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OBSERVATIONS

ON

MR. ELLIOTT'S HORÆ APOCALYPTICÆ:

OFFERED

TOWARDS REFUTATION
OF THE HISTORICAL SYSTEM OF INTERPRETING

THE

APOCALYPSE.

BY

THOMAS LUMISDEN STRANGE.

Second Edition;

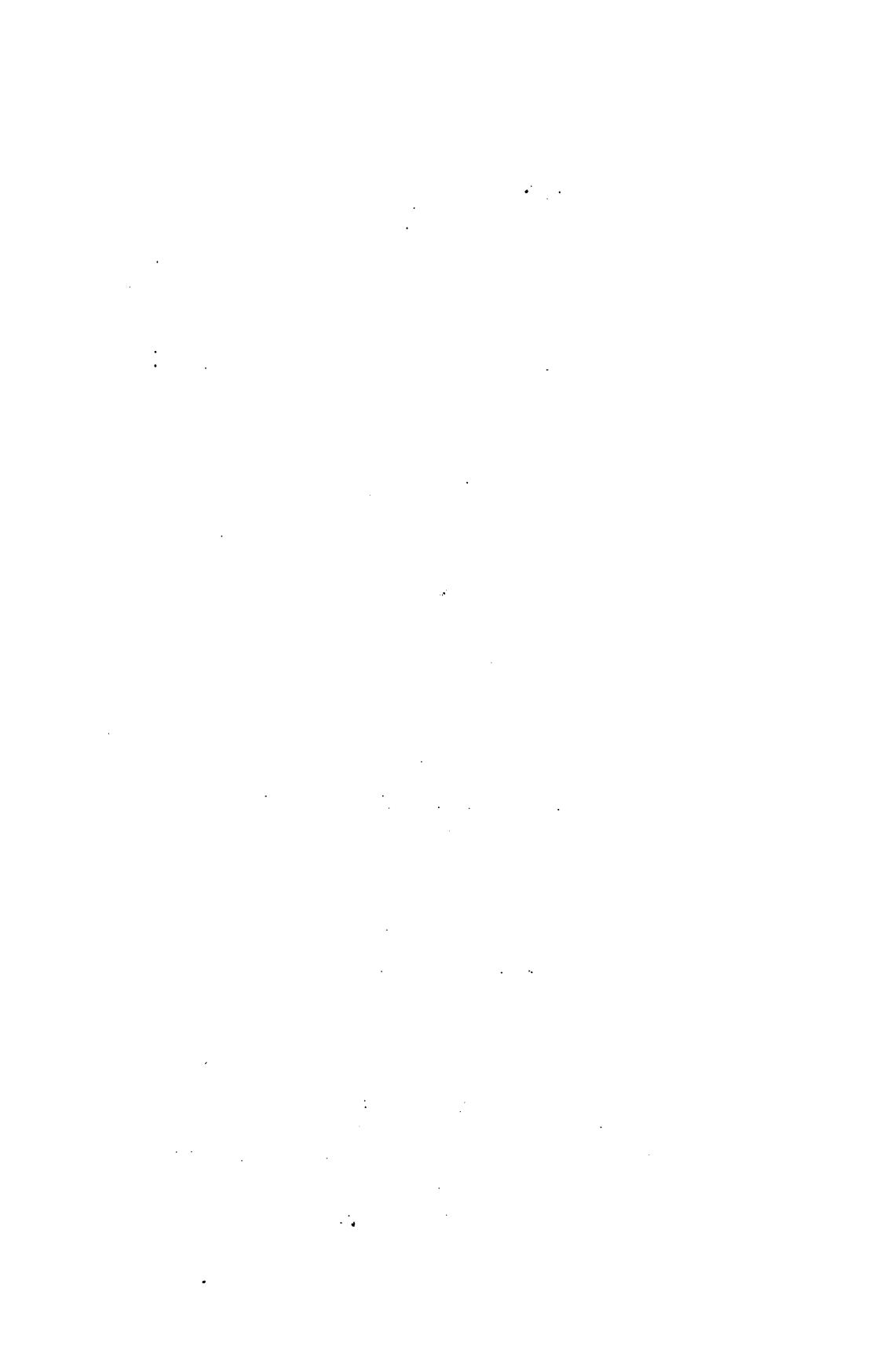
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OBSERVATIONS, &c.

WHILE engaged in passing through the press a treatise which I have prepared upon prophecy,* circumstances led me to the perusal of Mr. Elliott's "Horæ Apocalypticæ," and thereupon to form the design of endeavouring to refute the views advocated in this work, as being founded upon a line of interpretation fraught, in my apprehension, with error.

It is from no love of controversy that I enter upon such a task, but simply in the desire to advance the cause of truth; conceiving that this may be done as well in exposing what may be a false system of interpretation, as in advocating a true one.

Mr. Elliott's, I feel to be a production calling for such notice,† as it is one which commands much influence, and occupies perhaps the first position among the writings of that class of commentators to which the author thereof belongs; and I may add, I hope in no unbecoming spirit, that this notice seems in a manner due at my hands, from the circumstance that

* Entitled, "The Light of Prophecy."

† I am aware that it has received such notice, and some of the criticisms to which Mr. Elliott has been subjected I have seen, those of one author (Dr. Keith) before penning these remarks, and others subsequently, while the first edition of the present work was in course of being printed. I may have been more anticipated in the observations I have to offer than I know of, but will still trust that my efforts in seeking to lead to a right estimate of Mr. Elliott's interpretations may not prove superfluous.

I have been brought to views, not as yet (so far as I know) held by others, which stand clear of objections urged by Mr. Elliott against all of the same class of interpreters as myself, and whom he terms "Futurists," and which I am sensible afford me peculiar advantages in a discussion such as the present. Mr. Elliott, furthermore, confidently challenges the examination of his constructions of the Apocalypse, and the inducement to attempt to overthrow them is the greater, that he has admitted that his predecessors in the historic line of interpretation, which is the one he follows, have all been in certain material respects refuted by Mr. Maitland, a writer of the Futurist school. None other, moreover, of the historical interpreters, has brought that system to the test to which Mr. Elliott has subjected it, in undertaking, as indeed was no less than what was called for, to provide matter out of history for every part and clause of the Apocalypse. To join issue therefore with Mr. Elliott, appears on every ground the best method of pursuing this controversy to its end, and I engage in it in the hope that I may be permitted to add something to the efforts already made towards exposing a mode of handling the prophetic record which those who think with myself know to be productive of no other result than the substitution of man's thoughts for God's, and the conversion of the light of prophecy into darkness.

My first duty, obviously, is to show that I can meet Mr. Elliott upon the footing of holding views unaffected by his past criticisms of the expositions of the Futurists, so as to make it apparent that the system which would refer the prophecies of the Apocalypse to times yet to come, does not necessarily lie under the objections which he conceives to be inherent to it, and fatal thereto. In attempting this, I can here only specify what those conclusions are which have to be adduced as untouched by Mr. Elliott's exceptions, leaving it for such as would desire to satisfy themselves as to their accuracy, to judge thereof in the treatise in which the grounds on which they rest are followed out.

I. Mr. Elliott, in the part of his work to which I have

now to attend, (IV. 506—541,)* begins by allusion to the “year-day principle;” that is, that principle under which a day in prophecy is taken as designating a year; being in contrast with what he terms the “day-day principle,” followed by the Futurists, who believe the day to mean literally a day. On this question Mr. Elliott has a distinct section, (III. 218—247,) to which I have also now to advert.†

Mr. Elliott has three sources of argument in support of the conversion of the days of the Apocalypse into years, which may be noticed before passing on to the consideration of the basis upon which he would maintain the legitimacy of this conversion as a matter of rule and principle.

He first instances the success with which he has used the process in laying down the chronological periods of the different subjects of the prophecy he has treated of, as convincing of the accuracy of the principle of computation on which it is founded. The merit of this appeal depends altogether upon whether the renderings he has given of the prophecy can themselves be maintained, and these have to be judged of hereafter.

Mr. Elliott further builds upon the identity of the beast in the 13th chapter of the Revelation with the fourth beast in Daniel, and the fact that the latter embodied the history of a state, as showing that the days given for the endurance of this Apocalyptic beast, must mark a longer period than what natural days would do. I have here to oppose the conclusion to which I have been brought that the fourth beast in Daniel represents an individual, and not a state, or a dynasty of rulers;‡ a fact which, if established, must serve to sap the foundations, not of the year-day principle alone, but of the whole historic system of interpretation, the main support of which is derived from the current, but I must add erroneous, view taken of this vision in Daniel.

* The edition made use of is the 2nd.

† I may observe that the subject is treated of in the *Light of Prophecy*, at pp. 246—251.

‡ See my work, Part II.

Mr. Elliott also contends that the events of the prophecy of the Apocalypse were to occupy the time from the days of the apostle, to the final consummation, an interval which has already exceeded 1700 years; and hence that the 1260 days of the beast, which bear so important a place in the prophecy, must have extended beyond so many natural days. On the subject of the events of the Apocalypse embracing the whole period from the time of John to the end, Mr. Elliott has a distinct argument, which will be dealt with in its course.

The basis upon which Mr. Elliott would convert the days of the Apocalypse into years, as a matter of principle, is simply this;—that there should be a proportion of scale, in respect of time, between the symbol in the prophecy, and the thing symbolized; that the symbol of the beast in the Apocalypse signifying an empire, the miniature proportion of time allotted for such an object as a beast, should represent a longer period of time, such as would be appropriate for an empire; and that, as regards the scale to be adopted in construing the days of the beast, the typification of years by days in the instance wherein Ezekiel had to lie on his side for so many days, to denote the number of years that Israel and Judah were to bear their iniquity, (Ezek. iv. 4—6,) affords a clear and complete precedent for converting the days into years.

The force of the argument rests, it will be seen at once, upon the fact that the beast in question really does represent some object having an ascertained longer existence than a natural animal, so that we are merely thrown back upon the question of whether this beast signifies an empire, or an individual, without anything having been advanced, of an abstract nature, in proof of there being such a mode of figuring time in the prophetic writings as is in debate. As respects the precedent for fixing the scale of conversion which has been cited, there should necessarily be something to show its affinity to the subjects to which it is sought to apply it, for Ezekiel may very well have been called upon to act in the manner prescribed to him, without this comprehending any sort of rule whereunder to

judge of subjects of quite a dissimilar nature, such as the visions of the Apocalypse; but no such affinity can be observed, and all that Mr. Elliott himself can say of Ezekiel's act, is, that it affords "a *probable* key and guide" (III. 224) for the system of conversion of time which he advocates.

As regards the knowledge possessed by the early church of this principle of interpretation, it would appear according to Mr. Elliott that for the first four centuries the days in the Apocalypse were universally taken as literal ones; that after this, up to the 13th century, certain expositors gave various mystical meanings to the term of the duration of the beast, but not the one now in question, and in the instance of the three and a half days during which the two witnesses were to lie unburied, converted these into years,—one expositor doing the same by the 150 days of the torment spoken of in Rev. ix. 5. These facts by no means strengthen Mr. Elliott's position, for they show that in the Apostolic age, and onwards, the system he inculcates was absolutely unknown, and that it was at a period acknowledged to be one when much corruption prevailed, that the early method of accepting the scripture was departed from, and then in a way so arbitrary and unmethodical, as to prove that mere self will was the origin of the change. It is from such parentage that Mr. Elliott would derive his year-day system, and truly not at all inappropriately so, for to nothing but the exigency of self willed interpretations* can it be traced.

If this system had been really one which the Spirit had designed for adoption, few will dispute but that it should have been placed within the reach of the church in all ages. But Mr. Elliott has to acknowledge that such was not the case, and

* I use this expression, here and elsewhere, not as intending thereby to charge others with fabricating views by sheer effort of will, and uninfluenced by judgment and self conviction, but in the sense in which interpretations arising from other sources than God's word, are to be recognized as springing from the human, and not from the divine will, as indicated in 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. See the Light of Prophecy, pp. vi. and 168, 169.

that in the earliest times the church were without the means of attaining to this, in his estimation, the only true way of construing the scripture. "For, as Antichrist's empire," he observes, "might possibly last but so many days, it could only be regarded *a priori* as a probability (though perhaps a strong one) that the prescribed period was meant of years: until in the event its duration was found to be actually longer than 1260 days." (III. 227.) The event only was to guide the church to her light. While the beast then was unrecognized as such, she could form no opinion of the time he was to endure, or know whether the days of the prophecy were to be read as years, or as literal days. The beast, according to Mr. Elliott's admission, not having been known as such till the 12th century, (II. 366,) the church, consequently, during all this lengthened period, had the year-day system, as a principle of interpretation, absolutely denied to her.

In saying that few would dispute but that what the Spirit has laid up for instruction in the word should have been placed within the reach of those living in all ages who were to be taught out of it, I have, unhappily, to adduce Mr. Elliott as one who hesitates not to make such denial. The ignorance of the early church of the period for which, pursuant to Mr. Elliott, the Antichrist was to have his career, he attributes to the direct volition of God, saying that it arose "only according to the Lord's declared intention, that not knowing the times and the seasons,* the disciples might so, even whilst His advent was far off, watch as in near expectation of it." (III. 229.) In other words, to cite the phrase from Mr. Elliott, it was of "God's purpose" (III. 228) that the church should fall into an error of interpretation on this head, and so be prevented from seeing, what the prediction is conceived to hold in record, the fact that the return of the Lord was an event necessarily long distant

* That the times and the seasons may be withheld from our knowledge, and yet that the period of the endurance of the Antichrist may be accurately judged of, will appear from what is put forth in Part III. of my treatise.

from their day. And for the realization of such a "purpose," it may be observed, it was obviously further necessary that the same error should prevail until the season when the Lord's advent might be actually near at hand; that is, according to Mr. Elliott's expectations of its approach, up to this present time. "The Spirit of truth," sent to "guide us into *all* truth," and to "shew us things to come," could then only serve the "purpose" of God throughout the past seventeen hundred years of the church's existence, by inculcating error in what respected the times of these prophecies; acting thus, to adopt Mr. Elliott's language, in "providential overruling of men's minds: whereby they were (to be) restrained from entertaining the view," (that the days of the beast signified really years,) "so long as it would have necessarily involved a conviction of Christ's advent being an event very distant." (III. 236.)

But, over and above this, what is to be said when we see such purpose subsequently departed from, or defeated, the result which had to be guarded against by it still remaining to be obviated! In saying that it was the design of the Lord that the church should not foresee that His advent was far distant, Mr. Elliott has of course had in mind the Lord's exhortation to constant watchfulness, where He has said, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come;" and His saying, "Behold, I come quickly." But it appears that from the close of the 14th century, that is, from a period of four hundred and fifty years before this advent could be accounted as "quickly" to arrive, the knowledge of the days of the Antichrist being years was attained to by the church, (III. 236,) and the means of judging that this advent was yet far distant thus became lodged in her hands. Through whom, it must be asked, was such knowledge acquired, if it was in the "purpose" of God to withhold it? And to whose tuition is the first insight into the year-day principle to be ascribed?

It is not upon light grounds, of course, that Mr. Elliott has involved himself in such a dilemma as to have to impute to God

the introduction of error among those who are looking for His truth. On the one side he had the fact that our Lord was to be expected by us quickly, or at any time, and on the other there was his historic scheme of interpretation, which gave to one of the objects of the prophecy a career of 1260 years, during which lengthened interval, at the least, the Lord might be known to be absolutely barred from coming. His object has been to reconcile his scheme with the revealed nature of these expectations, and he can do so only at the expense of still more deepening his difficulties, by attributing to God what would directly affect His honour, and overthrow our confidence in His integrity.

But even could Mr. Elliott's expedient be permitted him, he has still to make it appear how, on the one hand, the Lord could declare of His advent that "of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father," while on the other there were the means afforded of accurately calculating that advent, as he himself has attempted to do, (IV. 251,) to the very year. The church might be kept in doubt, or error, but could the Son have been in darkness as to the method of the calculation? and if not, how could He have been ignorant of the precise day which was to be arrived at through it? This is a difficulty not confined to those adhering to the year-day principle of interpretation; for it affects equally such as take the days of the Antichrist to be literal days, if, with Mr. Elliott, they expect no appearance of the Lord until after the revelation of the Antichrist. It is to be met, it has to be observed, only by the fact, brought to light of recent years among some members of the body of Christ, that the Lord has yet twice to come,—once to carry up the church to Himself, and once to descend on earth in judgment, and to assume His millennial throne,—and that between these two advents the Antichrist is to run his course; thus making it appear that there is one coming, such as the Lord's above quoted words refer to, the period whereof no man can count upon, and another, succeeding to the times of

the Antichrist, the year of the arrival of which can be hereafter distinctly calculated on.*

II. I have to proceed to the consideration of Mr. Elliott's specific objections advanced by him as fatal to any scheme of interpretation which would ascribe the predictions of the Apocalypse to times yet future, in the hope of showing that they are either untenable, or else relate to matter not inherent to such scheme. These are arranged by him under five heads.

1. Mr. Elliott argues, from the precedents of visions in Daniel, the events predicted in which began to have commencement from dates which were those, or nearly those, of the times of the said visions, against the conclusion that the prophecy of the Apocalypse can relate to a period so far removed from that of the communication of the vision in which it was given as the time of the consummation, to which the Futurists refer it.

It is not to be allowed for a moment that the Spirit is under any restrictions as to the manner and circumstances under which to make known His revelations, but in the instance of the Futurists' view of the predictions of the Apocalypse, there is no real opening for Mr. Elliott's objection. The leading chapter of the Revelation, and especially verses 1—3 and 19, prove that the whole contents of the book form the subject of one continuous vision; and so Mr. Elliott would seem to have himself viewed it, where, in the attempt he made at interpreting the half hour's silence in heaven, (Rev. viii. 1,) he treated this vision as an integral subject, thinking that it occupied a defined period of twenty-four hours, and proceeded, thereupon, to divide these off, according to the topics of the vision. (I. 294, 295.) "Write," the apostle was told, "the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;" all being communicated to him in an unbroken chain, and given to him to be recorded, as we see actually executed by him, in one unbroken narrative. The commencing portion of this vision was what related to the seven churches

* The subject is treated of in Part III. of my work.

of Asia Minor; and hence, just as in certain of the visions in Daniel, things present were the theme with which it set out. After these had been brought under the Apostle's view, a long gap of time, according to the interpretation of the Futurists, is seen to intervene before the succeeding events might take place; and precisely this same gap, it may be observed, has occurred in other analogous prophecies. In my treatise, following here I should say light derived from another, I have shown its existence between the 69th and 70th hebdōmad in Daniel;* and it is to be found also in that remarkable prediction in Isaiah, applied by the Lord to Himself, wherein, between "the acceptable year of the Lord," and "the day of vengeance of our God," He made that pause where it occurs. (Isa. lxi. 2; Luke iv. 18—20.) It appears also in that declaration in Peter, where it is said that the Spirit, in dealing be it remembered with prophecy, had testified of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow," (1 Pet. i. 11,)—the same lengthened interval here also appearing between these closely adjoined clauses. I have also pointed out various other such gaps in Daniel, in his historical as well as prophetic communications, especially as occurring in the visions of the great image, and the four great beasts, which stand so closely allied to the Apocalypse;† so that the prophecy of the Revelation, as viewed by the Futurists, is only in keeping in chronological character with other parts of the scripture, and not in exception thereto.

Mr. Elliott passes on from the above "law of commencement," to insist also upon a "law of continuity," meaning thereby, that there should be no serious break of time in the current course of the prophecy: and contends that when the apostle had received the view of the things present, and was told that he was to be shown "what must happen after these," the declaration was express, that the latter were to follow in early sequence to the former.

Against "a law of continuity," or any other law, as binding upon the Spirit in the mode of His communications, I must of course protest, and can appeal, furthermore, to the instances of the gaps before adverted to in proof of the non-existence of any such law as is now in question. The announcement that the further events of the vision, succeeding to what related to the seven churches, were to "happen after these," is assuredly no evidence that they were to happen immediately after them. It is only by adding to the language of the scripture that this meaning can be fixed thereupon, what stands on record implying no more than that whereas things present had been brought before the apostle, things yet in futurity were about to be revealed to him. To connect the "after these," with what had foregone, in the way Mr. Elliott would do, there should at least be a correspondence of condition between the two classes of events. But there is none such. The early part of the vision consisted of a review of the doctrine and walk of the seven churches, and related to things existing, and of earth; and the latter, of various forthcoming events, the scene of much of which was laid in heaven. The transition from the one class of subjects to the other is thus a well defined one; and it was so marked in the method of the communication to the apostle. "After this," he says, "I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." The order of the events being quite dissimilar, he was thus in a prominent manner called up to a new sphere to witness these latter ones.

Mr. Elliott goes on to advert to the assurances in the Apocalypse that the events thereof "must shortly come to pass," and were "at hand," as demonstrating that they were to have early operation; and to Mr. Maitland's argument that the sense these expressions are to be taken in must be the same in which we have to receive the similar assurances that the coming of Jesus was to take place "quickly," and that the day of the

Lord was "at hand," he objects that these latter expressions have each a double meaning, a nearer and a more distant one, and that phrases which "in dubious sense" attach to the advent of our Lord, cannot be brought to bear upon events that were altogether most distant in time.

Mr. Elliott is here hardly sufficiently explicit to be dealt with, but it seems difficult for any one to attribute any other meaning to the phrases "quickly," and "at hand," than that they relate to matter the occurrence of which was to occupy but a very short measure of time, or to show how they differ in point of expression of time from other phrases of precisely the same character, employed in the same sacred text, one of which is even given in exact identity of words.

For a solution of the seeming difficulty which is involved in the literal acceptation I would give to these terms, I must refer to my treatise, where, in the pursuit of the sacred theme, and without any thought of such a controversy as the present, it will be found, I trust, to disappear. The Apocalypse, I have viewed as a book of entirely Jewish order, and the advent of which it is said that it is to be accomplished "quickly," that final coming of the Lord when He will appear for the redemption of the Jewish nation, and to take up His seat in His millennial kingdom on the throne of David; and not the prior advent when He comes for the church.* The subject being thus altogether Jewish, Jewish order of time is alone in question; and the key to this is in Daniel. There, a certain "appointed" time is spoken of as "determined" for the redemption of Israel; (Dan. viii. 19; ix. 24; xi. 27, 35;) and it is given as occurring at the conclusion of the 70 weeks, or hebdomads, relating to this people. Now of these, 69 had run their course ere the book of Revelation was put forth,—for this measure terminated when "Messiah" was "cut off,"—and there remained thus at that time, as there still remains, but one hebdomad, or a period of seven years, to be accomplished of this

* Pp. 364—367.

"determined" and "appointed" Jewish time; and the occurrence of this remaining hebdomad is given in the Apocalypse. Between the 69th and the still future 70th hebdomad, intervenes the long unmeasured and undetermined time of the Gentile dispensation, wherein we now stand, the course of which, in respect of Jewish interests, is wholly uncounted, and unestimated, as not belonging to these hebdomads. The declarations then in the Jewish record of the Apocalypse, which are in question, contemplate only the remaining period of the last unfulfilled hebdomad, and can thus be expressive of the shortness thereof. In this sense, it may be observed, Daniel was told to shut up the vision, and to seal it, as relating to what was to be "for many days," (Dan. viii. 26; xii. 4, 9,) while John was enjoined not to seal up the revelations given to him, "for the time," he was assured, was "at hand." The measure was the measure of these hebdomads, of which the whole seventy had still to run out in the days of Daniel, while only one remained to be fulfilled in those of the apostle.

2. The view taken by the Futurists of the opening of the 6th seal, that it indicates the advent of the Lord, or the signs immediately preceding that event, Mr. Elliott considers to engender impossibilities, as the earth, he conceives, would be subjected to destruction, if, according to the literal acceptation of the prophecy, the stars of heaven were to fall upon it; while the seven trumpets, and the seven vials, which have operation subsequently to the action of this seal, give cover to events which would have to be enacted upon its surface after this period of its so involved destruction.

To object fairly to the effect of stars literally falling on earth, we should first be fully acquainted with the whole contents of the heavens, so as to see that they consist of nothing but bodies of such weight, magnitude, and solidity, as would crush and destroy this globe, were they to fall upon it. But is there such knowledge? On the contrary, do not the meteoric bodies, weighing sometimes but a few pounds, which either traverse the heavens, or fall singly or in showers upon the earth, dis-

tinctly belie it?* The recent discovery that what had been taken to be nebulous matter, consists of collections of stars of infinite minuteness, (to our vision,) and number, and the ascertainment within only the last six years that the system in which the earth has place, hitherto thought to be composed of but eleven planets, comprehends in fact seventeen, if not eighteen, show indeed, additionally, how much we may yet have to learn of what exists around us in the heavens.

I do not offer these observations with the idea of anticipating in what way God will make good His words, but solely to prove that objectors, with their limited knowledge of the contents of the heavens, have not room for insisting upon the impossibility of their being carried out literally. My real answer is, that with God *all* things are possible, and that the spirit which would deny to Him the means of raining stars upon the earth, would also have denied to Him the power of stopping the course of the sun and the moon, as in Joshua, and of putting the shadow ten degrees back, as upon the dial of Ahaz, had not these disturbances become positively revealed facts.

Whether the ordinary figurative interpretation of the heavenly bodies of the prophecy, adopted by Mr. Elliott, can stand good, may be judged of hereafter, when the details of his commentary are entered upon.

Mr. Elliott's further objection to the Futurists' views of this 6th seal, that the events which are to have course after its

* The following extract, although appearing in a newspaper, is from the pen of one of acknowledged scientific attainments, and comes so opportunely to the subject in hand, that I may well be excused in offering it. "It must be kept in mind," the Editor writes, "that some of the most distinguished of our authorities maintain the opinion that meteors are asteriods, or planetary bodies,—that a few only of the millions careering through space ever enter our atmosphere at all....'The volume' (says Mrs. Somerville) 'of several meteoric stones has exceeded that of the planet Ceres, which is about seventy miles in diameter.'" "The display of November 12, 1833," the Editor elsewhere adds, "is the most wonderful on record, no fewer than 240,000 having been estimated as appearing that night in the sky."—*Bombay Times*, November 13, 1850.

opening, forbid the idea of its representing either the advent of the Lord, or the signs immediately attendant on the advent, does not affect the strictly literal signification which I would give to the prophecy ;* namely, that it describes the exhibition of signs, which we see elsewhere (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30) will be just such as will eventually attend the coming of the Lord, and which are given here in order to raise the terror of this event upon the ungodly, so as to convince them, at a season while they are still under discipline, that the day of the Lamb's wrath is awaiting them ; but that it embodies neither the display of the advent, nor is the instant prelude thereto, the same signs occurring under the seal having to be manifested again, when the Lord actually makes His appearing.

Mr. Elliott finally remarks that in assigning wars, famines, pestilences, and martyrdoms, to the seals preceding the 6th, the Futurists are dealing with generalities, not to be accepted as affording indications of the Lord's coming. To me it does not appear that the particular events, referred to under the seals in question, are to be taken as special signs of His coming, but are rather demonstrations of judgments, carried out upon the earth, through the means of the natural evil working among the ungodly, and are thus at the same time in exhibition of that evil, and in demonstration of the worthiness of those who are indulging therein to incur all the further wrath which the Apocalypse shows to be prepared for them.

3. Mr. Elliott points out the inconsistency of the Futurists in accounting the 144,000 sealed out of the tribes of Israel to be literal Jews, while the new Jerusalem is thought by them to indicate the beatified Christian church. The opening for this criticism has arisen from no defect of the system of interpretation which the Futurists have entered upon, but simply from a failure on their parts, in this instance, to adhere to the principles of that system, which, as Mr. Elliott justly observes, should have led them to allot the new Jerusalem to the Jews, equally as they have done the tribes of Israel. It will be seen how

* Pp. 251, 252, note.

much is founded in my treatise upon the recognition of this fact, that the new Jerusalem belongs exclusively to the Jews;* and I may add, that the possession thereof proved to me the key to most of what additionally appears in the section of the work wherein it stands.

Mr. Elliott moreover adverts to the operation of the Jewish symbol of the seven candlesticks, as applied to the seven churches of the Apocalypse, in showing that the church may be prefigured under Jewish elements, and he notices an inconsistency of Mr. Burgh's, in viewing the temple worship in the Apocalypse as being Christian worship; whereas, according to the literal system of interpretation to which he was pledged, the worship should have been Jewish worship.

On these heads my treatise will be found to stand clear, for I have been led to see that in the churches of the Apocalypse Jewish members were alone in question, and that the temple worship adverted to will be of strictly Jewish order.†

4. Mr. Elliott next insists that the political connexion, and the religious profession, of the predicted Antichrist, are against the possibility that he should be a literal individual, as taught by the Futurists.

The political connexion which Mr. Elliott would attribute to the Antichrist, is of course Rome, and this, as is commonly done, he grounds on the let, or hindrance, mentioned in 2 Thess. ii. 7, being the imperial power of Rome; upon the fourth beast in Daniel, out of which, as a little horn, he is held to spring up, being the Roman empire; and upon his city, the Babylon of the Apocalypse, being Rome. The Roman empire having passed away full thirteen centuries ago, Mr. Elliott comments upon the impossibility there is of connecting therewith the personal Antichrist yet to be revealed; but his observations do not affect the results to which I have been led, since attention to the literal language of the prophecies ordinarily referred to Rome, has served to show me that she is no where a particular subject of prophecy. The let, or hindrance, in question, I have

* Part V.

† Pp. 369—372, and pp. 231, 232.

been brought, with others, to see is the church, whose removal from this sphere to her heavenly resting-place must be effected before the Antichrist can be revealed.* The fourth beast in Daniel I believe to be the Antichrist,—the little horn being the false prophet associated with him.† And the Babylon of the Apocalypse I receive as the literal Babylon of Chaldea, which has yet to rise, and yet to fall.‡

The religious profession of the Antichrist Mr. Elliott takes to be one made under much show of religion, as in the instance of the Papacy, the name of Antichrist meaning either Christ's vicar, or an opposing and usurping Christ, and his system containing in it "the mystery of iniquity," and "all deceivableness of unrighteousness;" and he objects to the current view of the Futurists, that it consists of open infidelity and atheism, together with open licentiousness, whereby the Antichrist would not stand necessarily allied to Rome. Mr. Elliott, after commenting on the opinions of a Tractarian writer, and citing views derived from "patristic authority," (with neither of which do I feel called to occupy myself,) passes on to draw a contrast between the acts of an open enemy, and an avowed though false friend, in demonstration of the greater atrocity of the latter, and in proof that the evils of the Papacy transcend any that under the contemplation of the Futurists can be attributed to a personal Antichrist.

The Antichrist is indubitably associated with preceding evil, but the roots thereof I would lay much further back than does Mr. Elliott; and as the deluge was the end of God's controversy with man from the creation up to the end of that age, so the judgment coming in at the destruction of the Antichrist appears to me marked as the end of His controversy with the race from the deluge on to that time. "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." I see the Antichrist, accordingly, set up in Babylon, the earliest city, constructed, too, just after the flood, and in Nebuchadnezzar, as the first member in the visions in Daniel in which he has his

* Pp. 197, 198.

† Part II.

‡ Part I.

place, associated with the earliest king of notoriety handling universal empire; and I find him realizing to the full the sinful characteristics of that city, as developed from its origin, and going onwards to the exhibition of all the most hateful depths of violence, blasphemy, and depravity, to which Satan can urge him. Startling as this may be, I believe that the great adversary will be then in bodily presence upon earth, and, with the Antichrist, made the object of personal adoration; and these, together with the false prophet, I apprehend will then personify the divine Trinity, and so seek to displace the God-head from the scene of their creation.* The evils of the Papacy thus form but a passing link in this stupendous chain, and the horrors that the full exhibition of all that man and Satan are capable of when acting together in open revolt against the Omnipotent, need not be doubted as what must be far in excess of any that have yet been enacted on earth, or that thought can picture to us.

The scripture expressions cited by Mr. Elliott do not militate against any expectations such as the above; but, on the contrary, receive a thorough realization in such a scene as is embodied in them, and which the Papacy cannot be said to afford. The attitude, and the corresponding acts, of an opposing and an usurping Christ, would be of a far more awful description than any that an individual pretending to the sanction of Christ's authority, as being His vicar, could exhibit, however much the professed delegate might misuse the power of his position. The Antichrist will, I conceive, come out in the light of such an usurper, offering himself, when resuscitated from a deadly wound which he receives, as the risen Lord of all, and exacting personal worship, accordingly, as being himself absolutely of the God-head.† To this length no Pope has gone, nor could venture to go. The "mystery of iniquity," acknowledged to be working in the Apostles' time, cannot be restricted to that corrupt system which has sprung up since it. I take the iniquity to be such in no partial sense, but would derive it from the days of Eve, and

* Pp. 120, 121.

† Pp. 144—146.

believe it to be the expression of that universal sin, the deepest that can be committed, of the natural man's standing in enmity against his maker. He is actuated towards this by the great adversary, the devil, and he is delivered from it by Jesus. The "mystery of iniquity," and the "mystery of godliness," stand in evident contrast together. The one was "God manifest in the flesh," (1 Tim. iii. 16,) and the other must be the reverse,—Satan exhibited in man. This I conceive will be carried out to its demonstrated fulfilment at the revelation of him "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders," when the incorporation of the wicked one with this crowning sample of the human species will be displayed to every eye, to the demonstration of the sources, as well as to the development of the ultimate results, of all the evil that has ever been prevailing in the world since the day when sin gave Satan dominion in it.* "The deceivableness" of positive, naked, "unrighteousness," will then be truly worked out, and this will present a very different aspect, and a far more fearful and hateful one, than the mere mockery of a false righteousness, such as is exhibited in the Papacy.

5. Mr. Elliott finally considers it essential to the Futurists' system, and of course fatal thereto, that Jerusalem should be the capital of the Antichrist, and that he should be represented as sitting there in the temple, during the three and a half years of his reign, exhibiting himself as God, while at this very time the temple is shown in Rev. xi. 1 to be measured, in token of God's favour and protection extended over it.

The system of the Futurists need be placed in no such dilemma as this. It will be observed that Babylon of Chaldea is the place which I have been led to believe to be the capital of the Antichrist; and in tracing out the chronology of these times, I have been brought to see that there are two periods described in the Apocalypse, each of three and a half years, making up together the seven years constituting the final and still unexpired hebdomad of Daniel;† that for the first half of this

* Pp. 121—125.

† Pp. 244—246.

period the temple of the Jews stands recognized and tolerated, even by the Antichrist; and that the period during which the Antichrist takes up his seat therein as God, is but the last forty-five days of the concluding portion of the hebdomad.*

Mr. Elliott here refers to the Holy City, as being God's city, in contrast to the Great City, which is the beast's; and to the existence of this distinction I do not object; and he passes on to advert to the great city, where the dead bodies of the two witnesses are to be exposed, (Rev. xi. 8,) as being the latter place, whereas the Futurists, and myself I may state in common with them, have looked upon it as Jerusalem. A translation by Mr. J. Kelly dispels the difficulty, for he shows that the "great" attaches to the street of the city, and not to the city itself, the bodies of the witnesses having thus to lie "in the great street of the city;" and the emendation has this further advantage, that one street out of the many might be thus distinguished in a city, but no city could have but a single street, as would appear to be the case from the current translation.

I have thus, I trust satisfactorily, met the various objections which Mr. Elliott has put forward as fatally affecting any scheme of interpretation referring the prophecies of the Revelation to times yet future. I have done so, for the most part, not by challenging the weight of those objections, but by opposing to them views other than Mr. Elliott knew of, and which stand wholly unapproached by his strictures. Holding these views as I do, and therein differing from past interpretations of the Futurists, I may be permitted to add that Mr. Elliott's objections touch only the errors of the Futurists, and in no degree impair the real strength and truthfulness of their system.

I have to proceed now to comment upon Mr. Elliott's book, so far as may be necessary to show the unsoundness of his system of interpretation, and to combat the most prominent of the conclusions he has arrived at under it.

III. It has appeared to me that the very aspect of Mr. Elliott's pages carries with it the evidence that such a method

* Pp. 269—271.

of interpreting the scripture as he has pursued, cannot be of God. "The poor have the gospel preached to them," and it is, we must remember, also, "the gospel of the kingdom." To them,—that is, to those of the most unlearned and uncultivated minds,—is it "given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," equally, at the least, as to any of the superior classes. "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." But if, to fathom the meaning of the Apocalypse, it requires the stores of human learning,—critical, historical, and antiquarian,—which Mr. Elliott has brought to bear upon his subject, and on which he has really to depend for illustration thereof, how can this, the most important record we have connected with the gospel of the kingdom, be approached by any one of the unlearned, with any hope of his unravelling or profiting by its sayings? When I see therefore a scheme of interpretation based upon resources which none of the poor of the world, yea, and few even of the educated classes, can hope to command, I feel assured, from this circumstance alone, that God is not the author of it. His word is open to all, and is to be understood of all, and it needs not the partnership of aught that is generated by human wisdom, to allow of value and currency being given to its contents. It appears to me most derogatory to the sacred record to judge otherwise of it, or to doubt, what the more it is put to the proof the more will it appear true of it, that it is so constituted as to be fully qualified to stand as its own interpreter. Mr. Elliott has not so handled it. He has employed its phraseology for critical and illustrative purposes, and occasionally has brought some cognate prophecies to bear upon one another; but in the way of compassing an interpretation, he has not sought the light

which one part of the scripture can shed upon another, his process having been to pass on at once from his text, to the products of his human learning.

But I must allow him to speak for himself, both as to the nature and the extent of his labours, and also as to the method in which they were pursued.

In view of the task on which he had engaged of decyphering the Apocalypse by history, "what a field," he exclaims, "for historic research lies here before us! a field extending over seventeen centuries, and over countries many more than those of European Christendom!" (I. 115.) "It was evident," he remarks elsewhere, "that for such investigation prolonged and careful researches were necessary; researches such as he had neither time nor facilities for in a village retirement, and amidst the avocations of a parochial ministry." (*Preface*, v.) And that Mr. Elliott has not overstated the case, whether as to the time or the labour requisite to develop his system, no one who has judged of his exertions can fail to allow. His work he sums up as performed "intellectually and historically," and this "without grudging of time or trouble;" (IV. 293;) and he truly observes that "a laborious train of reasoning" has been the needful instrumentality for leading him to his results. (I. 337.) His beau ideal of the "pre-requisites for a proper Apocalyptic interpreter," he takes from Michaelis, who, "after noting as the first qualification a competent knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew, as the second a taste for poetry and painting, adds, as the third and most important, a complete knowledge of history, more especially of the history of Asia;" (I. 116, and note 1;)—human elements all, and which the poor can never hope to aspire to. This part of God's word is hence absolutely sealed up to them, and unless one of the learned according to man's wisdom comes in to their assistance, the sacred page must remain to them as an unwritten one. And who the best partner for the word, to whom they can apply, to give it its life and meaning? None other, it appears, than one noted for his hostility to its truth. "The infidel Gibbon," Mr. Elliott tells us,

has the nearest reached to the requisitions of Michaelis, and has become, (unconsciously though it be,) "the best illustrator of no small part of the heavenly prophecy." There was, according to Mr. Elliott, an "absolute need of such a pioneer to Apocalyptic interpretation," and he acknowledges his own appreciation of "the immense advantage derivable from his pioneering." To the pages of this insidious sneerer against the word of truth, the child of God is accordingly commended, if he would hope to receive any light from the Apocalypse; (I. 116;) casting him thus, most undisguisedly, upon carnal elements, for acquaintance-ship with the things of the Spirit. It is not denied that the student of scripture may derive aid, in the way of illustration, from such sources, but what is so, is that the subjects of revelation cannot be understood, nor appreciated, without them. Mr. Elliott is not specially chargeable with the sentiments here objected to. They are inherent to his system, and therefore the more dammatory of it.

Mr. Elliott's own method of attempting to elucidate the Apocalypse has of course been in keeping with these views of the essentials towards comprehending its contents. He has, as already indicated, applied himself freely to the resources of human learning available to him, in order to discover its meaning. The subject he approached as one in itself shrouded in the deepest obscurity. Prophecy, in his view, is the "chiefest mystery" of God, presented to us "in darkly expressed figures, and enigmatic chronological periods," for the nature of which latter, "until the eve of the consummation, . . . the church would from age to age in vain seek a complete solution." (II. 123.) That "light shining in a dark place," to which, *as such*, we are called upon to take heed, was thus, to himself, utter darkness, and in lieu of coming to it to get illumination *from* it, his aim was, in some way, to bring illumination *to* it; and in the learning not owned of God, and not owning Him, this illumination was to be found. Mr. Elliott's great object, necessarily, was to succeed in the "fitting of historic fact with the prophetic figurations," (*Pref.* xvi.,) and towards this "his habit" was "always in the

first instance to consider the simple grammatical meaning of the prophetic passage, comparing scripture with scripture;" (for this critical end only be it observed;) "then to consult the most authentic histories of the period *supposed* to be alluded to, . . . and, where necessary, such works also as might furnish antiquarian illustration. This done, and his own independent judgment formed thereon," he has passed to "the most approved and elaborate commentators on the subject," weighing their views with his own. (*Pref.* vii., viii.) The "handling" of the prophetic emblems, he judged of upon the same rules as one would the performance of "any superior human artist," and "proceeding on these principles and persuasions, light," he tells us, "soon began to dawn on the Author's mind, as he prosecuted his researches, . . . and, as he still went on somewhat laboriously, to complete what was wanting to a more perfect understanding on the subject, the twilight seemed to him to brighten into day." "Thus far," he very truly adds, "the investigation had been *almost purely literary* in its character," (*Pref.* vi.,) and to judges of human literary eminence would he submit his work. It was to him "a real source of satisfaction that one so able as Mr. Arnold, and one so well known too as a scholar and controversialist, should have undertaken the task of examining and refuting the *Horæ*;" but failure he anticipated would be found to characterize the attack, "and such indeed, if," he observes, "he may trust not his own judgment only, but that of many *literary* friends well competent to judge in the matter, has been the result;" and Mr. Elliott, at the date of publication, still sought to bring the controversy "to a decisive issue," but the tribunal, for him, is "the literary world." (*Pref.* xviii., xix.)

Mr. Elliott's own pen has thus very unmistakeably described the aim and character of his work, and the materials out of which its results have been elaborated; but as the human element is confessedly all that he has had to serve himself of, the product, we may be assured, cannot be of God.

IV. I would now bring to notice some special samples of this work, indicative of the spirit in which it has been executed,

in order that the people of God may the better judge with what prospect of safety they can put themselves under such leading as the Author's.

I have already noticed the astounding assertion on Mr. Elliott's part that by "some providential overruling of men's minds," the Spirit of truth has had a "purpose," through ages, of imposing error upon the church, even when coming to the sacred page for instruction; and I have adverted to his seeking to bring us up to the light of prophecy, as to an embodiment of most mysterious darkness. When God fails us, both as to His light, and as to His guidance, whither indeed should we turn for help? However, we have to see what Mr. Elliott may himself have to offer us.

1. The first specimen of Mr. Elliott's efforts in interpretation of the Apocalypse which I have to adduce is that of a view which it is true he has abandoned. This is his main exposition of the half hour's silence in heaven, mentioned in Rev. viii. 1, which, owing to the pressure of strictures thereupon by Mr. Barker, similar in certain respects to what have occurred to myself, he has had to relinquish. (*Vindiciae Horariae*, p. 209.) Being thus abandoned, I should not have brought this interpretation forward,* save that it affords so remarkable an exemplification of the kind of leading to which those are liable who are cast, of necessity, as under the historic treatment of the Apocalypse, upon a human guide to conduct them through the so represented mazes of its prophecies, and that it gives us an especial opportunity of judging of the safety with which Mr. Elliott in particular may be followed as such a guide. I present the view therefore just as showing to what lengths Mr. Elliott

* I may mention that the remarks I have to offer on this view of Mr. Elliott's, were penned and printed in the first edition of these observations before I was aware that he had been obliged to give up the interpretation. I have thus now had simply to consider whether I should still present them or not, and for the reasons stated by me, it has appeared to me, that their presentation may be of use to the object I have in view in this publication, of arming students of prophecy against the historic interpreters.

has been prepared to go in order to supply out of the stores of his own thoughts, or rather suppositions, that which may elsewhere be wanting, and now that we have the advantage of finding that he himself condemns this interpretation, we can the better see how it has been arrived at, and what the worth of the course through which it has been generated, so as to be the more on our guard as to resigning ourselves to Mr. Elliott when finding the same method, as is very much the case, pursued by him in offering us other delineations. Furthermore, in the abandonment of this interpretation without an adequate substitute being provided for it,* we have so far a confession on the part of this the most elaborate of the historic interpreters of his incompetency to produce in this instance material for the prophecy, and when any link in such a chain as he has undertaken to fabricate is wanting, from absolute deficiency of material, the system under which the chain should have been perfected must he held as stamped with failure.

But to the view itself. "I conceive then," Mr. Elliott has said, in explanation of the passage in question, "its specified half-hour to have been literally the time (for where the formal phrase of mystic time?) during which the calm lasted, measured on the scale of the one Lord's day mentioned Apoc. i. 10; which, with its 24 hours, is *thought* to have been the time of the representation of the whole visions. I speak of it as a day of 24 hours, because it is *to be inferred* from the ecclesiastical history of the early church that the Lord's day kept by it, like the Sabbath by the Jews, was one consisting of all the 24 hours of the natural day. Further, it is *my impression*, as will be explained afterwards, that the period prefigured in the Apocalypse, from St. John's time to that of the Millennium, *might be somewhere about* 1800 years, or with the Millennium inclusive about 2800; the prefigurations of which, with the exception of

* Mr. Elliott has an alternative view, as will be found, and upon this he appears disposed to fall back, but he is evidently not satisfied with it himself, and has at length to admit that he requires "more light on the point." (*Wind. Hor.* p. 209.)

the supplemental Part, will appear to have been consecutive. And *allowing some four or six hours* for the time of this supplemental part being more succinctly represented, and also for that of dictating the epistles to the seven churches, there will remain *some eighteen or twenty* for the representation of the main continuous series of visions. And *if this were on a scale of time*, and proportion *were at all observed* between the time prefigured and the time of the prefiguring, then an hour of that Lord's day that the Evangelist was in the Spirit, *might* be considered *in a general manner* as answering to *some 140 or 150 years* prefigured, and half an hour consequently to some 70 or 80." (I. 294, 295.)

This was certainly a most resolute process of guessing, and in the face of difficulties which to few minds would appear otherwise than insuperable. But Mr. Elliott had to find an "historic fitting" for every portion of the Apocalypse, and if there were no other way than this, he was prepared to follow it. The heaven was a mystical one, the scene it represented, as we shall see further on, being the Roman empire. But there had been no "formal phrase of mystic time" employed, and under the shelter of this consideration, (though it may be asked where, in any mention of time in the Apocalypse, has such formal phrase occurred?) Mr. Elliott, finding that his year-day system would not supply him with an appropriate historic fitting, conceived he might pass from the mystic to the literal, and take up the half hour as a natural one. He saw proper, furthermore, to depart from his mode of viewing time as expressed in every other portion of the Apocalypse, and held this half hour, not as described to the Evangelist in narrative, but as enacted for him in fact, the progress of the revelation being thus suspended before him for this literal half hour. But now he would make an end of dealing with his subject as if allied to the literal, and treat it as if belonging to the mystical, and though of course still without any "formal phrase of mystic time" before him, he has attached a figurative meaning to this half hour, so as to convert it, in its import, into a sufficiently developed historic period, which in itself, literally, it of course could not furnish; so making of it

a period of 70 or 80 years. To effect this, he had to suppose that the visions of the Apocalypse embraced a period of 24 hours in their exhibition, and that the events prefigured in them were to occupy somewhere about 2800 years; and then, adopting this doubtful period for a certain one, he had to divide it off among the 24 hours of the assumed actual duration of the vision, under a further supposition that there was such a scale of proportion between the time taken up by the vision itself, and that belonging to the events predicted therein. But here there were obviously very serious difficulties to contend with. For example, the vision of the seven churches having related to times present, what measure of representative time could have arisen for the exhibition thereof? Clearly none, according to the asserted scale of proportion; for where duration was not in question in the subject treated of, there should have been no duration in the exhibition of the subject. In this case then, if consistency was to be secured, it could only be at the expense of an impossibility. Again, where visions had reference to events of parallel periods of occurrence, as in the instance of that of the two witnesses, who, according to Mr. Elliott, were to prophesy for 1260 years, of that held to point to the church which was to be in the wilderness for this same time, and of that of the beast who was to flourish also for this time, how could the scale of proportion be maintained? Each subject was to be allowed its representative period, and as each had 1260 years to be represented, time in the enactment of the vision to denote 3780 years would be here alone requisite. But the total period for which provision was made was no more than 2800 years, and in this other subjects were to have their portion.* Here then fresh impossibility was involved. Mr. Elliott however armed himself against all such

* It might be observed moreover that the Apocalypse does not end with the millennium, but treats furthermore of the eternal ages beyond it, (see Part V. of my work,) making it thus also altogether impossible that the prefigurations of the vision could have occupied spaces of time proportionate to the duration of the subjects embraced thereby, for how could any scale of time be found to represent eternity?

hindrances, and passing them by, boldly struck off some four or six hours for the vision as to the seven churches, and for what he deemed a supplemental part of the visions, (but upon what system of calculation the allowance was made it appears not,) and thus obtained the period he wanted of 70 or 80 years for this half hour's silence. The result, after all, was but an indefinite one—"some 70 or 80 years" being all that could be determined of the time; for in truth Mr. Elliott seemed to have been aware that no one could have accepted a definite period from him, under so vague a process as that which he had resorted to. Nevertheless, though this was so far owned, Mr. Elliott's next step was to assume the time as a definite one, and thereupon to apply it to its historic fitting.

"*Thus explained,*" he went on to say, "the chronological intimations conveyed in the half hour's firmamental stillness, and respite from the threatened overwhelming tempests in the vision, will be found to correspond *sufficiently well* with the state of things in the Roman Empire during the 70 years that intervened between Constantine's final victory over Licinius, followed by the dissolution of the Pagan heaven, A. D. 324, and Alaric's revolt and invasion of the empire, consequent on Theodosius' death, A. D. 395." (I. 295.) Thus the silence in heaven was to be a period of respite from invasion accorded to the Roman Empire for this fixed period. But here also something had to be begged. Heaven was to stand for earth, or rather for a portion only of the earth, and that none indeed of heavenly aspect, being just the region of a corrupted and decrepit heathen state on the verge of its dissolution;* and silence was to have no reference to absence of sound, but was to signify absence of hostile invasion. The subject, moreover, thus gained to the prophetic chain of events, was after all nothing but what had already

* Mr. Elliott has elsewhere described the positions of earth and of heaven, as intended to designate on the one hand "the earthly-minded," and on the other such as "in heart dwelt in heaven." (III. 28.) Here, however, just as the necessity pressed on him, these distinctions were altogether set aside, and heathenism was put forth by him under the garb of heaven.

occupied a place therein, being the identical calm supposed to have been prefigured in the preceding chapter, under the type of the winds of the earth being restrained from blowing. (I. 293.) In the one case, accordingly, we see the "heaven" affording the figure, and in the other the "earth;" but Mr. Elliott was undeterred, and had the same solution for both, not heeding either the disturbance in the chain occasioned by the introduction of a duplicate link therein.

But here also a serious difficulty presented itself, for between these supposed coincident prophecies there was the apparent "intervention of the seventh seal," "the tempest-calm," as Mr. Elliott noticed, being represented as "before the seventh Seal's opening, the silence in heaven after it." There would furthermore have been but five years, and not 70, for the silence, if occurring subsequently to this seal, for within that time from the opening of the seal the first of the restrained invasions is held to have set in (*scroll*). But Mr. Elliott was not to be without a resource, and his expedient, (for it can only be called such,) in this instance, was to give a critical rendering to the verb *eyero*, appearing in the passage, making it read thus,—"And when he had opened the seventh seal, *there had been* (in lieu of *there was*) silence in heaven about the space of half an hour,"—by which strange phraseology the silence was made to appear, as was required, as if it had happened before the opening of the seal.

Still, notwithstanding all these liberties, the ground secured by Mr. Elliott for his historic fitting was any thing but safe and tenable, and he had accordingly to claim a proviso. He did this without a qualm, as if the demand were a most reasonable one, and in fact involving nothing at all weakening to his position. "That is," he has said after proposing his solution, "with one proviso,—a proviso essential to the satisfactoriness (!) of the explanation." (I. 295.) And what might this be? Truly one of a rather startling nature, for it was nothing less than that we should allow of the introduction, within this period of so called respite, of a terrific invasion of the empire which was to have been shielded under it, in which the emperor and his army were

destroyed. This is Mr. Elliott's own account of the interruption. "But, in the events which attended and caused the death of Valens, a fearful change occurred. A whole nation of the Goths, under terror of the threatened invasion of their Dacian country by innumerable hordes of Huns that had issued from the depths of Chinese Tartary, having implored permission to cross the Danube, were received into the Roman world, never thence-forward to quit it; rose up a military host against the Romans, on some insult or injury; and, after the slaughter of Valens and his army in the fearful battle of Adrianople, A. D. 378, stood before the world, connectedly with other of the frontier barbarians, like the tempest-angels seen by the evangelist on the four corners of the land, the evidently prepared instruments for effecting its desolation." (I. 296.) The silence in the Roman heaven was hence in this terrible manner broken, while yet 17 years of its pledged continuance had to be completed. The word of God, obviously, could not have thus belied itself, and the error lay necessarily with the interpretation. Nevertheless, and in spite of all the tortuous, imperfect, and hypothetical ways in which Mr. Elliott had arrived at his solution, in the face too, as has been seen, of absolute impossibilities, he called it one "alike simple and satisfactory." (I. 292.) It was so indeed, but only in the sense that its simplicity had to be denied, equally as its satisfactoriness.

And here one would think that the wearied disciple might have been left to repose himself upon the solution at length furnished him, so simple and so satisfying a one as it then was to his preceptor. But no, such is the freedom to self will allowed under the historic system of interpretation, and such the absence of solidity in its results, that the learner might, if he chose, adopt a method for fixing a meaning upon the prophecy wholly different from the one hitherto proposed to him. The verb *evero* is very pliant, and might be put back to "its usual imperfect sense," and the calm be introduced thus after the opening of the seventh seal, in lieu of being before it; and then albeit that "formal phrase of mystic time" was still wanting, the year-day

principle (!) might be resorted to. "Such," Mr. Elliott said of his original rendering, "is the solution that I myself *incline to* of the half-hour's silence in heaven. *At the same time* the alternative solution is *open to him who prefers it*,—while still explaining the silence to mean stillness from the threatened tempests, as before,—yet to interpret the half-hour on the prophetic year-day scale, as but a very short interval, even as of a few days." (Specified in a note as $7\frac{1}{2}$ days.—I. 297.) When it may be "open" to the learned thus to permit of such wide variety of interpretation, whither are the unlearned to turn for that "sure light of prophecy" which they have to seek only at their hands?

2. In the 12th chapter of the Revelation, upon the casting of the dragon out of heaven, a voice is raised, which calls upon the heavens to rejoice at being freed of his presence, and speaks of woe befalling the inhabitants of the earth, because he had come down among them. Nothing would appear more natural than that the expression of the joy occasioned by the ejection of such an inmate from the one region, should be followed up by observation of the woe he would occasion elsewhere in the other, to which his presence was to be transferred. But Mr. Elliott had an interpretation to uphold in which no transference of any bodily presence could have admission, and therefore the peculiar contrast of the circumstances of the heaven and the earth on the occurrence of such transference, appearing in these utterances, had to be done away with. The ejection of the dragon he considers to be the downfal of the Roman Pagan power, so that here no localities are in question, and no change of abode involved. Mr. Elliott consequently objects to the exclamation founded on the descent of the dragon upon earth, being connected with that relating to his expulsion out of heaven. He does so by designating the clause as to the expulsion as something distinctive of itself, of the nature seemingly of a classical composition of a fixed order, calling it an "*enrhusion*, or song of triumph;" and then he wonders how any can associate with such a theme, a subject of woe. The difficulty, it need hardly be pointed out, is one purely of Mr. Elliott's creation, and it has

been resorted to, as already observed, for a purpose of his own. As respects the clause involving woe, he proceeds to “*suggest the presumption*, (a presumption,” he observes, “to which no objection (!) seems to offer,) that this.... is to be regarded as a detached and solemn notification by the dictating prophetic Spirit of some woe on the Roman empire, soon about to follow.— Is it asked,” he goes on to say, “what woe? *The answer is ready;*” (aye indeed, and not one answer merely, but two are produceable out of the fertile storehouse of Mr. Elliott’s resources.) “*Either,*” he replies, “the Arian heresy raised up *within* the empire to be the disturber and persecutor of the church:— *or else* the Gothic scourge, which first of all *external* judgments, as we know, fell on the christianized Roman world.” (III. 28.) Thus, after an arbitrary wrench between two connected portions of the same speech, room is made for “the suggestion of a presumption;” and under it we are led on to two differing solutions, pointing to events coming from two opposite quarters, internal to the objects visited, or external to them, between which the unlearned have to make their choice. And here the dragon, who is the source of all they are enquiring into, is presented to them under no less than three discordant forms. Either he is the power of the state to be operated upon, or he is the flood of invaders who are to overthrow that state, or he involves no such antagonistic agents, but is simply a heresy in doctrine.

And after all, how stand the scripture declarations thus overlaid with their historic fittings? Who are the parties affected by the joy and the woe of which they speak? “The song of triumph,” Mr. Elliott tells us, “would represent that of the christian body then living, and elevated by the recent events to supremacy in the Roman empire.” (III. 22.) And to whom appertains the woe? It would hardly be anticipated by any having the contrasted language of the scripture before them, that these should be just the parties to whom the joy belonged. But it is so. The joy of this body was to be but short lived, and indeed seems represented as even altogether misplaced and delusive, the woe being their real portion. “But how different the

character of the coming future here, . . . from what was expected by the christians at this epoch of their triumph! . . . They spoke as if the times of promised happiness and glory to the church were just commencing. The prophetic vision, on the other hand, spoke of coming woe and persecution, of floods of impious invading enemies, and times impending on Christ's true church of famine, distress, and desolation." (III. 29.) This appears explicit enough, however opposed to the scripture, and would show that the woe fell upon those who had given utterance to the joy. But just in a breath before, pressed at the moment apparently by the force of the scripture contrast, Mr. Elliott would appear disposed to assign these sensations to two very different parties. "In either case," he says, "the woe was denounced distinctively against the earth and the sea, or those that dwell in them; a phrase specially significant of the earthly-minded, as long since observed: whereas it *seemed* implied that they who in heart dwelt in heaven,—a class marked out as separate from the former, just like the sealed ones of a former vision,—had a charter of exemption from real evil." (III. 28, 29.) From *real* evil? Then was it that the woe, as it fell upon the church, was as unreal as the joy? And if the heaven pointed to the heavenly-minded, how could a Pagan power, it has to be asked, which had never belonged to such an atmosphere, have been ejected out of it, as set before us under the dragon's fall?

3. The dragon, when cast out of heaven, was to come down to earth, "having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." This is significant, evidently, of the object spoken of being well aware that he had lost his position, irrecoverably, and of the rage animating him because he at the same time also knew that his days for action were to be few and numbered. How does the history meet these features?

The "final dejection of Paganism. . . from its high places in the empire," is stated to have been in "A. D. 324." But here, as in the instance of the breach of the silence in heaven by the slaughter of Valens and his army, a proviso of exactly a similar kind must be permitted. Mr. Elliott has to admit that

Paganism, after this “final (!) dejection,” had a “momentary *re-elevation*” in the empire, “under Julian,” the apostate ruler in it. The dragon therefore returned for the time to his heaven, quite against the scripture exigency. This Mr. Elliott seems to shut his eyes against, for he goes on to quote the scripture, and then to applaud the correctness of the fulfilment he has attributed to it. “‘The dragon,’” he observes, “‘was cast out of heaven, and his angels; and his place *no more* found therein.’—The exactness (!) of the imagery,” he exclaims, “seems indeed very striking.” (III. 21.) We have seen what Mr. Elliott’s ideas of simplicity and satisfactoriness have been in shaping out his historic adaptations, and here we have his notion of exactitude. Such is the lenity of the historic system as he would handle it.

But did the dragon, when he knew that his time was to be so short, know also of this temporary relief to his dejection? The scripture of course is altogether against his having any such knowledge, though attributing to him, evidently, full information as to the fate before him, even as to the duration of time involved therein. And how does Mr. Elliott exhibit historically the nature of this knowledge? Here he seems in perplexity, and disposes of the subject by burying his doubts in a note. “‘Knowing,’” he observes, “‘that his time is short.’ The knowing *may* here mean simply persuaded: just as in the case of the unprofitable servant, ‘Thou knewest that I was a hard man;’ (Matt. xxv. 26.) It is reasonable to suppose that the devil knows not, any more than the angels in heaven, the exact time of the last judgment: and might thus anticipate, as the early christians did, that it would follow speedily on the breaking up of the Pagan Roman empire. (Compare Matt. viii. 29; and xxiv. 36.)—*Or perhaps* the expression may refer to the brief remaining time in which profest Paganism would be tolerated.” (III. 29, note 4.) Truly the alternatives are very perplexing. The scripture, it appears, may very well mean one thing or the other, however conflicting such meanings. The object of the prediction, according to former representations, was at one time a Pagan power, and at another floods of invaders who overthrew

that power; or, possibly, simply a heresy in doctrine. It now however assumes a more serious shape, and is the evil one. The fall is attributed to one party; the prospects in the fall, to another. The "knowledge" of these prospects, may be as unreal as the joy and the woe of which we formerly read. It may be just sheer ignorance. The time thought to be short, may in truth have been very long, extending from the year 324, when the ejection is held to have occurred, to the final judgment, still laid up in futurity. Or, it may have been truly very short, having nothing to do with such judgment, and the knowledge exercised about it being after all just and sound. The sure light of prophecy, in historic hands, can do no more for us than to leave us here to our bewilderments.

4. Mr. Elliott, after referring to his solution of "the hour, day, month, and year," connected with the sixth trumpet, says, "I feel well convinced that the interpretation of the period given in an earlier part of this work is correct. *Yet it is not impossible* but that the period *may have been* worded in mystic phraseology, so as it is, in order to allow of a *double* interpretation; and that it may express as well the time during which, as the time within which, the Turk was to hold the empire and city of Constantine. *If so*, taking the year in the chronological formula to mean 365 years, as before, the fated epoch of the Turkish Empire, and total drying up of its flood from off the territory of Greek Christendom, will be not indeed 1844," (as concluded by another expositor, Mr. Habershon,) "but 1849. . . . This however is but conjecture. Whether true or not will soon be seen." (III. 398.) And then in a note Mr. Elliott adds, "Since this was written time itself (the year 1844 having ended without the fall of the Turkish empire) has shown the fallacy of Mr. Habershon's calculation. My own modified and conjectural suggestion as to the year 1849, still remains to be tested." The same unerring witness, time, has demonstrated the value of Mr. Elliott's "suggestion," equally as of Mr. Habershon's calculation, and in making it, "modified," and "conjectural," as in the near prospect of the proof to which it was to be subjected, Mr. Elliott

may have sought to term it, evidence is afforded that he is not restrained from imputing to the scriptures thoughts for which even not a word exists to support the imputation, nor from giving play, in avowal of unfolding what the Spirit may have solemnly put before us in the word, to the vagaries of a fertile and erratic imagination. Ingenuity then, with him, it is very plain, may take the place of interpretation.

5. Mr. Elliott had viewed the sea of glass, mentioned in Rev. iv. 6, as an adjunct to the throne of God's glory in heaven. (I. 82, 84.) By the time however that he came to the same object appearing in Rev. xv. 2, his scheme of interpretation had long involved him in earthly things, and among these it was desirable that this sea, as described the second time, should find a place. On the ground then that the article was wanting in this second instance, whereby the indication was assumed to be given that the object was one which had not been previously introduced, and also with some advertence to the fact that in the former instance the sea was "like crystal," but here was "mixed with fire," it became "almost clear" to him that the two seas were distinct ones. (III. 411, 412.) Mr. Elliott has traced out the use of the article in regard to various objects when referred to in the Apocalypse more than once, but he would seem to have overlooked that it has not been attached to the beast in chapter xvii., although he is universally allowed to have been before brought upon the scene. The absence of the article to the sea in Rev. xv., could not therefore be conclusive against its being identical with the sea appearing in chapter iv. And as to the one being like crystal, and the other mixed with fire, nothing like an irreconcileable difference between the two is thereby established, as Mr. Elliott himself allows; for, in the latter instance, the sea might be of the same constituency resembling crystal as appeared in the former one, and have had the fire superadded thereto. Mr. Elliott has thus seen the Lord Jesus presented under several aspects, as described very variously in Rev. i. 13—16; v. 6; and xix. 11—13, without at all stumbling at the different appearances assumed by Him.

However, Mr. Elliott leans strongly to the *seas* being distinct, and so proceeds to build his historic fitting upon the *supposition* that such is the case. "And, *if so*," he says, speaking of the sea last made mention of, and projecting thus a guessed solution in adaptation to a doubtful reading, "*why not* literally some *sea* depicted in the vision," (the literal, be it observed, being here preferred to the symbolical :)—"some *narrow sea*, markedly like the *Red Sea*." And then, drawing a parallel between the action of the harpers on the sea singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, with that of the Israelites when so singing on the bank of the Red Sea after their deliverance from Pharaoh, he goes on with his solution. "Let me just add," he continues, "that, *supposing* the Roman world to have appeared in miniature and living landscape before the evangelist, (a point established to my own conviction,) *then* its proper locality must have attached to the sea-scene spoken of, (just as to the sea, land, and boundary rivers noted elsewhere,) in the Apocalyptic landscape. And *supposing* further that the locality where the rainbow-vested angel planted his right foot, when descending on his light-bearing mission to the Roman world, *was marked as a sea-girt island in its north-west quarter, and perhaps too* that the tenth of the city," (viewed by Mr. Elliott to represent the kingdom of Great Britain,) "which fell soon after, coincidentally with the witness's ascent, was *some way* associated in vision with the same insular locality,—so as that Christ's servants should have appeared thenceforward specially attached thereto,—*then* the *probability* would be that the ocean-strait, which separated this island-tenth from what still remained of the mystical Egypt, or continental Anti-Christendom, was the sea which appeared to St. John in vision;" (III. 418—417 ;)—the fruit of all these suppositions being that the British channel is the sea in question. A marvellous transition of view, certainly, to adopt,—one sea of glass being a "transparent ether" (I. 84) appearing before the throne of God, and the other, the troubled, briny elements, which laves the shores of England. And how this latter sea, which is habitually so disturbed a one, could be represented as "glassy," is to be asked in vain.

Here, however, Mr. Elliott breaks off, to afford us another rendering, on an entirely antagonistic line of interpretation, if we should choose to prefer it. "But while," he says, "I present this as the best (!) solution I can *think of* that *seems* to satisfy alike the requirements of the present text, of grammatical rule, and of the notice of harpers singing the song of Moses, associated with the scene in action, yet I feel bound on fuller and renewed consideration to express my doubt whether, after all, the article may not have dropped out in the early copies, or some grammatical irregularity have been admitted, so as that though inarthrous, the clause may yet be construed as if the article were present. The reason of my doubt is first and chiefly this, because, construing it as I have done above, the scene becomes one detached and insulated in a manner quite unusual in the Apocalyptic *drama* (!); secondly, because the phrase 'having harps of God,' is one most naturally explicable of temple-harpers. And, if this be allowed, then the glassy sea will be the same here as before; the new statement of its admixture with fire being accounted for" (and here we may see how Mr. Elliott is prepared to draw upon his own thoughts to meet any emergency,) "by what is said of the smoke of the glory of God filling the temple during the vial outpouring: the fiery corruscations issuing from that glory being reflected on the glassy sea associated; and the place of the harpers on the margin both of the temple, and of the glassy sea touching it.—On this ambiguity," he adds, "the reader must judge for himself." (III. 417, 418.) The light of prophecy here again evidently fails us, and the criterion of its indications is to be our own imaginings.

These samples should suffice to show the nature of the guidance those are liable to who would follow Mr. Elliott through his delineations of prophecy. The prophetic page is one shrouded in dark mysterious images. Its subject is historic, running over times and countries widely remote, the records of which are often dim and inaccessible. It needs one who is at once a poetic painter, a grammarian, an historian, and an antiquary, to seize their contents, and to handle them successfully. The word of God is

dull and lifeless, without the energizing adjunct of human learning and resources. The unlearned must stand back in hopeless incapacity, and dare not dream of profiting by the sacred communication, save through the labours of the learned. "The spirit of truth" cannot undertake to "show them things to come," but by the instrumentality of some literary partner. The historic-solution system places us under a necessity for some such guide; and when we have him, we must be subjected, of course, to his humanities; and according to the calibre of the man, are his opportunities of misleading us. He may carry us through many a devious bye path, through many a tangled way, to the strangest, and even the most opposite conclusions. Grammatical criticism has such resources as to enable him to transpose a passage, to one sense or to another. Subjects may be literal or symbolical, seemingly at will; and, if symbolical, an active imagination turns them to any account. More of this will be seen hereafter as we go on with Mr. Elliott's pages. Historical adaptations abound, out of which the choice, according to the measure of the learning and of the candour of the guide, has to be made. And if any rigid difficulties should arise, a good-naturedly accepted proviso puts them aside. Chronologies are equally docile, the system for construing the types thereof being variable. And then, when the expounder may be at fault for positive meanings, conjecture supplies the remedy. Thus it is when we are laid under a necessity to look to man for instruction, and not to God. In the sight then of those who believe that the Spirit of God is able and willing to show all things to all who are under His dictates,—to the poor and the illiterate, equally as to the humanly wise and instructed ones,—the historic system of interpretation, in which man, with all his obliquities, must take so prominent a part, ought to carry with it its own confutation, and the bible itself, as able to make us wise unto salvation in every point on which it undertakes to address us, should be accepted as the only safe and truthful interpreter.

V. Attention has to be called to Mr. Elliott's treatment of

symbols, real or supposed, before we proceed to contemplate his delineations under them. While admitting the possibility of the predictions of the Apocalypse having (occasionally perhaps it is only meant) literal fulfilment, Mr. Elliott adds that "the analogy of all the Apocalyptic prefigurations requires primarily a symbolic explanation." (IV. 89, 90, *note 2.*) The rule, for commentators of Mr. Elliott's class, is a needful one, for where what are not avowedly figures are taken to be such, the only safe and consistent course is that every object occurring in the book should be accepted as figurative. No clause of the prophecy hence should appear without its symbolic form, and the admission of a literal acceptation, without any attendant symbolical one, should be disallowable. It ought not, furthermore, to be too much to expect that a symbol, once ascertained to have a particular meaning, should bear that same meaning wherever else it may appear; and the converse should also hold good, that no meaning once ascertained under any symbol, should afterwards be found to exist under a symbol of a different character.*

* I do not mean here to deny that there may be various types employed to represent the same object, provided the effect is to delineate that object in different lights. Our Lord, for example, it has to be admitted, has been thus set forth under many diversified figures. What is denied is the use of varied types for the same object, when this is represented in the several places without diversity of aspect and character.

I have also, I feel, to defend a position I have taken in my own treatise (pp. 134—146) with regard to the seven heads as exhibited upon the Antichrist, and as standing connected with his capital, and which may seem to be inconsistent with the first clause of the rule above proposed. These heads, when associated with the capital, I have believed to be seven hill-like remains of her former greatness, on which she will be rebuilt; when crowned on the dragon who transfers his empire to the beast, to be seven provinces, or kingships, constituting that empire; and when one of the heads is wounded, that this includes the destruction of the capital, which forms one of these kingships, as well as a deadly wound upon the Antichrist personally, taking effect upon his head. It will be observed here that there is a unity of thought pervading these various representations, which preserves to the symbol an uniformity of character, though this be expressed in several diversified ways. The head, in every language, is a type

That is, that every symbol should have its own appropriate meaning, without carrying with it a signification already borne by another symbol ; and should keep up that meaning, and none other, how often soever such symbol may occur. There is an end of force and certitude in the use of symbols, unless these rules obtain. Mr. Elliott has been rigid in exacting consistency from the Futurist school, and rightly so, objecting to their interpreting a clause first in one way, and then in another, reverting to the literal, or the symbolic, at their option. Let us see whether he at all preserves the required consistency himself.

The following are instances by which I would have him judged.

1. *Heaven*. Where a door was opened therein ; (I. 82;)—where the temple was situated ; (I. 98, *and note 1*;) and where it was opened ; (II. 428;)—literally rendered, and figuratively connected with the position and interests of the church below. Where the hosts are seen following Jesus ; (IV. 112;)—literal, without room for any such figurative application. Into which the two witnesses ascended ; (II. 400;) and where the woman clothed with the sun appeared ; (III. 10;)—rendered as signifying earthly exaltation.

of what is chief in importance or power. In the capital of the Antichrist, her chief buildings would be her appropriate heads, particularly where these were of such stupendous size as to assume, when in ruins, the form and dimensions of hills, as is the case at Babylon. The heads of an empire would be as appropriately the various provinces, or divisions, of which it was made up. And the transition to the actual head of the Antichrist, when he is personally concerned, is equally a natural one. It is the copiousness of what is laid up under the scripture prefiguration, and no need on the part of the interpreter, that has led to these diversities, but diversities, be it remembered, always of the same image, ~~to~~ the sustaining, and not to the forfeiting, of its primary character. I may add that in such treatment of this symbol all are agreed, in that it has been universally seen that the wounded head cannot be one of the hills, represented as heads, on which the city is built; neither have the crowned heads been held to be these hills, or heads of the city. The diversity of circumstances attaching to the symbol as appearing in different places, has called, necessarily, for modification in its interpretation. Thus the rule I contend for has so far its exceptions.

2. *Utterances in Heaven.* At the reception of the sealed book ; (I. 95;) and at the sounding of the 7th trumpet ; (II. 425; III. 279, *note 3* ;*)—in the literal heaven. At the downfall of the dragon ; (III. 22;)—in the political heaven.

3. *Thunderings and Lightnings.* Prior to the Gothic invasions ; (I. 345, 346;) and to the French revolution ; (III. 289—291;)—literal, and coming as portents to prefigure those events. Those from the throne of God ; (I. 84;)—literal, without associated figurative meaning. At the sounding of the 7th trumpet ; (III. 282;)—indicative of revolutionary commotions, without occurrence of literal enactment. The seven thunders at the vision of the rainbow-angel ; (II. 106;)—the Pope's decrees.

4. *Jews and Gentiles.* The 144,000 sealed out of the tribes of Israel ; (I. 233;)—the true christian church, the tribes being figurative. The countless multitude of Gentiles immediately after spoken of ; (I. 269;)—the same body, the nations, kindreds, people, and tongues, under which they appear, being literal. The people, kindreds, tongues, and nations, mentioned at the slaughter of the two witnesses ; (II. 381, 387—389;)—such as are hostile to the church, and not of it, being the Antichristian Papal nations. The measured Jewish temple ; (II. 178;)—the true body of christians. The Gentiles then in question ; (II. 178, 185;)—the Antichristian Papists. The holy city these were to tread down ; (II. 193;)—the true christians. The utterance of the Hebrew word “ Alleluia;” (IV. 109;)—associated with literal Jews.† The new Jerusalem ; (IV. 233;)—the christian church in the millennial glory.

* In this note, Mr. Elliott claims liberty for rendering the term heaven either in a literal or in a figurative way; but, if so, then the scripture remains undefended from human presumption as to which sense the word is to stand in. In effect, in just such a spirit of passing decision according to bare preference, or presumption, Mr. Elliott debates the meaning of the term in this note. Moreover, the rule he has laid down for himself, that the symbolical sense is always primarily to prevail in the prefigurations of the Apocalypse, is set at nought, when the literal, without the symbolic, is adopted.

† Notwithstanding the weighty Jewish interests so largely occupying

It is upon the interpretations of the Futurists on these points that Mr. Elliott presses heavily upon them, and, as I can allow, with reason. His objection to their inconsistencies on these heads only however lays him himself under the deeper obligation to keep clear of similar error, to the evil of which his own eyes are shown to be thus open. How he has redeemed himself when he came to interpret these very same subjects above appears. We have the tribes of Israel figuring the Gentile church, and in the same breath we have the Gentile church exhibited by tribes of Gentiles. In vain does the Spirit resort to marked discriminative distinctions. Jews and Gentiles are to be confounded together as if there were no difference between these bodies. Again, having just had the Gentile tribes to denote the true church, we have the same figure to represent their opposite contrast, the apostate body. All is thus mixed up in one, in hopeless confusion. We have further Hebrew destinies grounded (and I believe justly) upon the use of one Hebrew word, but when we come to the very tribes of the nation, in full detail, and to the name of their own city, with the tribes again inscribed upon her, we are to have none of them, and are to attribute all there given of such very peremptory Jewish type to Gentiles.

5. *Earthquake.* At the sounding of the 7th trumpet ; (III. 282, 289 ;)—a political revolution, preceded by portents of a literal earthquake,—the revolution, be it observed, occurring in Paris, but the portent in Calabria. At the opening of the 6th seal ; (I. 221 ;)—a politico-religious revolution, when Constantine triumphed over the Pagans, there being no literal portent attendant thereon. At the ascent of the witnesses ; (II. 405 ;)—a religious division, when certain states changed from Papacy to Protestantism, no literal portent accompanying.

6. *Famine and Drought.* *Famine*, under the 4th seal ; (I. 172 ;)—literal, with no “primary symbolic signification” attached to the prophetic record, and still remaining to be established, Mr. Elliott’s scheme is such as to accord them no place in the Apocalypse, save what may be hung upon this one word. Was it out of shame that even this little has been accorded them ?

ing thereto. *Drought*, in the time of the two witnesses ; (II. 200, 354, and note 1 :)—figurative, signifying spiritual destitution.

7. *Geographic features.* The *mountains* and *islands* moved under the 6th seal ; (I. 208 ;)—a revolution. The *dens* and *rocks* in which men then hide themselves ; (*ib.* 208, 209 ;)—having no particular meaning, the whole action simply implying terror. The *earth* connected with the tempest-angels ; (*ib.* 223 ;) where those dwell who rejoice at the death of the witnesses ; (II. 389 ;) that to the inhabitants of which woe is denounced at the ejection of the dragon from heaven ; (III. 28 ;)—literal, but under restriction as being only the Roman earth ; and bearing also a figurative significancy, implying that those dwelling there are earthly-minded,*—the heaven, be it observed, from which the dragon is cast down, having at the same time a figurative signification, and implying political power. That which swallowed up the flood sent by the dragon to overwhelm the woman fleeing into the wilderness ; (*ib.* 51, 52 ;)—Popery, as absorbing Arianism and Paganism. The *land*, *sea*, and *rivers*, under the three first trumpets ; (I. 325 ;)—literal, but having respect to those who dwell in such neighbourhood, and not to the geographic features themselves.† The *trees* and *grass* of the *earth*

* It seems a strange inconsistency that heavenly bodies, as in Mr. Elliott's interpretation of the 6th seal, should be the selected type for the rulers of this earthly-minded place.

† Mr. Elliott here claims liberty to accept these features in their literal signification, although occurring among others of symbolic import ; but in point of actuality he fails to adhere to his own proposition, for he makes the judgments, as we find, to fall, not upon the localities themselves, but upon persons occupying them. The case of Egypt, however, enables us to see that the very objects indicated in the text may be brought under the judgment ; and that the prophecy is thus literally to be accepted, may be further learned from the nature of the call made upon mankind to render their allegiance to God, where they are required to “worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters,” (Rev. xiv. 7,) the precise features visited under the trumpets being appealed to as affording proofs of His Godhead,—proofs obviously enforced by the judgments wrought upon them.

burnt up under the 1st trumpet ; (*ib.* 340 ;)—literal. The *sea turned into blood* under the 2nd trumpet ; (*ib.* 341 ;)—figurative, indicating loss of life among maritime people. The *rivers becoming bitter* under the 3rd trumpet ; (*ib.* 352, 353 ;)—figurative, referring to loss of life among those dwelling in the neighbourhood of rivers, occasioned, not through drinking the waters thereof, but in war. The *waters* turned into blood by the witnesses ; (II. 200 ;)—figurative, meaning the bloodshed of wars, and here such as is unconnected with the localities of any rivers. The *rivers and fountains of waters becoming blood* under the 3rd vial ; (III. 331 ;)—figurative, being the bloodshed of wars on the banks of literal rivers. The *sea*, to the inhabitants of which woe is denounced ; (*ib.* 28 ;)—literal. That from which the beast arose ; (*ib.* 92, 93 ;)—figurative, being a flood of invading Goths.* That becoming blood under the 2nd vial ; (*ib.* 325 ;)—figurative, bespeaking loss of life in naval actions. *The glassy sea* mingled with fire ; (*ib.* 417 ;)—literal, being the British channel, the fire being however figurative, and expressive of God's judgment upon the adversaries of those dwelling by that sea. The *wilderness*, where the sun-clothed woman became located ; (*ib.* 33 ;)—figurative, referring to the seclusion from observation in which she was to be. That where the harlot is located ; (IV. 98 ;)—a literal waste.

8. *The throne of God.* That round which the heavenly hosts are seen ; (I. 84 ;)—the seat of the Divine majesty. That to which the sun-clothed woman's child was caught up ; (III. 12 ;)—the throne of the Roman empire (nominally) christianized.

9. *The temple and altar of God.* Where the heavenly hosts are assembled ; (I. 98 ;)—the place of heavenly worship. Where

* I am aware of the necessity of a figurative meaning being attached to the word "sea" here, while elsewhere it has to be taken literally ; but then the landmarks in the scripture for the treatment of the word symbolically in this instance, (especially as derived from the parallel vision of the beasts in Daniel,) are very apparent. Mr. Elliott's habit is to pass from the literal to the figurative, at will, without having any such landmarks.

the beast is worshipped ; (III. 151 ;)—the temple and high altar of the Popish cathedral of St. Peter's.*

10. *Death, killing, and wounding.* *Death*, under the 4th seal ; (I. 171 ;)—literal mortality. The *killing* under the 2nd, 4th, and 5th seals ; (*ib.* 140, 172, 182 ;) under the 2nd and 3rd trumpets, and the 2nd vial ; (*ib.* 341, 342; III. 325 ;) and under the instrumentality of the image of the beast ; (III. 197 ;)—literal. The *dead*, whose judgment was spoken of at the sounding of the 7th trumpet ; (II. 426 ;) those beheaded by the beast ; (IV. 185 ;) those brought to judgment at the end of the millennium ; (*ib.* 185 ;)—persons literally dead. The *killing* to be abstained from under the 5th trumpet ; (I. 424, 426 ;)—not relating to literal killing, which in truth was effected abundantly under that trumpet, (*ib.* 424,) but having respect to a “political christian body,” which was not to be broken up and dissolved. The *killing of men* under the 6th trumpet ; (*ib.* 467, 479 ;)—the extinction of an empire. Of the two witnesses ; (II. 372 ;)—the reducing them to silence. Their *dead bodies* which were not to be buried ; (*ib.* 368, 389 ;)—literally such; the non-burial being also literal. The *crucifying* of Christ, spoken of as having occurred in a particular city ; (*ib.* 379 ;)—figurative, being the dishonouring Him doctrinally. The *slaying* of 7000 *men* at the ascension of the witnesses ; (*ib.* 411 ;)—the secession of seven provinces from the Papacy.† The *wounding* of the 7th head of the beast ; (III. 96, 97 ;)—the extinction of imperial rule.

11. *Fire and burning.* Under the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 6th trumpets ; (I. 347, 350, 351, 352, 477, 478 ;)—literal. That by

* Here is another glaring inconsistency connected with the Papists. The “earth” was allotted to them in type of their being “earthly-minded.” But would not the assigning them the “temple and altar of God” bespeak their being heavenly-minded?

† Mr. Elliott has two other figures for expressing instances of the same secession; namely, that of an earthquake, and that of the fall of the tenth of a city; (II. 405, 406;) so that figures of the utmost diversity of form, may at will be taken to represent all the very same thing.

which the beast is to be destroyed ; (IV. 118 ;)—literal, and probably volcanic. That denounced for the worshippers of the beast ; (*ib.* 71 ;) and that poured out upon the rebels at the end of the millennium ; (*ib.* 243 ;)—literal. That coming out of the mouths of the two witnesses ; (II. 200 ;)—figurative, having reference to God's fiery judgments. That called down by the 2nd beast ; (III. 177 ;)—also figurative, but being his anathemas, represented also as literal fire by the flash of lighted candles then flung down. That by which the horns consume the beast ; (*ib.* 853 ;)—figurative, but here signifying hatred and spoilation brought to bear upon the Papacy.*

12. *Smoke.* Appearing from the bottomless pit under the 5th trumpet ; (I. 410 ;)—figurative, being the spread of a false religion. (Mohamedanism.) That from the mouths of the horsemen under the 6th trumpet ; (*ib.* 477, 478 ;)—literal, their mouths however not being such literally, but signifying cannon. That ascending at the burning of Babylon ; (IV. 243 ;)—literal.

13. *A falling star.* That under the 3rd trumpet ; (I. 341, 352, *and note 1* ;)—a triumphant invader, taking his course like a meteor, natural meteoric portents also preceding him. That under the 5th trumpet ; (I. 415, 417 ;)—a fallen potentate.

It will be seen from the above that Mr. Elliott has placed himself under no rule, but that of his own will, in the treatment of the objects of the Apocalypse, and has allowed himself the widest liberties in his interpretations, whereby, of course, any meanings may be put upon the text, which the interpreter may choose to allot thereto. Such a system, however, exposes itself, for God cannot have placed His word thus at the mercy of man's imaginings, and were it even possible to admit the reverse, the means of acting upon such a system, with any hope of arriving at accurate conclusions, would be altogether wanting. Where

* There are thus two consumptions by fire of what Mr. Elliott looks on as the Papacy, of which in one instance the fire (as previously shown) is to be literal, and probably volcanic, and in the other, as here, figurative. What rule of interpretation is there then, other than the will of the interpreter?

could the line be drawn between the literal and the figurative? Would it not fluctuate in every hand which approached the subject? And when the figurative is determined upon, who is to fix upon the meaning of the figure? Would not every thinking mind take its own course in such a pursuit? Where then would be the solid truth offered us in the text of God? And when symbols of diverse aspect may denote the same thing, while other symbols may from place to place in which they appear indicate diverse things, who is to govern the anomalies? The "*sure word of prophecy*," evidently, can never be involved in such an endless tissue of uncertainties.

I will conclude this section of my subject with an instance of the freedom with which any quantity of matter may be laid upon a term of prophecy, when viewed as of figurative import, and treated, under the historic system, by a hand such as Mr. Elliott's.

The noisome and grievous sore, which under the 1st vial is inflicted on the worshippers of the beast, is thus dealt with by him.

"We may reasonably *suppose*," he observes, "that which was specially the blotch of Egypt. . . . to have been the prototype of the Apocalyptic figure. And this, *if I mistake not*," he adds, "is the plague-boil or ulcer. . . . *Supposing* which to be the sore intended, we must *add* to its other characteristics of the noisome, the painful, and the loathsome, that also of being in the highest degree infectious or contagious. . . . Thus, resolving the metaphor, and *turning from the body natural*, supposed in the figure, *to the body politic*, (just as in the similar metaphor of Isaiah,*) we

* The passage referred to is this. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." (Isa. i. 5, 6.) These illustrations appear in a passage where the metaphorical sense is manifestly made use of. Not so as regards the mention of the sore in the Revelation. This falls simply as an act of judgment upon the adversaries, and if the blotch of Egypt be allied thereto, surely the safe reference would have been to the literal visitation on the Egyptians, when, under parallel circumstances, this blotch was inflicted upon them.

seem bound,” (that is, by the force of our own suppositions,) “to interpret the judgment of this Vial as some extraordinary outbreak of moral and social evil, the expression of deep-seated disease within, with raging pain and inflammation as its accompaniment,—disease of Egyptian origin *perhaps*, in the Apocalyptic sense of the word Egypt, loathsome, deadly, self-corroding, contagious,—that would arise *somewhere* in Papal Europe, . . . and sooner or later infect its countries generally, and their inhabitants.” (III. 302, 303.)

The nature of the sore having been thus arrived at, Mr. Elliott proceeds with his application thereof.

“*Such*,” he says, “being the symbol, I explain it, in common with other interpreters, to prefigure that tremendous outbreak of social and moral evil, of democratic fury, atheism, and vice, which was speedily seen to characterize the French revolution:—that of which the ultimate source was in the long and deep-seated corruption and irreligion of the nation; the outward vent, expression, and organ in its Jacobin clubs, and seditious and atheistic publications; the result, the dissolution of all society, all morals, and all religion; with acts of atrocity and horror accompanying, scarce paralleled in the history of man, and suffering and anguish of correspondent intensity throbbing throughout the social mass, and corroding it:—that which from France as a centre spread like a plague, through its affiliated societies, to the other countries of Papal Christendom: and was, wheresoever its poison was imbibed, as much the punishment as the symptom of the corruption within.” (III. 304.)

And now we come to the actualities considered to have been prefigured under this sore of the Apocalypse.

These are enumerated to have been, the fury manifested on the taking of the Bastile; the atrocious night assault on the palace at Versailles, accompanied with a ferocious attempt at murdering the queen, and the abduction of the king in bloody triumph to the capital; the confiscation of all church estates; the subjection of all power, civil, judicial, and ecclesiastical, to the democracies; the declaration of a code of anarchy and revo-

lution ; the ascendancy to power of the Paris Jacobin club, and its affiliated associations ; the attack on the palace, massacre of the guard, imprisonment and dethronement of the king, and murders of the royalists in the prisons ; the execution of the king and queen ; the declaration of war against kings, and fraternization with revolutionists all over the world ; the reign of terror, the revolutionary tribunal, and civil wars and massacres of La Vendée and Lyons ; the public renunciation of christianity and of God ; the worship of a prostitute as goddess of reason, with all the orgies of licentiousness accompanying ; the abolition of the sabbath and of all religious emblems and worship ; the proclamation of death being eternal sleep ; and the procession at Lyons in mockery of christianity. (III. 305—307.)

This is an amazing flood of historic fittings, truly, to adjust to that one little word "sore ;" and where the limit, it may be asked, to the heaping up of adaptations, or where the mark of correspondence to be observed between the type and the anti-type, if so multifarious and astounding a train of events may be comprehended under one such term ?

VI. Mr. Elliott holds that the visions of the Apocalypse "form a continuous chronological series," (I. 266,) and in this few will fail to concur with him. It has to be seen with what degree of success he has made the attempt thus to set forth his delineations.

1. The operation of the 2nd seal is described to have terminated in A. D. 249, (I. 140,) and that of the 4th to have begun in A. D. 248. (*ib.* 171.) There remains hence no distinctive time for the action of the 3rd seal, which has to encroach on the period allotted for its predecessor ; and which it accordingly does, as it is stated to have prevailed from A. D. 212, (*Vind. Hor.* p. 146,) throughout the era of Alexander Severus, (I. 167,) who demised in A. D. 235, (*Class. Dict.*,)—thus also terminating its action ere that of the 2nd seal was concluded. Again, the 2nd trumpet is said to have operated from A. D. 429 to 477, (I. 349, 351,) while the 3rd both began and ended its course within that interval, having had effect from A. D. 450 to 453.

(I. 352, 353.) With these exceptions, the action of the one seal, or trumpet, is made to terminate before that of its successor sets in, and, consequently, the instances of departure from this order must be held to be demonstrative of failure in the scheme of interpretation which involves them.

In his "Vindiciae Horariæ," (pp. 137, 138,) Mr. Elliott claims liberty for the overrunning of the seals, the one into the other, on the ground that events in life, such as he conceives to be prefigured by the seals, may have synchronical action. The fact doubtless is so, but what we have to do with are the indications which the scripture gives us as to the course therein laid down for the subjects of the prophecy. The seals each cover some particular circumstance, or chain of circumstances. The natural progress is that when we have done with one, we pass on to the other. Mr. Elliott's description of the arrangements of the sealed scroll would peremptorily call for such precise steps in the progress. The eye is carried over all that is confined under the one seal, before we come to the stage of having the succeeding seal opened. Thus far for the method of the communication. And such also appears to be the method of the fulfilments. The expressions "after these things," and "after this," (vii. 1, 9 ; xviii. 1 ; xix. 1,) serve to show that the succession is maintained by the former things passing away, before new things appear. This is specifically said to be the case of the woes, which therein may be taken to be exemplars of all the other objects. "One woe," it is declared, "is past ; and, behold, there come two woes hereafter." And again, "The second woe is past ; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly." It was just thus in the visitations of Egypt, which afford so strong a type of God's dealings with the world under the Apocalypse. Every plague was in its order brought to an end before the next plague followed. The pause was needed that one blow might expend itself, and the effects thereof be judged of before it could be decided that there was occasion for another. Every blow thus carried with it its full and perfect lesson, free of the confusion that an intermingling of the blows would have produced.

The visitations of the Apocalypse are given precisely with the same view as those in Egypt, in testimony against ungodliness, and for the purpose of breaking down the opposition of the ungodly. "Yet repented they not," it is said, after many such demonstrations had been made; and then the former plagues having failed, more serious ones are brought in. The blows of the Apocalypse call thus for the very same system of arrangement as those in Egypt, in order that each may have its due weight, and tell its distinctive tale; and any system of interpretation which cannot provide them with such ordering, must on this ground alone falsify itself.

2. For the vials, Mr. Elliott has been able to secure but little semblance of chronological arrangement, notwithstanding that these objects are presented in the text under the same form of marshalling as the seals and the trumpets,—numbered in a series from 1 to 7,—and evidently involving the same consecutive order of succession. Indeed Mr. Elliott himself traces the similarity of the four first vials to the four first trumpets, (III. 229,) so as to have made it imperative on him to have found for them a parallel system of arrangement; and the more so as he furthermore sees in the plagues brought in under the vials "a manifest resemblance to the plagues of ancient Egypt," (*ib.* 298,) which were inflicted, as already observed, the one in strict succession to the other. The vials, in Mr. Elliott's scheme, stand relatively to each other thus. The events ascribed to the 1st, would appear to have been in operation from A. D. 1789 to 1800. (*ib.* 305, 307, *note* 5.) The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, began to be poured out before the 1st had cessation,—the 2nd and 3rd having been first exhibited in A. D. 1792, (*ib.* 323, 328,) and the 4th in A. D. 1794. (*ib.* 335.) The 2nd and 3rd vials began thus in the same year; but the 3rd terminated before the 2nd, the third having been brought to a close in A. D. 1805, (*ib.* 331,) and the 2nd not till 1815. (*ib.* 324, 325.) The period of the termination of the 4th vial is not clearly given, but as the "scorching" effects of Napoleon's campaigns * are held to have

* I may permit myself here to observe upon the singular infelicity of

been included therein, (*ib.* 338,) A. D. 1815, when his last appearance in the field occurred, must be taken as ending this vial. The 5th therefore, that took place in full during the year 1809, (*ib.* 342,) was embraced within the period of the 2nd and the 4th. Moreover, taking the 1st vial in the general acceptation of the effect attributed thereto, namely the prevalence of democracy and atheism, (*see scroll,*) it may be said to be still in operation, while the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th, have been expended. The infliction of the 6th vial is held to have been begun in A.D. 1820; (III. 391;) that is, after all its predecessors, with the exception perhaps of the 1st, had run out. The 7th was still in futurity when Mr. Elliott wrote.* We have thus the 1st vial continuing in operation after the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th have been expended. We have the 2nd and 3rd beginning simultaneously, but the last of the two on the series being exhausted first. We have the 5th vial taking full effect within the period of the 2nd and the 4th. And we have the 6th alone maintaining a position such as that intended to be assigned for the seals and trumpets, and withheld from exhibition until its predecessors (the 1st however being excepted) have had their course. The failure of the chronological arrangement has been then in the instance of the vials most absolute, and this entails the failure of the scheme of interpretation in which so manifest a defect occurs.

3. The two witnesses are considered to be christians giving

• ascribing scorching as an effect of Napoleon's campaigns, when the icy fate of his army, in the most serious one of them all, that in Russia, is borne in mind.

* At the time of the recent revolutionary movements on the continent, Dr. Cumming, an admirer, and a wholesale adopter, of Mr. Elliott's views, preached, no doubt to excited multitudes, that these were the effects of the 7th vial, then in actual course of infliction, to be followed, necessarily, with celerity, by the grand consummation of the advent of Jesus. The speedy restoration of order in the disturbed regions, and the calm that has followed, afford the best answer that can be given to this idea, and serve to illustrate the pretensions to reality of the system under which it has been put forth.

their testimony to Christ, and their death the silencing of that testimony. The death of the witnesses is held to have occurred in A. D. 1514, (II. 387,) and the beginning of their witnessing to have been in A. D. 533; (*scroll*;) that is, 981 years before their death. The uprising of Luther's testimony is viewed as having constituted their resurrection. The matter of the two witnesses is recorded in the 11th chapter of the Revelation, and the career of Luther is held to have been given in the vision appearing in the 10th chapter. We have thus the resurrection witness on the scene, before mention is made of those consequent upon whose death he was raised up, and who dated from upwards of 980 years before him.

Mr. Elliott attempts to account for this disturbance of order by saying that the matter of the witnesses was brought in under form of a narrative, retrospectively; (II. 190;) but here he had the difficulty to meet that the witnesses were spoken of, not in the past, but in the future tense. This he strives to obviate thus. “The *present* tense. ‘These *have* power,’” (to shut heaven,) “implies that the witnessing then still continued. The *future*, ‘I *will* give power, and they *shall* prophecy 1260 days,’ &c., is measured evidently from a point of time *past* with reference to *the then figured prophetic epoch*, but *future* with reference to *the time of St. John's seeing the vision*. In *Isaiah* liii., and other prophecies, where the seer is rapt by the Spirit into some distant future, a similar double standard date of reference occurs. ‘He *shall* grow up as a tender plant;’ ‘He *is* despised and rejected;’ ‘He *hath borne* our griefs,’” &c. (II. 190, *note 3*.)

It will be best first to dispose of the reference to *Isaiah*. The prophecy, we know, related to the sufferings of Jesus, yet future when it was enunciated. The use of the future tense in it was then strictly just what was called for. That of the present and the past was in liberty of speech, which God, in the certainty of the occurrence of that which He has designed, and in the presence to Himself of such realization through the power of His foreknowledge, can well employ, calling thus “things which be not as though they were.” (Rom. iv. 17.) This pas-

sage, consequently, gives no cover for the adoption of the *future* where the *past* is intended, a form of speech justifiable under no consideration, and such as would be generative only of confusion; and which, it may be added, neither God nor man have ever employed.

The difficulty then with which Mr. Elliott has to contend, has to be judged of by itself. "The *future*," he says, "is measured evidently from a point of time *past* with reference to *the then prophetic epoch*, but *future* with reference to *the time of St. John's seeing the vision*." The meaning of this passage would appear to be that there was a prophetic epoch, when the narrative of the witnesses is conceived to have been given out, and that although this narrative related to events of past occurrence, the narrator and the hearer were nevertheless supposed at the time to be existing at a period antecedent to these events, and so mention was made of them in the future tense. In other words, what had past was represented as if still to happen, and the narrative took the form of a prophecy. Was ever communication made under such circumstances as these? And is not the idea that the speaker and the hearer were thus cast back into past times, contradicted by the view Mr. Elliott takes of the occurrence in one clause of the narrative of the present tense, of which he says, "'These *have* power,' implies that the witnessing then still continued"?—bringing thus the parties to the narrative into the existing time of the prophetic epoch in which they are held to have actually stood. And that such is the real nature of Mr. Elliott's exposition of the scene, appears from the circumstance that he has considered the evangelist, who heard the narrative, not to have been in his simple natural character at the time, but himself an actor in the prophetic "drama," as "a representative man;" (I. 102, 263, &c. ;)* and

* It is lamentable that the solemn realities of the Apocalypse, where God is represented as coming out in visible contest with man, should be accounted as given forth in the unreal guise of so human a composition as a drama, and that the venerable apostle should be made to hold place therein as an actor, and that of Protean order, like some who have figured

as the epoch was that of the reformation, especially representing Luther. The idea is thus given in the exposition of the 10th chapter of the Apocalypse, the leading events of this 11th chapter, and among them, the narrative in question, being considered to belong to that same epoch, and in fact to be associated with the same hero of that epoch. "This premised," Mr. Elliott says, "and with the remembrance further of St. John's symbolic character on the Apocalyptic scene, as representative of Christ's faithful ministers of the time figured,—more especially, in this present act of the Apocalyptic drama, of him that was the head, guide, and master-spirit of the ministers of the reformation, Martin Luther." (II. 147, 148.) According to this exhibition of the matter, the hearer of the narrative was not left in his own time, to which the subjects of the narrative stood future, as Mr. Elliott would seem desirous of showing when the difficulty of the future tense had to be met, but was carried onwards to the prophetic epoch in which the narrative is held actually to have been in some way expressed, and received it in his representative character, as figuring especially the great agent in that epoch.

The conclusion then to which we are brought is that Luther, as a resurrection witness, after receiving the open book of his testimony with the injunction to publish it abroad, (for such is Mr. Elliott's explanation of the vision in the 10th chapter of the Apocalypse,) was called up to hear a narrative in which, among other things, he was told of his own resurrection, this according to Mr. Elliott, having been "the last point noted in the angel's retrospective narrative." (II. 398.) The confusion in the "drama" is thus at its height. And there still remains in that way upon the actual theoretic stage. The word of God, it is almost needless to observe, gives no cover for such a thought as this; and indeed subverts it, for the apostle comes forward with his revelation, very remarkably, in his own name, saying the Lord had given it to him as unto "his servant John," and that he had so received it. "I, John....was in the Spirit on the Lord's day," &c. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem." Now the last thing an actor would think of in exhibiting himself upon the stage, would be the proclamation of his own identity.

the difficulty of the future tense rigidly opposing Mr. Elliott's chronologic arrangements, under the force of which, pursuant to the place he would give to this narrative, that is spoken of as having still to be accomplished, which in effect had been going on for the space of nearly ten centuries.

4. Again, the measuring of the temple is interpreted to be the constitution of the "evangelic church," occurring at the time of the reformation in A. D. 1525, (II. 183, 184,) and the treading down of the holy city by the Gentiles for 42 months, the persecution of "the faithful in Christendom" during the 1260 years of the testifying of the witnesses. (II. 193.) And here too the order of the narrative, and the tense made use of, are quite against the chronology of Mr. Elliott's historic adaptations, for the measuring of the temple is the first spoken of, and afterwards we have the treading down of the city, which is described as an event then future. The outer court, it is mentioned, was "given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city," it goes on to say, "*shall* they tread under foot forty and two months;" so that Luther and his coadjutors, after having in A. D. 1525 to measure out the temple, were told of the treading down of the holy city, as a matter unknown to them, and yet future, when this had been going on, notoriously, for close upon ten centuries.

5. The denunciation of the apostate Romanists as Gentiles, is viewed by Mr. Elliott as a chronological event, and as having occurred at the measuring of the temple, when the outer court was assigned to them. He says, they had "called themselves christians, and been thus enrolled into the body of the New Testament Israel;" but had "forsaken the christian altar-worship; and were *now at length* denounced by the angel as having visibly, though not professedly, apostatized to heathenism." (II. 178.) And yet it is in this character of "Gentiles," or "heathenized christians," that they are held to have been treading down the holy city for the nearly ten preceding centuries. (II. 198.)

The "continuous chronological series" which it was the design

of Mr. Elliott to maintain in his delineations of the Apocalypse, has thus broken down in the ordering of the seals, the trumpets, the vials, and other material subjects of the sacred record. It has so in fact in regard to nearly all that he undertook thus to account for chronologically, for the vision regarding the woman clothed with the sun, and those relating to the Antichrist, are not viewed by him as given in chronologic position, while for the sealing and palm-bearing visions, as will be shown hereafter, he cannot be said to have provided any periodic fulfilment at all. Thus the failure on his part to exhibit an historical chain of events answering to the chronological arrangement of the subjects of the Apocalypse may be said to be an absolute one, and as this has proceeded from no want of foresight or attention upon his part, but has been owing to the sheer intractability of his materials, the erroneousness of the scheme of interpretation which has involved such failure becomes apparent.

VII. In giving an account of the manner in which he approached his subject, Mr. Elliott says that "the difficulty of the seals met him at the outset;" and "in commencing his researches" into this feature of the prophecy, he goes on to observe that "there were two preliminary *presumptions* on which he judged he might *safely* proceed. The one presumption," he explains, "was that, *supposing* the fortunes of the Roman world and Christendom, from St. John's time down to the consummation, to have been subjects of Apocalyptic figuration, the æras successively chosen by the divine Spirit for delineation must have been the most important and eventful in the history of Christendom :—the other, that the emblems introduced into and constituting each prefigurative picture, must have been emblems in every case suitable to the æra and subject, and in considerable measure characteristic and distinctive." (*Pref.* v., vi.)

But assuredly the first question to arrest attention, before passing to the consideration of the seals, was the nature of that book to which these seals stood appended. That determined, satisfactorily, judgment could afterwards be exercised upon the import of the seals. In fact, upon the due understanding of

what this book indicates, the solution of the seals, and of all the events which their opening gives rise to, is wholly dependent. And upon this point also the controversy between the historic interpreters, and those whom Mr. Elliott terms Futurists, mainly turns. The former believe it to be a book containing the prophecies of the Apocalypse ; the latter,—at least those who with myself follow Mr. Burgh in his able commentary on this subject,—the book of the evidence of the Lord's inheritance, conferred upon Him in bestowal of the power to enter upon that inheritance. The view of the Futurists is death to that of the historic interpreters, for if the delivery of this book to the Lamb indicate that the time has arrived when He rises from His Father's throne, in order to assume that dominion which belongs to His own throne, then it follows that all connected with that book is yet future, and that it cannot therefore relate to the past and current events surrounding us with which the historic interpreters would associate it. A decided controversialist, such as is Mr. Elliott, and one disposed as he is to follow out the record before Him to its minutest particulars, should not have overlooked the leading features of this scene of the delivery of the book, which so prominently challenge attention, and upon the due understanding of which the question between himself and those who hold the system opposite to his own thus materially turned. But like all of his school with whose works I am acquainted, Mr. Elliott has failed to enter upon the inquiry here so imperatively called for at his hands, and upon bare assumption has concluded that the book was that prophetic record (I. 95) which it suits his system of interpretation to make it.

The difficulties which lie in the way of such assumption, I would now instance.

The book, as with the historic interpreters, being a record of prophetic subjects, extending at the least to the advent of our Lord, hitherto sealed up, but now opened by the Lamb, it has been overlooked that the most important of these subjects, and which so largely enter into its contents, such as what relate to the Antichrist, to the coming of our Lord, to His reign on earth

with His saints, to the last judgment, to the new Jerusalem, and to the new heavens and earth, had been already presented to man, especially in the book of Daniel, in the gospels, and in the epistles, and consequently that such subjects, at the date of the Apocalypse, could not possibly have been represented as sealed up.*—It has been overlooked, that if man could be thus intrusted with the prominent features of the Apocalyptic prophecies, before our Lord appeared on earth and shed His blood, the merit acquired by the shedding of that blood could not have been needed to entitle Him to take the book and open its seals, if merely one of prophecy; whereas, in the description given of the scene in the Apocalypse, His title so to do is explicitly, and prominently, traced to this His bloodshedding.—It has been overlooked that under no circumstances could the Lord Jesus, who is equal with God, have been placed in such a position as regards the contents of this book, if relating simply to prophecy, as to have had it sealed up from Himself, so as that to get at its contents, it was necessary for even Him to “prevail” over such impediment by taking the book and opening the seals thereof.—It has also been overlooked that it was the special office of the Holy Ghost, as sent down on earth at Pentecost more than 60 years before the delivery of these visions to John, to “shew us things to come,” and that He could not be cast out of this office, and the same be made to devolve on the Lord Jesus, as the only one in heaven or on earth found worthy thereof.—It has been overlooked that John could not have wept at missing the contents of a book, the purport of which was at the time unknown to him, being till then sealed up from him; for a man is not brought to such an action, without first understanding the nature of the loss which is to occasion it. And it has been overlooked that he could hardly have anticipated that the things involved in the opening of the book were prophetic enunciations, the com-

* The correspondence between the revelations of the Apocalypse, and those given to Jewish prophets of old, as traced out in pp. 356—361 of my treatise, may also be appealed to as involving evidence that the subjects of the Apocalypse were not of a hitherto hidden nature.

munication of which he thus stood in danger of losing, as he had been brought to the scene under the special assurance that these very matters of prophecy were about to be exhibited to him. "Come up hither," he was told, "and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." This certitude could not have been given him, and then the next action made to express to him the very reverse, as if it were impossible that any man could ever be made acquainted with these things.—It has been overlooked that John could not have been so earnest in seeking to possess himself of the prophecies of the Apocalypse, if these formed the subject of the sealed book, as to have even wept when access thereto seemed to be denied, and yet, after witnessing the overcoming of the difficulty to the disclosure of the book, and seeing the seven seals thereof opened, and the contents of the book laid bare to view, have been liable to set his own seal upon those contents, so as to have stood in need of the injunction given him not to seal up the sayings of the book. He could not have been under risk of closing from sight, what he had been so solicitous to have exposed to sight. The seals he saw opened must therefore bear a very different import from the sealing which formed the subject of the interdiction thus given him.—It has been overlooked that the seals of the Apocalypse do not embrace all the prophetic contents of that book, but that their action terminates with the coming of the Lord, and the destruction of the Antichrist, after which there is the account of the millennium, and of the new Jerusalem, as appearing in the 20th, 21st, and part of the 22nd chapters, the exhibition of which, as comprehending the most marvellous and the most important part of the Apocalyptic enunciations, altogether apart from any question of sealing and opening of seals, has to be accounted for by those who hold that the opening of such seals was designed to denote the opening out of such prophecies; or, if such should be thought not to be the case, and the 7th seal is viewed as embracing all the chain of the prophecy up to the end, then the explanation has to be given how certain important blessings, described in this closing portion of the Apoca-

lypse, should have been announced to the churches, in the earlier part thereof, before the sealed book was produced or opened, and which consequently should have remained at the time buried in secrecy under its seals. These advertencies, it may be observed, Mr. Elliott has himself cited as thus connected with the concluding prophecies of the Apocalypse; namely, the promise as to the tree of life, as to exemption from the second death, as to inscription of names in the book of life opened at the establishment of the great white throne, and as to the sitting with Jesus on His appropriate throne conferred upon Him at the millennium, (I. 81,) which one and all appear proclaimed to the churches. All these are most important difficulties which remain to be cleared away before the view which interpreters of Mr. Elliott's class take of the sealed book can stand; and when this, the first link in the chain upon which their historic delineations are suspended, thus fails to be freed by them of the objections to which it is so obviously open, what remains but to turn away from their whole theory as an untenable one?

VIII. The character of Mr. Elliott's work, and the manner of its execution, having been now I trust sufficiently treated of, no more need be done, in passing to the body thereof, than to select the more prominent of the views he advocates, and to touch thereupon on their most salient points. This I would proceed to do.

1. THE FOUR FIRST SEALS.

It has been seen that Mr. Elliott has assumed that the prophecies of the Apocalypse embrace a continuous chain of events, dating from the time of their enunciation and onwards; and, further, that they relate to the career of the church in her connexion with the world, and, prominently, with Rome. It has been seen too that he has assumed the sealed book to be the record of these prophecies. The step was consequently not to be wondered at that he should conclude, even before entering upon the details of the earlier seals, that their opening had relation to Rome; and this he accordingly does, and even with much

speciality of detail. The “general subject” of the first six seals, he says, “I have presumed to be the decline and fall, after a previous prosperous era, of the empire of Pagan Rome.” (I. 118.) In the same spirit he set out to ascertain what the horse appearing under the four first seals might indicate; raising the presumption that it must “be construed of an empire, or of the christian church.” (I. 120.) And having thus arbitrarily limited its import to one or other of these meanings, he makes his election between the two, in favour of the former; which he does again upon considerations of “comparative probability,” (I. 121.)—“settling” it thus, “presumptively,” that here “it could only be construed to signify the Roman state, or Roman people.” (I. 123.) Here all is arrived at, step by step, by guess-work, and so the meaning of the symbol of the horse is predetermined.

The grounds upon which this application of the symbol is sought to be maintained, have to be considered. “The fitness of a war-horse to signify the martial Roman nation” is first instanced. Next, the fact that the “war-horse” was “sacred to Mars,” from whom the Romans claimed descent. Thirdly, that “a horse was one of the ancient Roman war-standards.” Fourthly, that “a horse associated with a crowned rider” was a device common to Roman coins. (I. 122, 123.) The leading idea thus is that a war-horse was the symbol presented in these seals; and the expectancy should follow that under it the deeds in arms of some warlike people should be portrayed. Mr. Elliott’s interpretations give however no such results. The wars of the nation have little or no part in his renderings of these seals. The first seal, with him, relates prominently to the internal prosperity of the empire, its proceedings in warfare being then but partially in question. The second, not to the legitimate, but to the perverted operations of the soldiery, in creating internal revolution and bloodshed, preying upon the vitals of the state they were bound to protect. The third,—still further removed from the subject of the symbol,—to fiscal oppressions. And the fourth, to mortality operating in the nation through various causes. The appropriateness of the war-horse no where appears.

Nor is the distinctiveness of the symbol, as pointing specifically to the Roman people, at all to be seen. A war-horse might stand for any martial race, and of the standards of the Romans the eagle was by far the most noted one; and equestrian figures, whether represented on coins or in statues, have been common to most nations. The emblem of the horse is confessedly a Sicilian one; (III. 199;) and Mr. Elliott has also taken the animal, when it suited him, as indicative of Arabia. (I. 404.) But even if it could be admitted that the symbol designated the Roman empire, the language of the text stands against its being so applied throughout the seals. Taking the horse of the first seal for example to imply that of Rome, the one appearing under the second seal must have a different signification, for it is declar-edly "another" horse.* As the link of these seals with Rome thus breaks down, the further illustrations, founded upon the supposition that they are connected with Rome, need not be gone into.

I have however to instance certain admissions which Mr. Elliott has had to make which are fatal to the integrity of his interpretation of the first seal. These occur in his "Vindicæ Horarizæ."

When pressed by Dr. Keith with the fact that the emperors whom he would consider as prefigured by the rider of the white horse of this seal were by no means all of them of martial renown, Mr. Elliott has sheltered himself under a qualified accep-tation of the seal. "Now that each and every one," he observes, "of the five emperors that were collectively represented, as I conceive, by the rider of the white horse, must needs go forth

* In his "Vindicæ Horarizæ," (p. 282,) Mr. Elliott defends himself from a like objection to this, which it appears has been urged by Mr. Faber, by referring to the fat and lean kine seen by Pharaoh in his dream, the lean kine being introduced as "other" kine, and yet all being obvi-ously of Egypt. The appeal to this as an example certainly should be of little value. Of course there were many kine in Egypt; but how many *symbolic* horses were there for Rome? What Mr. Elliott has to estab-lish, if he can, is that "another" here means "the same."

still ever making fresh conquests, and still ever afresh extending the limits of the empire, is, as I have again and again said, not my notion of the requirements of the 1st seal;" (p. 92;)—his requirement being to this effect, that "those only of the five emperors that engaged in war" should have had "triumphs" therein. (p. 83.) The text very explicitly and peremptorily demands that the object indicated by it should be a conqueror, and if we are to respect this its indubitable purport, any interpretation that involves as fulfillers thereof those who have not such character should at once be summarily abandoned.

But Mr. Elliott cannot hold fast by even his qualified view of the requirements of the seal, for when warfare was in question under this seal, triumphs, it appears, were not always attendant thereon. "And let me," he says, "at once and fully admit that the Romans experienced serious reverses at the first outbreak both of the Eastern, and yet more of the Northern war: reverses such as not only caused great injury to the Romans, but showed, especially in the latter case, the extremely formidable nature of the war so begun." (p. 94.) The following are further notices by him on this head. "On the Roman lieutenant Severianus. . . . marching against him" (Vologesus, the Parthian king.) "he was cut off with his army at Elegia. . . . Thereupon, says Dio, Vologesus fell with formidable force on Syria, ravaging the Eastern provinces." (pp. 95, 96.) "And here," speaking of the German wars, "I at once," he says, "fully allow the reverses of the Romans on the first irruption of the barbarians, and the fearfulness of the crisis." (p. 99.) "The barbarians first overran Pannonia: Victorinus, a Roman general, was defeated and killed. Alarm reigned in Italy." (p. 101.) After speaking of a victory on the part of the Romans, he adds, "but success suddenly shifted to the other side. The general Vindex and his army were defeated, and the most part cut to pieces, by the Marcomans; who advancing thereupon to Aquileia, besieged, and were on the point of taking it. This was the second crisis in the war." (p. 102.)

These reverses, retrieved though they may have been, cer-

tainly interfere with the aspect of the seal, which in the character of unvarying triumph it gives to the rider admits of no introduction of the element of defeat.

But there is also another feature of the seal, as interpreted by Mr. Elliott, which is in like manner interfered with, and that is the white colour of the horse, which he views as betokening the prosperity of the state supposed to be in question in the seal.

“‘From the end (the Eastern end,’’) he tells us, (quoting from Capitolinus,) “‘of Illyricum to the Gaulish frontier all the nations had conspired together against Rome: the Marcomanni, Narisci, Hermunduri, Quadi, Suevi, Sarmatæ, Buri; the Sosibes too with the Victovali, the Sicobotes, Roxolani, Bastarnæ, Alani, Peucini, Costoboci.’ And this,” Mr. Elliott adds, “made the case graver that the plague, introduced by the troops returning from the East, had greatly weakened the Roman armies.” (pp. 99, 100.)

Surely there is an end, for the time at least, of what can be called prosperity for the typified state, when such serious revolts occur within its precincts; followed up, as we have seen, by defeats and slaughterings of its generals and armies, so as to cause “alarm” to “reign” in the heart of its possessions, and at the very seat of its rule; and when, in addition to all, as we further find, the plague was devastating the ranks of its defenders. And this Mr. Elliott appears himself in some measure to be conscious of. “Of course,” he says, “the disasters that occurred, whether in the war or in the plague, cast a partial cloud on the fair prospect (the *white* * hue) of his reign.” (pp. 104, 105.) And the interruption, it seems, was for no insignificant period. “While admitting,” he observes, “the partial obscuration of the white during Aurelius’ fourteen or fifteen years of war, yet let it be remembered that the wars were in every case very soon driven back to the frontiers by that emperor or his generals; and there confined, or indeed repelled beyond them; so that the actual time of invading enemies existing in

* The italics are Mr. Elliott’s.

the heart of the empire would probably be found not to have lasted more than four or five years altogether." (p. 180.) For about one third then of this emperor's term of warfare, the whiteness of his reign would appear to have been forfeited.

And it was subjected, we find, to other, and as decided discolouration. Dr. Keith points to this last of Mr. Elliott's five emperors having had a colleague, and this an individual of a very different stamp from those to whom Mr. Elliott would, by virtue of character, among other considerations, assign a place on the horse of the first seal. "My critic," Mr. Elliott states, "with reference to L. Verus' having been for eight or nine years, down to this year, M. Aurelius' associate in the Empire, observes at p. xxxix that my *five* emperors must on this account be transmuted to *six*: though 'he could not be numbered among the *good* emperors of Rome,' and 'the white horse must have turned black at his touch;'" (p. 101, *note 3*;)—a fact which Mr. Elliott cannot gainsay, and from which he can defend himself only by the circumstance that Mr. Gibbon and others, (in speaking of the features of this era,) do not bring this personage to view; as if their omissions were the rule for the scripture account, and so ungainly and incongruous an addition to its developed subject might exist quite uncared for and unheeded.

If then perfect truth is to be ascribed to the sacred representations, it is very evident that Mr. Elliott's historic materials, offered as the fulfilment thereof, do not supply it. Under them we can no longer view the rider as seated uniformly on a white horse, any more than we can see him to be always moving forward in the career of victory. At times, and these lengthened ones, we have him of a pacific turn, unengaged in conquering, and actually unqualified for such performance; at times we have him visited by invasions, and disgraced and terror-stricken by defeat; at times the most deadly visitation yet sent among mankind thins his ranks and paralyzes their energies; and in fine, according to the admission even of the delineator who would present him in his actualities to our regards, the whiteness of his

horse is at times laid by, and the very symbol which we have to study disappears.

2. THE FIFTH SEAL.

Mr. Elliott conceives that under this seal "there was prefigured, evidently, some notable *era* of persecution against the church;" (I. 180;) and he adapts it to nine or ten years of such persecution, dating from A. D. 303, during which so many christians were put to death as to have obtained for this period the designation of "the *Era* of martyrs." (I. 182, 183.) But in the text there is on question of a prevalence of martyrdom during the precise time to which the seal may be thought to be applicable. What is set forth under the seal as to the occurrence of martyrdom relates to the past and the future, and not to the present, as assumed by Mr. Elliott. Some had suffered, we see, for their souls were then exhibited under the altar as of them that *had been* slain; and there were more we hear spoken of "that *should be* killed, as they were." An era of martyrs, as then occurring, is not what is indicated.

Neither does Mr. Elliott's historic adaptations provide for the feature of time appearing under this seal. The slain ones cried out to know "how long" their blood was to remain unavenged; and the answer to them was that they should "rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled;" that is, until all who had yet to suffer for Jesus should so accomplish their testimony. The "little season" has evidently to be contrasted with the "how long." Mr. Elliott considers the cry for vengeance to relate to the martyrs slain during the particular persecution to which he refers the seal, (I. 196,) and the fulfilment of the vengeance to be deferred to the end of the persecuting reign of the Antichrist. (I. 204.) Thus the "how long" pointed to no past time at all, and the "little season" to a still unfinished term of now more than fifteen hundred years duration. To this result did Mr. Elliott's historic adaptation bring him; and to meet the difficulty, he has to distort the text, and

to assume that the promise of vengeance was no promise at all, but that there was simply an expectation indicated on the part of the church that the martyred ones would be soon avenged. And as to this he has to add, "It of course needs not to say that in regard to this last point, I mean the time to which they looked for their final avenging and reward, history, the great interpreter, has proved them wrong." (I. 203.) Here we see what the weight and power of history are in Mr. Elliott's eyes, as measured with the word of God, and that it is the latter, and not the former, that has to be given up when the two appear together in conflict. It was just so in instances already observed upon, when the expressions of joy on the one side, and woe on the other, consequent on the fall of the dragon, were deemed to point to what was unreal; and when the dragon's knowledge of the shortness of his time came to be considered as based on ignorance. And so here, the promise made to the martyrs of speedy vengeance, is transmuted to be simply an idea on their parts that they were to be soon avenged, and then this idea, under the pressure of history, becomes an unfounded one. The text, however, few will fail to see, gives no sort of opening for any such construction as this, and conveys, very plainly, the annunciation of the vengeance to be looked for as offered to the martyred ones for their consolation by the same power that also had them clothed in white. It was the Lord whom they addressed, saying, "How long, O Lord;" and it was from the Lord that they got the expressed pledge that they should be speedily avenged. As being matter of promise therefore, on the part of God, we have to believe that in contrast with the time that they had remained unavenged, the period to the fulfilment of the vengeance was to be but a little season, and this simple reading of the word of the text gives the overthrow to Mr. Elliott's offered solution of its subject.

But more than this. The passage affords that which is fatal to Mr. Elliott's whole scheme of interpretation. This is not a time when vengeance can be either asked for by the saints, or be promised to them. It is that of the "long-suffering" of God,

who is “not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance ;” (2 Pet. iii. 9;) and in the exercise of this forbearance, and in this desire that every sinner may be saved, the church have to participate. It is the season during which they have to “love their enemies, to bless them that curse them, to do good to them that hate them, and to pray for them which despitefully use them, and persecute them ;” and this that they may be in unison of mind and nature with their Father which is in heaven, who is now engaged in sending His blessings upon the unjust as well as on the just. (Matt. v. 44, 45.) If smitten upon the one cheek, they have to turn the other ; and if brought to death, they have to cry with Jesus, “Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do ;” and with Stephen, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” The time for requiring vengeance cannot subsist with the time when mercy may be brought into operation ; and as we are still in the day of salvation, when there is hope of pardon and redemption for every persecuting Saul, the church, which is God’s witness on earth, and the expressor of His ways, cannot have been represented as in this day crying out for vengeance, and as having been encouraged in that cry by God. The subject of the fifth seal is hence indubitably future, and Mr. Elliott’s historic chain, in which it takes so early a place, is thereby very manifestly demolished.

3. THE SIXTH SEAL.

The characteristics of this seal are word for word exactly what attend upon the advent of our Lord. If associated in nearness with that event, (for I do not myself believe, as already explained, that they here indicate the presence thereof,) Mr. Elliott’s historic scheme, again, cannot stand ; for in such case a long enduring train of events, such as he ascribes to the remaining portion of the Apocalypse, could not intervene before the Lord fulfilled the threat of His coming, which this seal so clearly expresses as brought urgently to take effect upon the ungodly. Mr. Elliott, accordingly, as in other instances, dissipates the force of the sacred text, and whereas, under the seal, those spoken

of therein are represented to have been in terror at the expected advent of the Lamb in wrath, he accounts the fear to have been inspired by hosts engaged with them in the field, and defeating them in ordinary conflict,* (I. 215,)—the interpretation relating to a fear inspired by ordinary human instrumentality, then present and in actual operation, and the text to terror of a special, extraordinary, divine manifestation in wrath, threatening, but not yet exhibited. There is further the fatal objection to Mr. Elliott's solution which has already appeared under the fifth seal, and which is subversive of his whole scheme, that vengeance is not displayed under the existing dispensation. The Lamb is now assuredly the agent for deliverance from wrath, and not the instrument for inflicting it. "If any man," He has said, speaking of Himself as now offered to mankind, "hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." (John xii. 47.) And so is He presented by those who preach Him. "Now then," they have to say of themselves, "we are ambassadors *for Christ*, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in *Christ's stead*, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. v. 20.) The period of the wrath of the Lamb is therefore yet future, and it can be made subject of representation threateningly, only when the time for setting Him forth as the Saviour of the world is gone by.†

In respect to the figurative construction which Mr. Elliott, in common with others, has put upon the heavenly bodies as made mention of under this seal, the scripture provides a direct means of confutation. They are held by him to stand for earthly rulers and potentates; but under the seal we have these very

* Mr. Elliott endeavours to bring this fear under the force of the text by saying that "the terrors of defeat *must have been aggravated by a sense*" (on the part of the defeated) "of their gods having failed them; and of the power of heaven being with Christ, the christian's God, against them;" (I. 213, 214;) but this, even if the case, few will fail to see, comes very far short of the sensation described in the text, that the Lamb Himself was about to appear in judgment.

† I must refer to my own treatise (Part III.) for proof that there is such a time yet to come.

parties spoken of without a metaphor, according to their natural designations. "The sun," we hear, "became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood ; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth ;" after which, we learn, "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man," went and hid themselves in terror at the signs they thus had of the coming wrath. Can the kings, the captains, and the mighty men, have taken fright at their own fall ? Is it not plain that witnessing the signs in the heavens, this fear was generated among men on earth, and hence that these men on earth could not themselves have been the objects in the heavens ? And if otherwise, why, it has to be asked, should the veil of the symbols have been used to indicate these classes in the first instance, and then the literal objects themselves have been brought forward in the second, without sustainment of the symbol ? And supposing that the kings and the great men and the mighty men are represented in the first part of the passage under the guise of the sun, the moon, and the stars, where, it has again to be asked, are the appropriate symbols for those of quite another rank linked with them in the terror described under the second clause, and who are only "bondmen and free" ?*

4. THE SEALING OF THE 144,000.

"And after these things," it is said, "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God : and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither

* In Luke xxi. 25, which is an analogous passage, the signs in heaven, and the condition of things on earth, are distinctively marked. "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars ; and *upon the earth* distress of nations." These signs therefore are one thing, and must stand as described literally, and the distress on earth, which none can gainsay to be literal, another.

the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

The text, we see, is very stringent in requiring that the action of this vision should be confined within the limits of a particular portion of time. The winds were to be restrained from hurting for a given season, and before being let loose the sealing of those to be protected from them was to be completed. "Hurt not," it is enjoined, "till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Mr. Elliott accordingly feels that he has to assign a "chronological position" for this vision, (I. 229,) and he tells us that "its chronology ranges from Constantine's establishment of christianity to the reign of Theodosius." (I. 224.) This, in his "*Vindicæ Horariæ*," (p. 208,) he reminds us is from A. D. 312 to 395. We have to judge how he acquits himself in providing an historic solution for the vision such as may occupy this precise chronologic period.

The visitation of the winds, and their temporary restraint, he tells us, adopting the language of Gibbon, were "the threatening tempest of barbarians . . . which so soon subverted the foundations of Roman greatness," their restraining being that they were for a time "repelled or suspended on the frontiers." (I. 223, 224.) One would assuredly be led to expect that the immunity for the empire should be a complete one, and that if "the four winds of the earth," evidently signifying the winds from the four quarters of the earth,* were to be withheld from blowing upon it, no wind, or, pursuant to Mr. Elliott, hostile movement, should molest it from any quarter. This Dr. Keith, in commenting upon Mr. Elliott's interpretation, naturally exacted of him, and showed how seriously the facts of history overthrew his view, and that the required season of respite from hostilities was sadly interfered with by wars, foreign and domestic, in which the Romans were at that time engaged. Mr. Elliott has then to entrench himself within a very extraordinary limitation of the calm he would have us accept as that of the text.

* Mr. Elliott himself so reads the phrase. See I. 228, note 1, and 275, note 2.

It was to be one, it would seem, having respect to the operations of certain of the disturbers of Rome's peace, but not of all. "The reader," he observes in his "Vindiciæ Horariæ," (p. 215,) "is quietly and unconsciously led by my critic to suppose that the historian is speaking of '*the tranquility*'* of the empire *generally*, with reference to *all* enemies, both *foreign* and *civil*. This done, he parades in contrast a notice of all kinds of warlike events that happened in the fifty years between Constantine and Valens' defeat and death; especially the various *Persian* wars, and various *civil* wars, in the interval." It certainly little matters to us what "the historian" designed to put before us. The question is, what means the scripture? And thus Mr. Elliott would have us view it under the infirmity of his historic materials. The four winds of the earth, it would seem, were restrained, but yet there were many other unmentioned winds at that time permitted to blow their full upon the excepted region, but from what quarter these could come, seeing all four quarters were shut against them, we may demand in vain. And even as to Mr. Elliott's particular winds, he cannot hold his own, as the occurrence of "the slaughter of Valens and his army in the fearful battle of Adrianople, A. D. 378," (I. 296,) by those represented under one of them, and which we have already had before us in the matter of the half hour's silence, fully proves.

The chronologic calm that was desiderated hence fails to appear; and the other features of the interpretation will be found equally remote from filling up, or restricting themselves within, the required period.

The sealing Mr. Elliott conceives to imply the distinctiveness of the "faithful" and "true" christians from the "nominal" and "professing" body out of whom they were to be thus distinguished. (I. 233, 234.) We hear of these sealed ones again at the period of the fifth trumpet, where the tormenting locusts were under an injunction to hurt "only those men which had not the seal of God in their foreheads." (Rev. ix. 4.) The action of the locusts, pursuant to Mr. Elliott, was to endure till the

* The italics throughout are Mr. Elliott's.

year 985 ; (I. 439;) that is, for close upon six centuries beyond the season allotted for the vision under consideration. The sealed objects of the vision cannot then be the identical persons protected from the locusts, and Mr. Elliott has to seek a remedy for this defect. He does so by averring that the sealed were to replace each other in a "continued living succession;" (I. 268;) but for this assertion, not only is warrant wanting in the text, but the terms thereof are absolutely against its admissibility. The sealing, we have found, was to be completed ere the hurting of the winds began, and it could not therefore have gone on indefinitely through an unending period. The chronology of the sealing here then absolutely breaks down ; and it must do so indeed as looked upon under every point of view, if it bear the meaning that Mr. Elliott would put upon it. It is not in the 4th century alone that the distinction between true and nominal christianity has been made apparent. The "false brethren" were assuredly as clearly recognizable, and as faithfully denounced as such, in the apostolic times as in these, and as long as christianity has prevailed, the truth has stamped itself as distinguished from the error. There can be no particular term of years to be marked off characterized in a special way by that which we know to have thus been of universal occurrence.

Mr. Elliott was bound however to afford us some sort of a "chronological position" for this vision, and he still perseveres in the attempt. The sealing being with him the representation of true as opposed to nominal christians, he makes the circulation of true doctrine to constitute matter for the vision, such as to give us the required chronological fulfilment thereof, and he strives to fortify himself in this view by combining the palm bearing vision with the sealing one. "We ask the question," he thereupon puts it to us, in seeking for such fulfilment ; and "the answer," he tells us, "is given in one word, Augustine." (I. 275.) "I repeat it then," he observes, "Augustine's æra, doctrinal views, and preeminently blessed influence, . . . all concur to point out his history and teaching, as an exact and most remarkable fulfilment of these remarkable visions." (I. 275.)

Mr. Elliott then informs us of "the *chronology** of Augustine's life;" and "the dates of its chief epochs," he says, "may be stated as follows." And then he gives us these dates, ranging through various events of his subject's life from his birth in A. D. 354 to his death in 430. (I. 275, 276.) After this he recounts to us Augustine's particular acts as a disseminator of the truths to which he considers the visions point, and these are his preaching and writing on the doctrines of grace, his earliest writing having been in A. D. 395; (I. 278, *and note 1*;) his organizing councils to condemn existing error, and to uphold such truth, which occurred in A. D. 412 and 416; (I. 278, *and note 2*;) and his publication in A. D. 410 of his great work on the city of God. (I. 278.) Who would not have thought that Mr. Elliott's design was to have us accept "Augustine's æra, doctrinal views, and preeminently blessed influence," from his first ministrations until death closed his labours, as affording the needed chronologic fulfilment of these visions? Dr. Keith did so, and thereon charged Mr. Elliott with the failure of his view arising from certain invasions, supposed to be figured under the four winds, having been under prosecution, and not under restraint, during this period; but he is met by Mr. Elliott's limitation of the vision to a period 35 years short of the fulness of this "æra;" (*Vin. Hor.* p. 215;) namely to the year 395, as originally laid down by him.

In spite of Mr. Elliott's disclaimer, it is most difficult to understand why he has made such appeal to the whole period of the career of Augustine, unless he meant us to apply it chronologically to the vision,—"the *chronology*," as he calls it, "of Augustine's life." His notice of the last instance of his labours, namely, the putting forth of his work on the city of God, though this was certainly said to have had effect retrospectively, (as well as prospectively,) has furthermore much the look of being intended to convey the idea that the production entered into the initiatory or chronologic action of the vision. It was, he says, "the *very embodying of the idea of the 144,000 elect sealed*

* The italics, it has to be particularly noted, are Mr. Elliott's.

*ones of the Apocalyptic vision into a corporate form.”** (I. 279.) Again, he would certainly appear to desire to lead our minds to associate Augustine with the restraint of the devastating winds, or, as he has it, invasions, as if their confinement from blowing, and his existence, were in some sort synchronical, and the one made in a degree dependent upon the other, although it was too notorious from other parts of Mr. Elliott’s treatise that the commencement of the action of the winds had occurred years before the termination of Augustine’s life.† “He was born,” Mr. Elliott tells us, “near Hippo, in North Africa, A. D. 354, during the reign of Constantine; a time when (to quote Gibbon’s very illustrative words yet a second time) ‘the threatening tempests of barbarians, which so soon subverted the foundations of Roman greatness, were still repelled or suspended on the frontiers.’ He went to Rome, and thence to Milan, A. D. 383, 385; just a year or two after that the fatal battle of Adrianople had, agreeably with the prefiguration, established the Gothic hosts on the Roman earth,‡ and shown their preparedness, like as with fierce tempests, to overwhelm it: also while Theodosius, raised

* The italics are Mr. Elliott’s.

† The first is represented to have come into operation in A. D. 400; (I. 348;) that is, while thirty years of Augustine’s life had yet to run on; and to have been mainly fulfilled in A. D. 410, (I. 348,) or twenty years before his demise. The second is said to have been let loose in A. D. 429, (*scroll,*) or the year preceding that event. And prior to these, in A. D. 396, there was the first fierce invasion of these particular agents, but which Mr. Elliott accounts as having been thunderings, lightnings, and earthquake, introductory to the winds. (I. 344, 345.)

‡ It certainly needs a marvellous measure of compliance on our parts with the dictation of Mr. Elliott’s exigencies to believe that the untimely letting loose of these hosts, and their domination on the interdicted soil was “agreeable with the prefiguration” of their restraint upon its frontiers. The subsequent restraint of the winds by Theodosius, it will be observed, is further on commended to us with the like phrase that it was “still just agreeable with the prophecy,” as if the two operations resembled each other in character, and that in yielding to the justice of this latter commendation, we might let pass the other with less suspicion of its total unwarrantableness.

up by a most extraordinary intervention of providence for the purpose, was enabled, still just agreeably with the prophecy, (through the very instrumentality in part of the Gothic chiefs themselves,) effectually and at once to arrest them." Then, after notice of other events connected with Augustine's life, it is added, "At length, just when the tempests that had during that time been desolating the European or *land* provinces of the empire, crossing the *sea*, began to make their ravages felt in the *African transmarine province* also,*—the great work assigned him by his divine master (that same which we suppose prefigured in the visions under consideration) having been completed,—even as if the tempest's reaching him had been the signal preordained of his death, he was taken from the evil to come, and fell asleep in Jesus, A. D. 430." (I. 275, 276.) "In the second year of the invasion," Mr. Elliott tells us in detailing the operation of the winds, "A. D. 430, the siege of Hippo was formed: and while it was advancing, (how can I omit," he exclaims, "noticing the event?) Augustine, its sainted bishop, was gently released by death, and joined to the white-robed company before the throne. This was on the 28th August, A. D. 430. Then was Hippo taken, and burnt."† (I. 350.)

* The italics are Mr. Elliott's, and to give point thereto the text "hurt not the *land*, nor the *sea*, till we have sealed," &c. (the italics here also being Mr. Elliott's) is at this place introduced in a note, so as very significantly to show it to be Mr. Elliott's desire in some way to link Augustine's whole term of existence with the restraint of the winds,—the difficulties against this notwithstanding.

† It is true that the sentence goes on to speak of the fall of Carthage in 439, but still it is very evident with what purpose the mention of Augustine's death is here introduced, as indeed a previously quoted passage has informed us that we should look upon the arrival of this wind at his place of abode as the signal for his departure. We have to ask hereon whether among the multitudes who had the benefit of Augustine's ministrations there were none in Hippo similarly sealed with himself, and how it was that the place was captured while they were still abiding in it? Mr. Elliott, as will be seen farther on, has stretched the two witnesses out to an indefinite number, but surely he would not have us confine the 144,000 sealed ones to a single unit.

Assuredly we need to be very guarded how we abandon ourselves to our author, but giving him nevertheless the full benefit of his disclaimer that the last 35 years of Augustine's life did not enter into his chronological representations, we may yet conclude very safely that he would have gladly adopted the whole "chronology of Augustine's life" as illustrating the "chronological position" of the vision, could he possibly have done so. He was hindered, as usual, by historic difficulties, the interpretation having always to shape its course, at any expense to the requisitions of the text, so as to stand clear of these.

But we have still to enquire for the promised historic chronology, as derivable from Augustine. And here Mr. Elliott helps us no more. He has been driven to mark off his period to the exclusion of the Augustinian æra as entering into it, save as to the very initiatory appearance of Augustine's labours. His earliest publication, as we have found, was issued in A. D. 395, the very year of the termination of the chronologic period which had to be provided for. To make any use then of Augustine towards furnishing ourselves with materials for this period, we have to submit to an arbitrary dismemberment of his career at this particular juncture, there cutting off, and abandoning, so far as chronologic use is concerned, the remaining and most important portion thereof, namely the 35 years which Mr. Elliott has removed from the reach of Dr. Keith's strictures. So, after all our investigation, we secure historically but this one terminating year of the period before us.

Mr. Elliott is however still not without his resources. He has a system of "allusive contrast" to which he resorts, (but this only where it suits him,) under which he can introduce the very opposite of what the text may be thought to advert to, as being indicated thus allusively. Of this system he avails himself under the vision before us, wishing to have it believed that the doctrinal rectitude conceived to be represented by the sealing, had allusion to opposing doctrinal error at that time prevailing. (I. 246.) The doctrinal rectitude we have seen is secured chronologically in the one year of Augustine's ministrations which we

are at liberty to make use of; that is, in the concluding year of the period of 83 years, from A. D. 312 to 395, for which we were to expect an historic fulfilment. For materials for the other 82 years we are to be indebted, it would appear, to the expedient of the "allusive contrast," and this Augustine's one year of doctrinal rectitude has to supply us with. But how supply us? Most strange indeed the process. The 82 years of doctrinal error have to run their course unacknowledged for the time by the text, and just at the close thereof the one year that the text is held to afford us has to come in and by a backward leap adopt the whole, and so fill in the chronologic period. Mr. Elliott does not venture explicitly to trace out the operation of this very remarkable manœuvre, but nevertheless it would seem plain that to this alone can we be indebted for the chronologic fulfilment we had to seek for. It need hardly be pointed out that the poverty of the human delineator, here so apparent, is not to be charged upon the sacred text.

But even with all these liberties, the result desiderated is by no means attained to. The prevalence of the doctrinal errors, thus introduced, will not satisfy the pending exigency. These errors will not serve to realize the "chronologic position" of the vision. One of the most prominent thereof noticed by Mr. Elliott is that entertained in regard to baptism. (I. 246.) But did this belong specifically to the given era? By no means so, as Mr. Elliott himself is the witness. "I have spoken," he tells us, "of this baptismal error as one peculiarly characteristic of the times of Constantine: *not indeed overlooking the third century, as that in which it began to appear.*" (I. 255.) So then there is an end of supplying our chronologic requisition out of the circumstance of this error, for what arose in the third century can of course help to originate no peculiarity as descriptive of a period in the fourth. But yet Mr. Elliott would appear to wish us to shut our eyes against this very serious blemish in his solution, even while he again enunciates that which should expose it to us. He refers to the testimony he had drawn as to the existence of this error from "eminent and approved fathers of

the *third* and fourth centuries," and then adds, very complacently, "perhaps these might of themselves suffice as evidence of the *chronological propriety* * of the Apocalyptic picture." (I. 255.) We may certainly admit the chronological propriety of the picture as laid before us in the Apocalypse, but still be very far from being satisfied with Mr. Elliott's representation thereof. Indeed at the close of our researches the only question that can arise is, where, after all, is the chronologic fulfilment for the very precise term of years he has set before us from A. D. 312 to 395 to be looked for? and echo only can answer, "Where?"

5. THE FOUR FIRST TRUMPETS.

Mr. Elliott observes that these trumpets are commonly held to relate to the invasions of the western empire of Rome by the Goths; and he coincides in this view, but, at the same time, has to add that "there has been as to the details, and the apportionment of its part in the Gothic ravages to each one of the four Trumpet-visions distinctively, such a *remarkable* difference of opinion,—scarcely two commentators," he believes, "explaining them alike,—as to have thrown discredit, in the opinion of not a few, on the Gothic application altogether." (I. 321, 322.) It is singular indeed that if right in the subject of the interpretation, the materials thereof should be of so loose and indefinite a nature as to allow each man to form his own scheme of adaptation thereof to the sacred text. It has not been so with regard to those prophecies of which all are satisfied that an accomplishment has taken place,—such, for example, as relate to our Lord at His first coming. The facts of the fulfilments, and the particulars of the prophecies, have ever been of too precise and close-fitting a nature to give room for diversity of application, the one to the other, and had the Gothic invasions been the subject of these trumpets, no doubt the like forcible and unmistakeable illustration of the prophecy by the history would have appeared. The liberties too which each interpreter must have allowed himself, where all, with the same materials to handle,

* These italics, very remarkably again, are Mr. Elliott's.

came to essentially different adaptations, affords demonstration of the lax and self-accommodating manner in which historic fittings are applied. That Mr. Elliott conducts his process of adaptation in a similar way, bending the text to the facts, or the facts to the text, as may best suit his aims, abundant evidence has been offered ; and more such will appear in the present instance, and in his further interpretations.

Mr. Elliott contends for “the admissibility of literal localities, and a literal geography, into prophecies generally symbolical,” and so interprets the “land, sea, and rivers,” connected with the three first of these trumpets, in their natural sense. (I. 325—328.) When he comes, however, to the locality connected with the fourth trumpet, which is the firmament, he resorts to a figurative interpretation, calling it “the symbolic firmament,” or the Roman state. (I. 343.)

What the “third part” of the objects brought under visitation at the sounding of these trumpets might be, has, it appears, occasioned interpreters much perplexity. Mr. Elliott offers objections to each of the solutions thereof hitherto proposed, and finds none left for adoption but that a certain tripartite division of the Roman empire, which had occurred early in the reign of Constantine, was intended thereby. (I. 331, 332.) But he has to allow, on the other hand, that this no more prevailed at the season of the trumpets, and that just prior thereto a “memorable” and “permanent” *bi*-partition of the empire took place. (I. 333.) This difficulty Mr. Elliott has to overcome, and he attempts to do so under the consideration that the limits of this latter division varied, the central portion of the empire falling sometimes to one side, and sometimes to another ; and that this central part became subject to circumstances, chiefly such as invasions and foreign occupations, which did not attach to the other parts, so as, in Mr. Elliott’s view, to keep up its distinctiveness from the rest of the empire. (I. 333—336.) The text, however, as construed by Mr. Elliott, requires the recognition of some actual third part as then existing in separate posture, and he can show none but by reference to a foregone and cancelled condition of the state.

The thunderings, lightnings, and earthquake, "introductory" to the sounding of the trumpets, are taken by Mr. Elliott to imply an invasion themselves, and to be that of Alaric on the assumed "central" division of the empire. (I. 344, 345.) Here we have a "third part" of the empire brought under judgment without mention of any such limitation in the text. Can then the "third part" contemplated under the trumpets, be such an object as is thus unnoticed under the introductory storm, although distinctively affected thereby? The acknowledged prophetic value of the detail in the one instance, would surely have secured for it a like specific recognition in the other. The division supposed to have been visited under the preliminary thunderings was, we have seen, the "central" one, but that to which the trumpets are held to have applied is described to have been "the Western third of the empire." (I. 338.) Here therefore the correspondence that should subsist between the main judgments, and that which is "introductory" to them, is wanting.

The seven successive trumpets evidently denote seven successive acts of judgment, there being one instance of judgment, and no more, for each trumpet. Under the first trumpet, however, no less than four distinct invasions are held to have occurred, three conducted by Alaric,—the same who is viewed as having brought in the preliminary storm,—and in the interval of two of these, another, by a different leader, Rhadagarius; (I. 347;)—the text manifestly indicating integral, and not at all any such quadruple action. And it must be asked why, if Alaric's latter instances of aggression on the Roman state required to be introduced under the solemn symbol of the sounding of one of these seven specific trumpets, his first invasion thereof should have been left without such symbol? and also why his earliest invasion should have been typified as a storm of thunder and lightning, and his latter ones, which were of the same character, as hail and fire mingled with blood? The same ground of exception extends itself also to the features of the two next trumpets, there being nothing discriminative between the acts of the one invader and the other, to account for the speciality of blood and fire

being ascribed to the one, and the embittering of waters to the other. All were storm-like; all were tainted with blood; and all entailed that embittering fate upon the sufferers which Mr. Elliott supposes to be the purport of the last of these alleged figures. (I. 353.) The introductory symbols, and the elements of the three first trumpets, might thus be employed exchangeably with one another, and all sense of distinctiveness belonging to them becomes lost. Under such vagueness, historic fittings, and prophetic figures, may be made to associate together to any extent.

There are further features to be considered. The operation of the first trumpet, according to the text, is confined to the trees and grass, which were to be burnt up; but Mr. Elliott's fulfilment is by no means so restricted, the slaughter of men, and the destruction of cities, occurring in ordinary warfare, entering largely thereinto. (I. 347.) The peculiar characteristic of the judgment is thus forfeited. In the rendering of the second trumpet, Mr. Elliott also fails to adhere to the distinctiveness thereof. The judgment was to be one exclusively affecting the sea, the creatures therein, and the ships. Mr. Elliott brings in however land engagements, and the devastation of cities, such as Hippo, Carthage, and Rome, as forming part thereof. (I. 350, 354.) On the other hand, as respects the real scene of the judgment, he falls short. Apart from the ships, (with of course their contents,) which were to be destroyed, there were all the living creatures in the sea, which were to die. Of these latter he can show none as subjected to the effects of the judgment; and as regards the ships, though he speaks of the destruction of the Roman navies on two occasions, he does so by no means so as to prove, what he had to establish, that *all* the ships "that navigated the sea-third of the Western empire" perished. (I. 351.) In his interpretation of the third trumpet, the peculiar feature of the judgment appearing under it is in like manner not provided for. The deaths were to be through the drinking of empoisoned waters. "Many men," it is said, "died of the waters, because they were made bitter." Mr. Elliott introduces

waters into his solution, but no embitterment thereof, and no deaths consequent upon drinking them. The deaths he has to instance as occurring under this trumpet were occasioned, according to his own showing, by "slaughter," and "through famine, disease, and pestilence," (I. 353,) being thus of an ordinary nature, and not of that special and extraordinary kind described in the prophecy.

The darkening of the third part of the sun, and other heavenly bodies, which forms the subject of the fourth trumpet, is explained by Mr. Elliott under certain curious provisos. The original empire of Rome was at that time divided into two portions, as previously noted of it; namely the Western and the Eastern,—each with its emperor. The extinction of the authority of the former, and the transference of his rule to the latter,—the profession being made "to the emperor of the East that one emperor was sufficient for the whole of the empire,"—Mr. Elliott cites as entering into the fulfilment of the prophecy. (I. 354.) To admit of this being accepted as the solution, we have to suppose an "ideal unity" of the empire, so as that the two emperors should constitute but one sun; (I. 354, *note 1*;) and also an ideal division of the empire into three parts, of which the emperor of the East is to be thought to have had two, and that of the West the remaining one; and so, in this tortuous way, have to accept the integral emperor of the West, as the fractional third of the sun of the prophecy, which was to be darkened. Surely it is not the Spirit of truth that is guiding us here. And that the solution cannot possibly stand, the text explicitly shows, where it adds,—"and the day shone not for a third part of it." Of this clause Mr. Elliott gives no explanation, and the fact that on the extinction of the Western fragment of the ideal integral sun, the Eastern potentate, who represents the remaining portion thereof, at once shed the light of his rule over the territories of the displaced monarch, altogether negatives the idea of their being left in that darkness which the total absence of such rule, according to Mr. Elliott's hypothesis, could alone occasion. In fact the extinction of the fragmental sun

may be of itself totally denied, for the integrity of the whole sun became on the instant assured by the Eastern potentate realizing immediately the position and functions of the entire sun, undiminished in any way of any fragment thereof.

6. FOREWARNINGS OF COMING WOE.

Under this title Mr. Elliott has a chapter founded upon the annunciation of woes given in Rev. viii. 13. In prosecution of his project to weave his web of historic adaptations, he has endeavoured to find a place in history to be applied to this portion even of the Apocalypse; and perhaps consistently so. This annunciation, he says, was "not a mere private intimation to the evangelist of what yet remained to be foreshown respecting the coming future, but signified that which would have its fulfilment in *some* forewarning signs in real life, publicly observed by men at the time prefigured. . . . So that we must not be satisfied to pass onward, without looking into the history of the times here referred to, and seeing whether there was in them any thing, and what, that might be regarded as a warning voice of calamities impending." (I. 358.)

The annunciation was made thrice, "Woe, woe, woe;" and the subject thereof was precise, being tribulations awaiting "the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound." It was made just after the fourth trumpet had delivered its note, and it related, obviously, to the three other trumpets which had to follow, and which, so as to identify them with the subject of this annunciation, are designated, distinctively, as so many woes. The subject of these forth-coming trumpets, according to Mr. Elliott, were invasions by the Saracens and the Turks, and the occurrence of the French revolution, with events subsequent thereto portrayed under the seven vials. (*scroll.*) The subject of the fourth trumpet, which had just preceded the utterance of the woes, was, as we have seen, the transference of imperial power in Rome from the Western to the Eastern branch of the state. The church stood then just in position between the fourth

trumpet, and the three that were to follow, and, according to the view of the text which Mr. Elliott proposed to himself to establish, should have been at the time conscious that four of the trumpets had gone by, and that three more had to take effect, bringing in woes such as the sacred record shows to have been in store. But has Mr. Elliott the means of making it appear that the church was aware that she occupied the position relatively to the Apocalyptic prefigurations in which she is described to have been placed at this time, and was conscious of the approach of the three forth-coming special woes which had yet to visit the earth? This was what Mr. Elliott had to demonstrate; but not a vestige of evidence in proof of the proposition has he to offer. On the contrary, such as is of a nature exactly opposite to what was to be expected is all that he has to adduce, for he shows that the church was at the time in question altogether ignorant of the position she is viewed as having held, and it is only by having recourse to generalities, and so dissipating the precise language of the text, that he is able to produce any semblance of an historic fitting to this clause of the Apocalypse. "Woe," he writes, "to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the calamities and judgments even now impending!" (I. 366;) and again, "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitors of the earth, by reason of the judgments about to come;" (I. 371;) as if any such general expectations of judgments would suffice to fulfil the imputed exigency of the text. The anticipations that he describes to have been prevailing at the time, to which the text is held to apply, were of the revelation of the Anti-christ, (I. 359—365, 371—374, 379—383,) of the approach of the end of the world, (I. 366—370,) and of judgment in a general way, which existing corruption, it was thought, would call down; (I. 384, 385;) in respect of which it has only to be remarked that the two first subjects of expectation, which were of a precise nature, were not what Mr. Elliott introduces under the trumpets that had to be sounded, and that the last, from being of quite an indefinite character, is equally inapplicable to the particular subject for which an historic fitting was to be provided.

7. THE FIFTH TRUMPET.

The instruments of the judgment attaching to this trumpet are described in the text as locusts, having the power to torment as scorpions ; and a measured time is given for this action of tormenting, being five months, or, according to Mr. Elliott, 150 years. The locusts, Mr. Elliott holds, indicated figuratively the swarm of numbers, (I. 402,) and found their fulfilment in “a mighty Saracen invasion” of “Roman Christendom.” (I. 408, 409.) It was, Mr. Elliott states, in “the year 629 when the locust armies first issued out of the smoke,” (the smoke being Mahomedanism,) “to make their attack on Syrian Christendom.” (I. 428.) But the invasion, he informs us, was deferred for a time. “They appeared, and they retired : it was but the omen of what was to follow. But in 636 they returned to prosecute their mission in earnest ; and behold within less than three years Syria was subdued.” (I. 420.) “The settlement of the locusts,” he considers to have occurred “at the removal of the Caliphate to Bagdad, A. D. 762,” when they assumed a fixed position in their own capital, and “no more roved.” (I. 432, 434.) Between these two points then, that is, between the first act of aggression on the part of the locusts, and the time of their settlement, we should find the 150 years during which their torment was to last ; but no more than 126 appear. Mr. Elliott has accordingly to take up other ground for the commencement of the plague, and being bent upon maintaining his historic adaptation, he does so. He would put the period back to the year 612, when Mahomed “first publicly announced his prophetic mission ;” (I. 428;) an act, which, whatever sprung up from it in the course of time, involved in itself neither locusts, nor their torments, these not having made their appearance, as we have seen, until 24 years subsequently. But beyond the failure as to the commencing time of the plague, that of its termination is also altogether in fault. The aggression of the Saracens on the Roman territories by no means ceased in the above stated year 762. In the 9th century, we learn from Mr. Elliott, they were still engaged in struggles in Spain, and there were, he tells us, “marauding bands

that issued both from Spain and Africa:—of whom some, ere the middle of the 9th century, conquered the islands of Crete and Sicily; attacked, though vainly, Rome itself; nor were expelled from their conquests, till after a tenure of above a century in Crete, and two centuries in Sicily;” (I. 436;)—Crete, as Mr. Elliott particularizes in a note in the same page, having been seized in 823, and regained in 960; Sicily having been attacked in 827, subdued in 878, and reconquered from 1060 to 1090; and Rome having been assailed in 846, and the enemy repulsed in 849. It is very evident that the locusts in these regions were in no respect affected by the ideal settlement of their plague in Bagdad; and here, through their means, we have the torment lasting some 300 years beyond the time when it should have terminated;—that is, for about 450 years, in lieu of 150, which the text is viewed as giving to it. Mr. Elliott tries to cover up the damage which this engenders to his position. “The *venom*,” he states, speaking of these latter hostilities, “of the early religious fanaticism was *greatly* wanting. The *intensity* of the woe to Christendom had evidently passed away.” (I. 436.) But the question was not one as to the degree in which the plague was to operate. According to the text the infliction was to endure for a certain time, and then to cease; and as Mr. Elliott, in the very attempt to qualify the intensity of the plague, has thereby to allow of its continuance—be it in less degree,—the fact that appeared against him becomes positively ascertained, even under his own admissions. As respects those of the so considered locusts who took up their position at Bagdad, and as Mr. Elliott would seek to represent it, brought the plague to a close in 762, here also the testimony of history stands against him. Speaking of the year 787, that is, of a time lying 25 years beyond the desiderated period for terminating the plague, Mr. Elliott has to tell us “that the Saracenic woe, though already broken, seemed” (why *seemed* only?) “as if it had received a temporary revivification. Guided by Haroun al Rashid, the Arab forces from Bagdad swept across the lesser Asia, not once only, but *eight* times, bearing down all opposition before them.”

(I. 438.) "The removal of the Caliphate to Bagdad" thus by no means involved the settlement of this locust-plague, and Mr. Elliott's aim to find a period for it which in any way can be accommodated to the scripture, on all sides fails of realization.

During the specific period of the torment, the scripture manifestly requires that the agents thereof should be invariably in the ascendant over those who were to be afflicted therewith. "Unto them," it is said, "was *given power*, as the scorpions of the earth have power.... And to them *it was given* that they should not kill them (men,) but that they should be tormented five months." It appears, however, that during the period adopted by Mr. Elliott as that of the tormenting, the locusts, in lieu of always prevailing over their victims, sustained sundry defeats at their hands, and thus, from being tormentors, became themselves tormented. They were occupied, Mr. Elliott's pages show, in besieging Constantinople from 668 to 675; and again from 716 to 718; and "alike on either occasion," Mr. Elliott informs us, "they were unsuccessful; and obliged to retire, defeated and disgraced, as they had never been before." "Similarly, in the west," he goes on to show, in Spain, "they were twice repulsed with great loss, and gave up the enterprise." And, again, they were defeated by the Franks, under Charles Martel. "The Saracens recoiled broken and discomfited from the blows of him that was called the hammer of Western Christendom." (I. 425, 426.) * The speciality of these invasions is thus forfeited, when we see the invaders not uniformly carrying out the intent of the prophetic word, and their operations present themselves in the light of common acts of hostility, such as

* Mr. Elliott cites these repulses in illustration of that clause of the prophecy where it says that the agents of the judgment were not to kill men, but only to torment them,—the killing them being held to imply the overthrow of their political state. But it is clear, according to the exigencies of the prophecy, that they were to act only in a given way, for the end for which they were particularly sent forth, and hence it is incongruous that they should at any time have gone out of this path, and so have transgressed their commission.

have universally prevailed, attended by the ordinary vicissitudes, of success at one time, and defeat at another.

That such was their real character most plainly appears when the element of the field of these invasions is considered, in respect of which the invaders will be found to have been no more restricted to the prophetic limits assigned by Mr. Elliott, than they were to the time which he laid down for their operations. Mr. Elliott has concluded that there were grounds for the inference that "the Eastern third" of the Roman empire "was to be under this (5th trumpet) a principal sufferer." (I. 387.) "Now," he adds, "at length its hour was come to be judged. For of its time of reprieve it had made no profit. Throughout the two centuries reviewed in the last chapter, its religion had been sinking deeper and deeper into superstition. In the history of its theological controversies and synods. . . . we seek in vain for the christian spirit. . . . The spirit of the apostacy may be discerned as that which most deeply moved the people. And therefore judgment must visit them. The first bitterness of the first woe must fall on the Eastern third of the Roman world." (I. 388.) Here then was the exigency under which Mr. Elliott lay. A special judgment, to be applied, because of apostacy, to a special portion of the globe, being the Roman empire, but prominently that part of it indicated as its Eastern third, was what he had to exhibit. But how stands the fulfilment? Did the Saracenic locusts confine their visitations to this region? By no means. Mr. Elliott has to allow that their ravages extended far beyond the range he assigns to them under the prophecy. "All this," he says, speaking of their subjugations, "within the limits of Roman Christendom: and cotemporaneously,—though without those limits, and consequently without the sphere of the Apocalyptic prefigurative vision,—that of Persia in the second quarter of the seventh century, and that of North-west India and of Trans-Oxiana at the commencement of the eighth." And he goes on to observe that their conquests "reached from the confines of Tartary and India to the shores of the Atlantic." (I. 420, 421.) It is vain to say that the

attacks of these invaders were the fulfilment of a particular judgment upon Rome, because of apostacy, when we see them spreading over other regions, unconnected with Rome, or her apostacy. The character of the invaders, as instruments of such a judgment, can be maintained only when executing their mission upon the field under sentence; but if their operations extend themselves far and wide, as in the instance of these Mahomedan zealots, without reference, specially, to such field, then are they no more to be looked upon as sent forth with the precision of purpose which the text calls for. What befel Rome, befel the confines of Tartary, and nothing can be said of the nature of the visitation in the one direction, at all to distinguish it from what belonged to it in the other. In exceeding the assigned bounds of the vision as to space, equally as they have been found to do as to time, the Saracenic aggressions prove wholly unadjustable to the prophecy.

The prophetic locusts had another special sphere of function. They were commanded to hurt "only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented." The Saracens kept with no such bounds as are here described. In their wars, blood was shed profusely, and, utterly reckless of life, the sword was their elected instrument of conversion. "Ye christian dogs," Mr. Elliott quotes as a saying of one of their chieftains, in exhibition of the terms under which they pursued their ends, "the Koran, the tribute, or the sword;" (I. 421, *note 2*;) and he speaks of "the irresistible destroying fury of fanaticism" which characterized them, (I. 411,) and shows how much the spirit of the "Destroyer" was theirs. "Such," he states, "it appeared in the doctrine of the book," (the Koran;) "such on the field of battle." (I. 424.) "O prophet," he gives as a speech of Ali's to Mahomed, "I am the man. Whoever rises against thee, I will dash out his teeth, tear out his eyes, break his legs, rip up his belly. O prophet, I will be thy Vizier." On which Mr. Elliott adds he finds Mr. Hallam thus observing, (making the quotation evidently with accep-

tance,) that "These words of Mahomet's early and illustrious disciple are, as it were, a text upon which the commentary expands into the whole Saracenic history." (I. 429.) There is an end then, manifestly, to all thought that these Saracenic invaders were restrained from killing men, according to the word of the text; and Mr. Elliott hence has to seek a figurative meaning for the clause. It implied, he tells us, that they should not "annihilate them as a political christian body; but only torment them," (I. 424.)—the torment consisting in "the bitter contempt and hatred" with which they treated them. (I. 421.) It matters not that this "bitter hatred" should also have vented itself in the destruction of the objects thereof, as was so habitually the case. The killing of them is in some way not to be counted, and the eye is to be turned aside from that circumstance as in no respect entering into the operations of the tormentors. The grass and trees not to be injured we have seen were literally such. The men to be tormented were literal men, affected by the torment in their individuality. The men to be sealed, and from that cause not to be hurt, were, in like manner, literal men. But when we come to the non-killing of men, a sudden change in the method of the interpretation ensues, and the men now are to be no more seen in their individuality, or personality, but become a corporate institution. Such have been Mr. Elliott's betrayed necessities on this occasion, and such his way of meeting them. The rule for the literal, or the figurative, is just according as the facts of history will stand the test of the application. If any that meet the literal exigency can be made to appear, then the natural meaning of the word of God is permitted to stand; but if otherwise, the word must yield to the pressure of the history, and be made to take some other form than what the language thereof presents to view. And here the instrument called in to supply it with a new meaning, in some sort adaptable to the history, is simply the ingenuity of the expositor, whose will it thus is that governs the whole proceeding.

There is still a clause of the prophecy to which the history would not bend, and which accordingly has itself to be bent

aside to meet (if it can be so said to do) the history. "In those days," it is declared, "shall men *seek* death, and shall not *find* it." There was no difficulty, of course, in finding death in the days of Mr. Elliott's period at the hands of the blood-thirsty Mahomedans. The sword, as we have seen, was freely offered to all. The object, evidently, with the subjects of the torment, as thus treated of, was not to seek death, but to escape it. Mr. Elliott has therefore to rob the word of God of its simple and indubitable import, and to represent it as signifying no more than that in those days life was made "*almost* a burden." (I. 422.)

8. THE SIXTH TRUMPET.

The command given under the action of this trumpet to "loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates," is taken by Mr. Elliott to mean that this woe was to have its rise from Bagdad, where the preceding one, according to him, had settled down,—this having constituted the binding referred to in the prophecy. (I. 462.) Mr. Elliott has of necessity to acknowledge that Bagdad is on the Tigris, and not on the Euphrates, (I. 462, *note 2.*), and to ease himself as much as possible as to the text, he would read it as expressing that the angels were bound *by* the Euphrates, and not *in* it; but why the scripture, in undertaking to describe the site of the binding and loosing, should have passed over the one river, though in itself a mighty stream, and elsewhere freely mentioned under its Hebrew name of Hiddekel, (Gen. ii. 14; Dan. x. 4,) and have adverted to another lying miles beyond it, which is notoriously unconnected with the city supposed to be referred to, is a matter for which explanation has to be sought in vain.

The period of time mentioned under this prophecy, Mr. Elliott conceives to be given in a way to show that it was at the end thereof that the woe was to take effect, (I. 487,) the length of this time, according to his scale, being 396 years and 106 days. (I. 488.) For this very extended period, therefore, we are to have a woe impending, but not brought in till the close thereof.

The threatening catastrophe was that these angels were “to slay the third part of men.” Mr. Elliott believes angelic agency to be here indicated, (I. 458—461,) but that the real actors were the Turks, (I. 463,) by whom the Eastern third of the Roman state was to be overthrown,—this constituting the third part of men who were to be killed. (I. 463.) The chronological period of the prophecy Mr. Elliott takes to extend from the 18th January, 1057, when Thogrul Beg with his Turkmans “quitted Bagdad to enter on a long career of war and conquest,” to the 29th May 1453, when Constantinople fell. (I. 490, 493.) This expedition of Thogrul’s he accounts the “primary going forth” of the Turks “against Greek Christendom,” (IV. 261,) and to have been “the loosing of the united Turco-Moslem power from the Euphrates.” (I. 493.) But how stood the fact? Thogrul’s campaign, we learn from Mr. Elliott, “was to extend and establish the Turkman dominion over the frontier countries of Irak and Mesopotamia; that so the requisite strength” (this imputation being inserted to eke out the interpretation) “might be attained for the attack ordained in God’s counsels against the Greek empire.” (I. 491.) Thus it appears that he did not act against the Greeks, and hence did not provide the “primary going forth against Greek Christendom” which Mr. Elliott’s exigency called for. The Euphrates, as Mr. Elliott tells us, was not passed till A. D. 1063, when Thogrul’s successor Alp Arslan crossed it, and in 1065 possessed himself of Armenia, upon which the Greek emperor had to take the field for the defence of his empire. (I. 465, 466.) This then would form the commencing epoch to be sought for, and the chronological period, counting up to the fall of Constantinople, would be consequently short by either six or eight years of the desiderated amount. But even under Mr. Elliott’s own data the period is not accurately obtained. The extent thereof, as has been seen, should be 396 years and 106 days; but from Thogrul’s expedition to the fall of Constantinople there were 396 years and 130 days. (I. 493.) It must be borne in mind that this prophetic time is given with much precision, as made up of “an hour, and a day, and a month,

and a year." The excess of twenty-four days, appearing in the historic fact, would, according to Mr. Elliott's mode of computation, have produced upwards of an hour and a half more, which, had the event he treats of afforded the real fulfilment of the prophecy, could not but have been expressed; for when so narrow a portion of time as what was represented under one hour was specified, an additional hour and a half could not possibly have been overlooked. This difficulty had therefore to be overcome; and Mr. Elliott would do so by *supposing* that the period of the prophecy may have closed at about the crisis of the siege, saying that it "nearly" (why only nearly?) "marked its critical turning-point, of success to the Turkmans, of destruction to the Greeks." (I. 494.) But Mr. Elliott must be bound by his own terms, and if the fall of the empire was the slaying of the third part of the men prophesied of, then the positive loss of the capital, or the actual termination of the siege, was requisite to constitute that loss of life to the state which had to be accomplished under the prophecy.

The early Turkish aggressors upon Greek Christendom were of the Seljukian dynasty. (I. 466.) This became extinguished by the Moguls in the 13th century, and then the Ottoman power arose. (I. 468.) The exigencies of the interpretation required that an identity should be established between these two bodies, for the one gave the note of preparation, as it is assumed, for the downfall of the christian state, and the other, some four hundred years afterwards, carried out the threat, and overthrew it; and the text would show that the threatening agent was also the overthrowing one. The required identity Mr. Elliott satisfies himself is secured by the fact of a "band of Turkmans from Charisme and the Oxus," (represented in a note to have consisted of no more than 200 families,) having amalgamated themselves with the Ottomans, and so leavened the whole lump with the Turkman element, and even, somehow, with the Seljukian branch thereof. (I. 468, 469.) "The ruling dynasty," however, Mr. Elliott has to admit, "was indeed different," (I. 469, 470,) being Ottoman, and neither Seljukian nor Turkman,

and so his position is necessarily forfeited. But even were it otherwise, there was another point of connexion with the threateners of the christian state to be shown to belong to the demolishers thereof. The power for its destruction, was, the text indicates, bound up in the Euphrates, or, as Mr. Elliott has it, in Bagdad *by* the Euphrates, and had to be let loose for action from thence. This then had to be demonstrated in the case of the Ottomans,—that they came out to action from Bagdad. Mr. Elliott of course can adduce no such fact for them as this, but, as usual, he makes the endeavour to compromise the difficulty as well as the rigid materials of history will permit him. The Ottoman Sultan, he tells us, “in 1530 united Bagdad to his dominions,—(and) just as if to direct the attention of an inquirer to that city by the Euphrates as the local source whence, as here foretold, his primary commission issued, inserted it prominently into the list of his proud titles of empire,” that (among other places) he was “lord of . . . Bagdad.” (I. 472.) The need of the connexion between Bagdad and the subverter of the christian state is here fully admitted;—nay, even that Bagdad was to be the “local source” of his exploit. But how proved? Why it would appear by the circumstance that after the overthrow of that state, as we have seen, in A. D. 1453, the existing Sultan seventy-seven years subsequently possessed himself of Bagdad; so that the “source” of the action was secured by him seventy-seven years after that action had been completed! To what length may not an historic interpretation carry one!

9. THE VISION OF THE ANGEL WITH THE RAINBOW.

Mr. Elliott conceives the Reformation to be the subject of this scene, and the giving of the little book to John to have been fulfilled by Luther translating and putting forth the New Testament, which he looks upon to be the book here indicated. (II. 147, 162.) In the days of John, when the vision was given, books, such as we have, were not in use, but the literature of the time was inscribed on scrolls, such as Mr. Elliott describes the seven sealed book displayed to the evangelist to have been, (I.

104,) and a scroll comprehending the whole of the New Testament in manuscript would have been any thing but a small volume. Admitting however that the book of the vision may have been of the form existing in Luther's day, still, as printing was then in its infancy, the New Testament could not have been compressed so as to form a little book; and in point of actuality, to which of course we should look, Luther's translation thereof occupied two folio volumes, (*Merle D'Aubigné*, III. 91,) so as to have formed two large books, not one little one. Luther, furthermore, it must be remembered, went on to translate the whole bible, (*Merle D'Aubigné*, III. 93,) and necessarily made use thereof in his preaching.

The seven thunders, Mr. Elliott considers to be the Pope's decrees, and John's readiness to write down their utterances, and the command given him not to do so, but to seal them up, he views as carried out by Luther having at first accepted the Pope's decrees, but afterwards denounced and burnt them. (II. 114—118.) Now sealing, wherever else the figure is employed in scripture, implies invariably recognition and preservation, not disowning and destruction;* and Luther was not stopped short before his adoption of the Pope's decrees, as John was before he wrote down the utterances of the thunders, but had actually accepted them, and bound himself by them. "Most blessed father!" thus he at one time wrote to the Pope, even after his conversion, "prostrate at the feet of thy blessedness, I offer myself to thee with all I am and all I have. Kill me or make me live, call or recal, approve or reprove, as shall please thee. I will acknowledge *thy voice* as the *voice of Christ* presiding and speaking in thee." (II. 114, 115.) "And what," Mr. Elliott asks, "can more admirably illustrate the passage we are considering?" (II. 114.) Truly it is difficult to think of any thing more decidedly removed from affording the fulfilment of it. John was "*about* to write," but did not do so. Luther

* See Job. xiv. 17; xxxiii. 16; Cant. iv. 12; viii. 6; Isa. viii. 16; Dan. xii. 4, 9; John iii. 33; vi. 27; Rom. iv. 11; xv. 28; 1 Cor. ix. 2; 2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. i. 13; iv. 30; 2 Tim. ii. 19; Rev. v. 1; vii. 3, 4.

however wrote, and in terms that could scarcely have more fully expressed his acceptance and appropriation of the thunders which it would appear he should have repudiated from the moment of their utterance.

Mr. Elliott considers Luther's recognition of the Pope as Antichrist to have been prefigured in this vision by his imputed rejection of the thunders uttered, and that this was "a prophetic chronological discovery." (II. 141.) A representation such as this was material to Mr. Elliott's scheme, since, hitherto, in his chronologic chain of delineations, no mention of the existence of such a being as the Antichrist had occurred, and at the close of the chapter preceding the one which contains the vision we have now under consideration, a black list of the sins of the day had been given, in which that of worshipping the Antichrist had not appeared. But how stand the facts? The list in question, according to Mr. Elliott, was a record of prevailing sins brought up to the close of the 15th century. (II. 29.) The recognition of the Antichrist by Luther took place at the beginning of the next century; that is, in 1518. (II. 116.) So far all is safe. But as to this being "a prophetic chronological discovery," as was required for Mr. Elliott's scheme, we have it from his own pen that it was not so. The same recognition, he tells us elsewhere, had been made by the Waldenses "ere the termination of the 12th century," (II. 365, 366,) or more than three hundred years before the chronologic chain can give it place: and so was "transmitted downwards by them to the Wickliffites and Hussites* of the 14th and 15th." (IV. 398.) And it flowed also, it appears, over the undesiderated time in another, and an independent channel. Joachim Abbas, himself a papist, possessed himself of the idea at the close of the 12th century,

* Luther's imputed identity with the Waldenses, the Wickliffites, and the Hussites, as one with them in the body of the two witnesses, (appearing in the exposition of the next succeeding vision,) goes, it may be remarked, to deprive him of any independent position as a recipient of the notion that the Pope was the Antichrist, seeing that these his predecessors had been so openly testifying thereto.

(IV. 393, 394,) and from him, we learn, it "travelled down" among other Romanists "through the 18th century, to be stereotyped in the 14th for all literary posterity, in Dante's Inferno, and the Epistles of Petrarch." (IV. 397, 398.) What becomes then of the "prophetic chronology" of Luther's discovery of the fact? And how are we to judge of the blemish in the chain which the assertion that such was its nature was designed to cover?

10. THE TWO WITNESSES.

These are considered by Mr. Elliott to have been certain true members of the church, but indefinite as to number, who were witnessing for Jesus, (II. 195,) and against "the various antichristian superstitions of the apostacy, successively developed." (II. 202.)

Mr. Elliott objects to the Futurists as guilty of an inconsistency in viewing the beast as symbolic, and the two witnesses as literal. (III. 220, *note 1.*) On the head of the beast being symbolic, all are, and must be, agreed; for the nature of the object, and the parallel description of him in Daniel, with the inspired interpretation adjoined thereto, prove that it is not a natural animal, but a figurative one, that is treated of. But is there any such indication in the representation of the witnesses as may show that they constitute a symbol? And in truth are not the features of a symbol wholly wanting in the view which Mr. Elliott, in common with all the historic school, takes of them? For example, the objects in the text are witnesses. But are not those of the church whom they are supposed to stand for also strictly witnesses? It is not as when a beast pre-figured an empire, or an individual; but here it is no more than that witnesses are witnesses. Where is the transmutation then from the form of the symbol, to the form of the thing symbolized thereby? Both are absolutely thus far identical, and what stands in the text can no more be accepted as a figure, than that which is given forth in the interpretation. Again, Mr. Elliott rightly observes that "the term designating them

implies personality." (II. 194.) But does not personality equally attach to the church members in question? A symbol should have presented them in some other form than their natural one; but the reverse is here the case, and they are described in terms which, so far as these go, strictly and literally belong to them. The argument that Mr. Elliott would thus employ against the Futurists, has to be returned therefore heavily upon himself. The only feature of transmutation from the literal to something other than the literal which his view involves, is that the two, which constitutes the sum of the witnesses, implies an indefinite number. This however is no handling of a symbol, but simply the perversion of a fact, and for which authority will be sought in vain.

The witnesses were to give their testimony for the specific time of 1260 days, or, pursuant to Mr. Elliott, years. The period of this testimony is considered to have been from A. D. 533 (*scroll*) to 1793. If the prophecy respecting these witnesses has thus met with its fulfilment, and the facts thereof are to be proved from history, then are we to expect, indubitably, that records should be forthcoming to substantiate every needful detail of the circumstances of such fulfilment; and especially so with regard to the fixed chronological period, laid down as making the exact time of duration of the subject prophesied of. Mr. Elliott's interpretation as to these witnesses will be found however unsupplied with the required historical facts necessary to its establishment, and hence, on this ground alone, the correctness of the interpretation is to be disputed; for the Spirit, it must be judged, cannot have offered a prophetic incident to our contemplation, and one of so precise a nature as to involve a chronologic period for its duration, and yet have left us absolutely without the means of ascertaining all needful to make up its realization. If history be requisite for the elucidation of prophecy, then He who gave the prophecy, would also ensure the existence of the history. This is certainly not too much to look for, and under the consideration the rendering of the prophecy now in question has to be judged.

The testimony of the witnesses, we have seen, was to commence in 533, that year having been fixed upon as the 1260 years of their prophesying is held to synchronize with the parallel period of the duration of the beast, (II. 202,) against whom they were to testify. The historic record fails however to establish the appearance at this time of any whom Mr. Elliott would accept as of these witnesses, and it is not till the 7th century that he is able to afford us traces of such. Mr. Elliott then brings upon the field two lines of witnesses, in the West and in the East, holding independent course till the 10th (?) and 11th centuries, when they are found to have amalgamated in one, in the West. (II. 229.) The first he takes up are the earlier Western witnesses. At the outset he can specify but one, namely Serenus; and him only vaguely as to time, saying he appeared at the opening of the 7th century. (II. 210.) Then the Anglo-Saxon church are instanced, but without any note as to when their testimony arose or ended, save that it appeared "not long after" that of Serenus. (II. 213.) After this occurs "an interval,—a long interval," narrowed only "by the consideration that Serenus' example and opinions must almost necessarily in the nature of things have had disciples and converts to it;" (II. 213;) and then we have a protest on the part of the Council of Frankfort, in A. D. 794; (*ib.* 214;) and, onwards, Alcuin, (*ib.* 215,) Paulinus, (*ib.* 215,) Agobard, (*ib.* 217,) Claude, (*ib.* 217,) and Gottschale, (*ib.* 223,) who are specified as having fulfilled the precise office of the witnesses. "Thus," Mr. Elliott then observes, "we advance towards the close of the 9th century: and, in doing so," he has to acknowledge, "we advance also into a period of deep obscurity." (II. 225.) "It seems to me," he adds, "that we must admit a partial gap in the line of evidence;" (II. 226;) and so, with hardly a glimmer to guide him but in the way of conjecture, "we enter," he tells us, "on the opening of the 11th century," (II. 228,) when the incorporation with the Eastern witnesses occurred. The Eastern line consists of a sect called Paulikians, whose history Mr. Elliott traces from A. D. 653, (II. 230,) carrying it on till the period of

their junction with the Western witnesses ; but against the admission of this body into Mr. Elliott's scheme, it has to be objected that their testimony affected the Greek church, (II. 231, 234, 237,) with which they stood geographically in contact, and not the Papal beast, against whom the witnesses of the prophecy were to bear their testimony, and with whom they were to hold a parallel chronological course, and that it was only "from the commencement of the 11th century" that this Eastern line "appeared and excited notice in Italy and other countries of Western Europe," (II. 240,) or the regions of the beast. After bringing us up to this period of amalgamation between those of the East and those of the West, the combined line flows onwards in the channel of the Waldenses, the accounts of whom are copious ; but for the earlier line, the records are, as we have seen, and as Mr. Elliott has to allow, "not perfect, or without lacunæ ;" (IV. 17;) that is, absolutely wanting in the extent of information necessary for elucidation of this alleged fulfilled prophecy. Adaptation of fact to prophecy, so as to prove that the year 533 was the commencing time of the predicated chronologic period to be illustrated, is altogether impossible. Not a vestige of the required history is to be had throughout that 6th century, or till the opening of the next, and then, excluding, as in fairness we must do, the Greek-connected Paulikian sect, two serious gaps occur in the ensuing period onwards to the 11th century, such as in fact all but to swallow it up in vacuity. The period is of about 400 years, dating from the time of Serenus, and after naming him, and his contemporaries the Anglo-Saxons, we have the first break down of somewhere about 200 years, when the protest of the Council of Frankfort is adduced. And here we get about 100 years of scattered testimony till the close of the 9th century, after which there is a second break down of the concluding 100 years ; so that, in effect, from the outsetting period of A. D. 533, to the beginning of the 11th century,—that is, for upwards of four centuries and a half,—the needed evidence can be produced, but that only imperfectly, for little more than 100 years of the time, and for the other 350, is wanting.

The historic test has so far served to dissipate the historic interpretation. It has to be brought to bear thereupon in another point of view also, and with the like result. The witnesses were to prophesy in sackcloth. That formed a peculiarity in the circumstances of their testimony. Mr. Elliott defines the sackcloth-wearing to denote the "state of depression and mourning" of the witnesses, "arising, at first, *it might be*, simply from the general apostacy of the multitude round them," and, afterwards, "from direct and bitter persecution." (II. 352.) It is not the exigency of the text that leads Mr. Elliott to make this distinction—and it is no slight one—between the significations of the sackcloth-wearing at the one period and the other when it is held to have prevailed. It is, as usual with him, the exigency of the historic matter that has governed him on the occasion, evidence of the persecution entering into the character of the figure at the latter period, being absent, as we find, during the former, for which, consequently, a fresh expression for the figure had to be provided. The "direct and bitter persecution" which formed so material a feature in the sackcloth-wearing afterwards, cannot be traced by Mr. Elliott from before the time of Claude, (II. 352,) who laboured from A. D. 820 to 840; (II. 218;) so that the historic testimony thus far is wanting for near about the first three hundred years of the prophetic era before us. It is wanting also as to the material circumstance of the termination of the era. This, it has been seen, was to be the year 1793, or the time of the French revolution. As to the witnessing in sackcloth having then been brought to a conclusion, as the interpretation peremptorily required, all that Mr. Elliott can say is that the "establishment by the revolutionary, and afterwards the Napoleonic and other Codes, of equal toleration to Protestants as to Roman Catholics, (the former a proscribed class up to that epoch in the European kingdoms,) *seems* to point it out as the time when the two symbolic witnesses *may be considered* also to have *begun partially* to put off their sack-cloth." (III. 354, 355.) Nothing could be more definite than the chronologic proposition which had to be dealt with, and

nothing more indefinite than its proffered solution. At most the witnesses would appear to have begun "partially" to divest themselves of their sackcloth, and this of course implies that they also partially retained it; so that we have here the admission that the symbol continued beyond the period of its predicted duration, and in that fact the evidence that the interpretation proposed cannot be the true one. When we have to give up either the text, in all its precision, or the rendering thereof, in all its indefiniteness, the conclusion to come to cannot be for a moment dubious.

Mr. Elliott has been followed hitherto on the hypothesis that his ideas of the nature of the testimony of the witnesses, and of their sackcloth-wearing, are such as to have allowed of the subjects of the prophecy, as interpreted by him, having restricted operation during the specific period of 1260 years during which they were to prevail. It will be found, however, that under his representation of the purport of the vision no such limitation can have place. The witnesses, Mr. Elliott observes, "being simply described as witnesses for Jesus, they need not be supposed to have assumed prominently the aggressive character of direct remonstrants against the apostacy, whether in the East or in the West, except in proportion as that system should have authoritatively incorporated and enforced its growing superstitions and impieties, in open and necessary hostility to the doctrine of Jesus." (II. 195.) It was again the absence of historic material which led Mr. Elliott to allow himself such liberty. We have seen how he would associate the witnesses with the Papal beast in point of chronologic duration, for the limits of which, indeed, as respects the witnesses, he has not a particle of data but the one circumstance of this imputed association. But having the witnesses and the beast thus brought into juxtaposition, what more inevitable consequence was to be looked for than that they should have operated against each other, the one in testimony, the other in persecuting those giving the testimony? For the earlier centuries, however, historic evidence of any such action was absent, and so Mr. Elliott gave himself that

liberty in setting forth the nature of the prophesying of the witnesses by which we have now to judge him. Their testimony, it appears, was against heresies in general,—against all that ran adverse to the doctrine of Jesus,—and not specially against heresy as summed up in the Papacy at Rome. And has such testimony been ever limited by time since the first day that any were brought to the faith of Jesus? Do not the apostolic writings abound with proof that false doctrine on every side that it presented itself was vigorously met and denounced from the very commencement of the christian era? And has not the same line of testimony flowed onwards, uninterrupted, wherever Christ has had true adherents to His name, to this present day? Where then can a portion be marked off, within this period, during which such testimony prevailed not? And what consequently becomes of the prophetic limitation of time for Mr. Elliott's witnesses? His solution of the sackcloth-wearing lays him under the same difficulty. Persecution and mourning for prevailing corruption, which with him constituted it, belonged to the church from the earliest day, and the latter clause, assuredly, has never ceased to characterize it, and is to be found in existence at this current time. On all sides therefore has Mr. Elliott's solution of the period of the prophesying of the witnesses broken down. Under every possible expedient that he allows himself, a commencing time is to be sought for it in vain, equally as is a terminating one; and now it appears that even as to there being any such limitation of time at all which can be allotted to the vision, the means of admitting this into the solution are wanting.

We may pass to other clauses of the subject, wherein the failure of the interpretation will be found to be equally apparent.

The witnesses were to have power to destroy their enemies, and were to exercise that power. "If any man," it is said, "will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." As in prior instances which have been

commented upon, whenever we come to close and tangible facts belonging to the prophecy, Mr. Elliott's adaptation has to recede therefrom into the vagueness which a figurative rendering may supply. His witnesses, of course, produce no actual fire from their mouths for the destruction of their enemies. All that he has to say as respects them on this head is that the phrase pointed to "God's fiery judgments destroying the apostates *nationally* that might have persecuted them," (II. 200,) a fulfilment, he has further to admit, which has not yet been accomplished as regards the two most extensive branches of his witnesses; namely, the Paulikians, and the Waldenses. (II. 354.) The 1260 years of the prevalence of the witnesses have thus gone by without this important discriminative feature belonging to them, generalized even and diluted as it is by Mr. Elliott, having been true of by far the major part of them.

Unable as Mr. Elliott is to connect such power personally with those he takes to be the witnesses, he still could not avoid seeing that it was to be of an "avenging" order, (II. 353,)—so explicit is the text on this head. Here an objection urged under parallel grounds against other interpretations of Mr. Elliott's, (and it may be added of the historic school in general,) stands fatally opposed to him. The present dispensation is not one wherein our opponents are to be met with vengeance. We are called upon to "overcome evil with good," (Rom. xii. 21,) and are to "love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us." (Matt. v. 44.) God's witnesses must ever afford the expression of His mind, and this being with Him a time of longsuffering and tendering of mercy and salvation, no member of Christ could now open his mouth to call down fiery judgments upon his enemies, without ceasing to be in the position of a witness, and sinning against the character of the dispensation. The prophecy of the witnesses is hence indubitably to be referred to times yet future, when vengeance, and not, as now, blessing, can be poured forth upon the adversaries.

Of the witnesses, it is further said, that "these have power to

shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy." Mr. Elliott seeks to dispose of this feature likewise by a figurative interpretation. The drought, he assumes, was "a spiritual drought;" and in support of this he quotes that passage from Amos, where it is said, "The days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine on the land: not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." (II. 200, 201.) And this he applies to the prediction in hand, as illustrating the "shutting it (the land) out from the dews of heaven throughout the period of their prophesying;" (II. 353;) saying that during "the five earlier centuries" * of the time of the witnesses, "the general spiritual destitution was such, that the people might be resembled to poor and needy ones, that sought water and found none," which hence constituted the "spiritual drought, and famine of hearing God's word," of the prophecy. (II. 354. *and note 1.*) The word of God is here represented as the refreshing water, and the people as thirsting for it, but not getting it. So the conditions of the prophecy required. The drought must be *felt*, to be experienced as such. Thirst and privation must have been induced, and the longing souls, as Mr. Elliott's interpretation would put it, must have been sensible of their destitution, and earnestly craving for the supply which in their experience they knew would remedy it. But was such ever the condition of unregenerate man? With a heart by nature at enmity with God, and an apprehension not allowing of his taking up the things of the Spirit, can he ever be said to have known the value of the vivifying stream of God's word, and to be yearning and thirsting for sustainment to his spirit out of it? Of the Jews, as viewed in their national aspect, which is the one they are invariably estimated under, such a figure might be used, as in Amos, for they have had the oracles of God committed to them, and have known what it is to be under the guidance thereof; but the unconverted Gentile is to

* Mr. Elliott says that "other parts of the period under review" could be shown to have been similarly circumstanced, but he has not afforded the evidence as to this.

be recognized only in his individual capacity, and can never have been in such a position as to be subjected to the sense of the spiritual drought of which Mr. Elliott speaks.

But the producers of the drought, we see by the text, were the two witnesses. To them it was given to shut up the refreshing stream during the whole period of their testimony. This is indeed a strange power to vest in those who were preachers of the word, or in any manner to associate with their office of witnesses for Jesus. They were the very dispensers of this dew of heaven, and could not possibly at the same time have been employed to withhold it. They were those who were acting in obedience to the injunction to "preach the gospel to every creature," and at a time of which Jesus had said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink;" and it is not possible that at such a period God could have ordained that the thirsters should be as men "that sought water and found none," and that these witnesses for Jesus, whose office it was to minister to their need, should be the very instruments of their destitution. No view of this clause in the prophecy can in fact stand but the literal one, and this of course is death to Mr. Elliott's scheme of interpretation: for, as he himself observes, "it could not be that for 1260 years there should be no natural rain." (II. 200.)

The days of the prophecy would then have to be literal ones, and so also the parallel periods elsewhere in the Apocalypse, and the whole historic system would break down, and have to be abandoned.

The further "power" that the witnesses were to have "over waters to turn to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will," Mr. Elliott can be scarcely said to meet even with generalities. The waters being turned into blood, he says "can only be interpreted of the bloodshed of wars, inflicted in God's providence on the enemies of the Witnesses;" (II. 200;) but this species of infliction he had already allotted as the effect of the fire coming out of the mouths of the witnesses; and for the "plagues," the "all plagues," he has only the same exhausted solution, accounting the "visitations of Saxons and

Lombards, Saracens and Seljukian (!) Turks," as constituting them, (II. 354.)—visitations, it must further be remembered, which had already been appropriated for prior predictions in the Apocalypse.

The witnesses, we have seen, were to have power to prophesy for 1260 days, and "when they shall have finished their testimony," it is said, "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." Nothing can be plainer from this than that as soon as the 1260 days, or be it years, of their testimony had expired, they were to be warred against, overcome, and killed. Mr. Elliott allows that to place the war spoken of at the end of the term of the testimony, "in so far as the clause itself is concerned, is . . . the most natural mode of translating and understanding it." (II. 358.) Unhappily, however, considerations connected with the view of the clause itself were not those that were to prevail. There was always a mightier agent than the word of the scripture to which place had to be given. The potent element of history had to be admitted, and wherever it presented difficulties in the way of the word, the word had to yield the path. There occurred such difficulties here. The year 1793 was that fixed upon for the end of the testimony, and the beast in question being the Papacy, there were, it appears, "long previous wars" on the part thereof against the true believers, which, in this history of the witnesses, could not, Mr. Elliott remarks, have been "passed over in silence." (II. 359.) "The most natural mode of understanding" the scripture had accordingly to be given up, and Mr. Elliott, in view of the respect to be accorded to the history, readily does so; and as readily finds another meaning to the word of God, essentially different from that in which he would have accepted it "in so far as the clause itself is concerned." The import of the passage, he says, was that the war should arise when the witnesses had "gone through the several component parts or acts" of their "testimony," which would amount, in his mind, to their having "fulfilled or completed" it; but "yet not so as to imply that their whole

period of testifying was at an end." (II. 362.) Under this form of construction, the war against the witnesses is said to have been begun in the year 1163, (II. 368,) and, "as the 15th century drew to a close," to have advanced onwards to conquest; (II. 371;) and in 1514 the death of the witnesses is described to have been effected. (II. 387.) So protracted a warfare certainly does not correspond with the language of the text, which makes the conquest to characterize the war, from the outset, and the death of the witnesses to be the immediate result. The witnesses are in various ways described to be so vested with power to destroy their enemies, that none, it is obvious, could have stood up against them during the period of their testimony. "If any man will hurt them," it is said, "he must in this manner be killed." But here we have those warring with them for an interval of 350 years, and yet continuing, even to this day, unscathed.

"Personality," we have seen, attaches itself to the witnesses, and they are construed in effect to be so many individual persons. Their death, however, with Mr. Elliott, is not the extinction of their persons, but simply a silencing of their testimony, amounting to "their *apparent* extermination;" (II. 372;) so that the alleged fulfilment is one only in seemingness, and not in reality, the witnesses being all along in existence, but their testimony only not heard of. But even the death in the way of the shutting up of their testimony could not be absolute. No stretch of credulity could of course make us believe that for the term of the demise of the witnesses, which was pursuant to Mr. Elliott's computation three years and a half, every witness to Jesus, in every place, from one particular day, had his mouth rigidly closed against uttering a word of that testimony which he had hitherto freely given forth. Mr. Elliott had to take easier ground than this, and accordingly he represents, as the required silencing of the witnesses, the circumstance that on the given day none of them chose to appear before a certain Council of their adversaries, and so left the latter to triumph in the thought that they had put them down. (II. 386.) Here is no actual

silencing of testimony, but simply a hesitation on the part of the witnesses of Jesus to put themselves in the power of their enemies, whom they were indeed enjoined always to escape from if they could ; (Matt. x. 23;) and even were it true that their testimony had been silenced, it is evident that this could not have occurred simultaneously everywhere on that day, or on that day necessarily at all. The terror that might have served to reduce them to silence, must of course have been owing to the prior measures taken for the purpose by their enemies, and not have proceeded out of any thing that arose at a distant spot, and in this Council of their adversaries ; and hence the actual silencing must have been at times indefinite, and antecedent to the Council day. The death of the witnesses, reduced even to the measure in which Mr. Elliott would represent its accomplishment as effected, must then be simply said not to have occurred ; and assuredly not so at the stated time. And had it occurred, it must be observed, by the striking of three years and a half out of the measured space of time during which the testimony was to prevail, the integrity of the prophecy would by so much be directly violated. Mr. Elliott varies also from himself in computing the period during which the witnesses are thus alleged to have remained dead. The three years he makes natural solar ones, of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days each, but the half year, the half of such a year as is given in the Apocalypse, consisting of but 360 days. (II. 393.)

Mr. Elliott would appear ready to plume himself upon a “fulfilment to the very letter,”* (II. 389,) when his historic materials can produce him one. If the literal rendering of prophecy has higher merit in his eyes than the spiritual, what is this but to condemn himself in the spiritualizing method of interpreting, to which elsewhere he has so frequently resorted, and to show that his poverty of true materials for supplying facts for the prophecy has driven him thereto, and no fixed principle guided him. Such a fulfilment to the letter he finds for the predicted non-burial of the witnesses, in the enforcement of

* The italics here are Mr. Elliott's.

edicts by the Popes against the true believers, esteemed by them to be heretics, and under which the right of sepulture was denied them; (II. 388, 389;) but as it appears that an edict to this effect was put forth so far back as in the year 1179, (II. 388, *note 2*;) while the witnesses are held to have died in 1514, the occurrence of what had thus place 335 years before the period of the event predicted, cannot in any way have supplied the fulfilment of that event. Mr. Elliott, as we have found, objected to a construction which would involve an omission from the prophecy of the early wars of the beast against the witnesses, and in like manner one which involves an omission of previous non-burials of them should be held inadmissible. Mr. Elliott, however, has no other solution to offer upon this head; and under it, be it observed, his construction of the death of the witnesses stands disproved. A symbolic death should of course have a symbolic non-burial of the object defunct. That object, we have seen, was the testimony of the witnesses, which had become silenced; but in what way, it has to be asked, could silenced testimony be said to be refused burial? On the contrary, burial would be the very thing, not merely applicable thereto, but inherent to it; and hence, as it is plain from the text that non-burial was the lot of the object defunct, the killing thereof, it is just as evident, must be something other than the shutting up of the testimony. Mr. Elliott's necessity, it may have been, drove him from the figurative to the literal, when he came to have the non-burial of the witnesses to treat of, thereby affording another instance, among the many that have arisen, of his system of interpretation being one governed by exigency, and not by fixed rule, or considerations connected with the text itself. But on the one side, or the other, he here defeats himself, for if the death of the witnesses were unreal, and only figurative, their non-burial could not have been real and literal; and if the non-burial were literal, then the death must have been such also.*

* Mr. Elliott can be here called forward to condemn himself. In treating of the first resurrection, he observes, "But in these and all such cases, we must mark most carefully one rule that is observed,—a rule the pro-

The resurrection of the witnesses, as well as their death, had to be shown to a day, the prophecy on this head being precise. Mr. Elliott has attempted to meet the demand by representing the circumstance of Luther's posting his Theses at Wittemberg as the required resurrection, he having then come out in his witness character, and so revived the defunct testimony. But the witnesses who were dead were according to the text two, and these, pursuant to Mr. Elliott, standing for a much larger number; while in the resurrection act he has but one to show in resuscitation. The text on every side has to yield to the historic emergency, and the figure two, it would seem, may express an extensive and unlimited number, or a single unit, just as the necessities of the interpretation may demand.

We have to see, however, whether this one witness even, on the day in question, afforded the revivification of the testimony that had expired. Mr. Elliott has given his own rule for the estimate of the required testimony, and by that of course he must be bound. The witnesses, we have found, were to testify "against the various antichristian superstitions of the apostacy, (as) successively developed." (II. 202.) The great feature of the apostacy, as viewed by Mr. Elliott, is that the Pope is the Antichrist. That is the crowning sin, and the provocation to the strongest adverse testimony. The deceased witnesses had priety of which will approve itself at once to every discriminative mind; viz., that of making the *resurrection of corresponding character* with the *death*, from out of which it is a revival. Thus in Ezekiel it was a change from *national extinction to national revival*; in Luke from *spiritual death to spiritual life*; in the Apocalyptic visions from *political and official annihilation to political and official resuscitation*. So strict and constant is the observance of this rule, and so stringent its requirement by the proprieties of diction, that it needs but, in any doubtfully expressed case of *resurrection*, to ascertain the nature of the *death* revived from; and, if this can be ascertained, an explanation of the resurrection conformable thereto must almost necessarily be the true one." (IV. 184, 185.) It was an easy matter to conform to this rule upon the occasion for which it has been cited by Mr. Elliott, but let him carry it out, if he can, in the case of these witnesses, whose *burial* should of course, under it, be "of corresponding character" with the *death* which created occasion for burial.

come to the knowledge of the Pope's true character, as we have learned, "ere the termination of the 12th century;" (II. 365, 366;) that is, for more than three hundred years before their death; and during all this time, as we have also seen, they had been in actual warfare with him. (II. 368.) The resurrection witness, assuredly, should not take up a lower position as to testimony than that held by the deceased ones. The apostacy had thus far been long fully "developed," and the witness to meet it, should be one empowered as fully to denounce it. Did Luther, on his alleged resurrection day, assume that posture of hostility to the Papal Antichrist which would make him a true resurrection witness? Mr. Elliott shall answer. Among the propositions, the posting of which by Luther is considered to have constituted his resurrection, there is the following one quoted. "5. Le Pape ne peut (ni ne veut) remettre aucune autre peine que celle qu'il a imposée." Of which Mr. Elliott notices, "The reader will observe the saving clause for the Pope in Prop. 5, 'ni ne veut.' Others occur elsewhere. So Prop. 50: 'Si le Pape connaissait les exactions des predicateurs d'indulgences, il aimerait mieux que la metropole de St. Pierre fut brûlée, que de la voir edifiée avec le peau, la chair, et les os de ses brebis.' As yet Luther knew not the Pope." (II. 99, *note* 1.) This is marvellous indeed. The witness, and he a resurrection one, brought forward under circumstances of such peculiar triumph to replace those whom the Papal Antichrist had extinguished, not to know the very object against whom he was called up to bear his testimony! But so it is. Luther, we find, at this critical time knew him not. And now let us see in what light it was that he did accept this object of his testimony. The day given as that of his imputed resurrection is the 31st October, 1517. (II. 393.) In the year *following*, that is "in the summer of 1518," in a letter already quoted, we have him thus writing to the Antichrist. "*Most blessed Father!* prostrate at the feet of *thy Blessedness*, I offer *myself* to *thee* with *all I am* and *all I have*. Kill me or make me live, call or recal, approve or reprove, as shall please thee. I will acknowledge *thy voice* as

the voice of Christ presiding and speaking *in thee.*" (II. 114, 115.) Words could not express a more devoted adhesion to the one to be testified against than these addressed by Luther to the Pope. At this time then he was still ranking himself as one of those "sheep" of the Pope for whom he had evidenced his sympathies, and however marching towards the point, was still far from being a witness against him. It was not, we learn from Mr. Elliott, till the 15th June, 1520, that in reply to the Pope's bull of excommunication he was enabled openly to proclaim him as the Antichrist, (II. 118, *note 1.*,) or, consequently, to assume the position of the deceased witnesses. This then, if any, was the day of his resurrection; but it comes in rather too late for Mr. Elliott, for it occurs more than six years subsequently to the death of the witnesses, or upwards of two and a half beyond the time fixed under the prophecy for their resuscitation.

The ascension of the witnesses to heaven, Mr. Elliott takes to be their advancement to "the heaven of political power and dignity," (II. 400,) realized when the rulers of the world gave their support to the Reformers. The scripture narrative would lead us to expect that the translation occurred instantly, as they were raised from the dead, no time moreover having been expressed as occupied in the accomplishment of this event; whereas the days taken up in their testimony, and those of their continuing in death, had been precisely given. But not so the history. It was not until two years after a decree passed against them at Augsburg, which occurred in 1530, (II. 395,) that in their toleration by the Emperor of Germany the "first great step" was taken for them "to political ascendancy"; (II. 401;) and this it is held they did not eventually reach to until the "Peace of Passau, concluded August 12, 1552." (II. 403.) Thus we have an interval of thirty-five years, unmarked be it remembered in the prophecy, occurring from the resurrection of the witnesses to their ascension.

But here Mr. Elliott had to meet the objection that the witnesses, who had still upwards of 240 years of their testimony to accomplish in sackcloth, could not be in the heaven of political

ascendancy, and yet still be suffering oppression as characterized by the sackcloth ; and undoubtedly it is one that stands as absolutely fatal to his interpretation. Mr. Elliott strives to remove the difficulty by observing that “the nature of symbols involves necessarily at times strange and unnatural combinations,” and he instances that of the woman clothed with the sun, seen in heaven, and yet found travailing in pain ; and as to the fact of the witnesses being in political power, and at the same time in sackcloth, he notices that there was a “religious deterioration” at that period, which left the true witnesses “but a comparatively small and often neglected number of the church and nation,” and that in Popish countries, such as Italy, Spain, Portugal, Austria, and France, they still suffered persecution. (II. 419—421.) Now whatever strange combinations there may be in symbols, there can be none of a *contradictory* nature attaching to them, such as Mr. Elliott’s interpretation would involve : and for the instance of the woman travailing in pain in heaven, the figure has first to be rightly expounded, and then it has to be shown that no such pain as is expressed thereby, can be represented as experienced in heaven. The figure might betoken, as here I believe it does, heavenly sympathies associated with earthly things, such as also affect our Lord, who, although seated at the right hand of God, can “be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” and, as the head of the body, suffers when the members thereof suffer, so as to have been able, in the full sense of this, to say to Saul, when ill treating the church, “Why persecutest thou *me*?” Mr. Elliott’s idea of the witnesses being in sackcloth, and yet in heaven, cannot be thus accounted for, for the heaven being the enjoyment of political ascendancy, and the sackcloth expressing depression and persecution at the hands of those in such ascendancy, the two conditions cannot co-exist in respect of the same persons, and he has to abandon for them the one position, or the other, and so to forfeit his interpretation. His difficulties lead him into inconsistencies, which cannot at all be taken as clearing him from his dilemma, but rather serve to show his inability to extricate himself out of it. When he

speaks of the reformed protestants belonging to "a glorious witness-church for Christ," (I. 419,) it is vain to represent them as "a small and often neglected number of the church and nation;" and when he gives us a line of witnesses, strengthened in resurrection life and political ascension, it will not do to call up as belonging to their body those still suffering persecution in Popish lands.

The exaltation of the believers to political power, Mr. Elliott ascribes to the direct act of our Lord. He views Him as set forth under the figure of the angel clothed with a cloud, appearing in the preceding chapter of the Apocalypse, and says that the cloud in which the witnesses ascended was the same one, in which He was enveloped; and hence that it was "of Christ's special intervention" that this exaltation was effected. (II. 404.) Now if such a position were one selected by our Lord for His members, it could only be because it was such as was conducive to their spiritual welfare; but if so, it may be judged, they never would have been without it, and the centuries of previous depression and persecution could not have had place. Furthermore, what was good for the body, would be good for every member thereof, and our ambition should be, individually, to strain every nerve to arrive, each of us, at the highest possible position of political elevation. Those who are spiritually minded need not be told what death such a pursuit as this would prove to the action of the Spirit within them; and in point of fact Mr. Elliott, we see, has to record that the political exaltation of the church ended in "religious deterioration." We may be sure therefore that the Lord has not chosen such an atmosphere as one desirable for His people; and in truth, without being left to surmise for such a conclusion, we have His own words, enforced by appeal to His own example, that the position He has contemplated for them in respect of the world, is the very reverse of that to which Mr. Elliott conceives He raised the witnesses. "Peace," He has said, "I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: *not as the world giveth*, give I unto you." (John xiv. 27.) "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (John xvi. 33.) "If

the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you *out of the world*, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." (John xv. 18—20.) The truth of doctrine which the Reformers attained to was of the Lord; but their seeking the alliance of the world was against His truth, and not of Him.

11. THE WOMAN CLOTHED WITH THE SUN.

The same painful line of doctrine which has been just above animadverted on, reappears in the interpretation offered for this figure. The woman, Mr. Elliott considers to be "Christ's true church on earth." (III. 7.) The sun, moon, and stars, associated with her, he holds to be chief and lesser rulers of the state. (*ib.* 9.) The heaven in which she was seen, was "evidently," he says, "that of political elevation." (*ib.* 10.) The male child she brought forth, who was "to rule all nations with a rod of iron," he further explains, meant her "children united into a body politic, and raised to dominant power." (*ib.* 10, 11.) Her gestation is said to have occupied from A. D. 33 to 313. (*ib.* 18, *note* 1.) "Her travail had begun, above a prophetic week before, in the Diocletian persecution; and long, and painful, and ineffective hitherto, had been her sufferings. She had been with child: she had been in pain: she had brought forth but wind: she had wrought no deliverance on the earth. But now the moment for her deliverance had come." (III. 18.) Can it indeed have been that the early church, even of the apostolic age, was pregnant all this while with the ambition of reaching to the heaven of political power? Was it for this that she strove, and laboured, and suffered persecution? "Brethren," the apostle has said, "be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you *even weeping*, that they are *the enemies of*

the cross of Christ,”) (that cross whereby the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world;) “whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, *who mind earthly things*. For our conversation is in *heaven*;” (Phil. III. 17—20;)—a heaven, obviously, of a very different nature from that which this woman, in Mr. Elliott’s estimation, was struggling to reach to.

The strange representations thus involved under Mr. Elliott’s rendering of this figure, opposed as they are both to sound doctrine and to fact, were nevertheless such as grew, inevitably, out of the necessity under which he lay to adhere to a solution of its symbols such as he had already given where they had previously occurred. “Consistency,” he tells us, “requires that we explain these greater luminaries to signify the chief rulers of the state, according to the general prophetic use of the symbols; and in the same way the stars noted to signify lesser rulers in it.” (III. 9.) Let us see, further, to what this consistency leads us. The woman’s case is thus given in the scripture. “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” And thus stands the interpretation offered of her travailing. “Her travail had begun, above a prophetic week before, in the Diocletian persecution,” (nine or ten years is the period of the endurance of this visitation;—I. 183;) “and long, and painful, and ineffective hitherto, had been her sufferings.” “The pangs of birth” were put an end to “in the heaviest persecution that ever was then known.” (III. 18, *and note 1.*) Nothing can be more clear from the text than that it was while the woman was *in heaven* that these labour pains come on; and so we have seen that Mr. Elliott has elsewhere viewed the subject, where he has appealed to the fact of pain thus being represented as occurring in heaven, in defence of his position that the witnesses might be in heaven, and yet in sack-cloth. (II. 418, 419.) * So that the end is that in some way

* See pp. 119, 120 of these observations.

we are to accept these altogether discordant statements, and to believe that the church was in the heaven of political ascendancy, clothed upon with the chief and lesser rulers of the state, and so shining in resplendent triumph, and at the very same time, broken down, bruised, and oppressed, under "the heaviest persecution" ever then known of! To such a dilemma, inextricably, does Mr. Elliott's rendering of these figures bring him.

The dragon, Mr. Elliott considers to represent Pagan Rome as existing at the commencement of the 4th century. (III. 13, 14.) In discussing the symbol of the beast, he shows that his seven heads are identical with those of the dragon; (*ib.* 97;) and these he explains to be seven forms of headship under which Rome had been governed; namely, that of kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, military tribunes, emperors crowned with the *στεφανος*, or laurel crown, and emperors wearing the Asiatic diadem. (*ib.* 98, 105; I. 129, 130.) Mr. Elliott insists much upon the chronological accuracy of the Apocalyptic figurations as marked in the distinctive adoption of the crown or the diadem, according to the period of the empire indicated in the prophecy, —the crown being allotted in the earlier time of the first seal, and here the diadem. (III. 108.) He remarks "that whereas, with reference to such a period as the close of the 4th century, it would have been an impropriety, and with reference to the 6th an anachronism, to represent the *στεφανος*, or laurel crown, as a badge of empire, on an imperial or royal head,—just as much, and indeed still more, it would have been an anachronism to represent a Roman emperor of the two and a half first centuries with a diadem." (I. 131.) But what are we to say when not only the Roman emperor of this last named period, but even rulers of the commonwealth,—consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and tribunes,—are seen figured, as under Mr. Elliott's interpretation, each with the Asiatic diadem upon his brow? "And behold," it appears in the text, "a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns (*Gr. diadems*) upon his heads." *Seven* diadems, it is distinctly said; one for each of these historically undiademed rulers!

The appearance of the seven Roman heads altogether forms an additional most serious incongruity, for they were successional, the one supplanting the other ; and the six first had each in turn arisen and passed away, ere the seventh came on the scene. To call up thus the early kings of Rome, who had been displaced more than eight hundred years before,* and after them the other extinct forms of rulers, and to set them in company with the last form of emperors, is a defiance of fact and chronology the measure of which it would be very difficult to surpass.

The exhibition upon the dragon of the ten horns, involves Mr. Elliott in another manifest anachronism. These horns, he considers to be ten kingdoms, which arose after "the old imperial government" had been "swept away," (III. 113,) the number of which was completed in A. D. 532 or 533, (III. 116,) while here we have them in company with the imperial head, (as also with the other earlier ones,) from the outset of the vision, before the dragon's ejection from heaven, or from the beginning of the 4th century ; that is, more than two hundred years before the date assigned for their existence.

The tail of this dragon "drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." These, Mr. Elliott says, were christians persecuted by Maximin, in whom "the old Roman Pagan power" stood "concentrated ;" the persecuted being such as were "within the limits of his own dominion." (III. 18, 19.) "Consistency" had required Mr. Elliott to explain stars as rulers in a state, lesser ones albeit. But what becomes of that consistency now, when the same image can be applied, as in this instance, to those who had no office in the state ?† And where is the heaven out of which these stars were

* The last of the early kings of Rome was expelled B. C. 509, (CLASS. DICT.,) and this vision is dated from about A. D. 300.

† Mr. Elliott speaks of bishops among those persecuted by Maximin, and probably introduces them as a saving clause for his figure. But still the general run of unofficial christians, also assailed by Maximin and cited by Mr. Elliott, historically, as belonging to this clause of the prophecy, have to be accounted for as stars.

cast to earth, when we find them, not in the atmosphere of political elevation, but residing, and suffering, under the rule of an oppressive and hostile Pagan state?

The ejection of the dragon out of heaven is considered to have been the downfall of Paganism, an interpretation already brought under view, and then found to be pregnant with incongruities.* The woman's flight from him to the wilderness is held to be descriptive of the religious declension of the church, succeeding to that political elevation she had attained through Constantine, whereby "Christ's church and people were reduced more and more to the wilderness-state of spiritual want and barrenness." (III. 34—38.) This then was the result of that union with earthly things for which she would seem, under Mr. Elliott's solution, to have been panting from the days of the apostles, and the procurance of which for her again at a subsequent period, namely that of the Reformation, has been attributed by him to the direct intervention of Christ Himself. The "two wings of a great eagle," which were given to her "that she might fly into the wilderness," are conceived to designate "the Eastern and Western divisions of the (Roman) empire," (III. 41,) united under Theodosius, one described to be of "real personal piety," and "a protector and nursing father to the orthodox church of Christ." (III. 43.) Here, be it observed, the bi-partite condition of the empire is adhered to, and not the foregone and abolished tri-partite state of it, introduced by Mr. Elliott, just after this historic season, at the occurrence of the trumpets.† But can the word of God have given cover to such discordant descriptions of one and the same object? Can it have represented it at one time as consisting of two portions, and at another of three, its circumstances remaining all along the same? The dragon, from whose persecution the woman fled, is now no more Imperial Pagan Rome, that enemy having been extinguished in Licinius, (III. 21,) but a new power is called up to fulfil the figure; and this, floods of foreign invaders, imbued with Arian-

* Pp. 36—38.

† See p. 85 of these observations.

ism, sent forth by Satan to assail her : (III. 48 :) the same, in effect, by whom Rome was desolated, as appearing under the imagery of the earlier trumpets. The earth that swallows up the flood, is the Roman nation, in whose religion, as Papists, the Arian heresy is said to have been absorbed. (III. 51, 52.) These are the components of the scene, as set forth by Mr. Elliott. The action, as given in the text, is manifestly this. The dragon, full of malice at his fall, is bent upon the destruction of the woman, and God provides her with eagles' wings, that she may flee for safety to the wilderness, where she is nourished ; while the dragon casts forth a flood to overwhelm her, which the earth, in order to "help" the woman, swallows up, and so effects her deliverance. Under Mr. Elliott's representations of the different clauses of the figure, the scene takes this shape. At the fall of Pagan Rome, the church is not placed in circumstances of fear or flight, but rises into ascendancy. Her association with worldly things generates religious declension, and the wilderness state of "spiritual want and barrenness." No pressure of an external adversary thus compels her to betake herself to the wilderness, but on the contrary, her very prosperity (in the world) leads her into it. Her "protector and nursing father" spreads his wings to help her into this condition, that she may reach this spiritual wilderness, and be there starved, and not, as in the text, nourished. Her deadly enemy, on the other hand, strives to prevent her subsiding into such state ; that is, to save her from it ; and this, it appears, by sending out upon her a flood of heretic doctrine. But here he himself, in another guise, turns round to befriend her against his own act, and swallows up the flood ;—the transmutations of the enemy being that he first shows his enmity towards her as Pagan Rome ; that he then sends floods out of his mouth to overwhelm her, which are in fact his own enemies, who devastated him as Rome ; and that, finally, again in the shape of Rome, he himself comes forward and swallows up those floods. Had confusion been designed, more could hardly have been produced. Such, however, are the legitimate resultants of Mr. Elliott's renderings.

Mr. Elliott has a course of time for the woman from the

period when she first set out for the wilderness, till she actually reached it. It is "soon after the establishment of Christianity in the Roman empire," which occurred upon the downfall of Paganism in A. D. 324, (III. 21,) that the woman is considered to have begun to "flee towards the wilderness;" (III. 34, 35;) and the period of her stay there for 1260 days, or, pursuant to Mr. Elliott, years, being made to synchronize with the parallel period connected with the two witnesses and the beast, in A. D. 533 she is viewed as having reached it. (*scroll.*) "As a corporate body, and in respect of those acts by which a true church is manifested to the world, viz., the faithful preaching of the word, evangelic worship, the sacraments rightly administered, and.... christian Synods and Councils,—in respect of these," we learn she from this time, for the 1260 years of her seclusion, became "hidden and invisible." (III. 52.) A retirement, so gradual as to have occupied two centuries to accomplish it, and of a nature to be quite unmarked as to the progress thereof by incident, could present no point at which it could be said that the era had begun when the going towards the wilderness was over, and the wilderness state had been actually reached; and, accordingly, here is a chronologic prophecy, of precise limit of duration, without possible means for the ascertaining when the period indicated therein had its commencement, and the means of computing which, consequently, are absolutely wanting. A defect of this stamp, and thus necessitated, it need hardly be observed, must be owing to the erroneousness of the interpretation, and is not to be imputed to the text.

Mr. Elliott, in effect, in offering solutions of other parts of the Apocalypse, affords matter totally subversive of the representation he here gives of the woman in the wilderness. The state he ascribes to her under this condition, of "insulation from the rest of the world, invisibility in respect of public worship, and destitution of all ordinary means of spiritual sustenance," (III. 33, 34,) and of being "hidden and invisible," "just alive, and in obscurity," and not "manifested to the world" in respect, among other things, of "faithful preaching of the word" and

“evangelic worship,” (III. 52,) is one totally incompatible with that of those who at the same time, under the figure of the two witnesses, are described as having received “power” to preach; and to call down fire upon their enemies, and “to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.” The church, or any section thereof, cannot have been in witness capacity, presenting herself in open testimony against surrounding error, and standing the brunt of persecution for the truth’s sake, and for centuries in the conflict of declared war with her enemies, and at the same time thus spiritually destitute and physically lost to observation. And what is to be said of her from the date of the Reformation; that is, for more than the last 250 years of her alleged wilderness time, when she was raised up to the heaven of political ascendancy, with her temple measured, her “ecclesiastical establishment” reorganized with the “rod” of “civil authority,” her enemies cast out as “excommunicate” and “apostate,” (II. 180, 184, 187,) and herself shining forth as “a glorious witness-church for Christ?” (II. 419?) Was this for her also a time of “destitution,” when she was “just alive and in obscurity,” unmanifested even “in respect of public worship,” and “as a corporate body. . . . hidden and invisible?” The two lines of interpretation, it is needless to say, are altogether adverse, and destroy each other.

12. THE ANTICHRISTIAN BEAST.

In the controversy between the Futurists and the historical interpreters, this figure holds the most important place, the former viewing it as expressive of an individual, and so carrying it into times yet to come, and giving it but a very limited period of duration, and the latter associating it with an empire, of past and current existence, and of lengthened endurance. Upon the right appreciation of the symbol the question between them as to the futurity of the subjects of the prophetic portion of the Apocalypse is thus seen mainly to hang. Mr. Elliott, in common with his class, contends for an identity between the object the symbol portrays, and that to which the fourth beast in Daniel relates;

(III. 72;) and as the latter has been hitherto universally held to signify the Roman empire, he gets ground of assurance for affirming that the Apocalyptic beast is an embodiment of that empire. The parallel between the two figures is indeed so very close, and kept up through such peculiar and striking features, that it would assuredly be a violence to every indication which the word of God has provided to guide us to our conclusions, to deny that they designate in each instance the same thing. The historical interpreters therefore, in the admission on the side of their opponents that the fourth beast in Daniel stands for the Empire of Rome, have secured the means of insisting that the beast of the Apocalypse is the prefiguration of the same empire, and the Futurists' scheme, which would make of it a man, must become thus, in the eyes of impartial judges, inevitably jeopardized, if not overthrown. When however it can be seen that the fourth beast in Daniel is not an empire, but a man, and the very man, the Antichrist, for whom the Futurists would secure place in this figure in the Apocalypse, the evidence is completely turned against the historical class, and that brought to bear for their defeat, which was the main prop and support of their whole position. Cast Rome out of prophecy, and the historical scheme at once falls to the ground.

But apart from this consideration, the historic delineation of the Apocalyptic beast, as expounded by Mr. Elliott, in general keeping I believe with the views of most of his class, can upon its own merits be shown to be unsustainable.

He conceives the figure to represent the Roman Empire "in its last form, under a decemregal government," (III. 73, 74,) and the sea out of which it is described as seen to rise, the flood of Gothic invaders who overthrew the old rule, and brought about this last condition of the state. (III. 92, 93.) Its seven heads he believes to be seven successive forms of government under which the state was held, embracing from Kings to Emperors, the wounding of one of these heads being the destruction of the seventh, or imperial form of government, and its healing, the uprising in its lieu of the Papacy, which thus constituted an

eighth head, or the revived seventh. (III. 96, 97.) The ten horns he takes to be ten kingdoms into which the Western branch of the Empire became divided. (III. 113.) The time of the appearance of the beast, he gives as A. D. 533. (*scroll.*)

The identity between the fourth beast in Daniel, and this beast of the Apocalypse, is a point of fixture upon which Mr. Elliott's interpretation has first to be tried. The four beasts in Daniel are held to be emblematical of four successive empires, the fourth being that of Rome. Each is represented as uprising in its power, and ruling in its universality of dominion. But there is an anomaly attaching to the fourth beast. The empire of Rome was overthrown by Gothic invaders, and so destroyed. Mr. Elliott, in contending against the views of a Tractarian writer, himself makes use of the fact, and it is an undeniable one, of its "having full thirteen centuries ago past away." (IV. 521.) In its lieu has arisen the present constitution of Europe, composed of a number of independent sovereignties. It is vain to allege that these in any sense afford the recombination of the Roman Empire. They may occupy regions once belonging to Rome, but this makes them no more the embodiment of Rome than Rome was the embodiment of Greece, when she assumed dominion in territories that once were hers. Rome made certain conquests, and lost them ; and the conquered provinces fell into their original condition of independence, in which they now stand. If the universal rule of Rome constituted a fourth power, the present state of the kingdoms over which the prophecy extends, assuredly forms a fifth, and according to the historic and current view of the vision in Daniel, we should have had five beasts, and not merely four. The anomaly then attaching to the fourth beast, as commonly rendered, is that a part of his features are held to indicate the one condition of monarchy, and a part the other, while all, in the vision, are represented as rising up together.

The claim of identity between this beast and that of the Apocalypse, as rendered by Mr. Elliott, has then to be considered. There are two distinct conditions, as we see, attached to the beast in Daniel ; the one when he was the Roman empire ;

the other when he was the many independent kingdoms of existing Europe. Does Mr. Elliott attribute to the beast in the Apocalypse this two-fold character? The thorough identity of the two objects as to circumstances and figure,—both rising up out of the sea, and both with seven heads and ten horns,—should secure for them an equally thorough identity of subject. Can Mr. Elliott affirm this much for the beast in the Apocalypse, that it embodies exactly what the beast in Daniel comprehends? By no means. He could not do so; for the beast as it stood in Daniel was of past appearance at the date of the Apocalypse, while the Apocalyptic beast was then future. The first condition ascribed to the beast in Daniel, and which, if Rome be the expression of the beast, is just that which gives it such expression, is accordingly held to be wanting in the beast of the Apocalypse, which is made to embrace only the latter half of Daniel's beast, wherein Rome, as we have seen, is strictly and truly absent. The asserted identity between the two objects thus so far breaks down, and we have strictly parallel symbols, expressive in the one case of one thing, and not expressive thereof in the other. The very seas out of which each is displayed as arising, are hence with Mr. Elliott different. The sea of the beast of the Apocalypse, as he has it, is the Gothic invasions of the 5th century; and the sea out of which the beast in Daniel rose centuries before, must hence be something totally distinct. The vision of the uprising of the two beasts, and the condition of empire they represent in so uprising, are thus not parallel and identical, as imperatively they should have been; and judged of by the beast in Daniel, the historic interpretation of the beast in the Apocalypse cannot stand. The chronology, as we have seen, is utterly against the correspondence of these beasts, as thus interpreted.

The existence on the beast of the Apocalypse of features belonging to the primary condition of the beast in Daniel, involves this interpretation in further insurmountable difficulties. The beast is displayed with its seven heads as rising into being in the sight of the apostle. At first nothing is presented to him but the sea, or, according to Mr. Elliott, the Gothic inva-

sions. And then, out of this sea, he observes the beast come up. "I saw," he says, "a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns." As it rose up, these its heads rose into existence with it. The vision of this was communicated in the year ninety-six, and as relating to what was then still future, among the things that the apostle was told were to be "hereafter." But the heads, as the vision is interpreted by Mr. Elliott, were of things past, and not of things future, and the first exhibition of the earliest thereof had occurred about eight centuries and a half before the communication of the vision to the apostle. Here either the scripture account, or the interpretation, must be wholly in error, and we need not hesitate to determine which of the two is in the wrong.

The heads are furthermore seen simultaneously on the beast, together with his horns. The horns, Mr. Elliott allows, have all contemporaneous existence; (III. 114;) and such is the evident import of the text. The heads are spoken of under the very same terms, as equally appearing together upon the beast. But the historic fact as regards them is totally otherwise. The heads, according to the history, never existed together, but came up in successional order, the one dislodging the other, and taking its place. The history therefore, in this respect also, by no means accords with the representation communicated to the apostle.

The Papacy, as has been stated, is taken by Mr. Elliott to have been an eighth head, or the revivification of the seventh, which was the imperial form, and which had been wounded, but was thus restored. The correspondence between the successive heads from the first to the seventh is at the least as discernible as that asserted to exist between the seventh and the supposed eighth. The same rule therefore that would make the eighth a revived seventh, would make the seventh a revived sixth; and so on downwards, until the whole might be brought to be merely reproductions of the first and original head. Each also rose in a like way upon the downfall of its predecessor, so that there was not merely one head wounded, as the scripture particularizes, but all the prior heads, from the seventh up to the first, had

received parallel deadly wounds. Yet here, in the text, we have them all exhibited together in their integrity, and then one only out of the whole wounded. This wounding, moreover, the apostle speaks of as a thing witnessed by him in the vision. "And *I saw*," he says, "one of his heads as it were wounded to death." The vision, as Mr. Elliott has stated it, related to the beast as he stood in the year 533. But the wounding which he ascribes to him occurred 143 years before, or in A. D. 390. (*scroll.*)

"The dragon," we learn, "which gave power unto the beast," was to be "worshipped." The dragon, according to Mr. Elliott, is the expired imperial form of government. (III. 96, 97.) How this should be worshipped in the days of the Pope, Mr. Elliott has not attempted to explain; and such worship, obviously, could have no place, for a bygone and extinct government is the last thing that men reverence, especially in the face of the power by which it may have been supplanted.

The worship of the beast, Mr. Elliott holds to be prominently carried out at the adoration of the Pope when enthroned on the high altar of St. Peter's, which he designates as "God's own altar," and "God's own temple;" (III. 151;) thus fulfilling the prediction of the man of sin that he should sit "in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." That the temple and altar of Antichrist can ever be rightly considered the temple and altar of God, must of course be denied; and to judge of Mr. Elliott by his own definitions, it may be observed that in treating of the measuring of the temple, as described in the 11th chapter of the Apocalypse, he accords this title, distinctively, to "the Reformed church," (II. 179,) conceiving the Papists from that time to have been denounced as heathen Gentiles, and cast out of this temple. (II. 178, 193.) Their place of worship, accordingly, could no more be considered the temple of God, and, how it varied in its character previously, so as ever to have been entitled to such a designation, it would be also difficult to say.

The Antichrist, according to the scripture, was to be recognized as soon as brought upon the scene of his operations, for he was to take up his position as an object of revelation.

“Then,” it is said, “shall that wicked *be revealed*.” His delusions were to be a judicial infliction upon the world, and were to take effect upon “them that perish,” “that *they* all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” Those who accepted him were thus those who were marked out for eternal judgment. And thus it is declared in the Apocalypse, that all who worship him and his image “shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.”* The Pope is said to have assumed position as Antichrist in A. D. 533; but not a “suspicion” that he was such appears to have been generated till the 12th century. (II. 366.) Thus he was in the field, and practising and prospering, for a period of 600 years before being “revealed,” and his delusions all this while received and followed without possibility of the victims thereof knowing that they involved the condemnation so prominently denounced. Even the witnesses specially raised up of God to bear testimony against him, fail for this long season to recognize him, and when, according to Mr. Elliott’s interpretation of Rev. ix. 20, 21, the sins of the world are summed up at the close of the 15th century, (II. 29,)†—that is, 300 years after he had been revealed, and 900 after he had realized his position, not a word is recorded by

* Mr. Elliott calls it “an immense anachronism” to apply this passage to the whole period of the beast’s career. (III. 245, 246.) It can be so only upon acquiescence in Mr. Elliott’s line of interpretation; but the consideration that would make it such involves a greater difficulty, for it would show that God had not preserved a consistent estimate of the sin of this worship—at one time accounting it a venial one, and at another such as could never be forgiven. Mr. Elliott appeals to the instance of Sodom, wherein judgment fell upon all who were in the city at a particular time, but did not affect such as had resided there prior to that time, as Lot; but a temporal judgment is necessarily inflicted according to time, and can afford no rule whereby to estimate an eternal one.

† Mr. Elliott must not be viewed as singular in giving this chronological position to the passage. It comes in as an estimate of the ungodly made after the sounding of the sixth trumpet, which all the historical interpreters, I believe, in common with Mr. Elliott, apply to the invasions of the Turks.

the Spirit as to the prevalence of this most deadly of all sins, of worshipping him. Can any other inference be drawn than that up to this time the beast and his worship could not have been in existence? And for the condemnation he was to induce, where is it? Mr. Elliott of course has to allow that Papists may be saved; (III. 245;) and out of that body, it may be observed, the great reformer, and all his earlier followers, were brought. But if Papists may be saved, so also, assuredly, may the Pope himself, and thus, in direct violence to the scripture, "the man of sin" need not necessarily be also "the son of perdition."

13. THE FIRST VIAL.

This symbol, in Mr. Elliott's scheme, brings us down to modern times, being applied by him, as before shown, to the great French revolution. The other vials are dependent thereupon, and if the interpretation of this one should fail, the views given of the remainder need not be entered upon, for they too must then equally fail.

The symbol for the outburst of this revolution is a bodily sore; but in three other instances an earthquake was the type of such an event; (I. 215, 216; II. 405; III. 282;) and in the last of the three, this very revolution of the sore is held to have been indicated. Whence then the light to guide us, if the objects to be drawn out from the symbols are not consistently represented, but lie covered up under figures of so very dissimilar a nature?

The sore was to fall "upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image." Those who received this mark, according to Mr. Elliott, were natural men, the imposition on them of the cross on their foreheads in chrism being one instance of its application. (III. 216.) The sore, however, is assigned by Mr. Elliott, not to their natural persons, but to their "body politic." (III. 303.) The signification of having this mark imposed, Mr. Elliott observes, was that the recipients should be caused "to devote themselves to the Papal Antichrist: and this both in profession and action;

even as soldiers to their emperor, slaves to their master, devotees to their God ;” (III. 215;) and he illustrates this by referring to actual customs of marking such classes for such ends. (III. 199, 200.) The image of the beast, Mr. Elliott holds to be the Papal General Councils, (III. 182,) and the worship thereof to consist in the yielding obedience thereto, “ but chiefly, and above all, on questions of religion and faith,” therein propounded. • (III. 194.) * These, it is said, they promulgated “ as with the authority of the Holy Spirit ; and in this character from first to last required implicit and universal submission to them.” (III. 196.) Such then was to be the character of the worshippers of the image of the beast, and of the receivers of his mark. They were to be bound to him with all the power which attaches soldiers to their emperor, slaves to their master, and devotees to their God, and were to accord the most implicit obedience to his dictates, especially on matters of faith, receiving these from him as from God. We have hence a deeply reverential people before us, their devotion centring itself in the Papacy. But how stands the historic fitting? Mr. Elliott’s illustrations of the workings of the sore are derived wholly from its appearance among the French, and especially among the inhabitants of Paris; (III. 304—307;) and though he adverts to infection as spreading from them to other countries, it was here alone, notoriously, in France, and prominently in Paris, that any such violent action as he particularizes, took effect. Mr. Elliott makes an attempt to associate the French sufferers from the sore with the Papacy, by tracing the growth of those infidel opinions which instigated them to the effects of Papal superstitions and tolerance of evil; (III. 308—318;) but this by no means meets the exigency of the scripture as to the character and position of

* It will be observed how very different an estimate Mr. Elliott takes of the worship of the beast, and that of his image. The former he sees involves the personal adoration of an enthroned object, answering strictly to the universal idea of worship; but the latter, no more than the simply rendering obedience to a written command, which in no degree realizes such idea.

those upon whom the “plague-spot” was to fall. It is required that they should be persons marked with the mark of the beast, and actually engaged in worshipping his image;* or, pursuant to Mr. Elliott’s interpretation, such as were devoted to the Papacy, in person, heart, and doctrine. That this was not the case with those upon whom this sore is held to have broken out, Mr. Elliott himself proves. In a passage quoted when this figure was formerly brought under notice, we have found that he has traced the outbreak of the sore to “the long and deep-seated irreligion of the nation,” meaning their contempt for all religion, that of the Papacy, as what was chiefly known to them, being specially rejected; and that he has referred also to the “atheistic publications” they were addicted to putting forth. (III. 304.) The public renunciation of God, and of every pretence of worship, has also, we have seen, been noticed by him as an early result of what had thus been nurtured among them. (III. 307.) And further evidence of the like description is given. Among them, he says, speaking of times preceding the revolution, “infidel philosophy collected its strength and venom; and, under Voltaire and other leaders, formed and carried on that celebrated and monstrous conspiracy, of which the object was the overthrow of all religion,—the bitterness expressed in its very motto, ‘Crush the wretch,’ meaning our Lord Jesus,—the organ, cheap atheistic publications, everywhere diffused, (and cheap atheistic schools too,) with all the energy and perseverance of a master-passion,—the most effective weapon and argument, the absurdities, hypocrisies, immoralities, cruelties, and wickedness of the Papal church and religion, as if forsooth a fair representative of christianity,—and its success such that the whole literary, and almost the whole popular mind of France, became in the course of the 18th century fully tainted by it. And then,” he adds, “when,

* In the original, the present participle is used;—*τοὺς ἔχοντας τὸ χάραγμα τοῦ θηρίου, καὶ τοὺς τῇ εἰκόνι αὐτοῦ προσκυνοῦντας.* Those having the mark of the beast, and those worshipping his image. It would be against the significance of the judgment to suppose that it fell upon them after they had ceased to be concerned with the things for which they were judged.

at the outbreak of the revolution,—all royal and legal power that might have controlled it having been overthrown,—it aimed its deadly blow against both the religious establishment in France, and religion itself, there was no popular voice or inclination to uphold the one or the other. And first,” he proceeds to notice, “the Papal priesthood,—the official leaders in the worship of the beast and his image,—had to experience all the bitterness of privation, contempt, and suffering : and then the nation also,—so long the followers of its priesthood in the Papal worship,—to feel throughout its whole body politic the throbbing agonies consequent on the dominancy of a ferocious and relentless atheism.” (III. 310, 311.) These French revolutionists were hence no worshippers of the image of the beast, nor bearers of his mark, but, on the contrary, most rancorous haters of his tenets, and defiers of his authority,—carrying on their feelings towards him to open hostility and spoliation. On such, pursuant to the text, the sore predicted could not have fallen, and the whole fabric of Mr. Elliott’s adaptations, upon his view of this supposed figure, falls to the ground.

Such are Mr. Elliott’s delineations of the prophetic theme of the Apocalypse, as examined by his own avowed principles, and subjected to no other test than what the materials of his own book, and the word of God, furnish. It will be asked, if thus defective and self-contradictory, how so many, even of the Lord’s people, can have been led away to subscribe to their soundness ; yea, and to be filled with admiration at the wonderful accuracy and precision which Mr. Elliott is held to have secured to them.* It must be remembered, that in no respect more than in what concerns the things of God are we so certain of being led astray,

* Dr. Cumming, thus, in lectures which were heard by thousands, and which have since been extensively circulated in print, calls Mr. Elliott’s production a “noble and precious work,” and says it “will occupy a place, in reference to unfulfilled prophecy, that Newton’s Principia has occupied in reference to science.” (1st series, Pref. viii., and p. 15.)

if the spirit in which we engage in our pursuit be one that we have not derived from God ; and that in no branch of the sacred record is the adversary more interested in misleading us, than in the page of prophecy, which God has provided as “ a light that shineth in a dark place,” “ whereunto we do well that we take heed,” and which the enemy, obviously, takes every means of obscuring, so that we may not profit by the light, but remain unvisited by it in darkness. The admirers of Mr. Elliott are such as were *prepared* to set out upon a path which I must needs denounce as one altogether erroneous. They were ready to follow an historical guide, and to believe that the subject before them was one which history alone could open out to them. The light they looked for was in Gibbon, and other historians, and they wanted some master hand to open it out for them. The Apocalypse, apart from this, was to them utter darkness ; and expecting no illumination from it without the aid of their human preceptor, they fell, easily, into his darkness. The mistake was at the threshold, in not taking the word of God at its worth, and in seeking for human elements to give it effect. And truly in Mr. Elliott, they met with one well skilled, and well armed, to sort and put before them the kind of food they were looking for. He has performed his task, such as it is, with surprising ingenuity ; and none, it may be believed, has more thoroughly fallen into the snare of his own provision than himself. His course, in endeavouring to bring others into his views, has been taken with the utmost attention to every measure of strategy and tactics which one bent upon persuasion could put in force, and it is no marvel that towards those predisposed to follow such a leader, it should have been crowned with the results which it was designed to secure. Mr. Elliott’s process has been, first to put the text into such shape as would allow of his serving himself eventually of it in the way he contemplated. He then assumes its meanings, and exhibits these under a chain of suppositions, so as imperceptibly, and as it were naturally, to draw his readers to his conclusions. Other commentators of his own school are afterwards brought upon the field, and their posi-

tions are examined and shown to be untenable, and thus, with a somewhat high hand, the pedestal is cleared upon which he himself designs to mount ; and this is done also with justness and ease, (the views repudiated being really erroneous,) so that confidence is raised in the better guidance of him who thereupon undertakes to show the true solutions to be adopted. Difficulties are now proposed, but only of course to be overthrown, (the real and insurmountable ones being for the most part either unseen by the expositor, or kept out of view ; or else glossed over in a manner not to attract attention.) Candour, as well as judgment, seem to characterize the guide, and at every step he sensibly approaches nearer and nearer to success. At length the kind of fulfilment which the text is represented as requiring is proposed, and then, amidst exclamations of surprise at the wonderful accuracy of the provision thereby afforded for it, the historic fitting is brought to view, and laid open in its alleged applicability, with copious references and illustrations superadded, so as to make all secure ; and the whole is wound up with no stinted measure of applause at the result obtained, and in which the reader, thus captivated, is to join. The scene changes to the next subject in the sacred record, involving often some marked example of transition, and this, shaped and moulded by the hand of the delineator, is shown to correspond with seeming exactitude with what the historic page in its order unfolds. Link by link, be it prosperity, bloodshed, oppression, death, martyrdom, revolution, —whatever the subject,—the scripture and the history are made to appear to go hand in hand together to the end. The stringent test of chronologic periods is not shrunk from, but is taken up with minuteness, and apparently met to the very day ; and so the expositor proceeds in happy triumph to the close of his labours, carrying his readers with him, and bringing them at length to his own comforting conclusions. “With such an extraordinary combination of evidence, antiquarian and historical, to support it, does it seem possible,” he gets them to ask with him, “that we can have erred in our explanation of the four first Seals. and, if not, then in our application of the two

next Seals?..... Brought so far satisfactorily, can we have erred in explaining the six first of that Trumpet septenary of visions which evolves the seventh Seal?" And so on he continues, in this strain of self-gratulation, through the whole web of his delineations, until he ends by persuading his readers to join with him, impartially as it were, in saying that they "can discern no flaw or chasm therein, to vitiate or render it imperfect." (IV. 246—248.)

It has fallen to the lot of a necessarily adverse critic to attempt to break up these sad delusions, and to put upon their true footing the overlayings of history, with which Mr. Elliott would bury, and utterly darken, the sacred page. And here a recapitulation may be given of some of the most striking points of objection to Mr. Elliott's work in particular, but which also more or less bear upon that whole school of commentators among whom he has taken up so prominent a place.

There is first the grand impossibility that God can have made the knowledge of His scriptures dependent upon the learning of man, and that no one can take up the prophecies of the Apocalypse with profit, unless deeply imbued with human historic lore. The closet study would not suffice. The library, and that a pretty extensive one, would be needed to do justice to the theme. The real student would not be content with following the gleanings of another. The fountain head could alone satisfy him. And truly when the page of history may be read so very differently, as for example by Dr. Keith on the one side, and by Mr. Elliott on the other, it becomes a matter of necessity that original references should be resorted to. Mr. Elliott, in his zeal, may have overstepped the needed mark at which the historic student has to aim; but the like zeal, if exercised on a legitimate subject, is rather to be imitated than pronounced superfluous. If history be the key to the prophecy, and antiquarian and philological research are necessary adjuncts thereto, then the more of these we reach to the better. Let us see then what we may have to dive into in the pursuit. The following, appalling as the catalogue may be, are the authorities by which Mr.

Elliott has benefitted, and to which, by his example at the least, he who would judge of the Apocalypse for himself under the light of history, is invited.

Festus, Tertullian, Pamelius, Ovid, Rasche, Pliny, Eckhel, Wachter, Statius, Tacitus, Gibbon, Bayle, Montesquieu, Spanheim, Schlegel, Lactantius, Servius, Cicero, Dion Cassius, Herodian, Victor, Eusebius, Ackerman, Bellaris, Montfaucon, Universal History, Diodorus Siculus, Homer, Pindar, Pausanias, Thucydides, Plutarch, Polybius, Livy, Lucan, Hirtius, Pellerin, Manilius, Meursius, Bochart, Wesseling, Antipater, Suetonius, Adams, Ammonius, Matthiæ, Crevier, Encyclopædia Metropolitana, Hermas, Epiphanius, Hesiod, Denina, Heeren, Justinian, Bernegger, Clement, Chevallier, Strabo, Columella, Synesius, Cassiodorus, Vopiscus, Middleton, Seneca, Hooker, Arbuthnot, Martial, Fleetwood, Burmann, Lampridius, Procopius, Porter, Arnobius, Echard, Lardner, Walsh, Justin Martyr, Origen, Neander, Dionysius, Mosheim, Ignatius, Cyprian, Augustine, Boldetti, Irenæus, Bingham, Faber, Cyril, Waddington, Wilman, Valesius, Merle D'Aubigné, Taylor, Kaye, Baronius, Ducange, Ambrose, Riddle, Burton, Basnage, Vitringa, Lowth, Orosius, Hallam, Le Bas, Gilly, Sulpitius Severus, Gregory Nyssen, Dubois, Wilberforce, Prudentius, Paulinus, Van Mildert, Coleridge, Marcellinus, Claudian, Sidonius Apollinaris, Müller, Victor Vitensis, Sismondi, Idatius, Elliott, Sigonius, Mylie, Robertson, Dupin, Chrysostom, Hippolytus, Martin of Tours, Evagrius, Hales, Eustathius, Hilarion, Harduin, Fleury, Palmer, Gregory Nazianzen, Theodoret, Koran, Goldsmith, Scott, Moore, Lucretius, Buckingham, Solinus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Herodotus, Antar, Forster, Theophanes, Peyron, Eton, Elmacin, Al Iannabi, Benjamin of Tudela, Berengaud, Vaticinia Abbatis Joachimi, Menenius, Busquebius, Paulus Pater, Von Hanmer, Brydges, D'Herbelot, Rees' Encyclopædia, Purchas, Mills, Dalaway, Thornton, Ferrario, Rycaut, Tournefort, Knolles, Abulfeda, Al Bondari, Emad, Eddin, De Guignes, Dante, Petrarch, Southey, Chronicle of Brakelond, Tomlin, Chateaubriand, The

Golden Legend, Mendham, Life of Rienzi, Clemangis, Gerson, Canons of Council of Paris, of the 4th Lateran, of Council of Basle, M'Ghee, Sacerdotium Missale, L'Enfant, Laurentius Valla, Burnet, Fædera, Veron, Muratori, Ranke, Turner, Blackstone, M'Crie, Horne, Townley, Richinius, Gray, Gorres, Bernard, Brucker, Enfield, Bellarmine, Battista Mantuano, Roscoe, Infessura, Bost, Acland, Perrin, William of Malmsbury, Cramp, Michelet, Foxe, Comenius, Haweis, Penni, Martene, Zenobius Accoiaiolus, Bonanni, Guicciardini, Moreri, Nibbi, Johannes Philomusus Novocomensis, Picus of Mirandola, Vitalis, Fabroni, Pacecchi, Achille Collas, De Stael, Anastasius, Seckendorf, Melchoir Adam, Tischreden, Pellicanus, Scultetus, Veantius Honorius, Bassano, Catholic Magazine, Raynouard, Sozomen, Egbert, Pearson, Luther, Lathbury, Newman, Faustus, Ado, Bower, Masson, Adelmar, Agobard, Hugo Flaviniacensis, Labbe, Leger, Dungal, Claude, Allix, Theutmir, Muston, Peyrani, Hinckmar, Atto, Warnfrid, Schmidt, Petrus Siculus, Photius, Cedrenus, Dowling, Hamartolus, Evervinus, John of Fleury, Glaber, Chartulary, Ademar, Lancfranc, Hurd, Mabillon, Zingabenus, Gretzer, Ralph de Coggeshal, Sanderus, Hoveden, Bibliotheca Patrum Mixima, Wolfius, Henke, Giesler, Gueriche, Mather, Paschasius Ratberus, Hesychius, Ermengardus, Popliniere, Vignier, Serranus, Paradin, Gerard, Walter Mapes, Peter of Vaux Sernai, Guido the Carmelite, Stephanus de Borbone, Pilichdorf, Claude Scyssel, Reiner, Conrad, Semler, Ivonetus, Morland, Acts of the Councils of Orleans, Arras, Charroux, Rheims, and Oxford, Rorenco, Ebrard of Bethune, Bernard of Fontcand, The Noble Lesson, Waldensian Treatise on Antichrist, Canons of the Councils of Tours, and of Thoulouse, Michel, D'Esclot, Buchon, Lucas de Tuy, Thuanus, Chronicle of the Abbey of Corvey, Planta, Harenberg, Pertz, Scheidt, Bouquet, Vignez, Malvenda, Ivo of Narbonne, Combefis, Tissington, Fleming, Brightman, Peter Damian, Pareus, Lingard, Britton, Watson, Rapin, Aikin, Vegetius, Ferguson, More, Gordon, Keightly, Machiavel, Ennodius, Comber, Damian, De Pradt, Picard, Mantuan, Ravaillac, Gratian, Canons of Councils of

Antioch, Laodicea, Constantinople, Chalcedon, Nice, and Vienne, Giannone, Brydson, Isychius, Agatho, Dumont, Parteolus, Valerius Maximus, *Œlian*, *Œtius*, Stuart, Mionnet, Strabo, Chenmitz, Mann, Gothofred, Harmonia Confessionum, Barthe, Rose, Pusey, Sack, Rosenblad, Alison, French Encyclopædia, Fyshe, Gilbert, Wilberforce's Life, Cockburn, Baron, Cobbin, Christian Observer, Carr, Waugh, Bombelli, O'Donnogue, Rule, Llorente, Pomponius, Mela, Honorius Angustodunensis, Huie, Owen, Bickersteth, Crawford, Keble, Goode, Marks, Froude, British Critic, Perceval, Gresley, Hook, Gausseen, Typotius, Court de Gebelin, De Garencières, Ulpian, Scaliger, Le Moyne, Brocardus.*

This is a staggering demand indeed, even if only one tenth of the authorities cited should have to be consulted. And it is not the labour of perusal merely that is called for. Learning and judgment are copiously required if the study is to be effectually pursued. Facts are differently given by different writers, and have to be collated and decided between ; and literary forgeries even are to be apprehended and steered clear of. The authors to be leant upon may themselves have been misled, and it calls for no small critical acumen and research to know at times when to withhold dependance, and when to accord it.†

* In this list, works referred to solely as commentaries on the Apocalypse, and for illustration of the language of the text thereof, have been excluded.

† Mr. Elliott gives a notable instance wherein Mr. Hallam, the celebrated author of the History of the Middle Ages, was deceived as to a particular passage. He derived it from Planta. Mr. Elliott doubted its genuineness, as it seemed to be "almost too much to the point" it bore upon. Planta did not give his authority, but Mr. Elliott "with some difficulty traced the quotation from Planta to Müller," and from Müller to Harenberg, and then, not finding the facts it embodied in a particular work of Harenberg's where they would have been made use of if true, his suspicions became strengthened, until at length, through the means of a literary friend, he got access to the principal librarian to the king of Hanover, and from him discovered that this Harenberg, though holding a "respectable station," was a literary impostor, and the passage in question a forgery. (II. 337, *note.*)

The books also are many of them rare and difficult of access, and to make use of them, Latin, Greek, French, English, Italian, and German, must be at the fingers' ends. Arabic also would be needed. The door is evidently effectually barred against the unlearned; and of the great body of the educated classes even, few can command the resources needed for the pursuit. For all these, vain was the command that the sayings of the Apocalypse should be unsealed. Closed they are to them most rigidly, unless they can meet with a learned commentator *who can be depended upon*. Whether Mr. Elliott himself is one who can be safely followed, the preceding pages may declare.

From the authorities, we might pass to the subjects treated of. They are too manifold to be enumerated, but something may be judged of as regards them from a list derived from Mr. Elliott's work of the personages whom he brings historically upon the scene of the Apocalypse. The following are those whose sayings or doings he has recited to illustrate the fulfilment of the prophecy.

Domitian, Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, Antoninus Pius, Antoninus Aurelius, Commodus, Pertinax, Julian, Septimius Severus, Geta, Caracalla, Macrinus, Elagabalus, Alexander Severus, Gordian I, II, and III, Maximin, Maximus, Balbinus, Philip and his son, Niger, Albinus, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius, Aurelian, Probus, Diocletian, Galerius, Maximian, Clemens, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Sulpitius Severus, Hippolytus, Decius, Marianus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Constantine, Maxentius, Licinius, Constantius, Augustine, Valens, Theodosius, Sapor, Damasus, Gregory Nyssen, Paulinus, Jerome, Vigilantius, Valentian, Alaric, Rhadagadius, Genseric, Attila, Odoacer, Martin of Tours, Count Boniface, Pope Leo, Theodoric, Belisarius, Narses, Cyril, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Hesychius, Evagrius, Theodoret, Lactantius, Eustathius, Hilarion, Gregory the Great, Ethelbert, John the Faster, Pelagius, Serenus, Germanus, Primasius, Chosroes, Heraclius, Mahomet, Abonbeker, Ali, Charles Martel, Luitbrand, Constantine Copronymus, Mohadi, Haroun al Rashid, Emperor

Leo, Irene, Theodora, Marozia, Basil I and II, Nicephorus, John Zimisces, Canute, Henry the Fowler, Otho, Charlemagne, Mahmoud of Ghizni, Justin, Togrul Beg, Alp Arslan, Diogenes Romanus, Malek Shah, Suleiman, Alexius, Conrad, Louis VII, Frederic I, Ortogrul, Othman, Orchan, Amurath, Bajazet, Mahomet II, Peter the Hermit, Tamerlane, Ferdinand, Isabella, William the Conqueror, Gregory VII, Boniface VIII, Dominic, Gregory IX, Wicliff, Huss, Sixtus IV, Catherine of Sienna, Pius II, Bonaventura, Alexander VI, Anselm, Alain, Paul II, Tetzel, Innocent VIII, Savonarola, Philip of Savoy, Æneas Sylvius, Leo X, Pope Julius, Miconius, Adrian IV, Henry VIII, Lewis of Spain, Clement VI, Henry of Portugal, Edward IV, Marcellus, Luther, Staupitz, Zwingle, Waldo, Eck, Spalatinus, Melanchthon, Caroldast, Bugenhagen, Justus Jonas, Leo Juda, Bullinger, Latimer, Bale, Ecolampadius, Bucer, John Foxe, Egbert, Alfred, Elfric, Elector Frederic, Elector John, Cæsarius, King Alaric, Fulgentius, Hunneric, Gregory I and II, Alcuin, Agobard, Claude, Sergius, Bishop Jonas, Theutmir, Gottschale, Rabanus Maurus, Hincmar, Atto, Berenger, Arnold, Peter de Bruys, Constantine (of Samosata), Simeon, Justinian II, Genæsius, his father Paul, teachers called Zacharias and Epaphroditus, Bahaues, Sergius alias Tychicus, Michael Rhangabe, Carbeas, Petrus Siculus, Alexius Comnenus, Stephen, Lisoie, Arefaste and his chaplain, King Robert, Bruno, Henry (an Italian), Bernard, Evervinus, Gerard, Waldo, Photius, Cedrenus, Conrad of Lichtenau, Henry of Lausanne, Pope Alexander III, Lucius III, Innocent III, Frederic II, Wladislas, Paliwka, Caitan, Miltitz, Charles V, Solyman, Prince of Hesse, Prince Maurice, Edward VI, Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, Maximilian, Philip II, Henry IV, Louis XIV, Gustavus Adolphus, Charles II, James, William of Orange, Sobieski, Eugene, Romanzoff, Arius, Athanasius, Monk Anthony, Ammianus Marcellinus, Stilicho, Eucherius, Clovis, Theodoric, Honorius, Celestine, Hillary, Symmachus, Damasus, Valentinian III, Theodosius II, Phocas, Pepin, Pope Stephen II, Pope Adrian I, Rodolphus, Wilfrid, Julian Cæsarini, Pope Martin, Cranmer, Laud, Arndt, Spener,

Franke, Hooker, Usher, Hall, Leighton, Beverage, Hopkins, Walker, Venn, Baxter, Howe, Watts, Doddridge, Whitfield, Wesley, Peter the Great, Charles of Sweden, Robespierre, Louis XV, Voltaire, Louis XVI, Henry III, Henry of Navarre, Monk Clement, Ravaillac, Cardinal de Lorraine, Hood, Howe, Bridport, Nelson, Napoleon, Joseph Bonaparte, Jourdan, Moreau, Archduke Charles, Beaulien, Wurmser, Alvinzi, Hoche, Jerome Bonaparte, Louis Bonaparte, Murat, Maria Lousia, Christina, Espartero, Pius VII, Abercrombie, Ali Pasha, Chourshid Pasha, Ibrahim Pasha, Paskewitch, Diebitch, Mehemet Ali, Wilberforce, Newton, Scott, Milner, Cecil, Robinson, Simeon, David Brown, Martyn, Heber, Corrie, Judson, Owen.

The list, it is obvious, might be indefinitely extended, since the field of research is one, as Mr. Elliott, we have found, observes, "extending over seventeen centuries, and over countries many more than those of European Christendom." (I. 115.) Mr. Elliott has been very diligent, doubtless, but of course he has not exhausted the subject, and another might surpass him in his acquisitions as much as he may have surpassed those who have gone before him. Historic illustration being the thing needed, the more of it we acquire, the more should we be in a capacity to understand and enjoy the scripture. And it is not enough that we should simply have read of all these personages; their histories, so far as they bear upon the text, should be imprinted in the memory, and present to the mental eye, so that when we peruse the text, the actors in the "drama" should be at once called up to mind to fill the prophetic scene in vivid realization of its import. Again, the poor resources of human industry and intellectuality fail before us, and the Apocalypse is indeed a book denied to the vast majority, if to be appreciated only with these historic personages, or the half of them adhering to its text.

And what after all are the results, even if each in such a study should prove an Elliott? Is there any thing solid, indestructible, consistent, self-evident, to be acquired for the scrip-

ture out of the library of the historic student? Let the very diversified renderings of those who have thus pursued the theme, even when they have agreed as to the subjects adopted for their illustrations, answer. Facts, and also chronologies, are shifted about in their hands, until it is evident that under such a system it only requires ingenuity to weave the web into any form. It is hardly fulfilments, but no more than a species of adaptability, that the expositors themselves hope to secure for the text, and under the liberal freedom which an unrestrained resort to figurative constructions allows of, the scripture can be made of any shape, and the history of any applicability.

But Mr. Elliott's expositions form our particular subject, and judged of simply by themselves, we have seen that solid assurance, according to his own showing even, is not an element that they always provide us with.

The half hour's silence in heaven, according to the views thereof Mr. Elliott propounded in his book, (but which, I find, he has since for the most part, if not wholly, had to withdraw,) might be seventy years, or possibly only seven and a half days; and it may occur before the sounding of the seventh trumpet, or after it. The joy and the woe consequent upon the fall of the dragon may belong at once to the same parties, or to different ones. The sensations thereof may be true, or unreal. The woe may be fulfilled in two distinct ways, by what is external to the object acted upon, or what is internal thereto. The dragon, who comes out as Pagan Rome, becomes afterwards the overthrowers of Rome, or an abstract heresy, or the arch-enemy himself. His knowing that the time consequent upon his fall is short, may be sound knowledge, or else mere ignorance: and the time may be really short, or indefinitely long. And the sea of glass may be that before the throne of God, or the British channel. Between these diversities Mr. Elliott himself leaves us to shift,—he of course having his own *preferences*. Certitude thus so far fails us.

As to exactitude between the asserted fulfilments and the texts to which they are applied, a very wide latitude, it would

appear, is permissible. It is no blemish to the conqueror figured under the 1st seal that he should occasionally be no man of war, and that his wars should occasionally entail upon him defeats. It is no detriment to the alleged prefigured prosperity of his empire that it should be at times a scene of revolt and invasion, that alarm should reign even at its capital, and that pestilence should weaken and destroy its defenders. It is no matter that a defined season of predicted calm and freedom from invasion for this empire from the four quarters surrounding it, should witness many wars with which its hosts should be engaged, both foreign and domestic. It is no matter also that one of four particular invading powers who were to be specially restrained upon its frontiers during this time, should within the prescribed interval break in upon its dominions, destroy its monarch and his army, and establish itself in perpetuity within its possessions. And it signifies as little that a dragon, or Pagan ruler, who was to be dejected from the heaven of political ascendancy so that his "place" was not to be found "any more" there, should nevertheless manage to reascend to his old position for a time, and resume his power and dignity of empire. The historical system, at all events in Mr. Elliott's hands, is far too accommodating to be deranged as to its conclusions by such drawbacks as these. Either a limitation of the requirements of the text, so as to keep it as much as possible from being touched by these difficulties, will steer us clear of them, or, if that be impracticable, a "proviso," represented as "essential to the *satisfactoriness* of the explanation," will rid us of them at a gulp.

In respect of chronology, where to miss the prescribed mark in any respect is to break down altogether, matters are even worse. The successional order of the seals and the trumpets is imperfectly kept up. That of the vials is utterly wanting. The sealing vision, which should belong to a particular period, is found to prevail over the whole christian era, there being no means of assigning it limited operation. The prophesying of the two witnesses, and their assuming the garb of sackcloth, for which a specific space of time is assigned in the prophecy,

spreads equally over the whole era. A commencing period for the death of the witnesses is not to be had; and taking Mr. Elliott's date for the occurrence, the time that they remained extinct is seen to be six years, and not, as required, three and a half. The time of the woman's entry into the wilderness is equally indeterminate, there being no means of knowing when she ceased to go towards it, and when she reached it. Her stay in the wilderness, for which a fixed period is given in the text, is consequently not to be computed. The commencing and terminating eras of the scorpion-plague fail to hold good, and the plague is seen to have lasted about 450 years, while the exposition required for it but 150. The operation of the 6th trumpet is out by six or eight years as to the commencing time, but yielding that even, it is in excess by more than a prophetic hour and a half as to its close. The great sin of worshipping the Antichrist and his image, which had been recognized as prevailing for 300 years, is not mentioned in a prophetic enumeration of sins made up to the close of that period. Luther is seen to have been anticipated by these 300 years in the discovery that the Pope was the Antichrist, imputed to him as a prophetic chronological one. As a resurrection witness, he is moreover exhibited out of order before those are mentioned whose place in resurrection he supplied, and who had come into existence 981 years before him. The treading down of the holy city is announced as future after the measuring of the temple, while it had been in operation close upon ten centuries before that event. The apostate christians are chronologically denounced as Gentiles, while for this same period of nearly ten centuries they are described as having under this designation been treading down the city. The operations of the two witnesses are represented as still future, although they too had been going on all this while. The diadem, as a chronologic symbol, is applied to the seven heads of the dragon, when six of them belonged to a state of things dating from eight and a half centuries back, when no such symbol could appertain to them. They appear also together coexistently, as do they furthermore upon the beast, when they

were in fact successional ; and at a time when six of them as respects the dragon, and all of them as respects the beast, had passed away and disappeared, while in the visions they are described as uprising in futurity. The seventh head, finally, is seen by the apostle in the act of being wounded, when this had occurred 143 years before the date assigned for the object of the visions. The chronological results were the great stronghold of Mr. Elliott's production, assured upon which his interpretations assumed all the appearance of accuracy and truth ; but when these, one and all, manifestly fail him, the whole fabric of his delineations is exposed in its demonstrated unreality.

Beyond this, there is conclusive evidence that no scheme of interpreting the Apocalypse can stand good, but such as may refer the events thereof to futurity. If the peculiar and very positive characteristic of this dispensation, every where recorded of it in the scripture, that it is "the day of salvation," wherein forbearance and mercy on the part of God, and forgiveness and grace towards enemies on that of the church, is to be allowed its place, then the historic representations of the Apocalypse can no more for a moment be maintained ; for they represent God throughout as dealing in vengeance upon the ungodly,—just as if pardon for sin, and the means of deliverance from its penalties, were gone by,—and the church, as taking part in such feeling, and in like manner seeking the prompt destruction of the transgressors. There is hardly a portion of the Apocalyptic prophecies which is not of this tendency, for judgment is the all but universal theme thereof, and at the opening of the 5th seal, where the martyred ones are calling out for vengeance, and have it promised them, at that of the 6th, where the Lamb is represented to the world in threatening wrath, and at the vision of the witnesses, where they are sending forth fire upon their enemies, turning the waters into blood, and visiting all around them with all plagues as often as they will, the spirit of instant retribution, and not that of long enduring mercy, is by open revelation proclaimed, and these scenes can in no wise belong to this age wherein we find ourselves. The revelation of the man of

sin is of the like stamp, for he is brought in judicially, to overwhelm in delusion, and consequent judgment, all who are consigned to "perish," as being such as "believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness;" and this could never be while salvation could be freely tendered to all up to the last moment of their lives, as at this day. We have therefore the evidence, as far as God can give it, that the prophecies of the Apocalypse remain as much even now among the things that are to be hereafter, as they were in the apostle's day.

I have still one objection to offer to Mr. Elliott's book, and to the historic interpreters at large, and it is indubitably the most material one of all. Upon what is it that they would feed us? The "testimony of Jesus," we are told, "is the spirit of prophecy." Is that the testimony of their delineations? Do all we hear from Mr. Elliott of the prosperity and the downfall of Pagan Rome, of Alaric, Genseric, Attila, Odoacer, the Saracens, and the Turks, bring the Lord Jesus before us? Is it not "The Revelation of Rome," and not "The Revelation of Jesus," with which he is really occupied? and is not the course of study upon which we enter with him, absolutely one of profane history, in which the word of God holds no other place than that of a mere peg, or pretence, upon which the themes of history are to be hanged? Are these the sayings of the book by the keeping of which the promise is given of so much blessing?—the sayings and doings of the 340 actors whom Mr. Elliott brings upon the stage! We are to look for fruits when we take up the word of God. It is a seed that plants itself, and fructifies; and it does so in our spirits. But how do the invasions of Goths and Moslems affect the spirit? Do the records of them repose themselves there, or simply in the head? And with what results? Do they bring us into the patience of Jesus, or conduct us to the habitual submission of our thoughts to Him, making Him the central and sole point of attraction for us in all our interests and desires? Do they call our hearts out heavenwards, where our conversation should be? or do they cast us into the atmosphere of the world,—of its policy, its struggles, and its ambition?

Most truly Mr. Elliott set out, as he has borne witness against himself, with mere human elements, to effect his undertaking and most certainly a production which treats of human operations only is what he has accomplished. And there the child of God, who seeks nourishment for his spirit, should leave him, and beware of every would-be guide, offering himself to him, who may profess, with similar instrumentality, to feed him out of the realities of God, but who thereby can assuredly accomplish nothing for him but to darken his path, and starve his soul, with the obliquities and the insufficiencies of man.

THE END.

