**God having provided** (foreseen from afar)  
**concerning us** (viz. the Writer and his  
readers, as belonging to the New Test.  
church) **something better** (what is this?  
The Fathers generally interpret it of the  
ultimate state of glorious perfection, which  
shall only then come in, when all the  
number of the elect shall be accomplished.  
On this view, as Delitzsch says, the   
**something better** would consist in this, that  
the history of mankind has not been cut  
short, as it would have been if the ancients  
had received the promise in this sense, but  
has been continued for us to partake of our  
present privileges under the New Test.  
But, he continues, this narrow acceptation   
of the promise, as referring to the  
last things only, has against it not only  
what is said of Abraham in ch. vi. 15, that  
he “*obtained the promise,*” but also the  
whole spirit of the Epistle, which regards  
final salvation as brought in with the  
propitiation of Christ, and the “*end of  
the days*” as begun with His first Advent.  
The Writer cannot be ignoring this all-inclusive   
beginning of the New Test. fulfilment   
of the promises, in attributing to  
us *something better* than the Old Test.  
believers had. And consequently we must  
understand by the expression, something  
better than they had, viz. the enjoyment,  
here, of the fulfilment of the promise,  
which they never had here, and only have  
there since Christ’s descent into Hadés  
and ascension into Heaven. It is that  
“*something better*” for which the Lord  
felicitates his disciples, Matt. xiii. 17,  
the revelation of the Son of God, ch. i. 1,  
the “*salvation*” of ch. ii. 3), **that they  
should not apart from us be made perfect**  
(the design of God in this provision of  
something better for us was, that they, the  
Old Test. saints, should not be perfected  
without us, i.e. independently of the New  
Test. salvation of which we are partakers,  
—cut off from Christ’s universal Church, of  
which we are members. But we read, ch. xii.  
23, of them as “*made perfect*” now. And  
therefore the Writer implies, as indeed ch.  
x. 14 seems to testify, that the Advent and  
work of Christ has changed the estate of the  
Old Test. Fathers and saints into great  
and perfect bliss; an inference which is  
forced on us by many other places in  
Scripture. So that their perfection was  
dependent on our perfection: their and  
our perfection was all brought in at the  
same time, when Christ “*by one offering  
perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*”   
So that the result with regard  
to them is, that their spirits, from the  
time when Christ descended into Hades and  
ascended up into heaven, enjoy heavenly  
blessedness, and are waiting, with all who  
have followed their glorified High Priest  
within the veil, for the resurrection of their  
bodies, the Regeneration, the renovation  
of all things. This thought naturally  
leads on to the opening verses of the next,  
chapter).  
  
  
**CHAP. XII. 1–11.**] EXHORTATION,  
*mixed with reproof, on looking back at all  
these witnesses, and looking also to Jesus,  
who has come to glory through suffering,  
not to faint in the conflict with sin; nor to  
forget the love of our Father, who visits us  
with chastisement that we may bring forth  
the fruit of righteousness.* This exhortation   
was begun at ch. x. 19, and broken off  
by the insertion of all those examples of the  
nature and triumphs of faith. It is now  
resumed, having, so to speak, accumulated  
new momentum by the interruption, and  
is pressed home directly on the readers.

**1.**] **Wherefore** (the word used is  
one of earnest and solemn inference;  
—“these things then being so...”) **we  
also** (as well as those just enumerated),  
**having so great a cloud** (see below) **of  
witnesses surrounding us** (in order to  
understand this aright, we must bear in  
mind both the similitude here used, and  
the connexion with the preceding chapter.  
“This verse is altogether made up of words  
derived from the games,” says Hammond.  
And this being so, who can help referring  
this cloud of witnesses which surrounds  
us to the scene in the games which is  
depicted, and regarding them as lookers  
on while our race is run? Whoever  
denies such reference, misses, it seems to  
me, the very point of the sense. But  
even thus we have not exhausted the meaning   
of the word **witnesses**. It is