

ledge and permission that this life is afflicted with troubles of different kinds ; it is not because God is weak, forgetful, or unjust. Then, lest any should be tempted to ask, "Is it worth while ? If Christianity involves all this suffering, would it not be better to be as the world is, and escape ?" A picture of the future is given. The fifth seal shows that, immediately upon the completion of this life, the souls of the righteous are at peace ; and the sixth seal shows that a day of reckoning will certainly come for the world ; while the seventh seal is an assurance of heaven. It is worth while, therefore, to endure and to persevere, both on account of God's reward to the just, and His retribution upon the unjust. Thus would the signification of the visions be easily comprehended by those for whom they were originally intended ; and the same lessons are equally valuable for the Church at all times. A similar line is taken (page 149) by Dr. Clemance in the Homiletics. Thus the interpretation given of the third seal (chap. vi. 5) refuses to limit the meaning to the famine in the reign of Claudius, and states, "that this vision denotes famine in the ordinary sense, as one of the trials awaiting the members of the Church of God at various times during the existence of the Church on earth ;" and on page 187 it is said, "We may be able to point to a particular period or event as *a* fulfilment, of any one of these [seal visions], but we cannot assign definite times to each as *the* complete and ultimate fulfilment, since the trials which are signified must extend to the end of time." And again, on chap. ix. 3, "The *locusts* here symbolize heretics and infidels. Some writers apply the symbol to the Mohammedans (see Wordsworth *in loc.*, where the parallel is very fully worked out). But though this may be, and probably is, a fulfilment of the vision, it would be wrong to thus restrict our interpretation." The application of the visions to the circumstances of Christians contemporaneous with St. John is continually worked out, as in chap. vi. 1 ; xi. 1 ; xvii. 5.

The authors recognize the fact that it would be presumption to pretend to have successfully solved every difficulty in the book. Speaking of the opening of the seals, they say (p. 163) : "We are nowhere led to believe that it