**last** (see ver. 11 above: this is the meaning here,  
not as the semi-Socinian Commentators  
explain it, *“both highest in dignity  
and also most humiliated :”* it is the  
eternity of God which is expressed—of Him  
who is before all and after all, from and to  
everlasting), **and the living One** (not the  
*life-giving* One, however true the fact may  
be; nor here signifying *alive from the  
dead*; but it is the well-known attribute of  
God, the Eternal, not in bare duration, but  
in personal life. The *giving* life is *included*,  
but the word expresses far more.  
The A.V. is wrong in connecting these  
words with those that follow); **and I was**(I *became*: it was a state which I passed  
into) **dead, and, behold, I am alive for  
evermore** (see Rom. vi. 9, Acts xiii. 34.  
**am alive** expresses more emphatically  
than would the simple verb *“live,”* the  
residence and effluence of life. By this  
mention of His own death and revival, the  
Lord reassures His Apostle. He is not  
only the living One in His majesty, but He  
has passed through death as one of us, and  
is come to confer life even in and through  
death); **and I have the keys of death and  
of Hades** (not, of *hell*: the two words  
should never be confounded. I can bring  
up from death, yea even from the mysterious  
place of the spirits of the departed.  
The figure of the keys is often used in this  
book; see ch. iii. 7: ix. 1: xx. 1. The  
Targum of Jonathan on Deut. xxviii. 12  
says, “There are four keys in the hand of  
the Lord . . . the key of life, of the tombs,  
of food, and of rain” We have the *gates*  
of death as opposed to the gates of the  
daughter of Zion, Ps. ix. 14; cf. also Job  
xxxviii. 17; and the gates of Hadés, Matt.  
xvi. 16, Isa. xxxviii. 10).

**19.] Write  
therefore** (‘because I have vouchsafed thee  
this vision,—I whose majesty is such, and

whose manifested loving-kindness to thee.”  
‘The connexion is better thus than with  
ver. 11, as some: “Now that thy fear is  
over, write what I bade thee.” But it is  
very doubtful whether ver. 11 is spoken by  
our Lord at all: see there) t**he things  
which thou sawest** (just now: the vision  
which was but now vouchsafed thee), **and  
what things they are** (two meanings of  
the words thus rendered are possible. 1)  
*‘the things which are,’* viz. which exist at  
the present time. This has been taken by  
many Commentators, ancient and modern.  
2) as above, *“what things they* [the things  
which thou sawest] *are,”* i.e. *signify:* so  
some of the ancients and moderns. Both  
on account of the construction in the original  
[see my Greck Test.], and because  
the verb **are**, unquestionably in this meaning  
of *signify*, occurs twice in the next verse,  
I have no hesitation in taking this latter  
meaning, as given above), **and the things  
which are about to happen after these**(viz. after the things which thou sawest:  
the next vision, beginning with ch. iv.,  
which itself opens with *“after these things*I saw.”I would take the verb **be** in the  
sense of happening, not in the wide ages of  
history, but in *apocalyptic vision:* seeing  
that, **these** things meaning “the things  
which thou sawest,” *a present vision*, **the  
things which shall be** will by analogy  
mean the things which shall succeed these,  
i.e. a future vision. Notice, it is not *“the  
things which must come to pass,”* as in  
ver. 1: not the necessity of prophecy, but  
only the sequence of things seen);

**20.] the mystery** (i.e. the secret signification)  
**of the seven stars which thou sawest  
upon** (held in, and so standing over, as a  
wreath) **my right hand, and the seven  
candlesticks of gold** (elliptic construction for  
*‘and the mystery of the seven candlesticks,’*