

THE
PRINCETON REVIEW.

APRIL, 1855.

No. II.

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ART. I.—*Ethnographic View of Western Africa.*

WESTERN AFRICA may be divided, according to its population, into three grand divisions. *First*—Senegambia, extending from the southern borders of the Great Desert to Cape Verga, a little south of the Rio Grande, and so named from its being watered by the two great rivers, Senegal and Gambia. *Second*—Upper, or Northern Guinea, reaching from Cape Verga to the Kamerun mountain in the Gulf of Benin, about four degrees north latitude. *Third*—Southern, or Lower Guinea, sometimes called Southern Ethiopia, extending from the Kamerun mountain to Cape Negro, the southern limit of Benguela.

The term *Guinea* is not of African origin, or at least not among those to whom it is applied. There is, according to Barbot, a district of country north of the Senegal, known by the name of *Genahoa*, the inhabitants of which were the first blacks that the Portuguese encountered, in their explorations along the coast in the fifteenth century; and they applied this name indiscriminately afterwards to all the black nations which they found further south. In the two succeeding centuries it was applied in a more restricted sense to that portion of the

G. S. Faber

ART. IV.—*The Many Mansions in the House of the Father*, scripturally discussed and practically considered. By G. S. Faber, B. D., Master of Sherburn Hospital, and Prebendary of Salisbury. With a Prefatory Memoir of the Author, by Francis A. Faber, B. D., Rector of Saunderton, etc. London, 1854. 8vo., pp. 423.

IN his dedication of this work to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the author styles it “the dying performance of a very old man.” He was in his seventy-eighth year. In the concluding paragraph of the volume, he says: “As I approach the confines of another state of existence; as the blossoms of the grave have now long whitened my head; I sensibly feel my footsteps strengthened, my hopes elevated, and my consolations increased, by that definiteness which God has so graciously imparted in his holy word.” He died in January, 1854, in the eighty-first year of his age. His publications, exclusive of pamphlets, amount to about thirty; his first having been published more than a half century before the last. His name has been made long familiar to American readers by his work on the “Difficulties of Infidelity,” but particularly by his dissertations on prophetic portions of the Scriptures.

We open a book by so aged a minister of Christ, so long a reverent student of the Bible, and a practised author, with profound respect. The frequency with which he uses the expression “the alone merits of Jesus Christ,” when speaking of the foundation of his hope of heaven, awakens heartfelt esteem for him, as the humble follower of a common Saviour. Just before his death, he dictated the following words, addressed to a female relative: “Tell Mrs. Reade, with my love, that not being able to read, I have been so much thrown back upon myself, that it has led me to examine more closely, and to sift, upon what foundation I rest my hopes of salvation; and the result has been a more sure and firm reliance upon my Redeemer’s righteousness, and consequently a more perfect peace of mind than I have ever felt before. I think that I was converted to the knowledge of God, and regenerated by his Spirit, more than sixty years ago; and I thank and bless God that amidst all my

many and various sins, I have by his grace been kept from falling away from him and his service. But never, till this illness, have I felt the kind of assurance that I now feel in my own mind of my salvation through Christ."

His biographer states that the germs of the publication, whose title stands above, "had long lain ripening in the author's mind, and the subject at last became so familiar, that it was spread before him as a map." Mr. Faber himself appears to have placed a higher value upon it than upon any other of his books. He even suspected himself of a special affection for it, as the child of his old age. On learning that a second edition was called for, he wrote as follows to his publishers: "I am much inclined to rate it higher than any of my former writings. In it, except occasionally in new editions, I take my leave of the public; for a man who is rapidly approaching to eighty, may well think it time to bring his labours to an end." The object of the work is to discover, from the Bible, the precise locality of Heaven. The whole discussion he bases on an interpretation of the passage from which its title is derived: "In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." John xiv. 2. He would be far, he professes, from invading the retiring sanctity of the declaration, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." He distinctly avows that this work is intended as a supplement to his "Sacred Calendar of Prophecy;" that in respect to matters future, it takes up the subject where that work left it; "and thus ventures, though severely under the guidance of Scripture, to carry on the predicted future state, whether of the holy or the unholy, beyond the bounded limits of the present world."

In his interpretation of John xiv. 2, he says that the house of the Father is "the real temple of the Omnipresent," "the immense mundane house of God;" the many mansions are the many spheres, planetary and stellar, which astronomy reveals to us; and the place which our Lord promised to prepare for his disciples, is this planet of ours, in a restored and perfected condition, as one of the many mansions. But he reverently

adds, "if the proof from Scripture breaks down, let the whole be rejected as the baseless fabric of a vision; or should this be deemed too summary and severe, let it be estimated as nothing more than a decent probability, unproved by Scripture." He thinks that we have a full scriptural warrant for the belief that the Hades, where he contends that the disembodied spirits of men, both the good and the bad, are detained, entering neither heaven nor hell till the resurrection, is a receptacle beneath the surface of the very earth on which we now dwell, and that the compartment of it allotted to the righteous, as well as the one allotted to the wicked, will, by the fires of the last day, melt into and become a part and parcel of the Gehenna of the day of judgment. He thinks that the righteous, after beholding the destruction of this planet from some lofty height, in the clouds, to which they are to be caught up, immediately after the resurrection, will descend again to its surface, renovated and restored to the paradisaical state; and that this is the place which the Saviour promised to prepare for his faithful followers. We give his own words:

"But when the day of judgment, at the second advent of our Lord, shall arrive, then will take place the general resurrection, both of the holy and of the unholy. At that season the present earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up; and the atmospheric heaven will pass away with a great noise; and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Then the pious dead, reunited to their bodies, and with them those holy ones that shall be alive at the Lord's coming; both these classes of God's people shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air; and shall thus be securely conveyed out of the reach of the general conflagration. Meanwhile, the wicked dead, also reunited to their bodies, and with them, no doubt, those unholy ones who shall then be still alive; both these classes of God's enemies will be caught and enveloped in the flames which burn up and dissolve a world. As this process goes on, the better particles of more pure matter will be sublimated or volatilized, and thence will mount upward from the centre in all directions; while at the same time, as the lighter particles fly off and ascend, the vast burning mass of gross and solid matter, associating to itself the kindred region

of the intermediate Tartarus, will settle spherically to the centre, and produce the substratum of that molten lake of everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels, and which with them will be jointly tenanted by the wretched victims of their seduction, the finally lost apostates of the human race." pp. 412, 413.

"To define the precise mode of this gigantic process may justly be deemed an impossibility to us, circumstanced as we are. Beyond what Scripture hath revealed, we know nothing. Yet so far as Scripture doth, as it were, take us by the hand, we may venture to describe the process generally. Apparently, it will bear some resemblance to the following account of it, which exhibits the reversal of the process of fiery destruction. The sublimated particles of dissipated matter descend, by the special will of God indeed, but instrumentally, by the mechanical action of gravitation, and as they descend, they combine. A vast spherical arch is formed round the central globe, or flaming nucleus of Gehenna, itself wrapped in a shoreless ocean of liquid fire, the lake of the Apocalypse, burning with brimstone. This arch constitutes the thick massy shell of the renovated earth. Its external surface, beautiful and glorious beyond our present mortal conceptions, becomes the heaven or mansions of the regenerated and redeemed human race, where Christ himself, perfect man as well as perfect God, disdains not to fix his peculiar residence with his brethren according to the flesh, and thus to make their heaven the special local sovereignty of the universal archangel. But, within this unbroken shell, through which there are no spiracles, inasmuch as it is said to have no sea—within this unbroken shell, in fearful vicinity, securely enclosed on every side, so as to prevent all possibility of evasion, is the appointed prison-house of Gehenna." pp. 415, 416, etc.

We cannot doubt the perfect sincerity of our author, in the reverence with which he professes to refer all to the word of God; but whence could he have derived his rules of interpretation, to elicit such meanings from the word of God, on topics in relation to which its reticence is so remarkable and undoubtedly so wise? We seriously question, whether anything has ever been gained by what Mr. Faber terms "definiteness" as the

result of any such theory as he advances. More is lost by the impertinent familiarity with the most sacred mysteries, which is encouraged by the low, earthly level to which the subject is almost sure to be brought down, than can possibly be gained by any definiteness of conception as to the precise locality of heaven. The Bible would have given the fullest information upon this subject, if this knowledge had been important, or even desirable to men.

The question whether heaven has locality, that is to say, is a defined place of residence and action, is entirely distinct from the question whether the Scriptures clearly reveal where that place is to be found. That heaven is a place, in distinction from a mere state, is proved from the translation of Enoch, whose body did not "see death and was not found, because God had translated him." Heb. xi. 5. The history says "God took him." Gen. v. 24. He was removed, in body and soul, to another dwelling-place, to be with God. We have a similar proof in the translation of Elijah, who was carried bodily "by a whirlwind into heaven." 2 Kings ii. 11. The prophet Elisha saw him ascend. Nearly a thousand years after his translation he was seen again in this world on the mount of Transfiguration, in the same body in which he went up. There must be some place where the bodies of these translated saints have long been, and are still residing. That place is heaven. The ascension into heaven of Christ, in our nature, proves the same thing. He had shown himself to his disciples, after his resurrection, and given them ample opportunity to examine his body and satisfy themselves that it was the very same which hung upon the cross. He had told them that he should ascend to the Father who sent him; that he should return to the heaven from which he came down. And in their presence, while they were beholding, he returned to heaven. He did not leave his human body, but bore it with him. In his glorified human nature, he departed for a place which is beyond the ken of mortals. That place is heaven. But the great doctrine of the gospel that the self same bodies of men which are committed to the grave, shall be raised up by the power of Christ, does not leave us to doubt as to whether heaven has locality. The heaven into which Christ entered with his glorified body, into which Enoch

and Elijah were translated, in their original bodies, changed and glorified, but still substantially the same, and into which, at the last day, all the saints shall be admitted, clothed with a body like unto Christ's, must be an external, tangible abode, as tangible, to say the least, as the bodies which are to inhabit it.

Our Lord endeavoured to comfort his disciples with the assurance that he was going away to prepare this place for their reception; and that he would come again and receive them to himself. But did he tell them where, or in what part of the universe, heaven is located? Did he, on any occasion in his own words, or by the mouth of his apostles, make this a subject of communication to men? Dr. Chalmers, in a well-known discourse on the words, "Nevertheless, we according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," (2 Peter iii. 13,) suggests that by the convulsions of the last day this world may be shaken and broken down from its present arrangements, and the whole of its existing frame-work fall to pieces, and by a heat so fervent as to melt its most solid elements; and that, out of the ruin of this second chaos, other heavens and another earth may be made to arise; and a new materialism, with other aspects of magnificence and beauty, emerge from the wreck of this mighty transformation; that, in the place of eternal blessedness, there will be ground to walk upon, scenes of luxuriance to delight the corporeal senses, and the kindly intercourse of friends, talking familiarly, and by articulate converse together. But he very carefully avoids expressing the belief, or intimation, that the limits of the new earth will be coextensive with the boundaries of heaven.

Heaven, or the "Father's house," with its "many mansions," in which redeemed sinners from this earth are to find their eternal "place," may be as extensive as the sidereal heavens, or—excluding the "outer darkness" of reprobate angels and men—as the entire created universe. The *μοναὶ πολλαί* may be designed to describe space sufficient to accommodate innumerable companies. "It is no obscure hint," says John Howe,* "that is given of the spaciousness of the heavenly regions, when purposely to represent the divine immensity, it

* Redeemer's Dominion, etc.

is said of the unconfined presence of the great God, that even heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain him. 1 Kings viii. 27; 2 Chron. vi. 18. How vast scope is given to our thinking minds, to conceive heavens above heavens, encircling one another, till we have quite tired our faculty, and yet we know not how far short we are of the utmost verge! And when our Lord is said to have ascended far above all heavens, (Eph. iv. 10,) whose arithmetic will suffice to tell how many they are? whose uranography to describe how far that is?" Christ says, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I am to come back and receive you to myself; that where I am there ye may be also:" meaning, if language can mean anything, that the place was to be prepared before his return; so that even admitting that *πάλεν ἔρχομαι* refers to Christ's coming to judgment, Mr. Faber's theory is still without foundation. He did not say that he must return to prepare it, or before it could be prepared, but that he was going away to prepare it, and then was coming to receive them to it. But according to Mr. Faber, the earth is not to be burned up, and therefore could not be reorganized until Christ returns to raise the dead, and judge the world. He says that heaven is not to be prepared till *after*; Christ himself teaches that it is to be prepared *before* his second coming. It is too much for us to believe that the place which Jesus went to prepare remains still unprepared.

It is not necessary to suppose that he had reference to this or any other particular planet or star, which was to be beautified, or otherwise prepared for the reception of his followers, and to which they were to be confined. That place was prepared when he went into heaven, in a glorified human nature, as the great High Priest of the Church, to present as it were his own blood, and take possession, as their Forerunner, of the promised inheritance. Having by his death, made all his people priests so that they may always have access to the mercy-seat, this entrance abolishes the distinction between the holy places, and the holiest of all; it removes the veil which hides the inner sanctuary, and causes the holy of holies to encircle the whole camp of God's sacramental host. All that we are authorized in asserting that the words of Christ teach is,

that eternal felicity would be prepared for all his followers, by his return, in his mediatorial character, into the presence of his Father, on which felicity they would be permitted to enter at death, their bliss to have its perfect consummation at the resurrection of their bodies. Indeed, that place was prepared when Christ's atoning work, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, was accepted in behalf of his believing people in all ages, and he began to fulfil to patriarchs and prophets, his offices of Prophet, Priest and King. Christ prayed the Father that he would glorify him with the glory which he had before the foundation of the world, and immediately after prays that those who had been given him might be with him, where he was, that they might behold the glory which the Father had given him. John xviii. 5, 24. This earth cannot be the place where the Father glorified the Son, and where Christ will reveal the glory which he had with the Father before its creation. It is his interceding work, in the presence of God, which has already prepared heaven for his people. When they die, he comes again and receives them to himself. Absent from the body, they are present with the Lord, in his Father's house. Into the very heaven where Christ is gone, they are admitted. They have "a place" in its many mansions. Can we believe that the promise to Peter and James, and John, "I am to come back and receive you to myself" has not yet been fulfilled? That heaven has not yet been prepared for them; nor for the translated Enoch and Elijah; nor for David and Isaiah; that the dying Stephen saw the gates of "heaven" open only to delude his faith, and that the Lord Jesus has not yet received his spirit into that blessed world? Or that Paul after an absence of eighteen hundred years from his body, is still absent from the Lord? Impossible. Christ is present at the death of every believer, and may therefore be said to come back to receive his departing spirit. The soul goes forth to him into the many mansions of his Father's house. Science, to adopt with some modification the language of Sir David Brewster,* teaches us the history of our earth, its form, and size, and motions; it surveys the solar system, measures its planets, and pronounces the earth to be but a tiny

* More Worlds than One. Am. ed. p. 17.

sphere, and to have no place of distinction among its gigantic compeers. The telescope establishes new systems of worlds, far beyond the boundaries of our own, and inspires the Christian with an interest in worlds and systems of worlds—in life without limits, as well as in life without end. On eagles' wings he soars to the zenith, and speeds his way to the horizon of space, without reaching its ever-retiring bourn; and in the infinity of worlds, and amid the infinity of life, he descries the home and the companions of the future.

To establish his doctrine, our venerable and pious author appears also to rely much upon a well-known passage in one of the epistles of Peter: "But the heavens and earth which are now," &c., 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, 13. Admitting that these words are to be understood as literal throughout, does it follow that this earth is to be the seat, the exclusive seat of heaven? We feel much inclined to the literal interpretation of the passage, that it teaches that the present earth, after its predicted destruction, will come forth renewed; and yet we cannot hold that any such pre-eminence is to be assigned to it, as that it shall become the exclusive seat, or fixed bounded limit of heaven. It appears to be clearly the teaching of Scripture, in this place, that our material globe is to be at length overwhelmed with a fiery deluge—that the watery deluge in the days of Noah was a type of that which awaits it by fire in "the day of the Lord." The apostle expressly says that as the former world was overflowed with water, and perished, so the present heavens and earth are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men; that in the day of God the heaven being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. 2 Pet. iii. 6, 7, 12. And in accordance with this teaching that this destruction by fire is the doom that awaits the earth, God has already given us some signs from above. "We see in the heavens some traces of destructive elements, and some indications of their power. The fragments of broken planets—the descent of meteoric stones upon our globe—the wheeling comets welding their loose materials to the solar surface—the volcanic eruptions on our own satellite—the disappearance of stars, are all foreshadows of that impending convulsion to

which the system of the world is doomed." The awful text, "the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up," is written visibly upon the heavens over our heads.

It is an extraordinary fact, which astronomy reveals, that, within a comparatively brief period several stars in different constellations, seem to have totally disappeared. The sudden brilliancy which has been noticed in particular instances, causing them to surpass the splendour of the brightest planets, and to be visible even at noonday, followed by their gradually growing dim, until lost to sight, seems to point to fire as the agent in these changes. And geology reveals the fact that fire, as well as water, has already effected the mightiest transformations in our planet. On the face of every precipice and broken crag, in every excavation and quarry, may be seen records of periods of wild disorder, and the effects of mighty changes and convulsions. The skeptic may reject the idea of the burning of the world; but, how easy for the Creator to make the elements melt with fervent heat! There is a substance diffused throughout nature, one of the component parts of the air we breathe, the basis of the water we drink, the principle of vegetation, which contains the very principle of combustion. In its decomposed state, it will cause iron or steel to take fire. It is true that rocks, sand, and water will not burn; but when decomposed, they are found to be made up of elements that are either combustible or the supporters of combustion. Let the invisible fluid referred to be set loose, and it would at once decompose the water of the rivers, lakes, and oceans, and form a mixture with one of its elements, which, if brought in contact with the fires on its surface, or in the bowels of the earth, or with so much as a burning taper, would produce an explosion, which would shake our globe to its centre. Were the whole atmosphere at once dissolved, fearful concussions and detonations, of which it is impossible to form any conception, would ensue, and both sea and land be enwrapped in sudden fire. Thus do the lessons of science in respect to other parts of the material creation, and the history and changes of our earth, harmonize with those of revelation, and teach us how easy it would be for the Most High to bring to pass his word, that the earth shall be burned up, and the

heavens, or its surrounding atmosphere, pass away with a great noise.

But we are not to conclude that this destruction of the earth by fire will be its annihilation, any more than that the disappearance of stars, which once shone with superior brightness, proves that they have been blotted out of existence. The igneous changes, the inundations, and the transformations through which our planet passed before it was habitable by the human race, and which changes may have been as great as that which will be wrought by the fires of the last day, did not prove its annihilation. The earth having been subjected to the curse, on account of man's sins, and purified by the last conflagration, may afterwards be renewed, surrounded with new ærial heavens, and beautified beyond what eye hath seen, or ear heard, or the heart of man conceived, and then become one of the many mansions in the house of the Father, an apartment or portion of heaven, which the Redeemer shall visit and occupy, from time to time, as they do other parts of that blessed abode; nay, may perhaps regard with peculiar interest as having been the place of their rebellion and career of wickedness, their Saviour's atoning sufferings, their reconciliation, their discipline, and training for heaven. While the Scriptures teach that heaven is a place already existing, there is nothing contradictory to their teachings in supposing that new "mansions" may, from time to time, be added thereto. The words, "wherein dwelleth righteousness," express the grand feature of the new heavens and the new earth, which distinguishes them from the present. It seems to be the object of the apostle, in this whole passage, to declare that the scene of the present sins and sufferings of believers is to be reclaimed from the curse, become the dwelling-place of righteousness, and then be included within those blessed regions which will constitute the saints' future everlasting home.

The word of God clearly teaches us that man, in his future state, will consist of a soul residing in a corporeal frame. He will not be spirit alone, nor a merely corporeal substance. He must therefore have a home on which he may reside, suited to the nature of his body; not "an abode of dimness and mystery, so remote from human experience as to be beyond all compre-

hension," "a lofty ærial region, where the inmates float in ether, or are mysteriously suspended upon nothing,"* but a home suited to the nature of the resurrection-body. "Scripture has not spoken with an articulate voice of the future locality of the blest, but reason has combined the scattered utterances of inspiration, and, with a voice almost oracular, has declared that HE who made the worlds will, in the worlds which he has made, place the beings of his choice." "In what regions of space these mansions are built—on what sphere the mouldering dust is to be gathered and revived, and by what process it is to reach its destination, reason does not enable us to determine; but it is impossible for immortal man, with the light of revelation as his guide, to doubt for a moment, that on the celestial spheres his future home is to be spent; spent, doubtless, in lofty inquiries; in social intercourse; in the renewal of domestic ties; and in the service of his Almighty Benefactor. With such a vista before us, so wide in its expanse and so remote in its termination, what scenes of beauty—what forms of the sublime—what enjoyments, physical and intellectual, may we not anticipate: wisdom to the sage—rest to the pilgrim—and gladness to the broken in heart."†

But here we must stop. Heaven is a subject on which the Bible sets limits to its disclosures; and we should not seek to break through the wholesome reserve which, like the bounds Moses set about the holy mount, (Ex. xix. 12,) surround and guard it. It is here the extreme of folly to attempt to be "wise above that which is written." As the subject is one of the most attractive that can engage the serious mind, and the temptation to speculation is great, there is need of double caution. The believer knows that he shall remain in this world but a very short time; he is looking for a better country, even a heavenly. When his pious friends die, he tries to follow them in his thoughts to that better land to which he believes they have been taken. But there are some subjects which set all speculation and all rhetoric at defiance; and this is one. Our imagery must be borrowed from sensible things; from a world, which, however it may present to us many objects of beauty and sublimity, is marked with imperfection everywhere. Our

* Dr. Chalmers.

† *More Worlds than One.* pp. 24 and 262.

mental faculties are as yet feeble. Heaven, moreover, is a spiritual world; this is material, and we, the inhabitants of it, are creatures of sense. These considerations should make us cautious, lest we detract from the glory of heaven by our very methods or attempts to arrive at some adequate conception of it. The chief danger lies in so employing and interpreting sensible images as to bring down to the level of a material standard, and to our feeble capacities, the spiritual glories of a world, the highest and most characteristic element of which will be its spotless holiness. To form right views of heaven, we need to have our minds thoroughly imbued with the truths of Scripture, and to be guided by the Holy Spirit. The theme is too lofty, too holy, for our unassisted thought. With the word and Spirit of God for our guide, we may be saved from falling into the transports of a crude fancy, or from being charmed with the beautiful frost-work of an unchastened imagination.

Evidently guided thus, Augustine exclaims:* “O heavenly Jerusalem! * * how happy will my soul perceive itself, when it shall be admitted to see thy glory, thy beauty; to view the gates, the walls, the streets, the stately buildings, the splendour of thy inhabitants, and the triumphant pomp of thy King, enthroned in the midst of thee! For thy walls are of precious stones, and thy gates of pearl, and thy streets of pure gold, continually resounding with loud hallelujahs. * * * * There are the melodious choirs of angels; there the sweet fellowship and company of the heavenly inhabitants; there the joyful pomp of all those triumphant souls, who, from their sore trials and travels through this vale of tears, at last return to their native country. There the goodly fellowship of the prophets. * * * * There the twelve leaders of the Christian armies, the blessed apostles; there the noble armies of the martyrs; there the convention of the confessors; there the holy men and women who, in the days of the flesh, were mortified to the pleasures of sin and the world.”†

* Meditations, c. XXV. Vid. Pious Breathing, &c., made English by George Stanhope, D. D. 1720.

† Have we not here the original of that favourite and much used hymn, “Jerusalem, my happy home!” unmarred by allusions to the Virgin, the Magdalene, the *magnificat*, and the *te decum*, foisted upon it by popish versifiers?

“Suppose thyself,” says Richard Baxter, “a companion with John, in his survey of the New Jerusalem, and viewing the thrones, the majesty, the heavenly hosts, the shining splendour which he saw. Suppose thyself his fellow-traveller into the celestial kingdom, and that thou hadst seen all the saints in their white robes, with palms in their hands, and that thou hadst heard those songs of Moses and the Lamb. If thou hadst really seen and heard these things, in what a rapture wouldst thou have been! Do not, like the papists, draw them in pictures; but get the liveliest picture of them in thy mind that thou possibly canst, by contemplating the Scripture account of them, till thou canst say, ‘Methinks I see a glimpse of glory! Methinks I hear the shouts of joy and praise, and even stand by Abraham, and David, and Paul, and other triumphant souls!’”*

But it is doubtless infinitely more important for us to be able to read, in the divine charter, our “title to a mansion in the skies,” than to be able to determine the exact locality of heaven, and describe all its peculiar scenery, companions and employments. Holy souls, when dismissed from the body, will find their way to it in safety. Angels, who know the way, will conduct them thither. The general assembly and church of the first-born—an innumerable company—will welcome their arrival. And they shall see Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, as he is.

“ We speak of the realms of the blest,
Of that country so bright and so fair,
And oft are its glories confessed;
But what must it be, *to be there?*”

We speak of its pathways of gold,
Of its walks decked with jewels so rare,
Of its wonders and pleasures untold;
But what must it be, *to be there?*”

* *Saints’ Rest*, chap. xv.