

of this description assuredly at work throughout the mighty hosts of Asia at this moment, in India and China, and elsewhere. It is a question of time ; if we persevere, and other religious bodies persevere, ultimately there will be a great recompense of reward. But my confidence is based on something higher and better. I find men of science and literature, as they call themselves, pouring contempt on what they denounce as the old and obsolete evidences of Christianity, and therefore on Christianity itself. Now, it has been my own lot to be driven to examine these evidences in all their bearings as resisted and opposed by the acute intellects of atheistic, pantheistic, and polytheistic schools, and all the rest of them ; and I do now say here this day, with the utmost emphasis of faith, that to my own mind at this moment these evidences bulk more massively than ever, and with more rock-like solidity than ever. The Bible being thus based upon unassailable and irrefragable evidence, I am bound to take the truth it contains as the very truth of God ; and, among other truths, I find it there declared that God had a purpose with regard to this world from eternity--that He had a purpose not merely of creation, but a purpose of redemption, and that among the mysteries of Providence is this, that God is often more glorified by redeeming out of evil than by preventing evil ; that, therefore, angels and men were permitted to fall, among other reasons for this very end, that out of their fall this glorious character of God should be unfolded in ways in which it could not be unfolded in the works of creation. I find all this, and more than this, in the Bible, and I am encouraged to look for the issue in the light it gives. I find that this earth is designed to be the theatre for unfolding the mighty work of redemption ; and I am sure, from the study of the Bible, that when the last sinner is called, and when the last saint shall have finished his course, then the present organization will be at an end, and the earth will be wrapped up in its winding-sheet of flame, and that a new heaven and a new earth will then appear, wherein dwelleth righteousness. All this with the Bible in my hands, I am bound with the most absolute assurance of faith and hope to look forward to, and I am encouraged to look beyond the darkness of the present, with its trials and discomfitures, and try to realize the bright and glorious prospect that is yet hidden. Whatever may be the intermediate processes—I say nothing of them—I say nothing about the millennarian or any other view of the subject—I merely say, in general terms, that whatever be the intermediate processes by which we shall one day be landed on scenes surpassing fable, we ought all of us, with the most absolute assurance of faith and hope, to look forward to the realization of all these bright visions which are unfolded to us by the prophetic muse.

Looking calmly and candidly at the whole business, it may be that the manner in which God will accomplish all this may be wholly different from our antecedent anticipations ; it may be in a way that shall prove very humbling to us all. It may be that one and all of us will have to make endless confession of our short comings of different kinds and degrees ; it may be that one and all of us shall have our bended knees to confess bitterly the many ways in which we have wronged our neighbours by our hastiness, uncharitableness, and by our precipitate judgment. It may be, for aught I can tell, that all our existing ecclesiastical organizations, so devoutly idolized by many of us, may have to go down to actual dissolution, so that there may rise up one great, glorious, reconstituted Church, worthy of its Great Head and King. All this and much more may be, but we may be sure the end will be glorious. This may to many—to the eye of sense and of blinded, perverted reason—be the very climax of unlikelihood. It may seem that there are oceans of difficulties and mountains of impossibilities in the way ; yet faith ought to prevail. The intense assurance of God's omnipotence will level these mountains and roll out these ocean's into emptiness, making way for the effusions of the Spirit of Grace over a ransomed and gladdened world. It may be that the aspect of things is to the eye of sense dark and ominous. The shadows of evening may even now be