

existing framework shall fall to pieces; and with a heat so fervent as to melt the most solid elements, may it be utterly dissolved. And thus may the earth again become without form and void, but without one particle of its substance going into annihilation. Out of the ruins of this second chaos may another heaven and another earth be made to arise, and a new materialism, with other aspects of magnificence and beauty, emerge from the wreck of this mighty transformation, and the world be peopled, as before, with the varieties of material loveliness, and space be again lighted up into a firmament of material splendour.

“It is, indeed, a homage to that materialism, which many are for expunging from the future state of the universe altogether, that, ere the immaterial soul of man has reached the ultimate glory and blessedness designed for it, it must return and knock at the very grave where lie the mouldered remains of the body which it wore, and there inquisition must be made for the flesh, and the sinews, and the bones which the power of corruption has, perhaps centuries before, assimilated to the earth around them, and then the minute atoms must be reassembled into a structure that bears upon it the form, and lineaments, and general aspect of a man, and the soul passes into this material framework, which is hereafter to be its lodging-place for ever; and that not as its prison, but as its pleasant and befitting habitation; not to be trammelled, as some would have it, in a hold of materialism, but to be therein equipped for the services of eternity; to walk embodied among the bowers of our second paradise; to stand embodied in the presence of our God.”

“The glorification of the visible creation,” says Tholuck, the distinguished German divine, “is more definitely declared in Rev. xxi, 1, although it must be borne in mind that a prophetic vision is there described. Still more definitely do we find the belief of a transformation of the material world declared in 2 Peter, iii, 7--12. The idea that the perfected kingdom of Christ is to be transferred to heaven, is properly a modern notion. According to Paul and the Revelation of John, the kingdom of God is placed upon the earth, in so far as this itself has part in the universal transformation. This exposition has been adopted and defended by most of the oldest commentators; *e. g.*, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Hieronymus,