

THE HIEROPHANT:

OR

MONTHLY EXPOSITOR

OF

SACRED SYMBOLS AND PROPHECY.

CONDUCTED BY

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No. III. AUGUST, 1842.

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BUSH'S NOTES ON THE OLD TESTAMENT.

DAYTON and NEWMAN, 199 Broadway, continue the publication of Prof. Bush's Critical and Practical Notes on Genesis, Exodus, and Joshua and Judges, five volumes in all, to which another volume on Leviticus has just been added. This series of works, answering for the Old Testament the same purposes as Mr. Barnes' for the New, meets with the most decided approval from all quarters. The fifth edition of Genesis has recently been issued from the press, and the third edition of Exodus is just about to be printed.

The publishers hear of frequent instances where Sunday school and Bible class teachers are relinquishing all other commentaries for these, finding in them all they need for the purpose of explanation.

They learn also from the letters of missionaries engaged in translating the Scriptures into the languages of the East, that no biblical work affords them such important aid in that department of their labor as Prof. B.'s Commentaries. This is no more than the natural result of the author's careful study of the most scrupulous fidelity in eliciting the exact meaning of the original, and his peculiar tact in explaining it.

In all the volumes above-mentioned will be found discussions on the more important points of biblical science, swelling far beyond the ordinary dimensions of expository notes, and amounting in fact to elaborate dissertations of great value. Among the subjects thus extensively treated are: in Genesis, the Temptation and the Fall, the Dispersion at Babel, the Prophecies of Noah, the Character of Melchizedek, the Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the History of Joseph, the Prophetical Benedictions of Jacob;—in Exodus, the Hardening of Pharaoh's heart, the Miracles of the Magicians, the Pillar of Cloud as the Seat of the Shekinah, the Decalogue, the Hebrew Theocracy, the Tabernacle, the Cherubim, the Candlestick, the Shew Bread, the Altar, &c.; in the forthcoming volume of Leviticus will be found a clear and minute specification of the different Sacrifices, the Distinction of Meats, the Scape Goat, the Law of Incest, including the case of Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, very largely considered, and a full account of the Jewish Festivals.

It would be easy to set before the reader a voluminous mass of testimonials to the value of this series of Commentaries, but the following notices of one of them from the Boston Recorder and the Portland Christian Mirror will be found applicable in their main features to all the rest.

"Many of our readers are, doubtless, acquainted with the Notes of Prof. Bush. For such as are not familiar with them, we indite the following notice. These Notes have reached a somewhat extensive circulation; but they are by no means appreciated as they should be. We know of nothing in our language which could take their place. They illustrate some of the most difficult portions of the Scriptures, and in respect to which the English language contains much less of valuable critical illustration than could be desired. Prof. Bush comes to the undertaking with many advantages. He has long been a diligent student of the original Scriptures, and has become intimately acquainted with their grammatical principles, as his Hebrew Grammar abundantly shows. He is also extensively acquainted with oriental literature, antiquities, the manners and customs of the people, &c., as may be seen in his Life of Mohammed, and in the Scripture Illustrations.

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THE MILLENNIUM AND THE NEW JERUSALEM.

(CONCLUDED.)

Conflagration of the Heavens and Earth.

THE reader who has followed the train of our remarks thus far will have seen, that the amount of evidence is by no means inconsiderable, which we have accumulated in proof of our main position, that the New Jerusalem state, as described both by Isaiah and by John, is locally an earthly state—a dispensation, economy, or polity, to be developed on the material globe that we now inhabit, and as the result of that natural and established course of Providence which is continually unfolding its issues around us. Not but that marked and signal and extraordinary events will be evolved in preparing the way and ushering in this sublime consummation—not but that elements of a purely celestial character shall be mingled with those of earthly mould in the perfected state of this coming age, of which we shall have more to say hereafter—but what we affirm is, that we are not to look for the complete physical breaking up, by stupendous miracles, of the existing order of things previous to the introduction of the New Jerusalem era. We are firm in the persuasion that the glorious *denouement* which we are taught to anticipate in the sequel of the world's destiny, is to be brought about by human agency and by the use of appropriate *means*—that it will be the result of moral, intellectual, and political causes which are even now in active operation—and that although the most illustrious changes, overturnings, and disruptions in the affairs of nations, and in all kinds of institutions, together with strange physical signs and phenomena, and perhaps sore judgments

upon communities are to be expected—yet at the same time these occurrences shall not, while taking place, strike the mass of men as any obvious departure from the fixed course of Providence, or in fact as a real fulfilment of predictions, which subsequent reflection will show them indubitably to have been. All this we have endeavored more or less clearly to evince.

We have essayed, moreover, to demonstrate, that as the Millennium, properly so called, is a period entirely distinct from the New Jerusalem period, and anterior to it, so it will necessarily follow, that if the commencing date of the latter is in near proximity to our own times, the era of the former is to be referred *to the past*. But as the ushering in of the New Jerusalem is announced immediately upon the overthrow of the mystical Babylon—an event confessedly near at hand—the inevitable conclusion is, that the proper chronological place of the memorable thousand years is somewhere among the centuries already elapsed. This place we have for ourselves no more difficulty in determining than we have in determining the period when paganism, symbolized by the old Dragon, was bound or suppressed by imperial edict within the limits of the Roman empire. Our great authority on this head is Gibbon, to whom we must content ourselves with referring the reader, especially as cited in our formal treatise on the subject, the arguments of which we cannot here repeat.

To the above result we deem ourselves brought by the most legitimate process of reasoning, or rather of interpretation, nor can our conclusion be resisted unless our premises be overthrown. If the New Jerusalem of John be identical with the “latter day glory” of Isaiah—if the river and trees of life of John be identical with the river and trees of life of Ezekiel—of both which positions we have adduced a large array of proof—then as the Old Testament prophets are plainly describing rather the terrestrial than the celestial glory and grandeur of the church, John must of course be understood as having the same state and period in view.

How then, it may be asked, are we to account for it, that this period of blessing as described in the Apocalypse has so universally come to be regarded as in fact no other than the state of heavenly bliss, set forth in figurative diction under the image of a city goldenly and gorgeously adorned, and conveying by association the idea of every conceivable source of exalted delight and happiness? How has it happened that the evidences of its identity with the prosperous and joyous period portrayed in the latter chapters of Isaiah and Ezekiel have been so generally overlooked? To this the obvious reply is, that the language of 2 Peter 3 : 4–14, has been thought to interpose an insuperable barrier to such a reading of the prophecy. The *letter* of the apostle’s language is apparently so explicit in announcing the physical dissolution and passing away of “these *aspectable heavens*” and this material globe, *prior* to the introduc-

tion of the New Jerusalem, that it has scarcely entered into the thoughts of the readers or expositors of revelation, that any other construction could be proposed ; and though they have been latently aware that there were serious difficulties connected with this view, especially from the healing of the nations and the kings of the earth bringing their glory into the city, yet without looking them full in the face they have settled down under the impression that the evidence *preponderated* in favor of the celestial theory, and that whatever passages or expressions seemed to clash with this view, time or eternity would make all clear and harmonious.

As it is from this passage of Peter that the current belief of Christendom as to the great order of future events has formed itself, so it is from this source that we anticipate the full brunt and burden of the objection against the interpretation proposed above. So deeply rooted and grounded has become the impression that the utter destruction of the present mundane system by fire, the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the general judgment are to *precede* the New Jerusalem state, that any intimation to the contrary seems, at first blush, to be striking at the root of a grand elementary truth of revelation, and entirely unhinging the current notions of Christians in the whole department of *Eschatology*.* Under these circumstances we can only request a calm and candid consideration of the scriptural *facts* which we propose to lay before the mind of the reader. We have no theory to propose other than that which seems to be forced upon us by the *simple statements* of the oracles of truth—statements which no different view of the subject is at liberty to disregard. With the indubitable *facts* of the word of God all the cordial receivers of that word are alike concerned. Accordingly we cannot consent to charge ourselves with any special responsibility on the score of *consequences*, provided we do nothing more than exhibit fairly the obvious unforced teaching of the inspired page. God has indited the Bible, and not man ; nor are we required to attempt to make it more perfect than he has made it. It is very possible that a thorough investigation of the word may bring certain portions of it into *apparent* conflict with others. But what then ? Does he who simply *states* difficulties *create* them ? And suppose that the inevitable effect of such expositions is for the present to disturb the quiet of men's hitherto tranquil faith by showing that a new sense *must* be put upon one class or other of familiar texts ; is he who,

* As we shall probably have frequent occasion, in order to avoid circumlocution, to use this term, we here remark for the sake of those to whom it is not familiar, that it is a word compounded of Greek elements, the import of which is, *the doctrine of the last things*, including the resurrection, the judgment, the second coming of Christ, the end of the world, &c.

in the spirit of honest research, makes known the apparent discrepancy, justly liable to odium on that account? Does *he* perform a better service for the Truth, who, with backward step and averted eye, would approach and throw the mantle of concealment over her *seeming* incongruities? Does she not invite and challenge the most rigid inquisition into her every uttered word and sentence?—and is not he her most loyal subject—her most accepted worshipper—who contributes most to divest her meaning of all obscurity, and give it the most perfect enunciation?

But one answer, we think, can be given to these interrogations, and we accordingly know of no good reason that should deter us from presenting frankly, and with all candor, the grounds of our dissent from the view generally entertained of the scope of the apostle's language respecting the conflagration of the heavens and the earth. In the estimate which we have formed of the strength of our reasons, we may very possibly have erred; but we claim to be considered as having *honestly erred*. Our error, if it be one, is an *exegetical* error, and by an *exegetical* process only can it be fairly refuted. To array against it a phalanx of *theological* prejudices, and to assail it as the mere offspring of a spirit of vain speculation, or of reckless and rampant innovation, we should feel to be the height of injustice and unfairness. Our inmost consciousness acquits us of any other prompting in this matter than an earnest desire to compass the real truth of revelation, and our calmest judgment assures us that we have a right to have our conclusions pronounced upon according to the canons of a sound criticism, and not as they may be thought to agree or disagree with the dicta of a dogmatical *communis sensus*.

Another word in the outset. We do not profess to exhibit an interpretation devoid of all difficulty. We have not succeeded, in our own estimate, in so completely eliminating the subject from all embarrassment, as to feel that no serious objections can be urged against the view which on the whole we are constrained to adopt. In the explication of the prophetic Scriptures, involving as they do matters of the abstrusest nature, and couched as they are in the mystic diction of symbols, a balance of probabilities in regard to the genuine sense is oftentimes all that we can attain. We have, in this department, hard problems to solve, and the student of prophecy will frequently feel himself justified, because he is compelled to do so, in resting, though with lingering doubts, in that construction which is to him freest of difficulties. In the present case we have gone upon this principle. We have adopted the conclusion which has seemed to us sustained by the largest amount of evidence. But if any of our readers after a full investigation shall have come to an opposite result, and feel prepared, on exegetical grounds, to maintain it, our pages shall be freely opened to them, and an opportunity afforded for the most ample canvassing the subject on every

side. The ascertainment and establishment of truth is our sole object.

The grand question that now awaits our solution is, whether the language of Peter, rightly construed, necessitates the conclusion, that the heavens and the earth are to undergo a physical destruction by volcanic or other fire previous to the occurrence of that state which is denominated in the Apocalypse the New Jerusalem. If this be indeed the true and indubitable import of his words, then we must at once relinquish the position we have assumed above, for such a catastrophe is fatally at war with the view advanced of the *gradual* ushering in and supervening of that blissful period upon the previously existing state of the church and the world. The two theories are utterly incompatible, and the one or the other must inevitably give way. With whatever impetus the present order of things may be moving onward to such a grand consummation, it can never acquire a momentum sufficient to enable it to shoot *u.* . . . huge gulf made by the dropping out from under it of the solid globe itself. But let us look at the *ipsisima verba* of the apostle. We cite the passage in full. 2 Peter 3: 1-14,

This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I 1 stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be 2 mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, 3 walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of 4 his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly 5 are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the 6 world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but 7 the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that 8 one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some 9 men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But 10 the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be 11 dissolved, what manner of *persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of 12 the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, 13 according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye 14 look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

This, it must be admitted, is strong language, and taking the

passage by itself, independent of its relations to any other portion of Scripture, we see not how any but the plain literal sense could easily be educed from it. The *prima facie* evidence is certainly in favor of the popular and accredited interpretation, and if we are led to seek any other, it is because we are forced to it *ex necessitate rei*, or by the stress of collateral considerations. Upon these we are now called to dwell.

1. And first, we remark that it seems to be but little in accordance with the general scope of revelation to deal in matters of physical science. The grand drift of the sacred volume is *moral*. The design of its Author is to teach man his *duty*; and whatever he may impart on the great theme of destiny, it is the destiny of the human race inhabiting the earth, rather than of the earth itself. It does not appear to come within the compass of the divine counsels to instruct men in the *absolute verities* either of Astronomy, Geology, Physiology, or Chemistry. On all subjects of this nature the Bible speaks in accommodation to the then existing state of knowledge or to the popular notions generally entertained, without assuming to pronounce upon them as correct or incorrect. Thus in regard to the origin of our globe, it does not appear that we are required, by the canons of a sound exegesis, to put any construction upon the record of Moses which shall preclude the conclusions forced upon the mind by the *facts* and *demonstrations* of Geology. It is a grand moral truth of the utmost moment that God was the Creator of the universe; and this truth is most unequivocally taught us in the words of the sacred historian; but as to the *time, order, and details* of the creation, these are points on which God has left the human intellect free to exercise itself, and to gather the true *genesis* of the earth from the earth itself, from the nature of its elements, the order of its strata, and the intrinsic character of its various phenomena. The result in this case is well known. The unanimous voice of all practical Geologists traces back the commencing date of this terraqueous sphere to a period indefinitely beyond the era of Adam. So in like manner, it would not be surprising if the conclusion should at length be adopted, that the physical futurity of our globe should as far transcend the letter of prophecy as its physical antiquity does the letter of history. That this planetary ball is eventually in some way to be destroyed by the same power that called it into being, we think in the highest degree probable; but if such is to be its doom, we look for the annunciation rather in the discoveries of Astronomy than of revelation—rather in the Apocalypse of Newton, Laplace, or Herschell, than in that of John.

2. Should this suggestion appear to be taking unwarrantable liberties with the obvious literal teaching of the inspired apostle, we trust it will not be forgotten, that John speaks as truly under the influence of inspiration as Peter, and as we read *his* disclosures

they as imperatively enforce upon us the inference of the world's continuance, as do Peter's of its termination. The proof of this is to be found in the whole tenor of our preceding discussion. For ourselves we are utterly unable to put any other construction upon the statements respecting the New Jerusalem, than that which recognises the present material globe as its seat and scene. If we have not wholly failed in the array of Scriptural evidence attempted on this subject, we have shown that the characters of that dispensation do inevitably imply the continued existence of the globe and of its mortal inhabitants during the dominance of that blissful economy. What else is to be inferred from the kings of the earth bringing their glory into this city, which we have shown to be identically the same with the 'forces of the Gentiles' being converted to Zion, as prophetically announced by Isaiah. Is the earth to be burnt up before Isaiah's predictions are fulfilled? But Isaiah and John—we repeat the repetition—have identically the same period in view. At any rate, he that denies this is bound to disprove it. Until this is done we must contend that no one has a right to charge our interpretation with doing violence to the language of Scripture. Again, the leaves of the mystic tree of life in the New Jerusalem are to be for the healing of the Gentile nations. Are these nations to be healed in heaven? If so, then Ezekiel also is describing a heavenly state of things in his closing chapters, where precisely the same objects and results are portrayed with those of John. Has it been—can it be—evinced, that these Old Testament prophets have any other state in view than the New Jerusalem state? And are they setting forth any other than the glories of the *earthly* Zion in its latter-day triumphs and prosperity? Has it ever entered the thoughts of any commentator or divine, ancient or modern, that the destruction of the globe by fire was to precede the consummation which they announce? Yet that consummation is assuredly *posterior* to the elemental dissolution predicted by Peter, for it is the same with the New Jerusalem, and this no one doubts is subsequent, in the order of events, to that passing away of the heavens and the earth—whatever it be—which the apostle sets before us. We see then to what extremities we are reduced by the common construction put upon the words of Peter. It inevitably brings the apostle into *literal* conflict with other portions of the inspired volume, equally infallible and authoritative with his own. This *apparent* discrepancy we have simply *stated*. We exhibit it merely as a *fact* of revelation; and one which concerns every believer in revelation as intimately as it does us. We protest with uplifted hand against the charge either of idle speculation, skeptical cavilling, or heretical teaching on this account. Our readers will draw such inferences from the fact as they deem requisite, but for ourselves we hesitate not to hold it as the safer alternative to construe the apostolic announcement as

descriptive of a *figurative* rather than of a *literal* conflagration. Of this interpretation we have still farther proof to adduce from the Old Testament.

3. Peter, it will be observed, after describing the melting of the elements and the passing away of the heavens and the earth, immediately adds, ‘ Nevertheless we, *according to his promise*, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.’ Here is a distinct allusion to a special *promise* contained in some other part of the Scriptures, announcing a superlatively happy period to ensue *after* the precedent destruction described by the apostle. Where then is this promise, and how is it to be understood ? A reference to Isaiah 65 : 17, 25, at once discloses to us the prophetic intimation which the apostle had in mind. We give the passage at full length.

17 For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth : and the former
18 shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and
rejoice for ever in *that* which I create : for behold, I create Jerusa-
19 lem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusa-
lem, and joy in my people : and the voice of weeping shall be no
20 more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more
thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days :
for the child shall die a hundred years old : but the sinner *being* a
21 hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses
and inhabit *them* ; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit
22 of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit, they shall not
plant, and another eat : for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my
people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
23 They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble : for they
are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.
24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer ; and
25 while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb
shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock : and
dust *shall be* the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in
all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

This then is the announcement of the state which is to *follow* the catastrophe described by the pen of the apostle. We propound the question, whether the conditions of the prophecy are not such as to force upon us the conviction of the *continuance* of the present material fabric of the globe and of its mortal inhabitants ? Here is the dying of young and old—the building of houses and planting of vineyards—the enjoyment of longevity, like the days of a tree—the lying down together of the wolf and the lamb—and the prevalence of peace in all God’s holy mountain. The expressions are many of them undoubtedly figurative, but they are still of a character to indicate an order of events of a *terrestrial locality*. The most obvious interpretation unquestionably is that which is most common—viz. that of a grand spiritual renovation, the effect of gospel influences under the benign reign of the Messiah in the

later ages of the world, and during that halcyon period which is the chief burden of all prophecy. In this view of the passage the great mass of commentators unite their suffrages, with scarcely a dissenting voice; and the following note from Mr. Barnes on the chapter quoted may be taken as fairly embodying the current sentiment of expositors, in regard to the drift of the prophet's words. 'The figure of great transformations in material things is one that is often employed in the Scriptures, and especially in Isaiah, to denote great spiritual changes. The passage before us is highly poetical; and we are not required to understand it literally. There is, so far as the language is concerned, no more reason for understanding this literally, than there is for so understanding the numerous declarations which affirm that the brute creation will undergo a change in their very nature, on the introduction of the Gospel; and all that the language necessarily implies is, that there would be changes in the condition of the people of God as great *as if* the heavens, overcast with clouds and subject to storms, should be recreated, so as to become always mild and serene; or *as if* the earth, so barren in many places, should become universally fertile and beautiful.' Again, on verse 20, he remarks:—'The design of the prophet here is to describe the times of happiness and prosperity which would succeed the calamities under which the nation had been suffering. This he does by a great variety of images, all denoting substantially the same thing. In verse 17, the change is represented to be as great as if a new heaven and new earth should be created; in verse 20, the image is, that the inhabitants would reach a great age, and that the comparatively happy times of the patriarchs would be restored; in verse 21, the image is taken from the perfect security in their plans of labor, and in the fact that they would enjoy the fruit of their toil; in verse 25, the image employed is that taken from the change in the nature of the animal creation. All these are poetic images, designed as illustrations of the general truth, and like other poetic truth they are not to be taken literally.'

Bp. Lowth, in his *Lectures on Heb. Poetry*, (Lect. IX.) adopts the same principle of interpretation, remarking that great natural events, such as the Chaos and the Creation 'are constantly alluded to, as expressive of any remarkable change, whether prosperous or adverse, in the public affairs; of the overthrow or restoration of kingdoms and nations: and are consequently very common in prophetic poetry, particularly when any unusual degree of boldness is attempted. If the subject be the destruction of the Jewish empire by the Chaldeans, or a strong denunciation of ruin against the enemies of Israel, it is depicted in exactly the same colors, *as if universal nature were about to relapse into the primeval chaos!*'

Vitringa, in like manner, in his elaborate commentary on Isaiah, presents the same view. He remarks that 'the prophet, under the creation of new heavens and a new earth, is not speak-

ing primarily of a *natural* renovation of the world, but of the super-inducing of a new and better form upon the state of the church, the former and worse being abolished. I would not deny,' says he, 'that the state of the church as described in the context approaches very near to the celestial blessedness; at the same time the attentive reader will easily perceive that the scene of fulfilment is the present earth, and that the images, although in good measure to be mystically understood, are well suited to such a sense. A confirmation of this view is afforded by the preceding verse:— 'He who blesseth himself *in the earth*, shall bless himself in the God of truth.' Shall we seek *in heaven* for the accomplishment of that which takes place *on the earth*? Who, moreover, shall suppose that planting vineyards and eating the fruit of them, however spiritually interpreted, can be appropriate to the state of heavenly bliss?' He then quotes the words of Maimonides, who expressly says, that the phrase 'creation of new heavens and new earth' is altogether prophetic and metaphorical, like that of the darkening of the sun, the turning the moon into blood, the falling of the stars, and the rolling together of the heavens as a scroll.' And it is worthy of note, that Sir Isaac Newton lays down the same canon of interpretation in regard to the language of prophecy, (Observ. on the Proph. p. 1, ch. 2.) 'Great earthquakes, and the shaking of heaven and earth, so as to distract and overthrow them; the creating a new heaven and earth, and the passing away of an old one, or the beginning and end of a world, (are put) for the rise and ruin of a body politic dignified thereby.'

The question now comes distinctly before us, whether Peter is necessarily to be understood as giving a sense of this prophecy utterly and entirely diverse from that which lies upon its face, and which the great mass of commentators, Jewish and Christian, have by common consent adopted. In adopting this sense has any violence been done to the mind of the Spirit? Is not this sense fairly to be recognized in the words? Is it not a *true* sense? And taking this passage by itself, with all the analogy of the prophetic diction throughout the whole Scriptures before us, are we not capable of fixing its legitimate import with a very great degree of assurance? Certain it is, that no one would ever think of interpreting this language of a *physical* renovation of the heavens and the earth, or of any thing else than a grand *spiritual* reform, were it not for the passage in Peter which *appears* to give another turn to the Old Testament oracle, and to shut us up to the *physical* construction. What then shall be our alternative? As both writers speak equally under the prompting of one and the same Spirit of inspiration, we cannot allow ourselves to question for a moment that there neither is nor can be any *real* discrepancy between their several utterances. If rightly understood they *must* harmonize. But it is clear that the *literal statements* of each are directly inter-

repugnant, and that one or the other must receive a *spiritual* interpretation. Which shall it be? Shall we make Peter conform to Isaiah, or Isaiah to Peter? Shall we read Isaiah as predicting a *physical* change in the visible heavens and earth, or Peter as announcing a *spiritual* one?—for upon one horn or the other of the dilemma we are inextricably fixed. The point is one on which, for ourselves, we do not hesitate. The evidence is to our minds convincing, that whatever may have been the apostle's private personal views, the Holy Spirit, who spake by him, designed to set forth the same great moral change in the state of the world which is depicted in the earlier prediction of Isaiah. The apostles, for the most part, act the part of mere expositors of the true sense of the Old Testament writings, and the very title of the closing book of the sacred canon—'Apocalypse'—is doubtless adopted for the reason that it contains a *revelation* or *developement* of the hidden purport of the ancient prophets. It is much seldomer than is generally imagined, that we meet with any original and independent disclosures. The germs of all New Testament truths are to be found in the Old, and it is only by a deadly violence that one moiety of the great body of revelation is sundered from the other.

On the passage of Peter now under consideration, we adhere to the opinion expressed in our work on the Millennium (p. 202, 2d ed.), in which we say that we are compelled with Mede and others to regard it as denoting, not a literal, but a figurative conflagration, adumbrating *the close of a dispensation*, the violent abrogation of a previous order of things, the dissolution and prostration of the entire fabric of governments and politics, and systems formerly subsisting, and essentially at variance with the genius of that new and happier economy which was to be introduced. In describing this great and momentous change as a destruction of the heavens and the earth by fire, the apostle is merely adopting the lofty and high-wrought style of the former prophets, who frequently represent great revolutions, whether secular or ecclesiastical, under the imagery of fires, earthquakes, the removal of mountains, the falling of stars, the departing of the heavens as a scroll, and the wreck as it were of the whole terraqueous and planetary system. Nor can we refrain from inserting in this connection the following extract from the invaluable Commentary of Daubuz on the Apocalypse (p. 964), who gives substantially the same view. "The Holy Ghost, therefore, shows us affirmatively and explicitly, that the old heaven and earth are removed to make way for a new heaven and new earth, that is, a new government and a new people, as we have before shown these symbols signify. Now I say that the removal of the old heaven and the earth, and the introduction of the new heaven and earth, are symbols of a prophecy which has not its accomplishment in a sudden revolution or moment, but in progress of time; that is, the new heaven and earth

begin to be constituted, and have the beginning of their existence, as the constitution of the old heaven and earth wears away, which is done by steps. And whereas some people are apt to fancy a thorough change in the visible constitution of the universe as to the heavenly bodies, this is not only inconsistent with the nature of the prophetic style, which assumes these objects merely for symbols of the political world, but also contrary to the constant opinion of the primitive fathers, who, as I have shown elsewhere, understood this renovation as we have explained it."

But our position can only be made apparent by a display of the actual usage of the prophets in regard to their doctrine. We shall then be better prepared to appreciate the evidence that Peter is to be understood as speaking in the same style. The following from Isaiah will be perceived to be strikingly in point: Ch. 24: 1-20, 'Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.—The earth mourneth and languisheth, the world languisheth and fadeth away.—The curse hath devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: Therefore, the *inhabitants of the earth are burned*, and few men left.—The windows from on high are opened, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, *the earth is clean dissolved*, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage: and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall and not rise again.' So also ch. 34: 2-4, where the Most High declares his indignation to be upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies, he moreover affirms, that '*all the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll*: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree.' Thus also Nah. 1: 5, where the judicial vengeance of God against his enemies is intimated, it is said, 'The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, *and the earth is burned at his presence*, yea, the world and all that dwell therein.' A passage still more literally pertinent occurs Isaiah 51: 16, 'And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, *that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth*, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.'

It would be abundantly easy to show, did our limits allow, that in their legitimate primary scope these passages are to be applied to *national events*, either in the history of the children of Israel or of other peoples who are threatened with these fearful visitations and overthrows. They cannot be made, by fair and unforced construction, to refer to the period generally understood as *the end of the world*.

But here the question will no doubt be asked, What reason have we to suppose that Peter is employing this peculiar poetico-

prophetic style in the passage before us? Is it not obviously the style of plain *narrative* announcement of a future event, which can no more be understood *figuratively* than the deluge can be understood *figuratively*, to which in fact it is expressly compared? To this our first reply is, that we are naturally led to infer, from the apostle's words in the outset, that his mind was full of the Old Testament revelations, and that he *professes* to do little more than to recite their burden. His prediction is essentially a kind of *Targum* or paraphrase of those of his inspired predecessors. 'This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words *which were spoken before by the holy prophets, &c.*' What more palpable, than that he merely designs in what follows to repeat in substance the sense which both he and his readers had already gathered from the oracles of the major and minor prophets, with which they were of course familiar? If then he is merely reuttering what was foretold by Isaiah and his inspired compeers, must not his language be expounded on the same principles with theirs? But the passages which he had in his mind, it will not be questioned, in reference to the finale described, are the very ones, with others of kindred import, to which we have already alluded? These we have shown to possess a *spiritual* or *figurative* meaning, implying mainly a grand *moral* revolution in the state of the church and the world. It will be observed moreover that he says, after speaking of the deluge, that 'the heavens and the earth which are now, are *by the same word* kept in store, reserved unto fire, &c.*' What do we learn from this but that, as the infallible word or truth of God contained in the Old Testament *history* has assured us of the fact of the occurrence of the Noachic deluge, so we are informed *upon the same authority*, or by the inspired word of Old Testament *prophecy*, that an abolition by fire awaits the present heavens and earth? But this fire, spoken of by the former prophets, we have endeavored to show is not to be understood of *physical* fire, but as a metaphorical term for wasting judgments. At the same time, we are free to admit the probability, that in the series of calamities and woes involved in the judicial catastrophe here announced, literal fire may constitute an element, and its agency be more or less employed. In the passing away of the Jewish symbolical heavens and earth, the conflagration of the tem-

* It is especially worthy of note, that all the modern editions of the Gr. Testament exhibit the reading *τῷ αὐτοῦ λόγῳ*, *by his word*, instead of *τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ*, *by the same word*. Authorities, indeed, are not lacking for the latter reading, but as it has been excluded by common consent from the text of all recent editions, it is to be presumed that the evidence decidedly preponderates in favor of the former. There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, that 'by his word' is equivalent to 'according to his word,' i. e. his written word.

ple by the hands of the Roman soldiers, and the perishing of hundreds of thousands of the devoted nation in its flames, attested the presence of *fire* as a ministry of wrath. And so in the consummation described by Peter we deem it by no means improbable, that the treasured stores of volcanic fire may burst forth in destructive eruption, and overwhelm the *spiritual* Sodom, the metropolis of the empire of Antichrist, in the doom of the *literal* Sodom, its intended prototype. Still we would contend that the destruction from this source, if it should occur, will be but *partial*. It will fall immeasurably below the complete conflagration of the material fabric of the globe 'and all that it inhabits;' an idea which we maintain is not the burden of Peter's prophecy, because it is not that of the ancient prophets whose oracles he simply assumes to reiterate. And this brings us to our second reply to the question proposed above.

We dissent from the doctrine of the *physical* destruction of the globe, as taught in this passage, mainly from its *irreconcilableness* with the plain statements or inevitable consequence of numerous other passages equally inspired, and in our view of equally obvious import. Now we cannot consent to recognize for a moment any real conflict between different portions of that precious volume, of which the God of truth is the author; and it is wholly with a view to *save* the consistency and harmony of the inspired record that we have recourse to the *spiritual* instead of the *physical* interpretation of Peter's language. So far then is our construction of the passage from any want of reverence towards the plain averments of holy writ, that it is from the influence of this reverence that we take our stand against the *literal* mode of interpretation. This stand we shall at once relinquish whenever it can be shown, on clear and satisfactory grounds, in what manner the doctrine of the physical destruction of the heavens and the earth can be reconciled with the obvious tenor of Isaiah and the Apocalypse as already quoted.

Nothing in the compass of the written oracles strikes us as more obvious, than that the New Jerusalem is *subsequent* in the order of time to the consummation set forth by Peter. But the attributes of the New Jerusalem state are such as to bring it into unquestionable identity with the earthly latter-day glory of Isaiah and of Ezekiel; in which, as we have already seen, the kings of the earth are to bring their glory into the mystic city, and the leaves of the tree of life are to exert their healing virtues upon the Gentile nations. We see no possible mode of reconciling this, the inevitable construction, with the theory of a previous literal and entire conflagration of the globe and its contents. Who are to be left after such a destruction, to build houses and plant vineyards, and to witness the peaceful lying down together of the wolf and the lamb, the lion and the bullock? Are not the conditions specified such as to force upon us the inference of the *continued*

existence of the material earth and its present race of inhabitants? How then are they previously to sink in the flames of a universal fiery destruction?

We cannot be unconscious that this view of the predicted future, differs essentially from that which has obtained currency among the mass of Christians. But as we have been led to its adoption solely by the force of evidence, we claim to be acquitted of every charge which would reflect upon the *spirit* of our investigations. In like manner, as to any ominous *consequences* which may be alleged legitimately to flow from the proposed interpretation, we bid away all uneasiness from our minds on that score. The question to be determined is, whether the interpretation be *true*. If it be, the truth will take care of its own consequences, and we need not give ourselves any concern on the subject. If it be not true, then its falsity can be shown, and we are free to demand from an opponent that it shall be. Our conclusion flows necessarily from our premises. If our conclusion be rejected, let the fallacy of our premises be exposed. Let us know on what principles the apostles quoted and applied the Old Testament predictions. We would gladly be taught how to explain the fact, that the closing chapters of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John employ language *perfectly equivalent*, if the state described be not the same. Here is an immensely important problem in biblical hermeneutics to be solved; nor will it do for the professed ministers of the word to think to shelter their indecision behind the calm and easy dubiety of the critics of former ages. The plea of *quot homines, tot sententiæ*, will not avail at the present day to hush the urgency of the world-wide demand to *know* what the oracles of revelation mean in the most momentous of all their disclosures. The time has been when the remark that Grotius thought so and so,—Vitringa, so and so,—that Calvin inclined to this opinion, and Bishop Lowth to this, and Lightfoot to that,—would operate as a kind of foreclosure to further inquiry, and the expositor would go to his dinner or his devotions without a single upbraiding qualm. But the true sense of the prophetic Scriptures cannot be longer blinked. These lame apologies for exposition, these everlasting uncertainties and waverings, these infinite irresolutions and ‘ambiguous givings-out,’ however they may have served heretofore as ‘sops to Cerberus, or tubs to whales,’ will not longer answer the turn. *Tell us!—tell us!—tell us!*—is the universal and unappeasable cry. The posture of the human mind is such, that it must and will be satisfied in relation to the true sense of those portions of revelation which embody the great themes of destiny, and the great sanctions of duty. To the burden of this stern requisition, we from our inmost souls respond, *Amen.*

B

REPLY TO THE NEW-YORK EVANGELIST.

It is not without great reluctance and after much hesitation, that I have determined to insert the following communication from my own pen. It was written for insertion in the *New-York Evangelist*, in reply to very severe charges brought against me by the Editors of that paper as an interpreter of prophecy. On the appearance of the first number of this work they took occasion to denounce the enterprise *beforehand* in the most unqualified terms, as undoubtedly designed to be a vehicle for conveying the most false, heretical, and dangerous sentiments over the bosom of the Christian community—sentiments the tendency of which was to overthrow the doctrine of the resurrection and the general judgment, to unhinge the fixed belief of the church, and decidedly to promote the interests of Universalism. All this was affirmed simply on the ground of what they *presumed* the pages of the Hierophant would teach, from what they *inferred* that I held on the various subjects to be discussed; for with the exception of two or three fragments of sentences taken out of their connexions from my work on the Millennium, they condescended to give no *reasons* for their assertions. This appeared to me of course a very strange proceeding to be adopted by a Christian journal, towards an undertaking prompted solely by an earnest desire to promote the cause of biblical science. I accordingly remonstrated with the Editors, assuring them that though I *did* hold some of the opinions imputed to me—those particularly which I have thus far advocated in the preceding numbers—yet others I did not, and that the invidious *mode* in which the whole affair was presented in their columns was in the highest degree unjust and injurious. I demanded, therefore, that as a matter of equity, since they had dragged me thus uncourteously before their readers, and held up my alleged sentiments to their abhorrence, they should at least give me the opportunity of being heard through the same medium, in my own defence, and this defence I proposed to make simply a statement of my views on the points in question, together with the Scriptural evidence on which they were founded. To this, after much delay and with manifest reluctance, they finally consented. Several articles were accordingly published, but uniformly accompanied with editorial comments, so constructed as to *decry* without *disproving*, and to excite so much odium as would naturally weaken the effect of my arguments. When the following article was handed in, it evidently brought the Editors to somewhat of a pause, as nothing was said of it for two weeks, and then it was rejected as being *too disrespectful to be published!* Their refusal for this reason caused me no little surprise, for although I designed to express myself plainly and pointedly, for which their statements had given abundant occasion, yet I was wholly unconscious in penning it of any want of a decorously respectful feeling, such as should ever characterize the written or oral intercourse of gentlemen and Christians. At any rate, the odium of such a style, had I really

adopted it, would have fallen upon me, and not upon them, and while it weakened my cause would have strengthened theirs ; and as the subject-matter of the article was peculiarly important to my defence, I have never been able to feel otherwise than greatly aggrieved by their refusal to grant me a hearing. To this grievance I was the more sensible, from the fact, that the Editors, while they refused insertion to the entire article, saw fit to make garbled extracts from it, which, by being torn out of their connexions, presented my views in altogether a distorted and invidious light.

Accordingly, under the consciousness of very unfair dealing, I made a ' respectful' appeal to their sense of right, and in order to cut off all occasion for refusing to do me justice, I assured them of my willingness to expunge or modify any sentence or expression which they should deem exceptionable on the above score, provided they would give the strength of my argument, such as it was ; and to this, as it was a direct reply to direct charges, I felt that I was fairly entitled. *Of this proposal not the slightest notice has been taken*, and I am left to the unavoidable inference, that after proffering me the use of their columns to defend myself from an unprovoked and wanton attack upon the character of my biblical expositions, in which they represent me as broaching doctrines of the most heretical and pernicious tendency, the door is to be unceremoniously closed upon me, if I have not the complaisance to say in reply precisely what they would have me say. It is doubtless somewhat more agreeable to have one's allegations sustained than refuted, but it seems to be exacting rather an unusual stretch of courtesy for a plaintiff to require that this should be done, out of pure good nature, by a defendant.

Under these circumstances, finding all redress denied in the proper quarter, I have concluded to avail myself of the medium of my own pages to give my reply to the public. I can hope, indeed, in this way to counteract but a very small portion of the injury so wantonly inflicted, but a partial correction of wrong impressions is better than none ; and as the general subject is altogether germane to the scope of this publication, it will not be deemed wholly out of place or devoid of interest, though the reader will find some ideas, and some few sentences repeated, with which he has already become familiar in this and the previous numbers. These he will pardon for the sake of those into whose hands the Hierophant now comes for the first time.

Geo. Bush.

For the New-York Evangelist.

MESSRS. EDITORS :

The tenor of your remarks on my last communication has raised within me somewhat of a conflict of emotion between the irascible and the risible. While conscious, on the one hand, of the most uncandid treatment on the score of your representations, and feeling, like Jonah, that I should "do well to be angry," yet on

the other, I can scarcely suppress a smile at the self-complaisance with which you regard my articles as confirming to a tittle your previous statements. I could not but fancy that those of your readers who should see fit to abide by your version of my sentiments, would contemplate the discussion with very much the sensations of the spectator of the exploits of the Eastern juggler, who, in performing some master feat of manual dexterity, was so unfortunate, in the gyrations of his scimitar, as to fetch a stroke that severed his head from his body. "Bravo!" exclaimed one of the beholders, "capitally done; and now what next?" *Capital* indeed, in one sense, the achievement certainly was; a good deal more so, probably, than was set forth in the bill of entertainment. Whether I am in a fair way to emulate with complete success the example of this luckless professor of thaumaturgy, there is perhaps less doubt in your own minds than in those of *some* of your readers. If from what I have already said, I have furnished so many feathers to wing your arrows of condemnation, it is evident you can have no question, that if allowed to proceed I shall in the end spare you the trouble of any further refutation. How this may be, we shall be better able to judge by and by.

In the mean time, as you have seen fit to array your bill of indictment, in its different items, against the 'heretical pravity' of my views, as if intent upon making up an issue at once, I have no objection to come directly to the *gravamen* of your charge, and put in my plea to each of the counts in order. If my voice is still to be heard, not by itself alone, but as tortuously refracted and reflected through your editorial speaking-trumpet, I will at least do my utmost to guard against the instrument's giving an 'uncertain sound.'

As we understand him, he teaches:

1. That the Millennium, or the period of a thousand years, predicted in the Book of Revelation, is already past.

Guilty—guilty—without the shadow of an excuse, except the force of evidence. Is the offence remissible?

2. That the New Jerusalem, and the new heavens and earth, described in the last two chapters of Revelation, are to be expected on the *present earth*.

Peccavi! again. I need no confessional in which to make my humble acknowledgments on this score. I avow it before the sun and moon and all the luminaries, celestial and terrestrial, with the single qualification, that so far as the new *heavens* imply something distinct from the new *earth*, I have never embraced in my creed the incongruity of placing the heavens *upon* the earth, and thus mixing them confusedly together. But that the *site* and *scene* of that coming state of things which the Scriptures denominate the 'New Jerusalem,' is to be the present material globe, I do most assuredly believe and most unhesitatingly teach. And before you

brandish in my eyes the decree *de hæretico comburendo* (of burning the heretic), allow me to hint at the ground upon which this persuasion builds itself in my own mind.

I find by an exact collation of numerous passages in Isaiah, which are usually referred to the Millennium, with the tenor of John's description of the New Jerusalem, that both prophets are actually portraying *the same prophetic state*; so that if one is setting forth the glories of the terrestrial Zion, the other is also. If one is painting the felicities of the heavenly paradise, the other is also. At any rate, the terms of the description in each are so palpably parallel, that if you or any one else denies this identity, you are bound to account for the perfect equivalency, not to say absolute sameness, of language in the respective writers. I have a right to demand that the *principle* which requires a *distinct* reference of the two classes of texts, shall be clearly brought out. But you are well aware that the language of Isaiah is *universally* understood of what is familiarly termed the 'latter day glory,' and this in the current vocabulary of Christians is but another phrase for 'millennial glory,' which is of course, in their expectancy, to be realized on the earth in some future period. If such then be the true interpretation of Isaiah, seeing John has evidently the same state in view under the denomination of the New Jerusalem, *he* also is describing a *mundane* state of things of future occurrence. I am sorry that my limits forbid the expansion of proof on this head of which the subject is capable. I have gone into it at length in the two first Nos. of the 'Hierophant,' and intend to prosecute it still further in the sequel. But at present I can only adduce one or two passages as specimens of the argument.

JOHN 21: 24, 25, 26.

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.

ISAIAH 60: 3, 11.

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.

We have here the most indubitable evidence, that the blissful state shadowed out under the denomination of the New Jerusalem is still an *earthly* state; for how are the kings of the earth, *as such*, to bring their honor and their glory into the Paradise above? Clearly it is the preintimation of that surpassing peace, plenty, prosperity, dignity, grandeur, and supremacy which shall distinguish the kingdom of Christ in the latter day, and which shall exact the willing homage and the ready tributes of all earthly kings

and potentates. The tokens of fealty and subjection which were paid by the neighboring nations to Solomon in the palmy days of his dominion, which was a type of Christ's, shall be more abundantly evinced in this coming period of Zion's exaltation; 'And all the earth sought to Solomon; and they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armor, and spices, horses and mules, a rate year by year.' 1 Kings 10: 24, 25. By the 'nations of the saved' is to be understood, according to a common idiom of the original, which often puts a present participle for the future, 'the nations (i. e. gentiles) *to be saved*' or which are now brought within the pale of saving influences. The 'honor and glory' of the kings (i. e. kingdoms) of the one prophet is perfectly tantamount to the 'forces of the gentiles' of the other. The original word for 'forces' (חַיִל) is often used for 'wealth,' 'riches,' 'resources,' or whatever tends to impart distinguished *strength, sway, honor, and renown*. The very apposite note of Mr. Barnes on these words of the O. T. prophet may be properly cited in this connexion:—'The margin has undoubtedly the correct interpretation (wealth). The sense is, that the wealth of the heathen world should yet be consecrated to the service of the church. To some extent this has (already) been the case. No small part of the great wealth of the Roman empire was consecrated to the service of the Christian Church; and the wealth of what was then Pagan Europe, and the wealth of what was then Pagan and unknown America, has been to a considerable extent devoted to the Redeemer. The time will come when the wealth of India, of China, and of Africa, and of the entire world, shall be devoted to the service of God, in a manner far more decided than has yet occurred in the most favored Christian lands.' If this be—as we doubt not it is—the correct exposition of the language of Isaiah, how vain must be the attempt to seek in the perfectly parallel language of John for a sense utterly diverse from this, and make it an intimation of something to be done in heaven! The whole drift of the predictions of the respective prophets points to a fulfilment *in this world*, and in some coming age.

The foregoing is from Isaiah. Take the following from Ezekiel:

JOHN 22: 1, 2.

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

EZEKIEL 47: 12.

And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

Are not the two prophets indubitably describing the same visioned scene of surpassing grace and glory to the church of the living God? But where is the expositor, ancient or modern, who has ever intimated the opinion, that Ezekiel in this passage or in the chapter from which it is taken is speaking of the heavenly state subsequent to the physical destruction of the heavens and the earth? But if Ezekiel is describing an earthly state, John must of course be interpreted to the same effect. And this a little calm reflection would show to be necessary from the scope of the language itself; for what nations (gentiles) are to be healed in heaven? Are we not elsewhere taught, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still?" Besides, if, as you inform your readers in your 'Platform of Prophecy,' there is to be no sun or moon (literally) in the New Jerusalem, how are the 'months' to be measured, the intervals at which the tree shall yield its fruits?—The truth is, the state is a *terrestrial* state, and it is vain to attempt out of these materials to excogitate any other. And if so, then I demand of you when it is to be. What are its chronological relations? How is it connected with the other grand futurities of the Apocalypse? Do not think to throw the burden of solution on me. I refuse to assume it. I state simply the *facts* of revelation, and have no more concern with their bearings than you have. I affirm as a *fact*, the identity of the state, whatever it is, described by the Old and the New Testament prophets, and it is utterly impossible that you can avoid the very conclusion with which you have so invidiously reproached me, to wit, the *earthly* locality of the New Jerusalem, except by flatly denying that the river and the trees of Ezekiel pertain to the same state with the river and the trees of John. Until shown to be different, the *presumption* certainly is that they are the same, as all the attributes are the same; and if you deny this, the *onus* of the proof lies upon you, and you are bound to assign competent reasons for giving a diverse reference to each. If the present were a case where you could, as heretofore, enact Sir Oracle and *denounce* without *disproving*, I should expect you would adopt the same tone here also. But fortunately it is a case which does not admit of evasion. It is a categorical case, and must be met by either 'yea' or 'nay,' with a *reason*.

As the matter now stands, I do not hesitate to express the firm belief, that the two items above quoted from the description of the New Jerusalem, viz. the kings of the earth bringing their glory into it, and the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations, will eventually be to your own and the common views of the New Jerusalem state, what two small and unperceived leaks are to a vessel at sea; they will ingulf the theory. If there be any certainty in prophetic interpretation, Isaiah and Ezekiel predict identically the same state with John. But *their* golden age is on the material

globe and within the limits of *time*. So of course must John's New Jerusalem be. This period is precisely the same with that predicted by Daniel under the image of the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which became itself a mountain and filled the whole earth—the period when the kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints of the Most High, and they shall reign forever and ever.

So long therefore as my head is covered with the brazen helmet of these citations, I beg you will spare the outpouring of any vials of vituperation, as it would be a wasteful effusion.—But come we to the next item in the bill.

3. That in preparing the earth for this glorious state of things, there is to be such a conflagration as is described in Peter : 'The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night ; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth, also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.'

4. *This day of the Lord, and this burning of the earth, do not imply any personal coming of Christ, nor any physical conflagration.* 'The words denote (he says) not a sudden, but a gradual and progressive abolition of the things previously existing.' The 'elements of error shall be dissolved and melted by the purifying fire of truth.' How does this agree with the exhortation of the apostle, 'seeing all these things shall be dissolved ?' &c.

These paragraphs you have doubtless brought together in this manner in order to show, first, my inconsistency with myself, and, secondly, my inconsistency with Peter, and by an attempted *reductio ad absurdum* to throw the utmost disparagement on the alleged sentiment. Very well ; let us see where the opprobrium falls. Peter, you would intimate, teaches the doctrine of a physical conflagration of the earth, at which time there is to be the second personal coming of Christ. But Peter, you will observe, adds, 'Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.' This promise is to be found Isaiah 65 : 17, and proves upon inspection to be nothing more nor less than a promise of the New Jerusalem—which I have above shown to be an earthly state—and when taken in connection with the context evidently includes elements that *force* upon us the conviction of the *continued existence of the earth and of its mortal inhabitants*.*

* I might here have very properly remarked, in farther reply to the objection, that if the personal coming of Christ is to take place at the period of the conflagration, it is also to take place at the period announced by Isaiah, when God should create new heavens and a new earth, as the era is the same. I would demand, then, whether the language of Isaiah is at all consistent with such a view ? Let the context be consulted, and

I pray you not to put me in a false position in this matter. I am not propounding a theory, but stating *facts*—facts which concern you as well as me—facts which press upon the common view, and which it *must* dispose of before it can yield entire satisfaction to the intelligent mind. This New Jerusalem, like the old, seems likely to prove a ‘burdensome stone’ to those who have not strictly investigated the sequence of the prophetic visions. And allow me to say, that this same ‘burdensome stone’ bids fair to do some damage by rolling against the under-proppings on which your ‘platform of prophecy,’ as set up in the last Evangelist, rests. You inform us that the next great event in the predicted order is the destruction of Rome, the Babylon of the Apocalypse, and the seat of Antichrist, after which come other burnings and battles, the thousand years of Satan’s binding, the resurrection, general judgment, and end of the world, and then finally the heavenly state or New Jerusalem. To the destruction of Rome or Babylon, you say we are unquestionably very near, and you call upon ‘any man who is able to do it to bring one passage, either from the Old Testament or the New, which will militate with this construction.’ I accept your challenge at once. Indeed, I consider the whole previous tenor of this communication as a virtual refutation of the entire scheme which you have so confidently propounded. But waving that, what say you to the following? The destruction of Babylon is recited in the 18th chapter of the Apocalypse. In the 19th ensues immediately a triumphal song, sung in heaven, in view of the overthrow of this grand enemy of the church. In that song it is said, ‘Let us rejoice and be glad, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, *and his bride hath made herself ready.*’ That is, the destruction of Babylon has removed the main obstacle that stood in the way of the consummation of the long-promised and hallowed nuptials of the heavenly Bridegroom and his affianced Spouse. But who is the wife of the Lamb that hath thus made herself ready? Turn to chapter 21: 2, and the question is answered:—‘And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, *prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*’ Here then it appears that the *New Testament Evangelist* takes a very different view of the matter from the *New-York Evangelist*. According to the former, the introduction of the New Jerusalem

it will be evident at a glance, that no such construction is possible. On the contrary, as the state described is evidently a *spiritual* state, it is to be effected by a *spiritual* coming of the Son of God in the pre-eminent power of his Truth, Spirit, and Salvation. The theory of the second personal and visible advent of the Saviour at the opening of the grand sabbatical period of the world, whether this be termed the Millennium or the New Jerusalem, is in my opinion one of the most baseless of all the extravaganzas of prophetic hallucination.

economy is to take place immediately consequent upon the overthrow of Babylon, which is confessedly near, and according to the latter, the space of at least one thousand years of time and the physical conflagration of the globe are first to intervene! I leave you, gentlemen, to settle this discrepancy for yourselves, and in the mean time I will sit down and see what comfort I can extract from the following morceau of editorial conservatism: 'Prof. Bush may be assured that we shall not suffer speculations so perfectly wild as these to go forth, without protesting against them. This protest we have a right to make, and without giving our reasons.'

Very respectfully, yours, &c.

GEO. BUSH.

TO OUR READERS.—Our number for the present month, it will be perceived, is lacking in its usual variety: we trust not in its usual interest. The two articles composing it we knew not how to omit, nor, inserting, how to abridge; consequently our whole space is occupied by them. In the ensuing numbers we shall study to adhere more fully to our original plan.

Unavoidable circumstances, requiring an absence of a few weeks, will occasion some delay in the issue of No. IV. After our return we shall 'give all diligence' to make up arrears, by bringing out the remaining portions of the work at shorter intervals, till we have overtaken all the months in advance of us.

We propose to enter at an early date upon the consideration of the works of Prof. Stuart and Dr. Duffield, mentioned in our last.

The sixth volume in our series of 'Notes' on the Pentateuch—that on 'Leviticus'—has just been carried through the press, and is now to be had of Dayton and Newman, 199 Broadway, in uniform binding, and at the same price, with the preceding volumes.

"Some of the striking excellencies of his commentaries are the following. First, a faithful exposition of the text, according to its original meaning. We have no second-hand testimony, no transcription for the hundredth time, no miserable dilution. The Notes have the freshness which can be imparted only by a genuine scholar, who investigates fundamentally, and brings up the sparkling native ore; at the same time, there is no unnecessary protrusion of the original, nor depreciation of the English version. That venerable, and on the whole, excellent translation, is treated with all due respect.

"Second, There are copious and very apposite illustrations from the valuable productions of the old writers, now not much known. Such are the works of Vitringa, Venema, Pool, Lightfoot, Bochart, Le Clerc, &c. Curious and pertinent comments are drawn from the Targums and other Jewish productions.

"Third, Practical and critical remarks are duly proportioned. The work is not one of mere learning. Prof. Bush's practical observations strike us as uncommonly apt, and not unfrequently original. They are not, however, obtruded upon us. They are not, in general, such as would arise in the mind of a casual reader. They are sometimes suggested by texts which would not at first view seem to furnish much spiritual nutriment. Our attention is thus kept awake; and our moral feelings are benefited, while our minds are instructed. Not a few of the remarks show that the writer has a rich experimental acquaintance with the inspired pages; that he does what a biblical interpreter ever should do, sympathize with the spirit of that which he professes to expound."—*Boston Recorder*.

"Those who are acquainted with Prof. B.'s former works on Genesis and on Joshua and Judges will need no other assurance, as to the great value of these volumes, than that they are executed on the same plan and are every way worthy of being ranked by the side of their predecessors. For close critical investigation of the sense of terms and phrases, for diligent research into Eastern manners and customs, and a lucid, happy mode of presenting to common readers the results of the most profound inquiries, Prof. B. has no superior. When we add to this, that he loses no opportunity of grafting the most pertinent, moral, and practical reflections upon the texts which he explains, we have perhaps given to his works about the highest praise to which a commentary on the Scriptures can lay claim. To this praise we have no doubt the five published volumes of Prof. B. on the Old Testament are amply entitled; and we are happy to learn, from the republication of the whole series in England, that his critical labors are no less highly appreciated in that country than with us at home. The work on Exodus is distinguished by one feature which scarcely appears in that on Genesis, although it is true there is less occasion for it; we allude to the great number of illustrative cuts designed to make intelligible the descriptions of the various items of sacred antiquity, such as the Tabernacle with its furniture, the dresses of the Priests, &c., all of which the reader will find most graphically and accurately portrayed in these pictorial views. On the whole we cannot but think that the religious public, particularly the teachers and pupils of Bible Classes, are greatly to be congratulated on the appearance of this very valuable contribution to biblical science."—*Christian Mirror*.

NOTICE.

THE HIEROPHANT is designed as a monthly publication, devoted mainly to the subject of Scripture Prophecy, but embracing in its plan other topics of biblical exposition. The Editor's engagements are such that he cannot at present promise a very regular issue of the numbers at the stated intervals. His subscribers, however, may depend on receiving the twelve during the year. They will be published with more rapidity by and by.

The terms are \$1 50 per annum *in advance*; payment to be forwarded (free of charge) to the Editor, 136 Nassau-st., New-York. As the sum is one of rather inconvenient transmission by mail, it is desired that private opportunities should be embraced whenever practicable; or if the amount of two or more subscriptions could be sent in one inclosure at the same time, it would obviate the difficulty in question. Subscribers living in the neighborhood of agents will treat with them, unless opportunities occur for communicating directly with the Publishers or the Editor.

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