78 ST. MATTHEW. XI.   
   
 8 But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft   
 raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings’   
   
 houses. 9 But what went ye out for to see? a prophet ?   
 ch. xiv. yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. 10 For   
   
   
 senger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before   
 thee. 11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born   
 of women there hath not risen a greater than John the   
 Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom   
   
 His own Kingdom and Office. Luke i. 16,17, and 76), mean indica-   
 8. But] i.e. what was it, if it not tion of His own eternal co-equal God-   
 that ? what went ye out] The head. It is worthy of remark that all   
 repetition of this and the order three Evangelists quote this prophecy   
 of the suggestive answers, remarkable. similarly changed, St. Mark has   
 The first sets before the scene of it in aa entirely different Also,   
 their desert banks of Jor- that the high dignity and honoor, which   
 dan with its reeds, but no such trifles our Lord here predicates of the Baptist,   
 were the object of the journey: this has a further reference: He was thus   
 gration is rejected without an answer. Sorerunner others and because great then   
 second reminds them that it was a 11. hath . . . risen] Not merely a   
 man—baut not one in soft clothing, for word of course, but used of pro-   
 such are not found in deserts. The third phets and 1 see reff., once of our   
 brings before them the real of their viour Himself, v. 30. he   
 pilgrimage in his holy office, even that is least] has been variously   
 amplifies that office So that the dered and understood. Chrysostom and   
 great Forerunner is made to riee other ancient interpreters, the pause   
 and sublimely into his personality, and after “least,” take the words “in the   
 thus his preaching of is revived Kingdom of heaven” with what follows:   
 in their minds. in soft raiment] understanding “he that is least” of our   
 Contrast this with the garb of John as Lord. But such an int tion is   
 described ch. iii. Such an one, in soft surely adverse to the spirit the whole   
 raiment, might be the forerunner of a discourse. We may certainly say our   
 proud earthly prince, not the preacher Lord in such a passage as this not   
 of repentance before a and suffer- designate Himself as “he that is least”   
 ing Saviour; might be found as courtly compared with John, in any sense: nor   
 flatterer in the palaces kings, but not again is it Lord’s practice to speak of   
 as the stern rebuker of tyrants, and Himself as one in the of heaven,   
 languishing in their fortress dungeons. or of His own attributes belonging to   
 9.] We read, ch. xxi. 26, that or dependent on that new order of things   
 ‘all accounted John as a prophet.’— which this expression implies, which   
 John was more than a prophet, because was in Him rather than He in it. Again,   
 he did not write of, but saw and pointed the analogy of such as Matt. v.   
 out, the object his prophecy ;—and be- 19; xviii. would lead us to connect the   
 cause of his proximity to the kingdom of preceding adjective with in the   
 God. He was moreover more than a pro- dom of heaven, and not the following.   
 phet, because he himself was the subject The other, the usual interpretation, I   
 as well as the vebicle of prophecy. But am convinced, is the right one: but he   
 with deep humility he applies to himself that is least the of heaven, is   
 only that one, of two such prophetic greater than he. There is very likely   
 sages, which describes him as a voice of an allusion to Zech. xii. “He that is   
 one crying, and omits the one gives feeble among them at that shall be as   
 him the title of my messenger, here cited David.” Thus the parallelism com-   
 by our Lord. 10. thy) Our Lord here plete: John, not inferior any born of   
 changes the person of the original pro- women —but these, the least of them,   
 phecy, which is my. And that He are born of another (John i. 12,   
 so, making that which is said by Jehovah fii. John, the nearest to King and   
 of Himself, to be addressed to the Mes-   
 siah, is, such were needed (compare also