the Lamb. 5. And in their mouth was found no lie; they are  
blameless.”  
  
 They are not taken from the twelve tribes of Israel,  
but from men in general: therefore they are not the  
same body as the first 144,000. While the whole of  
Israel was redeemed out of Egypt, there were some  
peculiarly ransomed. “Israel is my son, *my first-born*,”  
said Jehovah to Pharaoh. Exod. iv. 22. Yet there were  
first-born of the first-born.  
 These are “first-fruits to God and to the Lamb.”  
 All believers in Jesus are “a kind of first-fruits of  
God’s creatures” (James i. 18). But these are first-fruits  
of those first-fruits. Paul makes mention of  
“Epenetus, *the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ*”  
(Rom. xvi. 5). And again, “Ye know the house of  
Stephanas, that it is *the first-fruits of Achaia*” (1 Cor.  
xvi. 15). These are not first-fruits of any special  
country, but “of the earth,” and of mankind at large.  
 Jesus is “the first-fruits” in resurrection. 1 Cor. xv.  
So are these also first-fruits to Him as risen. This risen  
body are first-fruits of the first resurrection, in which they  
“marry not, nor are given in marriage.” That they do  
not represent all the saved, or all the Church, is clear  
from the figure made use of. The *first-fruits* is not the  
*harvest*. The harvest is cut, when dead to the earth:  
the virginity of these showed their earlier deadness to  
earth. That is the scope of Paul’s words, when commending the state to believers. 1 Cor. vii. 32.  
 These are especial witnesses of the Church’s calling,  
as not of the earth, but *out* of it into heaven. They are  
of Christ’s spirit, and so are fitly made His companions.  
The present revelation is also appropriately made to  
John—the unmarried apostle.  
 “But your view condemns marriage.” By no means:  
that is lawful and good, this is better. But not all are  
called to it. “Each hath his proper gift of God, one