

ART. II.—THE GATHERING AND THE DESTINY OF
THE ISRAEL OF GOD.

THE readers of THE CHURCHMAN for November, 1886, might find a very noticeable example in a paper, which was likely to interest them greatly, by Mr. Sydney Gedge, M.P. There was a profitable lesson in the very fact that a lawyer of Mr. Gedge's professional energy, and a legislator with Mr. Gedge's keen relish for politics, had made time for writing a thoughtful essay on "*The Second Coming of Christ, and the Return of the Jews to the Holy Land.*" In days when too many forget the wisdom of the Apostolic axiom that we "do well"¹ to take heed to the word of prophecy, there is seasonable instruction in so practical a reminder that the future predicted in Holy Scripture infinitely exceeds in importance any "blessings of this life."

A layman's entrance on the study of prophecy is specially to be commended, because the subject which he approaches is thickly bristled by controversies; the obscurity incidental to inspired forecasts being met by students of unequal ability, with varied measures of knowledge and divers degrees of devoutness. Though the "holy men of old"² spake "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," they were set to describe coming events which were spread out before them at several stages of futurity, like an extensive range of mountain-peaks in a wide landscape under a traveller's eye. And it should not be surprising that their announcements easily perplex; because they have often mentioned in the same sentence, and perhaps in an order different from that in which they would actually occur, events separated by many centuries.³ Not unfrequently they have recorded the remotest portion of the vision before referring to that part of it which betokened an occurrence at hand; or because an object in the middle distance arrested their attention by its peculiar brilliancy, they have allowed it to anticipate, in their written account of the prospect, both the far-off and the near.

Highly-gifted interpreters of descriptions, thus tangled, have had to confess that they could only see as through opaque

¹ 2 Peter i. 19.

² *Ibid.*, i. 21.

³ Observe, for example, how two events, which more than eighteen hundred years divide, are described in the single sentence of the Baptist (Matt. iii. 11, 12): "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost . . . whose fan is in his hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor."

glass, darkly.¹ The very Apostle who urged his fellow-Christians to heed the prophetic word acknowledged it to be a light "*shining in a dark place.*"² And the indistinctness inevitable in Apostolic times has in our days become still more confusing, by reason of mistakes in the meanwhile of not a few well-intentioned but dull-sighted expositors.

But neither difficulty nor hindrance can justify neglect of predictions which the Holy Spirit has written "for our learning."³ A persuasion, which the history of prophetic interpretation confirms, that human commentators are liable to err, instead of discouraging, should quicken research, whilst deepening humility, bridling dogmatism, and stimulating brotherly fellowship in exploring the mine of truth. "CATCHWORDS"⁴ in various contexts, which careful students may trace here and there along the whole line of Scripture-prophecy, should be patiently compared. The suggestions of every prayerful neighbour who has meditated on the Holy Word should be welcomed and weighed with wide-hearted thankfulness.

I follow Mr. Gedge all the more readily on to an arena already crowded with disputants, not only because I cordially agree with him on one point (presently to be mentioned) which involves a train of important consequences, but because I think I can show, as to other points on which Mr. Gedge supposes himself to differ from many students of prophecy, that the apparent antagonism may not be real.

I shall begin by trying to abate the separation to which Mr. Gedge alludes. I shall then dilate on the point of agreement between myself and him, because he hardly, I think, attributes to it sufficient weight in the range of prophetic subjects; and afterwards, merely touching on a slight difficulty which Mr. Gedge has, in my judgment, unnecessarily enlarged, I will also glance at the glorious earthly future of the saints, which Mr. Gedge (*unscripturally*, according to an interpretation of both Testaments which our Prayer Book upholds) has entirely ignored.

I. On the first point he quotes, very appropriately, in respect to our Lord's second coming, an article from each of the three Creeds. He reminds us that all Churchmen are bound thoroughly to receive those articles, because "they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." He condenses

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

² 2 Peter i. 19.

³ Rom. xv. 4.

⁴ Thus Bishop Christopher Wordsworth ("Lectures on the Apocalypse," p. 189) says of *earthquake* in Rev. vi. 12: "It serves as a *catchword*. . . . Like other words and phrases in this book, it rivets events together where they are contemporaneous."

them very fairly into the statement that "there will be one last day in which Christ's second coming will take place, when all the dead will arise with their bodies, and the final judgment of both quick and dead, both good and evil, will be irrevocably pronounced by the Lord Jesus Christ;" and because he, as an interpreter of Scripture, holds firmly to the singleness of the day of the Lord, he is disposed to reckon that other interpreters are in irreconcilable variance with him, because they understand the Scriptures to foretell that the just will rise a millennium before the unjust, and that a series of thrilling events will occur between the sign of the Son of Man in the heavens and the final possession by the saints of undisturbable happiness in their everlasting home.

The discrepancy between the two opinions need not be as hopelessly wide as Mr. Gedge supposes: because the oneness of "the last day," which Mr. Gedge allows to be "not limited to twenty-four hours," is quite compatible with its extension¹ over at least a thousand years.

When a human sovereign intends to visit a selected portion of his dominions, and purposes on that occasion to receive an address from the local magistrates, to review the troops, as well as to preside at a sumptuous banquet, the simple notice in certain proclamations that there is to be "a grand day," or "a royal festival," would be quite consistent not merely with a statement on other placards of all the intended details, but with the issuing of authorized documents exclusively referring either to the reception of the civic rulers, or to the banquet, or to the review.

And if we understand such expressions as "the day of the Lord," "the appearing of Jesus Christ," or "the last day" to mean *the finishing period of the present dispensation which will introduce the everlasting age*, there is just as little inconsistency between Scriptures which refer briefly to the singleness of that great "day" which will change the darkness of this groaning world into an eternal continuance of perfect light, and other Scriptures which enlarge on a succession of events which will occur in the process of so vast a change, or with yet other Scriptures which only mention one or two of the coming occurrences in the momentous series.

I shrink from speaking with positiveness concerning a future indistinctly revealed. I refer to the possible order of its details with unaffected modesty. I do not pretend, for a single instant, to furnish an *infallible* explanation of matters which shine dimly on the sacred pages. But—after comparing carefully all the Scriptures which relate to the coming "end"

¹ 2 Peter iii. 8.

—I humbly submit, for the consideration of fellow-students, that there is no serious objection to the interpretation that the rapture of the saints;¹ the Redeemer's vengeance on the hearers of the Gospel who refused it whilst He was away;² the bestowal of a promised recompense on true believers according to the work of each;³ and perhaps (after that judgment of the saints) a final rebellion of Christ's foes, with their total overthrow⁴—may occur in succession during a vast period, which, notwithstanding its vastness according to human numeration, will be "with the Lord" as one day.⁵

And here it should be remembered that success in comparing two Scriptures, or in reconciling apparently diverse opinions upon them, may largely depend on scrupulous accuracy in observing every word or phrase. Casual reading may multiply errors, but discriminating care may attain to a discerning of the truth. In the studying, for example, our Lord's prediction of the saints' rapture in St. Luke xvii. 34-36, it should be noted that on that occasion He *may* have limited the "*Day* of the Son of Man" to the period of twenty-four hours in which our globe revolves on its own axis.

Referring to that side of the earth which will be at a certain moment enlightened by the sun, He said, "Two men shall be *in the field*: the one shall be taken, and the other left:" whilst, with reference to the darkened side of the earth at the same moment, He said, "I tell you in that *night* there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

But on the contrary, the "end of the age" which He predicted when explaining the parable of the tares (in Matt. xiii. 40-43) *may* be a period by no means limited to twenty-four hours. And it should be noted also that, on that occasion, the chief among all the prophets omitted a reference to the rapture of the saints, because He was then emphasizing the fact that unreal professors of Christianity will have been

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 17.

² 2 Thess. i. 8.

³ Rev. xxii. 13.

⁴ Rev. xx. 7-10.

⁵ The Christians of the second and third centuries have set us a whole-some example in allowing this matter to be an open question. Dr. Burton (the Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford about the time when I matriculated, fifty years ago—a man, I believe, of singularly calm judgment) has recorded concerning them: "It was believed by a large portion of Christians that the resurrection of the righteous would take place before the resurrection of all mankind. . . Such a belief was certainly entertained by several writers of the second century, though Justin [afterwards the Martyr], who himself adopted it, acknowledges that there were many Christians of sound and religious minds who differed from him on this point. It was in fact never made an article of belief, and each person was at liberty to follow his own opinion."—Burton's "History of the Christian Church," pp. 318, 223.

destroyed from off the face of the earth (cast into a furnace of fire) before the true children of the kingdom, who shall have been previously caught out of the reach of the fire,¹ shall take happy possession of the earth, as joint heirs with Christ their King. (Matt. xiii. 43).

There should be a similar accuracy of observation in considering two references by St. Paul to the future rising again of men from their graves. When he alludes (Acts xxiv. 15) to his expectation that all will rise, in one of two classes, he makes no mention of effort; because one or other alternative is absolutely unavoidable: "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." But when he alludes (in Phil. iii.) only to the rising again of the just, he describes himself as making a constant effort to secure a special sort of return from the grave: "if by any means I may attain εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τῶν νεκρῶν—to the resurrection from the dead" (Revised Version).²

And once more it is to be noted, that in the former passage, when referring to the resurrection of both kinds of human beings, St. Paul places the word "just" before the word "unjust," thus perhaps suggesting a difference of time; even as, in a parallel utterance of Christ Himself (in St. John v. 38, 39), the phrase "they that have done good unto the resurrection of life" precedes "they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment."³

I will not, however, further prolong the attempt to show that Mr. Gedge's expectation of "the last day" is quite reconcilable with that of those who look for a series of events, during "the day of the Lord"; because I am persuaded that far greater importance belongs to

II. The doctrine in which I cordially agree with Mr. Gedge: that *any members of the Jewish nation who shall ever*

¹ See 1 Thess. iv. 17; Isa. xxvi. 20.

² It is very noticeable that our Lord Himself has described the resurrection to life as having the same peculiarity (St. Luke xx. 35): "They that shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead,"—τῆς ἀναστάσεως τῆς ἐκ (out of) νεκρῶν.

³ The advantage of minute observation in the study of prophecies can scarcely be exaggerated. Probably Mr. Gedge would not have written as to 1 Cor. xv. 52, "οἱ νεκροὶ surely means all the dead," if he had noticed that the "we," all through the context down to "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory," means, verse 23, "They that are Christ's." Possibly, also, that very close observer of Scripture, Christopher Wordsworth, would not have induced Mr. Gedge to say "that it seems a strange reason for believing in a first resurrection of men's bodies that the Apostle St. John saw in a vision the resurrection of some souls," if it had been noted that the word used by St. John is the Apostolic word for describing the revival of the body. Nearly the same word is used in Romans xiv. 9 to describe the return of our Lord's body from the grave. The Revised Version translates accordingly, Christ both died and *lived again*—ἐπέζησεν.

be converted to the faith of Christ, shall hereafter be INCLUDED IN the same blessed company with converts from all other nations who in any age before the second coming of Christ shall have believed; or, to use Mr. Gedge's words, "there is no promise to believing Gentiles in which believing Jews will not share, and no promise to faithful Jews in which faithful Gentiles will not share."

This belief was held for many centuries by the leading English Divines; but in recent years, about three-quarters of a century ago, when the condition and hopes of the Jewish nation, (which had been, too long, almost uncared for by professing Christians,) began to arrest a becoming attention, neglect of God's ancient people changed, in some Gentile minds, into a somewhat misguided enthusiasm.

Without, as I venture to think, any warrant of Scripture,¹ and *in forgetfulness that the new earth is promised to all who are genuine children of Abraham* (see St. Paul's argument as to Abraham and his seed being heirs of the earth in Rom. iv. 13-17), an opinion was gradually formed by a few devout students of prophecy that the Jewish nation, when hereafter converted, will occupy in the world to come a distinct position from Christ's perfected Church.

As this comparatively modern tenet is still held by some who are otherwise much-to-be-respected interpreters of the Bible, and as Mr. Gedge, though convinced of its erroneousness, does not hold the further tenet as to the Church's dwelling-place after Christ's second advent, to which the teaching of Holy Scripture seems to lead, it may be worth while to state briefly four arguments in proof that there will be no distinction after Christ's second advent between the Jewish nation and the Gentiles who, in this dispensation, accept the Gospel, but that they will together form the glorified partner of the Redeemer in His eternal inheritance.

(1) Firstly, there is the argument (stated by Mr. Gedge) which is to be drawn from the inspired teaching of St. Paul. In Romans xi.,² when he compares the blessed company of all faithful people to an olive-tree in which the Hebrew patriarchs

¹ The perplexity of prophetic perspective has perhaps led differing interpreters to explain the same Scripture of different stages in the Jewish future predicted by a Jewish seer. Canon Faussett understands that Isaiah lxvi. 20 will hereafter be fulfilled to lineal descendants of Abraham. But Bishop Lowth, unable to decide between three interpretations, wrote: "The words may be understood either of the Jews 'that are escaped' converting the Gentiles and *bringing* them for an offering to God—the very phrase which St. Paul uses, speaking of the subject, Rom. xv. 16—or else that they shall convert their own brethren . . . or the place may be understood . . . of the *mystical* Israel."

² Compare especially verse 23 with verses 28 and 32.

were branches, and in which Gentiles who now believe during Jewish blindness *are* branches, he foretells, in the plainest language, that IN THAT SELF-SAME OLIVE-TREE the Jews, when they shall no longer abide in unbelief, *will be* branches.¹ And in Ephesians iii. he supports his doctrine by declaring that the full truth on this point has been more clearly revealed to New Testament apostles and prophets than to Old Testament seers. Now, he emphatically says it is *revealed* that the Gentiles shall be "fellow-*heirs*, and of the same body" with Hebrew believers; so that together, as "the Church," they shall make known to principalities in heaven the manifold wisdom of God.²

(2) Secondly, it is to be observed that, in accordance with this Apostolic teaching, the peculiar titles for the Lord's own people which originally belonged to Abraham and his lineal descendants are applied in the New Testament to the one company, of Gentile as well as Jewish believers, who form together "the Israel of God."³

Thus, for instance, the title of inestimable dignity "royal priesthood," which was once exclusively the property of the Abrahamic race (Exod. xix. 56), is not only applied by St. Peter to converted Jews (1 Peter ii. 9), but is readily given by St. John to converted Gentiles in the seven churches of Asia (Rev. i. 4-6). And the equally dignified title "elect," which originally belonged only to Hebrews (Isa. xli. 8), is used by St. Paul respecting Cretians who had been transformed by God's grace (Titus i. 1 with iii. 5-7), precisely as he uses it respecting men of the Jewish race (Rom. xi. 28).⁴

(3) A third line of reasoning in support of the same conclusion may be drawn from our Lord's prophecy that the national repentance of the Jews will occur *before the number of His chosen shall be complete*. Quoting the more ancient prediction of Zechariah as to the penitent wailing of the tribes, he foretells that it will happen on the appearance of the Son of Man's sign (whatever that may be), but previously to His sending forth His angels for the gathering of "His elect."⁵ And

(4) Fourthly, it may be argued that whereas those who

¹ In verse 29 St. Paul says, "And so *all Israel* shall be saved." This noticeable expression Calvin understood as meaning "the whole people of God."

² Ephes. iii. 4-11.

³ Gal. vi. 16.

⁴ Compare also the use of "*firstborn*," Exod. iv. 22, with Heb. xii. 22; and of "*saints of the Most High*," Dan. vii. 27, with 2 Thess. i. 10.

⁵ St. Matthew xxiv. 30: "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and THEN shall all the tribes of the land mourn—*κόψονται πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς* [compare in the Septuagint of Zech. xii. 12 *κόψεται ἡ γῆ κατὰ φυλὰς φυλὰς*], and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the

expect that the Jews will hereafter be a queenly nation, enthroned apart from the glorified Church, are pre-supposing the existence of *two* brides for the second Adam (who has Himself pointed out that God gave the first Adam only one wife), the opposite doctrine (that held by the more ancient interpreters) is consistent with the latest portrait of the Lamb's wife, in which details, foreseen by Isaiah as belonging to the Jewish people in future blessedness, are over and over again quoted by the inspired St. John as fulfilled in the coming grandeur of the true Church.¹

The combined force of these four arguments is, I am bold enough to conclude, unanswerable. And Mr. Gedge may be ready to say that I have been gilding refined gold in accumulating proofs upon the sufficient demonstration which he had already derived from St. Paul. But

III. I now proceed to show—what I wish him very closely to observe—that a cordial acceptance of that doctrine is quite consistent with holding the idea which he strongly condemns, *that a large portion of the Jewish nation will, antecedently to its conversion, be restored to the Holy Land.*

He inadvertently exaggerates the reticence of the New Testament as to any future return of the Jews to Palestine. Some measure of silence, and a very remarkable measure, there undoubtedly is. When Bible-students have inwardly digested the abundant predictions on this subject in Jeremiah, and other Old Testament prophets, which have never yet received a sufficient fulfilment, either in the going back from Babylon or in any other event of Jewish history, it can scarcely escape their notice, when they turn to the Gospels and Epistles, that there are *very few* New Testament echoes of what the Old Testament so loudly proclaims.

But that comparative stillness of the New Testament is at once accounted for by the never-to-be-forgotten fact that the "times of the Gentiles" are now being "fulfilled."² Even in the Old Testament prophecies of Daniel there is more than once what may be called *a gap of silence* with respect to the

clouds . . . and He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds." The learned Joseph Mede, in the seventeenth century, drew attention to the remarkable order of the events predicted in this passage, as appearing to allow an interval between the conversion of the Jews and the completion of the Church. Note also, *very specially*, a corresponding order of events in St. Peter's exhortation to Jews in Acts iii. 19, 20: "*Repent ye . . . that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send the Christ . . . even Jesus*" (Revised Version).

¹ Compare throughout Isa. lx. and Rev. xxi., but especially verses 3, 11, 19 of the Old Testament chapter with verses 12, 23, 24 of the New.

² Luke xxi. 24.

gloomy period during which Daniel's people would be spiritually blind. Much more, therefore, was it to be expected that the discourses of Christ or His Apostles, which for centuries were to be mainly instructive to Gentiles, would have but slight allusions to God's purpose in respect to His "ancient people," who, during the times of Gentile prosperity, would be under His righteous wrath.

But Mr. Gedge's account of the matter has utterly overstated the contrast, in this respect, between Old and New Testament Scriptures. His legal accuracy had for once deserted him, when he penned the sweeping assertion that "there is not one syllable, from the first verse of St. Matthew's Gospel to the last verse of the Revelation of St. John the Divine, which gives the *slightest hint* of any future return of the Jews to Canaan as their own land."

In the extract which I have already made from our Lord's prophecy on the Mount of Olives there is a very strong hint of their being in possession of Canaan in His quotation of Zechariah's prediction, "Then shall the tribes of *the land* mourn." But there are two still stronger hints in the same context. For Christ, when He left the Temple for the last time during His sojourning on this globe in great humility, plainly intimated that at His second coming He and the Jews would again be found together on the same sacred spot. "Ye," said He, (*i.e.*, ye Jews of Jerusalem) "shall not see Me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." And once more in the course of that prophecy, as He sat on the slope of Olivet with the great buildings of the Temple immediately under His eye, when He foretold, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles *until* the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled," He as plainly implied that, after the fulfilment of the Gentile day of grace, the ancient supremacy of the Jews in their own city will be restored.

Moreover, when it is argued, as I trust that I, in agreement with Mr. Gedge, have successfully argued, that the lineal descendants of Abraham, who in "the last days" shall be converted to Abraham's faith, will form one body with those Gentiles who during Jewish blindness have by faith become

¹ The seventieth hebdomad in Dan. ix. 25-27, which has not yet been fulfilled, is ominously separated from the other sixty-nine hebdomads, because "that determined" is still being poured upon *the desolate*; and in like manner *somewhere* in the latter part of Dan. xi. (interpreters differ as to the precise verse at which it should be introduced) a gap of some centuries is to be understood, so as to admit of the application of the entire portion of the passage to Antioches, whilst verse 40 evidently belongs to "the time of the end."

Abraham's genuine children, it should always be remembered that their sharing Abraham's childlike belief, instead of depriving them of an earthly inheritance, will expressly entitle them to possess it.

IV. One notable promise made to Abraham, and expressly quoted by St. Paul (Rom. iv. 13), was that he should be *κληρονόμος τοῦ κόσμου* (which our translations, the Authorized and the Revised alike, have rendered "heir of the world." Abraham showed (see Heb. xi. 9) the childlike simplicity of his faith in that promise, by "dwelling in tents" without settled habitation during his first lifetime on the earth, in token of his firm persuasion that he would come into "possession," according to God's word, on his return to the earth in the resurrection morning. He steadfastly looked for "a city which hath foundations"—heavenly, in the sense of being secured by the King of heaven (see 1 Peter i. 4), but in due time to come down out of heaven (see Rev. xxi. 2 compared with Rev. xi. 15, xix. 6-8), to be lastingly established on the earth. And all who have Abraham's faith, whether Gentile believers during their day of visitation or lineal descendants of Abraham, when the veil shall have been taken from their hearts, will, as Abraham's seed,¹ be HEIRS "ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE."²

Mr. Gedge's idea of the saints' future is a very different one. He has no expectation that either they or their Divine Lord will inhabit this earth after Christ's second coming. He supposes—supported in his supposition by some modern hymns—that Christ "will then take all the subjects [of His kingdom of grace] to reign together with Him in the *kingdom of glory in heaven* for ever and ever." And it is only with the profoundest reverence for the mysterious grandeur of the future eternity that I allow myself to discuss the correctness of any impression about it which is entertained by a thoughtful fellow-Christian. For though, doubtless, it is lawful to search into the meaning of those slight hints about the glory-to-follow which the Holy Ghost has seen fit to reveal, there was, nevertheless, profound wisdom in the very brevity of the last article in the Creed of the early Christians: "I believe

¹ Gal. iii. 29 compared with Heb. xi. 39, 40 ; xii. 27, 28.

² I for one, therefore, if a missionary to the Jews, would not have the slightest difficulty in meeting the dilemma somewhat grotesquely suggested by Mr. Gedge. For I should have only one gospel to preach to them, but a larger one than Mr. Gedge's, and as rich as St. Paul's: "Penitently believe on the Lord Jesus, and accept Him as your Messiah. You shall then not only 'be saved from sin and death and hell,' but with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the whole 'Church of the first-born,' your 'days shall be long' in the inheritance which the Lord God of Israel promised to your fathers."

in—the life everlasting.”¹ But I venture to suggest that the scanty information in the Bible on this magnificent topic (interpreted by such remains of ancient liturgies as have been retained in our Prayer Book) does not lead precisely to Mr. Gedge’s expectation. It is, of course, not only possible, but very probable, that Christ, Who is “Lord of all,” will hereafter conduct “the Church of the firstborn” to various parts of the universe over which He is supreme. If “the heaven of heavens” be, according to the thoughtful argument of Canon Garratt in his able treatise, “*World without end*,” the central spot around which all astral systems revolve, it may reasonably be concluded that they “who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth” will have the precious privilege of entering with Him into that true Holy of Holies. But I submit that that is not exactly the future blessedness on which the Bible has fixed the longing eyes of believers in Divine mercy since the fall. That has not been *the* HOPE to which either trustful Gentiles or the twelve tribes instantly serving God in ancient ages have hoped to come. The main topic of Holy Scripture is RECOVERY. It foretells the entire removal, by the second Adam, of the curse which came, on man’s earth as well as on man’s self, through the disobedience of the first Adam. The Bible’s most enthusiastic songs of praise, which are echoed in the *Te Deum* and *Ter Sanctus*, are hymns of hope that, when “the throne of the Lamb” shall have been established on the earth renewed, “of His kingdom there shall be no end.”²

But the subject thus suggested is a vastly extensive one. The proper discussion of various questions of great difficulty,

¹ Bishop Pearson, in his appendix, gives three Creeds earlier than the Nicene. Bingham, referring also to some ancient fragments, mentions the same. Riddle, in his “Manual of Christian Antiquities,” quotes rather more. But all are distinguished, in respect to eschatology, by similar modesty. Irenæus, about A.D. 178, believed that Christ, at His coming, will on “all righteous and holy men” “bestow the gift of immortality, and invest them with eternal glory.” Tertullian, soon after A.D. 200, believed in the coming of Christ “to take the saints into the possession and fruition of eternal life and the heavenly promises.” Even Arius presented to Constantine a creed with this article: “We believe in the life of the world to come, and in the kingdom of heaven, and in one Catholic Church of God extended from one end of the earth to the other.” In the apparently fabulous story, that the twelve Apostles met and concocted the Apostles’ Creed, Rufinus asserts that Matthias was the Apostle who suggested the article, “*And the life everlasting*.”

² The difficult question whether there still is to be, or already has been, THE MILLENNIUM—on which, as Mr. Gedge has shown, learned and devout commentators have taken different views—need not disturb our consideration of what the earth’s future is to be. For the Millennium—→ if, as there is strong reason to conclude, it will follow Christ’s second coming—will only be a slight fringe to the infinitely more glorious

though of deep interest, which link themselves to it¹ would far exceed the limits to which the present paper ought to be confined. If the Editor of THE CHURCHMAN is disposed to give me the opportunity in some future number, I may perhaps try to unfold in some measure the glorious truths which are asserted in those grand articles of the Nicene Creed—"I believe in the resurrection of the dead, and THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME."

In briefly concluding the present essay, it is very pleasant to find one more point for cordial agreement with Mr. Gedge in his zeal for world-wide evangelization. Whatever opinions are held upon other topics by grateful disciples of the Divine Redeemer, they *must* heartily unite in obedience to His plain command, "Make disciples of all the nations." Though the preaching of His Gospel in our day, as in St. Paul's day, influences but a small proportion of those who hear, and though the largest outpouring of the Holy Spirit *may* be reserved, according to the tenor of one prophecy, for a later period in the history of mankind,² the present duty of loyal Christians is unquestionably to fulfil the purpose of Christ, Who by their instrumentality is now taking out of the nations "a people for His name;"³ and notwithstanding the drawbacks and difficulties and discouragements⁴ which the preach-

END. To *that* St. Paul looked forward, in accordance with the ancient expectation of inspired Jews. Compare Rom. viii. 21 with Acts xvii. 31, which does not refer, as Mr. Gedge seems to think, to the future judgment-seat of Christ, but to His ruling righteously, as the second Adam, over MAN'S earth. The Apostle is quoting Psa. ix. 8 or Psa. xcvi. 13. So St. Peter's hope was "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter i. 11), and St. John was specially inspired to close the canon of Scripture with a book containing the glorious prediction, "The kingdoms of this world are become THE KINGDOM of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign *for ever and ever*" (Rev. xi. 15).

¹ Such questions, for instance, as, Who will be the subjects over whom the "royal priesthood" will rule? If they shall be human beings, constantly multiplying on the renewed earth, how shall they have escaped the deluge of fire which shall sweep away Christ's hardened enemies? and if God shall literally show mercy, according to the language of the fourth commandment, "unto the thousandth generation" (see Bishop Harold Browne, in the "Speaker's Commentary," on Exod. xx. 6), what intimations are there in Holy Scripture of homes in due time for the superabundant population of this planet, in other worlds which are now gradually being made habitable for them?

² Isa. xxxii. 15 compared with verse 1.

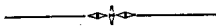
³ Acts xv. 14.

⁴ We have much to sadden, but nothing which should tempt us to suppress the proclaiming everywhere "repentance and remission of sins" in the name of the Lord Jesus, if we must infer as to India that possibly it contains to-day more unconverted heathen than eighty years ago, when a fresh impulse was given to foreign Missions. Our office is to bear the testimony (understanding *μαρτυρία* in the sense which Mr. Gedge

ing has encountered ever since it began, there is inexhaustible refreshment in the sure promise which the great Commander annexed to "the marching orders" of His advancing army, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the age."

DAVID DALE STEWART.

COULSDON RECTORY, NEAR CATERHAM,
January, 1887.



ART. III.—DEAN BRADLEY'S "LECTURES ON ECCLESIASTES."

Lectures on Ecclesiastes. Delivered in Westminster Abbey by the Very Reverend GEORGE GRANVILLE BRADLEY, D.D., Dean of Westminster. Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1885.

IT is needless to say that this is an extremely able book. Let me add, that it is by no means an easy one to review. The object of the lectures was edification rather than criticism. And yet they raise, or at least touch, nearly every question, critical or exegetical, that can be found in "the Preacher." Some such treatment as Dean Bradley's appears absolutely necessary, as a first step to the solution of these questions, and to determine the origin and purpose of Ecclesiastes. Another observation I cannot withhold. Dean Bradley is, above all things, a scholar. Yet in these pages he avows himself to be "no Hebraist," and takes his textual and critical comments from other authorities, by such principles of selection as an English reader must perforce adopt. I cannot but regret that

assigns to it), in order that Christ, by our testifying, may accomplish the number of His "peculiar people;" although General Haig, one of the most energetic and self-denying among the supporters of foreign Missions, has stated, in his address entitled "The Claims of India": "Every ten years a census is taken by the missionaries of the Church in India, and so the exact number of Christians, men, women, and children, is known. Taking the last three decades, the *annual increase* was 10,000 in the first, 10,000 in the second, and in the ten years ending 1881, 20,000. . . . And yet, while it is very encouraging to see the Church increasing at that rate, the outlook is not so encouraging when the actual increase of the total population is considered. For centuries before we took India under our charge, the population was probably nearly stationary; but now that they are under a strong and just and beneficent Government, the increase of the population is very rapid. The actual increase appears to be now at the rate of two or two and a half millions a year; but, supposing we only say one million, allowing for the epidemics that sweep away such large numbers from time to time, we have still these two facts confronting us—of the Christian Church increasing at the rate of 10,000 to 20,000, and the heathen population increasing at the rate of *one million* a year."