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ART. I.—*Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews, from the Church of Scotland, in 1839.* Eighth thousand. Edinburgh, 1843. 12mo. pp. 555. *J. W. Alex. an der*

OF this most interesting volume we would gladly see a reprint in America; but as we are aware of no proposals for this, we shall endeavour to furnish our readers with some of its statements. That these will be welcome to many, we are the rather inclined to believe, because we cannot close our eyes to the fact, that renewed attention is beginning to be paid to this department of missions, and that the expectation of a return of God's ancient people to their own land is becoming more general.

Of the origin of the enterprise no better account can be given than that which opens this volume.

“The subject of the Jews had but recently begun to awaken attention among the faithful servants of God in the Church of Scotland. The plan of sending a deputation to Palestine and other countries, to visit and inquire after the scattered Jews, was suggested by a series of striking providences in the case of some of the individuals concerned. The Rev. Robert S. Candlish, Minister of St. George's, Edinburgh, saw these providences, and seized on the idea. On the part of our church, ‘the thing was done suddenly,’ but it soon became evident that ‘God had prepared the people.’ The Committee of our General Assembly, appointed to consider what might be done in the way of setting on foot Missionary operations among the Jews, were

*By Prof. J. A. Alexander*

ART. III.—*The Valley of Vision: or the Dry Bones of Israel Revived. An attempted proof (from Ezekiel chap. xxxvii. 1—14) of the Restoration and Conversion of the Jews.* By George Bush, Professor of Hebrew, New York City University. New York: Saxton & Miles. 1844. 8vo. pp. 60.

THE Restoration of Israel is an ambiguous expression, which may either denote the spiritual re-union of God's ancient people with the church, or their literal recovery of the Land of Promise. In the present state of opinion and discussion, it may be conveniently restricted to the latter sense, in which Professor Bush employs it, while he expresses the other idea by the word Conversion. The future conversion of the Jews as a nation to the Christian faith is now almost universally regarded as an event explicitly revealed in scripture, the dissent from this interpretation of Paul's language being only occasional and rare. Their Restoration to the Holy Land is also extensively believed and looked for, and this doctrine may be found in combination with a great variety of other tenets not essentially connected with it. While it enters largely into the creed of Millenarians, it is also held by many who dissent from their peculiar doctrines. A belief in the literal Restoration of the Jews has for years been gaining ground in Christendom, and is now regarded with great interest by many who are not yet prepared to acknowledge it as true. In the Church of England it has long been a favourite opinion, and among the Presbyterians of Great Britain a strong impulse has been given to it by the mission of the Scottish Deputation to the Jews, of which we have given some account in the preceding pages. There is something in the doctrine itself, well suited to awaken even a romantic interest, by giving palpable reality to what might else appear intangible and visionary, and by bringing the local associations of the Holy Land, which otherwise belong to ancient history, into intimate connexion with the present and the future. That a subject so interesting in itself, and so extensively regarded as important, is deserving of repeated and deliberate investigation, cannot be disputed. That its investigation has been so frequently conducted in a fanciful manner, and without due regard to the principles of interpretation, is indeed to be lamented, but at the same time makes it the

more proper to receive with all respect, and weigh with all deliberation, such attempts when made by writers of acknowledged learning and ability. Professor Bush is now well known both in Europe and America, not only as a biblical scholar and interpreter of scripture, but as one who has, for many years, devoted his attention, in a special manner, to the subject of prophecy. We have so often had occasion to bring his publications before our readers, and to express our judgment of the author's views on some important subjects, that any statement of his claims to their attention, and any attempt to define his position as a theologian or interpreter, would be equally superfluous. We need only say that in the case before us we are called to sit in judgment not on a flight of fancy or an ignorant exposition of the English text, but on a genuine attempt to lay open the true meaning of the inspired original, by the help of the best means to which the author has had access. Such being the literary character, and such the interesting subject of the pamphlet, nothing more is needed to ensure for its author a candid and respectful hearing.

The immediate subject of Professor Bush's essay is the vision of the dry bones in the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, one of the most impressive passages of holy writ, even considered merely in a literary point of view. The common English version of the passage is given, followed by several pages of prefatory remarks, in which the author states his strong conviction that the preceding chapter cannot relate to any past event, because, on the one hand, the language is of such a nature as absolutely to forbid any kind of spiritualising interpretation, and on the other, the obvious purport of several of the clauses goes to ascertain the time of the accomplishment as utterly incompatible with that of the literal return from Babylon under the decree of Cyrus. The connexion between the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh chapters he explains to be this, that while the one announces the fact of the restoration, the other declares the manner and means of it. To determine the era of the one, therefore, is to determine the era of the other. Of the two visions contained in the thirty-seventh chapter, the author here confines himself to the first, the general sense of which, as a figurative prediction of the restoration of Israel, he thinks so strictly defined by Jehovah himself, that he does not consider it necessary to argue the point, nor even to notice in detail any different interpreta-

tion. Whether this is the most satisfactory method of determining the question, many readers will no doubt regard as highly questionable. We own, however, that to our minds a satisfactory exposition of the passage, in detail, on this hypothesis, would be more than equivalent in value to a general argument, *a priori*, in its favour. We are more and more disposed to believe that detailed and independent but consistent exposition of the prophecies affords the only key to the difficulties which involve them, and that much of the error upon both sides of various disputed questions has arisen from the influence of names and vague theories, as for instance when men call themselves literal interpreters, and undertake to act upon a fixed invariable principle of literal interpretation, from which however they are forced continually, by the very laws of language, to depart. The literal or figurative character of every passage may be and must be separately determined, and it is only by the combination of results thus reached, that any general system of prophetic interpretation can be successfully or safely formed.

Mr. Bush's plan is to exhibit in parallel columns the Hebrew text and the common English version, the Septuagint and Targum of Jonathan, with a literal translation of each, and the Vulgate in the original Latin, the whole followed by the author's exposition. The results to which he comes, as to the meaning of the passage, may be briefly stated under several particulars. 1. It refers exclusively to things still future, or at most with an allusion to the restoration from exile in Babylon. 2. There is no prediction of a literal resurrection, as some writers have assumed, nor is such a resurrection even presupposed. The whole is a symbolical prediction of the restoration of Israel to Palestine. 3. Ezekiel, in this vision, represents the whole body of divinely authorized expounders of the word, and teaches by example their duty in relation to the great providential purpose here disclosed. 4. The act of prophesying here ascribed to Ezekiel denotes the exposition of prophecy by authorized interpreters, as an appointed means for the attainment of the end proposed; that is to say, the restoration of the Jews is to be brought about by the convincing exposition of their own prophetic books, from the pulpit and the press, but more especially the latter. 5. The noise, which followed or accompanied the prophesying, represents, first, the universal response of the Christian church to the true exposition of

the prophets when made known, and then, the proclamations or decrees of Christian governments, facilitating the return of Israel. 6. The *shaking*, mentioned in the same verse, represents the effect of the truth upon the Jews themselves, and is descriptive of a general movement, in which their own learned men will take the lead, and which will spread among the nations with the force of a great concussion, leading to a diligent search and correct interpretation of the prophets. 7. The eighth verse represents the external gathering of the scattered Jews, and their rational conviction of the truth, before the dispensation of the spirit, and their restoration to spiritual life, which is not brought into view until the ninth verse, where instead of prophesying "to the wind," Ezekiel prophesies "concerning the spirit," and thereby shows the duty of the preacher and interpreter, in explaining those prophecies which relate to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in connexion with the future restoration of the Jews. At the same time the peculiar form of expression, meaning strictly "to the spirit," implies the necessity of fervent prayer, combined with exposition of the prophecies, as a means for the promotion of this great event. 8. The "slain," who are mentioned in v. 9, are not the sufferers in a special persecution, but the dead, i. e. the Jews in their present desolation and dispersion, without allusion to any particular form or time of suffering. 9. The last four verses of this passage contain the divine interpretation of the vision. In v. 11, is described the present afflicted, hopeless state of Israel; in v. 12, the promise of deliverance; the substitution of graves for scattered bones seeming to show that the language in either case is highly metaphorical and not to be strictly understood. 10. The internal conversion and external restoration of the Jews are not foretold as independent and distinct events, but as inseparable parts of the same providential scheme, the chronological relations of which are not explicitly revealed, although the author seems to look upon the spiritual renovation of the race as subsequent, in point of time, to their external restoration. 11. The grand duty of the Christian Church, in reference to Israel, is the study of prophecy, and the diffusion of the true interpretation, with importunate prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit, as a spirit of grace and supplication, leading them to look at Him whom they have pierced, and mourn with a sincere repentance. 12. The precise time of Israel's restoration, and the accompanying circumstances, have not been

explicitly revealed, and must be learned, if at all, from incidental statements of the scripture, and from providential indications.

Upon this summary statement we may remark, first, that Mr. Bush's view of this passage is one which no *literalist* can consistently adopt; for he deliberately rejects the old rabbinical interpretation of a literal resurrection, and explains the whole as symbolical of moral and political changes. We urge this, not as an objection to the truth of Mr. Bush's conclusion, but as one out of many proofs, that the dogma of literal interpretation cannot be consistently applied, without the sacrifice of some of the most pleasing prospects opened in the prophecies. To allege that this exposition is literal so far as relates to its application to Israel as a nation, and figurative only in the use of symbols to denote their restoration, is to say that an invariable principle of exposition may be varied at the will of the expounder. If every thing in prophecy which can be literally understood must be so understood, then this passage must relate to a literal resurrection of the body, as it has in fact been explained by some of the Jewish writers. If on the other hand a different application of the language is admissible, the canon of literal interpretation is abandoned without necessity, for this is a case in which the terms may without absurdity be strictly understood. The inference from this is not that prophecy is never to be literally interpreted, nor that it cannot be so interpreted in any supposed case, but that the literal or figurative character of any passage is to be determined by its form, its phraseology, its context, and the analogy of kindred prophecies, and not by the mechanical enforcement of an arbitrary general rule.

We remark, again, that by assuming, at the start, that this prophecy relates to the outward restoration of the Jews as a people, Mr. Bush has deprived his exposition of what would have been its chief attraction, a conclusive argument in proof of his position. The interest of the passage seems to hang almost exclusively on this one question, and the end for which an exposition would be probably consulted by a very great majority of readers would be simply the solution of this doubt, and not a mere expansion of its meaning, on the supposition that a particular solution is the true one. We have said already that the most satisfactory solution would be one derived, not from vague considerations of a general kind, but from detailed interpreta-

tation of the passage. What we complain of, therefore, is that the author, in explaining the details, has not distinctly pointed out their bearing on this interesting question, but contented himself with a general answer unaccompanied by any other proof than the assertion that God has himself determined it, which many will of course regard as a mere begging of the question.

The case may be fairly stated thus. The vision of the dry bones is now almost universally regarded as symbolical of a great change to be undergone by the Jewish people. It is also agreed on all hands that this change includes a spiritual renovation, i. e. the conversion of the great mass of that people to the Christian faith. The only question that remains is whether this conversion is a change of such importance as to exhaust the meaning of the symbols, or whether a distinct change of an outward kind is to be superadded as a subject of the prophecy. To us, we must confess, there is no evidence afforded either by the text or context that any other than a spiritual change is here predicted. Nor can this be objected to, as spiritualizing a literal prediction, first, because, as we have seen, the strictly literal interpretation is now universally rejected, and secondly because the spiritual change is supposed to be included in the meaning of the passage, even by those who suppose that it includes a great deal more. So far, then, as this solitary passage is concerned, we can see no necessity for extending the application of its symbols beyond that spiritual change which, all agree, is here predicted. It is very true, however, as Professor Bush observes, that this question is not to be settled by a reference to this place only, but by combining the legitimate results of exegetical analysis in all the places where the outward restoration seems to be foretold. Into that wide discussion we of course have no design to enter here, but simply wish to enter our dissent from the conclusion that the text or context of this passage in itself considered renders any such interpretation unavoidable, or even highly probable, without regard to parallel predictions or to the general analogy of prophecy, in treating of this difficult and interesting subject.

Instead of continuing these desultory criticisms on Professor Bush's exposition, we are strongly inclined to illustrate it further by comparison with others, and if possible with those of writers who might be expected to survey the subject from a somewhat different if not a more convenient

or commanding 'stand-point.' There are few things in exegetical inquiry more interesting and instructive than this kind of combination. There is something tedious and deadening in the process of comparing many writers who have drawn from the same sources or wrought up the same materials; but when we can bring into juxtaposition the impressions and conclusions of intelligent and cultivated minds, altogether independent of each other, and pursuing their researches under circumstances and influences widely different, the result can scarcely be devoid of interest, even in cases where it sheds no real light upon the subject of inquiry. But in undertaking to apply this method to the case before us, where shall we look for the objects of comparison? The older writers will not answer the purpose, partly because they may safely be supposed to have been included in the apparatus, and to have had their influence in forming the opinions of the author; partly because there is a false, or at least an exaggerated notion, at the present day, that biblical learning is a thing of yesterday, and that the judgment of a Buxtorf or a Bochart is of no worth till 'endorsed' by a substantial modern name. Among ourselves there has been little thorough exposition of prophecy in its original inspired form, although there has been no lack of second-hand and new interpretation of the English text. Both here, however, and in Great Britain, the more popular writers on these subjects have been trained in the same school and involved in the same controversies as Professor Bush, and cannot therefore answer the conditions which we have prescribed above. On the other hand, we observe that he makes little if any direct use of recent German writers on this subject, an omission which we do not here refer to as detracting from the merit of his works, but merely as affording us the means and opportunity of such a comparison as has been mentioned between his conclusions and those of other writers, whose training and habitual associations have been altogether different. To a modern German of any reputation there will of course be no objection on the score of philology, the modes of study and of teaching in that country being such, with all their faults, as to render it quite certain that no able writer there will venture to appear before the world without having availed himself of the labours of his immediate predecessors, so that the latest German works on any subject, if prepared by writers of established character, are almost sure to furnish us the last results of philological investigation. All this



is true independently of doctrinal distinctions, since believers and neologists are equally unwilling to give one another any advantage by neglecting those means which are common to both. A Hitzig and a Hengstenberg, however they may differ as to fundamental principles, are alike careful to avoid the charge of retrocession from the point which learned inquiry has already reached. We should not, however, think it worth our while to reproduce the notions of mere infidel expounders on a subject which in their esteem is scarcely equal in importance to a knotty point of classical antiquities. It is to writers who acknowledge the authority of scripture and the truth of Christianity that we should look for objects of comparison, the rather because even this class of Germans, though more or less familiar with the early writers, are little conversant with modern English exposition and religious controversy. Hence we may look to them for views which, whether right or wrong, have been obtained independently of those associations and discussions with which we are most familiar.

Under the influence of these considerations we proceed to open a new work upon Ezekiel\* by Umbreit, a professor at Heidelberg, who has long been known to the public as a commentator on the books of Job and Proverbs, and as a contributor to the 'Studien und Kritiken,' a theological and biblical journal conducted by some of the first scholars of Germany. His views of the inspiration and authority of scripture, although still below the truth, are such as to remove him from the class of rationalists, and to give an aspect of Christianity, and even of orthodoxy, to his later works, his views having undergone material alteration. The book to which we now have reference is the third in a series of 'Practical Commentaries' on the Prophets, the first two volumes being appropriated to Isaiah and Jeremiah. The author's freedom from the influence of English usage and associations is illustrated by the very title of his work, which would naturally lead an English reader to expect an application of the text expounded to experimental and devotional improvement. He would find, however, on becoming acquainted with the contents of the volume, that the 'practical commentary' consists of a continuous declamatory para-

\* Praktischer Commentar über den Hezekiel mit exegetischen und kritischen Anmerkungen von Dr. Friedrich Wilhelm Karl Umbreit. 8vo. pp. 270. Hamburg. 1843.

phrase, not in the best taste, even considered as a piece of rhetoric, and scarcely rising, in point of unction, to a level with the sermons of a very fluent but not very deep or very serious young preacher. The application of the term 'practical' to this performance is to be explained only by a reference to modern German usage, which excludes from works of criticism all appeals to feeling or even to that higher taste which looks beyond the lexicography and grammar of the author to his rhetorical and moral qualities. Hence what would seem to us, with our associations, a mere piece of sounding composition, has, in Germany, an air of serious morality, not to say of elevated piety. The influence of such a composition upon those who have been taught to look upon the sacred writers with a species of contempt, may no doubt be salutary, chiefly as a step towards something better; but to American and English readers the only value of the 'practical commentary' is that it affords a running analysis and paraphrase of the text, and gives the author's views of the connexion, which is often a large part of the exposition. But besides the paraphrase, from which the work derives its title, it contains two other elements of greater value, though of less dimensions, a complete translation of the whole book, and occasional notes on the difficult passages, embodying a large amount of learned criticism in a condensed form. Without the notes and version, the paraphrase would scarcely deserve the attention of a biblical scholar; but when joined to these, it adds to the value of the whole by giving it completeness.

In the translation of ch. xxxvii. 1—14, and the philological explanation of particular expressions, Umbreit scarcely varies from Professor Bush at all; but when we come to the application of the symbols, we find a material difference between them. While our countryman regards the resurrection of the dry bones as a striking emblem of the national resuscitation and restoration of Israel, the German Professor looks upon Israel itself, in this connexion, merely as an emblem of the human race, which God will not abandon to the night of the grave, but awaken to a new life. If the Prophet had not been possessed of this hope, he would never have employed a symbol so sublime as that of resurrection. To regard the passage as a mere figurative representation of the external and political resuscitation of the people after the exile, is, in Umbreit's opinion, to degrade and weaken it, and at the same time inconsistent with the agency ascribed

to the Spirit. On the other hand, the whole connexion of the prophecy appears to him to forbid the explanation of the vision as a didactic exhibition of the bodily resurrection of the dead, and to determine its meaning, as a symbolical prediction of the moral renovation of the human race by a divine influence. This we take to be the drift of his interpretation, which we set in opposition to Professor Bush's, not as evincing that the latter is mistaken, but to show how naturally two minds may in such cases, lean to opposite conclusions, and how far the opinion which commends itself to either, is from being self-evident or exclusively defensible.

The other works upon Ezekiel,\* which we have referred to, is by Hävernick, a friend and pupil of Hengstenberg and Tholuck, sometime a colleague of Gausson and Merle d'Aubigné in the Evangelical School of Theology at Geneva, and now professor of Theology at Königsberg. His previous reputation rests upon his Commentary on Daniel, a work of high philological and exegetical merit, and his Introduction to the Old Testament, recently completed. As might be inferred from his connexions, he is decided in his opposition to the rationalistic infidelity, and his defence of the inspiration and authority of scripture. At the same time he is highly independent and original, acknowledging no master and copying no model. A characteristic feature of his mind and writings is the disposition which he everywhere exhibits to grapple with difficulties and let what is easy take care of itself, in doing which he not unfrequently neglects to explain what may be puzzling to his readers, although it appears simple to himself. This marked peculiarity, while it renders him less continuously readable, gives him a high authority and value as an aid to be consulted in perplexing cases, and fixes his intellectual rank far above the common herd of interpreters, who skip the hard points to enlarge upon the easy ones. Not a few of the most thorough and profound discussions of different questions in Hebrew lexicography and grammar, may be found in the writings of Hävernick, whose merit as a scholar and a man of talent is acknowledged even by those who hate his doctrines and deride his faith. That the soundness of his judgment and the clearness of his style are not always equal to

\* *Commentar über den Propheten Ezeziel.* Von Heinrich And. Christ. Hävernick. 8vo. pp. 757. Erlangen. 1843.

his ingenuity and learning, may be regretted but can scarcely be thought wonderful, by those who are acquainted with the endless inequalities of human genius.

From what has been said it may be readily inferred that between the works of Hävernicks and Umbreits on Ezekiel there is but a slight resemblance. The lively declamation, the diluted paraphrase, and even the continuous translation of the one are all wanting in the other. The style of printing in the two is not more different than the style of writing, in relation to defect and superfluity of ornament. As to method, Hävernicks divides the book into large portions, and takes comprehensive views of these, while Umbreit merely gives a heading to the chapters. Umbreit, as we have seen, translates the whole book, and adopts the rhythmical arrangement, which has been so long in vogue that we now almost despair of seeing it exploded. Hävernicks's translation is a part of his commentary, and is restricted for the most part to those places which are specially difficult. The whole book indeed is a continued illustration of the trait which we have mentioned, an affection for hard places and a scorn of easy ones.

Of the nine parts into which he throws the whole book, the penultimate or eighth comprehends seven chapters, from the thirty-third to the thirty-ninth inclusive, forming one homogeneous and continuous whole, the common date of which is given in ch. xxxiii. 21, 22. Throughout this section, the catastrophe of Judah is described as past, the Holy City as already desolate. Before the news of the event could reach the exiles on the Chaboras, Ezekiel is informed that his predictions have been verified; and this assurance gives to the ensuing series of prophecies a character distinct from that of all which go before. At this point may be said to open the prophetic history of Israel's triumphs and of God's kingdom upon earth. In contrast to the actual distress and desolation, the form of these predictions is the most sublime and glorious. From the time of Israel's death, Ezekiel seems to think of nothing and his writings to breathe nothing but 'the resurrection and the life.' To this animating series the thirty-third chapter forms the introduction, in which Ezekiel is inducted anew into his office, as an intimation that his ministry of threatening and reproof was now to be succeeded by a ministry of promise and of consolation, that the great catastrophe which had been witnessed, far from being the conclusion of God's dispensations towards his chosen

people was but the eve, the night, before a morning of abundant blessing. In the thirty-fourth chapter, the foundation of the promises is laid in a general assurance of God's favour to his humbled and afflicted people, and a special prediction of Messiah's reign as the appointed means of blessing them. Having thus shown the necessity of tribulation as a preparation for the blessedness of Israel, the prophet brings to view, in the next chapter, the impending fate of all opposing powers, represented (as in Isaiah ch. lxiii.) by the hereditary enmity of Edom. But when the prophet wrote, the heathen were triumphant, and deriding the supposed inability of Jehovah to protect his people, a mistake arising from their disposition to regard the manifestation of *power* as the only end of the divine dispensations. Ezekiel, therefore, in the thirty-sixth chapter proceeds to show how the higher attribute of *holiness* is manifested, even in suffering Israel to fall and the gentiles to triumph for a time, but still more conspicuously in the destruction of the latter, and above all in the restoration of the chosen people, not for their own sake, but for the glory of Jehovah as a holy God, in the deliverance of Israel both from guilt and suffering, not only from the punishment of sin, but from the love and power of sin itself.

Having thus sketched the outline of the period of grace, the prophet now proceeds to the details, and being assured of Israel's salvation in the general, seems to stand astonished as the wondrous scheme unfolds itself. This is, according to Hävernicks, the nexus between the general promises foregoing and the glorious vision of Israel's resurrection, represented even by Jerome as a '*visio famosa . . . . omnium ecclesiarum lectione celebrata.*' The difficulty of the passage is in ascertaining the precise relation of the vision (vs. 1—10) to the application (vs. 11—14,) but may be resolved into the question, whether the resurrection here presented is a symbol of some future resurrection of the body or of something else. A common method of escaping from this difficulty has been to allege that the doctrine of a general resurrection is here presupposed and furnishes the figurative dress of the prediction. This ground is taken by Tertullian (in opposing the Gnostics, who applied this passage to the literal restoration of the Jews and made the resurrection a mere metaphor,) by Jerome, and in modern times by Vitranga, Pareau, Gesenius, Hengstenberg, and others. It has been opposed in Germany by Baumgarten

Crusius, Strauss, and Steudel, with whom Hävernäck concurs, because resurrection was the most appropriate and striking figure which could have been used to denote restoration of any kind, and because the doctrine of a literal resurrection was not sufficiently familiar to be presupposed or made the basis of a metaphor in such a case. As an opposite extreme to this opinion Hävernäck regards the doctrine of Origen and other ancients, that the resurrection of the dry bones in this vision is a mere emblem, especially when it is supposed, (as by Grotius, Vatablus, and Ammon,) to represent simply the deliverance of the Jews from heathen oppression and the restoration of the Hebrew state under Zerubbabel. The same objection lies, in a less degree, against the application of the passage to a mere internal renovation. The design of the passage, which is clearly to encourage the despondent Jews, the way in which it is introduced, and the connexion with the foregoing context, all go to prove, in our author's judgment, that it is not a mere parable or allegory, but that it directly teaches some important truth.

In the Talmud the figurative exposition is described as the prevailing one, but later Jewish writers make the passage refer literally to the resurrection, in proof of which doctrine it is also urged as a decisive proof-text by Justin, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Theodoret. The same interpretation is adopted by Calovius, who errs, however, in the judgment of our author, by making the whole passage a didactic statement, whereas it was intended to console as well as to instruct. The direct consolation he supposes to be couched in the last four verses, while the ten preceding are intended to command the people's faith in this assurance by a striking declaration of Jehovah's sovereign and creative power, extending even to the resuscitation of the dead. According to this view of the passage, the concluding part (v. 10—14) is not an explanation of the part preceding, but contains the main proposition to which the rest is only introductory. The people looked upon their case as hopeless and their ruin as complete. The Prophet, therefore, is commissioned to assure them that they shall be delivered and restored; but lest this should appear to them to transcend even the divine resources, he prefaces the promise with a declaration that with God nothing is impossible, not in an abstract or didactic form, but in that of an awful and majestic scene, where God appears performing that which seems to sense impossible, the restoration of dead

bones to life, and thereby proving that, as the less includes the greater, he is able to do all for Israel that he has promised or that they can ask.

So far as this vision was intended to assert God's miraculous power, Hävernicks thinks it not improbable that some allusion was intended to those cases of recovery from death which are recorded in the history of Elijah and Elisha, what there took place in solitary cases being here described as possible and future on the largest scale. In connexion with the ninth verse, he rejects the sense of *wind* adopted even by Hengstenberg, and denies that the Hebrew word can here have any other sense than that of *Spirit*, because this is its meaning in the foregoing context (vs. 5, 6, 8), because it is expressly distinguished from the *four winds*, and because it is closely connected with Jehovah and the word of his creative power.

The death, here predicated of the house of Israel, is understood by Hävernicks to signify the desolate and desperate condition of the people brought upon them by their sins, in contrast to which is exhibited the new creation which God purposed to effect on their behalf.

With respect to the fulfilment of the promise here given, there is certainly a want of very definite expression on the author's part, in his immediate exposition of the passage. We have seen, however, that he looks upon the blessings shadowed forth in this whole series of predictions (ch. xxxiii—xxxix) as belonging to the reign of the Messiah or the Christian dispensation. But the question still arises whether that which is foretold is to be verified externally or spiritually, or in other words whether this is a promise of Conversion merely or of Restoration also, in the sense of these expressions which has been before explained. To this inquiry Hävernicks gives no direct reply in his interpretation of the vision of the dry bones. When commenting on the last part of the chapter, which relates to the same subject and the same period of time, he propounds the question whether the 'sanctuary' there foretold is a material or a spiritual structure, and denies that either can be exclusively alleged as true, since the two ideas run together and as it were include each other. This may possibly be meant to express the same opinion which Professor Bush maintains, to wit, that restoration and conversion are inseparably blended in the view of prophecy. A more distinct idea of Hävernicks's opinion, as to the way in which these promises are yet to

be fulfilled, may be obtained from his interpretation of the singular predictions in the last division of the book (ch. xl—xlviii.) The question between literal and spiritual exposition there presents itself, no longer complicated with another respecting the mere figurative dress of the prediction, as in the one which we have been considering, and under circumstances which appear to render the concluding chapters a decisive key to the true method of interpreting the whole book, or at least its most perplexing passages. These chapters have undoubtedly the air of literal predictions which are to be strictly accomplished; while, on the other hand, the things predicted are themselves, in some respects, of such a nature as to create very serious obstructions in the way of a literal interpretation; so that, if, on the whole, that be the preferable mode of understanding them, there can be comparatively very little difficulty in applying the same method to many other portions of the book. At present, however, we refer to this last section, merely with a view to ascertain the light in which it is regarded by Hävernicks, in order thereby to illustrate what is otherwise obscure in his interpretation of the vision more immediately before us. Mr. Bush's judgment, as to the bearing of the one part on the other, may be gathered from the fact, that he has here inserted, as an appendix to his own interpretation of the vision of the dry bones, an extract of six or seven pages from Fry's work on the Second Advent, with a map, intended to illustrate the last chapters of Ezekiel, and especially the new partition of the Holy Land. With this it may not be uninteresting or unprofitable to compare the views and statements of a very learned and a very recent German writer, which we shall therefore give with some degree of fulness.

Taking a brief historical survey of the different interpretations, Hävernicks names first, as remotest from the truth, that of Villalpandus, which regards the description of the temple and the country as a mere reminiscence of the state of both under Solomon, or (as the same hypothesis is modified by Grotius) at the time of the overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar—the whole being designed as a direction and a model to the Jews who should return after the exile. A second theory is that of Doederlein, who looks upon these chapters as a mere ideal picture like the Republic of Plato, simply designed to relieve the mind and soothe the feelings of the distressed prophet. Herder, Eichhorn, and Dathe, under-



take to combine these two hypotheses by assuming that the chapters in question contain an improved plan for the restoration of the temple and the commonwealth, in which the basis is supplied by memory, but changed and modified at pleasure. The next place is assigned by our author to the 'carnal Jewish interpretation,' which anticipates a literal external fulfilment in the days of the Messiah. Last comes the view which has been prevalent in Christendom, to wit, that this portion of Ezekiel is typical of changes in the church under the new dispensation, distinguishing it from the old; this being regarded as the sole design by some, as Capellus, Pfeiffer, Cocceius, Calovius, while others, as Vitranga, in conjunction with the typical design, suppose a reference to the literal rebuilding of the temple by Zerubabel.

Upon these conflicting theories Hävernäck remarks, that as the second temple was confessedly not built upon the plan here laid down, the passage cannot be regarded either as a rule or a prediction having reference to that event, since the Jews would not have retained in their canon a prophet whose commands they thus despised, and whose predictions failed to be accomplished. To the suggestion of Dathe and others, that the execution of the prophet's plan was prevented only by external circumstances, such as the small number of the exiles who returned, he replies that, apart from the dependence of these very circumstances on the same being who inspired the prophet, there are parts of the description which could not possibly have been literally realized, such as the size of the temple, the stream flowing out of it, the equal division of the land, &c. The author then proceeds to speak of the departures from the Mosaic law, contained in this part of Ezekiel, not as throwing any suspicion on the genuineness or antiquity of the Pentateuch, but as proving that the prophecy has reference to a new state of things, in which the old law should be done away by being fulfilled.

He now proceeds to state more positively his belief, that this whole portion of Ezekiel is symbolical of something wholly different from the symbols themselves. The minute details, exact measures, &c., are explained by the fact that this revelation has the form of vision, which from its very nature, leads to such exact imitation of an outward reality; and as the images of such a vision must be borrowed from things really existing, it was natural that in Ezekiel's case they

should be drawn from the Mosaic institutions, with which as a priest, he was peculiarly familiar, and from the structure of that temple which he had seen laid in ruins. On this supposition it is easy to explain the occurrences of such visions only in Ezekiel, while on the contrary hypothesis of literal interpretation it is hard to understand, and in violation of analogy, that no full account of these wonderful events should be found in the other prophets. This conclusion he thinks fortified by the comparison of many other places where Ezekiel clothes his thoughts in figures drawn from the Mosaic ritual, while in the context every thing points to events and changes of a spiritual nature. A kindred argument is furnished by the obvious connexion between this and the preceding portion of the book, (ch. xxxiii—xxxix,) both relating to the times of the Messiah, and purporting to describe God's future dealings with his people. In one of the divisions this is done in literal terms or in figures of an ordinary kind; in the other, under images derived, as we have seen, from the Mosaic institutions. That the events of the same period should be so differently represented, can only be explained on the hypothesis that the representation in the latter case is wholly symbolical. In other words, the prophet, in a series of chapters (xxxiii—xxxix,) gives a general view of God's dispensations towards his people in the days of the Messiah, without any allusion to the rebuilding of the temple or the restoration of the ancient ritual. He then, in another series, (xl—xlviii) goes over the same ground, and predicts the events of the same period, in terms implying the continued existence of the ancient institutions. If these terms are to be literally understood, how could the same things be omitted in the previous predictions? If they refer to different periods, how may that difference be defined? If, on the other hand, the two series in question are different representations of the same thing, it follows of course that the language of the second is not to be literally understood. The fact that no other prophet gives the same view of the future, if these details are to be strictly understood, has been already mentioned as a reason for not so understanding them; while on the other hand the conclusion is strengthened by the occasional occurrence of such symbols in contemporary prophets, where the strict interpretation is irreconcilable with the context. The only other general reasons here assigned for preferring the symbolical inter-

pretation, are the perfect consistency and uniformity with which it can be carried out, and the analogy of Rev. ch. xxi and xxii, which the author considers to be not only founded upon this but exegetical of it as a prophecy of symbols.

From this sketch of Hävernicks's reasons for rejecting the strict interpretation of the last nine chapters, we may readily infer his opinion with respect to the fulfilment of the prophecy contained in the first fourteen verses of the thirty-seventh chapter, namely, that the restoration there predicted is a spiritual restoration, irrespective of local and external circumstances. It may be observed, however, that throughout the argument, of which we have been giving a brief abstract, the doctrine of a literal fulfilment hereafter is referred to only as a rabbinical conceit, and not as an opinion extensively and stedfastly maintained by many devout Christians. There is evidence, indeed, of a satisfactory though negative description, that the question of literal and spiritual exposition, as it has been agitated here and in Great Britain, was not familiar, or at least not actually present to the author's mind, when this part of his work was written. How far this supposition should be suffered to detract from the value of his judgment on the points at issue, is itself a difficult and doubtful question. But even granting that the author may have given less deliberate attention to the theory of literal interpretation, as an exploded Jewish notion, than he would have done if he had viewed it as a favourite and plausible hypothesis of modern date, it must still be admitted, that the conclusions of a mind so independent and acute, as well as learned, are at least entitled to respectful notice. And for ourselves we are disposed to think that the author's having breathed another atmosphere, and seen by other light, than that of the millennial controversy, really detracts less from the fullness of his testimony than it adds to its independence and trustworthiness. At all events we have here a convincing proof that the symbolical interpretation is one which can commend itself to eminently learned and unbiassed critics, now as well as formerly. More than this we do not think it necessary to insist upon, as we are not attempting to establish any theory, but merely to evince that there is more than one entitled to consideration.

There is indeed another circumstance, besides the want of a familiar acquaintance with the progress of opinion out

of Germany, which ought in fairness to be mentioned as entitled to due weight in estimating German testimony upon such a subject. We mean the national propensity to sacrifice the outward form to the Idea, the effect of which, in exegesis, is of course to give the spiritual method of interpretation the advantage over that which adheres more strictly to the letter. The strength of this propensity is various in different individual cases, but its existence is insured in all by early habit and association, by the whole course of instruction, and by the influence of preceding writers. With such a tendency we do not think that Hävernicks is chargeable in any unusual degree; but we admit that this consideration should not be excluded in relation to himself or to another writer in the same department, of more influence at home, and better known among ourselves, Professor Hengstenberg of Berlin, whose disposition to idealize the prophecies is at least as strong, particularly in his later publications.

It is not, however, by authority, and least of all by German authority, that this question ever can be settled. Thorough and accurate analysis, comparison, and combination of the prophecies themselves, on a sound basis of philology and common sense, under the influence of faith and love of truth, must do the work. As a contribution to this end, the little work before us is entitled to a hearty welcome, and will no doubt receive it from that growing part of the community which feels a lively interest in these investigations. The author's candour, independence, and exemption from all party prepossessions, while they are already well known to his personal acquaintances, are variously manifested in this publication, for example in the fact that, while adopting Mr. Fry's interpretation of the last part of Ezekiel, he entirely dissents from that writer's theory of a premillennial personal coming of Christ and his visible bodily manifestation and reign on the earth during the space of a thousand years. "For this general theory of interpretation," says our author, "I find no sufficient warrant in the oracles of God, and therefore am constrained to reject it altogether. As I interpret these oracles, they come much nearer to announcing an elevation and sublimation of the *natural* into the sphere of the *spiritual*, rather than a bringing down of the *spiritual* into the domain of the *natural*. While I anticipate, moreover, the most august developments of Providence on the field of human destiny, of which the dawnsings

may even now be perceived by the enlightened eye, I look with equal confidence for a *gradual* accomplishment of all the splendid purposes of Infinite Wisdom. Indeed, if there be any one principle of paramount importance to be established in connexion with the interpretation of prophecy, that principle I believe to be the *gradualism* of its fulfilment." (p. 53.)

We regard these few remarks with interest, as general results of Professor Bush's long continued study of the prophecies in detail, and the rather because he has always chosen rather to deal with individual points than with vague and universal principles. We may take for granted, therefore, that he speaks with due deliberation, when he lays down, as important principles of exegesis, that the changes foretold are in general to be gradually brought about, and that the tendency of prophecy is rather to a sublimation of the natural than to a debasement of the spiritual. To the truth of either of these propositions we have nothing to object, although we cannot very clearly see what force the latter of the two, as we have stated them, can have against the doctrine of a premillennial advent and a personal reign of the Messiah, which it has not against Fry's interpretation of the last nine chapters of Ezekiel, as adopted by our author. Other objections may, no doubt, be urged against the one, which do not lie against the other; but the difference between them, with respect to the broad principle here laid down as to natural and spiritual exegesis, needs elucidation. We are also at a loss to see what influence this principle has had upon the author's exposition of the vision of the dry bones, or in what way his conviction, that the true interpretation of prophecy leans rather to the spiritual than the natural, has led him to reject, without discussion, 'any kind of spiritualizing interpretation.' It is very possible that this apparent inconsistency may really be owing to the brief and partial exhibition of the author's views allowed by the limits of so brief an essay. And this consideration joins with others, which we need not stop to specify, in making us desirous of a more complete and comprehensive statement of the ground to which Professor Bush's exegetical researches have conducted him. That his publications hitherto have thrown light rather on detached points than upon the general subject, is a strong proof that he has pursued the very method best adapted to prepare him and entitle him to treat the subject in a comprehensive manner. Had his books

been filled with idle speculations, or even with ingenious reasonings a priori, we should care but little for his views as to the general relations of the subject; but as he has, for many years, been settling, in his own mind, the minute points, we should now like to know something of the general results arising from their combination. We are, therefore, pleased to learn that, although the Hierophant has been abandoned, Mr. Bush proposes to publish a series of occasional *brochures* on biblical and chiefly on prophetic subjects. This arrangement, we have no doubt, will be found more convenient to the author, and more likely to excite a general interest in his pursuits, than a periodical journal, containing in each number a plurality of articles on different divisions of the same great subject. The execution of this new plan will afford an opportunity for such general statements of the author's views of prophecy and its interpretation, as we have above expressed a wish to see.

In an appendix to the pamphlet now before us, the author gives a construction and translation of Daniel ch. ii. 2, which, 'on a somewhat closer view of the passage,' appeared to him more accurate than these which are given in the common version. According to the latter, all men are here described as sleeping in the dust and then awaking, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. In this construction the great body of interpreters have acquiesced, and yet all seem to have felt the difficulty which arises from the use of *many* instead of *all*, and which cannot here be explained as a synecdoche, because the expression *many of* (which appears in the original as well as the translation) clearly distinguishes a part from the whole. The weight of this difficulty may be gathered from the shifts resorted to in order to remove it, such as taking *many* to mean many of each sort, or supposing it to be exclusive of those who are to be alive at the resurrection and who cannot, therefore, rise again. The construction which Professor Bush proposes is to make the *some* (or literally *these* and *these*) relate not to two divisions of those who are to rise from the dead, but to these as one division, and to those who are not to rise at all as another. "The distinction is between those who awake to life and those who do not awake at all. In the outset all are represented as sleeping. Out of these all, a portion (*many*) awake; the rest remain unawakened. This is the ground of the distinction. *These*, i. e. the awakened, awake to everlasting life,

and those, i. e. the other class, who abide in the dust, who do not awake at all, remain subject to the shame and ignominy of that spiritual death which marked their previous condition. The *awaking* is evidently predicated of the *many*, and not of the whole. Consequently, the *these* in the one case must be understood of the class that awakes, and the *those* in the other, of that which remains asleep. There is no ground whatever for the idea that the latter *awake* to shame and contempt. It is simply because they do *not* awake that this character pertains to them." (p. 50.) From this ingenious emendation Mr. Bush, after rejecting the millennarian doctrine of a two-fold resurrection as without authority in scripture, draws the plausible conclusion, that the words of Daniel relate to a mystical and not a literal resurrection.

We have quoted this criticism, not for the purpose of asserting or denying its correctness, but as an illustration of the undesigned coincidences of remote interpreters. The new view of the passage seems from our author's words to have been forced upon his mind by the stress of exegetical necessity without recurrence to authorities; yet neither the grammatical construction nor the inference deduced from it is new. A contemporary German writer, in commenting on the text of Daniel, seems to have adopted the same view of its construction, as the only one admissible unless we suppose the expression *many of* to have been inadvertently and inaccurately used. He also seems to have arrived at this conclusion, not only independently of other writers but in ignorance of what they have advanced, as appears from his own language.\* The construction, however, is much older than Maurer, and together with the inference which Mr. Bush derives from it, may be found in that eccentric theologian and interpreter but admirable linguist, John Cocceius, who suggests a doubt (*velim cogitari*) whether the universal resurrection is referred to, and acutely observes that although *omnes* may be *multi*, they cannot be *multi de omnibus*. He then goes on to say that the prophet rather represents as given up to shame those other sleepers in the dust who will not awake, and refers, as Mr. Bush does, to Isaiah xxvi. 19, as an instructive parallel. Long

\* Aut igitur non omnes qui obdormiverint sed eorum multos tantum ad vitam redituros esse dicit scriptor, *nescio qua de causa*, aut statuendum est voluisse illum sic scribere, etc. Maurer, *Comm. Gramm. Crit. in Vet. Test.* Vol. 2. p. 196. Leipsic. 1838.

before Cocceius, however, the same doctrine had been taught among the Jews. Aben Ezra, in his commentary on the twelfth of Daniel, quotes Rabbi Saadiah Gaon as declaring, that 'these who awake shall be (appointed) to everlasting life, and these who awake not shall be (doomed) to shame and everlasting contempt.' The words of Gaon himself are that 'this is the resuscitation of the dead of Israel, whose lot is to eternal life, and these who shall not awake are the forsakers of Jehovah,' &c. Upon this construction of the sentence, taken in a strict sense, seems to rest the doctrine taught by some of the rabbins, that the bodies of the wicked will not rise at all.

But we have dwelt unintentionally long upon an incidental point of exegesis, or rather of exegetical history, and must now take leave of Professor Bush's pamphlet, in the expectation of soon meeting him again. Before we close, however, let us say what we have often said before, that none of our professional scholars and interpreters of scripture, has the art of clothing his opinions, right or wrong, in more original and eloquent expressions, an advantage of no little worth when viewed in contrast with the meanness or inflation which so often neutralizes the effect of even greater learning and of sounder sense. Nor is the eloquence of which we speak a mere trick or artifice of language. It is the joint product of strong feeling and a cultivated taste, the one giving energy and life to the expression, while the other clothes it in habiliments, which nothing short of general cultivation and familiarity with classic models ever did or ever can put within an author's reach. For the exhibition of this talent there is not, of course, much scope in the few pages of the work before us; yet we cannot but be struck with the impressive tone in which the restoration of God's ancient people is here held up as an object of devout desire and we had almost said romantic expectation. "That land of hallowed memories is yet to receive again its ancient tenants, and to yield its teeming riches to the old age of the people whose infancy was nurtured on its maternal bosom. The tears of a profound and heart-stricken penitence are yet to mingle with the dews of Hermon in fertilizing its barren vales and its deserted hill-tops. The olive and the vine shall again spread their honours over the mountains once delectable, now desolate; the corn shall yet laugh in the valley where the prowling Bedouin pitches his transient tent, and joyous groups of children, the de-



scendants of patriarch fathers, shall renew their evening sports in the streets of crowded cities, where now the ruinous heaps tell only of a grandeur that has passed away." That these expectations may be realized, no lover of the scriptures can help wishing, be his judgment what it may. Whether the grounds for so believing are sufficient, is a question which we may again bring before our readers, at no very distant period, in connexion with some recent and interesting publications.

*J. A. Alexander*

ART. IV.—*History of the Church of Scotland, from the Introduction of Christianity to the period of the Disruption.* By the Rev. W. M. Hetherington, A.M. Torphichen. Author of the Fulness of Time, History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, &c. New York. Robert Carter. 1844.

*By Prof. J. A. Alexander*

WE avail ourselves of this very timely and acceptable republication, to lay before our readers a connected though imperfect sketch of a subject, which late events have rendered highly interesting, but of which comparatively little has been known. We mean the rise and progress of the Moderate party in the Church of Scotland. With the beginning and the end of Scottish Church History, American readers have had occasion to be pretty well acquainted. The leading events of the first and even of the second reformation, the persecutions under Charles II., and the movements which led to the late disruption, are even among us familiar matters of history. But over the intervening period a cloud has always seemed to hang, chiefly, no doubt, because the period was one of gradual decline or occasional stagnation, and therefore furnished few marked and striking incidents, to attract the attention of the world. Some particular acquaintance with this chapter of history is nevertheless necessary to a thorough understanding of the late events, and of the actual position of the two bodies claiming to be the national Church of Scotland.

It is well known that the late disruption was directly occasioned by a change of measures consequent upon a change of parties in the General Assembly, the orthodox or evangelical party having obtained a majority in 1837 over the