

to be destroyed immediately. From his interpretations (example 2 Thess. i. 7-8,) the Saviour is to appear *then*, "in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who know not God and obey not the Gospel;" which includes every impenitent Jew or Gentile living; consequently, if this Millennium were to be ushered in to-morrow, it would be the immediate perdition of every sinner on earth. Then, at its close, the wicked are to be destroyed immediately, and the last judgment to succeed apace. The conversion of sinners therefore, must be forever at an end.

Secondly, it does not accord with the genius of the Gospel age; it was ushered in without parade, and its conquests have invariably been won, by means, and a spirit perfectly accordant with its origin, open triumph, external attractions on the one hand, violence, destruction on the other, have ever been foreign to its character. The theory we are examining inverts this established order; what is offensive to the unrenewed man, it abolishes the wicked, instead of being subdued and attracted by the cross, (John xii. 32,) are to become the victims of "exterminating judgment."

The author indeed, calls the Millennium another and a future dispensation, with which this change might compact. But is this warrantable? Is it not said in reference to the present dispensation, "That those things which *cannot* be shaken may [are to] remain? Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which *cannot* be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably," &c. What changes soever therefore, are to happen during the dispensation now existing, they will be such as will not change itself; otherwise it can be "shaken" — "moved" contrary to the above declaration.

Thirdly, the theory does not account with any satisfaction, for the existence of nations to be deceived at the end of the Millennium. Those nations cannot be the righteous and the wicked at the SAME TIME, any more than they can be neither, at any time. But they must be the one or the other, and at the very time Satan will be let loose. To suppose that risen or changed saints should produce an army and nations of apostates is absurd. Besides those nations are contra-distinguished from "the camp of the saints;" they must therefore, be the wicked. But how shall they have existed? — escaped the fate of those who obey not the Gospel? — the "exterminating judgment," which shall have destroyed the ungodly? — the conflagration which is to "purify the earth and the heavens?" But even if this were possible, how should their existence compact with "the reign of unmixed good" just ended? "Unmixed good!" whilst the four quarters of the earth shall be teeming with wicked nations, "in number as the sand of the sea." What interminable

difficulties centre in this Millennial theory? With due deference to those who differ from him, the writer sees in it little else than a compound of absurd contradictions.

But it will be said, though a thousand years are mentioned in Revelations only, that other Scriptures refer to some remarkable period. Two of these considered the types of many more, are cited by our author, "In the Millennium," he says, "all are to know the Lord, in every place men are to offer a pure offering."

That the *first* refers to the new covenant will be seen by its being applied to it in Heb. viii. All the subjects of the old covenant did not know the Lord, having been made with the whole nation of Israel, few, comparatively, of whom knew the Lord. The law delivered them was engraven upon stone, and laid up in the ark instead of being written in their hearts; consequently, it had not the power of an internal law or principle. Being thus defective, God "finds fault with" it, promises to make a *new* covenant, to write his law in the *hearts* of his people, by which they should know the Lord, "All know him from the least to the greatest." Let it be remembered, that the new covenant acknowledges as its subjects, those *only* who know the Lord. That there is the remotest allusion to the Millennium in the whole chapter, no candid man will affirm.

The *second*, (Mal. i. 11.) is predictive of the call of the Gentiles to the blessings of the Gospel age. To the Jews Jehovah says, "I have no pleasure in you, neither will I except an offering at your hand: from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentile, and in every place incense shall be offered to my name and a pure offering," &c. But what proof is here of a Millennium? It refers to the rejection of the Jews and the call of the Gentiles like many other predictions.

This passage has its counterparts in the New Testament writings: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations—your faith is spoken of throughout the *whole world*—the Gospel is preached to every creature under heaven—which is come to you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you," &c. This prediction has been as generally fulfilled even already, as that in the last verse in Malachi, was in the ministry of John the Baptist, and the writer thinks rather more so. 2 Thess. ii. will come under consideration here after, as the author makes use of it in No. IV. Another remark will close this paper. It is nowhere stated in Scripture that Christ will reign on earth a thousand years.

P. M.

"My son, give me thine heart."

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.]

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

*The influence of Sunday School Instruction on the Intellect.*

No. II.

Man is the noblest workmanship of God. He is fearfully and wonderfully made in physical structure; in mind formed in the image of God, and endowed with powers susceptible of unlimited expansion. A child under favourable circumstances as soon attains the stature of a man in mental capacity as in physical energy. The mind or intellect is continually progressing, and the intellectual capacity is enlarged in proportion to the magnitude of the subject it investigates. If we leave out of view the bearing which the truths of revelation have upon the condition and destiny of sinful and immortal beings, they are wonderfully adapted to invigorate and exalt the intellectual powers. The mind in contemplating them is brought direct to the source of all wisdom, is lifted above the grovelling object of sense to a contemplation of the perfections and government of Jehovah, of the sublime economy of the intellectual and moral universe. There are recorded events of the most wonderful character; and besides the history which this book contains, here are specimens of reasoning, of poetry, of eloquence, which unite the power of a comprehensive and brilliant genius with the majesty of God's own inspiration, and the advantage which this record has over every other; that it is the infallible testimony of a God of truth. It results from the very nature of the human mind that the study of such a book must enlarge and quicken its faculties; must create a thirst for general knowledge, and awaken a spirit of inquiry on all subjects under investigation. Hence we have a right to expect that just in proportion as the principles of the Bible are studied by a child the mind will be delivered from a habit of indolence and apathy, and wax bold and vigorous in its operations.

If we keep in view the influence which the word of God exerts upon the mind, it will be readily seen that Sunday School instruction is favourable to intellectual culture. The object of such instruction is to impart information, to teach children the principles of the Bible, and thus their minds are brought to contemplate the sublime truths of revelation. As food by the process of nature is appropriated to the nourishment of the animal system, so the mind in its incipient stages of youth and development appropriates to itself truth and knowledge; which becomes as it were a part of its own being. The child not only becomes enabled to fix the mind upon important truths, but exert its own powers of reflection and memory, while its intellect gradually