

iv. 6;) and submits that the fruitless branch stands for a down-cast believer. Hidden from the sunlight, laid low in judgment, (2 Chron. xxviii. 19.) through iniquities, (Psa. lxxix. 8,) or by affliction, oppression, or sorrow, (Psa. cvii. 39,)—it cannot, in its present drooping condition and circumstances, bear fruit—but the Husbandman lifts it up, and places it in a position favourable to fruit-bearing.

The author submits that expositors have hitherto attempted to derive more truth from the figure of the vine here than it is designed to illustrate. It is an allegory, (not a parable—there are no parables in John's Gospel) illustrating—not salvation through federal and vital union with Christ—but the character and condition of effective service for Christ. The subject is fruit-bearing, and the fruitless branch stands for a Christian who has ceased to render effective testimony to the truth of the Gospel,—perhaps through sin. He is visited by God in paternal anger—is dishonoured and degraded—is removed from fellowship with the vital church, and men* (not God) regard him as a foul apostate who never possessed grace, and is assuredly going to hell.† Thus he is a "castaway,"—not from Christ and His salvation—but from the professing church. Lord Bacon in his later years was degraded for infamous conduct; so Christians have been degraded and deprived of the honour they once enjoyed. "He that despiseth Me," said God to Eli, "shall be lightly esteemed," (1 Sam. ii. 30.) Thus David, while assured

*The supposition that the "burning" of verse 6 refers to hell has led to error. Men gather them, etc., is surely suggestive of the explanation submitted above. Poor backsliders often feel the bitterness of the scorn and contempt of their former friends. The burning is the termination of the Christian fellowship and usefulness—not the everlasting destruction of the soul.

†John Hazelton's view of the above was, however, different. He regarded verses 2 and 6 as referring to different characters. The fruitless branch of verse 2 he conceived represented infants, who, though vitally united to Christ, were not predestined to bear fruit, and were prematurely taken away by death. The man who does not abide in Christ (verse 6,) he took to be the backslider, who loses touch with Christ, falls into sin, is rejected and despised by professing Christians, and suffers the keen pangs of isolation and degradation. Perhaps the burning has some reference to the delivery of "such to Satan for the destruction of their flesh, that their souls may be saved in the day of the Lord," (1 Cor. v. 5.)

that God was, and ever would be, the God of his salvation, prayed, "Put not Thy servant away in anger," do not put me to the degradation of refusing to own me as Thy servant. (Psa. xxxvii. 9.)

In some texts, the Final Preservation of the saints appears to be made contingent upon the continuance of their Faith. For example:—

Col. i. 23. "If so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the Gospel." This has been judged to state the condition upon which Christ will "present" His people "holy and without blemish and unreprouvable before Him," (verse 22,) while failure will entail loss of the Salvation once enjoyed.

The expressions "the Faith,"* and "the Hope," however, do not stand for the graces of Faith and Hope in regenerated hearts, but indicate the doctrines which Faith believes, and the objects which are presented in the Gospel to the Hope of the true believer.

So-called Christians, who renounce the great truths of the Gospel, and cease to pursue the heavenly joys in which they once professed to feel such surpassing interest, make it evident that they are (and always were) destitute of the root of the matter, and never "knew the grace of God in truth," (verse 6.) If a man does not continue in the Faith, his expectation of attaining the joy of heaven is fallacious and vain.

Heb. iii. 14. "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."

Far better as in R. V. "For we are become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end." The text, as it stands in ordinary Bibles, might be supposed to teach that only such professed Christians as maintain their early confidence to the end of life, will be made partakers of Christ, and so be saved. The words, however, refer to a privilege and its proof. "We are (not 'shall'—a present blessing is contemplated,) become partakers of Christ, if (not in the sense of a condition imposed, but of a demonstration to follow) we hold fast the beginning of our confidence," &c.

The word is *hypostasis*, which means that which is underneath us, and on which we stand firmly; and hence, "firm confidence," "assured expectation." The word employed in Heb. iii. 6, iv. 16, (boldly, or with *boldness*,) and x. 35, is

*See "'Faith, by Israel Atkinson,'—*A Critique*," in the Author's Manual of Faith and Practice, page 160.

parrhêsia, which means, free-spokenness. The author is persuaded that *hypostasis*, rendered "confidence" in the above passage, (Heb. iii. 14,) should be understood *objectively* as referring to the truths or facts about which Christians should be confident, and not to the gracious feeling of boldness or confidence (*parrhêsia*) in the renewed heart, as in Heb. x. 35.

The terrible passages in Heb. vi. 4—8, and x. 26—31, on which so much has been written, are almost universally believed by Strict and Particular Baptists not to refer to regenerated characters, but to persons in the early Church, who had light without life, and gifts without grace, and who lapsed into irremediable apostacy. The expositions of these and some parallel texts given by Rev. John Stock, in his *Handbook of Revealed Theology*, (First Edition, pages 233—5,) are on the whole fairly satisfactory.*

Article XIV. The Intermediate State of the Dead in Christ, and the Resurrection of their Bodies at the Judgment Day. Page 8.

This Article consists of two parts, the first of which deals with

THE INTERMEDIATE CONDITION OF THE BLESSED DEAD.†

NOTE 1. To this, few, if any other Confessions of the Faith of the Strict and Particular Baptists refer. As, however, the ancient belief has been assailed by many, we should be prepared to "give a reason for the hope that is in us," on a matter so vital to the peace and joy of God's people.

*The "He" in Heb. x. 29, refers, not to the apostate, but to Christ. "He was sanctified, (that is to say, set apart or consecrated to His present priestly office,) by the blood of the everlasting Covenant." See *A Manual of Faith and Practice*, page 123.

†Two very curious and suggestive books on the Intermediate State are commended to the reader's attention. "On Dreams, in their Mental and Moral Aspect, as affording Auxiliary Arguments for the Existence of Spirit, for a Separate State, and for a Particular Providence," by John Sheppard, of Frome, the friend of John Foster, the essayist. Also "An Autumn Dream, Thoughts in Verse on the Intermediate State of Happy Spirits," by the same author. The latter, with its notes, which manifest a wonderful wealth of knowledge, is beyond praise. It is a real poem, vivifying and illustrating its abstruse subject in a marvellous way.

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE TO BE DISTINGUISHED FROM THE GLORIFICATION OF THE SAINTS.

NOTE 2. It is important to distinguish—as this and the following Article do—between the felicity of the souls of "the dead in Christ," in their present exanimate or disembodied condition, and the perfect joy into which they will enter at the "resurrection of the just."

"At the resurrection of the flesh, both the happiness of the good and the torments of the wicked will be increased." *Augustine*, quoted in Cary's *Dante*. (*Inferno* vi. 102—117.) See *Dante* in the *Chandos Classics*, pages 19 and 329.

It is popular to speak of those who "sleep in Jesus," as "glorified saints."* This the New Testament never does. The glory to which we were ordained "before the world," (1 Cor. ii. 7,) comprehends not only the rest, happiness, and holiness of the soul, but its reunion with the body which it abandoned in death, and the assimilation of the believer in his whole person to the likeness of his beloved Lord. (1 John iii. 2.)

Great as is the blessedness of those who have died in the Lord, their present condition is one of humiliation. Human souls were created to exist in conjunction with their own bodies. But for sin, there would have been no disembodied spirits; and all men would have lived for ever with untainted souls, dwelling in incorrupted and incorruptible bodies.

Precision of thought on these momentous matters will materially aid us in our controversies with such as deny what God has revealed.

DEATH TO THE CHRISTIAN, A SLEEP.

NOTE 3. The decease of God's people is seldom called their "death" in the New Testament. In the majority of cases it

*Though the word "glory" is used to denote the future happiness of the saints, it always includes the happiness of the body as well as the soul, in the state of the Resurrection. I remember no text wherein the word "glory" is used to denote the happiness of the separate state. Glory belongs to the perfect man—to the body as well as the soul—in Scripture language, to body and soul united. The body has its glory and brightness as well as the soul its excellencies and honours. When Christ appears, we shall appear also with Him in glory. We shall then appear vested in heavenly bodies like His own, (1 Cor. xv. 43.) For the body itself, which is sown into dust, in disgraceful and dishonourable circumstances, will be raised in light and glory."—*From a Sermon by Dr. Watts, reprinted in the GOSPEL HERALD, March, 1882.*

is spoken of as "sleep." This fact is fraught with consolation. It, however, demands consideration. The expression is figurative only; and by literalising it, men have been led into serious errors.

The dead bodies of the saints can, in no sense, be said to sleep. There is no analogy or resemblance between the dissolution and decay of their flesh in the grave, and our nightly rest and repose after the fatigues of the day.

The phrase "sleeping in Jesus," refers only to the state of the soul after the death of the body until the Judgment Day. Various ideas which we associate with natural, healthy and invigorating sleep—its mysteriousness,—its following labour—(Eccles. v. 12,) the rest enjoyed in it, (Psa. iv. 8,) its recuperative and renewing powers, (John xi. 12, 13,) its excluding from the mind the sense of external things, (Matt. xiii. 25,) and the fact that it is expressly said to be a blessing from God, (Psa. cxxvii. 2,) admirably illustrate the quiescence and happiness of holy disembodied souls, in the Master's presence in Paradise.

It is, however of paramount importance that we insist that the expression is figurative only, and that we do not force it beyond permissible limits.

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE, ONE OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

NOTE 4. "The bodies of men after death return to dust and see corruption: but their souls (which neither die nor sleep) having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them."—*The Confession of Faith of the Westminster Assembly.*

This has been denied by different individuals, and on very different grounds.

Materialists,* who make no distinction between the mind of man and the brain, which, under existing conditions, is the organ of its action, insist that death, which destroys the latter absolutely, terminates all consciousness on the part of the former. In their judgment, the soul is dependent on the body for all communication with what is exterior to itself; and that, therefore, "the dead know not anything," (Ecc. ix. 5,) as the Scriptures assert.

*Prominent among these was the celebrated Dr. Priestly, an eminent Socinian. A wit proposed the following as an appropriate epitaph to him:—

"Here lies, secure in oaken chest, packed up together neatly. The flesh and veins, and bones and brains, and soul of Dr. Priestly."

Others,* who literalise the word "sleep" when applied to the death of Christians, contend that their souls, until re-united to their bodies at the Resurrection, though freed from all perturbation and sorrow, are in a condition of unconscious quiescence and repose. (The ground of this error is apparent from Note 3.)

The testimony of the Scriptures, is, however, too clear to admit of hesitancy of judgment on the subject.

The Saviour assured the penitent robber, "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise;"† and the words were assuredly designed to convey the impression that he should immediately enter into the joyful consciousness of His Lord's presence in a happier state of existence.

Paul "desired to depart" because he would then be "with Christ," which would be "far better" than even his present life of splendid endeavour and service, (Phil. i. 23.) This could not be affirmed of a condition of quiescence, wherein no efforts were put forth for the glory of his beloved Lord.

In 2 Cor. v. 6, Paul asserts that whereas whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." Such however, will be the joy even of the intermediate state of the saints that "we are willing to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord," R.V. The word rendered "at home" in verse 6 is the same as that which is translated "present with" in verse 8, and indicates that, just as the soul, while now "at home" in the body, holds commerce with its present surroundings, so it will, after death, be at home, in conscious ease, joy and fellowship in the society of the Lord.

*Some of these are spiritually-minded Christians. The late Rev. Francis Tucker, of ever-blessed memory, told the writer that his spiritual father, the saintly Mr. Nicholson, of Plymouth, very strongly inclined to the belief that the condition of the believer's soul, when separated from the body by death, was one of insensibility; and that his dying words to his beloved wife were, "Good-bye, dear, perhaps till the morning of the Resurrection."

See the excellent Article on the Intermediate State, in Buck's Theological Dictionary by Henderson, Edition 1841, and the Article on Soul-sleepers, in A Dictionary of All Religions, by Hannah Adams, Williams' Edition, London, 1823.

†The Christadelphians read this, "Verily I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." To such extremes of folly does the perversity of error carry some persons.

Appeal to the **Book of the Revelation** is, perhaps, less satisfactory, from the diversity of the schemes of interpretation adopted by different Christians. It is difficult to decide whether many passages should be assigned to the souls of the godly dead now, or to glorified saints hereafter.

The following passages, however, at least demand consideration.

Rev. vii. 15 appears to teach that the spirits of the holy dead serve God in the upper Temple now; for the expression, "day and night," as there will be "no night" in the final state, is referable only to the present period, (Rev. xxi. 25.) While men on earth are experiencing the continual changes which the succession of day and night causes, toiling, resting,—alternately exhausting energy by labour, and recouping it in sleep,—the sinless singers minister to God in ceaseless and unwearied service. Their condition, therefore, must be one of happy consciousness.

Rev. vi. 9, 10, "Under the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held,.....cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Lord, (or Master) the holy, the true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

Without at present attempting to determine whose souls these were, or what period of the Church's history is referred to, the passage obviously implies that the disembodied spirits of the saints are in a conscious condition, and that they retain the recollection of what occurred when they were in the world.

These are advanced suggestively only, for the attention of the studious reader.

THE SAINTS, AFTER DEATH, AT ONCE ENTER INTO CONSCIOUS JOY.

NOTE 5.—Our Article asserts that "the souls of all who die in the Lord are immediately ushered into Christ's presence, and at once enter into rest, joy, and perfect holiness."

This is denied by Roman Catholics, who divide all sins into mortal and venial, and contend that, while the mortal sins of those who die in union with the Church are forgiven, and will not be punished in hell, their venial sins must be cleansed from them, after death, by the fire of Purgatory.

It must be conceded that, although this doctrine is indisputably unscriptural, and has been vilely prostituted by rapacious priests, to extort money from credulous people, for masses for

the souls of their dead relatives, it deserves more attention than it has received from Protestants since the Reformation.*

DEGREES IN GLORY DENIED.

NOTE 6.—It is affirmed by some that, while the three-fold blessings of salvation, Election, Redemption and Regeneration, will ensure the admission of the persons of God's people into heaven, their good works after conversion will determine their station and dignity there. Some will be crowned in the upper world, some uncrowned. Some will occupy stations of superior eminence; others—to mark God's disapprobation of their useless lives as Christians—will occupy inferior positions, and be invested with little dignity and honour. This is commonly styled the doctrine of degrees in glory, and those that maintain it are often supposed to have superior light and holiness.

It is, however, denied by the Strict and Particular Baptists, who hold that *all that constitutes heaven*, both our presence there and the enjoyments of that blessed world, will be entirely due to the sovereign grace of God and the merits of the Saviour. "Will there be degrees in glory? I say at once, 'No, I do not think so, and I do not believe it.'"—John Hazelton's Sermons, Vol. i. page 144.

*See the Article on the Intermediate State in Litton's *Introduction to Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. ii. page 330.

The doctrine of Purgatory has been revived among the Congregationalists—a section of the Church once eminent for their adherence to evangelical truth. A distinguished novelist and poet, who occasionally preaches, has a lecture on Dante, in which he affirms that, while Christians have learned to abandon the mediæval error of eternal punishment—which is the burden of the Inferno—they have re-embraced the truth (?) that a process of discipline, which will cleanse the saints from the stains of error and sin, must be undergone by them before they enter into the joy of Paradise—as taught in the Purgatorio.

In the "Notes on the Scripture Lessons" recently issued by the Sunday-school Union, in an exposition of the parable of "The Rich Man and Lazarus," we read: "Abraham is still the father of those who are *being purified by punishment.*" "Purified by punishment!" Then this is "another Gospel" of salvation by hell! Sins can be purged away by the fires of Gehenna that are not washed away by the blood of Christ. May we suggest that the officials of the Union might, with advantage to editors and readers, look into these notes?"—From "WORD AND WORK."

That the idea is a human fancy, is evident from the fact that it is wholly unsupported in the Bible. The few texts urged in its support are the following:—

Dan xii. 3. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." A contrast, it is contended, is here drawn between Christians who have religion enough to take them to heaven, but who exert no influence for good upon others, and Christians who are Gospel-workers and soul-winners. The first will, in heaven, be simply like the soft brightness of the evening sky; while the latter will be illustrious and conspicuous like the stars, to all eternity.

The verse, however, is a parallelism,* the second part being a repetition of the former in other phraseology. "They that be wise," and "they that turn many to righteousness," are, therefore, the same persons. The words refer—not to all time—but to a special period, in which advocacy of the truth of God would be attended with peculiar peril, and entail dishonour, deprivation, and even death. The words are designed to console and encourage its bold confessors in that evil day. The glory of heaven would make amends for the sufferings of earth; and its honours compensate for the shame and suffering endured here.

Many faithful ministers and missionaries made but few converts, and the thought that these will be less eminent in heaven than others who were not so useful, is not the idea of the passage. All the godly dead will rise to "everlasting life," (verse 2,) a phrase which designates *fulness* of joy in a happier world. "Well done, good and faithful servant," (faithful to

*This word has been given to a peculiar feature in Hebrew poetry, from the fact that the first half of a verse runs, as it were, even or parallel with the second. It is a species of rhyme in which (instead of words rhyming with words as with us,) ideas answer to ideas, and words, as to their significance, to words, as if fitted to each other by a certain rule or measure.

The above verse, poetically arranged, would appear thus:—
And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament:
And they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.

See Angus's Bible Handbook, number 286; and Horne's Introduction, Eighth Edition, vol. ii. page 495.

The figure Hyperbaton, referred to on page 26 is an elaborated variety of the Hebrew parallelism.

God, His truth, to his fellow-men, and to himself,)—not "Well done, numerically successful servant," will be the Master's welcome to "the joy of the Lord."

The parable of the talents has been supposed to refer to different types of Christian character, (Matt. xxv. 14—30.) The servant who was entrusted with five, it is imagined, stands for a gifted and earnest Christian, whose evangelical efforts are largely used to the conversion of sinners: he that received two talents to a less clever but really devoted Christian; and he that received but one, to a lazy and listless saint, who does nothing for the glory of God, and the spiritual benefit of men. The honours conferred on the first two, it is thought, teach that good works on earth will entitle to rewards in heaven, and that the measure of our eternal blessedness will be determined by our evangelical and Christian liberality and labours, between our conversion and our death.

To this interpretation there are many objections.

The number of the talents entrusted to each of the servants was "according to his (natural) ability," whereas spiritual gifts are bestowed by the Holy Ghost sovereignly on (spiritual) men, "severally as He will," (1 Cor. xii. 11.)

As a matter of fact, moreover, God, in His sovereignty, does not, as a rule, bestow eminent spiritual gifts on Christians of great natural powers. Many such, who were learned and eloquent, were far from widely useful in the Church—while others, who had little mental ability were largely owned to saints and sinners. In a word, there is, ordinarily, no observable correspondence between natural endowments and spiritual gifts, which is what the parable, if expounded as above, would distinctly teach.

Again, "he that received one" was as much a servant as the others, and the above interpretation would make our Lord teach that unfaithfulness after conversion will be punished with "outer darkness," and "weeping and gnashing of teeth," which is contrary to the truth of the Final Preservation of the saints.*

*Sufficient attention has not been given to the primary meaning of the parables of the Ten Virgins and of the Talents.

The parable of the Virgins refers to the first advent of Christ,—His gracious reception of His elect and God-taught followers,—and the rejection of the Jewish nation. The wise virgins stand for those who, like Simeon, waited with docile and expectant hearts "for the consolation of Israel," (Luke ii. 25,)—the long-promised coming of the Christ. The foolish

1 Cor. iii. 15.—“He himself shall be saved: yet so as by (or better “through”) fire.”

virgins represent the religious professors of that day,—notably the Pharisees, and those that were subject to their influence. The lamp which each virgin carried stands for the Scriptures of the Old Testament, (Psa. cxix. 105,) with the subject-matter of which both parties were familiar. The oil in each lamp, at first, points to the power inherent in the Word of God, to instruct the rational mind of man in the truth of God. The oil in the vessels sets forth that gracious knowledge of the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures which is imparted to devout men, who, like Daniel, patiently and prayerfully ponder over the sacred pages, (Dan. ix. 2 and x. 1.) The slumber of the ten, points to the general unpreparedness of men for the advent of Christ. The cry at midnight to the ministry of John the Baptist, (John iii. 29,)—the awakening of the wise virgins, to the zeal with which those who were drawn by the Father came to Jesus Christ, (John vi. 37—45,) and the exclusion of the foolish virgins, to the rejection of the Jews.

Opinions may differ as to the interpretation of details, but it is submitted that this is the general meaning of the parable in its original import.

The view entertained by the late John Hazelton, of the **Parable of the Talents**, was that the servant who received the *ten talents* stands for the Apostles to whom the largest measure of grace and light was given. He that received *two talents* represents the seventy, who were specially endowed with evangelical gifts, and sent by Christ on a mission throughout the Holy Land. The man who had but *one talent* represents the Scribes and Pharisees, who had the truth of God in the letter of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, but hid it in the napkin of their vicious traditions and glosses, so that it lost its moral power over the hearts and consciences of the people at large. The investment of the one talent indicates the full and honest proclamation of the truth taught in the Old Testament, which was the duty of those who professed to expound and enforce it, and which would have led to its reception into the minds of men, and so, to its circulation and increase.

In favour of this view, it is submitted that there is an evident parallel between the **Parable of the Talents** and the **Parable of the Pounds**. (Luke xix. 11—27.) The latter is distinctly said to have had a dispensational application, and to have referred to the Jewish nation; and, if so, the parable of the Talents should be interpreted on similar lines.

It is not urged that these parables have no ulterior spiritual

2 Pet. i. 11.—“For so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”*

These verses are frequently advanced as if they taught that, while all Christians will go to heaven, some will do so with diminished glory through their supineness and unfaithfulness, others will obtain conspicuous honour, as the reward of their illustrious efforts for Christ.

The verses, however, refer—as John Hazelton believed—solely to the act and article of death.

Some Christians die in great distress of mind, occasioned by bitter memories of their inconsistencies and deficiencies. Conscience upbraids them to the last. Their early joys have long left them, and they depart as a man might escape from a burning city, rushing through the flames for bare life. On the other hand, some Christians finish their course in the fulness of confidence and joy. (Acts xx. 24)

The above sentiment is well expressed by W. Cullen Bryant, in his **Thanatopsis**. The passage is quoted, with fine effect, by Charles Hill in his **Circular Letter on Sanctification**, issued by the Suffolk and Norfolk Association of Baptised Churches for 1881.

“So live, that when thy summons comes to join
Th’ innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm, ere each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon; but sustained and soothed
By an unfalt’ring trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.”

1 Cor. xv. 41.—“For one star differeth from another

application. Our sole concern here is their primary meaning, the sense in which those who heard them spoken, must have understood them.

It may be hinted that if, in its secondary and spiritual interpretation, the **Parable of the Talents** teaches the doctrines of rewards in heaven for works on earth, and degrees of glory hereafter, the **Parable of the Pounds** emphatically does not do so.

*Often misquoted “you shall have an abundant entrance,” perhaps only noticeable as exemplifying the small respect popularly paid to the *letter* of the Authorised Version.

star in glory." Often quoted, in a loose and careless manner, as if it taught that some saints would be invested with greater glory than others. That this is not the meaning of the passage is, however, evident to all who read it in its connection. The Apostle is demonstrating the doctrine that those who die in the fear and faith of God will rise again, and is here meeting the difficulty expressed in the words "With what body do they"—that is, the godly dead—"come?" To this he replies that the sidereal heavens manifest the power of God to create and sustain objects of different degrees of glory and beauty. So men in their present condition—with their natural wealth of physical, mental and moral endowment are glorious creatures, (Psa. cxxxix. 14); but *the Christian* in his final condition of glory will be as much more illustrious, as is one of the fixed stars than, (say) a small planet in the solar system.

Heb. xiii. 17. "They watch on behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account, that they may do this with joy, and not with grief (or groaning), for this (would be) unprofitable for you." "Not with grief." Often supposed to teach that unfaithful ministers will have less glory in a future state than others who were diligently concerned for the spiritual welfare of their flock.

This is, however, an erroneous interpretation; for,

1. It is evident that good ministers of Jesus Christ are exclusively contemplated; for they watch (not for your or their own *temporal advancement*, as wealth-worshippers, but) for your souls.

2. They do this in recognition of their responsibility to God. "As those that must give account." This does not mean after death, but in their approaches to God in prayer in this life.

3. A faithful pastor sometimes comes to God with joy, and blesses Him for the steadfastness and faith of his flock. Not unfrequently, however, when he tries to pray for his people, their apathy, luke-warmness and worldliness cause him to "groan" rather than to rejoice. This fact is the emphatic point of the passage.

Rev. iii. 11. "To the Angel of the Church in Philadelphia write.....Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown..... He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

"I am glad that God had seven thousand that did not bow the knee to Baal; but I'd rather have Elijah's little finger than the whole seven thousand. I wouldn't give much for seven thousand Christians in hiding. They will just barely get into heaven. They won't have any crown. See that 'no man take thy crown.'"—D. L. MOODY.

Whether this gentleman has ever come out boldly to declare that salvation is by sovereign and discriminating grace, and so risk his popularity, does not appear. There is little that is Elijah-like in giving crowded audiences Arminianism and other flesh-pleasing errors.

The text quoted is addressed to a Church, through its pastor. It is bidden to hold fast the doctrines and ordinances it had received—lest, if it yield to the seductions of a false teacher, its spirituality and power should be lost, and its very existence as a spiritual assembly cease.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS.

NOTE 7.—On this great and glorious truth, Strict and Particular Baptists are in accord with all Evangelical Christians. On some points, however, they differ among themselves; as, for example, whether the Resurrection of God's people will precede or follow the Millennium; whether the saints *will* or *will not* be summoned in their whole risen persons before the bar of God at the last day to be judged;* and in *what* the identity of the Resurrection body with the present one will consist.

THE MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN.

Some Strict and Particular Baptists have denied that we shall know one another in our future condition of blessedness—mainly on the ground of *difficulties* associated with this view of the subject.

1. The joy of Heaven (they contended) will be the vision of God, and near and dear fellowship with the Well-beloved. To see *His* face in righteousness will be fulness of joy—a joy incompatible with even the desire to renew the friendships of this life of struggle and sorrow.

2. It has been thought that the recognition of friends in heaven would be attended with more pain than pleasure. The eternal absence of some that were dear on earth would (it has been contended) cause continual anguish—while the disparity which time and change will have caused during the interval of the survivorship of the friend or relative who last died, will, it has been urged, effectually prevent any enjoyment in the resumption of intercourse hereafter. Our dear friend, W. H.,

*In his *Apples of Gold*, chapter v., Thomas Brooks, the Puritan, enquires *Whether in the great Day of Account, the sins of saints will be brought into the judgment of discussion and discovery or not?* and he establishes the negative by divers arguments.—NICHOL'S EDITION, vol. i., pages 220—224.

of Ipswich—who lost a beloved wife in her youth—was in the habit of saying, “What joy could it be to *her* to meet in her husband of years ago, a man of advanced age, the greater part of whose life had been passed apart from her, and in scenes and associations of which she knew nothing?”

These are samples of objections which have been raised.

The majority of thoughtful Strict and Particular Baptists would, we think, endorse the following “conversational observation” from the lips of the sainted John Stevens. MEMOIR, page 116.

“That we shall have a general knowledge of each other in the heavenly world, I firmly believe. Whether it will be connected with what occurred on earth I cannot tell. God certainly can retain so much in our remembrance as will be necessary to our felicity, and [cause us to] drop the rest.

“I believe that we shall know one another in the celestial world, without any of those natural feelings of which some talk; as of the delight which will fill their souls to meet their friends at the bar of God.

“I think that the only ground of our delight in the case, will be in seeing another object of mercy, after all its wanderings, brought home to God.

“Another says, ‘How shall I meet such an one on that day?’* I answer, ‘My friend, you need not fear; no past connections in this lower world will on that day afford either pleasure or pain, [to God’s people] and though we *may* review the past, it will be without that feeling which would cling to another because I loved him here; for I consider that the whole enjoyment of Heaven will be completely *spiritual*.

“When I look at my connections here, I remember that there was a time when such a person was nothing to me; then there came a time when that person comprehended all my pleasures; and afterwards that person was again nothing to me—he was gone—the relationship was dissolved.

“All these connections I see are transitory, are for a time only, and *then* for ever end.

“The relationship of heaven will be purely spiritual: Christ is the comprehending Head.”

*As in the case of individuals who were at bitter variance on earth—for instance, John Wesley and M. A. Toplady, whom the former so shamefully traduced in his dying hours. An extreme case is given in A MANUAL OF FAITH AND PRACTICE—namely, that of a murderer and his victim, supposing that both by grace enter heaven. Page 65.

The reader may with advantage consult Stock’s “HANDBOOK OF REVEALED THEOLOGY, First Edition, pages 249–256.

Texts to be studied: 2 Sam. xii. 23; Matt. viii. 11;* 1 Thess. ii. 19; 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14; Heb. xii. 22, 23.

Article XV. The Resurrection and the Final Condition of the Godly and the Ungodly. Page 8.

This Article re-affirms our belief in the certainty of the Resurrection of the Just, in order to place in juxta-position with it, our equally assured belief in the Resurrection of the Ungodly. Whether both will occur at the same time, or whether the saints will be raised at a period long prior to the Resurrection of the wicked, is, as we have stated, a moot point with us: though perhaps the *majority* of the Strict and Particular Baptists believe that all that have died, will be raised again simultaneously.

We are, however, lovingly content to let such questions be matters of private judgment, on which everyone should seek to be “fully persuaded in his own mind.”†

It suffices to say that we all believe that “in our flesh we shall see God,”—that the Resurrection will consummate our Regeneration: in other words, that glorification will do for our bodies what grace does for our souls, and that we shall be introduced to God in our whole and perfect personalities—body and soul being rendered meet for the eternal enjoyment of heaven—while our first sight of our risen and glorified Lord will transform us into His likeness:

*“Many shall come from the east and west, and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” John Hazelton was wont to dispute the popular interpretation of this verse—namely, that it referred to the future world of joy; and regarded it as teaching that sovereign grace will bring many Gentiles from all parts of the world into living association with Jews that have received Christ, in the one Church of the living God. Compare Gal. iii. 9.

†The above, like the question of the Restoration of the Jews, of what character will it be? or the Anglo-Israelitish Theory, should never be paraded by brethren whose convictions are emphatic, so as to interfere with the peace and harmony of our churches.

“Then shall these eyes, these very eyes,
The Risen Saviour see,
And all my rising bones shall say,
‘Lord, who is like to Thee?’”

The question, “How can these things be?” can be safely deferred till we reach yonder world of joy.

WILL THE RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS PRECEDE THAT OF THE UNGODLY?

NOTE 1. John v. 21-29.—The words “condemnation” in verse 24 and “damnation” in verse 29, should be read “judgment,” as they stand for the same term which is found in the original in verses 22 and 27. Note that our Lord here gives no hint of an interval between the Resurrection of the Just and the Unjust.*

NOTE 2.—The following passages are often quoted to prove that the bodies of the righteous will be raised at a period long prior to those of the ungodly. It is not the object of this book to disprove this idea; we, however, do submit that these particular passages do not teach the views so frequently derived from them.

1 Thess. iv. 16.—“The dead in Christ shall rise first.” Often quoted as if it meant that the godly dead will be raised before the ungodly—many insisting that a period of a thousand years will intervene between the two events. The Apostle, however, is not here contrasting the resurrection of the saints with that of sinners, He is solely insisting that those who are alive at the second Advent, will take no precedence above (“not prevent”—“in no wise precede”) those that have already died in the Faith. The dead in Christ will rise first—their souls will be re-united to their glorified bodies, and they will stand in their whole persons on the earth. *Then* (immediately after) all the godly, who are alive at that solemn time, will experience the change more fully spoken of in 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, and without dying, be transformed into the likeness of their Risen Lord. “So shall we”—namely the risen dead and the changed and glorified saints on earth—“ever be with the Lord.”

*Sufficient attention has not been paid to the fact that at the Second Advent there will be TWO CLASSES OF PEOPLE LIVING, (wholly exclusive of the dead who are to be raised) the Saints and the Ungodly. Neither of these will die the ordinary death of humankind. How few have for a moment considered the most true assertion of the “Apostles’ Creed”: Christ “ascended into heaven, from whence He shall come to judge the quick (the living) and the dead.”

Rev. vi. 9-11.—“I saw under the altar the souls (mark, not the glorified *bodies*) of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying. How long, O Master, holy and true, dost Thou not judge [us] and avenges our blood on them that dwell on the earth? and there was given unto each one of them a white robe; and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season until their fellow-servants also and (in the sense of “*even*”) their brethren who should be killed even as they, (referring not to the manner, but to the fact) should be fulfilled.”—REV. VER.

What was the locality of this vision?

Indisputably, *heaven*; which is contrasted with the earth in verse 10.

Whom did John behold in this vision?

The souls, or disembodied spirits, (not the whole glorified persons) of those who “*had been slain*” for their faithful testimony to “the word of God.”

In what position did he see them?

Under *the* altar, namely the Altar of burnt offering.

Can this be understood *literally*, namely, that John beheld a number of forms crouching beneath the brazen Altar?

Certainly not. There was no space under this altar, and the thought would be grotesque and absurd.

What, then, is the idea thus figuratively expressed?

Two thoughts are conveyed by the word altar—*sacrifice* and *safety*. The latter is probably designed here. A man’s life could not be taken while he clung to the altar, which was a place of sanctuary or refuge. See Ex. xxi. 14 (where note that the exception proves the rule); 1 Kings i. 50; 1 Kings ii. 23.

The words, “under the altar,” therefore, mean that these martyrs—though they had been killed on earth—were, in their disembodied condition, absolutely secure in the Master’s presence. They did not cling to the “horns of the altar,” but were “under” it—wholly and effectually covered or protected by it.

What was their petition to God?

“How long, O Master, holy and true, dost Thou not judge [us] (that is declare Thine own estimate of us, in the sense of Psalms xxvi. 1; xxxv. 24; and xliii. 1), and avenges our blood on them that dwell on the earth” (that is, inflict judicial punishment on these persons.)

How was their petition answered?

“White robes were given them.” “White” stands for

purity, innocence, or righteousness; and the phrase means that their innocence, though they had been put to an ignominious death, would shortly be confessed by all.*

What was added?

They were enjoined to "rest"—namely to abide God's time (Psa. xxxvii. 7) "for a little season," until another persecution should take place in which other Christians would be killed as they had been.

Rev. xx. 4.—[I saw] "The souls of them who had been beheaded (slain with an axe—a strictly Roman method of execution) for the witness of Jesus (for their testimony to Jesus) and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the Beast (given their allegiance to the Religio-political tyrant of chapters xiii. and xix. 19 and 20) neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads (namely, yielded him *open* homage) nor in their hands (namely, deferred *secretly* to his authority) and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not (both Dean Alford and Dr. Scrivener give *zad*, which is simply 'to live' in both instances) until the thousand years were finished" (or completed.)

The persons seen in this vision are unquestionably the same as those whom John beheld in chapter vi. 9—11, with the addition of those who it was *there* predicted should be afterwards slain for the Faith.

The two classes are therefore clearly indicated.

First Class.—"I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the word of God," etc.

Second Class—martyred at a later period [and also of those] "who had not worshipped the beast," etc.†

Whom, then, did the holy seer behold in Rev. xx. 4—6?

*In the language of prophecy, the *past* tense is often used for the future, when the predicted event is shortly to occur. The persecutors of these martyrs were *living*, and their sin was to be exposed and punished before their death.

†In the *first* vision, Rev. v. 10, the Apostle hears these "souls" *beseeking* to have their characters vindicated, and their persecutions avenged. In the *second*, Rev. xx. 4, he beholds them *get* the judgment for which they had supplicated. In the *first* their petition is *presented*; in the *second* it is *granted*. This affords a clue to the meaning of the latter passage. The living and reigning" is not living literally on earth in pomp and splendour, but receiving judgment and avengement—namely, the righteousness of the cause for which they suffered being made manifest.

The souls, or disembodied spirits of the persons who had thus suffered—not, as Millenarians assert, the whole elect church from the commencement of time. The idea that the expression includes all saints is wholly unfounded. A limited company is clearly designed.

What is stated of these martyrs?

That though their souls were in heaven, they were to "live" with Christ "a thousand years."

Does this mean that their *bodies* were to be raised again, and that they were to *live*, in their whole persons, on the earth during this period?

No. The text furnishes no foundation for this idea.

In what sense, then, is the word "live" to be here understood?

Perhaps, in the *figurative* sense, of their memories being regarded with love and reverence. Bunyan *lives* in his "Pilgrim's Progress;" Cromwell *lives*—though vilified for generations; Spurgeon *lives* in his sermons, which are scattered broadcast, and in his beneficent institutions. The men in question were to *live*, in that the *truths* for which they suffered would be universally respected and received.

It may again mean that they are to *live*—not simply to exist—but to enjoy their holy lives in a special and peculiar way with Christ, with whom they are to reign.

Does not this mean that the Saviour is to return to the earth before this, and that these holy persons are to live and reign here with Him?

Indisputably, no; since He is not said to come and reign with them: but they are said to live and reign with Him.

Are these views supported by respectable and spiritually-minded scholars?

Yes. Rev. Henry Gauntlett, (whose work on the Revelation is of the highest merit,) Albert Barnes, and the Bishop of Ripon, Rev. W. Boyd Carpenter, D.D., in his Exposition of the Revelation in the "New Testament Commentary for English Readers,"* regard it in this light. Both the latter give most scholarly and substantial reasons for the opinion which they advance.

What is further said of the "souls" which John saw in this vision?

That they were to "reign" as well as "live" with Christ.

What is the meaning?

*This may be had separately under the title of "The Commentary for Schools—The Revelation," Cassell & Co. Gauntlett and Barnes may be procured second-hand for a few pence.

That, though dead, the influence of the truths for which they had suffered should be paramount on the earth for the period intended.

But should we not regard the word as meaning that they were, in their glorified persons, to rule in visible splendour in a Palace which was to be erected on earth?

No. They were to reign as Christ is now said to reign—in Providence, and over the consciences and hearts of spiritual men.*

For how long were these "souls" to "live" and "reign with Christ"—that is, to exercise the same spiritual influence on earth as Christ is now exercising?

A thousand years.

Is this to be understood literally?

No. It would do violence to the whole book of Revelation so to interpret it. This wonderful portion of the Word of God throughout expresses truths and facts in symbolical terms. No one supposes that John beheld an actual Lamb opening the seals of a literal book (chap. vi. 1); or that a hundred and forty-four thousand of the seed of Abraham, numerically and exactly, will be in heaven (chap. vii. 4); or that he saw a real wild beast rising up out of the literal sea, (chap. xiii. 1.) Expositors of every school endeavour to assign to such expres-

*Millennarians assert that the reign of Christ is *future*; the Bible speaks of it as present. "He must reign"—that is, continue to reign, as He is now doing (*dei gar auton basileuein*,—for it is of necessity that He should continue uninterruptibly to reign) "until He hath put all enemies under His feet." This is directly contrary to the theory that he will not commence to reign before the (so-called) Millennium, at the commencement of which He will vanquish His foes.

The Millennarian error consists in confounding the words "reside" and "reign." The monarch of England *resides* in Great Britain, but *reigns* in India as well. Christ, in His whole glorified person *resides* in heaven, but His *reign* is *universal* in the whole creation, and *special* over His church.

The Millennarian's favourite expression, "the future personal reign of Jesus Christ" involves an absurdity. A monarch is a person. Reigning is a personal act. If the phrase "a personal reign" were permissible, there would be such a thing as "an *impersonal* reign."

The Lord Jesus indeed reigns in the "Holy Church throughout the world" by His Divine Viceroy, the Holy Spirit, but might and majesty centre in Him, in whom "all fulness dwells." He ever reigns *personally*.

sions the meaning which the figures naturally suggest. In harmony with this principle, definite numbers, when very large, stand for indefinite ones. "A thousand years," therefore, means a very long period, just as the hundred and forty-four thousand in chapter xiv. 1 (who are probably not the same persons as those referred to in chapter vii. 4) mean an indescribably numerous company.

Is there not another cogent reason why their reigning with Christ cannot be understood literally?

Yes. Of these "souls" (verse 4) it is said that "they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years," (verse 6.) Now, they could not, in their disembodied condition, literally act as "priests." We are therefore compelled to understand this expression to mean that these holy beings will be engaged in worship, between which and the functions of a priest some striking points of resemblance may be traced; and we are sure that if their priesthood was purely symbolical, their reigning with Christ must be so also.

What is this revival of the truth, forgotten during the tyrannical reign of the "beast" (Pagan Rome) and the "false prophet" (Papal Rome) entitled?

The "first resurrection."

But does this not mean the raising of the *bodies* of some of the human race prior to the rest of the dead?

No. In harmony with the rest of this marvellous book, this expression must be interpreted *figuratively** to mean that there would be a great increase of truth-loving men before the final end of all things below.

That the resurrection of the bodies of the persons in question is not intended, is clear from the fact that they are spoken of as "souls" throughout, and that the verb describing what they will experience is not *ana-zao*, to live *again*, but *zao*, which means to live, and here, as has been observed, to live in the highest sense.

Can we, then, be certain as to the interpretation of the passage?

"For my part," says Matthew Pool, "I freely confess that I do not understand this and the next two verses, nor shall I be positive as to any sense of them:" nor have the researches of recent commentators availed to elucidate them. It is easy to show what they do *not* mean; but most difficult to demonstrate exactly what they do.

With what object, then, have these remarks been introduced?

*Dr. Gauntlett's exposition, and that of Barnes, are worthy of the closest attention.

As this is the sole passage on which the Millennial theory rests, it has been sought to show that this pernicious idea has no Scriptural authority, and particularly that these verses do not teach that there will be an interval of a thousand years between the Resurrection of the just and that of the unjust.

MILLENNARIANISM A DANGEROUS ERROR.

Is it permissible to call Millennialism a "pernicious" opinion?

If contrary to the word of God, it indisputably is so, though some deem it of little practical importance whether a Christian holds it or not. A doctrine which has in countless instances unsettled Churches, inflated the pride of believers, and caused them to separate themselves from those with whom they were in holy and happy fellowship ought, however, to be withstood. William Palmer in his "Plain Papers on the Millennium," and his "Principles of Scripture Interpretation," fully substantiates this, and exhibits the serious consequences to which it has led. "All truths," he contends, "are related, connected, and of proportionate correspondence, and all are, therefore, more or less affected by the antagonism of error. Touch but one of its filaments, and the vibration is felt throughout the whole system," etc.

FUTURE JUDGMENT.

NOTE 2.—It is commonly believed by Strict and Particular Baptists that, at the end of the world, after the Resurrection, all that have ever lived, or will yet live—including both Christians and the world—will, at one and the same time, be tried in their whole persons before the throne of God, there to be acquitted or condemned. This is ordinarily styled the General Judgment: Matt. xxv. 31—46; Acts xvii. 31; Rom. xiv. 10—12; 2 Cor. v. 10; Heb. ix. 27; and Rev. xx. 12, 13. To these might be added 1 Cor. v. 5, in which an excommunicated Christian is said to be delivered "unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord;" 2 Tim. i. 18, where Paul prays for his deceased friend Onesiphorus, "the Lord will grant to him to find mercy from the Lord in that day;" 1 Cor. iii. 13, Paul's assurance that the true character and final results of evangelical activity will at a future period be made manifest, "for the day shall declare" (them); 1 Thess. ii. 19, his assertion that the Thessalonian believers will be his hope, joy, and crown of rejoicing "in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming;" his charging Timothy to preach the word fully and faithfully, "because the Lord Jesus Christ will judge the quick and the

dead at His appearing and His kingdom;" and 2 Tim. iv. 8, his recorded expectation that the Lord, the righteous judge would give him "the crown of righteousness in that day," &c, (2 Tim. iv. 8.)

Some weight should be, moreover, attached to the *consensus* of Christians in all ages as expressed in the hymns they loved—from the *Dies Iræ* (The Day of Wrath) of the early church—to the many compositions on the Day of Judgment which are popular at the present time.

The writer, who, perhaps, stands almost alone, is, notwithstanding, persuaded that this view is not only erroneous but contradictory to many plain Scriptures. John v. 24, "He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath eternal life and cometh not (a present tense with a future force) into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life," John v. 28, 29. "All that are in their graves shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment;" John iii. 18, "He that believeth on Him is not judged," (that is shall never be, a present with a future force.)" Again, so far from our being in suspense until "the day of the judgment" is over, we shall then have boldness. Christ has been judged, condemned, and punished for us, and is now beyond the possibility of being again arraigned as our Surety; and "as He is, so are we in this world," (1 John, iv. 17.) God's love has saved us the prospect of the terrors of a future trial, and infused a responsive love into our hearts, which knows no fear. Surely these passages assert or imply what is contrary to the popular doctrine of a general Judgment. See Note to page 105.

It cannot, however, be denied that the passages which bear on this subject seem contradictory. If these can be reduced to harmony, the benefit will be great. It is, therefore, suggested that these do not all, as is popularly supposed, refer to the same event—and that they may be classified under different heads.

I. THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SAINTS BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST IMMEDIATELY AFTER DEATH.

NOTE 3.—Rom. xiv. 10, 12, "We shall all stand before the Judgment seat (*bēma*) of Christ (or God.) "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God;" 2 Cor. v. 9—11, "We also

*The student would do well to study the verb *krino*, I judge, and its correlative noun *krisis*, judgment, in contrast with the verb *kata-krino*, I give judgment against or condemn, and its correlative nouns *katakrisis*, the act of condemning, and *katakrima*, an adverse judgment or condemnation.

make it our aim, whether at home, (in Paradise with Christ) or absent (on earth in the body) to be well-pleasing unto Him, for we must all be made manifest before the Judgment-seat (*bēma*) of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The persons here intended are indisputably Christians, whom Paul was exclusively addressing.

It has been assumed that the Judgment-seat (*bēma*) of Christ is identical with the "Great white throne" (*megas leukos thronos*) of Rev. xx. 11.

The writer would shrink from founding a doctrine on a grammaticism or purely verbal distinction, yet his belief in plenary inspiration has led him to a close and critical examination of the "words" which the Holy Ghost taught the writers of the Bible to use, (1 Cor. ii. 13.) In the present case two distinct terms are employed, and two ideas are surely intended. A throne is the official seat of the highest person in a state, and is only occupied on occasions of peculiar importance. Hence the word is referred to God as the supreme Governor of the universe, and to Christ as the final Judge of men, (Matt. xxv. 31; Rev. xx. 11.) A judgment-seat (*bēma*) was the official seat of a subsidiary governor or magistrate. The term was also applied to a tribune or platform, from which public speeches were delivered, and also to the dais or raised chair on which the umpire of a race or contest sat to decide who were the victors, and to announce their names, and to present their rewards. In this sense it is probably to be understood here. Christ will occupy the *Bēma* or Judgment-seat—not as a penal Judge to consign men to heaven or hell, but as the authoritative and final Judge of the conduct of His people while here below,

When will Christians thus be made manifest before Christ's *Bēma* or Judgment-seat? The writer emphatically rejects the idea of the Plymouth Brethren* that it will not be till after the Resurrection. He conceives it to be incongruous to suppose that the blessed dead in Paradise have this solemn investigation before them, or to think that they can be calmly and supremely happy with Christ, while anticipating that they must at some

*While making this disclaimer, the writer would express his indebtedness to many of the "Brethren" publications on this subject. Their views are, however, so intermixed with their doctrines of the Secret Rapture of the Church (in support of which not one text has ever been advanced),—the Resurrection of the pious dead before that of the ungodly (which we have questioned on page 108), the Millennial reign of Christ, &c., as to render their literature wholly untrustworthy.

future period be publicly arraigned before His tribunal to be "made manifest" and to "receive the things done in the body"—to hear His formal and final estimate of the moral and spiritual quality of their actions when on earth.

Without dogmatizing, he suggests that Christians will be called to give this account immediately after death. In texts referring in general terms to the decease of men, the exodus of the soul from the body, and its reception into the unseen world, it is said that "The spirit shall return to God who gave it," (Ecc. xii. 7.) "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this [*cometh*—which may be omitted] [a] judgment," not the judgment, Heb. ix. 27, Rev. Ver. This judgment which is to come to men as men, after death, will vary. Sinners will "fall into the hands of the living God;" and the judgment will be characterised by His "fiery indignation," (Heb. x. 26, 31); while saints will be "received" kindly by the Lord Jesus, (Acts vii. 59). Clearly a judgment, though not the great sessional Judgment before "the great white throne," awaits all men immediately after their decease.

The purpose for which the saints are, after death, to be called to stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ is fully stated. It is not to decide whether they are saved or not. It is not to determine the degree of glory with which each will be invested. (See page 99.) It is, however, manifestation, for we "must all" then "be made manifest"—or exhibited in full light. Our personal right—through boundless grace—to be there will not be challenged, but our actions will be examined, and receive commendation or censure. 2 Cor. v. 10: "Each one will receive the things done in the body according to what he hath done, whether it," not, so to speak, the actions considered generally, but each one—for the singular number is used—whether it, (after the closest and most impartial scrutiny), prove to have been good or bad. Observe, the bad actions of unsaved men, contrasted with the good actions of saved men are not in question; but the acts of every saved man, from his conversion to his death, which will be examined and estimated.

Our sins, after our call by grace, if honestly and earnestly judged, confessed, and abandoned, will probably not be brought forward at this solemn time. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John i. 9, and, *perhaps*, 1 Cor. xi. 31.

Many undoubted Christians, however, did things that were unquestionably wrong, and never owned or made reparation for them.

Whether Calvin, in spite of all that has been written, was absolutely blameless in the matter of Servetus, may be questioned.