

He desiderated in the present life a love purely unselfish. Marriage, its most ideal type, was, even in its most ideal form, but the entrance into communion, of minds already kindred. Our Lord discerned a yet higher possibility for man—the entrance into communion with minds as yet not kindred. He felt that however high it was to love *oneself* in another, it was not yet the topmost round. The highest love which a human soul could reach was the power to come out of self, the power to put itself into the place of another just where the nature of that other was most unlike its own. To realize the conditions of others, to enter by thought into the temptations of others: this was the secret of the Divine charity which was destined to abide for ever, for this is the life of those celestial spirits, who, from the height of a loftier platform, desire to look into the weakness of man.

GEORGE MATHESON.

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## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE APOCALYPSE.

### IV. THE WORLD IN THE CHURCH.

AN important point connected with the representation given us of the Church of Christ in the Apocalypse has reference to the enquiry, whether throughout the book the Church as a whole is viewed as faithful to her Lord, or whether she is to be regarded as consisting of two parts, one only of which continues stedfast to the end, while the other yields to the temptations of the world, and is at length visited by divine judgment in its severest form. The question is in its essence similar to that which has been so often and so eagerly discussed, whether the New Testament draws a distinction between a *visible* and an

*invisible* Church. To put it in that form would, however, lead us astray. No more than any other book of the Canon does the Apocalypse know of two Churches of Christ. The Church is one. Does it then follow that, because she is one, all her members are true members of the body of Christ, to be preserved amidst the trials of their pilgrimage, and eventually admitted to the marriage supper of the Lamb? Or, may it be that there are many of them who shall prove unable to resist temptation, and between whom and the true seed as complete a separation must be made as between the true seed and the world?

The question may even be put in another way. Does the Church degenerate? May she in the course of her history become so conformed to the world that she shall be no longer fitted to be the Bride of Christ, and that the people of God may have to be called out of her in order to escape the judgments by which she shall be overtaken? The question is interesting in itself, and in its bearing on the general interpretation of the book with which we are dealing. It possesses a double interest in connexion with the interpretation of one of the most difficult passages of the book—that relating to Babylon. Let us endeavour to look first at the facts of the case as they are presented to us by the sacred writer.

In doing so, we turn naturally, in the first place, to the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Chapters ii. and iii. All the elements of the future history of the Church are found in one part or another of these two chapters. If the world is ever to prevail within the Church we may be sure that we shall find traces of such a state of matters there.

Now it seems undeniable that we do so. We have already alluded to this in discussing, in a previous number of the EXPOSITOR,<sup>1</sup> the inter-relations of the seven Epistles, and we cannot now return to the subject at any length; but

<sup>1</sup> Second Series, Vol. IV. p. 57, etc.

a word or two upon it, under the aspect in which it concerns us at present, may be permitted. The point to be observed is this, that, when we look at the manner in which these Epistles describe the Church in her relation to the world, there is a marked distinction between the first three and the last four. In the former the Church stands over against the world, listening to the voice of a present Lord as He speaks by his faithful Apostles, meeting the severest trials without shrinking, and holding fast her Lord's name and faith at a time when persecution raged, even unto death. It is true that she is not perfect. Perfection is not reached here below. There are symptoms of decay in the leaving of her first love, and in the existence in her midst of positive sin. Yet, taken as a whole, she is true to her position and to the demands of her great Head. She can remember from whence she is fallen, can repent, and do the first works (Chapter ii. 5); and, if transgressors of the divine precepts of purity are among her members, they are not many in number, they are only "some" (Chapter ii. 14).

When we pass to the second group of Epistles, a striking difference is at once perceptible. With the exception of Philadelphia, the churches in the three other cities named have yielded to the influence of the world, and those who remain loyal to Christ are but the smaller portion of their members. Thyatira is thus addressed: "But to you I say, to (not, as in the Authorised Version, "and" to) the rest that are in Thyatira, as many as have not this teaching, which have not the deep things of Satan, as they say; I cast upon you none other burden. Howbeit that which ye have hold fast till I come" (Chapter ii. 24, 25). It is simply "the rest," the remnant, that have here maintained their faith. The bulk of the Church tolerate those who seduce Christ's servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols; nay, even when time has been given them to repent, they will not repent of their forni-

cation (Verses 20, 21). In Sardis a similar state of things is still more marked: "Thou hast *a few names* in Sardis which did not defile their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy" (Chapter iii. 4). Philadelphia, as we have stated, does not appear to be blamed, although even now it is not certain that there is not at least a gentle intimation that there had been failure, when it is said, "thou hast a *little* power;" and, again, "hold fast that which thou hast," *i.e.* thy little power (Verses 8, 11). But there can be no doubt as to the condition of Laodicea. There the victory of the world is almost complete; not indeed wholly so, for she is still able to receive warnings, and the "any man" within her who will listen to the Judge standing at the door has addressed to him the most glorious promise made to any of the Churches. Notwithstanding this, the temptations of worldly wealth (Verse 17) have proved in her case irresistible, and the last picture of the Church is the saddest of them all.

To these considerations let us further add the fact that the Churches thus yielding to the world are four in number—four being the number of the world—and it will be impossible to resist the conclusion that the Lord of the Church sees that, in the course of her history, the Church will not be always faithful to Himself. There will come a time when, as a whole, she will be more carnal than spiritual, more worldly than heavenly. The true members of Christ's flock will be fewer in number than the false. Even within the Church the remnant only is expected to overcome. The world will penetrate into the very sanctuary of God, and will not be rooted out until the Judge of all takes to Himself his great power and reigns.

From the Epistles to the Seven Churches we proceed to another passage which seems to contain a similar lesson. At the beginning of Chapter xi. we read: "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise and

measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple cast without and measure it not, for it hath been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (Verses 1, 2). In considering this passage we shall not spend time on the import of the measuring referred to. There can be no reasonable doubt that it is a measuring in order to preserve. The idea of some that it is in order to destroy has no sufficient warrant in the passages of the Old Testament quoted in its support, such as 2 Kings xxi. 13, or Isaiah xxxiv. 11; while, on the other hand, the measuring of the temple in Ezekiel (Chapter xl. 5, etc.), the contrast between the first and second verses of this chapter, the measuring in Chapter xxi. 15, 16, and the analogy of the sealing vision in Chapter vii., clearly shew that preservation, not destruction, is in view.

Our main enquiry, so far as our present purpose is concerned, is to determine the meaning of the words "temple" and "court," together with the relation existing between the two things thus designated. And the first point to be noticed is, that the Seer is thinking, not of the Temple upon Mount Moriah, but of the Tabernacle which was long the dwelling place of God in the midst of Israel. That the thought of the Temple may have mingled with that of the Tabernacle it is not necessary to deny. The plan of the former was moulded upon that of the latter, and with its buildings and services alone had the Seer been practically familiar. Yet our contention is that here, as elsewhere in his book, he draws his imagery, not from a structure which had undergone many modifications at the hands of man, and which (according as we determine the date of Apocalypse) either had fallen, or was immediately to fall, before the Roman power, but from that sacred Tent every pillar and board and curtain of which had been determined by the express injunction of the

Almighty, and which had been consecrated by all the most glorious displays of his presence with his people. That this is the case appears to us to be positively determined by the words of the nineteenth verse of the chapter, "And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven; and there was seen in his temple the ark of his covenant." In a building like the Temple upon Moriah, the ark of the covenant could not have been seen, for it had disappeared at the destruction of the first Temple, long before the days of St. John. That Apostle, again, certainly could not have thought of the first Temple as distinguished from the second. He could, therefore, be thinking only of the Tabernacle, in the innermost part of which we know that the ark had always been preserved. Nor is it any argument against this conclusion, that the "temple" spoken of in Verse 19 was seen "in heaven," for to the eye of the Seer the things in heaven were the type and pattern of the heavenly things on earth. The latter were the copy and shadow of the former, "even as Moses is warned of God when he is about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern that was shewed thee in the mount" (Heb. viii. 5). A temple, therefore, with the ark of the covenant within it could only be the Tabernacle of old; and, if this be true of Verse 19, no one who enters into the spirit of St. John will suppose that he is to look for another and a different reference in the first verse of the chapter. The second point to be noticed is the misleading character of the English word "temple." We must bear distinctly in mind that this is by no means the whole structure, but simply the innermost shrine, the Holiest of All, where were the ark of the covenant, and the tables of the covenant, and the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat, and into which the high-priest went only once a year. It may seem absurd to say so, but we have difficulty in persuading ourselves that a good deal

less pertinacity would have been displayed in insisting that the first two verses of this chapter are conclusive in favour of the idea that the Herodian temple was standing at the time when the Apocalypse was written, had this simple fact been kept clearly and steadfastly in view. The third point requiring mention is the "court," which can only be the large area enclosed by curtains, in which stood the tabernacle properly so called. This was within the sacred precincts, though "without" the shrine. Lastly, it will be observed, that both "the temple" and "the court" were sacred spots into which Israelites alone might enter, and which no Gentile foot might tread without profanation.

These things being so, to what other conclusion can we come than that the temple and the court represent two portions of the Church of Christ, the one that portion which is always preserved for the glory of God, and in which the light of his presence dwells; the other that portion which, once also true to Him, has at last been given over to the Gentiles that they may tread it under foot? This conclusion is confirmed by the remarkable use of the word "cast it out" (*ἐκβαλε*, not "leave it out" as in the Authorised Version). The use of the word is altogether novel in such circumstances as these. No one would dream of saying to another, "cast out" a certain large space of ground, with all the buildings on it, from thy measurement, if all he meant was that these things were not to be measured. He would certainly say, as our translators of A.D. 1611, true to the instinct of the English tongue, make the Evangelist say, "Leave them out." But another thought is in the mind of the speaker here. He is thinking of excommunication from the synagogue (compare John ix. 34, *καὶ ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν*), as when it is said of the blind man whom Jesus restored to sight, "they cast him out." This, however, distinctly implies that the persons thus cast out once belonged to the community of Israel, and that they must represent a por-

tion, which can only be a degenerate and faithless portion, of the Church. Not less clearly, then, than in the Epistles of Chapters ii. and iii. does it appear in the vision of the measuring, that the world penetrates the Church, and that within the same outward framework, there is the true salt destined for everlasting preservation and the salt which has lost its savour and is destined to be trodden under foot of men.

A third passage having relation to this subject, but of which we shall say little, as it does not supply cogent grounds for inference, is to be found in Chapter xii. 17. In that verse we read of the dragon waxing wroth with the woman, and going away to make war with "the rest of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus." Who are the persons referred to? It is not easy to answer. We met a little while ago a corresponding expression in the Epistle to Thyatira, and understood by it there, the faithful remnant in the midst of the degenerate church, something similar to what St. Paul has in view when, writing to the Romans, he says, "Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. xi. 5). Such a faithful remnant appears to be in the Seer's eye when, in Chapter xii. 17, he speaks of "the rest." They are the seed within the seed, the Israel within the outward Israel, the Jews in spirit and truth, as distinguished from the mass of the nation, the rest as distinguished from the nominal children of God. But, if so, we have again what can be regarded in no other light than as one of those anticipatory pictures, so common in the Apocalypse, which prepare us for a fuller unfolding of the same thought in later parts of the book; and, in that case, we can hardly think of it in any other light than as shadowing forth a separation between the Church as a whole and a part of her members, which the Seer is yet to explain more fully.

Such explanation appears to be given in the vision of Babylon presented to us in Chapters xvi., xvii. and xviii. Babylon had indeed been previously mentioned in Chapter xiv. 8, where an angel proclaims, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, which hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." But the fuller description of what is thus alluded to is, after the manner of the apocalyptic writer, reserved for the chapters now mentioned. We have, therefore, to ask, What does this woman, this "Babylon," represent? Different answers have been given to the question, the most widely accepted of which are—that she is either pagan Rome, or a great world-city of the last days (the metropolis of the world-power symbolized by the beast upon which she rides), or the Romish Church. That there is not a little in the description (more especially in Chap. xvii. 9, 15, 18) to favour the idea of pagan Rome may be at once admitted. But the arguments against such an interpretation are decidedly preponderant. It supposes that the beast in its final form is controlled by the metropolis of the Roman empire (Chap. xvii. 3). This is so far from being the case, that the Roman empire is "fallen" before the woman comes upon the stage. It has disappeared as completely as the other world-powers which had ruled before it. No doubt, the woman is mentioned at Chapter xvii. 1, while it is only at Verse 10, that we read of the fall of the Roman power. But the beast upon which the woman sits, at Verse 3, is the world-power in its last and highest manifestation, and is therefore subsequent to any of its earlier forms afterwards alluded to, when the Seer carried his thoughts backward in order to trace its history. Again, pagan Rome was never turned round upon (in the manner rendered necessary by Chapter xvii. 16), and hated, and made desolate, and burned by any world-powers that preceded her Christian condition. Once more, various individual expressions employed in these chapters are unsuitable to

pagan Rome (Chap. xvi. 19), because Babylon is to be in existence at the time when the last plagues are poured out (Chap. xvii. 2); because no relations of the kind here spoken of existed between pagan Rome and those kings of the earth over whom, in the language of Alford, she rather "reigned with undisputed and crushing sway" (Chap. xviii. 2); because pagan Rome fell without having been reduced to the condition there described (Chap. xviii. 11, 19); because pagan Rome never was a great commercial city, or, if it be said that only her purchasing is referred to, because she did not cease to purchase even after her pagan condition came to an end. On the other hand, the words of Chapter xviii. 24, obviously founded on Matthew xxiii. 35, cannot be applied to pagan Rome.

Alive to the force of such considerations, or others of a similar kind, the tendency of later expositors has been to abandon the idea of pagan Rome, and to resort to that of another city, which they term the world-city of the last days; some indeed seeing such a city in all the great cities that have at any time directed persecution against the people of God, others confining it more strictly to a city yet to arise. The difficulties attending this interpretation are even greater than in the case of the former. The tone of the passages as a whole is unfavourable to the thought of any metropolis, whether of the past, the present, or the future. It is not the manner of the Apocalypse to symbolize by its emblems such material objects as a city, however huge its site, splendid its palaces, or wide its rule. The writer deals with spiritual truths; and to think that he would introduce this woman as a symbol of a city even far vaster than London, or Paris, or New York, is to lose sight of the spirit in which he writes. If it be urged that it is the dominion, not the stone and lime, of the city that he has in view, the extent of this dominion is fatal to the explanation. No such rule has belonged to any city either of ancient or

modern times; or, if the reply again be, that the city is not yet come, it is unnecessary to say more than that the existence of so great a city is, as yet at least, inconceivable, and that thus one of the most solemn and weighty parts of the Apocalypse has been for eighteen centuries without a meaning. In addition, the use of the word "mystery," in Chapter xvii. 5, is at variance with the supposition. That word points at once to something spiritual, and cannot be applied to what is merely of the earth earthly. This interpretation, like the former, must be set aside.

The idea that we have before us in the woman papal Rome, either the Romish church or the papal spirit within that church, is of a different kind, and its fundamental principle may be accepted with little hesitation. The emblem employed leads directly to the idea of something connected with the Church. The woman is a "harlot"; and, with almost unvarying uniformity, that appellation and the sin of whoredom are ascribed in the Old Testament, not to heathen nations which had never enjoyed a special revelation of the Almighty's will, but only to those whom He had espoused to Himself, and who had proved faithless to their covenant relation to Him (Isa. i. 20; Jer. ii. 20, iii. 1, etc.). No more than two passages can be adduced to which this observation seems at first sight inapplicable (Isa. xxiii. 15-17; Nahum iii. 4), and these exceptions are probably more apparent than real. The mention of whoredom in what was obviously a symbolical sense immediately suggested to Jewish ears the sin of defection from a state of former privilege in God.

Again, the harlot here is so distinctly contrasted with the "woman" of Chapter xii. and with the "bride the Lamb's wife" of Chapter xxi., that it is difficult, if not impossible, to resist the conviction that there must be a much closer resemblance between them than exists be-

tween a woman and a city. Compared with the former, she is a woman; she is in a wilderness (Chap. xii. 14, xvii. 3); she is a mother (Chap. xii. 5, xvii. 5). Compared with the latter, she is introduced to us in almost precisely the same language (Chap. xvii. 1, xxi. 9); her garments suggest ideas which, however specifically different, belong to the same region of thought (Chap. xvii. 4, xix. 8); she has the name of a city, "Babylon," while the bride is named "New Jerusalem" (Chap. xvii. 5, xxi. 2); she persecutes while the saints are persecuted (Chap. xii. 13, xvii. 24); she makes all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, while the faithful are nourished by their Lord (Chap. xiv. 8, xii. 14); she has a name of guilt upon her forehead while the 144,000 have their Father's name written there (Chap. xvii. 5, xiv. 1). When we call to mind the large part played in the Apocalypse by the principle of contrasts, it is hardly possible to resist the conviction that the conditions associated with "Babylon" are best fulfilled if we behold in her a spiritual system opposed to and contrasted with the true Church of God.

We are led to this conclusion, also, by the fact that both Jerusalem and Babylon have the same designation, that of "the great city," given them. This epithet is applied in Chapter xi. 8 to a city which can be no other than Jerusalem, and the same remark may be made of Chapter xvi. 19. In six other passages the epithet is applied to Babylon (Chaps. xiv. 8, xviii. 10, 16, 18, 19, 21). The necessary inference is that there must be a sense in which Jerusalem is Babylon and Babylon Jerusalem. If it be not so, we shall have to contend, in the interpretation of the Apocalypse, with difficulties of a kind altogether different from those that generally meet us. Interpretation, indeed, will become impossible, because the same word, occurring in different places of the book, will have to be applied to totally different objects. No doubt

it may be urged that the two cities, Jerusalem and Babylon, have so little in common that it is unnatural to find in the latter a figure for the former. The objection is of little weight.

In the first place, it may be observed that the description of the fall of Babylon in this chapter is in all probability taken as much from the prophecy of Hosea (Chap. ii. 1-12) as from anything said expressly of that city in the Old Testament; and, as that prophecy applies to "the House of Israel," we have a proof that in the mind of the apocalyptic Seer there was a sense in which the Babylon of this chapter, and a particular aspect of Israel (and therefore, also, "Babylon" and "Jerusalem"), were closely associated with each other. Nor does it seem unworthy of notice that, at the moment when Hosea utters his warnings, he has before him the thought of a *change of name*, "Then said God, Call his name Lo-ammi, for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God" (Chap. i. 9). The change of name might easily be transferred from the people to the city representing them; and, if so, no name would more naturally connect itself in the mind of St. John with the things spoken of in Chapter ii. of Hosea than that of Babylon.

In the second place, there is an aspect of Jerusalem which most closely resembles that aspect of Babylon for the sake of which the latter city is here peculiarly referred to. We cannot read the Fourth Gospel without seeing that, in the view of the Evangelist, there was a second Jerusalem to be added to the Jerusalem of old; that there was not only a Jerusalem "the city of God," the centre of a Divine Theocracy, but a Jerusalem representing a degenerate Theocracy, *out of which Christ's people must be called* in order that they may form his faithful Israel, a part of his "own flock." At this point, then, it would seem that we are mainly to seek the ground of the com-

parison between Jerusalem and Babylon. In the latter city God's people spent seventy years of captivity; and, at the end of that time, they were summoned out of it. Many of them obeyed the summons. They returned to their own land to settle under their vines and fig-trees, to rebuild their city and temple, and to enjoy the fulfilment of God's covenant promises. All this was repeated in the days of Christ. The leaders of the old Theocracy had become "thieves and robbers"; they had taken possession of the fold that they might "steal and kill and destroy;" it was necessary that Christ's sheep should listen to the Good Shepherd, and should leave the fold that they might find open pastures. Not only so. Repeated then, the same course of history shall be once more repeated. There shall again be a coming out of Christ's sheep from the fold which has for a time preserved them; and that fold shall be handed over to destruction. The probability is that this thought is to be traced even at Chapter xi. 8, where Jerusalem is "spiritually" called Sodom and Egypt. Not simply because of its sins did it receive these names, but because Sodom and Egypt afforded striking illustrations of the manner in which God summons his people out from among the wicked, Lot out of Sodom (Gen. xix. 12, 16, 17; Luke xvii. 28-32), Israel out of Egypt (Hosea xi. 1; Matt. ii. 15). Babylon, however, afforded the most striking illustration of such thoughts, and it thus became identified with the Jerusalem which we learn to know in the Fourth Gospel as the city of "the Jews." Out of that Jerusalem Christ's disciples are by his own lips exhorted to flee (Matt. xxiv. 15-20). The same command is given in the chapter of the Apocalypse which relates the fall of Babylon (Chap. xviii. 4).

On these grounds it appears to us that there need be no hesitation in so far adopting the interpretation of those who

understand by Babylon the Romish Church as to see in it what is fundamentally and essentially correct. The "great city" is the emblem of a degenerate Church. As in Chapter xii. we have, under the guise of a woman, that true Church of Christ which is the embodiment of all good, so here, under the guise of a harlot, we have that false Church which has sacrificed its Lord for the sake of the honours, the riches, and the pleasures of the world. It is not necessary to think, with Auberlen, that the woman is *changed* into the harlot. Such an idea is opposed to the general teaching of the Apocalypse with regard to the Church of Christ; and the feeling that it is inconsistent with the promise of our Lord in Matthew xvi. 18, has led many to reject, who would otherwise have welcomed, the view we have defended. But no such idea of *change* is necessary. Babylon is simply a second aspect of the Church. Just as there were two aspects of Jerusalem in the days of Christ, under the one of which that city was the centre of attraction both to God and Israel, under the other the metropolis of a degenerate Judaism, so there are two aspects of the Church of Christ, under the one of which we think of those who within her are faithful to their Lord, under the other of the great body of merely nominal Christians, who in words confess, but in deeds deny Him. The Church in this latter aspect is before us under the term "Babylon"; and it would appear to be the teaching of Scripture, as it is certainly that alike of Jewish and Christian history, that the longer the Church lasts as a great outward institution in the world, the more does she tend to realize this picture. As her first love fails she abandons the spirit for the letter, makes forms of one kind or another a substitute for love, allies herself with the world, and by adapting herself to it secures the ease and the wealth which the world will never bestow so heartily upon anything as upon a Church in which the Divine oracles are dumb.

Beyond this point it is not possible to accompany those who understand by Babylon the Romish Church. Deeply that Church has sinned. Not a few of the darkest traits of "Babylon" apply to her with a closeness of application which may not unnaturally lead us to think that the picture of these chapters has been drawn from nothing so much as her. Her idolatries, her outward carnal splendour, her oppression of God's saints, her merciless cruelties with torture, the dungeon, and the stake, the tears and agonies and blood with which she has filled so many centuries—these, and a thousand circumstances of a similar kind, may well be our excuse if in "Babylon" we read Christian Rome. Yet the interpretation is false. The harlot is *wholly* what she seems. Christian Rome has never been wholly what on one side of her character she was so largely. She has maintained the truth of Christ against idolatry and unchristian error, she has preferred poverty to splendour in a way that Protestantism has never done, she has nurtured the noblest types of devotion that the world has seen, and she has thrilled the waves of time as they passed over her with one constant litany of supplication and chant of praise. Above all, it has not been the chief characteristic of Rome to ally herself with kings. She has rather trampled kings beneath her feet; and, in the interests of the poor and the oppressed, has taught both proud barons and imperial tyrants to quail before her. For deeds like these her record is not with the Beast, but with the Lamb. Babylon cannot be Christian Rome; and nothing has been more injurious to the Protestant Churches than the impression that she was so, and that they were free from participation in her guilt. Babylon embraces much more than Rome, and illustrations of what she is lie nearer our own door. Wherever professedly Christian men have thought the world's favour better than its reproach; wherever they have esteemed its honours a more desirable possession than its

shame; wherever they have courted ease rather than welcomed suffering, have loved self-indulgence rather than self-sacrifice, and have substituted covetousness in grasping for generosity in distributing what they had—there has been the spirit of Babylon. In short, we have in the great harlot-city neither the Christian Church as a whole, nor the Romish Church in particular, but all who anywhere within the Church profess to be Christ's "little flock" and are not, denying in their lives the main characteristic by which they ought to be distinguished, that they "follow" Christ.

It may be well to remark, in conclusion, that the view now taken relieves us of any difficulty in accounting for the lamentation in Chapter xviii. of kings and merchants and shipmasters over the fall of Babylon, as if these persons had no interest in her fate. So far is this from being the case, that nothing has contributed more to deepen and strengthen the worldliness of the world than the faithlessness of those who ought to testify that the true inheritance of man is beyond the grave, and that the duty of all is to seek "a better country, even a heavenly." A mere worldly and utilitarian system of ethics may be better trusted to correct the evils of a growing luxuriousness than a system which teaches that we may serve both God and Mammon, and that it is possible to make the best of both worlds.

In view of the different considerations now adduced, we seem compelled to come to the conclusion that, if no book of Scripture presents us with so striking a view of the glory of the Church of Christ, both here and hereafter, as the Apocalypse, none also sets before us so melancholy a picture of the extent to which in the course of her history the world was to prevail in her. We cannot wonder that the late Archdeacon Lee, commenting on Revelation xvii. 1, and referring to the statement of Auberlen already mentioned, should say: "It is hard to understand how such

statements can be made in the face of the Lord's promise, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world,'—especially hard is it, if we remember how the Church is described when she appears again after Chapter xii., as the 'Bride,' as the 'New Jerusalem' (Chap. xix. 7, 8, xxi. 2, 9, 10, xxii. 17; cf. John iii. 29)." Yet, after all, the lesson is not different from that taught us by our Lord Himself when, comparing Himself to the true vine, He adds, 'Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned' (John xv. 2, 6). There are two sets of branches in the "true vine." If we think of it only as it bears the one, it shall be gathered unto life eternal; if, as it bears the other, it is destined to be burned. The two sets of branches must be separated from one another, and the one only can be the "Bride" prepared for marriage to the heavenly Bridegroom.

The truth is that, in the whole delineation which has come under our notice in this paper, we have a fresh illustration of what we once spoke of as the principle lying at the foundation of the structure of the Apocalypse. That principle is that St. John beholds the history of the future mirrored in the events of the life of Christ with which he had been himself familiar. Nothing, as we see in his Gospel, had struck him more than that a Divine Theocracy intended to prepare for the first coming of the Lord had degenerated into a carnal and worldly institution, *out of which* Christ was to be the door (comp. John ix. 35, x. 3, 4). He turns to the Church of Christ, intended to prepare the way for the second coming of the Lord, and he beholds the same scenes re-enacted. The world again enters into the Church. Its riches and honours and ease are again welcomed instead of persecution and the cross. The Church ceases to prepare for the future. She lives for

the present and for the amount of real good that she can do in it. The voice which says, "Yea, I come quickly," loses its attractive power, or is resolved into a shadowy amelioration of society. The Pharisee, the Sadducee, the Herodian, the Priest, the Scribe sweep by upon the stage, all of them citizens of the Holy City, members of the new Divine Theocracy. The hearts that sigh and cry for a pure and spiritual righteousness are few in number, and are not heard amidst the disputations of the Sanhedrin or the clash of instruments in the Temple. What can happen but that the Lord of the poor and lowly and meek shall at length say, "Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" ?

WM. MILLIGAN.

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## THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

### VI. THE SCHOOLING OF THE CHRISTIAN.

#### *Chapter ii. 11-15.*

CHRISTIANITY is at once a revelation of God as man's Saviour and a system of moral discipline for mankind. It reveals God as saving men in order that it may tutor saved men into goodness. So intimate is the link betwixt what it has to tell us of God and what it requires from us, that the former aims at the latter as its natural and intended result. That is to say: The ethical design of the Gospel is *the* design of the Gospel. God discovers Himself in Christ in order that He may re-make man. Redemption is the commencement of a process of which the termination is holiness.

Such is the teaching of these verses, as everywhere of St. Paul, and indeed of St. Paul's Master. The Apostle has