THE SECOND DEATH AND THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS

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The Second Death and the Restitution of All Things by Andrew Jukes

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ANDREW JUKES

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PREFACE.

A THOUGHT conceived but not expressed is at best only an unborn child, not only without any influence on the world, but of whose very existence the world may be unconscious; but once brought forth it becomes part of the living working universe, to work there its appointed season, and possibly to leave its mark for good or evil on all successive time.

The thought which is now expressed in these pages has long been growing in the writer's heart. Hidden at first and unconfessed, during the last few years it has from time to time been brought forth in conversation with trusted Christian friends. But the time seems come to give it a wider circulation. Men's hearts, now perhaps more than in any former age, are everywhere moved to inquire into the nature and inspiration of Holy Scripture, and the destiny of the human race, more especially the future state of sinners, as taught in Holy Scripture. Not a few are perplexed, hesitating to receive as perfect and divine a revelation which, they are told, Preface.

in the name of God consigns a large proportion of those who in some sense at least are His offspring to everlasting misery. And the conclusion, uttered or unuttered, in many hearts is, either that this doctrine cannot really be a part of Holy Scripture, or else that what is called Holy Scripture cannot be a perfect exposition or revelation of the mind of God our Saviour.

A friend, whose mind had been unsettled by this subject, lately expressed to the writer of these pages some part of this difficulty. The following letter was the result. The writer feels the solemn responsibility of dissenting on such a question from the current creed of Christendom. He feels too that truth spoken before its time may be, not hurtful only, but even most unlawful. The Christian truth, that "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek,"1 and that "circumcision is nothing," would surely have been unlawful, because untimely, in the Jewish age. So even now there may be many eternal verities which are beyond what St. Peter calls "the present truth." * But the fact that God Himself is now on all hands opening out His truth seems a sufficient reason for making it known as far as He opens it. Is not His opening it to His servants an intimation to them that His will is that they should declare and publish it. Age after age the day arrives to utter something which till the appointed

¹ Rom. x. 12. ³ 2 S. Pet. i. 12. 2 1 Cor. vii. 19.

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day is come has been "a secret hid in God." 1 The very gospel which we all believe once jarred on many minds as a doctrine directly opposed to and subversive of the law given by God to Moses. The doctrine here stated, therefore, though derived from Scripture, may be condemned as contrary to God's mind, just as Paul's gospel, when first proclaimed, was charged with being opposed to that old law of which it was but the fulfilment. In every age the man of faith can only say, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." 2 Truth may, and indeed must, vary in form as time goes on,-Christ Himself, the Truth, at different stages appears differently,-for God has stooped to this, to give us truth as we can bear it; stooped therefore to be judged as inconsistent, because He is Love, and waits to reveal Himself till we are prepared for the revelation. But the end will justify all His ways; and some of His children can even now justify Him.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand. And as in early dawn the stars grow dim, because the day is coming, so now the lesser lights which have been guides in darker days are paling before the coming Sun of Righteousness. And though those who go up to the hill-tops and watch the east may see more of the light than those who are buried in the valleys or sleep with closed shutters, all who look out at the

¹ Eph. iii. 9. ² 2 Cor. iv. 13.

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glowing firmament may see signs of coming light. May it find us ready when it shines out in all its brightness.

The writer would only add that he will be thankful for any suggestions or corrections on the subject of the following pages. Any letter addressed to him, to the care of the Publishers, will be duly forwarded and acknowledged.

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