

tration which I last gave (Fig. 6 and 7) as describing a general principle of the divine administration, viz., that a leading object of God's treatment of men is to weaken their attachment to this world, and to concentrate in heaven an attractive influence of overwhelming power. And, really, when we consider how much he does to weaken our hold upon the world, and to draw us towards heaven, instead of wondering that a few Christians are willing to die, we ought to wonder that any of them are willing to live. This was, indeed, the state of feeling with ancient saints. Their grand difficulty seemed to be how to be reconciled to life, not to death. This was the feeling of Job when he said, *All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come* — as if he had been anxiously looking for that time. This was the feeling of Jacob when he exclaimed, *I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord*. And such eminently was the feeling of Paul when he said, *I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better beyond expression*. O, what a mighty impulse towards heaven reigned in the apostle's soul! He longed to leap out from his bondage to matter, and become a disenthralled spirit before the throne. Whenever he alludes to the subject, his soul is all on fire, and he exclaims, *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day*. He had reached that lofty point of Christian experience when only a single tie bound him to the world, and that was a sense of duty to his brethren; and this he might not sunder till God should give permission. But all the other objects of his hope and desire had been transferred to heaven, and there formed a mighty centre of attraction. (See the representation in Fig. 7.)