108 THE APOCALYPSE [ou. iv. 5  
  
saw the seven angels who stand before God”’ (viii. 2).  
The sphere of the government of these elders is the  
earth. Hence the close connection between the elders  
and living creatures. They stand related as rulers and  
subjects.  
Hence “‘ the earth’ and its nations occur in all the  
elders’ speeches. v. 9, 10.  
“The nations were wrath, and Thy wrath is  
come, and the time of the dead ... and that thou  
shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth”’ (xi. 18,  
19; xix. 2-4).  
For the government of creation these elders have  
hitherto sufficed. But now the new covenant and the  
effects of redemption are to come into view. ‘The  
Redeemer is to be exalted. The government of God  
at this crisis undergoes a change. Angels have been  
rulers of the earth during the evil age. Daniel is our  
witness that during the future age the sovereignty is to  
be given to man, according to the word of God. Also  
Ps. viii.; Heb. ii. 5. The Lord Jesus introduces a  
new body of priests and kings associated with Himself, who  
take their place. Accordingly, the last time we read of the  
thrones of the elders is at the seventh trump, when the  
kingdom becomes that of Jesus. And the last time  
we hear of them at all, is just before the Saviour comes  
forth from the heaven to take His own kingdom. They  
throughout acquiesce in, and assent to, this change.  
“Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven ! ”  
The governments of the churches, of the throne on  
high, of the millennial kingdom, and of the final state,  
are all framed on one model.  
  
5. “‘ And out of the throne are proceeding lightnings and voices  
and thunders.”  
  
The present tense here is very observable. It seems  
clearly to indicate John’s writing down at the moment