

maintaining the true relations of the Word and Sacraments, admitting large liberty of thought and action, in harmony with the character of the nation, rooted in its soil and intertwined with its history, endowed with proved faculties for self-renovation and expansion; and now, in presence of unprecedented openings for evangelizing the world, this Church of England stands a monument of Providential care in the past, and a ready instrument for Divine use in the future. But all advantages are vain unless the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, which may God vouchsafe to grant for His dear Son's sake!

T. D. BERNARD.

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Correspondence.

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PROFESSOR BIRKS AND MR. ELLIOTT ON PROPHECY.

*To the Editor of the CHURCHMAN.*

SIR,—In justice to myself as well as to Professor Birks, whose view of the Vision of the Seals seems to me far more true than that of Mr. Elliott, I have subjoined a few extracts from his "Thoughts on Sacred Prophecy." This was his latest work on the subject, and was in part, moreover, written expressly to avow his unchanged dissent from Mr. Elliott's scheme. Whatever, therefore, be the exact force of the passage in the "Outlines of Unfulfilled Prophecy" to which Mr. E. B. Birks in his letter to you refers, it seems plain that it is cancelled by the strength and clearness of the later statements which I have quoted. In any case, I can hardly doubt that most candid readers will admit that they gave me strong warrant for the statement to which Mr. E. B. Birks' objects in my review of Guinness's "Romanism and the Reformation." On no other point but this did I hint at any difference between his father and Mr. Elliott; and on this point it still seems to me that they may not unfairly be said to have disagreed completely to the end of their lives. The last extract gives the only hint which I can find in Birks's latest work of anything like an approach to Mr. Elliott's scheme. A master of all the arts of controversy and fully aware of the issues at stake, Professor Birks decided (and doubtless rightly) that the restatement of his own opinion was of more importance to the cause of truth than the preservation by silence of the seeming unanimity of his school. Had it not been so, we should all have trusted Mr. Elliott's words and never doubted but that he and his most powerful opponent were at length at one on the meaning and historical connection of the Vision of the Seals.

Yours very truly,  
ARTHUR C. GARBETT.

Southwell, February 4, 1888.

Extracts from Professor Birks's "Thoughts on the Times and Seasons of Sacred Prophecy" (with a preface by E. B. Birks, M.A.), published in the year 1880.

Suddenly he [the author] discovered that in the fifth edition of the late Mr. Elliott's *Horæ Apocalypticæ* he was credited with a conversion to notions to which he had never been converted, . . . . and he felt it his duty to protest. —Preface, p. i.

I will specify three main questions in which I think Mr. Elliott wholly wrong. The first is the structure of the Apocalypse. The second is his interpretation of the seven Thunders; and the third is his exposition of the first four Trumpets.—Chapter I., p. 5.

The view of Mr. Elliott is thus demonstrably untrue and baseless. I am so far from sharing it, that I have not the least doubt it has rendered his first volume a step backward and not forward in the onward march of Apocalyptic interpretation.—*Ibid.*, p. 7.

This view of the structure, then, is one which I had maintained for twenty years as of primary importance, both in two writings of my own, and in eight successive editions of Mr. Bickersteth's work; an interval now enlarged to nearly forty years without a single word of public retraction.—*Ibid.*, p. 44.

Mr. Elliott's view of a fulfilment [that is, of the Seals] in successive stages of the degeneracy of the Roman State, from the peaceful state of the Antonines to the persecution of Diocletian, needs to be completed by the view which he so strongly rejects, of their application to the decline of the visible Church from its first purity to one of intense corruption and opposition to the truth, before the coming of Christ.—*Ibid.*, pp. 46, 47.

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## Review.

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*Tenants of an Old Farm; Leaves from the Note-book of a Naturalist.* By HENRY C. MCCOOK, D.D.; with an Introduction by Sir JOHN LUBBOCK, M.P. Illustrated from Nature. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1888.

**H**ARDLY any study is more healthful to the mind, more full of pure pleasure, and in its tendency, at least, more directly religious than the study of natural history. Even in its simplest branches, it throws an ever-growing interest over many of the most obvious facts of the world in which we are placed, while it brings us into the closest contact with the wondrously varied workings of Almighty God. As Howe long ago argued, it is hard to know how we could ever be convinced by works of might and wisdom of the real existence of an Almighty and All-wise Creator if the glorious works with which the world is filled, and of which we form a most significant part ourselves, are not enough to bring a full and awe-inspiring conviction of the truth. No reasoning can really shake the substance of the so-called argument from design, as men have ever felt its force from Socrates to Paley—however wise may be a re-adjustment of its verbal statement to the growth of modern knowledge. All such books, therefore, as that which Dr. McCook has given us under the title of the "Tenants of an Old Farm," deserve a hearty welcome. Conceived and written in a religious spirit, they can only do good to all into whose hands they chance to fall. In the present case, moreover, the mere pleasure of perusal is fully equal to the wealth of solid knowledge which the book contains. Though the colloquial and slightly story-like way in which the chapters are written may prove at first distasteful (as the author fears) to purely scientific readers, yet to the young and those who lack a scientific training this method will be doubtless found to give a charm, and so to win a hearing which otherwise might not so soon have been obtained. The style is so clear that a well-taught child will follow easily the writer's meaning, and only here and there in phrase and spelling does anything occur which betrays a trans-Atlantic origin. But though the author is an American, and in America of great repute, the truth and exactness of his facts are