

Notes on the Apocalypse.

THIRD ARTICLE.

I will now endeavor to deal with the four living creatures of whom the doctor writes as follows:—

"These four living creatures must be symbolical of those represented by the 24 elders, *that is of the saints*. The elders as we have seen (?) are representative of the saints in the peaceful exercise of their sacerdotal and regal functions resting from their labors performed in the war of the great day of the almighty Deity, while four living ones represent the saints in co-operation with the spirit carrying on the war to its victorious consummation." Vol. 2, Eureka, p. 37.

This is confusion worse and worse confounded. How is it possible for a candid and impartial student of the Apocalypse to identify the four living creatures with the 24 elders I cannot understand. Whoever they may represent it is a fact which cannot be legitimately disputed that they do not represent the 24 elders. The narrative presents them at all times as being separate and distinct from the elders, and as giving thanksgiving and praise to God and the Lamb in conjunction with the elders. It requires a great stretch of the imagination to believe they are one and the same individuals. Mine, at all events, is not so elastic. They appear full of eyes which Dr. Thomas says is the symbol of intelligence, each eye is therefore representa-

tive of a man, and as the four sing "Thou hast redeemed us," each eye is symbolical of a saint. (Page 40.)

This reads very nicely, but then we know on the authority of the best MSS that the four do not sing, "thou hast redeemed us," and therefore the foundation of this pretty structure is cut away. The doctor identifies them with the four living ones Ezekiel saw in vision. But by doing so he disposes of his own argument, for Ezekiel speak of their flesh (margin cap x : 12) says "they must be raised and then transformed into spirit bodies. That which is born out of spirit is spirit." Then of course it isn't flesh. For to my mind the idea of flesh in connection with immortal saints does not present itself, and the theory of flesh endowed with spirit in lieu of blood is most assuredly not scriptural. A theory it is and a theory it remains so far as proof is concerned.

If however the four living ones John saw in his vision are really identical with the four seen by Ezekiel, then I am content to receive the assurance of the latter that they were cherubims. "I knew (says he) they were cherubims." cap. x : 20. And personally I am satisfied with this information. What the cherubims are it is folly to speculate when God has withheld all adequate information. But before leaving this subject it may perhaps be profitable to pursue the doctor's remarks a little further. He labors to show they are symbolical of the "One Body." On page 38 after noting the fact that though Ezekiel refers to four