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ART. I.—*Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. Charles Simeon, M. A., late Senior Fellow of King's College, and Minister of Trinity Church, Cambridge*, with a selection from his writings and correspondence; edited by the Rev. William Carus, M. A., Fellow and Senior Dean of Trinity College, and Minister of Trinity Church, Cambridge. The American edition edited by the Right Rev. Charles P. McIlvaine, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, for the Diocese of Ohio. New York, Robert Carter, 58 Canal street: Pittsburg, 56 Market street.

THE Rev. Charles Simeon was a burning and a shining light in the English church in his day. Although there were among his contemporaries, men of greater genius and greater learning, yet it may reasonably be doubted, whether any individual, during the period of his ministry, left so extensive and so deep an impression on the public mind, as Mr. Simeon. In our opinion, evangelical religion, in the Church of England, owes more to his exertions, under the blessing of God, than to the labours of any one man. The reader, however, will be better able to form a

a flaw, but neither can our adversaries do so upon their part. Until the Reformation, the two lines are coincident, and since that time, the continuation of the series of Presbyters, in Scotland, England, Ireland, and America, is as certain and notorious as that of Bishops. Supposing, then, as we of course do, that the rank, which we have claimed for Presbyters, is justly due to them, it follows necessarily, that no objection to the validity of Presbyterian orders can be founded on the want of apostolical succession; partly because it is not absolutely necessary, partly because we are as really possessed of it as any other ministry or church whatever. When any urge this argument against our ministrations, they assume two facts, both essential to the truth of their conclusion; first, the fact that such succession is of absolute necessity, and secondly the fact that they alone possess it. If either of these assumptions is unfounded, it destroys the argument; for if succession is not necessary, it matters little who has or has it not; and if on the other hand we have as much of it as our opponents, they can have no pretext for impugning the validity of our ministrations. By disproving either of these two positions, the conclusion is destroyed. By disproving both, it is doubly destroyed, "twice dead, plucked up by the roots."

ART. V.—*Christ's Second Coming: will it be Pre-Millennial?*
By the Rev. David Brown, A. M., Minister of St. James' Free Church, Glasgow. Edinburgh: 1846. 12mo. pp. 386.

As early as the second century, there seems to have been a general expectation in the church, that Christ would return to the earth, and spend a thousand years with his disciples. The current notion of the happiness to be enjoyed throughout this period became gradually more and more debased, until the doctrine was itself rejected by more spiritual Christians, and by some of them along with it the book of Revelation, on a single obscure passage in which the chiliastic doctrine rested. After the lapse of ages, during which it seemed to be forgotten, a new interpretation of the Apocalyptic *millennium* became current. This supposed the *terminus a quo* to be the institution of the

Christian church, and the end of the world coincident with that of the tenth century. When the general agitation, which arose at first from this belief, had been allayed by the arrival of the dreaded epoch, the millennium again ceased to be a general subject of attention till the Reformation. The Reformers seem to have bestowed little thought upon it; but towards the close of the sixteenth century, it became a favourite theme of disquisition. Some agreed that the millennium was past, but differed as to the time when. This general doctrine was maintained by Usher in his work *De Ecclesia*. But a new face was put upon the controversy by the *Clavis Apocalyptica* of Joseph Mede, who held the millennium and the day of judgment to be one and the same period, during which the church is to be freed from all existing evils, and the Jews to be converted as a nation, in a manner similar to Paul's conversion and prefigured by it. It now became the common doctrine of interpreters, that the millennium was still future, and after the end of the seventeenth century, that it should precede Christ's second coming. To this anticipated period the descriptions of the future glory of the church in the Old Testament were now applied without hesitation, and the name *millennium*, thus understood, became universally familiar. When revivals of religion or awakenings became frequent, they were looked upon as signs of the approaching millennium, and enthusiasts indulged their imaginations freely in defining the precise time when it was to open.

Since the commencement of the present century the doctrine has again assumed a new form or rather has resumed an ancient one in which it now extensively prevails both in Britain and America. This is the pre-millennial theory, which makes the thousand years of the Apocalypse the period of Christ's personal reign at Jerusalem, and also teaches that the dead saints will then be raised and the living transfigured, while the wicked will remain in the grave until the thousand years are past. Some of the advocates of this opinion, not content with the period of a thousand ordinary years, enlarge it to 365,000, by applying the principle of a year for a day. This pre-millennial theory has led to a more extensive study of the prophecies in general, and especially of the Apocalypse, with many varying and strange results.

These speculations have especially prevailed among the

evangelical members of the Scotch and English Churches. Some, however, are beginning to recede from the ground which they once occupied. Among these is the author of the work before us, who has been reproached by his opponents, as "having once held the views whose untenableness he has endeavoured to show." But this we look upon as an advantage, since it gives him the authority of one who has attentively examined both sides of the question with the zeal of a believer, yet without the rancour of a renegade.

Mr. Brown begins by stating what is common to the parties. This is the more important because even Mr. Bickersteth, in his preface to a recent course of pre-millennial lectures by twelve clergymen of the Church of England, represents it as the common but erroneous doctrine, that the second coming of Christ will be a spiritual coming in the hearts of his people; a statement contradictory, not only to notorious fact, but to his own assertion, in his work on Prophecy, that "the great points of controversy among Christians are not with regard to the actual and personal coming of Christ, since all who believe the Bible believe that he will thus come."

As to the final destiny of the present physical system, there is no agreement upon either side. Some pre-millennarians believe, that the saints are to dwell forever in the "new heavens and new earth," to be formed out of the materials now existing. Others hold, that after the millennium, Christ and his people will forsake this world forever. And the same diversity is found in the opinions of the adverse party, as our author shows by a reference to particular discourses on the subject.

Mr. Brown admits the merit of the pre-millennial writers in awakening the attention of the church to Christ's second coming, which he holds to be the pole-star of the church, and shows to be continually held up to our view in scripture as an object of desire and hope, with which the entrance of believers at their death into a state of blessedness is never put in competition. To the arguments founded on expressions in the word of God which seem to imply that the second advent is at hand, our author opposes the irrefragable fact, that ages have elapsed since this conclusion was first drawn from the very same expressions. It is painful to observe that some of the pre-millennarian writers, in their anxiety to escape this difficulty, seem inclined to think

that the apostles were themselves deceived, a supposition monstrous in itself and irreconcilable with Paul's declarations to the Thessalonians.

Mr. Brown's first positive argument against the pre-millennial theory is drawn from the plainly revealed fact, that when Christ comes, all the redeemed will be partakers in that glorious manifestation. What then will be the condition and character of the other inhabitants of the earth during the millennium? The conclusion seems to be inevitable, that there will not be one righteous person or believer among them for successive ages. Some extreme writers admit the truth of this conclusion, but maintain, that the rest of mankind will be in a state resembling that of Adam before the fall, i. e. free from original corruption. A part of these, being left to the freedom of their own will, are to fall, as Adam fell, while the rest, though free from sin, and needing no redemption, are to be united to Christ and thus preserved from falling. This may serve as a sample of the follies into which a fanatical attachment to this dogma has betrayed some recent writers calling themselves orthodox and evangelical. It is not however an opinion generally held by pre-millennial writers, some of the most eminent of whom have undertaken to refute it, but without escaping from the pressure of the difficulty, to remove which this absurd scheme was invented.

That Christ, at his appearing, will have all his chosen people with him, they cannot deny. Indeed, in the "Lectures of Twelve Ministers of the Church of England," the latest work which has been published on the subject, they avow this doctrine in the most positive and emphatical language. The very first lecture in this volume, by the Rev. E. Auriol, maintains, in the most explicit terms, that the church which Christ will present without spot, at his second coming, "is composed of all those who have been given to him from eternity, by the Father." It comprises "all those for whom Christ in a special manner gave himself." In like manner, the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw asks, "What Church? It is all those who have been chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world." "It is every one of those who is, or shall be born of the Spirit, and made new creatures, in Christ Jesus. Till all whom the Father hath chosen in Christ, out of mankind, are born again, and justified, the church will not be complete." All this is very correct. But if the church of

Christ be complete at the time of the second advent, it can admit of no additions; and the question returns, what will be the character and condition of the people on the earth, during the millennium, over whom Christ and his saints are to reign? If not Christians, and not restored to original purity, then they must all be unregenerate sinners; and what sort of a millennium, and what sort of a kingdom would that be?

By most pre-millennialists, this difficulty is scarcely noticed, and when noticed little effort is made to solve it. But there is one distinguished writer, the Rev. H. Macneile, who does attempt to grapple with this objection. He is, however, under the necessity of denying, that all the elected church of Christ will be with him, at his advent. And he argues forcibly, that the nation of the Jews, whose conversion he places after the advent, are a part of the redeemed and sanctified church; and he shows very clearly that Christian privileges and blessings are promised to the Gentiles in the millennium. This is perfectly scriptural. "But unfortunately," says our author, "his opponents can neutralize him, on his own principles, with a proposition equally scriptural with his, namely, that all that are Christ's shall appear with him at his coming, therefore, the nations being on the earth after his coming will *not* be in a Christian state."

Our author next considers the pre-millennial doctrine in relation to the mediatorial offices of Christ, and shows that these offices, together with the means of grace now in use, by divine appointment, must cease at the second coming of our Lord. It follows, as an inference from what was before proved, namely, that the number of the elect will be complete, and all gathered together, at the second advent; that there will be no room for the further exercise of Christ's mediatorial offices in the salvation of lost sinners. But the author does not rest his argument, derived from this topic, on the truth already established, which some pre-millennialists deny; but he adduces numerous texts of scripture, all which refer to the second advent, as the termination of the present dispensation; and he introduces quotations from their own ablest writers, in which they acknowledge and assert, that the sacred scriptures, as they now exist, will be by no means adapted to the state of things in the millennial state. But it is by the word and sacraments that Christ exercises his offices of prophet, priest, and king, for the salvation of his people; and therefore

when these ordinances cease, his mediatorial work must be at an end. And as the means of executing the prophetic office, as now enjoyed by the church, must cease, at the time of Christ's second coming; so his acting as the great High Priest of his people, by presenting the merit of his sacrifice on the cross, when he shall leave the highest heavens, where he now appears before God as an advocate, and ever lives to make intercession for us. The most holy place, or holy of holies, in the tabernacle and temple, was the only place where the High Priest could sprinkle the blood of the sin offering for all the congregation, on the great day of atonement. Now the apostle Paul teaches most clearly that this place was the type of the highest heavens, into which Christ entered, and this whole transaction on that sacred and memorable day, prefigured the exercise of the Mediator's sacerdotal office, by presenting before the mercy-seat on high, the blood of his atoning sacrifice. Evidently, therefore, when Christ shall leave his throne in the heavens, and take up his abode upon earth, his intercessions will cease; and how then can any more sinners be saved, as his ability to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, is made to depend on his ever living to make intercession for them.

The argument from the kingly office is drawn out by our author, to a very great length, so as to fill up one half of the volume. He enters into a long discussion respecting what is meant in the New Testament by the phrase "the kingdom of God," and maintains, that this kingdom had its commencement with the institution of the Christian Church; whereas, the pre-millennialists maintain, that that kingdom is still future, and will not be set up until Christ shall come the second time; when he will assume the reins of universal government, and will sit on the throne of his father David, according to the prophecies. They lay much stress upon Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream; where after describing the rise of four successive kingdoms, it is said, "In the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," &c.

As our space is limited, we are under the necessity of passing over the points brought under discussion in this argument, from the regal office of the Mediator. We would remark, however, that a very undue proportion of the book is, in our opinion, devoted to the consideration of this point. The remaining argu-

ments against the pre-millennial scheme, are in our judgment, much stronger, than this on which so much labour has been bestowed.

The next argument, of the book under review, is derived from a consideration of the pre-millennial scheme, in relation to the scriptural doctrine of the resurrection. Their opinion is, that when Christ comes, the saints who are dead shall rise, and those who are alive on the earth shall be changed; but that the wicked will not be raised until after the millennium. "But how," you will ask, "do they dispose of another class of saints, unprovided for by the above scheme; the myriads of shining believers who are to flourish on the earth during the thousand years; and who by the scheme in question, are neither privileged to appear with Christ at the *beginning*, nor doomed to rise with the wicked at the *end* of the millennium? The answer to this question will startle the reader, if he happens not to be well read in the changes which this unsteady scheme has, from time to time, undergone, and if he be not acquainted with its latest modifications. The fact is the system is nowhere more at fault than here. It has positively got no scripture on the subject. For having exhausted all that scripture says about saints raised, or saints changed upon those that lived *before* the millennium, they find it silent, of course, about the raising or changing of the vast numbers they have to dispose of *after* the millennium. What do they do with them then? For the most part, the subject is avoided, those however, who grapple with it, are hurried into such revolting speculations, as I believe, will open many an eye to the true nature of the whole scheme."

His first statement is taken from a lecture of Mr. Bickersteth, in a recent volume, before referred to. "If," says he, "the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked, and the general judgment of all men, took place at one time, and in the same day, none would, none could be left, *as the heads and parents of a redeemed people on earth*, (that is, after the general judgment). But the holy scriptures reveal to us a progress in judgment, and that the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked are clearly distinct in time. This is the first resurrection of the saints, at the commencement of the millennium; and after the thousand years, the rest of the dead (the wicked) live and are judged. . . . At the close of the millennium, there is a last open apostasy of

the wicked, who during the thousand years had yielded only a feigned obedience. This finally separates all the believers, and removes them from the earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. The apostates are first slain by fire, and afterwards raised with the rest of the wicked dead for judgment. BUT NO CHANGE IS MENTIONED AS THUS PASSING ON THE JEWISH NATION, OR ON THE LIVING RIGHTEOUS, WHO CONTINUE FAITHFUL TO GOD, AS IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE SAINTS BEFORE THE MILLENNIUM. The object of the rebellion, to overthrow the camp of the saints and the beloved city, fails of its design. God protects them. The living righteous then after *the millennium* may continue A SEED TO SERVE GOD, and in successive generations, be TRAINED UP FOR HEAVENLY GLORY."

There is then to be no simultaneous change of those myriads of believers who have lived during the millennium, as of those who lived before the millennium. What then becomes of them? One by one, through successive generations, they get glorified—we are not told how, or on what principle—but *the race of them never dies out*; they live on and propagate their kind, to all eternity; "they continue a seed to serve God." These are the remarks of our author on Bickersteth's sentiments. But, in addition we may ask, whether the saints who shall be born and converted during the millennium, will die as saints did before the millennium, and be subject to the same infirmities, temptations, and afflictions? If so, what a strange incongruous state of society will the earth exhibit, in the days of the millennium. First, we have Christ, the Lord of heaven, keeping his court at Jerusalem, surrounded by all the pious who lived from the beginning of the world until the millennium, with incorruptible, immortal, spiritual and glorious bodies; and, of course, the holy angels will also be present to worship their king. Whether these celestial beings will need houses or any other earthly accommodation, we are not informed. But then, on the other hand, we have a succession of believers dwelling in mortal bodies, and dying as at present. Now what sort of society or intercourse will there be, or can there be, between those two classes of saints? Or can there be any communion between them? But this is not all. Mr. Bickersteth startles us with the information, that during the millennium, when we supposed there would be nothing but righteousness and peace, there will exist a body of wicked men,

who, during the thousand years, *yield a feigned obedience*, and who at last openly apostatize. We suppose, that he refers to the rebel armies of Gog and Magog, who, after the millennium, are to surround the camp of the saints; their number, according to the prophecy, will be exceeding great—even “*as the sand on the sea shore.*” Rev. xx. 2.

It is alleged, that the earth will undergo a great change before the millennium, and be so renovated, that it will be a suitable and glorious habitation for Christ and his saints. This theory might be received, if none were to inhabit the new earth but the risen, glorified saints; but the same habitation would not be suitable for those saints still inhabiting frail, dying bodies. These must still cultivate the ground, and feed upon its fruits. And as to the company of hypocrites, mentioned above, surely, they cannot have a part in “the new heavens, and in the new earth.” These are only a few of the incongruities of the modern pre-millennial scheme; they multiply on us, the more attentively we examine the system.

Now let it be considered, that this whole theory of a first and second resurrection rests on a literal interpretation of a passage in the twentieth chapter of the book of Revelation. No one, however rigid a literalist, would think of interpreting all the parts of this obscure prophecy in a literal manner. We are of opinion, that the key to unlock this sacred deposit of God's mysteries, has not yet been discovered. When we consider how many men of eminent learning have spent years in the laborious investigation of the Apocalypse, and yet, that there is a wide diversity in the interpretations of the whole of the commentators, can it be wise to found so important a doctrine on the literal interpretation of an insulated passage? But again, if we adhere to the letter of the passage in question, it will not sustain the doctrine derived from it. It is not said, in this passage, that all the saints shall have a part in the first resurrection; but only the martyrs—“The souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark in their foreheads, nor in their hands.” Even if we suppose the latter part of the description refers to other saints besides martyrs, still it refers only to such as lived after the rise of the apocalyptic beast.

The risen martyrs are to reign with Christ a thousand years; but the text says not where; neither is any mention made of their bodies. It is alleged, that if the resurrection of the body is meant in the latter part of the passage, then according to all just rules of interpretation, the resurrection mentioned in the first part, should be referred to the body. To which we answer, that there is no necessity which obliges us to consider the resurrection of the "rest of the dead" as being a literal resurrection, any more than the resurrection of the martyrs, in the first. When we read of the death and resurrection of the Two Witnesses, we do not understand a literal death and resurrection; and we are under no greater necessity of interpreting this passage literally; especially, when many things in the context cannot be so interpreted. Bishop Newton says, "We should be cautious and tender of making the first resurrection an allegory, lest others should reduce the second to an allegory too." The answer to this by Fraser of Kirkhill, is sensible and pointed. "The scriptures" says he, "frequently mention the second or new birth: the first is that of the body; is it necessary that the second should be so too?"

The next argument which Mr. Brown brings forward in opposition to the pre-millennial scheme, is taken from the nature and circumstances of the general judgment, as exhibited in the Holy Scriptures. This grand and awful transaction is constantly represented as having relation to all men, and to occur at the same time to the righteous and the wicked. It is, therefore, called "a day," "the day of the Lord," "the day of judgment," "the judgment of the great day," &c. In the xxv. chapter of Matthew, Christ himself says, "when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered ALL NATIONS," &c. And the passage in this very chapter, on which the literalists lay so much stress, ought to satisfy them, that all men will be collected together at the day of judgment. "And I saw a great white throne, and I saw the dead small and great stand before God," &c. The attempts to do away the force of these testimonies, have led to such distorted and perverted interpretations as furnish a strong proof, that a scheme requiring such methods of support, cannot be founded in truth. For example, in one of the series of "Lectures, by Ministers of the Church

of England," in commenting on the xxv. chapter of Matt. says, by all nations should be understood "all Gentiles"—and the question, "when saw we thee an hungered," &c. is one of ignorance, asking information. Those, therefore, addressed, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you," are not Christians, but persons, who had no knowledge of Christianity!

We come now to the closing argument of our author, which relates to the general conflagration of the earth. On this subject, he says, "there is probably, nothing in scripture, so hard to bend to the pre-millennial doctrine, as that which relates to the conflagration and its issues." And then he cites 2 Pet. iii. 7—10, "But the heavens and the earth which are now, are kept in store reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," &c. The difficulty in this scheme is, that it supposes the earth to remain during the millennium; whereas, this passage of Peter represents it as utterly destroyed by the general conflagration. To avoid the difficulty, some recent writers are for putting off the conflagration, until after the millennium. But this will not do; for the apostle connects it with the second coming of Christ. "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and the works that are therein shall be burned up." They allege that this day is one of a thousand years, and the conflagration may be as well at the end, as the beginning. Others suppose that the conflagration will not render the earth unfit for habitation; but what becomes of the inhabitants during the conflagration? The fire may indeed refine the earth, but it will be the "perdition of ungodly men." Mr. Bickersteth and Mr. Brooks appear to be much perplexed to reconcile the predicted conflagration with their pre-millennial scheme.

At first view, it might seem, that the pre-millennial doctrine was at least perfectly harmless; for what injury can it be to any one, to expect the coming of Christ soon; or to believe, that for any thing which we know, he may make his glorious appearance any day. Certainly, such a belief and expectation will have a tendency to withdraw those who entertain them from a too ardent pursuit of the objects of time and sense; and from the prominence given to the second advent, in the sa-

cred scriptures, it would seem, that it was the intention of the Holy Spirit to have the minds of Christians constantly occupied with this subject.

All this is very plausible; but what, in fact, has been the experience of the church on this subject? It cannot be denied, that the expectation of the near approach of the second advent has given rise, in different ages, to much enthusiasm and wild fanaticism, and in our own age, who has not heard of the lamentable excesses produced by Irvingism and Millerism? This, however, may be said to be an abuse of the doctrine; and no doctrine should be judged of by its abuse. It must be admitted, however, that the pre-millennial doctrine is extremely liable to abuse. It is believed, that even in regard to the most sober and pious of the advocates of this doctrine, it has a tendency to turn off the attention from the preaching of Christ crucified; which is the subject most necessary to be inculcated on sinners. Whether Christ will make his second appearance before or after the millennium is certainly no fundamental doctrine; persons may be equally safe in believing either side of the proposition. And it is dangerous to draw off the attention of the people from essential points to future events of an exciting character, and by which it is possible that the imaginations of many may be greatly affected, who are ignorant of the way of salvation. If the expectation is, that the second appearing of Christ may occur within a century or half a century, the belief will have very little effect on the minds of men, more than if it was believed, that this event would not take place until after the lapse of more than a thousand years. But if a confident expectation is created that the appearance of Christ is very near, and may be looked for every day, the effect will be great, and the excitement and agitation such as to disturb the serenity of the mind, and to interfere with the regular performance of the duties incumbent on men in the various relations of life. We have known some serious, well-meaning people to be thus agitated; so as to be capable of thinking of scarcely any thing beside. Paul evidently took pains to allay all undue excitement in the minds of the Thessalonian Christians, arising from the expectation of the near approach of the second advent.

On the subject of the millennium, we have very little to add. To what period the thousand years in the Apocalypse refers, we

profess, that we do not know ; and therefore we cannot be sure whether it is past or future. We are, therefore, neither millenarians nor pre-millenarians. But we believe, that before the second advent of our Saviour, there will be a far more glorious state of the church, than has yet been witnessed ; when the Jews shall all be converted to Christianity, and when the fulness of the gentiles shall be brought in. And we believe that this blessed state of the church will be brought about by the faithful preaching of the gospel and circulation of the holy scriptures, in the languages of the nations of the earth. One of our strongest objections to the pre-millennial scheme is, that it casts discouragement on all missionary efforts, in regard to both Jews and Gentiles. Many of the authors of the scheme have admitted, that the missionary exertions of the church can never accomplish the conversion of the world ; but that this glorious event will be the effect of Christ's advent and personal reign on the earth. Some, indeed, have, from this consideration withdrawn their efforts from missionary enterprises altogether ; while others, and these the more pious and evangelical, have still inculcated the duty of endeavouring to extend the knowledge of the truth to as many as possible ; but the strongest motive to exertion, their system paralyses ; for they have no hope that all these exertions, however multiplied, will be effectual to bring the nations of the earth, under the influence of the gospel. Their attention, therefore, is principally directed to the second advent, and their hopes of the world's conversion are associated with that event ; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that their missionary zeal should be greatly diminished. But we would ask, by what means do they expect the world to be converted, after the coming of Christ ? His glorious appearance will not of itself have this effect. No sinner was ever converted by an external appearance, however glorious. Thousands beheld Christ while he tabernacled on earth, who were not benefited by the sight ; and the whole race of men will see him in his royal majesty, when he sits as judge on his great white throne ; and yet none will then be converted by the spectacle. Suppose Christ to have taken up his residence on earth, would it not be necessary for the gospel to be preached by faithful ministers ? And will not the efficacy of the word depend then as now, upon the agency of the Holy Spirit ? And would not the success of

the gospel be as great while Christ is on his throne in the highest heavens, if accompanied by the same influence of the Spirit? If these questions must be answered in the affirmative, then the conversion of the world can be accomplished as effectually and speedily, before Christ's second advent, as it could be afterwards.

It seems to have been forgotten by these interpreters of prophecy, that the regeneration and sanctification of every one of the redeemed must be by the operation of the Holy Spirit; and that Divine agent, who, on the day of Pentecost, changed the hearts of three thousand enemies, even the murderers of Christ, is able, by the preaching of the gospel, to convert nations in a day. Christ told his disciples, that it was necessary, that He should go away, in order that the Paraclete might come; and as long as the work of conversion and sanctification is going on in the world, will not the same necessity of Christ's presence in heaven exist? While He there lives to intercede, salvation may be extended to the ends of the earth.

In every respect, the heaven of heavens is a more suitable residence for the King of kings and Lord of lords, than Jerusalem, or any other place on our diminutive globe. And if the Son of God should remove his residence and throne from heaven to earth; not only all the glorified saints, but the myriads on myriads of holy angels, of every rank and order, must also transfer their abode from heaven to earth, and heaven, where God in glory dwells and manifests himself, be emptied of its worshippers, and all its exalted praises for a thousand years be silent. Who can believe it?

Some, it is true, believe with Mede, that the millennium and the day of judgment are the same: that this day will continue for a thousand years, because a thousand years are with the Lord as one day, and one day, as a thousand years. But this is a mere conjecture, without the shadow of a foundation in the sacred scriptures. It is, moreover, a very improbable supposition, that Christ will be occupied a thousand years in the judgment. The time of the judgment is never represented as being extended through centuries: it is always spoken of as a *day*. They allege, that the word judgment, should not be taken in a strict sense, as meaning formal trial; but in a more general sense, as signifying such an administration of the affairs of the world, as will correct all the apparent irregularities which now exist in

the moral government of God; when the righteous will be rewarded and exalted, and the wicked convicted, condemned, and punished. But this representation does not correspond with the account of the holy scriptures; and, indeed, is utterly inconsistent with it. The judgment is uniformly described as a great assize, in which not only those who shall then be living on the earth, but all men who ever lived must appear before Christ the Judge, to answer for the deeds done in the body. How long this day will last, we pretend not to say; but the whole transaction is represented as taking place in a very summary manner; and there is no probability that a thousand years will be spent in the judicial process.

The whole practical benefit of believing the pre-millennial doctrine, as we have already seen, is the impression on the public mind that the second coming of our Lord may be very near; which will have a tendency to arouse the church from its state of stupidity, and lead the people of God to watchfulness and diligencé in preparing for the advent of the Redeemer. But this argument would have been just as forcible in the days of Paul; and yet he puts this day afar off, by assuring the Thesalonians, that it would not happen before a general apostacy should intervene. That apostacy has, indeed, already occurred, and the "man of sin," the son of perdition, has been revealed; but if there are other divine prophecies, which remain to be fulfilled before that event, we may say, in the language of the apostle, that that day shall not come until these predictions have had their fulfilment. And we believe that there are such, as for example our Lord says, "and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world; for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come." Matt. xxiv. 4.

We believe however that the Jews are to be brought into the church, and with them the fulness of the Gentiles—in short that the kingdoms of the world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, before the day of judgment shall arrive. For we are persuaded, that every attempt to place the conversion of the world after the second advent, must utterly fail.

We are also of opinion, that the pre-millennial doctrine has a tendency to disturb the minds of men, and turn them off from attention to those truths which are most essential to their spiritual prosperity, and to discourage the diligent use of the appropriate

means for extending the kingdom of Christ in the world, and the preaching of the gospel to the nations of the earth. If a man should believe that the coming of Christ was distant only half a century, it would have no more effect on him, than if he believed that it was thousands of years future; because he could not expect to be alive at the time. But if the impression was, that this grand event would probably happen in a few months or weeks, the effect would be to produce such agitation as would greatly interfere with the regular discharge of the common duties of life, and with the zealous use of the means for the dissemination of the truth by the universal preaching of the gospel. This is not now a theoretical opinion: it has been strikingly verified in the case of the Millerites, and other enthusiasts, who believed that the day of Christ's appearance was near at hand. God has wisely spread a veil of obscurity and mystery over the future, and more especially over this event. "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven." Matt. xxiv. 36. And in the parallel text in Mark xiii. 32, it is added, "*neither the Son, but the Father.*" That must indeed be a profound secret which was not only concealed from the angels, but from the human soul of the Mediator. Christ, therefore, after his resurrection, repressed all curiosity on this point in his disciples, by saying, "IT IS NOT FOR YOU TO KNOW THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS WHICH THE FATHER HATH PUT IN HIS OWN POWER."

SHORT NOTICES.

ART. VI.—*Miscellaneous Essays and Discourses.* By Mark Hopkins, D. D. President of Williams College, Boston: T. R. Marvin, 1847. 8vo. pp. 514.

THIS truly beautiful product of the Boston press gives us in a permanent form those numerous occasional discourses of President Hopkins through which his reputation as an author has been established. Those judgments which we ventured to express, somewhat at large, on a former occasion, in regard to his manner of thinking, and his consequent style, apply here in all their force, and need not be repeated. If we err in considering this