stone of various wavy colours, semi-opaque,  
granulous in texture, used in ancient times  
for gems and ornaments, but in more  
modern ones on a larger scale for pavements  
and tables. The altar in Canterbury  
Cathedral stands on a platform of  
yellow jasper pavement, 30 feet by 14 feet.  
The **sardine** is a red stone, commonly supposed  
to answer to our cornelian. But  
Epiphanius, in his treatise on the twelve  
stones in Aaron’s breastplate, says of it,  
that it is a Babylonian stone, blood red in  
colour, like the gleam of the *sardine* fish  
when pickled, and semi-opaque. Several  
of the Commentators have said much on  
the symbolic significance of these stones as  
representing the glory of God. Thus much  
only seems, in the great uncertainty and  
variety of views, to stand firm for us: that  
if the **jasper** is to be taken as in ch. xxi. 11,  
as, by the reference there to *the glory of  
God* it certainly seems it must, then it  
represents a watery crystalline brightness,  
whereas the **sardine** is on all hands acknowledged  
to be fiery red. Thus we shall have  
ample material for symbolic meaning:  
whether, as some take it, of the one great  
judgment by water [or of baptism], and  
the other by fire,—as others, of the goodness  
of God in nature [jasper being taken  
as *green*] and His severity in judgment,—  
as Ansbert, of the divinity and humanity  
[because His humanity at the time of His  
passion was tinged with blood], &c., or as  
the moderns mostly, of the holiness of God  
and His justice. This last seems to me the  
more probable, especially as the same mixture  
of white light with fire seems to pervade  
the Old Testament and Apocalyptic  
visions of the divine majesty. Compare  
Ezek. i. 4, viii. 2; Dan. vii, 9: and our  
ch. i. 14, x. 1. But nothing can be confidently  
asserted, in our ignorance of the  
precise import of the *jasper*): **and a rainbow**  
(Gen. ix. 12-17; Ezek. i. 28) **round  
about the throne** (i.e. in all probability,  
surrounding the throne vertically, as a  
nimbus; not horizontally), **like to the appearance  
of an emerald** (on this name, in  
Greek “*smaragdus*,” all seem agreed, that  
it represents the stone so well known among  
us as the *emerald*, of a lovely green colour.  
Almost all the Commentators think of the  
gracious and federal character of the bow  
of God, Gen. ix. 12—17. Nor is it any  
objection to this that the bow or glory here  
is green, instead of prismatic: the *form* is  
that of the covenant bow, the colour even  
more refreshing and more directly symbolizing  
grace and mercy, So far at least,  
we may be sure of as to the symbolism of  
this appearance of Him that sitteth on the  
throne: that the brightness of His glory  
and fire of His judgment is ever girded by,  
and found within, the refreshment and  
surety of His mercy and goodness. So  
that, as Düsterdieck says well, “This fundamental  
vision contains all that may serve  
for terror to the enemies, and consolation  
to the friends, of Him that sitteth on the  
throne...”).

**4.]** *The assessors of the enthroned One.*—The construction after **behold** still continues.  
**And round the throne twenty-four  
thrones** (i. e.) evidently smaller thrones,  
and probably lower than **the throne**): **and  
upon the twenty-four thrones, elders sitting,  
clothed in white garments; and  
on their heads golden crowns** (these  
twenty-four elders are not *angels*, as  
maintained by some, as is shewn [not  
by ch. v. 9, as generally argued, even by  
Elliott, vol. i. p. 81 f.: see text there: but]  
by their white robes and crowns, the rewards  
of *endurance*, ch. iii. 5, ii. 10,—but  
*representatives of the Church*, as generally  
understood. But if so, what sort of representatives,  
and why twenty-four in number?  
This has been variously answered. The  
usual understanding has been that of our  
earliest Commentator, Victorinus; who  
says, “twelve Apostles, and as many Patriarchs.”  
And this is in all probability  
right in the main: the key to the interpretation