 10). The objectors are not indeed Sadducees; but unbelief as far as it goes joins saints in bad companionship. Together they err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

And the consequence of this unbelief has been disastrous from early days to our own. The low chiliastic views of the second and third centuries, which fell back on the Jewish hope of the earth at Christ's coming, were met for the most part by the allegorizing interpretation, which assumed a reign of the gospel and of the church, either already or at a future day. The purpose of God to put the universe heavenly and earthly under Christ was given up by both to the unspeakable loss of the saints, and sad slight of their Lord. Under this error lie our brethren today. Even Dr. B., who differs from most of his friends by looking for all Israel's inbringing as a leading feature of the latter day, nullifies its distinctiveness by his usual argument of less now and more then, so as to assimilate all and deny a new age or dispensation. This vagueness dissolves the power of the truth: else he must feel that the nature of the church as the one body of Christ wherein is neither Jew nor Gentile forbids, and is inconsistent (as long as it is in process of building) with, the inbringing of all Israel. But this he does not see, because he, as much as those who reject Israel's hope, ignores the special calling and character of the church. Now according to scripture it is not the merging of all Israel in the church which is predicted; but, along with their conversion, prophecy points out their restoration to more than pristine glory and blessedness under Messiah and the new covenant; and this, to be the head of the nations on earth, when the glorified reign over it from their heavenly seats with Christ.

When the church ceased to affirm the future prospects of Israel on earth, she along with this lost

sight of her own heavenly hopes, and began to seek ease, honour, and power here below, and naturally perverted the prophecies to this end. At length she substituted herself so completely for the ancient people of God, that she dreamed Jerusalem and Zion, Judah and Israel, to be only so many varying expressions of her own glory, either now or at a future day. For another age characterized by Christ's presence and reign was now become intolerable. As long as (alas! how briefly) the church walked in the living hope of her own heavenly association with Christ's glory, she also confessed God's immutable mercy for Israel here below; that at Christ's coming He might have the glorified with Himself above, and concurrently therewith His earthly people, the channel and means of the universal spread of His name among all nations broken by judgments, and under the Spirit's latter rain, Satan being banished from his wonted haunts.

The prevalent view betrays the usual symptoms of unbelief. It does not face a quantity of plain scriptural testimony. It occupies itself with exaggeration of others or with its own difficulties and objections, not positive truth. It neglects the scriptures which tell us clearly how the kingdom is to come. It is based on the assumption of human progress in the face of the clearest warnings of failure increasing till Christ come. It hides its self-confidence under the plea of the Spirit in and by man working Christ's cause to ultimate triumph. It denies the divine purpose of putting all things visibly under Christ, and the glorified saints on high with Israel and all nations blessed here below before eternity come. It banishes the King from His kingdom, for His bride to enjoy it if she can in His absence, and insists on keeping Satan in his bad eminence, spite of the strongest assurance to the contrary. To what is such obstinate incredulity due? Were the eye single to Christ's personal glory (not "His cause" in our hands), the whole body would be full of light, instead of the confusion this error breeds for this and almost every other truth.

It is false that Christ's second coming "will be at once followed by the final separation of the good and bad, and by the eternal glory" (p. 135), and that consequently the millennium cannot follow it. Our Lord, to correct the thought that the kingdom of God was about to be manifested immediately, spoke parabolically (Luke 19) of going to a distant country (heaven) to receive for Himself a kingdom and to return. His servants (Christians) meanwhile trade with His money; His citizens (the Jews), not content with rejecting Him as they were already doing unto the death of the cross, send a messenger after Him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. All this (in spite of Peter's call in Acts 3) was punctually fulfilled in the murder of Stephen, sent after Christ as it were with that insulting message. So indeed it was shown in the Acts at large and the N. T. generally. But when Christ comes back again, having received (not given up) the kingdom, He awards to His servants *for the kingdom* authority over this or that, and utter loss for such as make no use of what was given; He also executes judgment on the rebellious people. All this will be as surely fulfilled. But it is in no respect the great white-throne judgment for the lake of fire, nor the eternal glory of Rev. 21: 1-8 when He shall give up the kingdom to Him Who is God and Father. It is what the apostle had in view when he charged Timothy by (or testified both) Christ's appearing and His kingdom (1 Tim. 4: 1); for He is to judge not dead only at the end, but quick at the beginning and in one form or another all through the kingdom. Reigning in righteousness is the characteristic display then; and we shall share His throne.

The post-millennial system misapplies or excludes that grand prospect which the apostle was inspired to open out to us in Eph. 1: 10; Phil. 2: 10, 11; Col. 1: 20. For, though there be results for eternity, the millennium will be the blessed manifestation before the universe of the Savior's triumph. What grace does now is in no way the administration of the fullness of times; nor will eternity be anything of the kind, for Christ shall deliver up the kingdom and Himself be subject to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) may be all in all (1 Cor. 15: 24-28).

The millennium is not a characteristic period of conflict between good and evil, however changed the conditions. It is a reign of righteousness on earth, Christ and His glorified saints reigning together over it. It is the heavenlies, no longer infested by spiritual wickednesses, but purged for ever, and filled with those who were once the slaves of Satan, bearing in their risen bodies the image of His glory. It is the heavenly Jerusalem, reflecting from on high, not glory only, but that same spirit of grace (Rev. 22: 2) in which those who compose it once walked on earth by faith: the beautiful contrast of the earthly Jerusalem which in that day will still be the witness and instrument of unsparing righteousness (Isa. 60: 12). Then more fully will be seen the truth of the great Melchizedek, not only in person and title but in the exercise of His priesthood, when He will bless man with the blessing of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth; and bless the Most High God Who will have delivered the enemies into the hand of the faithful. Heaven and earth will no more stand severed and opposed through sin; nor will it be merely grace in Christ from heaven shining for all that they may believe, and on believers as they feebly pursue their pilgrim path; but heaven and earth shall form the harmonious theater of suited glory. "For there are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and that of the terrestrial is another." "And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith Jehovah, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel (Hosea 2: 21-22).

Eternity is not an "administration" or stewardship, as this will be; nor is it true as a fact yet, but, a revealed purpose for that intervening day "to sum (or head) up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth" — "in Him in Whom we also obtained an inheritance," having been foreordained according to His purpose. For we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. During this evil age Satan is the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2), the god of this age, who beguiled its rulers to crucify the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2). This, however, only gave occasion to the mystery concerning Christ and concerning the church. While Christ sits exalted head over all things at God's right hand, the Holy Spirit is sent down to gather out and together the members of the one body, the sons of glory; so that, when He comes again, having received the kingdom, they too may reign with Him. Then the earth will be judicially cleansed from its defilement, and the ancient people of God in repentance welcome their once rejected but now glorified Messiah, and thus take their destined place, though on the ground of pure mercy, as the head of all nations and families of the earth, at length blessed under the sway of the only worthy One.

In the eternal universe there will be no more sea (Rev. 21: 1). For the millennial state it is written, "Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills be joyful before Jehovah; for He cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall He judge the world and the peoples with equity." It is the kingdom of God before being given up. Then will creation be, not burnt up as at the end, but delivered; for the revelation of the sons of God is come; and as they are no longer waiting for the adoption, the redemption of the body, creation groans no more, but is set free from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of God's children (Rom. 8). It is the day of the displayed glory of the Second Man, and His manifested triumph over Satan, not the conflict, but the kingdom; and when this (not the strife) draws towards its close, Satan is loosed for a little time, but for a great moral lesson, after which he is overwhelmed and tormented forever. Then only will be the eternal state.

Then will the world, not "believe," as it ought, now, that the Father sent the Son (John 17: 21), but "know" that the Father did send Him and love the saints on high as He loved Christ (v. 23); for will they not then shine in the same heavenly glory? For the glory which the Father gave Christ, Christ gave them (v. 22), now first said to be "perfected into one," as indeed cannot be till then. This is the

perfection of supernatural interference, the very reverse of "heaven and hell withdrawing from the field, and leaving it to the inherent power of principles as manifested in human life on earth," as Dr. Edwards erroneously thinks (p. 73).

Dr. Edwards writes for the most part calmly. Yet with an adequate knowledge of scripture one cannot yield to his thoughts or his reasoning.

It is true, as a matter of course, that the advent of the Messiah is first shown in the O.T. (p. 63), and that only after His rejection by the Jews was His second advent discerned clearly from the first. But it is a mistake that the second advent is ever represented in the N.T., as introducing "the eternal reign of God when Christ shall have delivered the mediatorial kingdom to the Father" (p. 64). The age to come is ignored between the end of this age and the eternal day. Nor does scripture leave room for a third advent, which cannot therefore be postulated.

That the end of (not this age, but) the world and the judgment of the dead will be ushered in by an advent of our Lord Jesus, is certainly opposed to the N. T. Rev. 20 is absolutely silent about His advent, because it has been already described in Rev. 19, and what follows consists of its results. There are no quick (living) to be judged after fire from God has devoured the rebellious nations (Rev. 20: 7-9); so that the judgment in vv. 11-15 consists solely of the dead, and we may add of the wicked, who, if we believe our Lord in John 5: 24, exclusively come into judgment, as these do. They are judged according to their works, which for a sinner is perdition. The books according to the figure employed bore witness of their deeds; the book of life had none of their names. Divine sovereignty was silent; their works confessed the justice of their doom. If Christ must appear to judge quick and dead, it cannot be at the end of the kingdom, because there is no earth to come to, any more than quick to judge. According to the express terms of the vision, earth and heaven will have fled away, and no place be found for them. The dead stand before the throne; but it is neither the earth nor yet the heaven as far as we know, for they are then gone. It is a going of the dead to be judged by Christ, not in any sense His coming, which is a fabulous interpolation for that time. His true advent for the judgment of the quick is in Rev. 19: 11, not in Rev. 20: 11, when it is no longer possible, as in fact it is not so written.

As to "inherent improbability" (pp. 65-67), no argument can be more precarious. The nature of the case implies a divine intervention unexampled in the past. The only question for a believer is, What saith the scripture? The first coming of our Lord was no mere link in the chain of the world's history; nor will His second coming be. The one was God's humiliation in Christ's person in grace; the other will be in Him man's exaltation in glory. That both are above "development" is simple to faith, whatever be the speculations of philosophy. The atonement of Christ is not more the answer to a guilty conscience, than it is God thereby glorified even in the face of sin; and the kingdom will be the display of His victory before the universe to the joy of all the once groaning creation, the blessing of long deceived and benighted man, the glorified enjoying the reward of fidelity — in their reign with Christ as they once suffered with Him. Yet Dr. E. asks, "What is gained by a millennium?" and answers, "Apparently, nothing; absolutely nothing." This is really too dense.

The new age, however necessarily distinct from all before, is a stewardship, an economy. It will have its peculiar object — for Christ to put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. Though He has the title already (Head over all things, which God has put under His feet), He is not yet making good that title against His enemies. While sitting at the right hand of God, and on the Father's throne, He is acting as priest, etc., for His friends, *till* God makes His enemies His footstool. Then He will come, having received the kingdom, rule in the midst of His enemies, and strike through kings in the day of His wrath. It is a new age marked by its

own special principles and ways, wholly distinct from what He or we are doing now, when He is gathering the co-heirs who are associated with Himself in a heavenly way for His reign over the earth at His coming.

Is it not profane to speak of this holy and glorious kingdom of Christ and His own, as wearing the appearance of an immense demonstration, like the triumph of a Caesar? Such a comparison one might understand from the lips of a Festus, who regarded the revelation of God as questions of superstition, and of one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

"It neither grows out of the intellectual and spiritual condition of the human race, nor leads to higher attainments intellectual or spiritual" (p. 66). It is the purpose of God to glorify the Lord Jesus and those who have in faith shared His sufferings, not only as now in Himself on high, but from out of the heavens over the earth, placed as it has never yet been in fact under His scepter.

But Dr. E. should not speak as he does both of the millennial reign, and of the short space that follows: For a time it burns like a fierce light to be quenched in utter darkness; again, however, to blaze out in final and unending day (p. 66). Satan expelled, Israel and all nations blessed, creation delivered, Christ and His own that are changed reigning over the earth, the Most High God possessor of heaven and earth united and in peace, and He Who was erst crucified bearing up the pillars of God's glory: can anything be more worthy of Christ, or more in accordance with God's word? Otherwise a vast deal of scripture in O. and N.T. is reduced to a blank, which again obscures both this age and eternity, with which in that case its contents are more or less confounded.

No prospect so desirable both for Christ and for the race. God occupies Himself with the glory of Christ, which will not fail. The millennium is no mistake, but a revealed and splendid chapter in God's story of the universe. In Adam man fell and died; in Christ man will be made alive and blessed. Israel under law became ruined and scattered to every land; under Christ their King, and the new covenant, they will yet be gathered and maintained in peace, and joy, and honour. The nations invested with imperial authority became "beasts," as Daniel calls them, till the last, in the blasphemous pride of its chief, brings down the Son of man's judgment in His kingdom, when all peoples, nations, and languages shall serve Him. The church, saved by grace, and the responsible witness on earth now to Christ glorified on high, being united to Him by the Holy Spirit, has proved unfaithful and corrupt, as the professing mass will assuredly fall into the apostasy, when the man of sin shall provoke the vengeance of the Lord, no less than the self-exalting civil head; but none the less will Christ present to Himself the church glorious, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and unblemished. Now the millennium will be the "immense demonstration" of all this and more before the world; but as unlike a Caesar's triumph, as a man of dust differs from the Lord of glory. If there were no millennium, what a gap in God's ways and in the display of His counsels!

That the world-kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ shall come at the close of this age, and last for a long but terminable period constituting the new age, before "the end" or eternity begins, is no difficulty to a true-hearted believer accustomed to bow to scripture, and on his guard against tradition. And the insurrection of the distant nations after the thousand years are over, when Satan is let loose for the last temptation, simply shows that it is an age or dispensation when man is tried under quite new conditions and for the last time. Would the experience of a thousand years of righteousness, peace, and outward blessing, under the glorious reign of Christ and the heavenly saints, endear God to the race as such, so that then they would reject the deceit of Satan?

To this the answer of God's word by the little space (Rev. 20: 7-10) is, that the race (however controlled to their own immense advantage, with every mercy around them through the infinitely

beneficent and mighty One Who held the reins and shed the blessing) only needs the active temptation of Satan to turn and rebel once more at God. Nothing but to be born of God can avail. They submitted in Satan's absence, when it was their own interest to render such obedience as it was, and when every transgression paid a just and speedy penalty. There was no temptation; and all was good around, and abundantly too. In such a state they could not be God's people, and He their God, for the new heavens and the new earth. Satan's temptation, unless God must or would convert them all, was precisely the due way to test them, as the race had been, if otherwise, always tested before; and they fall to their ruin at the first trial of Satan, as did man from the beginning. Is it godly, is it intelligent, is it decent, first to blot out the truth of the scriptural millennium, and then to stigmatize its freedom from social conflict, and its "reign in holiness and profound peace for a thousand years," as a state to which "the actual history of the world is infinitely preferable" (p. 67)? Truly "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12: 34). "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12: 37).

It is ignorance and unbelief to regard the millennium as earthly alone. The distinctive truth is that, both heaven and earth will be in blessed nearness of harmony under Christ and the risen saints. And here it may be well to observe that the chief, perhaps only, N.T. semblance of proof for the earth exclusively is the misrendering of Rev. 5: 10, where it is painful to see the error of the A.V. reproduced by the Revisers (of 1881). For the usage, as far as appears, is that with words of authority or rule ἐπὶ indicates the sphere ruled over, ἐν the place in which the ruler lived. There is a shade of difference between gen. dat. and accus., but none as to the general fact that they express the subject of rule, not the ruler's abode. It will be seen, in the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, for instance, that the locality of the king is regularly expressed by ἐν, the sphere by ἐπὶ. This being so, the true rendering is "over," not "on." Those who have given the latter have adopted a legitimate force of the preposition generally, not its meaning when modified by the connected βασ. The millennial reign then is heavenly, but over the earth, where Israel and the nations do not reign but are reigned over.

Every one fairly informed on the question knows that the N.T. assumes the O.T. revelation of God on the millennium, but it is almost exclusively on the earthly side. The N.T. is not "more authoritative" (p. 69), but it adds very fully the connection with the heavens under the risen Christ, Heir of all things. Still, while the coming of the Lord is put forward prominently, the kingdom is in no way hidden in the N.T. nor even in the Epistles to the Thessalonians. "The kingdom" implies Christ's coming to reign over the earth. In 1 Thess. 2: 12 the apostle speaks of God calling to this, as an encouragement to walking worthily of God; and 2 Thess. 1 shows the enemy had taken advantage of their persecutions and afflictions to say that the day of the Lord was arrived. The apostle, even before he dissipates this delusion, treats their troubles, on the contrary, as a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, "that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God *for which ye also suffer.*" It is clearly the millennial reign with Christ which was suggested. And this is the more evident from v. 10, where it is said that Christ "*shall come to be glorified* in His saints, and to be marveled at in all them that believed." The world will then know by the glory in which Christ and His own shall be manifested, that the Father sent the Son and loved them as He loved Him. This is the millennium, not the eternal scene in the new heaven and new earth.

The next argument of Dr. E. on 2 Thess. 2 (pp. 69, 70), like some of Prof. B.'s, goes against the millennium, whether before or after Christ's return. Now it is quite true, that what the apostle says excludes the millennium *before* He appears to destroy the lawless one. Here we are cordially agreed. But where is there the shadow of a reason against a subsequent thousand years of peace? More extraordinary still is the next statement:

The impression left on the reader's mind is that Christ's reign is a long conflict with evil, which in the end embodies itself in the person of the lawless one, whose defeat brings the war to a close. A similar misconception appears in Prof. B.'s paper (p. 28). The impression given by *the chapter* is that the open outbreak and God-defying pride of the lawless one brings the Lord from heaven to annul him by the shining forth of His presence. This coalesces not only with Rev. 19: 11-21, but with Isa. 11: 4; both of which are followed beyond controversy by the millennial reign. After that reign is over, Satan is let loose for a special and needed sifting of the unrenewed masses of millennial Gentiles, and judgment falls from God's fire, not from Christ's appearing, without a semblance of the lawless one at that epoch. And no wonder: he had been destroyed irretrievably a thousand years before. Not the lawless one but Satan leads afterwards.

On 1 Cor. 15: 25 one need say little; for it is agreed that the verse speaks of Christ reigning. But not a word implies that it "has already begun." The verse does imply that God will have set Christ's enemies as a footstool for His feet to trample down. Is it seriously argued that Christ is actively subduing His enemies now, as He will when the kingdom comes? As to really vanquishing them, He is quiescent now: all His activities are of grace in converting foes, and nourishing, etc., friends; and this, because the members of His body, the church, are not complete. The marriage of the Lamb takes place in heaven, before He appears in judgment of His open foes (the lawless one first of all), and enters on the reign where all things are to be subjected to Him in fact, as they are now in title. But the reigning is when the dispensed power is in full and public operation before the universe. When that is done, not only in the millennial reign, but by the judgments which precede, and the still more solemn eternal judgment that follows, then the Son shall also Himself be subjected to Him that subjected all things to Him, the kingdom is surrendered, and God is all in all. So far from there being no hint, there is a pointed reference to the millennial reign in the latter half of 1 Cor. 15: 24 and the whole of v. 25.

But Dr. E. makes up for such shortcomings by his open admission (pp. 71, 72) that the figurative interpretation of Rev. 20: 1-10, for which Dr. Brown and Prof. Beet contend keenly as a question of life or death, "completely breaks down." Nay more, he frankly accepts the interpretation that finds in the passage the doctrine of two resurrections, and that a long period, symbolically designated a thousand years, comes between the resurrection of the saints and that of the rest of the dead. What is there to contend about after such an admission? the plain Christian may ask in surprise. That the millennium is a governmental system, and for a time only, in Christ's hands, is the point. It is not the perfection of the new heaven and earth, when rule is over.

"This passage (adds Dr. E.) contains no hint that Christ comes before the thousand years begin . . . But St. Paul plainly tells us that the saints are raised at Christ's coming (1 Cor. 15: 23). In this respect, that is, in reference to the resurrection of the saints, I infer that the advent is premillennial. Beyond this I cannot see that the passage supports the millennial theory." It appears to me that a premillennialist must be hard to please who cannot see in this admission Dr. E.'s surrender of the post-millennial view; nor can I doubt that his two negative coadjutors must have been scandalized by a confession so distinct and positive, if not complete. To hold that Christ comes from heaven to raise the saints a thousand years and more (symbolically or literally) before He raises the rest of the dead, and yet that He does *not* then reign, and does *not* bring in times of restoring all things, though so full of prophetic testimony and therefore of such interest to God and His children, and that the world is *not* to know the wonders of God's love to Christ and those that were His in days of suffering, and that there is to be no accomplishment of God's purpose for administration of the fullness of times, no heading up of all things in Christ, both heavenly and earthly (Eph. 1: 10), in which we are to share the inheritance with Him: — to hold what Dr. E. allows, and to deny, as he does, these glorious consequences of Christ's

coming, is to present as remarkable a group of inconsistencies as one can expect to see in a man of ability. In this judgment Prof. Beet and Dr. Brown would agree against Dr. E., unless I am greatly mistaken. One can but deplore the violence done thereby to the texture of scripture, and the impotence to which even the truth confessed is thus reduced.

The fact is, however, that our negative brethren are singularly at war with each other on vital questions. Thus Prof. Beet will have it, as the teaching of very many statements, by various sacred writers . . . that the coming of Christ will for ever end the conflict of good and evil (p. 140). Such is his main position. This is directly at issue with Dr. Edwards, who holds that Christ comes to raise the saints for heaven where they will reign with Him, before the millennium (or a thousand years symbolical before the rest of the dead are raised, Satan being meanwhile bound and cast into the bottomless pit). Yet he also holds that the thousand years, far from being a time of holy peace, are a continuation of the conflict between good and evil, but under changed conditions . . . Heaven and hell withdraw from the field to leave it to the inherent power of principles, as manifested in human life on earth (p. 73). Thus all is avowedly reduced to a human level and order, *beyond any dealing of God in the past!*

"The conflict assumes apparently a more human character!" and this, after confessing Christ come, the saints raised, and Satan bound!! Of course Dr. B., as well as Prof. B., wholly reject all these features of Dr. E.'s wonderful millennium. "A more human character" is only true, if the all-important place of the risen Head and the risen saints is owned, not "withdrawn" but from heaven controlling the earth for good, as never before, and ruling the nations with a rod of iron, in contrast with the gospel. The loosing of Satan after the thousand years, and his successful seduction of men far and wide on earth (for he never gains the place of accuser in heaven, as we know him), will only the more bring out that all flesh is grass; for it might have been thought an "inherent improbability" for such as judged from the unbroken peace, righteous government, and visible glory, of that unparalleled period. But flesh ensnared even then by Satan is devoured by fire coming down out of heaven; and heaven and earth are dissolved and vanish away for Christ's judgment of the dead, who are cast into the lake of fire; and new heavens and a new earth appear wherein righteousness dwells, and God (not the exalted Man) is all in all.

For Dr. B. here, and more fully in his Second Advent, contends for a millennium which only differs from this age by an increase of the good now at work, and a diminution of the evil, with scarce one thing adequately answering to the visions of the kingdom as set forth in both Old and New Testaments alike. Dr. B. indeed does not argue like Prof. Beet, as if the passage in Rev. 20: 1-9 stood alone and at issue with every other in the N. T. The chief thing peculiar to that passage in fact is defining the length of the kingdom; and where in the N. T. could that measure be given so fittingly as in its one great prophecy? The kingdom itself is most fully described in the Old Testament as well as less so in the New. Dr. B. does not question, as Prof. B. seems to do, the sphere of the reign with Christ (pp. 30, 146). They do indeed join arms in throwing doubt over its being a resurrection of the saints. One of them calls it an unproved assertion that the prophet speaks (in v. 4) of three classes, *i.e.*, of the saints in general, besides the twofold Apocalyptic martyrs; another assumes that they are only martyrs.

In truth Prof. B. leaves it doubtful as far as appears (and I should abhor misjudging him or any other), whether he believes in a millennium at all, save possibly "a fresh departure greater and better even than the Reformation" (pp. 34, 35)! And he widely differs in the hasty assertion that "the visions of Daniel refer always to the eternal glory" (p. 33). Dr. B. on the contrary, with no less confidence, maintains the opposite error that the first vision (and the same principle applies no less to the last) is *not* even a *new dispensation*, but only a final step of the same unbroken dispensation as the present (pp.

119-121)! Thus both ignore "the age to come" in flat opposition to scripture. Again, Dr. B., in his aversion to the natural interpretation of Rev. 20: 4-6, which Dr. E. admits it is impossible to evade, dwells on the symbolical and difficult nature of the Revelation, with almost every possible interpretation advanced, and the varieties of understanding this very passage among its literal interpreters (pp. 107, 108). Now what matters all this cloud of dust, if he is sure it is inspired, and that the Holy Spirit enables him to understand its genuine meaning? When people are so full of others' uncertainties, can one trust their own assurance? Prof. Beet goes farther still, and does what he can to take up the old scepticism which those who shrunk from Rev. 20: 1-10 fell into respecting even its genuineness (pp. 137, 138). But no man ever quarreled with the Apocalypse, unless the Apocalypse gave no quarter to his own idols. There is no book of scripture more self-evidently of God.

As far as appears, Dr. E. symbolizes with the late Prof. Moses Stuart, who believed in a first resurrection literally, and yet adhered to the traditional view of a general resurrection before the great white throne. But this amalgam is incoherent, and the exegesis unsatisfactory, even to the Andover expositor himself; as every comment must be which is not based on two distinct resurrections, of the just, and of the unjust. A general resurrection, or a universal judgment, is opposed to God's word, and fraught with perplexity and error.

Dr. Brown, after some prefatory words of no concern here, begins with 2 Peter 3: 10-13. His fundamental mistake is the assumption that the day of the Lord is the equivalent of the Second Advent. Now any careful reader of the O.T. may see that "that day" includes a vast variety of divine dealings, and is a period, not an epoch. It begins (not with the Lord's presence or coming (*i.e.*, the rapture) at all, which is positively and plainly contra-distinguished from it in 2 Thess. 2: 1, 2, as we have already shown, but) with His judicial dealings on earth (beginning with His appearing in glory); which judgments, in one form or another, occupy the kingdom for more than 1000 years, till it is delivered up at the end. This is the simple truth of the day of the Lord, apart from controversy; and it thus completely disposes of the difficulty. The dissolution of the universe is near the close of that day, but still within it, which is just what the apostle states (see 2 Peter 3: 7-13, JND translation). Dr. B. perplexes himself by taking for granted that it is at the beginning. His argument in pp. 91-93 is wholly invalid.

The earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up; the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat; but all that the apostle Peter determines is, that it is "in" that day (v. 10) and *by reason of it* (v. 12). It was not to be before, nor yet after, but within (the day of the Lord), and because of the presence of, the day of God (*i.e.*, the eternal state). The Apocalypse of John adds, where alone we ought to expect distinct details in their relative order, that this same destruction of heaven and earth is to be only just before the end. No wonder therefore that those who cling to the postmillennial theory decry the inspired book which demolishes it. The burning up and sweeping away are just before the day (of the Lord) ends, which had been running its course for more than a thousand years, an ample period for all that scripture predicts or premillennialists say. Nor is it true that the warning to the scoffers is pointless. If they ask, "Where is the promise of His coming?" the apostle answers with "the day of the Lord" and its overwhelming terrors, which will destroy the ungodly at the beginning, but will not end before the heavens and earth that now are pass away: the fitting and full reply of God to the scornful scepticism which took its stand against His word on the (alleged) stability of the visible creation. The day will come as a thief, nor will it terminate till every word is accomplished. Dr. B.'s argument cannot survive the touch of scripture.

Just as vain is his reasoning on John 6, and the kindred texts in pp. 94-96. The Lord will assuredly raise up all the dead saints, and change the living ones, to be caught up together in clouds to meet the

Lord in the air; but this leaves all open as to any who may be born of God afterwards during the day of the Lord, when Messiah's praise shall be of God "in the great congregation," and "all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kingdoms of the nations shall worship before Thee." It is absurd to ignore the harvest of the millennial earth, necessarily distinct from the saints who compose the first resurrection. They that are Christ's are to be raised at His coming; but how unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to fancy that Christ has none to bless in the day of His power and joy! Texts which speak of saints past or present do not shut out the "generation" to come. Psalms and Prophets speak distinctly of saints in that day on the earth. That they die not proves they will not be raised; that they do not suffer with Christ indicates that they are not to reign with Him in that day, for they will be reigned over; but as nothing forbids the gracious quickening of the Spirit in that day, so they will have their blessed portion in the eternal state. A premillennialist must be a simpleton to be perplexed by a conclusion as unsound as the premise is negligent of scripture.

In pp. 97, 98 follows a string of texts (Matt. 10: 32, 33; John 5: 28, 29; Rom. 2: 6-10, 16; 2 Cor. 5: 10) which are cited for simultaneous presentation and judgment of righteous and wicked at Christ's second coming. *Not one* of them utters a word to that effect. All teach award; none defines the time or way, still less simultaneity. Other scriptures prove that they are wholly apart; one at least defines the long interval. Dr. B. connects Rom. 2: 16 with v. 10 and preceding; whereas it really links with v. 12. Again, Acts 17: 31 speaks solely of Christ's judging the habitable earth, and not the dead. It is therefore nothing to Dr. B.'s purpose, but proves a different judgment, which the postmillennial scheme ignores. John 5 is so far from indicating a simultaneous judgment, that it proves the believer's portion to be life, in contrast with judgment which awaits the wicked only; so that there are two contrasted resurrections also. Hence in 2 Cor. 5: 10 we read that we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each may receive the things done through the body according to what he has done, whether good or bad; but not a hint that it will be for just and unjust at the same time, which is elsewhere shown to be unfounded, yea, contradictory of God's word. Dr. B. is loose and unhappy in his citations.

But what then of Rev. 20: 11-15, which is supposed to express clearly the absolute universality of the Last Judgment? (p. 99.) Can reasoning be feebler? As in Rev. 11: 18, and 19: 5, "the small and the great" include none beyond those that are named, the God-fearing, so in the passage questioned "the great and the small," do not go beyond the dead that now stand before the throne for judgment, after the blessed and holy we saw raised 1000 years before to reign with Christ. Dr. B.'s argument really upsets his own conclusion. "The great and the small," as well as the mention of the sea, death, and Hades, do solemnly mark the universality of the dead left by the first resurrection; but to seek, as is sought, to include those already raised in "the dead," who now so long after stand before the throne to be judged, seems as opposed to all just interpretation of the chapter and to all scripture, as it is to all sound reasoning. It can only be accounted for by the darkening influence of error, πρῶτον ψεῦδος.

Every one must be manifested before Christ's Bema, saints and sinners at their respective and due times: the saints already glorified to give account and receive according to their deeds; sinners, as they have violated conscience, transgressed God's law, or rejected His gospel, to come into judgment, whence none of them can be saved, for they have not life. Hence here it is said (Rev. 20: 12) that "the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books according to their works." If so, it was and could only be everlasting rain, as inspired David expresses it (Ps. 143: 2); and so in the N.T. judgment is contrasted both with life (John 5: 24, 29) and with salvation (Heb. 9: 27, 28).

Yet my excellent friend Dr. B., after citing the affecting repetition in verse 13 ("and they were judged every man according to their works"), appeals to "the almost identical language of the Gospels and Epistles already quoted," which do *not* treat the judgment of the righteous and wicked as one

whole. He asks, Are we to believe that Life's book was opened for no other purpose than to show that not one of those then raised and then judged was to be found in it? The answer is, that the text expressly declares that the dead, not some but all, οἱ νεκροὶ, were not merely "made manifest" as all saints are to be, but "*judged*" also, as no believer is or can be, if we accept the words of our Lord, "out of the things that were written in the books." This is inevitable perdition, as every believer saved by grace through the faith of Christ ought to know.

For what then was or could that "other book" be opened, save to make plain that if God's wrath, long revealed and despised, must take its course righteously, God's sovereignty was neither disappointed nor conflicting? The names of the condemned were not there. Therefore it is not "baldly," but with awful emphasis, added, "And if any one was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire." Not a hint of one who was found written there. The book of life tallied perfectly with the books of deeds. Their works called for God's final punishment; to grace they had been indifferent or actively opposed. I regret that a dear Christian should count it "bald" to believe the divine expression of a most weighty truth — the consistency of sovereign grace with everlasting judgment. And the folly of traditional theology is the more evident; for if the righteous were "nakedly expressed" here or anywhere as sharing the judgment with the wicked, it would contradict the O.T. as well as the New, the Lord no less than the apostle. The error strikes not only at "the most mysterious book of the N. T.," but at fundamental revelation in general. To say that the believer comes into judgment is at issue with the truth of the gospel itself, and is the mere fruit of reasoning from the assumptions of the natural mind.

It is not true, then, that "the one answer to all this" (p. 101) is the "first resurrection," though it be irreconcilable with the anti-scriptural dream of a last simultaneous judgment of all. For we have seen thus far that there is not an atom of truth in one argument alleged. Now Dr. B. betakes himself to another venerable and widespread error, that the persons raised in this first resurrection are the *martyrs exclusively*" (p. 102). Two classes, he says correctly enough, are here very definitely *specified*; but how come he and his friends to overlook the general description which precedes, leaving room for all saints beyond those martyrs? "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given them," — exactly fulfilling what the apostle brought before the unspiritual and forgetful Corinthians (1 Cor. 6). Does not Dr. B. know that the saints (not the martyrs exclusively) shall judge the world? Here is the vision of its accomplishment.

We know from 1 Cor. 15, 1 Thess. 4, 2 Thess. 1, and many other scriptures, that the saints at large, of O. and N.T. alike, are to meet the Lord at His coming (the rapture), and to be with Him in the Father's house on high. This the Revelation, as being characteristically a judicial book, does not describe on any scheme whatever; but it does disclose the glorified saints above ere this, notably the marriage of the Lamb come and His wife (the church assuredly as having made herself ready in Rev. 19. Others are there entering into the joy of heaven, not in that most intimate relation, yet blessed indeed — they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19: 9), not the bride but the guests. It is not faith nor wisdom to slight, or confound, these distinctions of God's word. And it is but a shuffle to evade them under the pretense that it is a question only of interpretation. Not so. The text is plain, too plain for prejudice; and therefore it must be explained away by misusing Rev. 21: 2. The bride is not invited to her own wedding; nor are those invited to it the bride. So in Heb. 12: 22-24 (where the different objects are marked by καὶ, "and," but neglected in both the Authorized and the Revised Versions), "the church of the firstborn," who are enrolled in heaven, are clearly distinguished from the "spirits of just men made perfect." It is a false system which merges all saints in one throng; and if the O.T. saints are thus distinguished from the assembly of firstborn ones, how much more the

saints in the wholly changed conditions of the age to come! Not seeing this, and bent on denying it, Dr. B. (in his Second Advent p. 84) has been betrayed into the stupendous blunder that Heb. 11: 40 ("God having provided some better thing concerning us [of the N.T.], that apart from us they [the O.T. saints] should not be made perfect,") means "They *without us* could not be made perfect, that is, *without Christ and the Spirit!* whose proper economy ours certainly is." Such is the result of his desperate effort to escape the plain distinction drawn by inspiration between the saints of the O.T. and those of the New.

Now both compose the general mass of saints, which our brethren overlook, as seen by St. John, already occupying thrones in Rev. 20: 4, as before seen following Christ out of heaven in Rev. 19: 11-14. Compare also Rev. 17: 14. When Daniel (Dan. 7: 9) beheld the thrones, not "cast down," but "set up," he speaks of no sinner but one, the Ancient of days; when John saw thrones, they were filled by sitters on them, and judgment was given to them. The phrase is purposely general, the better to comprise the undefined body of changed saints just issued out of heaven with Christ in order to reign with Him. But as not a few had suffered unto death in the earlier and later persecutions described in the Apocalypse (Rev. 6: 9-11, Rev. 13: 7, 15), these, who had been slain subsequently to the rest and were not yet raised, are carefully specified as now alive from the dead, both classes of them, to join the general group already enthroned (Rev. 20: 4). No doubt this goes far to put out of court the historicalist notion of the Pagan and the Papal periods; but this is a secondary question of application which may be left to the speculative. Our business now is the true exposition of the text before us; and there is no intelligible ground in its plain terms for doubting that there is first, in the opening clause of verse 4, the general body of those who have part in the first resurrection; then the earlier class of Apocalyptic martyrs; and lastly the later company, for which the earlier were to wait. The last sufferers having been killed even as those before, the two specified classes are now raised in time to join the great bulk of the glorified who had already been seen on the thrones (having been caught up at the rapture), so that they all might reign with Christ a thousand years. Who can fail to see that this is the clear and sure meaning when attention is once fairly drawn to the passage? It was unnecessary to define who filled the thrones (p. 146); for it could not but be the saints answering to the bride and the guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb, who had followed Him out of heaven for His judgment and reign over the earth.

These form the first and general class (of Rev. 20: 4); to which both groups of Apocalyptic sufferers (the martyrs during Daniel's 70th week) were added when raised, as the prophet was given to see. Dr. B. at least expressly admits the two "very definitely specified" classes of martyrs, though he, like many others, has not taken account of the already enthroned saints (of Rev. 4). It is idle to dispute that the verse reveals the general body, with two classes added of special interest in the Apocalypse. It is negligence or prejudice which accounts for the strange oversight of the general clause. What does it matter if the (church) Fathers saw not the wood of that clause in their hasty preoccupation with the trees in the subjoined clauses? What avails parading moderns, whose exegesis was not "strict," but really fanciful in the extreme, or vague and lifeless? There the word of God stands, the test of all interpretation. Disprove what is here given, if mistaken. Let objectors give the exact sense without ignoring its most important introduction.

Dr. E. is right, Dr. B. quite wrong, as to Rev. 20: 4-6, which, only if taken literally, corresponds with Rev. 1: 6; Rev. 2: 10, 11, 26, 27; Rev. 3: 21; Rev. 5: 10; as it is the sole adequate recompense for such suffering as we see in Rev. 6: 9-11, etc. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him"; not His "cause" merely having the upper hand in other persons without Him, but ourselves reigning gloriously with Him.

And here let us observe how unjust is the slight put on the Revelation, as not having equal

authority with other books of scripture. Is it to be justly blamed because its expositors have so differed one from another? There can be no sliding scale among inspired writings. If it be, as the apostle John declares, what the Lord Jesus gave him from God, woe be to the man who contemns it in comparison with other books. As with St. Paul's letters there are things in the Apocalypse hard to be understood; but the amount is excessively overrated. The first five chapters are as plain as most parts of the N. T. So are chs. 7, 10, and even 12-15; chs. 17-22 are so for the most part. Only chs. 6, 8, 9, 11, 16 present serious difficulty in some respects; yet even in these will be found unquestionably edifying matter for souls.

In fact, then, Rev. 20: 4 is a comprehensive sketch of the saints risen to reign with Christ. Its peculiarity is, not only that it defines the duration of that reign over the earth before "the end," but that it specifies two added classes of sufferers slain in the crisis which precedes the day of the Lord. Without this vision it could be but dimly seen how those specified would fare; though one might be sure on first principles that all must be well with them. For they were not put to death till after those symbolized by the twenty-four crowned elders were in heavenly glory (Rev. 4); and their slaughter did not cease while the Beast and the False Prophet lived to kill them. Thus they did not survive to enjoy the blessings of Christ's reign over the earth. But by dying for His sake, even so late, they gained immensely instead of losing; for they too, as the vision declares, live and reign with Christ, no less than all that were His raised previously and already seated on thrones. To gainsay this, and on the score of "legitimate principles of interpretation" (pp. 108, 109), where the main entry is omitted, and only the two added items are taken into reckoning, is carelessness and self-deception as gross, at least, as if one, in describing the British Empire, dwelt only on Scotland and Ireland, and forgot there was such a part of it as England and Wales.

It is well-known that the post-apostolic Fathers till Origen were millenarians. The remains of some and the writings of others, bear ample testimony to early and prevalent conviction of a literal resurrection of the saints, and their reign with Christ for a thousand years. But these ante-Nicene views were but partially true at best, to say nothing of Talmudical reveries that crept in here or there. They looked for a reign and living of the glorified on the earth. They never rose to the height of God's purpose for Christ's glory in the universe. They entered not into the N.T. light in 1 Cor. 15, Eph. 1 and Heb. 2, cast on Ps. 8: the risen Son of man at the head of all creation, not Palestine only nor yet the earth, but "all things that are in the Heavens and on earth"; and the saints till then changed into His glorious likeness at His coming, and associated with Him, the heavenly bride of the Bridegroom. Like their adversaries that followed, they mixed up the (heavenly) hope with the prophetic word; so that dreaded times or expected seasons intercepted the heart's waiting for Christ, and lowered their eyes from heaven to earth.

Then the ruin of the church's testimony grew apace. Origen spread widely his allegorizing system, Dionysius of Alexandria his dialectic, Eusebius of Caesarea his flattery of the powers that then were. At length the influence of Augustine established all but universally in Christendom the so-called spiritual theory, that the first resurrection means regeneration in virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, and that the baptized, if at least God's elect, are reigning with Christ ever since He ascended to heaven!! This truly "wild" interpretation not only prevailed before the Reformation, but keeps its ground since among Romanists, as among many of the Protestants who still hold it, save where the yet lower ecclesiastical theory of Grotius proved acceptable, till the Arian Dr. Whitby broached, early in the eighteenth century, his discovery — to spread like wild fire — of a future reign of Christ's cause on earth, gradually brought about by divine blessing on Christian agencies, but helped on by providential dealings also.

Of the Whitbyite hypothesis Virtranga, though striving to trace a foreign source, was the learned advocate, as Dr. Brown is the chief popularizer and warm special pleader in our day. More plausible in one respect than the Augustinian fancy, it undermines and supplants the revealed hope more fatally, falls in readily with the delusion of human progress, and thus corrupts the faith with an expectation essentially worldly and carnal. In particular, the Grotian idea of an ecclesiastical reign since Constantine left men free to conceive, as did the late Bp. Waldegrave and many other brethren, that the millennium is past, and the little space ebbing out; so that they could look for Christ's coming without one revealed event between. For all these speculators had alike fallen into the error of identifying His advent with "the end" or the judgment of the Great White Throne. So men like the admirable S. Rutherford or Bp. Hall might be dark indeed as to prophecy; but the hope for them was not so paralyzed, as it became half a century or more afterwards by Whitbyism, which suits perfectly the unbounded self-confidence of the revolutionary liberal movement, the characteristic of the last hundred years. Scripture, on the contrary, assures of declension and apostasy, the mystery of lawlessness, and the lawless one revealed, whom the Lord Jesus destroys at His appearing (2 Thess 2: 8) — the distinct reversal of the Whitbyite expectation, which glorifies present instrumentalities and robs Christ personally of His honour, as it leaves Satan in possession, however reduced.

Take a sample or two of its effects manifest in the in the essays before us, as everywhere else in this school. They all object to what is said to be revealed but once: an irreverent unbelieving notion worthy of all detestation as applied to God's word, nay, unworthy even of honourable men. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater" (1 John 5: 9), says the beloved disciple. "Know ye not" says St. Paul, "that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. 6: 3). Now this follows the question in v. 2, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" — the same truth, which reappears explicitly in Rev. 20: 4-6, as it had with less detail appeared in Dan. 7: 18. But if it had been true that the reign of the saints with Christ had been revealed only once, is our judging angels the less credible or important, because we here have it in this single passage? Christ's surrender of the kingdom to the Father is notified only in 1 Cor. 15: 24. Is it therefore of dubious import or of insignificant value? Is it not a truth of the utmost consequence, because it draws the line (undivulged in the O.T.) between the millennial reign and eternity? Without it one could not decide, as Prof. Beet and Principal Brown do not yet, the just force of the O.T. prophecies in general and of not a few in the N. T. Hence it is idle on this ground to object to the stoppage of Satan's temptations for a thousand years, or to the revolt he stirs up in the little space that follows. Their argument at bottom is blind unbelief, sure only to err, and lead astray all who lean on that broken reed of Egypt.

Again, it is argued in this hazy system that the beginning of the millennium may be as uncertain as the starting-point of the seventy weeks. Now where is the analogy? On the one hand it is a question mainly between the seventh or the twentieth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, and two commandments not a little resembling. On the other hand, the most tremendous judgments will fall first on the western powers in confederation with the Jews and their king, followed by the destruction of the eastern under their great northern chief, with carnage beyond example in both cases: events which close this age, and open the age to come, or millennial reign. Is it wise to set the easily understood vagueness of one ancient imperial mandate, out of two not unlike, against a crisis of unexampled solemnity and horror, to say nothing of Christ's appearing, or of the universal peace and blessing that ensues without an enemy or an evil occurrent? The effort to find gradual and successive steps in Dan. 2: 44, Dan. 7: 26, and 2 Thess. 2: 8 is unworthy of sound philology, and contradicts the plain objects of the three texts, which describe nothing else or less than a sudden and complete extinction. Consuming in a slow sort and by evangelical means is precluded by the least approach to exact criticism as well as by a spiritual judgment.

But it is pleaded that the Whitbyite view is strengthened by the frank concession that the thing seen in the vision of Rev. 20: 4 was a literal resurrection (pp. 109-111); and that Rev. 11: 3-12, as well as Ezek. 37, etc., help the figurative force (pp. 112-115). I must reject Dr. B.'s historical application of the Two Witnesses as the full adequate sense for the crisis when every word is to be fulfilled. Probably Prof. B. and Dr. E. accept it no more than I do. Then the prodigal son in Luke was dead *spiritually*, and so made alive. Dr. B. himself admits that this is not the force of our text. So again in Rom. 11, if Israel's casting away be the world's reconciliation, what shall be their reception but life from the dead? Resurrection is the figure, not the explanation as in Rev. 20. Further, Dr. B. admits the reference to Rev. 6: 9-11, where undeniably literal death is meant. How then can he escape the inevitable conclusion that here those literally slain are literally raised to life? Surely in all this argument logic and exegesis are equally at fault.

As the Two Witnesses are too questionable to afford a sure test, let us try the Jewish prophecy. Ezekiel was given to see a multitude of dry bones come together, acquiring flesh and sinew and breath, so that they stood on their feet an exceeding great army. This revival is the figure, of which the explanation follows, "These bones are the whole house of Israel," who were to be placed in their own land (Ezek. 37: 11-14). John saw thrones with persons seated on them; and then two classes of disembodied souls who had been slain for Christ, or in refusal of the beast, and were now caused to live that they too might reign with Christ. This is the Apocalyptic vision, of which the explanation is, "This is the first resurrection" (Rev. 20: 5). Plainly therefore, in all accuracy of exegesis, the cases are in contrast; for in the Jewish prophet resurrection is the vision, in the Christian prophet resurrection is the declared meaning of the vision. Figures are in no way denied, nor yet symbols. The question is as to the meaning of the vision here, and the revealed answer is, This is the first resurrection.

The context demands the literal sense. Dr. E. confesses it here. Dr. B. resists it in vv. 4-6, while a little lower (vv. 12, 13) he cannot but allow it. Is this spiritual? or reasonable? or consistent? In the same short context two resurrections are predicted, with nothing but blessedness affixed to the first, with nothing but judgment and the lake of fire attached to the second. Yet, according to this shifty invention of Dr. Whitby (as poor a commentator as he was a contemptible critic, to say nothing of his fundamental heterodoxy), the first is to be figurative, the second beyond doubt literal notwithstanding the design and character of this ambiguous and debatable book! Such principles of criticism, such exegetical practice, who can consider but as illegitimate in the extreme? For surely in two visions of the same context, successively balanced against each other with the respective keywords, This is the first resurrection, and, This is the second death, they should be, in all consistency, either both literal or both figurative. As even the allegorist is obliged to admit that the second is literal, we insist that so ought to be the first: else the chapter is not fairly dealt with. No book could be intelligibly interpreted on a plan so arbitrary. It is not the book which is censurable, but its interpreters, of whom the Whitby school is perhaps the lowest.

To obviate the pressure Dr. B. asks for the literal sense of v. 5, "The rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years should be finished." But, instead of waiting for an answer from a neighbor capable of searching him, he insinuates a reply which simply proves his own bewilderment: Is it a set of men rising literally from the dead? Why, in the place of this, we find them to be a cloud of mortal men in the flesh, enemies of Christ and His cause, etc. (p. 115). Now the true answer is, that the prophet saw that the rest of the dead *did* live, and that the most incredulous of believers admit that so it is, in vv. 12, 13. The insurrection of vv. 7-10 is never called a resurrection. In vain is it objected that there was "a little time" more in the account. For the "till" in no way negatives an added space after the thousand years; it denies the rising of the rest of the dead before that. The attempt to substitute the insurrection of Gog

and Magog for the resurrection which the prophet only saw afterwards (the sole possible reference that is not fraudulent), is a too evident diversion to prop up the tottering mythical interpretation of vv. 4-6. This may be truly designated as "distortion " wholesale (p. 116); whereas not a word is distorted in either vision, when both are interpreted literally. The one is a resurrection of life, as the other is of judgment; and thus the Revelation perfectly harmonizes with the Gospel of John. If we believe the Lord in both, a "catholic" or simultaneous resurrection is a mere figment, which scripture discountenances and dispels.

Dr. B. does not put forward here, but he does strongly maintain, in a useful book devoted to it, the restoration of the Jews, once more and for ever blessed nationally in the Holy Land. His error is in assuming that it will be under the gospel, instead of for the kingdom in the new age. For it is a matter of apostolic doctrine, with which the O.T. of course agrees, that "as touching the gospel they (the Jews) are enemies for our (Gentiles') sake; but as touching the election they are beloved for the fathers' sake" (Rom. 11: 28). They stumbled at the Stumbling-stone — a humbled, rejected, suffering, and crucified Messiah. Therefore are they scorning the gospel, themselves rejected. During their eclipse Gentiles are called by the gospel, and the believers (Jew or Gentile) are united to Christ the heavenly Head by the Holy Spirit sent down. When this new dealing of God is complete (wherein Jewish and Gentile distinctions vanish, and Christ is all), and we go to meet Christ in the air, divine mercy begins afresh to work in Israel, fitting them to be His earthly people, the leader of the nations under the Lord's reign. Thus are God's gifts and calling shown to be unrepented of. Now blindness in part has befallen Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in (Rom. 11). By-and-by all Israel shall be saved, but this only when there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, Who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11: 26). It is the kingdom, not the gospel as now.

It is deeply interesting to compare in Rom. 3 the quotations of Ps. 53, and of Isa. 59, not only with the connection in these chapters, but with the citation of Isa. 59 in Rom. 11. Nor does it bear slightly on the question before us. It proves a total change between God's ways under the gospel as now, and under Messiah at His coming again.

In Rom. 3 the apostle quotes the psalm and the prophet to prove the Jew shut up under sin, no less than the Gentile about whom the Jew at least, had no doubt. But, says the apostle, the law, of which you boast as yours only, speaks of you Jews, and condemns you explicitly and utterly; so those two witnesses (which might have been multiplied) conclusively declare it, "that every mouth may be stopped and all the world be under God's judgment." What follows meanwhile? The gospel of God's grace, whilst Christ is away, glorified in heaven, consequent on His death on the cross. This accordingly is pursued, instead of the conclusion of the psalm, or of the prophecy; which say not a word about the grace which now flows out without respect of persons to Jew and Gentle. They point only to the future when the salvation of Israel is to come out of Zion, God bringing back the captivity of His people, and the Redeemer Himself coming to Zion. The apostle in Rom. 3 says nothing of Israel's hope, because this is not the gospel; it dwells only on the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God set forth a propitiatory or mercy-seat through faith in His blood.

But in Rom. 11 he is proving that the present rejection of the Jew, which makes room for the indiscriminate grace of the gospel, is not to last always. For the Gentile, if he continue not in God's goodness, will surely be cut off; as the ancient people, if they continue not in their unbelief, will as surely be grafted in. And this he proceeds to show as a prediction from the same Isa. 59. All Israel (not (merely individual) Jews only) shall be saved. But it is, on the one hand, when the fullness of the Gentiles is come in; and on the other, when there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer: two facts most momentous, which indicate the present age at an end, and the new one come. It will be the kingdom

when Israel are to be saved; as it is the gospel which gathers out the Gentiles in a mercy which ignores the national and peculiar privileges of Israel. God's covenant to take away Israel's sins only takes effect when Christ comes to and out of Zion.

Dr. B.'s contention is really with St. Paul. Is not this an immense change in God's methods? A heavenly people cannot consist with an earthly one, both owned here below at the same time. The national restoration of Israel is incompatible concurrently with the indiscriminate grace of the gospel which blots out all natural differences in those who compose Christ's body for heaven. The coming of Christ closes the heavenly purpose, and introduces in due time the earthly plans of God, Christ being the centre of both. The Father's name is developed in the former, as in the latter the name of Jehovah, the Almighty God; the Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth. These blessed counsels and ways of God in Christ for His glory are blurred or effaced by the post-millennial scheme.

Of the appeal to missionary feeling in pp. 116-120, and the closing words, little more is needed, as it has been sufficiently met already. It is sweet to find in a single verse of Rev. 22 the adequate safeguard. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take life's water freely." Here we have the heavenly hope, absolutely apart from, and thus unfettered by, the visions of coming judgments, providential or personal. St. John at the close is as fresh in living hope, as St. Paul at the beginning: they at least were God-informed followers of Christ, if the Thessalonians were alarmed by the false cry that the day of the Lord — in some figurative sense probably — was come. There is no mistake in any part of scripture. The Lord bade His servants stand, as it were, behind the door, that when He came and knocked, they might open to Him immediately. Watching for Him is higher and nearer His heart than working, though blessed are both; and best of all, when watching for Christ imprints ever a heavenly character on serving Him.

It was no question of less or better informed followers. The church was to say, Come (Rev. 22); aye, and not the church only (for even she might, and did, err), but "the Spirit and the bride say, Come." It was the body of Christ, warranted, guided, and sustained, at the last point to which revelation leads us. The enemy would strive to divert them from the constant waiting for Christ's presence; he might seek to shake by dread of the day, or by the great tribulation; or he might seek to interpose the improvement of the world or a millennium of Christ's cause. But no! "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." And so was the individual to say who had only heard Christ's voice, ill-informed perhaps about prophecy, the church, or aught else. Still this is the individual hope too: "He that heareth, let him say, Come."

Then do we find the other side. Our first and best affections are, and ought to be, for Christ our hope. But Christ gives us while waiting for Him to share divine love toward perishing souls; and therefore we can turn round to a lost world and take up the good news, "He that is athirst let him come": yea, more, "He that will, let him take life's water freely." *This* is the gospel in all its free grace, and in its due place; but it is subordinate to Christ and the hope of Christ, if indeed we are subject to God's word.