THE WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND JOSEPH HALL, D.D.

BISHOP OF EXETER AND AFTERWARDS OF NORWICH.

A NEW EDITION,

REVISED AND CORRECTED, WITH SOME ADDITIONS,

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THE REVELATION UNREVEALED.

CONCERNING THE

THOUSAND YEARS' REIGN OF

THE SAINTS WITH CHRIST UPON EARTH.

LAYING FORTH THE WEAK GROUNDS AND STRANGE CONSEQUENCES OF
THAT PLAUSIBLE AND TOO MUCH RECEIVED OPINION.

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THE PREFACE.

If there be any deeps in divine scripture wherein the elephant may swim, they are surely to be found in the Book of the Revelation: wherein many great wits have both exercised and lost themselves.

Arias Montanus, that learned Spaniard, whose labours are famous for that noble edition of the whole sacred volume of God, when he comes to illustrate the Revelation with his commentary, shames himself with his improbable glosses; and by his ridiculous abstracts moves both the wonder and pity of the judicious of either religion. Castellio, whose elegant and painful version of both Testaments hath wont to pass with the learned for an useful paraphrase, when he comes to this Book of the Revelation, is not ashamed to pass a non intelligo upon it. Master Junius, though given to this last age for a great light to the holy text, yet professes himself in many of these mysteries to be in the dark; and no marvel, when Deodati grants that there are some parts of this book still reserved under God's secret seal, the explication whereof is utterly uncertain. And, amongst ourselves here at home, one, whom no man will envy the reputation of one of the greatest clerks in his age, when a plain man came seriously to him, and asked his opinion concerning an obscure passage in that book, answered, "My friend, I am not come so far."

Yet, I know not how it comes to pass, such is the nature of our inbred curiosity, that there is no book of the whole scripture wherein men are so apt to spend both their time and judgment: like as every man is apt to try his strength in lifting at an over-heavy weight, and to offer at the string of that bow which is much too strong for him to draw.

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a Arias Montanus, in his Commentary upon the Revelation, ridiculously interprets the several prophecies by abstracts: as, "Terrestris industria, pagana rusticitas, &c."

b ["Et tamen hujus libri cujus vix millenniam partem intelligo."—Castal. Annotat. in Apocal.]

c "Mystoria valde obscura."—Jun. Prefat. [in Apoc.]

d Deodati: Argument of the Revelation. [See his notes on the Book of Revelations.]

e Dr. Andrewes, bishop of Winchester.
Preface to the Revelation unrevealed.

Whereupon have issued those strange obtortions of some particular prophecies to private interests. Mr. Brightman, a learned and godly divine, thinks to find not England only, but Cecil and Walsingham there. A Belgic doctor, in the synod of Dort, thought to find grave Maurice there. Joannes Brocardus thinks to find Venice there: and a grave divine, whose name I will spare, was so confident to find the Palatinate there, both in the loss and recovery of it, as that he would needs present his thoughts to the judicious eyes of king James himself, with small thanks for his labour. Neither wanted there some that made full account to find the late victorious Gustavus Adolphus therein plainly designed. As if the blessed apostle, now in his Patmos, overlooking all the vast continent betwixt us, should have had his thoughts taken up with our petty occurrences in this other side of the world. What should I tell how many, both of our own and foreign divines, have baffled and shamed themselves, in predefining, out of their mistaken constructions, the utmost period of the world; and have confidently set God a day for his final judgment!

As for this place which we have in hand, how rocky and shelvy it is, appears too well in those ribs of splitted vessels which lie still scattered on the sands.

The true importance of the point controverted.

Not that I think the opinion of our new Chilists so deadly and pernicious in itself, as to make shipwreck of their own or others' faith. Far be it from me to be guilty of so much uncharity, as to lay so deep a charge upon my fellow Christians: for what prejudice is it to me, if the souls of martyrs get the start of me, in resuming their bodies a thousand years before me; if in the mean while my soul be at rest in a paradise of bliss? And what can it import any man's salvation, to determine whether the saints reign with Christ on earth or in heaven, while I know that in either they are happy? Surely, in its own terms, the tenet seems to carry no great appearance of offence.

But all the danger is in that train of strange paradoxes and uncouth consequences which it draws in after it, specified in the following discourse: and in the ill uses that are made too commonly of it by some ill advised and mistaken clients. Whereof some, vainly imagining this reign of the saints already begun, cast off scriptures and ordinances as utterly useless, and please themselves in a conceited fruition of their happy kingdom, and an immediate conversation with the King of Glory. Others, con-

\footnote{Five Lights at Walton.}
struing all mutations which befall the Church as either the har-
bingers or several stages of their Saviour's approach to his new 
kingdom and theirs, applaud themselves in their imminent and 
already-descrived glory, rejoicing to tell us how far he is on his 
way; and, lest we should appeal to our own eyes in so important 
a case, tell us that this object is not for our discerning, but for 
qualified persons only; men, not like the ordinary sort of pro-
fessors, who are of a low, poor, pusillanimous spirit, but for such 
only as are deeply engaged in the Church's cause, and sharers in 
her troubles and sorrows: whereas, certainly, if those which suffer 
most may be allowed to be the most quicksighted, it may easily 
be known whose eyes we may best trust for intelligence. Hence 
have followed heavy censures and harsh entertainments of the 
otherwise affected; and an insultation upon dissenting brethren, 
as the oppressed and down-trodden enemies of this kingdom of 
Christ.

I desire, not to aggravate either these or any other inconveniences, which do usually attend this opinion; as one, that 
wishes rather to heal than to corrode the public sores.

Let me, therefore, preengage my reader not to mistake my dis-
course or my intentions. For my part, I am per-
suaded in my soul, that the coming of our Saviour 
is near at hand; and that, before that great day,

God hath decreed, and will yet effect a more happy 
and flourishing condition of his Church here on earth than we yet 
see; which I do humbly pray for, and hopefully expect; ambi-
tiously suing to my God, that my poor endeavours might be thought 
worthy to contribute any thing to so blessed a purpose. But, for 
the particularities of the time and manner, I both have learned 
and do teach silence. And if any man think he hath sufficient in-
timation of either or both of these, in the words of holy scripture; 
yet, since those clauses are involved in some obscurity and may 
afford multiplicity of sense, my desire and whole drift is, to be-
seech him to suspend his judgment concerning these so deep and 
intricate doctrines, till God shall be pleased to clear them by ap-
parent events; and in the mean time to rest contented with 
those evident and unquestionable truths of the gospel, which the 
Church of Christ hath hitherto unanimously taught and main-
tained: wherein he shall do that, which may happily conduce both 
to the Church's peace and his own.

* Zion's Joy in her King, pp. 24, 25, &c.
THE

REVELATION UNREVEALED.

SECTION I.

That prophecies, especially before they are fulfilled, are no
other than riddles, needs no other proof, than,
amongst other, the two dark passages of the Re-
velation: the one, concerning the number and name
of the beast, 666; the other, concerning the thou-
sand years' reign of the saints; either of which, I
may boldly say, many have guessed at, but no man living hath yet
been ever able fully to unfold.

Our business is with the latter; set forth by the beloved disciple
and evangelical prophet St. John, towards the shutting up of his
divine Revelation*.

Out of the literal sense whereof, not a few, in these later times,
have been raised to such a confidence of the speedy accomplish-
ment of this new kingdom, as if they did already see the clouds
breaking under the glorious feet of their returning Saviour, and
the chairs of this blessed state set ready for their enthronization.
How many have I heard joyfully professing their hopes of an
imminent share in that happy kingdom! Yea, some have gone so
far, as already to date their letters from New Jerusalem, and to
subscribe themselves glorified: whose ungrounded credulity may
receive some just correction, if they shall but see the strange
variety of construction which this supposed earthly sovereignty
hath undergone from men as wise in their own opinion as them-
selves.

Whereunto, that I may make the better way, I shall lay this
for an undoubted ground, That there is no passage in the whole
book of God wherein this millenary reign of saints is punctually
expressed save only this of the Revelation.

For, as for those sixty-six texts alleged by Alstedius, and the
late herald of Zion's Joy, they are too general to make out such

* Rev. xx. 4, 5.
a specialty, both of the term and the personal administration, which is contended for; and, besides, have been, by the judgment of all allowed antiquity and all Christian authors till the fag-end of this last century, understood of the spiritual beauty and glory of the evangelical Church under the happy times of the gospel. Whosoever shall be pleased to take a strict view of these several scriptures shall find them only to import the calling of the Gentiles, the conversion of the Jews, the abundance of rich graces poured out upon believers, God's gracious protection and enlargement of his Christian Church, the subjugation and overthrow of the public enemies thereof: all which may well stand without any relation to this pretended dominion of the raised martyrs or changed saints. So as I cannot but wonder to see Christian authors so apt to humour the refractory Jews, in a literal construction of the prophetical predictions of the restoration of that pompous and secular glory which they have hitherto fondly dreamed of, and hath been hitherto unanimously decried by all the ancient and late doctors of the Christian Church: and to see these evangelical promises thus carnally drained into a wrong channel; which, certainly, whose shall stand upon in so gross a sense, may as well contend that the New Jerusalem shall really have twelve gates of twelve pearls, and streets of pure gold, and the foundations of the walls all manner of precious stones\(^b\): and if these be figurative, why should the other be literal?

**SECTION II.**

But that scripture which might seem to bear most weight in this subject is the prophecy of Daniel; who, in the construction of the favourers of the millenarian opinion, is pretended to speak particularly of the tyrannical reign of Antichrist, of his destruction, of the happy deliverance and peace of the faithful under the gospel; not without a special designation of the punctual time wherein that *man of sin* shall be revealed, and wherein God's people shall enjoy rest and happiness, both in the beginning and termination thereof. Insomuch as besides Alstede, our learned Mede, in a Latin manuscript of his, which came lately to my hands, concerning the revelation of Antichrist, grounds his judgment upon Daniel's prophecy: not a little blaming some late expositors for turning the stream of those predictions another way.

\(^b\) Rev. xxi. 19, 21.
But reserving a due reverence to so great and eagle-eyed authors, I dare appeal to all unbiased judgments, whether it do not best suit with all the circumstances of those enigmatical prophecies of Daniel, to confine their relations only to the Jewish Church; making their utmost extent to be the death of the Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem, without any further meddling with the state of the Church evangelical; saving only in that one touch of the second coming of Christ to judgment, wherein both the whole Church and world is jointly concerned.

To make, therefore, the fourth monarchy to be the Roman tyrannizing over the reformed Church under the gospel, and the little horn with eyes to be the Antichrist of the last times, and to draw the computation of the times mentioned unto an accordance to an imagined calculation, may seem to be no other than a straining of the text beyond the intention of the author. Sure we are, that all those prophetical predictions were literally and really fulfilled to and upon the Jews, under the reign of those kings amongst whom the Grecian empire of Alexander the Great was shared, and that in the just times which were designed; but upon what grounds we may stretch them farther, to a reaccomplishment in these last times, it is neither easy nor safe to determine.

Two things must be yielded: first, that those descriptions which are made by divines of that cruel tyrant and persecutor Antiochus Epiphanes, may well, by just allusion, be applied to the Antichrist under the gospel: secondly, that it hath pleased the Spirit of God to make use of the same expressions in John’s description of times which had formerly been taken up by Daniel: but hereupon to infer a revolution of the same condition of the Christian Church in the last age of the world, both in respects of her enemies and several events, seems strangely inconsequent.

Section III.

The most probablest and most urgent passages of the prophet Daniel, and those which are most stood upon by the forenamed authors, are Dan. xii. 11, 12, And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is the man that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

\[c \text{ Ecolampad. Comment. in Danielvm. l. ii.}\]
Where these two things are taken by these expositors for granted: 1. That the taking away of the daily sacrifice and this desolatory abomination, is to be understood of the last destruction of Jerusalem by Titus: 2. That the days there mentioned are to be understood to be so many years, which shall immediately succeed in the process of the evangelical Church.

So as, by Alsted's confident account, the destruction of Jerusalem falling upon the sixty-ninth year of Christ, presently begins the reckoning of the thousand two hundred and ninety prophetic days; that is, so many years; which do expire in the year of Christ 1359; about which time divers worthy persons, say they, began to oppose Antichristian impiety. From this period, they tell us, we must begin to compute the second number mentioned by Daniel, which is the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days; that is, years; which shall bring us unto the year of Christ 2694: in which, saith Alstadius, the thousand years of the saints spoken of in the Revelation shall have end; and they being ended, the war of Gog and Magog shall begin, which the last judgment supervening shall put to an end. So then take from these two thousand six hundred and ninety-four years one thousand years of the saints' reign, there remain one thousand six hundred and ninety-four. In this year then, or sooner, saith he, the thousand years of the happy reign of the saints shall take their beginning.

But what a weak and sandy foundation is this whereon to raise so high a structure! a foundation merely laid upon a misconstractive conjecture.

For what if that desolation mentioned be not that of Titus? what if those days be not years? where are we then for the time of our millenary reign?

Let us then obtain leave to inquire a little into both these:

And for the first, it is more than probable, by all circumstances, that this desolating abomination here spoken of, is the same with that which is forementioned, Dan. vii. 25, and viii. 13, 14, wherein the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the desolation specified are foretold by the angel interpreting the vision, and the very same time limited for the fulfilling of it; both which are accordingly, with much clearness of indubitable truth, accomplished in that persecuting tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes. Compare we the texts and the times. He, saith the angel, shall think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his
hand until a time and times and the dividing of time, Dan. vii. 25. By him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered, Dan. viii. 11, 12. Now what is a time, times, and a parcel of time, by Daniel's own exposition, but three years and some days? and what are those three years and few days, but those three years and ten days wherein the rage of persecution continued upon the Jews till the happy restoration of God's worship wrought by Judas Maccabeus, who, in seven months and ten days after this, forced the confirmation of it from the persecutors? And who is the man that shall do this great mischief intimated? Even that bloody Antiochus, which is so exactly deciphered by the prophet, as if he meant to forestall all question that might arise concerning him in the following generations: for it cannot be doubted that the great horn of the goat, which was the third monarch, was Alexander the Great; which horn being broken, the four horns that arose instead thereof were unquestionably those four kingdoms towards the four coasts of heaven, amongst which that Grecian monarchy was divided: which were of Egypt towards the south, falling to the share of Ptolemy Philadelphus; of Syria towards the north, which fell to Seleucus Nicanor; of Macedon towards the west, which fell to Cassander; and of Asia the Less to the east, which fell to the share of Antigonus. Now out of one of these, saith the prophet, that is, Seleucus Nicanor king of Syria, shall arise that little horn, the cruel Antiochus Epiphanes, who shall make such woful havoc amongst God's select nation the Jews; styled the people of the saints of the most High, Dan. vii. 27, in taking away the daily sacrifice, and defacing the sanctuary: whose grievous persecution, for the first stage of it, was of that punctual duration.

And to make the matter yet more clear, if we shall compare Dan. viii. 14 with this instanced text of Dan. xii. 7, we shall find the number of the days pitched upon to be the very same, for a time, times, and half a time: so as the 1290 days immediately specified make up that three years and a half wherein the fury of Antiochus's persecution shall continue; without any relation to the Roman Titus, which is pretended by these authors to make good their imagined computation. Reverend Calvin,

\[\text{d Seven times, i.e. seven years, Dan. iv. 16.}\]
\[\text{e Dan. viii. 8, 9.}\]
\[\text{f Ibid. 9.}\]
whose judgment I so much honour that I reckon him amongst the best interpreters of scripture since the apostles left the earth, is willing to construe this of the last desolation of the Jews by the Roman victors, but knows not what to make of the days specified; professing, that he is no Pythagorean for matter of numbers, and therefore contents himself to take this 1290 only pro longo temporis tractu, "for some long indefinite tract of time."

But whereas Alstede builds his conceit upon the succession of these two numbers, making the 1335 days (i.e. years) to follow after the former 1290 expiring, out of both making up his accomplished number of the saints' reign; Calvin checks him with a plain perperam; and resolves, upon a certum est, that both these numbers are coincident, and are to be taken for one and the same, with that small addition of the greater and later sum of years to the former: which if it be yielded, we are altogether to seek for our calculation of the thousand years wherein the saints must reign upon earth.

Only one main rub seems to lie in our way, which we must be careful to remove. Our Saviour himself speaks of the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, as a thing in his days yet to come; and therefore with undoubted relation to the Roman army led by Titus, and to the final sacking of Jerusalem. All which I do willingly grant, without any the least derogation from that former verity; for what is the holy place but the temple of Jerusalem? and what is the abomination of desolation but the idolatrous, heathenish, destructive army? such was both that of Titus and that of Antiochus. The place then of Daniel to which our Saviour alludes, with charge to him that reads to observe, is not the foregoing text now insisted upon, but Dan. ix. 27; wherein the angel, after the end of the designed weeks, tells us of the final destruction of the city and the sanctuary, which in the just time was accordingly fulfilled: so as this passage of prophecy hath no affinity at all with that of the xiith of Daniel, being not so much before it in place as after it in time.

Yet, if the event had not punctually made good every jot of this prediction, so construed as we have declared, there might be some doubt of the sense contended for; but now, the issue of the things did so evidently answer to the words thus interpreted, as

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8 "Quidam separant, sed perperam, dies 1290 et 1335. Nam, certum est pro eodem accipi."—Calv. in loc. Dan. Serm. 12.

h Matt. xxiv. 15.
one would think there could be no place left for contradiction: for, as Junius, Rolloc, and Deodati have clearly computed it to my hands, from the time that Antiochus Epiphanes began to set up idolatry at Jerusalem, until the time wherein he was compelled by the victorious Maccabees, both to permit and allow and ratify the reformation thereof by his charter, there passed three years, seven months, and about thirteen days; which amount to the thousand two hundred and ninety days, mentioned v. 11. And from the setting up of that idolatry, if we reckon to the time of the full deliverance of God's people from the yoke of that tyranny, it will fall upon the second number mentioned, v. 12, wherein that wicked Antiochus was taken away by death; which makes up the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days: which day whoso should live to see, is declared to be blessed, for his happy freedom, and comfortable enjoying of the holy worship of God.

Section IV.

And now, what is here in the letter of Daniel's prophecy that doth but look towards the thousand years' reign of the saints upon earth? Surely not one syllable that may without a violent anguration be drawn to such a sense.

And if Alstede shall pretend that these mysteries of the later times, concerning the Antichrist and the time of the saints' reign, are to be found in Daniel, not in the express letter, but in a way of type or analogy, because he meets with the same phraseology of time, and the like description of persons and things in the evangelist's revelation which he finds in Daniel's prophecy; surely, he had need of greater authority for the warrant of such application than, I fear, can be produced: and if that were yielded, yet that which we are wont to say of similitude is verified much more in prefigurations that they are not intended to hold universally; and, in short, symbolical divinity is not to be trusted for matter of proof.

What mysteries there may be in numbers, and upon what reason it hath pleased the Spirit of God to take up the same terms of numeration for days, months, years, and times in the case of the Christian Church which he made use of in the Jewish, I suppose it were too much presumption in any man to determine.

1 2 Maccab. xi. 33.
And if the events of things be the best commentaries upon prophecies, how unanswerable those have proved to the computations and sense of our new Chiliasths shall in due place be made manifest.

Now if there be any other amongst those sixty-five places alleged by Alstedius, wherein the favourers of the millenarian reign can place any confidence for the evicting of their opinion, I should be glad to see it driven up to the head. For my part, I must sincerely profess I see none that can so much as raise, much less settle my belief.

Supposing, then, as we well may, that this place of Rev. xx. stands alone; let us inquire whether the sense of it be so clear as that we may with good assurance build upon it, for the certainty of our resolution concerning the state of the whole world, and particularly of all God's saints, for the space of a whole thousand years, lost hitherto in the vulgar account of all Christian divines. Surely, there can be but one truth; and whatever falls beside it is but vain opinion: as, when two points are fixed, there can 'be but one direct line drawn betwixt them; all other bewray a manifest variation and obliquity. The stars, because they keep a regular course, yield most certain observations of their site and motions; but the clouds, which are raised out by vapours and carried by winds, how far they are from affording a true judgment, let every almanack witness. Now whether this conceit be a star or a cloud shall appear by that which followeth.

Section V.

Some expositors, then, and those neither few nor mean, have taken the thousand years of Satan's shutting up to be the same thousand wherein the saints shall reign. Others, not fewer, make the saints' reign to follow this binding of Satan for many hundreds of years. And for the time of this chaining up of Satan some take the thousand years for a long time, but indefinite: so Fulke\(^k\) and Deodati\(^l\). Others construe literally, of that determinate number of years specified. Some define it to be the whole time since the first publishing of the gospel to the end of the world: so Nicholaus Zegerus, Emmanuel Sa, and Estius\(^m\). Some determine

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\(^k\) Fulke in loc.

\(^l\) Deodati in loc. [Rev. xx. 3.]

\(^m\) Zegerus, Sa [i.e. usque ad diem

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it to be the whole time of the gospel published until the days of their Antichrist; which should be three years and an half before the judgment: so Ribera\textsuperscript{a}, out of Augustin: so Haymo\textsuperscript{o}, and Joannes Gagnæus, a divine of Paris.

Some define this number of the 1000 years to begin the 36th year, or thereabouts, after our Saviour's death; when the Jewish Church being overthrown, Satan rushed impetuously upon the Church Christian, and was restrained till the days of Hildebrand: so Junius.

Some define it to begin from the time of Constantine (whom Mr. Brightman conceives to be that angel which, coming down from heaven, and having the keys of the bottomless pit, laid hold on the dragon, and bound him in chains), till the thousand years expired; which ended in the one thousand three hundredth year of Christ, in the days of Boniface the Eighth, and the Ottoman empire: so Napier and Brightman and Mr. Fox.

Some reckon it from first preaching of the gospel by Christ and his apostles until the time of Gregory the Seventh, otherwise called Hildebrand: and the time of Satan's loosing to be 400 or 500 years: so Dent.

Others, ending the time of Satan's shutting up in the year 1300, make the time of his rage to be an hour, a day, a month, and a year; that is, about three hundred and ninety years after: so Brightman.

Some others make the loosing of Satan to be when Mahomet and the pope grew so great; which was at the end of the thousand years after Christ: in all which time the sincere doctrine was taught, till Antichrist came in with the doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, and the doctrine of merits, satisfactions, &c.: so Fulke.

Some place the beginning of Satan's binding upon the year 1517, when the witnesses were raised; for that from that time all people have not generally drunk any new poison of heresy, which might weaken or overthrow their faith: so Matthæus Cotterius.

Some others imagine the beginning of this chaining up of Satan to be after the taking of Rome by the Goths, and after Augustulns, who was the last emperor of the west; affirming, though uponickle grounds, that after the fall of the Roman empire, yea after Mahomet, there was peace in the Church for 1000 years: so as

\textsuperscript{a} Ribera in loc. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{o} Haymo l. vii. in Apoc.
Sect. VI.] The Revelation unrevealed.

Satan was bound, and shut up in the bottomless pit, till this last age now passed: so Mariana.

Others hold that this thousand years of Satan's binding up is not yet begun, but shall be in this age, wherein the saints' reign shall enter about the year 1694: so Alstedius and his followers.

These are some of those varieties of constructions (for, if I listed to look after them, it were easy to cloy the reader with many more; these tendered themselves to me suddenly, and, as it were, unsought) which have passed concerning the thousand years' captivity of Satan, whereby it pleased the Spirit of God to make way to the thousand years' reign of the saints. In the determination whereof there is no less multiplicity of judgment amongst learned and Christian interpreters; some few whereof I shall lay forth before my reader.

Section VI.

And, first, concerning the times of this reign.

"A thousand," saith Haymo, "is a perfect number; and, therefore, by a thousand years we understand the present life and the future: now the saints reign by faith; and, in the day of judgment, their reign shall not be terminated, but receive a glorious augmentation." So he.

To the same purpose saith Collado: "The thousand years are the whole series of time here in this world, in which there shall be always a Church of Christ. As the faithful have lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, that is in the whole space of this life, so they shall reign with Christ a thousand years in the whole duration of the world to come."

And, if this seem too large, surely these men do not shoot farther over than Joannes Brocardus shooteth short; who contracteth the thousand years after the establishment of the gospel into a thousand days here on earth; as, contrarily, Jonas's forty days were stretched out into forty years.

Of those that hold not fit to divide the time betwixt the present and future life, some understand the thousand years' reign to be understood of the flourishing estate of the Church militant during the time of Satan's captivity: "For all the faithful," say they, "do in a sort live and reign with Christ here on earth, when they overcome the world by faith:" so Mr. Dent. Some, again, take it of the whole time between the first coming of

Haymo in Apoc. i. vii. Collado in Apoc. xx.
Christ and the second: so Æcolampadius, in Daniele. Others, waving the present life, define it to be meant of that glorious kingdom which the souls of the saints enjoy in heaven until the day of judgment: so Mariana: so Estius: and Fulke, to the same purpose, thus:—"These martyrs, being delivered from the calamities of this miserable life by the first death, and being taken up into heavenly joys, they live and reign still with Christ through the whole thousand years, so long as Satan shall remain in bonds: not that after that thousand years they shall die; but to express how great a benefit it was to the godly to be all that while in happiness:" thus he; without any supposition of a preceding resurrection. Joannes Piscator, as going yet farther, even half the millenary way, so construes it, as that it is to be understood of theraised martyrs and their ensuing glorification: "This," saith he, "is the singular happiness of the martyrs of Christ, who, before these 1000 years, endured persecution; even their resurrection, which shall be before the general resurrection; and their reign in heaven with Christ for a thousand years before the resurrection of the rest.

Of those which take this 1000 years' reign to be in this life below, there is no small variety of construction. Illyricus takes it to be an inversion of sense; the predicate being set before the subject, the relative before the antecedent; so as the order of the sense should be thus: "I saw the souls of those that worshipped not the beast, &c., and that died for Christ, to live and reign with him, and to sit on their thrones, and judge the wicked; reigning with Christ spiritually, in suffering bodily; as those who, by their martyrdom for Christ, shall reign and triumph, all the time of Satan's repression, over him and his wicked instruments." Aretius thus: "They lived again, and reigned with Christ: that is, their cause was found just before him; and they were openly accounted and pronounced saints." "The thousand years' reign," saith Ribera, "is not to be referred to those which worshipped not the beast; for he speaks not of them as dead: but is to be referred to the souls of those which had been martyred for the testimony of Jesus; that is, to those who, when he wrote this, had suffered death for Christ:" so he. But others take it for a later reckoning. "This reign of 1000 years," saith Brightman, "was to begin where the former period ended; that is, in the year 1300: wherein the continuance of the truth is promised

* Brightman Apocal.
to be for 1000 years, after the restitution of it in these parts of Europe, whose is the first resurrection: we only have seen three whole hundreds of it passed since the first resurrection:" thus he. "Not so," saith Mr. Cotton; "but, after the destruction of Antichrist, the saints shall enjoy that liberty a thousand years together: not any one of them, but men of the same spirit shall reign with Christ a thousand years in the government of the Church upon earth: reign with him; that is, execute, not their own government, but the government of Christ." "Nay," saith Alstede, Mede, and Archer, "that sense falls too short: but the bodies of the martyrs and saints shall rise again in the beginning of those thousand years before the universal and last resurrection; and shall reign here with Christ upon earth, as being appointed governors of the Church with Christ." "No, they shall not rise in their bodies," saith Mr. Cotton; "but there shall rise men of the same spirit; who shall have the judicature and government of the Church, together with these angels or messengers, and ministers of God: those that were branded before for heretics, they shall be the only men to be fit to have crowns on their heads, and independent government committed to them:" thus he.

But I may not tire the reader too much with the enumeration of these differences.

Some take this thousand years' reign to take beginning after the second resurrection: whom Mr. Brightman absolutely rejects.

Others, in the other extreme, imagine themselves now already reigning with Christ; their resurrection or change to be already past; and themselves glorified, and possessed of the new Jerusalem descended from heaven; who, if they do find in themselves these high workings of the Spirit, which they profess; and be so far transported with these raptures as to think themselves already in their new heaven; I should not be more apt to wonder at their ecstasies than to pity their glory.

Mr. Mede makes the 1000 years' reign to be the day of a more visible and apparent judgment; circumscribed with two conspicuous resurrections, as two limited terms. "It shall be," saith he, "begun, first, with the particular and timely judgment of Antichrist, and other enemies of the Church then remaining alive, with the glorious appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, in

1 Cotton, Resurrection of Churches. 2 Mede, Commentarium Apoc. cap. part 2.
flames of fire: and at length, after the kingdom of a thousand years granted to his holy Spouse, the new Jerusalem here on earth, and others that shall afterward be born, this great day now drawing to an end, shall be finished, after the letting loose of Satan and utter destruction of the Church's enemies, with the general resurrection and judgment of all the dead; which being performed, the wicked shall be thrust down to hell, to be tormented everlastingly, and the saints translated into heaven, to reign eternally with Christ." So he.

Shortly, some hold this reign of Christ with his saints for the 1000 years shall be personal and visible: so Mede and Archer. Others, that this while Christ shall reign visibly in heaven, invisibly upon earth: so Alstedius. Others leave it in medio, whether personal or otherwise: so Mr. Burroughs.

And, lastly, whereas this kingdom of the thousand years relates to the resurrection; some hold the first resurrection spiritually, to be understood of rising from sin by a spiritual regeneration: so Fulke and Aretius. Others take it of a bodily resurrection of some elect persons, before the general: as Alsted and Mede. Others take it of a resurrection of churches, when recovered from their apostatical and dead estate in idolatry: so Mr. Cotton. Others, lastly, make the first resurrection to be the glorification of the souls of the elect; and the second, at the general day, the arising to their perfect blessedness, both in souls and bodies: so Gagnæus. Some appropriate this first resurrection and reign to martyrs only: others enlarge it to all the saints.

Now, Lord, where are we? What reader doth not find himself lost in this wilderness of opinions? Or what living man can in such diversities of probable judgments say, this, not the other, is the sense of the Holy Ghost? It was a wise and true word of that father, *Melius est dubitare de occultis, quam ligitare de incertis*: "It is better to doubt of things hidden, than to quarrel about things uncertain." And to the same purpose is that discreet and moderate counsel of Deodati: "In all this prophecy," saith he, "it is better and more sure to expect and stay for the explication of the event, than to give it without any certain ground:" which seasonable advice, if it had been accordingly followed by many of our zealous compatriots, had saved me the labour of this not overpleasing discourse.

* Burroughs in Hos. Lect. 7.  
* Cotton, Resurrection of Churches.
SECTION VII.

But when I saw so many well-minded Christians, by a credulous trust of some modern authority strongly carried back into the opinion of the ancient chiliasts, which was so many hundred years ago hooted out of the Christian Church; and so passionately affected therewith, as that they run themselves into wild consequents, both of paradoxes in opinion and resolutions in practice; I might not but break silence; and, if no more, yet charitably to advise them to a safe suspension of judgment in a matter so abstruse and altogether indeterminable.

It is true, that it is not a matter of faith; neither imports salvation either way: so as here can be no warrant for the violation of charity, in over bitter censures of either the defenders or oppugners of it: yet, withal, it must be granted to be such as, in that form wherein it is maintained by some abettors, may draw in some dangerous consecutaries, both of act and opinion.

It would be bootless for me to look back at the ancient heresy of the milliaries, as Austin calls them, to show how that gross error, which was first broached by the Epicurean, and, as Lindanus justly calls him, Judaizing Cerinthus, was in a more tolerable sense taken up, not long after, by Papias bishop of Hierapolis, reported by Irenæus to be an auditor of St. John and companion of Polycarpus, a well-meaning man, but σμίκρος τῶν νόμων, "of a mean judgment," as he is styled; mente non acri, as Nicophorus: which yet relished so ill with the Christians of those times, as that this very passage of the Revelation was deemed by them a probable ground to call the divine authority of this whole book into question, as savouring too much of Cerinthus; but the majesty, which shined in that holy prophecy, soon dispelled that cloud, and induced the Church to find a better sense of so obscure a clause than the merely literal.

Wherein yet some eminent authors thought fit still to rest, as Irenæus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Lactantius: yea, we are told by that worthy and orthodox Dionysius Alexandrinus, that Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, wrote a book in those early times to this purpose, which he called Elenchus Allegoristarum; wherein he too grossly maintained that thousand years' reign in all earthly pleasure and delicacy; seconded also by one Coracion, the then famous ringleader of that sect: against whom that reverend and

* About the year of Christ 270.  
* "Ελέγχω τ' Ἀλληγοριστάων."
holy Dionysius bent his style, in two books of the Promises of God: confuting that Judaical and literal construction of the large predictions of the outward happiness of the Church, now by some revived: who, not without a preface of the high respects which he gives to the author for his excellent parts and merits, effectually oppugns his misraised opinion; and spends three days' conference with Coracion to so good a purpose, as that he brought him, by strength of argumentation, to cast away and recant his former error: all which is fully laid forth by Eusebius.

Yet after this, about the year 370, Apollinaris, that exploded heretic, revives this sect; and adds this error to the company of many, much worse, defended by him: which, say Baronius and Binius, was so condemned in him by a council held at Rome about the year 373, ut posthac omnino conticuerit; "that it never so much as whispered since:" but, as it is better observed by Aretius, it held out to the times of Jerome and Augustin; who upon all occasions refel it, and cry it down for a Jewish fable.

Ever since which time, till now of late, there hath been no noise at all of it in the world; so as it hath lien dead for this twelve hundred and forty years; and now is raised up out of the grave of oblivion, by some that think themselves wiser than their predecessors.

Section VIII.

But, forasmuch as it doth not so greatly concern us to know what in this case hath been held by former opinionists, as what is now insisted upon for the present, let us both carefully inquire into the substance of this uncouth doctrine lately taken up by some of our brethren, and unpartially examine the grounds whereupon it is maintained.

And, for that I find none hath laid forth this opinion so fully and confidently as a late London divine, Mr. John Archer; one esteemed of so great sanctity and worth, as that no mean person doubted not to file him amongst men as precious as any the earth bore in his time; I shall fearlessly take his word for the point in

b Ἡρῴδης Ἐπιφάνειος.


d In his book of "The Personal Reign of Christ on Earth; laying forth and proving, that Jesus Christ, together with the Saints, shall visibly possess a Monarchical State and Kingdom in this World." Printed and sold by B. Allen, anno 1643.—Mr. Archer abridged, concerning Christ's Kingdom and Coming.
hand; and shall first sum up his doctrine concerning this subject, and then show the improbabilities and incongruities of it: the rather, for that I perceive his conceptions pass generally for the current tenet of the fators of this plausible opinion.

First then, he lays for his foundation, that there is a threefold kingdom of Christ: one, providential; which is that universal sovereignty by which Jesus Christ manageth the affairs of all the world, both in heaven and earth: another, spiritual; which is that sovereignty which he exercises over the consciences of some people, and in special the elect; subduing them, by his word and Spirit, to an universal obedience of him: a third, monarchical; wherein Christ, when he enters upon it, will govern as earthly monarchs do; that is, universally over the world, and in a worldly, visible, and earthly glory; not by tyranny and oppression, and sensually, but with honour, peace, riches, and whatsoever in and of the world is not sinful: so as Christ shall administer this sovereignty over all the earth in a visible and worldly manner, for splendour, riches, peace, &c., though not in a fleshly or sinful manner.

He thence descends to the consideration of the manner of this kingdom of Christ both in the extent and qualities of it.

The extent of it he makes to be unto all reasonable creatures; angels, devils, and men: showing that the high ones of the earth, kings and their monarchies, shall fall before the Lord. Both sun and moon, i.e. majesty of an higher and lower rank, shall vanish before him. He shall change all worldly custom; and so all kingly glory; and set up a new, even his own glory.

Secondly, for the opening of the quality of it, he makes a double day of judgment: one, strictly taken, for a partial judgment of some, not all; wherein many, both saints and sinners, shall be judged, and that with great terror and solemnity: the other, general; wherein all men and devils shall be judged; bringing a world of saints and sinners first to the bar of that more partial and strictly-taken judgment, long before the last and general day. But even that former shall be, he saith, a general judging (though not to the second death) of all the ungodly in the world; at least of all that will not stoop to Christ's sceptre: and, secondly, a judging to the saints alive, who shall be blamed for their former failings.

Now these two times and degrees of judgment begin and end Christ's kingdom or monarchies: so as all the time of his reign
may fitly be called a day of judgment; wherein there is an evening and morning, answerable to the natural day.

In the evening, or first part of Christ's kingdom, there is first an end, or withdrawing and ceasing of the light and glory of the foregoing day: so Christ's kingdom shall begin with the withdrawing of peace and comfort, and in following darkness; in that, great trouble shall begin to arise upon those who shall be the subjects of Christ's monarchy, both believing Gentiles and Jews, with Israelites or the ten tribes, who shall be all converted, and greatly troubled. But when that trouble is at the height, then comes the beginning of Christ's kingdom.

At the first setting up then of this kingdom, Christ shall come from heaven visibly, even as he went thither: which yet is not his last coming to the last judgment, but a middle coming betwixt the two other.

For Christ, he saith, hath three comings: the first, when he came to take our nature; the second, when he comes to receive his kingdom, for the receiving of which he went to heaven; the third, when he comes to judge all, and end the world.

This second coming of Christ shall be long before his coming to the last judgment.

In which second coming Christ will do these three things:

First, he will raise up the saints which are dead before this his coming: not only such as have been martyred, as some think; but all saints, who have died in the faith: for which cause he is said to come with all his saints, Zech. xiv. 5. But all the dead, which are not saints, shall lie still in the dust till the last and general judgment, for the second death. The saints which thus are raised in the first resurrection shall not return to a mortal state of body again, nor yet be so perfectly glorified as they shall be afterwards; for then the people on earth could not bear their presence, for they shall shine as the sun: but they shall be in a middle state, betwixt glory and mortality; as Christ was after his resurrection, before his ascension.

Secondly, he will destroy the wicked people on earth; for they, about the time of his coming, shall combine against the saints, and then will Christ suddenly surprise them to their ruin. Now this ruin of the wicked shall not be as yet universal to every one, only now he will ruin the armies of them; and so he will break the head and the arm of them, as it was with the Egyptians at the Red sea, and the rest he will make slaves to the churches.
And it seems that some wicked shall be left for a seed to these nations; because, by the end of Christ's kingdom, Gog and Magog shall rise against the saints; which cannot arise out of such as prove hypocrites or excommunicated, for there shall be none such there; but these wicked ones left shall be the nations ruled with iron, Rev. ii. 26, 27.

Thirdly, he shall examine, blame, and shame the saints who are alive at his coming, if they be found to have walked loosely. He will not kill them, nor change them in a moment, but shame them: therefore Peter exhorts to be holy, that we be not blamed at his coming, 2 Pet. iii. 11-14.

SECTION IX.

Mr. Arber's opinion concerning Christ's withdrawing to heaven again, and the government deputed to the saints, with their privileges.

Now when Christ hath thus done, and put his kingdom into form, he will withdraw to heaven again, and leave the government to the dead saints raised up, among whom the apostles shall be chief: and they shall have the government of those saints which are found alive; that is, they and all believers shall rule the world, in which the twelve tribes shall be chief: and they shall not only rule as kings, but as priests; that is, discipline their souls as well as their bodies.

Now, for that it might seem to be no small damage for the souls of saints dead to be fetched from heaven to live again upon earth, with men, in their bodies; he tells us, that it is likely the souls of the departed saints are not in the highest heaven, but in a middle place, better than this world, but inferior to the highest heaven; which place is meant by paradise in the New Testament: which paradise, he conceives, to be below the third heaven; and therefore, surely, to be in the region or element of fire, where the sun and stars are, or in the highest region of air, which is called heaven in scripture.

These saints' souls, fetched from this paradise, and joined with their bodies raised from the dead, (which is the first resurrection,) they rule Christ's kingdom, even all of them, though some of them in more eminent place than others.

The persons that shall be governed, or the subjects of this kingdom, shall be all that live upon earth; and the place they shall govern shall be the whole world. The saints shall be ruled like the Israelites under Solomon; the wicked, as slaves. Those ten of the twelve tribes that are lost, shall be found out and made
subjects of this kingdom. The cities of the tribes shall be built again, especially Jerusalem, which shall be the most eminent city then in the world. The Israelites shall be first raised to this glory, and at Jerusalem will Christ begin to show himself; and from the Israelites shall glory descend to the Gentiles.

The privileges of this kingdom shall be wonderful. First, all the subjects of it, that are freemen, shall be holy; and not seemingly saints, but true saints; not any sinners. Nothing that defileth shall be there; no hypocrite; no person excommunicated, as proving bad; nor any of the children of these saints shall prove naught, but all shall be elect, and prove saints, and the seed of the blessed: for if any of their issue should prove hypocrites or wicked persons, it would so affect them, that they should not have everlasting joy, neither could sorrow nor sighing fly away. Now in these times there shall be no sorrow nor weeping. They shall be edified immediately from God in Christ. The sacrament is but to last till the next coming of Christ, to set up his kingdom. Christ will hold them up in fulness of grace, though not in full perfection of grace till the last general judgment, or their translation to heaven. There shall be a full and present answer to all their prayers, there being no sin to keep good things from them. There shall be a fulness of all temporal blessings; as peace, safety, riches, health, long life, or whatsoever can be had in this world. They shall have exemption from all bodily troubles. Every one shall live an hundred years; no infant, nor any other shall die sooner. There shall be no sickness or grief to consume the strength. Although a natural death shall be, yet there shall be no violent or untimely death, by any grief, sickness, or trouble. Satan shall be wholly restrained from tempting them to sin, or others to trouble them. Original corruption shall be kept in, not to break forth into any gross way. To which he adds, they shall not be infected with popery.

This for the evening, or first part of Christ’s kingdom.

Section X.

Now when this kingdom of Christ hath lasted to many generations, the slaves and tributaries will be grown to multitudes. These, under the name of Gog and Magog, upon whom the devil shall be let loose, shall be drawn by Satan to assault the saints: which trouble shall not be long: it shall be sudden and
violent, but short. For Christ shall suddenly come from heaven, and with fire kill all the wicked ones, not leaving one of them alive upon earth.

This assault of the wicked will Christ take for the occasion of his coming to the last and general judgment: before which, he shall in a moment change the bodies of all his saints that are not dead, but alive at his coming; and raise up the dead bodies of the saints who lived and died during this kingdom of Christ; and they, together with the changed saints, shall meet the Lord Jesus in the air, coming again from heaven, never more to be parted.

Then shall all the wicked be raised up, from Cain to the last wicked man that is found on the earth: and now shall be the judgment, which we call the day of judgment; which being finished, the saints shall be carried with Christ for ever into heaven, and the wicked sent with the devil into hell: which hell shall not be the same which is now so called, but another: this being now but as a prison; that, the place of execution and torment; the hell that now is, serving only to reserve condemned spirits, which have no bodies, till the execution at the last day; at which time this hell shall cease, and be swallowed up. The hell that shall be for torment shall be all this lower and visible world of earth, waters, and the lower heavens, reduced by God then to their first chaos of confusion.

Now this kingdom of Christ, though for the evening, or the first part of it, it is expressly determined to last a thousand years, or ten generations; yet the dawning or latter part of it is not expressed in scripture how long it shall endure, but doubtless will last a long time: and though called but a day of judgment, yet it may last a thousand years, as the other is to do; because this is the time in which God's mercy, justice, truth, power is to be gloriously revealed before all men and devils, so as every sinner is to be silenced in his reasonings, or convinced; which must require much time. Secondly, this is the time in which Jesus Christ is to triumph and lord it over all reasonable creatures, to be worshipped and acknowledged by every one in heaven, earth, and under the earth. Thirdly, the solemnity of it were to little purpose if it were not to last long; as we deride great preparations and pomp for a short show. Lastly, every act of reasonable creatures being immortal, shall not only abide for ever in heaven or hell, but be revived and brought forth in that day before all the world; and
all these acts, from Adam to the last of mankind, shall be orderly and clearly proceeded in by books, as in a court of justice.

When all this is done, and the final sentence pronounced upon all creatures, both blessed and cursed, then will Christ resign his kingdom to the Father; and this world, together with his kingdom, shall end.

For the beginning of this monarchy of Christ, it must be set up, saith he, the last in the world, after the other four are past whereof the Roman is the last; that being divided into the eastern and western monarchy; and out of the western, ten horns or kingdoms arising; and, among them, another little horn most blasphemous, which is the papacy. When these ten kingdoms and the papacy shall be put to an end, then is the beginning of this kingdom of Christ; which, saith he, by comparing of Daniel with the Revelation, shall be anno 1666; the number of the beast, only the thousand, because it comes seldom, left out. Three years and an half before this 1666, the papal power shall have support in Europe: all the ten kingdoms apostatizing to popery, and yet one of them shall return to the truth. In the years of Christ 1650 or 1656, the Israelites are to be delivered, by being called to Christianity; both Jews which were two tribes, and the ten tribes of Israel: both which shall, after their conversion for forty-five years after, suffer great trouble from Mahometans, heathens, papists. Upon all which computations, it is likely, saith he, that Christ’s coming from heaven, and the raising the dead, and beginning his kingdom, and the thousand years, will be about the year of our Lord 1700, for it is to be about forty-five years after 1650 or 1656.

Now it being found out when Christ’s kingdom, or the thousand years, shall begin, it is easy, he saith, to guess when the time of the last general judgment and the world’s end shall be; which neither angel, nor Christ himself as man, did, in those days, when the disciples asked the question, know; for it was locked up in the Father’s secrets. But after Christ’s sufferings and ascension, all the Father’s secrets were revealed to him; for he was worthy; and he reveals them to the churches by John; opening the meaning of Daniel’s time, times, and half a time, which no creature could expound to be forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days. He tells us expressly, that his kingdom should last, after it was fully settled, a thousand years, and then should be a little
disturbance; so as we have some comfort, that there is hope the troubles of us Gentile-Christians shall cease about 1666; but till those days we are like to see sad times, for it is to be feared that popery shall again overrun Europe, and bring back under papal power every king in Europe, and suppress all their opposers in every kingdom. By this revolting of the kingdoms to popery, it comes that the witnesses are slain and lie dead in the streets. But ere Antichrist can have time to triumph four years, the witnesses shall be raised up, and one of the ten kingdoms fall off from him, and ruin the city of Rome. But yet the papacy shall breathe, and by degrees get head, and join with Turk, Tartar, and the Christians in Europe; but from this danger will Christ save all Christians by his coming, and setting up of his kingdom.

Section XI.

Thus have I faithfully related the opinion, and summarily contracted the larger discourse, of Mr. Archer: who, upon the grounds of Alstedius and Mede, runs his own descant plausibly enough; for every clause of his tractate calling up the testimonies of the sacred scripture.

The several allegations whereof upon every passage, I could be most willing thoroughly to scan, if I had less care to spare myself than the reader.

For whose satisfaction, that I may be neither unpardonably tedious, nor in any sort deficient in the managing of this subject, I shall, first, show that universal strain and ground of error which runs through the whole writing of this author; then, I shall note some of the chief of those bold paradoxal and unwarrantable assertions which I meet with in this opinion and discourse; in the third place, I shall lay forth those strangely improbable consequents which will inevitably follow upon both; and, lastly, I shall subjoin such fair, safe, and orthodox constructions as may be warrantably admitted of that dark passage of scripture, the misprision whereof is guilty of this controversy.

For the first, that which is the general fault, not of this author only, but of all other that look towards the millenary way, and indeed the main ground of all their heterodoxy in this point, is, that they put a merely literal construction upon the prophecies and promises of scripture, which the Holy Ghost intended only to be spiritually understood.
Hence it is, that those frequent predictions which we meet in every page of the prophets concerning the kingdom of Christ, the reedifying of the Jewish cities, the pomp and magnificence of restored Israel, their large privileges and marvellous achievements, are altogether drawn to a gross, corporal, and syllabical sense; which the judgment of the whole Christian Church, seconded by the event, hath upon good grounds ever construed not of the letter but the spirit.

I remember some thirty years or more ago a learned gentleman, an eminent serjeant at law, a man very skilful in the holy tongue, and that professed no less acquaintance with the laws of God than of man, published a large volume concerning, not the imminent conversion only, but also the royal state of the Jews, their absolute and universal monarchy, their awful sovereignty over all the kings of the earth, the glory of their empire, the splendour of their court and cities; gathering up to this purpose all the glorious promises which occur every where in the prophets: at the sight whereof, that deeply judicious king James of precious memory was highly offended; and, after the perusal of some offensive passages, commanded me, then attending him, to carry the book to the synod at Westminster then sitting, for their censure; who, upon a serious examination, with much zeal unanimously sentenced it to a speedy suppression, as that which did have in cortice, and savoured too strong of the flesh, as being too servilely addicted to the letter.

And now those very texts, whose misunderstanding hath hitherto led the Jews into a fool's paradise, by expecting an earthly glory, are no less confidently taken up by the favourers of this opinion, as the main ground of their defence.

For instance, the Lord, by his prophet Zechariah, hath said, The Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord, Zech. ii. 12, 10: this is, by the author of "Zion's Joy," applied to that repaired and happy estate of the city of Jerusalem, at this second coming of Christ in glory: whereas the prophet only foretells the restoration of that city and country after their then present captivity; and under that figure describes the comfortable condition of the evangelical Church.

c [Sir Henry Finch, serjeant at law, author of "The world's great restoration, or the Calling of the Jewes."
So again, by the prophet Isaiah, God saith, *I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountain: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there*, Isa. lxv. 9. This the same author cites, in a literal way, to make good the resettlement of the Jews in that ancient city of their inheritance.

Why doth he not as well add that which followeth? *And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in. But ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain.* Surely, if one of them be applicable to the new Jerusalem, the other must be so also.

The truth is, these prophecies have their reference either to God's merciful dealing with Jerusalem upon their return from their Babylonish captivity, or, by an usual allegory, express his gracious purpose to the Church under the gospel, without any respect at all to an earthly reestablishment of the Jewish nation in their long-since forgotten possessions.

It were as easy as tedious to pass through all those scriptures which are wont to be alleged in this case: whereof I dare say there is scarce any one whose either words or context do not evidently bewray their misapplication; or, if that did not, yet the event would; forasmuch as the time is now at hand, wherein these promises of the general call and outward magnificence of these ancient people of God should, according to the construction of our new Chiliasts, be either well forward or accomplished, as we shall see in the sequel; whereas there is not yet the least motion towards it in all the world. Besides, some of their misconstrued texts will necessarily cross the way of us, upon occasion of the several passages which we are about to examine.

**SECTION XII.**

Of paradoxes, let it be the first, but not the least, that Christ, the Son of God, now glorified, shall come and personally set up and administer a monarchical state of a kingdom here upon earth, in a visible and worldly manner for splendour, riches, peace, &c.

I had thought we had heard him say, *My kingdom is not of this world.* Now to what world do riches and honour and earthly contentments belong, if not to this? If he govern as earthly monarchs have done, in a worldly, visible, earthly glory, (such are the words,) how is his kingdom not of this
world? Surely, this is more than ever the very Jews expected or
dreamed of. They have looked for a Messiah that should exer-
cise kingly authority in the world; but they never looked for a
glorified Messiah to come down from heaven to rule upon earth.
Zebedee's wife certainly never thought of such a kingdom, wherein
her sons should be the primere peers. Neither did the good
thief think of such a state when he said, *Lord, remember me
when thou comest into thy kingdom.* We have heard of an ab-
solute sovereignty of Christ, as God; of a delegated sovereignty,
as Mediator: we have heard of his rule in the heart, of his rule
in the Church: but of his monarchical rule in the world, for a
whole thousand years, in a worldly, visible, earthly glory, we
never yet heard, and think it very strange news to Christian
ears. But much more strange news it is, that *all the prophets,
since the world began*, have spoken of this marvellous monarchy,
and yet, that we never heard of it in the writings of all the fathers
and doctors of the Christian Church, till this day. It is no wht
strange, that God's people should be abused by the feigned glosses
of men, drawing these scriptures, which speak of Christ's coming
to the final judgment of the world, to the sense of that imaginary
kingdom, which hath being no where but in their own brain.
But without any intention of a formal confutation, I purpose only
to give some light touches at those paradoxal and unwarrantable
positions which meet with me in this discourse.

That, in this visible monarchy of Christ, he shall change all
worldly customs, and put down all kingly power
and greatness, however just, and set up a new; so
as there shall be no more lords but he; even as
the earthly monarchies swallowed all kingly power
under them; may well pass for a sufficient paradox.

We grant, indeed, there shall be none in competition with him,
even in his spiritual rule; but that there shall be none in sub-
domination to him in his supposed visible monarchy were too bold
a word.

That there shall be a double judgment, one a thousand years
before the other: the one, wherein many, both saints
and sinners, shall be judged, and that with great
terror and solemnity, which shall be a general
judging (though not to the second death) of all the ungodly in
the world; at least of all that will not stoop to Christ's sceptre:

*Acts iii. 21.*
the other, of all devils and men, upon the expiration of those thousand years, in that universal appearance before God at that great day, is an assertion as bold as groundless.

We have heard of a particular doom passing upon every soul immediately upon the parting from this house of clay; and of a general judicature in those common assizes of the world; but of a middle sessions, betwixt both these, in which all the ungodly shall be arraigned, and sentenced to a temporal death or perpetual vassalage, was never either spoken of by God or heard of by men.

SECTION XIII.

That there is a threefold coming of Christ: the first, when he came to take our nature; the second, when he comes to receive his kingdom; the third, when he comes to judge all and end the world; may well pass for a paradox, not inferior to the rest.

Besides the metaphorical comings of Christ to any soul or nation, whether in mercy or judgment, we have ever heard of one coming of our Saviour, past, in human weakness; another, to come, in divine power and glory: but that there should be a third coming down from heaven to earth, betwixt these, is strange news to Christian ears; which were heretofore wont to be inured to our old Apostolic, Athanasian, and Nicene Creeds; and to hear, "From thence shall he come to judge the quick and the dead."

No coming, therefore, till he come to judgment: and, that there may be no thought of an intermediate and partial judgment in the beginning of that thousand years, the Creed, which we were wont to profess in our baptism, ran thus; "We believe, that in the end of the world he shall come to judge the quick and the dead": lo, in the end of the world, not a thousand years before it. Let all good Christians stick close to their old Creeds, the faith which was once delivered to the saints, Jude 3, and not suffer themselves to be carried away with every gale of new doctrine. That of Tertullian is a sure rule, Primum verum, "The first is true."

Necessarily depending upon this, is that other gross conceit of a double general resurrection: the one, of those saints which were dead before this coming of Christ, which shall be raised up 1000 years before the rest,

\[5\text{ Pp. 12, 13, 14.} \]

\[Y 2\]
at his next coming; the other, of all flesh at the end of the world, and the final coming and judgment.

But whether that first resurrection shall be only proper and peculiar to martyrs that have died for the name of Christ, or common to all the saints, let our Chiliasts argue amongst themselves. Their opinions do no less disagree from each other than they all from the truth. Alas, good Martha, thou wert much deceived when thou saidst concerning thy brother Lazarus, I know he shall rise again in the resurrection, at the last day, John xi. 24: why, woman, the resurrection of that saint, thy brother, shall be 1000 years sooner than thou thoughtest of. Neither did St. Paul ever take notice of this first resurrection of the saints, while he adjures his Timothy, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, 2 Tim. iv. 1; for surely the Lord Jesus's judging of the quick and dead, indefinitely spoken, must suppose a resurrection of all the dead whom he judgeth: but here, saith the Chalìast, is only in Christ's next appearing a resurrection of the dead saints, and a judging of none but the wicked which are found alive; for their raising out of their graves is reserved for the last and universal judgment; so as by that rule Christ should not at his appearing judge both the quick and the dead.

**SECTION XIV.**

Answerable to this double resurrection is the paradox of Christ's threefold ascension into heaven: for, saith the author, when Christ hath thus put his kingdom into form, he will withdraw from earth to heaven again, and leave the government to the dead saints raised up; they and all believers shall rule the world.

And if these all shall govern, who are those that shall be governed? There are none left upon earth but saints raised to immortality; and saints found alive, who are perfect believers; and some few slaves, spared from death for servitude. See now what an honourable employment and singular privilege and honour here is, for saints immortalized, and translated from death to life, to be the governors of some sturdy and rebellious vassals! In the mean time Christ, the glorious King of his Church, is returned back into heaven, and will govern the earth

n Pp. 17, 18.
by his deputies. What a mean conceit is this which these men profess to have of the King of eternal glory! that he, who hath said, Behold, I am with you always, even until the end of the world, whose majesty fills heaven and earth, should come down to put on his kingdom here below, to be governed by certain delegates, and then withdraw to his heaven: what is this but poorly to circumscribe the infinite Majesty of heaven within the terms of a finite administration! And now, in this second ascension, we hear no news of the attendance of his retinue: he that brought down the souls of his saints to wait upon him in this descent, for the receiving of this inferior kingdom, shall leave them behind him with their old (but new raised) partners, to spend 1000 years upon earth; at the end whereof, he shall come down again, and fetch them up with him, in his third ascension, to the highest heaven. What an high presumption is this in flesh and blood, to send the Son of God, the Lord Jesus, from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, upon an errand of their own making! when himself, in his holy scriptures, never speaks but of a double ascent of Christ: the one, which is past, from mount Olivet, (where the impressions of his sacred feet are still said to be), forty days after his resurrection; the other, future, when, after the general judgment of the world, he shall carry up all the elect with him to his heavenly glory.

Section XV.

A literal interpreter is no other than a slave to his syllables, binding himself up to a mere sound of words, with neglect of the true sense intended; which is too well seen in this present subject. The subjects of this kingdom, if any may be such where all are either princes or slaves, are to be the twelve tribes of the Jews and the nations of the Gentiles. What if ten of those twelve tribes be lost? they shall be found again, and be made saints, that they may become subjects; for else they should but be found out for a worse confusion. So, then, the cities of the tribes shall be built again, and inhabited by natural Israelites; especially Jerusalem, which shall be the most eminent city in the world, or that ever was in the world; and at Jerusalem will Christ begin to show himself: and then, by and from the Israelites, shall glory descend to the Gentiles. Thus runs the letter.

1 Page 36.
But the best interpreter, St. Paul, tells us of a Jew outwardly, and a Jew within; of circumcision in the flesh, and circumcision of the heart; of circumcision in the spirit, and in the letter; of children of the flesh, and children of the promise. Which distinction whosoever shall have duly digested will easily find how wild a paradox it is to tie those frequent and large promises of the prophets made to Judah and Israel, Zion and Jerusalem, to a carnal literality of sense; and to make account of their accomplishment accordingly, which were never otherwise than spiritually meant: and thereupon to affirm, as this author doth, that even those ten tribes of Israel, which were, 2340 years ago, so dispersed, as the dust with the wind, that no man could since their dissipation say of any one of them, "This was an Israelite," neither have they now any known being in the world, that they should be suddenly fetched up again, out of the forlorn rubbish of paganism and Mahometism, wherein they are in many hundred generations irrecoverably long since lost, and made the founders and citizens of a new and more glorious Jerusalem, credat Judæus Apella. It is true, that nothing is impossible to an omnipotent power: had the Almighty said the words to their sense, no difficulty could hinder our assent: he can as easily raise Israelites out of Turks, Tartars, Indians, as out of their graves: but we know the sense of these prophetical promises and predictions to be, as that father said, in medulla, not in superficie. In this just construction, there is no Jew but a Christian; and Jerusalem is built up, not in the soil of old Jebus, but in the hearts of believers. Shortly, that we may clearly evince the moral impossibility at least of this misconception of the reduction and flourishing estate of all the twelve tribes wholly converted to Christ their King, and the magnificent reedifying of Jerusalem, the event is instead of a thousand arguments. It is but the next year, 1650, or at farthest 56, which this author, comparing Daniel with John according to his own calculation, hath pitched for the performance of these great matters concerning the Jewish people: in which, saith he, the Israelites are to be delivered, by being called to Christianity; both the Jews which are two tribes, and the Israelites which are ten tribes, &c. And now where is the man that can tell us tidings but of a thrave of Jews newly converted, or of one stone laid in the new foundation of the new Jerusalem? so as the issue plainly tells our millenarian brethren they have mis-

k Rom. ii. 28, 29.  
1 Rom. ix. 8.
taken their aim, and sends them to seek for a truer and more verifiable sense.

SECTION XVI.

Well may it pass for a further paradox, that the dead saints now raised to an immortal life, shall, in those their spiritual bodies—so the apostle calls them—meddle with the outward administration of the affairs of the Church, and have continual conversation with mortal men; controlling their actions, and ordering their processes according to their secular occasions.

We find that, in the attendance of Christ's resurrection, many of the dead saints rose out of their graves, and went into the holy city, and appeared to many: but that they ever offered to touch with any either secular or sacred business, we never find. These ecclesiastical services, how holy soever, are too mean for so glorious agents. And if they shall manage them, how and in what fashion shall they govern? shall they abate any thing of the privileges of their glory and immortality? shall they be always visible? shall they be clothed or naked? since clothes are only to hide shame, and to defend from the injuries of the air; and there can be no place for shame in an immortalized body, and amongst saints, where there shall be no sin: and since their raised bodies are now impassible, and apt to the quick motions of spiritual substance, shall they confine themselves to these low places upon earth, and not lodge when they please in their former paradise?

SECTION XVII.

As for those living saints, who, if any at all, must be their subjects, in what an impossible condition doth he make them! They must be mortal, and yet sinless. What man or angel can reconcile these two? They must still have original corruption in them—that cannot be denied; but it shall be so yoked and restrained, that it shall get little or no ground of them.

What a paradox is this! If little, if any at all, surely they are sinners: and sin, wherever, whatever it be, defileth! now nothing that defileth or worketh abomination shall be there, Rev. xxi. 27. None shall be in this kingdom but such as shall be saved, such as are elected: but is it the privilege of election to exempt from sin? I had thought the fruit of God's gracious election had been the

\text{m} \text{Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.}
remission, not the freedom from the commission of sin. All here shall be saints: no one, he saith, shall be an hypocrite: O happy kingdom, where there is no taint of hypocrisy! But shall men have hearts then? and are not the hearts of men deceitful above all things? Though Satan be never so close chained up, yet the innate corruption of that deceitful heart is able enough to breed store of hypocrisy. But what news is it, that no person excommunicate shall be there? what place can there be possibly imagined for an excommunication in a kingdom, after a sort heavenly, wherein there shall be no use of sacraments? no use of any other ordinances? wherein all shall immediately feed from God in Christ? wherein Christ will hold them all up in fulness of grace? Yea, when there shall therefore be no use of pastors, doctors, elders, deacons, preaching, censures in this holy and glorious estate, what spiritual government is that which the raised saints shall exercise in the new Jerusalem? Neither shall the persons only of the then-living saints be freed from depravation by sin, but all their children, in all the succeeding generations: none of them shall prove bad; none reprobate: all shall be called the seed of the blessed. What! though they be begotten and conceived in sin? what! though they propagate sin to the fruit of their loins? yet their issue shall not prove sinners. As much as to say, there shall be fire, but neither heat nor smoke: there shall be a poisonous fountain, but it shall yield no unwholesome water. Neither can there be any danger of their languishing in grace, though they have neither word nor sacraments. Neither shall they have use of any improvement by the heavenly counsel or examples of those glorious and immortal saints which they shall converse with, which one would think should avail much to the continuation and increase of their holiness; but they shall have an immediate fellowship with God, and shall be edified immediately from God in Christ. But what! shall there be any use of their prayers? are not those a part of God's ordinances? and the fellowship, he saith, which they shall have with God is not by ordinances, but by God and the Lamb: and what need they pray for that, which they do indefeasibly enjoy? However, let it be scored up for none of the least paradoxes, that God's ordinances should be useless unto God's people any where out of heaven.

SECTION XVIII.

That under this monarchy of Christ there shall be to the saints for a thousand years all fulness of all temporal blessings; as peace, safety, riches, health, long life, and whatsoever else was enjoyed under any monarchy, or can be had in the world, or may make their lives comfortable, savoureth too strong of a Jewish or Mahometan paradise; as being extended, in a fairer and more modest expression, to those carnal pleasures, both of the bed and the board, which have been dreamed of by those sensual Turks and Talmudists.

It is true, that God hath been as exceeding rich in mercies, as no less large in promises of all blessings to the children of the kingdom: but those riches and delights are of another nature, purely spiritual; such as may be proper for the fruition of saints. As for those outward favours, they are such as the worst may have, and the best may want: such, as that a man may be happy without them, and he that enjoys them most miserable: such as, wise Solomon tells us, bewray neither the love nor hatred of the Almighty. And surely if Gog and Magog did not find themselves enabled with strength and health of body, with vigour of spirits, with outward wealth and power, they would never offer, during the time of that kingdom, to rise up against the saints in an open war. Shortly, we know the kingdom of God doth not consist in meats and drinks, in houses and lands, in mines and metals, in flocks and herds; but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17. The enjoyment of good things for a moment is scarce to be reckoned amongst blessings; since the grief of their cessation doth more than counterpoise the contentment of their fruition. But here, a long life shall make up the happiness of the rich, honourable, frolic patriots of this new kingdom; for not one of them shall die early. What! not though it be to be translated from mortality to eternal blessedness? Is it an advantage to be held off long from heaven? But who told this man, that no one should die under 100 years old? It is true, he finds in the letter of Isaiah, 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 an hundred years old, Is. lxv. 20: but he might have found also in the next words preceding, In Jerusalem the voice of weeping shall be no more heard, nor the
voice of crying, ver. 19. Well, then, the husband or wife or child must die at the last: and shall there be no tear shed for them? shall all the subjects be exempted from all afflictions whatsoever; and yet be obnoxious to death, the utmost of all terribles? And how doth that promise extend to a freedom from all outward violences and inward sicknesses, grief and trouble, which are the means and harbingers of dissolution; and yet give way to that worst of evils to which all these are but the gentle preparations? The truth then is, these are high allegorical expressions, whereby it pleaseth the Spirit of God to set forth, under bodily resemblances, whether the prosperous and comfortable condition of the evangelical Church, or the happy estate of the glorified children of the resurrection; which, whose shall construe literally, shall in vain expect to see the wolf and the lamb to feed together, and the lion to eat straw like the bullock, Isaiah lxxv. 25.

Section XIX.

May it not well pass for a further paradox, that, while there are so many thousand saints reigning upon earth, and endued with so much majesty and power to govern the world, the slaves and underling-tributaries should be suffered to grow up under them, to such a head, as to defy their governors, and to bid battle to all those immortal rulers, any one whereof were able to quell a world of weak sinners.

Who can think that the malice of these men should so far exceed their wit, as that, knowing, by long and daily experience, that these raised and glorious saints, under whose iron sceptre they lived, are immortal, and utterly impossible, they should yet hold it safe or possible to oppose them with any hope of success? And if, to make the matter more credible, it shall be suggested, as it is by this author, that they are drawn in by some deceitful trick of Satan; they could not but know the wisdom and knowledge of these glorious saints to be such, as that they might, much better than the apostle, say, We are not ignorant of his devices; so as, if Gog and Magog shall hope, either by wiles or violence, to prevail against invulnerable, spiritual, and half glorified powers, they shall approve themselves more mad than malicious. And to make this paradox perfect, how strange is the intimation, that this shall be taken for the
occasion of Christ's coming the third time to his general judgment; even the ruin of these assailants, whom he will come from heaven to destroy! as if this witless and vain insurrection of Gog and Magog could not be suddenly and powerfully crushed by so over-puissant opposites: as if the blowing upon all the legions of earth and hell could not scatter them in an instant: as if one of God's mighty angels, who, in one night, destroyed an hundred fourscore and five thousand Assyrians*, could not as easily turn Gog and Magog into heaps or ashes; and yet the Son of God still keep his heaven.

**Section XX.**

The third time, then, he saith, Christ shall come down from heaven to earth, for his final judgment of the world: the day whereof shall dawn immediately upon the expiration of the thousand years' reign; but may, for aught he knows, last another thousand years, as the former. The scripture, indeed, he confesses¹, sets not down the time how long it shall last; but long, certainly, it must last.

And why so very long! and what do we talk of years, when the angel before this *swore that time should be no more?* What a bold weakness is this, to measure the infinite God by ourselves! The necessity of the length of that time of judgment is evinced, he saith, by the great work to be accomplished in it: for therein God's mercy, justice, truth, power, &c. is to be gloriously revealed before all mankind and devils; and the truth of every scripture cleared; and sinners silenced or convinced. And, secondly, this is the time in which Christ Jesus is to triumph and lord it over all reasonable creatures, and wherein every knee shall bow to him: as if the Almighty should be limited to do his acts by leisure: as if he, that made the world in six days, and could have made it in an instant, cannot as well in that space of time judge it. Alas! what is time, but a poor circumstance of finite mortality; not reaching up to the acts of the Eternal? That Ancient of Days may not have his workings confined to hours, days, months, years: and justly do we say, that he, who is of himself one most pure and simple act, works in an instant: he can therefore gloriously reveal his justice, truth, power, to men and devils, without any such leisurely respirations: and if in an instant he can raise all flesh from their graves, why should we question whether he cannot as soon judge them? As for the

*² Kinoe xix. 35.*

¹ Page 39.
triumph of the Lord Jesus over all his enemies, as it is partly accomplished already, when he ascended up on high, and led captivity captive; so shall it be fully perfected in the act of his last judgment, when his foes shall be made his footstool, without any such lingering forms of a protracted solemnity. For the performance whereof, it is supposed by this author, and his contests in opinion, that whereas the Lord Jesus, in his first coming down from heaven, stayed not full thirty-four years upon earth; and, in his second coming down, continued his visible presence amongst men, but till he had settled his government here in the world, and then returned to his heaven; now, upon his third descent to judgment, shall, for some thousand years, remain visibly upon earth, out of the local heaven from whence he descended: a conceit that would have sounded very strangely in the ears of our unenlightened forefathers; who were ever wont to conceive, that this great business of the last judgment, being managed by the infinite wisdom and power of the Son of God, should be of a speedy despatch; and that their returning Saviour should come to fetch up the bodies and souls of his elect to the instant fruition of their glory in heaven, not to call them to a thousand years' attendance on his visible presence here on earth; and if they found the thrones set, and the books opened, and all the process out of records, they were wont to construe these expressions as such wherein the Spirit of God meant to condescend to our weakness, setting forth his own incomprehensible acts, by the forms of our human judicatures, which must necessarily both take up time and require open evidences and convictions, whereof there is no more use when we speak of an infinite God, than of parchments, scribes, registers.

Section XXI.

Well, then, towards the end of the second thousand years, the judgment is ended, the final sentence passed both of life and death, the elect are carried up to their bliss, the wicked sent to their place; both settled in their eternity.

But here, I confess, I stand amazed at the confident and peremptory assertion of this author, and other favourers of his opinion, concerning the place of the present and future hell. Doubtless, the departed souls of wicked and unrepentant sinners are not in custody only, but in torture; as being both separated eternally from the face of that God in whose presence is the fulness
of joy, and seized upon immediately by the dreadful executioners of divine vengeance: although not in that full exquisiteness of torment which awaits for them in that great day, when their bodies, which were partners with them in their crimes, must also partake of their everlasting punishments. Tophet, we know, is prepared of old; and there is a peculiar place of unconceivable horror for the devil and his angels and vassals: but where this place is I have not so much warrant as to inquire, much less to determine. I must therefore wonder whence these men receive their light: certainly, (that which was denied to the damned glutton in the gospel,) no man hath been sent thence to them, to inform them of these infernal regions of darkness; and I am sure God hath nowhere revealed this to them in his holy scripture. As not daring, therefore, so much as to scan this point, much less to unlock so deep a secret, I lay my hand upon my mouth in silence and dread; referring it to the glorious angel that hath the keys of the bottomless pit, and leaving these bold and curious dogmatists to their own conceits.

SECTION XXII.

But though I may well fear I have overwearied my reader with the enumeration of those ill-sounding paradoxes, which have not incidently fallen from the pens, but have been studiously maintained by the hands and tongues of the abettors of this millenary reign; yet I must crave leave to put his patience to a further task, in viewing some of those incommodious, misbecoming, and improbable consequents, which will necessarily follow upon that opinion.

I find, in a published letter from Dr. Twisse of Oxford to Mr. Mede of Cambridge, that this subject was privately much agitated betwixt those two learned divines; and that the doctor had furnished twelve complete arguments against this tenet, which, if they could have come to my hands, might both have given me light, and perhaps have saved me labour. In the want of them, I shall insist upon some of those harsh inferences which offer themselves to my thoughts.

Let the first be, that, in the Lord’s Prayer, we are taught to pray, *Thy kingdom come*:\footnote{Archer, p. 10.} therefore we do there-in pray for the accomplishing of this monarchical and personal reign of Christ with his saints on
earth; when as, both such a kingdom was never acknowledged nor believed by the universal Church of Christ from that day till this hour; and it is clear, that it was Christ himself, who taught the disciples herein to pray to his Father for the accomplishing of his Father's kingdom, which is merely spiritual; not for his own personal and visible, as Mediator.

Secondly, how strangely doth it hang together, that the Son of God, in his second coming with much terror for a general judging of all the ungodly in the world, shall yet leave many wicked men alive to breed enemies to his saints; to be slaves and tributaries to them in their new kingdom! For as for those saints that are raised up from the dead to an immortal estate, they can have no use of such drudges. And for the saints living, either they shall know the wicked courses of those surviving vassals or they shall not know them: if they know them not, they shall be defective in their care and oversight: if they do know them, they shall be afflicted with the sight of their wickedness; according to the profession of the Psalmist, *Mine eyes gush out rivers of waters, because men keep not thy law;* and if so, they are not in that happy estate freed from sorrow, which is strongly pretended, for in these times *there shall be no sorrow or weeping,* Rev. xxi. 4.

SECTION XXIII.

Thirdly, there had need to be a firm ground whereon to build a belief of so unlikely a truth, that the Son of God, who a little before his ascension could say, *All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth;* and who, ever since, rules the Church by a vicariate of his Spirit, as Tertullian expresses it, according to that order of government which he hath appointed; should now, the second time, come personally down from heaven to depute new governors in this his monarchy, and having settled the administration in their hands should again take his leave of the earth. Further, if those of the ungodly which will not stoop to the sceptre of Christ shall be the subjects of his destruction, who can imagine that, when he shall come in such heavenly glory and majesty, and in such astonishing terror, there can be any person upon earth that will not readily crouch unto him, and offer to lick the dust under his feet? Moreover, if Christ shall come down, and after deputation of governors ascend again into

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x Archer, p. 13.
heaven, how can it be stood upon, that this reign of his is personal for 1000 years upon earth? since personal presence and deputation cannot stand together: there may be a virtual presence of the prince, in delegation of power to others; but a personal there cannot be.

SECTION XXIV.

Fourthly, if this new kingdom must consist of raised saints and men living, what a strange composition shall here be of a government! what an unimaginable com-mixture of subjects! what a contemperate of heaven and earth! The bodies raised are spiritual; the living bodies, fleshly; the raised saints, immortal; the saints living, mortal, and at an hundred years dying. What kind of commerce shall here be? how unequal! how unsuitable! How can it be other than a disparagement, to creatures immortal and glorious, to be matched with flesh and blood? How can it be but too much honour for mortal and earthly creatures, ordinarily to consort with the blessed denizens of paradise?

Fifthly, if all saints that ever were before Christ's second coming shall be raised, and the wicked destroyed, and the saints then found living continued in the world, how shall that be verified which was spoken by him who is the Truth: When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?

Sixthly, if all saints from the first man Adam to the last that expired before Christ's coming, and all the believers then living, shall be rulers and princes, who shall obey? And if amongst the raised saints, the apostles shall, in their sense, sit upon twelve thrones, and as a monarchical state on earth judge the twelve tribes of Israel, how is that verified which our Saviour said to them, It shall not be so with you?

Seventhly, what an apparent disadvantage should this be to the blessed souls of the saints departed, to be fetched down from heaven where they are in perfect bliss, to spend a thousand years upon earth, ere the consummation of their glory! to change the company of angels for men, heaven for earth!

To which main and choking objection there is wont to be offered a double solution.

7 Archer, p. 8.
First, were those departed souls in the highest heaven, yet it becomes them, as the angels do, to come down to serve the saints; and, with Lazarus's spirit, to return to their bodies again, at the commandment of Christ. True: all creatures owe their obedience to their Maker and Redeemer; and the more holy they are, the more ready still they are to pay this tribute of their humble obsequiousness to the will of their God, which is the supreme law, without all pleas of their own inconveniences: but in this case, where shall we find any such command? where the least signification of the divine pleasure? Surely should he bid any of them glide down to the dreadful regions of hell itself, he would not stick at the condition; but as soon shall they find the Almighty's charge for the one as for the other.

Secondly, they say, it is likely the souls of the dead saints are not in the highest heaven, but in a middle place, better than this world, but inferior to the Empyreal heaven, which is meant in the New Testament by paradise.

Wherein, certainly, Mr. Archer hath shot strangely wide, both for the name and the place. Here can be no thought of the terrestrial paradise, as Epiphanius weakly imagined, which doubtless was long since defaced by the deluge. That the celestial paradise, then, should either be called or be a lower place than the highest heaven, is no other than a gross misprision. I appeal to the blessed apostle, who was rapt up thither: who tells us, that the man he knew was caught up to the third heaven, 2 Cor. xii. 2; and straight, as describing paradise for some more eminent part in that highest heaven, he adds, that he, the same man, was caught into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, ver. 4: where, that we shall not need to imagine a double rapture of St. Paul, as some of the fathers out of this place have done, it seems clear that, contrary to this author's assertion, the paradise of the New Testament is the highest and most glorious place of the Empyreal heaven; which must certainly be hence evinced, unless we will grant, either two several raptures of the apostle, or an unnecessary and tautological repetition of one: for, having first said, I knew such a one caught into the third heaven, he subjoins, And I knew such a man, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth: how that he was caught into paradise, and heard unspeakable words; so as his taking up into paradise must needs be a farther advance of that his exta-

2 Archer, p. 12.  a Ibid. p. 23.
tical rapture, the first rise whereof was no lower than the third heaven. Add to this, that when our Saviour said to the dying convert on the cross, *This day thou shalt be with me in paradise*, he could intend no less than a place of heavenly glory: the thief speaks of a kingdom, our Saviour of a paradise: the kingdom that was spoken of was the paradise which was promised. To this purpose is that which our learned Gregory observes out of *Irenæus*, who describes the receipt, of just and perfect men, to be a certain paradise in the eastern part of the third heaven; professing to receive that tradition from the disciples of the apostles. So as this paradise, according to the best interpreters, is *calī pars nobilior et eminentior*; "a more noble and eminent part of heaven." And if there may be any damage, then, or disadvantage in the change of a place of more excellence for a meaner, in the change of the company of blessed angels for the society of mortal men, surely it lies strongly against this opinion, which fetcheth the saints down from the fruition of an heavenly glory to the government of the earth. But who told this author that the souls of the departed saints are only *ἐν προδύσοσ*, as some ancients have expressed it? in some "outer porch" belonging to the court of heaven, and not in the inner rooms of those glorious mansions? in a place wherein they have full joy and perfect happiness, yet not where Christ’s body is? and that in this place they are kept till this kingdom of Christ come? We are sure we hear our Saviour say, *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me*, John xvii. 24: and in his last sacramental banquet with his disciples, we hear him say, *I will drink no more of this fruit of the vine, till I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom*: we are sure we hear the Chosen Vessel, who had viewed those heavenly palaces, say, *We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, 2 Cor. v. 1: lo, in the heavens, not beneath them; and that immediately upon the dissolution of this earthly tabernacle, not three thousand years after it; and more than so long it must be, by their rule, ere the apostles can be admitted into heaven: a thousand six hundred years are already passed, and yet the thousand years’ reign is not begun: a thousand years after that must pass ere the end of the last judgment,


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which shall enter them into the possession of their heaven. But
a full confutation of any incident passages is no part of my inten-
tion; otherwise, I should willingly fall upon the discussion of
those scriptures which are strained to the defence of that asser-
tion, whereof yet there would be the less need, for that the argu-
ment holds strongly enough, even upon their own concessions:
for if that paradise, which they imagine to themselves, be, though
not the third heaven, yet a place of perfect joy and happiness,
certainly the exchange of it during those thousands of years for
so base and dungeon-like an habitation in this lower world, must
needs be greatly disadvantageous.

But if not in the highest heaven, where will he think to place his
paradise? Surely, saith this author, in the element of fire.

A strange soil wherein to plant a blissful paradise! But what
if there be no element of fire? Such tenets, surely, the schools
afforded our younger days. Some Patricius would tell him, that
if there be an excess of heat in those upper regions, under the
concave of the moon, yet it is neither fire nor elemental. But
if, upon some new principles, he shall make the substance of the
starry heaven (which we had wont to call quintessential) to be
the element of fire, I shall choose rather to wonder at that strange
philosophy than to wrangle about it; wishing that it were no more
unsafe to broach our own singular imaginations in these points of
divinity than in these harmless speculations of nature.

However it be, whether either of them may be the receptacle
of the departed souls of the faithful till Christ's next coming, it is
too much curiosity to inquire, and no less presumption to determine.
Sure we are, and it is agreed on all hands, that, immediately upon
their freeing from this clog of earth, they are in peace\(^d\) and un-
speakable happiness, whether in a local or virtual heaven: neither
need we doubt to say, that the full complement of their glory
shall be in that great day, when their old consorts, their bodies,
shall be joined with them in the partnership of their consummate
blessedness.

**Section XXVI.**

Eighthly, how ill is it contrived to match such contrarieties in
the same subject! The children of the saints conceived and born in sin,
yet still saints.

\[^c\] Patricius, or Patricius, Franciscus, De rerum natura.
\[^d\] Wisdom of Solomon iii. 3.
restrained, were inconsistent with holiness: _Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?_ saith Job, ch. xiv. 4. If, then, they be pretended to be true saints, why are they not cleared from all sin whatsoever? unless we will bring in the justly-exploded distinction of sins venial and mortal, sins besides, not against the law; and shall free concupiscence from the taint of sin; and so shall in the new kingdom find out sinning saints, or holy sinners. And how insufficiently is it pleaded, that there can be no hypocrites in this kingdom; for that, it being administered by the raised saints, they cannot possibly pass undiscerned by so piercing eyes! as if those sharp eyes of the raised saints could penetrate the bosoms of men, and look into the heart, which the Maker of it hath locked up for his own only search and intuition.

**SECTION XXVII.**

Ninthly, it suits not over well, that the subjects of this kingdom shall not converse with God by ordinances, and yet that they shall have a full and perfect answer from God to all their prayers; since it cannot be denied that prayer is none of the meanest ordinances of the Almighty.

Tenthly, upon this first resurrection of all saints at the next coming of Christ, how hard and harsh a consequent must it needs seem, that heaven, or (as he will have it) paradise, shall be, for two thousand years at the least, dispeopled of all their ancient and glorious inhabitants, the souls of God's saints, which have departed from the beginning of the world, to the very instant of our Saviour's return: all which are for that time housed again with their raised bodies upon earth, and there continued upon the employment of their kingly administration!

Eleventhly, how incongruous doth it justly seem, that the souls of God's saints, after their first dissolution, should be in so various, different, and unequal condition, as that some of them should be ruling on earth, clothed with their bodies; while others, which departed after Christ's coming down, should, as new guests, be triumphing in heaven!

Twelfthly, how can it accord with that which the apostle hath taught us concerning the last coming of Christ to judgment, _them also which sleep in Jesus will the Lord bring with him_, 1 Thess. iv. 14, if the saints shall be found all on the earth before him, as being raised by him at his second coming, to reign here below till his return to the final judgment of the world?

* Page 19.
These and many other absurd inferences may be brought, as necessarily following upon the doctrine of this first resurrection
and reign of all saints, if I did not fear to cloy my reader with distasteful superfluities.

Section XXVIII.

But perhaps I may meet with some of our millenarian brethren, who, disclaiming this more common opinion of the raising and reigning of all the saints, will choose rather to adhere to the concept of Alstedius and his complices, who appropriate this privilege of the first resurrection and thousand years' reign to martyrs only; as the first fruits unto God; as purchased by a particular prerogative from among men. For which purpose, they think fit to interpret that 1 Thess. iv. 14, those that sleep in Jesus, by a strained construction of the preposition—"those that sleep for the sake of Jesus."

Wherein, certainly, they are not well advised, and will find themselves strongly confuted out of the very scope and context of the place. It was the apostle's drift there to comfort his Thessalonians, and to mitigate their extreme sorrow for the death of those which were dear unto them; whose decease he terms a sleep. Can they think they grieved for the parting only from their martyred friends? or did none but they sleep? The word is first general and absolute, ere it be restrained by any preposition; and, in the sequel, those which are asleep are contradistinguished to those that are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord; so as all the faithful, which died before, are those that are asleep in Jesus.

Neither can their interpretation find any relief from Rev. xiv. 13, Blessed are those dead which die in the Lord, &c.; that is, as they take it, "for the Lord:" the next words refer it; for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them. Do none but martyrs find rest from their labours in death? do none else find the happy reward of their works?

And well may their opposers say, We find not the four and twenty elders, which sat clothed with white raiment, and with crowns of gold on their heads, to have been martyrs; and yet we heard them say, Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign upon earth, Rev. iv. 4, v. 10.

[f[Intelliguntur itaque martyres quos * ἐσ', propter quem. [The original text maatarunt Imp. Ethnici, &c.—Alsted. is ἡ τοῦ 'Ισραήλ, not ἔσ.] Apocal. XX. 4.]"
Indeed, if there shall be any reign of the saints on earth at all for those thousand years, Alstedius is sure too straitlaced to restrain this honour to martyrs only. How many thousands of saints have there been, that have been no less holy, and won no less honour to God in their stations, than those which have bled for him? What shall we say to Abraham, the father of the faithful? to him that wrestled with God, and prevailed? to the rest of the holy patriarchs? to Moses, the man of God, that conversed so familiarly with the Almighty? to Elias, that was rapt up to heaven? and to all the other holy prophets? to the blessed apostles? to the laborious planters of the evangelical churches amongst pagans? to those painful preachers of the gospel which have willingly wasted themselves to give light unto others? Shall we suppose that they shall lie still in the dust, while one sudden stroke of an axe shall advance those other to the prevented resurrection of a thousand years?

Besides, if he will needs be literal, how much lower must the restriction yet fall! I saw, saith St. John, 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, nor his image; neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

For how many thousands have suffered martyrdom for good causes before the beast was bred, or his image, or his marks heard of; or before Christ came in the flesh! Such was the righteous Abel, the protomartyr of the world. Such were the four-score and five persons that wore a linen ephod, murdered by the command of Saul. Such was Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, slain by the command of Joash. Such were those many thousands of God's people, that were massacred under the tyranny of Antiochus. Neither doubt I to say, that whosoever he be that suffers for the testimony of a good conscience, because he dares not violate any one of the moral laws of God, is as true a martyr, as he that dies for the maintenance of any of the twelve articles of his creed.

Besides, our histories tell us of some very Arians and other heretics, that have yet given their lives up to heathen persecutors for the name of Christ. Shall we say that these men shall receive more privilege from God than the most orthodox confessors, which kept their souls within their teeth; yet suffered grievously, and lived and died more holily?

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1 Sam. xxii. 18.  
2 Chron. xxiv. 21.  
1 Socrat. Hist. Eccl. i. iv. c. [33, ed. Hussey.]
Shortly, then, if we shall count this preventive resurrection a special blessing of God, it must needs be an injurious partiality in those, who shall make such a difference of saints, as that the more holy shall, in the retribution of the just God, carry away the lesser reward; and the less holy shall, for one act of an instantany suffering, be crowned with so great and long-lasting glory before them.

Howsoever it be taken, surely that so much-urged text of 1 Thess. iv. 14 favoureth neither of them: for when the apostle saith, *Those that sleep in,* or for, *Christ, shall rise first,* he speaks of one and the same resurrection, not of two resurrections, a thousand years asunder. Neither is there any clause in the whole book of God that doth so much as seem to countenance, no not to intimate, this double resurrection, in the sense pretended; or this reign of either martyrs or other saints upon earth: which in a verity of such importance is without all example: for all the holy doctrines of divine scripture do, as that father said aright, σωφρονεῖτεν, "contruth with" each other; making good both themselves and their fellows; whereas this not only (if it could be true) stands alone, but hath many sore brushes of contradiction, both of text and reason, to discard it from our belief.

SECTION XXIX.

Alstedius's evasion of Alstedius, that the single expression of this supposed truth is no more derogation from the undoubted certainty of it, than that of the seventy weeks of Daniel, which, though but once mentioned in scripture, yet is and ever hath been received as a most sure, comfortable, and undeniable verity, it cannot serve his turn in the case we have in hand. There is no less difference in the comparison than in the time. The one, a thing past, and punctually fulfilled; the other, in very pretence, future. The one, clearly laid forth without any ambiguity in the relation, save only that weeks of years, not of days, are plainly signified; the other, full of doubtful construction. As well might he have instanced in many hundred passages of scripture, especially in matter of history, wherein the Holy Ghost contents himself with single and but light touches of report, and yet challenging no less belief than upon a thousand reduplications.

Far be it from him to entertain so uncharitable thoughts of us, as if we durst not trust God on his word, though but once spoken. We know him to be Amen; and that repetitions add nothing to
plain truths: but all the question is here, not of words, but of sense; not of what is said, but of what is meant: so as we have reason to expect and require, that, when a strange doctrine is raised out of the construction of a doubtful text, it should be showed to be seconded by the accordant testimony of other scriptures, which upon this matter lying now before us can never be effected.

Section XXX.

We are now fallen upon the last part of our task, which is to show that we are not, by any necessity of this text, cast upon the admission of these strange tenets, of a double resurrection of the body, and of such a reign of the saints upon earth as is pretended; since the words may well bear other more commodious and safe constructions, wherein our sober predecessors contented themselves to rest.

For the terms here used are, if we observe them, of much latitude. He saith, *I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, &c., and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection.*

1. We know the souls are sometimes taken for the spirit that animates us; sometimes for the whole person, so the protomartyr tells us, *Jacob brought down into Egypt threescore and fifteen souls,* Acts vii. 14.

2. *That were beheaded;* though in a grammar sense it signifies the time past; yet commonly, in a prophetical sense, it signifies the future; it being the ordinary phrase of the prophets, by reason of the infallible certainty of the events, to speak of things to come as already past; the instances are obvious and infinite.

3. The living and reigning with Christ is either in this life or in heaven; present or future; in grace or in glory; in way of government or of a blessed fruition.

4. The thousand years, either punctually determinate or indefinite.

5. The first resurrection, either of the soul or body; either the resurrection of the soul from sin and a dead state of unregeneration, or the resurrection of the body from the grave; and in the former construction, a resurrection either of a reformed community or of particular persons.

All these, then, well put together, cannot but afford us our choice of orthodox and probable interpretations without any violence offered to the sense.
Amongst the rest, I shall pitch upon these two as the most clear and free from all just exception.

Section XXXI.

The former, relating to the condition of God’s faithful servants here on earth after those bloody and general persecutions. Thus: “I saw upon the restraint of Satan from that furious and universal violence, which by the hands of those cruel emperors he had exercised against the Church of Christ, such honour put upon his faithful and constant confessors, during the time of Satan’s shutting up, as that the power was committed unto them of managing the affairs of God’s Church, and executing due censures upon the offenders. And I saw those godly persons, which, in true zeal of God’s glory, either had suffered, or were ready to suffer and lay down their lives for the testimony of Jesus Christ; and those which conscientiously refrained from and abhorred the errors and idolatries of the times; those, I saw to enjoy a comfortable life and spiritual reign with Christ, in a sanctified and gracious estate here on earth, all the time of the thousand years of Satan’s restraint. But for the rest, which lay spiritually dead in their sins and impious courses, they did not, either in that space or afterwards, at all attain to this life of grace, and to the true knowledge and fruition of God. Now this abandoning of the sinful corruptions of the times, and attaining to the true knowledge and love of the saving truth of God, and a conscionable obedience thereto, is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath his part in this spiritual resurrection; for on such a one the second death, which is an eternal separation of the soul from the presence of God, shall have no power,” &c.

The other, relating to the happy estate of the souls glorified in heaven, to this sense: “I saw the souls of the blessed martyrs, after they were, by a violent death, for bearing witness to the name of Christ, freed from the calamities of this wretched life, received up to glory; and, reigning in heaven with their glorious Redeemer in everlasting happiness, even during those thousands of years wherein Satan was in his fetters, and, after that, to all eternity.”

If either of these constructions may fitly explicate the text, and fully suit with all other scriptures, to what purpose should we ransack the grave, and rake in the ashes of an odious Cerinthus, or an exploded Papias, for the long since condemned conceits of old and hitherto forgotten millenarism?
I might easily, if it would requite the cost of time, lay before my reader the just exception that may be taken against divers of those other expositions, and the opinions thereon grounded, which I formerly specified; but I do willingly forbear them, as more worthy of silence and neglect. I had rather spend my time and breath in exhorting all good Christians to keep close to their old tenets, and to beware of all either new devised or redivived errors of opinion, whereof this last age of ours is deplorably fruitful.

Section XXXII.

Among the rest, let me beseech them to stick fast to their received principles in these four points, which are incident to the matter that lies before us.

First, that they fix not their belief upon any kingdom of Christ our Saviour but spiritual and heavenly. I am sure no other can be enforced upon them by the text; for it is not said that Christ shall reign with them on earth, but they shall reign with Christ; rather intimating, that they should be fetched up to him, than that he should come down to them: and besides, this reign is attributed to the souls, not to the bodies of the martyred saints. If it be urged that this reign of theirs is upon a resurrection from the dead, it is as easily returned, that the resurrection intimated is no less spiritual than the soul which it concerns: Awake, thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light, Eph. v. 14, saith the Spirit of God: Io, that sleep is death, and both that dead sleep and the awaking out of it is purely spiritual. Neither, indeed, is this personal and visibly monarchical reign of Christ other than disagreeable to the heavenly condition of the Son of God in the fulness of his glorification; which, certainly, if ever he would have exercised, it should have been when he was here, like unto us, a man amongst men, that so he might have ruled over subjects suitable to himself; but now that his human body is in a celestial and glorious estate, and his blessed Deity shining forth in the full beams of resplendent majesty which mortal eyes are not capable to behold, to bring him down from the highest heaven to take the personal government of men, subject to sin and death, as Alstedius yields them, seems to be extremely incongruous. And if we would imagine a visible and personal monarchy, here must be all things correspondent thereunto; the place, the form, the attendants, the officers, the laws, the process, the rewards and punishments, in an outward, bodily, and little other
than secular way; all which, how probable it may sound to Christian ears, I leave to the judicious reader to judge.

Section XXXIII.

Had our blessed Saviour while he was here on earth, or his inspired apostles after him, given us the least hint of this his future monarchy, we should humbly have prostrated our souls to the belief and expectation of it; but if men will be raising such doctrines out of their private constructions of an enigmatical text capable of a more safe and received sense, we must crave pardon to withhold our assent, and to leave them to their own imaginations.

Secondly, that they do not, out of this conceit of a personal and visible kingdom of Christ, flatter themselves into an opinion of an absolute freedom from either sin or bodily affliction here in this earthly life; since both these are and ever will be the unavoidable companions of frail humanity, and the miserable symptoms of our fleshy nature. It is a true word of Eliphaz the Temanite: What is man, that he should be clean? and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Job xv. 14. Certainly, we must cease to be men when we begin to be sinless. Sin, though it be not of the essence of our nature, as some have erroneously thought, yet it is a proper and inseparable adjunct thereof, which we cannot hope to be quit of by the most perfect regeneration. And as for affliction, he hath told us that cannot deceive us, even Truth itself, In the world you shall have tribulation, John xvi. 33; and his blessed apostles, to the same purpose, That through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven, Acts xiv. 22. And if Alstedius shall hope to avoid the blow by shifting his foot, and referring the words to the present condition of the persecuted disciples, which yet should afterwards be interchanged with vicissitudes of calm and peaceable times, he might well have considered, that this life of ours is necessarily obnoxious to many other affictions beside violent persecutions, and might have paralleled that sentence with the experimental observation of the great pattern of patience, Man that is born of a woman is of a few days, and full of trouble, Job xiv. 1. Neither indeed can this conceit of theirs stand with that old and never contracted distinction of the Church militant and triumphant: for if this Church of Christ upon earth shall after the next return of him be freed both from Satan, who is now chained up, and from all whatsoever afflictions, with
what warfare shall we say it is exercised for the space of a whole
1000 years? what adversary can it meet with for confliction? And
if Alstedius shall tell us, that in this mean while the living saints,
though not the raised, are still combated inwardly in their breasts
with their rebelling corruptions, we send Mr. Archer to enter the
lists with him; who offers to make good upon him, that those
very saints whom our returning Saviour shall find alive are both
in themselves and in their children, in all succeeding generations,
freed from all the power of sin; so as, though they have an origi-
nal corruption still within them, yet it shall never break forth
to the prejudice of their souls. So as by this rule there should be
no church in the world till towards the end of that thousand years,
but triumphant; which surely a man had need of a strong faith
to believe.

SECTION XXXIV.

Thirdly, that they do not entertain the thought or expectation
of any other future coming of their Saviour, but
that one only of his return to the final judgment
of the world. Surely the blessed apostle knew of
no other, when he charged Timothy before God
and the Lord Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead at
his appearance, to preach the word, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2: when he
prayed for his Thessalonians, that God would establish their hearts
unblamable in holiness, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ
with all his saints, 1 Thess. iii. 13. Lo, if there should be ima-
gined a third coming of Christ, we cannot say that he comes with
all his saints; since the greatest part of them, according to this
tenet, are already upon earth before him, and do rather stay for
him below, than come from above with him. And, indeed, where-
fore should it be imagined that the Lord Jesus should make this
middle descent from heaven to earth? Great actions must have
answerable motives: what necessity or use can they frame to
themselves of this wonderful appearance? Is it to receive his
kingdom? He hath it already: Thou hast put all things in sub-
jection under his feet, saith the apostle, Heb. ii. 8: already hath
God highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above
all names: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the
earth, Phil. ii. 9, 10. Is it to settle the government of that his
better reformed Church? It is done already: He that descended
is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he
might fill all things. And he gave some, to be apostles; some,
prophets; some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; to what purpose! For the perfecting of the saints, &c., for the edifying of the body of Christ, Ephes. iv. 10, 11, 12. And how long? Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, ver. 13. Is it to subdue and destroy his enemies? Hath he not infinite power in his hand to effect that without a bodily descent? When he destroyed the first world of wicked men, did he descend from heaven to do it? So then we may, with all Christian assurance, rest upon the word of his holy apostle Peter, that the heavens must receive him until the restitution of all things, Acts iii. 21: which is that of the general resurrection, as we may see by comparing of St. Peter with St. Paul, Rom. viii. 23, termed by our Saviour, the day of our redemption: till when (which cannot be long) we have no ground to expect our Saviour's return.

Section XXXV.

Fourthly, that we do neither, out of a credulous security, put the day of the last judgment far off from us, nor, out of a misguided presumption, pass our punctual predeterminations of it.

In both which extremes, these last times have been too fault-worthy. The time was, when the apostle was fain to beat off his Thessalonians from the expectation of the then instant appearing of Christ to judgment; now we have more need, after sixteen hundred years' continuance, to persuade our people of the approach of this great day. They did then believe that Christ was at the door; now we are hardly induced to believe that he is upon the way to that dreadful judicature. Surely, this operation hath this millenary doctrine had upon the hearts of men, that, though they are thereupon apt to expect an appropinquation of their Saviour for their happy advantage, yet they resolutely put off the thought of his coming to the general judgment of the world for many generations. A man hath a good estate in his farm for almost an hundred years; another, that is about to purchase the inheritance in reversion after so long a term, is told it were better to spare that cost, since in all likelihood the world would ere then be at an end: he answers, “Tush! no, the thousand years are not yet entered wherein the saints shall reign upon earth before that day.” In which yet this opinionist can be no other than grossly overseen. For is he
a saint, or is he none? if none, even the next coming of Christ destroys him, and mars his purchase: if a saint, though he make no purchase now, he shall then (according to their doctrine) live in all fulness of riches and earthly contentment. But what if that thousand years' reign be to be accomplished in heaven, not in earth, as some construe it? or if on earth, what if it be already accomplished, as others? Where is then the confidence of this delay? Certainly, notwithstanding this unhappily raised suggestion, nothing appears why we should not make full account that the world is near to its last period; and that our Lord Jesus is at hand for his final judgment. For if, in the time of the blessed apostles, it was justly computed to be the last hour, needs must it now be drawing towards the last minute: neither have we any reason to say, with the evil servant in the gospel, the Lord defers his coming.

It may be a question, whether it may be more out of boldness, to maintain that dilatory assertion of the last judgment which hath passed the pens of Alphonseus, Conradus, Cotterius, and others, or the confident and punctual assignation of the time of those universal sessions determined by Alstedius, Archer, and others of that way. Who can but be startled at those lines of Mr. Archer? "Now," saith he," having found out when Christ's kingdom, or the thousand years, shall begin, it is easy to guess when the time of the last and general judgment and the world's end shall be." Thus he. Truly, the evidence is much alike of both: for when shall that 1000 years' reign begin? "About the year of our Lord 1700," saith he, following the steps of Alstedius; who, upon the same ground, casts it upon the year 1694: and both of them ground the epochs of their calculation upon that forementioned place of Dan. xii. 11, 12: From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days: where the days, as I formerly intimated, are taken to stand for years; and, withal, it is supposed that the 1335 years are, in order of time, to take their original after the expiration of the 1290 years; and both of them to take their rise from the termination of the seventy weeks, viz. anno 169. All which put together make up the number of 2694, which is the utmost period of the 1000 years' reign of the saints: from which, therefore, if we deduce the said thousand, there must

m Personal Reign, p. 50.
remain 1694, the *initium regni* of the Lord of glory here upon earth. But if either the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the desolatory abomination be not understood in that place of the act and army of the Romans; or the days there mentioned be not intended to stand for so many years, as being only to signify the short time of Antiochus's cruel persecution; or, lastly, if those two several numbers were not meant to be successive one to the other in the whole computation of them, (which learned Calvin plainly censures for a vain and groundless conceit,) all this aim and labour is lost; and we are yet to seek where to pitch the account either for beginning or termination. Shortly, what heed is to be given to this reckoning appears in that first parcel of it which concerns the total conversion of the Jews; which Mr. Archer, with the like confidence, places upon 1650, now entered upon by our almanacks, or at the farthest 1656: wherein we see his prognostication fails him, and his prediction is sufficiently checked by the event. No otherwise than Mr. Brightman's: by whose account the Turkish tyranny should have lasted but seven years after he wrote his "Revelation;" whereas now near forty years are since passed, and that empire holds up still in too much vigour, without any appearance of diminution.

What should I need to show how others, both of our countrymen and foreigners, who thought themselves wiser than their fellows, have been shamefully baffled in their fore-determining of the last day of the world; which themselves have been suffered to overlive? It will well become modest Christians to rest in revealed truths; and leave the unlocking of the secret cabinets of the Almighty to the only key of his divine wisdom and omniscience: as remembering the words of our Saviour; *Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven.*

Let it be our care to be ever in a perpetual posture of readiness for that awful and glorious coming of our Lord and Saviour, wheneversoever it shall be; and to see that our accounts be set right for that great audit: so shall we meet our returning Master with a comfortable and happy assurance; and hear from him that blessed *Euge, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into thy Master's joy.*