

of the scriptures, there followed, as there had previously in the Jewish synagogues, short, and at first very simple addresses, in familiar language—the momentary effusion of the heart which contained an explanation and application of what had just been read." Justin Martyr, expresses himself thus on the subject: "After the reading of the scriptures, the president instructs the people in a discourse, and incites them to the imitation of these good examples." Among the Greeks, where the taste was more rhetorical, the sermon from the earliest times, was of a more lengthened kind, and formed a very important part of the service."

According to Origen, as quoted by Lord King, his sermons in his day were explanations of the lessons, or passages of scripture read in order. They occupied about an hour in delivery, and concluded with a suitable application by way of exhortation. As the most satisfactory illustration of this subject, we conclude with an outline of a sermon by Chrysostom, and a few quotations from a translation of it, by Professor Ripley. Chrysostom, we should state, was born about 347, and died in 407. The text is, 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as them who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also, who sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him."

After a brief allusion to some previous discourses on the parable of Lazarus, he notices, that in the text, Paul speaks of the decease of believers as a sleep; but when he speaks of our Lord's decease, he says plainly "Jesus died." It was not casually or negligently that he employs these expressions. "In speaking of Christ, he said *died*, so as to confirm the fact that he had suffered death; but, in speaking of us, he said *asleep*, in order to impart consolation. For where a resurrection has already taken place, he mentions death with plainness; but when a resurrection is still a matter of hope, he says 'sleep,' consoling us by this very expression, and cherishing our precious hopes. For he who is only asleep, will surely awaken, and death is no more than a long sleep."

He then justifies this description of a believer's death. It may be said that we turn to dust and ashes. But what then? When a man is about to rebuild an old and tottering house, he first sends out its occupants, then tears it down, and rebuilds it a more splendid one. This occasions no grief to the occupants, but rather joy. When God is about to do a similar work, he destroys our body, and removes the soul, that he may build it anew and more splendidly, and bring the soul into it again, with greater glory. Let us not regard the tearing down, but the splendour which is to succeed.

He illustrates the same truth by the case

of a man who has a statue mutilated and decayed by age, he breaks it up and melts it to re-cast. So the body is dissolved to be remoulded. And not only so; the stately casting a brazen image into the furnace, only makes a brazen one again; but casting in a mortal body will return it glorious and immortal.

He next supposes the bereaved person to interpose sundry objections, such as the loss of the society of the departed. When the bridegroom takes the bride from her father's house, to his distant home, it is not regarded as a calamity. Why should it be when the Lord himself has taken a relation or friend to himself. But how, say the bereaved, is it possible not to grieve? It is not grief that is condemned, but the excess of it, which is displeasing to God, and dishonouring to the departed. In this connection he rebukes unseemly demonstrations of grief at funerals, especially under the eyes of unbelievers, who will say, "If these Christians fully believed in a resurrection they would not act thus; if they really thought that their deceased friend had departed to a better state, they would not thus mourn." As when men are called to a high office, multitudes with praises on their lips assemble to escort them to their stations, so should Christians assemble with abundant praise, to send forward as to greater honour, those of the pious who have departed.

In looking at books, both the learned and the unlearned look with the same eyes, but not with the same understanding; for to the unlearned the mere shapes of letters appear, while the learned discover the sense that lies within these letters. So in respect to affairs in general, believers and unbelievers see with the same eyes, but not with the same understanding. When the one sees a corpse he sees the end of life; but the other sees the beginning of glory. If we must have anguish, we should lament those who are living in sin, not those who are sleeping in Jesus. Weep a little for the dead, but a fool's life is a greater calamity than death.

But the bereaved may ask, "how is it possible, that being a man, I should not grieve?" It might rather be asked, "how is it possible that, being a Christian, I should grieve?" He then points, 1st, to the example of Job whose afflictions he sets forth at some length and very affectingly, who said, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. Secondly, to the example of Abraham, who when God commanded him to sacrifice his well-beloved Isaac, obeyed without a murmur. Speaking of the severity of the trial, he says, "In what manner to express myself, I know not. He only could know who did these things, for no language can describe how it happened that his hand did not become torpid, that the strength of

his nerves did not relax, that the affecting sight of his son did not over power him.

He concludes: "gathering wisdom from all quarters, and considering the assurance of a resurrection, and these examples of the faithful, let us frequently recite it to our souls, not only when we are in sorrow, but when we are free from distress. As soldiers eyes in peace perform warlike exercises, so that when actually in battle, and the occasion demands skill, they may avail themselves of the arts which they have cultivated in peace. So let us furnish ourselves with weapons and remedies that whenever there shall burst on us a war of passions, or grief, or pain, we may, well armed, repel the assault with skill, and wall ourselves around with right contemplation, with divine promises, the example of good men, and every possible defence. For so shall we be able to pass the present life with happiness, and to attain to the kingdom of heaven through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen."

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.]

UNFULFILLED PROPHECY, No. V.

THE JUDGMENT.

The day of judgment is, in the Word of God, invariably associated with the coming of Christ. This is frequently regarded as an unanswerable objection to the whole pre-millennial theory. A more accurate knowledge of the Scriptural meaning of the word judgment will serve to remove this objection; and it will shew, that the work of judgment, so frequently and forcibly predicted, is wholly inconsistent with the prevalent and popular notions of a single great assize, at which Christ is to judge all mankind, and which is to be proceeded with and concluded, if not within the space of twenty-four hours, at least within as short a period of time as possible.

The Scriptural characteristics of a Judge are, to rule and govern his people, to deliver and protect them, and to avenge them on their enemies. Deliverance and government, vengeance and punishment, are the principal ideas included in the term judgment. The consideration of the special prophecies, which relate to Christ in his office of the Judge of the earth will abundantly shew, that this office is to be a continued one, and not the mere presiding at a single assize. He is to judge the people with righteousness, and the poor with judgments. He is to judge the poor of the people; he is to save the children of the needy, and to break in pieces the oppressors. (Ps. lxxii. 3, 4.) He is to judge the world in righteousness, and to minister judgment to the people in uprightness. (Ps. ix. 8.) He is to judge the people righte-