

pates a triumph over all evil, so grandly complete that earth shall witness a worship as devout, a sway as absolute, and an obedience as complete, as heaven itself, must contemplate a period when the last enemy is destroyed, and all foes have been put beneath the feet of the enthroned Son of God.

There is, then, a final period of the kingdom when the work of the Spirit and of the Son shall be complete, when Satan shall have been bound and destroyed, and the kingdom, visible, universal, eternal, shall be re-established and God the Father shall be all in all. This appears to be also the full and final revelation of the ultimate glory of the saints, when the righteous are to "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of *their Father*" (Matt. 13 : 43).

It is not easy to find an illustration sufficiently dignified for mysteries so stupendously celestial. I venture to use one, only premising that the illustration is not an analogy, though it may fit at the one point to be illustrated.

Imagine a world-wide empire of a father who associates with him, in equal honors and dignities, a prince and princess royal. The administration of a distant and revolted province is by this father committed to the son during the period of revolt. The son goes there in partial disguise on his mission of reconciliation, revealing himself to certain who repent of their rebellion, receive him, and gather around him as the nucleus of a restored State. Being rejected, insulted, and outraged by others, he withdraws, having used no coercive measures, and sends the princess royal to use her singular charms to win back other rebels to their allegiance. Hers is a strictly secret mission ; herself always unseen, she prompts messages of love and sends out far and wide her heralds with the good news of amnesty, until the whole province is pervaded by the tidings and a large body of loyal subjects has been organized. Then suddenly the prince royal, in all the glory of his father, and with a vast army, appears on the scene and leads on his elect host to a final contest and an overwhelming conquest. All enemies who do not voluntarily bow before his power are slain by his sword ; and, perfect peace being re-established, he surrenders back the reins of government into the father's hands.

This study of the ages and the kingdom is a reverent treading on holy ground. The ages are the courts, of which the kingdom is the tabernacle, and we have been advancing from outer court to inner shrine. The present age is the outer court, with its altar of burnt offering and laver, reminding us that during this age the two great truths to be emphasized and proclaimed are the "*terms of communion*," nay, of communication with God—a new relation by the blood of atonement and a new nature by the Spirit and the Word. Behind the first veil lies the coming age, with its ideal "*forms of communion*," the sevenfold lamp of an ever-shining witness, the consecrated offering of self and service, and the ever-burning incense of heart worship. But, beyond even the second veil, through whose rent we catch a glimpse of glory yet beyond, there is to be realized a perfected ideal—God Himself dwelling in the midst of a redeemed and glorified humanity as the Shekinah blazed and shone between the wings of the cherubim.