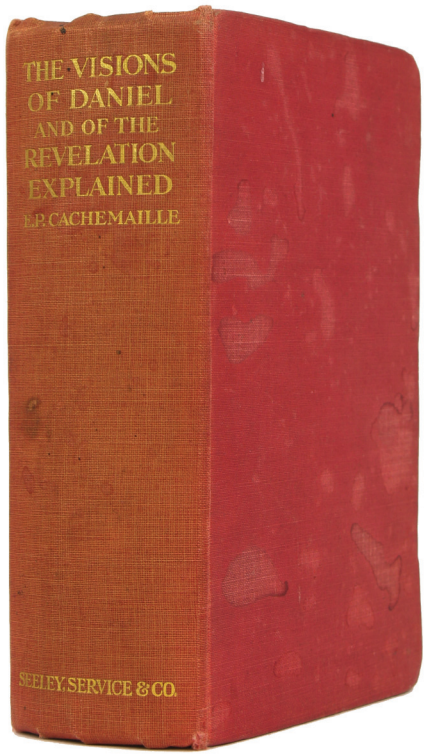

THE VISIONS OF DANIEL AND OF THE REVELATION EXPLAINED

E. P. CACHEMAILLE

NEW EDITION

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THE VISIONS OF DANIEL AND OF THE REVELATION EXPLAINED

E. P. CACHEMAILLE

DIGITAL EDITION 1.0

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XXVI PRESENT DAY PAPERS ON PROPHECY

THE VISIONS OF DANIEL AND OF THE REVELATION EXPLAINED

On the Continuous-Historic System in XXVI Present Day Papers on Prophecy

WITH MAPS AND DIAGRAMS

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets."—AMOS iii. 7.

"Now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe."—JOHN xiv. 29.

By the

REV. E. P. CACHEMAILLE, M.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF CONVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE; LATE SECRETARY OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

NEW EDITION

LONDON

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N.B.—Such notes on some of the Diagrams as "scale, ten years to one inch," apply only to the large sized originals on calico, from which these have been photographed.

The true knowledge of the Word of Prophecy, even to nations, is a surer defence and safer guide than the mere human prudence of the wisest and most valiant leaders.—Professor T. R. Birks.

ERRATA.

Page

233. 9th line from bottom. *For* with fresh Powers, *read* as fresh Powers.

329. 8th line from bottom. *For* refuges of his, *read* refuges of lies.

423. 10th line. *For* from the sea, *read* from those.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

THIS volume was issued at first under the title "XXVI Present Day Papers on Prophecy," to which was added as a sub-title on the front page, "An Explanation of the Visions of Daniel and of the Revelation on the Continuous-Historic System." Complaint was made that the chief title was insufficient and misleading, giving no idea of the plan and contents of the book. Accordingly for this new edition the former sub-title has been made the principal one, but the arrangement in XXVI Papers has been retained in the body of the volume, for the convenience of those who have the earlier edition.

Since the date at which the book appeared, we have passed from under the Sixth Vial into the Seventh, the last of the series that developes the Seventh Trumpet. We are therefore now amidst final events, and are drawing near to the close of this Dispensation and to the Return of our Lord. This advance in the prophetic position has required the introduction of some additional matter at the end of the volume, pointing out the commencement and the general features of the Seventh Vial. Otherwise, except for a few new paragraphs here and there, and several new illustrations, the main contents of the volume remain unchanged, as indeed should be the case if the Continuous-Historic Explanation is a sound one.

The author has recently published a small volume, *The Prophetic Outlook To-day* (Morgan & Scott), that goes more fully into the sequence and character of terminal events, and that points out their order as

revealed in the New Testament. This may be regarded as a supplement to the present commentary.

The Great Prophetic Periods, most of which have now run out, are exhaustively treated in the new edition of Dr. H. Grattan Guinness' *Light for the Last Days* (Morgan & Scott), to which readers are referred. Space would not allow of that wide subject being included in this volume, except in one chapter.

These wonderful visions are being unsealed in our day, and the Lord God of the Spirits of the Prophets is shedding a flood of light upon them and upon the hearts of many who are studying them. The pity is that any, especially of the official teachers of God's people, should be blind or indifferent to the indispensable guidance that these prophecies, and they alone, so abundantly supply.

XXVI PRESENT DAY PAPERS ON PROPHECY

THE chief purpose of this series of Papers is to put before the Christian public, in plain and popular language that appeals to the average reader, and in non-controversial form, an Historical explanation of the symbolic prophecies of Daniel and St. John.

Great pains have been taken to give the most approved interpretations from the most trustworthy authorities of the Historic school of prophetic exposition, and the freest use has been made of the valuable materials so accumulated; however, the explanations are left to stand on their own merits, in the judgment of Bible students, and apart from the influence of certain names. A general acknowledgment, but of the amplest kind, is all that can be given here. Those whose studies have lain in these directions will have no difficulty in recognizing the sources whence the explanations are derived, nor in appreciating the abundant obligations under which these Papers lie to writers who have gone before.

It is not for one moment pretended that here is the only possible interpretation of these visions, and that all others are wrong. It is simply a humble contribution to the elucidation of great and wonderful things, which we are bound to study and to seek to understand. In the religious literature of the day, the Historic interpretation of these prophecies is often referred to, often criticized, often egregiously misrepresented; yet few who read

and are influenced by such criticisms know what that interpretation really is, and what it has to say for itself. It seems desirable, therefore, to put it plainly forth, in a popular but complete and easily accessible form, that people may be in a position to compare it with other schemes, and to judge for themselves of its reasonableness and truth. Perhaps also many, who have begun by glancing through a small volume, may be drawn on to read the treatises of larger build on this most deeply interesting subject; and especially to study, with prayer for heavenly teaching, whole regions of their Bibles that they have hitherto too sadly neglected.

What carries conviction is not only a chance resemblance between here and there a vision and here and there an historical event; but rather the marvellously exact correspondence, all the way down through the centuries, between the visions in their order, representing the history in symbol, and the actually recorded facts and events as they succeed each other in the pages of the standard historians. This close parallelism prevails through scores of particulars, all in their proper succession, throughout the visions and the history, and it is impossible not to discern intention in it all. But let the reader judge for himself in what follows in this volume.

It will be seen that these visions, interpreted according to the Continuous-Historic system, shed a true light on not a few of the religious and social problems of the present day, as well as on those of earlier times. Here the faithful and obedient disciple, who desires above all to know his Lord's mind and to be fulfilling His Will, is vouchsafed clear and reliable guidance; here he may learn what "Views" to hold, what line to take, on what side to be found. Here also is light and leading for the true patriot, who seeks in every way to promote his country's highest welfare. Indeed, if this interpretation

be a true one, it is of the most momentous importance, not only to the whole Church of Christ here below, but also to the entire world, and therefore it ought to be widely made known. The very purpose of these prophecies is to warn God's people against secret danger, and such warning cannot be given without exposing unsuspected enemies.

While the main line of Continuous-Historic interpretation is followed, there may still be room for difference of opinion on minor points and details. Accordingly, in some instances more than one explanation is given, and readers are left to judge for themselves. We must not be too bigoted for our own favourite expositions. God does not reveal everything to any single one of His most faithful and spiritually-minded servants, that there may be between them, as says saintly George Herbert, commerce and interchange of spiritual wares, for the implanting of humility and mutual love. Let it always be remembered, however, that in these last days more light is being given from above, and that these wonderful Scriptures are being gradually unsealed. We may therefore expect to see things more and more clearly as time goes on, and to be cheered by a constantly increasing unity of interpretation amongst the disciples of the Saviour who are longing for His appearing.

Knowledge of all kinds grows from age to age. The stores accumulated by one generation are the possession and privilege of all the generations that follow, the vantage ground from which to start on their own career. Not only should we study these things for ourselves, but also it is imperative that we should make intelligent use of the labours of those who have gone before. In this, as in all sciences, they who begin as if nothing had yet been discovered or known, casting aside the results attained by their predecessors because they sometimes made mistakes or reached wrong conclusions, are not

likely to make much real headway. We must reject all that time has proved to be false; gather up and cherish all that time has proved to be true; and to all this add the results of our own observation and study.

The Continuous-Historic exposition is obviously a thing of growth, as events develop, and as the symbolism becomes better understood, and is more accurately explained and applied. The pages of the best recent expositors consist very largely of the explanations given by their predecessors, but modified and added to in accordance with the clearer light now vouchsafed. Students of prophecy to-day will render the wisest and most useful help by endeavouring to complete the explanations of detail already—by God's blessing on the labours of others—so luminous, and in such wonderful accord with the actual facts of History.

I

THE STUDY OF THE SYMBOLIC PROPHECIES

THE Symbolic or Orderly Prophecies form but a small portion of the prophetic writings, and are marked off from the rest by notable features. They are connected and continuous, in general covering the whole period from their own beginning to the establishment of the kingdom of the Son of Man ; and for the most part they are expressed in the language of symbol. They are the following :—

I. THE GREAT IMAGE (Dan. ii.).
II. THE FOUR GREAT BEASTS (Dan. vii.).
III. THE RAM AND THE HE-GOAT (Dan. viii.).
IV. THE SEVENTY WEEKS (Dan. ix.).
V. THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH (Dan. x., xi., xii.).

These five, all in the book of Daniel, are separate visions, seen at different places, with intervals longer or shorter between their dates. Then there is also :—

VI. THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN.

This is one connected Vision, seen by St. John in the isle of Patmos, on one Lord's Day.

The first in this series serves well to illustrate the main features of them all. In that Vision, the great empires that have ruled in succession since the days of Nebuchad-

nezzar are represented by various metals, which together make up a human figure. It stands until a stone, cut out without hands, crushes its feet; after which the whole image is reduced to dust and is carried away by the wind, and the stone becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth. Here, empires are symbolized by metals, and the vision ranges over the whole period from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the establishment of Christ's kingdom.

These Visions, so marked off from the remainder of the prophetic word, began to be given at a very remarkable crisis. Hitherto God had spoken in the prophets by divers portions, but He had not yet vouchsafed a complete and connected view of the course of this world's history as affecting His people; no general chart of His plans for the future had yet been revealed. But from the time when the last remnants of His chosen people had been carried away into captivity, and the Jewish Theocracy had come to an end, these orderly Prophecies, these connected and consecutive Visions, began to be given,—a most important era in the course of Divine Revelation. Now began the great "Seven Times," of which the latter half is so often referred to; sometimes as "a time, times, and an half;" sometimes as forty-two months; and sometimes as twelve hundred and sixty days. Now also began these symbolic Visions, in which the course of this world's history was revealed in an orderly and connected form, around which the other Prophecies, however apparently fragmentary and unconnected, could be arranged in their proper positions.

They are therefore a most precious gift from God to His church, intended not to gratify a vain curiosity, but to comfort and support His people under their trials, and during their long waiting for the return of their Lord. They reveal God ruling in the world, and shaping the course of the kingdoms of men. They give a luminous

and comprehensive outline of His providential dealings with mankind. They teach that the existing conditions and relations of the powers of this world were foreknown and fore-ordained by Him, and that these are a daily pledge of the Lord's presence even now in the midst of His people, and of His providence ruling in great things and in small. They indicate the general course that future events will take; they guide us in recognizing the significance of those events as they reach fulfilment; and they make the faithful servant of God know assuredly which side he ought to take, and where he ought to be found, when all these things come to pass.

Their surpassing importance appears especially in this,—that here is nothing less than God's own philosophy of history, His own judgment upon each event or succession of events foreshown in these Visions. In the best and most reliable human histories, the judgment of the historian is still necessarily interwoven with the facts he narrates, but it is only the judgment of a fallible man. There may be little or no dispute as to the facts; the difference lies in the interpretation put upon them, the significance assigned to them, and the inferences drawn from them. How infinitely superior, for correction or confirmation, is the judgment of God, as here shown! How helpful to His people! Here are the clues given by the Holy Spirit to guide us aright through the maze of events and movements that go to make up history. Here we are taught to recognize what is of real and far-reaching importance. Here we are shown the true origin, direction, and tendency of what is going on around us. We can all be wise after the event, says Professor Seeley (*Expansion of England*, ii. 1), but the study of history is to make us wise before the event, to make us discern what is coming, and how to deal with it.

"What makes an event great or little? Is the accession of a king necessarily a great event? At the moment it seems

great, but when the excitement it causes has subsided, it may appear to have been in the history of the country no event at all. . . . We must have a test for the historical importance of events, and to apply this test will be a principal part of the historian's work. . . . Great events are commonly judged by contemporaries quite wrongly. It is in fact one of the chief functions of the historian to correct this contemporary judgment. . . . The true test of the historical importance of events is their pregnancy, or in other words the greatness of the consequences likely to follow from them." (*ib.* i. 8.)

"True historical genius lies in selecting the great crises, the great agents, and the great movements, in making these clear to the reader in their real nature, in passing over with the lightest and slightest touch numerous events and many persons, but always keeping clear before the reader the plan of composition."—*Paul the Traveller* (Sir W. M. Ramsay).

Where can we more surely learn this relative importance of events, and their connexions with each other, than in these inspired Visions, in which the prescient Spirit has made everything known to Christ's true servants that they need to know, and has given them clear and trustworthy guidance as to the line they are to take? What shall we not lose, if we ignore or neglect them?

Methods of Study.

How shall we set about to study these Visions with profit?

We must begin at the beginning, and work onwards; not at the ends, and work backwards. We must take them as we find them in our Bibles, if not in the originals, yet in the Revised Version; and beginning with the first, that of the Great Image, must proceed with an orderly and consecutive study of the whole series. This is the only way to make safe and sure progress as we advance. In the earliest Visions are laid down the essentials of prophetic knowledge, the grand outlines of God's providence. These must be mastered before we go on to

study details, so that we shall have nothing to unlearn as we proceed, but only to supplement and develop what we already possess.

It is imperative to begin at the beginning, and to get clear notions there, instead of working away at the outset of our studies amongst the far distant ends of these Symbolic Prophecies. Of what use is it to seek unity of view as to the endings, until we have discovered how far we agree as to the beginnings ?

Our aim should be to obtain a complete and continuous exposition—so far as it pleases God to give it—of the whole series ; not of some Visions only, but of all ; not of certain episodes alone, here and there, but of the entire collection and sequence of them, in their natural order as they stand, unless there be plain marks of retrogression or recapitulation. We shall then see what a true and powerful grasp they give of the whole course of history, from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the full establishment of the kingdom of the Son of Man. It is this broad view especially that impresses the mind. The question of the divine prophetic inspiration of these Visions will settle itself. Even the question of their date need not be very anxiously discussed at first ; for except in reference to their authorship, the difference of a few years one way or the other as to date of composition does not seriously affect the main issues.[1] If they are found to be what has been described, then all must confess that a greater than Daniel or St. John is here, even He that sees the end from the beginning. No mere human sagacity or foresight could have made forecasts such as these, verified by the events of many consecutive centuries.

Another essential is parallel explanation. God's plan

[1] See *The Book of Daniel from the Christian Standpoint* (John Kennedy) in Eyre & Spottiswoode's *Bible Students' Library.*

is to give the grand facts first, then gradually to fill up the outline. If He can foreshow the principal facts, why not also the lesser ones? If the broad outlines, why not also the details? No one Vision tells everything; therefore we must lay these Visions alongside of each other, and must remember and take account of whatever has been already given, in coming to what is subsequent. The first Vision,—that of the Great Image,—rules all the rest; all the subsequent Visions must fit into it. The order of events, once laid down, is never departed from; nor is anything, once given, afterwards cancelled. Suppose that we lay down the Visions alongside of each other in parallel columns, we shall have to stretch I to fit in II, and then to stretch I and II to fit in III, and so on, but that is all. A second Vision will tell us more than did the first, but nothing different, nothing contradicting the first. In studying the second, we have to keep steadily in mind what we have learnt from the first, and so on with the successive Visions, adding up as we go along.

The Vision of the Great Image describes four great empires. The next Vision, that of the Four Beasts, presents those same four empires from a different point of view, that of the prophet of God, and adds many details of the history of the fourth empire. The next Vision, that of the Ram and He-goat, adds information as to the second and third empires and the latter times of their history. The Revelation of St. John, the last in the series, dating after the first three empires had passed away, and while the fourth was in power, gives abundant detail as to the changes and other events in the history of that fourth empire. It fits evenly into its place in the harmony of the whole series. In dealing with it, we must remember all that has already been given in the book of Daniel; everything previously foreshown must be taken for granted, in its matter and in its order, before

Revelation is approached, and the explanation must harmonize with and fit into all that has gone before.

The Language of Symbol.

These Visions are given almost entirely in the language of symbol, and we have to recognize that the history is expressed not in literal terms, but in signs, hieroglyphics, cypher. It is of course essential to know as accurately as possible what Daniel and St. John actually saw or heard, to possess the truest and most exact description of Visions and emblems. But that does not explain them ; it only puts them truly and clearly before the mind. They are still signs and symbols ; they still await interpretation. The hieroglyphic is correctly copied, but we want the Rosetta Stone. The cypher is accurately written down, but we cannot read it till we possess the key. Now as large portions of the Visions in Daniel are already fulfilled, several symbols are explained by their historical fulfilments ; and in Revelation several clues are given by our Lord Himself or by the revealing angel, which put us on the right track for interpreting the rest. So our Lord interpreted some of His parables, that His disciples might thereby learn how to interpret the rest.

The symbols must be expounded according to their recognised meaning in Scripture, and there must be definite and consistent interpretation of definite symbols. Unsatisfactory explanations, and the reference of important symbolizations to quite different eras and events by different interpreters, have generally arisen from assigning a vague and indefinite meaning to the symbols. If we believe these prophecies to be divinely inspired, we may undoubtingly expect, that the eras and events chosen should be those of confessedly greatest importance according to the judgment of standard historical authorities, and that the prophetic pictures should be

so specific and definite as to fit accurately those eras and events alone, and this more and more in proportion to fulness of detail. They are not a piece of loose drapery, that may be flung in graceful folds over almost any figure; but a carefully measured garment, that will properly fit only the person for whom it has been made. Would not this hold good in the symbolic description or picturing of such subjects by any true artist or historian? How much more when the portraiture is the work of the omniscient Spirit!

We have now a long series of historic records, extending over many centuries, to help us in these explanations, and to serve as a test of the prescient accuracy of the Visions. We thus enjoy advantages quite impossible to the early Fathers, and to the prophetic students of primitive times. For them almost everything was still future. Their obscure conjectures are now, by the testimony of historic facts, either verified, or greatly modified, or proved to have been incorrect. These chronologic prophecies must from their very nature be especially intended for the benefit of later, not of earlier generations. They are gradually explained by their own fulfilments, and more and more clearly as the time draws nearer. The great, solid, notorious facts of history stand recorded on many a printed page, as well as on the face of the world, and we can neither alter nor ignore them. Different interpreters may put different estimates upon them, may explain them or account for them differently; but there the facts are, and if the Visions are a foreshadowing of these historical events, our explanations to be worth anything must take full account of these accomplished and recorded facts.

It follows then that there can be in reality only one grand historical interpretation of symbolic prophecy; but it seems to have been the purpose of God—as the History of Interpretation shows—that the correspon-

dence between the course of the Visions and the events of history should be only gradually unfolded, as the wants of His Church required it. Blessed are our eyes, in these latest times, for they see things that have been kept hidden from God's servants of the ages before.

Prophecy and History.

It is most remarkable how these Symbolic Visions, scripturally and soberly explained, exactly fit the actual facts of history, in their proper order and in the right proportion; so much so that the Vision or Visions form an accurate and reliable *memoria technica* for the history of the period in question. Learn the Symbolic Vision, and you find yourself in possession of a philosophic epitome of the particular section of history; nor only of the great and leading events, but also of the historic details of the period. When this is observed to hold good, not only for one or two random selections, but also for the whole course of the Visions and of the corresponding periods of history, it forces one to the conclusion that this correspondence cannot be accidental, it bears too plain a mark of design. The Visions must have been intended to portray what so exactly fits and explains them. The correspondence is not merely between some individual symbols and some events that might be adduced as fulfilling them; but it is a close resemblance between the entire symbolic series regarded as a whole, and the entire course of history. No important event is passed over, and none is placed out of its proper order. Unchronological prophecies may have double meanings and accomplishments, but are not these great chronological prophecies from their very nature and construction incapable of a double interpretation? They are nothing less than a connected history in anticipation; as well say that each

event in history is double, as that each link in a chronological prophecy has a double fulfilment.

The study of these Symbolic Prophecies, on these lines, is of intense interest, ever opening out fresh wonders and delights, and greatly strengthening faith. It sanctifies all history, giving it a new and holy character, and lifting it to a higher level, as being the fulfilment of predictions in God's Word, the evidence of His ever-present providence in the daily course of human events, whether they be what we call great or small, for we are not competent judges of the magnitude and importance of events in the sight of God. It stirs one up to read all the best histories one can get hold of, filling one with the desire of searching, like the Bereans, whether these things be so. However accurately prophecy may have been fulfilled, it is impossible to perceive its accomplishment unless one is acquainted with the history that has fulfilled or is fulfilling it; but it is the interest of the Visions that will entice to the study of the history, rather than the study of the history that will lead to the Visions. Like a well-framed synopsis, they give one a powerful grasp of the history, and act as an attraction no less than as a help.

At the time when Daniel saw the last of his Visions, he had reached a very advanced age. He was soon to leave this world, after a long and varied experience of its vicissitudes, and to enter into his rest. Yet the Lord does not count it a useless distraction, at such a time, to reveal to His aged servant a long series of political changes, and even of petty wars and rivalries, amongst the kingdoms lying round about the Holy Land. On the contrary, it is implied that this message from the Lord is a precious gift, a mark of special favour, vouchsafed to the prophet. It is no evidence of spirituality of mind to neglect historical studies in connexion with prophecy, or to be indifferent to the changes in the king-

doms of this world, all of which are brought about by the hand of God's providence. The true Church of Christ has a perpetual interest in all the events of history; and if patiently and reverently followed, no study will more richly repay the devout disciple with spiritual profit and delight.

The time is surely coming when Christian students will find it no longer possible to rest satisfied with explanations of a vague and spiritualizing type; whereas the Visions are seen to be full of elaborate detail, and everything bears marks of precision and intention in these "vast intuitions." Devout minds will yearn to know what God has to say to them through these wonderful visions, and in answer to their prayers He will give increasing light in these last days.

A Harmony of the Visions of Daniel.

It is a simple matter, but most instructive, to draw up a Harmony of the Visions of Daniel; to range them side by side, so as to display at one view all that they contain in reference to any prophetic epoch they include.

The first step is to arrange each Vision, together with its inspired interpretation, in the strict chronological order of the prophecy itself. The vision of the Great Image, Daniel ii., consists of two parts, the Vision itself, and its interpretation; it arranges itself therefore into two parallel columns, the Vision clause by clause in the first, and in the second each portion of the interpretation side by side with its corresponding portion of the Vision, thus (using the Revised Version):—

ii. 32.	ii. 37.
As for this image, his head was of fine gold.	Thou, O King, art king of kings.

The next Vision, that of the Four Great Beasts, Daniel vii., ranges itself not in two but in three parallel

columns; for a portion of the Vision is given twice over; and there is the interpretation besides. After relating the Vision, Daniel says, in reference to the Fourth Beast, verse 19: "Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them"; and thereupon he recapitulates the description of the Fourth Beast and of its doings. All this stands in a middle column, between the original account of the Vision and the explanation of it by "one of them that stood by," thus:—

vii. 7.	vii. 20.	vii. 24.
And it had ten horns.	And concerning the ten horns that were on his head,	And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise:

The next Vision, that of the Ram and the He-Goat, Daniel viii., having interpretation but no repetition, occupies only two columns, like that of the Great Image, thus:—

viii. 5.	viii. 21.
An he-goat came from the west.	And the rough he-goat is the king of Greece:

The prophecy of the Scripture of Truth, Daniel x., xi., xii., occupies for the most part only one column, and is in direct narrative, not in symbol like the others.

After each Vision has been carefully arranged within itself in the manner described, the next step is to place the parallel columns of the Visions alongside of each other, and to make the grand points of coincidence range together. What lies between these will likewise range. Thus the head of gold in the Great Image ranges with the lion with eagle's wings in the Four Great Beasts; these portions of the arranged Visions will therefore be

placed opposite to each other. The breast and arms of silver in the Great Image range with the bear in the Four Great Beasts and with the two-horned ram in the Vision of the Ram and the He-Goat; these three portions therefore lie alongside of each other, clause opposite to clause throughout, and so on with the rest. There can be no contradiction between these predictions, nor any change in the general order of events; the Visions all fit into one another, but they may view the events from different points of observation, or may largely supplement one another.

One Vision may much more fully expand what appears in an abridged form in the parallel portion of another Vision, and may separate and distinguish its subordinate divisions; or one Vision may intercalate a great deal that is not even mentioned in another; but the order of events once foreshown and laid down will not be changed, however the Visions may be multiplied. Hence the importance of taking into account all that is fixed by one when proceeding to interpret another, and of watching against so interpreting any one alone as to disarrange any other, or to mar the harmony of the whole. In some of these prophecies certain periods are, in geological phraseology, typically developed; from others the same periods may be altogether absent, but any single interpretation that involves the dislocation of some or all of the parallel Visions is thereby self-condemned.

The Revelation of St. John does not stand by itself; it is the last of a series of symbolical prophecies very similar to it in style and matter. Each member of this series is perfectly consistent with all the rest, and fits evenly into its place in the harmony of the whole. In going to the Revelation, then, we must remember all that we already possess in the Book of Daniel, particularly as to the Fourth or Roman Empire, under which

the Revelation was given. Everything that has been foreshown in his prophecies must be taken for granted, in its matter and its order, before the Revelation is approached, and the interpretation of the Revelation must harmonize with and fit into all that has been given before. The Revelation must first be arranged within itself, as has been done with the Visions of Daniel, and then it must be laid alongside of the Fourth Great Empire therein foretold.

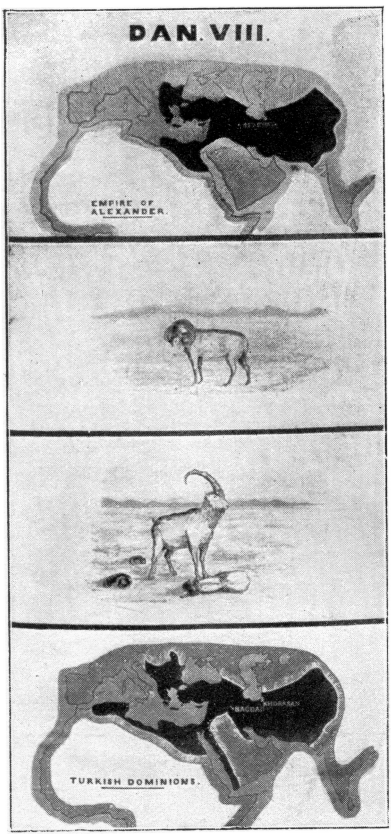
Fuller description and much addition of detail may be expected in St. John's Visions ; objects that from the remote distance of Daniel's times looked like one may be found in the clear light of the Gospel days to be two or even three ; minor changes in the emblems, corresponding with like changes in the history of the Powers portrayed, may be described ; but there cannot be any contradiction between prophecies that all proceed from the same Divine mind, and have reference to the same general series of events in the history of the world and of the church.

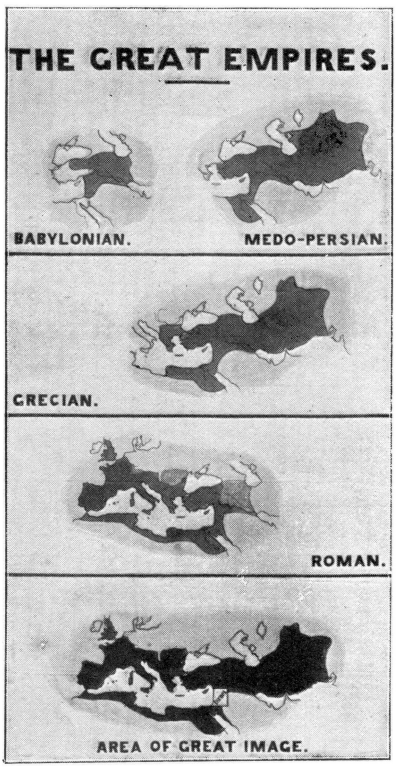
The parallel columns show that some topics are treated and some predictions are given at much greater length and with much more fulness than others. One topic may appear in only one column, or only once in each prophecy ; another may be found mentioned more or less plainly in almost every column of every one of the Visions brought into harmony together. There can be no doubt as to the significance of this ; it is intended to call special attention to these topics or predicted events, and to mark them out as being of paramount importance. The law of proportion is strictly observed throughout Holy Scripture, and not least in these prophetic Visions. It will be noticed also that some topics are very briefly, if at all, mentioned in one Vision, while they are treated of at great length and with much detail in the corresponding part of a parallel Vision. The

reasons for these differences will generally be found in the circumstances under which the particular Vision was given, or in the class of persons for whom it is specially intended.

Let students of prophecy work out all these things for themselves in the first place, and then they will be better prepared to study commentators and explanations in the second place, and to judge of their value.

DAN.II.
DAN.VII.


DAN. VIII.
EMPIRE OF ALEXANDER.
TURKISH DOMINIONS.


THE GREAT EMPIRES.
BABYLONIAN.
MEDO-PERSIAN.
GRECIAN.
ROMAN.
AREA OF GREAT IMAGE.

II

THE IRON EMPIRE AND THE STONE

Daniel II.

THE Vision of the Great Image stands first in this series of Visions. It being the first of the Orderly or Symbolic Prophecies, we may expect to find traced in it the broadest outlines of the subject, with the fewest details. It will give the headlines, the chapter-titles, of the whole; and will disclose the fundamental principles of interpretation that are to guide us through the subsequent Visions.

Clear notions here are of supreme importance if we would profitably explore this great subject, and if we would make real advance as our studies proceed. For if we are vague and uncertain in this the first, the simplest, and the most influential of all these Visions, how shall we be able to tread with any confidence when we approach those that follow? How shall we be able to recognize in them the landmarks which we have failed to identify at the outset?

The range of this Vision is certainly from the days of Nebuchadnezzar, if not from the beginning of his dynasty, through all the principal revolutions of history down to the establishment of the eternal kingdom. When so vast an expanse of time is covered, when some twenty-five centuries are sketched in a few brief sentences, it is obvious that only the barest outlines,

the broadest facts, can be given. But how useful this bird's-eye view, this comprehensive grasp of a grand subject! We can lay down these great historic facts with confidence, as it were the titles to the several chapters of history to be afterwards filled in. God Himself has given us the clue, and no subsequent additions will disarrange or cancel any part of what He has once been pleased to reveal.

Nebuchadnezzar was wondering in himself what should come to pass in the future, after his times; and God, who sees the end from the beginning, sent him this Vision for the express purpose of revealing to him the broad outline of events, from his days to the final establishment upon this earth of the kingdom of the Son of Man. The broad outline only, the great leading facts; for the Vision described and interpreted in these seventeen verses covers more than twenty-five centuries of human history. Detail therefore is out of the question. But if the revelation of these grand secrets was of such interest to Nebuchadnezzar and his court, and to Daniel; of how much deeper interest is it to ourselves to-day, who now possess the actual history of those centuries, by which to verify and to display its prescient accuracy!

Nebuchadnezzar in his dream saw standing before him a great image of metal, glittering with a terrible brightness. Its Head was of gold, its Breast and Arms of silver, its Belly and Thighs of brass, its Legs of iron, its Feet and Toes part of iron and part of earthenware,—that is, of baked clay or pottery.[1] The various metals were in

[1] The R. V. in the margin explains "miry clay" as "earthenware." It is obvious that a weighty mass of metal like the Image could not stand upon feet made partly of soft clay; nor could this soft clay be broken to pieces and reduced to dust, as is described in the Vision.

close contact with each other, welded together; there was no break, no gap between any two of them. Together they formed a complete human figure, with no breach of continuity between its parts.

Here, according to the obvious meaning of the Symbol, and the interpretation given by Daniel, was a clear prediction of the rise of four great empires. They were to be not contemporary, but successive; different from one another as the metals differ, not descending all from the same stock; kingdoms of conquest, subduing and bearing rule over subject nations. There was to be no break between them, no gap in their succession, no long interregnum. The order in which these four empires were to succeed each other was given both in the description of the Vision and in Daniel's interpretation; they proceed according to the metals from the head to the feet, and not from the feet up to the head. The gold indicated dignity and magnificence in the first empire. In the silver, though there was extension of size, there was diminution of imperial majesty. The brass signified a further deterioration, notwithstanding greater strength, and an extension of the limits of dominion. The characteristic of the fourth, or iron empire, was prodigious strength and power of subjugation. The image form in which the four empires were represented is significant of their association with, and their support of idolatry. There were to be these four empires, and no more, from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to the setting up of God's kingdom; not five, not three, but exactly four.

Historical Fulfilment.

There is an exact correspondence between this Vision of the Image, and the broad facts of the world's history in relation to the people of God. Four great Empires are to be seen on the page of history—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome; under which last, in one

or other of its phases, we must now be living There is no serious difference of interpretation in regard to the names and succession of these four great empires ; indeed it is difficult to see how there could be. There may be some variations of opinion as to what particular event, or which decisive battle, should be accepted as the point of transition from one empire to its successor ; but the vast majority of interpreters recognize these four great dominions as the counterparts of the four metals of the Image. No interpretation would be worth anything that ignored or disarranged the paramount facts of human history for those centuries.

It is deeply interesting that these four empires are similarly presented as successive in the celebrated astronomical Canon of Ptolemy, which traces the course of imperial rule from the era of Nabonassar, king of Babylon, to the reign of the Roman emperor Antoninus. The Canon may indeed be deemed a running commentary upon the Vision of the Image. In it one line of Sovereigns is engrafted upon another, as one metal upon another, without taking into account the preceding rulers under whom that particular empire has become qualified to take its place in the Image. The chronological value of the Canon of Ptolemy is due to its interweaving a series of ancient dates with a series of astronomical positions, which can be rigidly verified. More than eighty solar, lunar, and planetary positions, with their dates, are given, all of which have been verified by modern astronomers, and consequently the events with which they are connected are fixed with absolute exactness.

The Gold.

The Head of Gold represents the first of these great empires, that of Babylon. The words, "Thou art the head of gold," are addressed to Nebuchadnezzar not

personally, but as representing the whole course of the Babylonian empire. For Daniel goes on to say, "After *thee* shall arise another kingdom inferior to *thee*." This is the Silver, or Medo-Persian, which succeeded the Babylonian; not, however, after the death of Nebuchadnezzar himself only, but after the death of his successor, Belshazzar, and the fall of the kingdom. The Head of Gold therefore represents not merely one Babylonian king, but the whole Babylonian empire with its succession of kings; just as the Silver represents "another kingdom," the Medo-Persian; and the Brass a third kingdom, the Greek. Nebuchadnezzar is viewed not personally, but officially, as the existing ruler. Therefore his son or grandson, on succeeding to the kingdom, would equally be represented by the Head of Gold, during the time of his own rule. The official unity continues through three generations. See Jeremiah xxv. 11; xxvii. 6, 7.

The first king of the Babylonian Empire of the Image was Nabonassar, and the date of his accession is one of great historical importance. It has been ascertained with certainty, through a series of exact astronomical observations given by Ptolemy, as being noon of February 26, B.C. 747. This most important era marks the commencement of the Babylonian Empire of the Image, and therefore of the great "Seven Times" of these Symbolic Prophecies. Under Nabonassar and several of his successors Babylonia appears to have been independent. This condition of independence continued, with intervals of subjection, down to the accession of Esarhaddon, B.C. 680, when Assyrian supremacy was once more established. Babylon then continued in a subject position till Nineveh fell, B.C. 625; whereupon Babylonia became not only independent, but the head of an empire, till its conquest by Cyrus, B.C. 538.

The terms used in verses 37, 38 denote a universal

dominion; yet on the map the Empire of Nebuchadnezzar is restrained within comparatively narrow limits. Such expressions have to be interpreted according to their context, and the facts of the era to which they refer. Compare 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 23.

The Silver.

The second empire, the Medo-Persian, is represented by the Breast and Arms of Silver. The transition from the first Empire to the second is clearly marked in the history of the book of Daniel, and shows no gap or long interval between the two. In interpreting the writing on the wall, Daniel said to Belshazzar, "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end"; "Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (Dan. v. 26–28). Accordingly, in the next chapter is described a reconstruction of the government, and the law of the realm is now "the law of the Medes and Persians." The capital of the empire is no longer Babylon, though that retains much of its importance, but Susa. It has been noticed that silver, of which this part of the Image consists, was the chief adornment of the Persian warriors. The duration of this empire is from the death of Belshazzar and the fall of Babylon (B.C. 538), to the conquest of Persia by Alexander (B.C. 334).

The Brass.

History is no less clear as to the third of these great empires, represented by the Belly and Thighs of Brass. It was the Greek, under the dynasty of Alexander the Great, that overthrew the Persian, and ruled in his stead. To describe the transition would be to give the history of the battles of Marathon (B.C. 490), Salamis and Arbela, and of the campaigns of Alexander the Great. Here is shown simply the broad fact of the brass succeeding the silver, details being added in the

following Visions. As the silver characterized the Persian, so did brazen armour characterize the Greek soldier.

The Iron.

The last of the four great empires of the Image, represented by the Iron Legs, has been shown by history to be the Roman. With iron strength and tenacity of purpose, it subdued, brake in pieces, bruised, and reduced under its irresistible sway by far the greater portion of the then known world. In the Roman battle array iron was as conspicuous as brass had been in the Grecian, and silver in the Persian.

Now it is notorious that the Roman empire, since the date when it became qualified to take its place in the Image, has passed through several phases, and is now in an altogether different form from that it had in the age of Augustus. It becomes interesting to inquire, then, whether these historical changes are recognized and represented in the prophecy; always remembering that what we are to look for in this first Vision is the broad features only, the main outlines of Roman history from that date to the present time; details will be added in subsequent Visions.

In the Vision of the Great Image (Dan. ii.), the fourth kingdom is represented as passing through three phases in the course of its history, yet as being the same fourth kingdom and no other from first to last, until the kingdom that the God of heaven sets up. Thus in verse 40 it is "the fourth kingdom"; in verse 41 it is "a divided kingdom"; and in verse 42 it is still "the kingdom, . . . partly strong, and partly broken," or "brittle." Three distinct periods are marked out in its career:—

First, a period of *unity*, when it was to be firmly united, and prodigiously strong in conquest. This stage is represented by the joint symbol of the two iron legs, down to the ankles.

Secondly, a period of *division*, when its cohesion would be loosened, and its firmness and strength impaired, a principle of division having been introduced into its constitution. This stage is represented by "the feet and toes," mentioned together in verse 41, and formed partly of earthenware and partly of iron.

Thirdly, a period of *separation*, when it should be completely divided into separate contemporary kingdoms, which nevertheless are still regarded in the Vision as together forming the fourth kingdom. This stage is represented by "the toes of the feet," mentioned alone in verse 42, and made part of iron and part of earthenware. These kingdoms were to make many attempts at reunion, by alliances and intermarriages, but without lasting success; "they should not cleave one to another.

This state of separation is the last phase of the fourth kingdom, and it continues long, even until the Stone comes and smites the feet, and the time has arrived for a great fifth kingdom to arise, which has no successor, but endures for ever. In the middle stage—that of division—the unity of the empire was still outwardly maintained, for the feet of iron and earthenware were still a continuation, without gap, of the legs of iron that represented the undivided fourth kingdom. But at last comes actual separation, represented by the toes alone, yet without gap between the feet and them. The number of these separate kingdoms is implied in the number of toes on the human feet, but it is not directly stated till the next Vision; attention is here called to the great fact of separation, rather than to the actual number of constituents. The intermarriages and attempts at reunion foretold between the separated kingdoms imply naturally a space of several generations. The Image, in its four parts, denotes four mighty empires, each ruled by dynasties or successions of rulers; at last the fourth empire itself becomes broken up into separate contem-

porary kingdoms, each ruled by dynasties or successions of individual kings.

Roman History.

Now, do the great facts of Roman history, for the centuries in question, correspond with what is here foreshown ? Taking a bird's-eye view of the career of that Power, from the days when it gained the mastery over Greece down to the present time, what eras would the philosophic historian point to as marking fundamental changes of the broadest character, involving, it may be, many other changes of less magnitude ? For we have to contemplate at present only the most salient features, the grand historical facts.

Rome herself dates back to B.C. 753, about the same era as the beginning of the dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar. But she had to grow and to be prepared through many long centuries, till she became ready to take her place in the Great Image as the Empire of Iron. Since the time when Rome succeeded Greece in the Image, there have been three marked periods in its history, exactly corresponding with what has been foreshown in the Vision.

First, Rome was united, firm, strong as iron, invincible in warfare ; " breaking in pieces " by actual conquest, and exacting tribute and revenue from all ; and " subduing " all into obedience and order and the regular administration of government. Gradually Italy, and then the whole of the Mediterranean lands and of those adjoining them were brought under the dominion of the one Roman city. At the beginning of the Christian Era, " all the world " was hers, and was all ruled from Rome ; and towards the end of the first century, in the days of the Apostle John, she was still " the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

Next, in A.D. 292, the Emperor Diocletian introduced a fundamental change into the constitution. He

divided the empire into four parts, to be administered by two senior emperors or Augusti, and in association with them two Cæsars. He judged the weight of the empire too great for any one man to bear, and he laid down this joint administration of four, not as a temporary expedient only, but as a new fundamental law of the constitution. Rome was no longer the real and only capital; rival cities were now exalted into seats of government. Diocletian moreover introduced the principle of division not only into the empire as a whole, but also into the provinces, and into every branch of the civil and of the military administration. The empire was still in theory one. The army was in the hands of the four partners of the supreme authority, and imperial edicts were promulgated in their joint names; but notwithstanding these precautions, the principle of division had been introduced, and the political union of the Roman world was gradually dissolved. Ere many years had gone by, the long-lasting separation of the Eastern from the Western Empire came about, one main effect of which was to sever the territory peculiar to the city of Rome,—that is, the Latin territory,—from the Greek provinces of the East, as if to define the sphere within which further separation was to take place. The division into Eastern and Western Rome cannot be placed on the Image higher than the instep, and historically it was the consequence of the really important division made earlier than this by Diocletian, at the height of the Image's ankles. It marked off the territory that had belonged to Rome only, the territory peculiarly Roman, from the territory that had been Greek, and that had belonged to the Brass Empire. This distinction reappears in the Visions of the Book of Revelation, where the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets, which deal with Greek or Eastern territory, are marked off from the first Four

Trumpets, which deal with Latin or Western territory. Other changes were introduced by Diocletian, which may be classed under the general title of Orientalism; but his most important and influential work, and that which carried the furthest reaching consequences, was that of "Division."

Thirdly, during about two centuries of decay and confusion, barbarian invaders—Goths, Vandals, Huns, and others—overran the Western territory of Rome; and at last, in A.D. 476, the Western imperial power came to an end. Romulus Augustulus, then reigning in the West, was deprived of his sovereignty; the dignity of Emperor of the West was formally abolished, even to the sending away of the imperial insignia to Constantinople; and Odoacer, who had been chosen by the barbarian mercenaries as their leader, ascended the throne as the first barbarian "King of Italy." The Commonwealth of kingdoms that constitutes modern Europe began to rise up, and has existed ever since. Verses 42, 43, give a brief and comprehensive sketch of European history from that date onwards. Statecraft and ambition have done their utmost to weld these separate States again into one power, but all in vain; the cohesion that once bound together the mighty Empire of Rome is lost.

In this Vision, however, the Roman Empire is regarded not as fallen, but only as divided into separate contemporary kingdoms. The modern states of Europe that have sprung up within the area of ancient Western Rome are, in the view of the Holy Spirit in this Prophecy, a continuation of the same Empire, divided indeed, but making frequent attempts at reunion, and having yet some bonds in common, which, though generally weak and never enduring, still mark them off from other nations of the earth. In what sense these separate kingdoms are to be regarded as parts of an Empire whose

centre is Rome is a detail to be revealed in a subsequent Vision. See Daniel vii.

That area was formerly under one and the same rule; now it is under many. It was once all heathen; it is now by profession Christian. How came all this to pass? Roman history explains modern Europe. Dominion has travelled down the Great Image, from the head to the toes. The whole world now recognizes as the "Great Powers" some of those that have their headquarters in the Western European regions, though their offshoots and dependencies are to be found even at the ends of the earth.

The state of things represented by the separation of the toes is of long duration; it lasts on and on till the Stone comes to smite the Image upon its feet. At the ankles of the Image we may place the date A.D. 292, at the roots of the toes the date A.D. 476; and these are epochs of fundamental importance in all the subsequent Visions relating to the Roman Empire. But to gain further information as to the long period that follows we have to go to the succeeding Visions, which add and expand, but never disarrange or cancel anything. Thus for the further history of the separated kingdoms, and for the explanation of the enigma of their separation and yet of their unity, we pass on to the next Vision, that of the Four Great Beasts, and there we find ample details of the history of this third period of the Roman dominion.

The Stone.

There is no gap whatever between the metals of the Image, where another kingdom could be thrust in; all is consecutive and continuous down to the state of things represented by the toes. And up to this point in the Vision everything has been fulfilled; we have actually reached the last stage but one in the whole series, and

have seen that stage, viz., the Western Roman Empire divided into separate kingdoms, continue more than twelve centuries. We are now expecting the final revolution, and who knows how soon!

While Nebuchadnezzar gazed upon that glittering Symbol, a Stone, that had been cut out of the mountain without hands,[1] smote the Image upon its feet, and brake them to pieces. Then were all the metals broken to pieces together, and the wind carried them away like chaff; and the Stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. All the previous changes had been more or less of like nature, one metal succeeding another; but now a kingdom that is no part of the Image grinds it to powder, blots it out of existence, takes its place, and fills the whole earth. Great dynastic revolutions like the overthrow of Babylon, Persia, and Greece, had been represented simply by the change from one metal to another; but here is the breaking up of all the metals together, the total dissolution of the polity of these earthly kingdoms; something immensely more important and subversive than any political change the world has yet beheld. It is the "Breaking in pieces like a potter's vessel."

The Stone comes to the Image where it stands, and smites it upon its feet, not upon its legs or head; moreover this tremendous event is mentioned last, after all the other changes in the Image. It occurs after the division of the Roman Empire into separate kingdoms. God's new kingdom is set up, as is stated in verse 44, in the days of those kings or kingdoms, who are still in existence when the Stone smites. As the four great Empires are successive and cover many centuries, verse 44 would have no meaning if referred to them; but it

[1] The metals of which the Image was composed were such as are dug out of the mountain by men's hands. But the Stone is cut out of the mountain without human hands.

has a clear meaning if referred to the kings or kingdoms represented by the toes, for they are contemporary.

The action of the Stone is not silent, gentle, or gradual; but sudden, violent, and abrupt. The destruction of the Image results from the blow of the Stone, not from its expansion, which does not take place till the Image has been destroyed, and removed by the wind. The blow falls upon the feet, not the toes only; this seems to indicate that the separated kingdoms will in some way or other be re-united, and the tenfold division altered, when that event takes place. It may also be intended as a guide to the locality where the blow is to fall, that is,in some region that belonged to the Roman Empire since the time when Diocletian made his division, but before the portion connected with Rome was reduced to the dimensions of Western Europe only. See Zechariah xiv. 3, 4: Revelation xiv. 20; xvi. 19. It may further mean that other powers besides the Kingdoms of the West are smitten, because in league all together against the Lord and against His Anointed. All this fits in closely with what we are told in Ezekiel xxxviii., xxxix. of the invasion of the land of Israel by Gog and his hordes, and of his sudden destruction upon the mountains of that land, when on the point of overwhelming the Israelites, then settled and prospering in the country of their fathers. See Paper XXV.

The effects of the blow spread throughout the whole area of the kingdoms represented by the Image. All these are in a certain sense still in existence, though political life and dominion have passed from one to the other, till now concentrated chiefly in the divisions of the fourth kingdom.

The Stone is our Lord, the whole kingdom and power of the Messiah summed up in Himself (Luke xx. 17, 18), and this is His Second Advent, not His First. He was born and crucified under Imperial Rome, in the time of

the iron legs. The First Advent belongs to the period of the undivided iron strength of the Roman Empire, not to that of its decay and division. The Stone smites upon the feet, and the earliest date for the feet is A.D. 292; the stroke therefore cannot be earlier than that date. The only possible event in that past history corresponding to the stroke is the overthrow of Heathenism in the times of Constantine and Theodosius. But after this comes a long delay, while the Church is in the wilderness. See Paper X. The First Advent did not crush and obliterate Gentile dominion, for that continues in those parts of the world to this day. The Founder of Christianity suffered under a Roman Governor, and His faithful Disciples were martyred under Roman Emperors. The first triumphs of the Gospel were silent and gradual, the result of persuasion and conviction, the effect of the Spirit's gracious influence in the hearts of men. In all this there is nothing corresponding to the crushing of the feet by the Stone. But the Second Advent is very different—a sudden and mighty shock, a wide area cleared, and a new, better, everlasting kingdom there set up. Apart from the actual enemies then found ranged against the Lord, this does not necessarily imply destruction of human life, but only an entire and fundamental change of rule.

Israel's Future.

In the very centre of this area, thus cleared of rule, are placed the people of Israel, according to the arrangements described in the closing chapters of Ezekiel; with great physical changes in their land, including a new watershed and a new water supply; with ample room for expansion on the right hand and on the left, from India to the Atlantic; with command of all the seas, and of the thoroughfares between West and East; with every facility for colonization; and with the function of repair-

ing the desolations that God's judgments on the sinful kingdoms will have wrought throughout this large and important section of the surface of the earth. (Isa. liv. 3.)

III

THE FOURTH KINGDOM AND THE LITTLE HORN

DANIEL VII.

IN the Vision of the Four Great Beasts, which was given to Daniel some fifty years after that of the Great Image, the same four kingdoms were presented under quite another aspect. To the king of Babylon they had appeared as metals making up a splendid idol: the prophet of God sees them degraded into the likeness of ferocious beasts of prey. The two Visions, taken together, exhibit the career of these Powers, as it appears to the worldly mind, and as it is discerned by the true servant of God (see the diagram in Paper II). The second Vision tells more than the first, but nothing different. There will be fuller detail, especially as to the fourth kingdom and the later periods of its history; but all that has been established in the first Vision stands, and must be kept in mind as we study the second. So also in all succeeding Visions: there will be no change of order, no cancelling, but only addition.

This second Vision was given to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar, and therefore while the first great empire, that of Babylon, was still in power. The two Visions are alike in several respects. In each, four great empires are described; and the starting point is the same, for each is given while Babylon is the ruling power.

The issue is the same, the establishment of the visible kingdom of Christ. In each there is the same gradation, the most precious metal taking the lead in one, and the most noble animal in the other. The four empires are in each Vision represented as occupying the whole time from the days of the prophet to the Second Advent of our Lord. There are no gaps anywhere.

While the first three empires are in this Vision rather rapidly passed over, the fourth is described at great length, and with much repetition; moreover, Daniel feels a peculiar longing to know the true meaning of this part of the Vision. The reason for all this is that the Vision is shown, not to the worldly monarch, as was that of the Great Image, but to the beloved servant of God; and the fourth empire, and particularly a Power that was to rise up within it, was to have a very close and influential connexion with the Church of God. The main outlines of its history would therefore possess the deepest interest for all true servants of Christ, especially in view of the great fact to which the angel at the outset called the attention of the prophet (ver. 18), "But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."

The Four Great Beasts rise out of the stormy sea, and the angel explains (ver. 17) that "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth." "King" is used in the official sense, denoting a dynasty or ruling power; not merely an individual monarch, but a succession of such individuals, few or many as the case may be. Each of the Great Beasts is said to be a "king"; but in verses 23, 24, it is said that "The fourth beast shall be a fourth *kingdom* upon earth"; and "Out of this *kingdom* shall ten *kings* arise." "Kingdom," in this connexion, means the body politic, inclusive or exclusive of its natural head, the ruling power. "King" and "Kingdom" are distinguished

as the head is from the body, yet "king" may often be used as equivalent to "kingdom." The context and connexion decide. The unity of the kingdom consists, not in the personal life of the ruler, but in the sameness of the state ruled, or in the continuance of the same regular succession of the ruling power. But at any one special date in the history of such a "king," of course we have to deal with the individual king who happens to be ruling at that date. Thus in the year 1900 the "King of England" was Victoria; in the year 1911 he was George V; and the "Papacy" was Pius X.

The Lion: Babylon.

The first of these Four Great Beasts, corresponding with the Head of Gold, and representing the Babylonian Power, "was like a lion, and had eagle's wings." In this Vision the empire that had been represented by the most precious metal was now represented by the king of beasts, furnished, moreover, with the wings of the king of Eastern birds.[1] The wings on the lion are a fit emblem of the lofty soaring of Nebuchadnezzar's ambitious spirit. As the prophet looks on it, the wings thereof are plucked, and it is made to stand upon two feet as a man, and a man's heart is given to it. In all this the action, movement, and succession represent the course of events in actual history. The wings began to be plucked, when that voice from heaven arrested Nebuchadnezzar in the midst of his pride, "O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from thee." This prostration of strength and majesty continued and increased under his successors, while the Medo-Persian conquests advanced. The Lion

[1] The "Eagle" here spoken of is really the Great Griffon Vulture, a most noble and majestic bird, never out of sight in any part of these Eastern lands.

was "made to stand upon two feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it," in that last festival, when the handwriting on the wall awoke the slumbering conscience of Belshazzar, and he acknowledged, but too late, the dominion of God.

The Bear: Medo-Persia.

The second Beast, corresponding with the Breast and Arms of silver, and representing the Medo-Persian Power, was like a Bear. It was inferior to the Lion, as the silver was to the gold; but at this stage of the Vision, dominion has passed away from the Lion, and has now been given to the Bear. Here also is movement and succession, denoting progress in history; the Bear lifted up itself, or was raised up, on one side, for of the two combined Powers, the Mede and the Persian, the latter became the greater, though inferior at first.

It had three ribs in its mouth, between its teeth; these are understood by some to represent the early conquests of Persia, in the three directions described in the next Vision (Dan. viii. 4); by others they are understood to signify the kingdoms of Sardes, Babylon and Egypt, which were conquered by Persia, but did not at first belong to its body. Others attach no importance to the number three here.

"They said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh"; which signifies not only a career of conquest over other peoples, but more especially the ravenous nature of this second empire, and the fiscal oppression it was to exercise on its subject nations. In Eastern phraseology, at this day, to "eat" means to "tax."

The Leopard: Greece.

The third Beast, corresponding with the Belly and Thighs of brass, and representing the Greek empire,

was like a Leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl. This was an emblem of the Greek Empire, under the dynasty of Alexander the Great. The swiftness with which he overran the East is represented by the agility of the Leopard, increased by the addition of the four wings.

"The beast had also four heads." These, being named before dominion is said to be given to the Leopard, are understood to denote the four successive headships of Greece previous to the Asiatic conquests of Alexander. In the analogous symbolization in Revelation xvii. 9–11, the seven heads are clearly successive, not contemporary, and so here. The invasion of Greece by Xerxes is marked in Daniel xi. 2 as the chief crisis of Persian decay, and the beginning of Grecian superiority. From that time four distinct headships prevailed in Greece: the Athenian, for 72 years, B.C. 477–405; The Lacedemonian, for 33 years, B.C. 404–371; the Theban, for 10 years, B.C. 371–362; and the Macedonian, from the accession of Philip, B.C. 359, and the commencement of the power of Macedon. These are represented by the four heads of the Leopard.

The Greek Language.

"Dominion was given to it." The decisive battle of Arbela, B.C. 331, gave Asia to Alexander, and a few days after he entered Babylon. The crisis of his career was now reached, and the ancient Persian Empire, which once threatened to subjugate all the nations of the East, was irreparably crushed. Why was this dominion given? Alexander carried with him the most perfect, flexible, and expressive of languages, and Greek became diffused throughout the regions he had conquered. In every region that he traversed he planted Greek settlements, and founded cities, in the populations of which the Greek element at once asserted its predominance.

Such was the ascendancy of Greek genius, so wonderfully comprehensive and assimilating was the cultivation it introduced, that within thirty years after Alexander crossed the Hellespont, the language, literature, and arts of Greece, travelling along new lines of communication, predominated in every country from Asia Minor to the Indian Ocean. Provincial dialects survived, but every one with the slightest pretence to education spoke Greek. It was the language of state, literature, science, the merchant, the traveller, the courtier, the Government official, the soldier. Throughout Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, the Hellenic character remained in full vigour down to the time of the Mohammedan conquests.

The infinite value to mankind of this working of Providence was seen when, in the fulness of time, God's dear Son came to this earth, and His Gospel, in Greek, was given to the world. The early growth and progress of Christianity were aided by that diffusion of Greek language and civilization, caused by the Macedonian conquest of the East.

Fourth Beast: Rome.

The fourth Beast, corresponding with the iron Legs and Feet, and representing the Roman Power in its successive phases, was terrible, and strong exceedingly. It had great iron teeth, and nails of brass; it devoured, trode down, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet. On its head were Ten Horns, most probably arranged like a coronet; and in the midst of them grew up an eleventh, a Little Horn, with human eyes and mouth, before whom three of the other Horns were plucked up by the roots, and fell. Then that Little Horn began a career of warfare with the saints of the Most High, in which for a long season it prevailed

against them. In all this part of the Vision there is abundant movement and succession.

The period of Rome's history, corresponding with the Legs of iron in the image, is thus described, "It devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet." Rome first conquered by degrees all the other peoples of Italy, then went on to conquer all the nations that adjoined the Mediterranean Sea. All these she governed, and to them all she gave her laws. Her wide-reaching and powerful organization, extending over the then civilized world, was in God's providence abundantly made use of for the spread of the Gospel. Her roads and communications, her law and order everywhere provided, were freely used by the messengers of Christ. More than once St. Paul was protected by his Roman citizenship. Rome is the great link in the history of the world; for all the nations of old time were conquered by her, and came under her power; and all the European nations down to our own day have been formed out of her overthrow, and have learnt or received much from her.

In this second Vision, the attention of the prophet and the interest of the prophecy are concentrated on this fourth Beast, that is, on the Roman Empire; and especially on the last of the three main periods of its history, which, in the Vision of the Image, had been represented by the separation of the toes. The history of this era, and the true application of the prophecy of the "Little Horn," were to be of the deepest interest and importance to the church of God, hence the mind of the holy prophet is drawn forth by the Holy Spirit into great earnestness of desire to "know the truth" as to this mysterious Power; and, in proportion to the rest, a large space is given to its description.

The Ten Horns.

On the head of this fourth Beast the prophet observed Ten Horns, and was told by the angel that these were ten kings that should arise out of that fourth kingdom. This Vision, being one of the earliest in the series, is concerned chiefly with broad features of history, with grand historical facts. Here "king" is used in its official or dynastic sense, as appears from comparing verse 17 with 23, 24. In the language of symbol, a Beast represents a *kingdom*, the body being its popular constituency, the head its governing department, and the horns being dynasties or successions of rulers that govern it. The number of these contemporary dynasties had been implied in the first Vision, but now it is definitely declared to be ten; the separation of the fourth kingdom was to be of a tenfold character throughout that period of its history. The frequent attempts at reunion would make that number vary from time to time, but its average is fixed at ten.

How came it that these separated kingdoms should still be regarded as a continuation of the fourth empire? What gave them this unity? What was their common bond of union, separated as they were from one another? This the Vision proceeds to show. Observe the movement, the order of succession, in all that is being described. The Holy Spirit, by fixing the prophet's attention on each feature in a certain order, teaches that this is the order of appearance in time, in the course of the history of that fourth empire.

The Little Horn.

While Daniel was considering the Horns, an eleventh Horn was seen to arise among them. The breaking up of the Roman empire was a necessary preliminary to the manifestation of this other Power, which grows on the

head of the fourth Beast—not of the first, second, or third—and in the midst of the other ten. Also it rises after the first rise of the rest, but among them, and therefore within their territory; it is not some foreign power from outside their limits. Its career is contemporary with that of the Ten Horns. It is little in comparison of these, as regards its temporal dominions; it grows up among them with a gradual growth; three of the first Horns are put down to make room for it; but its pretensions are vast, it has human eyes, a mouth speaking great things, a look more stout than its fellows, it makes successful war against the Saints, and it thinks to change the times and the law.

In modern no less than in ancient times, the eye is symbolic of the office of oversight, of the work and dignity of an overseer of others. In the Revolution of 1793, says Gaussen, the Swiss wished the chief governor of their Republic to wear on his breast a silver eye, to signify that his office involved a universal oversight over all the interests of the citizens. In the throne-room of the palace at Amsterdam there was represented on the back of the chair of State an eye, symbolical of the office of the occupant of that chair. The Lamb (Rev. v. 6), has seven horns—the symbol of all power, and seven eyes—the symbol of all knowledge and all supervision. By the eyes on this Little Horn it was signified that this king, little as regards his temporal power, would claim the office of overseer of the rest, and would be so regarded by them. Taking the title bishop in its original sense of overseer, the whole emblem —a horn with eyes—would most accurately represent a bishop-king. Besides the eyes, there was a mouth wherewith great words were spoken against the Most High; that is, blasphemies, in the way of claiming to exercise Divine prerogatives and powers, and of arrogating Divine titles, and though only a man, yet making

himself God. The duration of this Horn was to be long, for it makes war against the Saints and wears them out, and they are given into his hand. This denotes long-continued and persevering oppression.

It is nowhere said that as soon as this Power appeared it should be known and recognized by all God's people; nor that from the very beginning of its career it should practise such violence and persecution as must necessarily and at once force its identification upon the Saints. On the contrary, the long and elaborate description implies that certainly at first there would be great difficulty of recognition.

The European Kingdoms.

The fulfilment of these predictions, as to the rise of the Ten Horns and the growth among them of the Little Horn, stands out clear in the history of Europe.

The Western empire of Rome extended over the territory that was peculiar to Rome as distinct from that which had belonged to Greece, but was devoured by Rome, and from that which afterwards formed the Constantinopolitan or Greek division of the empire. The proper "Latin" empire continued to exist in the divided Western empire of the Ten Horns; and the proper Grecian empire, though absorbed for a season, continued to exist in the Christian Constantinopolitan empire. The boundaries of the Western empire of Rome are these:—

The Wall of Antoninus that separated England from Scotland; the Rhine, from its old mouth north of Leyden to a point half-way between Strasburg and Basle; down the Danube to Belgrade; south to Dyrrachium and across the sea to the Syrtis Major and the great African desert. All east of this line belonged to the Greek division of the empire; all west to the Western or Roman. To this Western division became

appropriated the title of "Latin," the kingdoms forming or formed in Western Europe being called the Latin kingdoms.

It is remarkable how, amidst frequent fluctuations, a tenfold division has remained prominent upon this Western area. The Vision of the Image foretold partial and temporary unions between some of these Powers, followed by renewed separations; these would cause temporary variations in the total number, but within narrow limits, and the number ten would constantly reappear as the medium of these oscillations. Not the same ten would continue all through, but some would disappear and others would grow up. So the Twelve Tribes of Israel are differently reckoned up in different scriptures, and the Apostles are the Twelve, though Judas drops out and Matthias is elected in his room. The Powers of mediæval and modern Europe have throughout their history formed a family of about ten kingdoms, existing side by side; and the variety of lists, drawn up by different interpreters with reference to different epochs, is a remarkable testimony to the accuracy of this prophecy.[1]

The Papacy.

But if the Ten Horns be the kingdoms of mediæval and modern Europe, there can be no question as to what is the Little Horn that grows up amongst them, and claims and exercises a supremacy over them all. The rise, growth, dominion, and decline of the Papal power are by far the most notorious and the most important facts in the history of those regions and those

[1] In the year 1911 there were within this area the following, some of them having wide dominions outside as well:—1, England; 2, Holland; 3, Belgium; 4, France; 5, Spain; 6, Portugal; 7, Germany; 8, Switzerland; 9, Austria; 10, Italy.

centuries. By the confession of all the best historians, the career of the Papacy is the track about which, for twelve or more centuries, the history of the European kingdoms has to be arranged.

It was not till the unity of the Roman Empire had for some time been destroyed that the Papacy could begin to show itself as a horn, that is, as a temporal power. So long as the Western Imperial Power survived at Rome, it formed an effectual hindrance or restraint to the growth of the ambition of the Roman bishop. However lofty his position as the bishop of the imperial capital, he had no chance of becoming a monarch there while there also the Cæsars ruled. The removal from Rome of the seat of the Government,—not its absolute extinction,—as well as the breaking up of the empire from its primary form, were necessary preliminaries to the manifestation and growth of the Little Horn.

The hindrance spoken of by St. Paul in 2 Thessalonians ii. 6. 7. as "That which restraineth," and "one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way," was understood by the early Christians to be the imperial power then ruling at Rome. Their belief seems to have St. Paul's approval when he says, "And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season." This hindrance or restraint was not to be utterly ended or destroyed, but only "taken out the way." Accordingly, when the Western Empire of Rome fell before the inroads of the barbarians, and separate powers began to rise in its stead and on its area, room was made for the growing pretensions of the Bishop of Rome.

In A.D. 476, Odoacer, chosen by the barbarian auxiliaries to be their chieftain, deprived the reigning Western Emperor, Romulus Augustulus, of his sovereignty. The Eastern Emperor, Zeno, at Constantinople, was entreated to confer on Odoacer the title of patrician

and the administration of the Italian provinces. He granted what he could not refuse, and Odoacer, taking the title of king, ruled as first barbarian "King of Italy," yet as nominal vicar of the Eastern Emperor. There was thus legally no extinction of the Western Empire, but only a re-union of West and East. Constantinople, instead of Rome, was the centre of the Civil Government. The hindrance at Rome had thus been not extinguished, but only moved aside,—"Taken out of the way." Then the bishops of Rome began to develop into temporal sovereigns, and to lay the foundations of the more than regal and imperial power which they so long wielded at Rome. The abandonment of Rome by the emperors was the liberation of the pontiffs, and their opportunity for becoming civil rulers.

Three Horns Rooted Up.

As it was necessary to the primary development of the Little Horn that the Roman imperial power in the West should be taken out of the way, so it was no less necessary to its fuller development that such of the Horns as had established themselves in the neighbourhood of Rome, and were able to overawe the Little Horn or to hinder its growth, should also be got rid of. Not till these neighbouring powers had, by one means or another, been overthrown and rooted out, could the Little Horn be firmly established, and its distinctive features and pretensions be fully displayed. This overthrow forms a transition period from the early partial to the late full development; and fills up the interval between the lost unity of the empire, and the fresh unity the West regains under the dominion of the Little Horn. Accordingly, the removal of the Vandals, Ostrogoths and Lombards is one of the most prominent topics in the next pages of the history of Western Christendom. The manner in which these several powers overawed the

Roman bishops is matter of notoriety; it was evident that their removal was essential to the full expansion of the Papal power.

The Vandals of North Africa were rulers of Sardinia, within the Roman bishop's own diocese. In A.D. 455 Genseric the Vandal had taken Rome, and for fourteen days, in a calm and business-like manner, had emptied it of all its moveable wealth. In A.D. 533 the Horn of the Vandals in Africa, Corsica and Sardinia was rooted up by Belisarius, commander of the Greek Emperor Justinian's forces, and after A.D. 536 the Vandals disappear from history, only leaving a trace of their name in Andalusia.

The Ostrogoths were successors of Odoacer in the kingdom of Italy, and soon after the overthrow of the Vandals their dominion also was annihilated by the same general Belisarius, the nation appearing no more in history. From their territory was formed the Greek Exarchate, ruled from Ravenna.

Not long afterwards the Lombards subdued the northern part of Italy that bears their name, and extending themselves southward, divided the empire of Italy with the Greek Exarchate. At length their power altogether preponderated; in A.D. 752 they conquered the Exarchate, and acted like its predecessors in Italy, in overawing the Roman See. Thereupon the help of the Franks was invoked by the two popes, Stephen II and Adrian I, and the Lombard Horn was rooted up by the instrumentality of the Frank kings, Pepin and Charlemagne. The Exarchate of Ravenna, and other of the Lombard conquests, were attached to the Roman See as "Peter's Patrimony." Pepin's donation was made A.D. 755, and was confirmed and enlarged by Charlemagne, A.D. 774. Thus did the Bishop of Rome fully become a temporal Sovereign, a Bishop-king, a Little Horn with human eyes.

As a temporal power the Papacy has lasted many

centuries amidst the other Powers of Western Europe, though its territory has never been large. How it has worn out the Saints of Christ by sword, stake, Inquisition, exciting crusades against so-called heretics, and by warfare and persecution of all kinds, is writ large in letters of blood on the page of history. The Papacy has freely taken and applied to itself the promises and prophecies of Christ's future glory and kingdom, and the Pope himself claims to be the "Vicar of Christ" upon Earth. The term "Antichrist" means a Christ instead of the true one, and hence, also, a Christ against the true one; but in either case himself a Christ, and therefore in profession not an infidel or atheist, whatever he may be in reality.

Even after the time of the uprooting must be supposed to be past, renewed mention is made of the same number ten, in reference to the Horns or Kingdoms. From this it would appear that the uprooted Horns are replaced by others and the number made up. This may be the meaning of the word "first" in verse 8; as though the Horns germinated in succession, and three of the first were uprooted by the Little Horn, then were replaced by others that followed.

Ten remains the characteristic number of the kingdoms all through the 1,260 years. Not that the same ten continue throughout, but that notwithstanding frequent changes—disappearance of some, uprising of others, coalitions of two or more—the average number of ten Western kingdoms constantly recurs down the centuries. This will be manifest if lists are made out at intervals of say fifty years, giving the actual kingdoms within the area marked out in the prophecy.

At such a great crisis as the establishment of the Little Horn, considerable disturbance might naturally be expected, but the average number ten would ere long assert itself again.

Judgments on the Papal Power.

In both Visions the four great Empires are followed by another, the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Its establishment on earth is preceded by acts of judgment on the Power whose history has been given with so much detail in this second Vision. These preliminary acts of judgment, however, are described not in the Vision that was shown to the worldly monarch Nebuchadnezzar, but in the parallel vision given to the prophet of God; it being thereby implied that a spiritual discernment would be needed to recognize in these events, as they took place under the eyes of the world, the act of God, and the fulfilment of long-delayed judgment.

Thrones are placed, not visibly on earth, but beyond the reach of human sense. The commission of wasting and decay is given against the Little Horn, and a season of signal judgment begins, wherein the Lord, as the invisible Ruler, wastes and consumes His adversaries, preparing the way for His own open manifestation, in which they will be utterly and for ever overthrown. The reason for these tremendous judgments is, "because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake." More than one stage of destruction seems to be marked out; there is first a gradual deprivation of temporal dominion, the great words still continuing to be uttered; and the dominion is never recovered, though there is no extinction of existence. Then follows utter ruin and destruction. The Horn lasts quite to the end, deprived of temporal power indeed, but with the same vast pretensions, and speaking the same blasphemous words. There is an air of deliberation, of gradual but relentless progress, about the overthrow and extinction of a dominion that has endured for so many centuries, and has done so much evil throughout its long career.

The beginning of these judgments on the Papal Power may be reckoned from the era of the great French

Revolution of 1789; since which date, down to the present time, what is foretold in this vision has been in course of accomplishment.

In 1789 the National Assembly began the work of spoliation in France, abolishing tithes, appropriating ecclesiastical lands, suppressing monastic establishments, and reducing the Roman Catholic Clergy to the condition of state pensioners, under stringent regulations. In 1798 the French Army entered Rome; the tricolor was hoisted on the Capitol; the Pope's temporal reign declared at an end, and the Roman Republic proclaimed. The Pope was arrested in the Sistine Chapel, and taken captive into France, where he died in exile the next year. In 1809 Napoleon I issued the famous decrees of Schönbrunn and Vienna, by which the Papal States were confiscated, and the Pope reduced to the position of a simple bishop of Rome.

The overthrow of Napoleon allowed of partial repair of the ruins of the Papal throne; but notwithstanding some temporary recoveries, the foretold judgments on the Papacy have been steadily progressing since the above-named era, and in relation to the European Powers the Pope now occupies quite a different position from that he held of old.

Fall of the Temporal Power.

In 1866 was fought the decisive battle of Sadowa or Königgratz, between Prussia and Austria, which settled the question of ascendancy in central Europe in favour of Protestant Prussia. Still the Pope, by French support, maintained his independent rule in Rome and in what remained of "Peter's Patrimony." Events rapidly developed; within four years the Franco-German War had brought the second French Empire to an end, and with it finally fell the Temporal Power of the Pope. Ten days after the French Emperor's capitulation at

Sedan in 1870, Italian troops crossed the frontier of the Papal States, and shortly afterwards Rome was annexed to the Italian kingdom, and became the capital city of Italy.

Greater than ever were the words the Horn spake at this time, for it was in that same year that the Pope held an Æcumenical Council at Rome to decree the dogma of Papal Infallibility. But the Temporal Power is gone for ever, and its loss is shown in the Vision to be but the prelude to a much more awful blow. The spiritual power and pretensions remain, and will remain quite to the end; but the secular power is a thing of the past. Within the same year, 1870, the Papacy assumed the highest exaltation to which it could aspire, but lost the temporal sovereignty which it had held for more than twelve centuries.

There is no institution in the world, to all appearance, less in danger of destruction than the Papal See. Had it been allowed to retain the Temporal Power, no one can say to what dangers it might not in these days have been exposed. But its reduction to a spiritual organization, although the Pope still ranks as a Sovereign, has strengthened it immensely, and it is not in days like these, when men are craving for spiritual light and moral help, anywhere and from every quarter, that the Roman church is in danger of extinction. That is why it is of so much importance to Princes, to statesmen and to nations that the occupant of the Papal Chair should be a man possessed of the same wise judgment, exhibiting the same dignity, and endowed with the same graces, as Leo XIII. (*Standard*, July 21, 1903; on the death of the Pope.)

Thus the whole of this Vision, except quite the close, is now actually fulfilled in history. The great words of the Little Horn are the cause of judgment on the Fourth Empire. The fourth Beast,—for there are only four, and this is the same fourth Beast, though its kingdom has been divided,—is to be slain, and its body destroyed, and given to be burned with fire. The

Little Horn drags down with it into destruction the body of the Beast that bears it,—a clear intimation of the close alliance of some or many of the Latin kingdoms with that Power at that time, and of the terrible fate they thereby ensure for themselves.

The Vision furnishes a powerful safeguard against all the methods and arguments and claims of the Papacy. Whatever they may be, whether easy or difficult to be met, here is an inspired view of the whole career of that Power, and a plain and solemn warning to all who will heed it, as to whither their sympathies ought not to go.

Nor is the Vision less useful as a caution against adopting the teachings, or imitating the practices, of a system that is of such evil repute in the prophetic word of God.

IV

THE PERSIAN, THE GREEK, AND THE TURK

DANIEL VIII.

THIS Vision deals with the second and third of the four great empires foreshown in the two previous Visions. It corresponds, therefore, with the silver and the brass portions of the Great Image ; the Ram ranging with the Breast and Arms of silver, and the He-goat ranging with the Belly and Thighs of brass. With regard to the Vision of the four Great Beasts, the Ram corresponds with the Bear, and the He-goat with the Leopard (see the diagram in Paper II.). The Little Horn that grows from the He-goat is parallel with the Toes of the Image and with the Ten Horns of the Fourth Beast, in the later periods of their history. The action in the Vision takes place for the most part within the territory of the third empire.

The two former Visions are given in Aramaic, the language of the chief Gentile Power then in existence ; but the Hebrew is resumed with this Vision, and is continued to the end of the book. From this change it is natural to conclude that in the first two Visions the Holy Spirit reveals the course of Gentile dominion, whereas the succeeding Visions are more concerned with the fortunes of the Jewish people.

Daniel was shown this Vision in the third year of Bel-

shazzar, that is, about two years after the Vision of the Four Great Beasts; and its scene, in vision, was at Shushan, the abode of the Persian monarchs. The power of Babylon was rapidly declining, while that of Persia was just as rapidly rising. Hence, the first empire, which had already been spoken of in two Visions, is passed over in silence; and the Vision opens with the victorious career of Cyrus, which raised Persia to the supreme dominion.

The Persian Ram.

"There stood before the river a ram which had two horns." The Ram is the emblem of Persia, and its body represents the aggregate of tribes, Median and Persian, that throughout its existence were united under its sway. It had two horns of unequal height, the higher having come up last. These represent the two ruling dynasties, the Median and the Persian; the successive rise of the two horns corresponding with the successive sway of the two dynasties. The Median was at first the stronger, but yielded to the ascendancy of the Persian, under the aspiring genius of Cyrus, and became the inferior, though both shared in the sovereign power. (Compare Dan. v. 28, vi. 8, 12, 15, with Esther i. 3, 14, 18, 19.) After the horns had once arisen, they became a permanent historical symbol; for the angel explains that the Ram itself, and not the two horns only, represents the Medo-Persian Power.

"I saw the ram pushing." The first action revealed in the Vision is the growing supremacy of the Medes and Persians, though Babylon still held sway at the date at which the Vision was given. The conquests foreshown are those by which the Persian Power became great. It bordered on the river Ulai when its career of conquest began, and for fifty or sixty years, that is, from the sole rule of Cyrus, B.C. 536, to the Greek expedition of Xerxes,

B.C. 480, its course was one of continually advancing supremacy over other Powers. The directions of the Ram's butting, at the opening of the Vision, are the general directions of Persian aggrandisement during that period; westward, overthrowing Crœsus and the Lydian empire; northward, subduing Upper Asia; southward, taking Babylon, and, in the time of Cyrus' successor Cambyses, conquering Egypt. No beast could stand before the Ram, nor deliver out of his hand: "but he did according to his will, and magnified himself."

The battle of Marathon, fought B.C. 490, between the Persians and the Greeks, was the first critical epoch in the conflict of those two nations. The Persians were defeated, and the spell of their invincibility for ever broken. Hitherto they had inspired the Greeks and other nations with terror, but by this defeat, the first that Persians had ever received from Greeks, it was proved that they might be repelled, and the independence of Greece maintained against them. A great and salutary change was wrought in Grecian feeling, and the spirit was generated which beat back Xerxes and afterwards led on Xenophon, Agesilaus, and Alexander, in terrible retaliation through their Asiatic campaigns.

Darius, filled with wrath, began vigorous preparations for a renewed attack, but died in B.C. 485. His son and successor Xerxes, the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther, carried on his plans, and in B.C. 480 invaded Greece with an immense levy. But he was unsuccessful; the Greeks gained a great naval victory at Salamis, and Xerxes returned to Asia, leaving a chosen army under Mardonius, which was destroyed by the Greeks at Platœa, B.C. 479. In this and the following years the Persians lost all their conquests in Europe, and many on the coasts of Asia.

The Macedonian Goat.

While Daniel was considering the triumphant career of the Ram, there came from the west a rough He-Goat, who had a great horn between his eyes. This He-Goat, the angel informed Daniel, was the King of Greece, the goat being the emblem of the Macedonian power; and the notable Horn was the first king, or as history has shown, the dynasty of Alexander the Great, —that is, Philip of Macedon, Alexander's father; Alexander the Great, son of Philip; Alexander's brother, Philip Aridœus; and Alexander's posthumous son, Alexander Ægus.

It is to be noticed that the term "king" is here used in the dynastic and not in the personal sense; the Goat being the "king" of Greece, and the great Horn being the first "king." Also it is worthy of remark that in verse 5 the Goat is said to come from the west over the face "of the whole earth"; this use of so comprehensive an expression, to describe certain well-known historical and geographical facts, showing the importance of explaining such expressions according to their context, and the era to which they refer, and not necessarily according to the sense we attach to them now.

The Goat came close to the Ram, ran upon him in the fury of his power, smote him, and brake his two horns. Under Alexander the Great, the Macedonian Goat rushed with irresistible swiftness and fury on the Persian Ram, and smote him in the victories of Granicus, B.C. 334; Issus, B.C. 333; and Arbela, B.C. 331; magnifying himself exceedingly by adding the Ram's dominions to his own, and uniting them into one mighty empire. Now began perhaps the most remarkable part of Alexander's career. The pursuit of Darius, and then of Bessus, drew him on to the north-east corner of the Persian Empire. Thence he proceeded through Afghanistan into India, which he entered on the side whence alone

India is accessible by land, namely, by the North-West. He had designs for the subjugation of the whole continent of Asia, but the refusal of his soldiers to proceed stopped him at the Sutlej, and forced him to bend his steps homeward.

From his crossing the Hellespont, B.C. 334, to his death at Babylon in B.C. 323, his life was spent in Asia, amidst unceasing military operations, and ever-multiplied conquests. In all the qualities of the soldier and of the general he towered far above the level of his contemporaries. His strategic combinations, his employment of different arms to one end, his long-sighted plans of campaign, his constant foresight and resource, his rapidity of movement even in the worst countries,—all were on a scale of prodigious magnitude according to the ideas of those times, and have no parallel in ancient history. He carried systematic and scientific warfare to a degree of efficiency that even successors trained in his school were unable to keep up.

The results of Alexander's conquests, effected in ten or eleven years, continued for as many centuries, and in some respects remain even to the present day. He revolutionized the East, broke down the barriers separating Asia from Europe, and above all, spread the Greek language throughout his vast bominions. In that language, the richest and the most delicate that the world has ever heard, the New Testament was given to mankind; and the Greek tongue has become pre-eminently the language of theology.

The Common Greek of the New Testament rose out of the classical language. The impulse which produced it lay, beyond question, in the work of Alexander the Great. The unification of Hellas was a necessary first step in the accomplishment of his dream of Hellenizing the world, which he had marked out for conquest. To achieve unity of speech throughout the little country which his father's diplomatic and military triumphs had virtually conquered for him was a task too serious for Alexander

himself to face. But unconsciously he effected this, as a by-product of his colossal achievement; the next generation found that not only had a common language emerged from the chaos of Hellenic dialects, but a new and nearly homogeneous world speech had been created, in which Persian and Egyptian might do business together, and Roman proconsuls issue their commands to the subjects of a mightier empire than Alexander's own.

His army was in itself a powerful agent in the levelling process which ultimately destroyed nearly all the Greek dialects. The Anabasis of the Ten Thousand Greeks, seventy years before, had doubtless produced results of the same kind on a smaller scale. The Lacedemonian, the Thessalian, the Arcadian, the Bœotian, and the rest, would find it difficult to preserve their native brogue very long free from the solvent influences of perpetual association during their march. The assimilating process would go much further in the camp of Alexander, where during prolonged campaigns, men from all parts of Greece were tent-fellows and messmates, with no choice but to accommodate their mode of speech in its more individual characteristics to the average Greek which was gradually being evolved among their comrades.

In this process naturally those features which were peculiar to a single dialect would have the smallest chance of surviving, and those which most successfully combined the characteristics of many dialects would be surest of a place in the resultant "common speech." The army by itself only furnished a nucleus for the new growth. As Hellenism swept victoriously into Asia, and established itself on all the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean, the mixture of nationalities in the new-rising communities demanded a common language as the medium of intercourse, and the Greek of the victorious armies of Alexander was ready for the purpose. (See J. H. Moulton, *Grammar of N. T. Greek*, vol. I. p. 31.)

Four Horns Come Instead.

"When he was strong, the great horn was broken." The breaking of the Horn is not merely the death of Alexander himself, but is the ending of his dynasty. Alexander died at Babylon, B.C. 323, in the plenitude of his power, and his death was followed by the speedy breaking up of his empire. Philip Aridœus, his half-brother, was proclaimed king, and in conjunction with

him, a posthumous son of Alexander's by Roxana, afterwards called Alexander Ægus. During the lifetime of Philip and Ægus, Alexander's generals forbore to assume royal titles, professing themselves simply governors under Alexander's brother and son. But in B.C. 317 Philip was murdered, and in B.C. 310 or 309 Ægus also and his mother Roxana; whereupon the generals all put crowns upon themselves.

"Instead of it there came up four notable horns towards the four winds of heaven." This fourfold division was not to be looked for while the Empire was still administered in the name of Alexander's posterity; for they were still the Horn, and the fourfold division was to take effect only after the Horn had been broken, that is, after the family of Alexander was extinct. Only one formal partition of Alexander's empire was made, after his family had ceased to rule, on the great platform of the joint territory of the Ram and of the He-Goat; that was the division of the four Macedonian kingdoms, after the battle of Ipsus, B.C. 301. By this apportionment, Greece was secured to Cassander; the greater part of Asia Minor to Lysimachus; Seleucus had Syria to the Euphrates, and fixed his capital at Seleucia where Bagdad now stands, on the Tigris; and Ptolemy held Egypt.

But these four kingdoms had not Alexander's power. Two of them were soon absorbed into one, and the rest by degrees fell into decay, till all alike sank at last under the iron dominion of Rome. Their position, aspirations and interests were materially different from those of Alexander. They had neither appetite nor means for new and remote conquests; their great rivalry was with one another, each seeking to strengthen himself near home against the rest. It became with them a matter of fashion and pride, not less than of interest, to found new cities, immortalizing their family names.

The period thus graphically portrayed in symbol, giving the history of Persia and Greece from the days of Cyrus to the death of Alexander the Great, is one of the most celebrated in antiquity. Within its range are found the conquests of Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius, Alexander the Great; the wars of Greece, the expedition of Xerxes, the battles of Marathon, Thermopylæ, and Salamis; the names of Miltiades, Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, Pericles; the struggles of Athens and Sparta, and Sparta and Thebes; the eloquence of Demosthenes, and the victories of Alexander. Arts and arms, taste and genius, conspire to make this era memorable in the estimation of man. But in the light of this and of the parallel Visions, all that so-called secular history is sanctified; it becomes the exposition and illustration of inspired prophecy, and a new and holy interest is given to the doings of all these great personages of antiquity.

When Daniel was called in by Belshazzar to read and interpret the writing on the wall, he had already been prepared by three Visions for the change that was now imminent; by the Vision of the Great Image, many years back, when he was but a youth, then by those of the Four Beasts and of the Ram and the He-Goat, two years apart, but comparatively recent. The actual presence of the great events may have startled him, as does the flash that we are expecting, and that we know must break from the thunder-cloud we are watching. Yet he knew in broad outline what was coming, and was quite prepared to recognize the true significance of the events when they came to pass, and to give them their right interpretation. He knew that the gold must give way to the silver, and the Lion to the Bear, and that the supremacy of Babylon must pass to the Two-Horned Ram. Moreover the very names had been given him, for he had been told that this Ram was "the kings of

Media and Persia." He was therefore expecting to see the transfer of dominion from the dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar to that of the Medes and Persians, and was on the watch for great events; which were accomplished when Belshazzar's kingdom was numbered, brought to an end, divided and given to the Medes and Persians. All this serves to illustrate and to enforce the great usefulness of an intelligent study of these prophecies, not only to observe their accomplishment in the past, but also to obtain from them guidance for the future.

The Little Horn that Waxed Great.

A great part of this Vision is taken up with the history of a Little Horn, that came forth out of one of the four kingdoms into which the empire of Alexander had been divided. This Horn was to rise "in the latter time of their kingdom," that is of the kingdom of these Greek dynasties; and it is to be noticed that the singular "kingdom" is used, and not "kingdoms" in the plural, as might have been expected, they having been four in number. This looks as if some Greek people of the latter day were marked out to be desolated, and as if at that epoch a single kingdom or empire would be the representative of the four earlier Macedonian dynasties.

We must carefully distinguish between the Little Horn of the Fourth Beast in Daniel vii. 8, and this Little Horn, which grows out of the Third Beast. The Little Horn of Daniel vii. 8 grows out of the Fourth Empire after its breaking up, that is, it grows up amongst the kingdoms of Western Rome; whereas this Little Horn of Daniel viii. 9 belongs absolutely to the Greek Empire, or Third Beast, growing out of one of the four divisions of Alexander's dominions. Moreover, it "waxes exceeding great" in the course of its history; whereas the other, of Daniel vii., never is more than a "little

horn," though with vast claims, pretensions, and influence. The time of its rise, also, is later than that of the Little Horn of Daniel vii.

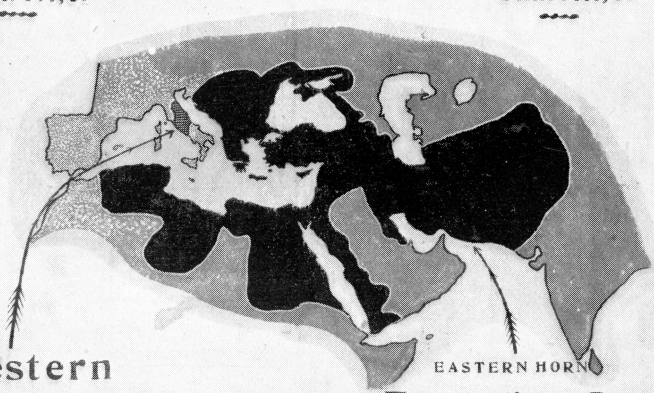
This Little Horn of Daniel viii., with which we have now to do, was to originate not out of the Fourth or Roman Beast at all, but out of one of the four Macedonian-Greek kingdoms; either out of one of the Greek ruling dynasties, or out of one of their territorial domains, for territorial identity as well as dynastic continuity will satisfy the emblem. This "king," of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, was to be little at first, but was to rise with great rapidity into empire, mighty even on the scale of that of Alexander, as appears from comparing verse 9 with verse 8. He was to "wax exceeding great" towards the south, the east, and "the glorious land." This last phrase may refer to Jerusalem, where of old God's glory rested,—"Whose is the glory" (Rom. ix. 4),—or it may point to the country which, at the time of the rising of this Little Horn, had the light of God's revelation committed to it, and was professedly and outwardly the country of God's covenanted people. If by the "sanctuary" is meant the Christian Church of that date, then "the glory" should be explained of a Christian country, and "the holy people" of the professed Christian people. These would be "holy" in contrast with those who followed Mohammed instead of Christ, and the Koran instead of the Bible.

The "king" was to "destroy wonderfully"; and the reason for "the mighty ones and the holy people" being thus abandoned to destruction was, that their religious state at the time of the Horn's rising was one of matured transgression and apostasy. These "mighty ones" of the latter day Greek empire would by profession be "holy ones"; but in reality "transgressors come to the full"; and therefore they would be objects of

THE TWO HORNS

DAN. VII, 8.

DAN. VIII, 9.



Western
Little Horn

on FOURTH or
ROMAN BEAST.

THE PAPACY

EASTERN HORN

Exceeding Great

on THIRD or
GRECIAN BEAST.

THE TURK

God's punishment by means of this Little Horn, who destroys them "in their security."

The Turkish Power.

If we inquire for a Power answering to this description of the Little Horn, that desolated the Greek Empire in the latter times of its history, it is impossible but that the thought of the Saracens and the Turks should flash into the mind. Both were little at first, but rose suddenly into mighty empire; both were propagators of a false religion; and both were tremendous desolators of apostatizing Greek Christendom. But the Saracen Power, though rising near the border of Ptolemy's Egyptian kingdom, and soon settled within its limits, was yet distinctly Arabian in its first origin, springing from Mecca and Medina in Arabia, and not out of the territory of one of the four divisions of Alexander's Empire. Moreover, the Saracens cannot be said in the full sense to have destroyed the mighty and holy Greek People; they destroyed their armies, and mutilated and diminished their Empire, but did not politically destroy it, and bring it to a complete end. Their commission was to torment, but not to kill in the sense of political annihilation.

The Turkish Power, however, in its Seljukian and Othmanic dynasties, fulfils all the conditions of the Vision, and answers in every respect, throughout the whole of its career, to the Little Horn here described. It originated in Chorassan, the ancient Parthia, south of the Oxus, and thus out of the territory of the Seleucian Horn, one of the four into which Alexander's Empire was divided. In A.D. 1038 the Turkmans under Togrul Beg appeared as a Horn, only a little one as yet, before the Asiatic world; Togrul Beg's first conquests being over the eastern provinces of Persia towards the Indus. In A.D. 1055 the Mohammedan Caliph of Bagdad called

him to his aid; the Turkman descended southwards, and Central Asia was added to his dominion. Then came a crisis in his history that opened the way to far higher greatness; he was made by the Caliph chief general of Islam, and being bound up by this office, and by his marrying the Caliph's daughter, with the religion of Mohammed, he became its armed apostle and propagator, specially against Greek Christendom.

From Bagdad on the Tigris, as his new religious capital, he set forth on a long career of conquest. The site of Bagdad was the spot on which, many centuries before, Seleucia had been founded, the Eastern capital of the greatest of the four successors of Alexander; and now, after all that lapse of time, it was chosen as the Turkman's capital city. Thus, as regards both province and capital, it was out of the chief of the Four Horns that the Little Horn of the Turk sprang, in its Seljukian dynasty, in the latter time of the Greek Empire.

"In their security shall he destroy many." How this Horn cast down and destroyed the secular and the religious powers is abundantly witnessed by history. His fierceness of countenance as he conquered has passed into a proverb, "Fierce as a Turk"; but this must not be limited to physiognomy, it describes especially his ferocity of character and of manner of warfare. He was the propagator of the false religion of the Koran. The result of his success was to be destructive against the rulers, at that time, of God's professed people, as well as against religion; for the host and stars of the symbolic heaven, which he casts to the ground and tramples upon, are explained as at once "the mighty ones and the holy people," and the prince of the "host" is also called the prince of the "sanctuary." He "cast down truth to the ground," and "caused craft to prosper," taking away "the continual"; which has been explained as meaning not only the continual burnt offering, but

also everything permanent in the worship of God, such as sacrifices, prayers and preachings, the "standing service" or stated mode of the worship of the true God.

His success was to be such that he should wax exceeding great "toward the South, and toward the East, and toward the glorious land." Both Judæa, the ancient glorious and holy land, and Asiatic Christendom, the land of God's then professing people, were soon embraced in his conquests. From the Euphrates to Constantinople mosques were built, and the Koran and Moslem institutions established. Under Malek Shah, "commander of the faithful," the third of the Turkish Sultans, the Turkish dominions extended from the Chinese frontier, west and south, as far as the mountains of Georgia, the neighbourhood of Constantinople, the holy city of Jerusalem, and the groves of Arabia Felix. This subject territory surpassed in extent the Asiatic dominions of the Persian Cyrus and of the Saracen Caliphs.

At Constantinople the Emperor Alexius trembled behind the walls of his capital, and "his plaintive epistles were dispersed over Europe to excite the compassion of the Latins, and to paint the danger, the weakness, and the riches of the city of Constantine"; for unless some great and effectual intervention were made, the Turks would extinguish his empire. Such an intervention did occur in the Crusades, which continued for two centuries, from A.D. 1095 to A.D. 1291, and which delayed, but did not avert, the destruction. All through this period the Turkish Sultany of Roum, or Asia Minor, preserved its vitality; "Roum," i.e. the country of the Romans. Then came the Mongols, who subverted the Seljukian dynasties of Persia, Syria, and Iconium. The Turks of the latter kingdom betook themselves to the mountainous country, where they formed several petty principalities.

The chief of one of these, Othman, at the end of the thirteenth century, penetrated into the province of Bithynia, from which his posterity were never withdrawn. Under these Othmanic or Ottoman princes, the ancient kingdom of the Seljukians revived, as the Ottoman Empire, and the work of destruction was resumed and continued. From the Danube to the Adriatic the European provinces of the Greek Empire were one after another rent from it, until its vitality was almost confined to Constantinople itself; which, for the first time for more than a thousand years from its foundation, was surrounded on its Asiatic and European sides by the same hostile power. At last in the year A.D. 1453, the city was taken, and passed into the hands of the Ottoman Turks, with whom it has remained ever since, down to the present day.

This part of the Vision conveys a solemn warning. The Turkish Power was allowed to rise and grow, from small beginnings, until it actually destroyed the Greek Empire, and established itself in the capital city, Constantinople. The Greeks were professedly God's Church, and nominally Christians; but they had given themselves up to Saint worship, Virgin worship, gross superstition of all kinds, and the sins which always sooner or later accompany corrupt religion (Rev. ix. 20, 21). First, God permitted the Saracens to rise, and to torment them, though not politically to destroy them. Then, when there was no repentance or amendment, the Turks were allowed to prevail, and after a long struggle, actually to overthrow the Greek Empire, and to possess themselves of its capital, and to rule in its stead, and that for more than four hundred years. Every step, then, in the direction of those sins is a most fatal error; sure to bring down, sooner or later, the just judgment of God.

TURKEY DRYING UP.

Turkish Decay.

The end of the Little Horn was to be that " he should be broken without hand " ; that is, that his end should be brought about, at length, without any apparently adequate earthly power or agency. Both in this Vision and in Revelation, this foe is represented as coming to an end, not as destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming, nor as suddenly swallowed up like Babylon the Great, but as perishing slowly and surely by inherent decay.

Accordingly, such has been and is now the characteristic fate of the Ottoman Empire, within the last hundred years. His end is being brought about by exhaustion, drying up, internal decay, rather than by outward foes. These judgments began visibly in 1820, and are now in full progress before our eyes. The Turk is " the sick man " of modern politics, though Europe would fain arrest his decay if she could. Under the Sixth Vial (Rev. xvi. 12) this decay is described in symbol as the drying up of the great river Euphrates. Waters represent peoples, and the symbolic Euphrates is spoken of as " great " because of the multitude of peoples and nations that are therein. Like Assyria (Isa. viii. 7, 8), it had overflowed from its Euphratean banks over Grecian Christendom ; but now, its symbolic waterflood was to be dried up, that is, its area and population were to diminish.

We may imagine the literal Euphrates a river of ink, having widely overflowed its banks, and having flooded and blackened on the map the whole area of Turkish dominion in its widest extent ; then the black waters beginning to dry up, and highlands and islands gradually emerging, and rising above the level of the subsiding flood. This is represented in the accompanying diagram, where the original area of the Turkish dominions is seen partly black, and partly of a lighter shade. The

lighter shade shows what has been practically lost to Turkey, and the dates of the principal changes are placed near the regions they concern. It must be remembered, moreover, that the grasp of the Turkish government over even the blackest parts is nothing like so firm and powerful as it was of old.

In the beginning of the year 1820, the Ottoman Empire found itself freed from foreign war and domestic rebellion; but before the year ended the scene had changed, and causes of exhaustion and decay were introduced, that have never since ceased to operate. First, internal revolt. Ali Pasha rebelled against the Sultan, and precipitated the Greek Insurrection, which rapidly spread and prospered. The sympathies of Western Christendom were aroused on behalf of brother Christians struggling for independence, and writhing under the cruelties of the Turks; and when a Turko-Egyptian armament under Ibrahim Pasha landed in Greece, the English, French and Russian fleets interposed. The battle of Navarino was fought October 20, 1827; the Turko-Egyptian fleet was destroyed, and Greece was set free.

Next, after the massacre of the Janissaries at Constantinople in 1826, there followed a most disastrous war with Russia; the ultimate result of which was that in 1829, Wallachia and Moldavia were secured as Christian principalities under Russian protectorate; Servia was made independent; and not a Turk was allowed to reside north of the Danube. In the same year the French took Algiers. Then followed, in 1832, the rebellion of the great Egyptian Pasha, Mehemet Ali, with the final result, that from 1840 Egypt was practically lost to Turkey. In 1882 began the English occupation of Egypt, which still continues. In 1844 Turkey was compelled by the European Powers to cease the practice of execution for so-called "apostasy" from the Moslem relig-

ion to Christianity; the extorted concession being a proof of conscious weakness on the part of the Turk. More warfare, followed by the Berlin Conference in 1878, resulted in further dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire; and even the war between Turkey and Greece in 1897, in which Turkey apparently gained the victory, ended in the autonomy of the great island of Crete, one of Turkey's most valuable possessions. In 1908 Crete definitely joined itself to Greece, Bulgaria declared her independence, and Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In addition to all this, and to financial collapse, the anti-social habits of polygamy and vice, political oppression and misrule, earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and civil commotions, have long been depopulating the Turkish territories.

Thus since 1820, the exhaustion of the Turkish Power, the drying up of the flood that for near four hundred years had inundated Eastern Christendom, has been advancing with a rapidity beyond anything that a sober mind could have imagined. The Turks were for centuries the terror of Europe; but now it is evident that nothing supports the feeble remains of the once mighty and formidable power of Turkey but the policy of the kingdoms of Christendom.

Jewish Renaissance.

Side by side with the progress of Turkish decay, there is being witnessed a most remarkable *renaissance* of the Jewish people. Jewish disabilities are being removed; Jewish wealth, learning and social and political influence are increasing; the unification of the people is being promoted by various alliances and organizations among them; from some countries they are being driven by persecution, while there is a constantly growing desire on their part for a recognized national re-possession

of the Land of their Fathers. This is now finding practical expression in the newly-born Zionist movement, full of vigour and enthusiasm, as well as of wise and far-sighted endeavour. It is welding the Jewish people together as one man, for the attainment of this great end, and it should have the heartiest sympathy of all intelligent Christians. To the land of Palestine the Jews are now returning in great numbers ; agriculture is reviving under their care, and as a consequence of healthy labour, even in their physique there is a marked improvement.

In this Vision, as in the two preceding, we have now reached quite the last stage, and the signs that are taking place in the world around are those that are foretold in connexion with the closing era of this dispensation. The centre of world power is to be shifted back to Jerusalem.

DAN. IX. 24-27.

SEVENTY WEEKS,
decreed
upon Daniel's people
and his holy city:

to

finish transgression,

make an end of sins,

make reconciliation for

iniquity,

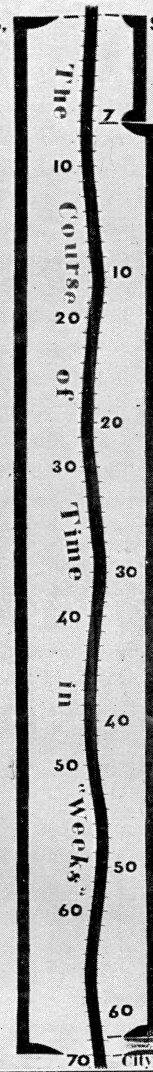
bring in everlasting

righteousness,

seal up vision and

prophecy,

anoint the most holy.



SEVEN WEEKS.
Jerusalem built again,
with street and moat,
in troublous times.

B.C. 1457. Solar
1444. Lunar

SIXTY-TWO WEEKS,
unto

the Anointed One,

the Prince.

A.D.

Solar
Baptism
Crucifixion
Lunar

ONE WEEK.
Anointed One cut off.
City and Sanctuary destroyed.

Desolations.

V

THE SEVENTY WEEKS AND THE MESSIAH

DANIEL IX.

THE chief purpose of this Vision is to give the exact dates for the coming and work of the promised Messiah. Neither in the Vision of the Image nor in that of the Four Great Beasts is the first Advent of Christ described or referred to; the reason being that it is much too important an event to appear as a mere incident in the history of the Fourth or Roman Empire. But here it has an entire prophecy dedicated to itself and to its consequences. The great subject of the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks is—the appearance of the Christ in the fulness of time; the accomplishment of His great work of redemption; and the sentence of judgment which was to fall upon the Jewish nation in consequence of their rejection of Him. It is the only prophecy in the Old Testament which definitely predicts the time of the first Advent and of the death of the Messiah.

Daniel was a student of prophecy. He did not rely upon his own visions only, nor think that everything had been revealed to him alone. In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes (Dan. ix. 1, 2), Daniel "understood by the books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord

came to Jeremiah the prophet, for the accomplishing of the desolations of Jerusalem, even seventy years" (see Jer. xxv. 11, 12; xxix. 10). The time appointed by God for Judah's captivity in Babylon was seventy years. But what was the starting point? This is a common difficulty in dealing with the prophetic periods; their length may be plain enough, but whence are they to be measured? In this case there had been several stages in the beginning of the captivity, from each of which the seventy years might be reckoned, thus leading to several corresponding stages of fulfilment. There had been not one date only, but an epoch, for the commencement; there would be likewise not one date only, but an epoch, for the close. Moreover, there are three kinds of year in the Scripture, differing in length, and therefore giving different terminal dates from the same commencement. The lunar year, of about 354 days, consists of twelve complete phases of the moon, or lunar months; the solar year, of about 365 days, is marked out by the circuit of the earth round the sun, through the four seasons; and there is also a year of 360 days, consisting of twelve months of 30 days each, which is used in the narrative of the Flood, and in the Symbolic Prophecies, where 1,260 days, 42 months, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ times, evidently represent the same period of time.

All this greatly complicates matters; yet, as the time draws near, God vouchsafes clearer light, and His people begin to understand. It was so with Daniel, and he was led to pray more earnestly than ever. The knowledge of God's merciful intentions should not check, but rather quicken, our prayers. God means us to understand these prophecies more and more clearly as the time approaches. He may sometimes let us wait long for the answer to our prayers, though the answer has been commanded, and is actually on its

way. But we must keep the prophecies in full view, looking steadfastly into them, and waiting for the light that God will certainly give in answer to our prayers. In answer to Daniel's prayer, verses 20–23, the Angel Gabriel was sent " to make him skilful of understanding," and to give him these exact dates for the coming and work of the Messiah ; that same Angel Gabriel, who, when the fulness of time was come, was sent to Zacharias and the Virgin Mary, to announce the approaching fulfilment of these very same periods and predictions ; which things even the angels desire to look into.

The Angel Gabriel did not say anything directly as to the termination of the Seventy Years' Captivity, which was the chief point of Daniel's prayer ; for God often answers prayers in a different way to that which is expected. But he made a communication of more importance, in which it was implied that the restoration should take place. The time appointed by God for Judah's captivity in Babylon was seven decades of years, seventy years, a week of decades. As these sad years of exile were drawing to a close, it was revealed to Daniel that a larger week was to begin, each day of which should equal the whole period of the Captivity ; seven times seventy years ; four hundred and ninety years ; seventy weeks of years. That they are not ordinary weeks of seven days is evident, for what is named in verses 25 and 27 could not take place in literal weeks ; besides, measured in literal weeks, the prophecy would have no meaning at all.

The object of the prophecy was to measure and to foretell the interval up to Messiah the Prince ; to intimate beforehand the greatest events of all history and all time,—the atoning Death of the Son of God, and the establishment of the New Covenant. Accordingly, within the last week of the period, that is within the last seven years of the four hundred and ninety, are included

our Lord's Ministry, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension,—the whole public lifetime of our Lord. Christ and His work is the one great theme; His first coming, His rejection and Death; and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, which was the consequence. The prophecy announced the duration of the restored national existence of Israel up to the great epoch of all history—the Advent of Messiah the Prince. It foretold that within 490 years from the date of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem the long-foreshadowed, long-predicted, supreme atonement for sin was to be made, reconciliation for iniquity effected, everlasting righteousness brought in, vision and prophecy sealed up, and the Most Holy anointed. It gave a summary of the future of the Jewish nation from the time of Daniel down to the time of their rejection by God as a nation, because of their having rejected His Son.

Interpreted in the light of history, as a fulfilled prophecy, it affords conclusive evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, of the inspiration of Scripture, and of the Divine origin of the Christian faith. It is also of great evidential value against the Jews, for from this prophecy alone is drawn a powerful proof that the promised Messiah has indeed come.

The Seventy Weeks Entire.

There is first a general statement as to the Seventy Weeks, verse 24:—

"Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish [or, to restrain] transgression [or, the transgression], and to make an end of [Another reading is, to seal up] sins, and to make reconciliation for [or, purge away] iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy [Heb. prophet], and to anoint the most holy [or, a most holy place]."

The whole time was to be Seventy Weeks of Years—i.e. 490 years, or a jubilee measure of 49 years on a tenfold scale. Within these Seventy Weeks all these great matters, mentioned in verse 24, were to be accomplished, in reference to Daniel's people and Daniel's Holy City, for "Salvation is from the Jews." This period of Seventy Weeks is subdivided in the next verses into three portions, thus :—

Verse 25	. . . . .	7 weeks.
Verse 25	. . . . .	62 weeks.
Verse 27	. . . . .	1 week.

Making the total of 70 weeks.

Moreover, the last week is divided into two halves.[1]

These Seventy Weeks are "decreed," or "cut off," as from the long measuring line of time. The Hebrew verb is in the singular, indicating unity and continuity as regards the period spoken of. The weeks run on in one continuous course. There is no gap whatever between them any more than in the measurement of the seventy years of the Babylonish Captivity, or of the forty years' wandering in the wilderness. They are a definite period, complete in itself. Suppose it were said, "I will cut off for you a length of 70 inches from a builder's measuring line of 66 feet (792 inches), to give you a measurement which I mean to make use of later on," who would dream that it was intended to cut off 69 inches at one end of the line and one inch at the other end of the line, leaving a long piece of 722 inches between? Every one would understand one complete piece of 70 inches, cut off from the rest. So here; it is a

[1] See the diagram. The long bracket on the left represents the complete seventy weeks; the three shorter brackets on the right represent respectively the 7, 62, and 1 weeks, and together make up the same length as the other bracket. The wavy middle line represents the course of time, from which the Seventy Weeks are measured off.

complete period of 70 prophetic weeks, or 490 years, marked off from the course of time, but divided into three portions of 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and 1 week. As the 7 weeks touch the 62 at their beginning, so does the last week also touch them at their end. A vast edifice of exposition has been built upon the 70th week when wrenched away from the 69. Leave it in its proper place, and that whole edifice has no foundation whatever.

What was to be accomplished within that period? All the great things described in verse 24. The Angel dwells with emphasis and repetition on the great redemptive work of the Messiah which was to be accomplished at the close of the period. Daniel had been confessing and mourning over the sins, iniquities and transgressions of himself and of his people, and here free and full pardon is proclaimed, sin is to be done away, atonement is to be made. The words are quite general—"transgression," "sins," "iniquity"—not merely the sins of Daniel's people, but sin in the abstract. Whatever types and shadows may have been given before, God here speaks of one act, atoning not for particular sins only, but for sin. Once in the future, at the end of the Seventy Weeks, in the midst of the last week, there was to be an atoning for all iniquity—past, present, and future. The Messiah was "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Nor was there to be only the removal of sin, but also the means of making man righteous—"to bring in everlasting righteousness," to dwell with man, to make its abode with him for ever.

"To seal up vision and prophecy." Not any one vision only, but vision and prophet generally. This foretells either the setting the seal to, in the sense of accrediting or authenticating, or else the shutting up or sealing of all prophecy by its fulfilment. The Messiah is the grand subject of prophecy, both in the Old Testament and in the New. The prophecies of the Old

Testament were to receive their fulfilment in Him, at His first or second coming; those of the New Testament at His second coming.

"And to anoint the most holy." Compare verse 25, which fixes the meaning here: "Unto the anointed one, the prince"—a Person who was to be anointed with the Holy Spirit far above any before Him, and who was to present God's truth in a higher, holier, and clearer form than the prophets who had preceded Him. The public and official anointing of the Christ took place, not on the Cross, but at His Baptism.

These were the great things that should come to pass within the Seventy Weeks. They are not limited to Daniel's people, though the whole prophecy is addressed originally to them; many Messianic prophecies are addressed to the Hebrew people, yet promise blessings intended for all the human race. They find their fulfilment in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His death upon the Cross for all mankind.

Subdivisions of the Seventy Weeks.

But these Seventy Weeks, or 490 years, contained within them certain important epochs, which accordingly are marked off, and Daniel is told where the critical points occur, and what is to happen at each of them. The Angel, having named the whole term as Seventy Weeks, now goes more into detail, and breaks up the complete period into three portions. "Know therefore and discern." For there are deep and difficult meanings in the prophecy, requiring attention and study; first impressions may not be correct. "Let him that readeth understand" (Matt. xxiv. 15).

The Angel first amplifies what he has said in verse 24, thus: Verse 25, "From the going forth of the Commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Anointed One, the prince [or, Messiah the prince; or,

an anointed one, a prince] shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks : it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times."

A period is marked off, beginning from the going forth of an edict, lasting seven weeks and sixty-two weeks —that is, sixty-nine weeks—and ending with the appearance of Messiah the Prince. The two limits within which the period lies are—the going forth of an edict, to mark its beginning ; and after it has run out, the appearing of the " Anointed One, the Prince." Not His Birth, for that was little known by the Jewish people, but His coming forth, at the time of His Baptism, as the Messiah whom the nation expected. The descent of the Holy Ghost upon Him was His official anointing to His threefold office. The event that marked the ending of the 69 weeks was as public as the decree that marked their beginning. What the Angel here foretold was something that stirred the whole nation.

The Seven Weeks.

It is to be noticed that the Angel says, " Seven weeks and threescore and two weeks." That is not the same as if he had said sixty-nine weeks. Every word in this condensed prophecy has its proper place and meaning, and there is a reason for this division of 69 into 7 and 62. The seven weeks are named first, and come in their natural order according to their position in the prophecy as the first division of the whole period.

These first seven weeks, or 49 years, cover the period of the two great restorers of the Jewish polity, Ezra and Nehemiah together. Their joint administration occupied about 49 years ; it was an era of restoration, during which Jerusalem was rebuilt and the government re-established. The Holy City was rebuilt ; not the Temple, for that is not mentioned here at all, but the

street and moat—that is, the town and ramparts of Jerusalem.

This was done " in troublous times," amidst continued interruptions, hindrances and vexations from their hostile neighbours, as is described in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

The Sixty-Two Weeks.

The next division, sixty-two weeks, completes the period up to the time of the Messiah. This number 62 has no special significance of its own—it is merely the result of subtracting the first and third divisions from the total period.

The text of the Revised Version, in punctuating the phrase, places the main stop after " seven weeks," thus—" Seven weeks : and threescore and two weeks, it shall be built again." But the margin of the Revised Version, as well as the American Revisers, and the Authorized Version, punctuate thus—" Seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks : it shall be built again."

Why this difference ? The Revised Version has followed in the Hebrew what is known as the Massoretic text, settled by learned Jews between A.D. 500 and A.D. 1000, who also arranged the punctuation. These Jewish Massoretes put the main stop after the words " Seven Weeks," and they are charged with having done this " on account of the heretics," i.e. the Christians. That is to say, so strong is the evidence of the fulfilment of this prophecy in Jesus of Nazareth, that it was thought necessary to tamper with its plain sense, by means of the punctuation, in order to lessen the force of the argument from its fulfilment.

It is difficult to understand what the passage should mean according to the Massoretic punctuation. But the Revisers have followed that punctuation in their text, placing, however, what must be considered as the

true reading in the margin, supported by the American Revisers, the Authorized Version, and what is much the most important of all, by the fulfilment of the prophecy. It is an interesting fact that to this day several verses of this confession of Daniel are repeated each Monday and Thursday by Jews; but the latter part of this chapter ix., which so plainly prophesies of the sufferings of the Messiah, is never read; in fact, the Rabbis pronounce a dreadful curse upon every one who investigates the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks. They say: "Their bones shall rot who compute the end of the time."

In the year 536 B.C. Cyrus issued his decree (Ezra i.) for the return of the captives from Babylonia, and for the rebuilding, not of Jerusalem itself, but of the house of the Lord, in Jerusalem. This was the end of the Seventy Years' captivity. The commencing date of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel's prophecy is "from the . . . commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem." Two such commandments are recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, dated respectively in the seventh and in the twentieth years of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus. From both of these the measurement may be made.

Commencing Dates.

In the latter part of the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, B.C. 457, his command was issued to restore and to build Jerusalem (Ezra vii.), that is, to restore the Jewish polity to its former state. For this Ezra was despatched with full powers to settle affairs, and all who liked were to accompany him. This is the beginning of the Seventy Weeks, in solar years. From the date of this decree to the Baptism of our Lord, in solar years, is 482½ years, being within a matter of a few months 483 years, or 69 weeks, as foretold. It is in fact a round number. As this decree corresponds in a

general way with the foretold "commandment," so, in round numbers, there is a remarkable correspondence of dates, when reckoned in solar years. Add "half a week," or three and a half years, and we are brought to the Cross.

It should be mentioned that the best authorities are divided between B.C. 458 and 457 for the date of the decree of the seventh of Artaxerxes, and between A.D. 29 and 30 for the date of the Crucifixion; but this uncertainty does not seriously affect the actual length of the interval. Except in regard to astronomical events, which can be ascertained with absolute exactness, there is not seldom a margin of uncertainty about ancient dates. If we knew the precise instant or the critical event from which it has pleased God that the reckoning should begin, we should have no difficulty in discerning a similarly precise instant for the close. But not knowing this, it is surely enough if, on periods measured by many centuries, we are able to recognize fulfilments occurring within a margin of even a few months of the given dates. The margin is due, not to inaccuracy in the prophecies, but to imperfection in our knowledge of ancient events and of their chronology.

In the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, B.C. 444, there were issued letters from the king supplementing and completing the former decree, and appointing Nehemiah royal commissioner to give them effect. An escort also was granted him by the king (Neh. ii.). As these later royal acts correspond with the foretold "commandment" more exactly than do the former, so, from this date, the time more exactly agrees, when reckoned in lunar years. To the Crucifixion, or "Cutting off" of Messiah the Prince, the interval in lunar years is exact, 486½ lunar years, or 69½ weeks of lunar years. This is up to the middle of the last or seventieth week. The complete "Seventy Weeks," or 490 lunar years, reach

from March 2, B.C. 444, to July 26, A.D. 32; and the last week of seven years is bisected by the Passover month, A.D. 29.

So that by the mouth of two witnesses, solar and lunar time—the former in more general, the latter in more exact terms—the truth of this prophecy is established. Our Lord appeared, and did, and suffered all that was here foretold, at the end of the exact interval named in the prophecy; and the threatened penalty overtook the Jewish nation, in consequence of their rejection of Him. In both cases the last or seventieth week of years included most of the Ministry of Christ, His Death, Resurrection and Ascension, the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and the early proclamation of the Gospel in Palestine.

After the Sixty-Two Weeks.

The Angel next foretells what will take place, not in, but "after," the 62 weeks, which, together with the seven already accounted for at the beginning, make up the 69. It is clearly stated that the 69th week reaches *unto Messiah the Prince*, not unto the death or cutting off of the Messiah. Two great events were not to come on till after the 69 weeks—the cutting off of the Anointed One, and the destruction of the city and sanctuary. These belong to the last week of the Seventy, the last seven years of the 490, and to the future beyond. Verse 26: "And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing [or, there shall be none belonging to him]: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and his end [or, the end thereof] shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined."

This means, not necessarily that the cutting off falls at the very beginning of the last or seventieth week, but

only that it shall be the first great event of this week, and that the other things mentioned in the remainder of the verse shall then follow, viz., the destruction of the City and Sanctuary. After the 69 weeks or 483 years had elapsed, Messiah the Prince was publicly to appear; and after that, at some time not exactly specified in this verse, but within the limits of the Seventieth Week or last seven years of the whole period, Messiah was to be "cut off." That expression usually means death inflicted by God, or violent death at the hands of man. The exact time of the cutting off can be found only from verse 27, that is, in the middle of the last week, or last seven years. At that epoch the entire abolition of sacrifice, bloody and unbloody, was to be accomplished by the Messiah.

Accordingly, after the lapse of 483 years from the Edict, Messiah the Prince did appear, saying, "The time (i.e. the time indicated by this very prophecy) is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark i. 15). But it was also foretold that he "shall have nothing"; an awful intimation of what actually happened, —that He should not be accepted by His nation, but should be put to death at their hands; the City and the Sanctuary should be his no more. "He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not." Then, in the words of the prophet (Isa. liii. 8), "He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken."

It is further foretold that Jerusalem and its Temple should subsequently, and as a consequence, be destroyed, and that a flood of foreign invasion should overflow the land. The destruction of the City and Sanctuary of Daniel's people are here connected with their great sin, the rejection and cutting off of the Messiah. In both verses, 26 and 27, the Messiah is made the prominent subject, occupying the first half of the verses; while the

City and Sanctuary are secondary, being mentioned only in the second halves of the verses. Here, in the latter part of verse 26, the angel describes the fearful judgments that were to come upon that nation for their chief crime, in rejecting and slaying the Messiah. All which most surely came to pass. After the cutting off the Messiah, the Roman soldiery, under their Emperor Vespasian and his son and general Titus,—" the people of the prince that shall come," i.e. of the Roman Emperor,—did destroy Jerusalem and the Temple, and swept away the people like a flood. The end of Jewish independence came with a flood of foreign invasion, and the pre-determined desolation fell on the land and on the people.

" The prince that shall come " is the prince of the people who did the deed here foretold ; but it is to be carefully noted that the subject of the sentence is not " the prince," but " the people of the prince." The " people " are contemporaneous in their action with the " prince," or at least are not his predecessors. There can now be no mistake, for it was the Roman soldiery under their Roman Emperor that destroyed the Temple and City of Jerusalem ; and it is remarkable that contrary to the facts in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and conformably to the facts under the Roman Titus, the destruction is attributed not to the prince himself, but to *the people of this prince.* Antiochus himself was the soul of *his* persecution ; Titus worked to save the Temple, but his soldiery destroyed it. " The prince " is merely the instrument pre-ordained by God, by whose people both city and sanctuary were to be destroyed. Thus, even as far back as the days of Daniel, and long before the Jews had heard or thought of the Romans, the angel Gabriel spoke of the prince and the nation who should be the instrument of God's judgments upon Daniel's people. No chronology is attached to these

latter events; the object of the prophecy being to measure the time up to the first Advent, and not to the second.

The One Week.

The Angel has described Messiah's work of redemption as being the great subject of the whole prophecy, and he has accounted for 69 out of the 70 weeks. Now the one week, the last of the 70, receives some further explanation. The angel returns to the main subject, the Messiah, and briefly announces that the introduction and establishment of the new covenant was to be the great feature of the last week, or last seven years of the whole period. The meaning is that during the one week He makes the covenant; not, that the covenant was to last one week. Accordingly this was accomplished during the first half of the week, the first three and a half years of those last seven. Verse 27: "And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and for the half [or, in the midst of] the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation [or, meal-offering] to cease."

The historical aspect and consequences of Christ's death have been described in verse 26; now this verse 27 gives its religious aspect, and describes the grand spiritual results it should accomplish. In order to be rightly understood, this particular statement has to be explained by the context and spirit of the whole prophecy, and in the light of New Testament teaching; then it is seen that the Angel is referring to the great work of the Messiah, and describing it as the all important thing to be accomplished during, or in the course of, that last week of the seventy.

"He," that is, the Messiah, "shall make a firm covenant." Abrupt changes of person are not uncommon in Hebrew, or in poetic language; but in this sentence

" he " could not mean Vespasian or Titus ; they made no such covenant. Moreover, as has already been pointed out, the subject of the sentence in verse 26 is not " the prince," but " the people of the prince." The actor throughout all these clauses is one and the same, the Messiah Himself ; and they are a solemn and touching prophecy of the life, death and work of the Christ. Though thus cut off, Messiah should confirm, or make valid, the covenant with many, or the many—not with the whole nation—during the course of the one " week " the last of the seventy. With this we may compare Isaiah liii. 11, " shall my righteous servant justify many." Our Lord is the " Mediator of the new Covenant." He uses the very expressions of this prophecy, identifying his doings with what is here foretold, thus :—Matthew xxvi. 27, 28 : " This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins." Luke xxii. 20 : " This cup is the new Covenant in my blood." See also Hebrews viii. 8–13 ; ix. 15 ; xiii. 20, " the blood of the eternal covenant."

Taken in close connexion with the coming and the cutting off of the Messiah, it is impossible to doubt what event is predicted, when it is said, " He shall make a firm covenant with many." Though the nation was judged, Messiah did confirm the covenant with many ; not with all Israel as a people, but with " an election according to grace," and against this covenant the rest " did wickedly," see Daniel xi. 32. But whatever primary reference there may be to Daniel's own people, the meaning of the prophecy must be extended to the spiritual Israel, the people of the Messiah, the Israel of God.

The angel goes on to make still much clearer and more definite the application to Christ, and tells when and how this covenant was to be established :—" In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." How ? See Hebrews x. 8–14, especially 9 :

" He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second " ; and 14, " For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." He has put an end to all these typical ordinances by taking away all further need of them. When ? The Lord's ministry as Messiah the Prince began after the 69th week ; and " in the midst " of the last week of seven years, that is, after three and a half years, the duration of our Lord's ministry, came His atoning death, His sacrifice on the cross. There he declared, " It is finished," and the veil of the Temple was rent from the top to the bottom. It is the climax of the prophecy, the greatest event in all time.

The clause may also be interpreted to mean, " In the half of the week " ; this was the period of our Lord's ministry on earth. During the course of that half-week, He would cause sacrifice and oblation to cease. No one else put an end to the sacrifices offered by the law continually, or caused them to cease by the offering of one sacrifice for sins for ever, or by one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified. What actually, as a matter of historic fact, as well as in the Divine intention, caused the Jewish sacrifice and oblation to cease, was " the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all " ; and this took place in the course of the seventieth of the predicted weeks ; the one week which stands alone at the close, and comprises the earthly ministry and the atoning death of the Son of God ; as well as the giving of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and the first formation of the Christian church. Though the sacrifices might still for some years be offered, and the ritual be continued at the Temple, they had lost all meaning and all ceremonial efficacy since the veil had been rent in twain.

The events mentioned as taking place in the midst of the last week occurred within 490 years from the edicts of Artaxerxes, and are long past ; the prophecy is a

fulfilled prophecy. The judgments on the Christ-rejecting nation continued, and will continue to the end; but the main object of the prophecy was not to announce the duration of those judgments, but to measure the interval unto Messiah the Prince.

The Last Half of the One Week.

There is no gap in the midst of the Seventieth Week, but the Angel gives no account of the last half of that week, any more than he had done of the events during the sixty-two weeks. The whole prophecy deals with three principal subjects, the restoration of Jerusalem; the epoch of the Messiah's appearance, work, and death; and the destruction that was ultimately to fall upon Jerusalem. These together constitute the probation and judgment of the Jewish nation.

The cutting off of the Messiah, which forms the central event of the last week, was of such transcendent importance that it threw into the shade what immediately followed. The Angel leaves indefinite and unfinished the details of the last portion of the seventieth week; and thus full force is given to his description of the all-important event in the middle of it, the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The remaining $3\frac{1}{2}$ years may be understood as marking the time during which the Gospel was preached to the Jews, before the preaching to the Samaritans and other Gentiles showed that the special privileges of the Jews were at an end. It is the interval between the cutting off of the Messiah, and the martyrdom of Stephen. When the Jews persecuted the Church, and stoned Stephen, the respite of grace granted to them came to an end. The very persecution caused the dispersion of the Gospel preachers; the Gospel began to be preached to the Gentiles; and the whole seventy weeks were now at an end. After the close of the last week, the covenant

that had been firmly established was thrown open for Gentiles as well as for Jews ; and the unity of the Roman Empire, and the ease of communication between its parts, favoured and facilitated the spread of Christianity. Closely connected with the martyrdom of Stephen is the conversion of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, by the direct intervention of the Lord Himself from heaven ; and shortly after this, the Holy Spirit is sent down from heaven on the Gentile centurion, Cornelius, and his companions (Acts x. 44–48). These two divine acts mark the crisis arrived at by the ending of the whole seventy weeks.

The Jewish Desolation.

The closing sentences of the prophecy are obscure as to their exact meaning, but their general drift is clear enough. They describe the judgment that was to fall on the Jewish nation, at the hands of the Romans and other Powers, for the rejection and murder of their Messiah. In the words of St. Paul (1 Thess. ii. 16), " The wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."

The angel says, verse 27 ; " And upon the wing [or pinnacle] of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate ; and even unto the consummation, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolator [or desolate]."

This is a repetition in dark and ominous terms, of what was uttered in the latter half of verse 26. That verse had spoken of the Roman army as causing desolation ; this one speaks of the city as made desolate. Our Lord referred distinctly to the Roman armies, with their eagle standards, as " the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet " (Matt. xxiv. 15) ; and He said, " When ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand " (Luke xxi. 20) ; " Behold, your house is left

unto you desolate" (Matt. xxiii. 38). Jerusalem was to be made desolate, not indeed for ever, but until a certain pre-determined doom should fall upon the Powers that desolated it; as foretold by our Lord, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke xxi. 24).

This ends the prophecy. Three great subjects have been dealt with: the Restoration of Jerusalem, under Ezra and Nehemiah; the coming and work of the Messiah; the destruction that was to fall upon Jerusalem and her People. All this has been accomplished, with wonderful exactness. The true Messiah has come, and has done and suffered all that is here foretold, and in Him alone and in his finished work of redemption we are to trust.

Note to page 77. The two words here rendered "most holy" are of frequent occurrence in reference to the Tabernacle and its furniture, to the Temple of Solomon, and to the Temple seen in vision by Ezekiel. They describe the "most holy" place, i.e. the sanctuary, the inner of the two divisions of the Tabernacle and of the Temple. They are also applied to the Ark, the Altars, and other furniture, the Sacrifices, Incense, Offerings, Shewbread, and every devoted thing. The phrase as used in Daniel is explained by the words of our Lord in John ii. 19–21: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. . . . But He spake of the temple (or sanctuary) of His body" (see also 1 Chron. xxiii. 13, R.V., margin).

Note to page 85. There is no "for" in the Hebrew of "for one week," and the phrase is just as correctly rendered "during" as "for." So in the next sentence, "for the half," which in the R.V. margin reads "in the midst of."

VI

THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH

DANIEL X., XI., XII.

THE last of Daniel's Visions is commonly known as the Prophecy of the Scripture of Truth, because of the words of the Angel in chapter x. 21, A.V., "I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth"; or, R.V., "I will tell thee that which is inscribed in the writing of Truth."

It differs from the others in that for the most part it is in direct narrative, not in symbol; up to chapter xi. 30, at least, the ruling powers whose doings are described are generally spoken of literally as kings, they are not represented by beasts, or horns, or any of the symbolism of the former Visions, though here and there "king" is used in the dynastic sense. The context decides. But all that has been revealed in previous Visions is taken for granted, in its matter and in its order; the present Vision changes nothing and cancels nothing, its main purpose being to connect all this with Daniel's People and with their Land, especially in the closing period of this dispensation. For so the Angel declares (chap. x. 14), "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days." God means that His servants shall understand these Visions; if not at first, yet more and more clearly as the end draws near.

The Vision was seen in the third year of Cyrus, king

of Persia (chap. x. 1.), that is, after the first empire—that of Babylon—had quite passed away, and had been succeeded by the second. It belongs to the era of the Silver in the Image, of the Bear among the four great Beasts, of the two-horned Ram in the Vision of Daniel viii. In the first year of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1–4) his memorable Edict had been issued for the release of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, and Zerubbabel and his company had returned to Jerusalem. In the seventh month they set up the altar there, and in the second year, the second month, they laid the foundations of their new temple (Ezra iii.). Then followed harassing interruptions from the people of the land, causing the work to be suspended till the accession of Darius Hystaspis. Daniel's mourning and fasting may have had reference to the trials and disappointments that were beginning to afflict his countrymen in Jerusalem.

There appeared to Daniel a glorious Being, clad in priestly garb, doubtless the Lord of angels Himself, who on a later day appeared in like glory to His beloved Apostle John in Patmos (Rev. i. 13–16). He stood above the waters of the river Hiddekel, or Tigris, and the attendant angels were on its banks. These refer their questions to him as to a superior (Dan. xii. 5–7); compare viii. 16; ix. 21. The solemn oath he utters bears a striking resemblance to that in Revelation x. 5–7. He gave Daniel in direct prediction, and not in symbol as in former Visions, a long and detailed account of the conflicts and intrigues of the Egyptian and Syrian kings, in which Daniel's people were continually involved, and by which they were made to suffer; together with the history of later powers and later events, leading up to a great final crisis for Israel, through which they were to be brought, and from which God's power was at last to deliver them,—all this belonging to the era of the latter days.

Daniel was now far advanced in life, and was soon to leave this world, after a long and varied experience of its vicissitudes, and to enter into his rest. Yet the Lord does not count it a useless distraction for His aged servant, to reveal to him at such a time a long series of political changes, of wars and rivalries and intrigues, amongst the kingdoms bordering on Daniel's Land. On the contrary, it is implied that these Divine communications are a mark of special favour, a precious gift vouchsafed to a beloved servant of God. The true church of Christ has a perpetual interest in all the events of history, and cannot be indifferent to the changes in the kingdoms of this world, all of which are brought about by the hand of God's providence, and are the fulfilment of His plans and purposes as revealed in these prophecies.

Persia and Greece.

The Angel's narrative begins from the time then present. He had spoken, in chapter x. 13, 20, 21, of a heavenly or spiritual conflict between angelic powers; and the earthly warfare which he proceeds to describe is viewed as the direct result of the heavenly. Of the four great powers that were to hold sway on earth before the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, the first,—that of Babylon,—had passed away, and the second,—that of Media and Persia,—had already come, a pledge of all the rest. But when was the third,—that of Greece,—to attain its supremacy? And when was the fourth to take its own place; and that mysterious Power within it, symbolized by the Little Horn of the fourth Beast, growing up among the other Ten Horns?

Chapter xi. 2: "Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be richer than they all; and when he is waxed strong through his riches,

he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece [or, all this shall stir up the realm]."

Cyrus, king of Persia, was reigning in his third year at the time of the Vision. There were to be "yet," that is, after Cyrus, three kings in Persia. These three are mentioned in order to fix the place of the fourth, in whose days was to occur the chief crisis between Persia and Greece. The three are Cambyses, B.C. 529–522; Gaumâta or Pseudo-Smerdis, B.C. 522 (seven months only); and Darius Hystaspis, B.C. 522–485. The fourth is Xerxes (the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther), who reigned B.C. 485–465. He was pre-eminent above his predecessors for his riches and might, and for the vast armament with which he sought to crush the rising power of Greece. Though the first defeat of Persians by Greeks had taken place at the battle of Marathon, B.C. 490, during the reign of his father Darius, it was Xerxes who brought Persia directly into conflict with Greece on a grand scale, and his invasion of Greece is singled out in the prophecy because it was the final crisis in the long conflict between the two powers. To it he devoted all his treasures and all his energies, but it ended in the disastrous defeat at Salamis, B.C. 480.

The Empire of Persia is represented as at the height of greatness and prosperity under this fourth king, and not as close upon ruin and extinction. The fourth king is not spoken of as the last of the kings of Persia, but as much richer than his predecessors, and waxed strong through his riches. The inference is that other kings were still to follow, as was actually the case, but that their reigns should be inglorious, and that the empire should be in a condition of decline and decay.

Alexander the Great.

The issue of this mighty invasion is not expressed in the prophecy, it having already been given very fully in

the Vision of the Ram and the He-Goat, in Daniel viii. But it is clearly implied, for the Vision, passing over the intermediate Persian rulers, hastens on to the period when the course of events begins to affect the people of Daniel, and proceeds to speak of the supremacy of Greece, and of the conquests of Alexander the Great (xi. 3, 4): "And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up (or, while he is standing), his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; but not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion wherewith he ruled; for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside these." Observe the contrast between the very brief treatment of what concerns Persia and Greece, and the abundant detail of what more closely affects Daniel's own people. From the second of the great empires the Vision has now passed to the third, that of Greece, under the Macedonian dynasty.

The "mighty king," like the Great Horn of the He-Goat in chapter viii., represents not Alexander the Great personally and alone, but the dynasty of which he of course was by far the most prominent and important member. That dynasty included Philip of Macedon, Alexander's father; then Alexander himself; then Philip Aridæus, half-brother of Alexander; and in conjunction with him, as soon as born, a son of Alexander's by Roxana, called afterwards Alexander Ægus. The breaking of the kingdom is not merely the death of Alexander himself, but the ending of his dynasty. During the reigns of his successors, Philip and Ægus, the generals forbore assuming the royal title, professing themselves simply governors under Alexander's brother and son. But in B.C. 317 Philip Aridæus was murdered, and in B.C. 310 so were Ægus and his mother Roxana, as also an illegitimate son of Alexander's

named Herakles. Whereupon all the generals put crowns upon themselves.

Alexander's dominion, and the subsequent breaking up of his empire into four kingdoms, are described in phrases that find their close parallels in the three former visions; compare especially Daniel viii. 8, 22. Here it is stated that his divided empire should not go to his posterity, a fact not mentioned in the former visions; also it is added that "his kingdom should be plucked up, even for others beside those." This implies that the posterity of Alexander was to be soon extinct, or cut off from royal dominion, which was strikingly fulfilled; also that the fourfold division was not to be looked for while the kingdom was administered in the name of Alexander's posterity. The short continuance of the fourfold division is hinted at, and in the sequel of the prophecy only two of these divisions have their history detailed.

It should be specially noted how this first great transition in the prophecy is made, for it will serve as a precedent for comparison and guidance in recognizing other transitions later on. There is no warning, no preparation, but the transition is abruptly made, in verse 3, to another age as well as to another country. All that has been foreshown in the former Visions is taken for granted here, and the great divisions in those prophecies rule in this Vision as well; but it is left for us to compare one with another, and to recognize the points in this Vision at which the transitions are made. (See diagram in Paper II.)

The Kings of the South and of the North.

The revealing Angel, continuing to tell Daniel what should befall his people, next proceeds to sketch out the subsequent history of two of the four divisions of Alexander's Empire, this portion of the prophecy extending

over chapter xi. 5–30. These two are called respectively, "the King of the South," and "the King of the North"; that is, the dynasties of the Ptolemies in Egypt, and of the Seleucidæ in Syria, their seats of government being south and north of Judæa. In verse 8 the country of "the King of the South" is expressly called Egypt.

The reason for these two being singled out are, that they continued longer, and made a much greater figure in history, than did the other two; also that the land of Judæa, which lay between them, was continually entangled in their quarrels. It was the principal stage across which the kings of the south or Ptolemies, and the kings of the north, or Seleucidæ, passed to and fro; and the Jewish government was for the most part a dependency of the one or the other, till its occupation by the Romans.

Up to the end of verse 30 there is close parallelism between the prophecy and the history of the Ptolemies and of the Seleucidæ. The difficulty of tracing out any part of this remarkable prediction arises from the loss of many ancient histories, the fragments which remain being very imperfect, and each author illustrating only a portion of the prophecy. The fact is, the prophecy is more complete than any history that has come down to us; no one historian has related so many circumstances, and in such exact order, as the prophecy has foretold them. It is necessary to have recourse to a variety of authorities, Greek, Roman, Jewish and Christian, and to collect something from one and something from another, in order to explain and illustrate all the particulars in the prophecy.

The difficulty, however, consists in searching out and combining the materials from so many quarters, not in tracing the correspondence between prediction and fulfilment. If any one continuous history of those wars and

intrigues and alliances were now extant, the agreement between prophecy and events would be obvious; but the historians of those times have come down to us chiefly in fragments. Yet their testimony, so far as it survives, is in almost unbroken harmony with the prophecy; and for nearly every main fact there are two or three consenting witnesses. Various authors are consulted, not to choose out the most convenient among conflicting statements, but to obtain all the necessary details wherewith to fill up the comprehensive framework of the prediction.

The Romans.

The first reference to the Roman Power is found in verse 18: "After this shall he turn his face unto the isles (or coastlands), and shall take many: but a prince (or captain) shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; yea, moreover, he shall cause his reproach to turn upon him."

Antiochus the Great, Seleucid king of Syria, considering all secure in the direction of Egypt, turned his face towards the Grecian Isles, and with a great fleet and army took many, thereby offending the majesty of the Roman Republic, whose confederates they were. Whereupon, in B.C. 192, the Roman Commanders caused the reproach to turn on him. They attacked and utterly defeated him at Thermopylæ, and in the decisive battle of Magnesia, B.C. 190, and drove him back to his own land a disgraced fugitive; the western half of his empire being surrendered, and an immense tribute being imposed on him. To obtain help towards payment of this, he entered and sought to plunder some rich temple in Elymais; when he was attacked, and killed, B.C. 187.

In verses 21–30 is given the history of Antiochus Epiphanes down to his second expedition into Egypt, when he was expecting to reduce Egypt finally under his

sway, but was stopped by the intervention of Roman ambassadors, just arrived from Italy; verse 30, "For ships of Kittim shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved and shall return, and have indignation against the holy covenant, and shall do his pleasure: he shall even return, and have regard unto them that forsake the holy covenant."

As this far-ranging prophecy marked the transition, at verse 3, from the second to the third of the great empires, so might it be expected to mark that from the third empire to the fourth, that is, the Roman; and for this there could be no fitter epoch than when the Roman ambassadors arrived in ships at Alexandria. For the Macedonian kingdom, the original seat of the Macedonian dynasty, had just been overthrown by the Romans, and converted by them into a subject province, after the battle of Pydna, B.C. 168; and the very fact of their dictating terms as they did between the Syrian and Egyptian dynasties was at the time a notification to the world that the Roman arms now held the supremacy.

The very singular circumstance of the Angel's adopting the language of Balaam's prophecy, when bringing the Romans upon the scene, might show not only that the same power was here intended by him as was by Balaam, but also that the desolation of the Hebrew nation next spoken of was the same in both prophecies. (Num. xxiv. 24): "But ships shall come from the coast of Kittim, and they shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he shall also come to destruction."

"The Abomination that Maketh Desolate."

At verse 31 a new Power enters upon the scene. "Arms shall stand on his part"; arms, that is, of the human body, not armour. The phrase signifies the uprising and strengthening of some new Power. At this

point in the prophecy the power of Antiochus Epiphanes passes into that of Rome; the Roman Dominion has come into view, and continues, as the former Visions have shown, in one form or other, right on to the end of this dispensation.

Then "the abomination that maketh desolate" will mean that which was set up by the Romans, under Vespasian and Titus, and which introduced the greatest and longest desolation of the Jewish Temple and City. The daily sacrifice ceased in the Roman siege of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. The article, "the abomination," points to one previously made known, as that foretold in Gabriel's prophecy in Daniel ix. 27; or else it points to that which was to be emphatically the grand abomination of desolation. This was still future when our Lord was upon earth, and He specifies that to be set up by the Romans as the one spoken of by Daniel the prophet (Matt. xxiv. 15; Luke xxi. 20). In Jerome's time (fifth century), the Jews, having the two interpretations before them, applied this prophecy not to an abomination set up by Antiochus Epiphanes, but to that far more awful one set up by the Romans. "The abomination" may also have a further mystical meaning, referring to the pollution of God's visible church by the domination of the Anti-christian Power; see Revelation xi. 2.

The verses that follow (Dan. xi. 32–35) give a sketch of events, from the setting up of the abomination by the Romans, to the rise of the self-exalting king. It is essential to remember that from the epoch of the "abomination" the condition of the Jewish people had been altogether changed. Our Lord warned them, "The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. xxi. 43). And St. Paul speaks of some of the natural branches of the olive tree being broken off, and wild

olive being graffed in (Rom. xi. 17–24). Our Saviour is a Jew; the first Christians were Jews; "Salvation is from the Jews"; but the majority of the nation, and its rulers, would have none of Him or of His message.

As to that people, there were from Christian times onward two distinct classes of Jews; those who "did wickedly against the covenant,"—the covenant of the seventieth week (Dan. ix. 27),—by rejecting the Messiah; and those who became Christians. Moreover, these last, by becoming Christians, were merged into the general Christian body, where there is neither Jew nor Gentile, all distinctions of race or nation being done away with in Christ. Christianity spread far and wide; the people that knew their God were strong, the teachers of the people instructed many. Yet this Christian body, including Jews like the Apostle John, and Gentiles, was subjected to cruel persecution, and "fell by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days," under the heathen emperors of Rome, these afflictions culminating in the terrible persecutions under Diocletian in the third and fourth centuries.

Conversion of the Roman Empire.

Then came the great and marvellous revolution, in the fourth century, by which the Roman Empire ceased to be heathen, and became by profession Christian.

"Rome is not Rome in all her fulness, she has not risen to the true height of her mission in the world, she is not fully mistress and teacher of the nations, till she has cast aside her old gods, and has bowed to the spiritual mastery of a despised sect, from a despised corner of her dominion. The miracle of miracles, greater than dried-up seas and cloven rocks, greater than the dead rising again to life, was when the Augustus on his throne, Pontiff of the gods of Rome, himself a god to the subjects of Rome, bent himself to become the worshipper of a crucified provincial of his empire. . . . That Christianity should become the religion of the Roman Empire is the miracle of history;

but that it did so become is the leading fact of all history from that day onwards."

Freeman: "Rome the Head of Europe."

Now "the wise among the people," or the disciples of the Messiah, who hitherto had fallen by persecution, were "holpen with a little help," under the Christian Emperor Constantine, and later, under Theodosius. Christianity was now the established religion of the Roman Empire, and the Roman people embraced it in multitudes, applying to themselves the title "Israel" and the prophecies of Israel's future glory, and forgetting that "they are not all Israel, which are of Israel" (Rom. ix. 6). On this gleam of visible prosperity, says the prophecy (ver. 34), "many shall join themselves unto them with flatteries." Hypocrisy shall insinuate itself even into their body; mere dissemblers in religion, false professors, shall join themselves to those who are truly wise. Later on persecution was to arise against those sincere ones, even out of their own body; and "some of them that be wise" should fall,—"some" only, not all mentioned in verse 33. But under the Divine over-ruling, the result should be only for their good, to refine and purify and make them white. This intimation reaches "even to the time of the end" (verse 35, and compare xii. 9).

The Self-exalting King.

The chronology of the prophecy having thus been brought down not only into Christian times, but also far beyond the era of the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity, that is, beyond the fourth century, there are now described the rise and doings of a certain "king," who magnifies himself above every god, and who prospers "till the indignation be accomplished," that is, the indignation or wrath of God against His

ancient People, whom this prophecy especially concerns. This king, whose career belongs to the time of the fourth or Roman dominion, has a long and influential reign, before the "time of the end" referred to in verse 40.

If we place this description, verses 36–39, alongside of the previous prophecy of the fourth Empire in Daniel vii., we find it to correspond in a most remarkable manner with the description of the "Little Horn" that rises among the Ten Horns on the head of the fourth Beast; that is, with the description of the Papacy and its doings (compare also 2 Thess. ii. 1–12). But in this present prophecy, several important particulars are added to what had been revealed in the former Vision (Dan. vii.) as to the character and doings of this "king," this new head of the Roman Empire now come into view. All these, from both Visions, must be taken into account, in studying the complete portrait; the later vision adds to the earlier, but changes nothing and cancels nothing. The features added here are especially those that affect the People of Daniel, as will presently be explained.

"The king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods," that is, by claiming to exercise Divine attributes and prerogatives, and assuming a more than human authority.

Notwithstanding his position in the Roman dominion, he will not regard the Pagan gods of his Roman predecessors; not "the desire of women." This last phrase may be understood in two ways: many explain it of marriage, and this gives a sense well agreeing with fact, for it finds its fulfilment in the encouragement of monasteries, nunneries, vows of virginity, and in the enforced celibacy of the clergy (1 Tim. iv. 3). On the other hand it is urged that the phrase occurs in a passage that speaks of the gods whom the king was to reject; and that therefore it more appropriately designates

Him who was the special object of desire to the Hebrew women, that is, the Messiah, the promised Seed of the Woman. This also gives a true sense, for while Christ and His work are acknowledged in name, they are denied in practice; other mediators, other means of salvation practically take the place that rightly belongs to Him alone. One who claims to be the visible head of the Church is substituted for the invisible Lord Himself. The term "Antichrist" means a Christ instead of the true One, and therefore a Christ opposed to the true One; but in any case, one who claims to be a Christ, and to exercise the Lord's prerogatives.

Verse 38: "In his place (or, office)," that is, when established in his own official station, "shall he honour the god of fortresses." This is understood to point to the canonizing and the worship of martyrs and saints, and to their adoption as the tutelary deities of the places where their bodies lay or their relics were deposited. This result was reached by the following steps: the martyrdom days or anniversaries of death were observed at the tombs; the tombs became places of special prayer; the personages themselves were regarded as possessing influence above, and therefore as being available as mediators; then honour was paid to their remains, relics, or images, in order to obtain their favour above. Hence their bodies, relics, and images were regarded as pledges of the saints' protection, and the saints themselves as the defenders or "fortresses" of the places where they were deposited, or of the persons dedicated to them. Here the word "fortresses" is used of the deities who constitute the protecting power of their shrines or sanctuaries; guardian deities or tutelary saints, who receive worship from their votaries as protectors or defences.

"A god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things." This is well explained of the conse-

A Monstrance.
By permission of the *Illustrated London News*.

crated wafer, the transubstantiated breaden god, elevated for adoration in monstrances made of costly metal, surrounded with rays as a glory, and enriched with all manner of precious stones.

Verse 39: "And he shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a strange god; whosoever acknowledgeth him he will increase with glory (or, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory): and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for a price." This is understood to refer to the practice of attaching to each country, town, monastery or church its patron saint or saints, thus "causing them to rule over many," and "dividing the land for a price." "Every cathedral or monastery," says Hallam, "had its tutelary saint, and every saint his legend; fabricated in order to enrich the churches under his protection, by exaggerating his virtues and his miracles, and consequently his power of serving those who paid liberally for his services."

These features, being singled out from amid many others by the Holy Spirit, are of special importance as characteristics, for identifying and exposing the power that is so much to be dreaded as the enemy of Christ and of His people. But also, as the Vision particularly concerns Daniel's people (Dan. x. 14), the very practices are explained and exposed that have tended to set the Jews against Christianity. Multitudes of them have known Christianity only as represented by the Roman Catholic Church, with its idolatry, saint worship, mariolatry, and other corruptions; and have hated it and turned away from it accordingly.

Papal no less than Pagan Rome has wrought terrible mischief on the Jewish race. Fearful persecutions and cruelties of all kinds, even unto death, have been perpetrated by her in the name of Christianity upon Daniel's

people. In a prophecy professing to foretell the fortunes of Daniel's people, such a terrible Power as this, under which they have suffered temporally and spiritually for long centuries, could not possibly have been omitted or ignored.

Moreover, if this "king" be the same as the "Gog" that is to lead his hosts into the land of Israel, to try to destroy the people again settled there, as is described in Ezekiel xxxviii., xxxix., this would be another reason for speaking so fully and plainly of him in a prophecy that especially concerns that people. See Paper XXV.

The Warfare at the Time of the End.

In the warfare at the time of the end, (Dan. xi. 40–xii. 1) the kings are engaged that have been spoken of in the previous verses; but in this warfare the kings of the South and North will be the powers that, at the time of the end, are in possession or occupation of the same countries as were held by the Ptolemies and Seleucidæ of old. Thus when Napoleon and the French, in 1799, occupied Egypt, he was the King of the South. When he advanced northward towards Syria, and sought to establish his power there, he was on the way to become also King of the North. At present the English occupy Egypt, and therefore are for the time being the "King of the South." Much light is thrown on this part of the Vision by Ezekiel's narrative of the invasion of the Holy Land by Gog (Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.). See Paper XXV.

The "time of the end" here spoken of must be the epoch of the end of this dispensation, taking the phrase in the sense it bears in Daniel xi. 35, and xii. 4, 9. If it means the period of the final judgments on the Little Horn of Daniel vii., it will have been in progress since the date of the Great French Revolution of 1789; since

which epoch there has also been a marked change for the better in the condition and prospects of the Jewish people. The self-exalting King was to prosper till God's indignation against the Jewish people, which has been executed by more than one Power, should be accomplished.

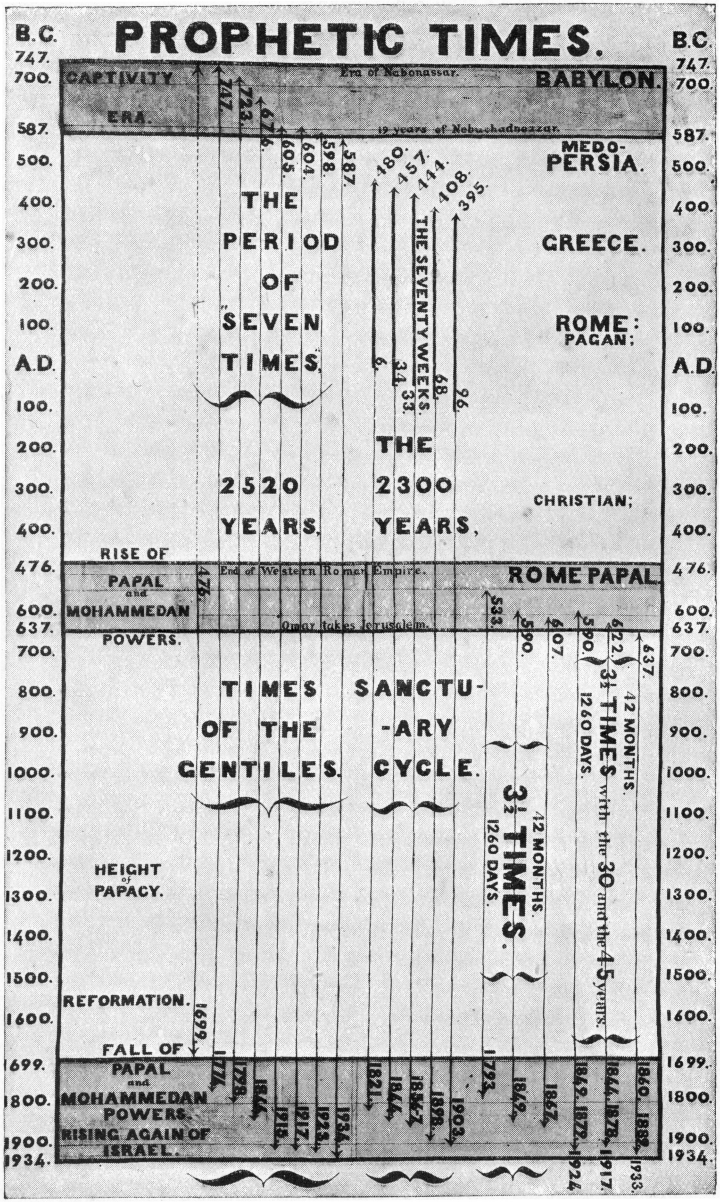
The scene of the climax of this warfare is the land of Palestine and the adjoining countries, and the chief sufferers at first are Daniel's People. For them this epoch is a time of trouble such as never before was experienced, a great tribulation; but it ends in their deliverance, and the destruction of the invaders (see Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.). "It is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it" (Jer. xxx. 7). Hence the homeward return of the Jews, and their resettlement in the land of their fathers, which has some time ago begun, and is in progress before our eyes, is an important indication of advance in the accomplishment of these Visions. All this part of the prophecy, however, belongs to the future, though we may be seeing the beginning of these terminal events in the present movements of the Jewish people.

This Prophecy of the Scripture of Truth closes the series of Daniel's Visions. There remains the Revelation of St. John, the last in this series of symbolical prophecies; and in going to it we must remember all that we already possess in the Visions of Daniel, especially as to the Fourth or Roman Empire, under which, in its last stages, we are now living. Everything that has already been foreshown in Daniel must be taken for granted, in its matter and its order, before the book of Revelation is approached.

We want to know how that mighty Iron Empire became weakened and divided, and at last actually broken up into separate kingdoms; what was the origin and

history of that mysterious and formidable Power that was to arise among the separate kingdoms, and domineer over them ; what events are to precede and accompany the return of our Lord and the establishment of His kingdom.

On all these and kindred topics fuller description and much addition of detail may be expected in the last great prophecy of this series ; objects that from the remote distance of Daniel's times looked like one may be found, in the clearer light of Gospel days, to be two or even three ; minor changes in the emblems, corresponding with phases in the history of the powers portrayed, may be described. But there cannot be any real contradiction or discrepancy between prophecies that all proceed from the same Divine mind, and that all have reference to the same general series of events in the history of the world and of the church.


PROPHETIC TIMES.
B.C.
747.
700.
587.
500.
400.
300.
200.
100.
A.D.
100.
200.
300.
400.
476.
600.
637.
700.
800.
900.
1000.
1100.
1200.
1300.
1400.
1500.
1600.
1699.
1800.
1900.
1934.
CAPTIVITY ERA.
747.
733.
677.
Era of Nabonassar.
BABYLON.
19 years of Nebuchadnezzar.
605.
604.
598.
587.
180.
457.
444.
408.
395.
MEDO-PERSIA.
GREECE.
ROME: PAGAN;
THE PERIOD OF "SEVEN TIMES."
THE SEVENTY WEEKS.
9.
34.
33.
68.
96.
THE 2520 YEARS.
THE 2300 YEARS.
CHRISTIAN;
RISE OF PAPAL and MOHAMMEDAN POWERS.
476.
End of Western Roman Empire.
ROME PAPAL.
533.
590.
607.
590.
622.
637.
Omar takes Jerusalem.
TIMES OF THE GENTILES.
SANCTU-ARY CYCLE.
3½ TIMES 1260 DAYS.
42 MONTHS.
3½ TIMES 1260 DAYS.
42 MONTHS.
with the 30 and the 45 years.
HEIGHT of PAPACY.
REFORMATION.
1699.
FALL OF PAPAL and MOHAMMEDAN POWERS.
RISING AGAIN OF ISRAEL.
1774.
1778.
1844.
1918.
1917.
1923.
1934.
1821.
1844.
1847.
1898.
1903.
1793.
1843.
1867.
1849.
1877.
1924.
1844.
1878.
1917.
1860.
1882.
1933.

VII

THE MEASUREMENT OF THE PROPHETIC PERIODS

GREAT light has of late years been shed upon the measurement of the prophetic periods in the Visions of Daniel and of St. John. Daniel was expressly told, apparently in reference to the meaning of the time-measures used by the angel, that " the words were shut up and sealed till the time of the end " (Dan. xii. 9). It might be expected, then, that as the time of the end drew on, more light would be given on the meaning of those measurements and on the methods of using them ; and conversely, if students of prophecy began to see more clearly than before how these measures were to be applied, and found that their applications of them began to yield striking results, it might be concluded that this was indeed the time of the end, in which these prophecies were beginning to be unsealed.

The purpose of this Paper is to explain some principles according to which these prophetic measurements are now applied, and to point out some of the results that have thereby been obtained. The subject is far too wide for complete treatment within the compass of these few pages ; but those who wish to pursue it further will find abundant and interesting details in such a work as Dr. H. Grattan Guinness' *Light for the Last Days*, to which this Paper is very largely indebted.

As Daniel studied the prophecies of Jeremiah (Dan. ix. 1, 2), and the records of events that had happened while he was still a child, he perceived that the captivity of his people had not been a sudden catastrophe, but a gradual process ; and that it had been accomplished by stages during a period of twenty years, stages as to the relative importance of which there might be some question. It was evident that a wide margin existed,—wide as compared with the whole seventy years of the captivity, being no less than twenty years,—somewhere within which the initial date of the captivity must be found ; but it was not easy to fix upon the precise year. The edifice of Jewish monarchy had trembled and tottered for some time before it fell, and when it did fall, it fell in several successive crashes. Which was the critical one ? The relative importance of historical events, and especially of events near our own time, is often difficulty to estimate.

Moreover, by what sort of year was the Captivity period of seventy years to be measured ? Three kinds of year are used in the prophetic Scriptures, and the actual duration of the Captivity would vary to the extent of two years, according to the measurement employed.

While meditating on these questions, the thought,—proved by the result to be correct,—could scarce fail to be suggested to Daniel's mind, that the Restoration might probably be as gradual and as much by stages as had been the Captivity, and so might occupy an era rather than a year. His people had not all come to Babylon at one time ; was it likely that they would all leave at one time ? Jerusalem and the Temple had not fallen in a day, or a year, but by stages ; the Temple being first spoiled of its treasures, and then consumed by fire eleven years after ; would not its re-construction and re-dedication proceed in like manner ? The national

overthrow had been gradual, would not the national restoration be so likewise? If so, which was the principal stage? Already one was past; Babylon, the Power that had been permitted to prevail over God's people, was overthrown, and Medo-Persia had succeeded. Not only had the time begun to run out, but one part of the prediction was accomplished. How strengthening to Daniel's faith! How encouraging to his hopes, though the Restoration itself had not yet come! He bowed himself in confession and prayer.

The position of students of prophecy at the present time is very similar to that of Daniel. They understand by books, and especially by this book of Daniel, that the end of the present state of things must be drawing nigh. They have carefully and prayerfully studied not only the word of prophecy, but also the records of God's providential government of the world, from Daniel's days to their own. They have compared the facts of history with the forecasts of prophecy, and the actual chronology of the one with the predicted chronology of the other.

They have received immense help from astronomy, which has taught them that the great chronometer provided by God marks off, by its different revolutions, years of three different lengths; one measured [1] by the sun (365 days; the seasons), one by the moon (354 days; twelve lunations), one by the conjoint movement of both (360 days; Noachian, symbolic, sometimes also called prophetic),—the solar, lunar, and calendar years. They have found that God in His word of prophecy employs all three; and that the difference between them, small though it be for one single year, becomes so considerable in longer periods as to have veiled from earlier generations the accurate fulfilment of chronological prophecies. The great episodes of Jewish and

[1] These periods are given in round numbers only.

Gentile history are measured, both actually and in prediction, by all these three different years; and the recognition of this fact has let in a flood of light on the whole subject of chronology in relation to prophecy.

Eras, not Dates only.

The fundamental principle of measurement is the following. The years of crisis in the fall of the people of God spread over an era, including several dates for commencement. From this whole era, and from each of these included dates, the great prophetic periods are to be measured; and we then reach a corresponding era of close, including several critical closing dates. Thus there is an era, and not one single date only, for commencement; and a like era, not a solitary date only, for close. Moreover, these years of crisis in the fall of the people of God are answered, when the prophetic period has run out, by similar years of crisis in the fall of the Powers that have been the great oppressors of the Israel of God, literal and spiritual. Along with this proceeds the gradual rising again of the people of God, Jewish and Christian. There is to be seen no longer the overthrow of God's people by their enemies, but the overthrow of those enemies themselves by the hand of God, in order to the deliverance and exaltation of His people.

All three measures of time are employed; lunar years of 354 days are employed; calendar or symbolic years of 360 days; solar years of 365 days. Hence these visions direct our attention to no one date alone, to no one year only, as marking the end of a prophetic period; but rather to an era, in which, measured from the various commencing dates by the various scales, the period is found to run out again and again. Each of these closes is marked by events that have a terminal character, and that are distinct steps or stages in a great historical

movement, of a nature directly contrary to the initial movement in Daniel's day.

The measurements of these great prophetic periods, therefore, are to be made not only from single dates to single dates, but also from eras embracing several critical commencing dates, to corresponding eras likewise embracing several terminal dates. For want of attending to this fundamental principle, mistakes have been made, wrong conclusions have been arrived at, delusive expectations have been raised, and much ignorant ridicule has been excited.

A period has been correctly measured off, it may be, from some important commencement, but by one kind of measure only; and it has been too confidently affirmed that the date so arrived at would be not only terminal but also final. Whereas it was only one of several critical dates all lying within a terminal era, and not necessarily the final one. All was correct as far as it went, but not all the conditions of the problem had been taken into account; accordingly the result was failure, and the enemy was again stirred up to blaspheme.

The Great "Seven Times."

When Judah and Benjamin were finally carried away captive to Babylon, a great change took place in the providential government of God. As a chastisement for their sins, He ceased to recognize the Jewish monarchy, He deprived them of their independence, cast them out of their land, and allowed Babylon to enslave them. It was not by chance, nor by human prowess, that Assyria had overthrown Israel, and that Babylon finally overthrew Judah; the hand of God was in it all. The restoration for which Daniel prayed came indeed, but it was only partial, and lasted only a few centuries. After the Messiah was crucified and slain, the wrath of God came upon the people "to the uttermost," and

the overthrow of Jerusalem by Titus introduced a judgment incomparably more severe than any they had yet endured, involving expatriation, dispersion, affliction, and complete and long-continuing subjection to Gentile powers.

But in previous stages of Jewish history, similar periods of trial had always had their limits assigned and foretold. It was so with the bondage in Egypt, the wandering in the wilderness, and the captivity in Babylon. It might therefore be expected that God would assign limits also to this far longer and more terrible period of judgment and suffering, and that He would allow those limits to be more or less distinctly understood, at any rate as the period drew towards its close.

Now we find this great period divided into two portions, and, as might be expected, it is with the latter half especially that measures of time are connected. This latter half is reckoned as " a time and times and half a time " (Dan. vii. 25); and " a time, times, and an half " (Dan. xii. 7); a period which has been very generally understood to mean three and a half times. But this is obviously only a half number, the complete number being seven times. In Revelation xi. 3; xii. 6, 14; xiii. 5; the three and a half times are taken as equivalent to 1,260 days or to 42 months, the year in these measures being one of 360 days. Thus the complete " Seven Times " will include 2,520 days; and taking the day for a year, according to the principle followed in these symbolic visions, we obtain two half periods of 1,260 years each, or one entire period of 2,520 years, as the duration of Gentile domination from the era of the overthrow of the people of God.

The septiform character of this great period of " Seven Times " harmonizes with all the Levitical measures, and with several episodes of Jewish history, including those in the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks. The

" Seven Times " are a great week, analogous to others on other scales ; as, the week of literal days, leading to the weekly Sabbath ; the week of weeks, leading to Pentecost ; the week of months, including all the feasts ; the week of years, leading to the Sabbatical year ; the week of weeks of years, 49 years, leading to the Jubilee ; the week of decades of years, 70 years, measuring the captivity in Babylon.

Here, each day of this great week is a prophetic " time " or year of 360 prophetic days, that is, 360 actual years, and the entire duration is 2,520 actual years. Arithmetically, 2,520 is a very notable number, specially fitted to be the basis of chronologic prophecy. It is a king among numbers, the Least Common Multiple of the first ten digits, and therefore adapted to harmonize several series of periods in a way that no other could.

In Luke xxi. 24, our Lord declares that " Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The " times of the Gentiles " may be understood to begin from the date when the Apostles turned to the Gentiles, Israel having rejected Christ and His Gospel (Rom. x., xi.). Or they may be regarded as including the whole of this great period we are now considering ; beginning with the four great Gentile Empires, and ending with their close. The " Seven Times " will then cover the duration of the Great Image and of the Four Great Beasts ; that is, the joint duration of the rule of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome in all its stages. The period is marked by Jewish loss of independence, subjection to Gentile powers, dispersion and suffering of the Tribes, and desolation of their land ; also by affliction to the Christian Church.

Last Forms of Gentile Power.

The last forms of Gentile Power, as especially affecting God's people, are symbolized by the two " Little Horns "

of Daniel vii. and Daniel viii., which were to exercise a vast and evil influence during the latter half of this great period of "Seven Times." They grow, the one out of the Roman or Fourth Beast, the other out of the Grecian or Third Beast; and they symbolize the Papacy in the West, and the Turkish Power in the East, the latter being now the official head of the Mohammedan system, as the former is the official head of the Papal system. The Mohammedan religion rose in the same era as that in which the Papacy began to gain its temporal power; that is, on the fall of the Western Empire of Rome, when the separate powers began to arise which now form the kingdoms of Modern Europe. The dominion of these two "Little Horns," the twin anti-Christian powers in the west and in the east, constitutes the last phase of Gentile power, in relation to the people of God, that is presented in prophecy. Both have for many centuries opposed and blasphemed God and His truth, persecuted His saints, defiled His sanctuary, literal and spiritual; and trodden down the Holy City.

The Captivity Era.

The era from which all these measurements commence is that of the Captivity, reaching from B.C. 747, the first year of Nabonassar, to B.C. 587, the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. During this era the Jewish Monarchy was falling, and Babylonish or Gentile Monarchy was rising over it, as well as over Egypt and other countries.

The first king of the Babylonian Empire of the Image was Nabonassar, and the date of his accession is one of great historical importance. It has been ascertained with certainty, through a series of exact astronomical observations given by Ptolemy, as being noon of February 26, B.C. 747. This most important era marks the commencement of the Babylonian Empire of the Image, and therefore it is the earliest date from which we may

begin to measure the great "Seven Times." It is the date of the coming into power of the Gentile Empire that was to be the instrument in God's hand for chastising His people, though it had not yet inflicted upon them any injury. Measuring from this date, then, the point we should reach could only be the beginning of the end; the events pointed to might be preparatory or even threatening, but they would not be final.

Captivity Dates.

B.C. 747. Era of Nabonassar, first king of Babylon.

B.C. 738. First deportation of Israel from their land, in the reign of Pekah, their king. Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, reduced the Ten Tribes to tribute, and carried away captive from the other side Jordan, Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh.

B.C. 723. Shalmaneser besieged Samaria. It fell in 721, and Israel were carried captive into Assyria, to Halah and Habor, by the river of Gozan, and to the cities of the Medes.

B.C. 676. Esarhaddon, son of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded Ephraim, carried captive another detachment of Israelites, and thus finally, destroyed the national existence of the Ten Tribes. Alien colonists were settled in their land, and Samaria ceased to be a royal city.

As soon as the Babylonian Empire was fully developed by the destruction of Nineveh, and had reached its height in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, the more serious disasters of Judah began.

B.C. 605–6. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judæa, in the first year of his reign. Jehoiakim was made tributary; the king and people of Judah

first lost their independence, becoming subject to Babylon.

This is the first commencing date of the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity, as is proved by the issue of the Restoration Decree of Cyrus, seventy years later.

B.C. 598. Nebuchadnezzar's overthrow of Jehoiachin, all but the poorest of Jerusalem carried off to Babylon. A principal crisis in the Captivity Era.

B.C. 587. Nebuchadnezzar's overthrow of Zedekiah, and final destruction of the City and Temple. The rest of the people carried captive to Babylon, for the remainder of the Seventy Years.

This completes the Captivity Era of 160 years, including all the above dates, from which measurements may be made.

The Central Era.

The great "Seven Times" are divided into two halves. The first half includes the succession of the four great heathen empires, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, all of which in turn ruled over Israel, and held Jerusalem; and the last of which was officially responsible for the Crucifixion of our Lord, as well as for cruel persecutions of the primitive Church, down to the days of Diocletian. The second half includes the rise and careers of the two Little Horns of Daniel vii. and viii.; that is, of the Papacy in Western Europe, the last form of Roman Rule; and of the Turkish Power in the East, the official Head of the Mohammedan religion.

Half of seven times is three times and an half; and half of 2,520 years is 1,260 years. This half-period is frequently used in these prophecies, sometimes as a time, times, and an half; sometimes as forty-two months;

sometimes as 1,260 days. Some mysterious designation is always employed instead of the plain statement of 1,260 years, in order that a veil might rest for a time over the period, and that its true scale might become clear only in the light of its fulfilment. It is the duration of the dominion of the Little Horn of the Fourth Beast, Daniel vii.; of the closing period of Jewish dispersion, Daniel xii.; of the treading under foot of the Holy City, and of the prophesying of the two Witnesses, Revelation xi.; of the sojourn of the woman in the Wilderness, Revelation xii.; and of the prosperous career of the Beast in Revelation xiii.

The Central Era lies in the midst of the Seven Times, and embraces the history of part of the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries. It is a period full of events of momentous interest to the people of God, events which have had a long-enduring and most mournful influence on the Christian Church. (See the diagram.)

It witnessed the fall of the Western Empire of Rome, which cleared the way for the rise of Rome Papal, that great power which still claims the spiritual allegiance of two hundred millions of mankind. It also witnessed the strangely sudden rise of the Mohammedan religion, one of those great movements that have impressed a new and lasting character on vast numbers of the human race. Everywhere the corrupt and idolatrous form of Christianity prevalent at that epoch succumbed before the onslaught of the vigorous monotheistic faith of Islam; and at the present day it is calculated that one-seventh of the inhabitants of the world are Mohammedans. In India alone they numbered at the last census more than 57 millions.

The commencing date of this era is A.D. 476, when Romulus Augustulus, the last of the Western Cæsars, fell, and the tenfold commonwealth of kingdoms which constitute modern Europe began to rise. It has existed

ever since, united for its first twelve centuries by a common bond of subjection to Rome Papal. The rule of Rome has thus been the characteristic feature in the latter part of the first half, and in the whole of the second half of the great Seven Times. Roman Catholic and Protestant writers alike recognize the importance of this Central Era in connexion with the rise of the Papacy; for the abandonment of Rome by the Cæsars was the liberation of the Pontiffs. (See 2 Thess. ii. 6–8.)

Central Era Dates.

WESTERN, FOR THE PAPACY.

A.D. 476. End of the Western Empire of Rome.

A.D. 533. Pope-exalting Decree of Justinian. The Saints were delivered into the hands of the Roman Pontiff by this famous Decretal Letter, constituting the Roman Bishop "Head of all the holy churches and of all the holy priests of God."

A.D. 590. Accession of Gregory the Great.

A.D. 607. Pope-exalting Decree of Phocas, granting to Boniface III the headship over all the Churches of Christendom, even of Constantinople.

This year also, the Anglo-Saxon and Lombard kingdoms, last of the ten, gave in their submission to Rome. France had been the first to do so, A.D. 476.

EASTERN, FOR MOHAMMEDANISM.

A.D. 622. The Hejira, or "Flight" of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina, where he was received as a prophet and a prince. To this day it is the date from which the Mohammedan Calender is reckoned. The conquering

career of the Saracens began the year of Mohammed's death, A.D. 632.

A.D. 637. Jerusalem taken. The conquest was completed in 638, and the Mosque of Omar was built on the site of the Temple.

The Terminal Era.

The Terminal Era, or Time of the End, is distant 2,520 years from the Captivity Era, that is from the fall of Israel and Judah, and the rise of Babylon, the first of the four great empires. It is also distant 1,260 years from the rise of the Western and Eastern Apostasies, the Papacy and Mohammedanism; that is, from the Central Era.

It is a period during which those two powers are passing through a series of distinct stages of decline and fall; during which also there is taking place a marked *renaissance* of the Jewish people. A liberation from the Gentile oppression, and a material uplifting, are in progress, which will issue in the restoration of that nation to their own land, and the recovery of their national independence.

Moreover, it is a period during which the spiritual Israel, the true Church of Christ, is experiencing a similar spiritual liberation and uplifting; though amid the most strenuous efforts on the part of superstition and infidelity for the recovery of their evil sway. It is a time of spiritual revival in the Christian Church, and of widely extended Gospel-preaching at home and abroad.

As the stages in the Captivity of Israel and Judah spread over an era of 160 years, we must measure the great Seven Times, the Gentile dispensation of 25 centuries, not from any one year only, but from this entire era of 160 years, as well as from its included years of crisis. We shall thus obtain a closing era, which, from its incipient characteristic movements on to its final

stages, will occupy at least the same space of time as did the Captivity Era. But it will occupy more. A series of commencing dates would in any case give rise to a series of terminal dates over an equal period; but in these predictions lunar, calendar and solar measurements of the year are employed, so that from each commencing date the time may be measured by a short scale, a medium scale, or a long scale, and the terminal era will be correspondingly lengthened. (See the diagram.)

The accumulated difference between these measurements over 2,520 years amounts to 75 years. Adding these 75 years to the 160 of the commencing era, we have a period of 235 years in which to expect the terminal events, reversing those of the commencing era. Some of these would fall out at the lunar close of the Seven Times, reckoned from the earliest starting-point; others at the solar close reckoned from the latest starting-point; and others at various intermediate points between those extremes.

The Captivity Era of 160 years extends from B.C. 747 to B.C. 587. The corresponding Era of 160 years, after the Seven Times, reckoned from the earliest date on the shortest or lunar scale, extends from A.D. 1699 to 1860. Reckoned on the longest or solar scale from the latest date, it extends from A.D. 1774 to 1934. Thus the Terminal Era, or Time of the End, allowing for the full length of 235 years, extends from A.D. 1699, to 1934, so far as the great Seven Times are concerned. There are also some dates beyond 1934, obtained from the periods named in Daniel xii.; but these need not be discussed here, the object of this Paper being only to explain the principles of measuring, not to seek the results of every possible measurement.

Now we need not wait till actual low water to decide that the tide is falling; nor need we hesitate to say that it is rising, though it may not yet have touched high-

water mark. Knowing as we do that the movement of the tide occupies about six hours, if we have watched it for five, we have no doubt what the next hour will bring. Have then the years from A.D. 1699 to the present time been conspicuously and undeniably years of decay and downfall to the Papal and the Mohammedan Powers? Has there been a turn in the tide of their fortunes since the end of the seventeenth century, and has the subsequent movement been steadily downwards?

The Turn of the Tide.

The answer to these questions is writ large in recent European history. The last two centuries have been an era of special and previously unparalleled decay and downfall to the Papacy and to the Porte.

Since the great French Revolution of 1789, terrible blows have been dealt at Papal power and prestige, and at the status and belongings of the Romish Church. Moreover the Pope is no longer now a temporal monarch at all, great and formidable as may still be his spiritual influence. Not he, but the king of Italy, now rules at Rome, which is now the capital of a united country. The "States of the Church," and the "Patrimony of St. Peter," have disappeared from the map of Central Italy.

The Porte is the "sick man" of European politics. That once mighty and formidable empire is now in the last stages of decay; but it is maintained in life chiefly because the European Powers cannot agree as to how it is to be replaced when it dies. The Mohammedan religion, indeed, may and does still widely prevail; but the temporal power of its chief upholder is fast ebbing away.

The era in question has been and is still one of solemn and awful retribution on both those powers, for deeds of corruption, tyranny and blood; for opposition to

God and to His truth, and for persecution of His faithful people.

No less distinctly does this era include a remarkable *renaissance* of the Jewish people. Modern Jewish emancipation has already passed through many stages, and is still on the path of progress. Nor is this limited to the literal Israel. Concurrently with all these events, there has been taking place a most notable revival of true faith, practical godliness, and Christian effort, among the Reformed churches everywhere; so that now there is an immensely larger number of truly converted and renewed men and women in the world than ever before. Missionary and Bible Societies have sprung into existence during this era. The revival of the spiritual Israel has been even more marked than that of the natural Israel, and it has been accompanied by a widespread evangelization of the heathen, and by a marvellous circulation of the Scriptures. Great progress has also been made in the elucidation of the prophetic Scriptures, and in the intelligent attention paid to them; so that now a large and constantly-increasing number of Christians are really "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Thus, steadily progressing decay of the oppressing powers, and rapid rising again of the people of God, are characteristic features of the Terminal Era in which we are now living.

Illustrative Measurements.

A few measurements [1] will now be given, by way of illustrating the application of the principles that have been explained. Measurements made from incipient dates only, and on the shorter scale, will of course lead only to incipient termini, to events that mark "the turn of the tide," but that have not the character of finality. Whereas measurements made from the

[1] These are taken from Dr. H. Grattan Guinness' *Light for the Last Days*, where may be found many more of a like kind.

latter part of the commencing era, and on the longer scale, will lead to events far more decisive and final in their character. But even when we have thus marked out, as we suppose, the whole of the terminal era, we must not be too positive ; there may be more yet to come that we have not noticed, and we may have overlooked some of the conditions, which become more visible as the light brightens.

Lunar "Seven Times."

Measured from the earliest date of the Captivity Era, that is, from B.C. 747, the 2,520 years on the lunar scale bring us to initial endings only, within the Terminal Era ; to events incipient in character, marking the "turn of the tide," but no more.

Two great Treaties of Pacification were signed at this period :—

A.D. 1697. The Peace of Ryswick in the West ; marking the full political establishment of the Protestant religion, and of civil and religious liberty. It ended the sanguinary conflict between the Protestant and the Papal nations of Europe as such, and secured the recognition of our "glorious Revolution," and of William and Mary as lawful sovereigns of England.

A.D. 1699. The Treaty of Carlowitz in the East. By it Austria secured Sclavonia, which for 200 years had been occupied by the Turks ; she made also the important acquisition of Transylvania. The Sultan lost nearly half of his European possessions ; and from this diminution of territorial sovereignty, the Ottoman Power ceased to be formidable to Europe.

Each of these marks the early beginnings of downfall and decay, the first in connexion with the Papacy, the second in connexion with Mohammedanism. It was not so much that either Power began actually to fall very perceptibly so early as this ; but just as the Nabonassar Era marked only the rise of that Babylonian Empire which was destined to overthrow Judah, so this corresponding terminus marks the accession to superior power of the Protestant nations in the West, and of the non-Moslem nations in the East. The events which began to take place at this crisis were then dim in the future, but have since changed the condition of the world.

Measured from the latest date of the Captivity Era, B.C. 587, the fall of Zedekiah, the 2,520 lunar years run out in :—

A.D. 1860. In that year was formed the Universal Israelite Alliance, whose headquarters are at Paris, and whose objects are to labour everywhere for the emancipation and moral progress of the Israelites, as well as to encourage colonization of the land of Palestine.

Also there was made the first inroad on and limitation of Mohammedan power in Syria. The Ottoman Porte was made to agree to placing the Lebanon under a Christian governor, England and France having a veto on the appointment. This was an admission of loss of independence, a compulsory acting contrary to Moslem principles.

Thus the year was marked on the one hand by an incipient commencement of the national reorganization of the Jewish people, an evident beginning of that unification of the long-scattered nation foretold in Ezekiel xxxvii., under the figure of bone coming to his bone. On the other hand it was marked by an incipient cleansing of the Land from the Moslem domination.

Solar "Seven Times."

Measured from the earliest date of the Captivity Era, B.C. 747, the 2,520 Solar years bring us to A.D. 1774, within the Terminal Era. This is the date of the accession of Louis XVI and of Marie Antoinette, his queen, the monarch who lost his crown and his life in the great French Revolution of 1789. His accession may therefore be regarded as a critical epoch in the history of that Revolution; and accordingly it is from that event that Sir A. Alison begins his *History of Europe*, that is, of the French Revolution.

By the consent of all historians, that great movement was the opening of a new Era in the history of European Christendom. Beginning with the preparatory stage, in which infidel doctrines were made the basis of widespread attacks on religious faith and on existing political institutions; it passed on to the actual revolution, which overthrew church and state, society, religion, royalty, nobility, clergy, laws, customs, institutions, everything most stable that had previously existed in France. Then followed the Napoleonic stage, a series of aggressive wars that upset every kingdom in Europe, dethroned the Pope and five other monarchs, created eight new ones, carried captive two Popes, and incorporated Rome with the French Empire. It ended by subjecting France to a tyranny more complete than that from which liberation had at first been sought, The

whole movement may be said to have extended from Voltaire to Waterloo.

In the East, this same date, 1774, brought another well-marked stage in the fall of Turkey; a disastrous Russian War, and crushing defeats, closed by the humiliating Treaty of Kainardje, by which Russia obtained the free navigation of the Black Sea, besides large cessions of territory. Thus commenced that dismemberment of the Turkish Empire which has gone on ever since.

The French Revolution and the Treaty of Kainardje mark the full Solar commencement of the "Time of the End."

First "3½ Times," Lunar.

Lunar measurements up to the Central Era lead to remarkable and strikingly critical events. From B.C. 747, the 1,260 years, or 3½ Times, on the lunar scale reach to A.D. 476, the date of the fall of the last of the Western Emperors of Rome, Romulus Augustulus. It was the end of the old Roman Empire in the West; but it was equally a starting point of the new form of Roman Power. It was the removal of the "let" or "hindrance" to the rise of the foretold "man of sin" (2 Thess. ii. 6). The Imperial Head of heathen Rome had been mortally wounded when heathenism fell, in the Constantinian Era; in the West it was now wounded to death, in the sense of being politically annihilated. In its place there rose after a time another Head, another form of Roman rule—the Papacy—that line of tiara-crowned monarchs, who for more than twelve centuries governed Papal Europe from the Seven-hilled city, and ranked not only as high priests but also as temporal sovereigns, uniting under their spiritual sway the kingdoms of Western Christendom. The initial date of the rise of the Papal Temporal Power is therefore one of great importance, from its relation to one of the most momentous movements in history.

From B.C. 587, the final date of the Captivity Era, the complete overthrow of Judah and the burning of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, 1,260 lunar years lead to A.D. 637, the year of the taking of Jerusalem by the Saracens, under Caliph Omar. It is the initial date of the final desolator of the Land of Israel, who has trodden down Jerusalem during by far the longer part of the eighteen centuries of the desolation of Palestine.

Second "3½ Times," Western.

From the Central Era dates of the rise of the Papacy, the 1,260 years, measured on all three scales,—lunar, calendar, and

solar,—lead to resultant dates within the Terminal Era, all connected in the most definite and unquestionable manner with Papal overthrow.

From A.D. 533, Justinian's Pope-exalting Decree :—

1,260 years Lunar give 1755 ; Voltaire's literary incendiarism.

1,260 years Calendar give 1774–5 ; The Accession of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette.

1,260 years Solar give 1793 ; The Reign of Terror.

From A.D. 607, Decree of Phocas, the measurements lead to Anti-Papal Revolutions ;—

1,260 years Lunar give 1830 ; Abdication of Charles X, after three days' "war of barricades" in Paris, and victory of the people. Belgium became independent. Papal chair vacant for two months.

1,260 years Calendar give 1848–9 ; a year of Revolutions in Europe. The Pope had again to flee from Rome, driven away by his own subjects.

1,260 years Solar give 1866–70 ; Final Fall of the Temporal Power of the Pope.

The battle of Sadowa, 1866, settled the ascendancy in central Europe in favour of Prussia and Protestantism, for the first time in history. The Franco-Prussian war followed ; after the disasters of Sedan, Rome was evacuated by the French Troops, and the Papal Government fell, to rise no more. In October, 1870, Rome was incorporated with the kingdom of Italy. In that same year Papal Infallibility was declared.

SECOND "3½ TIMES," EASTERN.

Measurements from the Mohammedan dates in the Central Era give equally striking results. From A.D. 622, the Hejira, whence the Mohammedan Calendar, strictly lunar, dates :—

1,260 years Lunar give 1844 ; the year of the Hatti Hamayoum, or enforced decree of religious toleration. The Porte was compelled under threat of European interference, to abolish the practice of execution for the adoption of Christianity. A proof of loss of independence.

1,260 years Solar give 1882 ; Bombardment of Alexandria and victory of Tel-el-Kebir. Establishment of English Protectorate in Egypt ; a heavy blow to the Porte.

From A.D. 637, the Omar taking of Jerusalem :—

1,260 years Lunar give 1860 : first stage in the liberation of the Holy Land from direct Turkish rule, in placing

the Lebanon under a Christian governor. Formation of the Universal Israelite Alliance, an important initial step towards Jewish national reorganization.

1,260 years Calendar give 1877–8. Berlin Conference, and wholesale dismemberment of Turkey.

1,260 years Solar give 1897. Turko-Greek War; autonomy of Crete determined on by the great Powers. First Zionist Congress of Jews at Basle, with the object of recovering for themselves their Land, and obtaining national recognition from the Powers.

Summary.

These examples, only a few out of very many, will suffice to illustrate the principles upon which the prophetic periods may now be measured. From a Commencing Era, including several commencing dates, the whole period of the great "Seven Times" is to be measured, on more than one scale, and thus a series of terminal dates is arrived at, all lying within a Terminal Era.

Similarly from a Central Era, half way along the "Seven Times," the half-period of the "Seven Times," —that is three and a half Times,—is to be measured, also on the various scales; and again a whole series of terminal dates is reached, all lying within the same Terminal Era. Some of these dates being especially critical, are reached in duplicate and triplicate by several of the measurements employed.

Moreover there is an unmistakable consistency of character amongst the group of events in each era, those of the Terminal Era being the reversal of those of the Commencing Era. Whereas in the beginning there is decay of God's people, and growth of Gentile power; in the end there is decay of Gentile power, and rising again of the people of God.

The "Time of the End," in reference to the great "Seven Times," measured from the Captivity Era, extends from A.D. 1699 to A.D. 1934; and there are other

dates beyond these, obtained from Daniel xii. What all these future dates mean, and what may happen at each of them, or beyond or before their coming, it is not for us to say. All will be made clear in God's own time and God's own way; but we must take heed not to neglect the light He is now shedding on all these subjects.

Conclusion.

These chronologic prophecies must, from their very nature, be intended for the benefit of later and not of earlier generations. As the end draws near, the predictions are gradually explained by their own progressive fulfilments, and the light grows stronger and clearer towards the close. To the earlier generations of the church, these time-measures were so mysterious, that at that era they could not be rightly understood, and only the vaguest guesses could be made as to their scope and meaning. No long series of historic events, and of political and religious changes, could yet be referred to, by which to test or to illustrate their explanations. Hence to go back to the writings of those early ages in search of the true interpretations, is to go back to the knowledge and ideas of childhood for the explanation of what cannot possibly be understood but by mature age.

God in His mercy saw fit to conceal from the early church the duration of the many centuries of trial, temptation, persecution, suffering and seduction by an awful apostasy, that lay before His people. But He had embodied in Scripture sundry chronological revelations of the most precise character, vindicating His foreknowledge; these were to be gradually unsealed and understood, as the time of their own accomplishments drew near. The true duration of the Gentile age was revealed, but in a mystery; its limits being stated in hieroglyphics, which only the lapse of centuries could interpret, and

which could not become clear till even far into the "Time of the End."

There is therefore a science of chronological prophecy, a science of recent origin, but of unspeakable interest and importance for all lovers of truth, for all who desire to take advantage to the utmost of the light that God is now giving to those who seek it. In bygone ages there were reasons why that science should make little progress; but those reasons exist no longer, and the time has come when these subjects, so long hidden in mystery, must and will be studied and understood by many. The result will be an intelligent and reasonable hope, built on knowledge and experience, and on the clear witness of Holy writ.

The line of Christian evidence that is based on fulfilled prophecy is specially adapted to these last days. It is as distinctively suitable to the close of this dispensation as were miracles to its beginning. The proofs of supernatural power and wisdom arising from fulfilled prophecy accumulate and gain strength as time goes on. Each century of Jewish and Gentile history adds to their amount, and the last century most of all. It is an astounding fact, that the prophecies in the short book of Daniel give a luminous view of twenty-five centuries of Jewish and Gentile history, including the first and second Advents of Christ, together with the actual chronology of various episodes of the then utterly unknown and long distant future. As far as time has elapsed, every single point predicted in Daniel has come true; and the question of inspiration is settled for honest minds.

If these prophecies and periods were never intended to be understood, what was the use of giving them? They might not be meant to be made clear until the facts of history were there to interpret them, and they were given to one generation for the benefit of other and distant generations, but each additional accomplishment has

given additional light. The qualifications for understanding these prophecies are moral no less than mental; and the declaration that not even "the wise shall understand" till "the time of the end" amply accounts for the misunderstandings and mistakes of earlier days, and for the only partial understandings of later days. But now it is an encouragement to the study of the whole subject, that much progress is being made by devout and learned students at the present day.

"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Instead of craving for the sensational, let us take to heart the abounding signs actually before our eyes; signs political, ecclesiastical, social, Jewish, Mahommedan, chronological; special, but perfectly natural events, occurring in a predicted order, and at a predicted time. God works deliberately; "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." But when, after the lapse of centuries, His fore-ordained moment has arrived, then everything He has prepared most surely comes to pass.

VIII

SCENERY AND SYMBOLISM IN THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION

Daniel and St. John.

WE now pass from Daniel to St. John, over a space of at least six centuries, from the early part of the "Seven Times" to the end of the first century of the Christian era; from ancient Babylon and Susa to the Isle of Patmos; from the Hebrew statesman in captivity to the beloved Apostle of the Lord in banishment. But we find ourselves still amidst familiar surroundings in the Visions of St. John. The same Old Testament imagery and symbolism meet our view; the same subjects, yet seen from a later date, are presented to our observation; but all in the brighter light and the richer abundance of detail that belong to the Gospel dispensation.

The Fourth Empire.

When St. John was shown the Visions of the Book of *Revelation*, the Roman Empire—that is, the fourth of the great empires of Daniel's Visions—was in full dominion, and had nearly reached its utmost extent. The Fourth Kingdom, which, in the Image, was represented by the Legs of Iron, and in the Vision of Daniel vii. by the Fourth Beast, "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly," with its "great iron teeth," was

now identified by the event. The Roman Empire, in the days of St. John, had "devoured the whole earth, breaking in pieces and stamping the residue with its feet." The Visions thus far had been explained by the facts of history.

What follows in the Visions of Daniel had not yet come to pass—the Fourth Empire in a state of division, and then broken up into separate contemporary kingdoms, represented by the feet and toes of the Image, and by the Ten Horns and the Little Horn of the Fourth Beast. At the time when the *Revelation* was given, the Roman Empire was yet entire and unbroken; its strength was still unimpaired, all was iron in its constitution. And though for some years it had been nearly stationary as to its conquests, yet these had not been pushed to their utmost extent when St. John was in Patmos, even taking the later and more probable date, A.D. 96. How did all these changes come about? By what steps did they develop themselves, and whereunto did they lead?

On all these and kindred subjects fuller information was required, and that is what we might expect, and what we do actually find, in these Visions of the *Revelation*. Their general subject is, the continuous fortunes of the Roman world and of the Christian church therein, from the days of St. John to the end of the dispensation and beyond, even into the eternal reign of Christ. The *Revelation* deals mainly with the last of the four great empires of Daniel's Visions, that of Rome, and with the offshoot of that empire which migrated to the east, and was transformed into an Eastern Power. This Eastern Empire is regarded in prophecy as a kind of revival of the third or Greek Empire, over which Alexander ruled. But the *Revelation* is the story not only of the fourth but also of the fifth great empire, the eternal kingdom of the God of heaven.

The general purpose of the Visions of *Revelation* is

not Jewish, but Gentile. They are addressed to the seven churches of Asia. In the opening benediction (i. 4) the holy and incommunicable Name is now for the first time translated out of the Hebrew idiom into the language of the Gentile churches; nor is it only thus translated, it is also associated with a name distinctively of Gentile origin, and given in the Greek tongue: "I am the Alpha and the Omega." All the Visions were revealed to St. John on the Christian Lord's Day (i. 10), and not on the Jewish Sabbath. *Revelation* is pre-eminently a Sunday book for the Christian.

The Visions, at the date at which they were given, are described as dealing with "the things which must shortly come to pass" (Rev. i. 1, 19; iv. 1; xxii. 6). Obviously, then, the Visions refer to what was in front of the date at which they were given, and not to what was behind that date in point of time. They add much fuller detail to what had already been given in Daniel, but all on the same lines. The *Revelation* does not stand by itself; it is the last in a series of symbolic prophecies very similar to it in style and matter. Each member of the series is perfectly consistent with all the rest, and fits evenly into its place in a harmony of the whole. Everything previously foreshown in Daniel must be, taken for granted, in its matter and its arrangement, before the *Revelation* is approached; and the interpretation of the *Revelation* must harmonize with and fit into all that has gone before.

Objects that from the remote distance of Daniel's day looked like one may be found in the clear light of Gospel times to be two or even three; minor changes in the emblems may be described, corresponding with like changes in the history of the Powers portrayed; but there cannot be any real discrepancies or contradictions between prophecies that all proceed from the same Divine mind, and that have reference to the same general series

of events in the history of the world and of the church.

In the communication of this New Testament prophecy to the Church the Blessed Trinity are concerned. The Three Divine Persons preside over the august assembly in heavenly places before whom the Visions are shown, and who manifest intense anxiety to see and to hear the promised revelations. All heaven is searched for an intelligence worthy to handle the Sealed Book. Note the definiteness of the promise made to St. John by the heavenly voice: "Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must come to pass hereafter"; and then his deep longing and emotion as he awaited its fulfilment. What new and abundant disclosures of the coming future might he not expect, in the clearer light and richer bounty of the Gospel dispensation? Note further the grandeur, the exceeding elaborateness, the fulness of detail, of the symbolizations themselves. There is everything, in short, to stir the largest expectations, and to impress the momentous importance and significance of the revelations to follow.

Now are heaven and earth thus moved, merely to communicate vague generalities as to the progress of Christ's Gospel, the growth and trials of His Church, the wickedness of the world, the judgments on the earth and its inhabitants, and other such like things? All this, and more too, had already been revealed in many a Scripture of the Old Testament as well as of the New; and if this is really all that these Apocalyptic Visions are meant to convey, this magnificent New Testament prophecy becomes almost no revelation at all. St. John might well have wept after beholding the Visions as well as before, at the disappointment of his hopes. But it is impossible to rest satisfied with these vague and generalizing applications, when the Visions themselves are seen to be so grand, so definite, and so full of symbolic detail.

THE REVELATION.

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ." The Book is the unveiling which Jesus Christ gives, a revelation of which He is the Author and Source. It contains not an arbitrary selection of events, but an orderly and continuous narrative in symbol, intended, like the Visions of Daniel, to be a Divine help to the church; given by God the Father to the Lord Jesus Christ (compare Rev. i. 1, and v. 7) to be shown to His servants, that they might know of "the things which must shortly come to pass." It is intended to nerve His warriors, to arm them for the battle, and to lead them to victory. Its noble purpose is to form the characters, guide the steps, maintain the faith, and inspire the courage of those who were to pass through flood and flame to glory and immortality; to make the saints and martyrs who were to share its triumphs and wear its crowns. It is a revelation, not a mystery, though in symbolical language. Such prophecies are simply history written beforehand, and in hieroglyphics or cypher, which conceal while revealing, and reveal while concealing, but which are gradually made plain as the time of their accomplishment draws near.

The events of the future are represented as written in a Roll of a Book, held in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, and then taken by the Lamb, and gradually opened by Him. This is to mark them as all preordained in the eternal counsels, and then as made known by the Lord Jesus Christ to His church, in this great Gospel-prophecy, which is described as "the Word of God" and "the testimony of Jesus Christ."

The form of the Book was that of a Roll, a form common amongst the Romans, and almost universal for the sacred books among the Jews. The back of the Roll was not left blank, but was seen by St. John to have writing upon it, besides the writing that was within. It is

natural to suppose that the writing without was supplemental to or explanatory of the writing within. In a human composition such writing on the back would be caused by an unexpected redundancy of matter, or by some additional explanation being required, or by having to rectify some accidental omission; but in an inspired prophecy all is premeditated and of set purpose, supplemental or explanatory matter being placed on the outside of the Roll, opposite to the parts within that have to be amplified or explained; the additional matter being thus supplied in its proper place, yet not so as to interrupt the progress of what is recorded within.

The Roll was sealed down with seven seals, all of which were visible on the outside, and were so arranged that they could be opened in succession, and no more of the contents be disclosed than belonged to that particular seal.

History in Symbol.

It may be understood that actual history was written in the Roll, with names, dates, and all details, the whole of this being known beforehand to Him Who sees the end from the beginning. (Compare Dan. x. 21: "I will tell thee that which is inscribed in the writing of truth"; that is, in the Book in which God has inscribed beforehand, as truly as they will be fulfilled, the destinies of mankind.) As each separate portion was unrolled—not before the world, but in the heaven of God's presence—St. John was made to see a corresponding symbolical Vision, representing in scriptural and local symbol, in divine hieroglyphics, the events recorded in the corresponding portion of the Roll. St. John is nowhere represented as seeing or reading what was written in the Book itself, but only as seeing and hearing what took place on the scene before him, as each Seal was opened, or Trumpet sounded, or Vial poured out.

The Visions themselves form a grand prophetic drama, in orderly succession, of the chief eras and events in the history of the world and of the church, from the date of the Vision, or near it, up to and beyond the Second Advent of our Lord. What St. John sees as each Seal is opened is not something in the Roll itself, but action on the stage of the Vision; and all that he saw or heard he wrote down, in Patmos (Rev. i. 11; x. 4; xxii. 10). Hence the Book of *Revelation* had no existence as a Book till the last Vision had been shown to St. John and recorded by him. Did he write seven copies of it, one for each of the seven churches of Asia, to whom he was told to send it; or was the one copy circulated among them all? Be this as it may, the Book is simply a record of past Visions, significant of things to come, and all seen in or from heaven (Rev. iv. 1), by St. John while he was in the mental condition of exaltation and rapture described as "in the Spirit" (Rev. iv. 2; and compare Dan. viii. 18; x. 9; 2 Cor. xii. 3, 4).

A Book of Signs.

There is no reason to believe that St. John himself fully understood the meaning of his Visions, any more than the Old Testament prophets fully understood the meaning of all the prophecies delivered through them (Dan. vii. 28; viii. 27; xii. 8; 1 Pet. i. 10–12). He simply wrote down accurate descriptions, stating faithfully and truly what he saw and heard, all that was shown to him, that he might transmit it to us; and the utmost that a literal interpretation can do is to tell us as precisely as possible what he actually saw, to give us the most exact particulars of Vision and emblem; in short, to place us in the position of the Seer himself, at the time when the Visions were being seen by him.

But that does not explain them; it only puts them

truly and clearly before our minds. They are still signs and symbols; they still await interpretation. Of course our first step must be to ascertain as accurately as possible what signs and symbols were seen; but then comes the important question: What do these signs and symbols mean? If should be remembered, moreover, that literal and symbolical are not seldom intermixed in such prophecies as these, and therefore that careful attention will have to be paid in order to distinguish the one from the other.

Sir Isaac Newton lays it down as a principle, that for understanding the prophecies we are in the first place to acquaint ourselves with the figurative language of the prophets. This is taken from the analogy between the world natural, and an empire and kingdom considered as a world politic.

The prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse being symbolic in their language are not to be interpreted literally. In these books the sun, moon, stars, earth, fire, meteors, winds, storms, lightning, hail, rain, waters, sea, rivers, floods, dry land, overflowing of waters, drying up of waters, fountains, islands, trees, mountains, wilderness, beasts, as the lion, bear, leopard, goat, with their horns, heads, feet, wings, teeth, etc., are all symbolic; they are symbols of things of a different nature, though things analogous to these, or in some sense resembling them.

On this principle the Two Witnesses of Revelation xi. are symbolic, and do not represent two actual men from whose mouth literal fire proceeds, and who literally shut heaven, and literally turn waters to blood, and smite the earth with literal plagues, and who are slain and lie dead for three and a half literal days, and then literally rise from the dead, and literally and visibly ascend to heaven in a cloud; nor is their ascension followed by a literal earthquake, and a literal fall of the tenth part of a literal city, and by literal lightnings, voices, thunderings and hail.

All these are symbols of other things, and the first step in the direction of the comprehension of these prophecies is the consistent recognition of their symbolic character. A sufficient number of these symbols are divinely interpreted for us, to serve as a clue to all the rest. The second step to a comprehension of symbolic prophecy is the settlement of the meaning of the various symbols.

Clues to Their Meaning: "Star."

Several important and suggestive clues are given in the Book itself, guiding to the right interpretation of the symbolism; just as our Lord's explanation of some of His parables was intended to put the disciples on the right track in interpreting the rest. Thus He tells St. John (Rev. i. 20) that "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches." These "angels," whether human beings or angelic, are the chief and responsible rulers of the seven churches. In this connexion a star is an ecclesiastical ruler. In another connexion a star would as naturally mean a civil ruler; thus the eleven stars in Joseph's dream represented the heads of eleven of the Tribes of Israel. In Balaam's prophecy our Lord is "A star out of Jacob"; and He Himself says, in this Book, "I am the bright and morning star." The star of Bethlehem was the symbol of the King of the Jews.

Whenever, then, we meet with stars in these Visions—which is often—we have our Lord's own authority for understanding them to represent rulers of some kind. But if the stars undoubtedly be symbols, then also the other heavenly bodies, so often symbolically introduced into these Visions, must have a like symbolic meaning—the sun, the moon, the firmament in which they all shine, even the earth below over which they shed their light. The sun, moon, stars and heaven that St. John gazed at, stretched out above the landscape below, fitly represented the governing powers, imperial and subordinate, ruling over the inhabitants of the Roman earth. The darkening of those luminaries meant the diminution or the total loss of power, majesty and authority. The falling of some to the earth meant their dethronement, their being cast down from their high positions in the social system, and their being reduced to the same level as the ordinary inhabitants of the earth. The rolling away of the whole firmamental heaven represented a great revo-

lution, by which the existing governmental system was removed, so that another should take its place.

"Candlestick."

Again, our Lord says that "the seven candlesticks are the seven churches." A candlestick, then, represents a church, and so we may interpret the symbol elsewhere in the Visions.

But if this one piece of Tabernacle or Temple furniture be a symbol, we may seek a like symbolic meaning in the other articles of furniture or emblems from the Tabernacle or Temple—the Ark, the Altars, the Inner and Outer Courts; even in the buildings themselves, in the Tribes that worship therein, and the Gentiles or nations that tread its Outer Court.

"Waters."

The waters that St. John saw were explained by the Angel (Rev. xvii. 15) to mean or represent peoples, not literal waters. Then we may in like manner interpret rivers and waters elsewhere in these Visions, and in similar prophecies. "The roaring of the sea and of the billows" (Luke xxi. 25) will mean popular risings and tumults, on such an unwonted scale as to cause men's hearts to fail for fear.

But if there be this symbolical meaning in one of the natural features of the landscape, why not also in others; in the hills and mountains down which the waters flow, the valleys through which they wind, and the islands they surround? If the waters and the valleys lying level or low represent the people at large, then hills and mountains that arise above them represent those who are above the rest in social position or social authority; and the islands represent institutions or organizations in some social way marked off from the rest, though

standing in their midst. (See Rev. xvii. 9, 10, where "Heads" are also "Mountains" and "Kings.") So likewise earthquakes that shake those mountains and hills and islands, and move them from their places and overthrow them, are a symbol of some form of revolution; and storms and tempests that drive over the scene fitly represent some form of foreign invasion.

History Explains the Symbols.

Besides the above, as large portions of the prophecies of Daniel are already fulfilled, a number of the symbols have been explained by their historical accomplishments, and these explanations will serve as a safe guide to the meaning of like emblems met with in the *Revelation*. Yet further, if it be found that a great part of the Revelation itself is now fulfilled, then the historic explanations of that part will guide with certainty to the meaning of the remainder, as far as it is possible for us to discover it.

In all this we have a great advantage over the Christians of the earlier centuries. They could only conjecture as to the future; whereas we have many centuries of history recorded, by which to test our interpretations. If we accept the principle, that the Visions of the *Revelation* form a continuous symbolical history of events throughout the Christian era, then our interpretation of those Visions must recognize and agree with the general course of those events; and in the historic records of those events, in the pages of standard historians, we have the material for checking our interpretations.

Christian Meaning of the Jewish Emblems.

The opening Vision (Rev. i.) was that of a sacred chamber, like that of the Jewish sanctuary, and with

like furniture; and in it Christ, the Head of the Christian church, in the character of the Jewish High Priest, walked amid the golden candlesticks. The candlesticks or lampstands are no longer one, with several branches, representing the one church of the old dispensation, but seven, separate and distinct, grouped together, yet each complete in itself. They represent the seven Asiatic churches, as is explained by our Lord Himself, and this prepares the way for a similar application of other Jewish emblems to the Christian church.

The Epistle to the Hebrews had taught that all the furniture and ordinances of the Tabernacle were a shadow of heavenly things, of spiritual realities connected with the true church of Christ; and St. Paul had appropriated to Gentile Christians the name and privileges of the seed of Abraham, and various terms such as temple, sacrifice, offering, figuratively and in a Christian sense. The Gentiles are included in the new Israel (Eph. i. 13). The symbolism of the Visions of the *Revelation* is governed by the same principles.

In the Epistles to the Seven Churches, dictated by our Lord Himself, christianized Jewish figures and appellations are frequently introduced, preparing St. John for a like Christian meaning of the Jewish names and emblems in the sequel.

The New Jerusalem is described as the mother city of all true Christians; on its gates are the names of the Twelve Tribes, and through these gates all the redeemed go in and out. If inanimate Jewish symbols are to bear a Christian meaning, it would be plainly inconsistent not to give a Christian meaning also to the Jewish personal names met with in the *Revelation*.

The witnessing and suffering saints are described as those who "overcame because of the blood of the Lamb," who "hold the testimony of Jesus," who "keep the faith of Jesus," and are "the martyrs, [or witnesses]

of Jesus," slain "for the testimony of Jesus." Who could these be but Christian people? But these are the saints, sufferers and conquerors in the prophetic portion of this Book. It must therefore be a Christian prophecy, relating to the experiences of the Christian church, militant and triumphant. In Revelation xiv. 3, 4, the 144,000 are described as redeemed "from *the earth*," "from *among men*," and not from the literal Israel only.

MAIN DIVISIONS.

The main divisions of the Book of the Revelation are the following. There is first an Introductory Vision, in which our Lord appears to His beloved disciple in Patmos, on the Lord's Day, and dictates to him messages to each of the seven churches of Asia Minor. The Lord is speaking continuously throughout the whole of these first three chapters; there is no break between chapter i. and chapter ii. or between chapter ii. and chapter iii. The division of the chapters in our Bibles is apt to mislead, and to give the idea of interruption or separation where none exists.

"The Things Which Are."

These Seven Messages or Epistles, spoken by our Lord while still addressing His beloved disciple, are a description of "the things which are" (Rev. i. 19), and the portraits are of universal application. Seven typical and representative churches embody the broadest and commonest features of the Church, in its faithfulness or its unfaithfulness. The seven make up a complex whole, and possess an ideal completeness, representing the state of things then existing, and existing at almost any epoch in the history of the Church universal.

No succession of seven periods is intimated; not a word is said by the Lord as to any such prospective meaning. Everything in this opening Vision marks

simultaneousness, not succession. All is still; there is no movement whatever, except of the Lord Himself amid the golden candlesticks. The seven candlesticks are seen at the same instant; they do not come on one by one, and pass before the eyes of St. John. The seven churches are named in the same breath. How different are the Visions that follow! There all is movement and succession, because representing the course of events in actual history.

It is to be noticed that the titles used by our Lord in addressing the various churches are taken from the description of His appearing in the opening Vision; and that there is a close correspondence between the promises to conquerors in any of the churches, and the blessings of the Saviour's reign as described in the closing chapters. Thus there is a dramatic unity maintained throughout the whole Book of the *Revelation*.

"Things Hereafter."

The Visions that follow, from Revelation iv. onwards, are separated with the utmost precision from what precedes. The Voice of the Lord, who had been communing with St. John, ceased; a door opened in heaven, and a new voice summoned St. John to enter through that door. Doubtless this was the voice of the Angel spoken of in Revelation i. 1; xxii. 6, 16; by whom the Lord sent and signified these wonders unto His servant John. This is the Angel whom, at the close of the Visions, St. John was about to worship, but was rebuked and bid to worship God (Rev. xxii. 8, 9). The presence of this revealing angel is implied even where not expressed.

On hearing the summons, St. John was again "in the Spirit"; he seemed to enter at the door, and a new scene, a new world in heavenly glory, burst upon his view. He is lifted to a higher level, whence he can survey things in their true proportion and relation. The

scene is described in chapters iv. and v.; and then the prophetic action, the symbolic representation of coming events, begins at chapter vi. The first five chapters are of the nature of an introduction to the prophetic Visions themselves.

Dramatic Representation.

This great Revelation of the coming future was unfolded in dramatic representation. As each portion of the Roll was opened out, or as each section of the Revelation was proclaimed, the historical matter of that portion was visibly acted out on the scene before St. John, and he wrote down for us what he thus saw or heard.

It is a grand drama. Heaven and earth supply the scenery and the actors. A large and complicated subject was to be represented; the secular and ecclesiastical history of Christendom, events often mingling with each other; the great political revolutions and changes in the Roman world, with the agencies that effected them, from without or from within; the outward fortunes of the professing Christian church, and the corruptions of doctrine and worship; the separation, sufferings, faith and triumph of the true spiritual church of God. How difficult to represent all this, to mark the due connexion of events, and to keep the proper unity of effect! Yet it is done.

THE APOCALYPTIC SCENERY AND SYMBOLS.

There is no connected description of the Apocalyptic scenery in detail, but as the Visions proceed it is incidentally noticed, and may be gathered and put together from them. The main features of the landscape, the Temple, Mount Zion, the Great City, etc., remain fixed and permanent on the scene; they form the standing scenery of the drama, and give connexion and unity

to the whole. Other features, symbols and personifications are introduced and perform their parts as the representations advance. The eye of the Apostle is directed now to this and now to that feature or locality of the general scene, and many important points in the interpretation are made clear by careful attention to the particular scenery under observation at that moment.

The following is a brief summary and explanation of the principal symbols employed in these Visions.

SYMBOL:	REPRESENTING:
A Temple, which remains stationary in the foreground throughout the Visions. No doubt it resembled Herod's Temple, which was standing when our Lord was on earth, and which was well-known to St. John.	**The Christian Church** generally, as to its worship; that Church which is "the house of the living God." Here the worshippers are specified, as well as the local scene of worship, making distinct the intention of the symbol.
Scenes in the **Holy of Holies,** where was the throne of Jehovah, and the blessed company attendant around it. The throne did not appear in open space, but within the inclosure of the Temple Sanctuary; and before it was spread the glassy sea, like crystal (Rev. ix. 13; xi. 19; xv. 5; xvi. 17. Compare Isa. vi. 1).	Doings of **The Saints who are with Christ above.** In the Most Holy Place was that part of the Church already with Christ, the spirits of the just made perfect.

There was no veil separating the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place in this symbolic building. The Veil of the Temple had been rent in twain at Christ's death, and the way made open into the Holiest; and these Visions, as well as that of Isaiah vi. have reference to Christian times. What passed in the one chamber as well as in the other was visible to St. John, who was so placed as to command a view of the sanctuary within and without.

Scenes	
in the **Holy Place** where was the golden altar of incense (Rev. viii. 3; ix. 13); and the seven burning lamps (iv. 5). This part of the Jewish Temple was accessible only to the priest.	**The Saints and their spiritual worship on earth, as seen by their great High Priest.** This represents the state of the Churches, as seen by the eyes not of man, but of Him that seeth in secret.
SYMBOL:	REPRESENTING:
In the **Temple Court** was the scene of the worship of the citizens of the Holy City. In it stood the brazen altar of sacrifice (Rev. vi. 9). Worship goes on during the Visions (see Rev. xi. 1).	**What was publicly seen by man in the Christian worship.** This part of the symbolic Temple represents the true Church Visible, in respect of its visible and public worship. Not only Christ's true spiritual believers, but the true visible church including them; that part of the church visible which adhered to the true and divinely-instituted form of worship typified by the altar of sacrifice.

The **Outer Court,** or Court of the Gentiles (Rev. xi. 1, 2). In Herod's Temple, with which St. John was familiar, it was fenced off by the "middle wall of partition."	**Formal Professors.** Members from out of heathenism, who had called themselves Christians, and had been formally enrolled into the body of the New Testament Israel, and admitted to free communion with the Altar Court; yet ere long had forsaken true Christian worship, and apostatized to heathenism. Their complete and recognized apostasy was marked by their being shut out from the Court of Israel (Rev. xi. 2). They are at length solemnly denounced by the angel, and the order for their exclusion is given accordingly to St. John.
SYMBOL:	REPRESENTING:
Mount Zion and the Holy City (Rev. xi. 2; xiv. 1). The Temple and Mount Zion seemed raised high above the earth, yet not detached from it. The Throne in the Holy of	**The Saints as a Polity or Citizenship,** with Christ their Head, are represented by the Lamb with His 144,000 on Mount Zion. The mountain stands on earth, but its

Holies was said to be in heaven, yet the Outer Court was accessible to the inhabitants of earth, and the Holy City could be trodden by them.

The Roman Landscape and its Great City. A miniature view beneath stretching far and wide, and showing the four quarters of the Roman earth, with its inland sea, its frontier rivers, and other notable features, and with its seven-hilled City as Metropolis (Rev. xvii. 9, 18).

The Firmamental Heaven.

Sun, Moon, and Stars.

top is toward heaven. They are in the world, but not of it; their citizenship is in heaven.

The Roman World and its inhabitants, as distinguished from the saints; the earth being the fit emblem of those who in heart dwelt only on earth (Rev. xiii. 3).

The Place of Political or other Elevation (Luke x. 15).

The Governing Powers. The Sun is the Supreme Ruler; the Moon may present the imperial authority of the realm viewed as the allegorical consort of the Supreme Ruler; the Stars are Princes, Nobles, Magistrates, etc., of various ranks.

Here and there care is needed to distinguish the atmospheric and starry heaven, used as a symbol, from the heaven of the Divine presence; but generally this

is clear enough from the context. Thus in Revelation xii. 1–6, the Woman is described as being "in heaven," so is the Dragon, and so is the birth of the Man-child; yet, when born, the Child is "caught up unto God and unto his throne."

SYMBOL:	REPRESENTING:
Waters.	**Peoples.**
Rivers and Floods.	**Peoples in Motion** (Isa. viii. 7, 8; xvii. 12; Jer. i. 13–15; xlvi. 7, 8; li. 42.
Winds, Storms, Overflowing Rivers.	**Foreign Invasions, and the quarter whence they come.**
Earthquakes.	**Revolutions from within.**
St. John himself, acting throughout as a Representative Man. He is always present on the scene, not as a mere spectator or reporter, but in a representative character; himself bearing a share in what is taking place, always with Christian eye and intelligence observing everything, hearing everything, and on certain occasions himself speaking and acting an important part in the great prophetic drama.	**Actings of the Apostles' lineal descendants in the same most holy faith.** What was seen, heard, or done by St. John in these Visions, represented what should be seen, heard, or done in actual history, at such epoch as the Vision foreshowed, by the faithful disciples of that epoch. The Views he received from time to time represented the light to be given to the true Church, on the points in question, at each particular era.

As the Visions proceed, other signs and symbols occur, such as a Woman, a Man-child, a Harlot, etc. In one of Daniel's Visions a great empire is represented as a Metal, in another as a Wild Beast, in a third as a Domestic Animal. So in these Visions Christ's true Church is represented by more than one symbol, by part of the Temple, by a Woman, etc. All these will be explained in their proper places.

The eye is directed now to one part of the scene, now to another; from the earth to the open Altar-Court of the symbolic Temple; to the earth again, and then to the Throne in the Holy of Holies; and so on continually, from one symbol to another. Most careful attention must be paid to all these changes of scene and symbol, if we would rightly interpret any particular Vision.

There must also in every case be definite and consistent interpretation of these most definite symbols, and of their distinctive features; and all the symbolism described in each case must be taken into account in the explanation. Less than this may not be done with a prophecy recognized as inspired.

The Chief Apocalyptic Scenery and Symbols.

SYMBOL:	REPRESENTING:
A Temple,	**The Christian Church** as to its worship.
Scenes in the **Holy of Holies** (Throne, Glassy Sea, Ark),	Doings of **the Saints who are with Christ,** in heaven.
No Veil, because **in Christian times.**	
Scenes in the **Holy Place** (Golden Altar, Seven Lamps)	Doings of **the Saints, and their Spiritual Worship on Earth,** as seen by Christ.
Scenes in the **Temple Court,** (Brazen Altar of Sacrifice),	**What was publicly seen** by men in Christian Worship.
In the **Outer Court** (of Gentiles),	**Formal Professors.**
On **Mount Zion,** with its Holy City,	**The Saints as a Polity** or citizenship. Christ their Head.
Roman Landscape, and its Great City,	**The Roman World** and inhabitants.
Firmamental Heaven,	**The Place of Political Elevation.**
Sun, Moon, Stars,	**The Governing Powers.**
Waters,	**Peoples.**
Rivers and Floods,	**Peoples in Motion.**
Winds, Storms, Rivers that overflow,	**Foreign Invasions,** and whence they come.
Earthquakes,	**Revolutions** from within.
St. John acting as a **Representative Man,**	**Actings of** the true Apostolic line of **Disciples,** at the times prefigured.

Others Symbols are used as the Visions proceed.

STARTING-POINT OF ST. JOHN'S VISIONS.

The Vision of the Image, in Daniel ii., has shown the Fourth or Roman Empire, first in unity and strength; then weakened by the introduction of a principle of division; and then further as divided into separate contemporary kingdoms, in which last condition it continues down to the end.

The next Vision, that of the Four Beasts, in Daniel vii., has given fuller detail as to the third or separated condition of that Fourth Empire, and as to the Power that was to rise amid the separated kingdoms, and to continue among them to the end.

Now St. John lived in the days of the iron strength of the Fourth or Roman Empire, before any symptom of division had appeared in its constitution; and a prophecy given to him must refer to what was still future when that prophecy was given, whatever be its actual date. Following the analogy of the Visions in Daniel, when we come to the *Revelation* we may accordingly expect much fuller information as to the decline and breaking up of that Fourth or Roman Empire; what led to it, how it began, how it proceeded, and what was the Power that rose up among the separated kingdoms.

But what is the historic starting-point of this grand series of Visions? With what events do they begin? At what date is the first contact between the symbolic history in the Visions, and the actual history in the course of the Roman Empire?

A great historian, Gibbon—who, so far from having any bias in favour of Christianity, was its declared opponent, and knew nothing of Apocalyptic exposition—has undertaken precisely this subject, the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. With philosophic insight he has fixed upon the point of departure for his narrative, and has traced the decline of that once mighty Empire

from that date onwards through the whole course of its decay. The philosophic historian, handling the same general subject as we have reason to believe is treated of in these Visions, makes choice of a certain epoch as the most suitable from which to begin depicting the whole.

We make the experiment of starting from the same point with these emblematic Visions. We lay Vision and history alongside of each other, and we find not only that at the outset the emblems admirably fit the several epochs of decline as they succeeded each other; but also that the whole course of the Visions onward, in their undisturbed order, corresponds in a most remarkable manner with the whole subsequent course of history down to the present day. This holds good for all the grand facts as well as for the lesser ones; for details as well as for general features of both Vision and history. The key fits the lock, in all its complicated wards, and turns easily; must it not be the right one? Must not key and lock have been made for each other?

Add to this that the date of the Book of Revelation, A.D. 96—as now largely accepted—is precisely the commencing date of the period in Roman history to which reference has just been made. The Visions, if this be their real date, are given at the very epoch at which they are to begin to have their accomplishment in the events of the history of Rome.

The accompanying diagram of "The Seven Sealed Roll" displays the whole series of Visions, with the titles of the historic events that they are understood to represent, so far as they have already been fulfilled. References to the chapters are given in the margin.

The Visions run on consecutively and without break, from the First Seal (Rev. vi.) to the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet (Rev. xi.); all this corresponding with the first part of the "Writing Within."

Then comes a retrogression for explanation, ranging parallel with the greater part of the " Writing Within," and occupying three chapters, Revelation xii.–xiv. This retrogression corresponds with the " Writing Without." These three chapters (Rev. xii.–xiv.) are of the nature of a parenthesis, giving necessary explanations as to the rise, character, career and doom of the Powers marked out for judgment under the Seventh Trumpet, as developed in the Seven Vials. The period of the $3\frac{1}{2}$ Times, or 42 Months, or 1,260 Days, intertwines three or four times, and fits the series without and the series within together; and there are other links between the two.

Then the " Writing Within " takes up again at Revelation xv., and runs straight on to the end. The onward course of the Visions of the Within series, which for a time had been suspended, is here resumed, and the judgments of the Seventh Trumpet are developed in the Seven Last Plagues of the Vials.

The structure of the Roll may be illustrated by folding the page lengthwise down the middle; this places the two series of writings within and without the Roll respectively, and brings the " Without " supplements at the back opposite to their corresponding originals " Within." The folded page may then be rolled up from the bottom upwards to the Seven Seals, each of which would be fastened down in its proper place; and as they are opened in their order, a corresponding portion of the Roll will be unrolled.

According to the Continuous Historic exposition of these Visions, we have now for some time been under the Sixth Vial (Rev. xvi. 12–16); and on the one hand we are witnessing the decay and drying up of the Turkish Power; while on the other hand, we are suffering from the operations of the three evil spirits of Infidelity, Popery, and Priestcraft.

THE SEVEN SEALED ROLL.

	WRITING WITHIN.	WRITING WITHOUT.	
		Supplemental.	
REV. VI.	**SEALS.**		
	I. Prosperity. II. Military Despotism. III. Oppressive Taxation. IV. Mortality. V. Martyrs. VI. Heathenism falls: } DECLINE AND FALL OF HEATHEN ROME.		REV. XII.
		Dragon and Woman. War in Heaven. DRAGON CAST OUT. Woman flees to Wilderness.	
VII.	ROME CHRISTIAN. Sealing & Palm-bearing.		
VIII.	VII. Incense-offering.		
	TRUMPETS.		
	ROME CHRISTIAN RAVAGED BY		
	I. Goths II. Vandals. III. Huns. IV. Heruli, &c. } IN WEST. End of West Empire.	River from Dragon's Mouth.	
IX.	V. Saracens. VI. Turks. } IN EAST. Constantinople taken.	Beast from Sea, with Attendant and Image.	XIII.
X., XI.	THE REFORMATION. VII. Era of French Revolution;	Counterview of Christ and His 144,000. HARPERS. I Angel; GOSPEL.	XIV.
	JUDGMENTS ON PAPACY.		
	Supplemental; ⟶		
	⟵		
XV.	**VIALS:** Last Plagues.		
	HARPERS BY GLASSY SEA.		
XVI.	I. Outbreak of evil. II. Judgment on Maritime Power. III. Judgment on Countries of Rhine, Danube, Po. IV. Darkening of Papal Kingdoms. V. Judgment on Popedom. VI. ,, ,, Turk.		
	THREE FROGS.	II Angel; BABYLON FALLEN.	
XVII.	VII. Great Earthquake.	III Angel; WARNING.	
XVIII.	BABYLON DESTROYED.	HARVEST.	
XIX.	Marriage of LAMB.	⟵——VINTAGE.	
	BEAST & KINGS DESTROYED.		
XX.	Satan bound. Millennium. Satan loosed. Gog and Magog.		
XXI.	Great White Throne.		
XXII.	ETERNAL REIGN.		

Note on the Structure of the Revelation.

Are the Seals, Trumpets and Vials Consecutive or Parallel ?

There are three sevenfold groups of Visions—Seven Seals, Seven Trumpets and Seven Vials—all in symbol. Before we begin to study these symbolic Visions in detail and to attempt their interpretation, we have to inquire whether these three groups are intended by the Holy Spirit to be consecutive or to be parallel.

The Seals are obviously consecutive among themselves, being numbered first, second, third, up to the seventh; so are the Trumpets, and so are the Vials. But do these three series come after each other in succession of time, or do they run parallel to one another ? In explaining them, are we to proceed from the Seventh Seal on to the First Trumpet, and from the Seventh Trumpet on to the First Vial, in the order in which they follow each other in the Book itself; or are we to go from the First Seal to the First Trumpet and then to the First Vial, from the Second Seal to the Second Trumpet and Second Vial, and so on ? Are we to treat each of these three series as covering the same general period, and therefore to be explained as running parallel with each other ? Do these three sets—Seals, Trumpets and Vials—together symbolize twenty-one successive historic periods or events; or only seven, each being shown under three aspects ? Are they a prophetic chain of twenty-one links; or three parallel chains, each of seven ?

The question should be investigated simply from the construction, the statements, the internal evidence of the Visions themselves, and apart from any particular system of interpretation—Historicist, Præterist, or Futurist. But the answer to the question will absolutely control the interpretatation; that is—if it be found that the three series are consecutive, then such interpretations as regard them as parallel will have to be abandoned, and *vice versâ*.

That the three series are consecutive, and not parallel, appears from this—that in the earliest series, that of the Seals, there are statements, there are beginnings of things, which require for their development that the Trumpets should in order of time follow the Seals, and not run parallel with them; and that the Vials should likewise follow the Trumpets.

I

Revelation vi. 9–11.—Under the Fifth Seal St. John sees beneath the Altar the souls of martyrs who have been "slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held." He hears their cry for God's vengeance, and how they are bid to wait till another series of martyrs like themselves should also have been slain.

The words addressed to them indicate that there was to be a period of cessation of persecution; then that at some later time the storm was to burst forth again, and another great harvest of martyrs was to be gathered in. Then, but not till then, would the whole number be completed. At the era of the Fifth Seal there has been but one series of martyrs, not two; and there is yet another second series to come.

Now when, and by what hostile Power or Powers, is this second series of martyrs slain? Where in the subsequent Visions are those evil doings recorded? At the era of this Fifth Seal they have not yet been slain, but are still they "which should be killed." Even under the Sixth Seal, Revelation vii. 14, mention is made of some that are still "coming"—not yet all actually come—"out of the great tribulation." Where in the Visions that follow can we discover any slaying of Christian martyrs that will satisfy this prediction made under the Fifth Seal, and on such a scale that the second series shall be comparable to the first?

The first intimation to this effect is found under the Sixth Trumpet (Rev. xi. 7), where St. John is told that the Power represented by the Beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war with Christ's Witnesses, and overcome them and kill them. (These Witnesses are not individuals; they are described (Rev. xi. 4) as "two candlesticks," and our Lord in Revelation i. 20 tells St. John that a candlestick is a church.) The Beast, who is here mentioned for the first time, must have been in existence before the date of the slaying of the Witnesses, and must have had time before then to grow to his maturity and strength, and to such a position of authority as enables him to war upon Christ's Witnesses and to slay them.

In Revelation xii. 17, xiii. the Dragon is said to go away in wrath "to make war with the rest of the woman's seed, which keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus." For this purpose he evokes a Beast from the sea, and gives him "his power, and his throne, and great authority." This Beast makes war with the saints, and overcomes them. There is good reason for believing that the Beast from the abyss

and the Beast from the sea are one and the same, see (page 427). This Beast is aided by a subordinate, a second Beast, who makes the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first Beast, and to make an Image to him. To this Image the second Beast gives breath, so that it speaks, and causes all that refuse to worship the Image to be killed. All this is of course later in point of time than the rise of the first Beast.

Again, under the Seventh Vial (Rev. xvi. 19) after the great earthquake and the tripartition of the great city, Babylon the Great is "remembered" for judgment. Previous to this she has had a long and triumphant career; so long, that it has seemed as if God had forgotten her; so evil as now to call for a specially awful judgment. She has been engaged in a savage warfare against the martyrs or witnesses of Jesus, and now St. John sees her not drinking but drunken with their blood. The drinking is past; only its intoxicating effects now remain.

Here then is what will account for a second series of martyrs, later than that first series mentioned under the Fifth Seal. These, the second series of Christian martyrs, are slain at the instigation of the Dragon, by his creature the Beast, by the Beast's Assistant and the Image, and by the Woman Babylon, who rides on the Beast. The triumphant career of these Powers, which results in the second series of martyrs, is later than the era of the Fifth Seal, and even of the sixth, and belongs to the era of the Trumpets.

When we come to the Vials, in Revelation xvi., we find them described as the last or terminal Plagues, fulfilling or completing the wrath of God. But the very first of these Vials brings "a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and which worshipped his image." The rise and growth of the Beast must precede his attainment of wide influence; his career must precede his doom; and the worship rendered to him and to his Image must precede the execution of judgment on his worshippers. Therefore all that has been described as to the rise of these Beasts, and as to the making of the Image, must be earlier in date than the era of this First Vial. Before this era the martyrs of the second series have been slain; and under the Third Vial the Angel and the Altar look back to the shedding of their blood along the course of the rivers and fountains of waters, and recognize the retributive justice of this judgment. At the era of the Fifth Seal they were still to be slain; at the era of the Third Vial they have been slain, and judgment is being executed on their murderers. All through the era of the Vials, the Dragon, the Beast, and his subordinate

the False Prophet, remain on the scene, and are beheld there by St. John making their final efforts (Rev. xvi. 13). But they are no longer triumphant; even the very first of the Vials brings judgment on the Beasts' constituents.

Therefore, the course of the history of this second series of martyrs requires that the Trumpets should come after the Seals, and should go before the Vials.

II

Revelation vii. 1-3.—The whole of this seventh chapter belongs to the Sixth Seal. The modern chapter divisions here and elsewhere are most unfortunate, suggesting separation of subject where there is none.

Under the Sixth Seal St. John sees four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, ready to let slip tempests over earth and sea and trees; but they are temporarily restrained by another angel, while an elect number of individuals are being sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel.

The Sealing having been accomplished for which the four Tempest-Angels were for a while restrained, when do these execute their mission, by letting devastation ravage the territories under their control? Clearly, under the Trumpets. The Trumpet-Angels only sound the signals for each of the threatened judgments; they do not themselves execute those judgments. That work belongs to the four Tempest-Angels, who are let loose for it when the Sealing had been finished.

Their career lasts through the first five Trumpets, and at the close of the judgment of the Fifth Trumpet they are bound at the great river Euphrates. Then they are loosed again for the execution of the judgment of the Sixth Trumpet. In this case the Angel of the Sixth Trumpet not only sounds the signal, but also is bid to let those four Angels loose again (Rev. ix. 14).

They had at first been restrained for a while; then they had executed judgments on land and sea; then they had been stayed, and bound at Euphrates; and finally they are loosed again for the judgments of the Sixth Trumpet.

Thus, to allow for the career of those four Tempest-Angels, the era of the Trumpets must follow that of the Sixth Seal.

III

Revelation vii. 4.—Under the Sixth Seal St. John sees certain chosen ones being sealed with God's seal upon their foreheads,

and so being marked off and distinguished in His sight from the rest of the inhabitants of the earth amongst whom they dwell, and upon whom judgments are about to be executed by the four Tempest-Angels mentioned in verse 1.

Passing on to the Fifth Trumpet (Rev. ix. 4) these same Sealed ones are seen amongst the inhabitants of the earth who are ravaged by the Locusts; and the Locusts are bid to hurt none but those upon whom that sacred mark is not to be seen: "And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only such men as have not the seal of God on their foreheads."

Therefore the era of this Fifth Trumpet must be later than the era of the Sealing, which belongs to the Sixth Seal.

IX

THE DECLINE OF HEATHEN ROME

FIRST FIVE SEALS: Rev. vi. 1–11.

The First Six Seals.

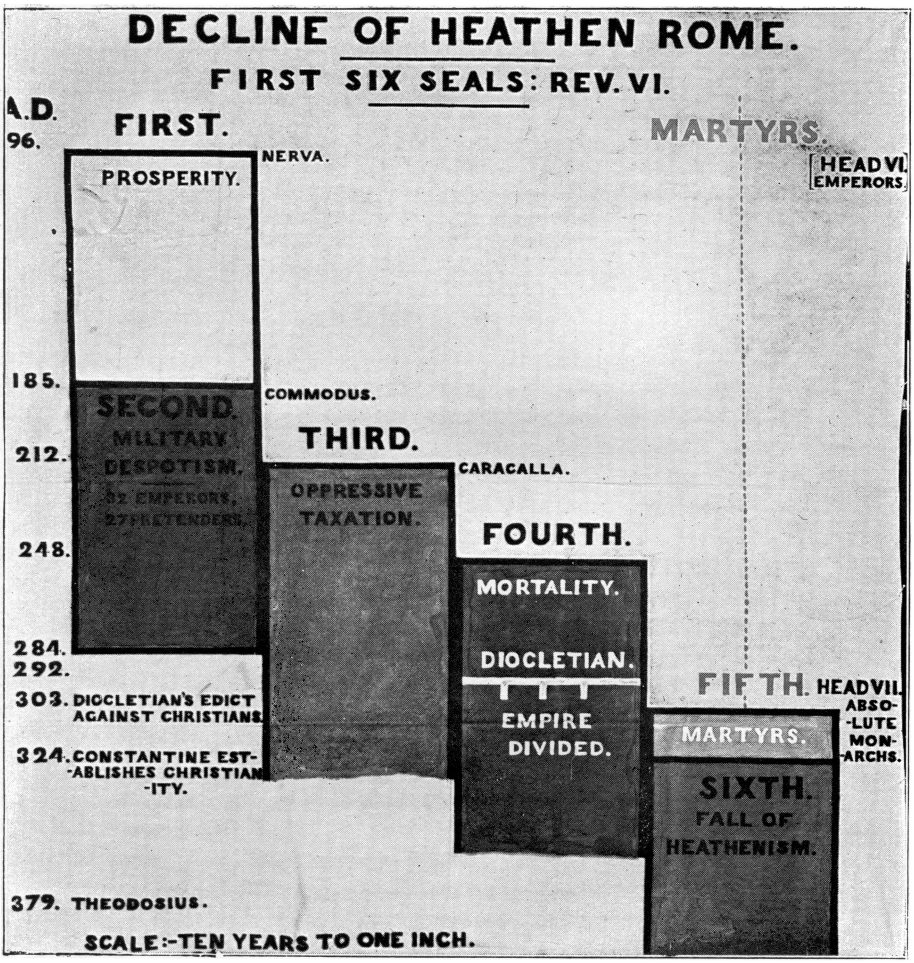
THE general subject of the first six Seals is the temporary prosperity of the empire of heathen Rome, and then its decline and fall, before the power of Christianity. It is a subject of grand dimensions and of the deepest interest; for we know how strong, solid, and united was the widespreading Roman Empire, yet now we see its Western area covered by a number of separate and independent kingdoms. How came this to pass? It was all heathen; now these kingdoms are by profession Christian. When and how was the change brought about?

These first Visions describe the beginning of the breaking up, the causes that led to the dissolution of the unity of the empire of heathen Rome. They show how the restraining power, spoken of by St. Paul in 2 Thessalonians ii. 6–8 as the hindrance to the development of the "Man of Sin," was gradually weakened; until it was actually "taken out of the way," and room was thus made for that "mystery of lawlessness" to be "revealed in his own time."

On the Great Image, which is the basis of all orderly prophetical knowledge, the period of the first six Seals is the transition from the iron legs to the feet of iron

DECLINE OF HEATHEN ROME.

FIRST SIX SEALS: REV. VI.



SCALE:-TEN YEARS TO ONE INCH.

and earthenware; that is, from the lower part of the shin down to the instep.

These Visions describe not only the events and changes as they followed one upon another, but also the causes of the changes, and the outward symptoms they produced. The first four short Visions contain the very spirit of the history of Rome for the next two centuries after St. John, up to the memorable year A.D. 292, when the unity of the Empire was practically dissolved. These epochs thus pictured, and the new agencies for good or evil then introduced, so bore on the decline and fall of the heathen Roman Empire, that no philosophic history of this period could omit them, or any one of them; nor does the philosophic treatment of the facts of the period require the introduction of any more.

Under the Fifth Seal, with quite different imagery, there was pictured another era and another cause, bearing on the overthrow of the dominion and religion of heathen Rome yet more strongly and directly than any before. It is the fit introduction to the Sixth Seal, which prefigured that overthrow.

THE EMBLEMS OF THE FIRST FOUR SEALS.

A Horse is the prominent emblem in the first four Seals. It represents a nation. Heathen empires are symbolized in Scripture not only as wild beasts, their emblems in their persecuting character; but also as domesticated animals, with reference to their national history and characteristics. Thus in Daniel vii. Medo-Persia is represented by a Bear, and Greece of the era of Alexander the Great by a flying Leopard; but in Daniel viii. Persia is represented by a Ram, and Macedonian Greece by an He-Goat. The intent of these symbols is plainly stated in the Vision itself, and the animals are well-known emblems of those two empires.

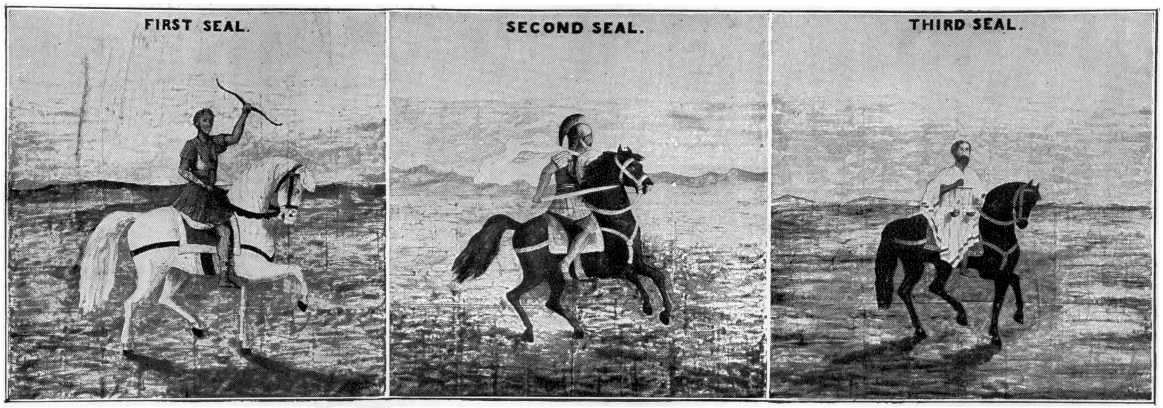
So far as these two symbolic animals are concerned, that Vision has had its fulfilment in the conflict between Macedonian Greece and Persia, and in the overthrow of the latter by Alexander the Great. All this, so graphically portrayed in the Vision, is now ancient history; there is no doubt as to the meaning of those emblems, for history has settled it.

Now if one domesticated animal, the Ram, represent the Medo-Persian Empire; and if another such animal, the He-Goat, represent the Greek-Macedonian Empire; why may not another domesticated animal, the Horse, also represent an empire, and that the Roman, especially when the Roman war-horse is found so abundantly as a national emblem on Roman coins? Thus we obtain a valuable and trustworthy clue to the meaning of the Horse in the first four Seals; it represents the Roman Empire of that era. As a military power, Rome is represented by the war-horse; as a persecuting heathen power, by other symbolizations.

Four Horses and Horsemen in succession pass over the landscape of the Roman world, to which they have reference. Horse and Horseman together form one composite symbol, which must be interpreted consistently throughout all the four Seals; making due allowance for the differences of colour and for other changing details as the Visions proceed. What Horse and Horseman are in the first Seal, that they must be also, however modified, in the second Seal, and in the third, and in the fourth.

The Colours.

The colour of the Horses—white, red, black, and then livid—represent in succession the outward symptoms which the Roman body politic would visibly display; from a condition of high health and prosperity, down to one of mortal dissolution.



THE FIRST THREE SEALS.

The Riders.

The Riders, who direct the Horses, are the causes of those symptoms, the agents or agencies by whom, during the particular epoch in question, the Roman body politic would be thus acted on and influenced. Each Rider bore, or had given to him, some distinctive badge of his class, to prevent mistake as to the particular agent or agency in each case intended. It should be remembered that these symbols have a corporate meaning; as the Horse represents a nation, so does the Rider represent not an individual, but a collective body, class, or series of individuals of the kind represented.

THE FIRST SEAL: Rev. vi. 1, 2.

As the first Seal was opened by the Lamb, there was heard a loud call from one of the four living creatures, in obedience to which a White Horse came forth. This indicated, for the Empire represented by the Horse, the opening of a new era, an era of political health, prosperity and triumph. White was the chosen colour for the horses used by Roman generals in their triumphs, and still more by Roman Emperors; and here it implied that the empire would for a time be "unstained by civil blood," "undisturbed by revolution." It is in contrast with the red of the second Seal, and the black of the third; and it signified that prosperity, long unknown, was now to spring up, and to continue for some considerable time, within the empire.

The Rider represents the whole series of reigning emperors throughout this white era.[1] It was the established law and custom in Rome to refer the victories of subordinate commanders to the reigning emperor himself, under whose auspices they had been gained. To

[1] It will be noticed that he has none of the marks of Deity, as in Revelation x. 1; xiv. 14; xix. 11.

one conversant as was St. John with the Roman customs of the age, these emblems of the first Seal could scarcely but have suggested the idea of a Roman Emperor speeding forth to victory.

"*He that sat thereon had a bow.*" The Rider had the bow before the crown was given unto him. The bow was pre-eminently a Cretan weapon and a Cretan badge; and when pictured emblematically in the hand of a European warrior, it would mean that he was of Cretan origin. Besides much other evidence to this effect, there is extant a Greek epitaph, dating from about a century before Christ, which gives a list of emblems and their explanations, one of them being a bow. A magpie sculptured on the tombstone would mark the talkativeness of the person whose epitaph it was; a cup, her being addicted to drink; some wool, her diligence in domestic work; a bow, that she was a Cretan.

Crown, not Diadem.

"*There was given unto him a crown.*" A crown, not a diadem. The "Crown," at the date of these Visions, was simply a wreath of laurel leaves encircling the head, as may be seen on many a Roman medal, coin, or sculpture of those times.[1] Whereas the "diadem," an Oriental badge, was originally a bandage decked with pearls, worn round the head; but by increase of size, and by the addition of gold and gems, it has grown into what is now called a crown, the emblem of sovereignty in Europe, stamped upon much of its coinage. The distinction between the "crown" and the "diadem" is carefully observed in these Visions, and is of great importance in their interpretation, in regard to the date of the particular era symbolized.

[1] In Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, under "*Asiarchæ*," there is a good representation of Commodus, with the laurel crown.

The " crown," or laurel wreath, was the badge of earthly conquest and of imperial supremacy ; and from the time of Augustus (B.C. 29), the wearing of the crown was all but withdrawn from subordinate generals as too great an honour. From the accession of Domitian (A.D. 81), it was appropriated to the reigning emperor as his own proper distinction.

Not till the time of Diocletian (A.D. 292) was the " diadem " adopted by Roman Emperors, this innovation being accompanied with other tokens of Oriental royalty. The change marked an epoch in Roman history ; for thenceforward, but not till then, the diadem became the imperial badge, for a century or more conjointly with the laurel crown, and then alone.

So that for the sixth century it would be an anachronism to represent the laurel crown as a badge of empire on a royal head ; but much more would it be an anachronism to represent a Roman emperor of the first two and a half centuries as wearing a diadem, that emblem not having yet come in.

" *There was given unto him.*" This signifies the beginning of the rule of a new line of emperors, under whom the symbolic colour of the Roman Horse would be white.

" *He came forth.*" An emperor's setting forth to war was an occasion usually taken by the Senate to express their good wishes and their auguries of success ; and in token thereof, medals were struck, representing the emperor on horseback, galloping forth, and striking down an enemy, with the inscription, " *Profectio,*" or " *Expeditio Augusti.*" If success had already favoured him, he was represented with a captive enemy prostrate at his feet ; or else as advancing between trophies and captives, with Victory crowning him, or going before with crown in hand. Medals are still in existence of the five emperors belonging to this era, representing them more or less fully under these same devices.

"*Conquering and to conquer.*" This signified an era of prosperity introduced by wars of victory, and attended by victory whenever wars should arise during that period. It does not necessarily mean incessant war and conquests, nor that every individual emperor in the series represented by the Rider should go forth conquering and to conquer. There would be intervals of peace between the victories belonging to the whole period up to the end of the first Seal.

AN ERA OF PROSPERITY AND VICTORY.

A.D. 96–180.

This period of Roman history, taken as a whole, was remarkable, both at its commencement and at its close, for triumphs in war, sustaining the glory of the Roman Empire, and extending its bounds; while the middle interval, though not without occasional wars, in which victory attended the Roman arms, was generally a time of profound and happy peace.

It began with the accession of Nerva, on the murder of his predecessor Domitian in A.D. 96, and it includes the reigns of the Emperors Nerva, A.D. 96–98; Trajan, A.D. 98–117; Hadrian, A.D. 117–138; Antoninus Pius, A.D. 138–161; Marcus Antoninus Aurelius, A.D. 161–180; ending with the accession of Commodus in that year. Of this period the historian, Gibbon, speaks as follows:—

"The golden age of Trajan and the Antonines had been preceded by an age of iron. It is almost superfluous to enumerate the unworthy successors of Augustus. Their unparalleled vices, and the splendid theatre on which they were acted, have saved them from oblivion. . . . During four score years, excepting only the short and doubtful respite of Vespasian's reign, Rome groaned beneath an unremitting tyranny, which exterminated the ancient families of the Republic, and was fatal to almost every virtue and every talent that arose in that unhappy period."

"If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman Empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws. Such princes deserved the honour of restoring the republic, had the Romans of their day been capable of enjoying a rational freedom."

The opening of the era was marked by Nerva's Pannonian triumph. Thence followed triumphs under Trajan, adding Dacia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and other provinces to the empire, which under this emperor reached its greatest territorial extent. His column at Rome is the memorial of these victories. During the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius there were passing wars enough to illustrate the predicted destiny, "conquering and to conquer." Towards the end of the era wars arose again, of so formidable a character as to test to the very utmost the truth of the prophecy; it seemed as if the whole barbarian world had been stirred from its very foundations, to overwhelm the envied glory and prosperity of the empire.

On a sudden surprise, more than once, the Roman frontier army was overthrown; but as soon as the imperial strength had gathered itself up against the invaders, not only were these repelled, but the war was carried into the invaders' territory. Even in the most mighty of all these wars, the Marcomannic, victory after victory attended the Roman standards under Marcus Antoninus Aurelius; till the German barbarians, driven into their forests, were reduced to submission.

It is true that the Asiatic conquests of Trajan passed away almost with himself, and that his European conquest—the vast Dacian province, last won and first to pass away—was given up by a soldier of Rome hardly less illustrious than himself, Aurelius, who made the Danube once more the Roman frontier. But for 150 years after the surrender of Dacia, fully up to the end of the fourth century, it can hardly be said that the boundaries of the empire ever formally went back.

The column of Marcus Antoninus Aurelius at Rome marks the victories of the close of the period of the first Seal.

The Cretan Succession.

After Domitian, Nerva's immediate predecessor, there was a notable change in the principle of the imperial succession. Nerva himself was of Cretan origin (Merivale: *Hist. Rom. under the Empire*, chap. lxiii.), and with him began a line of emperors who were great and good men, and who ruled well. Under these, the empire did not any longer pass from father to son; but each emperor adopted as his son and successor the fittest man he knew for so high a place.

There is in the British Museum a silver Roman coin of the Emperor Nerva, who is there shown wearing the laurel "crown." On its reverse it bears the huntress Diana, with her quiver and bow, she having been an object of special worship with the inhabitants of Crete.

THE SECOND SEAL: Rev. vi. 3, 4.

The White Horse, symbol of the Roman Empire during some ninety years of prosperity and triumph, had passed away from view. Another, a Red Horse, now passes over the scene before the eyes of the Evangelist, representing the same empire under the different colour

of civil war and bloodshed. It is not another and different nation or empire that is now seen; but, like the "other kine" in Pharaoh's dream, the same empire in another and different condition.

The Rider represents the Military, whose distinctive badge was the sword; and he impersonates not the Prætorian Prefects simply and alone, but the dominant soldiery generally. The second Seal symbolizes the Roman Empire under the evils of military despotism and oppression, with revolution and civil bloodshed as the consequence.

"*To him it was given to take peace from the earth,*" the peace left by the former Seal on the Roman earth. "*And that they should slay one another.*" This is civil war; not the wars of nation against nation, as in Matthew xxiv. 7; not the killing of the inhabitants by foreign invaders, but their slaying of one another.

"*There was given unto him a great sword.*" The word here used means properly the small sword; but its being described as "great" implies undue authority now given to it, and undue and unnatural use made of it; instead of its being used only in subordination to the civil magistrate, and in defence of country and order.

AN ERA OF MILITARY DESPOTISM: A.D. 185–284.

The bright period under the first Seal had included the triumphant peace made with the Germans, after Aurelius' death, by his son Commodus; as well as the first few years of Commodus' own reign, during which he was governing wisely while acting, as by a kind of tradition, on his father's principles and arrangements. It was followed by the breaking up of the national peace and prosperity, not through foreign invasion, but by civil war and revolution. It is a period of internal war-

fare and bloodshed ; under the abuse of the power of the sword. The agents of the insurrections and bloodsheddings were, from first to last, military men in power ; men whose vocation was war, and whose weapon was the sword.

Throughout the period of the first Seal, the license of the soldiery was restrained ; their power was kept in subordination to the civil magistrate, and was used only in defence of the country and of order. The law was supreme, the sword of the army was its enforcer, the civil magistracy were sustained in their functions, the authority of the Senate was recognized ; and as regards the occupant of the Imperial throne, the choice was left with the Senate, and only the approval with the army.

The Evil Begun.

But with Commodus came the fatal change. He introduced a system of military despotism which speedily issued in revolutions, civil war, and bloodshed. The evil began to be prepared immediately after A.D. 185, by his mal-administration ; and it broke out with violence in A.D. 193, on his assassination. From that epoch it continued, with scarce more than two intervals of intermission, for some eighty or ninety years, down to the accession of Diocletian.

At two well-defined epochs in the course of this period, the evil of Military Despotism was joined and aggravated by other evils, described in the third and fourth Seals. The evil of one Seal continues and runs parallel with the evil of its successor. (See diagram.)

The wars of the period of the second Seal were not wars of succession, but conflicts between rival generals, nominees of the Prætorian Guards or of the army ; between the representatives and impersonation for the time being of the dominant military—Prætorian Pre-

fects at Rome, or Imperial Lieutenants in the provinces. Generals were raised by their armies in every region of the empire, and ruled great areas as monarchs apart, owning no allegiance to the possessor of the Capital.

The Sword Given.

This disastrous change may be considered as dating from Commodus' exalting Perennis, Commander of the Prætorian Guards, to despotic authority at Rome and in the State ; even then not without the accompaniment of military insurrections, civil strife and bloodshed. This answers well to the symbolic action of a great sword being put into the hand of the Rider. In law and theory, the Prætorian Commander represented the emperor ; in actual practice, the supremacy was now with the army. There was no check on them by the restraints of responsibility, or of law, or of other constitutional authority, so cherished in the preceding era of Trajan and the Antonines.

The Evil Aggravated.

Septimius Severus, during the remaining thirteen or fourteen undisturbed years of his reign, after the conclusion of the great civil wars with Niger and Albinus, aggravated this system of military despotism, with the result of fresh revolutions and civil bloodshed. For he directed his policy, not, as had been done in the age of the Antonines, to curbing the license of the military, but to riveting upon the empire, and strengthening and perpetuating the bondage of pure military despotism. The licentious Prætorians that overawed Rome were quadrupled. The prime ministry of state, with authority over the whole civil and military administration, was attached by him as a matter of law, as it had been by Commodus as a matter of fact, to the Prætorian Prefecture. His

maxim was, "Enrich the soldiery; despise the people."

Thus the civil wars, insurrections and murders before his accession are connected with those after his death, inasmuch as he made use of the interval for aggrandizing the main cause of both; or, in the language of the Vision, for enlarging the sword in the hand of the Rider. The ineffectual efforts at reform made later by Alexander Severus only aggravated the evil they were intended to heal.

A Blood-Red Period.

This Red period, from A.D. 192 to 284 (the accession of Diocletian), is a period of upstart rulers, soldiers of fortune, who usurped the Imperial Power. In those ninety-two years, thirty-two Emperors and twenty-seven Pretenders alternately hurled each other from the throne by nearly incessant civil warfare; and the world was taught on what a frail foundation the virtue of the Antonines had reared the felicity of the Empire. The people took no share in these intestine wars; the sovereignty had passed into the hands of the legions, and they disposed of it at their pleasure.

THE THIRD SEAL: Rev. vi. 5, 6.

The change of the Horse's colour to black, under this Seal, represents a change in the condition of the Roman Empire to aggravated distress and mourning. Not that the evil of the Second Seal—Military Despotism—had ceased; it continued parallel with what is signified by the Third Seal, and even partly with the Fourth Seal also. But now a fresh cause of suffering and distress was introduced into the Roman body politic, after the establishment of military misrule, and before the awful mortality represented by the Fourth Seal.

The Rider, who is not described as wearing a crown or any mark of imperial majesty, has in his hands a balance —the common emblem of justice, and the official badge of those who had the administration of justice; moreover, he is charged and admonished by a voice from the midst of the four living creatures. He represents the subordinate administrators of justice, such as the Roman Provincial governors; but in his case the balance is a badge only in official symbol and profession, not in reality. Though he holds the emblem of justice, his influence is such as to aggravate existing evils, and to deepen the blood-red aspect of the Horse under the Second Seal into the black colour of distress under the Third.

The balance is associated, not with a man's weighing out pieces of bread in scant measure for eating, but with buying and selling of corn. Buying by weight is a very different thing from eating by weight. At all times corn and bread are sold by weight and measure.

The Voice of Law and Equity.

A monitory voice, as from before the throne, is addressed to the Rider; limiting his action, and providing that notwithstanding his errand, sustenance shall not utterly fail. This is the protesting voice of law and equity; for "Law," says Hooker, "hath her seat in the bosom of God"; and it speaks with imperial brevity, fixing bounds to the severity of the infliction. "A measure," or "chœnix," "of wheat for a penny," or "a denarius"; "and three measures of barley for a penny: and the oil and the wine hurt thou not." It is grain already threshed out and ready for measuring and for sale that is spoken of, not the cereals growing in the field; and oil and wine, as stored in casks and cellars, not olives and vines as trees.

The price of wheat here named might be a scarcity price, but this does not mean actual famine; and the

price of barley puts the idea of famine out of the question. The "measure" was a day's sufficient allowance of wheat or barley for a man, and the "penny" was approximately the daily wage of labour in St. John's time. The price specified would therefore mean that by one day's labour a man might gain a sufficiency of corn for one day's food, or of barley for about three days' food.

Moreover, the two other next most important articles of consumption (see 2 Chron. ii. 10), oil and wine, are not to be hurt. The proclamation says, "*and* the oil and the wine hurt thou not." The former injunction, then, is of kindly import like the latter. If it had said, "*but* the oil and the wine hurt thou not," this would have implied a contrast in character between the two injunctions; whereas they are coupled together as being of like benignant purpose.

Scarcity, not Famine.

The idea of famine is decisively set aside. Food there shall be, though dear and scanty; the oil and the wine are not yet to be injured; there is to be anxiety and distress, but not yet starvation. The whole of a labouring man's day's earnings will go in the purchase of one man's bread; nothing will be left over for any superfluity, or even for other necessaries. If others depend on him, he must have recourse to the cheaper and less nutritious kind of food, and instead of his measure of wheat must content himself with the equivalent three measures of barley.

Thus the Seal describes a condition of scarcity, the pressure of want on men, especially on those who depend on their daily labour; not sweeping them away by utter failure of the means of subsistence, but keeping them far below the ordinary standard of comfort. It points not so much to death by famine—which belongs

to the next Seal—as to agrarian distress, with all its dreadful consequences, which are to be seen under the Fourth Seal. The Third Seal represents an aggravated oppressiveness of taxation, a fresh and wasting evil now introduced into the Roman body politic.

AN ERA OF OPPRESSIVE TAXATION.

Era of Caracalla: A.D. 212–217.

An era of oppressive taxation followed on the celebrated Edict of the Emperor Caracalla, by which the Roman City was made co-extensive with the Roman Empire, and the rights of Roman citizenship were extended to all natives of the Roman world. Undoubtedly, whatever its immediate motives and results, this Edict did in the end create an artificial Roman nation throughout the Roman dominion; and annihilating legal distinctions, it completed the work that trade and literature and toleration to all beliefs but one were already performing. Yet the measure in its origin was one, not of liberality, but of avarice; the excessive cost of the army making this fiscal oppression of the civil population necessary.

The inhabitants of the provinces now found themselves called upon to pay not only their provincial tributes as before, but also the distinctive taxes of the Roman citizen, and those now augmented. Caracalla, knowing himself to be generally hated, "endeavoured to secure the affections of the soldiers by combining excessive rewards for service with very remiss discipline, thus doubly injuring the Empire. The vigour of the Army melted away under his lax rule; and the resources of the state were exhausted by his ruinous profuseness, which led him to devise new and ingenious modes of increasing taxation."

The Collectors of Revenue.

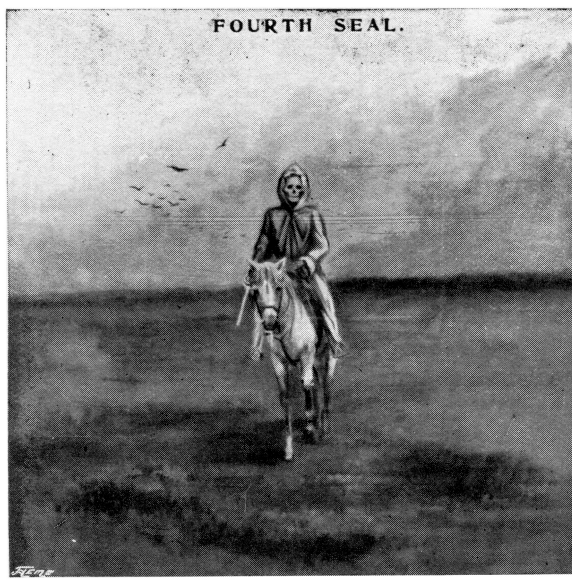
The Rider represents the Provincial Presidents, Proconsuls, or Procurators, to whom was entrusted in each province the collection of the produce and of the revenue. Opportunities for exaction abounded, especially in payments or purchases in kind. Hence the name of these collectors—"The robbers of the provinces." This explains how, under the influences of one who held in his hand the symbol of equity as his badge, the aspect of the Roman Horse should yet gather blackness.

Era of Alexander Severus : A.D. 222.

Under this Emperor, laws against extortion and injustice on the part of Provincial Governors were passed; sometimes naming the price at which the Governor was to rate and purchase, in phraseology remarkably like the injunction to the Rider. But all in vain. After a brief and partial amelioration, the evil would reassert itself as before, and these laws appear as records and not as preventives of crime. Official corruption triumphed. The system of largesses, at this time acted out on a vast scale at Rome, made constantly increasing demands on the revenues, which had to be collected by the provincial authorities.

Mammæa, the mother of Alexander Severus, had such an ascendancy over him, that his government was almost like her regency; and her covetousness was one of the chief drawbacks to the good of his reign. His endeavours to choose proper governors, and his appeals for just dealing in provincial rule, met with only partial and transient success; his administration being "an unavailing struggle against the corruptions of the age."

Under the Emperor Maximin and his successors from A.D. 235 onwards, the administration of the provincial governors was most oppressive, in fiscal exactions and


FOURTH SEAL.

extortions of all kinds. After the impoverishment of the rich followed that of the less wealthy, and then that of the people in general, the provincial governors being always the ready instruments of oppression.

Results.

The results of this oppressive taxation were, as might be expected, a general wasting of the Roman state. Agriculture was insensibly ruined, thus making preparation for famine; the most fertile provinces became depopulated and desolate; personal suffering and distress prevailed even to despair; and patriotism was gradually extinguished. In short, as Gibbon expresses it, "The industry of the people was discouraged and exhausted by a long series of oppression."

THE FOURTH SEAL: Rev. vi. 7, 8.

At the summons of the fourth living creature, St. John sees a Pale Horse come forth, with Death as its Rider, and Hades following after. The colour of the Horse, which had been in succession white, red and black, is now livid; the greenish pallor of a corpse in incipient decay, or of the face in far-advanced disease. The Horse is now approaching dissolution. This Seal is the climax of the two preceding Seals. The Rider is not, as under the foregoing Seals, the representative of human rulers or functionaries, but the King of Terrors himself; nor is he here the destroyer of political existence only, for Hades, the recipient of his victims, is following him. The two are associated also in Revelation xx. 13, 14.

To these two formidable foes authority is given "over the fourth part of the earth," to kill with sword, famine, and pestilence and by wild beasts. If in this phrase the term "earth" be understood not of area but of population, the meaning will be, that as many as a fourth of the then inhabitants of the whole Roman world perished at that

era by these four agencies. It is to be noticed that sword, famine, pestilence and wild beasts are all of them judgments acting upon persons rather than upon the earth itself; and it is obvious that in such a passage as Revelation xiii. 3, 4, "And the whole earth wondered after the beast," "earth," means "inhabitants of the earth." Compare also 1 Samuel xiv. 25, "*And all the land* (i.e., the people) *came into the forest.*"

Another explanation of this phrase connects the "fourth part," not with all the agencies together, but with each one separately; one-fourth to be exposed to death by the sword, another fourth by famine, another by pestilence, another by wild beasts.

There is a natural connexion between the last three of these sore judgments. Famine is the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression, such as have been represented under the Third Seal. The bodily frame, weakened by want of proper food, falls an easy prey to pestilential epidemics. And where the reign of man fails, that of the wild beasts begins; they quickly occupy scenes of waste and depopulation.

The Horse Disappears.

Up to this point the Horse, the symbol of the undivided Roman Empire, has remained in his integrity; though changing colour from bad to worse, and appearing at last in the pallor of approaching death. But now comes the actual dissolution of the Horse; he passes away, and after this Seal appears no more.

AN ERA OF MORTALITY: FROM A.D. 248.

The evils of the two preceding Seals, still in force, having prepared the way, there followed an era of terrible mortality, by which the very vitality of the Roman

Empire seemed threatened. Gibbon describes it as follows :—

"From the great Secular Games celebrated by Philip, A.D. 248, to the death of the emperor Gallienus, there elapsed twenty years of shame and misfortune. During that calamitous period every instant of time was marked, every province of the Roman world was afflicted, by barbarous invaders and military tyrants, and the ruined empire seemed to approach the last and fatal moment of its dissolution."

"Our habits of thinking so fondly connect the order of the Universe with the fate of man, that this gloomy period of history has been decorated with inundations, earthquakes, uncommon meteors, preternatural darkness, and a crowd of prodigies, fictitious or exaggerated. But a long and general famine was a calamity of a more serious kind. It was the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression, which extirpated the produce of the present, and the hope of future harvests. Famine is almost always followed by epidemical diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food. Other causes must, however, have contributed to the furious plague which, from the year A. D. 250 to the year 265, raged without interruption in every province, every city, and almost every family in the Roman empire. During some time 5,000 persons died daily in Rome, and many towns that had escaped the hands of the barbarians were entirely depopulated. Half the population of Alexandria perished ; and could we venture to extend the analogy to the other provinces, we might suspect that war, pestilence and famine had consumed, in a few years, the moiety of the human species."

Gibbon thus suggests that perhaps half of the population perished in this era. If, however, the explanation given above be the correct one, the evils of this Seal affected not one-half, but one-fourth of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire.

Diocletian and "Division."

As the Horse passed away during this Seal, and was seen no more, so at this era the Roman Empire under its old constitution ceased to exist. In A.D. 292 the Em-

peror Diocletian introduced his famous plan of "Division," by which the empire, hitherto governed as one, was now divided into four portions, each under a ruler of its own. The theory of unity was kept up for a time, but the reality was gone. On this Gibbon remarks, "Like Augustus, Diocletian may be considered as the founder of a new empire."

As illustrating how the evils of the Third Seal overrun into the period of the Fourth, it may be added that the establishment of four courts instead of one, and the multiplication of officials and of armies, vastly augmented the expenditure; and a heavy increase of taxation was the necessary consequence. The provinces groaned under the burden of oppressive imposts.

REVIEW OF THE FIRST FOUR SEALS.

Thus, in a series of four consecutive representations, in each of which a symbolic Horse and Horseman passed forth in vision over the Roman landscape, the coming fortunes of the great military Empire of Rome were prefigured.

Short as are these four symbolizations, they contain within themselves the very spirit of the history of Rome for the next two centuries after St. John; and are in singular agreement with the best and the most philosophic historians of the Roman Empire. They form an admirable *memoria technica*, in symbol, of those two critical centuries in the Decline of Heathen Rome.

THE FIFTH SEAL: Rev. vi. 9-11.

What, meanwhile, of the Christian church and cause? Direct information is now given. The Vision of the Fifth Seal depicts a crisis in the history of the church, to follow upon the events of the Fourth Seal; and

it intimates, in retrospect, what had been the condition and treatment of the Christian cause in the Roman Empire, during all four preceding Seals.

A Change of Scene.

There is now a change of scene. Hitherto the action may reasonably be supposed to have been taking place on the landscape of the Roman world, over which passed the Horses and Horsemen that were related to it. But now attention is directed to something to be seen in the Altar-Court of the symbolic Temple.

In the literal Temple, the Altar-court was the scene of what was public and visible in the divine worship. There were performed the ministrations at that Altar, the sacrifices and offerings, the washings, presenting of incense, and solemn prayer and psalmody, by the worshipping people.

So, in the symbolic Temple, the Altar-Court is the scene of what is characteristic and important respecting the visible worship of Christ's true and faithful people. The great brazen Altar of Sacrifice is the standing memorial of Christ's one offering of Himself; that being, to the end of time, the very centre and essence of all true Christian worship.

Martyrdom.

This Vision, then, represented something notable and characteristic in the Church's visible worshipping at this era. It was an era of persecution so virulent, that visible worship and witnessing thus for the faith would now be suppressed; and this alone would remain for Christians to do—to offer themselves. For church service they met in caves and catacombs, and their only way of publicly and visibly witnessing for Christ was by shedding their blood in martyrdom. Accordingly, in the place where the ashes of the sacrifices were gathered, St. John saw,

not living worshippers, but dead—" the souls of them that had been slain." As white robes are said to have been given to them, it would seem that their shadowy forms appeared beneath the altar in human shape ; but their mortal bodies had been given up in martyrdom.

No New Thing.

Their cry, " How long . . . dost thou not . . . avenge our blood ? " implies that the present persecution was not a new thing, but only a continuance, a repetition, or an aggravation of what had been going on long before. The history of the Church throughout the first five Seals is a history of persecution. Thereby hypocritical profession was in a great measure suppressed ; hence, probably, faithful confessors under Heathen Rome are chosen as the one and only picture, the most characteristic emblem, of the Christian body during the first five Seals. At no subsequent era would this picture be true and characteristic as it was now.

" *Judge and avenge.*" The feelings of the earlier martyrs were for the most part those of joy and gratitude at being permitted to share Christ's sufferings. But now other feelings began to appear ; they spoke of a coming vengeance. This was the seeming cry of the martyred saints ; the voice of their blood, like Abel's, crying from the ground in the ears of the surviving Christians of Apostolic line and character, represented by St. John, who hears the cry in Vision. It is not meant that there is any actual cry for retribution and avenging, on the part of the souls of the martyrs, against their enemies ; such could not issue from the blessed ; but that the cry would seem to rise from the scenes of their martyrdom into the ears and hearts of their brethren. It is their blood that cries ; it is the wrong done to them that demands reparation.

" *Them that dwell on the earth* " are the Roman rulers

and people, raised up in strength again from the destroying judgments of the previous Seal, but making use of that renewed strength to seek to exterminate, if it were possible, the Christian church throughout the Empire.

AN ERA OF PERSECUTION: A.D. 303-311.

In the year A.D. 261 the Emperor Gallienus, trembling under God's sore judgments, though still unconverted, sensual, and hard-hearted, had issued for the first time an Edict of Toleration to the Christians. Their churches and burial-grounds were restored, their worship permitted; and though popular outbreaks were not discontinued, Christianity was legalized.

After the destroying judgments of the Fourth Seal, Rome was saved for a time by a succession of great princes—Claudius, Aurelian, Probus, Diocletian—who within about thirty years triumphed over the foreign and the domestic enemies of the state. The empire revived in strength, but only to exhibit a spirit of deadly enmity to Christianity.

Persecution under Diocletian.

In the very year, A.D. 303, that Diocletian celebrated the last triumph Rome saw, the persecution broke out. Early in that year secret and ominous councils began to be held in the royal palace of Nicomedia, between Diocletian and Galerius, the Eastern Cæsar; Maximian, the other Augustus, was absent, but was understood to concur. The object was the destruction of Christianity.

On February 23 an armed force was sent to destroy the great church of Nicomedia, and to burn the sacred books. This began a persecution, the longest, most widespread and fiercest that had ever yet raged against the Christians. According to the first Edict, their churches were to be demolished, the books of the Scrip-

tures burnt, church property confiscated, the holders of religious assemblies put to death, and Christians generally put outside of the protection of the law. Other Edicts imposed imprisonment, tortures, and death, first on the bishops, presbyters and other ecclesiastics, then on all Christians if obstinate in their faith.

War Against the Scriptures.

A new feature in these persecutions was a war against the Holy Scriptures. It is hinted at, in the Vision, in the words, "*Slain for the Word of God.*" Bishop Westcott in his work on *The Canon of the New Testament* (Third Period), says :—

"During the long period of repose which the Christians enjoyed after the Edict of Gallienus, the character and claims of their sacred writings became more generally known, and offered a definite mark to their adversaries. Diocletian skilfully availed himself of this new point of attack. The earlier persecutors had sought to deprive the church of its teachers; he endeavoured to destroy the writings which were the unfailing source of its faith."

But the Bible was preserved, and we owe it to the heathen enemies of the Gospel that the Rule of Faith was henceforth accepted by the universal church of Christ. Copies had previously been so multiplied in the Empire, that the most severe inquisition could no longer be attended with fatal consequences. It was during the previous tranquillity that Origen had made his famous Old Testament Hexapla, or Sixfold Version. Moreover, this warfare was overruled for good :—

"The decree for the confiscation of the sacred Christian writings, which constituted an ingenious part of the persecutor's policy, defeated its own purpose; it advertised to the whole world the influence of the acknowledged Christian Scriptures, and forced upon the attention of the Church their infinite superiority as compared with all other ecclesiastical writings. The books indicated by the decree must for the purposes of the

secular power and of the church have been in some way identified. For some tried to evade the penalties of the law by the concealment of the sacred Scriptures and the production of Apocryphal books before the authorities. Many, too, in the church who clamoured for severe penalties against those who surrendered the sacred books [hence called "Traditores"], insisted that the limits of the collection were already practically recognized although not officially ordained." (See the Cambridge *Helps*, p. 14.)

A Vain Boast.

Long before the nine or ten years of this persecution expired, Diocletian, Maximian and Galerius united in raising pillars, commemorating their success in having everywhere destroyed "the Christian superstition." A medal of this period represents Maximian as Hercules destroying the seven-headed Hydra of Christianity. Thus did the lying Satanic Spirit that had animated Roman Heathenism, symbolized in Revelation xii. 3 as a seven-headed Dragon, seize on the Scripture symbol, to avert it from itself, and to turn it against the Christians.

Justification of the Martyrs.

"*There was given them to each one a white robe.*" This was done not in the inner sanctuary, which would have signified their justification before God; but in the open Altar-Court, which signified their justification before the world, in view of their fellow-men—a justification which would apply to the memory of the slain, as well as to the character of the survivors.

And so it was. In A.D. 311 an Edict of the persecutor Galerius was issued, agreed to by two of the other emperors, confessing by implication at least to the wrong done to the Christians, putting an end to the persecution, and even entreating the Christians to pray to their God for him. This public justification was a confession of the moral triumph of Christianity, and portended its political

triumph, which was soon to follow. The calamities of the three preceding Seals were causes and symptoms of the decline, politically considered, of the Heathen Roman Empire. The events under this Fifth Seal also were a cause, religiously considered, indeed the immediate cause, as well as the precursor, of its fall.

A Second Series of Martyrs.

"*It was said unto them,*" by the voice of divine prophecy, as their minds apprehended it in those times of fiery trial. The words are heard by St. John in his representative character. They define the time of the judgment which these martyrs seemed to call for, so far as to declare that there must intervene before it the rise and slaughter of another and distinct body of martyrs, who should similarly witness for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held. The words, "*that they should rest yet for a little time until,*" seem to indicate that after this martyr-era under the Fifth Seal, there was to be a period of cessation from persecution; but that in after years the storm was to burst forth again, and another great company of martyrs was to be slain, before the full number should be completed.

The Fathers and the Prophecies.

The early Fathers took a most earnest interest in the prophecies, especially those of the Great Image and of the Four Beasts in Daniel, and those of the Man of Sin and of Antichrist in the New Testament. From these they gained support, counsel, encouragement and comfort throughout the Heathen persecutions. It was a universal conviction among the sufferers under Heathen Rome, that only the reign of Antichrist, and his slaying of the other series of martyrs, had to intervene before the end. The Christian Church and Fathers passed through and out

of the period of the Fifth Seal and of its persecutions with the strong conviction on their minds, as by a voice from heaven, that there only needed to be completed another and different series of martyrs—those under Antichrist—and then their Redeemer would come in vengeance.

They judged with one consent that Daniel's Fourth Beast symbolized the Roman Empire; that the Little Horn of that Beast, or its equivalent the last Head of the Beast of Revelation xiii. and xvii., symbolized the same Power as St. Paul's Man of Sin and St. John's Antichrist; and that the Roman Empire, in its then existing state, was the let or hindrance meant by St. Paul, standing in the way of the Man of Sin's manifestation. Moreover, they were agreed that this Antichrist was to persecute the Christian church with a fierceness altogether unparalleled; and that thus there would be a second series of Roman persecutions, and a second series of martyrs slain under Roman oppression.

Living as they did early in the Christian era, they had no long continuous chain of historic events by which to check and to correct their expositions; and they were mistaken as to intervals, lengths of time, and dates, though right as to the events and their order. They could only generalize and conjecture, for they lacked the historic essentials to the right interpretation of the Revelation as a continuous prophecy; which we, who live in the last times, now so abundantly possess.

Martyrs under Rome Pagan and Rome Papal.

There are then two distinct series of Christian martyrs: those under Rome Pagan, and those under Rome Papal. The former had white robes given them, and are thus marked off from the rest. The latter, at the era of the Fifth Seal, have not yet been slain; they are the Protestant martyrs. From the sequel of the Visions we learn—that the second series of Christian martyrs here foretold

are slain at the instigation of the Dragon, by his creature the Beast, by the Beast's Assistant and by the Image he makes, and by the Woman Babylon. (See Rev. xi. 7 ; xii., xiii., xvii., xviii. 24.) The triumphant career of these Powers, subsequent to the times of the Fifth Seal, belongs to the era of the Trumpets, and is earlier in time than the era of the Vials ; for this latter era, even from the First Vial, is one of judgment upon all those Powers that have persecuted and slain Christ's saints.

Therefore, the course of the history of this second series of martyrs requires, that the chronology of the Trumpets should succeed to that of the Seals, and should precede that of the Vials.

X

FALL OF HEATHENISM IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE. MANIFESTATION OF THE APOSTASY BEGUN

SIXTH SEAL: Rev. vi. 12–vii. 17.

THE Sixth Seal comprises three Visions, in close connexion with each other:—

I. The Earthquake (Rev. vi. 12–17).
II. The Sealing (Rev. vii. 1–8.)
III. The Palm-bearers (Rev. vii. 9–17).

The division of the chapters in this Seal is most unfortunate, for it gives many readers the impression that the Seal ends with chapter vi.; whereas it is obvious that the Sixth Seal includes all from the end of the Fifth Seal to the opening of the Seventh Seal in chapter viii. 1.

Change of Scene.

The eye of the Evangelist is now directed back from the Altar-Court of the symbolic Temple to the earthly landscape, which appeared with seas and lands (ver. 14) outspread in view, and above them its sky and the heavenly luminaries therein. This represented the Roman world; and, according to Scripture usage, its own firmamental heaven represented the ruling department, and its luminaries the actual rulers and governing powers that belonged thereto. As the Temple

in the Visions fitly symbolized the faith and worship of Christ's people through an atoning and mediating Redeemer, and as the Holy City symbolized their polity, so did the earth as fitly symbolize its own heathen inhabitants.

I. THE EARTHQUAKE : Rev. vi. 12-17.

It must be remembered that this is not a narration of actual facts, but a description of a Vision abounding in volcanic imagery, which was seen by St. John when rapt in the Spirit, and the symbolical meaning of which we have to discover. The expressions respecting the earthquake and the other phenomena cannot be taken literally, nor as referring to the physical changes in the material earth and heavens to be expected at the consummation, when " the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat " (2 Pet. iii. 10). No mention is made here of the " flaming fire."

All is symbolical of political and other changes. The symbol of an earthquake, and of convulsions and changes in the firmamental heavens and their luminaries, and in the face of nature, is commonly used of political revolution in a state or kingdom, of subversion of its institutions, and of the fall of its governing powers. See Jeremiah iv. 23–29, said of Jerusalem ; Ezekiel xxxii. 7, 8, of Egypt attacked by Babylon ; Isaiah xiii. 9, 10, 17, of Babylon destroyed by the Medes. The symbol is common also in historical and political speech and writing.

Not Final.

Nor is any of this final ; for in the continuation of the Seal (Rev. vii. 1), the earth, seas and sky again appear restored, and the luminaries again shine. Tempests are lowering on the earth, which is still evil, not

regenerated; its inhabitants, living men, good and bad, remain on it; and the Angels of the Winds, at its four corners, are preparing to let slip over it their hurricane blasts.

A Great Revolution.

The first part of this Seal betokens some great and sudden Revolution in the Roman Empire, to follow after the Era of Martyrdom of the Fifth Seal. From the cry of terror in verses 16, 17, it may be concluded that this Revolution involved the ruin of Heathenism and the triumph of the Christian cause; the way for this having been prepared by the justification of the Martyrs, recorded in the previous Seal.

The great lights in the heavens are darkened, and the stars fall to the earth. This is obviously symbolical. To imagine a literal fulfilment of what is here described is to have no sense of the proportions of the universe, or of the comparative minuteness of our little speck of a planet amid all those great worlds. Even if they knew where to find our earth, their huge diameters would forbid two of them approaching it together. The nature of things forbids literalism here. What is symbolized is the deposition of the rulers and constituted authorities; the reducing of those in high station or noble rank to the ordinary level; and the casting down of all subordinate ruling powers. See also Daniel viii. 10, where literalism is impossible.

"*The heaven was removed.*" The old political and religious heaven was caused to pass away. This signifies a political Revolution so great as to involve the overthrow of the existing governmental authorities, in order to make room for other and different ones.

"*Every mountain and island were moved out of their places.*" They do not "flee away," as in the much

greater earthquake or revolution of the Seventh Vial (Rev. xvi. 17–21); nor are they levelled down to earth or sea, so as not to be found when looked for; but here they are only "moved out of their places," Heathen making way for Christian.

Terror-Stricken Inhabitants.

The kings of the earth, princes, generals, the rich, the strong, the free and the slave—all these personages probably distinguished on the scene by their dress—were seen to hide themselves in the caves and in the rocks; and were heard to call upon the mountains to fall on them, not to crush, but to hide them from the face of God, and from the wrath of the Lamb; "*For*," cried they, "*the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?*" They named no mere earthly foe as the object of their terror, but spoke as conscious that the Jesus who was crucified was now their conqueror.

No Authoritative Announcement.

But observe that no one of any heavenly authority is heard by St. John to declare that the day of God's wrath is really come. No voice from the Throne proclaims it, no heavenly beings, not even any of the people of God then on the earth; but only these Heathen kings, princes, captains, and other inhabitants. "Every bondman and freeman" is characteristic of a past period; slavery does not now exist in Europe or in America. (But compare Rev. xiii. 16; xix. 18.) At that time the proportion of slaves in Rome was very large. In their terror men imagine that the great and final day of God's wrath has actually come, and they cry out for fear. But it is only upon this Roman earth, and among its terror-stricken Heathen inhabi-

tants, that that impression prevails. No last Trumpet has sounded; no celestial beings chant forth their joy and praise.

Whereas when the clang of the Seventh or last Trumpet is heard (Rev. xi. 15–18), "There followed great voices in heaven," and the song was instantly taken up by the blessed spirits, who had been listening for this Trumpet, and who at once recognized it as that under which Christ's kingdom was to be established. So when the last of the Seven Vials was poured out (Rev. xvi. 17), "There came forth a great voice out of the temple, from the throne, saying, It is done." So again, after the destruction of the great Harlot (Rev. xix. 1–4), there is a twofold Hallelujah, from a great multitude in heaven. Nothing of the kind accompanies this earthquake of the Sixth Seal.

Typical of Greater Events.

No partial change would answer to the strength of the symbols here employed; nor would the mere overthrow of the persecuting emperors by others, milder and more tolerant, but still Heathen. Nothing less can be represented than the ruin of Heathenism itself in the Empire of Rome, before the progress and power of Christianity; and the sweeping from their high places of the Heathen authorities and powers; and that, not through the gentle progress of opinion, but with circumstances of force accompanying such as to strike consternation and dismay into the Heathen opposers.

But this lesser Revolution certainly is typical of the great and final Revolution, in which all the powers of evil are to be cast down and broken before the power of Christ. Hence the language and imagery employed here—and in several other places where the reference

is to political changes and revolutions—are such as to lead on our thoughts to the great and final overthrow of the enemies of the Lord. This Vision of the Earthquake, relating primarily to the overthrow of Heathenism, is described in language that will find its complete fulfilment in the crisis of the Second Advent; in describing which, our Lord, in His prophecy on the Mount of Olives, employed the same prophetic imagery.

The matter must be settled by the context of each passage, and in the light of other prophecies referring to the consummation; also by comparison with the facts of history at the point that has been reached. The downfall of Heathenism and the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire, were a type of the grand realization when Christ shall at last appear.

THE OVERTHROW OF HEATHENISM: A.D. 312–395.

Up to this point every important epoch of change in the Roman Empire, with its causes and symptoms, has been represented; and we are now brought, in history, to the eve of Constantine's great Revolution. That precisely at the time depicted in the Vision, following upon the era of Martyrdom under Diocletian, a Revolution of the character described took place in the Roman Empire, is one of the most memorable and most astonishing facts of history. By this mighty Revolution, Heathenism was overthrown and ruined in the Roman Empire.

Era of Constantine and Theodosius.

It is the Revolution of the era of Constantine, not merely the conversion of Constantine himself. He

was raised up, as Cyrus of old, for this great purpose. His acts, however, were but the beginning; his series of victories inaugurated the Revolution, but it was completed by Theodosius, there being a continuous advance through the acts of Constantine and his successors until the final downfall of Heathenism.

By this extraordinary break with the past, Christianity, after having been apparently crushed to death by the terrible persecution under Diocletian, rose suddenly into the ascendant; and soon, having attained to absolute supremacy, trampled its old foe Heathenism in the dust. There can be no doubt that by this time most of the intellect and virtue of the empire had passed over to the Christian side, so that the State cannot but have gained abundantly by a change that enabled it freely to employ this its best material.

Constantine came to the throne in A.D. 306. Maxentius was Emperor of Rome; Maximian, who had resigned, now resumed the purple; and the Eastern Augustus, Galerius, having made two subordinate emperors instead of one, viz. Licinius for the government of Illyricum, and Maximin for that of Syria; for the first and last time the Roman world, in A.D. 308, was divided between no less than six emperors at once. This continued till the death of Galerius.

Already Constantine, at his accession, was known as a favourer of the Christians, ere he bore down from the Alps against Maxentius, the son and successor of the persecuting Emperor Maximian. Then he avowed his espousal of the Christian cause, and of that of Him whom the Christians worshipped, the Crucified One of Nazareth, the Lamb of God. From as early a date as that of the great battle with Maxentius, at the Milvian Bridge, October 27, A.D. 312, he adopted the Cross as his distinctive military ensign; and that object of abomination to the Heathen Romans was seen "glit-

tering on the helmets, engraved on the shields, and interwoven with the banners" of his soldiers. The Emperor's own person was adorned by it, wrought with the richest materials and the finest workmanship. Above all, on his principal banner, the Labarum, he displayed at its summit the same once accursed emblem, with a crown of gold and gems above it, and the monogram of the name of Him who, after bearing the one, now wore the other. Such was the honour now paid to the symbol, which before had been regarded by the Romans much as the gallows is by ourselves.

There may have been political motives and objects in Constantine's mind; but what then? That did not affect the fact that the cause of Christianity was publicly identified with Constantine's own, and that the public triumph of the Christian cause was the result of his victories. It was much the same with Henry VIII and the cause of the Reformation in England.

"Paganism."

Under the first shocks of the Earthquake, the Roman Earth had been agitated, and the enemies of the Christians had been filled with consternation, or driven into flight. But the prophecy had not as yet received its entire fulfilment. The stars of the Heathen heaven had not all fallen, nor had that heaven itself been rolled up like a scroll and been removed. The stars of Heathenism could not be said to have fallen, until the Heathen governors, teachers and other authorities had been displaced and superseded.

On Constantine's first triumph, and after the first terrors of the opposing emperors and their hosts, although the Imperial Edict gave to Christianity its full rights and freedom, yet it allowed to the Heathen worship also free toleration. But soon there followed measures of marked preference for the Christians and

for the Christian faith, in the appointments made by the Emperor. After Constantine's final defeat of Licinius, and his establishment as sole emperor, he issued edicts, in spite of the indignation and resentment of the Heathen, for the suppression of Heathen sacrifices, the destruction of the Heathen temples, and the toleration of Christianity only in public worship.

His successors attached severe penalties to the public profession of the Heathen religion. Hence it came to be called "Paganism," because kept up only in the "pagi" or outlying villages, and no longer in the cities and towns. The result was that under Theodosius, before the century had ended, the stars of Heathenism had all fallen to the ground, its very heaven, or political and religious system, had vanished; on the earth the old Heathen institutions, laws, rites, and worship, were all but annihilated; and its votaries were constrained to hide their devotions, now prohibited on pain of death, in the caves and rocks which before had been the Christian's refuges. "The ruin of the Pagan religion," says Gibbon, "is described by the Sophists as a dreadful and amazing prodigy, which covered the earth with darkness, and restored the ancient dominion of chaos and night."

Rome Christian.

The following extract has already been quoted in Paper VI, but it is too much to the point to be omitted here :—

"Rome is not Rome in all her fulness, she has not risen to the true height of her mission in the world, she is not fully mistress and teacher of the nations, till she has cast aside her old gods and has bowed to the spiritual mastery of a despised sect from a despised corner of her dominion. The miracle of miracles, greater than dried-up seas and cloven rocks, greater than the dead rising again to life, was when the Augustus on his throne, Pontiff of the gods of Rome, himself a god to the

subjects of Rome, bent himself to become the worshipper of a crucified provincial of his empire. The conversion of our own folk, the conversion of any other barbarian folk of Europe, was no marvel. Where Rome led, all must follow, Celt, Teuton, Slave, each in his turn. That Christianity should become the religion of the Roman Empire is the miracle of history; but that it did so become is the leading fact of all history from that day onwards." (Freeman: *Rome the Head of Europe.*)

Constantinople: New Rome.

After the defeat of Licinius, Constantine proceeded to found in the East a new Rome, called after the name of its founder, Constantinople, A.D. 330. Thither went the Christian government, and the city became the seat of Constantine and of his successors in the East. This Eastern Empire is regarded in prophecy as a kind of revival of the third or Greek Empire over which Alexander ruled.

After the division of the Roman Empire into East and West, the Western emperors made their capital no longer at Rome, but first at Milan, and then under Honorius at Ravenna.

Paganism Lingers Round Rome.

Life yet awhile flickered in the old Paganism, though cast down and proscribed; and hope of restoration, that prompted strenuous efforts to regain the bygone ascendancy. Its spirit lingered especially around the Seven Hills of Rome, the habitation so long consecrated to it; a locality which the Christian government, in a manner very remarkable, had almost instantly on its foundation forsaken for another seat and throne, as if Rome were a spot with which it could not be associated.

II. THE SEALING: Rev. vii. 1–8.

The Visions of the Sealing and of the Palm-bearers are still part of the Sixth Seal. The earth again appears

tranquil after the earthquake, and its luminaries again shine in its new firmamental heaven. Sky, earth and inhabitants are all again visible, notwithstanding the convulsions that have been experienced. In chapter vii. 1 the winds are spoken of as not yet blowing on the land or sea or trees, which must therefore have appeared restored and quiet after the Earthquake; as also under the first three Trumpets (chap. viii. 7–11). Under the fourth Trumpet (chap. viii. 12) it is implied that sun, moon and stars have been shining over the Roman earth, for then they are partly obscured.

This Sealing Vision consists of two contemporary and parallel parts: Four Angels of the winds, standing prepared to desolate the earth, but temporarily restrained; the Sealing of God's servants on the same earth, by God's seal-bearing Angel, as a safeguard from the winds. From the time of His rising, He is the restrainer, and they are the inflictors, of the judgments. If their temporary restraint was of such importance as to call for particular symbolization, much more must their letting loose the tempests have been of importance to call for it; and accordingly it is given in the Visions of the Trumpets.

Four Tempest-Angels: Rev. vii. 1.

"After this." The word "*this*" is in the singular, and the phrase thus differs from the one so common in these visions, "After these things." After the physical commotions that have been described, John sees four destroying Tempest-Angels, "*holding*," as a weapon might be held ready for use, "*the four winds of the earth.*" These mean all the winds, and they represent fierce tempests of invaders from every side. So, accordingly, the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Saracens and Turks desolated the Roman territory all round. Where winds are used symbolically of destroyers

coming on a nation, they represent enemies or judgments from without, not from within. The "winds" are the barbarians and others threatening invasion; the angels are the spirits that directed them, like the angel of the pestilence in 2 Samuel xxiv. 16.

The commission to injure belonged to these same four Angels (Rev. vii. 3). Just now, the winds are under temporary restraint, but are destined ere long to desolate the Roman earth, as the Plagues did the land of Egypt. It is these four Tempest-Angels who execute the judgments under the Trumpets, all of which, in nature, are associated with winds and tempests. Even under the Fifth Trumpet, as "the east wind brought the locusts" on Egypt, so these four Angels may have directed the flight of the symbolical Locusts on to Christendom; especially as the same body of Christ's sealed ones, first mentioned in connexion with the Tempest-Angels, is referred to as then also on the scene, and the same care lest they be hurt is implied in the charge to the symbolical Locusts (Rev. ix. 3, 4).

The Trumpet-Angels (Rev. viii. ix) do not themselves execute their judgments. They simply give the signals by sounding their trumpets, and the ravages and desolations that follow each signal are accomplished by these four Tempest-Angels, whose career lasts without interruption through the first five Trumpets, and after a temporary cessation is resumed under the Sixth Trumpet.

At the close of the judgment of the Fifth Trumpet, these four Angels are bound at the great river Euphrates. Then they are loosed again for the execution of the judgment of the Sixth Trumpet (Rev. ix. 13–15). In this case the Angel of the Sixth Trumpet not only sounds the signal, but also is bid to let those four Angels loose again. They had at first been for a while re-

strained; then they had executed judgments on land and sea; then they had been stayed, and bound at Euphrates; and finally they are loosed again for the judgments of the Sixth Trumpet.

Thus the era of the Trumpets is in point of time later than this era of the Sixth Seal.

The Tempest of Barbarians.

During the era of Constantine, says Gibbon, the "threatening tempest of barbarians, which so soon subverted the foundations of Roman greatness," was "repelled or suspended, on the frontier." On the defeat of the Emperor Valens by the Goths, and his death, August 9, A.D. 378, the Gothic hosts "established" themselves ("standing") on the Roman earth, though effectually arrested by Theodosius. But on the death of Theodosius, January 17, A.D. 395, there was a consequent loosing of the winds.

The Sealing: Rev. vii. 2–8.

There is now depicted to St. John, upon the same earthly scene, something spiritual, such as mortal eyes could not see—the Lord's own marking out, and sealing, and numbering the members of the Israel of God, from among the visible professing body. St. John is shown certain invisible and spiritual actings by Christ Jesus, revealing the secret of the constitution of God's true church.

St. John in these Visions is a representative of apostolical men of the era of each vision. The fact that he is now made to see what the Sealing Vision describes, means that at this era there would be on the part of apostolical men a perception such as the world around would not have, of these spiritual actings of Christ, and of the true constitution of His church of

the elect; moreover, by allusive contrast, that notions of an opposite kind would then be widely prevalent in the professing church.

The Apostasy Developing.

Intimation was thus given to St. John, that almost immediately after the downfall of Heathenism in Rome, and the conversion of the Heathen Roman Empire into one professedly Christian, there would appear in it the rapid development of an Anti-Christian apostasy. This had begun to work in St. Paul's time (2. Thess. ii. 7), but in a more hidden and mysterious manner. Now it was to begin to manifest much more clearly its true character and principles.

With admirable prophetic truth and propriety the Revelation, before describing the desolating effects of the Gothic tempests, pauses at this precise era to depict two light-shedding Visions from heaven—the Sealing and the Palm-bearers. For some long time afterwards there is no light from heaven; only tempests, woes, sins and witnessing in sackcloth; until in the midst of the Turkish Woe appears the glorious Vision of the Epoch of the Reformation (Rev. x. 1–xi. 13). The former Vision of Gospel truth, that of the Sealing, was to combat the Anti-Christian Apostasy in its incipient development; the latter Vision, that of the Reformation Angel, was to combat it when perfected and triumphant. Both were at their own era precisely what was most suited to preserve to the Lord a true church in Christendom.

The Sealing Angel.

St. John saw "*another angel*"; that is, one different from the four whom he saw at the four corners of the earth. This Angel ascended "*from the sunrising.*"

With this may be compared the titles of our Lord, "Sun of righteousness," "Dayspring from on high," "Light of the World," "Bright and Morning Star"; and His ascending from the sunrising may have been intended to foreshow a shedding of doctrinal light and knowledge upon the scene, as well as upon the heart of each real recipient of that light.

He has "*the Seal of the living God*," that is, the Holy Spirit; the epithet "living" having reference to the quickening power of the Spirit, the only giver of spiritual life. Only one Angel or Messenger of God has the right and power to seal with this seal of God, as only one officer in the kingdom has the keeping of the Great Seal of the sovereign. Christ alone has the Spirit, and His gifts and graces, without measure, and can and does bestow Him and them upon men.

The use and intent of a seal is to prove, to confirm, to mark with authority. That which bears the seal of the Sovereign comes with the authority of the Sovereign. The seal is used also to mark as property; what bears a person's seal is thereby distinguished as belonging to him. By sealing these servants of God, the Angel marked them out from among the rest as God's own, consecrated them in a special manner to God, and showed that they were under His special protection. This does not mean their actual immunity from the woes and trials that were to sweep over the earth; but it was a token of God's special ownership of and watchful care over them in the midst of it all. As when our Lord said, "There shall not an hair of your head perish," though many were persecuted to death, so now; their highest interests were safe, and their future reward certain, whatever might happen to them or to the world. (See Ezek. ix. 2–11.)

They are sealed "*on their foreheads*," the most conspicuous part of the body, the seat of boldness and

constancy, both for evil and for good. God's mark rests there, in token of the consistent open testimony they bear, by their holy life. The seal is not visible to the man himself, except when he looks into the mirror of God's Word; but it should be visible to friends and foes alike. Comparing Revelation vii. 13 with Revelation xiv. 1, the mark on the forehead is seen to be the Name of the Father and the Name of the Son, sealed by the Holy Ghost; that is, the sealed ones know the Father and the Son, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

This Angel has power and authority over the other angels. To them it had been given to hurt the earth, the sea, the trees; they were commissioned to this by God. But this Angel has authority over them and restrains them, as His servants. He is the Son; they are but servants. He speaks of Himself as more than one: "Till *we* shall have sealed the servants of *our* God on their foreheads." He speaks as one of the Trinity, as in Genesis i. 26, Isaiah vi. 8.

From all this it is evident that this is no created angel, like the rest; but the Divine Angel of the Covenant Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is here seen by St. John in vision to intervene. His coming seemed to indicate some great necessity for His appearing on the scene at this crisis.

"*To whom it was given to hurt.*" The commission to these four angels is very large, and possibly also of long duration, though liable to arrests and interruptions like this first check. Perhaps it lasts as long as the 144,000 are upon the earth, for these are sealed by way of protection from the action of the four angels. These four angels execute the judgments under the Trumpets, the Trumpet-Angels only sounding the signals. Under the Fifth Trumpet, which therefore is later in date than the Sealing Vision, the sealed

ones are on the scene and are to be recognized by the Seal of God on their foreheads; and the Locusts are charged to hurt only such men as have not that Divine seal impressed upon them (Rev. ix. 3, 4).

The Twelve Professing Tribes.

These Twelve Tribes, as to their popular constituency, occupy the same area as the inhabitants of the Roman Earth, now by profession Christians. The servants of God, who are chosen out of every Tribe, would have been subject, like the rest, to injury from the tempests, had it not been for their sealing. They must therefore have been mingled with the inhabitants of the devoted earth, and have been spread over the same localities as those were. The inhabitants of the earth, as well as these Twelve Tribes of the symbolic Israel, alike include and alike are distinguished from God's true servants. Hence the inhabitants and the Twelve Tribes must either be identical, or the one constitute a notable part of the other. All through the prophecy, the 144,000 sealed, bearing God's mark on their foreheads, and the unsealed mass who have no such mark, will be found in contrast on the Apocalyptic scene.

These Twelve Tribes are symbolical, like the rest of the Jewish imagery in these Visions. They are not the literal Israel according to the flesh, but represent the whole professing people of God, the whole visible Christian church of that era, wheat and tares together. The sealed ones are described as "the servants of our God"—perfectly general, and including Gentiles as well as Jews; so also must the Tribes out of which they are chosen include both. In Revelation xxi. 12, the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, through which enter all the redeemed, bear the names of the same Twelve Tribes of Israel. If the sealed ones were limited to Jewish Christians, why should the holding

back of the winds be universal? It would have been enough to restrain the winds that blew on Jewish Christians, and not all four winds of the earth.

It is to be noticed that in this Vision no distinction is made between the case of infants and that of adults. All are spoken of alike.

Names of the Tribes.

The enumeration of the Tribes given here is different from any other enumeration of them in the Scriptures. Judah heads the list, probably because from that Tribe came the Lord, and in its territory was He born. Levi is inserted; this is a token of his not being detached from the rest by any peculiar office. In Christ there is no priestly tribe; all Christians are priests. The Tribes sprung from the bondwoman are intermingled with those from the free woman; an arrangement suited to the Christian dispensation.

Dan is omitted; why? In order to make room for the insertion of Levi, one Tribe must be omitted; and it seems that Dan is left out, because it was he who adopted and continued idolatry, from the time of the Judges even to the Captivity (see Judges xviii. 30, 31). Thus from very early times he had become a separatist in religious profession from the commonwealth of Israel.

The Professing and the True.

This Sealing Vision gives a general intimation as to the state of religion in the Roman Empire, after the downfall of Heathenism, and the first national profession of Christianity. After Constantine's overthrow of the Heathen emperors and supremacy, the Roman people in multitudes, and at length in the mass, embraced Christianity. There was a rush of mere formal professors and of half-convinced Heathen into the

Church's pale; and they proceeded to appropriate to themselves the title "Israel" and the prophecies of Israel's future glory, transferring to the professing Church, earthly and visible, the Scripture language that belongs only to Christ's true Church invisible in its corporate and spiritual character. All this was done in reference to the then outwardly glorious state of the earthly Church visible.

The most reliable accounts of the actual religious condition at this time, of the mass of the professing Christian inhabitants of the Roman Empire, show that there was a grievous lack of vital and practical godliness, and a multitude of hypocritical accessions. "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel." Hitherto the distinction between the professing and the true, between outward Israel and the Israel of God, though always existing and known to God, had been much less observable. During the first three centuries persecution had to a great extent kept away hypocritical professors. But now the sunshine of Imperial recognition and favour, and consequently of outward peace and prosperity, beamed on the Church visible; and the distinction between the professing and the true became too prominent to escape even contemporary historic notice.

An Abiding Distinction.

The distinction between the large corporate body of the visible professing Israel, and the small election of the 144,000 of God's true spiritual Israel, is of extreme inportance in the whole subsequent history of the Christian Church. It is not merely temporary, but abiding. The 144,000 Sealed are distinguished not from the members of an apostasy from the true Church and faith, as in Ezekiel ix. 1–7, but from the mass of those out of whom they had been chosen for

sealing, and who themselves in profession made up the Twelve Tribes of the Christian Israel, the visible corporation of the newly-established Christian Church.

The Outward Baptismal Rite.

In the historic records of the era, prominence is given to the admission of Church members by Baptism. After Constantine's accession to the supremacy crowds of adults were thus brought in; it was quite a feature of the times. As regards the outward rite, everything was done in order. But of a personal looking in faith to Jesus, as the Life and Light of the soul, whereby alone to secure the spiritual realities and blessings of the sacrament, all too little is said. Exaggerated and unscriptural notions prevailed as to the virtue of the outward rite itself; as though, when duly performed, it was sufficient in itself to secure the blessing. A kind of magical virtue was attributed to it; by it all sins were by the very act washed away, all evils averted as by a charm.

Various ceremonies were added: turning to the west and abjuring Satan, and then to the east to receive the illumination of the Spirit; enrolment in the Church registers; a crown and a white robe put on; being led up with Hallelujahs; painting of the cross on the forehead; calling the baptized the elect, the holy, the faithful. To every one of these points there is an allusive contrast in the Sealing Vision, which thus declares God's solemn condemnation of the doctrinal system that then prevailed. The 144,000 alone, chosen out and sealed by the Lord Himself, possess the spiritual realities of all these outward privileges and blessings.

Baptism was delayed to the death-bed; it was, in estimation and practice, the Extreme Unction of the day. When the whole Empire had become Christian in profession, and Infant Baptism was almost universal,

the rite could no longer avail as a final passport to heaven, but the "Viaticum" was at hand as a substitute. Gradually but surely the Church and the Sacraments were exalted in the place of Christ Himself. It came to pass that the Sacraments, when duly received from the priest's hands, were regarded very much as potent drugs, or chemical antidotes, infallibly dispersing the poison inherited from Adam.

This view of them might heighten the authority of him who administered them, but it deadened or extinguished all true piety. Hence grew a mistaken, formal, earthly view of God's true Israel, or Church, a superstitious exaltation of ceremonial, and a misapprehension and perversion of the character and functions of the clergy.

Foundation-Stone of the Apostasy.

This Baptismal error was the foundation-stone of the great predicted Apostasy; whose one grand object and characteristic, ever followed out with admirable unity of purpose by its originator, the Master Spirit of Evil, was this:—

Within the Christian Church itself, and while professedly exalting Christ and His institutions, and making use of Christian phraseology, practically to set Christ aside out of the Christian system from first to last, in respect of one and all of His saving acts and offices.

The Number is Heard.

St. John did not himself count those who were sealed; it is not for man to do this. But the number was proclaimed, and he heard it; it fell with impressiveness on his mind, as later on did the number of the Euphratean Horsemen (Rev. ix. 16). He heard it as a representative man, representing those of his Apostolic

faith who should be living at the time to which the Vision belonged.

These Twelve Tribes, and the 144,000 Sealed, were not identical, but the latter were an election made by the Lord Himself out of the former. It is not said of the 12,000 Sealed from Judah that they constituted the Tribe of Judah, but that they were sealed out of that Tribe. Nor is it said that the 144,000 constituted the Twelve Tribes of Israel, but that they were sealed as an election out of them. The Twelve Tribes, the large body in all its tribal completeness, signify the whole Christian professing body in the Roman Empire at that date; the Sealed ones are God's true servants chosen out of it, contained within it; a firstfruits indeed, and not the whole harvest ultimately gathered in (Rev. xiv. 4, 5). But every Tribe, the least as well as the greatest—that is, every portion of the professing Church—furnishes its quota to this blessed company.

In forming an estimate, if we take the population of the Twelve Tribes at six or seven millions, when united under David or Solomon—as the Church under Constantine answered to Israel settled under kingly government—the proportion indicated in this Vision would be scarcely one in fifty. But this estimate must not be too closely pressed.

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo.

St. John heard the number, as a representative man. Did any one, then, at this Constantinian era, observe the distinction between the professing and the true Church, and mark it out so publicly that his views formed an epoch in Church history? Can it be shown that, at the close of the fourth century, there were those of the true apostolic line of ministry, to whom was thus strikingly given a revelation about Christ's

true Church as distinct from the professing, and chosen out by Him, and preserved unto the end ?

The answer is, decisively and at once, Augustine.[1] Just as the threatened tempests of the Gothic barbarians burst upon the Empire, there was impressed upon his mind that doctrine as to the Church of God's elect, which most strikingly and beautifully answers to these two Visions of the Sealing and the Palm-bearers. When the ravages of the tempests had begun, the master-idea in his mind was expressed to the Church in his writings and preachings. At length, on Alaric's taking Rome in A.D. 410, Augustine embodied his idea in that most admirable of the works of the Fathers—"*The City of God*"; a treatise destined to be the light and comfort of Christ's true Church throughout the Dark Ages, and down to the Reformation.

"*THE CITY OF GOD.*"

Augustine's view was that Christ's true Church consists of real, spiritual believers alone; as distinguished not only from heathens, heretics, and schismatics, but also from the mere formal, professing, corporate Church of the baptized. Also, that the origin and formation of this true Church is the work of Divine Sovereign grace. He had been made to feel in his own experience, while yet unbaptized, the truth and reality of God's free, sovereign, electing, enlightening grace; and that God's true Church was formed only of those who had felt and had been sanctified by the same Divine influence. Very soon was added to these views that of the final perseverance of the Saints, as shown in the Vision of the Palm-bearers; and then,

[1] This Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, who died A.D. 430, must not be confounded with the Augustine who came to England in A.D. 597.

as against the Pelagian heresy of free will, the doctrine of God's free grace, as working in the Church of the really faithful.

The "*Civitas Dei*" of Augustine is the society or body of the elect, who are even now to the Divine eye separated from the world, and form one spiritual community. He divides the human race into two kinds, one of which lives according to man, the other according to God; and he mystically calls them two cities, which two cities are confused together in this world, but distinct in the other. "Many reprobate live among the elect; both come into the Gospel's net, and both swim at random in the sea of mortality, until the fishers draw them to shore, and then the bad are thrown from the good, in whom, as in His temple, God is all in all."

The theology of the Reformation is full of the aspect of "the elect" as one people, one Society, one body in the eye of God; the "Body mystical collective" of Hooker; the "Invisible Church" of all Protestant Divinity. "The Church of the Elect," says Laud, "is *in* the Church of them that are called, and the invisible Church in the visible." "The general or outward Church of God is visible," says Jewell, "but the very true Church of God's elect is invisible, and cannot be seen or discerned by man, but is only known to God alone." This aspect of "the elect" is dominant in the catechisms and expositions of that day. This does not supersede the existence of another body, the mixed or visible Church. The full recognition of the Church, as a visible body, was perfectly consistent with regarding the elect who were within that Church as a body; an inner society within an outward one, an invisible commonwealth within a visible one, a pure communion within a mixed one. (See Mozley: "*The Baptismal Controversy*," Part. II, chap. iii; and Nowell's *Catechism*: "*The Church Visible.*")

It is in her XVIIth Article, *On Predestination and Election*, that our Church of England gives her luminous account of the ideal process of conversion, holiness, and glorification. "They which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose by His Spirit working in due season; they through grace obey the calling; they be justified freely; they be made sons of God by adoption; they be made like the image of His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity." This does not refer to Baptism, least of all to Infant Baptism.

It is to be observed that in this Vision no distinction is made between the case of infants and that of adults. And in our Church Catechism it is declared that infants promise what is required of adults, i.e. both repentance and faith, by their sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.

Our Catechism does not say that infants are baptized "because they do not resist the grace of God." That answer *was* given in the Middle Ages, and is now given by the Church of Rome, and by some teachers among us. But it is nowhere given by the Church of England's own voice; nor is it anywhere given in Holy Scripture. It is a theory of human thought. Our Church's answer is quite different:—"Because they promise, and are bound, to repent and believe, when they come to age to do so."

In our Service, the infant is dealt with as, so to speak, an adult by anticipation. The Service takes the child as, by anticipation, already penitent and believing. It is treated as, by anticipation, already an inquirer after God and His truth, already a convert, already a believer. The Service rises, as it were, above the limits of time. The future is to it as the present. It gives to this young receiver the seal of the Covenant; and in that sense it gives him the Covenant and its blessings. But how does it give them? In the deepest and most real aspect, by anticipation. It gives them in title, to be claimed in act "when the infant comes to age." (See *English Church Teaching*, Part ii, chap. v.)

An Effectual Antidote.

This doctrine, made plain and published at this time, was most suitable and effectual as an antidote against the baptismal and other errors and corruptions of the age. It declared and emphasized the contrast between God's own individual, direct, electing and saving grace, and an ecclesiastical system of salvation, begun by the *opus operatum* of the priest in baptism, and carried on mainly by the saving virtue of Church ceremonies and observances.

"Catholic" Usages.

Thus, after the barbarian tempests from the North had been let loose on the Roman earth, a twofold stream of doctrine was perpetuated in the Church visible through the ages following:—

(1) The ecclesiastical ritualistic doctrine of religion.

(2) The spiritual, Augustinian doctrine of saving grace.

Hence also a twofold view of Christ's Church of the promises:—

(i.) The earthly corporation of the Church visible and Catholic, under a vice-Christian priesthood.

(ii.) The little flock of those united by a true and living faith to Christ the living Head.

Our Church of England appeals to antiquity really primitive; meaning thereby the New Testament, and the Fathers of the first three centuries. After that era many a corruption crept in; and the question of date therefore becomes of supreme importance in estimating the value of so-called "Catholic" usages.

III. THE PALM-BEARERS: Rev. vii. 9–17.

Before the Throne and the Lamb.

In this Vision, closely connected with that of the Sealing, St. John, still as a representative man, is made to look away from the earth, upon which the twelve professing Tribes are dwelling, into the Holy of Holies of the symbolic Temple. His eyes are now directed towards the Throne and the Lamb, and he holds colloquy with one of the twenty-four elders round the Throne.

He is there shown, what might seem unchronological, the ultimate salvation and blessedness of all the aggregated generations, of all the different branches, of the true Church of Christ, after some great intervening

Tribulation. He now sees them, not upon earth as were the Sealed Ones, but before the Throne above; and he is told that these are they who "*washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*" Their rewards and blessings, which will be adjudged at the Lord's coming, are here shown out of the regular chronology. At the time when John saw this Vision Christianity had not been long enough or far enough among the nations to produce an innumerable multitude of departed saints from every part of the world.

The Future of the True Church.

Christ's true Church of the election of grace is prefigured, not only in the present, but also by anticipation in the future. There they form but one great body, gathered from all times and from all families of mankind; to which have been added, from time to time, generation after generation of chosen ones like the 144,000 sealed. At any given period their number may have been small in comparison with that of the unsealed; but in the aggregate they form an immense multitude, which no man could number.

St. John is shown that each generation of chosen and sealed ones is at last gathered into that great company of all God's people; which includes (ver. 9) constituents out of all "tribes,"—the Tribes spoken of just before—as well as out of every nation, people, and tongue; not only the sealed, generation after generation, from the era of the Sealing Vision onward, but all who come under the description given of them by the elder. Whatever their previous condition, they have now one clothing, one Creed, one song.

Washed and Whited Robes.

The robes of these blessed ones had not always been white as St. John saw them; they had once been defiled

with sin. But they had been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, which cleanseth from all sin. This is spoken of in the past tense, so that it was not only after this life that they had been cleansed; white had been their colour while still in this world. It was before their death that these righteous ones had washed their robes, and thus obtained the right to stand before the Throne of God. (The white robes spoken of under the Fifth Seal (Rev. vi. 11), were given to the souls of the martyrs after death.)

They carried palms in their hands, like Jewish pilgrims, or Roman conquerors, in token that they had come victorious out of the great conflict that they had to pass through while still upon earth.

The Great Tribulation.

"*These are they which come.*" Not past, but present and future. They come not all at once, but by degrees; the saints of God are continually passing into the unseen world, and taking their place among the spirits of just men made perfect.

"*Out of the great tribulation.*" That is the whole sum of the trials of the saints of God, viewed by the elder as now complete, and therefore designated by this emphatic and general name. But it includes especially the great anti-Christian persecution intimated to the souls of the Martyrs seen under the Altar in the Fifth Seal; and at that time, as also at the time of this Sixth Seal, still future.

This persecution, by Papal Rome, takes place during the reign of Babylon the Great, who is seen by St. John at the end of her career to be "*drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*"; and in whom is *found* the blood of prophets and saints and all that have been slain upon the earth. As this blood is "*found*" in her, search will have been

made. Probably this means that history will have been carefully inquired into, and it will have been found that there really has been this great persecution and slaughter of Christ's true and faithful ones, for centuries, by Babylon.

The tribulation is great by comparison with previous tribulations; it is longer and fiercer than those were. That is because it includes especially the period of the Papal domination, which was to last for not less than twelve centuries and a half; with persecution not by any means of equal intensity from the outset, nor necessarily prevailing the whole period through, yet described as a warfare against the saints, and shown by history to have resulted in the slaughter of many millions of Christ's true servants, branded as "heretics."

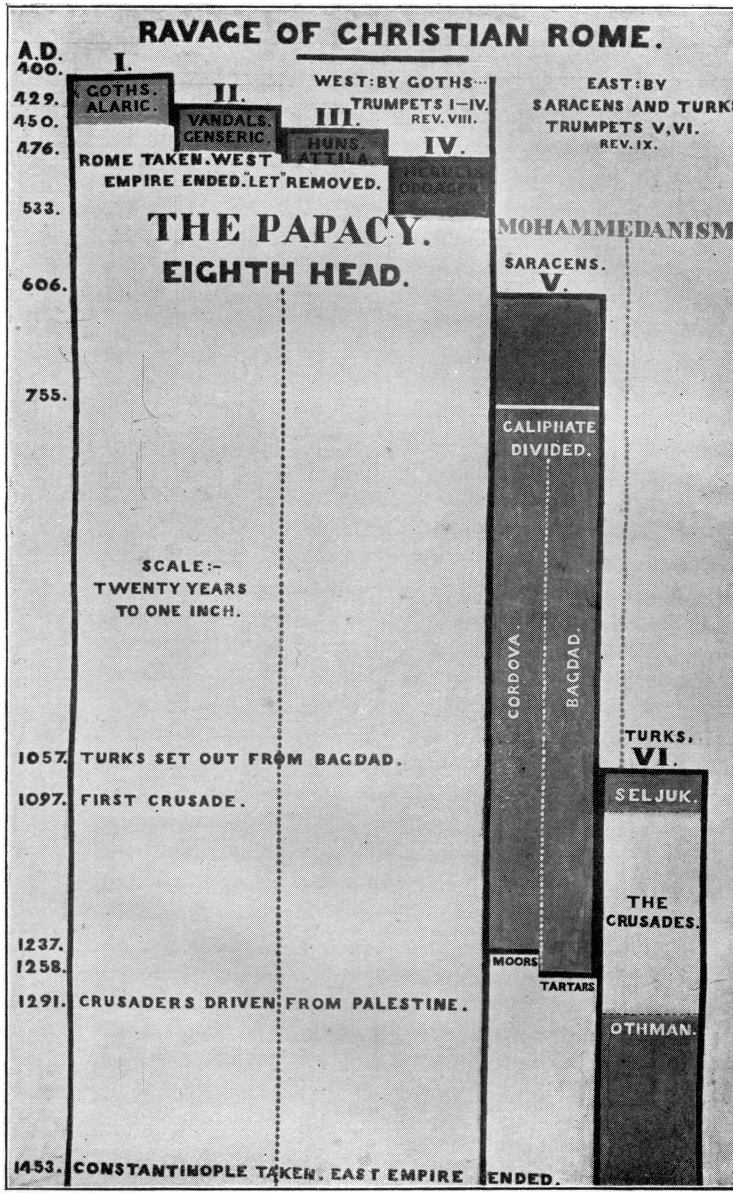
It does not seem, however, that martyrdom is the principal characteristic of this great tribulation. Those who come out of it have made their robes white by washing them in the blood of the Lamb. The tribulation, then, consisted largely in being tempted to trust in some other means of cleansing. They have suffered hunger and thirst, sun and heat, and tears. That is, they have had no proper spiritual food ministered to them, and they have been scorched by the powers that be. All this points rather to a trial by means of false teaching, corrupt teaching in a position of power, than to persecution or martyrdom, though that may be included. Compare Revelation xvi. 15, "Blessed is he that keepeth his garments," when these spirits are abroad. Also xxii. 14, "Blessed are they that wash their robes."

It is scarcely necessary to remark that this is distinct from the great tribulation that is to come upon the Jewish people, in their land, at the time of the end (Dan. xii. 1). See also Paper XXV.

SUMMARY OF THE SIXTH SEAL.

After the symbolization, in the first portion of the Seal, of the downfall of Heathenism in the Roman Empire, there was given in the sequel of the Seal a significant intimation as to the nature of the corruption of doctrine and practice that would forthwith begin to be developed in the professing Christian Church.

At the same time there were revealed afresh, as with light from above, the doctrines of grace respecting the origin, nature, preservation, and final salvation of God's true Israel, the church of His elect. Not that those gracious doctrines had not been revealed before; but the teachings of Scripture in those respects had been grievously obscured, and even forgotten, until in God's mercy they were republished through Augustine. He was at this era God's great instrument for reviving the doctrines of grace in the Christian Church, and his influence has lasted for centuries after his own day.


RAVAGE OF CHRISTIAN ROME.
A.D.
400.
I.
GOTHS. ALARIC.
II.
VANDALS. GENSERIC.
III.
HUNS. ATTILA.
IV.
HERULI. ODOACER.
WEST: BY GOTHS··· TRUMPETS I—IV. REV. VIII.
EAST: BY SARACENS AND TURKS TRUMPETS V, VI. REV. IX.
429.
450.
476.
ROME TAKEN. WEST EMPIRE ENDED. "LET" REMOVED.
533.
THE PAPACY.
EIGHTH HEAD.
MOHAMMEDANISM.
SARACENS.
V.
606.
755.
CALIPHATE DIVIDED.
CORDOVA.
BAGDAD.
SCALE:-
TWENTY YEARS TO ONE INCH.
TURKS.
VI.
1057. TURKS SET OUT FROM BAGDAD.
1097. FIRST CRUSADE.
SELJUK.
THE CRUSADES.
1237.
1258.
MOORS.
TARTARS.
1291. CRUSADERS DRIVEN FROM PALESTINE.
OTHMAN.
1453. CONSTANTINOPLE TAKEN. EAST EMPIRE ENDED.

XI

RAVAGE OF ROME CHRISTIAN: IN THE WEST, BY GOTHS AND OTHERS

FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS: Rev. viii. 1–12.

THE SEVENTH SEAL: Rev. viii. 1, 2.

AFTER the Seventh Seal had been opened, intimation was given of other divisions of the prophecy to follow; St. John now saw Seven Angels, to whom were given Seven Trumpets. As the four Living Creatures had called "Come!" so now each of the Seven Trumpet-Angels gives the call for a judgment. The Trumpets are given them; this signifies divine authority to call forth the judgments. These Angels were not seen, nor mentioned, till after the opening of the Seventh Seal; and then were given to them the Trumpets with which they were to sound the signals for the successive judgments wherein the Seventh Seal is developed. It may be said that that Seal includes all from its own opening to the end of the Visions; for the Trumpets are the development of that Seal, just as the Seven Vials, later on, are the development of the judgments of the Seventh or last of the Trumpets.

The Trumpets are successively sounded, and after each signal thus given there follows symbolic action, representing the history of the particular era belonging to each Trumpet, just as was the case with the Seals.

We have now a long course of history, extending over many centuries, to compare with these symbolic Visions; and it is a great help in discerning to what the Visions refer, as well as in guarding against out-of-the-way explanations.

Era of the Gothic Invasions.

The first six Seals have brought us to the fall of Heathenism in the Roman Empire, and the establishment of Christianity under Constantine and his successors. The close of the Sixth Seal, with its four Tempest-Angels temporarily restrained, and its Sealing and Palm-bearing Visions, was fixed at the arrest by Theodosius of the Gothic insurrection under Valens, and the contemporary Augustinian revelation of the Constitution of Christ's true Church. The death of Theodosius, January 17, A.D. 395, all at once removed the restraint from the Tempests of Barbarians, and marks the beginning of a new and fateful epoch, which well answers to the opening of the Seventh Seal.

We have thus arrived at the precise era of the Gothic Invasions; and in the Visions, after a plain intimation of the crowning sin of that era—Saint worship and Martyr worship—there follow symbols that accurately fit those Barbarian devastations. As the Gothic invasions ended in the extinction of the Western Emperors and Empire of Rome, so the Vision of the Fourth Trumpet depicts the partial darkening of the heavenly luminaries, the well-known symbols of rulers. As these events in the West were succeeded, after an interval, by the Saracenic invasions in the East; so is the Fourth Trumpet followed, after the intimation of an interval (Rev. viii. 13), by what exactly depicts the Saracenic Woe. Thus there is a close correspondence between the broad features, no less than between the

details, of the Trumpet-Visions and of the facts of history subsequent to the death of Theodosius.

Silence in Heaven.

When the Lamb opened the Seventh Seal, "there followed a silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." The simple, natural meaning of this symbol is, that it is the hush before the storm in the firmamental heaven, the four devastating winds being as yet authoritatively restrained from blowing. It is a brief suspension of judgment. Preparation for action, rather than the action itself, marks the opening of the Seal. As yet the Seven Trumpets have only been given to the Seven Angels; more has to pass before the Angels put them to their lips to sound.

About Half an Hour.

The silence seemed to St. John, or affected him, as might the half-hour's stillness before a storm in nature. Why this short respite? In order to exhibit a scene of Temple-Worship, characteristic of the precise epoch, and suggesting a reason for God's proceeding to execute the threatened judgments of the Tempest-Angels (see Ezek. viii. 17, 18). Could the Apostasy develop itself without judgments following? Occasion also was given to note the distinction between the sealed and the unsealed, between the true Saints of God and the men of the earth; a distinction which was to exist and to be recognized by God all through the Trumpet judgments.

The interval between the opening of the Seventh Seal, and the first outbreak of the Tempests of Barbarians, was to be very short; for on the half-hour's ending, the check upon the Four Angels and their Tempests was to be withdrawn. If it were measured on the year-day scale, "half an hour" would equal seven and a half days

of twenty-four hours, or fifteen days of twelve hours. In any case it represents a very short interval, perhaps of days rather than even of weeks.

Death of Theodosius.

Theodosius himself had been able to keep the Goths quiet while he lived; but the news of his death, January 17, A.D. 395, roused them to revolt; and their revolt was an earthquake that shook the Roman Empire to its very foundations. "Before the winter ended, the Gothic nation was in arms" (Gibbon). Restraint had been removed from the winds. By the infatuation of the Eastern Emperor Arcadius, Alaric, after returning from a Greek invasion, was made Master-general of Eastern Illyricum, A.D. 398. During four years he prepared for his great enterprise, seated in authority in the centre of that vast Prefecture, which, since the days of Valens, had been very much occupied by the Goths and other barbaric tribes. Then the Gothic war burst forth upon the Roman Empire.

THE INCENSE-OFFERING: Rev. viii. 3–5.

This is a scene in the Altar-Court, and therefore one that represents some marked characteristic of the visible worship of the Christian Church at this era.

After the delivery of the Seven Trumpets to the Seven Angels, "*Another Angel*," different from these seven, "*came and stood over the Altar.*" This is the Angel of the Covenant; the great High Priest over the house of God, passed through the heavens. None but He is High-Priest in the Christian Church, and it is in that character that He is represented in the opening Vision (Rev. i. 13; ii. 1). In Ezekiel ix., x., the same who marks God's servants, and reports, takes fire and scatters it over Jerusalem. So here; this Angel is the

same who in the previous Vision sealed God's true servants from among the professing multitude. He now takes the golden censer of incense into the Holy Place, and ministers there at the Golden Altar, which in the Tabernacle stood before the Veil, but here there is no Veil, and the Golden Altar is "before the throne"; then He comes forth to the great brazen Altar in the open Court, takes of that Altar-fire, and scatters it over the apostatizing land.

The ritual of the Incense-offering is described in Leviticus xvi. 12. The priest ministered at both Altars. "He shall take a censer full of coals of fire from off the Altar before the Lord" (i.e. the Brazen Altar of Sacrifice, on which the fire was always burning), "and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil." Then he put the incense on the coals, that the cloud from the incense might cover the mercy-seat, that he die not; the truths typified being, that except by association with the meritorious atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and the application of its purifying and propitiatory virtue, the prayers and praises of God's people could never rise acceptably before the heavenly mercy-seat.

One Mediator.

The Vision of the Incense-Angel was seen by St. John in his representative character, impersonating in this case the faithful ones of the Augustinian era, who held Apostolical doctrine, as distinguished from the mass of mere formal professors. Instead of many intercessors, St. John in his representative character saw only One, the great High Priest, the Angel of the Covenant.

By allusive contrast, the Vision represented the virtual abandonment of Christ's atoning Sacrifice and Mediatorship, by the mass of professing Christendom. As the Vision depicted what passed in the open Altar-

Court, the scene of what was visible in the Jewish public worship, it implied that this forsaking of the Altar-fire and the High Priest of the Altar, by the mass of the inhabitants of Roman Christendom, would be characteristic not of their private devotions only, but also of their public worship; so that even publicly Christ's faithful people would be peculiar amid the rest in availing themselves solely of His mediation and propitiatory sacrifice.

"*The prayers of all the saints.*" Here the Israelitish Temple and Altar-Court are the scene of public worship to "all the saints," that is, to all true Christians. The Jewish symbolism has a Christian meaning. These Saints are the 144,000 alone, and the mention of the Saints implies an allusive contrast to those not the Lord's true saints. The inhabitants of the earth (ver. 5) are presently the objects of the Angels' wrath. The large majority in Roman Christendom would now have forsaken the great High Priest as their Atoner for sin, their One Intercessor, their One Mediator, and the Offerer of their incense of prayer on the golden incense-altar.

Invocation of Saints and Martyrs.

The second great step in the Anti-Christian Apostasy was the invocation of Saints and Martyrs, as new means of propitiating God. There was a rapid relapse, under Christian names and Christian profession, into a Christ-forsaking idolatry. The invisible world was allied with the visible, the earthly priest with the heavenly martyr. Enthusiasm respecting the martyrs easily passed into superstition, and superstition gave birth to credulity. Those who had sealed a Christian faith by a martyr's death were exalted above the condition of men, were enthroned among superior beings, and might surely extend miraculous help to their votaries still on earth.

It was inculcated that prayer was never so efficacious as when offered at the tomb of some saint. Dead

saints were connected with certain localities, and were associated with the priestly functionaries of the Church over the martyr's relics or tomb. Who so effectual a helper to the saints' favour as the priest or guardian of his relics? Hence priests began to be called "Mediators"; hence arose a superstitious awe of the clerical body, as dispensers of the favour and wrath of heaven; hence an awful increase of pride, superstition and worldliness on their part.

Hence also arose the stupid veneration for bones and relics. Images, incense, flowers, lamps, tapers, fictitious miracles, pilgrimages and revellings—all these things followed. Heathenism was revived under a Christian disguise. "Christianity was paganized in order to Christen Paganism." Yet the Second Commandment, like the rest of the Commandments, forbids not only the gross sin of making an image for worship, and bowing down to it; but it also forbids every approach to, every accompaniment of, idolatrous worship.

There was in short a practical supersession of the Lord Jesus Christ as the One Mediator, and of His propitiatory and meritorious sacrifice. God Himself was practically forsaken as the object of prayer; the usual mode being to seek the intervention and intercession of some saint. There was more and more of a barrier interposed between Christ and the soul; and the lamentable feature of this apostasy of the Church was, that not the few, nor the less instructed, thus deserted the One Mediator between God and man, but that the highest and most influential of the bishops and doctors all erred in this matter.

Christianity Paganized.

An illustrative extract from Gibbon is subjoined. His chapter is significantly headed, "Final Destruction of Paganism.—Introduction of the Worship of Saints and

Relics among the Christians" (*Decline and Fall*, chap. xxviii.).

"If, in the beginning of the fifth century, Tertullian or Lactantius had been suddenly raised from the dead, to assist at the festival of some popular Saint or Martyr, they would have gazed with astonishment and indignation on the profane spectacle which had succeeded to the pure and spiritual worship of a Christian congregation. As soon as the doors of the church were thrown open, they must have been offended by the smoke of incense, the perfume of flowers, and the glare of lamps and tapers, which diffused, at noonday, a gaudy, superfluous, and, in their opinion, a sacrilegious light. If they approached the balustrade of the Altar, they made their way through the prostrate crowd, consisting, for the most part, of strangers and pilgrims, who resorted to the city on the vigil of the feast; and who already felt the strong intoxication of fanaticism, and, perhaps, of wine. Their devout kisses were imprinted on the walls and pavement of the sacred edifice; and their fervent prayers were directed, whatever might be the language of their church, to the bones, the blood, or the ashes of the Saint, which were usually concealed by a linen or silken veil from the eyes of the Vulgar. The Christians frequented the tombs of the martyrs, in the hope of obtaining from their powerful intercession every sort of spiritual, but more especially of temporal, blessings.

"It must ingenuously be confessed that the ministers of the Catholic Church imitated the profane model which they were impatient to destroy. The most respectable bishops had persuaded themselves that the ignorant masses would more cheerfully renounce the superstitions of Paganism, if they found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of Christianity. The religion of Constantine achieved, in less than a century, the conquest of the Roman Empire; but the victors themselves were subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals."

Not all, however, had become thus blinded, and had forsaken the Divine and only true High-Priest and Intercessor. Under such teaching as that of Augustine, many had learnt to regard Christ as their all-perfect Mediator. To their prayers was added "much incense."

Judgments Denounced.

On account of these grievous departures from the true faith, the judgments of God were commissioned against Roman Christendom. The Angel moved back to the Brazen Altar in the Altar-Court, and taking again thence of the burning embers, filled the censer with them, only not now to bless, but to devote to destruction. From the Temple height He scattered the fiery ashes, so that they might fall on the despisers of His proffered atonement and mediation in the world below—the world professing, but in reality apostate.

There is an intimate connexion between the act of the Angel and the Seven Trumpets that follow. Not an instant passes without signs of recognition, in heaven and on earth, of this devoting of the land to a curse. Forthwith the tempests burst on the earth, with thunders and lightnings, and the Roman world quakes throughout its whole extent. These symbols sum up the general character of the events that were to take place under the Trumpets; just as on the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet there is symbolized in general terms what was to follow under the Seven Vials (Rev. xi. 15–19).

Preparation for Sounding: Rev. viii. 6.

The Seven Angels now "prepared themselves to Sound." They do not themselves execute judgments, but only give the signals with their trumpets; and the ravages and desolations that follow are accomplished by the Four Tempest-Angels of Revelation vii. 1, who had been for a while restrained, but are now let loose to fulfil their mission. At the end of the Fifth Trumpet these Four are bound at the Euphrates, and then are again loosed for the judgment of the Sixth Trumpet (Rev. ix. 14, 15). In this case, however, the Sixth Trumpet-Angel does more than give the signal; he is

told himself to loose those Four Angels from their bonds.

The Four Angels, holding the four Winds, represented desolations from all sides upon the Roman territory; and this was accomplished under the first Six Trumpets, by the Goths, Vandals, Huns, etc., in the West; and by the Saracens and Turks in the East.

Use of the Levitical Trumpet.

As regards Israel, the Trumpet was used to proclaim epochs of advancing time, sabbaths, and other festivals; summoning the people for praise and prayer. In the Wilderness, the Trumpet announced each forward movement of the camp, each advance towards the end of the pilgrimage. As regards Israel's enemies, the sounding of the Trumpet during war time was to proclaim war against them, as from God Himself. Here both uses may be understood, as regards the chosen and sealed ones, the true servants of God; and as regards the professing but really apostatizing remainder.

There were to be Seven Trumpets, and under the Seventh Seven Vials. This suggests a resemblance to the fall of Jericho; seven trumpet-blasts on seven successive days; and on the seventh, seven compassings of its walls, till at last those walls fell, and Israel entered into that first city of the promised Canaan. So here, it seems as if some power were marked out as the New Testament Jericho, whose domination opposed, and whose overthrow would introduce, the Saints' enjoyment of the heavenly Canaan.

Era of the Trumpets.

Comparing prophecy and history, we have now reached the precise epoch when began the Gothic irruptions into the Western Roman Empire; and the points

of resemblance between the symbols that now follow, and the events of the subsequent history, are too many, too striking, and too exact, to allow the thought that they are merely fortuitous.

The first four Trumpet-Visions are connected together by strongly-marked features of resemblance; they depict destructive action affecting the third part of the Roman earth and its produce, of the Roman sea, rivers, and luminaries. They are explained of the successive invasions and ravages of the Gothic nations, chiefly in the fifth century. The fourth Trumpet-Vision depicts the partial darkening of the heavenly luminaries, the well-known symbols of rulers; and the Gothic ravages ended in the extinction of the Western Emperors and Empire at Rome. Then the Gothic desolations were succeeded by the Saracen invasions, to which the symbolism of the Fifth Trumpet admirably corresponds.

The invading barbarians disdained the title of conquerors, and assumed that of guests of the Romans. They petitioned for places and titles from the Eastern Emperor as a peculiar honour. The rude tribes of the North were engrafted on the existing polity of Rome, and borrowed from her laws, institutions, and titles, the chief elements of their political power. Hence in these symbolic Visions they are viewed as the continuation of the same Roman Empire, but in a different form, and with fresh Powers springing up in the body of the Empire.

The "Let" not yet Removed.

The "Let" or restraint to the manifestation of the Man of Sin had not yet been quite taken away. For though Constantine removed the Imperial seat from Italy to Constantinople, so allowing freer scope for the development of the Roman bishop's ambition, yet he was an upholder of the high Imperial prerogative.

Moreover, after his death, there was again appointed a Western Emperor for Italy and the West, as well as an Eastern for the Eastern half of the Roman Empire. And though the seven-hilled Rome itself was no longer the actual Western Imperial seat, yet from Milan or Ravenna its distance was not so great but that thence might be exercised some supervision or check to any extraordinary self-exaltation on the part of the bishop of Rome.

At length, as the fifth century opened, a new and terrible change occurred. The Gothic hordes poured in overwhelming force over the northern frontier of the Alps into Italy, and the very existence of the Western Emperors and of Rome itself was threatened. Shortly after, Rome was actually taken, but she and her Imperial power fell not just yet. For near a century the flux and reflux of the barbarian deluge swept over the land, ere her fall was accomplished. Finally, in A.D. 476, the Western Imperial power was extinguished and the "Let" was thus taken away. Out of the dismemberment of Western Rome the states of Modern Europe have gradually grown.

Whence the Impulse?

The wave of invasion that now broke upon the Roman frontier was impelled by a rising tide of migration far in its rear, which forced it on, and would not allow it to fall back. A great movement of races had begun in the lands beyond the Danube; Sclavonic and Scythic or Turanian hordes were pressing westward, and more and more cramping the Germans in their ancient seats.

"The invasion of the Huns precipitated on the provinces of the West the Gothic nation, which advanced, in less than forty years, from the Danube to the Atlantic, and opened a way, by the success of their arms, for the inroads of so many hostile tribes more savage than themselves. The original

principle of motion was concealed in the remote countries of the North, and the curious observation of the pastoral life of the Scythians or Tartars will illustrate the latent cause of these destructive emigrations." (Gibbon.)

"The Huns were a Turanian people, from the steppes of Northern or Central Asia, who had been driven from their own older settlements by movements in the further East, but who became an important element in the history of the fifth century. They affected the Empire, partly by actual invasions, partly by driving other nations before them; but they made no lasting settlements within it." (Freeman: *Hist. Geogr.* chap. iv.)

RAVAGE OF WESTERN ROME.

First Trumpet: Rev. viii. 7.

The first Angel sounded his trumpet, against Italy and Rome as history has shown, and there followed a tempest bringing hail—and so from the north—and fire, mingled with blood, signifying the destruction of life as well as of vegetation. "Blood" is seen; not bleeding slain. In prophetic Scripture the literal and the symbolical are continually intermixed, and it is almost impossible to take all literally or all symbolically. See Psalm lxxx. 8–11, the vine out of Egypt; Jeremiah iii. 6, Israel's idolatry; Ezekiel xxvii., Tyre; Ezekiel xxxii., the king of Egypt.

The third part of the earth and trees, and all green grass, was burnt up. Compare Revelation ix. 4. The contrast between this wasting of vegetation by the Goths, and the preservation of it by the Saracen Locusts, is true to fact, and is noticed in the prophecy.

Era of Alaric, Rhadagaisus, and the Goths: A.D. 400–410.

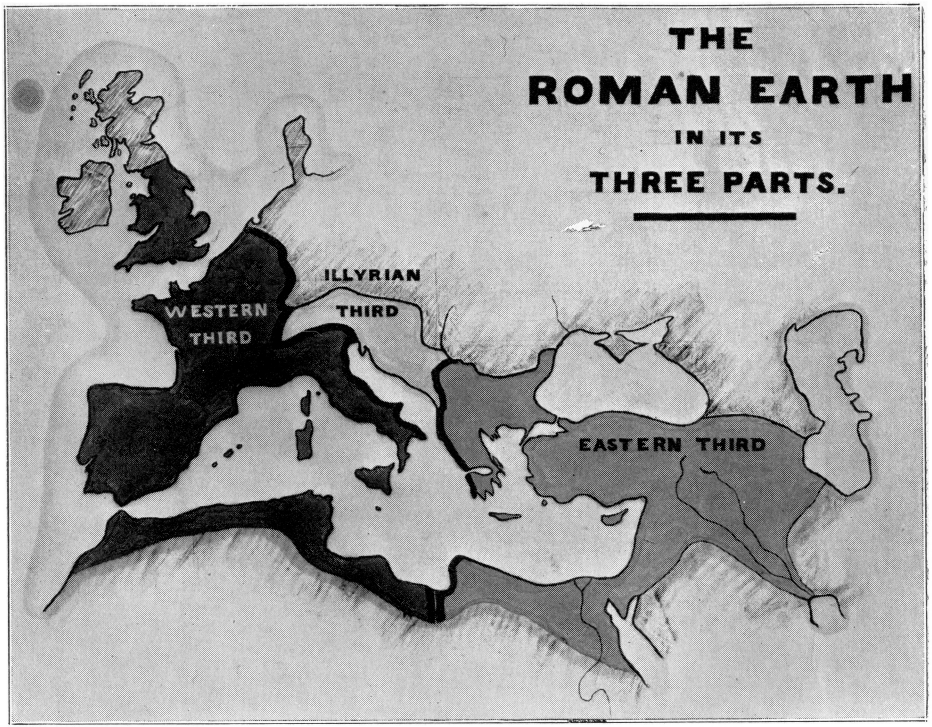
This era chiefly embraces ten or twelve years, from A.D. 400 to about A.D. 410; though as the ravages of the provinces were not then discontinued, the Vision may well cover a longer period. The dates are these:

Alaric invades Italy, A.D. 400; Rhadagaisus also, A.D. 406; Alaric's first siege of Rome, A.D. 408; his second, A.D. 409; his third, and capture of the city, A.D. 410. In that latter year the Vandals had extended their conquests to the Straits of Gades; and Alaric, who had accomplished his destiny, and had reached the southernmost coast of Italy, was arrested by death.

Gibbon's vivid historical pictures show the inimitable perfection of the hieroglyphic symbols. The quarter from which the invasion came, the north, indicated by the hail—the character of the invasion, shown by the fire and blood—the track of the invading host visible to St. John's eye, in burning trees and grass—all complete this image of Alaric the Goth and his armies, when imperial Rome, for the first time since the days of the Gauls, fell into the hands of a foreign foe.

Alaric "felt a secret and preternatural impulse, which directed, and even compelled, his march to the gates of Rome." As his trumpet sounded and his march advanced, terrible omens and prognostications preceded him. "The Christians, however, still derived some comfort from the powerful intercession of the saints and martyrs." So does Gibbon unconsciously note the very cause hinted at in the Apocalypse for the coming judgments. Thrice Alaric descended on the Italian plains, marking his course with fire and blood, till the gates of Rome itself were opened to the conqueror. A like devastation marked each step of the track of the Goths, in Gaul and Spain, as in Greece and Italy. The burning of trees and herbage, as well as of cities, is pathetically described by the chronicles of the time.

Between Alaric's first and second invasions, Rhadagaisus from north Germany, with a host of Vandals, Suevi, and Burgundians, "a dark thunder-cloud from the Baltic" (Gibbon), burst on the Rhætian and Italian


THE
ROMAN EARTH
IN ITS
THREE PARTS.
WESTERN
THIRD
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valleys. With difficulty he was repulsed near Florence, where he was killed; and the remnant of his army invaded Gaul and Spain. From this passage of the Rhine may be dated the fall of the Roman power in the countries beyond the Alps. The desolators never retreated. The desolation of Gaul and Spain went on, but rather by wars of Goths against Goths, than of Goths against Romans.

"The Third Part."

From the Fourth Trumpet (Rev. viii. 12), and its accomplishment in history, it appears that whatever were the other two, the Western Empire of Rome must have been one of the thirds; and to it the first four Trumpets seem to apply, as to its land territory, its maritime dependencies, its frontier rivers and valleys and fountains, and its luminaries. This third included Britain, Gaul, Spain, Italy, and the Western half of the north coast of Africa.

Another third included the Illyrian Præfecture, lying south of the Danube; and the remaining third comprised the Asiatic provinces, with Egypt and Thrace. Each of these third parts included its third of the Mediterranean or Roman Sea, as well as one-third of the land; and its own characteristic stream, of the three great frontier rivers, the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates (see the Map).

At the time of the First Trumpet's sounding, this Trisection existed as a matter of fact, and the Illyrian Præfecture was detached from the rest by Gothic occupation. No doubt other temporary divisions followed; more especially, just before the irruption of the Goths, the memorable and permanent division of the empire into Eastern and Western, first under Valentinian and Valens, and then under the two sons of Theodosius—

Arcadius and Honorius.[1] But whatever minor changes of boundary may have taken place, the Trisection described above seems to be the one referred to in the first four Trumpets. These concern the Western or Italian Third; the Sixth Trumpet (Rev. ix. 15, 18) concerns the Eastern or Asiatic Third.

SECOND TRUMPET: Rev. viii. 8, 9.

On the sounding of the Second Trumpet, St. John saw "as it were a great mountain burning with fire" cast into the sea. It was not actually a mountain, but it looked like a great volcano in eruption; and when cast into the sea its effect was to turn one-third of the sea into blood, and to destroy one-third of the living creatures therein, and one-third of the ships.

This would represent maritime invasion by some fierce power, devastating the basin of the Western Mediterranean, and the islands and trans-marine African coast, from Gibraltar to Sicily; the sea-third answering to the land-third of the Western empire; with the accompaniment of burning, bloodshed, and destruction of shipping. The symbolical meaning of "mountain" may be illustrated by Jeremiah li. 25, 26; Psalm lxxii. 3.

[1] On the death of their father, Arcadius took the Eastern Provinces of the Empire, answering nearly to the Præfectures of the East and of Illyricum; while Honorius took the Western Provinces, the Præfectures of Italy and Gaul. Through the greater part of the fifth century, the successors of those two princes formed two distinct lines of Emperors, of whom the Eastern reigned at Constantinople, and the Western most commonly at Ravenna rather than at old Rome. But as the dominions of each prince were alike Roman, the Eastern and Western emperors were still looked on in theory as Imperial colleagues charged with the administration of a common Roman dominion. Practically, however, the dominions of the two Emperors may be looked upon as two distinct empires.

Genseric and the Vandals : A.D. 425.

Genseric the Vandal accomplished what Alaric had been prevented by death from completing—the conquest of all that remained to the Western Roman Empire in the Mediterranean. The desolation of Gaul and Spain had not been discontinued, but hitherto Africa, the granary of Rome, had remained intact.

Invited by Count Boniface, apparently under temporary infatuation, Genseric transported his Vandals to Africa from under Gibraltar ; all prepared, like some burning volcanic mountain upheaved and transported across the Straits, for the desolation of that province. In A.D. 430 Hippo was besieged and taken.[1] In A.D. 439 Carthage fell ; resistance ended, and the whole African province was subjected to the Vandals, and finally severed from the Western Roman Empire. Sicily and Sardinia, and the Roman ships, still remained ; but on land, except for some precarious possessions in Gaul and Spain, the Western Empire was now confined to the three countries of Vindelicia, Rhætia, and Italy.

After the capture of Carthage, Genseric, finding himself shut in to the south by the desert, cast his eyes toward the sea, and determined to create a naval power. Then "the (Vandal) fleets that issued from the port of Carthage again claimed the empire of the Mediterranean." Sicily, Sardinia, the Western Isles, all that was in "the third part of the sea," was conquered, and the coasts of Spain, Gaul and Italy were ravaged. Twice, in A.D. 457 on the West, and in A.D. 468 on the East, Roman navies were sent forth, but were suddenly and utterly destroyed, at Carthagena and Bona. In A.D. 477 Genseric died.

"The Vandals occupied Bætica ; but they presently passed into Africa, A.D. 425, and there founded the one Teutonic kingdom

[1] Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, died this year, on August 28.

in that continent, with Carthage to its capital, a kingdom which took in also the great islands of the Western Mediterranean, including Sicily itself." "Though they passed altogether out of Spain, they have left their name to this day in its southern part under the form of Andalusia, a name which under the Saracen conquerors spread itself over the whole peninsula." (Freeman: *Hist. Geogr.*)

THE THIRD TRUMPET: Rev. viii. 10, 11.

"*A great star, burning as a torch,*" is the symbol of a powerful ruler, on fire with the lust of ambition, vengeance, and conquest. It fell with disastrous effect—and not simply as the stars fell to the earth in the Sixth Seal—upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; that is, upon the Western third of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the European waters. It embittered and poisoned the waters, so that many men died by drinking them. Probably political death or extinction is what this feature of the Vision symbolizes.

Attila and the Huns.

Long before the extinction of the Burning Mountain of the Second Trumpet, and the death of Genseric, Attila, king of the Huns, "the scourge of God," united Germany and Scythia under his sway. Superstitious awe added to his power. To his enemies he was like the baneful meteor then blazing in the heavens, and supposed to bode war and ruin.

He came to the throne in A.D. 433, and in his reign the Huns again became the terror of the world. For the first eight years from his accession he was occupied with wars in Germany, Persia, and Scythia. In A.D. 441 he attacked the Eastern Empire, ravaged Thrace and Mæsia, and the Danube down to the Euxine. In A.D. 450 he made a treaty with Genseric; ravaged

the upper Danube, crossed the Rhine at Basle, and tracing it down to Belgium, made its valley one scene of desolation and woe. This his connexion with the Danube and the Rhine is especially to be noted.

Venice.

Repulsed in the tremendous and decisive Battle of Chalons, A.D. 451, he diverted his course, and fell on the Alpine heights and valleys of Italy. Many fled to the low and marshy islands at the mouth of the Adige, Po, and Brenda. Venice is a memorial of this "Scourge of God," the Hun Attila. He destroyed the city of Aquileia, and its inhabitants, fleeing to the Venetian islands, laid the foundations of the commonwealth of Venice.

An embassy from the Western Emperor Valentinian, together with Pope Leo I, was successful in deprecating his wrath. He retired to the royal village near Buda, and died of apoplexy, A.D. 453.

THE FOURTH TRUMPET: Rev. viii. 12.

The glory of Rome had long departed; her provinces had been rent from her one after another; the territory attached to her had become like a desert; her maritime possessions, fleets, and commerce, were annihilated. Little remained but vain titles and insignia of sovereignty.

The time had now come when these also were to be withdrawn. Hitherto, though her land, sea, and frontier rivers and fountains of waters had been desolated, yet her sun—representing the chief ruling power—still continued shining on the Western Empire as before. But now at length this also suffered partial eclipse, and the chief governing luminaries of the western third of the Roman world no longer gave their light.

Odoacer and the Barbarian Mercenaries.

Odoacer (or Odovaker, as it seems his name ought to be written) was a chief of the Heruli, a remnant of the host of Attila, left on the Alpine frontiers of Italy. Shortly after the accession of Romulus Augustulus to the Imperial throne, the barbarian mercenary troops, who were now all-powerful in Italy, made a demand for one-third of the land of Italy; and when their demand was refused, they chose Odoacer as their leader, took arms under his command, slew Orestes, the Emperor's father, and demanded that the name and office of the Roman Emperor of the West should be abolished.

The authorities at Rome bowed in submission. After a reign of less than one year, Romulus Augustulus (singularly suggestive name!) abdicated, A.D. 476; and the Senate sent away the Imperial insignia to Constantinople, professing to the Emperor Zeno of the East that one Emperor was sufficient for the whole empire, and that Odoacer was qualified by his wisdom and courage to be protector of their state. They further entreated Zeno to confer upon Odoacer the title of Patrician, and the administration of the Italian provinces.

The Emperor granted what he could not refuse; the dignity of Emperor of the West was then formally abolished; and Odoacer, taking the title of king, ruled for fourteen years nominally as the Vicar of the Eastern Emperor, practically as the first Barbarian King of Italy.

The Third Part Smitten.

It might be said that in theory there was no extinction of the Western Empire at all, but only a reunion of the East and the West; things now reverting, in form and

to some extent in the belief of men, to what they had been during the first two centuries of the Empire, except that Constantinople instead of Rome was the centre of the civil government.

But of the Imperial Sun the third belonging to the Western Empire was eclipsed, and shone no more; The Imperial Sun was one, and the Apocalyptic fraction here is strictly accurate; in the last arrangement between the courts of the West and of the East, the whole of the Illyrian third had been made over to the Eastern division. So in the West the extinction of the Empire had taken place; the night had fallen. In Revelation vi. 12 the whole sun and whole moon are smitten; the whole Imperial power is changed. Here it is only the third or Western part that is affected.

Still the authority of the Roman name had not entirely ceased. The Senate assembled as usual. The consuls were appointed yearly, one by the Eastern Division, one by Italy and Rome. Odoacer himself governed under the title of Patrician, conferred by the Eastern Emperor. In the next half century these, too, were extinguished. Theodoric the Ostrogoth, on destroying the Heruli and their kingdom at Rome and Ravenna, ruled in Italy, A.D. 493–526, as an independent sovereign; and on Belisarius and Narses' conquest of Italy from the Ostrogoths, the consulship was abrogated, and the Roman Senate dissolved, about A.D. 550.

"She saw her glories star by star expire."

"At the end of the fifth century, the whole of the Western dominions of Rome, including Italy and Rome herself, have practically, if not everywhere formally, fallen away from the Roman Empire. The whole West is under the rule of Teutonic kings. The Frank has become supreme in Northern Gaul, without losing his ancient hold on Western and Central Germany. The West Goth reigns in Spain and Aquitaine, the Burgundian between the Rhone and the Alps. Italy and the lands to the north of the Alps and Hadriatic have become, in substance

though not in name, an East Gothic kingdom. . . . To the north of the Franks lie the independent tribes of Germany, still untouched by any Roman influence. They are beginning to find themselves new homes in Britain." (Freeman: *Hist. Geogr.*, chap. iv.)

End of the Gothic Period.

So ended the awful visitations of the Gothic Period. The year A.D. 476—though to those who lived at the time it was no such epoch as it has since become, nor was any impression made on men's minds commensurate with its real significance—was the terminus of the old world, of the old Western Roman Empire, and the beginning of the kingdoms of Modern Europe.

It was the year of the removal of the "Restraint" spoken of by St. Paul in 2 Thessalonians ii. 6; it emancipated the Popes. As the Western Empire of old Rome disappears from view, we begin to discern not only the origin of the modern European states, but also that great spiritual Power which hereafter so largely engages the attention of the historian.

The "Let" Removed.

The "Let" or "Restraint" was not to be destroyed or annihilated, but only moved aside, "taken out of the way," to make room for the Man of Sin. The Roman Empire continued to exist, though in a divided form; but the Roman Imperial Power ruling at Rome was taken away from Rome, and concentrated at Constantinople.

While the Cæsars ruled on the Tiber or in Italy, the bishops of Rome had no chance of becoming monarchs; but when the Western Empire of Rome fell under the inroads of the Gothic barbarians, then the bishops of Rome began to develop into temporal sovereigns, and to lay the foundations of the more than regal or imperial power which they so long wielded at Rome.

If the Roman Imperial succession—"that which restraineth" the manifestation of the Man of Sin—be designated by St. Paul under the figure of an individual man, "One that restraineth now"; why should not the other phrase, "the Man of Sin," be also meant of a succession, and not of an individual?

The Fourth Empire and the Second Advent.

As the Fourth Empire, whether as the Iron Legs of the Image, or as the Fourth Beast under its Little Horn, continues till the Second Advent of our Lord; and as the old Empire at Rome ended in the fifth century, and even the Eastern Empire of Rome ended in the fifteenth century; some other form of power exercised from Rome must have arisen, and must now be in existence, awaiting destruction by the second coming of Christ.

What other power than the Papacy has filled the place of the old Roman rule; has lorded it over Western Europe from Rome for more than twelve centuries; and has united under one Head the Horns or kingdoms that rose upon the ruins of the Empire of the West?

Italy and all the Western provinces fell into confusion. They were a prey to ignorance and violence. The only survival of the ancient order and civilization who remained was the Roman bishop, and he soon began to undertake civil responsibilities, though always in dependence on the Emperor, or on his nominal representatives. That which began as a duty soon became a pleasure and a source of profit, then an object of ambition, of intrigue, or of battle, and at last a divine right. The bishops of Rome were gradually immersed in temporal concerns, and soiled by the cares of government. They had no time for theology; and for nine hundred years (says Döllinger) "not a single work of any importance" was composed in Rome. Twenty-four papal wars may be enumerated in the earlier Middle Ages, and the Papacy was bought oftener than it was battled for. The old severity of penance was commuted into money payments; and by the ninth century the whole system

of papal administration had assumed that financial character to which it has always clung. (Galton: *Attitude towards Eng. R. Catholics*, p. 8.)

The supremacy and importance of the old capital; the notion of Peter's supremacy, of the prerogatives conveyed to him by the words in Matthew xvi. 18, 19, the legend of his bishopric in Rome, and of the inheritance of his imaginary prerogatives by succeeding bishops; the romance of "Constantine's Donation"; the real possession of delegated civil power, the gradual acquisition of territorial possessions and of independence; the separation from Constantinople, the disappearance of the other Patriarchs, and the isolated importance of the bishops of Rome; all these elements combined in evolving the Mediæval Papacy out of the old Roman Patriarchate. (Galton: *Attitude Towards Eng. R. Catholics*, p. 24.)

Prophetic Exposition at this Era.

Did prophetic expositors now, after the breaking up of the old Roman Empire in the West, recognize the signs of the times, and look out for a Roman Antichrist?

No; not till the time of Berengaud, about A.D. 1100.

How was it, that when the "Let" so much spoken of and so fully understood by the earlier Fathers, had now been so strikingly taken away, by the utter breaking up of the old Roman Empire proper, and by its division into something ominously like the ten portions foretold—how was it that among prophetic expositors, at least till Berengaud, all recognition of this great sign of the times was wanting; and there appeared little thought or care about the necessary consequence—the development of the Man of Sin?

The following reasons have been assigned:—

I.—The universal prevalence in the West of the mystical principle of interpretation, throughout almost the whole period from A.D. 500 to 1100; and considerably in the East also. By this principle, all in the prophetic symbols, as to geography and chronology,

that was most definitely applicable to Papal Rome, was spiritualized away.

II.—The Greek Ruler at Constantinople was still called and thought of as Roman Emperor, after the Gothic catastrophe, though not having Rome itself as the seat and centre of his power. Some three centuries later arose what was called the " Holy Roman Empire " ; first under Charlemagne, who was crowned by the Pope at Rome, A.D. 800 ; and next under Otto I, crowned at Rome, A.D. 962. Hence expositors reasoned as if the " Let " still remained.

III.—The generally received idea that the times people were then living in were a part of the Millennium, previous to Satan's being loosed for a little season of three and a half literal years, and previous to the manifestation of Antichrist.

IV.—The political fact, that in these early centuries the bishops of Rome rose gradually and almost furtively to political power ; and with such a combination of lamb-like pretensions to sanctity, and of lion-like pretensions as Christ's vicegerents on earth, as served in that dark and unintellectual era to blind the minds even of expositors, to the real correspondence between the Papacy and the foretold Antichrist.

V.—The moral fact, that the corruptions of Christian doctrine and worship enforced by Papal Rome were participated in, more or less, by the expositors themselves, in West and East. Hence their blindness to these grand marks of the Antichristian Apostasy already developed.

The Jews expected Christ to come when He did come, and yet knew Him not when He was come, because they fancied the manner and quality of His coming like some temporal monarch with armed power to subdue the earth before Him. So the Christians, God's second Israel, expected that the coming of Antichrist should be at that time when he came indeed,

and yet they knew him not when he was come; because they had fancied his coming as of some barbarous tyrant who should with armed power not only persecute and destroy the Church of Christ, but almost the world; that is, they looked for such an Antichrist as the Jews looked for a Christ. (*Mede's Works*, p. 647. Quoted in Dr. C. H. H. Wright's *Daniel.*)

XII

RAVAGE OF ROME CHRISTIAN: IN THE EAST, BY SARACENS AND TURKS

FIFTH AND SIXTH TRUMPETS: Rev. ix.

Forebodings of Woe: Rev. viii. 13.

THIS part of the Vision corresponds historically with the period between the extinction of the old government at Rome, and the rise of Mohammed and the Saracens. It is a period of transition from ancient to more modern Roman history, in East and West. For awhile the prophetic scene shifts, and we are called upon to look Eastward, and to behold the judgments of God there being fulfilled.

The warning voice that St. John heard was not from the inner part of the Symbolic Temple, but from an Eagle flying in mid heaven. It was therefore not a private intimation to the Evangelist, but a forewarning of the most public character, addressed to "*them that dwell on the Earth*";[1] and it would have its fulfilment in a general impression then prevailing in the minds of men, and that found expression also in such public and official manner as would satisfy the emblem of the Eagle flying in mid heaven. At this era the Pope's

[1] These are the objects of the Vengeance called for in the prayers of the martyrs of the Fifth Seal (Rev. vi. 10).

Letters Missive were the most diffusive and influential means of publication, and it must be remembered that the Eagle still continued to be a characteristic ensign of Papal, as it had been of Pagan, Rome.

"*Woe, woe, woe.*" Fresh and more severe judgments were impending; three Woe-Angels had yet to sound. Moreover, whereas the plagues of the first four Trumpets were inflicted on natural objects—the earth, trees, grass, sea, rivers, lights of heaven—those of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets were expressly said to be inflicted on men (Rev. ix. 4, 15). The common character of the first four Trumpets is political; that of the last three is hostility to true religion.

The first four Trumpets are not spoken of as woes, in the same manner as are the last three. (But see Rev. xii. 12.) This is an instance of the discriminating accuracy so remarkable in the Apocalypse. Grievous as was the immediate result of the barbarian inroads, their ultimate effect was beneficial, by engrafting on the effete civilization of the old Romans the healthier moral tone and stronger physical powers of the Gothic nations. In this respect they form a striking contrast with the Saracenic and Turkish woes of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets. These were simple and unmitigated scourges. History testifies that neither Saracen nor Turk has imparted any direct benefit to the ravaged lands.

"*For them that dwell on the earth.*" The Saracens, the Turks, and the French Revolution together covered the whole of the Roman earth, in its widest extent.

Solemn Expectations.

At this era solemn expectations were awakened amongst mankind because of the fall of Imperial Rome; though, as we have seen, prophetic expositors had not

grasped the full significance of the removal of the " Let " or Restraint to the development of the Man of Sin. The impression widely and deeply prevailed, that the world's seventh millenary was about to begin, and that the world was coming to an end. Pope Gregory the Great believed that the last judgment was at hand, and Antichrist, and publicly avowed his belief. Comets appeared ; earthquakes affrighted mankind ; the plague began its ravages ; all these were looked upon as corroborative proofs of the nearness of the end.

Yet these Divine judgments, in the invasions of the Gothic barbarians, and the extinction of Imperial power in the Western division of the Empire, in no wise led to repentance, nor to the purging away of the errors that had come in. On the contrary, fresh superstitions were added, and the old ones were confirmed. Sacramental errors, the invocation of saints, the belief in purgatory, the celibacy of the priesthood, their growing influence and ambition, and low morality ; all these evils were either introduced or sanctioned, so that almost all the sins denounced in Revelation ix. 20, 21, were commonly prevalent.[1]

THE FIFTH TRUMPET : Rev. ix. 1–11.

The interval of forewarning had passed away, and the Trumpet again sounded, giving sign that the first of the three Woes was about to begin upon the Roman earth and its apostatizing inhabitants.

[1] " The first four waves of invasion followed one another in history, as they do in the prophecy, in rapid succession. The fifth and sixth, which in the prophecy are treated as far more permanent, and are far more fully described, correspond in history with powers whose duration is measured, not in decades, but in centuries."

The Eastern Third.

No particular division of the Roman earth and its inhabitants is expressly marked out for infliction or exemption. But we may compare verse 5, "And it was given them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months," with verse 15, "And the four angels were loosed . . . which were bound at the great river Euphrates . . . that they should kill the third part of men." From this it may be inferred that the same third which was to be destroyed under the Sixth Trumpet was to be the principal, though not the only, sufferer under the Fifth Trumpet. Hitherto this division had nearly escaped, but now at length its hour was come to be judged, for of its time of reprieve it had made no profit. Throughout two centuries its religion, like that of the West, had been sinking deeper and deeper into superstition.

Arabian Symbols.

The symbols of the Fifth Trumpet all point to Arabia. The zoology of the Vision is all Arabian. The locust is peculiarly Arabian, so is the scorpion. There is a geographical propriety, a local appropriateness, in the symbols used in Scripture prophecy. As one country is in a measure distinguished from another by its plants, animals, dress, customs, insignia; so it is the frequent habit of Scripture to choose for its purpose symbols that are locally distinct, characteristic, and appropriate.

Moreover, there is a systematic employment of miniature in prophetic symbolization; a propriety and proportion of scale is observed, in a general way, between the symbol and the thing symbolized. Miniature periods also go with miniature symbols. The locusts are a miniature symbol—insects in swarms, for multitudes of men invading the land.

Was there then, about the opening of the seventh century, any destructive invasion of Roman Christendom from Arabia? It is notorious that the chief topic of the history of that century is a mighty, desolating, locust-like invasion by the Saracens, inspired by their Mohammedan religion. This outburst of Mohammedanism in the East agrees in date with the early establishment of the Popedom or Papal empire in the West.

The Fallen Star.

The star is personified; "There was given *to him.*" This chief or ruler had before this shone in the heaven of political supremacy—"A star from heaven"—but when St. John saw him represented at the date of this Vision, he had before then fallen to the earth; that is, he was now in a condition of political degradation. St. John saw him not in heaven, but now on the earth.

The star is Satan, before this fallen from his high estate of supremacy in Roman Heathendom; as was foreshown under the Sixth Seal, and as appears in the parallel outside-written Vision of Revelation xii. 9, "And the great dragon was cast down . . . to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him"; which Vision must therefore be chronologically earlier than this Fifth Trumpet. This "fallen star" is the contrast and counterpart of Him who is "the bright, the morning star," and who "has the keys of death and of Hades." He is now plotting in wrath against the kingdom in which his rule has been overthrown, and against the true Church of Christ. In Revelation ix. 11, the "king" or leader of the Locusts is said to be the angel of the abyss, and the title is given him in Hebrew and in Greek, Abaddon, and Apollyon, the Destroyer. Who so fit, of the evil angelic intelligences, to be the invisible

instructor and guide of those symbolized by the Locusts ? [1]

The Abyss Opened.

To this Fallen Star " the key of the pit of the abyss " is given, for the purpose of the part he is to bear in the Vision. That is to say, authority is given him over the prison place of evil spirits, to open and shut ; but he has no such authority till it is given him, and he has to return the key (see Rev. xx. 1).

" He opened the pit of the abyss," and smoke went up therefrom, and out of the smoke came forth the Locusts. From this same source issues also the " Beast from the Abyss " (Rev. xxii. 8), who executes Satan's enmity against the Woman and her seed. The opening of the abyss was a necessary preliminary to the Beast's issuing forth from it. Schemes devised by the great Deceiver are represented as proceeding from his headquarters.

The Smoke from the Pit.

This is a system of false religion, suddenly and unexpectedly arising from the pit of hell ; darkening the sun of imperial authority in the firmament of the political heaven ; darkening also the moral atmosphere. As the natural light of the sun is a fit emblem of the spiritual illumination that comes from the Father of

[1] Jude 6 speaks of " Angels that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation," as being " kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." St. Paul (1 Tim. iii. 6) warns Timothy against appointing " a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil." From this it would seem that Satan fell through pride, and his angels with him. But all this was previous to the history of man on earth, and has nothing to do with what these Visions are depicting.

lights, so whatever is described as darkening the sun and the air represents that which brings spiritual darkness over the soul of man.

Here is an inspired description of Mohammedanism; very different from the human estimate of Islamism formed by some who decry Christian missions to the Mohammedan world. The originator and director of the whole system is that fallen angel Satan, and the source of that false religion is the pit of the abyss. He has to find tools to use; he works by men and means. In this case he made use of Mohammed, who "in the cave of Hera, three miles from Mecca, consulted and listened to the spirit of fraud or of enthusiasm." This was in A.D. 606. The fumes from the abyss wrought within him, like the lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets. "The tongue is set on fire by hell" (Jas. iii. 6).

In 612 he publicly announced his mission; and the Hegira, or flight from Mecca, took place in 622, a most important date in Mohammedanism. So did the system suddenly arise. "Of all the revolutions which have had a permanent influence upon the civil history of mankind, none could so little be anticipated by human prudence as that effected by the religion of Arabia" (Hallam). The Koran, speaking broadly—for there are rites and traditions besides, that go to make up the Mohammedan religion—embodies in itself this smoke from the abyss, this system of false doctrine. It is to be distinguished from those who propagate it—the Locusts, and the Horsemen.

The Locusts: Rev. ix. 3–6.

Besides dimming the light of the sun, and darkening and polluting the air, the smoke from the pit was the source of a terrible scourge. Out of it came forth locusts

upon the earth; a plague in themselves, but here with the additional power of stinging as scorpions, and tormenting with their venom.

The reason for this strange provision is obvious; the natural locust devours green herbage, and speedily devastates whole districts; but to these symbolic locusts it was expressly commanded "that they should not hurt the grass . . . neither any green thing, neither any tree." The ordinary locust mouth would therefore be useless. They issue forth all formed in character out of the smoke, with the commission to torment certain men. For this they needed other powers, the scorpion sting, and they are furnished accordingly; powers not deadly, but tormenting.

In addition to the prohibition as to hurting the grass and trees, other limitations were imposed. Their commission was declared to be only against such men as had not the seal of God on their foreheads; they were not to kill them—that is, they were not to annihilate them as a political body—but only to torment them as such; and the time during which the locusts might torment was limited to five months, or 150 days. This period is not by any means the whole duration of the locusts' career, but only the time of the intensity of the woe. After those five months the locusts, though still existent, would not have the same power or permission as before to sting and to cause torment.

The death here referred to is symbolical, and in this case represents political extinction or annihilation. This the Locusts were not permitted to inflict; but the agents under the next Woe, the Horsemen, had authority to actually "kill" the third part of men, that is, to put an end to the political existence of one-third of the Roman Empire. Compare Revelation xi. 7, where the death is also symbolical.

Not Literal Insects.

The mixture of human similitudes with bestial shows that men, not literal insects, are the destined scourge. The groundwork of the symbol is the locust, but with marked peculiarities—in look, movement, and sound, like the horse; in teeth like the lion; in tail and poison-sting like the scorpion.

Like locusts, they swarm in numbers numberless; their migration rapid and far-extending; their powers of devastation irresistible. They were like unto war-horses, implying that they were to be hordes of cavalry; moreover Arabia is the original home of the horse. The "crowns" have been understood of decorated turbans. The faces like those of men represented man-like courage; as well as the manly appearance in contrast to that of the Goths, who had smooth faces. Their long flowing hair indicated effeminate licentiousness. Their teeth as lions symbolized strength, and savage destruction of life. The wildernesses of Arabia are the natural haunt of the lion, for whom it is said the Arabs have "five hundred names." The breast-plates of iron signified invulnerability in war, and constant victory.

The Sealed Ones Safe.

"Hurt . . . only such men as have not the seal of God on their foreheads." This charge implies the existence, among the doomed inhabitants of the earth, of those who had had God's seal impressed upon them. These sealed ones were at this era on the earthly scene, mingled with the rest, but recognizable by the impress on their foreheads. They might be called to suffer, along with the rest of their fellow-citizens, but the woe was not for them; there was a Divine protecting care over them, and they were safe. Compare Ezekiel ix.

4–6. As for the rest, they "have not the seal of God on their foreheads," they are not truly the Lord's people, hence their doom. Their open apostasy from Christ is the cause of the Locust Scourge.

The sealing and marking have taken place under the Sixth Seal (Rev. vii. 2, 3); where the sealed ones are described as only twelve thousand out of each Tribe of the professing Israel, sealed by the Lord with the seal of His Holy Spirit. The era of this Fifth Trumpet must therefore be subsequent to the era of the Sixth Seal.

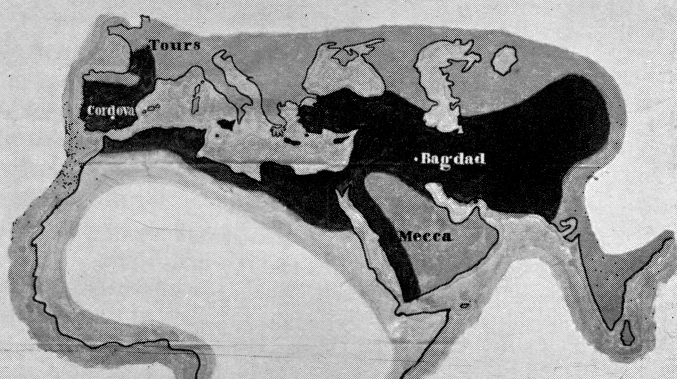
The Saracens.

The Saracens, after embracing Islamism, burst forth "out of the smoke" upon Christendom, imbued from this very source with the qualities here described. It was the religion of Mohammed that made the Arabs what they were; that for the first time united them as one, in numbers numberless as the locusts; that gave them the impulse to speed forth as its propagandists over the world; that imparted to them, as to lions of the desert, the irresistible destroying fury of fanaticism; that prepared in them a scorpion-like venom of hatred and contempt, wherewith to torment the Christians whom they subdued; that added sensualism to their ferocity, suggesting indulgence of their lusts in life, and bidding them look for and fight for a heaven of lust beyond.

"A new nation, that of the Arabs, now became dominant in a large part of the lands which had been part of the Roman Empire, as well as in lands far beyond its boundaries. The scattered tribes of Arabia were first gathered together into a single power by Mahomet himself, and under his successors they undertook to spread the Mahometan religion wherever their swords could carry it. With the Mahometan religion they carried also the Arabic language, and what we may call Eastern civilization as opposed to Western. A strife, in short,

SARACEN DATES.

A.D.		A.D.	
612.	Mohammed announced his mission.	732.	Checked at Tours.
622.	Hejira: Flight from Mecca.	755.	Caliphate divided.
629.	Saracens issue from Arabia.	762.	Settlement at Bagdad.



THE
SARACEN CONQUESTS.

now begins between Aryan and Semitic man. Rome and Persia, with all their differences, were both of them Aryan powers.

"The most amazing thing is the extraordinary speed with which the Saracens pressed their conquests at the expense of both Rome and Persia, forming a marked contrast to the slow advance both of Roman conquest and of Teutonic settlement. In the course of less than eighty years the Mahometan conquerors formed a dominion greater than that of Rome; and for a short time the will of the Caliph was obeyed from the Ocean to lands beyond the Indus. In a few campaigns the Empire lost all its possessions beyond Mount Tauros." (Freeman: *Hist. Geogr.*, chap. v.)

The Saracen Advance.

In A.D. 629 the Saracens, under Mohammed, issued from the Arabian desert, filled with the fanatic fury of Islamism; entering Syria, they began a fearful course of conquest over Roman Christendom. They subjugated Syria, Egypt, Africa, Spain—all within the limits of Roman Christendom; and contemporaneously, but outside the limits of the Vision, Persia, North West India, and Transoxiana. In 637 Jerusalem itself was taken, the Greek Patriarch muttering as the Saracens came in, "The abomination of desolation is in the holy place"; and notwithstanding all the efforts of the Crusaders through 200 years, there the Mohammedan has remained to this day. The Mosque of Omar stands within the Temple precincts.

In the ten years of Omar's Caliphate, from A.D. 634 to 644, 36,000 cities or castles were reduced, 4,000 churches destroyed, 1,400 mosques built. In the course of one century the Arabian Empire had been extended to 200 days' journey from East to West; and reached from the confines of Tartary and India to the shores of the Atlantic. Under the last of the house of Ommiyah, one command was obeyed from the banks of the Sihon to the utmost promontory of Portugal. The

Saracens even spread from Spain into France, till checked by Charles Martel in a decisive battle at Tours, A.D. 732. Thus did a large part of the Roman world pass from Aryan and Christian to Semitic and Mohammedan dominion.

The Saracen Commission.

The Arab cavalry, emerging in their countless hordes from the smoke of the pit—that is, imbued by Islamism with terrible courage and fierce purpose—carried everywhere with them their false religion, poisonous to the soul, reckless of human life.

"*It was said unto them. . . ,*" by their False Prophet, in his book the Koran, repeated by Caliph Aboubekr, and oft quoted after: "Destroy no palm trees, nor any fields of corn, cut down no fruit-trees." This policy enabled them to form flourishing kingdoms out of conquered countries (compare Deut. xx. 19, 20); and was in marked contrast with that of other conquerors, such as the Goths, who left desolation behind them. The desert places that abounded in the provinces the Goths overran, were a long memorial of their conquests. Hence, under the First Trumpet (Rev. viii. 7), the wasting of vegetation by the Goths is made a distinct feature of the prophecy; whereas here, in reference to the Saracens, the prophecy notes the exact reverse.

"*Hurt . . . only such men as have not the seal of God.*" Mohammed declared his commission to be against idolaters and unbelievers, whether in Arabia or in foreign lands. His death prevented his fulfilling his mission against the latter, but he marked them out to his followers—especially the Mariolatrists and saint-worshippers of the Roman Empire.

The locusts were not to kill them; that is, were not to annihilate them as a Christian body politic. See

verse 6, "*Death fleeth from them*"; and contrast verse 15. They were only to torment them, by invasion and harassing warfare, and by personal and religious degradation, treating them as "Christian dogs and infidels." They were to be tormentors, as with scorpion sting, of the men in Roman Christendom whose lives they spared.

Remarkable Checks.

After a while the Saracens received some remarkable checks. Twice they attacked the vital part of the Empire, by besieging Constantinople, A.D. 668–675, and 716–718, and each time without success. In the West they met with a decisive repulse from Charles Martel, in the battle of Tours, A.D. 732. "Europe owes its existence, its religion, and its liberty, to his victory."

Historians express surprise and wonder, and agree in speaking of these deliverances of Christendom as events of which, at the time, there could have been no reasonable anticipation. But the prophecy accounts for all. The Locusts might mutilate the body politic, and torment the men its constituents; but in attempting to annihilate them, the Saracens exceeded their commission, and were repulsed.

Their King: Rev. ix. 11.

"*They have over them as king the angel of the abyss.*" This great movement was no mere instinctive or undesigned effort, but was the offspring of a hidden, spiritual force, and was under the leadership of Satan himself, or of one of the chief of his evil angels. Like the lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets, he had inspired Mohammed, and the caliphs after him were but the mouthpieces and tools of that spirit of evil. Apollyon, the Destroyer, was their king; and

wherever they went, they were ruled by the laws of their false religion, and were actuated by its spirit.

Unlike the Goths, and later the Saxons and Hungarians, who adopted the religion of the conquered, the Saracens everywhere carried their religion with them, and forced it on their subjects. Through all the Saracen conquests, even in countries the most remote, the Koran was the code of religion and of law by which they were governed; and the Caliphs were invested with civil power simply in virtue of their religious character and office, as Caliphs or Vicars of their Prophet. Gibbon says:—"It is not the propagation, but the permanency of his religion that deserves our wonder. The same pure and perfect impression which he engraved at Mecca and Medina, is preserved, after the revolution of twelve centuries, by the Indian, African, and Turkish proselytes of the Koran."

The Destroyer.

Such indeed did the system prove to be; destroying the soul by the poisonous doctrines of the Book, and most destructive of human life on the battlefield.

"The Mussulman power, under the first four Caliphs, was nothing but a grand religio-political association of Arab tribes for universal plunder and conquest, under the holy banner of Islam, and the watchword, 'There is no God but the Lord, and Mahomet is his apostle.' On pretext of spreading the only true religion, the Arabs swallowed up fair provinces lying all around; and, driving a profitable business, enriched themselves simultaneously in a worldly sense." (Herr von Kremer, in *Present Day Tract*, xiv.)

The Five Months.

Twice this period is named (Rev. ix. 5, 10). As the locusts themselves are miniature emblems of invading hosts, so the time mentioned—which would be a natural

and common period for the ravages of literal locusts—is a miniature measure of the duration of the intensity of their tormenting power. These miniature symbols of time resemble the scale of miles in a map, as "50 miles to one inch," and so on.

These five months are the duration, not of the Locusts themselves, nor of the era of the Fifth Trumpet; but of the intensity of the Woe, of their aggressive movement, of their injuring and tormenting Roman Christendom with their lion-like teeth and scorpion stings. On the year-day system, five months of 30 days make 150 years. These 150 years, however, are not the whole duration of the Saracen Woe, but only a primary period within the whole period of the Fifth Trumpet.

Commencement.

Two or three epochs suggest themselves as the starting-point of the 150 years. Did we know when the idea first established itself in Mohammed's mind, of preaching his new religion, that might be one suitable commencing epoch, as being the time when the key of the abyss was given to Satan. A.D. 606 is regarded as the year in which Mohammed retired to the cave to prepare his scheme. Next comes A.D. 609, when he began privately to preach his divine mission, thus causing the smoke of the abyss to rise up before his own family. Again, in A.D. 612, he first publicly announced his mission, and so publicly caused the smoke to rise before the eyes of men. Then, in A.D. 629, the Locust armies first issued out of the smoke to attack Roman Christendom.

Of these the fittest seems to be A.D. 612, for it is the date of a public act, marking a public commencement. Then was first expressed the principle of propagating the religion by violence and the sword.

End of the Intensity.

When did the intensity of the Saracenic Woe end? Not after the first month, or first thirty years from A.D. 612, during which Syria and Egypt fell. Nor after the second, during which Cilicia was reduced, Constantinople approached, and Africa invaded. Nor after the third, in which the African seaboard was nearly all subjugated. Nor during the fourth, when Spain was subdued, and South France overrun almost to the Loire.

The earliest possible date is at the beginning of the fifth month, A.D. 732, Charles Martel's victory at Tours. But though repulsed, their power was not destroyed; one Caliph still, twenty years after this date, governed all the Locust hordes. In A.D. 750, however, the Abbasides, descendants of a different family of the early followers of Mohammed, supplanted the Ommiades in the Caliphate; the only survivor of the deposed and proscribed family fled to Spain, and was there acknowledged Caliph. Thus in A.D. 755 the Caliphate was divided, and there was a Caliph of the West, at Cordoba, in opposition to a Caliph of the East, at Damascus.

In A.D. 762 the Caliph Almanzor, dissatisfied with the capital where his rivals and enemies the Ommiades had so long lived and reigned, laid the foundations of a new capital, at Bagdad, on the western bank of the Tigris. Thither the government and head of the Locusts took its flight, far to the East away from Christendom; and the city was called Medinat-as-Salem, the City of Peace. This is the era of the settlement of the Locusts. They no longer roved in quest of conquests, nor were they any more in close contact with Eastern Christendom. Aggressive war was now begun against them.

Thus if A.D. 605 be the exact time when the idea was first formed by Mohammed, an inceptive com-

mencement, 150 years bring us to A.D. 755, an inceptive close. But from the public opening in A.D. 612, 150 years bring us to A.D. 762.

By the Mahometan conquests in the East, Grecian Christianity was almost blotted out. It persisted only in a diminishing area round Constantinople, until that place was conquered by the Turks in A.D. 1453; but the Churches and Patriarchs of Jerusalem, of Antioch, of Alexandria, disappeared. Through ecclesiastical rivalry and political necessities, the Patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople were more and more estranged from one another, and finally all communication between them was broken off. The old Patriarchal confederation was thus destroyed; and, in place of it, we find the remnants of the Church divided sharply into East and West, each part regarding the other as heretical and hardly Christian. (Galton: *Attitude towards Eng. R. Catholics*, p. 7.)

Decline of the Saracens.

In Bagdad, after a brief temporary splendour and revival of military exercise and success, the once terrible power of the Saracens began to decline, through luxury, licentiousness, and the cooling of religious fanaticism. In the ninth century, several new and independent dynasties were set up. At length, as the tenth century opened, the Fatimites, descendants of Ali, Mohammed's first Vizier, and of Fatima, Mohammed's favourite daughter, claimed the Caliphate, reduced Africa, Egypt, and Syria; and from Cairo as capital became known as the third Caliphate, excommunicating and excommunicated by its rivals at Cordova and Bagdad.

Thus more and more dismembered, the Abbassidean Caliphate at Bagdad languished on, till the Persian independent Moslem dynasty of the Bowides, interposing in A.D. 934, stripped the Caliph of his secular office and supremacy, and reduced him to his spiritual functions as chief pontiff of Islamism, the mere phantom of departed power. The Western Saracens shared

in the progressive decline of their Eastern brethren, and the Saracen possessions in various countries were gradually reconquered from them. At last the Caliphate of Cordova gave way to the Moors in 1237, and Bagdad was taken by the Tartars in 1258. Thus had the Four Tempest-Angels been bound, for a long inaction, in the region of the Euphrates.

Passing Away of the First Woe : Rev. ix. 12.

"The outline of Saracenic history for three centuries after Mohammed," says Hallam, "is—one age of glorious conquest; a second of stationary but rather precarious greatness; a third of rapid decline. The Greek Empire meanwhile survived, and nearly recovered from the shock it had sustained."

But at this era comes the solemn intimation that yet two Woes were to follow. The offered opportunity for repentance and amendment passed unheeded. Neither the bitterness of the First Woe, nor the taunts of their Mohammedan foes, nor the protests of their own iconoclastic princes, and of certain purer witnesses for Christ among the people, had the effect of bringing home a sense of their sin either to priesthood or to laity. Self-delusion is not security. The guilt of inveterate anti-Christian apostasy clove to them, stamped on their worship, their hearts, and even on their coinage.

The description of Western Christendom in Revelation ix. 20, 21, is retrospective, applying to this periob as well; and it fully accounts for these forewarnings of Woe. Yet for the present Eastern Christendom was to be the chief sufferer.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET : Rev. ix. 13–19.

"*One Voice from the horns of the golden Altar.*" The locality whence the voice calls for judgment is associated

with the guilt or sin to be punished; e.g. Abel's blood crying from the ground (see also Job xxxi. 38; Isa. lxvi. 6; Hab. ii. 11; Jas. v. 4). That symbolic incense altar has been the scene of special sin, whether through profanation or from neglect, on the part of the division of Roman Christendom described as "the third part of men" (ver. 15). The voice issues not merely from the altar, but from its four horns, which are associated with Atonement and the rite of Reconciliation for a transgressing priesthood and people.

The meaning is, that there had been abandonment of Christ as the one and only atonement and propitiation; and an abandonment of Him in His character of the Great High Priest, for other mediators and intercessors. The opportunity for repentance had passed by unheeded, and now another Woe is sent. This plague resembles the last, but is much aggravated; vast hosts, with the power of the horse, lion, viper and other means of destruction, and with the commission this time not merely to torment, but actually to kill, that is, to destroy political existence.

The Four Angels Loosed.

The other Trumpet-Angels had only sounded the signals for judgments; but this Sixth Angel both sounds the signal and in addition looses the Four Tempest-Angels from where their career had been arrested—at the great river Euphrates; and the commission is given them to kill the third part of men.

It is clear that these Four Angels had been in existence and activity previous to the time of their binding. For a while they remained bound and inactive; and now they were loosed for a fresh career and a more formidable commission. These are the same Four Angels mentioned before under the Sixth Seal (Rev. vii. 1), who

then had a general commission, and who had been in action all through the Five Trumpets. At first they had been seen standing at the four corners of the earth. During the Five Trumpets they had careered over land and sea, over the Western Third during the first Four, and over the Eastern Third for the most part during the Fifth. As the Angel was arrested over Araunah's threshing-floor (1 Chron. xx. 15), so had they been bound at the river Euphrates, until now loosed and commissioned afresh.

The Turks.

After the passing away of the Saracenic Woe, what more notorious fact is there than the rise and career of the Turks? They were inspired by the same system of religion; their hordes of cavalry were numberless; they finally succeeded in taking Constantinople, thus politically slaying the Eastern Third of the Roman Empire; and there they have been established ever since, down to the present day. The symbols are thoroughly Asiatic in character, to describe a thoroughly Asiatic subject; and all the features of the description unite in the Turks, and in no other nation whatsoever.

The locality where the Turkman Power received its commission was the same as that where the Saracenic scourge was arrested and bound. The Four Angels had been prepared "for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill"; i.e., they were to go on slaying the third part of men, till the slaughter was accomplished in the destruction of their national existence. Or else, at the expiration of the entire period formed by the addition together of the hour, day, month, and year, they were to kill the third part of men. The sense is in either case the same. The killing, being a momentary act, cannot properly have a period assigned to it, during which the killing is to have effect.

Moreover, it is the killing not of individuals, but collectively and nationally of the third part of men.

The whole term, on the year-day scale, amounts to 396 years and 118 days. Not that this is given as the whole duration of the Turkish Power; but only as the period of its action for a special object, and up to the accomplishment of that object.

The Horsemen and Horses.

In other armies the bulk were foot-soldiers; with the Turks they were horsemen, and in the Vision the feature is the number of cavalry. "*Twice ten thousand times ten thousand.*" This corresponds with the Turkish custom of numbering by tomauns or myriads. The phrase is indefinite, and according to Scripture usage expresses large numbers. These Four Angels, then, were to execute their dread commission by means of Mounted Warriors (ver. 17), reckoned by myriads of myriads. Though Angels are directing, the Woe is executed through the agency of hordes of cavalry, the horses breathing fire, smoke, and brimstone.

"*I heard the number.*" St. John hears this as a representative man, and this marks the impression that would be made by hearing the numbers. It implies that the report of the Turkman hosts would fall with more than common impressiveness on the ear of the Christian Church. (Compare 1 Sam. xiii. 3. 4.)

The horses had riders on them, and these notify man's agency in the scourge; but horses and riders are a composite symbol, all the characteristics being said of the horses, including those that refer not to animals but to men.

The colours named—red, as of fire; blue; and yellow, as of brimstone—are characteristic of the warlike apparel of the Ottomans, in contrast to that of Greeks or Franks or Saracens. The singular words

used of the colours may also suggest that fire and sulphur were in some peculiar manner connected with the Turkish armies. This is referred to again below. The heads as of lions are symbolic of their leaders, and express their lion-like destroying character.

The Turkish Woe.

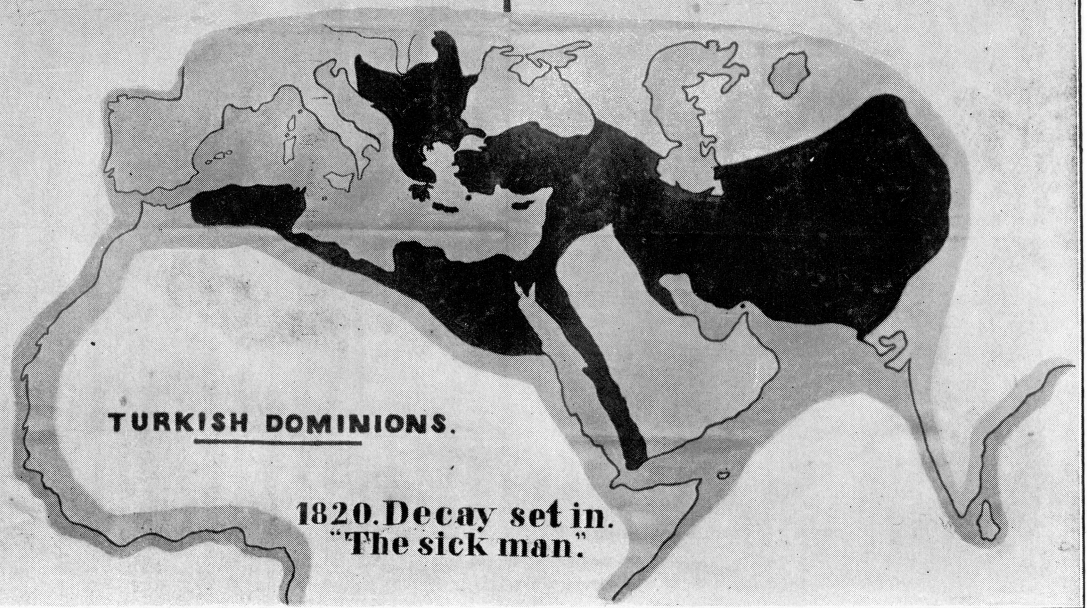
The rise and early career of the Turks have already been described, in explaining the Vision of the Ram and He-Goat in Daniel viii. (See Paper IV.)

In A.D. 1038 the Turkman tribes, who had all embraced the religion of Mohammed, asserted their independence, and chose Togrul Beg, of the house of Seljuk, as their chief. In 1055 the Caliph of Bagdad called them to his assistance against domestic factions, and appointed Togrul his lieutenant, head of the secular power of Islam. Then and there was the re-loosing of the long quiescent Moslem Power against Roman Christendom, from Bagdad, West of the Tigris, in the region of the Euphrates. A holy war against Greek Christendom was resolved upon, and in 1057 Togrul Beg quitted Bagdad on a career of conquest. That was the loosing of the Four Angels.

Alp Arslan, "The Valiant Lion," succeeded to Togrul; in 1063 he passed the Euphrates, and in 1065 Armenia was conquered. At Malazgerd, in 1071, the Emperor Diogenes Romanus was defeated, and the Asiatic provinces fell. Malek Shah followed this up, and spread his conquests as far as Arabia Felix, Jerusalem, and the neighbourhood of Constantinople. In 1074 Asia Minor, or Roum, was conquered, and Nice chosen as capital. From the Euphrates to Constantinople mosques were built, and the Koran and Moslem institutions established.

A.D.
1057. Togrul Beg quits Bagdad.
1097–1291. The Crusades.

A.D.
1299. Othman.
1453. Constantinople taken.



Dismay at Constantinople.

The Emperor Alexius trembled on his throne at Constantinople, and in plaintive letters implored the help of Western Europe; for unless some great intervention were made, the Turks threatened to extinguish the Empire, thus killing the third part of men.

Such an intervention did take place in the Crusades, and lasted two centuries; but it only delayed, and did not avert, the destruction.

The Crusades.

Peter the Hermit, and the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and others, spread abroad the report and the terror of the Turks. Their appeals echoed and thrilled through Western Christendom, among true as well as professing Christians. The Council of Clermont, 1095, stirred a ferment throughout Europe, and then precipitated Christendom, in the Crusades, against the Euphratean Horsemen, to recover from them the Holy Places and the Holy Land.

The first Crusade was in 1097, and the movement continued with varied fortunes for two hundred years, including the career of Godfrey de Bouillon, and the history of the shortlived kingdom of Jerusalem; till, in 1291, the Latin Crusaders were finally driven out of Palestine.

"The double-headed eagle . . . must be regarded as one of the peculiarities of Hittite symbolism and art. The symbol, whose prototype goes back to primitive Babylonia, was adopted in later days by the Turkonian princes, who had perhaps first seen it on the Hittite monuments of Kappadokia; and the Crusaders brought it to Europe with them in the fourteenth century. Here it became the emblem of the German Emperors, who have passed it on to the modern kingdoms of Russia and Austria. It is not the only heirloom of Hittite art which has descended to us of to-day." (Sayce: *The Hittites*, 3rd edit.)

The Ottoman Power.

All through this period the Turkish Sultany of Asia Minor, or Roum—i.e., the country of the Romans—preserved its vitality; till the Moguls extinguished the Seljukian dynasty in that country. But this did not put an end to the Turkman Power, for it revived under Ortogrul, 1247, and Othman; and the ancient kingdom of the Seljukians again flourished under the Ottoman princes. The ruling dynasty was different, and there had been a short interval of anarchy, but not such as to affect the unity and continuity of the Turkman Power.

Under the one dynasty began the fulfilment of the Sixth Trumpet; under the other, it was completed.

After the Crusades.

Under Othman and his successors, from 1299 onward, the European provinces of the Empire, from the Danube to the Adriatic, were one after another rent from it.

At length its vitality was almost limited to Constantinople; which, for the first time for more than a thousand years from its foundation, was surrounded on the Asiatic and on the European sides by the same hostile force.

The Third Part of Men Killed.

Finally, on May 29, 1453, Constantinople was taken, and the third part of the Roman Empire was politically brought to an end. It is a different third from that of the first four Trumpets; and the mention of its Angel-destroyers from the Euphrates suggests that it is the third nearest to that river. There the Turks have remained ever since, and there they are to-day.

"The Roman name, as the formal name of a power, ceased only in 1453, or rather in 1461." "The Ottoman was to become,

what no other of the many earlier invaders of his stock had ever become, not the mere passing scourge, but the indwelling and abiding oppressor of Christian and European land . . . . He was to do what the Arab and the Seljuk had striven in vain to do, to fix his seat in the new Rome itself." (Freeman.)

Hence, under the Seventh Trumpet, or Third Woe, the Western part only is spoken of as "the Earth" (Rev. xi. 18); the Illyrian or middle third having before now been joined with the Eastern.

The Hour, Day, Month and Year.

It was remarkable, and contrary to all human probability, how that after the Turkman Woe had been let loose, the accomplishment of its work was delayed as far down as to this era. At the end of no more than forty years, Constantinople seemed on the verge of ruin by the Seljukian Turks. But then came the crusades, then the Moguls under Zenghis Khan, then Timour or Tamerlane.

No intervention availed, however, when the fatal term had expired. On the year-day scale, the whole prophetic interval is 396 years, 118 days. From January 18, 1057, to May 29, 1453, is 396 years, 130 days. Thus, according to this reckoning, the prophetic interval falls short of the historical by twelve natural days, or less than half a prophetic hour. Had it said "two hours" instead of one, the real epoch would have been passed by nearly three weeks.

"Fire, Smoke and Brimstone": Verses 17, 18.

The arms of a nation are often noticed in prophecy, and in this case their influence was all-important. Many expositors see in this description of a new destroying agency, by which the Horsemen were enabled to kill the third part of men, a plain reference to the gunpowder and artillery of the Turks, by which was

effected the capture of Constantinople, and the consequent destruction of the Greek third of the Roman Empire.

The Power of the Horses : Verse 19.

" The power of the horses is in their mouth, and in their tails." With their lion-like fire-breathing mouths in front, the symbolic Horsemen were to kill the third part of men, destroying their political or national existence. With their serpent-like tails behind, the tails bearing heads, they were afterwards to injure, do injustice to, and oppress the individuals of the remnant left. No doubt it was by bite and venom that these serpent-like tail-heads did injury, not only oppressing, but also diffusing the poison of their false religion.

The symbol of heads naturally suggests rulers or governing authorities. Not only were the horse-tails serpent-like, but they also had heads. The tails were still horse-tails, but like serpents to look at, probably having serpent-like heads at the end ; the whole appearance being that of a serpent in the place of the horse's tail.

It is a singular fact that the horse-tail has been adopted by the Turks as a standard, and they are the only nation that has chosen so strange an ensign. The dignity of a Turkish pasha is marked by the number of horse-tails—one, two, or three—that he is entitled to display as his badge of authority. It is well known what ravening harpies these Turkish pashas were, and how with their venom they embittered the lives of their subjects in the conquered Greek provinces.

" Dark Muchtar his son to the Danube is sped,
Let the yellow-haired Giaours view his horse-tail with dread."

(Byron : *Childe Harold*, Can. II, 72.)

See also *Bride of Abydos*, Can. II, 14; *Siege of Corinth*, xxii., line 11.

Another explanation of the "tails" is this: Let the reader picture artillery going into action, and the appropriateness of the symbol will be seen at once. The cannon dragged behind the horses, and swung round in order to open fire and inflict destruction, seem obviously to correspond to the "tails" behind the horses which St. John saw in vision, and of which he says that "with them they do hurt."

The Greek Church.

The Woes of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets, especially the latter, fell most disastrously on Eastern or Greek Christendom; that is, upon the professing Christian Church within the area of the Eastern Empire of Rome. Latin Christendom also suffered, but one need only look at the map of the Saracen conquests, and at that of the Turkish Dominions, to see that the territories which suffered most were those occupied by the Greek Church—that is, Asia Minor, Greece, and the regions round about Constantinople.

The separation between the Latin and the Greek Churches had its beginning as far back as the foundation of "New Rome" or Constantinople, in the early part of the fourth century, followed by the consequent political division of the Roman Empire into East and West. As time went on, the separation became more and more marked; as by the *Filioque* controversy, A.D. 431, and the excommunication of the Emperor Leo by Pope Gregory II, A.D. 729.

Retrospect of Four Centuries: Rev. ix. 20, 21.

In these verses is described the prevalence of awful corruption of religion and morals in Christendom, at and previous to the fall of Constantinople.

"The rest of mankind" were of the same political

community—being men of Christendom—with those who had now been nationally killed by these plagues. The phrase refers chiefly to Western Christendom, but includes also individuals of the Greek Church, surviving under the yoke of their Turkman conquerors, though slain in their corporate political capacity.

Even that tremendous disaster, the political destruction of the Eastern Third of Roman Christendom, by armies that bore with them from Euphrates a false religion from the pit of the abyss, failed altogether to induce repentance and reformation in the remnant that was left. " They repented not of the works " ; that is, by quitting, coming out of, the sins specified.

Prevailing Corruptions.

A catalogue of their sins is given, and a plain, literal statement is made as to continued persistence therein on the part of those who had not yet been slain. These corruptions are declared to have prevailed during the progress of the Woes, up to the fall of the Greek Empire, and to have continued afterwards. Indeed, the statement implies that the Woes were sent as judgments on account of those sins.

These times have been called the " Ages of Faith," and there are those who fondly depict them as periods of illumination and perfection of the Church. But the religion thus admired is obviously the external and the imaginative ; not that heart-cleansing, practical godliness which alone the Bible recognizes. Appeal must be made, not to a series of carefully chosen extracts from the voluminous scholastic and mystic writers, with more or less moral beauty and religious truth in them ; but to the plain and painful facts of history. Then the statements of the prophecy will be found only too fully true.

The kingdoms forming what might now begin to be

called the great Western Confederation of Europe had been steadily, though slowly and interruptedly, recombining their political elements, consolidating their strength, and readjusting their limits, in the form which more or less they have since retained. The Temporal Sovereignty of the bishops of Rome was now firmly established. Every scheme to bind all Italy together had proved abortive, and the Roman See maintained its ascendancy over the Italian Powers.

Civilization had advanced; chivalry had amended manners; internal trade and maritime commerce had increased wealth, and aided the cause of civil liberty; feudal servitude was gradually disappearing; intellectual energies were being awakened, especially by the invention of printing; religious zeal was being abundantly manifested, in the Crusades, and in the erection of magnificent ecclesiastical buildings.

But the religion prevalent was superstition of the grossest kind, and with it a grievous corruption of morals, and darkness of religious truth. It must be remembered that the Bible was then practically unknown; and that the corruption of the natural heart found the popular religion in many ways congenial to it. This dulled the moral sense, and stilled the misgivings of conscience, in the greater number.

The Sins Denounced.

"*Worshipping devils*," or demons; which includes worship of the spirits of dead men deified, regarded as mediators and as guardian spirits to their suppliants. All spiritual worship of the true God, through the One Mediator, was thus superseded; God was displaced from His office as the ever-watchful Guardian and Guide of His people.

"*Worshipping idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood*"; worshipping, as in the heathen system, through

the medium of visible images, which compel the idea of the local presence of the saint, and prevent thoughts of the heavenly and spiritual. A professedly Christian idolatry was adapted, as was the heathen, to the circumstances of every rank in society; in churches, highways, street-corners, and dwellings—whether cabins or palaces. Before them all ranks and classes, like their heathen forefathers, did "bow down and worship," in contempt of God's command, which plainly forbids even the bodily act and posture, whatever be the intention or attitude of the soul. Romanist arguments disclaiming idolatry are just those used for the same purpose by the heathen, but they will not stand the test of the Second Commandment. On August 2, 1469, Mohammed II published his vow in all the mosques, against the "idolatry" of the Christians.

"*Murders*," especially murders for religion; the treading down and persecution even to death of the faithful ones by the dominant professing Church. The so-called "heretics" were for the most part men of purer doctrine, drawn from the Scriptures; and they were therefore marked out as sheep for the slaughter, condemned by Councils, hunted down by Crusades, tortured on the rack and burnt at the stake. (See Rev. xi. 7.)

"*Sorceries*," magical deceits and deliberate impostures practised on popular ignorance, whereby the priesthood worked on superstitious credulity for the support of their religion, just as had been the case with the heathen. Among these must be placed the so-called miracles of the canonized saints.

"*Fornications and thefts*." Historians, Acts of Councils, poets, popular ballads—all alike testify to the widespread licentiousness of the Middle Ages, and most of all among the clergy. The celibacy of the clergy, auricular confession, the licensing of priestly

fornication, monkeries, nunneries, pilgrimages, all occasioned and encouraged vice.

The love of money was the root of evil methods of obtaining it. Ecclesiastical dignities of every degree were for sale and purchase, most of all from Rome. The sale of indulgences, and of masses for the dead; the value assigned to fictitious relics; all were nothing more than so many unrighteous methods of obtaining money. (See Hallam, *Middle Ages*, chap. ix. Froude, *Short Studies:* "The Dissolution of the Monasteries.")

Apparent Hopelessness.

Various remedies that human wisdom could suggest had been tried, and had failed; and things were apparently in a hopeless condition. The two Mendicant Orders, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, had arisen, and with them there had been a revival of preaching. But it was soon manifest that covetousness could lurk under the vow of poverty, and ambition under the cloak of humility. Their preaching for the most part was lying fables and ridiculous superstitions. Intellectual emptiness and hatred of learning; quarrelsomeness; proselytism of ignorant youth; bigoted cruelty against so-called "heretics"—these were their notorious characteristics. But the Pope was their patron.

The cry arose and was prolonged, for an independent General Council. The light of literature was breaking on men's minds; but the Bible was still little known, and by the mere classic enthusiast was despised. The disease was deeper seated, and the remedy needed therefore to be more powerful and searching, than men had yet recognized. Apostasy from their God and Saviour was the essence of the disease that had so long and so sorely afflicted Christendom; and there

could be no effectual remedy but the republication of the Lord's own Gospel of grace, accompanied by the power of His own Spirit.

Few Witnesses.

Some few, indeed, beloved of God, but the offscouring of men, understood the true state of the case. Most of them were God's secret ones, the 144,000 sealed; but here one and there one, bolder than the rest, stood forth as His witnesses in an apostate world. Many had been their efforts to make known among their fellow-men the gospel of the grace of the Lord, and many their prayers that He would interfere for His own cause and people; but all seemed to be in vain.

Time went on, yet He appeared not through the darkening watches of the night. Their strength was spent; their hopes waxed fainter; their enemies seemed to have at last prevailed against them, and against the cause of truth, the cause of the Lord Jesus. When the Bohemian remnant, in 1495 and 1497, sent into each part of Christendom to see if there were any beside themselves to testify for Jesus, they found none. It looked as if the Lord had quite forgotten them.

Man's Extremity.

But just at this crisis it pleased the Lord signally to vindicate the truth and faithfulness of His promises. The very next Vision represents the descent of the Covenant Angel, with His face as the sun, His open Book in His hand, His voice as the roaring of a lion against the usurper.

And the next scene in the drama of European history is the outburst of the glorious Reformation. Thanks be to God!

ANALYSIS

THE REFORMATION.

Rev.			A.D.
		First Epoch.	
x. 1–3.	I.	Discovery of Saviour: Sun of Righteousness. His Gospel open in His hand. Roars as a Lion against Usurper.	1517
„ 3, 4.	II.	Discovery of Usurper. Recognition not to be given to the Voices of his Seven Thunders.	
„ 5–7.	III.	Revelation of Position in Prophetic Calendar. Only one more Trumpet.	
„ 8–11.	IV.	Devouring the Little Book. Fresh Commissioning of Gospel Preachers.	
		Second Epoch.	
xi. 1, 2.	V.	Princely authority for constituting the Evangelical Churches. Their measurement and Definition in Reformed Confessions of Faith.	
„ 3–11.	VI.	History of Christ's Witnesses, who witness for Him and His truth. "Protestants."	
		Third Epoch.	
„ 12.	VII.	Christ's Witnesses called up into Political Elevation.	
„ 13.	VIII.	Fall of Papal Supremacy in England. Union of the seven Dutch Provinces.	1609

XIII

THE REFORMATION: ITS DIVINE ORIGIN

REV. x. 1–7.

THE series of Visions that follows, from Revelation x. 1 to xi. 13, belongs still to the Sixth Trumpet, and symbolizes events during the progress of the Second or Turkish Woe, the passing away of which is not mentioned till Revelation xi. 14. These events take place on earth, not in God's heaven, for the Mighty Angel stands on sea and land.

A Divine Interposition.

Against the gloomy background of the prevalent idolatry, superstition, and corruption of morals described in Revelation ix. 20, 21, a series of glorious pictures is shown, representing a sudden, light-giving, world-arousing intervention of the Lord Himself, on behalf of His true Spiritual Church. He appears as the Light of the soul, made manifest to all men, revealing afresh the Gospel of His grace, re-asserting His rights, vindicating His honour, and making His voice to be heard far and wide as the roaring of a lion; all this too at a time when idolatrous worship and its invariable accompaniment, gross immorality, widely prevailed.

Sudden, and most Public.

In the Sealing Vision of Revelation vii. 2–8, the Lord's intervention was represented as comparatively quiet, secret, unperceived by the inhabitants of the world. But here the accompanying signs of glory and power openly displayed prefigured an interposition by the Lord Jesus, sudden, striking, altogether exceptional; in vindication of His covenant to the Church (signified by "*the* rainbow"); in which He would display before mankind His enlightening beams as the Sun of Righteousness; would assert by word and deed His rights to the world as His inheritance; and with voice resounding thoughout the whole Roman earth, as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, would strike terror into the enemies of His Church.

By the Little Book held opened in His left hand was prefigured the chief means whereby all this was to be accomplished—by the re-publication of the teachings of His holy Word; by the public opening of His own book before the eyes of mankind; that is, either the whole Bible in a small form, or the New Testament alone. From this epoch onwards printing would begin to make it possible for the Book to be produced in much smaller size than of old, as well as for it to be far more widely distributed and made known.

"His feet as pillars of fire," from beneath the mantling cloud, might signify that He would make the destroying fire of His power felt, to the confusion of His enemies, and the triumph of His cause and people. Or, bearing in mind His declaration, "I am come to send fire on earth," it might be an intimation that the effect of the re-publication of His Gospel would be divisions, contentions, and fierce wars of opinion.

St. John a Representative Man.

Throughout this series of Visions, as elsewhere in this Book, St. John is a Representative Man. At each epoch he fills the place of Christ's true ministers and people, who hold apostolic faith and practice; and his share in the action means that at the time belonging to each Vision, they would experience or do, in actual history, the same as or like that experienced or done in the Vision by St. John himself.

Thus, notwithstanding the cloud that mantled the Covenant Angel, St. John gazed upon and realized the glory and the divinity of His aspect, and heard His voice. When the Seven Thunders spoke, he was prepared to write, until deterred by warning from on high. He then heard a solemn declaration from the Covenant Angel as to the position of this intervention in the great drama of the world's history; namely, that it was separated by only one more Trumpet blast from the consummation. Under the same heavenly impulse as before, he went and took the Little Book out of the hand of the Angel, ate it up, and tasted its sweetness and its bitterness. He received the Angel's charge to prophesy again. He was presented with a reed like unto a rod, wherewith to measure the Temple and its worshippers. Finally, there was set before him in retrospect the history of Christ's witnesses, through the dark ages preceding, even up to the time then present.

By all this there was prefigured not only, in general terms, some great re-awakening at that era, in the professing Church, of the apostolical spirit in all its energy of action; but also, in detail, something in the views, history, actions, or experience of the Reforming Fathers and people—John's successors in office and spirit—corresponding in each particular with what

was heard, done, or experienced by the Evangelist himself in Vision.

General Features of the Reformation.

The series of Visions comes accurately in its right historical position. First the Woe of the Saracen Locusts, and next that of the Turkish Horsemen, had proved ineffectual for repentance, and the condition of things seemed *hopeless*. Awful superstition and immorality prevailed, and Christ's witnesses existed only in secret.

The next great event in European history was the outburst of the glorious Reformation, just as is pictured here. There is no other event but the Reformation, from St. John's time down to the present, that can be shown to answer to this series of Visions; but that one does, in every particular. Sudden, unexpected, the human instrumentality apparently so inadequate, the results of such surpassing and enduring importance—if ever event had the character of some direct intervention of Divine Providence, this one had.

"The history of the Reformation is the history of one of the greatest outpourings of the life that cometh from God." Its most prominent characteristic as a religious revival was the public setting forth of the Lord Jesus as the true Light of the soul, the Sun of Righteousness, the Lord our Justification. All this was owned and felt by multitudes in different nations and lands.

It was a crisis in which, through the voice of the Reformers sounding wide and loud, the Lord rebuked His usurping enemies, as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. By the providential overthrow of the Usurper's authority in a tenth part of the Apostate City, the Lord asserted His rights to the earth as His inheritance.

" All the tithe of the land is the Lord's " (Lev. xxvii. 30). The very proportion may have been meant to indicate that He claimed the whole, and that his claim was acknowledged.

All this was done in connexion with the re-publication of His Gospel, the public re-opening of His own written Word, so long cast aside and forgotten. New and wide publicity was given to the neglected oracles of God, and to the forgotten doctrines of His grace.

Finally, this enlightenment and deliverance of His Church and religion was not accomplished without fiery contentions, long continued wars, and fierce conflicts of opinion; in all of which the Lord's power was displayed, to support His truth and to discomfit His foes.

I. DISCOVERY OF CHRIST THE SAVIOUR: Rev. x. 1-$\frac{1}{2}$3.

" And I saw another strong Angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth; and he cried with a great voice, as a lion roareth."

" Another " Angel, not one of the seven who sounded the Trumpets, nor of the four who had been loosed. A " strong " Angel, in reference to the force with which the Reformation burst upon the world from heaven. In the interventions of the Lord, those attributes or emblems are chosen and put forth which best suit the action He is about to take. Here is described the action of Him who is the Head and King and Lord of His church, and the object of His intervention is the vindication of His honour, and the fresh revelation of His own grace and Gospel. Hence the epithets and

characteristics here chosen for the description of this Angel of the Reformation.

Not only has this Angel Divine attributes, but He also appears in similar glory to that displayed to St. John in the opening Vision of this Book. He calls the witnesses for Christian truth "*My* witnesses" (Rev. xi. 3); see also 8. He is "arrayed with a cloud." No created angel has such glory as to need this shrouding. "*The* rainbow was upon His head"; that is, the rainbow of the Covenant, round the throne (Rev. iv. 3), because He comes from that throne. His "face was as the sun" (Rev. i. 16), shedding heavenly light upon the scene. His descent, in this Vision, with life-giving lustre, on the Roman earth, was a prefiguration of the outburst of Gospel light vouchsafed by Him at the Reformation. That great movement had its origin in the positive recognition of Christ as the Sun of Righteousness, the only source of light, life, and justification, to the soul of man. "His feet as pillars of fire"; compare Revelation i. 15.

"In his hand a little book open." A book small in size; not sealed, but opened and remaining open in His left hand. The prophetic book of Revelation v. 1 was a large roll, opened gradually, seal by seal, in the inner sanctuary, in the heaven of God's presence. This one was small, and appeared already opened on the theatre of the world; though it were closed before, it was now brought by the Lord open to the earth. Its opening and public display are represented as the accompaniment of the light of the Reformation; and it is the book that afterwards is taken and devoured by the representative of the Reformers.

The book is a symbol of the doctrine contained therein, and its open display, like everything else enacted outside of the inner sanctuary, pictured some event or fact that was to happen on the Roman earth, in the manner

and in the order of things here shown—the opening again, for the freest study by everybody of the long forgotten and forbidden Book of God, and the world-wide publication of the doctrines it contains. A closed Bible has ever been the traditional policy of the Papacy, while an open Bible is the motto of the true Church of Christ. Therefore the "little book open" in the hand of the angel is a symbolical prophecy of the unfolding and open publication of the Word of God.

"His right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth." An act of taking possession, of claiming both as His own, asserting His rights to this world as His inheritance. Nor did He quit either ground till, in one and the other, there had been accomplished the overthrow of a part of the usurper's power; by the fall of a tenth part of the Great City, and by the killing of seven thousands—a pledge of total overthrow still future. The great work of the Reformation was not to be confined to any one locality; it was intended to bless the world; continents and islands, and those who go down to the sea in ships, were to feel its blessed influence.

There appears in the action of the Angel, in planting his feet on sea and land, and roaring as a lion, a singular abruptness and decision; the most obvious explanation of which is that it is an indignant reference to some signal usurpation of His rights, and to the triumph of some enemy and rival, at the time in question. This is the principle of allusive reference and implied contrast. The epoch of the usurper's triumph is the epoch of the Lord's intervention.

"It was not the formation of the church, but its re-formation after its ruin by Romanism. Not a first beginning but a second. Pentecost formed the church; Popery de-formed it; Protestantism re-formed it."

Luther's Discovery of Christ the Saviour.

This was the secret origin and beginning of the Reformation. "The Reformation passed from the mind of Luther into the mind of Western Europe." "The different phases of the Reformation succeeded each other in the soul of Luther, its instrumental originator, before their accomplishment in the world." Hence the importance of tracing the early development of the Reformation in the spiritual history of the Reformer himself, the master-spirit, under God, of that great revolution.

Of these phases the two which gave rise to all the rest, and without which the rest cannot be accounted for or explained, were—the Discovery of Christ in the fulness of His grace, and the Discovery of the predicted Antichrist in the Papacy and the Papal system.

"To Germany belongs the undying merit of having restored Christianity to a purer form than it had presented since the first ages of the Church—of having re-discovered the true religion. Armed with this weapon, Germany was unconquerable. Its convictions made themselves a path through all the neighbouring countries. . . . In these opinions there is a force that convinces and satisfies all minds." (Ranke: *Hist. of Popes*, Book I, chap. 3.)

"To understand the nature of the Reformation, as it rose and spread in Germany, we must become familiar with the life of him who was its centre and its chief." (Hardwick.)

"That the Reformation was able to establish itself in the shape which it assumed was due to the one fact, that there existed at the crisis a single person of commanding mind as the incarnation of the purest wisdom which then existed in Germany, in whose words the bravest, truest, and most honest men saw their own thoughts represented; and because they recognized this man as the wisest among them, he was allowed to impress on the Reformation his own individuality. The traces of that one mind are to be seen to-day in the mind of the modern world. Had there been no Luther, the English, American and German peoples would be thinking differently,

would be acting differently, would be altogether different men and women from what they are at this moment." (Froude: *Luther.*)

Luther Finds a Bible.

A.D. 1503. Luther had found a Vulgate Bible in the University Library of Erfurt. In that Bible the Reformation lay hid. Study of the book led to deep conviction of sin, with a sense of God's anger, and of the need of propitiation.

In 1505 he entered the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt, but found there neither holiness nor peace. "O my sin, my sin!" was the bitter cry of his soul. Staupitz, Vicar-General of the Augustines, who had himself passed through like experience, was sent by God to open to him the Scriptures, and to explain to him God's love and mercy to man, shown in Christ crucified; His death, the expiation for sin; His perfect righteousness, the sinner's trust.

"Would you," said he, "have merely the semblance of a sinner, and the semblance of a Saviour?" "Seek repentance in contemplating God's love in Christ Jesus. Love Him who has thus first loved you."

He Finds Christ, and Peace.

He received the words as the voice of the Divine Spirit. With the eye of faith he beheld Christ beaming upon this lost world and his own sinful soul, as the Sun of Righteousness, with the rainbow of the Covenant of Mercy. "O happy sin," exclaimed he, "which hast found such a Redeemer!"

When Staupitz quitted Erfurt, a new dawn had risen upon Luther. But the work was not yet finished. The Vicar-General had prepared the way; God reserved its accomplishment for an humbler instrument. In the second year of his abode in the Convent, he was brought

by illness to the brink of the grave. All his distresses and fears were aroused at the approach of death. One day, as he lay overwhelmed with despair, an aged monk entered his cell, and addressed a few words of comfort to him. The venerable man was incapable of following up that soul in all its doubts and difficulties, as Staupitz had done; but with great simplicity he reminded Luther of the article in his Creed, "I believe in the remission of sins," expounding it in such a way as to bring out more consciously man's personal trust in a free redemption. Hence the origin of the peculiar emphasis that Luther placed upon this doctrine all the rest of his life.

One passage, Romans i. 17, caused Luther great perplexity in regard to the doctrine of justification. He had been taught to understand "the righteousness of God" of the active righteousness in virtue of which God punishes sinners; but he finally learnt that it meant God's passive righteousness, by which, in mercy, He justifies mankind through faith in Christ.

"Luther found the Gospel in Romans, and found in it a power which made him the greatest conductor of spiritual force since Paul, which directly regenerated one half of Christendom, and indirectly did much to reform the other half." (*Expositor's Greek Testament.*)

Study of the Bible, trials, illnesses, and the like, tested and confirmed him in these comfortable truths. While at Rome, long-cherished ideas and early associations induced his momentary return to old outward superstitions; but while climbing the Pilate staircase, a voice as from heaven sounded in his ears, "The just shall live by faith." This put an end to his superstitions. It was in Rome itself that God gave him the clear view of that fundamental doctrine of Christianity.

Now to be Set Before Others.

Luther had now to act as God's chosen minister, and to set all this before others.

In 1509 he had been made Professor in the University at Wittenberg. On October 18, 1512, he was received as Licentiate in Divinity, and took the following oath: "I swear to defend the evangelical truth with all my might." Next day there were conferred on him the insignia of Doctor of Divinity. He was made Doctor of the University *ad Biblia*, and was called to devote himself to the study of the Bible. This solemn oath was Luther's call to the Reformation, his vocation as a Reformer. From this period he no longer sought the truth for himself alone; he sought it also for the Church at large.

This was the third epoch of his development. His entrance into the cloister had turned his thoughts towards God; the knowledge of the remission of sins and of the righteousness of faith had emancipated his soul; his Doctor's oath gave him that baptism of fire by which he became a Reformer of the Church.

Christ and His Word.

This was the tenor of his teachings: "Thou, Jesus, art my righteousness; I am Thy sin. Thou hast taken on Thyself what was mine; Thou hast given me what is Thine."

The eyes of men were now directed to the true Sun of Righteousness, to the Angel and to His little Book, that is, to Christ and to His pure Word, instead of to the impostures and substitutes that had deceived mankind hitherto; and many looked, and felt the healing. They saw for themselves, with amazed eyes, the blessed Redeemer of mankind. Here are two great principles of the Reformation: Justification by Faith and the Supremacy of Holy Scripture.

The Roaring of the Lion.

Up to this epoch the glorious manifestation of Gospel light had been comparatively noiseless, tranquil, a matter for the individual in the secret of his soul. There had been simply a revelation of Himself by the Lord Jesus to the favoured ones, in His character of the Sun of Righteousness, and of the Rainbow-vested Angel of the Covenant, mighty to save.

But now was to be added the roaring as a lion against the usurper. The calm was now to end, and the fiery conflict to begin between those two mighty antagonistic principles, Christ and Antichrist. At this point the Reformation first appears before the public eye, but its manifestation could not be understood except in the light of what has preceded.

What Luther and the Reformers did afterwards on deliberation, and with their own consciousness, is attributed to St. John as their representative in the Vision. But here the voice is ascribed to the Angel. Luther himself felt it so to be—the voice of one Mightier speaking through him. The words ran like fire through the nations of Europe, and were propagated with marvellous rapidity throughout all the Roman world. All heard the mighty voice, loud as the roaring of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, re-asserting His claims against the usurper, and striking terror into His foes.

Tetzel and the Indulgences.

Tetzel and his indulgences precipitated the conflict. Approaching Wittenberg, at Jüterboch, four miles distant, he advertised his wares for sale; proclaiming the Papal Bulls of grace and indulgence, setting forth the Pope as the heaven-sent dispenser of mercy, as the sun, the source of all divine light, grace and salvation. Luther was more especially stirred by discovering that

some of his own parishioners had gone with the multitude to Jüterboch, and had bought Letters of Indulgence ; and, in the confessional, they spoke of not abandoning their sins, trusting to the Indulgences.

" Though disciplined to habits of submission, and by nature indisposed to break away from the traditions of the past, he was nevertheless unable to repress the storm of holy indignation that arose within him on beholding the practical substitution of man's righteousness for Christ's, of justification by the law for justification by faith." (Hardwick.)

The Theses : October 31, 1517.

Then was the spirit of Reformer kindled within him. Little thinking of the effect they were to produce, he published his celebrated Ninety-five Theses against Indulgences, October 31, 1517—the epoch of the Reformation, " The most memorable day in modern European history " (Froude).

With a rapidity, power and effect unparalleled, unintended, unexpected—as the voice of a Mightier through Luther—their sound echoed through continental Christendom and insular England. Those ever-memorable propositions were felt by friends and foes to be a mortal blow to the whole Papal system, and presently to the Papal supremacy ; to will-worship, superstition, priestly domination, and all that tribe of errors.

Both on the mainland and in the island there had been implanted in men's minds a view of Christ's glory, rights and headship in His church, such as could never again be wholly extinguished, notwithstanding that the Papacy then had the support of most of the Powers of the world.

The truths most prominently asserted in the Theses were—the Pope's utter insufficiency to confer forgiveness or salvation, but the all-sufficiency of Christ ; the participation of the true penitent in the blessing of

forgiveness and all the riches of Christ, by God's free gift, and independently of Papal indulgence or absolution; and that the true and precious treasure of the church is not the merits of the saints, but the Gospel of the glory and grace of God.

Their Wide and Rapid Diffusion.

The Theses spread as with the speed of lightning. A month had not elapsed before they were at Rome. "In a fortnight they were in every part of Germany, and in four weeks they had traversed nearly the whole of Christendom, as if the very angels had been their messengers, and had placed them before the eyes of all men. No one can believe the noise they made." All this must be estimated according to the ideas and facilities of those days, in regard to rapidity of communication.

"Frequently in after years, as Luther contemplated the immense and unexpected consequences of this courageous attack, he was astonished at himself, and could not understand how he had ventured to make it. An invisible and mightier hand than his held the clue, and led the herald of truth along a path that was still hidden from him, and from the difficulties of which he would perhaps have shrunk, if he had foreseen them, and if he had advanced alone and of his own accord." (D'Aubigné.)

Luther was indeed in Rome, but not of Rome. When he wrote the Theses, he thought he was a Papist, but his spirit was essentially anti-Papist. Even in those Theses, imperfect as they were, there was a proclamation of Jesus as the sole meritorious justifier of man from sin, in direct contradiction to the Papal system of justification by works of merit, penances, indulgences, and so on; and therein a witnessing for Christ before the world in His noblest character and office, against the whole Papal religious system, though Luther at the time knew it not.

Christ's Witnesses again Living.

Christ's witnesses lived again in Luther and the Reformers, and testified for Him and for His truth. Except the Resurrection of the Lord Himself, there is not in all ecclesiastical history any example of such a sudden, mighty, and triumphant resuscitation of His cause and church from a state of deep depression, as was exhibited in the protesting voice of Luther, and the public outburst of the glorious Reformation.

The sudden contrast forces itself upon every writer of history, Romanist or Protestant; and the figure of a revival, resuscitation, or resurrection, is so natural and appropriate that it is perpetually applied to the Reformation by writers of differing sentiments and creeds.

Just as the Fifth Lateran Council, with the name of Rome and the Roman state or church on its lips as the new and holy Jerusalem, had met for the last time, and separated; a light from God's Spirit was shed upon the scene, amid which the deception faded away like a dissolving view, and the great city stood revealed in her true colours. It was a discovery of permanent and most practical importance.

II. DISCOVERY OF THE USURPER: Rev. x. $\frac{1}{2}3$, 4.

"And when he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying, Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not."

After the voice of the Angel, roaring as a lion, "*the* seven thunders" are said not to sound only but to speak. They have voices of their own, and speak in a manner

evidently quite intelligible to St. John. In this they are unlike the thunders elsewhere described in this Book as proceeding from the throne; those are sounds of wrath and judgment from on high, but not articulate or vocal as these are. Compare John xii. 28, 29, where mention is made of an articulate voice from heaven. Some thought it was thunder, others an angel; but the very words are given.

"THE Seven Thunders and their Voices."

The article does not refer to some previously-mentioned thunders, as was the case with "*the* rainbow" of Revelation x. 1; but it implies that these are "the well-known seven thunders," or the thunders that come from a sevenfold source. They are earthly thunders, not from the Throne.

They had "*their* voices," voices peculiarly and distinctively their own, in contrast with the voice of the Covenant Angel just before and the "voice from heaven" mentioned just after. They were opposed to or discordant from both of these.

Their voices fell on St. John's ear not only intelligibly, but also as an oracle or voice from heaven. It will be remembered how the Jewish Rabbis had been wont to palm upon the people their own false religious decrees and dogmas, as if "Bath Kol"—a voice or oracle from heaven. St. John says, "I was about to write." He was writing down everything as he saw or heard it, for so the Lord had bidden him (Rev. i. 11); and he was going to do the same for these voices also. He thought them authoritative, and therefore was about to write them down, and so give them recognition and authority.

But he now heard a voice from heaven, bidding him seal up what had been uttered, and not write it down. Sealing is for authentication, or for concealing from

public view; evidently the latter is the sense here. When the Apostle is told to "write," it is because the voice is true and faithful, the voice of the Spirit, the true saying of God; e.g., the Epistles to the Seven Churches, also Revelation xiv. 13, xix. 9, xxi. 5. In this case he is told, "Write not," because what the Seven Thunders uttered, though like an oracular voice from heaven, was not true and faithful, not the voice of the Spirit, not the true saying of God, but false and an imposture. He is to give them no recognition, no authority.

St. John being, as before, a representative man, this part of the Vision foreshows the impression that would be produced at the time on men holding the apostolic faith. After the discovery of Christ the Saviour, and after His roaring as a lion against the usurping foe, certain well-known voices, described as those of "the seven thunders," would be heard by those whom St. John represented. What was uttered by those voices would be regarded at first as authoritative, and worthy of attention; but presently a true voice from heaven would be heard, forbidding to write, preserve, or authenticate what the thunders had spoken.

The Thunders of the Vatican.

At the epoch belonging to the Vision, the thunders well-known throughout Christendom, and acknowledged as having authority, were those that proceeded from the Seven-hilled City of Rome, the Papal Thunders, the Thunders of the Vatican. In reference to them these expressions occur continually in the histories of those times.

There is no need to relate how, very shortly after the publication of the Theses, the Papal Thunders of intimidation began to make their voices heard against them.

"I Was About to Write."

The words in the Vision imply that those members of Christ's church symbolized by St. John, and especially their leader and mouthpiece Luther, even after witnessing Christ's glory and beauty, would yet—from long habit and association, and old-established claim—on hearing the Papal Thunders be ready to receive and acknowledge them, as if they really were what they professed to be, a voice from heaven.

So it was, strange as it may seem. The truth was that Luther had formed acquaintance with the character of Christ some years before he formed acquaintance with that of Antichrist. The cry of the Papacy being Antichrist, raised long before by the followers of Waldo, Wickliffe and Huss, had almost died away in Christendom, and if heard by Luther was regarded by him only as a blasphemous heresy. His conscience was very tender, and he was tremblingly afraid of offending God. The supposed sacredness and authority of the Pope, as head of the Church and "Christ's Vicar," in accordance with long received superstition, all induced him to bow with deference to the Papal decision.

Early in 1518 there had taken place at Frankfort-on-the-Oder a disputation with Tetzel on the subject of the Indulgences, in which that shameless trafficker took shelter with all his disorders and scandals under the mantle of the Pope. To Luther's great astonishment, the ground of dispute was changed from the Indulgence-markets to the halls of the Vatican. In the place of the despicable broker whom he had so firmly grasped, there was substituted the sacred person of the head of the church. Thenceforward it was no question of a discredited traffic, but of Rome itself.

After this, in the summer of that year, Luther wrote most submissively to the Pope, acknowledging his voice as that of Christ. In the spring he had indeed begun

to draw a distinction between the infallibility of Holy Scripture and that of the most able pontiff; denying to the latter any authority to "speak from himself alone," independently of General Councils, except as the interpreter of the decrees they had put forth. Still, when the Seven Thunders uttered their voices, he was about to write; that is, to recognize and act on them as if they really were what they professed to be, an oracle from heaven.

The Voice from Heaven.

But at this critical moment of danger there came to him a real voice from heaven; the Spirit's whisper began to be heard, saying to him, "Write not." He doubted, discredited the fact of the Pope's sanction being given to the system of Indulgences. Soon after, the publication of the Pope's Bull (December 13, 1518), in sanction of Indulgences, forced him to identify the Pope himself with these abuses.

At this epoch he wrote to his friend Link (December 11, 1518): "My pen is ready to give birth to things much greater. I know not whence these thoughts come to me. I will send you what I write, that you may see if I have well conjectured that the Antichrist of whom Paul[1] speaks now reigns in the Court of Rome."

For a while he combated the thought, to him so fearful. Next year, March 13, 1519, he wrote to the Elector of Saxony, that he began to entertain doubts whether the Pope were not the very Antichrist of Scripture. About a year later the suspicion had considerably ripened. He had read the treatise of Laurentius Valla, proving that the "*Donation of Constantine*" was a forgery; this so exasperated him that he thought the

[1] "Antichrist" is not a Pauline word; it is peculiar to St. John. St. Paul speaks of him, but not by that name.

Papacy capable of all enormities. He still spoke half-respectfully of Leo X, considered in his personal capacity, and represented him (October, 1520) as "a Daniel in Babylon." Further study of Scripture, further teaching of the Holy Spirit, and further examination of the Papal character and claims, filled him with surprise, and turned what had been a suspicion into a real and awful certainty.

When the Pope thundered forth his final Bull of anathema and excommunication against him (June 15, 1520), Luther published his famous book on "*The Babylonish Captivity of the Church*," which appeared on October 6, 1520; also on November 4, 1520, his treatise "*Against the Bull of Antichrist.*" On November 17 he formally made an appeal to a General Council, bringing the gravest charges against the Pope. This protest was circulated throughout Germany, and sent to most of the Courts of Christendom.

Luther burns the Pope's Bull and Decretals.

At length he did an action by which all Europe was thunderstruck. On December 10, 1520, in presence of a vast concourse outside the walls of Wittenberg, he committed the Papal Bull and the Decretals and Canons to the flames. The Pope's Legate, travelling to Worms, to his astonishment found himself disregarded and shunned as an agent of Antichrist.

"A holy terror seized upon the souls of the people. It was Antichrist whom they beheld seated on the Pontifical throne. This new idea, which derived greater strength from the prophetic descriptions launched forth by Luther into the midst of his contemporaries, inflicted the most terrible blow on Rome. Faith in the Word of God took the place of that faith which the Church alone had hitherto enjoyed; and the power of the Pope, long the object of adoration among nations, had now become a source of terror and detestation." (D'Aubigné.)

The Usurper Discovered.

It was a mighty revolution, a lasting discovery. The view, though bitterly disputed, has never since been lost. The light which previously had only gleamed here and there on the subject and then had long been all but quenched, suddenly burst into a blaze. The voice of the Waldenses, Wickcliffites, and Hussites, protesting against the Papacy as the Apocalyptic Beast, and Rome as the Apocalyptic Babylon, revived in power hitherto unparalleled.

Vain was the authoritative prohibition by the Fifth Lateran Council, of writing or preaching on the subject of Antichrist. There was an energy in the discovered truth that could not be kept down, for it came not from books or earlier traditions, but from the Spirit's own teaching out of God's Word. Alike in Germany, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Sweden and England, it was received as an almost self-evident and fundamental truth by the founders of the several Protestant churches; indeed as of itself a sufficient justification of the mighty act of their separation from Rome.

Two Grand Discoveries.

These verses, Revelation x. 1–4, prefigure the two grand religious discoveries, made first to Luther and then to multitudes in Christendom, that introduced the great and glorious Protestant Reformation: the discovery of Christ the Saviour, and the discovery of the Usurper.

The era witnessed a great advance in prophetic interpretation, as it was then that the true character of the Papacy was first universally recognized. It became a general conviction among Reformed Christians that the Babylon of the Apocalypse was Papal Rome. Towards the close of the century there were put forth the

views of Apocalyptic exposition which, after long reflection, the Papal doctors thought best for meeting the arguments urged against them with such fearful force from the Apocalypse. These were the Præterist and the Futurist schemes of interpretation.

"Antichrist."

When "anti" is joined to a noun that describes some kind of agent or functionary, the compound word means either a vice-functionary, or an opposing functionary of the same kind, or sometimes both.

It is most important to remember that the word "Antichrist" cannot mean only any or every person opposed to Christ, or an enemy to Christ. It means a vice-Christ, or a false Christ opposing, or both; but in any case a Christ of some kind, who is "anti"—"instead of"—the true Christ. Antichrist is neither more nor less than another Christ, a pro-Christ, a vice-Christ, who sets himself up as the counterpart of the true, and claims to be the "Vicar of Christ."

Bishop Westcott, in his commentary on the Epistles of St. John, says that the word means far more than simply "an adversary of Christ." As far as the form is concerned, it may describe "one who takes the place of Christ," or "one who under the same character opposes Christ." It seems most consonant to the context to hold that Antichrist, in St. John, describes one who assuming the guise of Christ opposes Christ. In this sense it embodies an important truth—that that hostility is really formidable in which the adversary keeps the likeness of the excellence which he opposes. The Antichrist assails Christ by proposing to do or to preserve what He did, while yet denying Him.

An excellent illustration is the famous word used in the Middle Ages, "Anti-pope." This meant not simply an enemy to the Pope, such as the then German Em-

peror; but a hostile, self-substituted, usurping Pope, occupying the place of the proper Pope, exercising his functions and receiving his honours.

Similarly in French "contre" is used in certain compounds, such as "contre-amiral," a vice-admiral; "contre-maitre," a vice-master.

III. REVELATION OF THE PROPHETIC POSITION: Rev. x. 5–7.

"The angel . . . lifted up his right hand." Still the same Divine Covenant Angel of verse 1. His left hand held the Little Book open, and it remained there open, until John ate it up. "And sware. . . ." The oath bears a close resemblance to that of Daniel xii. 7. There, the Angel stands over the river that represented the Persian Power then dominant; here, the Angel stands upon land and sea, as about to vindicate both unto Himself. The oath is in the most solemn form; God Himself is invoked as witness to its truth.

"There shall be delay (R.V. margin, and American) no longer"; i.e., unto the finishing of the mystery spoken of in the next clause. In Daniel xii. mention is made of "many days," and of an enigmatic period, "time, times and an half." But here it is plainly and solemnly declared that now only one Trumpet-blast intervenes. This implies that there has been delay; that the previous Trumpet periods have been of long duration; but though nothing is said positively as to the duration of the Seventh Trumpet, it is affirmed that that one is the last.

"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel." The voice of that Angel then was to be spread over "days." How many? How long was that Trumpet to last? The Fifth Trumpet extended over about 450 years; the Sixth over more than 700. The Seventh, reckoned from the outbreak of the Great French Revo-

lution of 1789, has already extended over more than 120 years. This illustrates the measurement of epochs by Trumpets. The Angel, marking out the true time of the consummation, sware that the mystery of God should be finished, not in the days of the Sixth Trumpet-Angel, in which His descent had taken place, but in the days of the Seventh.

Accordingly, when that Seventh Trumpet sounded (Rev. xi. 16, 17), it was at once recognized by the heavenly hosts as being the last. "Is finished the mystery of God." In Revelation xv. 1, the Seven Vials are described as the last plagues, for in them "is finished" the wrath of God, which is declared to have come in this Seventh Trumpet (Rev. xi. 18).

"The mystery of God." This is: (1) God's mystery of Providence, wherein good has so long been overborne by evil; (2) God's mystery of prophecy, the solution of which the Church seeks from age to age; (3) God's mystery in the rejection of His ancient people, and the calling of the Gentiles (Rom. xi.; Eph. iii.).

Position in the Calendar of Prophecy.

This great oath was heard by St. John, and this impression was made upon him, as a representative man. Accordingly, the next step, in the history of the Reformation, was a deep impression on the mind of Luther and of other Fathers of the Reformation, at this time, of the approach of the consummation.

It was based upon prophetic evidence, and closely connected with those associations which struck upon St. John's ear and mind in the Angel's oath; in this way—the same prophecies that foretold Antichrist's character and doings spoke also of his days as numbered, and affirmed the manner and means of his destruction to be by "the breath of the Lord's mouth," and "the manifestation of his coming." Hence, naturally, the

republication of the Gospel of Christ, the exposure of the Papacy, and the abolition of Papal superstition in some places, were regarded as incipient fulfilments of these prophecies.

The idea fixed itself on the mind of the whole Reforming body, as a voice from the spirit of Jesus. The German Reformers grounded their impressions chiefly on the prophecies of Daniel and of St. Paul; those in Switzerland and England soon passed on to this very passage in Revelation x., and concluded that progress had been made up to that point. The time was not indeed come as yet, but it was nigh at hand. More distinctly than ever before, it was revealed to Christians whereabouts they were in God's grand calendar of prophecy.

An Abiding Impression.

It was an abiding impression, and at the same time most influential and practical, precisely that best suited to animate them for the great and difficult work that lay before them. It served admirably to give them courage in all their subsequent conflicts—as the Lord's witnesses—with Antichrist, the World and Satan. It was a prophetic discovery permanently established in the mind of Protestant Christendom; a fixed impression that the reign of the Papal Antichrist was not at its beginning, nor about its middle, but already far advanced towards its end.

Pareus, Mede, Vitringa, and almost all the principal expositors that followed, on the Continent and in England, kept up the idea as certain, throughout the seventeenth century, that the Reformation had been accomplished under the Sixth Trumpet, and that only the Seventh Trumpet remained to sound. Indeed it is from this, as from a point of light, that the chief subsequent Protestant interpreters have since gradually,

though painfully and with interruptions, made progress towards the explanation of other parts of the Apocalyptic prophecy.

After the glorious Reformation, though a vast advance was made in prophetic intelligence, and though sounder views began to prevail as to the future—by the explanation of the emblems of the Beast and Babylon as representing the Papacy and Papal Rome ; by the adoption of the year-day system ; and by clearer understanding of the Gothic, Saracenic and Turkish woes—still from the times of Luther, the Magdeburg Centuriators, and Foxe, down to those successively of Brightman and Mede, Vitringa and Daubuz, Sir Isaac and Bishop Newton, many gaps remained to be filled, many important dates to be verified. The chief reason was—as Sir Isaac Newton with characteristic sagacity observed—because there still remained unfulfilled in history the last predicted revolution, that of the Seventh Trumpet, essential to the clearing up of some most important points of interpretation. Till then, it was no wonder if many mistakes were made, and many matters remained obscure.

Prophetic Interpretation up to this Era.

For 700 or 800 years after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the Book of Revelation had been expounded as if it were little more than a repetition of mere commonplace intimations as to the world's wickedness, the Church's sufferings, and God's consequent judgments. It was regarded as a storehouse of figures, whence the expositor could choose according to his fancy. None treated it as if it contained any definite prophecies of coming events, or as if there were any chronological order or succession in its predictions, as in the very similar Visions of Daniel. None seemed

to realize the possibility of gathering from it true prophetic teaching as to the things that had already been since St. John saw the Visions in Patmos, or as to the things still to be thereafter.

This was to set aside the chief value of the Book to the Church of Christ, as she steers over the stormy billows of this world's history. Yet so it remained, until at length, about A.D. 1200, Joachim Abbas opened the way, however imperfectly, to explaining it as a distinct and definite foreshadowing of the history of the Church and of the world, from Apostolic times to the present and far on beyond. This was followed up, still very imperfectly, but with clearer light and fuller knowledge of actual history, by the expositors of the era of the Reformation.

Those parts of the prophecy especially were opened up to them which more immediately concerned their cause and their era—the glorious light-giving descent of the Covenant Angel, with the opened Gospel in His hand, just when Christendom was in its darkest and most hopeless state; during the period of the Sixth Trumpet, which they could not but understand of the Euphratean Turk—the oath, in this same Vision, that only one Trumpet remained to be sounded, ere the consummation—the predictions concerning the Beast, and his persecutions of Christ's true Church—the Witnesses in sackcloth raised up to protest against him and his whole system—and apparently the same mystic period connected with all these 1,260 days, or 42 months, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ times.

This strengthened the conviction in the minds of the Reformers, that this whole prophecy, when rightly understood, was definitely historical, a divine picturing of the fortunes of the Church and of the world, from the time of St. John to the consummation. But beyond this general conviction they did not much advance.

On the fundamental point of the structure of the Apocalypse, and the order and relation of its several parts, they held the most diverse opinions. God had vouchsafed much fresh light, but His time had not yet come for making everything clear.

XIV

THE REFORMATION: ITS PROGRESS AND DEFINITION

REV. x. 8–xi. 2.

MIGHTY effects had been produced by the entrance of true Gospel light into the hearts of the Reformers, and of the multitudes who saw and felt with them. This Gospel was now to be publicly and officially proclaimed to all, and provision was to be made for raising up and equipping a succession of faithful, Spirit-taught preachers, who should keep up the testimony for Christ and for His truth.

The next portion of the Reformation-Vision shows how this was to be effected; it represents the special commissioning, by the Lord, of ministers of the Reformation, preachers of His Gospel, to proclaim it in many languages and lands, and before many classes of persons.

IV. RENEWAL OF GOSPEL PREACHING: Rev. x. 8–11.

"*The Voice.*" The same as is mentioned in verse 4, that had cautioned him as to the Seven Thunders—the secret voice of the Spirit. "*Speaking with me.*" Not to, but with, me; this is quieter, more conversational, not so much a command as a suggestion. "*Go,*

take the little book." The book that Christ holds open in His hand, for us to look upon and read and learn; the book that conveys the message of His Gospel.

In the Vision the book is a symbol of the doctrine it contains and makes known. In actual fact, it is the volume of God's Word; either the whole, or that small portion of it which contains its very essence—the New Testament.

St John was told to go to the Angel and to receive from Him the book. It was given to St. John opened, not to open; it could not then be a prophecy of future events, to be gradually unfolded in subsequent chapters. Only the Lamb has the prerogative of unfolding the future. In this, as in all else in the Visions, St. John is a representative man, prefiguring in what he did or in what was done to him Christ's true and faithful ministers and people at the time in question. Those whom St. John represented were, after recognition of Antichrist's voice and doom, to be impelled by the same heavenly guidance as before to go to the Lord Jesus, and to receive of Him the book of His Gospel.

St. John was not only to take the book, but was also to eat it up, and then to go and speak again. Compare Ezekiel i. 27, 28; ii. 1–iii. 4. Ezekiel saw a roll of a book, and was bid to eat it and then to go and speak, the roll containing the substance of what he was to proclaim. Here the substance of Christ's Little Book is what is enjoined upon those whom St. John represents, for them to make known far and wide.

In obedience to the Angel's command, St. John took the book, and ate it up, and found it—as the Angel had said—sweet as honey in his mouth, but afterwards bitter. The Angel mentioned the bitterness first, as the most important, though it came second in order of time. As with Ezekiel, one chief cause of it was to be the rebelliousness of those to whom he had to speak.

St. John was in his own experience first to feed upon and assimilate the contents of the book, in order that he himself might know its sweetness and value; and then he was solemnly commissioned to resume the work of Christ's ambassador and Gospel preacher.

Prophesy again.

"*Thou must prophesy again.*" This does not mean that he was to begin a fresh series of predictions, but that he was to resume the work of Christ's ambassador and evangelist. He had so "prophesied" before, but there had been some notable interruption of this preaching. St. John is not spoken of as prophesying in the sense of foretelling; Christ alone does this. The Two Witnesses are said to "prophesy" 1,260 days (Rev. xi. 3–6); but even this does not mean "predict." They are silenced in death for a time, and then they rise again.

To "prophesy," in the New Testament sense, means to "speak as God's ambassador"; not in prediction only, though that is not excluded, but in declaration of God's mind and will, publicly reading and explaining His Word, pleading His cause, reproving, rebuking, exhorting, instructing.

Gospel Preaching Extinct.

This health-giving practice had long been all but extinct. It was now to be resumed, but on a much wider scale than before, over many different kings and peoples, and in a multitude of tongues. Those whom St. John represented, having been prepared by the experimental digestion of the doctrines of Christ's Gospel, were to be commissioned afresh by the Lord Himself, and sent forth as His witnesses and preachers. People everywhere, in every rank, were to be taught the contents, the doctrines, of the Lord's own book.

The reading and preaching of God's Word, originally part of the Church Service, had gradually become neglected—through the monastic multiplication of services, and the reading of legends of saints instead of Scripture, all in Latin, which was becoming an unknown tongue; and through the exaggerated importance attached to the Sacraments. In the Dark Ages, the doctrine of Transubstantiation confirmed the clergy more and more in neglecting the work of an evangelist. The Mendicant Friars arose, but there was no revival of true Gospel preaching. Wickliffe and the Hussite preachers in England, and the Hussites in Bohemia, were indeed glorious exceptions; but they were speedily excommunicated, and nearly suppressed by the sword.

Thus this most important function of the Christian ministry was almost universally neglected. Living addresses to the heart and conscience, fresh from the living fountain of Divine Truth, setting forth God's love in Christ, were all but unknown in the established worship of the Christian Church, and were all but suppressed in the sects outside, till the beginning of the Reformation.

Luther's Commission.

Luther, at his Deacon's ordination, had had put into his hand the Book of the Gospels, and authority had been given him to read them in the Church, and to preach the Word of God. At his Priest's ordination, there had been delivered to him the paten and chalice, with the blasphemous commission—"power to sacrifice for the living and the dead." This was the consequence of the reception of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and marked how such offices as preaching the Word had been superseded, and being regarded as inferior, had become obsolete.

Taught by the Spirit, Luther even from the first had realized the responsibility of his charge, and had striven to act upon it. The order of his Vicar-General confirmed it. As yet indeed he was but partially enlightened, still he recognized and fulfilled the function of an evangelist. By his preaching, lectures, writings, and visitations, he was already unconsciously preparing many monks and clergy to be evangelical preachers in the new church soon to be established.

After his recognition and rejection of the Papal Thunders, in 1520, there followed the grand scene at Worms, in April, 1521, before the Emperor Charles V, when the endeavour was made to cause Luther to retract, or to move away from the Word of God. Then came a crisis.

"The battle that had been fought at Worms resounded far and wide." "The appearance of Luther before the Diet on this occasion is one of the finest, perhaps it is the very finest, scene in human history." "From the moment that Luther left the Emperor's presence a free man, the spell of Absolutism was broken, and the Victory of the Reformation secured." (Froude.)

"The whole empire had turned towards this man, with the most ardent prayers and the most terrible threats, and he had not faltered. His refusal to bend beneath the iron yoke of the Pope emancipated the church and began the new times. The interposition of Providence was manifest" (D'Aubigné.)

Luther Hidden in Wartburg.

The supreme secular and ecclesiastical powers issued decrees condemning him and his fellow-labourers. Luther was proscribed. To save his life, the friendly Elector of Saxony had him carried off and hidden in his castle at Wartburg, where he remained from April 26, 1521, to March 3, 1522.

"After the violent combat that Luther had just sustained, God had been pleased to conduct him to a place of repose and peace." "It was requisite that this great individuality should

fade away, in order that the revolution then accomplishing might not bear the stamp of an individual" (D'Aubigné.)

He Translates the New Testament.

What did he do there? He heard the voice saying to him, "Go, take the Little Book." The chief occupation to which he was directed during this exile was to take in hand the New Testament and to translate it into German, believing that it would be the most powerful help in diffusing Gospel light among ministers and people, and in overthrowing superstition. The people were to read it. Luther himself first tasted its sweetness, as he devoured it. Some of the consequences of publishing it were bitter, from perverseness, opposition, and persecution; but when he ate it, it was "sweet as honey." In God's providence it was to be one of the mightiest helps to the Reformation.

"In the disguise of Junker George, Luther was enabled to pursue his theological labours, and completed what has ever since been felt to be among his very best productions—the translation of the New Testament into the standard dialect of Saxony." (Hardwick.)

"Luther was called to present his nation with the Scriptures of God. That same God who had conducted St. John to Patmos, there to write his Revelation, had confined Luther in the Wartburg, there to translate His Word. This great task, which it would have been difficult for him to have undertaken in the midst of the cares and occupations of Wittenberg, was to establish the new building on the primitive rock, and, after the lapse of so many ages, lead Christians back, from the subtleties of the Schoolmen to the pure fountain-head of redemption and salvation." "From that time the Reformation was no longer in the hands of the Reformer. The Bible came forward; Luther withdrew. God appeared, and man disappeared. The Reformer placed the Book in the hands of his contemporaries. Each one might now hear the voice of God for himself." (D'Aubigné.)

Luther recognized that Gospel preaching was still "the power of God unto salvation," and that the duty

of proclaiming that message lay on the ordained ministry of Christ. He made his translation of the New Testament into German, therefore, specially with a view to Christian ministers digesting and preaching it, and the people at large having access to it. Moreover, after the Decree of Worms, when himself in his "Patmos," he urged upon the reforming ministers, at this momentous crisis of their isolation from the Romish Church and the Empire, the fulfilment of precisely what the Angel's injunction prefigured.

Soon he himself returned to Wittenberg (March 7, 1522). A crisis had arrived, through bitter persecution, official hindrance, and the rise of fanatics. "The Divine Will," said he, "leaves me no choice." "It is not from men that I have received the Gospel, but from heaven, from the Lord Jesus Christ." The Covenant Angel blessed his preaching, fulfilling the promise implied in His words of re-commission. Excellent effects followed; order was restored, fanatics quelled, false prophets refuted, other evangelists encouraged.

The New Testament Published.

After much conference between Luther and Melancthon, there appeared on September 21, 1522, the complete edition of 3,000 copies, in two volumes folio, with the simple title: "The New Testament—German—Wittenberg." It bore no name of man. Every German might henceforward procure this portion of the Word of God at the moderate price of a florin and a half, about 2*s.* 6*d.*

This Version served more than all Luther's writings to spread Christian piety. The work of the sixteenth century was thus placed on a foundation where nothing could shake it. The success of the Version was prodigious. Every copy was speedily sold, and a second edition appeared in December of that same year. By

1533 there had been printed 17 editions at Wittenberg, 13 at Augsburg, 12 at Basle, 1 at Erfurth, 1 at Grimma, and 13 at Strasburg. The translation of the Old Testament followed.

The Change it Wrought.

Multitudes had been thirsting for instruction, looking in vain for it to their ecclesiastical teachers.

"The publication of the New Testament in the vulgar tongue is an important epoch in the Reformation. . . . It worked an entire change in society; not only in the presbytery of the priest, in the monk's cell, and in the sanctuary of our Lord; but also in the mansions of the great, in the homes of the citizens, and the cottages of the peasants. When the Bible began to be read in the families of Christendom, Christendom itself was changed. Then arose other habits, other manners, other conversations, and another life. With the publication of the New Testament the Reformation left the School and the Church to take possession of the hearths of the people. The effect produced was immense." (D'Aubigné.)

Within the next two or three years the Gospel was successfully preached before princes and people, in Germany, Sweden, Denmark, France, Belgium, Spain, Italy and England; and translations were made into the vernacular of those countries. Between 1521 and 1595 Melancthon's *Commonplaces of Theology* passed through sixty-seven editions, besides translations. Next to the Bible, this is possibly the book that contributed most to the establishment of evangelical doctrine.

Future Supply of Ministers.

"Thou must prophesy again." This refers first of all to those who, having already been ordained in the Romish Church, had been interdicted and degraded. They now resumed their functions.

But what of future ordinations, and of the future

supply of ministers? The Reformers and their disciples were cut off from the Bishops, none of whom favoured the Reformed doctrines. In 1523 Luther, seeing no other course open, decided to act independently of the Romish hierarchy. A year or two after, ordination was formally taken by the Reformed Churches into their own hands. In the German Church it was vested in Superintendent Presbyters, chosen as substitutes for Bishops; so also at first in the Swiss Church, though afterwards simply in the Presbytery.

In Denmark, Sweden, and England, by God's favouring Providence, the direct episcopal succession passed into the Reformed Churches. But they remained in Christian harmony and fellowship with their continental sister Churches of the Reformation. Our Article XXIII was notoriously so worded as to recognize the orders in the Lutheran and Reformed Churches.

A Case of Necessity.

Thus was provision made for the permanent fulfilment of the commission, "Thou must prophesy again." It was a case of necessity. The Continental Reformers would gladly have continued the episcopal form of Church government if they could, but no Bishops were with them. No other course than that they followed seemed open; and the Vision appears to give God's sentence of approval. At this stage St. John is made their representative, intimating that all of them alike are regarded as in the line of Apostolical succession, and as commissioned for their work by the Lord Himself.

Ordination Ritual Changed.

A change in the Ordination Ritual was now introduced by the Reformers. The imaginary function of "sacrificing" was renounced as blasphemous, and that

of preaching the Gospel, with due administration of the Two Sacraments, was enjoined as the grand function of the Christian ministry. A corresponding change was universally made in the Ordination formula; instead of the blasphemous words, "Receive thou authority to *sacrifice* for the living and the dead," authority was given, and a solemn charge laid, to preach the Gospel.

In some of the Reformed Churches, notably in our own, there was made also a change of symbol. The delivery of the chalice and paten was abolished, and instead thereof the Lord's Book was put into the hand of the candidate. In our own Ordinal we have a perpetuation of this very figure of commissioning the ministers of the Reformation; a Deacon has put into his hand the New Testament, a Priest the Bible. From England it passed into her colonies, which, from the very time of His planting His right foot on the sea and His left on the land, the Lord began to give her, as if to prepare for His revindication to Himself of the dominions claimed by the Usurper.

Here is strength and comfort for Christ's ministers, when they have to taste the bitterness of their ministerial work. The Covenant Angel Himself has commissioned them. He intends that they should make His Gospel the grand subject of their personal study and of their public teaching; and that they should witness *for* Him, and thus witness against all sin, error, and superstition; more especially, wherever and whenever needful, against the same errors and superstitions that were testified against by Luther and the Reformers.

Here also is deep instruction for ministers and teachers. Go to the Angel of the Covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ. Pray to Him to give you that Book, so that you may understand it, and that its blessed truths may enter

into your heart and soul. Take it; taste its sweetness; devour, digest it. Then go, and speak; and the Lord shall be with you, and give you His blessing.

V. THE REFORMED CHURCHES DEFINED AND CONSTITUTED.

"*There was given me.*" It does not say by whom; the statement is indefinite, but it would seem not to have been the Covenant Angel that gave the rod to St. John. The Angel must in that case have had it in His hand before, whereas in the description in Revelation x. 5, 8, 10, no hint is given of His having held anything besides the Little Book. The Book was in the Angel's left hand, for it was His right hand that He lifted up to heaven when He made the oath (Rev. x. 5, 6).

The Reed like unto a Rod.

The reed came to St. John, not from Christ directly, but from whosoever at that time was its possessor; yet under the Lord's eye and sanction. It was given in the course of God's providence, as was a crown to the Rider of the White Horse, and a great sword to the Rider of the Red Horse, under the Seals.

"*A measuring reed, like unto a rod.*" Whether by carving or ornamentation or otherwise, it had somewhat of the character of a rod or staff of authority. It was an official rod or sceptre, the emblem of princely or high magisterial authority. Each prince of a tribe brought one to Moses (Num. xvii.). The rod in the Vision symbolized the civil power, and it was given to St. John in token of the giving of magisterial authority to those whom St. John represented—that is, to the Reforming Fathers—for the purpose of measuring and defining the Reformed Church.

"*And one said, Rise.*" This implies vigorous and

decisive action after inertness, and success after depression.

"*Measure the temple of God.*" The symbolic Temple in these Visions represents the Christian Church as to its worship; and here the worshippers themselves are included, and are to be measured as well. The symbolic measuring with the reed means, marking out the extent of the Temple and ascertaining exactly how much is Temple; defining the dimensions and limits of that which is really holy; marking off that which is profane, however near it may be in position to the holy; making careful and minute distinction between the servants of the true God and those who own allegiance to the Usurper.

The Outer Court.

Here for the first time mention is made of the "Outer Court," within the sacred precincts, but outside of the Temple proper. St. John is bid to leave it without, or "cast it out." Here is no question of gathering in converts from outside; it is simply a casting out. Now at length these heathenized worshippers are solemnly denounced, and order is given to St. John to cast out or excommunicate them (compare John ix. 34), as having really and manifestly, though not in profession, apostatized to heathenism. This paganized Outer Court, cast out by St. John under Divine sanction, seems no more recognized in these Visions as part of the Temple proper. The casting out implies, moreover, the Reformation of the earthly Church which had become heathenized.

"*It hath been given unto the nations.*" The Angel was speaking while one of the twelve apostles was still alive on earth. The "treading under foot" had not yet begun when the Angel spoke; but it was to begin at some time after, and to continue forty-two months,

the same period (there is only one such period) named in Daniel vii. 25, as that of the supremacy of the Little Horn. The excommunication implies that these heathen worshippers had long existed, and had intruded themselves into the Temple, but were at last to be cast out. The "nations" of the Christian Apostasy occupy the outer court of the mystic Temple, because they make an outward profession of Christianity; but they are shut out from the Temple itself and its inner courts.

Under the Fifth Seal the Altar-Court, still undefiled by outward mark of any but the true worship, was yet silent and desolate of worshippers, and no voice heard from it, but that of the souls of the martyred ones from beneath the altar.

In the scene before the First Trumpet's sounding, "all the saints," and they alone, appeared gathering to the altar and the altar-priest with their incense; while the rest of the professing Israel, though they might enter the court, mingled not in the altar-worship.

In the present altar-scene, far further on in time than that one, the charge to St. John, as a representative man—to cast out the outer court, for it had been given unto the nations—seems to show that those professedly proselyted heathen, who were still heathen in heart, had at this time long occupied the Altar-Court as if it were their proper place, the holy altar still standing indeed, as a witness against them.

Princely Authority Given.

How was this great work to be accomplished, and on a scale of magnitude and notoriety corresponding with the symbolism of the Vision? Those to be now cast out had for long ages professed themselves, and had been considered, Christ's true Visible Church; "the temple of the Lord are we." All the governing powers and authorities of Christendom were still Papal. Yet

a reformed and purified Christian Church and worship had to be exhibited openly and publicly before the world, on a grand scale. How ?

Princely authority was given to the Reformers, represented by the Reed or Rod put into St. John's hands. A most important work had to be accomplished, quite out of the common, and the highest lawful authority had to be obtained. The extraordinary nature of the work to be done required the extraordinary intervention of some adequate authority ; princely, not episcopal or priestly ; indeed, it is implied that the chief ecclesiastical power at that era was directly hostile to those whom St. John represented.

The Royal Supremacy.

The giving of the Rod represents the royal authorization of those whom St. John impersonated, for the work of the Scriptural reformation of the Church enjoined upon them from heaven. This is the very principle of the Royal Supremacy, so clearly laid down in our Article XXXVIII.

By way of illustration we may compare the reformations under Hezekiah and Josiah. The heathen abominations brought by Ahaz and Manasseh into the Temple and Altar-Court were solemnly cast out ; the building purified ; injuries to the structure repaired ; the ancient worship re-established.

How and by whom was all this done ? Of course the priesthood had to act in it, but they did so by royal authorization. The earthly reigning princes, Hezekiah and Josiah, themselves the anointed of God for His service, as much as was the High Priest, acted therein with their authority. No priest could of himself have done it without a revolution ; even the High Priest's authority was insufficient, much less that of an ordinary

priest, supposing the High Priest had been on the wrong side.

By the king's mandate and authority the Jewish priests in each case carried out the work of purification and reformation in the Temple at Jerusalem. They bore in their hands the badge of princely authority as their earthly authorization. Their highest call indeed was from above; but under God's directing providence the Royal authorization gave the means.

Measuring the Temple.

The Vision signified that after the resumption of Gospel-preaching, and the re-commissioning of Gospel preachers, there would be given princely authority to those whom St. John represented; and at the same time they would be called upon to "Rise, and measure" the symbolic Temple. That is, they would be directed as from heaven to some new definition, constitution, reformation of the earthly Church in Roman Christendom. The measuring, coupled with the casting out, implied the re-constitution as well as the definition of what was measured.

Measuring the altar and the worshippers meant to define as alone rightly belonging to the Church of Christ, such as in public profession and worship recognized what that altar symbolized—justification by Christ's sacrifice alone, and through none other Mediator but Him. The rest were to be cast out as apostate and heathen. The living representatives of true professing Christians would take possession of the mystic Altar-Court, and cast out their enemies. Notwithstanding, this system of heathenized worship would still for a while appear attached to the Church Visible; God's time of endurance not having yet expired.

The Reformed Churches Organized.

Down to Luther's leaving his Wartburg "Patmos" in March, 1522, in order to resume his public preaching, the established religion in Saxony and elsewhere was the Papal. His idea at first was little more than to secure from the civil power freedom for Gospel preaching. The rod of official authority had not yet been given to the Reformers to empower them regularly to constitute a Reformed Church.

But they were met by the difficulties of providing for the instruction and building up of the Lutheran congregations. Public worship and the administration of the Sacraments could not be conducted decently and in order without some measure of ecclesiastical organization and some plan of discipline.

Rightful Authority Given.

The Elector Frederick, thoroughly convinced that the Reformation was in accordance with God's mind and will, determined on giving his authority for organizing the Reformed Churches. He died before this was done, but his brother and successor, the Elector John, in the autumn of 1525 assumed that supremacy in religious matters which, according to the Reformers, was the natural right of every lawful sovereign, and exercised the right with resolution and activity, by authorizing new ecclesiastical constitutions, modelled according to the principles of the great Reformer.

The Reforming Fathers rose up in their strength to execute the important commission entrusted to them—of measuring, that is of defining and constituting, the Churches. After ages in which no orthodox Churches had been visible in the light of day, all suddenly, as by the Voice that called light out of darkness, these national evangelic Churches started into existence.

Measurements.

New formularies of worship, on Gospel lines, were authorized and introduced. Romish images and superstitions were cleared away from Churches. Ecclesiastical revenues were appropriated to the Reformed parochial clergy and to schools. A fresh supply of ministers of the Gospel were ordained. A general Visitation of the Electorate was made in 1527–8 by Luther and others, on the Prince's order.

From 1526 to 1529 there was a calm in Germany, by which the Reformation profited to organize and extend itself. As the Papal yoke had been broken, an ecclesiastical order needed to be re-established. It was impossible in these Reformed Churches to continue the jurisdiction of the existing bishops, for these continental prelates maintained that they were in an especial manner the Pope's servants. There were no Latimers, no Cranmers among them. A new order of things was therefore demanded, if the Church was to be saved from falling into anarchy.

Other Countries Followed.

The organization at that time going on in Saxony exercised a powerful influence on all the German Empire. Like measures followed in other parts of Germany, in Denmark, Sweden, England and Scotland. For this purpose the Rod was given by the civil authorities to the Reforming ministers. The Reformers did not utterly reject an institution because it had become corrupt; they rejected the abuse, and restored the use.

The Reformed Theology.

The prominent characteristic of the Reformed Theology was that typified by the Altar in the Jewish Temple —salvation through Christ's meritorious death and His

sole mediatorship. "Thou, Lord Jesus, art my Righteousness; but I am Thy sin. Thou hast taken mine, and given me Thine." A clear distinction was laid down between the righteousness of God and that of man; between the saving work done for us, and that wrought within us when we have learnt to trust in Christ's salvation.

It was not indeed alleged that previous generations had been wholly ignorant of these truths, or had ventured openly to call in question the doctrine of free justification by trust in Christ. But the Reformers one and all were persuaded, that if these truths had not been denied, yet in later times they had been so grievously displaced, so completely pushed into the background, as to exercise far less than their due influence on the lives and characters of Christians.

Only One Mediator.

They saw that practically a crowd of human and angelic mediators had been interposed between the worshipper and the Saviour Himself. They knew from their own experience how ideas of superabundant merit in the Saints, and of their prevailing intercession, had so filled the spirit of the sin-stricken, that Christ was virtually shut out, and His all-sufficient sacrifice and mediation practically denied. The blessed Virgin, and a multitude of other beings with whom the popular imagination had peopled the heavenly places, were thus exalted into rivalry with the King of Saints Himself, or else were allowed to intercept His grace and glory from the worshipper.

But in the countries in which the principles of the Reformation prevailed, all such created Mediators were dethroned. Saints, priests, and even sacraments became subsidiary; the wall of partition that had been

made to separate Christ from the believer was broken down; and in the blessed consciousness of spiritual freedom inspired by God's gratuitous mercy, now understood, all notions of human merit, of sufficiency, of superfluous satisfaction, were utterly rejected.

Religion Personal.

Another fundamental principle of Reformation teaching was the truth—that a man's religion is a personal concern; that he will have to appear personally before the judgment seat of Christ, there to be brought face to face with the great Searcher of hearts; that he will be dealt with as an isolated individual, responsible for his own gifts and opportunities; and that his eternal destiny will depend upon the issues of that judgment.

No Purgatory.

So long as men continued to believe in a Purgatory, the most careless might hope that even if he died impenitent, there was room for correction and amendment afterwards, and that he might pass at last into the realms of the blest; moreover, the devotions and offerings of survivors might really be of advantage to him. Therefore he need not be deterred from his unholy ways by the prospect of the worm that dieth not and the fire that is not quenched. All these refuges of his were swept away by the Reformation.

The Reformed Confessions.

Now were drawn up those celebrated Confessions of Faith, which were put forth as the standards of doctrine for their respective Churches. First the Confession of Augsburg, presented to the Diet and to the Emperor, June 25, 1530; then the Helvetic, the Gallican, the

Belgic, and others; afterwards the English Articles, 1562.

These Confessions of Faith are the solemn promulgation of the principles of the Reformation. They may differ on non-essentials, but they are in admirable harmony on the grand fundamentals. They represent the "measuring" of the symbolic Temple and of its worshippers, and the leaving out of the Outer Court and the nations therein. (See Art. XIX of the Thirty-nine Articles.)

The Reformed Churches now appeared to view regularly constituted. This concludes the second grand epoch of the Reformation. The first embraces Luther's discovery of Christ the Saviour, and of the Usurper. The second includes the renewal of Gospel preaching, and the regular constitution of the Reformed Churches. The third—hereafter to be treated of—includes the political elevation of the Protestants. In this third epoch the Protestant body was officially recognized as legitimate in the empire, and as independent of the Roman Pontiff.

Protestantism.

Some speak of Protestantism as if it were a mere system of negations, but how different is its inspired portraiture here! With what dignity and importance and Divine approval do these prophetic pictures invest the Reformation as an historic event, and the formal teachings of the Reformers!

The Bible was now everywhere translated and printed in the tongue of the common people; the pure Gospel intelligently preached by hundreds, free from the glosses of the Fathers; the Papacy everywhere denounced as Antichrist; the Day of Judgment held forth as certain, fixed, quickly coming, and to terminate the Papal reign

and power; the Pope and all his adherents excommunicated by the Reformers; and the Reformed Churches constituted according to a regular and orderly system. The Lord had indeed done great things for His people.

XV

THE REFORMATION: ITS ESTABLISHMENT AND RESULTS

REV. XI. 3–13.

"*THE holy city shall they tread under foot.*" St. John is told that the "nations," or Paganized Christians, shall tread under foot, as being in authority, the mystic Temple-court and the Holy City for forty-two months. Treading the Holy City under foot means the introduction of paganizing heresies, apostasies, and practices. The statement is analogous to Luke xxi. 24, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." These words relate to the whole time of the Jewish desolation, from the fall of the Temple onward for many long centuries. This would suggest interpreting the forty-two months of a long period.

The "Holy City" of these Visions—that is, the faithful in Christendom—is territorially within the Roman "Great City." In all this symbolism a proportion of scale is observed: the Great City stands for all Papal Christendom; the Holy City for the society of Christ's true servants within it. (Compare the symbolism of the Locusts, under the Fifth Trumpet.)

VI. CHRIST'S WITNESSES.

Could it be that no witness for Christ would be kept up all through that long and dreary time? Surely not.

Independently of the statements here made, we might have felt assured that the Lord would keep up a witness for Himself and for His truth, during all those ages of the Apostasy.

Here He affirms that through precisely the same period His witnesses prophesy, that is, testify to the truth of God as it is in Jesus. It is to be noticed that in the mention of these prophetic periods, the "times" and "days" are used in connexion with the Church and the witnesses; but the "months" in connexion with the nations and the Beast. This distinction of periods measured by the sun and by the moon corresponds with the Scriptures in which Christians are described as children of the light and of the day, and unbelievers as children of night and of darkness.

The Witnesses' History in Retrospect.

At this particular point in the Vision, next after St. John's receiving the reed like to a rod for the measurement and reformation of the mystic Temple, mention is made of Christ's witnesses. These are they who throughout the great Apostasy, so long reigning, from which the Reformed Churches had now separated, would have kept up a testimony for their Lord and Master, and for His truth.

Their history in retrospect is given to St. John; their character, work, conflicts, and especially the warfare in which they are slain by the dominant Power; all these and other particulars of their sayings and doings are related by the Angel, and set before St. John as a representative man. Various tenses are used in this relation; some points of time being future as regards the date of St. John's seeing the Vision, but past with reference to the prophetic epoch which the Vision represents. Thus "I will give" ("power" or "commission") is future at the time when St. John is being

spoken to by the Angel, but past at the date that has now been reached in the progress of the prophetic drama.

They are Witnesses for Christ.

"*My two witnesses.*" They are Christ's witnesses, testifying for Him. Their primary function is to bear testimony for Christ and for His truth. The grand subject of their witness is His grace, glory, salvation, all-sufficiency; also the authority of God's Word, as against the traditions and precepts of men. All this is something positive and substantial, not mere negation of error. They do not testify distinctively and only against the Papacy, though they do this too as a natural consequence; Christ's truth being opposed to all error, and His way of salvation to all systems invented by man.

They are persons; living confessors, not ordained ministers only, but also private believers. In Revelation xi. 10 they are called "prophets," not soldiers or servants, as Christ's people are so often described. In Revelation xiii. 17 they are referred to as "the rest of the woman's seed, which keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus"—two characteristics always found together. They fulfil their testimony by recurring to the written Word; for to men who are not themselves inspired by the Holy Ghost it is not given to testify, against the enemies of God or the corrupters of His truth, in any other way or with any other weapons than the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Two: One Alone not Enough.

They are not three, nor a company, but only two, the smallest number sufficient under the Mosaic law. One alone would not have been enough for effective testifying. They are only "the remnant of the woman's

seed" (Rev. xii. 17). They are not two individuals, but two representatives each of a body or series. They are "candlesticks," or lampstands; that is, according to our Lord's own interpretation in Revelation i. 20, they are Churches. Individual witnesses, members of those Churches or bodies of believers, might die from time to time, slain by the Beast in his warfare against them, but the succession of witness was not yet extinct.

The two may also represent two separate lines of witness, east and west, in these divisions of the empire.

Commencing Epoch.

The commencing time of their testifying *in sackcloth* (for they may have been testifying before, though not in that garb) seems coincident with that of the heathenized Christians treading the Holy City. The two statements are placed close together, as though to hint at the connexion of cause and effect, and the forty-two months of the one are equal to the 1,260 days of the other. The expression of the witnesses' period in days may imply that throughout it they will prophesy day by day. They are clothed in sackcloth, the sign of mourning; for not only are their righteous souls vexed by what they see and hear around, but also they themselves are persecuted by their enemies, who are politically supreme.

Olive-Trees and Candlesticks.

The union of the two symbols—olive-trees and lamps—implies that both ministers and churches are included. The olive-trees are faithful ministers and Gospel preachers, who supply the oil to the lamps, the needful nourishment to the Churches. The witnessing is fed by perpetual streams of heavenly oil, the unction of the Holy Spirit. A candlestick being a Church, according to our

Lord's explanation in Revelation i. 20, we must understand this of Christian Churches or companies of believers, small as well as large, holding the true doctrine of Christ and of His Word; communities of faithful persons, uniting together in a true Christian profession and worship, the individual members shining by their consistent life and pure doctrine as lights in the world. (Compare Zech. iv. 1–7 and Ps. lii. 8.) Since the two olive-trees and the two candlesticks are those of the literal Temple, the Churches which they represent must be sought within the precincts of the mystic Temple, beginning before the "measuring."

But at the period represented in the Vision, the number of candlesticks has been gradually reduced from sevenfold completeness to only two. It has dwindled down to the smallest number that God's purposes, and the maintenance of His Gospel truth, might allow.

The Witnesses' Power.

"*Fire . . . out of their mouth.*" The reference is to the power given literally to Moses, Aaron, and Elijah. Here it is figurative, and not as the witness's own wish or intention, but as the sequel in God's providence manifested on their behalf. Compare Jeremiah v. 14; Isaiah v. 6; Amos viii. 11. "*Devoureth their enemies.*" This does not imply immediate destruction, or how could the Beast make war upon them, and vanquish and slay them, as he is said to do? It refers to God's fiery judgments destroying nationally the apostates who persecuted them. The individual witnesses or prophets might die, yet their words remained like fire to consume the guilty people (Zech. i. 6). "*Must be killed.*" This judgment would be final; the destruction of their enemies by fiery judgments from God.

"*These have power . . . to shut heaven.*" Power, in the sense of authority rather than in that of ability. This judgment of spiritual drought is continuous during the whole period of their prophesying. The time is the same—three years and six months—as that during which Elijah's prophecy shut up heaven.

There was to be no blessing from heaven on the barren field of the Church; and it is an historical fact that during the ages of their ministry there was neither dew nor rain on earth, in the spiritual sense, but at their word. There was no right knowledge of salvation but by their preaching, no descent of the Spirit but in answer to their prayers; and as they were shut out from all professing Christendom, a universal famine ensued. The Word of God was locked up in a dead language, or forbidden to be read. The priesthood, instead of preaching the Gospel, descanted on the merits of Indulgences, or the efficacy of relics; or recounted ridiculous legends of so-called saints. None of these things could satisfy the hunger of the soul.

Through the five earlier centuries of the Witness period, in Christendom generally the spiritual destitution was such that the people, poor and needy, sought living water and found none. On the scale of Christendom, as of individuals, God's sentence was fulfilled, "Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." This may be viewed as a judicial infliction for rejecting the witness to the truth, the heavenly light that had been offered.

"*Turn the waters into blood.*" This is an occasional judgment, the bloodshed of wars inflicted in God's providence on the enemies of the witnesses (see Rev. viii. 8, 9). Saxons, Lombards, Saracens and Turks were of those whom God permitted to scourge the witness-rejecting nations. Compare Ezekiel xliii. 3, ". . . when I came to destroy the city."

Their Testimony "Completed," not "Ended."

"*When they shall have finished their testimony.*" The idea is that of action complete or concluded, brought to a state of completion, perfected. The testimony is viewed as a thing of growth; having gone through preliminary stages, partial only, it comes at last to embrace all the intended subjects of protest, displaying all its evidence of Divine inspiration. The testimony is now perfected, but it is not implied that it then comes to an end; rather, that it continues in its complete form. It is completed, not in time but in matter.

What are the component parts of this testimony? Obviously as a whole it is a protestation for Christ against each of the antichristian errors, successively and gradually developed and enforced by the Apostasy. As soon as the witnesses had discerned and recognized each and all of these, and had brought to bear against them the full evidence of Scripture, they might be said to have perfected or finished their testimony. Similarly in Psalm lxxii. 20, "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended" does not mean that David after that prayed no more, but that this that he was asking for was the utmost object of his prayers.

The Beast from the Abyss.

"*The beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war.*" This is the first mention to St. John of the Beast, and the definite article shows that there is but one Beast of this origin. St. John might wonder what Beast this was, unless the reference were to the Fourth of the Great Beasts of Daniel vii. He might presume that this was some persecuting Power, that would combine and head those Gentile or paganized Christians just spoken of as usurping the mystic Temple and the Holy City throughout the period of the witness-prophesying;

also that it was the same Ten-horned Wild Beast seen by Daniel, the last and most fearful form of the Roman Power as persecutor of God's saints.

There is need of supplement and retrogression later on, to explain who this Beast is, and how and whence he arose, and this is given after the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet. The history of the Beast is too important to be given parenthetically here; it is the subject of two supplemental Visions (Rev. xii., xiii.; and Rev. xvii.).

History of Christ's Witnesses Investigated.

Exactly at this stage in the history of the Reformation, after the constitution of the Reformed Churches, the attention of the Reformers was directed back into the earlier ages of the Christian Church, to investigate the history of Christ's witnesses. This most remarkable correspondence with the Vision was brought about in the following manner.

There began to be urged against the Reformers by their enemies the so-called novelty of their religion; a favourite argument ever since, and to be met at all times as it was then, by reference to Scripture and to really primitive antiquity, the first three centuries of the Christian era. The Reformers reverted directly to the Bible and to the Fathers of the first ages of Christianity. They looked back into the earlier periods of the Christian Church to find those who like themselves had witnessed for Christ, and to trace the origin of that anti-Christian Apostasy from which they had now separated themselves.

Important Works Appear.

For this investigation much learning was required, but the ministers of the Reformed Church were learned,

and the Princes as well as the chief Reformers encouraged learning in the universities and academies of their kingdoms.

This retrospective view began to be taken from about 1542–3. Bale's *Image of Both Churches*, which included a brief catalogue of witnesses, was published before Henry VIII.'s death, about 1545. Important works now appeared, on these very subjects, especially that of the Magdeburg Centuriators, so called because written by four ministers of Magdeburg. The first part was published in 1556, and bore the remarkably appropriate title, *Catalogus Testium, A Catalogue of Witnesses.* Another well-known work was published almost at the same time, Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, or "Witnesses." In 1571 our English Convocation ordered that a copy should be placed in all the Churches of England. What a tale does it unfold!

Eastern and Western Witness.

Bearing in mind the distinction then existing between the Eastern and Western divisions of Roman Christendom, we might expect two similar lines of succession of living witnesses for Christ, throughout the dark period of the 1,260 years.

In the East, even at the beginning of this period, the grosser visible superstitions of the Apostasy were already fully developed and authoritatively enforced. There we might expect the witnessing to be made earlier than elsewhere, upon a larger scale than only of individuals and in public protest.

In the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries the Popes, destined to be in later times the chief adversaries of Christ's witnesses, were gradually advancing to the ecclesiastical subjection of the whole West, in actual fact, as it had already been subjected to them in right

by the Theodosian Code. Wherever the Papal authority prevailed, it was being used for the inculcation of the same gross and open superstitions as in the East.

Paulikians and Waldenses.

It appears from mere hostile evidence that there was perpetuated in the Paulikian sect, at least from A.D. 653, an Eastern line of witnesses for Christ's truth, and against the Apostasy.

"An interest attaches to the Paulikian sect from the place it occupies in Ecclesiastical History as an early 'Protestant' element. The Paulikians persistently rejected the vast fabric of traditionary belief, which in the Greek and Latin Church had grown up around the Gospel. . . . They were a steady protest in favour of the right of the laity to the possession and use of the Holy Scriptures. They were in this respect, under the Byzantine despotism, what the Donatists, Lollards, Waldenses, and Puritans have been in other times and places." (Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Biography.*)

There was also in France, Germany and North Italy a witness line of Western origin. This appears from hostile evidence, and from their own writings that have come down to us.

These two lines were united in spirit, and intermingled as early as the opening of the eleventh century; then more markedly about the end of the twelfth century; when in various countries they became known under the common name of Waldenses.

In this united line, as in its earlier branches, there was the union of teachers and taught, olive-trees and candlesticks. Their appeal was simply to the Word of God as the Rule of Faith, and not to man's traditions. The Person and Work of the Divine Saviour were prominent in their teaching; while they protested against the chief doctrines of the Apostasy, that set Him aside. They were few in number as compared with the great

mass around; and their robing was sackcloth, for they were in mourning and depression, at first from the prevalence of false doctrine, and then from direct and bitter persecution.

War Against the Witnesses.

Before the end of the twelfth century the Waldenses, Paulikians, and others, made the great step in advance, and recognized Babylon the Harlot, and Antichrist, in Papal Rome and the Popedom.

Hitherto separate members of the Popedom, independently, had made war against heretics; but now the Popedom roused itself collectively, in the Third Lateran Council, 1179, and declared war against them. The commencement of this Papal warfare against the Witnesses is strongly marked in European history. The Popes and all Western Christendom under them entered on what evidently was a war of extermination against all whom Rome adjudged to be "heretics."

Why not till now?

Not till Rome's supremacy was established over each state of Christendom could she command the secular sword to strike down what she called heresy. Her pretensions to all this dated from the sixth or seventh century, but their enforcement required time and occasion. So also not till Rome's supremacy was established over every national church could she consider herself identified with the prevalent superstitions everywhere, as part of her greatness and wealth.

Moreover, as regards the Witnesses, not till Rome was completely and palpably identified with the corruptions of Christendom could their duty seem clear, to protest now against the source and head of the Apostasy, as they had done before against its particular errors.

Then, as might have been expected, the Wild Beast, now thoroughly prepared, turned his fierce wrath against these Witnesses for Christ, and made war upon them unto extermination.

The Papal Warfare.

In the decrees of the Papal Councils and the Bulls of the Popes, from the Council at Tours in 1163 to the Bull of Pope Innocent IV in 1244, the most determined war was waged against "the detestable Albigensian heresy," the "Cathari, Patareni, Publicani, and heretics of other appellation." All persons were interdicted from yielding them refuge, from communicating with them in buying or selling or conversation, from giving them Christian burial. The secular power was subordinated to the spiritual for the purpose of their extirpation, vassals were absolved from allegiance, inquisitors were appointed, crusades against heretics preached and organized.

Persecution the most cruel and relentless pursued them into all their missions and settlements; not in Piedmont and Dauphiny alone, but in Spain, France, Flanders, Germany, Bohemia. Everywhere the blood-hound spirit of Papal enmity and hatred tracked them, acting on and directing the secular arm in Western Europe. Nor was it against the Waldenses only, but also against any who were inspired with the same spirit of witnessing for Christ; especially Wickliffe and the Wickliffites in England, and Huss and the Hussites in Bohemia.

Kings and princes, having drunk of the cup of Rome, and being frenzied and maddened therewith, wasted at her instigation the blood and treasure of their subjects, and literally beggared themselves to carry on this war. It was marvellous, considering the might and craft arrayed against them, that these Witnesses endured

as they did. Yet throughout the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in spite of rack, prison, sword and flame, their voice was still uplifted for the truth as it is in Jesus, and in protestation against the lies and corruptions of the whole Papal system.

The Death of the Witnesses.

At length, however, as the fifteenth century drew to a close, after a furious renewal of crusades against the Waldenses of Dauphiny and Piedmont, and the purer remainder of the Hussites in Bohemia, the purpose of the Papacy seemed to be attained, and victory lay within its grasp. So indeed it had been predicted; the Beast was not only to make war upon the Witnesses, but was also to conquer and to kill them.

The Witnesses being symbolic, their death also is symbolic. It is a strong figure, implying complete silencing for the time, apparent extermination, the suppression of God's truth. Both Witnesses are killed, and lie dead, overcome and slain by the Beast.

Anti-Papal Testimony Silenced.

Their death symbolizes the time when, by the common consent of historians, the voice of anti-Papal testimony was most effectually silenced throughout Europe, and the Popedom was most triumphant. In 1499 the Bohemian Church sent deputies through Europe to search for some of kindred spirit, but they sought for such in vain. The consonant voice of historians, and not merely of prophetic commentators, testifies to the completeness of the witness-suppression throughout Western Christendom at this epoch. Affairs were at the lowest in the true Church, when they were at their highest in the kingdom of Antichrist.

The Witnesses Unburied.

"*Their dead bodies.*" The word is in the singular—the dead *body* of the two Witnesses. This indicates the figurative character of the prophecy, and may also signify the unity in spirit of such witnesses as then remained. In verse 9 the word is in the plural. Compare Deuteronomy xxviii. 26: "*Thy carcase shall be meat,*" said of the Israelitish nation.

"*The street of the great city.*" In St. John's time, and long after, none other but Rome was called, or could be called, the great city. In Revelation xvii. 9, 18, she is described as the great city "which *reigneth* over the kings of the earth." She, and she alone, was so reigning at that time, that is, in St. John's day.

Here we must understand not merely the literal city on the banks of the Tiber, but the great polity of which the city Rome was the centre and the seat of government. In St. John's time the Roman city—taking the word in the political sense—embraced all Italy, besides other more distant citizens enfranchised by birth or by purchase. A century later Caracalla's edict enfranchised all the constituency of the Empire. At the date to which this Vision refers, "the great city" was the system of polity ecclesiastical and civil which centred in the city of Rome. It extended over all the Ten Kingdoms of Europe, and was supreme in them; so that under the government of the Papacy Europe formed but one corporation or symbolic city.

"*The street*" was the open place in ancient cities where the chief gatherings were held, for business, justice, or politics. In this case, according to the proportion of the symbolism, it is the literal city of Rome, where the business here symbolized was transacted. The "great city," then, is the whole constituency of Papal Rome; "the street of it" is the literal city which

was the capital and the seat of government, the central area of the professing Christian world.

"*Which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt.*" "*Is* called," in the time of St. John; also at the time of the witnesses' death, at which latter date the Divine Spirit would call special attention to the fact of these titles attaching to the great Roman city. "*Spiritually,*" that is, in the eyes of men who have spiritual discernment. The evidence is only too clear on the page of ecclesiastical history. The Great City was Sodom, in respect of its impurity, its brutal passions, and other abominations; its doom was to be burned. It was Egypt in respect of its idolatry, its religious darkness, and its oppression of God's people; its doom was the plagues.

"*Where also their Lord was crucified.*" The Lord of the Witnesses; see Revelation xi. 3, "*My* witnesses." It is called also spiritually a Jerusalem, that is, a professed Church of God, yet a place where Christ is crucified afresh in His members. As a matter of literal fact, our Lord was crucified within the Roman Empire, and by Roman authority; and was spiritually crucified afresh in His members during the Roman persecutions. The province of Judea, at the date of our Lord's crucifixion, was within the limits of the Roman Empire. At a later era (Rev. xiv. 20), in accordance with historic fact, that province is regarded as outside the great city.

Recognition of the Witnesses' Death.

"*And from among the peoples....*" It is not the peoples and tribes and tongues themselves, but certain delegates or deputies from among them; representatives at some great assembly or council of Western Europe. This does not require a large concourse; a few hundred

men in the House of Commons represent the whole British Isles.

"*Look upon their dead bodies.*" It was not the death of the Witnesses that the Council had to accomplish; that was the evil work of the Beast that warred against them. The Council had to recognize the accomplishment of their death as already effected by the Beast's warfare; or if anything were still wanting thereto, to see it completed so as to make their death openly recognizable.

"*Not . . . to be laid in a tomb.*" This also is symbolic, as are the Witnesses themselves, and their death. But it is notorious that denial of Christian burial was one of the many indignities inflicted by Papal persecution upon so-called heretics—the individual witnesses who together constitute the witness-body. The usual death for heresy was burning, the ashes being afterwards thrown to the winds or cast into rivers. The practice of exhuming the bodies of heretics already buried was derived from Paganism; but Papal practice went even a step further, in holding a formal process against a dead body, if after death suspected of heresy.

"*Rejoice . . . make merry . . . send gifts.*" The public recognition of the witnesses' death is an occasion of joy and mutual congratulation for their enemies. The rejoicing of the citizens is the plainest proof of the trouble and vexation that they had experienced from the testimony of those faithful ones. "When heretics are burnt, Papists keep holidays, celebrate feasts and banquets, sing *Te Deum Laudamus*, and wish one another joy."

Epoch of the Triumph of the Papacy.

The Fifth Lateran Council, 1512–17, under Popes Julius II and Leo X, was constituted of deputies

clerical and lay, from all the different states of Europe. Citation was issued to the dissidents (the Bohemian Brethren) to appear and plead either before the Cardinal Legate in Hungary, or before the Council at its Ninth Session, May 5, 1514. This may perhaps be regarded as the commencing date of the predicted three and a half years, during which Christ's witnesses were to appear as mere dead corpses in the sight of Christendom.

But there was no pleading, no deputies, no movement made, no mouth opened, to support the ancient heresies. Throughout the length and breadth of Christendom Christ's witnessing servants were silenced; they appeared as dead. The period is one at which, by the common consent of historians, the voice of anti-Papal testimony was most effectually silenced throughout Europe, and the Papacy was most triumphant.

"No danger seemed to threaten the Roman Pontiff; the agitations previously excited by the Waldenses, Albigenses, etc., having been suppressed by counsel and the sword; and the wretched surviving remnant of the Bohemian heretics being an object rather of contempt than fear."

"Never was the Court of Rome more confident in the sense of security than at that instant. The various heresies which had so long disturbed the Church were for the most part dismayed and silenced."

"At the period when the Reformation burst forth, Rome appeared in peace and security. One might have said that nothing could ever disturb her in her triumph."

"Everything was quiet, every heretic exterminated, and the whole Christian world supinely acquiescing in the enormous absurdities inculcated by the Romish Church."

Congratulations and Rejoicings.

The orator of the Session ascended the pulpit, and amid the applause of the assembled Council uttered that memorable exclamation of triumph, never possible

before, and never since: "Now nobody contradicts, no one opposes." To the Pope he said, "The whole body of Christendom is now seen to be subjected to its head, that is to thee." The same day as this triumph, an edict of reform and discipline was issued by Pope and Council, one object of which was "the perpetual elimination of all heretics from the Church Visible." Former penalties were reinforced, among which was the denial of burial to their bodies, as had been done by Pagan persecutors; but now thought to be tenfold worse, as involving eternal damnation.

In March, 1517, Pope Leo issued his Bull for the dissolution of the Council. There were congratulations and rejoicings, a plenary Indulgence, a *Te Deum*, and splendid banquetings. "The assembled prelates and princes separated with complacency and confidence, and with mutual congratulations on the peace, unity and purity of the Apostolic Church."

Three Days and a Half.

From May 5, 1514, the day of the ninth session of the Fifth Lateran Council, to October 31, 1517, the day of Luther's posting up his Theses, is three years and a half. As far back as the fifth century Tichonius, an Apocalyptic expositor, argued that these could not be three and a half literal days, for that would be too short a time for all to be done in the city that is said to be done while the Witnesses lie dead, such as the congratulations and sending of gifts. Ere the inhabitants could have exchanged their tokens of joy, the rising again of the Witnesses would have filled them with consternation.

Retrospect ends; History begins.

The history of the two Witnesses is given in retrospective narration, until it has been brought down to

the time corresponding with that of the Angel's descent (Rev. x. 1); whereupon, but not before, the Witnesses are brought upon the scene in actual vision. In Revelation xi. 10 the characteristic future is still used, marking the Angel's narrative: "they shall send." The transition from retrospect to history in the Vision cannot therefore be fixed earlier than here.

The Witnesses Rise Again.

Things were to all appearance hopeless. But just at this extremity the Lord showed that He had not forgotten His Witnesses. The very next recorded event is His raising them up from their apparent state of death. So likewise the next scene in the drama of European history is the glorious Reformation. The death and rising again of the Witnesses precede the passing away of the Turkish woe (Rev. xi. 14), and therefore cannot represent something still future.

At the waking up of the Reformation, there was a speedy, sudden, wonderful revival of the witnessing. Christ's Witnesses were seen to live again in Luther and the other Reformers.

Their Firm Attitude.

"*They stood upon their feet.*" Compare Ezekiel xxxvii. 10, said of the future restoration of Israel in national strength and vigour: "they lived, and stood up upon their feet."

"*Fear . . . upon them which beheld.*" Not the Council, that had been contemplating their corpses, for that had separated a few months before Luther's protest. Nor even the Pope at Rome, who was incredulous as to anything from so mean a source affecting his supremacy and power. It was their enemies, who were on the spot, when the voice of the revived Gospel

witness thrilled through Germany, that trembled in consternation. They speedily saw that the very foundations of the Papal system were assailed, and that there was a might in the voice and in the movement as from heaven, which they could not withstand.

As the Reformed Body took successive steps towards the consolidation of the Reformation, they stood more firmly at each stage of advance, and the religious revival was more and more confirmed; likewise the fears of their enemies which beheld were increased.

"The term Protestant is positive, not negative. As first used it meant the earnest assertion of the mighty positive truths that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, the final court of appeal in the Christian Church, free to be read, and by the Lord commanded to be read by every Christian. These are not mere anti-Roman, they are vital Christian tenets. They touch directly on the very heart of the Gospel, the revealed work and will of God in Christ, revealed that the individual may know, believe, love, obey, and be filled with Christ. Nothing discredits Protestantism more than identifying it with negations." (Prof. H. G. C. Moule, now Bishop of Durham.)

VII. THE WITNESSES CALLED TO POLITICAL ELEVATION: Rev. xi. 12.

Hitherto the Reformation has been described spiritually and ecclesiastically; it is now described politically, the whole being a pledge of that total and more signal overthrow still awaiting the Usurper. What follows marks the further progress and development of the Reformation; and it is given not retrospectively or in explanatory narrative, but in scenic progress as before.

"*They heard a great Voice from heaven.*" A loud call to the Witnesses from a heaven visible to their enemies. It is said both of their ascent and of themselves after it, "*And their enemies beheld them*"; therefore it was not the spiritual heaven of the Divine Presence, but,

as elsewhere in the Visions, the heaven of political elevation and dignity.

"*Come up hither.*" The Voice came from that heaven to which they were to ascend. It was a call to them, from the persons highest for the time being in the lower heaven of political authority, to come up hither; or the call may be regarded as made in God's providence.

"*They went up.*" The figure of ascent into heaven represents triumph and exaltation.

"*In the cloud.*" That in which the Covenant Angel had been robed. This was to show that the ascent of the Witnesses, and the attendant circumstances, were the result of this special intervention of Christ; and to identify still more plainly and closely the cause and triumph of the Witnesses with that of the great Protestant Reformation.

"*Their enemies beheld them.*" This made the triumph more remarkable; their enemies were present on the occasion of the Witnesses' ascension, as they had been before on the occasion of their resurrection. Even more; the result is accomplished in the face of and in spite of those enemies.

The ascent of the Witnesses to the political heaven is accomplished before the termination of their appointed 1260 years of sackcloth prophesying; hence, even after their ascent, they are still in sackcloth.

Political Establishment of Protestantism and the Reformation.

Could it be that the Witnesses—so lately warred against even to extermination by the Popes, and by the secular Powers of Europe at their instigation, rejoiced over when apparently dead, and even after their resuscitation aimed at by hostile decrees—could it be that they should yet be called up to political ascendancy

and power, and that with a voice audible throughout Europe ?

History shows this to have been the fact, within little more than twenty years from the anti-Protestant Decree of Augsburg. God's providence made use of Charles V, the head of the Germanic Empire—that great secular power in which the Popes most trusted to crush the rising heresy—and of various political complications. Scarce two years after the Augsburg Decree, the threatened Turkish invasion under the terrible Sultan Solyman, made the reconcilement of the Protestant states necessary for the preservation of the Empire.

"The preservation of the Protestants at this juncture is mainly traceable to the Ottoman Turks, who in the summer of 1532 swept over the plains of Hungary with 250,000 men, and even climbed up into the fastnesses of Styria, where they seem to have shaken for a moment the indomitable heroism of Charles V himself. In order to enlist the arms of every German province in repelling these invaders, he opened fresh negotiations with the Protestants, whom he ultimately satisfied by promulgating the religious Peace of Nuremberg, July 23, 1532."

Full Toleration Granted.

This Decree from the Emperor and the Germanic Diet—the Pacification of Nuremberg—granted full toleration to Protestantism, and put a stop to all suits against Protestants in the Imperial Chamber, until the assembling of a General Council. Henceforth, from being only a troublesome religious sect, they came to be viewed as a political body of no small importance. It was their first great step, and that on the Imperial call, to political ascendancy.

Rise of Protestant Power.

The second great epoch of the rise of the Protestant Power in Germany dates from 1534, the Treaty of

Kadan, confirming and enlarging the Pacification of Nuremberg. Then followed, on August 12, 1542, the Peace of Passau, confirmed at Augsburg in 1555. This accorded the fullest toleration to Protestantism, and Protestants equally with Romanists were admitted judges in the supreme Imperial Chamber. It was the fulfilment in actual history of the symbol of the Witnesses' ascent into the political heaven, and this in Germany, the country where in God's providence this great revolution began. It was speedily followed by their like elevation in other countries.

At the passing of each decree by which Protestants rose into ascendancy, their enemies were present in the Diets and Councils. As they sat in elevation in the Imperial Chamber, still their enemies were present, and beheld them face to face. The triumph was accomplished in the face of their enemies, and in spite of them.

Witnesses still in Sackcloth.

But those were not all true Protestants that zealously professed Protestantism, in England, Holland or North Germany; nor did the same zeal for the pure Gospel doctrines long continue in any of those countries.

In England, after Elizabeth, efforts were made by high ecclesiastical authorities to go back to semi-Popery, and disfavour was shown to those who held fast to the Gospel. An influx of fanaticism followed, and then, as might be expected, religious lukewarmness and infidelity. The Church of England herself, by her Scriptural Articles and Formularies, was still a true witness for Christ; but Christ's witnesses were only a comparatively small and often neglected portion of the church and nation.

In Holland and Protestant Germany there was the same religious deterioration. In other countries of Christendom there was persecution and oppression of

the scattered members of the Witness body. In Italy, Spain and Portugal they were mercilessly hunted out, destroyed, suppressed by the Inquisition. In Austria toleration was not granted to Protestants till the Imperial Edict of 1783.

In France the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, 1572, showed the feeling of king, nobles, priests, and people towards the Protestants, before Henry IV's accession, and the Edict of Nantes. This celebrated Edict, so called from the place of its publication, 1598, guaranteed the perfect freedom of the Huguenots in matters of religion, and solemnly declared the Edict to be perpetual and irrevocable. Even then it was not always acted on; moreover, it was revoked by Louis XIV, 1685, and the remnant of the Protestants in France were thus put outside the pale of the law.

The world forgets these things; so do some of Christ's own people; but He forgets them not.

VIII. ENGLAND, AND THE DUTCH PROVINCES: Rev. xi. 13.

"*There was a great earthquake.*" That is, a great revolution; following immediately on the ascent of the Witnesses into the heaven of political elevation.

The Fall of the Tenth Part.

"*The tenth part of the city fell.*" The great city included in its empire Ten Kingdoms. One of these "fell"—an expression used in prophecy of cities or countries conquered and transferred to the dominion of a triumphant enemy; thus in Isaiah xxi. 9, of the fall of ancient Babylon. This implies the conquest and overthrow of the Papal Empire in one of the Ten Kingdoms, by the aggression of Protestantism; for it

was from Protestantism that the earthquake, a great political schism, had its origin.

"All the tithe of the land is the Lord's." Here was the quit-rent, in acknowledgment of the Lord's title to the whole. The very proportion may have been meant to show that it was an act asserting His right to the whole, in accordance with His planting His right foot on the sea and His left on the land.

The tenth part of the city "fell." It is not said to have been swept away, to have been moved elsewhere, or to have entirely disappeared; but simply to have been laid in ruins, so far as its having been a portion of the Great City was concerned.

Seven Thousands Slain.

"*There were killed . . . names of men, seven thousand.*" That is, they were politically or nationally slain, as members of the Papal Empire. Compare Ezekiel xxxvii. 9, said of Israel, slain as a nation. Also Revelation ix. 5, 15, 18, 20, said of political extinction. It is not said that these seven thousands were killed by the fall on them of the tenth part of the city to crush them. On the contrary, the two events, though linked together, are expressly dissociated from one another: "And there were killed *in the earthquake* . . .," not necessarily in the fall of the tenth part.

Thousands, not Thousand.

Seven "Chiliads," or "Thousands"; not "Seven thousand." The "Thousand" was the most important of the subdivisions of a tribe, and was first introduced by Moses on the advice of Jethro; the people being divided into "thousands, hundreds, etc." (Exod. xviii. 21; see also Num. x. 36). When the people were established in Canaan, the "thousand" was in-

creased in number as the tribe multiplied, and was endowed with a portion of the territory belonging to its tribe; so that like the English "hundreds" in a county, these "thousands" became identified with certain districts, each with its chief town (see Mic. v. 2).

Roman Christendom has been represented under the symbol of the Twelve Tribes. Was any group of seven subdivisions, in the commonwealth of Western Europe, destroyed as members of the Papal Empire, in the same political earthquake as that in which Papal England fell?

The Earthquake of the Reformation.

Writers of every creed agree in speaking of the Reformation as one of the mightiest of revolutions. For example:—

"The Reformation was a tremendous earthquake; it shook down the fabric of mediaeval religion, and as a consequence of the disturbance in the religious sphere filled the world with revolutions and wars. But it left the authority of the Bible unshaken, and men might feel that the destructive process had its limits and that adamant was still beneath their feet." (Prof. Goldwin Smith.)

"The depth of the convulsion, the marvellous rapidity with which it was propagated, the vast upheaving it caused in every sphere of human thought. . . ." "Destined to produce mighty throes and conflicts in the whole of Christendom." (Hardwick.)

The events that have been detailed involved a mighty schism from the Popedom of those countries in which Protestantism had been established as the State religion; that is, of Saxony, Prussia, Sweden and Denmark. It was indeed "a great earthquake." But all these countries lay north of the Rhine or the Danube, outside of the boundary of the old Roman Empire. What further influence was this mighty revolution to have?

The angel had planted his right foot on the sea and

his left on the land. Accordingly, two grand and permanent political changes in Europe arose out of the earthquake of the Reformation, one in insular England, the other in continental Holland.

Fall of the Papal Supremacy in England.

Was there any one of the Ten Kingdoms of Papal Christendom in which, at about the same time as the political exaltation of the Protestants in Northern Germany, the Papal Supremacy fell, overthrown by Protestantism ?

History answers—England, which till then had been one of the most notable of the Ten Kingdoms. The Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy was completed latest of the Kingdoms, A.D. 582, and so formed the tenth kingdom in order of time. Papal England, as a tenth part of the Papal Empire, fell in that great earthquake. The effect of the Reformation was that the Papal Supremacy in that country was put an end to for ever.

A Political Move, but Prepared for.

God works in divers ways, and overrules the most unlikely characters and events for His own purposes. To all appearance the movement in England at this era was more political than spiritual ; but hearts had long been secretly prepared for it by Tyndale, Wickliffe, the Lollards, and the Lutheran doctrines brought to our shores from the continent. England had shared in the light and truth of the earlier stages of the Reformation, as portrayed in these Visions.

" Without Luther there would have been either no change in England in the sixteenth century, or a change purely political." (Froude.)

" The Reformation of England, perhaps to a greater extent than that of the Continent, was effected by the Word of God.

Those great individualities we meet with in Germany, Switzerland, and France—men like Luther, Zwingle, and Calvin—do not appear in England; but Holy Scripture is widely circulated. The religion of the Anglo-Saxon race is particularly distinguished by its biblical character." (D'Aubigné.)

"God was first creating by His Word a spiritual church, before He broke by His dispensations the bonds which had so long fastened England to the power of Rome. It was His good pleasure to give first truth and life, and then liberty" (*ib*).

Erasmus' Greek Testament was published in 1517, and was received by all men of upright mind with unprecedented enthusiasm. Never had any book produced such a sensation. It was in every hand. The words it contained enlightened every heart.

The Divorce.

Henry VIII, dissatisfied with his marriage with Queen Catherine, and doubting its lawfulness, sued the Pope for a divorce. Unsuccessful, and revolted by the chicanery of Rome, he summoned his Parliament, and in 1534 the memorable Act was passed by which the Papal Supremacy was renounced in England, and the King declared the temporal Head of the Church. The first threatening of separation between the King and the Pope had been in 1529, just when the German Reformers united under the name of Protestants; and the Act of Parliament was passed in 1534, the year of the Treaty of Kadan. So did the Papal Supremacy in England fall in the earthquake.

Henry VIII, in 1521, had actually come forward as a champion of the Papacy, to dispute with Luther. In that year "the English monarch forwarded to Rome a copy of the treatise he had just completed in refutation of 'Martin Luther the heresiarch.' On this occasion, Clerk, the envoy who presented the sumptuous manuscript to Leo X, expatiated on the perfect orthodoxy of his countrymen, and their entire devotion to the Roman Pontiff; little dreaming that in the course of the

next thirty years an era fatal to the old opinions would have dawned on every shire of England, as on the other parts of Western Christendom; and least of all anticipating that one of the prime movers in the changes then accomplished would be Henry VIII himself, who in return for his chivalrous vindication of the Schoolmen had been dubbed 'Defender of the Faith.'" (Hardwick.)

Pope Leo XIII, in his "Letter to the English People," in April, 1895, thus bewails the crisis:—

"In the storms which devastated Catholicity throughout Europe, in the sixteenth century, England, too, received a grievous wound, for it was first unhappily wrenched from communion with the Apostolic See, and then was bereft of that holy faith in which for long centuries it had rejoiced and found liberty. It was a sad defection, and our predecessors, while lamenting it in their earnest love, made every prudent effort to put an end to it, and to mitigate the many evils consequent upon it."

No more Appeals to Rome.

The sole material change affecting the internal polity of the Church was, that appeals from the Metropolitan tribunals could no longer be carried out of the island to the Roman Pontiff, but must pass directly upwards to the king, who by his delegates had now the power of final adjudication. This subverted the state of things in which the priesthood had more or less been exempted from the common laws of the realm, and in which a foreign jurisdiction was allowed to overrule the home tribunals.

"There is no people among whom the Reformation has produced to the same degree that morality and order, that liberty, public spirit, and activity, which are the very essence of a nation's greatness. Just as the Papacy has degraded the Spanish Peninsula, so has the Gospel exalted the British Islands." (D'Aubigné.)

Building up : not only Casting Down.

As yet, however, Protestantism was not established in England. Through Henry VIII's reign Popery lay in ruins, but no edifice of real Biblical Protestantism was erected in its stead. This was happily effected under Edward VI, when the English Protestant Reformed Church was fully organized and established on the ruins of the Papal.

Queen Mary during her short reign did her best to subvert it, to restore Popery, and rebuild the "Tenth" that had fallen; but the sufferings and constancy of the 288 martyrs brought to the stake during that time effectually endeared the Reformation to the hearts of the people.

In the next reign, that of Elizabeth, the half-reconstructed "Tenth" of the Papal City "fell" again, and the Protestant or Witness Church of England was then fully fixed in the heaven of political exaltation, where it has ever since remained.

Everything proves that the English Reformation was no sudden storm, and no mere theological episode. Its causes went deep into every sphere of national and social life. Politically and ecclesiastically, it was a deliberate revival of that sounder and more national condition which had prevailed in Church and state before the Norman and Papal Conquest. Theologically, it was a revolt against false and unhistorical Catholicism; against the material, sacerdotal, innovating dogmas and practices of Innocent III and his Lateran Council. It was a deliberate return to more primitive ways of belief and worship; a deliberate repudiation of the mediaeval Papacy and its theology. Spiritually, it meant a desire to regain Christianity as it is found in the New Testament, and as it was not found in the Papal and mediaeval Church. Intellectually, it meant the revival of sound learning, the recovery of Greek, of the original Scriptures, of Christian history and literature; a release from the limitations and ignorance of the middle ages. (Galton: *Attitude towards Eng. R. Catholics*, pp. 37, 38.)

The English Reformation was, above all things, an appeal

to sound learning, to primitive belief and practice, to ancient freedom. The corporate life and fabric of the old national Church were not touched. There was no break in continuity, no change in the ancient form and machinery of government. Scripture was made the final standard and arbiter of belief, as it had been to the Early Church. Everything which could not meet the test of Scripture was judged to be merely human. It might be advisable as a matter of sentiment and order. It could not be binding as a matter of faith and conscience. The results of the New Learning were accepted, and applied both to Scripture itself and to antiquity. By these aids, our first generation of Reformers abolished a great many Papal and mediaeval accretions upon the ancient faith. Their model of belief and practice was the primitive Church, and not the mediaeval. They deliberately rejected the ritual, beliefs, theology, liturgies, and practices of the thirteenth century. They repudiated all the Papal claims and usurpations. They re-asserted those liberties which had once been possessed by every national Church, and which our own Church had enjoyed until the eleventh century. These were the ends set by Cranmer and his fellow workers before themselves. They strove to attain them with utter honesty, carrying their lives in their hands. (*ib.*, p. 55.)

That consciousness of the divine presence; that honest striving after the truth; that reaching back through controversy, through all the centuries of ignorance, of official deceits, and of blind corruption; that effort to regain the "primal Church," to restore as far as possible the Christianity of the New Testament: these were the aims of our Reformers. The determination to secure these good things enabled them to carry on that struggle which won our theological and historical position; and which, though it was not seen clearly at the time, ensured our national independence, as well as our political and civil freedom. (*ib.*, p. 57.)

The Seven Dutch Provinces.

Did any set of seven subdivisions in Western Christendom at this time fall away from the Papal Empire, or be politically slain to the Papacy, in the same "earthquake" in which Papal England fell?

The answer stands forth in the history of Europe. During Elizabeth's reign, the Seven Dutch United Pro-

vinces were emancipated from the Spanish yoke, and the Papal rule and religion in them were destroyed. It is a long but deeply interesting story, as readers of Motley's *Dutch Republic* well know.

The War with Spain.

In 1569 the war began under Philip II. Before this the Reformed doctrines had made their way amongst the Dutch, the Gospel had been preached, the blood of martyrs had been shed. The earthquake in which the tenth kingdom of the Popedom had recently fallen, began to convulse and to threaten the Papal Supremacy also in these lesser districts. In the midst of the terrible disasters brought on the country by the Duke of Alva, William of Orange openly espoused the cause of Protestantism, and with it that of civil and intellectual freedom. Aided by a host of coadjutors, he took the field in 1568. At first their heroism was ineffectual, but by 1579 it had so far prospered in the desperate struggle as to rend the Seven Northern Provinces from their connexion with the other ten, and to secure their independence.

Union of the Seven Provinces.

In 1579 the union of these Seven Provinces was effected, the remnant adhering to Spain and the Papacy. To the eye of man their cause seemed hopeless; Philip so mighty, they so few and feeble, Spain the greatest state of Christendom, and the Spaniards the best soldiers of the day.

But God was with them. An indomitable courage was imparted to these few Hollanders by their religion, and to encourage them they had the example and sympathy of England. It is a glorious history. After thirty-seven years' war, in 1609 their independence was virtually acknowledged by Spain. Out of the ruins of

seven old Papal Lordships arose the Protestant Republic of Holland, the Lordships as such having been slain. It is one of the most interesting and momentous revolutions recorded in history.

Thus, besides the fall of the tenth part of the city, there had been slain to the Papacy seven thousands, names of men; both these events being an earnest and pledge of the total fall, still future. The difference in terms used for England and for the Dutch provinces is necessary from the difference of their constitution; England being at that time an independent kingdom, but the others only a small part of the Spanish realm.

Effect on the Rest.

In England and Holland, "the rest," that is, the Papists that remained in them, after the fall of the Papal power and the victorious ascendancy of Protestantism, "*were affrighted.*" Penal enactments were passed against them, sometimes in forgetfulness of the duties of Christian charity. Popular feeling was against them. The great majority conformed to the Protestant faith, and thus at least outwardly "*gave glory to the God of heaven.*"

By sovereign and people in England, Holland, and Germany, all these great results were publicly acknowledged as the Lord's doing. Glory was given, not as formerly in England and still in other Papal countries, to the saints or the Virgin Queen of heaven, but to the God of heaven. (Compare Rev. xvi. 9.)

Two Permanent Changes.

These were the two grand and permanent political changes in Europe that arose from the earthquake attendant on the Reformation. The Angel's right foot had been planted on the sea, and the result was that

insular England had been broken off from the Papacy; His left foot had been planted on the land, and He had claimed continental Holland.

Thus a dramatic unity reigns through this division of the prophecy. What was signified in the first act is consummated in the close. What more apparently hopeless than the condition of things before? What more magnificent, influential, and enduring than the results obtained in the short space of about fifty years? "If the Reformation in Germany was the foundation of the building, that of England was its crowning stone" (D'Aubigné). It is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes.

Commerce and Colonies.

From this time also commerce and maritime power flowed in upon England and Holland, and colonies dependent on them were formed in America and Asia. Later on England began to use this influence and connexion as a means for spreading throughout the world the Word of God and the tidings of the everlasting Gospel.

"About the time that the maritime greatness of England was beginning, she began also to be a great manufacturing country. . . . The England we know, the supreme maritime, commercial, and industrial Power, is quite of modern growth; it did not clearly exhibit its principal features till the eighteenth century, and the seventeenth is the period when it was gradually assuming this form. It began to do so in the Elizabethan age." (Seeley: *Expansion of England*, Lect. V).

"The world was astonished to see a petty state, with a barren soil and insignificant population, not only hold its own against the great Spanish empire, but in the midst of this unequal contest found a great colonial empire for itself in both hemispheres. Meanwhile the intellectual stimulus which the sea had begun to give to these Western states was nowhere more manifest than in Holland. The same small population took

the lead in scholarship as in commerce, welcomed Lipsius, Scaliger and Descartes, and produced Grotius at the same time as Piet Hein and Van Tromp." (*ib.*)

To 1688.

The prediction seems to embrace a period reaching down to the memorable epoch of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 1685, and of our glorious Revolution of 1688.

Not till near then did the predicted results in North Germany and England receive their final settlement. In 1620 the Emperor Ferdinand II issued the terrible Restitution Edict, by which German Protestants were required to restore to the Church of Rome all the possessions they had become masters of in consequence of the religious peace concluded in the preceding century. A war arose in defence of Protestant rights, in which Gustavus Adolphus fell victorious at Lutzen, 1632; nor was it till 1648 that these rights were re-established on a firm and lasting basis by the Peace of Westphalia.

In England by Charles II, and yet more by James II, his brother and successor, advances were made towards the restoration of Popery; until at length in 1688, through God's gracious favour, William of Orange superseded James II in the government. Thus just when Protestantism and Protestants were being ruthlessly crushed in France, the political elevation and establishment of Protestantism was finally secured in England, and eventually also in Holland.

"One most remarkable experiment had been tried on this strange Empire [Spain]. A small fragment, hardly a 300th part of the whole in extent, hardly a 30th part of the whole in population, had been detached from the rest, had from that moment begun to display a new energy and enjoy a new prosperity, and was now, after the lapse of 120 years, far more feared and reverenced than the huge mass of which it had once been an obscure corner. What a contrast between the Holland

which Alva had oppressed and plundered, and the Holland from which William had sailed to deliver England ! " (Macaulay : *History of England*, chap. XXIII ; year 1698.)

SUMMARY OF THE FOREGOING HISTORY.

In the twenty-four verses, Revelation x. 1–xi. 13, which have now been explained, there has been given in symbol a history of that great religious and political movement of the sixteenth century. The symbolic picturing is carried through all the stages of the history exactly as they followed each other in actual fact ; and the whole is placed in its proper chronological position—that is, under the second half of the Turkish Woe.

Not only is this a most graphic and complete exposition of the whole movement, laying bare its origin, progress, and results ; not only do these twenty-four verses furnish an admirable and trustworthy epitome of the history of the Reformation period ; but also—what is far more important—all this is given as from God's point of view. It is the history inspired by His Spirit, and revealed by His Son, and therefore true and reliable, putting in the right light and in their philosophic relation the momentous events of those times.

No history of the Reformation so exactly traces according to truth the main outward steps and epochs, and the inward and spiritual principles and secret springs of action, in the course of that great revolution. The Visions lead us from its very commencement in Luther's first discovery of Christ as the Righteousness of His people, to the establishment of the now purified Churches in many countries of Christendom ; more especially in the tenth kingdom of Papal Christendom, thenceforward Protestant England ; and in the " Seven Thousands," thenceforth the Dutch Protestant United Provinces.

If the Reformation be indeed, as is here shown, the

Lord's own doing, with what respect and confidence should it be regarded! Who that loves the Lord will dare to mourn over it as a deplorable schism? To work on Reformation lines is, in a very true sense, to be a fellow-worker with God.

"There certainly never has been a movement which, in its ultimate results, has contributed so largely to the emancipation of the human mind from all superstitious terrors as the Reformation." (Lecky: *Rationalism in Europe*, chap. I.)

"The Reformation, beyond the region of opinions, was a historical fact—an objective something which may be studied like any of the facts of nature. The Reformers were men of note and distinction, who played a great part for good or evil on the stage of the world. If we except the Apostles, no body of human beings ever printed so deep a mark into the organization of society; and if there be any value or meaning in history at all, the lives, the actions, the characters of such men as these can be matters of indifference to none of us. We have not to do with a story which is buried in obscure antiquity. The facts admit of being learnt. The truth, whatever it was, concerns us all equally. . . . Fiction in such matters may be convenient for our immediate theories, but it is certain to avenge itself in the end." (Froude: *Short Studies: Times of Erasmus and Luther.*)

"The Protestant creed was by no means a mere negation of the Papacy—a simple renunciation. It was in the highest degree positive, a renovation of Christian sentiments and principles, that govern human life even to the most profound recesses of the Soul." (Ranke: *Popes*, Book V.)

"If we fairly balance gain with loss, the Reformation is to be esteemed among our very choicest blessings. It recovered what is even more precious than ecclesiastical unity—the primitive and Apostolic faith. From it, accordingly, has dated a new era in the moral progress of the Western nations, and the spiritual development of man. It has to some extent replaced him in the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free. It has unloosed the trammels that oppressed not only his understanding but his conscience. It has led to the rejection of that semi-Judaism in thought and feeling, which, however it was overruled for good in training the barbaric nations of

the North, was, notwithstanding, a melancholy relapse into the servile posture of the Hebrew, as distinguished from the free and filial spirit that should characterize the children of God.

"Above all, the Reformation vindicated for our blessed Lord the real headship of the Church, exalting Him as the One Source of Life and Righteousness, and thereby placing saints, and priests, and sacraments in their true subordination. Personal faith in Him, the Reconstructor of humanity, the living Way unto the Father, was now urged with emphasis unequalled since the age of St. Augustine; and this quickening of man's moral consciousness imparted a new stimulus to individual effort." Hardwick: *Reformation.*)

Romish Expositions of Prophecy.

For some time after the Reformation, as Foxe and Brightman report, the Romish doctors were very shy of prophetic exposition. At the first, indeed, on Luther's protest, some unguarded doctors of the Papacy took up the theory of the Fifth Lateran Council—that the then Church of Rome was the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse, and that the Papal dominion was Daniel's Fifth Monarchy or reign of the Saints.

But then what of the Little Horn, or Antichrist, that was to intervene between old Rome's iron empire and the Saints' reign? The question was so puzzling that it must have been evident to all thoughtful Romanists that such a theory was untenable, and that some better one must be taken up if the Papal citadel were to be defended on prophetic grounds.

Futurist and Præterist Schemes.

At length, as the sixteenth century was drawing to a close, the views of Apocalyptic exposition were put forth which, after long reflection, the Papal doctors thought best for meeting the arguments so fearfully urged against them from that prophecy. Two Jesuits published their respective but quite opposite opinions.

About 1585 Ribera, a Jesuit priest of Salamanca,

published an Apocalyptic commentary which, on the grand points of Babylon and Antichrist, was substantially what is now called the Futurist Scheme. According to this, the greater part of the prophecy is made to relate to things even now still future, the things concerning Christ's Second Advent.

Alcasar, also a Spanish Jesuit of Seville, published a scheme which on main points is that of the modern Præterist. This restricts almost the whole of the Apocalypse to the catastrophes of the Jewish Nation and of the old Roman Empire.

Either scheme almost equally well promoted the object of the writers, namely, to set aside all application of these prophecies to the Church of Rome and the Papacy. The Præterist made the prophecy stop short of the era of Papal Rome; the Futurist made it overleap the whole interval since the prophecy had been given, and plunge into the far distant future just before the consummation.

The strange thing is that at the present time many Protestants should have adopted the views favoured by one or other of these schemes; coming as they do of such a parentage, and having been launched for such a purpose.

"Modern historical interpreters of the Apocalypse are in good company; they stand with the Fathers, the Confessors, the Martyrs, the Reformers, with men who suffered for the truth they believed, and were practically guided and inspired by the interpretations they have handed down to posterity."

XVI

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

SEVENTH TRUMPET: Rev. xi. 14–19

ALL that has been shown as to the rise, progress, and establishment of the Reformation is under the Sixth Trumpet. At Revelation ix. 18, is mentioned the slaying of the third part of men by the Turkish Woe of the Sixth Trumpet; that is, the fall of the Greek Empire, whose capital was Constantinople. But not till now (Rev. xi. 14), immediately after the ascension of the Witnesses and the fall of the tenth part of the city, is that same Sixth Trumpet Woe said to be ended.

Thus, in exact accordance with historical facts, the second half of the Turkish Woe, from the fall of the Greek Empire, is defined as including the rise, progress, and establishment of the Reformation. Just after the prophecy of the slaying of the third part of men by the Euphratean Horsemen, and the declaration that even that catastrophe was ineffectual to produce repentance, the glorious Vision was shown of the descent of the Covenant Angel, betokening the beginning of the Reformation. Then just after the prophecy of the political establishment of the Reformation, the announcement is made—"*The Second Woe is past.*"

End of the Turkish Woe: Rev. xi. 14.

This solemn notification marks out an interval as for pause and looking forward. But it was to be short:

"*The Third Woe cometh quickly.*" No new outward judgments, no eventful changes, such as to be worthy of figuration, were to pass over Roman Christendom before the breaking forth of the Third Woe. This points unmistakably to the great French Revolution as being the outbreak of the Third Woe; otherwise more than two centuries, and those full of great events, would have elapsed since the passing away of the Second Woe, without any appearance of the Third.

When it is said that the Second or Turkish Woe is past, it is not meant that the Euphratean Horsemen have disappeared or ceased to exist, but only that they are no longer a Woe to Europe as they were at first. They still remain on the scene, though in decline; for the overflow from the Euphrates that symbolized them does not dry up till the era of the Sixth Vial (Rev. xvi. 12). But they are no longer aggressive and formidable to the neighbouring Powers, as they had been at the outset of their victorious career. Their conquering advance has now ceased.

Ryswick and Carlowitz: 1697–9.

Two great Treaties of Pacification were signed at the period that has now been reached—the Peace of Ryswick in the West, and that of Carlowitz in the East. Each marks the turn of the tide, the incipient beginning of downfall and decay, the first for the Papacy, the second for Mohammedanism.

The Treaty of Ryswick, marking the full political establishment of the Protestant religion, was signed in 1697, between the Emperor Leopold, Great Britain, the United Provinces, France and Spain, and was ratified by William of Orange. It signified the end of the sanguinary conflicts between the Protestant and the Papal nations of Europe, and it secured the recognition of our "glorious Revolution," and of William and Mary as

lawful sovereigns of England. St. Paul's Cathedral was opened for the great Thanksgiving Service celebrated on the conclusion of this Peace.

By the Treaty of Carlowitz, 1699, Austria obtained the whole of Transylvania, most of Hungary, and the greater part of Slavonia and Croatia. Venice retained the Morea. To Poland the Sultan restored the parts of Podolia that had been conquered under Mohammed IV. Russia kept Azof, and thus secured a position on the Black Sea. The Ottoman Power was seriously diminished by this Treaty, and from this time it ceased to be a danger to the Christian powers of Europe.

Dates of Turkish Decay.

1517–1540. Rhodes, Hungary and Egypt fell under the Turks.

1571. In the naval battle of Lepanto they receive the first effectual check.

1669. They take Crete, one of the bulwarks of Christendom.

1682–98. Their war with the German Empire; victories of John Sobieski and Prince Eugene; down to the Peace of Carlowitz. This was a decisive arrest and repulse of the Turkish Woe. Their energy of aggressive progress and destruction had passed away, yet they still seemed a mighty and formidable Power. But decay had irretrievably set in.

1769–75. War with Russia; 1787, and with Austria. Victories of the Allies.

1789. A second and more fatal war.

1791 (April). Peace, dictated by the conquerors, humiliating to Turkey. The Turkman Power no longer a Woe to Christendom. Its dissolution now became only a question of time and of European policy.

Fanatical outbreaks of Moslem atrocity and hatred against Christians have from time to time occurred in some portion or other of the Turkish dominions; but cruel and disgraceful as these are, they cannot for a moment be regarded as showing that Turkey is still a power that strikes terror into Christendom at large; rather are these as the spasmodic quiverings that often precede dissolution.

Anticipations: 1774–1789.

In the interval between the passing away of the Turkman Woe and the outbreak of the French Revolution, that is, from 1774–1789, the generality of observers prophesied peace and safety. Danger from without, as from new hordes of barbarians, was most improbable, nor did the princes and statesmen of Christendom discern any cause of alarm from within. The rancour of religious differences had all but subsided. Russia, recently come into the European commonwealth, was weak for aggression. The increased strength of Protestant Prussia was a balance against Roman Catholic Austria. The recent revolt of the United States, 1774, and the new democratic principles of thought and action suggested thereby, as little caused disquietude. It could scarcely be imagined that these should vegetate on European soil.

But others had more ominous presentiments. A sect of infidel philosophers in France, headed by Voltaire and Rousseau, and united in a kind of literary conspiracy against Christianity, were expecting convulsions in Christendom. The oracles of Satan have at times prophesied with superhuman sagacity, and they did so now. Human Innocence and Social Perfectibility—the fundamental doctrines of Rousseau's philosophy—are antagonistic to the Christian faith, and are everywhere the spring of revolutionary convulsion.

The Encyclopædists.

Against religious influences the Encyclopædists[1]—D'Alembert, Helvetius, Raynal, Diderot, and a crowd of others who followed them—declared the most envenomed hostility. They trusted to the united virtue of mankind for a safeguard against all the temptations that arise in the course of extensive changes in society, and the French Revolution was the consequence. Raynal laboured to portray the supposed innocence and virtue of primitive man, and the unbounded calamities which the bigotry of priests and the thirst for gold had brought into his unsophisticated abode. D'Alembert, Helvetius, and Diderot took bolder ground, and openly denied the existence of God.

"These frightful doctrines, which tended at once to extinguish all feeling of moral responsibility and all motive to self-control in men, and to reduce society to a mere game of chance, where success was the only test of excellence, were rendered the more dangerous by the talent, industry and graceful taste of these highly-gifted men."

"These really eminent and able, though dangerous and deluding writers, were followed by a crowd of others, whose names have sunk into oblivion, but whose writings exercised at the time, and for long after, an unbounded sway over public thought in France and great part of Europe. Openly supporting the doctrines of materialism, denying the existence of a Supreme Being and of a future state, they applied all the energy of their talent to add to the force of present passion, and to minister to the variety of sensual gratification. . . . This was the great cause of the downward progress, unbounded wickedness, and ultimate failure, of the Revolution."

"They made no provision for coercing the selfish passions of our nature. Amidst all their reforms, they forgot the one on which they all depend—the reform of the human heart. They tried to solve the problem, 'Given a world of knaves, to produce happiness out of their united actions.'"

[1] So called from the *Encyclopædia* which they compiled, embodying, with much other matter, the teachings they sought to propagate.

"These writings exercised an influence over the opinions of the whole educated classes in France, of which no previous example had existed in the world. . . . Almost the whole of the philosophical and literary writers in Paris, for a quarter of a century before the Revolution broke out, were avowed infidels; the grand object of all their efforts was to load religion with obloquy, or, what was more efficacious in France, to turn it into ridicule."

It should be remembered that the Roman Catholic religion was the only form of Christianity they knew.

Results of their Teaching.

Though in due time the reaction came with unerring certainty, yet the immediate effects of these sceptical writings were to the last degree destructive. By accustoming men to turn into ridicule what others most revere, and by leading them to throw off the principles and faith of their forefathers, they prepared the way for a general dissolution of the bonds not only of religion, but of society.

"Towards the latter part of the reign of Louis XV, no one at Court but the King, the Dauphin and Dauphiness, and a few of the older part of the nobility, evinced any respect for religion. Even the external acts of worship were abandoned to the tradesmen and the lower people."

"Since the reign of the Roman Emperors, profligacy had never been conducted in so open and undisguised a manner as under Louis XV and the Regent Orleans. From the secret memoirs of that period which have been published, it is manifest that the licentious novels that at that time disgraced French literature conveyed a faithful picture of the manners of the age."

The Encyclopædists and the French Roman Catholic Clergy.

The Roman Catholic clergy in France were far from being insensible to the danger of this flood of irreligion deluging the land, and they raised their voice in the

loudest strains to denounce it; prophesying that this impiety, making inroads alike on God and man, would never be satisfied till it had destroyed every power, divine and human.

But they did not possess ability sufficient to stem the torrent. The Romish Church now felt the consequences of the entire overthrow of the Protestant faith in France, so long the subject of congratulation; the barbarous injustice of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes at length recoiled on the heads of its authors. Victory had abated their energies, the cessation of controversy had destroyed their powers; indolence and luxury in the noble dignitaries, poverty and ignorance in the inferior functionaries of the Church, rendered them wholly unequal to a contest with the giant powers of newly-aroused infidelity.

"The sceptical philosophers took advantage of real abuses—such as the invidious exclusion of all persons of plebeian birth from the dignities and emoluments of the ecclesiastical profession; the enormous wealth, and the luxurious habits and dissipated lives of the higher dignitaries—to influence the public mind against a religious establishment of any kind." "Hence the universal indignation, in 1789, at the vices and corruption of the Roman Catholic church, and the facility with which, in the very commencement of the Revolution, their property was sacrificed to relieve the embarrassments of the finances."

A Terrible Catastrophe at Hand.

The torrent of irreligious opinion with which France had been deluged had awakened a general belief amongst the reflecting part of the community, that some terrible national calamity was at hand. Christian thinkers also anticipated an outbreak, not of freedom and happiness, but of wrath and judgment; the abounding iniquity and infidelity in professing Christendom appearing to call loudly for vengeance from above.

The very elements, agitated with unwonted convul-

sions, seemed to forewarn judgment; a hurricane in the West Indies, the reopening of volcanic fires in Vesuvius and Iceland, a three years' earthquake in Calabria, 1783–86, and in the autumn of 1788 a terrific and desolating hailstorm in France. These events made an impression on the minds of devout prophetic students, and the resemblance was noted to the elemental signs in the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet. Such natural convulsions awaken awe and expectation, and may serve the prophetic student as corroborative signs, but he looks for others less dubious.

Prophetic Features of the French Revolution.

Though we have not yet seen the end of the great French Revolution, there is all along its course a general coincidence of the prophetic indications with its most prominent features and characteristics.

It broke out just a little while after the passing away of the Turkish Woe. It was an "earthquake," a political convulsion and revolution of such magnitude, that the prophecy would have been inconsistent with itself had it passed it over without notice. It was a convulsion of internal origin, not an invasion by outward foes from the four winds; a convulsion in which the exasperated passions of men manifested themselves with unprecedented virulence against Christ's religion, God's judgments, and mankind. "*The nations were wroth.*"

It issued in long and furious wars throughout Western Christendom—"*thunderings, lightnings, and great hail*" —wars in which "*them that destroy the earth,*" that is, the Papacy, the Romish Church and clergy, and the Turk, were signal sufferers.

"A Revolution in France," says Napoleon, "is always sooner or later followed by a Revolution in Europe." It addressed itself to the hopes and pre-

judices of the great body of the people in every country, and a ferment immediately began to spread through the neighbouring kingdoms. Extravagant expectations were formed, and the labouring classes, inflated by the rapid elevation of their brethren in France, deemed the time approaching when the distinctions of society were to cease and the miseries of poverty to expire, amid the universal dominion of the people.

The rise of this terrible spirit, destined to convulse the globe, excited the utmost alarm in all the European monarchies. From it sprang the bloody wars of the French Revolution, undertaken to crush the evil, but which at first tended only to widen its devastation. The passions aroused urged whole nations into the battlefield.

Judgments on the Papacy.

About the year 1750 Voltaire began his scoffing attacks on the Christian religion in France, and for fifty years from that time he and his colleagues in the task of undermining all religious faith in the masses of the people, were indefatigable in their attacks on the only form of Christianity with which they were acquainted—the Romish. They succeeded in producing in France an intense hatred and contempt for the priesthood and the Church of Rome.

All the Roman Catholic nations, irritated and wearied by the atrocious crimes and terrible immoralities of the Jesuits, began one after another to expel them. In 1773 the ambassadors of all nations demanded the abolition of the Order itself, and Pope Clement XIV was obliged to sign a Bull for their suppression; the act, however, cost him his life. The Inquisition, the other great pillar of the Papacy, was abolished in Naples, Tuscany and Parma in 1782; and in 1784 monasteries also were suppressed in Naples.

Not a single kingdom had confidence in the Roman Court, or was willing to fight in its defence, when the French Revolution burst like a hurricane upon its head, and for the time swept it away.

France, since the conversion of Clovis and the Donation of Pepin and Charlemagne the first of Papal nations, and her king, the " eldest son of the Church " ; France, for more than a thousand years the main pillar of the Popedom in Europe, so prominent in the persecution of the Reformed religion, had now become anti-Papal to the very core. Her people, once so superstitious, had revolted from the tyranny of priestcraft, and had become openly and fiercely infidel.

The French Revolution burst like a thunderclap upon a startled world. Though called French because it happened to originate in France, it speedily became European ; nor was its duration limited by the entry of the Allies into Paris, for its consequences continue to this day. It marks an era in the world's history, in every way a mighty epoch, as regards politics, religion, society, and the human mind. It could not but constitute an important epoch also in prophetic interpretation ; and it gave a new and mighty impulse, a sustained impetus, to prophetical investigation. This newly-awakened interest in the study of the prophetic Scriptures is confined to no sect.

An Era of Evangelization.

It was in a remarkable degree a time of God's remembering His covenant, removing barriers, opening to view His Reformed Church, and stirring up many to proclaim His precious Gospel to mankind. Besides the decay of the Papal and Mohammedan Apostasies, and the Renaissance of the Jewish people, which mark this era, there has taken place a most notable revival of true faith and practical godliness everywhere amongst

the Reformed Churches, so that now there is an immensely larger number of truly converted and renewed men and women in the world than ever before.

There has been a revival of the spiritual Israel even more marked than that of the natural Israel; and this has been accompanied by energetic and widely-spread evangelization, and by a marvellous circulation of the Scriptures. Almost all the Bible and missionary societies have sprung into existence during this era. Also an entirely unprecedented progress has been made in the elucidation and understanding of the prophetic Scriptures, so that a large and constantly increasing number of Christians are looking for "that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET SOUNDS: Rev. xi. 15–19.

"*The seventh Angel sounded.*" His voice was to spread over "days" (Rev. x. 7). How many? It is not said; but the Fifth Trumpet extended over about 450 years; the Sixth over more than 700 years; and the Seventh includes all that follows, the Vials, etc., up to the Second Advent. It was to be a Woe Trumpet (Rev. viii. 13; ix. 12; xi. 14); the last, and doubtless also the most grievous, of the three. In it (Rev. x. 7) was to be "finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he declared to His servants the prophets."

"*There were great voices in heaven.*" Whether this be the firmamental heaven of political elevation, or the heaven of the Divine presence, there is anticipated as near at hand the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth, as the great and ultimate result of what was to happen under this Trumpet. The declaration, moreover, meant that God had taken to Himself His penal sove-

reignty, the exercise of which might seem to have been long suspended. The season was now come to recompense all the sufferings of His persecuted servants upon the heads of their oppressors, and to destroy them who for ages had with impunity destroyed the earth. So the Seventh Trumpet had a double aspect: it was the Trumpet of the kingdom, as well as the Trumpet of woes and judgments.

"*And the four and twenty elders . . .*" The song was instantly taken up by unequivocal voices. By the blessed spirits this Trumpet, for which they had been listening, was thankfully and joyfully recognized as that under which Christ's righteous kingdom was to be established. This Trumpet immediately has the largest recognition in heavenly places, more so than any of the others, because it is the last of the seven. The Covenant Angel in His oath had referred to this Trumpet in like terms. Hence what follows, as is the custom in prophecy, is spoken of in the past tense; but at the same time words are added of significant import, showing that other and awful events must first come to pass. Here a summary is given of what was to take place under the Trumpet; details follow later on. The vengeance was not to be executed all at once, nor were the kingdoms of the world at once to become the kingdoms of the Lord; but from the sounding of this Trumpet both were to begin, and were to advance as it progressed.

Nations Wroth. God's Wrath.

"*The nations were wroth.*" During the era of the Seventh Trumpet the paganized nations of Christendom were to manifest some remarkable outburst and exacerbation of the passions, against Christ and His religion, and against each other, in a paroxysm of malignity. Where there is bitter exasperation against God, there will also be the like against man.

"*Thy wrath came.*" God's destroying wrath was to be poured out upon them. See Revelation xv. 1, "*Seven plagues which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God.*" Guilty nations and individuals alike are punished by the consequences of the very iniquities they commit. The principal actors in this terrible drama were overruled by an unseen power, which made their vices and ambition the means of vindicating the justice of the Divine administration. Retribution is writ large on the history of the French Revolution. "Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

The Dead. God's Prophets.

"*The time of the dead to be judged.*" A declaration of what is included in the Trumpet, but of course not coming to pass till its consummation.

"*Reward to thy servants the prophets.*" This likewise is included in the Trumpet, but not necessarily at its beginning. The Two Witnesses were "prophets," and "prophesied." By the Revolutionary laws, and afterwards by the Napoleonic Code, there was established equal toleration to Protestants as to Roman Catholics. Up to that epoch the former were proscribed in the continental kingdoms, on the territory of the old Roman Western Empire, except in some Swiss cantons, and in the Dutch United Provinces. This time, then, seems to be pointed out as that at which the two symbolic Witnesses may be considered to have begun partially to put off their sackcloth.

Destroyers to be Destroyed.

"*Destroy them that destroy the earth.*" As under the Sixth Trumpet the "third part of men" were slain (Rev. ix. 18); under the Seventh Trumpet "the earth" means what remains of the old Roman Empire, that is,

the western part only. The destruction of them that destroy the earth involves certain preliminary judgments, the Seven Last Plagues, leading up to the final catastrophe.

But who are these that destroy the earth ? Whence ? Where and when were they established ?

To answer these obvious questions, the forward progress of the Visions is suddenly interrupted, and a new and parenthetic series of Visions begins, occupying chapters xii., xiii., and xiv. This is the "Writing Without," parallel with and explanatory of the "Writing Within." After this parenthesis the regular course of the Visions is resumed, with the Vials, from chapter xv. and onward.

The Temple Opened.

"*There was opened the temple.*" The last previous notice of the mystic Temple was when St. John, in his representative character, cast out from it, under Divine direction, the "nations" or paganized worshippers. Its Outer Court being thus cast out, seems thenceforward to have been no more recognized in these Visions as part of the Temple.

The Temple shrine, having been solemnly reformed, now represents the Reformed Church. This purified mystic Temple is opened to the wide world, in order to display to view the Ark of the Covenant. It is now seen in heavenly places; the heaven being apparently that of political elevation. This continues through the whole era of the Vials' outpouring, and the same scene is repeated at Revelation xv. 5, to mark the connexion. The open manifestation of the Ark is an assurance that God is about to finally fulfil His covenant with His people.

There was to be an opening to the world, as never before, of Christ's Reformed Protestant Church, in

exaltation and authority; there was to be invitation to the multitudes without its pale, and manifest signs of God's truth and presence resting within it, throughout the whole of this era of judgment.[1]

Revolutions and Commotions.

"*Lightnings, voices, thunders.*" Political revolution, commotions, and warfare were to be characteristic of this Trumpet. This is stated here in a general way, details being given further on, especially under the Seventh Vial (Rev. xvi. 18, 21), where the same symbols occur.

So in Revelation viii. 5, the earthquake and lightnings before the sounding of the First Trumpet, betokened the political revolution and warfare when the Goths began to rise against the Romans. These were introductory to, and characteristic of, all the woes that followed on the Gothic invasions.

The general features of the Seventh Trumpet, then, are these: as regards heavenly things, the opening of the Temple and display of the Ark; as regards the earth, "lightnings, voices and thunders."

OUTBREAK OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

The French Revolution is, by the common consent of historians, regarded as the commencement of a new era in the history of European Christendom. It could never have assumed the awful character it did had not the people previously lost all fear of God and all respect for man, and had not the national mind been blinded and corrupted, and the national heart hardened against

[1] Where is a future "Great Tribulation" to come in? Is the mystic Temple to be shut again? Where is there mention of such a persecution as to suppress sincere Christianity?

all claims human and divine. It was a tremendous, an unparalleled, an irresistible movement, which at once put an end to absolute monarchy, aristocracy, and ecclesiastical power in France ; and which communicated to the neighbouring nations of Europe the shocks of revolution, and the fierce fires of democracy, together with an anti-ecclesiastical mania that has never since been allayed.

Three Stages.

It had three stages. First, the preparatory stage, in which deistical and infidel doctrines were made the basis of widespread attacks on religious faith, and on the existing political institutions.

Secondly, the actual Revolution, which overthrew Church and State, society and religion, royalty, nobility, clergy, laws, customs, institutions, everything, in short, most stable that had previously existed in France.

Thirdly, the Napoleonic stage, a series of aggressive wars which upset every kingdom in Europe, dethroned the Pope and other monarchs, incorporated Rome in the French Empire, and ended by subjecting France to a tyranny more complete than that from which at the beginning the country had been liberated.

Initial Date.

The whole movement may be described as extending from Voltaire to Waterloo. But the Accession of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, in 1774—the monarchs who lost crown and life in the crisis of the Revolution—may be regarded as the initial date of the central portion of the movement. Alison and Carlyle both make the accession of Louis XVI the commencement of their history of this great revolutionary period.

Its Immediate Cause.

The immediate cause of the outbreak of the Revolution was embarrassment in the national finances. In 1788, just a month after the great hailstorm that devastated France, the financial and social derangements of the nation were such that the king and the minister (Necker) considered it necessary to summon the "Convocation of the States General," a measure for extraordinary occasions, and long disused. These States-General were the representatives of the nation in its three estates—clergy, nobles, and people (*Tiers-état*).

They met at Versailles, May 5, 1789. This was the first day of the French Revolution. As the public beginning of the Reformation is dated from the day on which Luther posted up his Theses, so the outbreak of the French Revolution may be dated from this meeting at Versailles. The minister, Necker, as one demented, had doubled the number of the *Tiers-état*, so that it alone outnumbered the two other orders; and thus the democratic element, which had been silently growing up to wealth, intelligence, and political ambition, found all suddenly and strangely power placed within its grasp, nor did it let it slip.

The Earthquake.

Scarce met, the *Tiers-état* insisted on all three orders together forming one deliberative body; and on the clergy and nobles refusing, they constituted themselves the National Assembly, authorized even alone to legislate and to act as the representatives of the nation, June 17, 1789. Then having soon, through firmness and support of the popular voice, overawed the others into submission, and swamped the aristocracy of Church and State by force of numbers, they proceeded to enact the part of legislators, and at one fell swoop abolished the whole of the long-established laws, rights, and cus-

toms of the nation, the privileges of the nobility, tithes of the clergy, and the monarch's supremacy.

It was an earthquake; historians, statesmen, and orators perpetually adopt the metaphor. The world looked on in awe. Within two short months from their constitution as the National Assembly they had overthrown everything that might have appeared most stable in Church and State. It was evident that a drama had opened in which mightier agencies than those of man were at work. Its issues who could foretell?

"Never had the government of a great country been overturned with so much facility; never had the liberties of a great people been purchased at the expense of so little bloodshed. . . . All France was in transports at the auspicious events which, breaking in one day the chains of a thousand years, had set a whole nation free, without causing the widow or the orphan to weep. Europe sympathized with these sentiments. . . . Yet from this very triumph is to be dated the commencement of the reign of violence." (Alison.)

"After having demolished everything, they resolved to reconstruct the whole social edifice with the same breathless rapidity; and so extravagant was the opinion of the Assembly as to its own powers, that it would willingly have charged itself with the formation of constitutions for all nations." (*ib.*)

Attack on Versailles.

On October 6, 1789, the mob attacked Versailles, and insisted on the royal family coming to Paris. The Assembly, then also at Versailles, hastily passed a resolution that it was inseparable from the king, and would accompany him to the capital.

Thus the democratic party obtained the immense advantage of having the entire Legislature transferred to a place where their own influence was irresistible. Brought to Paris without protection, the Legislature was at the mercy of the populace. Freedom of deli-

beration was out of question in such a situation. With fatal precipitancy the National Assembly had placed itself without any protection at the mercy of the most corrupted populace in Europe, at the period of its highest excitation. On October 8 the king and the royal family were brought to Paris; and thus ended the first era of the revolutionary government, during which a shadow of independence had been left to the Legislature.

Just five months had elapsed since the meeting of the States-General, and in that short space of time not only had the power of the sovereign been overthrown, but the very structure of society had been changed. The right to tithes, the feudal privileges flowing from the conquest of Gaul by the followers of Clovis, the immunities of Corporations; all had perished. The principle of universal equality had been recognized; all authority admitted to flow from the people; and the right of insurrection numbered among the most sacred of the social duties. The power of the king was no more; he had been insulted, had narrowly escaped being murdered in his own palace, and was now a captive, surrounded by perils, in the midst of his capital.

Mightier Powers at Work.

"The talent developed in the French Revolution was too great, the wickedness too appalling, to be explained on the usual principles of human nature. It seemed as if some higher powers had been engaged in a strife in which man was the visible instrument, as if the demons of hell had been let loose to scourge mankind, and the protection of Heaven for a time withdrawn from virtue, to subject its firmness to the severest test." (Alison.)

RETROGRESSION OF THE VISIONS: Rev. xii.–xiv.

Hitherto the Visions have progressed continuously and without interruption, for the retrospective history

of Christ's Two Witnesses was given by the Angel in conversation and explanatory narrative.

But now begins a series of supplementary Visions (Rev. xii.–xiv.); the "Writing Without," ranging with the "Writing Within." The form of the Book—a Roll—admits of explanatory or additional matter being placed on the back thereof, opposite to that part of the writing within to which it refers. Each of these outside additions is placed on the back or outer side of the Roll, opposite to the inside portion which it is intended to explain or amplify. In a merely human composition these additions would be accidental or caused by unexpected abundance of matter; but in this inspired prophecy all is premeditated and intentional.

Retrogressions for explanation are common in the best writers on modern European history. Thus, after writing on secular matters or political changes, they turn back to bring up the ecclesiastical history or the history of art and literature to the same level. So likewise at this point in the Apocalyptic Visions.

Marks of Retrogression.

A Woe Trumpet. The Seventh Trumpet was to be a Woe, as great as or greater than those of the Saracens and of the Turks; but no Woe begins to be described till the Seven Vials (Rev. xv. 1). These are spoken of as the "*seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God.*" It had been said, when the Trumpet sounded (Rev. xi. 18), "*Thy wrath came.*" The nature of the Woe had been stated in general terms—wrath of the nations; God's wrath against them; and destruction of them that destroy the earth—but no details are given till the Vials.

Abrupt change of scene. The Temple, with the Ark of the Covenant, just said to have been opened in heaven (Rev. xi. 19), and the thunderings and voices, earth-

quake, and hail, all evidently foreshowing events that were to follow consecutively, are abruptly left; and a new and continuous series of Visions begins, apparently quite unconnected and detached. The Woe of the Seventh Trumpet was to be executed on the earth and its inhabitants; but chapter xii. begins with scenes and doings in the firmamental heaven. Then at Revelation xv. 5, the same scene is pointedly repeated, to mark the resumption of the connexion. The scene is the same for the Seven Vials as for the Seventh Trumpet, and continues through the whole era of the Vials' outpouring.

What Beast?

In Revelation xi. 7 it is said that "the Beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war with" Christ's Two Witnesses, and kill them. St. John on hearing this must have wondered what Beast this was, as none had previously been mentioned. Was it the same as Daniel's Fourth Beast (Dan. vii. 21), whose Little Horn made war with the Saints? Here the omission is supplied, and a full description is given of the rise, establishment, reign and doom of that Beast and of his attendants and helpers. It is obvious that these chapters, Revelation xii. and xiii., describing the parentage, growth, and evil-doings of the Beast and his attendants, must be in point of time earlier than the mention of him in Revelation xi. 7, where he is at his full strength.

First there is given a representation of a great preliminary crisis in the history of Roman Christendom and of the Christian Church, the personages being the Sun-clothed Woman and the Great Red Dragon. Then certain changes follow, introductory to the rise of the Beast from the sea, called forth and furnished by the Dragon to make war on the Woman's seed. Then the

history of the Beast is carried on even to its last scene, the Treading of the Winepress (Rev. xiv. 20).

This gives a powerful unity to the whole of this supplemental series of Visions—the "Writing Without." Beginning with the Woman and the Dragon, the Visions proceed with the delegation of power to the Beast by the Dragon; the Beast's attendants and helpers are described; and then the Doom follows, first of the Harlot, in the "Harvest," and next of the Beast himself, in the "Treading of the Winepress" (Rev. xiv. 14–20). To break up these chapters into separate Visions, and to treat them independently, is entirely to miss their point. The important feature is the singleness of purpose of this whole series, and its close unity throughout. The chapter divisions are no part of the original prophecy; they are apt to mislead, and should be disregarded.

The 1260 *days.* The same remarkable period of 42 months or 1260 days is several times named and included in these Visions. Daniel speaks of only one such period ere the saints receive the kingdom. These several mentions must not be taken as though they came in succession to each other; the period is mentioned several times over because it has relation to several distinct personages or institutions, but it is one and the same period throughout—for the Woman in the Wilderness, the Beast in power, the Holy City trodden down, the Two Witnesses prophesying in sackcloth.

Gaps. In all these supplemental Visions it is obvious that there may be gaps. The consecutive prophecy is given in the "Writing Within"; whereas the "Writing Without" only supplements and explains some of the epochs described "Within," and may pass over intervening periods.

Revert to Fifth and Sixth Seals. In these supple-

mental Visions we are taken back to the era of the Fifth and Sixth Seals and their sequel; that is, to the era of the martyrdoms under Diocletian, of the downfall of Heathenism under Constantine and Theodosius, and of the Sealing Vision as fulfilled in the doctrinal revelation in the days of Augustine of Hippo.

Then return. After the supplemental portion has been run through, reaching as it does far beyond the point at which it was introduced in the "Within" Visions (see the diagram of the Seven-sealed Roll), there is a return to the regular series of the "Writing Within"; those Visions being resumed and proceeding without interruption to the end.

Were it not for these retrogressive explanations, the numerous references in the course of the Vials to the Beast, his Image, Mark, Seat, Adherents, etc., could not be understood.

XVII

SUPPLEMENTARY VISIONS: REV. XII.–XIV.

THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON: REV. XII.

The Woman.

THE Woman is seen in the heaven of political elevation, in which the Dragon also appears. The position is contrasted with the being cast down to the earth, which represents a change from political power to political degradation, the being brought down to the common level (Rev. xii. 9).

She had existed before, on earth; but at this particular era in her history she appears raised into the heaven of political elevation. Then shortly after she is again on earth, fleeing towards the wilderness.

The Woman is a miniature symbol of the true visible Church, at that particular era. In respect of its scriptural public worship, the Temple with its Altar-Court had been the emblem of the Church; and in respect of its policy, the Holy City; but here Christ's true visible Church on earth is represented as a Woman. She is not simply the Church of the 144,000, whose names are written in heaven, and who are known to God alone; but the true visible Church on earth containing and nurturing them, and at the particular era now signified, still generally sound in the essentials of faith and doctrine, though not without some earthly admixture.

She is spoken of (Rev. xii. 17) as the mother of them that keep the commandments of God, and the witness of Jesus. That is, she has many other children of both sexes, besides the Man Child that is about to be born, and they are faithful disciples of the Lord. She is the mother of the Lord's spiritual children.

The Woman's Array.

The Woman now appeared "*arrayed with the Sun*" of imperial and legal recognition. In these Visions the greater luminaries signify the chief rulers in the state; the stars the lesser rulers. The moon of the civil authorities, now subordinated to her, was as the sandals under her feet. "*A crown of twelve stars.*" In other passages stars are used to represent living and intelligent persons, as in Revelation i. 20, "The seven stars are the seven angels of the Churches"; and under the Third Trumpet. Here the starry coronal represents the heads or ecclesiastical rulers of the Twelve Tribes of the professing Israel. The distinction between the professing and the true was not yet so marked, nor so necessary to be made, as later.

The Precise Era.

This representation of Christ's faithful visible Church was not universally or even generally true, but only at some remarkable time and in some special conjuncture of circumstances; when the ruling powers in the Apocalyptic world would be associated with her as her decoration and support, and when her ecclesiastical rulers, or bishops, would be recognized as dignified authorities before the world.

It is the Church at the crisis of her primary elevation to power and dignity through the instrumentality of Constantine. The precise era of the Vision is some little time before the total fall of Heathenism from its supreme position in the Roman Empire, in the fourth

century. It is the crisis of transition from Heathen to Christian supremacy, when the Christian Church and the Heathen power were both in the heaven or high place of political dignity, and when the Heathen power was confined to one-third of the political firmament.

The Dragon.

The Dragon represents the persecuting power of Imperial Rome, animated by the old serpent, the Devil. As a military power, Rome is symbolized by the War-horse; but as a persecuting power, by the Dragon. A purple-red Dragon was one of Imperial Rome's military ensigns; but not used till near the close of the second century, nor become common till the third.

It is not merely a Dragon, for this might represent any heathen persecutor, but a Dragon with Seven Heads and Ten Horns; explained in verse 9 as the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan. Not the Devil abstractedly and personally—for has he personally seven heads and ten horns?—but the Devil acting in and inspiring the Heathen Roman Empire. "That power acted openly as the agent of Satan, first against Christ—through Herod and Pilate, then against His servants—through emperors such as Nero and Diocletian." "*Great*," because of the power that he possesses and wields. "*Red*," because of the ferocity with which he destroys. Under Heathen Rome, Satan acted against Christ's saints in his natural colour.

"*Seven heads*." These are the same as the first seven of the Beast, the Dragon's successor. The Heads represent forms of government, and the seven earliest of these forms of government belonged to Rome while Heathen; that is, belonged to it while still Draconic in spirit, and represented therefore by the Dragon. When Rome became by profession Christian, in the days of Constantine, A.D. 324, the Draconic Form would no

longer be appropriate or true. The symbol of the Dragon, then, cannot refer to a date later than that of the era of Constantine.

"*Ten Horns.*" The Horns are not yet diademed, a Head still reigns. Hence the Heads are named here before the Horns, and the diadems are on the Heads. Later on (Rev. xiii. 1), when the Horns have become regnant, they are named before the Heads, and they wear the diadems.

"*Seven diadems.*" Not crowns, but diadems, the badge of Asiatic royalty, adopted by Diocletian when he made his quadripartition of the Empire, A.D. 292. At the time of the First Seal the diadem had not yet been adopted, and it was the crown, not the diadem, that signified the then ruling power; but at the date of this Vision of the Dragon, the diadem is the appropriate emblem.

The Dragon Dated.

The date to which this particular Vision belongs is therefore most precisely defined by the symbolism of the Dragon. He wears diadems; therefore under this aspect he belongs to a date not earlier than A.D. 292, when the diadem was adopted as the official badge of empire. He is the Dragon, therefore cannot appropriately represent the Roman Empire after it became by profession Christian, in the time of Constantine A.D. 324. He remains on the scene throughout (Rev. xvi. 13), but in the features here assigned to him he belongs appropriately to this one era and to this alone.

The epoch specially symbolized must therefore lie between these two dates, A.D. 292 and 324. Anywhere outside of those thirty-two years the symbols become inappropriate. And if the Dragon is so precisely dated, the Woman likewise, who is seen opposite to him in the firmamental heaven, must belong to the same period;

and the birth of the Man Child cannot symbolize anything that happened earlier than that era. The symbols fit only those thirty-two years in the whole course of Roman history.

"*His tail draweth the third part of the stars.*" The epoch is just before the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire. It is the closing paroxysm of the Roman Dragon's persecution of the Church, under the direction of his seventh and diademed head. In this crisis of transition from Heathen to Christian supremacy, the Dragon is represented as already expelled, as if by force of some secular power friendly to the Woman, from the government of two-thirds of the Empire. He still has control over the stars of one-third of the political heaven, and when he is altogether cast down he draws them down with him. They are involved in his fate.

The Woman and the Dragon : History.

All these prophetic indications had their fulfilment in the crisis of the last war waged by the Roman Imperial Heathen power against the Christian Church.

"*The Third Part.*" In A.D. 311, January, the Roman Empire was divided as follows :—

Constantine	had	Britain, Gaul and Spain.
Maxentius	,,	Italy and Africa.
Licinius	,,	Illyricum.
Galerius	,,	East Europe and Asia.
Maximin	,,	Syria and Egypt.

The persecutions of the Fifth Seal were in force ; the sorrows as of a woman in travail had indeed come upon the Church.

In May of that year Galerius issued an Edict of Toleration, in the name also of Constantine and Licinius. In the next two years—

Constantine took the provinces of Maxentius.
Licinius ,, ,, European part of Galerius.
Maximin ,, ,, Asiatic part of Galerius.

Thus the Roman Empire was divided into three parts, Constantine having the precedence. In two-thirds—that is, in Europe and Africa, under Constantine and Licinius—the Christians had toleration, and by the celebrated Milan Decree of Constantine and Licinius, March, 313, Imperial recognition and support.

In one-third—that is, in Asia, under Maximin—persecution went on as before. Maximin, furious as if inspired by Satan at the now imminent prospect of Christian supremacy in the Empire, renewed persecution against the Christians within his limits. He made war against the Emperors who had adopted the Christian religion; but on April 30, 313, he was defeated by Licinius, and three or four months after, in the summer of 313, he died, confessing himself vanquished.

The Final Struggle.

At the crisis depicted in the Vision, the true Catholic professing Church—though with the admixture of orthodox professors who might be unsound in heart before God, and of imperfection in the really good, which must ever characterize the Church as a visible corporation here below—yet morally bright and beautiful, and the more so from the purifying effect of the last persecution, appeared before the world ascendant for the first time in the political heaven. On her shone the full radiance of the highest of the three Imperial dignities, the favour of the second, and legal recognition by the whole Roman world; resplendent at her head as a starry coronal were the chief bishops, the heads now imperially recognized of the Twelve Tribes of the Christian Israel.

"*That he might devour her child.*" Ere the birth and

elevation of the Man Child came to pass; ere Christianity by the aid of Constantine was seated on the throne of the Roman world; another crisis occurred. In A.D. 323 Licinius, also drawing the Eastern third of the Roman world, apostatized from the Christian faith, re-enacted persecutions of Christian Churches and their bishops, and avowed himself the champion of Heathenism against the religion and the disciples of Christ. The contest between Constantine and Licinius may be regarded as the final struggle between Heathenism and Christianity. The Dragon, acting in and animating Licinius, stood before the Church eager to swallow up the child she travailed with.

But Licinius was defeated and slain; and it remained to the Dragon and whatever survived of broken Heathen power to behold what is next represented, the Woman's Man Child wonderfully caught up to God's throne.

The Man Child Born: Rev. xii. 5.

The Woman being symbolical, so also is all the rest—the travail, the thing travailed with, the bringing forth, and the birth.

We may compare Isaiah lxvi. 7: "Before she travailed she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. 8. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? [or, travailed with for but one day?] shall a nation be brought forth at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. 9. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I that cause to bring forth shut the womb? saith thy God."

Thus the man child of which the literal Zion is in the latter time to be delivered is declared to mean her children united and multiplied into a nation or dominant body politic. Whence it may be inferred that the Man

Child of whom the figurative Zion, or Christian Church, appeared travailing to be delivered, means that same Christian Church's children, united into a body politic, and raised to dominant power.

The mystic Man Child, a recognized Christian people, appeared as it were born, and with the prospect of speedy ascendancy throughout the Roman Empire. There is symbolized the exaltation of the Christian body, after its establishment in the firmament of political elevation, to speedily following supremacy on the throne in the Apocalyptic earth.

He is to Rule.

"*Who is to rule.*" Is destined to rule; not yet, but after a while. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Compare Revelation ii. 26: "And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations: 27. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also received of My Father." This is the glorious destiny of Christ's faithful soldiers and servants; but not yet.

"*Her child was caught up . . . unto God and . . . his throne.*" The Woman has other seed besides this Man Child (Rev. xii. 17). He is only one of her numerous children, but born at a special time, under special circumstances, and with a special career. The throne of David and of Solomon is called the throne of the Lord (1 Chron. xxviii. 5; xxix. 23). Also Nebuchadnezzar's throne is so called (Jer. xlix. 38); he being a monarch who had a special commission from God.

The Establishment of Christianity.

The establishment of Christianity as the religion of the Roman State followed on the defeat of Licinius,

A.D. 324. As soon as that event had invested Constantine with the sole dominion of the Roman world, he immediately by circular letter exhorted all his subjects without delay to imitate the example of their sovereign, and to embrace the Divine truth of Christianity.

Thus the Christian body was speedily elevated to the supremacy of the throne in the Roman world. Constantine was enthroned as a Christian emperor, and it is interesting to note that he was called "Son of the Church"; but, as has been seen above, the symbol of the Man Child does not represent any one man alone, not even a Christian emperor.

At first equal toleration was extended to Heathen and Christian, but not for long. After the victory over Licinius, Heathen sacrifices were prohibited, and Christians were raised to honours. Heathen symbols disappeared from the coins; and on Constantine's medals the Cross was erected over the fallen Dragon. In A.D. 325 the Council of Nice was held, under the presidency of the Emperor, and Christ's true Deity was solemnly affirmed and proclaimed to the world, by both Emperor and people.

The Woman's Flight into the Wilderness: Rev. xii. 6.

Forthwith after the taking up of the Man Child to God and to His throne, the Woman is said to "flee" towards the Wilderness. As the Dragon's fall from heaven to earth meant a change of state in the Roman Empire, from political supremacy to political degradation, so the Woman's flight towards the Wilderness signified a gradual change of state. She, the faithful visible Catholic Church, heretofore a glorious object before the eyes of the world, is not indeed said to be "cast down to earth" as is the Dragon, yet she is now depicted as fleeing away on the earth towards the Wil-

derness; as Israel of old fled from the persecutions and heathen abominations of Egypt.

This flight represents the faithful Church's loss of catholicity or universality; the gradual disappearance of true Christian public worship, for by what else than by its avowed doctrine and public worship is a Church to be corporately distinguished? It represents the gradual destitution of all ordinary means of spiritual sustenance, so that God's special interposition is needed to support life, as with Israel in the Wilderness.

Gradual.

However, all this comes to pass not suddenly, but by degrees. There are two stages of the Woman's flight; in the first, she simply "flees"; in the second (Rev. xii. 14), the two wings of the Eagle are given her that she may "fly." She begins her flight after the taking up of her Man Child, and before the heavenly victory. After the battle is won, and the Dragon is cast down, even while the triumphant celebration of victory is heard chanted above, the Dragon persecutes her afresh; wings are given her for her escape, and she "flies" into the desert with increased speed. The words used in these two cases are different; in the first the Woman is said to "flee" (on her feet), in the second to "fly" (with wings). In the first case she begins to make her escape, in the second that escape is facilitated and hastened.

Her settlement in the Wilderness was not completed till after the Dragon had been cast down, after he had persecuted her afresh, after the two wings had been given to her, after the river had been cast out of the Dragon's mouth, and had been partly absorbed by the earth. The 1260 days of her sojourn in the Wilderness do not begin till she is actually there. Even then she was only hidden, not lost; her seed remained on the

scene, but the Woman herself, their mother, was no longer in view.

She was not to starve and perish there, but was to be preserved and nourished with the bread of life all through her long sojourn. At the end of the time she is to come forth, leaning on her Beloved. The Harlot-Usurper of her place before the world is in her turn to be sentenced to desolation, as of a wilderness, and that for ever.

The Church in the Wilderness.

In Apostolic and primitive times, Christ's faithful orthodox Church was recognizable before men as the united body of all professing Christians; and was notable for the generally scriptural and holy character of its teaching and public worship, and of the lives of its members, though some might be at heart but false professors. During the earlier centuries persecution did much to keep the Church free of hypocritical members.

But soon after the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire, and throughout all the half century following, this faithful Church began to flee towards the Wilderness—that is, gradually to vanish in its distinctive features from public view, becoming sectional, isolated, desolate, more and more straitened for spiritual sustenance in the public means of grace. "The living church retired gradually within the sanctuary of a few solitary hearts."

Doctrine was vitiated by superstition and human fictions; the public worship lost its scriptural character and majestic simplicity; reserve was maintained on fundamental truths; and an allegorizing system of interpreting Scripture was adopted. Thus the public means of grace were rendered non-nutritious, and Christ's true Church and His faithful ones were more and more reduced to the wilderness state of spiritual barrenness and want. In the fourth century the

features of the true visible Church were yet faintly discernible, and food was still scantily supplied; but as time went on, whatever of Christ's true Church was preserved was so preserved only by God's special and extraordinary interposition, as with Israel or Elijah in the Wilderness.

An Illustration.

The flight towards the Wilderness may be illustrated as follows. You visit, suppose, Church after Church in the various provinces of the Empire. In each and all of them you behold congregations of faithful Christian persons gathered together, devoutly worshipping in spirit and in truth; you hear the pure Word of God read and preached; you see the two Sacraments administered according to Christ's ordinance in all their essentials; and you find a scriptural liturgy in regular use. Thus the Woman, the true Visible Church, is in full public view.

But after some lapse of time, you again visit these same Churches in all the provinces. In almost all of them you find a more or less pompous ritual, on pagan lines, with rich vestments, incense, candles, bowings and prostrations, and abundant ceremonial; very little, if any, of the Word of God read or explained in its true sense; worship directed to a crowd of other beings besides the Lord; the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper offered by a priest at an altar; and so on. Here and there a true worshipper is found, bewildered by all this ritualism, yet seeking to address his worship, through the one only Mediator, up to God Himself; or there may even be found some few congregations with these sentiments. In this case, though there may be *a* Church very much in evidence before the eyes of men, yet the Woman, the true Church visible, is gradu-

ally disappearing from sight; she is fleeing towards the Wilderness.

The Reformation period was indeed a great advance out of the Wilderness state, and a token and pledge of ultimate victory; but it was not complete emergence. As the Witnesses were still in sackcloth, so the true visible Church was still in the wilderness. At the present time every effort is being made to minimize and if possible to undo the work of the Reformation.

Michael and the Dragon: Rev. xii. 7, 8.

At this point in the Vision the Dragon had not yet been entirely and finally cast out of the heaven of political supremacy, only out of the two-thirds of it. Now war was resumed between Christianity and Heathenism, a new war for supremacy; powers invisible as well as visible entering into the conflict. A preparation was made for it by Constantius' apostasy to the Arian faith, after the death of his father, and the subsequent deaths of his brothers Constantine and Constans, who reigned with him. By their removal he became for nine years sole emperor. His apostasy caused the faithful orthodox Church's primary fall from her previous brightness and elevation, and her first movement towards the wilderness.

The war itself was fulfilled in the subsequent brief re-elevation of professed Heathenism, so prepared for, under Julian, who reigned a year and a half. He made an attempt at reforming and philosophizing Heathen theology and worship, wrote against Christianity, and sought to falsify Christ's prophecy about Jesusalem by rebuilding the Temple and re-establishing the Jews.

The Dragon Cast Down: Rev. xii. 9.

After four great battles, in which Maximin and Licinius vainly fought for Heathenism, and after yet

another struggle under Julian, the last Heathen head of the Roman Empire was wounded and struck down, Then came Heathenism's final downfall, on Julian's death in the Persian War; he confessing, "O Galilean, thou hast conquered!" This was followed by the accession of the orthodox Jovian.

The Dragon, as seven-headed and diademed, was cast down from the heaven of political elevation, from a position of political power, to one of political degradation. (Compare Lam. ii. 1.) Accordingly, in Revelation ix. 1, which is later in point of time than this Revelation xii. 9, he is described as "a star from heaven fallen to the earth."

A Final Fall: "Paganism."

"*And his angels with him.*" This second fall was full and final. All toleration of Heathenism was put an end to by Theodosius, and its worship and rites interdicted under the severest penalties. Heathenism now began to be called Paganism, because kept up only in the *pagi* or outlying villages.

Life had lingered awhile in the old Heathenism, though cast down; and hope, that prompted strenuous efforts to regain the ascendancy. Especially did its spirit linger round the Seven Hills of Rome, the locality so long consecrated to it. But it grew weaker and fainter from the "repeated strokes" given to it by Christian emperors; and Theodosius, by the decisive Edict suppressing its sacrifices as well as its temples, inflicted a "deadly wound" on surviving Heathenism generally, and above all in the capital. "In a full meeting of the Senate, the Emperor proposed according to the forms of the Republic, whether the worship of Jupiter or that of Christ should be the religion of the Romans"; and "on a regular division, Jupiter was condemned and degraded by a large majority." (Gibbon.)

Rome Forsaken.

It is very remarkable how the Christian government, immediately on its formation, forsook the Seven Hills of Rome for another seat and throne, as if Rome were a spot with which it could not be associated. First the Christian government went to Constantinople, the seat of Constantine and his successors in the East. Then, after the division of the Empire, the Western emperors made their capital first at Milan, and afterwards, under Honorius, at Ravenna.

Rome herself also was struck down by the sword of the Gothic conquerors, so that not only her Heathen religious life, but even her political and civil existence for a time was annihilated ; her head, as it were, wounded to death, the death of political annihilation. The head had been wounded when Heathenism was cast down ; now it was wounded even to death.

The Christian Song of Triumph : Rev. xii. 10–12.

This voice is heard " in heaven," the symbolic heaven of political elevation and power, spoken of just before as the seat of both the Woman and the Dragon, and the scene of the warfare that ended in the Dragon's downfall. It is the Song of Triumph of the Christian body then living, raised by recent events to supremacy in the Roman Empire. With this agrees the reference in verse 10 to " our brethren," that is, those who had previously suffered martyrdom.

" *They overcame him.*" This does not refer to victory over the devil in the ordinary warfare of the Christian, but to their present victory over him as shown in his downfall from power. " *Therefore,*" because the Dragon is cast down, the heavens and they that dwell in them are called upon to rejoice.

The Cross held in Honour.

This Song of Triumph was put up first, on the primary casting down of Heathenism under Maximin and Licinius, the very phraseology of this Song being used by the Christians; again, on the final casting down, under Julian. Throughout the Roman world the cross, formerly despised as with us the gallows, was now everywhere had in honour. The righteousness of the martyrs was acknowledged, and living confessors restored to their homes in triumph. Magnificent churches were built, and a pompous ritual adopted. There were innumerable accessions to the Christian body; candidates for baptism presented themselves in throngs; white-robed neophytes were to be seen in crowds.

An Œcumenical Council was held under Imperial auspices, the Emperor showing respectful deference to the Christian authorities. On the medals of that era was seen the phœnix, radiant with the rising sunbeams, to represent the Empire as now rising into new life and hope; with the legend, "*Beata Tranquillitas*," "Blessed Tranquillity."

Astonishment and Delight of the Christians.

The Christians, astonished and delighted, forgot at first all that was of sinister omen in Scripture prophecies as to the Man of Sin and Antichrist. With high-raised expectations of latter day blessings, of the new Jerusalem, and the fulfilment of prophecies, it seemed to them as if God's kingdom had come, and those blessed times of regeneration foretold by the prophets had now begun.

The crowding of candidates by thousands and tens of thousands to baptism; the honour shown to living Christian confessors, and to the memory of deceased martyrs; the gathering of a council of bishops from every

part of Christendom, with Imperial deference paid to them; the adoption of the cross as the chief military standard of the Empire—all these were marvellous, beyond almost all former marvels.

Martyr-Worship.

Unguarded language was used in ascribing this victory to the martyrs, thus preparing the way for their undue veneration. Martyr-worship was perhaps the most prominent form of superstition now prevalent. It was induced by an unbounded reverence for the departed martyrs, as if they themselves had been the authors of the victory over Heathenism; a reverence natural, and indeed at first innocent, but that soon passed into superstition. Excessive reverence for the martyrs presently became worship of the deceased martyrs and saints, and substitution of their supposed mediatorship and guardianship for that of Christ.

Prophetic Interpretation.

This great revolution of the Constantinian era could hardly fail to exercise a considerable influence on Apocalyptic interpretation. That Christianity should be established in the prophetically-denounced Roman Empire was an event the likelihood of which had apparently never occurred to any of the previous exponents of prophecy.

It suggested the idea of a manner, time, and scene, for the fulfilment of the promises of latter day blessedness that could scarce have arisen before; namely, that the scene of that blessedness might be the earth in its present state, not the renovated earth after Christ's coming; its time, that of the present dispensation; its manner, by the earthly establishment of the earthly Church visible. For it does not seem to have occurred

at the time, that all this might in fact be part of the preparation, through Satan's craft, for the establishment after a while of the great predicted anti-Christian empire, on the platform of the same Roman world, and in a professedly Christian Church.

Woe for Earth and Sea! Rev. xii. 12.

This is no part of the Song of Triumph, but a solemn notification, by the prophetic spirit, of some woe on the Roman Empire soon to follow. It resembles the other Woe denunciations of the last three Trumpets (Rev. viii. 13). This "Woe" covers especially the first four Trumpets. How different from what the Christians were then expecting!

The Woe was to be fulfilled for the earth geographically, by the tempests of Gothic barbarians; and symbolically for the earthly-minded as distinguished from the sealed ones who were under protection. The original author of all the evil is revealed. His agencies were heretical persecutors within the Church and Empire, and the scourge of the Gothic invasions, which, first of all the judgments from without, fell upon the Christianized Roman world. This is developed under the first Four Trumpets.

"*Knowing that he hath but a short time.*" "Time," in the sense of opportunity rather than of duration. This may refer to the brief time during which professed Heathenism was still to be tolerated. Satan knows not, any more than do the angels, the exact time of the last judgment.

"Paganizing Christianity."

The illusions of the Christians soon began to be dispelled by the outburst of the Arian heresy against the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the now dominant

Church ; and the cry that Antichrist was at hand was again raised by Athanasius, Hilary, and others, with reference especially to the prevalence of Arianism. After half a century's struggle, that particular heresy was all but vanquished.

But other symptoms had meanwhile appeared or increased in the Church, that might well awaken the fears of spiritually-minded Christians. There were multitudes of baptisms. If the candidates were actuated, as many were, by mere worldly motives, then those new professors, now the great majority of the Church, were but tares ; and the voice of " the Church " would be but that of a majority unfaithful and unsound.

The principles and worship very generally established by the end of the fourth century, within the professing Church, made the aspect of its religion almost as much that of a departure from Christ as of Christianity. Martyr-veneration had now unfolded into martyr-worship. In the Churches, the perfume of incense, the glare of candles, the pictures of martyrs with offerings in their honour suspended before them, and the recitation to them of ceaseless prayers for their intercessions were now the most marked characteristics of public worship ; very like what had been practised by the heathen Romans in honour and worship of their deities. The ascetic life and discipline were now beyond measure held in admiration, and monkish ascetics revered as the model of Christian perfection. It was a " Paganizing Christianity in order to christen Paganism."

The Dragon Persecutes the Woman : Rev. xii. 13.

" *When the Dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted.*" Each time that Paganism was cast down, Arianism was presently raised to power in its place. So the Devil carried on his warfare by persecu-

tion under Arian emperors, then by temptations to superstition, and presently also by the Pagan or Arian flood of Gothic invasion.

The Woman is defined as she "which brought forth the Man Child," that is, the true, primitive, orthodox Church, the one that had accomplished the victory over Heathenism. Soon after her elevation and glory the true Church found herself a wanderer on earth, persecuted and suffering. There seems to be an allusive contrast to some other Church or Churches then arising or about to rise. If so, then they would be not the sufferers under the Dragon's persecution, but possibly some of the very instruments he would employ, taken captive by his deceits and guile.

Wings given to the Woman: Rev. xii. 14.

"*The two wings of the great eagle.*" Compare Exodus xix. 4, ". . . how I bare you on eagle's wings . . ."; Deuteronomy xxxii. 11, ". . . He spread abroad his wings, he took them, he bare them on his pinions." This is emblematic of the help and protection afforded to ancient Israel, when fleeing to the wilderness from the Egyptian Dragon Pharaoh.

In a symbolic prophecy like this, the Eagle's Wings must be emblematic of some earthly instrumentality corresponding with the symbol employed, which at this era was made use of by God's providence for the help and support of Christ's true Church. This power seems marked out by the Eagle standard of Rome as being the Roman; and the two wings may fitly be explained of the Eastern and Western divisions of the Roman Empire, which, though once Pagan, did now alike profess and support Christianity. The extremities or geographical divisions of a land are spoken of in Scripture as wings (Job xxxvii. 3; xxxviii. 13; Isa. xi. 12).

The eagle is a general emblem in Scripture, not dis-

tinctively Roman, but applied also to Babylonians, Persians, and Egyptians. Our Lord apparently refers to the Romans under it, in Matthew xxiv. 28. At the period to which this Vision relates, it was notoriously a Roman emblem; moreover, no other Empire at that time but the Roman even professed, much less supported, Christianity. This points to the Roman Power as the one intended. The Empire here being Christian is no longer symbolized as a Dragon, and Satan seems to appear in his true form, being called Serpent in verses 9 and 15, in the former of which his identity is clearly stated. In Ezekiel xvii. 3, the great eagle symbolized the greatest of existing empires, the as yet unbroken Babylonian Power, wielded by Nebuchadnezzar. In verse 7 another great Eagle is mentioned, without the definite article; this is Egypt, great indeed, but not pre-eminently great as Babylon. By "the great Eagle" must be meant the Roman Empire in its unbroken greatness, or at least in undivided action, with the two wings as characteristics, and under some Roman prince pre-eminently great, heading and directing it.

Theodosius aids the Church.

To the orthodox and pious Christians, especially in the Eastern Empire, when suffering under the persecutions of Valens, it may have seemed unlikely that any help should soon be given them by the rulers in both parts of the Empire. Yet so it was; for after this time Arianism was altogether renounced, and on the vital point so long disputed, orthodox Christianity alone was professed and upheld by the Roman Emperors, and above all by Theodosius.

Theodosius the Great (A.D. 379–395) was the only "great" emperor from the times of Constantine to those of Charlemagne. It was his lot, alone of Roman

emperors after the bipartition by Valentinian, to unite the two divisions, Eastern and Western, under his own sway. All this his imperial power, success, and greatness, he made use of as a protector and nursing father to the orthodox Church of Christ; and this, not by mere individual favour and support, but by the solemn act and co-operation of professing Roman Christendom.

He showed himself the determined and influential enemy of Paganism and Arianism. The Council of Constantinople, A.D. 381, confirmed the decision of the Council of Nice against the Arians, and as to the divinity of the Holy Ghost. So that under the presiding influence of Theodosius, Roman Christendom East and West did solemnly profess, and thereby uphold, the orthodox faith. In fact, it did what the symbol presignified; it united with its Emperor in giving to the Woman the two wings of the great Eagle, to support and bear her up in her flight from the persecutions and projects of the Dragon.

Augustine of Hippo.

Sixteen years' respite was granted to the Church and Empire from the threatening Gothic flood. During this time the holy Augustine of Hippo entered on his ministry, and shed a lustre over his African diocese. He was used of God to revive the fainting Church, and to furnish it with food for the present, and for her future long sojourn in the Wilderness. When the tempests that had desolated the land provinces crossed the sea, and the Vandals began to ravage the African province also, Augustine fell asleep.

By now all the heathen stars had fallen; the firmamental heaven of heathenism had vanished, and on earth its institutions had been done away.

The River from the Dragon's Mouth : Rev. xii. 15.

In Revelation xvii. 15, "waters" are explained by the Angel to be a symbol of "peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues." Rivers and floods, then, symbolize peoples in motion, and are a frequent Scripture metaphor for invasion by hostile nations (Ps. cxliv. 7; Isa. viii. 7; xvii. 12). What flows from the mouth is doctrine, good or bad, according to the man's character (Prov. xv. 28; xviii. 4).

Here the two symbols are combined. The Dragon first made a direct attempt, by persecution within the Empire, to overwhelm the true faith and Christ's Church. In this he failed, and the Roman Imperial Power, upon which he had relied for crushing Christ's true servants, itself became Christian. Now, shortly after the two wings had been given to the Woman, he poured forth on the Empire floods of foreign invaders, tainted with doctrinal errors and heresies; in order, by this mixture of force and doctrinal error, to overwhelm the true Church and religion. The Dragon, through his Pagan or Arian instruments, first drew in the invaders, and then ejected them against Roman Christendom, in the form of tremendous irruptions of Pagan or Arian Goths, Vandals, Huns, and others.

The sea of inundation thence spreading was that from which the Wild Beast rose (Rev. xiii. 1), when Satan began to evolve his much greater scheme, of laying hold of Christian Rome herself, and making her the persecutor. These were the waters upon which the Harlot, rider of the Beast, was said to rest (Rev. xvii. 15).

The Gothic Irruptions.

In A.D. 106 Trajan added Gothic or Getic Dacia to the Empire, and in A.D. 170 Aurelian yielded it to the

Gothic sovereignty. Thus its present population of Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals, Gepidæ, Lombards, Burgundians, and Alans, were prepared by some 200 years of union and intimacy for the part they were afterwards to act as invaders and conquerors of the Empire; their doctrinal preparation as Arians having been effectually accomplished through Valens.

When the time had arrived for action, on occasion of the terror of a Hunnish invasion from the Far East into Dacia, the Visigoths, one of the chief of these barbarous nations, were transported across the Danube, through the infatuation of the Arian Emperor Valens. Those same Arian Visigoths, under their king Alaric, after the memorable respite of the reign of Theodosius, invited, it is said, by Rufinus, Prefect of the East, were the first to precipitate themselves on the Empire in hostile invasion.

Numerous hordes of Pagan Goths, Vandals, and Burgundians swept into the Italian and Western provinces. It was like a flood drawn in and regurgitated over the Empire. The Apocalyptic figure is so appropriate that it has presented itself naturally to historians ancient and modern, in describing these invasions. The fury of the flood was such as throughout the length and breadth of the Empire to sweep away before it all the political bulwarks of Roman authority; and it might well have been thought enough to sweep away also the Christian Church and Christianity itself, the professed religion of the Empire. The Pagan remnant at Rome and elsewhere were not without hopes of this result. The thought cheered them amid their own sufferings, and they excited the enmity of the invaders against their Christian fellow-citizens. All showed that the spirit of the old Dragon, cast down though he had been, directed these raging inundations.

The Earth helps the Woman: Rev. xii. 16.

But God had His own means of preserving the Church Visible, and within it His true Church. The Trinitarian faith had been so inwrought into the national mind and habits, the institutions and laws, especially from the effects of Theodosius' reign, that to sweep away Christianity would have needed to sweep away the Roman population itself.

"*The earth helped the Woman,*" and swallowed up the river. (Note that here, by historic fact, "the earth" means the area of the Western Roman Empire.) Superstitious and earthly-minded though the Roman population had become, they did service to Christ's Church in her present need. There was an absorption of the invading barbaric flood into the old settled Roman population; and not only were much of their original institutions, customs, and languages absorbed, but also their religion altogether. They were converted, at least nominally, to the Christian faith. Instead of the barbaric Paganism or Arianism, the Christian Trinitarian creed was at last universally adopted ere the close of the sixth century. The successive tribes abandoned their Paganism, at first mostly for Arianism; but after a century or more of flux and reflux of the invading flood, this also was abandoned for the orthodox Trinitarian faith.

The Goths and the Vandals who poured down upon the Roman Empire were evangelized so silently, or so rapidly, that only a fact here and there relating to their conversion has been preserved. (Bp. Lightfoot: *Historical Essays.*)

The influence of the Roman See, gradually more and more operative with the barbarians, powerfully tended to this result; also the victories of Clovis and his orthodox Franks, at the close of the fifth century, in France; and those of Justinian and the Greeks, ere the middle

of the sixth, in Africa and Italy. In the last quarter of that century the Visigoths, on the appeal of Recared, King of Spain, gave in their adhesion to the Nicene faith; and soon after the Lombards of North Italy, the only other Arians.

So the Arianism and Paganism of the invading flood, the false doctrine and the secular force by which the Dragon had schemed to overwhelm the Church and Christianity, were seen no more. They were absorbed into the soil, and disappeared.

We must distinguish between the flying of the woman into the wilderness, and her residence there. The flight represents a gradual transition, lasting some three centuries, from the fall of Paganism to the rise of the Papal Power. As the Visible Church of error asserted herself, the Visible Church of truth had to retire; she became less and less prominent in the eyes of men. Her outward manifestation in congregations and ecclesiastical buildings, by open preaching of the Gospel and by purity of worship, was more and more suppressed, and the dearth of ordinary outward means of grace at the hands of her ministers was more and more felt. So, when at length the Harlot Church began openly to flaunt herself enthroned upon the Western Empire in the City of Rome, the Woman, or true Visible Church, had become hidden in the obscurity and privation of the Wilderness condition; not, however, to starve and perish there, but to be preserved and "nourished" by the bread of life all through the period of Papal prospering.

The True Church Hidden.

The Woman thus entered, but only just alive, into her wilderness state of invisibility and dearth, stripped of her character of catholicity or universality. As a Christian corporate body, and in respect of those acts by which a true Visible Church is manifested to the world—the faithful preaching of the Word, a Scriptural worship, the due administration of the Sacraments, Christian synods and councils—she was hidden and became invisible. (Compare Article XIX of the XXXIX

Articles.) For 1260 prophetic days, or years, she was to disappear from men's view in the Roman world, and for that long period she was to be secluded in wilderness solitude.

How was her vitality preserved? In her children, known to God, though for the most part unknown to men, like the 7,000 in Israel, that Elijah knew not of, that had not bowed the knee to Baal. Some were in monasteries, some in the secular walks of life; but all alike isolated in spirit from those around them, and as regards the usual means of grace, spiritually destitute and desolate, as "in a barren and dry land, where no water is."

Besides these, there were some very few of her children prepared like Elijah of old to act a bolder part, and to stand forth as Christ's witnesses before Christendom. Vigilantius, at the very time when the river from the Dragon's mouth was beginning to be poured upon the Roman world, was a specimen and prototype of them in one point of view; and Augustine of Hippo in another. These were of those who are described as "keeping the commandments of God, and holding the testimony or witness of Jesus," in after times depicted as the Two Witnesses.

The Woman is not the invisible Church of God's true people always known to Him, but the true Visible Church, which was in unbroken unity during the earliest centuries, but as time went on was broken up by evil men and evil doctrines, and has remained unseen, unrealized, her unity an article of faith, not of sight, but still multiplying her seed. In the wilderness she still goes on bringing forth sons and daughters. The flight into the wilderness consists not in the withdrawal of God's true servants from the world and from open recognition as individuals; but in the disappearance of the true Church, as a visible body, from the sight of men.

The Devil Plotting.

The Devil, the animating spirit of the old Paganism, seeing that there would be these witnesses—the seed of the Woman—in the new state of things about to be introduced, is represented as proceeding with undiminished wrath against Christ's cause and Church, to plot for their destruction.

His direct attack against a most essential doctrine of Christianity had failed. His indirect attack, by temptations to superstition, had succeeded so far as to render the faithful Catholic Church which had overthrown him no longer visible. This, then, he saw to be the fittest principle for the new plan of attack. All seemed prepared for it in the mind of professing Christendom. Out of this Christendom ecclesiastical itself to perfect an anti-Christendom was the grand problem set before him. Wonderful to say, the very adhesion of the Roman Empire and of the Church established in it to Trinitarian orthodoxy, its very confession of Christ's Divinity, was one element, and an essential one, to the success of the new plan.

All Revealed by the Spirit.

The scheme well deserves the appellation—"The masterpiece of Satan." But it was fully made known by the Eternal and prescient Spirit to St. John all those centuries beforehand; and to us, if we will give heed to this Divine instruction.

Note to page 400. On transferring to the Beast his throne and power, the Dragon will have transferred also the covering skin with Seven Heads and Ten Horns, and he now appears simply as the Dragon.

XVIII

THE SUPPLEMENTARY VISIONS: REV. XII.–XIV.

THE BEAST AND HIS HELPERS: REV. XIII.

THE Dragon's purpose was to make war, not with the Woman herself, for she had fled into the wilderness, but with the rest of the Woman's seed. For she has other seed besides the Man Child, and they do not accompany her in her flight. Not a few of the sons of that faithful Church remained still on the platform of the Roman world, to testify for God's commandments against man's traditions, and for the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Atonement and Mediator, against deified martyrs and saints.

The two characteristics are always found united. Those who sincerely testify for Christ—and they are to be found in various sects and widely-distant countries—will also be those most observant of God's commandments. Those that testify to other than true Christian doctrine will be disposed rather to observe the commandments of men.

The Dragon Wars with the Woman's Seed: Rev. xii. 17–xiii. 1.

Against the Woman's faithful seed the Dragon's wrath was now concentrated. He stands on the sea brink, probably the waters of the Gothic inundation, or it

may be of the Mediterranean Sea, to call forth thence the Beast to whom he makes over his throne and empire. To this Beast he now delegates the supremacy so long exercised by him through Imperial Heathen Rome. The Beast is equally energized by Satan as was the Power represented by the Red Dragon, but his action is much more effectually disguised, hence the Dragon form no longer appears.

He himself, the master spirit, remains on the scene, but in the background, and invisible to human eyes, effectively though covertly watching, suggesting, helping, directing. From Revelation xvi. 13, it is plain that he has not gone away, for he and his creatures are still then to be seen. Moreover, the appearing of Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet, as described in these present chapters, must be anterior in point of time to Revelation xvi. 13, where they are spoken of as being still on the scene.

Revelation xi. 7 now Explained.

This narrative, following soon after the account in Revelation xi. 7, of the slaying of the Witnesses by the Beast from the Abyss, supplies answers to the natural questions: What Beast is this? When did he rise? What is his origin and history? So important is the description of this Beast, that it is given twice over, here in Revelation xiii. and again in Revelation xvii. The former relates to the beginning of his history, the latter to the end.

These elaborate pictures, full of important detail, are given because it is no easy matter to penetrate the disguise, and to recognize the Lord's enemy under an apparently Christian covering. Careful attention has to be paid to every detail that the Lord has been pleased to reveal, if we would identify this evil Power.

Identity of Beast from Sea and Beast from Abyss.

The Beast from the Sea (Rev. xiii.), and the Beast from the Abyss (Rev. xvii. 8), resemble one another in this fundamental feature—that each has seven heads and ten horns. These heads are explained in Revelation xvii. 10, as representing seven, or in a certain sense eight, successive Rulers or Forms of Government, only six of which had yet arisen at the date of the Revelation in Patmos. The symbol of the Beast with Seven Heads and Ten Horns represents in wonderful epitome the whole course of Roman history. The particular era under notice in one or other passage is indicated by the position of the diadems; they being at one time on the Heads, at another later time on the Horns.

Each of these monsters had a constituency of Ten Kingdoms, symbolized in the Beast from the Sea by the Ten Diadems (Rev. xiii. 1), which are now for the first time seen upon the Horns, and so form a chief mark of distinction from the Dragon its predecessor (Rev. xii. 3); and declared by the Angel (Rev. xvii. 12) to attach to the Beast from the Abyss.

Each is associated with a chief helper and minister, in the one case the Lamb-like Beast, in the other the False Prophet, symbols of a false though professedly Christian priesthood. In addition, the Beast from the Abyss supported a Harlot rider, that is, a corrupt apostate Church.

The Beast in its last form (Rev. xix. 20), is in company with the False Prophet that did the miracles before him. The Beast from the Sea (Rev. xiii. 11–14) has the Two-horned Beast that does miracles before him. From a comparison of the two passages it is obvious that the Two-horned Beast and the False Prophet are one and the same. Consequently, the Beast before whom he practised (Rev. xix. 20) is positively identified with the Beast from the Sea.

They alike bore on them names of blasphemy. In Revelation xiii. 1, these are said to be on the heads; in Revelation xvii. 3, it is simply said, "full of names of blasphemy." The characteristic is the same, only more fully developed when the later era has been reached.

Both alike, on their manifestation, are objects of wonder, deference, and submission, to all dwellers on the earth, except those written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Could there be two such Powers, in the same days of the same Empire?

They both alike make successful war on Christ's Witnesses and servants (Rev. xi. 7; xii. 17; xiii. 7). In Revelation xi. 7, it is the Beast from the Abyss that slays the Witnesses; then in Revelation xii. xiii., follows the description of the Beast from the Sea, to all appearance as an answer to the questions: What Beast is this that slays the Witnesses? What is his origin and history?

Sea and Abyss.

The Abyss is deeper than the Sea. The same Beast or persecuting Power might, so far as was visible to man, have risen out of a flood of invading peoples or nations; yet God's eye would see that it really rose out of the deeper depth of hell. St. John sees it coming up out of the sea; the Angel describes it as the Beast from the Abyss. The first, though rising from the sea, is represented as of devilish origin; in the later Vision the origin is more plainly declared, it is from hell itself. That may be explained as implying that later on in the course of time, through better understanding of these Visions, the origin of the Beast will be recognized as being from hell. So a marine volcanic island rises both out of the sea and out of a deeper depth beneath.

The Beast Rises from the Sea : Rev. xiii. 1.

"*Out of the sea.*" Most probably that of the Gothic inundation, a sea of anarchy and confusion of peoples. The flood had subsided into a lake, as the earth opened to drain off its waters. The waters are peoples, but no longer now peoples in motion, as had been symbolized by the river flowing from the Dragon's mouth.

The Dragon then was standing beside the flood that he himself had poured out after the Woman ; and gazing upon that troubled sea of nations, he meditated how next to assail and, if possible, extinguish the Woman's Seed. Under the Fifth Trumpet (Rev. ix. 1–3), the pit of the Abyss is opened, and the Locusts come forth from its smoke. It is Satan that opens the pit, and having done so, he calls forth from it both the Beast and the smoke with the Locusts. The one was to be his agent in the Western regions of the Roman world, the other in the Eastern. Accordingly the outburst of Mohammedanism in the East and the establishment of the Papal Empire in the West belong to the same era, and have a common origin.

"*A beast coming up.*" It rose gradually. "It was not so fierce in aspect, nor so terrible in colour, as the Dragon ; it resembled the wild beasts of the earth—that is, the ordinary earthly powers." Dante (Inf. I., 49) represents the Papacy as a lean She-wolf, but here is a symbolization much more accurate and complete, because inspired. There was first an incipient development along with the rise of the Ten Kingdoms ; then a fuller unfolding afterwards, during the progress of the 1,260 years, its destined period of prospering. Very wonderfully, the Papal system and power arose out of a combined perversion of Scripture and of historic fact, which gradually and successfully was palmed on Western Christendom, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, during the period of the Gothic invasions, and the

rise and establishment of the Romano-Gothic Kingdoms in the West.

Ten Horns and Seven Heads.

The Horns are mentioned before the Heads, for they are now regnant; moreover, as the Beast is seen to rise out of the water, the Horns would emerge before the Heads.

In the case of the Dragon (Rev. xii. 3), the Heads are mentioned before the Horns, as at that date a Head is still regnant; also the diadems are then on the Heads, not on the Horns. In the description of the Beast in Revelation xvii. 3, after the great earthquake and the tripartition of the Great City, no diadems are mentioned as on either Heads or Horns.

These ten early barbaric kingdoms and kings were connected with the Bishops of Rome as their ecclesiastical and spiritual head. "With the exception of a common reverence for the Roman See, they had no point of union." This conjunction of secular and spiritual power was essential to the Popes, for carrying out their Antichristian pretensions.

"*Seven heads.*" These have a double meaning—Seven successive Forms of Government, and Rome's Seven Hills. As representing successive Forms of Government, these first seven belong to that Power or Empire in its Draconic character. The Eighth, or revived Seventh—the Papacy—belongs to that Power in its Bestial form, the last phase of the Roman Empire. They symbolize also Rome's Seven Hills, which were to be the Beast's seat or throne of empire, as they had been of the Dragon before him (Rev. xiii. 2).

THE SEVEN HEADS OF THE DRAGON, AND THE EIGHT HEADS OF THE ROMAN BEAST:

DANIEL VII. 7; REVELATION XIII. 1, 3; XVII. 3, 10–12

B.C.		*Heads.*	
753.	First Head:	KINGS.	Romulus, etc.
	Only this Head had yet come in Daniel's day.		
509.	Second ,,	CONSULS.	L. Jun. Brutus, L. Tarqu. Collat. etc.
498.	Third ,,	DICTATORS.	T. Lartius, etc.
451.	Fourth ,,	DECEMVIRS.	
443.	Fifth ,,	MILITARY TRIBUNES.	
	These five had fallen before the time of St. John.		
31.	Sixth ,,	EMPERORS.	Augustus, etc.
	This Head was in power in St. John's day.		
		(Crown worn.)	
A.D.			
292.	Seventh ,,	ABSOLUTE MONARCHS.	Diocletian, etc.
		(Diadem adopted.)	
363.	This Head was wounded to death at the Downfall of Heathenism.		
	The first Seven Heads are the same for Dragon and Beast.		
	The Christian Headship, being at Constantinople, does not appear at all on this Western Beast.		
	It begins in the interval between the "deadly wound" and the healing.		
476.	End of the Western Roman Empire.		
	Ten Horns grow.		
530, or 606.	Eighth Head: or Revived Seventh Head:	POPES.	Deadly wound healed.
	Rev. xiii. 3; xvii. 8.		
	The Last Form of Roman Power.		

The Ten Horns or Kingdoms.

These are to be sought on the territory not of the whole Roman Empire in its widest extent, but of the Western portion only, the territory peculiar to Rome, and never occupied by Greece. What is known as the Eastern Roman Empire was really Greek. In Daniel vii. 24 the Ten Kingdoms are said to arise *out of the Fourth Kingdom*; not necessarily out of the whole area it ever covered, but simply *out of it.*

The successive metal portions of the Great Image denote successive additions of territory as each Empire is formed, and also a transfer of supreme power to the new Empire. Each metal as it attains supreme power rules also over the portions of the Image above it. Thus the silver portion denotes the fresh territory added by the Medo-Persian Empire to that of Babylon, and the transfer of power over both to the new Empire thus extended. So with the brass. Similarly the iron portion of the Image denotes the fresh territory of the Western Empire of Rome which was added to the Eastern territories symbolized by the previous metals; also that the supreme power over the whole was to be transferred to the new Empire of Rome.

Hence it is clear that since the Ten Toes belong to the iron portion of the Image, the kingdoms they symbolize are to be sought, not in the Eastern territories of the previous Empires, but only in that part of the Roman Empire which was not included in the Grecian brass, or the Medo-Persian silver, or the Babylonian gold; that is to say, only in the Western Roman Empire, represented chiefly by modern Europe. This was pointed out long ago by the acute intellect of Sir Isaac Newton.

The notion that five of the Ten Kingdoms are to be sought in the East and five in the West is entirely without Scripture foundation, and indeed is directly contra-

dicted by Scripture. The two Legs of the Image are one composite symbol, representing the Roman Empire in its strongest and most united form, long before the era of division. On the Image itself, the division of the Roman Empire into East and West could not be put even as high up as the ankles ; it is not represented historically higher up than the instep.

How the Empire became Divided.

This twofold division began to be prepared by Diocletian, when the Form of Government he introduced became the Seventh Head (Absolute Monarchs), and he divided the Empire into four parts. This was in A.D. 292. By the fundamental change in the constitution so introduced it came to pass, that the Western part of the Empire ultimately was attached to the Seven-hilled capital, Rome ; Constantinople becoming the capital of the Eastern or Greek division.

The separation was effectually carried out between the first wounding of the Seventh Head and the rise of the Eighth, that is, of the revived Seventh, the Papal Head. Over the Western part only did the Gothic flood, in its flux and reflux, sweep away all the old Imperial Government, and make room for new kingdoms to rise. Over this part only was the authority of the Eighth or Papal Head properly or permanently established. On this area only, as more than twelve centuries of history prove, was a group of separate kingdoms established, the average number of which has remained practically the same to the present day.

The " Holy Roman Empire."

The " Holy Roman Empire "—which represents an idea dominant in men's minds during the Middle Ages, that there should be one great secular Roman Empire

and Emperor, as there was one great ecclesiastical Empire under the Pope—was more titular than anything else, and was never a powerful world Empire. Yet even as an idea, it was expressly distinct from the old Eastern division of the Roman Empire. It may be said to date from Charlemagne's coronation by the Pope, at Rome, on Christmas Day, A.D. 800; but as Charlemagne's realm fell to pieces after his death, and there was a long interregnum, the "Holy Roman Empire" is more correctly dated from Otto I, A.D. 962. This title was put an end to by Napoleon more than a hundred years ago, A.D. 1806; whereas in the Visions the Fourth Great Empire lasts quite to the end.

It will have been noticed also how the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets, which have to do with Greek or Eastern territory, are marked off from the first Four Trumpets, which have to do with Western or Roman territory (Rev. viii. 13).

Boundaries of the Western Portion.

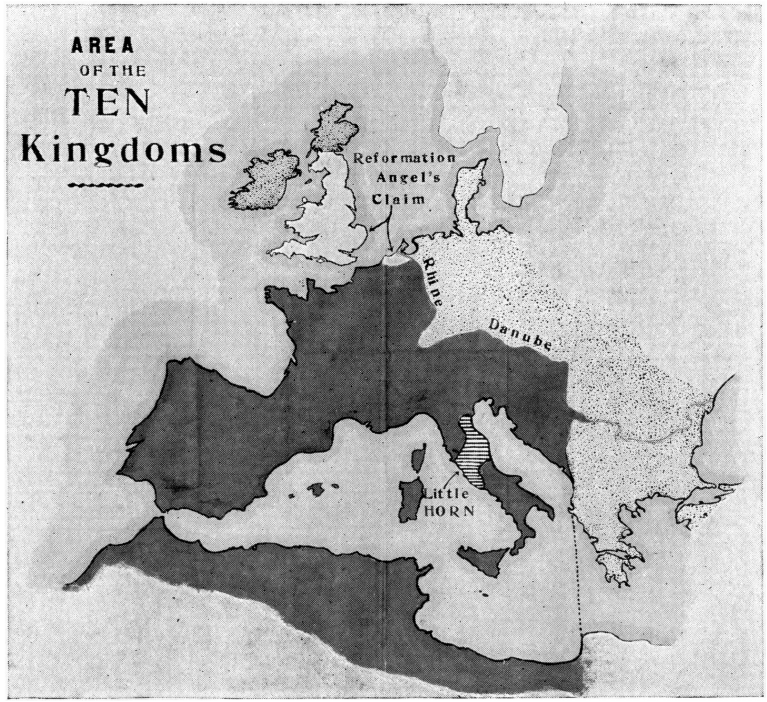
The boundaries of the Western portion of the Roman Empire, with which we are now concerned, are as follows, beginning from the North.

The Wall of Antoninus, that separated England from Scotland, reaching across between the Firths of Clyde and Forth.

The Rhine, from its old mouth in Holland, near Leyden, up its course to a point halfway between Strasburg and Basle. Thence down the Danube to Belgrade.

Southwards to Dyrrachium (Durazzo), and from thence across the Mediterranean Sea due south to the Syrtis Major, and the great African desert.

All East of the line from Belgrade to Africa belonged to the Constantinopolitan or Greek division of the Empire; all West of it to the Western or Roman. This included England, France, Spain and Portugal, the


AREA
OF THE
TEN
Kingdoms
Reformation
Angel's
Claim
Rhine
Danube
Little
HORN

African Province, Italy, and the countries between the Alps and the Rhine, the Danube, and the Save. These were anciently called Rhætia, Noricum, and Pannonia; and in modern times Switzerland, half Swabia, Bavaria, Austria, and Western Hungary.

The constituency of the Ten should be Romano-Gothic, the term Gothic including all kindred barbarian invaders; that is—each of the Ten we are seeking should be of Gothic or barbarian extraction, and placed upon some part of the area of the Western Empire of Rome. For the Ten Horns all rose with the Beast out of the inundating flood or sea, and as its product.

Time when the Horns arose.

The first list of Ten cannot be drawn up before the completion of the number ten on the platform of the Western Empire, yet it may be so before the rooting up of the three described in Daniel vii. 8, 20, 24 (see Paper III). For the Beast is shown emerging from the flood not at first with three or four horns, and the rest growing after, but already with ten.

The first list, then, cannot begin earlier than A.D. 476, the date of the extinction of the Western Empire by Odoacer, when first a barbaric Horn established its rule in central Italy; but it need not be later than A.D. 533, when the Greek Imperial Army struck down the Vandal and Ostrogothic Horns, and formed the Exarchate of Ravenna, which is not one of the primary Horns of the Romano-Gothic Beast. Moreover, the Franks, the most noted and important of all the nations of the West, did not form a Horn on the territory of the Western Empire till A.D. 486; when, emerging from their Batavian island under Clovis, they conquered Syagrius, the so-called "King of the Romans," at that time the ruling chief of the natives and barbarians of Soissons

and its neighbourhood. Thus we obtain dates within which to seek for a first list of Ten Kingdoms.

First List : A.D. 486–490.

1. Anglo-Saxons.
2. Franks.
3. Allemans.
4. Burgundians.
5. Visigoths.
6. Suevi.
7. Vandals.
8. Heruli.
9. Bavarians.
10. Ostrogoths.

This arrangement is geographical rather than chronological. The Saxons are named first because the most northern, but their Heptarchy was completed latest of all, A.D. 582, and so formed the tenth kingdom in order of time. They invaded Britain in 440, and their principalities, subordinated to the strongest for the time being, are often considered a monarchy, as is done here ; the germ of what is afterwards called the tenth part of the Great Papal City, in Revelation xi. 13.

Even after that, England was still one of the Ten Kingdoms, although in regard to her relation to the Pope, and as part of the Great Papal City, she "fell" in the Reformation earthquake.

Second List : A.D. 532 or 533.

1. Anglo-Saxons.
2. Franks of Central
3. Alleman-Franks of Eastern
4. Burgundic Franks of South-Eastern France.
5. Visigoths.
6. Suevi.
7. Vandals.
8. Ostrogoths in Italy.
9. Bavarians.
10. Lombards.

At this date a general Papal connexion of the kingdoms had begun, which at a later epoch was completed.

Other lists may be made between these two, and many more at dates subsequent to these. It will be found that Ten remains the characteristic number, though —as the Visions lead us to expect—it is not strictly maintained at every moment. The tenfold character is dominant throughout, but the "mingling themselves . . ." (Dan. ii. 43) implies temporary and partial unions, then renewed separations. These changes will, of course, be continually altering the list of actual kingdoms, and there will be frequent variation, but within narrow limits. Ten is the medium in all these oscillations.

The Ten Horns Diademed.

In Revelation xii. 3 the Horns on the Dragon did not yet wear the diadems; a Head still reigned at the era symbolized, and the diadems accordingly were on the Heads. But the change came ere long. The barbarian Gothic kings, after their first conquests, were generally anxious to receive appointment from the Roman Emperor—from the Western while one remained, and then from the Eastern. The appointments they sought were those of Masters-General, Patricians, or Consuls of the Empire. This was in order to legitimatize their government in the eyes of their Roman subjects, who greatly exceeded in numbers the barbarian population that had conquered.

It was usually agreed that the bust and names of the Roman Emperor, with the distinctive Imperial badge of the diadem, and not those of the Gothic prince, should be stamped on at least the gold barbarian coins. Hence there is a semi-Roman transitional state of the Gothic coinage, except as to the Vandals in Africa, dating from about A.D. 450 to 550.

The Diadem on Gothic Coins.

But at the opening of the sixth century, Clovis the Frank had the sovereignty of Gaul awarded him, with the title of Consul and Augustus, and the badge of the Roman Imperial diadem. The grant was renewed in 532 by Justinian to Clovis' children, with full power over the coinage, and that his purely Frank money should have currency throughout the Roman Empire.

In the course of the sixth century the example of the Frank king, in stamping his diademed effigy on the coinage, was followed by others of the barbaric princes; the Lombards, or perhaps the Bavarians, coming last, soon after A.D. 600.

Thus, at the opening of the sixth century, not only did the Gothic princes exercise in their own dominions the prerogatives of supreme sovereignty, but also they had begun to appropriate the Roman badge of such sovereignty, that is, the diadem. By about the close of that century, their assumption of the diadem had become general, if not universal, as their coins now extant plainly testify.

The diadems on the Horns signify that the Fourth Empire, in the West, was now actually broken up and divided into separate reigning powers.

The Beast from the Sea: Rev. xiii. 2, 3.

This Beast is Satan's grand instrument for warring against them that kept God's commands and the testimony of Jesus. It is the Papacy and Papal Roman Christendom; the succession of Popes themselves being the Beast's last ruling Head, with the great mouth; and the Ten-king Empire, subordinate to and inspired by him in Western Europe, being the Beast's body. It answers to the Little Horn of Daniel's Fourth Beast (Dan. vii. 8), that had the great mouth speaking blasphemies against

God, that warred against the saints, lording it over the ten contemporary kingdoms, and prospering for forty-two months.

The Beast was made up of the three previous Beasts of Daniel vii., Leopard, Bear, and Lion. For the Papal rule was to combine in itself the characteristics of the previous world-empires. The feet of the bear signified power to oppress the saints; the mouth of the lion signified strength to tear and destroy them.

His Helpers.

This Antichristian Power is exhibited under a three-fold symbol—the Beast himself, the Lamb-like Beast his attendant, and the Image. Of these three the Beast, or rather his ruling Head, is undoubtedly the principal. The Second Beast is only his chief minister or agent, directing his efforts to making the world worship the first Beast.

Hence to try to explain the first Beast as the secular Emperor and Empire of Western Christendom, and the second as the Pope and Papal Empire, is a most plain and fatal error. History is against it. Did not the Papacy always claim to be far above the Secular Power? Did it not so act as well as speak? Did the world worship those secular emperors, as the Beast or his ruling Head was to be worshipped, and this at the instigation of the Pope?

The Dragon gives him his Throne.

"*The Dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority.*" Satan gives to the Beast the throne and power and influence which he (Satan) had so long possessed and exercised in heathen Rome. This Beast, then, is the Dragon's creature and substitute; and the real author of his success is expressly declared to have

been the Dragon or the Devil, who, after long animating and reigning in the old Roman Empire, now gives to the Beast his seat and throne. The Dragon does not himself directly act, though remaining on the scene (Rev. xvi. 13); he has his representative, or Vicar, or substitute, in the Beast.

Transition from Draconic to Bestial is direct.

The Dragon or Heathen Power gives his throne and authority to the Beast or Papal Power, and that all through the Beast's reign. So the transition from the Draconic condition of Rome and its Empire to the Ten-horned Bestial condition is direct; that is to say, no other Head or condition intervenes, though the transition includes the Dragon's fall, the wounding of the Seventh Head, and the circumstances accompanying.

The Christian Headship of the Roman Empire, being at Constantinople, does not appear at all on this Western Beast. That Christian Headship began in the interval between the "deadly wound" of the Seventh Head, and the healing whereby it became in a certain sense an Eighth Head.

The Dragon's Seven Heads are the same as the Seven Heads of the Beast his successor, but they are seven only, and not in any sense eight like the Beast's. Hence the seven earliest governing Heads, or Forms of Government, of the Empire or Power symbolized by both Dragon and Beast, must have belonged to it in its Draconic form, and only the eighth, or revived seventh, to it in its Ten-horned Bestial form; exactly as stated by the Angel (Rev. xvii. 11). "*The Beast . . . is the eighth*" —the eighth phase of the Roman Empire.

Deathstroke of the Seventh Head.

"*One of his heads as though . . . smitten unto death.*" The Seventh Head was cut down, together with professed

Heathenism itself, by the sword of civil law and authority; insomuch that the language of history, unconsciously adopting the Apocalyptic emblem, speaks of the Christian Imperial Edicts, from Constantine to Theodosius, as having inflicted "a deadly wound" on Heathenism. In fact, the Heathen Head was amputated, while the members of the monster lay quivering in death. Never thenceforward any more was there a Heathen Imperial Head to the Roman Empire.

The Imperial Head of the Western portion of the Empire (at that time by profession Christian) received its deathstroke, so far as the exercise of sovereignty was concerned, in A.D. 476, when the Emperor Romulus Augustulus was compelled to abdicate, and Odoacer became first barbarian King of Italy. It must be remembered, however, that there can be no Christian Headship on the Dragon. The Eighth Head of the Beast (the revived seventh) was by profession Christian.

The Deathstroke Healed.

But the deathstroke was healed; the Devil being the surgeon. "The wound was fatal; the Beast was wounded to death; but a supernatural agency of Satan props up the lost life, and is the admiration, on that very account, of the world that looks on." This explains Revelation xvii. 8, 11. "*The beast that was, and is not,*" is the Roman Heathen Dragon cast down and slain under his Seventh Head; "*and is about to come up,*" as the Beast from the Sea or Abyss, the new form and Head under which he revives.

History of the Beast from the Sea.

That the simple Bishop of Rome should ever have thought to found upon his episcopacy the extraordinary character of Christ's Vicar on earth, and thereby to add

to his episcopal mitre the triregno crown of super-imperial majesty; moreover, that when he displayed himself in this character of Christ's Vicar, the common sense as well as the moral sense of Christendom should have so prostrated itself as for full twelve centuries to admire, reverence, and even adore the usurper—the whole scheme and its accomplishment is a phenomenon so wonderful, as to be accountable for in no other way than from the influence of the Old Serpent in blinding the minds of men.

The Papal Headship.

The Papal Headship began to show itself contemporarily with the establishment of the Romano-Gothic kingdoms; and after the universal adhesion to it of their kings, it continued thenceforth their only Head, and this in the distinct character of Christ's Vicar. "In the Pontificate Rome revived as with a second birth." "The Supreme Pontiff is the substitute of the Emperor."

Rome being the head of the world, the Church of Rome was considered the head of all the Churches; and the Bishop of Rome consequently had high ecclesiastical rank, as Bishop of the Imperial city and capital. When Constantinople became capital, and the division was made into East and West, with Ravenna as Western capital, and when the barbarian capitals began to rise; then also began to be unfolded the design of Rome's patron and inspirer, and the claim to Supremacy was put forth on purely spiritual grounds.

How the Supremacy was Claimed.

Thus: Rome was the See of Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, on whom the whole Church was built; the scene of his martyrdom, and his burial place. Peter received the keys and the power of binding and loosing;

he still lived and exercised judgment in his successors at Rome. "Peter spoke in Leo." The Bishop of Rome, as successor of Peter and Vicar of Christ, was the official guardian of the Catholic Faith and of the Traditions of the Fathers. His teaching was ordained with a view to the illumination of all throughout the world. In things divine kings were to bow the neck to priests. The Pope himself was the Head of Priests, whom Christ's own voice had set over the universal Church. As God's Vicar he was judge, but could be judged by no one.

Thus he vaulted at once from the mere ecclesiastical rank of Patriarch of the West to that of supremacy over all the kings and potentates of the world. The haughty assumption was followed up, confirmed, and enlarged by the next successors; and in this manner the foundation was laid of the subsequent Papal Supremacy.

Domination over the Ten Kingdoms.

Within the century, from about A.D. 430 to 530, the Roman Papacy began to assume the principle of domination over the Ten Kingdoms of Western Christendom, as well as of usurping Christ's place in the Church, of blasphemy against God (in the sense of claiming His attributes), and of hostility to the Saints.

In that period it began to be not only an ecclesiastical Patriarchal Power, supreme in rank and authority beyond all lawful measure over the clergy of the West. This might have been—as with the Constantinopolitan Patriarch over the Eastern clergy, he being nevertheless a slave under the eye of his master, the Greek Emperor—and yet no domination have resulted over kings and kingdoms. It was the spiritual authority officially attached to the Pope that gave him headship over the kings, and was the principle of his usurpations; an authority distinct from, though mainly upheld by, his ecclesiastical power over the clergy. This spiritual

authority was derived from his being supposed to be officially the representative of the Apostle Peter, with the power of the keys committed to him by Christ, and thus by speedy consequence Christ's Vicar upon earth.

Submission of the Kings.

Though the kings of Western Christendom were bound to this subjection to the Pope, even from Valentinian's time, by the Roman Law, yet some years elapsed ere they acknowledged it, as a matter of fact. At the formation of their kingdoms, the Paganism and Arianism of the Goths was a bar to their personal and full adhesion to the Roman See.

But in A.D. 496 the Frank Clovis, on the occasion of his victory over the Alemanni, embraced the Catholic Faith as that of Rome, and received the title of "Eldest Son of the Church," transmitted for nearly 1,300 years to his successors. Then followed Burgundy, 509; Bavaria and Portugal, 558; Spain, 589; Lombardy, 600; England, 597–604.

Sanction to Papal Claims.

Early legal sanction was given to these Papal claims. It should be remembered that the Imperial Edicts were the law of the Roman Empire.

A.D. 380. A law of the truly Christian Emperor Theodosius was a primary Imperial recognition of the Roman Bishop's Patriarchal pre-eminence; and an incautious expression in it about St. Peter may have had the unintended effect of seeming to support his claims as the standard and consequently the judge of the Christian faith: "It is our pleasure that all the nations governed by us should steadfastly adhere to the religion taught by St. Peter to the Romans; that which faithful tradition has preserved, and which is now professed by

the Pontiff Damasus." He added, however, "and professed also by Peter Bishop of Alexandria, a man of Apostolic holiness." That he did not recognize the Roman Bishop as supreme or sole judge of the faith appears from the Alexandrian Bishop's authority being placed side by side with that of the Roman; still the effect was doubtless to support the pretensions of the Roman See.

A.D. 445. The Emperors Valentinian III and Theodosius II, induced by Pope Leo, issued conjointly a memorable Decree, chiefly ecclesiastical, and bearing on the subordination of the Western clergy to Rome, but also designating the Roman Pope as director of universal Christendom, and recognizing his right and primacy as grounded primarily on Peter's merit, not merely on the circumstance of Rome being originally the Imperial city. Thus this Decree yet more strongly supported the lofty claims of the Popedom. From this time the power of the Roman Bishops grew up under the protection of the Roman Emperor himself.

A.D. 533. Decretal Letter of Justinian to the Pope, which thenceforth became part of the Civil Law, solemnly recognizing the Pope as Head of all the Churches, and Head and Judge of the faith. This was just when the Western Romano-Gothic Powers had begun to give in their adhesion to the Roman See, as the seat of Christ's Vicar on earth. This may be regarded as the date at which the saints were delivered into the hand of the Roman Pontiff.

A.D. 607. Decree of the Emperor Phocas. So far as an Imperial Decree might go, this confirmed the right of the Roman See and Bishops to the headship of all Churches; and expressly in contradistinction to their only rival in Christendom, the See and Bishop of Constantinople. This epoch is memorialized by the Pillar of Phocas, still standing at Rome, excavated in 1818. At about this

epoch both the Anglo-Saxon and the Lombard kings, last of the Romano-Gothic princes, gave in their adhesion to the Roman See, and so completed the formal submission of the Western kings and people to the religion and the supremacy of Papal Rome. In the following year, A.D. 608, Phocas further marked his favour to the Pope by giving him the Pantheon, dedicated to Cybele and all the Heathen gods, but now dedicated to the Virgin Mary and all the martyrs. It was a transfer of the spirit of Paganism into Rome's professedly Christian ritual.

A New Head.

Thus the Bishops of Rome began to be a new Head of Empire at Rome, and in the rise of the Papal Supremacy the deadly wound of Rome's last Pagan Head was healed.

"Like Thebes, Babylon, or Carthage, the name of Rome might have been erased from the earth, if the city had not been animated by a vital principle, which again restored her to honour and dominion." "The tradition . . . that a Jewish tent-maker and a fisherman had formerly been executed at Rome; . . . and after 500 years their genuine or fictitious relics were adored as the palladium of Christian Rome, and their shrines resorted to from East and West." (Gibbon.)

About this time the Bishopric of Rome was filled by one of living energy, the first and greatest of the Gregories, well fitted to turn to account the miraculous sanctity and superstitions of the spot, and to supply precedents for the lofty pretensions of succeeding Popes.

The temporal dominion of the Popes was also a healing of the deadly wound as regards empire. The Imperial power at Rome had been slain in A.D. 476; under the Popes it revived, and continued more than twelve centuries. The Popes were kings as well as priests; they ranked as sovereigns in Europe; the power they exer-

cised was temporal as well as spiritual. They claimed to be subject to no power on earth, but to be king of kings; and for ages they acted accordingly, having territory, armies, fleets, and ambassadors, not as priests, but as kings.

The Earth Wonders: Rev. xiii. 3, 4.

"*The whole earth wondered.*" The expression, "the whole earth," and the similar ones in verse 7, must be limited by the usage of Scripture. Thus in Daniel ii. 37, 38; iv. 20–22; Jeremiah xxvii. 6–8; the terms used in reference to Nebuchadnezzar denote universal dominion. Yet his Empire never reached into Europe, nor perhaps into Africa beyond Egypt; hence it is clear that the terms are used not in the strict but in a popular sense, referring to the Eastern kingdoms then prominent in history. Over the rest there might be a virtual supremacy, in their acknowledgment of the paramount power of Babylon, but there could be no direct control. The expression is used of Alexander the Great (Dan. viii. 5); of the Roman Empire (Luke ii. 1); of the sphere of action of the three evil spirits like frogs (Rev. xvii. 14). Its meaning widens as history passes on.

"The world in which we live is in physical extent vastly bigger than the first civilized world of old Greece, vastly bigger than the far wider Mediterranean world of Rome. What the Ægean and its borderlands once were, Ocean and his borderlands, spread over so many continents and islands, are now." (Freeman.)

Universal Submission to the Pope.

The "wondering" here spoken of is symbolical; it implies the deference, awe, and subjection yielded by an inferior to a superior. The universal submission to the Pope is almost the most notorious as well as the

most wonderful fact in the history of Western Christendom. On the part of kings and of people he commanded universal reverence, as well as faith in his monstrous claims and pretensions, throughout the long Middle Ages.

The Roman Pontiff is twice crowned—once with the mitre, his symbol of an universal bishopric; and once with the tiara, in token of universal Imperial supremacy. But as all were not Israel that were of Israel, so not all are of necessity Papists in the strict sense that are subject to the Papacy. From the warning in Revelation xviii. 4, it may be inferred that some of God's true people are in the apostate Church, as Lot was in Sodom, even to the very eve of its destruction.

"*They worshipped the dragon.*" When they worshipped the Beast, they were in reality worshipping the Dragon, because it was he that had given his authority to the Beast. "*Who is like unto the Beast?*" This is an obvious imitation of the ascriptions of praise to God, in such passages as, "Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath his seat on high?"

Marvellous Ascendancy.

All this description is a picture of the Papacy in its prime; not at its first emergence, nor yet in its injured or decaying condition. Twice it is said (Rev. xiii. 2, 4) that "the Dragon gave him his power"; and verily without Satanic aid it is hard to conceive how the system of the Papacy could ever have obtained the marvellous ascendancy over mankind that for ages it enjoyed. It is an expression not of human but of Satanic genius. By means of counterfeit Christianity, Satan has through the Papacy mightily resisted the spread of true Christianity. The forms have been copied, the realities set aside. In this manner did Jannes and Jambres resist Moses.

"It is impossible to deny that the polity of the Church of Rome is the very masterpiece of human wisdom. In truth, nothing but such a polity could, against such assaults, have borne up such doctrines. The experience of 1,200 eventful years, the ingenuity and patient care of forty generations of statesmen, have improved that polity to such perfection, that among the contrivances for deceiving and oppressing mankind it occupies the highest place." (Macaulay.)

The Mouth Speaking Blasphemies: Rev. xiii. 5, 6.

"*There was given to him a mouth.*" It was given him by the Dragon (ver. 2), and compare James iii. 6, "The tongue . . . is set on fire by hell." In the New Testament "blasphemy" specially denotes an assumption of what is Divine; John x. 33, " . . . because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." This Power blasphemes against God in appropriating to himself Christ's functions, honours, and prerogatives, and parodying the God-Man as Man-God.

The Pope assumed to have been appointed Christ's plenipotentiary Vicar on earth. In this assumption alone is ample fulfilment of the foretold blasphemy. He might judge all, but could be judged by none; might make laws, but was above laws; king of kings, as the sun above the moon; maker and unmaker of kings, with authority to assign kingdoms and take them away. As Christ's appointed representative and impersonator, each ecclesiastical and spiritual office and title of Christ in Scripture attached also to him; the Universal Shepherd, the Door, the Truth, "His Holiness," Husband of the Church, signified by the marriage ring in the ceremonial of his inauguration.

To him belonged the keys; the power to give Indulgences; to elevate the dead to the rank of saints; to issue anathemas. The promises of the latter day he

cited as to be fulfilled in him, and proclaimed that the glory of the predicted consummation consisted but in this, that all kings throughout the whole world were then at length to bow down to him, all nations to do him service. In short, he claimed to be reverenced even as Christ, and in every way inculcated Christ's impersonation in him on the minds and eyes of men.

A Monstrous Usurpation.

All this answers, as a translation in terms, to the title Antichrist,[1] in its first sense of a Christ instead of the true one; and inasmuch as it was an utter falsehood and usurpation, it answers also to the second sense of the word, a hostile, counter-Christ; but in either case a Christ, not a professed infidel. For outside of the Church there is no Antichrist, in the Biblical sense of the term.

This monstrous usurpation was nothing less than a perversion of the very essence of religion. It directed the eye, the thought, and the heart of each seeker of salvation Romeward instead of heavenward; to the Pope instead of to Christ. The Popes became Vice-christs or Antichrists with reference to each of the three great offices to which Christ has been anointed for man's salvation—Prophet, Priest, and King. On this system God's Word was sure to become more and more neglected, and sooner or later altogether forbidden.

The Pope himself assumed to be the key-bearer of heaven, thus blaspheming God's tabernacle. What Scripture authority is there for his canonizing human beings?

[1] It should be remembered that neither of the titles "Antichrist," "Man of Sin," is found in the Revelation. These Visions identify and describe the Papacy throughout the whole course of its history; then those titles, from other prophecies, fit in, and further illustrate the subject.

War with the Saints: Rev. xiii. 7.

"*It was given unto him to make war.*" Given unto him by the Dragon, whose direct object in giving the Beast his seat and power and great authority was to make war with the remnant of the Woman's seed, "Which kept the commandments of God, and had the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. xii. 17). The phrase implies a long-continued warfare. It was war in word and in deed, by blasphemous and opprobrious epithets, as well as by bloody persecutions and "crusades" against so-called heretics. These unfortunate victims were hunted down like wild beasts, deprived of civil privileges, searched for and tortured by the Inquisition, and massacred wholesale.

It is not said that from the beginning of his 1,260 days he should adopt such a course of violence and persecution of the Saints, as must necessarily force upon them the recognition of him in his true character. In Revelation xiii. 5, it is said, "There was given to him authority to continue," or "to do his works," "forty and two months"; and in Daniel vii. 25, "They shall be given into his hand until . . ." That is to say, he is allowed to have authorized rule and domination over the saints and others throughout all that period, and they recognize their political or ecclesiastical subjection to him.

But this does not imply the exercise of his authority and power all the while against them, in the way of active persecution and warfare. On the contrary, whereas the paganized Christians were to tread the Holy City throughout the 1,260 days, and thus cause the Witnesses to testify in sackcloth; yet not till that period was far advanced would the Beast make war on them and their Gospel-witnessing, and so force on their notice the crowning feature of his Antichristian character. Moreover, the Image (Rev. xiii. 15) causes as many as will not worship to be killed. But the Image is later

than the Lamb-like Beast that formed it, and that Lamb-like Beast rises after the other Beast; hence the words and acts of the Image must be later than the beginning of the 1,260 days of the Beast's reign.

Authority given him: Rev. xiii. 7, 8.

"*Over every tribe, people, tongue, nation.*" As with verses 3 and 4 above, there must be limitation of these expressions according to the context and the facts of history. Absolute universality cannot be insisted on. This prophecy refers exclusively to the sphere of the Beast. during the time of his triumphant reign. The "earth" in question is the Roman earth; the "tribes" are those of the professing Israel; the "people, tongues, and nations" are, as comparison with Daniel's prophecy proves, those represented by the Ten Horns.

Hence the nations belonging to Eastern Churches, whether Greek, Coptic, Nestorian, Armenian, or any other, are geographically out of the question. They form no part of the territory peculiar to Rome, and are not numbered among the Ten Horns. Modern Protestant nations, on the other hand, are chronologically out of the question, for this description applies especially to the culmination of the power of the Beast, which was just prior to the revival of Protestantism.

It is simply predicted that in the sphere of his power—the Roman earth—and during the height of his power—that is, during the Dark Ages—all save true believers would "worship the Beast," that is, recognize and show reverence and submission to his power. And it is a notorious fact that throughout Western Europe, and throughout the Dark Ages, all men reverenced, served, and obeyed the Popes of Rome.[1]

[1] See Papal Claims in the Canon Law; Hole, *Manual of English Church History*, p. 144. Also the Pope's Bull deposing Henry VIII, *ib.*, p. 147.

God's Law of Retribution : Rev. xiii. 9, 10.

"*If any man is for captivity.*" God, who makes use of wicked men, warriors, conquerors, and tyrants, as rods wherewith to scourge His rebellious people, does not on that account excuse their wickedness. In their turn they also are judged; as witness Pharaoh and Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon. This principle of the Divine action is clearly announced over and over again in Scripture, and especially in connexion with the doom of the Antichristian Papal Power; " . . . *into captivity he goeth.*"

"*Here is . . . patience.*" In this great Law of God, the Law of Retribution, consolation is given to the persecuted. Their enemies would lead them into captivity, but a worse captivity awaits themselves. Their enemies would kill with the sword, but with a sharper sword than that of human power they should themselves be killed. Is there not enough in that to inspire the saints with patience and faith? Well may they endure with unfainting hearts when they remember who is on their side; for "it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to them that afflict them," and to them that are afflicted "rest" (2 Thess. i. 6, 7)—rest with apostles, prophets, martyrs, the whole Church of God; rest never again to be disturbed either by sin or by sorrow

THE ATTENDANT BEAST : Rev. xiii. 11, 12.

Daniel, from his far distant view of these times, saw only one Beast here. St. John, much closer at hand, sees it accompanied by another Beast, and by its Image. This second Beast, and the Image, are the great earthly means and helps to the first Beast's assumption and acting out of his prerogatives, and carrying on his warfare.

This Second Beast seems to have been on a smaller

scale than the former, for that first Beast is of the size of a lion, whereas this one is like a lamb. It comes up out of the earth, after the other Beast had risen from the sea; that is, it comes up out of human society and its progress, its origin and gradual development taking place during the reign and growth of the Empire denoted by the first Beast. It comes into prominence out of a consolidated and ordered state of things, such as was the ecclesiastical organization out of which the Romish priesthood grew up into power; as contrasted with the "Sea" of anarchy and commotion of peoples, out of which arose the political supremacy of the first Beast, or Papal Imperial Power.

It had a covering skin and horns like a lamb. The horns are usually taken off with the skin of horned animals, so that he who assumed the covering skin would appear with the horns. It spake; hence, in Revelation xvi. 13, and xix. 20, it is called the False Prophet. Its appearance was mild, unlike that of the other; but its words, which carry its real character, were fierce, cruel, unrelenting. Both alike are "wild beasts," hostile to God's flock and fold.

A Subordinate and Helper.

This second Beast is a subordinate and helper, not a principal. The difficulties in the way of supposing him to be a king in his own right are insuperable. It is the first Beast, not this one, that answers to the Little Horn of Daniel's Fourth Beast (Dan. vii. 8). The Second Beast is the Prime Minister of the first. He is not a successor, but a supporter; he is lost in the splendour and importance of the other. After his rise, which is later than that of the first Beast, the two are inseparable companions, throughout their joint career, and in their ruin (Rev. xix. 20); and the second exercises the power of the first, and leads men to worship the first. Thus

they are necessarily synchronous, and in close alliance one with the other.

As the second is smaller than the first, and is a subordinate, not a principal, it cannot be explained of the Pope and Pontifical Empire, while the first is said to symbolize the Secular Emperor and Empire of Western Christendom. This would be contrary alike to historical fact, and to the claims of the Papacy to be above all secular power.

Two Horns.

"*He had two horns.*" This Beast represents some class, or corporate body, under a twofold hierarchy ruling it; yet not the principal upon the scene, but subordinate to that represented by the first Beast. The ruling Head of that one is the principal; this one is only his chief minister or agent, directing his efforts to making men worship the first; and all this power is exercised as derived from, overseen by, and responsible to the first, and with the intent and purpose of helping the first to play off his part as a deity on earth, and a usurper of Divine functions, titles, offices, prerogatives, and dignity.

For all is said to be done "*in his sight.*" This refers not to mere isolated acts, but to general conduct, as passing before the eyes of the other. Thus, in a similar but better sense, it is said: "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." "The ways of men are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings." "Did evil in the sight of the Lord." "They were both righteous before God." "I charge thee before God." In all these cases the presence referred to is that of a supervising superior; and the phrases are very specially appropriate in regard to ministers of religion, such as priests or prophets ministering before God.

Wolves in Sheep's Clothing.

The symbol corresponds with our Lord's description of false teachers (Matt. vii. 15), "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." They wear the outward appearance of Christ's sheep, bear Christian names, make Christian profession. The Lamb-like Beast, then, can scarce represent anything else but a body of clergy, acting in support of the Power symbolized by the first Beast. The prophecy sums them up in this symbol as one combined body, all organized and subordinated under the now manifested Antichrist, who has risen soon after the subsidence of the Gothic flood.

Spake as a Dragon.

"*Horns like unto a lamb . . . spake as a dragon.*" Under a show of preaching the Gospel, they would elaborate a practical denial of Christ, and instil the poison of the old serpent. They would not take only God's Word as the supreme rule of doctrine, but would add to it the traditions and commandments of men. So their doctrine would not be the pure truth, but would be tainted with falsehood. They would teach not simply the worship of God, but also, as in Paganism, the worship of dead men; not the mystery of godliness, but the mystery of iniquity; they would preach not Christ, but Antichrist. The voice bewrayeth them.

The Dragon was a murderer as well as a liar. These would preach up crusades against so-called "heretics," who in reality were the saints of Christ; would urge on the crusaders, sentence to death, and assist at the executions. Though their appearance might be sacerdotal, their words and deeds would be those of the Dragon.

The Papal Clergy.

The symbol represents the Papal clergy united under the Pope in his ecclesiastical character as the Western Patriarch; they, moreover, acting so as to support him in his far loftier usurpation of the function of Christ's Vicar on earth.

The twofold character of the Papacy must be kept distinct. There is (1) the immeasurably highest, mightiest, but usurped character of Christ's Vicar on earth, with consequent headship over kings and people. In token of this royal, or rather super-royal authority, the Pope wears the triple crown. Then there is (2) his patriarchal headship over the clerical body. In token of this sacerdotal or ecclesiastical authority, he wears the Mitre.

Whatever authority the Papal clergy possessed in their sacerdotal functions was regarded as derived from the Pope, and it was all exercised "in his sight"—"Coram Petro." "In the sight of Peter"—that is, under cognisance of, and responsibility to, him as their Head, as Universal Patriarch.

"*He exerciseth all the authority of the first beast.*" Specially the Power of the Keys, as it was called, first spiritual, then temporal; absolving from sin, communicating grace by seven Sacraments, continually offering a so-called propitiatory sacrifice, delivering or solacing souls in Purgatory, and opening Paradise. The administration of all this was delegated by the Pope to the Romish priesthood alone; first to the Metropolitan Bishops and Abbots, by the gift of the *pallium*, or otherwise; then through them to the inferior hierarchy, secular and monastic; then to the subordinate monks and clergy; all, however, "before," as responsible to, the Pope.

The analogy of military fiefs was applied to benefices. The beneficed clergy, in their various grades, from parish priests

to the archbishops, became practically the "men" of the Pope; just as in England the landowners, great and small, became the "men" of the King. (Galton: *Attitude towards Eng. R. Catholics*, p. 34.)

The Western Patriarch.

Till the close of the second century the Christian Churches were each under the independent government of their own bishops. Then began the distinction of Metropolitan bishops; the bishop of the Metropolis presiding, for reasons of order, at the Provincial Councils. This office gradually became enlarged, and a certain pre-eminence, not of authority but of rank and privilege, was yielded to the Metropolitans of the capitals of Italy, Syria, and Egypt; that is, of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, especially of Rome.

On the establishment of Christianity and the union of Church and State in the Roman Empire, the authority of Metropolitans, and the precedence of these three patriarchs, was solemnly recognized, confirmed, and enlarged; and on the erection of Constantinople into the Metropolis of the East, similar privileges were granted to its Bishop as a fourth Patriarch; soon after, also to the Bishop of Jerusalem.

There being thus four Eastern Patriarchs—of Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria—their mutual interference, the supremacy of their one common Emperor at Constantinople, and later on the Saracen invasion, all checked their unlimited ecclesiastical and secular growth.

But no such obstacles prevailed against the great Western Patriarch at Rome, to hinder his advance unto direct and paramount supremacy over the clergy of Western Christendom. Ecclesiastical laws by Roman Emperors, before and during the dissolution of the Empire of the West, tended greatly to promote and

confirm this supremacy; and that not for a time only, but permanently.

Steps were taken towards the complete subjugation of the Western clergy, and reducing them under a perfect system of ecclesiastical despotism; resulting in their subserviency to the Pope, as Christ's Vicar, and in the exercise of their influence to uphold him in his place. They showed fidelity rather to the Pope than to their secular sovereign, when the two came into conflict. Bishops were such "by the grace," not of God, but "of the Apostolic See."

Sanction to the Papal Claims.

At the request of Pope Damasus and his Roman Council, there was issued, in A.D. 378, the Law of Gratian and Valentinian to the Prætorian Prefects of Gaul and Italy, so including the whole Western Empire, ordaining that in case of a charge against an ecclesiastic, his Metropolitan was to be the judge, but with liberty of appeal for the accused to Rome. If the charge was against the Metropolitan himself, the Roman Bishop was to be the judge, without appeal.

So Imperial Authorization was given to the Papal jurisdiction over all the Western clergy. The Bishops having now to write to Rome for direction in doubtful cases, the Pope answered by Decretal Epistles, to which afterwards as much authority was attached as to the Holy Scriptures. At the same time he appointed one Metropolitan in each kingdom to represent him, and to see to their publication and enforcement.

When the Bishop of Arles resisted his encroachments, the Emperors Valentinian III and Theodosius II, in A.D. 445, issued an important Imper al Decree, sharply rebuking the presumptuousness of resistance to the Holy See, bidding the whole body of Bishops to do no-

thing without his approbation, and the universal clergy to obey him as their ruler. Whereupon bolder steps were taken towards the more complete subjugation of the Western clergy to Rome, by the same Pope Leo on whose application the Imperial Decree had been issued.

In his Decretals the clergy were subjected to the Bishops; the Bishop to the Metropolitan, specially as to Episcopal Ordination; the Synod of Bishops, in the election of a Metropolitan, to the Papal Vicar; the Vicar himself, of course, as Leo well reminds his Vicars, to the Pope (or Peter) himself. The system of ecclesiastical despotism was now complete and perfect in conception; but the agitations of the Gothic kingdoms, and the general Arianism of the Gothic kings, separating them from Rome, prevented for a while its full accomplishment. Justinian's code, first published in A.D. 529, mainly confirmed in regard to ecclesiastics the decree of Gratian.

The Lamb-skin Pallium.

Even the above laws were not sufficient to overcome existing hindrances, and to accomplish Leo's scheme of domination over the Western clergy. Pope Gregory the Great, at the close of the sixth century, enforced in the Western kingdoms the rule that the Metropolitan must receive Papal sanction in order to exercise his functions. The token of this sanction was a lamb-skin *pallium* or pall, from Rome, blest and presented by the Pope; and ever since the time of Gregory I, the *pallium* has been essential to the office of the Papal Archbishop, and consequently to the ordination and constitution of the clerical body under him.

The scheme was completed by Wilfrid or Boniface, one hundred years later, who induced the Bishops of the German and Frank clergy to make a vow of implicit obedience to the See of Rome; the *pallium* being requi-

site for Metropolitans as before. The custom of making this vow soon became established among the Western clergy. Thus they became united as one body under one head, the Pope of Rome, as Western Patriarch or Universal Bishop.

Bishops and Abbots.

The Bishops presiding over the parochial or secular clergy, and the Abbots or Generals of Orders over the monastic or regular, answer to the Two Horns of this Lamb-like Beast. Each alike was powerful in Christendom.

The celibacy of the Seculars had detached them from other ties, and transformed them into a kind of monastic order. The Bishop's or Abbot's mitre was anciently cleft from front to back, so as to give the appearance of horns; whence they used to be called in the Middle Ages "*cornuti*," "horned."

It is the testimony of almost all the ecclesiastical history of Western Christendom that the clergy did for the most part unite in making the Roman earth and its inhabitants worship the Papal Ruler of Christendom; the worship being that of reverence, submission, and obedience. They were like "an army" of priests prepared for the support of the Antichrist.

Great Signs, and Fire from Heaven: Rev. xiii. 13.

An obvious fulfilment of this feature of the description is in the asserted power of Popes and priesthood to call forth and hurl the judicial fire of heaven, through anathemas and excommunications, against enemies. They spoke of these as "lightnings" and "thunderbolts." Whole kingdoms were laid under interdict, the entire body of the clergy assisting; the Churches were closed, the Sacraments not administered, the dead deprived of Christian burial. As under the old Pagan

superstition, the very locality as well as the person thus struck was deemed accursed of heaven.

Another fulfilment is to be seen in the lying miracles of the Romish clergy. There is also the everyday miracle of Transubstantiation, which seems referred to here. Under the Levitical dispensation, as well as under the Patriarchal, the descent of fire from heaven upon men marked their destruction from God; but when it descended upon the sacrifice, it was a sign of favour, and of the acceptance of the sacrifice as a substitute for the offerer. All this is parodied by the priest sacrificing "for the living and the dead" at the Mass.

The Attendant Beast, and the Harlot.

This two-horned Beast symbolizes the Papal *clergy*, the officials of the Papacy, as a class distinct from the laity. The Harlot of Revelation xvii. is the Roman Church with her adherents and possessions, her Church buildings, monasteries, convents, lands, sumptuous worship and ceremonial, wealth and influence of all kinds, dispersed throughout the world. These are her "flesh," which the Ten Horns and the Beast are to "eat"—a process now going on before our eyes.

This explains how that the Beast and the False Prophet are still found together (Rev. xix. 20), even after the Harlot has been completely despoiled, and burnt with fire.

The Attendant is in front of the Beast. The Harlot rides upon the Beast, in close touch with his body, that is with the popular constituency of kingdoms subject to him.

THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST: Rev. xiii. 14–18.

The two Beasts being symbolic, not literal, so also must be this Image, and its worship. As the Beast

symbolizes Papal Christendom, the Image of the Beast symbolizes the Councils-General of the Papacy. The Representative Council of a kingdom is the Image of that kingdom. To make an Image of the Beast is to assemble a body of men who are his representatives.

Here the representation is by envoy or deputy. In Ancient Councils the deputed member was said to be the image of those who sent him; and in the Middle Ages a deputy representative was called one's image-bearer. Burke speaks of the House of Commons as the express image of the nation; and the same metaphor was used of the French National Assembly in 1848, "a faithful and complete image of that nation."

The Image was set up to be worshipped; this also is symbolical and figurative, and is to be understood in the same way as the worship of the Beast.

Making the Image.

"*He deceiveth them that dwell.*" In Revelation xix. 20 he is called "The false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceiveth them." "*Saying to them that dwell.*" The Pope, as chief Patriarch or Head of the clergy, sent letters of invitation through his clerical delegates or nuncios to the kings of the West; and at the same time to all Provincial Archbishops or chief Abbots. Thus it belonged prominently to the ecclesiastical body, through its two horns—the parochial and the monastic heads—to give effect to the Pope's orders, and to make the Council to or for him.

"*To give breath.*" In these General Councils, on matters ecclesiastical, the clergy alone had a voice. Laymen might suggest or counsel, chiefly in the preparatory committees, but they had no vote. Those of like views to-day also are for keeping the laity in the background. Through Papal influence, and subserviency to the Pope, what was professedly the Image of

the whole Beast or body of Western Christendom was virtually the Image of the Papal mind, of the Beast's ruling Head.

"*Worship the Image.*" On questions of religion and faith it professed itself qualified to pronounce with an authority infallible and independent of the Scriptures, as under the guidance of God's Spirit. The dogmas promulgated were the characteristics of the Papal system. The worship of implicit reverence, obedience and submission was required; or the rebellious were anathematized, excommunicated as heretics, and held liable to death. The extirpation of heretics was a professed object in almost all the Bulls convoking General Councils in the West; and by the Canons, or Voice of the Councils, their death was decreed, and provision made for accomplishing it. The same spirit of persecution unto blood, against those faithful ones who would worship only God, inspired the Image from first to last. The "killing" spoken of would also include symbolic death, in the sense of political or social extinction.

The Papal Councils.

After the establishment of Christianity by Constantine, General Councils on a large scale were assembled, a virtual representation of the Universal Christian Church inhabiting the Roman world. Of these some were held under the sanction of the Greek or Eastern emperors, before the separation of the Eastern and Western Churches.

Those with which we have now to do are the twelve held in Western Christendom, from A.D. 1123 to 1545, all under the sanction and presidency of the Popes of Rome, and professing to represent the whole Romish Church, or indeed all orthodox Christendom. The First Lateran Council was held in 1123, and that of Trent in 1545.

The Mark of the Beast.

"*He causeth all . . . a mark.*" Whether it be the Second Beast or the Image that "causeth," matters not; the Image is but the mouthpiece of the Second Beast, and the Second Beast is but the agent or superintendent to fulfil the enactments of the Image.

Slaves, soldiers, and the devotees of a god, bore marks generally on the forehead or the hand. These were sometimes the simple name or characteristic emblem, sometimes the God's hieroglyphic number. The practice is common now in India and elsewhere. This symbolic prediction meant that the Papal hierarchy and clergy, by legal enactment or otherwise, would cause the inhabitants of the Roman earth universally to devote themselves to the Papacy in profession, signified by the mark on the forehead; and in action, signified by the mark on the right hand; as soldiers to their emperor, slaves to their master, devotees to their god.

The fulfilment of all this stands out as a matter of fact in the history of Western Christendom. The famous Bull "*Unam Sanctam*" declared it to be essential to every man's salvation that he should be subject to the Roman See. Accordingly both the secular priests and those of the monastic orders, having first taken on themselves the vow of obedience, imposed it on all other classes, inculcating on the people generally respect and reverence to their Papal Lord as to a god. Tremendous penalties lay against those who refused allegiance. They were branded as "heretics"; and where the Papacy had power it was literally true that "no man might buy or sell" who did not bear the mark of the Beast. This was the "boycott" of those days.

The Beast's Number.

The number is made up of the values of the letters that go to form the name; and though the creature be

a Beast, the number gives its name as that of a man. The word is Greek, not Hebrew or some other language; for the Apocalypse was meant for Gentiles, and in the opening Vision as well as in the last chapter Christ says in Greek, "I am Alpha and Omega," the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Each letter of that alphabet was used as a numeral, and had a well-known definite value. When this name, then, is written in Greek letters, and their values are added up, the total is 666.

"*Let him that hath understanding count.*" For the number may be reckoned up, and is intended to be known. The feat may be difficult, but it is possible.

"Latinus."

The solution given as far back as the time of Irenæus is "Latinus," the *i* being spelt in the Greek with the diphthong *ei*, "Lateinos." This solution completely answers to every requirement of the sacred enigma, and is the only one that does so. It is "the name of a man," Latinus, the father of the Latin race. Its numeral value is 666. It is the name of the then holders of that Fourth Great Empire, out of which the Man of Sin was to arise.

In the times of Irenæus the emperor and nation might be called Latins, but more usually the nation was called Roman and the language Latin. But after the break-up of the Western Empire into the Ten Kingdoms, the Easterns appropriated the title of Romans, and affixed to the Western kingdoms, because of their connexion with Rome, the appellative Latins, which was accepted and adopted, and holds good at the present day.

The Latin World.

Thenceforward it became the peculiar distinctive title of the Roman Empire in its last form, including

Body and Head, the Two Beasts, and the Image. It was the "Latin" world, kingdoms, Church, Patriarch, clergy, Councils. They Latinize in everything. Mass, prayers, hymns, Litanies, Canons, Decretals, Bulls—all are in Latin. The Papal Councils speak in Latin. The Latin Vulgate Version of the Bible was declared by the Council of Trent to be the only authentic Version. All things with them are Latin.

"The Latin Empire, the Latin Church, Latin Christianity, have ever been its commonly current appellations; its language, civil and ecclesiastical, has ever been Latin; its public services, in defiance of the most obvious requisite for public worship, have ever been throughout the world conducted in Latin; there is no one word which could so completely describe its character . . . as this." (Dean Alford.)

The writing the long Greek or Latin *i* with a diphthong *ei* or with a single *i* was a matter as to which authorities differed and fashions changed. Irenæus and Hippolytus write *ei*; and there are many instances on medals and antiques. It was very commonly so written in analogous words, as Antoninus, Faustinus, etc. It seems as though the more antique method of writing was almost made a point of in framing the word-mystery or enigma.

Other Solutions.

The most noticeable of other Greek solutions are these:

"*The Latin Kingdom,*" in Greek letters, with the single *i* in "Latin." But this is not "the name of a man." Above 400 other kingdoms, similarly or otherwise legitimately expressed in Greek, have been tried, and not one makes up 666, as this does.

"*The Italian Church,*" with the Æolic *a* at the end of the Greek for "Italian." The Latins being of Æolic origin, the Æolic termination may perhaps be legitimate,

No other national Church name makes up the number 666.

Many other solutions have been offered, in Latin, Hebrew, and Arabic ; or Pagan, Protestant, and Mohammedan ; whereas the enigma is Greek. Their object is to turn away the application from the Popedom to some quite different enemy, or supposed enemy, of Christ's Church. But they all fail, for one reason or another, and this makes the " Latinus " solution the more remarkable and convincing.

Satan's schemes are deep laid, and are worked out with wonderful craft and power ; but a Higher Intelligence has laid them bare centuries beforehand, if only we will give heed, and seek to understand.

XIX

THE SUPPLEMENTARY VISIONS: REV. XII.–XIV.

COUNTERVIEW OF THE LAMB AND HIS SEALED ONES: REV. xiv. 1–5.

WHAT, meanwhile, of Christ's true saints and servants? Here is a notice, by way of contrast, in this supplemental series of Visions, indicating their existence, position, and chief changes, during the long and dark period of the Beast's reign.

The emblem of the Lamb with His 144,000 on Mount Zion represented generally Christ's polity of the faithful, all through the Beast's reign. They are seen on Mount Zion, that is, on this earth and not in heaven, and all this symbolic action must be interpreted accordingly.

Moreover, St. John saw these Visions as a symbolic man, the representative of the Apostolic line of true Christian ministers and people throughout the eras depicted, to whom these symbolized truths were to be made known. He was made to see the Lord and His elect, not enthroned like the Beast, but as the suffering Lamb; simply standing—without any such marks of triumphant descent as in Revelation x—on Mount. Zion, the citadel of the city which was David's royal seat. This earthly Zion is the symbol of the saints' polity here below during their earthly state; it is not

the heavenly Jerusalem, the symbol of their perfected polity in the world to come.

The Counterview and Safeguard.

It was this averted view—from the Papal Antichrist, his professedly Christian priesthood, and his worldly "Catholic" Church—to Christ the Lamb of God, and His true spiritual Church of the faithful in heart—that perhaps more than anything else preserved the members of that true Church from being absorbed by the ever-increasing power of the great Apostasy. The inward experimental light of truth and love, from the teaching of God's Spirit, is the blessed privilege of the true Christian, and his safeguard amid surrounding seductions. Not the so-called Vicar of Christ, nor a so-called "Catholic" Visible Church, nor the so-called priests and their nostrums; but Christ Himself, by the direct influence of His Spirit, is the life, light, and salvation of each true disciple, of each living member of His true Church. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

We may note in every particular the allusive contrast throughout with the Beast, his position, his attendants and surroundings. The Papacy usurped to itself and its adherents all the characteristics here ascribed to Christ and to His saints; the Roman City was the "Holy City," and so on.

Against the view of Christ's true Church as His election of grace out of the Visible professing Church, the redeemed by His blood, living by His life, firstborn and adopted sons of God—against all this the Beast, both by his own mouth and by that of his Image, directed his fierce anathemas. It was the deadliest of heresies to make life and salvation originate from and depend on direct personal union with Christ Himself, and not with His so-called Vicar.

This counterview as a whole seems intended to range parallel with the view that has been given of Woman, Dragon, and Beast throughout; and to refer to the same eras, but with wide gaps between, as might be expected in a merely supplemental series of Visions. The epochs are marked out at which special light was given from heaven to Christ's true people, during the period beginning from the conflict between the Dragon and the Woman.

They are Seen with the Lamb: Rev. xiv. 1.

First, the 144,000 are seen with the Lamb, on this earth, on Mount Zion (Rev. xiv. 1). "Lo, I am with you always." This part of the counterview ranges with Revelation vii. 4–8, where, at the corresponding era in the "Within" series, they are seen sealed on this earth by Christ, with the Holy Spirit.

They are Taught a New Song: Rev. xiv. 2–4.

Next comes a forward step in the history of the 144,000 sealed ones; some remarkable and happy crisis in their fortunes is depicted. They are taught a new song from heaven. Hitherto the Holy City, during the Beast's reign, had been trodden down by Gentiles, the mystic Temple defiled by Gentile idolatries, Christ's people oppressed, solitary, mourning. Now, City and Temple are musical with Temple Harpers harping a new song, and with the voice of people and princes uniting to swell it. It is not the 144,000 who first sing that song; the harpers and the song are "before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders," thus being distinct from yet in presence of that heavenly company. But the 144,000 alone are able to learn that song so heard by them on earth. This represents some happy crisis during the Beast's reign, and

previous to the universal missionary preaching of the Gospel depicted in Revelation xiv. 6, 7.

It was a harping as of the Levite Temple harpers in the Jewish ritual, but in unusual numbers and of unusual joy, such as on the occasions of the dedication, purification, or reformation of the Temple; in the time of Solomon, Hezekiah, Josiah, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Maccabees. It must be intended to represent similar ecclesiastical rejoicings at a similar purification of the mystic Temple, during the reign of the Power represented by the Beast; that is, at the era of the Reformation.

The New Song.

The principal topic of the "new songs" sung by the Church of God is, deliverance from external enemies and dangers, or some fresh revelation of God and His Grace; the former appreciable in a measure by all concerned, the latter only by those who have been taught of God. Now the chief doctrine again made clear at the Reformation was that the Lord Himself is our Righteousness, and that we are made righteous by trust in Him and His finished work. The Reformed Confessions, in one enchanting harmony, sang this new song, taught from heaven: "Thou, Jesus, art my righteousness; I am Thy sin." This was introduced into the new services and rituals, as well as into the Confessions of Faith.

It was not a really new song, or the Reformers might justly have been charged with innovations in religion; but "as it were a new song," heard afresh, new in sound, not in reality. They were no innovators in theology; what they upheld were the apostolical doctrines of the primitive Church, as set forth in the Bible, which were, so to speak, re-discovered at the era of the Reformation.

No one else could Learn it.

But "*no man could learn the song save the* 144,000." Many heard it, but only the few could learn it for themselves. There is a failure of sympathy with the Temple-harpings and the new song on the part of all but the 144,000, who stood with the Lamb on Mount Zion. Mere nominal profession is distinct from real heart religion. None but the election of grace could really enter into it; none but the truly converted and enlightened by the Spirit can rightly understand the Gospel and its message.

This declaration continues in force till the next figuration, that of the Angel flying in mid-heaven with the Gospel (Rev. xiv. 6), and thus implies the continuance of the truth here stated. So alas! it was in the history of the Reformed Churches, during the era from the Reformation to the French Revolution. In Germany there was first dead orthodoxy, then neology; in England efforts against the Reformation, then heartless theology. After the conversion of the Protestant nations to Scriptural Christianity at the Reformation, just as after the calling of Israel out of Egypt, and as after the conversion of the Roman Empire under Constantine, only an individual election out of the national had any real and living appreciation of Divine Gospel truth.

Character of the Sealed Ones: Rev. xiv. 4, 5.

But all along there was such an election, as the Vision proceeds to describe, giving their character for our instruction.

These, who are "purchased *out of the earth*," "*from among men*," and not from the literal Israel only, are "*not defiled.*" This describes their inward purity, and following after holiness. They are not sullied with the stain

of spiritual adultery or fornication, that is, with unfaithfulness to God. They are living members of that holy Church of the redeemed which is now affianced to Christ, and is hereafter to be presented unto Him as a chaste Virgin.

"*They . . . follow the Lamb.*" They show active practical self-denial, following the example of their Lord as "the Lamb," in piety, charity, benevolence, suffering and patience. This has no reference whatever to dead saints after death, but to saints while still living upon earth.

"*Purchased . . . firstfruits.*" There are other servants of Christ, belonging to other ages of the history of His Church; but these are the firstfruits, accepted of God, before that much greater ingathering that is to follow under the better millennial dispensation.

"*In their mouth . . . no lie.*" That refers especially to the false doctrines of the Antichristian system. See 2 Thessalonians ii. 11, "That they should believe *the* lie."

Thus in spiritual purity, obedience, acceptance by God, and sincere love of His truth, they are marked out even in the sight of men as belonging to the Lord, and being His true and faithful people. It is by the acts of the 144,000 that what subsequently is symbolized by the Visions of the three flying Angels is accomplished. By three grand epochs was the work of God on earth to be revived, and each of these is a corresponding epoch in the downfall of the Papacy.

The Gospel Angel: Rev. xiv. 6, 7.

As the eighteenth century advanced into its third quarter, the voice of the 144,000 waxed feebler, and the tokens of their presence more obscure, in all the continental Protestant countries and Churches. In Germany, Sweden, and Denmark, neology and rationalism

prevailed; in Holland a death-like torpor, and the absence of spirituality and life; in the Swiss Church Socinianism. In England, almost alone, the salt seemed not to have lost its savour.

Could it be that the blessed Reformation itself had ended in failure? The answer is given by this next Vision, that of the Angel flying with the Gospel.

The Vision belongs to the part Written Without, and is shorter and simpler than the corresponding part within. It comes between the Vision of Christ's true Church of the 144,000 during the 1,260 years of the Beast's reign, and the Visions of the two successive Angels announcing the fall of Babylon, and the impending judgment of fire upon the Beast and his votaries. Thus it belongs to the era of the great French Revolution, and of the outpouring of the Vials.

It is in harmony with, and illustrative of, the Vision of the opened Temple (Rev. xi. 19); for it is a voice telling that God's Gospel Church is open to man, and by hope and fear urging all to enter.

"*Another Angel flying.*" This figured some remarkable era of widespread evangelic missions and Gospel preaching; not mere proclamation of so-called Christian doctrine, but the bearing forth of the "everlasting Gospel." The word Gospel without the article may mean that it was an actual Book of the Gospel, or New Testament, that the Angel appeared bearing in hand, to preach. It is called everlasting, not only because of its origin and of its always being the same, but also because preserved by Divine providence through all the darkness, irreligion, and hostility of past ages. The Message was now to be borne not only to those upon the Apocalyptic Roman earth, but also to every nation without distinction; there is to be no exception or restriction, the message is absolutely universal.

"*The hour of his judgment is come.*" This identifies

the Vision with the time of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, in the former series, in the "Writing Within." God's judgment is executed in the "Last Plagues" of the Seven Vials; and "earth, sea, and waters" refer to the first three Vials. There was to be in the prefigured preaching a blending of solemn warning and appeal with the persuasions and invitations of the Gospel; by reference to the fact that God's judgments were then on earth, and that the times of heathen ignorance had passed away.

An Era of Gospel Missions.

On the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, that is, at the era of the French Revolution, there was a wonderful revival of Gospel preaching. Indeed, the changes wrought by the Revolution were the means of giving an immense impulse to the spread of Christianity all over the world. Almost all the great Missionary Societies date their beginnings from this era; small at first, indeed, and struggling, but in course of time attaining magnificent dimensions. Nearly coincidently with the rise of these missions in India and elsewhere, the Missionary battle was fought by William Wilberforce in the House of Commons, and legislative sanction obtained for the work of evangelization in India. Thus was the Temple door thrown open to the Eastern world, imperfectly at first, afterwards more completely; and none has been able to shut it. The open door for evangelization implies the open door for the admission of converts.

The ever-advancing maritime and colonial ascendancy of Great Britain; the foundation just before, almost as by miracle, of its East Indian Empire by Clive and Hastings, and its consolidation under Lord Wellesley—all these great events in the providence of God prepared

the widest fields for the missionary enterprise of British Christians.

Never since the Apostolic era had there been such a work of Christian evangelic missions. Everywhere the Gospel was preached, the Scriptures circulated, evangelic schools instituted, Christian Churches opened to the heathen, and Christian lives given up in martyrdom. God's ancient people were not forgotten, nor the benighted professing Churches of Greek and Roman Christendom. The present widespread preaching of the Gospel, as a " witness to all nations," is one notable sign that the end is drawing near.

Here these Visions of the " Writing Without " pass into the future.

Second Angel ; Babylon Fallen : Rev. xiv. 8.

This is evidently the same Angel and the same cry as in Revelation xviii. 1–3, in the series of Visions of the " Writing Within." The two passages may be placed alongside of each other, and ranged line by line. It will be seen that the one " Within," that is, Revelation xviii. 1–3, is the fuller of the two, but that they both mean the same.

The chief reason for the judgment of Babylon is, that she has made the nations drink of the wine of her fornication. The greatest enemy to the spread of the true knowledge of God in the world has always been a false profession of His name. If His professed Witnesses belie His character, who shall make it known to the world ?

Third Angel ; Doom of the Beast : Rev. xiv. 9–11.

This Warning Voice has its proper chronological position in the prophecy, that is, at the very end of the

Beast's career. It follows after the declaration of the near-impending fall of Babylon; it is yet future.

Some use these words as an argument against the identification of the Church of Rome with Babylon, as if the words meant that all for many ages who are or have been in communion with Rome are consigned to damnation. But this is a strange oversight. While no doubt the Vision conveys a salutary warning for all time, its proper chronological position is after the exposure of Babylon and the accompanying warning, and while the judgments on her are in progress. Those who will not heed all these warnings and judgments, who hear the Voice, "Come out of her," but will not obey it, will certainly be doomed.

Not only is it a warning voice against worshipping the Beast and his Image, it is also a declaration of the impending end of such worshippers, as doomed to drink of the wine of the wrath of God, and to be tormented with fire and sulphur before the Angels and the Lamb, the smoke of their torment ascending for ever. The "wine" seems to have reference to the Winepress-treading, the second great act of judgment, executed on the Beast and his confederates (Rev. xiv. 19, 20). This is a voice of revived protest against Antichrist's deadly errors; a voice going forth and making itself heard far and wide, not only in professing Christendom, but also throughout the whole habitable world.

"*Here is the patience of the saints.*" As regards the destruction of Babylon and of the Beast, here is the reward of the long patience of the saints, that is, of those who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus Christ.

"*Write, Blessed are the dead . . . from henceforth.*" "Write" implies apparently some deep impression in the true Church, and the urgent inculcation of it, at the time answering to this part of the Vision. "From

henceforth " is not necessarily from the precise moment of the utterance of the Voice, but from a time near it, subsequent to the date of the Voice in the Vision. The announcement comes after the statement in verse 11 of the doom of the Beast; hence it seems to refer to the Millennial state. After the First Resurrection, and the rapture of the saints, the death of those who die in the Lord during the Millennium will be under new conditions. Satan will then be bound. They rest from all painful toil, but this does not exclude the holy activities of the new life.

The Harvest; Babylon Destroyed: Rev. xiv. 14–16.

This Harvest is the first of the two grand acts of judgment on Antichristendom, the second being the Vintage next described. The Harvest, in this series " Without," corresponds with the judgment by fire on Babylon in the series " Within." It is the destruction of the Woman that rode on the Beast; the Vintage, later on, being the destruction of the Beast himself.

A harvest covers a wide area, much wider than that of the Vintage. It spreads over many fields, such as Europe and other lands; whereas the Winepress, in these prophecies, is only a part of Palestine. The Harvest may well include the Rapture of the Saints, as well as the judgment on Babylon; for see Matthew xiii. 30, " . . . gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

The Rapture of the Saints has not yet taken place even at the destruction of Babylon, for some of them are in her still, and are urgently warned to come out of her lest they suffer with her (Rev. xviii. 4). It seems, then, that we are to see the destruction of Babylon before the Rapture of the Saints, whatever may be meant by " Babylon."

"*One . . . like unto a Son of Man.*" His likeness to a Son of Man, and the white lightning-cloud His chariot, point out the God-Man, Christ Jesus, as the person intended. Not that this is the great predicted second Advent, when every eye shall see Him. His being visible to the Evangelist in Vision does not require that He should be personally visible at the time and in the events so foreshown, any more than before in the Reformation Vision. He is not said to come upon the earth itself, but only to cast His sickle upon it from the cloud on which He appears.

"*A golden crown.*" Implies His having come forth as a conquering warrior against His foes. Each symbol of power at first attached to the world's potentates is now transferred in the figuration to its rightful owner.

"*A sharp sickle.*" This seems to designate Christ as the great initiator of the final judgments; as below, His treading the Winepress marks Him as their Completer.

"*Another Angel*" (besides the three before mentioned) "*crying . . . to him.*" Not in the way of command, but of entreaty. This Angel is subordinate to the Angel above described, but that Son of Man is not of necessity actually visible to mankind at the time. Hence the action and words of this second Angel, who sees the Son of Man on the cloud, otherwise invisible.

The Vintage; the Beast Destroyed: Rev. xiv. 17–20.

This Vintage is the second of the two grand acts of final judgment on Antichristendom. It is in the series "Without," and ranges with the judgments on the Beast and his confederates, in the series "Within." As in the order of nature, so here; the Vintage follows after the Harvest. And as the Vintage was the last natural ingathering, so this is the last judgment visible upon the earthly scene against apostate Anti-christen-

dom. There is but one Winepress-treading in the prophecy; this therefore in the supplemental series or writing "Without" must be a succincter sketch of the judgments more fully described in the writing "Within" (Rev. xix. 17), and the Winepress can scarce be other than the Har-Magedon of Revelation xvi. 16.

17. "*Another angel . . . from the temple.*" This indicates the Divine origin of the coming judgment, and the sharpness of the sickle indicates its severity.

18. "*Another angel.*" There is division of offices among the angelic host. This Angel answered in the mystic Temple to those Levitical priests whose office it was to keep the sacred fire burning on the Altar, and to look for the ashes that dropped into the grate beneath the Altar. Thus his bearing part in the judgment would signify:—

(1) That the Vine to be gathered, whose clusters were to be trodden, was to be a sacrifice to the Divine justice; the heaven-derived Altar-fire being the symbol of that justice, and of its readiness to consume all but those who have made a covenant with God in His appointed way by sacrifice, and have saved themselves through faith in the Lamb of God as their substitute.

(2) That one special cause of God's wrath against the inhabitants of the earth was their slaying of the martyrs, whose ashes had long been accumulating beneath the Apocalyptic altar. Compare the Fifth Seal (Rev. vi. 9–11), and the Third Vial (Rev. xvi. 4–7). Now, however, the cry of the Angel issuing forth from the interior of, or hollow beneath, the altar, proclaimed that their number was completed, the moment of their avenging come, the power of the Two Witnesses to bring down fire from heaven against their injurers about to be fearfully illustrated before the world, the earth about to disclose her blood, and no more to cover her slain. (See Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix., and Paper XXV.)

The Vine and the Winepress.

"*The Vine of the earth.*" This need not designate only an ecclesiastical body; the emblem is used in the national sense also. Thus in Psalm lxxx. 8–11, "Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt . . ." Jeremiah ii. 21, "I had planted thee a noble vine . . ." Also Deuteronomy xxxii. 32.

The gathering of the Vine's clusters by the Angel's sharp pruning-hook, and the casting them into the Winepress of the wrath of God, seem to indicate acts preparatory to the Winepress treading. The former may mean some signal separation by sharp judgments of Antichrist's members from those of Christ; and the latter may foreshow the overruling of their own wicked wills, and of the plans of the three evil spirits animating them, to accomplish the gathering together of the Antichristian body to the fated field of vengeance.

"*Winepress . . . trodden without the city.*" The king's and other winepresses of old were outside of Jerusalem. The Winepress is some region outside of the Papal city, that is, outside of Western Christendom. Palestine satisfies this condition. The Beast and his adherents are slain by Christ after the destruction of Babylon, and consequently away from it. It is supposable that the city of Rome, and the Harlot Church, should be destroyed, while the Pope and Papal priesthood still remained elsewhere.

"*There came out blood.*" This indicates a judgment unto blood, very dreadful; a tremendous final act of vengeance, the executor of which is the Word of God, the Lord Jesus. "*The horses*" and horsemen are visible on the scene of conflict and slaughter. So in the parallel Vision in Revelation xix. 18, and 11, 14, the judgment is executed on them that sat on horses, and by One who Himself sat on a white horse, and was attended by saints also on white horses.

"*Sixteen hundred furlongs.*" Some say that the whole length of Palestine, about 1,600 furlongs, is the destined field of slaughter. Others point out that 1,600 is a square number, the square of 40. Wine-vats, square or otherwise, dug in the earth or the rock, were a usual appendage to the winepress (Joel iii. 13). This 1,600 furlongs may thus express its square, and the depth of blood would be the depth of the wine-vat, easily gauged; whereas if it were a stream 1,600 furlongs in length, how should its depth not vary? Is the area one of forty furlongs, that is of five miles, to a side; twenty-five square miles? Or is it of 200 miles to a side? Even the smaller figure indicates tremendous slaughter, the wine-vat being the size of one of our large modern cities.

Not Depopulation.

We must guard against the notion that these judgments will have depopulated the world, or even Christendom.

In describing the British conquest of India, we enumerate the different native princes overthrown, and the successive destruction of native governments and armies; but this by no means implies the destruction of the people, or the depopulation of the country. On the contrary, the British conquest has brought to the masses of the people the blessings of peace and protection under a comparatively righteous government; and the improvement of the country, and the development of its resources, by the superior energy, wisdom, and wealth of England.

This may give an idea of what the transition from the Roman to the Millennial Empire will be to the nations of the earth. Pre-millennial judgments will extinguish all Wild-Beast governments as such, but will not destroy

their subjects; will put an end to Gentile monarchy, but not necessarily to Gentile nations.

There are, however, solemn statements that look as if even the nations of Apostate Roman Christendom were doomed to destruction. The full establishment of Messiah's kingdom on earth, even after His glorious epiphany, may be a work of time.

End of the Supplemental Visions: Rev. xii.–xiv.

Here ends the briefer sketch of the "Writing Without," the supplemental series of Visions.

Its chief object was a full description of the Beast from the Abyss, from his origin as the creature of Satan for warfare against the Woman's seed, down to his final destruction by the Lord Himself. This gives a powerful unity to the whole series. The notice of other matters is necessarily more succinct. In the "Writing Within" a much fuller revelation of these subjects is given.

The retrogression began after the general notice in Revelation xi. 15–19 of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet; it went back in Revelation xii. to the era of the downfall of Heathenism, and Satan's plans thereon; and it travelled down past the epoch at which the retrogression had been introduced, as far onward as the two final acts of judgment—the destruction of the Harlot that rode upon the Beast, and the destruction of the Beast himself, these judgments being symbolized respectively as a Harvest and a Vintage.

Now the interrupted series of Visions Within is resumed, at Revelation xv. 1, which properly connects with Revelation xi. 19.

XX

THE LAST PLAGUES BEGUN:

REV. XV.–XVI. 2.

ERA OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

AT this point the series of Visions within written recommences, Revelation xi. 15–19 connecting with Revelation xv. 1. St. John's attention is called away from the Supplementary Series of Visions that he has been considering, to the development of the Seventh or last Woe Trumpet under Seven Last Plagues; from Harvest and Vintage on earth to something taking place in the inner shrine in heaven. From those Supplementary Visions we can now understand the references to the Beast, his Image, his Seat, and his adherents, which occur in the course of the Vials, and which otherwise would not be intelligible.

This introductory notice (Rev. xv.) of the Last Plagues is brought in to mark the resumption from Revelation xi. 19; and to connect what follows, as to the true servants of God living at the time of the Vials, with the Vial era.

The Seven Angels and the Seven Last Plagues.

"*In heaven . . . seven angels.*" These are seven other angels from the Temple; not the four angels of the winds, whose instrumentality had been employed

under the six former Trumpets, nor any of the Trumpet Angels themselves. Possibly this indicates that the present judgments would originate from no external agency, as from foreign invasion or aggression; but from causes or agencies of internal origin, altogether within the limits of professing Christendom.

The Seven Angels are in the inner shrine of the mystic Temple, which is now opened (Rev. xi. 19). Presently (Rev. xv. 6), St. John sees them come out thence, to execute their mission.

"*Seven plagues which are the last.*" Being the last, they cannot run parallel with all the previous history, but must come after it. In Revelation x. 7 the Angel spoke of the Seventh Trumpet as that in which God's mystery was to be finished. The finishing Trumpet therefore cannot fail to include or to run parallel with these Vials, which are the last Plagues of God's wrath. No other development of Divine judgments appears. Compare Revelation x. 7; xi. 18; xiv. 7. As the Seventh Seal was developed under the Seven Trumpets, so the Seventh or last of the Woe Trumpets is developed under the Seven Vials. The Vials are the primary contents of the Trumpet, but in it are included, as its ultimate result, the time of the dead being judged, the Saints rewarded, and Christ's kingdom established. The Visions of Rev. xvii. and xxi. 9 are expressly said to be given by one of these Vial Angels, thus connecting them with and including them in the Vial era.

"*In them is finished the wrath of God.*" On the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet—after the Supplementary Visions of Revelation xii.–xiv.—Seven Vials are poured out, each with its own share of judgment, and the last reaching to the close of the present dispensation, and the triumph and glorious reign of Christ and of His saints. In the part Within Written, the epoch of the Seventh Trumpet is stated to be that of

the hour of God's wrath and judgment against the corrupters of the earth. This is unfolded in the Seven Vials. In the part Without Written it is the epoch of the two successive Angels' flying forth; the one to preach the everlasting Gospel, the other to raise the anticipative cry of triumph and warning against the corrupting Babylon, as foredoomed and speedily to fall.

Harpers by the Glassy Sea : Rev. xv. 2.

What of Christ's Evangelic Church throughout all this period of the Vial judgments? With God's own assured safeguard round it, it could no more fail or be destroyed during the progress of those judgments than during the Beast's 1,260 years of supremacy and oppression.

This Vision, as well as the parallel Vision of the Gospel Angel, refers to the true servants of God living at this time on the scene of Christendom. Here St. John, who at verse 1 had been looking into the heavenly Temple, now has his gaze turned again upon the earthly scene.

"*As it were a glassy sea.*" It was not a sea, nor was it of glass, but "as it were a glassy sea, mingled with fire." It was not the glassy sea-like expanse before the throne, described in Revelation iv. 6, for that would have required the article, "*the* glassy sea." It must have appeared to St. John detached from, though associated with, the Temple Scene in the foreground of the Vision.

Volcanic Imagery.

The symbol seems borrowed from Volcanic phenomena, much Volcanic imagery being used by St. John in the book of Revelation. The "glassy sea mingled with fire" will then be a widespreading deluge of vitrified rock and lava, glass-like as it cools, spreading in

destructive inundation over the territory of the mystic Egypt and Babylon of the Apocalyptic earth; the fire that fused it breaking forth continually from the mass, as it does from the glowing lava of Vesuvius. The Harpers, escaped triumphantly out of the Beast's Egyptian domination, stand with their harps, unharmed, by or upon the edge of this volcanic flood. The figure is most apt, because the symbol of an earthquake accompanies the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, and under the last Vial Babylon is destroyed by the selfsame Volcanic agency.

The Harpers have "harps of God"; this expresses either excellence or devotion to God's service. They stand unhurt by the desolating sea of volcanic fire, and it must be mainly through their agency that the symbolized acts of Evangelic effort and progress are carried out. Their time seems to extend through the whole range of the Seven Vials. They "come victorious from" the Beast; this implies not only conquest over, but also separation from him. They have successfully resisted the temptation to worship his Image and to receive his mark. Before, he conquered them; now, it is they that are the victors. All this must of course be long subsequent to Revelation xiii. 18. The Powers there described have had a long career, but now these Harpers have come off, and are coming, victorious. In the descriptions there is an exact contrast, and the present participle is used in each case; those subjected to the Plagues are living men that had the mark of the Beast and worshipped his Image—"*the men which had the mark of the beast, and which worshipped his image*"; those exempted are also living men that were victoriously separate from the Beast and his Image—"*them that come victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the glassy sea, having harps of God.*"

There were then to be on earth, during the time of these judgments, true servants of God, victorious separatists from the Beast, living at the time of the Vials' outpouring, and spectators of the judgments contained in them. They would recognize God's hand and justice in them, and would mark and hail this as the time for the conversion of the nations to the knowledge and worship of God. They must have appeared as the living representatives for the time being of those protesters against the Beast, previously raised to life and power, in the face and to the terror of the Beast and his adherents.

The fiery volcanic flood is obviously a fit symbol of the overflow of French revolutionary fury, desolating France and Europe. The symbol is continually applied by politicians, journalists, historians, and others. "Volcano," "lava," "volcanic fires," "explosion of revolutionary lava," and like expressions abound in descriptions of these times and scenes. Thus :—

"This huge Insurrectionary movement, which we liken to a breaking-out of Tophet and the Abyss, has swept away Royalty, Aristocracy, and a King's life. The question is, what will it next do; how will it shape itself? Settle down into a reign of Law and Liberty; according as the habits, persuasions, and endeavours of the educated, moneyed, respectable classes prescribe? That is to say; the volcanic lava-flood, bursting up in the manner described, will explode and flow according to Girondin Formula and pre-established rule of philosophy. (Carlyle: *French Revolution*, Vol. III; Bk. III; chap. I.)

If the descriptive "glassy" requires that the lava should be in its cooled and vitrified state, we must remember that desolation remained on the land after the torrent of war had passed; but "mingled with fire" may imply a state of fiery liquefaction, sufficiently answering to the epithet "glassy."

Religious Revival and Missionary Zeal.

Just before the tremendous political outbreak of the French Revolution, living Protestantism, and the 144,000 that alone understood its new song, seemed almost confined to insular England. Even there also spiritual life had sunk deplorably low. What a revival of religion and missionary zeal was needed! What a concurrence of other favouring circumstances was called for, such as the raising up of fit instrumentalities, religious combination, and colonial and maritime supremacy and extension, not bare political safety! All was supplied. The historic facts in regard to England at the time of the French Revolution are: a revival of spiritual religion; preservation and progress in maritime and colonial power, amidst unprecedented dangers; and an outburst of missionary feeling, action, and anticipations.

It was when the continental nations were agitated with the fiery volcanic outburst of the Revolution; when the infection of French democratic and infidel principles, having spread plague-like across the Channel, threatened the outbreak of ulcers noisome and sore in the English body politic just as in the French, had not the virus met with its antidote; it was when the sea, with its European Papal colonies, and the rivers and kingdoms of the European continent, were dyed with blood; when Europe's most ancient thrones were subverted, and the chiefest lights in its political heaven eclipsed or darkened; when the apparently irresistible power of France, under Napoleon, having been the scourge and plague of Papal Christendom, seemed ready to concentrate all its efforts in bitterest enmity against the chief nation that had escaped out of its bondage; it was during this awful period, when the danger to England was so imminent, that things were thought to be in extremity, and that nothing but the interposition

of heaven could save the country; that this religious revival, this wonderful outburst of missionary spirit and action, broke forth in our favoured land. The fearfulness of the epoch of the French Revolutionary wars, now forgotten, appears vividly in the memorials of that day.

William Wilberforce.

The chief instrument of this religious revival was William Wilberforce. Besides many high gifts, intellectual, social, and political, he had experienced true conversion of heart. He recognized as his vocation the reformation of his country's manners. His celebrated work, the *Practical View of Christianity*, was first published in April, 1797. Its design was to rouse the nation, and especially the higher orders, to a just view of real Christianity. It was a manly yet conciliatory exposure of the false principles and defective practice of professed Christians, with a powerful exhibition of what true religion is, as delineated in the Bible, and displayed in the spirit and temper of true Christians. The style and spirit were almost as new as the subject to the men of that time. Nothing could surpass the winning, affectionate, and skilful manner of address.

Never perhaps did any volume by a layman, on a religious subject, produce a deeper or more sudden, effect. It came upon the whole world of statesmen, literary men and divines as a great surprise. It was a thing quite unprecedented for a leading parliamentary speaker to publish any considerable work, much less one on religion. The moment it appeared, therefore, every one stood astonished.

It had a wide and rapid circulation. In six months it went through five editions of 7,500. In 1826 there had already appeared fifteen editions in England and twenty-five in America, and translations had been made

into French, German, Spanish, and most of the European languages.

Effect of Wilberforce's "Practical View."

It was one of the principal means at that critical period of awakening the minds of the leading persons in the country to the truths of spiritual religion, when infidelity was spreading among all classes, and was threatening the destruction of religion and of the throne. Perhaps there was no order of men on whom the work had a more important effect than the younger clergy. It may be affirmed beyond all question that it was used of God to give the first general impulse to that warmer and more earnest outburst of spiritual religion that speedily followed. Under God's blessing true religion revived in England; its adherents, means, and resources were multiplied, and higher views of Christian duty and usefulness were opened.

The Great Religious Societies.

A spirit of religious union and co-operation awoke. Christian and philanthropic associations arose. Missionary Societies were formed in quick succession, like Alpine peaks catching and reflecting the rays of the rising sun—the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792; the London Missionary Society, 1795; the Wesleyan, 1796; the Church Missionary, 1799. Older Associations were rekindled: the Moravian, founded 1727; the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, founded in the times of William and of Anne—an omen of England's future missionary eminence. Last, but perhaps greatest, the British and Foreign Bible Society, 1804; by which, with the Missionary Societies, the Word of Life is being diffused and preached in all the world. The Vision of

the Flying Angel with the Gospel has been literally fulfilled, and in the exact order of time there laid down.

The Song of Moses and of the Lamb : Rev. xv. 3, 4.

This is an anticipatory song upon the eve of the outgoing from the Temple of the Seven Vial Angels ; or rather, during the Vials' outpouring, for verses 2, 3, are connected with verse 1, the introductory notice of the Vials.

There are two Songs of Moses. The first, Exodus xv., was sung at Israel's entrance on the Wilderness, after the overthrow of Pharaoh. The scene was the margin of the Red Sea, in which the Egyptians had perished ; the persons were Israelitish harpers, with harps tuned to God's praise. The topics were, recognition of God, as the strength and salvation of Israel : His glory in the destruction of the enemies and persecutors of His people ; and anticipation of the Canaanitish heathen being struck with fear on hearing of this act of judgment, and of God triumphantly establishing His people in that land of Canaan.

The other song, Deuteronomy xxxii., was sung at the eve of Israel's entrance into Canaan. It carries the view further and wider, foretelling Israel's apostasy to idols after establishment in Canaan, the consequent judgments on them, and their long rejection by God ; then God's gracious relenting, His final destruction of their enemies, and the heathen's sharing in Israel's joy and blessing. The topic wanting in the first song is here supplied—the assured anticipation of "all the nations" being now at last brought to fear, glorify, and worship Him as their King, His righteous judgments having been manifested.

In the New Testament the blessed result of the general conversion of the Gentile world is set forth as following on the ultimate triumph of the Lamb, with such as

have been His faithful saints and servants during the present dispensation of trial; this too after God's final judgments on the enemies of His Church and people.

Thus there is close agreement in the anticipations for the Gentile world under both Testaments, and this Song is accordingly called the Song "of Moses and of the Lamb." Besides, the era of the Seventh Trumpet is marked by wide opening to all of the Temple of Christ's Reformed Church, and by the preaching of His Gospel to every nation, Jews and Gentiles alike.

During the terrible Wars of the Revolution, the faithful ones in England cherished the hope that their country would be preserved, as with all its sins it still had in it the Ark of Christ's true Evangelic Church. As religion and religious zeal revived, their hopes grew stronger; so also during the progress of the Vial Plagues, and when—like another Pharaoh—Napoleon threatened them with all his tremendous power.

When, in spite of all his efforts, they still stood unhurt and secure, looking from their sea-girt shore on the desolating lava-like flood mingled with fire, as it spread its ravages over continental Europe; when they saw the enemy overwhelmed, and God's Gospel making progress; and when homage was done to the holy cause itself by foreign emperors and princes on their visit soon afterwards—as by Jethro after the Red Sea deliverance—they were filled with adoration and praise, recognizing God's power and holiness and faithfulness, and anticipating the time when all nations should come and worship before God and the Lamb.

But these anticipations were premature. Before the Dragon and his creatures were utterly vanquished and cast out, there was still to be a fresh putting forth of Satanic subtlety and power, in the form of the three evil spirits like frogs, proceeding from the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet (Rev. xvi. 13).

The Preparation for the Vials: Rev. xv. 5–8.

"*The temple . . . was opened.*" The scene of Revelation xi. 19 is pointedly repeated here, to mark the connexion. It is the same scene for the Seven Vials as for the Seventh Trumpet. The symbol continues through the whole era of the Vials' outpouring. The Temple was opened to allow the Seven Angels to go forth therefrom. "*The* Seven Angels" are those mentioned in verse 1. St. John had already seen them "in heaven"; that is, doubtless, standing in the Temple shrine, which now was opened. Their coming forth from the Temple might signify the special interposition of God's providence in what followed, as being done by agents standing before Him and commissioned in His immediate presence. Though their work was awful, it was holy.

"*One of the four living creatures.*" This is almost the first mention of any of the saintly company taking part in the actings of the drama. Before this, under the Seals, it was these living creatures who called forth the Horsemen. "*Seven golden bowls*"; not "Vials" in the sense that that word now bears, but golden bowls, probably of a saucer shape. They are the "basins" of the Old Testament, used for carrying into the sanctuary the incense which had been lighted by fire from the brazen altar. They were thus much better adapted than "Vials" would have been for the execution of a final judgment; their contents could be poured out all at once, and suddenly. Cups are a frequent symbol in Scripture of judgment (Ps. lxxv. 8; Jer. xxv. 15; Isa. li. 22).

In the Plagues themselves there is a manifest resemblance to the Plagues of ancient Egypt, inflicted to compel the release of the People of God. As Papal Christendom is figurative Egypt, these Plagues also figuratively resemble those of Egypt. All the while the

smoke of God's presence is made manifest as taking vengeance.

The Command to Pour out the Vials : Rev. xvi. 1.

These last Seven Plagues are called for by "a great voice *out of the sanctuary*," a command to the Seven Angels who had come forth out of it (Rev. xv. 6), to go and pour out their bowls upon the earth ; for these are judgments against those that "destroy" or corrupt the earth (Rev. xi. 18). Each Vial after being poured out continues to act, though others also may have been added to it, the judgments of preceding Vials overrunning into succeeding ones.

The First appears to describe the spirit and principle of the judgment as first set in action ; the three next its continued operation against the apostate nations of Antichristendom ; the fifth, judgment against the very seat or throne of the Beast, the head of the long-established Antichristian apostasy ; the Sixth, judgment begun against the Euphratean Turk ; the Seventh, the final acts of judgment on the corrupters of the earth. The first stroke falls upon the individual men of the Papal world ; the next on its nations ; the next on its monarchies ; then the governing and centralizing heads are smitten ; and then its air in which they all live.

There is a likeness between the first four Vials and the first four Trumpets. The scene and subject are in each case almost the same—the earth, sea, rivers and fountains of waters, and the sun. These will be interpreted as before ; the "earth," the territorial state of Western Roman Christendom ; the "sea," its sea, including its maritime colonies and provinces ; the "rivers and fountains of waters," its Alpine streams and two great boundary rivers, the Rhine and the Danube with their respective valleys ; the "sun," the symbol of its royal and imperial ruling powers.

The "Earth" of the Vials.

There is, however, this notable difference. In the Trumpets it is said, "one-third" of the earth, sea, rivers, and sun; the reference being to the then Western Division of the old Roman Empire. But in the Vials these localities are spoken of as entire. The reason is, that the Eastern Division, which together with the half of the intermediate or Illyrian Division anciently formed part of the Roman Empire, had by the Turkish conquests been long since annihilated in its political character as a Christian state. The "third part of men" had been "killed" in their collective and political character, under the Sixth Trumpet (Rev. ix. 18). After that it is added, "The rest of the men that were not killed . . ." Consequently Papal Europe was left as all of Christendom that remained practically independent, on the platform of the old Roman earth.

The First Vial: Rev. xvi. 2.

"*It became a . . . sore.*" This is an eruption from within, not an infliction from without. It is the epoch not of the recognition, but of the outbreak of the ulcer that is prefigured. As this First Vial speaks of the Mark and Image of the Beast, it must be chronologically later than Revelation xiii., which describes the origin of the Beast, and of his Mark and Image, and of his Attendant who makes the Image.

The word rendered "sore" is used of the Egyptian plague-boil, of leprosy, of Job, Hezekiah, and Lazarus; all of these being cases of painful and deadly ulcers. Symbolically explained in reference to the body politic (compare Isa. i. 6, ". . . wounds, bruises, and festering sores . . ."), the judgment prefigured in this First Vial is some extraordinary outbreak of moral and social evil, the expression of deep-seated disease within, with raging

pain and inflammation. It would arise somewhere in Papal Europe, shortly after the passing away of the Turkish Woe; and would soon overspread and infect the countries of Papal Europe and their inhabitants.

A Grievous Ulcer.

All this was abundantly fulfilled in the facts of the French Revolution; and it is remarkable how naturally and frequently the symbol of the First Vial is applied, by writers and orators of the day, to the working of infidel and democratic principles in the political and social body, and especially in revolutionary France.

The symbolic ulcer originated in the symbolic Egypt, that is, in the country of them that had the mark of the Beast and that worshipped his Image. Nor only in a Roman Catholic country, but also out of Roman Catholic principles. The French Revolution is largely traceable to the corruptions of the Papal religion itself, where established. In God's retributive justice, apostasy from the true faith contains the germ and principle of its own punishment. The horrors and sufferings arising out of the national atheism, licentiousness, revolutionary democratism, and bloodthirstiness then exhibited, were but the translation into action of the corrupt principles, religious, moral, social, and political, that had now for long infected the nation.

Infidelity not only Speculative.

Man's reason revolted at incredible dogmas, and his moral sense revolted at the cruelties and oppressions practised under the Papal system. Infidelity was the nursling of that system, tolerated by it, for indulgence was shown towards the ingenious infidel speculations of those who still outwardly conformed. But infidelity thus cherished was not always to continue merely

speculative; its hatred to God and the Gospel impelled it to become aggressive.

Voltaire and his colleagues had formed a conspiracy to overthrow all religion; and in the atheistic schools and cheap atheistic publications, the chief weapon and argument was the absurdities, hypocrisies, immoralities, cruelties, and general wickedness of the Papal Church and religion, as if forsooth that could be taken as a true and fair representative of Christ's religion. The gross licentiousness, in which the King and Court led the way, was directly traceable to the Jesuit system established by Louis XIV. The moral sense of the nation was vitiated, and brutal ferocities were the natural accompaniment of brutal licentiousness. The atrocities and cruelties practised on principle against the French priests, and the aristocratic adherents of the Romish Church, were but copied from earlier atrocities by the Papal clergy, king, and nobles on their unoffending Protestant brethren. In fact, these precedents were remembered and held out to execration at the time. The Massacre of St. Bartholomew was represented on the stage, in order to raise disgust against the Roman Catholic clergy.

Alison, after enumerating periodicals and other first-hand materials for his history, says: "They clearly demonstrate . . . that the French Revolution was entirely carried through by the incessant application of exaggeration and mendacity to the public mind. Falsehood was its staff of life." "Nations, not less than individuals, are seduced by false but alluring appellations of things."

A Fury of Propagandism.

Though the outbreak was first and chiefly in France, the infidel democratic plague-fever spread speedily to

other kingdoms also in the countries of the Popedom, and everywhere prepared for the Gallic sword to follow. In England, through God's mercy, the true and scriptural religion professed and established in her Reformed Church was made the means of repelling, and for a time at least almost expelling the mischief. The malignant spirit of the First Vial had in itself a fury of propagandism, as if the frenzy of the madman was on him that had the plague and its sores. "The first burst of popular fury was followed by an ardent and universal passion for arms." "Thus commenced the greatest and most bloody war . . . since the fall of the Roman Empire"; a war of unequalled "general exasperation."

The Outbreak of Moral and Social Evil.

The First Vial has its historic fulfilment in that tremendous outbreak of social and moral evil, democratic fury, and atheism, that was speedily seen to characterize the French Revolution.

Its ultimate source was in the long and deep-seated corruption and irreligion of the nation; its outward expression and organ was in the Jacobin clubs, and their seditious and atheistic publications. Its result was the dissolution of all social bonds, of morals, and of religion, along with acts of horror and atrocity scarce paralleled in history, and suffering and anguish throbbing through and corroding the whole social mass. It spread like a plague from France to the other countries of Papal Christendom; and proved, wherever its poison was absorbed, as much the punishment as the symptom of the corruption within.

Its Character Mistaken at First.

At first many altogether mistook the character of the Revolution. Not a few hailed it as the harbinger

of the triumph of liberty, and of the jubilee of deliverance to the oppressed in Europe. Even the fury of the populace in destroying the Bastille did not undeceive them.

But speedily the true character of an infidel democratic spirit in power exhibited itself. The Revolution was thoroughly irreligious. It was a revolt not only against the government and institutions, but also against the opinions and beliefs of former times. It was ushered in by an inundation of scepticism and infidelity; it led to the overthrow of every species of devotion, and to the education of a generation ignorant even of the simplest of the historic facts and of the first elements of the Christian faith.

The crimes of the Revolution were not the work of any particular body of men; they were the work of the masses, and the guilt of them must be borne by the immense majority of the French nation. Their real cause is to be found in the overthrow of religion effected by Voltaire, and in the dreams of equality and natural innocence put forth by Rousseau.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

1789. *August* 18. National Assembly's declaration of the Rights of Man, that Code of Anarchy and Revolution; proclaiming war against the European orders of nobility and the European sovereigns.

October 6. Night assault on Versailles, and abduction of the King, October 8. The National Assembly established at Paris, under mob control.

November. Confiscation of all the Church Estates, above a third of the whole landed property of the kingdom. No purchasers could be found, as the title was distrusted. System

of Assignats begun; that is, paper money issued on the security of those estates.

1790. *January* and *April*. Parcelling out of France into provincial and municipal democracies, subordinate to the central one at Paris. Subjection to them of all power, civil, judicial, and ecclesiastical. By this gigantic step, the whole civil force of the kingdom was placed at the disposal of the lower orders.

1791. The Legislative Assembly elected. Total want of property and decorum in the new Assembly; not fifty of the members possessed £100 a year. Nothing could control the vehement and vulgar majority. If a demon had wished to choose a body calculated to consign a nation to perdition, he could not have made a more useful choice.

Massacre of the Swiss Guard.

1792. *August* 10. Massacre of the Swiss Guard; imprisonment of the King. This victory over the throne was immediately followed by the submission of all the departments in France to the ruling party. [The Lion at Lucerne is a Memorial of these massacred Guards.]

August 11. Fury of the populace, after the massacre of the Swiss Guard. The emblems of royalty, the statues of the kings, were by orders of the municipality entirely destroyed; those of bronze were carried to the foundry for cannon. Similar devastations were committed in every quarter by frantic crowds of drunken men and women.

August 17. Institution of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and adoption of the guillotine.

Massacre of the Royalists.

September 2. Massacre of the Royalists in the prisons. Above 1,100 persons perished in the different prisons of Paris during these massacres, which continued with no interruption from September 2 to 6. The small number of those who perpetrated these murders in the French capital, under the eyes of the Legislature, is one of the most instructive facts in the history of revolutions. The number actually engaged in the massacres did not exceed three hundred, and twice as many more witnessed and encouraged their proceedings at each jail; yet this handful of men for the time governed Paris and France. The immense majority of the well-disposed citizens, divided in opinion, irresolute in conduct, and dispersed in different quarters, were incapable of resisting the band of assassins engaged in these most atrocious cruelties.

Amidst this carnage and bloodshed the Legislative Assembly came to an end. During its short existence of eleven months, 8,300 persons perished by violent death. But the destruction which its measures had brought upon the higher ranks was speedily inflicted, by its successor, upon its own leaders.

The National Convention.

The National Convention began under darker auspices. The deputies for Paris were none other than the leaders who had organized the revolt of August 10, and had subsequently prepared and rewarded the massacres in the prisons. The deputies from the rest of France were almost all of the same type.

September 23. The first step taken by this new body was the abolition of Royalty, and the introduction of a new Calendar, dating from the first year of the French Republic, September 22, 1792, and abandoning the old Calendar reckoned from the year of our Lord's Birth. A new Constitution was established, entirely democratic, and based on universal suffrage. All persons in whatever rank were declared eligible to every situation; the franchise was conferred on every man above twenty-one; and absolute equality in its literal sense was universally established.

War Declared Against all Governments.

November 19. The Convention issued a Decree, and subsequently confirmed it, and unfolded its details, to the effect that any nation which might see good to shake off the fetters of despotism was thereby, so to speak, the sister of France, and should have help and countenance. This openly placed the French Republic at war with all established governments, and expressed the determination to spread the principles of revolution in other countries.

Execution of Louis XVI.

1793. *January* 21. The trial and execution of their King, Louis XVI, followed, on January 21, 1793. It produced an indescribable effect in England, as also at St. Petersburg. The execution of the Queen, Marie Antoinette, took place in the same year, on October 16.

War Against Britain.

February 3. War was declared by France against Great Britain. Thus began that great and universal war, which speedily embraced all the corners of the globe; which continued with short interruptions for more than twenty years; which led to the occupation of all the capitals in continental Europe by foreign armies, and finally brought the Cossacks and Tartars to the French Metropolis. France made a declaration of war against kings, and of fraternization with all revolutionists everywhere.

Tombs of the Kings Violated.

August 3. The rise of democratic licence in France was signalized by the destruction of the most venerable monuments of the monarchy; owing nothing to antiquity—as they supposed—the people repudiated the honours that France had transmitted to her children. By decree of the Convention, the tombs of the Kings of France at St. Denis were violated, and rifled of their bronze; those of Turenne, Richelieu, and Cardinal Mazarin were defaced. All the Churches, and even many private houses, were stripped of their valuable metals; hardly any monuments of note escaped. The exquisite tapestry of the Gobelins was publicly burned, because the mark of the crown and arms of France was on it. All the sculpture and statuary that could be found on tombs, in Churches, palaces, or chateaux, was destroyed because it savoured of royalty and aristocracy.

Abandonment of Religion.

Having massacred the great of the present, and insulted the illustrious of former ages, nothing remained to the revolutionists but to direct their vengeance against Heaven itself. Accordingly the leaders of the municipality publicly expressed their determination to dethrone the King of Heaven, as well as the monarchs of the earth.

To accomplish this design, they prevailed on Gobel, the apostate constitutional Bishop of Paris, to appear at the bar of the Convention, accompanied by some of the clergy of his diocese, and there to publicly abjure the Christian faith. That base prelate declared "that no other national religion was now required but that of liberty, equality, and morality." Many of the constitutional bishops and clergy in the Convention joined in the proposition; and during several weeks daily abjurations by the constitutional clergy took place at the bar of the Convention.

There was a universal abandonment of religion, with the natural consequence of a general and excessive dissolution of manners. The Churches were closed. A prostitute was worshipped as the goddess of Reason, with shameful orgies accompanying. Marriage became a civil contract, binding only during the pleasure of the parties, and divorce was common. Before the era of the consulate, one-half of the births in Paris were illegitimate. Almost all the members of Convention lived publicly with mistresses, who became possessed of much of their influence in the State. To have done otherwise would have exposed them to the blasting suspicion of being Christians and Royalists.

Hospitals Suppressed.

A Decree of the Convention suppressed all the Academies, public schools, and colleges, even those of Medi-

cine and Surgery, and confiscated the whole of their revenues. Even the Academies which had become celebrated in European history, by the illustrious men by whom they had been graced, were involved in the general proscription.

In the universal havoc, even the establishments of charity were not overlooked. The revenues of the hospitals and humane institutions throughout the country were confiscated by the despots whom the people had placed in power, and their domains sold as part of the national property. Soon the terrible effects of the suppression of all permanent sources of relief for the destitute became apparent. Mendicity advanced with frightful steps ; and the condition of the poor throughout France became such as to call forth the loudest lamentations from the few enlightened philanthropists who still followed the Car of the Revolution.

Education Neglected.

New schools were directed to be opened, but no efficient steps were taken to ensure their establishment, and education for a number of years almost entirely ceased throughout France. Parents were too much taken up with their own personal safety to think of the education of their children. One establishment only, the Polytechnic School, takes its date from that epoch. During that long night, the whole force of the human mind was bent upon the mathematical sciences, which accordingly flourished from the concentration of mental powers, and soon were illuminated by the most splendid light.

Three Great Measures.

Three Great Measures, of paramount importance, belong to this year 1793, producing consequences which

will be felt by the latest generation in France. These were, (1) the immense levies, first of 300,000, then of 1,200,000 men; (2) the confiscation of two-thirds of the landed property of the kingdom, which arose from the Decrees of the Convention against the emigrants, clergy, and persons convicted at the Revolutionary Tribunals; (3) the unbounded issue of Assignats on the security of the national domains.

The immense levies of soldiers drew off almost all the ardent and energetic spirits, and not only supplied bread to the multitudes whom the closing of all pacific employments had deprived of subsistence, but also let off in immense channels the inflamed and diseased blood of the nation. The confiscation of the land placed funds worth above £700,000,000 at the disposal of the government, which they were enabled to squander with boundless profusion in the maintenance of the revolutionary *régime* at home, and of the contest with its enemies abroad. The extraordinary issue of paper, to the amount ultimately of £350,000,000, always enabled the Treasury to meet its demands, and interested every holder of property in the kingdom in the support of the national domains, the only security on which it rested.

Tremendous, but Temporary, Energy.

These great measures, which no government could have attempted but during the fervour of a revolution, mutually, though for a brief period only, upheld each other, and perpetuated the revolutionary system by the important interests which were made to depend on its continuance.

During the unparalleled and almost demoniac energy produced by the sudden operation of these powerful causes, France was unconquerable; and it was their combined operation which brought her triumphant through that violent and unprecedented crisis.

The civil force exerted by the dictators within their own dominions was perhaps even more remarkable than the military power developed by France during this eventful period. Forty-eight thousand revolutionary committees were soon established in the Republic, being one in each commune, and embracing above 500,000 members, all the most resolute and determined of the Jacobin party. Each of these individuals received three francs a day as his wages for seeking out victims for arrest and the scaffold, and the annual charge for them was £24,000,000. Between the military defenders and the civil servants of the government, almost all the active and resolute men in France, and the whole of the depraved and abandoned ones, were in the pay of the Dictators, and the whole starving energy fed on the spoils of its defenceless opulence.

It was a terrible system, drawing after it the total dissolution of society, capable of being executed only by the most audacious wickedness ; yet when attempted, never likely for a time at least to fail of success. It produced astonishing effects for a limited period, just as a spendthrift who in a few years squanders a great fortune outshines those who live by the fruits of their industry ; but the career of extravagance is generally short, bankruptcy arrests alike the waste of improvidence, and the splendour that attends it.

The Assignats.

The issue of Assignats was enormous. In August, 1793, the national expenses were at the rate of £12,000,000 a month, while the receipts were never more than one-fourth of that sum. There was no means of supplying the deficiency but by an incessant issue of paper money. This system continued during the whole Reign of Terror, and produced a total confusion of property of every

sort. All the persons employed by government were paid in paper at par; but as it rapidly fell, from the enormous quantity in circulation, to a tenth and soon to a twentieth of its face value, the pay received was merely nominal, and those in receipt of apparently large incomes might nevertheless be in want of the common necessaries of life.

Constant depreciation of the Assignats caused an unprecedented rise in the price of provisions and of all the articles of human consumption. The Assignats were not absorbed in the purchase of the national domains, for would-be purchasers were distrustful of the security of the revolutionary title, which was all that could be obtained. The Convention in vain strove to arrest this continual depreciation by punishing those who in any way treated the Assignats as of less than their face value. Debtors hastened to discharge their obligations; and creditors, compelled to accept at par paper not worth a fifth, a tenth, and at last not a hundredth, of its face value, were defrauded of the greater part of their property.

Effect on the Working Classes.

The working classes, whose wages, in consequence of the total destruction of credit, the general decline of consumption, and the universal stagnation of industry, had by no means risen in proportion to this fall in the value of the Assignats, found themselves miserably off for the necessaries of life. The farmers, on the other hand, kept raising the price of their provisions in proportion to the fall in the paper, till they were raised far beyond the reach of the labouring poor.

This state of things, so opposite to what they had been led to expect as the result of the Revolution, excited the most vehement discontent among the working classes. They ascribed it all to the efforts of aristo-

crats and forestallers, and demanded with loud cries that such should be led out to the guillotine.

The Reign of Terror : 1794.

In the midst of all these extraordinary changes in society, however, the present triumph of wickedness was preparing its final and condign punishment. Divisions, as usual, had sprung up in the victorious body on the destruction of their opponents. In a singular and providential manner their crimes brought about their own punishment. The Revolutionists destroyed each other in succession. No foreign interposition was necessary ; no avenging angel was required to vindicate the justice of the Divine administration. They fell, the victims of the passions they themselves had let loose, of the injustice of which they had given the first example.

Robespierre and St. Just resolved to destroy both the Dantonists and the Anarchists. Towards Danton Robespierre acted perfidiously. First the Anarchists were proscribed and executed ; then also Danton and his party were arrested, tried, and executed. For a while after their fall no voice was raised against the Reign of Terror, which lasted from the death of Danton to the fall of Robespierre, that is, from April 5 to July 29, 1794. During those four months death became the sole engine of Government ; systematic and daily executions went on in the capital, and extermination in the provinces, for universal submission from every part of France followed on the death of Danton.

Chimerical Projects.

The professed object of the Decemvirs was to establish a republic after the model of the ancients ; to change the manners, habits, public spirit of the country. Sove-

reignty in the people, magistrates without pride, simplicity of manners, fraternity of relations, austerity of character—all utterly impracticable, from a mistaken idea of the virtue of unsophisticated man. To accomplish these chimerical projects it was indispensable to destroy the whole superior classes of society, to cut off all in any way pre-eminent among their neighbours. This was the end proposed in the indiscriminate massacres that were put in execution. It would have sunk the human race to the level of the lowest classes.

Wickedness in Power.

Silent and unopposed, the tyrants struck redoubled blows from one end of France to the other. The Girondists had sought to prevent that fatal rule, the Dantonists to arrest it; both perished in the attempt, because they were inferior in wickedness to their opponents; they fell, the victims of the little humanity which lingered in their bosoms. The combination of wicked men who thereafter governed France is without a parallel in the history of the world. Their power, based on the organized weight of the multitude, and on the ardent co-operation of the municipalities installed by them everywhere throughout France, was irresistible.

By them opulent cities were overturned; hundreds of thousands of deluded artisans reduced to beggary; agriculture, commerce, the arts, destroyed; the foundations of every species of property shaken; and all the youth of the kingdom driven to the frontier. There was no middle course between taking a part in these atrocities, and falling a victim to them. Virtue seemed powerless. There was not a hope left for France, had it not been for the dissensions which, as the natural result of their wickedness, sprang up among the authors of the public calamities.

Fall of Robespierre.

July 29. On this date came the fall of Robespierre, and his execution, with that of all the leaders of the revolt. Thus ended the Reign of Terror. The spectators shed tears of joy, embraced each other in transport, crowded round the scaffold to behold the bloody remains of the tyrant. The transports were universal; no words can convey an idea of the impression which his overthrow produced in Europe.

In no former period had the efforts of the people so completely triumphed, and the higher orders been so thoroughly crushed by the lower. The throne had been overturned, religion destroyed, the aristocracy levelled with the dust; the nobles were in exile, the clergy in captivity, the gentry in affliction. A merciless sword had waved over the state, destroying alike the dignity of rank, the splendour of talent, and the graces of beauty. All that excelled the lower classes in situation, fortune, or acquirement, had been removed; the oppressed had triumphed over their oppressors, had seized their possessions, and risen into their stations.

Power of the Wicked Few.

The Republican Prudhomme, a friend of Danton, gives a list of victims of the Revolution, not complete, but amounting to 1,027,106. The ease with which a faction, composed of a few of the most audacious and reckless of the nation, triumphed over the immense majority of all the holders of property in the kingdom, and led them forth like victims to the sacrifice, is not the least extraordinary or memorable fact of that eventful period.

The active part of the bloody faction at Paris never exceeded a few thousand men; their talents were by no means of the highest order, nor their weight in society considerable, yet they trampled under foot all the in-

fluential classes, ruled mighty armies with absolute sway, kept 200,000 of their fellow-citizens in captivity, and daily led out several hundred, at last even thousands, to execution. The peaceable and inoffensive citizens lived and wept in silence ; terror crushed every attempt at combination, the extremity of grief subdued even the firmest hearts. In despair, universal apathy prevailed, and the people sought to forget their sorrows in the delirium of present enjoyments. All the theatres of Paris were open as usual during the whole continuance of the Reign of Terror, and they were never fuller.

The faction in power followed the principle of universally arousing the cupidity of the lower classes by the display of fresh objects of desire, and representing all the present misery as the consequence of the resistance of the holders of property. When the higher orders were exhausted, and the guillotine began to descend upon the shopkeepers and the more opulent of the labouring classes, the general reaction took place which put an end to the Reign of Terror.

The history that has thus been sketched furnishes a terrible object-lesson of the consequences of the nations rejecting God ; and of the first expression of His wrath in answer to their wrath. He gave them up to their own reprobate minds, and left their passions to unchain themselves against their fellow-men.

XXI

JUDGMENTS ON THE PAPACY AND ITS REALMS

VIALS II TO V: REV. XVI. 3–11.

The Second Vial: Rev. xvi. 3.

THE Vials go on to portray the spread of the evil, and of the judgments and plagues consequent, to different parts of Christendom and of the regions connected therewith. It must be borne in mind that the Vials overrun each other or run parallel to some extent, so that the judgments of one do not necessarily cease when the next Vial is poured out, but continue their effect, to which the succeeding Vial adds intensity or extent.

Destruction of Maritime Power.

The Second Vial resembles the Second Trumpet, which signified destruction by bloody wars of the maritime power, provinces, and commerce of Rome; the agents being Genseric and the Vandals. So here is signified by the Second Vial a judgment, not unconnected with the First Vial, which should fall upon and destroy the maritime power, commerce, and colonies of the countries of Papal Christendom; that is, of France, Spain, and Portugal, for these were the only countries to which such colonies and power belonged.

"*Every living soul in the sea . . . died.*" That is, they were annihilated in their character of European colonies. So under the Second Trumpet, "There died the third part of the creatures . . . in the sea"; explained of the African Province and Mediterranean Islands being conquered by Genseric, and taken from the Romans. Compare also Revelation ix. 18, under the Sixth Trumpet, "The third part of men killed"; explained of the subversion by the Turks of the Greek Third of the old Roman Empire.

Judgment on Maritime Papal Christendom: 1793–1815.

The fulfilment of this prophecy stands out conspicuous in the history of the wars that arose out of the French Revolution.

In God's providence two agencies were made use of for this purpose: (1) the democratic revolutionary spirit of the First Vial, propagated like a pestilence across the sea into the French and Spanish colonies; (2) the maritime power of England, long separated from the Papacy, though once the "tenth part" of the Great City, and now the bulwark not of Protestantism only, but almost of the very profession of Christianity itself.

The Revolutionary Spirit in the West Indies and South America.

The first agency began its work in St. Domingo, the greatest and most flourishing of the French West Indian colonies. France's commerce to this Island alone had maintained 1,600 vessels and 27,000 sailors. The Frenchmen there imitated what had been done in France by the National Assembly, but rejected the claim of the mulattoes and negro slaves for equality. A dreadful

civil and servile war followed, from 1792 to 1804, resulting in the slaughter of 60,000 blacks, the defeat and expulsion of the French, and the establishment of the independent Negro Republic of Hayti. How this was regarded at Paris may be gathered from the saying attributed to Moreau de St. Méry and to Brissot: "Perish the colonies rather than that one principle be sacrificed!"

The same revolutionary venom was the cause of similar civil wars and bloodshed in the Great Spanish colonies of South America, which likewise separated themselves from the mother country; similarly also with regard to the Brazils and to Portugal. Everywhere the results were the same—the independence of the insurgents, and the annihilation of each and all of these provinces in their character of European colonies.

Naval War between France and England.

This great war lasted twenty years, from February, 1793. The maritime power of England was strengthened by Almighty God to destroy everywhere the French ships, commerce, and smaller colonies; as well as those of Holland and Spain, the allies of France. In little more than a month the French were entirely stripped of their West Indian possessions, with hardly any loss to the victors. The following are the dates of the chief naval victories:—

1793. Lord Hood. Destruction of the French fleet at Toulon.

1794. Lord Howe at Ushant. Taking of Corsica, and of nearly all the smaller Spanish and French West Indian Islands.

1795. Lord Bridport. Taking of the Cape of Good Hope.

1797. Mutiny of the English fleet at Spithead and the Nore; general consternation.

1797. Victory over the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent, and over the Dutch off Camperdown.

1798. Nelson and the Nile. 1801: Copenhagen. 1805: Trafalgar.

Altogether, from 1793 to 1815, there were destroyed near 200 ships of the line, 300 or 400 frigates, and an almost incalculable number of smaller vessels of war and commerce. History has not yet presented such a period of naval war, destruction, and bloodshed. The sea indeed "became blood as of a dead man." This destruction of French maritime and commercial power is the more remarkable because of Buonaparte's sense of the importance of such possessions, and his consequent craving after "ships, colonies, and commerce." But powerful as he was on land, where he had a mission to fulfil, he was impotent in what Providence denied him. So was accomplished the judgment of this Vial.

Great Britain and New Russia.

The fearful judgments, which in these years crushed all the Roman Catholic nations of Christendom, had two other unlooked-for and most important results. They established the military and maritime supremacy and the vast colonial empire of Great Britain; which went into the Revolutionary wars a dwarf, and came out from them a giant. They also established a new Power in Europe, the great military empire of Russia, which now rules a non-Catholic empire extending from the Wall of China to the Baltic, and from the Arctic Ocean to India.

The Third Vial: Rev. xvi. 4–7.

"*The rivers and fountains of waters.*" Under the Third Trumpet the star wormwood fell upon "the third

part of the rivers . . . "; which was interpreted of Attila, fixing himself first on the middle Danube, then on the Rhine, then on the Alpine streams that feed the Po; and causing the bitterness of distress, famine, pestilence and death to those who drank of the waters, that is, to the inhabitants of the Roman provinces watered by those streams.

Under the Trumpets it is "one-third" of earth, sea, etc., that is affected. But long before the era of the Vials, the Eastern portion of the Roman Empire had been annihilated in its political character by the Turks. Consequently, under the Vials the remainder, that is Western Papal Christendom, is spoken of as entire.

Since the local scene of this Vial's judgment is "the rivers and the fountains of waters," we seem bound to interpret the former of the two great frontier rivers of Papal Christendom, the Rhine and the Upper Danube; and the latter of the Po and its tributaries. The prophecy then means, that after the judgment of blood on the maritime power and colonies of France, Spain, and Portugal (the Vials overrunning each other), a judgment of war and bloodshed would begin to be poured out upon the countries watered by the Rhine and the Upper Danube, and on the sub-Alpine provinces of Piedmont and Lombardy.

A Righteous Retribution.

"*Righteous art thou . . .*" God often defers judgment to a later generation. Here, apart from other national sins, one is declared to St. John to be the reason for judgments so terrible. The Third Vial is a righteous retribution from God on the countries and nations judged, for murders previously committed by them on His saints and prophets. Appropriate titles are chosen. As "the eternal one," God did not forget

the cries from the scenes of martyrdom that rose up before Him. As "the holy one," His judgments could not but issue against impenitent murderers.

There were the cruelties of the French against the Waldenses and Albigenses before the Reformation, and against the Huguenots and Calvinists after it; of the Piedmontese and their princes of Savoy against the Waldenses of Piedmont from the thirteenth century onward; of the House of Austria against the Waldenses, Hussites and Lutherans in Lombardy, Bohemia, Moravia, and the Netherlands. Many of the localities famed as scenes of carnage and bloodshed in these wars have other and holier associations, as scenes of martyrdom or sufferings of witnesses for the Lord Jesus.

The Altar Speaks.

The great sacrificial Altar has remained still on the scene before St. John, as at the beginning. Under the Fifth Seal the Altar is the covering tomb of the martyrs self-sacrificed in the cause of Christ. Here it is heard speaking (compare Joshua xxiv. 27; 1 Kings xiii. 2). The prophets and saints referred to by the voice as murdered by the princes and people of Papal Rome who are to be judged under this Vial, are thus recognized as fellow-martyrs, associated in spirit and place with the souls previously gathered under the same altar from the persecutions of Rome Heathen, depicted under the Fifth Seal. This voice from the Altar showed that not the full and final predicted vengeance had come, but that indeed a preliminary judgment had then begun.

Historical Summary.

In April, 1792, war was declared by the French National Assembly against the German Emperor, and in September against the King of Sardinia. Ere the

close of that year the Rhine was marked with blood, and the French advanced towards the Alpine streams of Piedmont and Lombardy. Conflicts between French and Austrians took place at Mentz, Worms, and Spires, the very towns long before desolated by Attila, and other conflicts in the Austrian Netherlands. The French advanced also into Savoy. The infection of the Republican democratic spirit had everywhere, from Holland to Italy and Sardinia, prepared and facilitated the progress of French invasion.

In 1793–4 the same scenes of war and bloodshed were enacted. Early in 1795 the French had advanced into Holland, and united it with France, constituting it a democracy.

In 1796 was Buonaparte's first Italian campaign against the allied Sardinians and Austrians. The French invaded Italy, with an army that never mustered 50,000 men in the field, though maintained nearly at that amount by successive reinforcements. Yet with those forces they broke through the Alps into the valleys of the Po and the Adige, subdued Piedmont and Lombardy, humbled the Italian States and the Pope, defeated and almost destroyed four powerful armies raised by Austria to defend her possessions, and wrenched Mantua from her grasp, under the eyes of the greatest arrays of armed men she had ever sent into the field. Then commenced the advance on the Danube, as well as on the Alpine streams. Every river was made a position and a battlefield.

In 1797 resistance was suspended and submission made by Austria. By the Treaty of Campo Formio the Confederation of the Rhine was ceded or virtually subjected to France, as well as Piedmont and Lombardy.

In 1798–9 took place Napoleon's expedition into Egypt, and in 1798 Nelson's victory of the Nile.

To 1799 belongs the celebrated Italian campaign of

Suwarrow, and the repulse of the French. In less than three months after the opening of the campaign on the Adige, the French standards were driven back to the summit of the Alps ; the whole plain of Lombardy was regained, with the exception of a few of its strongest fortresses ; the conquests of Napoleon had been lost in less time than it took to make them, and the Republican armies, divided and dispirited, were reduced to a painful and hazardous defence of their own frontier. A hundred thousand men were spread over the plains of Lombardy.

These triumphs demonstrate on how flimsy and insecure a basis the French dominion at that period rested. But the European Governments were not as yet sufficiently awakened to the dangers of their situation. At this time Napoleon was seeking by his Egyptian campaign to realize his dreams of Oriental conquest and dominion.

Military Despotism.

France was in a deplorable state. It was high time that some military leader of commanding talents should seize the helm, to save the Republic. Never since the commencement of the war had its prospects been so gloomy, from external disaster and internal oppression.

Napoleon had been compelled to retreat from Acre. No event, down to the retreat from Moscow, so deeply affected him. It had cost him 3,000 of his best troops, and the illusion of his invincibility was dispelled. The overthrow of his schemes of Eastern conquest cut him to the heart, and the continuation of this retreat to Egypt added to his misfortunes. By a file of English papers he learnt the disasters of the Republic, and leaving Kleber in command in Egypt, he set sail secretly from Alexandria, taking the greatest pains to escape the English ships. On October 8 he landed at Frejus,

set off the same day for Paris, and arrived there, amid universal enthusiasm, on October 16.

On November 9 the Directory were overturned by a *coup d'état*, and a provisional government was established with Napoleon as First Consul. The two other Consuls had a right to enlighten him by their counsels, but not to restrain him by their vote. The power of the people was totally abrogated, and thus the changes of the French Revolution ended for the time in the establishment, by universal consent, of a government which swept away every remnant of freedom, and consigned the state to the tranquillity of military despotism. Such was the government that the people had brought upon themselves by their sins and their extravagance.

Reconstruction by Napoleon.

In 1800 Napoleon began his measures to extinguish the revolutionary fervour of the people, and to re-establish monarchical authority. He resided at the Tuileries, and commenced the etiquette and splendours of a court; at the same time suppressing the liberty of the press, and establishing a secret police. He began to take steps for the embellishment of Paris, and for the general improvement of France. Prospects everywhere began to amend. The mind of Napoleon was equally elevated in everything it undertook, and there is nothing more striking in European history than the sudden resurrection of France under the despotic government of this great man. It evinces the general disposition of all classes, when taught wisdom by suffering, to resume that place in society for which they were destined and fitted by Almighty God, and in which alone their exertions can add to the sum of general happiness.

To this year belongs Buonaparte's second Italian campaign; the passage of the St. Bernard, and the

victory of Marengo. War followed also along the Danube, and in 1805 the war of the third German coalition was ended by the Battle of Austerlitz, which broke the power of Austria.

It is unnecessary to carry this summary further. The Vial had been felt in the entire range of scene allotted to it—the Rhine, the Danube, and the Alpine streams. In the whole history of European wars, from the rise of the Ten Kingdoms onward, there is not recorded any one year in which these valleys had been the scenes of such carnage, and had so had "blood given them to drink."

Napoleon Emperor.

1801. February 9. The Peace of Luneville concluded at this date was the first considerable pause in the continental strife; and the next two or three years of peace were taken advantage of by Napoleon to pursue the reconstruction of society in France. The success with which his efforts were attended is a more glorious monument to his memory than all his victories in the field. In this year the Legion of Honour was formed, the Roman Catholic religion re-established in France, and connexions with the Pope resumed by the Concordat of July 15. The observance of Sunday was re-established. In 1802 the Civil Code Napoleon was formed.

In 1804, on May 18, Napoleon was declared Emperor of the French—Louis XVIII protesting—and on December 2 he was crowned by the Pope in Notre Dame; but he put the crown on his head himself.

The Fourth Vial: Rev. xvi. 8, 9.

The fourth angel poured out his Vial "*upon the sun.*" It seems most natural to understand that the sun is the

recipient and sufferer, just as the earth, sea, and rivers have been under the former Vials, and just as the sun was the object of judgment under the Fourth Trumpet. There the "third part of sun, moon, and stars . . . was darkened"; and this was fulfilled when Odoacer compelled Romulus Augustulus to abdicate, he being emperor of the Western Third of the old Roman Empire—the third of the sun in its symbolic firmament; his abdication being followed by the extinction of the subordinate Roman authorities.

If the passage be understood in this sense, it may be inferred that here is foreshown the darkening completely or partially (for it is not said that the day does not shine), either of that power amongst the Ten Papal Kingdoms which might most properly be considered the sun in the symbolic firmament of Papal Christendom, that is, the German Emperor; or perhaps in more general terms, of the sovereigns of those Papal kingdoms. This also as a chronological sequel to the former Vial.

But it is said, "*It was given unto it,*" or as the R.V. margin, "*him,*" "*to scorch men with fire.*" If we read "*it,*" this would be the sun, to which the scorching power is given. According to this interpretation the sun is not the sufferer; the meaning would be that the chief Imperial authority represented at that time by the sun had special power given to it to torment men in the way described. Instead of salutary beams, a great scorching heat is shed upon them; this scorching by the sun represents grievous tyranny.

If we read "*him,*" this will be the Angel of the Vial. As in the case of the Locust Plague of the Fifth Trumpet, when a visible earthly agency of torment was headed by an evil invisible angelic agency, Abaddon; so here we may understand that in the execution of God's judgment a righteous invisible agency, that of the Vial

Angel, heads or directs a visible earthly agency whose effect was symbolized by scorching heat.

The historic facts agree with either of these interpretations.

Darkening of the Papal Kingdoms.

The darkening of the Sun of the Papal Kingdoms was accomplished in the wars of the French Revolution.

There had been an earlier and partial darkening at the beginning of the Third Vial, 1794 and 1796, when the lights of the Dutch Stadtholder and of the King of Sardinia were extinguished. But in 1806, the year after Austerlitz, the German Emperor was compelled by Napoleon solemnly to renounce his title of "Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire," and of Germany.

So the Holy Roman Empire, as it was called, having lasted 1,000 years from the time of Charlemagne, or 844 from the time of Otto I, was declared to be no more. The Imperial Sun of Papal Christendom was darkened, and the Emperor Francis retained the title of emperor simply as sovereign of his own hereditary Austrian dominions. The Holy Roman Empire died and was buried, and to all appearance was soon forgotten.

"The dissolution of the German kingdom, and with it the wiping out of the last tradition of the Roman Empire, cannot be separated from the history of the wars of the French Revolution which went before it, and which indeed led to it." (Freeman.)

"The new German Empire of 1871 is in no sense a continuation or restoration of the Holy Roman Empire which fell sixty-four years before its creation. But it may be fairly looked on as a restoration of the old German kingdom, the kingdom of the East Franks." (Freeman: *Hist. Geogr.* chap. VIII.)

The "Confederation of the Rhine" (July 12, 1806), chiefly consisting of the dukedoms of Bavaria and Wurtemburg under French protectorate, revolutionized the old imperial Germanic constitution. These princes were made altogether independent of the German

Emperor, and became vassal-kings of the French, not of the German, Empire. By this change sixteen millions of men were severed from the German Empire.

Napoleon's King-making.

So began Napoleon's king-making, whereby within two short years most of the once independent sovereignties of Western Europe were revolutionized, and their light eclipsed in the political heaven.

Prussia, nominally Protestant, but long since imbued with French infidelity and German neology, was utterly overthrown at Auerstadt and Jena, and shorn of half her dominions, October 14, 1806. The Saxon Elector, aggrandized with Prussian territory, was made King of Saxony. Napoleon's own brother, Jerome Buonaparte, was made King of Westphalia; Louis, his brother, King of Holland; Joseph, his brother, King of Spain and Portugal; and his General Murat, King of Naples. All this from 1806 to 1808. Never before in modern Europe had there been such a subversion of old dynasties and change to new ones; never such a "darkening of the sun," and a "shaking of the powers of heaven," in the political firmament.

And when in 1809 the Austrian Emperor made another desperate effort to emancipate himself and the other European sovereignties, the battles of Eckmuhl (April 22) and Wagram (July 5) turned his hopes into despair, Aspern and Essling (May 21, 22) having been favourable to his cause. He purchased peace only by giving his daughter, the Archduchess Maria Louisa, in marriage to the oppressor, with an implied acquiescence in and sanction to Napoleon's usurpations and tyranny.

Men Scorched with Heat.

There may be here an allusion to the artillery used by the French Emperor, to an extent beyond all former

example in military annals, as the great arm of his victories. If under the Sixth Trumpet the fire was literally that of artillery, why not here ? The Mamelukes, after the battle of the Pyramids, called Buonaparte "The Sultan of Fire."

But the fulfilment, in the usual sense of fiery affliction and suffering, is equally clear in the history of Napoleon's wars. How dreadfully Western Europe, from Cadiz to the Russian frontier, suffered from them ; both until the oppressor had passed the zenith of his power, 1809–11, and after, until his extinction ! The French themselves, victorious till 1812, suffered immensely from taxation and conscription, and from Napoleon's reckless way of making war, without supplies, often without hospitals, and supporting himself by plunder. He drained the very lifeblood of the people entrusted to his charge, not for the defence of their own country, but to extend the ravages of war to distant and unoffending regions. And the countries they conquered, and which were re-conquered ! Exorbitant requisitions were imposed on every city and town, as the French occupied it. Truly men were burnt with fire by the very sun that should have shed on them salutary beams.

No Repentance.

"*They repented not, to give him glory.*" Compare Revelation xi. 13. During the fearful period under review, 1789–1809, that is, from the first outbreak of the revolutionary venom in France to the final prostration of the German Empire and of all Western Europe, there is no evidence of repentance by renouncing infidelity or the Papal Apostasy for a purer faith ; no turning, like some at the Reformation, to the God that smote them. France, wearied with the absurdity and impolicy of her national atheism, had indeed nationally

abandoned it, but for the profession of Popery, as a tranquillization of weaker minds; the energy of the nation was infidel. So was it likewise in Italy, Germany, Spain and Portugal; Romish superstition nationally, French infidelity in the heart, and a bitter, blaspheming, rebellious spirit.

The Fifth Vial: Rev. xvi. 10, 11.

The judgment on the Beast's throne and kingdom follows on that of the Fourth Vial. The throne or seat of the Beast, the spot where the power and presence of the Beast had its proper residence, was the same as that of the Seven-headed Dragon, representing the Heathen Roman power before him. It was the throne of the Seven Hills, the See of Rome. This Fifth Vial must be subsequent in time to Revelation xiii. 2, where the Dragon gives his throne to the Beast.

"*They gnawed their tongues.*" This enhances our idea of the severity of the sufferings. It seems to imply the manner in which all expression of thought and feeling against the oppressor would be repressed, as under an iron reign of terror. This aggravation in a marked manner accompanied the establishment of French domination, under Republic and Emperor, in every subjugated country of Western Europe, by jealous censorship of the press, and oppressive tyranny of the police.

"*Their pains and . . . sores.*" These words bind on this judgment to that of the First and following Vials, and show that these judgments are cumulative, and not simply successive.

Judgment on the Popedom.

Immediately after the battle of Wagram in 1809, and the re-subjection of Austria—the closing historic fact

in the exposition of the Fourth Vial—Napoleon issued the two famous Decrees of Schönbrunn and Vienna, whereby the Pope's Temporal authority over the Roman state was abolished, and Rome itself incorporated with France as the second city of its Empire.

But this was only the consummation of insults and injuries heaped on the Papal Power by the French from almost the very commencement of their Revolution. The spoliation of the Romish Church began in France, but that was not actually the "throne of the Beast." This throne was not touched till at least 1798, and then fully in 1809, as will now be related.

Spoliation Begun in France.

For half a century before, symptoms showed that the attachment of many of the Western Kings had more than grown cold towards the Pope; there was a preparation of mind within them, if not for the overthrow of his dominion, yet for some spoliation of the Church his associate. But as yet no mortal blow had been struck by any of them against Papal supremacy.

1789. This was reserved for the epoch of the Revolution, and for that country which, under Clovis 1,300 years before, had first of the Western kingdoms attached itself to Rome, and the king of which had thenceforth borne the title of "eldest son of the Church." The National Assembly began the work of spoliation. Tithes were abolished. All ecclesiastical lands in the kingdom were appropriated as national property, which before had been regarded as not French property only, but that also of the Roman Catholic Church, and therefore needing the Pope's sanction to the alienation. The clergy, already made pensioners of the State, were to be popularly elected, instead of being instituted after the Papal Concordat; and on pain of forfeiture of their

pension, were compelled to make a solemn abjuration of all allegiance to the Pope.

1793. Decree for the abolition of the Christian, that is, the Romish, religion in France. Many Churches were razed to the ground, others left in ruin; sacred places were defiled; treasures rifled, Church bells cast into cannon. So was the whole French ecclesiastical establishment at that time destroyed; many French clergy massacred with most horrid atrocity; the rest, beggared, fled from popular fury, mostly into Protestant lands. Judgment was begun, and darkness was gathering over the Papal kingdom. The spoliation of the Harlot Church thus begun in France spread rapidly into the other countries of Christendom; the tempests of war lent it their wings.

And Continued in Italy.

1797. January 28. Surrender of Mantua. Having achieved this great conquest, Napoleon directed his arms against Rome. The power which had vanquished after so desperate a struggle the strength of Austria, was not long in crushing the feeble forces of the Roman Church. During the strife on the Adige, the Pope had refused to ratify the Treaty of Bologna, and had openly engaged in the hostile measures at the conclusion of the campaign, in conjunction with the forces of Austria. The French troops, in consequence, crossed the Apennines; the Papal troops were routed on the banks of the Senio; Ancona was speedily taken, while a small column on the other side of the Apennines pushed on as far as Foligno, and threatened Rome itself.

Treaty of Tolentino.

Nothing remained to the Vatican but submission, and peace was concluded at Tolentino, February 19,

1797, on terms most humiliating to the Holy See. The Pope engaged to close his ports against the Allies; to cede Avignon and the Venaisin to France; to abandon Bologna, Ferrara, and the whole of Romagna (Peter's Patrimony); to admit a garrison of French troops into Ancona till the conclusion of a general peace; to surrender military stores; and to pay a contribution of above £1,500,000 to the victorious Republic.

Besides this, he was obliged to surrender a hundred of his principal works of art, the finest paintings and statues in the Vatican, to the French commissioners. These trophies of ancient and modern genius were seized on with merciless rapacity, and in a short time the noblest specimens of the fine arts that existed in the world were placed on the banks of the Seine.

Humiliation of the Pope.

This Treaty of Tolentino was concluded by the French under the idea that it would eventually prove fatal to the Holy See. Napoleon proposed to overturn at once the Papal Government, and the Directory invited him to do everything in his power to destroy it, considering the Roman Catholic religion the irreconcilable enemy of the Republic.

The aged Pope himself, now left mere nominal master of some few remaining shreds of the "Patrimony of St. Peter," soon experienced in person the bitterness of the prevailing anti-Papal spirit. On pretence of an insult to the French Ambassador, a French army in February, 1798, entered Rome; the tricolor was displayed from the Capitol amid the shouts of the populace; the Pope's Temporal reign was declared at an end, and the Roman Republic proclaimed.

Then in the Sistine chapel of the Vatican, in the antehall to which is a fresco painted by Papal order to com-

memorate the Protestant massacre on St. Bartholomew's Day, the aged Pope, while seated on his throne and receiving the congratulations of his cardinals on the anniversary of his election to the Popedom, was arrested by the French soldiery, the ring of his marriage with the Church Catholic torn from his finger, his palace rifled, and he himself carried captive into France, to die there in exile, in August, 1799.

The confiscation of all territorial possessions of the Church and monasteries, the pillage of the Pope's library, museum, furniture, and even sacerdotal robes, which were burnt to collect the gold in them—all these injuries plainly told the world that the Vial had touched the throne of the Beast.

Afterwards, through the temporary success of the Allies under Suwarrow, there was repair, but only temporary, of the ruin o; the Papal throne. The Romish religion was recognized by Napoleon, but only in common and on an equal footing with other forms of Christianity; this was bitterness to Rome. His idea was to retain the Pope, but in a state of absolute subjection, and to make him the tool of his own boundless ambition. In his coronation in 1804 the Pope took part, but Napoleon put the crown on his own head. He refused any accession of territory to the Holy See.

Schönbrunn and Vienna.

On the Pope's resistance to the oppressor, there followed in 1809 the full outpouring of the Vial upon his throne, in Napoleon's anti-Papal Decrees of Schönbrunn and Vienna, to which all the Ten Kingdoms of Western Christendom, except England, long since broken off from the Popedom, might have appeared before the world as assenting and consenting parties.

Their purport was—Revocation of Charlemagne's donations to the Holy See; Napoleon claiming the

right to do this as himself the successor and representative of Charlemagne. Annexation of the Papal States to Italy. Total and final abolition of the Pope's Temporal authority; and settlement of a salary on the Pope as a mere pensionary of state, in his spiritual character. Incorporation of Rome as the second city of the Empire.

The Pope vented the bitterness of his soul in an old-fashioned excommunication of the French Emperor and his adherents; but by its detail of wrongs it only served as a memorial of the predicted outpouring of the Vial; and by its impotency and the ridicule it met, it proclaimed the fact that the days of the old Papal supremacy were ending.

Napoleon's Views on the Papacy.

Napoleon had great views, well matured, on the Papacy and its more intimate connexion with the French government, the influence which he might acquire over its members, and the more extended basis on which by such means he might establish his own power. He not only had no jealousy, but he cordially approved of every institution which tended to bring men into a state of due subjection to constituted authority. All he required was that these institutions should be placed under his own immediate influence and control.

With this view he meditated the translation of the Papal Government to Paris, the extinction of its Temporal dominion, its entire dependence on the French Empire for revenue, and the consequent subjection of its chief to his own control; but if this were effected, he had no wish to impair the spiritual authority; on the contrary, he was rather desirous to extend it. Like the Roman Emperor, he was anxious to found his own authority not merely on temporal power, but also on

religious influences, to adorn his brows not only with the diadem of the conqueror, but also with the mitre of the pontiff; and as the forms of the Church prevented the actual union of both offices in his own person, he conceived that the next best system would be to have the Pope so situated that he should be irrevocably subjected to his control.

His plans were to make Paris the head of the Church; to fix the Pope and the Papal See in the Archiepiscopal Palace there, the spiritual head of the Roman Catholic Church under his own eye and restraint, in the new capital of Catholicism. He would then have done everything in his power to extend the Romish propagandism and the Roman Catholic foreign missions, and to increase the power of the clergy.

The Fontainebleau Concordat.

1813. January. Conferences were held with the Pope at Fontainebleau. Napoleon fascinated him in conversation, and by the end of the month had the satisfaction of seeing the signature of the Pope to a Concordat, which settled the principal points in dispute between the Court of the Tuileries and the Holy See. It tacitly ceded to the Emperor the whole of the ecclesiastical states in Italy, by stipulating nothing for their restitution, and in effect decided in favour of the civil power in France the long-disputed question as to the ecclesiastical veto on the appointment of Bishops by the temporal authority.

Next morning, decorations, presents, and orders were profusely scattered among the chief persons of the Pope's household; the joyful intelligence was communicated to all the bishops; *Te Deum* was chanted in the Churches; all the restrictions upon the freedom of the Pope were removed; mass was allowed to be celebrated in the palace of Fontainebleau; a numerous

body of cardinals soon after joined the Pope from their different places of exile; the Emperor loaded the Pope, and all the members of his court, with that gracious and insinuating kindness which, when it suited his purposes, he could so well assume.

The Pope Repents.

But shortly after the Concordat was signed, the Pope with profound grief repented of the step he had taken. After long and anxious debate among the Cardinals, it was determined that the Pope should solemnly retract his signature, in a letter to the Emperor, and ascribe his previous acquiescence to the weakness of the flesh.

This he did. Though mortally offended, Napoleon dissembled his wrath, and feigning to disregard entirely this retractation, he acted as if the matter were irrevocably concluded. On the very day after he had received the Pope's letter, he published the Concordat as a law, obligatory upon all archbishops, bishops, and chapters.

The Popedom and Rome.

Prophecy, however, connected the Popedom with Rome until Rome's final and terrible destruction. Accordingly the sudden and wonderful overthrow of Napoleon's power occurred, to prevent the carrying out of his plans as to the Papacy. But even then, upon the Peace of Paris, when "Catholicity having deserted him, four heretical kings bore the Pope back to Rome," the Pope sat on his throne not as before. His power was crippled, his seat unstable, the riches of his Church rifled, and a mighty principle of action established against him, for the consuming judgment predicted in Daniel, and the darkening of his kingdom, predicted in the Book of Revelation.

Subsequent attempts at the re-establishment of Papal superstition and supremacy were made by the Bourbons, Ferdinand, Miguel, and the Pope, in France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. But revolutions in the first three weakened the ill-cemented reconstructions. Down to the reign of Louis Philippe, 1830 to 1848, in France the Romish Church remained impoverished, and only on the footing of equality ; in Portugal, spoiled of ecclesiastical domains by secular decree, 1835 ; in Spain, subjected to similar spoliation. In Italy it kept the domains reassigned at the Peace of Paris, but the democratic anti-Papal spirit infused under French domination was not extinct. In 1848–9 took place the democratic revolt at Rome, and the Pope had to flee from his capital.

In 1860–1 there was a second spoliation of most of Peter's Patrimony, ultimately through French agency. The Pope's dominion was henceforth limited to Rome itself. Finally, in 1870, the Italian government entered the Papal States, the Temporal Power fell, and Rome was declared the capital of the kingdom of Italy.

But it must be remembered that under the Sixth Vial (Rev. xvi. 13, 14), there is foretold a revival of energy in the Papal Beast. Moreover, in Revelation xviii. 9, there is implied some kindly feeling towards Rome on the part of the Western Kings, at the epoch of her great and final destruction.

No Repentance.

What was the moral and religious impression and effect of the Vials so far ?

As after the scourge of the Sixth Trumpet, so now. There was no true repentance toward God. "They blasphemed," not merely cursing or speaking injuriously against God ; but also virtually though indirectly speaking against and denying Him, either by usurping

His prerogatives, or by ascribing them to idols or to other gods.

The time seems to extend from the first pouring out of the Vials on the Beast's kingdom, through all the plagues and sufferings consequent, down to the pouring out of the Sixth Vial on the Euphrates, that is, from 1790 to 1820; indeed apparently further, for no change is noticed as occurring afterwards. The objects of its crimination are the constituency of the Beast's kingdom, the same that under it was darkened; that is, the constituency of anti-Christendom generally, if we explain the phrase of the Pope's spiritual kingdom; that of Rome and the Italian Papal States, if we explain it of his temporal kingdom.

Under Buonaparte's Consulship in 1800, France abandoned the national profession of atheism for that, not of a pure Scriptural faith, but of Popery, and on the grounds of expediency alone. There was a mock show of the revival of the old Romish superstition, as if that were true religion. The general infidel spirit of the nation was unchanged. The Bible was unknown, and unprocurable, the Lord's Day not observed, Mariolatry was practised, Protestantism treated with all the intolerance that present limits allowed, and there was an utter demoralization of manners. Romish missions were planned, antagonistic to the Protestant foreign missions.

In 1815 the rod of the oppressor was broken, peace was re-established, and the Pope and Princes restored to their kingdoms in the European world. What then? There was reassertion by the Pope of all the old Papal impieties and blasphemies; saints were canonized, a miraculous image of the Virgin crowned, the Jesuits re-established, toleration refused to Protestant worship in France, Protestants again anathematized on Maundy Thursday, briefs issued against Bible societies. The

Princes of the nine kingdoms repented, not of their evil deeds, but of their insubordination to Rome; there was no sign of any other repentance.

Yet a little respite was to be granted them, while the next Vial was poured out on another and different corrupter and desolator of the Roman earth—the Moslem Turk from the Euphrates.

XXII

JUDGMENTS ON THE TURK. OUTGOING OF THREE EVIL SPIRITS

SIXTH VIAL: REV. XVI. 12–16.

THE Sixth Vial is poured out upon "the great river . . . Euphrates." It seems manifest that the same Turkish Power is here intended as was described under the Sixth Trumpet, and there said to be loosed from the Euphrates. Its water is its people (Rev. xvii. 15), and it is spoken of as "great" because of the multitude of people and nations therein. Like the Assyrian and other Powers of old, when providentially employed to desolate Judah (Isa. viii. 7, 8; xvii. 12, 13), it had overflowed from its Euphratean banks over Grecian Christendom (see also Jer. xlvi. 7, 8; xlvii. 2). And now, as the next great event after the outpouring of the Fifth Vial on the Seat of the Beast, that is, on Papal Rome, it was foreshown that the symbolic waterflood of that great river was to begin to be dried up; that is, that the population and area of the Turkish Empire were, from one cause or another, to begin to be diminished.

Though the Second or Turkish Woe had long passed away, so far as its being a Woe to Christendom was concerned, the overflow of the mystic Euphrates does not begin to dry up till now. This is the second stage in Turkish decay. We may imagine the Euphrates a

river of ink, having widely overflowed its banks, and flooded on the map the whole area of Turkish dominion at its fullest extent. Then what is here foreshown would be, that black flood beginning to dry up, and highlands and islands gradually to emerge. (See the diagram in Paper IV.)

But though the Turkish Power be dried up, though the Little Horn of Daniel viii. be broken without hand, yet the Mohammedan religion, whose origin is four centuries earlier than that of the Turkish Power, by which it is professed and supported, may still prevail, and still influence multitudes of mankind, till destroyed at the Lord's Advent.

Judgment begun on the Turk.

During the Revolutionary Wars in Europe, the Turkman Power had remained comparatively uninjured. Napoleon's expedition of 1798, which conquered Egypt, was soon expelled by the English under Abercromby, in 1801, and the political state of the Turkish Empire became as before. So that in 1802 a Christian commentator, Galloway, wondered how this Vial was to take effect, and an Empire so mighty and populous was to be wasted and dried up.

In the beginning of 1820 the Ottoman Empire found itself freed from foreign war and domestic rebellion. But before the year ended the scene had changed, and causes of exhaustion and distress were introduced that have never since ceased to operate.

First, internal revolt and insurrection. Ali Pasha, in 1820, revolted against the Sultan, and precipitated the Greek insurrection,[1] which rapidly spread to the Ægean Isles, North Greece, Epirus and Thessaly, also

[1] There is a close parallel between this and the Greek rising against the Persians 2,300 years before.

to Wallachia and Moldavia. The insurrection progressed to a successful issue. The massacres by the Turkish admiral stirred abhorrence and indignation. The sympathies of Western Christendom were awakened for brother Christians struggling for independence; and when a Turko-Egyptian armament under Ibrahim Pasha landed in Greece, the English, French, and Russian fleets interposed; the naval battle of Navarino was fought, October 20, 1827, the Turko-Egyptian fleets destroyed, and Greece was saved, and received her independence.

Next, after the massacre of the Janissaries at Constantinople, July 15, 1826, a most disastrous foreign war was added by Turkey's infatuation to all its other woes. In April, 1828, insulted Russia declared war. From East and North the Turkish Empire was attacked. The Ambassadors interposed, and in October, 1829, peace was made, but by it the drying up of the Euphratean flood was greatly advanced. Wallachia and Moldavia were secured as Christian principalities under Russian protectorate, Servia was made independent, and not a Turk permitted to reside north of the Danube. In the same year, 1829, a French army landed on the African coast and took Algiers, thus drying up another source of Turkish power.

Then followed the rebellion of the great Egyptian Pasha, Mehemet Ali. The French invasion of Egypt had taught him the superiority of European discipline, and the part he had taken in endeavouring to subjugate Greece had exercised and disciplined his army, and shown its superiority to the troops of the Sultan. Thus, very soon after the Russian War, he asserted his independence, attacked and conquered Syria, and defeated the Turks in three great battles—Hems, in June, 1832; and Nezib and Iconium, in January, 1833. The interference of the ambassadors of Christendom prevented

the victorious army from marching on Constantinople. At length, in 1840, England, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, weary of suspense and peril to the balance of power, interposed, took Acre, and forced back the Pasha within his own pashalic. Yet there he was only a nominal dependent on the Sultan. The English occupation of Egypt, in 1882, has still more completely isolated that country from the Sultan's dominions.

In 1844, one of the closes of the prophetic periods, reckoned in solar years, though there was for Turkey no military defeat, an event took place of a far more important character, as marking the loss of independence by the Porte, and the beginning of liberation for its Jewish and Christian subjects. In that year the United Powers of Europe compelled the Turkish government to cease the practice of execution for apostasy ; in other words, to cease persecuting on religious grounds. This, being contrary to the fundamental principles of Mohammedanism, would never have been conceded until all power of resistance had failed. The concession was the result of conscious weakness in relation to the Christian Powers.

The depopulating judgments of God have also been at work ; not only the depopulation that has long silently gone on, from anti-social habits of polygamy and vice, and political oppression and misrule ; but that also arising from such causes as earthquake, famine, pestilence, civil commotion, and financial collapse.

Thus from 1820 the exhaustion of the Turkish Power, and the drying up of the flood with which for nearly 400 years it had inundated half Christendom, has been going on with a rapidity beyond what any sober mind could have anticipated. From 1820 to 1897 Turkey has lost Greece, Servia, Moldavia, Wallachia, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, and Crete. These have emerged as islands from the subsiding flood, as Christian principalities or provinces,

and the professedly Christian population in them has again become dominant.

Nor has the drying up ceased. Everywhere the process of internal decay and depopulation goes on, and it is evident that nothing supports what remains of the once mighty power of Turkey but the policy and the jealousies of the Princes of Christendom. Turkey is the "sick man" of European politics. Jewish renaissance progresses along with Turkish decay (see Paper IV).

The energies of the young Turks, and their sounder ideas of government, may infuse life into some remnants of its Provinces, may rejuvenate some portion of the Empire when re-distributed; but Turkey, as a Power, is doomed to decay and extinction. Whatever promise these new movements may seem to contain, the Word of Prophecy warns us to expect only further stages in Turkey's decay. One of the early acts of the young Turks has been to give autonomy to Western Arabia, thus loosening Turkey's hold on another large portion of her dominion.

Turkish decay has extended even to the regions of literature, poetry, and the fine arts. Memdouh Bey, a celebrated Turkish poet, who came to London in the autumn of 1901, was reported to have expressed himself very strongly on the decline of literature in Turkey:—

"The decadence dates from the accession of the present Sultan. Until that time there existed in Turkey not only a classic literature, but a school of artists and musicians; but so baleful has been the influence of the Sultan's rule that all have been practically destroyed, as also have chemical, astronomical, and even geographical researches. No one dares to publish a book of any literary value. Every writer is suspected of political motives, and is immediately subject to persecution should he attempt to write anything but commonplaces. The result is that nothing appears except worthless pamphlets eulogizing the Sultan and his system.

"It is in vain for thinkers to protest that the views to which they desire to give expression are those already propagated by

Ruskin, by Voltaire, by Racine, and other great writers; the only result of such protests is to secure the prohibition of all the works of these authors in Turkey. In consequence of this all the chief literary men of Turkish nationality have either suffered persecution or been obliged to become exiles in foreign lands.

"The Sultan is particularly hostile to poets, notwithstanding (perhaps because of) the fact that his imprisoned brother, Murad Effendi, is a poet of no mean ability; he is also a clever musician. There was formerly a good supply of typical Turkish music, but it is now a thing of the past. There are writers and poets, and artists of great potentiality, but they are at present held fast bound by the existing system."

The Kings from the Sunrising.

Who are these? Whose way is to be made ready by this drying up of the symbolic Euphrates? What is the character and result of their advance? More than one explanation is given of this passage.

I. From the context it appears that the kings of the whole earth are about to be gathered together to the great battle against the Lord, in which He shall be victorious, and they shall perish. The time for this gathering is now drawing near, and by the drying up of the Euphrates the way of those kings who are to come to it from the East is made ready.

It appears from Ezekiel xxxviii. 4, 5, that among those who aid Gog in his invasion of the Holy Land are "Persia, Cush, and Put," some of Ham's descendants (Gen. x. 6), occupying the lands where Mohammedanism has sway. Looking at the map of the Area of the Great Image (see Paper II), it will be seen that Gog gathers together all the West, the inhabitants of Western Papal Christendom, and leads them to Palestine; while the drying up of the symbolic Euphrates clears the way for the Mohammedan Powers of the East to reach the same region for the same purpose (see Paper XXV). The

kings in this case come for a hostile purpose. In this connexion, what may be the significance of the awakening and victories of Japan, and the still more marvellous awakening of the hundreds of millions of China ? On whose side are they about to range themselves ?

II. Another explanation is as follows. The opening of the Temple gate on the Apocalyptic scene was one of the notable accompaniments of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet ; that is, the opening of the Reformed Church to view, and the uncovering before the world of the holy mysteries and divine tutelary presence symbolized by its Ark (Rev. xi. 19). There was also a Song by some of God's faithful servants in some way chronologically connected with the era of the Vials (Rev. xv. 3, 4), one clause of which anticipates the future : " For all the nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy righteous acts have been made manifest." All prophecy agrees with these anticipations of the conversion of the heathen, at this time of the end, and the confluence of their princes and people to worship before the Lord.

Now Mohammedanism, reigning and supreme, has been the most formidable obstruction to the Christianization of much of the Eastern world ; that is, according to symbolic phraseology, to its entering within the opened gates of the Temple and worshipping. And the Turkish Power has been the greatest bulwark to the Mohammedan religion. Till March, 1844, it was death to a Mussulman to apostatize from his faith and become a Christian. What, then, so signal a removal of obstructions to the Christianization of a great part of the East as the drying up of the flood of the Turkman Power ? What so notable a preparation of the way for princes and peoples from the East, like the Magi of old, to come to the Christian Temple, and enter, and worship ? According to this explanation, the kings come

to seek the Lord and His truth, a great hindrance to their advance having been removed.

III. This passage has also been explained of the restoration of the Jews to their own land, on the decay and fall of the Turkish Empire. But is there clear Scripture warrant for this interpretation ?

The Jews are nowhere represented as so concentrated in Eastern countries at the close of their dispersion, as to warrant their being spoken of as a people to be gathered from the East. They come from all points of the compass (Isa. xi. 11, 12 ; xliii. 5, 6 ; xlix. 12, etc.). As a fact, they are still dispersed in all quarters of the globe.

Moreover, at the time of their final re-establishment in their own land, they are not spoken of in prophecy as kings. Their Gentile gatherers and nursing-fathers are called " kings," but not so the people themselves. Whatever may be their subsequent superiority and religious eminence under the Millennial Dispensation, there is nothing to justify their being called kings with reference to an earlier epoch.

The Three Frogs : Rev. xvi. 13–16.

The Sixth Vial is strikingly marked, politically, by the drying up of the symbolic Euphrates, that is, by the decay of the once mighty Turkish or Mohammedan Power. It is no less strikingly marked, religiously, by the outgoing over England and the world, of the three deluding spirits of Infidelity, Popery, and Priestcraft, all united in the one object of warring against the pure Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This follows next after the drying up of the Euphrates has begun.

In Revelation xiii. is the description of the rise of the Beast from the sea, and of the delegation to him of the Dragon's former throne and power ; also of the rise and close connexion with that Beast of the Two-horned

Lamb-like Beast, the False Prophet. From that point the Beast from the Sea may be traced, without any change of form, down to this Sixth Vial. The account of the final war, and the treading of the winepress, is given in Revelation xix. ; it is the same Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet all through. As the Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet are referred to in this Sixth Vial as being now on the scene, the descriptions of the three in Revelation xii., xiii., must be anterior in point of time to this Revelation xvi.

What are these Three Evil Spirits ?

The Dragon is that old Serpent the Devil, who in earlier days animated and acted in the Heathenism of Ancient Rome. He has been depicted in the vision of the final war of Heathenism against Christianity, at the opening of the fourth century, in a covering skin of a Seven-headed Dragon ; and he has remained on the scene. The spirit from the Dragon's mouth is heathen-like Infidelity, with its proper accompaniment of blasphemy, and of rebellion against rightful authority, Divine and human, when opposed to it.

The Beast, or rather the Beast's Eighth Ruling Head, is the succession of the Popes of Rome, from and after the time when the Papacy began to occupy the Dragon's throne and empire in Western Christendom. The spirit from the Beast is the pure direct principle of Popery, based on the fundamental Antichristian dogma that the Pope is Christ's divinely appointed Vicegerent on earth, the Vicar of Christ here below. It comes from the *mouth* of the Beast ; not from his body, the peoples ; nor from the Woman, the Papal Church ; but from the Beast's ruling Head, that is, from the Papacy itself.

The False Prophet is identified in Revelation xix. 20, with the Two-horned Lambskin-covered Beast of Reve-

lation xiii., which represents the Priesthood of the Patriarchate of Western Europe, from and after the time of its subjection and official attachment to the Roman Popedom; this Two-horned Beast being the chief agent, mouthpiece, and supporter of the Papal Beast its principal. Here the False Prophet is named without any expression of subjection to the Beast; he bears simply the generic name of an apostate priesthood in the professing Church.

The most characteristic spirit of such a priesthood is the spirit of Priestcraft, and this is the spirit from the mouth of the False Prophet. Its essence is to arrogate to its own peculiar order the distinction of being the appointed and necessary earthly mediator between man and God, the one effective deprecator of His wrath and channel of His grace and salvation; and the spirit shows itself not in the Roman Catholic priesthood only, but in all sacerdotal priesthood in any Church. It is distinct from and independent of the spirit of direct Popery, though it is its natural and almost necessary ally. It so acted independently in the fourth and fifth centuries, before it was organized to prepare the way for the Antichrist that was to head the Apostasy; and afterwards it was his most effective instrument and supporter, still fully retaining its own peculiar spirit of Priestcraft.

All from the Same Source.

The three Spirits, then, are those of Infidelity, Popery, and Priestcraft; and all three are ultimately from the same source. The Dragon has called forth the Beast, and given him his throne and power; and the Beast has been provided with the False Prophet as his chief attendant and helper. As is the source, so will be the stream; as is the enemy who originates, so will be the influence transmitted. These three are under one and

the same evil direction, and act with unity of effect, though it is quite possible that they may seem to unreflecting persons to be in opposition to each other. Their purpose is, to seduce and to gather together the powers of the world—as Ahab was seduced by a lying spirit to go to Ramoth Gilead to fall there—in antagonism against Christ's truth and people, for the great and final conflict.

Rapid and Widespread Diffusion.

Here is foretold, after a certain progress has been made in the drying up of the Turkish flood, and ere the expiration of the era of the Sixth Vial, a great revival of energy in these three Powers, a fresh issuing forth in strength over the prophetic scene of those three spirits of evil that had already been the chief enemies to pure Christianity during the eighteen previous centuries.

The symbols signify some extraordinarily rapid, widespread, and influential diffusion throughout the whole Roman world, if not indeed throughout the whole habitable earth, of the three unclean or unholy principles that characterize the Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet; that is, the principles of Infidelity, Popery, and Priestcraft, all alike directed and speeded by spirits of hell.

Frogs: Agitators.

The earthly agencies employed to propagate them resemble frogs, that is, vain loquacious talkers and agitators, deluding and seducing the minds of men, low in character while lofty in pretensions. The comparison is to the noisy frogs of Southern Europe; and the symbol seems to indicate opposition by speaking and agitation, rather than by active violence and persecution. But though earthly teachers and agitators

may be the visible means, the real propagators are evil spirits.

Three Spirits ; not One Only.

There is nothing whatever in Scripture to authorize the expectation that in the last days infidelity will be universally substituted for superstition and corruption of the truth. On the contrary, it is here foreshown that at the close of the dispensation three unclean spirits like frogs go forth together to the kings of the whole world. It is not one only, as from the Dragon alone ; but three, from three distinct and contrasted sources, that are to gather the hosts for the last great conflict against Christ and His truth. This plainly shows that up to the very end error will be various in form.

Historic Sketch.

The historic sketch of the doings of these three evil spirits must begin from about 1830, when the mystic Euphrates had been dried up in Greece, across the Danube, and in Algiers. Some few years before, the spirits of Infidelity and Popery had made themselves very noticeable ; but at this time momentous political changes occurred in France and England, the two most influential Powers in Western Christendom. In France there was the second democratic Revolution, in 1830 ; in England the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act, in 1829, and the Reform Bill of 1832.

By these, though little intended by the chief authors of those changes in England, the issuing forth of the three spirits in virtual alliance with each other, at least as to common enmity to evangelical religion, was greatly helped and hastened forward. It is especially in England that their actings must be marked, for during the Revolutionary era England was the chief asylum of

true religion, the centre of evangelization for the world. Here their working would be most injurious, and here of all European Christendom the author of evil might be expected to urge their going forth in power with his deepest subtlety and mightiest energies.

The Spirit of Infidelity.

The Spirit from the Dragon, the early antagonist of Christianity in the days of Roman Heathenism, is the unholy spirit of heathen-like infidelity, in all its proud rebelliousness against opposing truth, whether in religion, morals, government, or even in science itself.

It is notorious that there was a sudden furious outbreak of this spirit in England, after the overthrow of the Bourbon dynasty in France, and about the time of the progress of the Reform Bill at home. An extraordinary anti-religious and revolutionary agitation took possession of the public mind. Rank and property, Church and State, were alike endangered. Frequently was seen the conjunction of the avowed infidel as to religion and the revolutionary democrat as to politics, incessantly croaking to the masses, "Agitate, agitate." The Established Church was marked out as the special object of enmity and attack; its prelates were insulted, and even in the House of Lords were admonished to set their house in order. The other religious bodies seemed especially infected with that spirit.

Whoever those may have been who at the time fell under the influence of a mighty spirit of delusion, there could be no two opinions as to the real origin of the godless, irreligious spirit which at this political crisis burst forth with such singular vehemence. Nor was the unclean infidel spirit from the Dragon's mouth silenced even after that fearful crisis. It continued still alive and active among the lower orders; and socialism, chartism, and infidelity still kept up in England their

machinery of agitation—inflammatory harangues, mob orators, newspaper articles, and halls in which infidelity and sedition were sedulously inculcated. Human reason was appealed to against the truths of Christianity. The infidel spirit invaded and sought to establish itself in the sanctuary of the English Church.

The same, with even yet more effect, was the case in the continental countries, whence the draconic spirit came to England; more especially in France and Germany, but also in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Russia, and Denmark. Nor in Europe alone; its range is wider than the old Roman earth, even to the whole world. Thus in regard to India, advantage was taken of the renewal of the East India Company's Charter in 1833 to send out bales of Tom Paine's works and other like literature.

The spirit has not ceased to work, from that time to this, in a variety of ways. To its activity are due attacks of all kinds on the New and Old Testaments, not necessarily coarse and vulgar, as in the eighteenth century, but refined and subtle, and with a great show of scholarship. Intelligent and reverent investigation of all that concerns God's Revelation to man is not only not to be dreaded, but may with all confidence be welcomed and encouraged. Yet not a little of what shelters itself under the name of "Higher Criticism" is of this Dragon spirit and has its aims. One means of propagating these views is by encyclopædias and dictionaries as was the case before the great French Revolution. A notable feature of this kind of criticism, betraying its source, is that the testimony of our Blessed Lord Himself, goes for nothing, and is not taken into account at all. Such teaching does not come from the Holy Spirit, whose special function is to glorify Christ.

How these evil spirits spread their influence throughout the whole world is well illustrated by an Appeal, presented in 1903

to the Chancellors of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. It set forth that in India the position of the Bible and Christianity was most menacing, owing to the spread of the Higher Critical theories. The native press shows these forth as emanating from English Universities, yet as directly anti-Christian. The position of Christian missionaries is almost grotesque—teaching from the Christian Bible, whose truth is denied at the headquarters of Christianity, the Universities themselves. These denials of the truth of the Bible have gone forth from the Universities to the world, until the Bible is now held up to natives by thoughtful Mohammedans as teaching no more than the Koran, and, as far as truthfulness is concerned, demonstrably inferior to the Koran. The effect of these teachings and pronouncements of leading men at home on mission work everywhere is disastrous in the extreme.

The Missionary Conference at Bremen, in May and June, 1905, representing twenty-six Missionary Societies, expressed its painful regret that mission work at home and abroad was disturbed and rendered difficult by the planned diffusion of a theology that depreciated or altogether denied the foundation facts of salvation, and that questioned the unique character of the revelation of God in Christ, and, as a consequence, the absolute claims of the Christian religion. The Conference declared that the power of saving and restoring humanity resided alone in the Gospel of the Son of God, crucified and raised from the dead on behalf of sinners—a Gospel attested by Holy Scripture. Any preaching which ignored this foundation, placed itself in opposition to the history of the Christian Church, deprived itself of the source of its power, and robbed itself of its Divine right in relation to the human race.

From the same source come the constant efforts to secularize and degrade the Lord's Day, the bulwark of religion; and to lessen the sanctity of marriage, the bulwark of society, giving greater facilities for dissolving the union, with little regard to the Divine arrangements for training up a new generation. So also to lower the estimation of parental authority, and indeed of any authority whatever. The all-round weakening of authority in every form is a distressing feature of the present day. The strike mania prevails everywhere, in England no less than in other countries. Much is

done to loosen morals, and to discredit the Divine Revelation, by the current literature and especially by the fiction of the day. Strange beliefs are put forth, and sects formed, as though at last some great truths had been discovered.

Hence comes also the encouragement and practice, even among the educated and cultured classes, of various forms of superstition. In this twentieth century, astrology, crystal-gazing, clairvoyance, palmistry, and other occult sciences, are ominously flourishing, and bring many votaries and substantial gains to those who cultivate them. No thoughtful person can view without alarm the growing passion for superstition combined with decay of religious faith, reckless luxury, and irresponsible frivolity.

The Spirit of Popery.

The spirit of Popery has been not less active and stirring. What the Popes did on their restoration to the Romish See, and their re-settlement at Rome, before the outpouring of the Sixth Vial, must be viewed as but preparatory to what is here prefigured. They issued Bulls, Allocutions, Indulgences, which asserted or implied all the Pope's old pretensions as Christ's Vicar; and re-instituted the Inquisition and the Jesuits. But the authority they then sought to exercise was very much after the old model, in France, Spain, Portugal, Bavaria, Austria, Sardinia, Naples. In each of these there was a marked revival of Popery, and in some cases even the Inquisition was again set in action. But this being against the spirit of the age, a popular reaction ensued in the first three of those countries.

Then appeared the power and aptness of Popery to ally itself with whatever new political forms of government might arise. For years Ireland had been in agita-

tion; in 1829 the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act was passed, as a preferable alternative to civil war; in 1830 the Dutch Protestant King was expelled from Belgium. Whereupon, after some hesitation, the Papal Court, being convinced that democracy was in the ascendant in Western Europe, and finding that the French people, all democratic as they were, professed Roman Catholicism as the religion of the great majority —for religion in some form or other the human soul craves after—resolved to shape its course accordingly. A masked alliance was entered into between the spirit of the Dragon and that of the Beast; there being thus presented a double seduction from the truth, according as either infidelity or corrupt Christianity might best suit the character of the country, times, or persons. Such was the state of things for sixteen or eighteen years after the Second French Revolution in 1830.

In England the Reform Bill of 1832 having been passed by the conjunction of Romanists (now in Parliament) and Liberals, results succeeded to strengthen the cause of Popery at home and abroad. The turning of the scale was found to be in the hands of the Irish Papal party; hence in the House of Commons the deference paid to Romish principles, discouragement of distinctive Evangelical Protestantism, assertion of the obscurity of the Bible, and equal probability of opposite views of its essential dogmas. Romish chapels, convents and colleges sprang up with increased rapidity throughout the land. The press lent its powerful aid; romances, novels, music, architecture, all were pressed into service. At length, in 1850, the whole island was astounded by the Bull of Pope Pius IX, ignoring our Protestant Church, and parcelling out England, as if prepared for it, into Romish Episcopates.

France helped the Papal cause yet more than did England, for England only put the Romish Church on

the same footing as Protestant sects, whereas France adopted it distinctively and alone, especially in the countries bordering on the Mediterranean. Even during the revolutionary era from 1830, democratic France still boasted to be the protectress of Roman Catholicism. Nor did she change after 1848, that third extraordinary Revolution which involved the overthrow of royalty in France, the expulsion of the House of Orleans, and the establishment of the French democratic Republic, as a transition to Louis Napoleon's revived Empire.

The world saw with amazement that when, under fear of the democratic faction at Rome, the Pope had fled from Rome, it was an army of democratic France, under direction of its then President, that fought against their brother democrats at Rome, and restored the Pope to his capital and to his kingdom. During the earlier years of Louis Napoleon s reign, even more than during the reign of Louis Philippe, France carried out the Papacy-favouring policy, as a nation priding itself upon being " the eldest son " of the Romish Church. During the same period the other European Roman Catholic States concurred in giving their support and aid to the Papacy.

Recent Papal efforts show plainly that all the old claims are put forth to-day as they have been before, as to the Papal authority, the need for all to recognize and to submit to it, and to be in union with him who pretends to be the Vicar of Christ on earth. All the old and new doctrines and superstitions are vamped up afresh. Thus in Pope Leo XIII's Letter to the English People, in April, 1895, this prayer occurs : " O sorrowful Mother ! intercede for our separated brethren, that with us in the one true fold they may be united to the supreme shepherd, the Vicar of the Son." In the same Letter the Pope brings forward Prayers to the Virgin Mary, described as the " Mother of God and our

most gentle Queen and Mother"; a "300 days' indulgence," and "the pious practice of the Holy Rosary." When Pius X was crowned in St. Peter's at Rome, on August 9, 1903, these words (in Latin) were used: "Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art the father of princes and kings, the ruler of the terrestrial orb, the Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom is honour and glory for ever and ever."

To mar the work of Evangelic Protestant Missions has been in every case one primary object of this spirit. Not only have its Propaganda Missions been vigorously supported, but in very many instances Roman Catholic missions have been planted where the obvious purpose was to hinder the progress, or to pervert the converts of other missions.

We have need to be on our guard as to specious schemes for the reunion of Christendom. By all means let Christian love and unity be cultivated, and reunion between Christian bodies be aimed at, on the basis of the Word of God and truly primitive Christianity. But not a little of this effort is really intended to bring Christendom or most of it, and especially England, the headquarters of Protestant "heresy," back under the headship of the Papacy; and is the work of this spirit. The invasion of England by Romish monks and nuns is reaching alarming dimensions.

To assimilate services to the Roman type is another of the aims of this spirit.

The Spirit of Priestcraft.

The spirit from the mouth of the False Prophet is Priestcraft pure and simple. Its essential character has ever been to arrogate to its own order the exclusive dignity of being the earthly mediator between God and

man, necessary for effectively averting God's wrath and communicating His favour and salvation.

The Oxford Movement.

Who can hesitate to recognize this spirit in Oxford Tractarianism, which in 1833 so suddenly and influentially sent forth its voice from the banks of the Isis? At first the Oxford Movement was avowedly against both the infidel revolutionary and the Popish spirit, and hence much of its early strength. It was looked upon by the friends of order, religion, and the Church, in times of fearful peril and agitation, as an ally of conservatism. Not a few of its early authors and abettors so intended it, and foresaw not whither it would lead them. For when a spirit of delusion goes abroad, its plans are not at once fully developed; and thus its agents and instruments are often at first led blindfold. Satan may come in as an angel of light. But the development soon became clear and unequivocal.

The Tractarian Era.

The time and mode of the issuing forth of this spirit was after some progress had been made in the drying up of the mystic Euphrates. In 1833, after the Turkman Power had dried up in Greece, Moldavia, Wallachia, Algiers, and other countries for years overflowed by it, the first of the Oxford Tracts issued from the press. It synchronized with the going forth of the spirits from the Dragon and the Beast. Oxford Tractarianism has been accompanied with a most remarkable and almost simultaneous outbreak from the spirit of godless infidelity, and the revived spirit of direct avowed Popery.

Its mode of speech and action has well answered to the symbol of a frog. There has been unceasing emission of voice in conversational or more formal discussions,

by pulpit, press, essays, romances, poetry, devotional manuals of all kinds, children's books, newspapers, music, painting, Church decoration and architecture. What is unsound in doctrine is skilfully mystified, the false mixed up with the true, false picturings of evangelical religion intermingled with as false but fair-drawn picturings of the religion of the apostasy, incessant but delusive appeals made to the better and worse feelings of our nature, high swelling words and claims put forth as to a supposed sacerdotal office and apostolic descent and powers.

Tractarian Success.

The speed and far range of the spirit's outgoing, not only at the first, but on each fresh emission of its voice, forces on us the idea of some supernatural influence at work—among laity and clergy, in country and town, in England and the colonies, in all grades of society. Its human originators wondered at the fact, and were convinced that some higher power was helping them, not reflecting, however, that it might be a bad spirit rather than a good one. Not only in England and the colonies has this spirit made its voice heard, but also in the American Episcopal Church, and the Lutheran Church on the continent.

However willingly one would admit the zeal, moral worth, and high attainments of many advocates of the movement, who knew not what spirit they were of, yet that the helping spirit was one of error, not of truth, will seem little doubtful to whoever takes God's Written Word as the one supreme standard of truth and right, or to him whose heart and reason are fully in accord with the doctrines of the Reformed Church of England in her Articles and Liturgy, still less to him who has entered discerningly into all that these Visions tell us

as to the character of the Great Apostasy and of the Man of Sin.

Tractarian Characteristics.

The following are some of the chief characteristics of this spirit. (1) It refuses to receive as the one rule of faith and practice the Written Word and Commandments of God, a firm adherence to which is the one constant mark of the true prophets and witnesses for Christ. It makes that rule void, as did the Pharisees of old and the apostatizing teachers of the fourth and fifth centuries, by addition of another rule of faith and conduct—the traditions and commandments of men.

Tradition, however, has been supplemented, or rather superseded, by the theory of Development. This teaches that our Lord had committed to His Church certain seeds and germs of truth destined afterwards to expand into definite forms; consequently, that He did not intend the teaching of His Church to be always the same, but ordained that it should go on continually improving under the guidance of His Holy Spirit. This theory practically abandons the claims of Christianity to be regarded, in things essential to salvation, as a supernatural revelation, likely to be preserved in its purest form by those who lived nearest to the times when it was given. The way of salvation does not change from age to age; those truths which were effectual for the salvation of souls in the second or third century are sufficient for salvation still. Moreover, the so-called developments are not seldom found to be in direct opposition to the primitive revelation.

(2) It notoriously takes for its model, not the really primitive age, though perpetually appealing to "primitive" practice and teaching, but the fourth and fifth centuries, or later ones, when the Church was greatly

corrupted, and the first marked development of the predicted apostasy had appeared.

(3) It has chosen for the primary and fundamental doctrine of its system the very dogma that the Church Sacraments, duly administered, are the unconditional means for communicating divine life to man; thus superseding the Spirit of Christ, who is Himself directly and alone the Enlightener and Quickener of each dead soul. With this is connected the doctrine of a fancied apostolical succession for the sacerdotal priesthood, as the actual and only conveyancers of that divine life.

(4) It holds doctrines of reserve on the Atonement, and doctrines concerning Justification which virtually supersede Christ as our propitiatory atonement. Also it favours the mediation of living priests and departed saints, superseding Him as Mediator.

(5) It teaches a mysterious change in the sacramental bread and wine upon the priest's consecration, if not transubstantiation, yet most nearly resembling it. It speaks of offering these changed elements as an offering for the living and the dead, holding a doctrine of Purgatory, and encouraging prayers for the dead.

(6) It insists upon the duty of auricular confession to the priest, and the necessity of his priestly absolution, with his penances, for God's forgiveness.

(7) It praises, if not inculcates, as marking a high attainment of grace, self-imposed celibacy, especially for the clergy; and monastic institutions for either sex, as in the fourth and fifth centuries.

(8) It supports in no equivocal manner the Papal pretensions and authority; teaches reverence due to the Pope; recognizes his universal primacy; deplores the " schism " at the Reformation; longs for reconciliation and reunion; regards his see as the Saviour's holy home; praises and imitates Rome's ritual in contrast with that of the English Church; and wards off all

applications of the titles "Antichrist," "Harlot Church," etc.

(9) It avows allegiance to General Councils—not only that of Trent—as speaking the Voice of God's Spirit and possessing the Spirit's infallibility, wresting Art. XXI. It excuses and desires re-enactment of the penalties of excommunication, for enforcement of the Church's decrees.

(10) It displays bitter enmity against the anti-Papal witnessing of Protestantism and the Reformation; avows as its object the unprotestantizing of the National Church; unchurches the foreign Protestant Churches and the dissenters at home; shows that it does not only not understand the "New Song," the holy and glorious doctrine of Justification by Faith, but also above all things abhors and rejects it. Hatred to this great doctrine of the Reformation, to the Protestant Reformation itself, and to the great earthly instrument raised up by God to effect it, has always been characteristic of the Tractarian spirit.

The Dean of Canterbury has stated very definitely the contrast between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant ideals of spiritual life in the following words:—"The Roman Church had a certain ideal of spiritual life, which was that the spiritual life of a man or woman should be under the control and direction of the priesthood. As a consequence of that ideal, confession formed an essential part of the Roman system. The effect of the practice of confession was that every man, woman, and child had to submit their spiritual lives to the judgment and guidance as far as possible of the priest. That, he thought, was a very momentous, a very far-reaching, and a very serious thing indeed. What the Reformation did was to break that principle, and to tell Christian men and women that they might and ought to live their spiritual life in the main with God alone in the secrecy of their own consciences, and only go to the priest for guidance if they found their consciences over-burdened, and if they could not in their private and secret intercourse with God quiet their own consciences. Those two ideals, the Roman and Protestant, they would see were absolutely distinct." This

is well and truly put. Our differences with Rome are far more and deeper than any questions of æstheticism and ceremonial. They touch the very springs of the spiritual life, and it is for this reason that the Reformation of the sixteenth century stands as a permanent factor, since it meant the emancipation of human consciences from a system which ruled men through the priesthood. It is this that gives point to the present crisis in the Church of England. Sacerdotalism, as Dean Wace rightly said, means a system which puts the priest in command of the spiritual life of mankind.—*Life of Faith*, May 8, 1907.

Tractarian Doctrines.

In all these points the character and theological doctrines of the Tractarian School agree very completely with that of the False Prophet. Dean Goode gives this summary :—

"It is their avowed desire and object to re-appropriate from Popery the doctrines which our Reformers rejected; to set up a Popish rule of faith, a Popish view of the Church and Sacraments, a Popish doctrine of sacrifice in the Eucharist, available for quick and dead for remission of sins; and in regard of transubstantiation, purgatory, invocation of saints, and even on the Papal Supremacy, a doctrine which, if not Popish, is at least so near it, that it is like splitting hairs to draw a distinction between them; nay, which is admitted to be in most of these instances consistent with the Tridentine statements; and only not Popish because it does not reach all the extravagances practised in the Popish communion."

"The Tractators must pardon me for saying, that their statements, when taken as a whole, incontestably prove that they have taken up their views not from a careful and impartial perusal of the Fathers themselves, but from the works of Romish and semi-Romish writers; for they are involved in almost all their misrepresentations and mistakes" (Goode: *Divine Rule of Faith*, Vol. III, p. 96).

Still more terse was the reported judgment of the then reigning Pontiff—that they wished for Popery without the Pope.

The Tractarian Leaders.

With regard to the movement toward Rome, there was this difference between the early apostatizing Church and the present Oxford School—that the latter, as professed members of the Anglican Church, had to deal with the notorious hostility of their Church to Rome and the Papacy, which the former had not. So for some time this hostility was expressed by the Tractarian writers; and it did the movement service, as open evidence against the charge that they had Popish predilections.

Very strange it seemed to reflecting men, considering the affinity of the spirit with that of Romanism, that its ardent advocates should not join the Church of Rome. The Romanists on their side looked with more and more hope continually for their secession, and even hailed the movement as the probable precursor of the re-conversion of England. Soon the anticipated event took place, and most of the Tractarian chiefs seceded to the Romish Church. Others of the leaders remained, with whatever inconsistency, in the Reformed Church of England.

To the activity of this spirit in the Church of England at the present time the Report (1906) of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline bears ample testimony.

Change of Opinion as to Apocalyptic Interpretation.

To this same era of the Sixth Vial belongs a remarkable effort to change the views long held by Protestant interpreters, in regard to the interpretation of the prophecies of Daniel and St. John, and so to break down some of the strongest barriers in the Word of God against Romanism.

In 1826 appeared the first prophetic pamphlet of Dr.

Maitland, followed by others, energetically assailing the whole Protestant application of the symbols of the Little Horn in Daniel vii., and of the Apocalyptic Beast and Babylon to the Roman Papacy and Church. It was his idea that quite a different personal and avowedly infidel Antichrist was meant, and that the prophetic days were only literal days. The scheme he advocated was even more futurist than Ribera's, for he supposed St. John even in the very first chapter of Revelation to plunge in spirit into " the day of the Lord," as though " the Lord's Day " spoken of in Revelation i. 10 were the great epoch of the Lord's second coming and of the consummation of all things. Nearly contemporarily Mr. Burgh in Ireland put forth his treatise on Antichrist and the Seals, much to the same general effect.

The principal arguments urged were—the great discrepancy of many chief Protestant expositors of the Historic School on sundry points, and the manifest unsatisfactoriness of the explanations of some of these; the alleged utter novelty of the year-day principle, as if never dreamt of before Wickliffe in reference to the prophetic periods; and the alleged anti-patristic character of the views held by Protestants respecting Antichrist.

In regard to these arguments it is enough to point out that light on all these topics has greatly increased in these latter times, and that we have now a much longer series of historic facts than had earlier expositors, to aid us in recognizing the true explanations; that the year-day system, applied according to the lengths of the different kinds of year, is now yielding the most striking and instructive results; and that there were many points in regard to which it was impossible that the Early Fathers and expositors should do more than offer their guesses, for the events were not to happen till long centuries after their day.

However, these assaults on the Protestant explanations were not without effect, and many persons adopted these new views as to Antichrist and the year-day system. The strange thing is that not a few good Protestants have been drawn into following these anti-Protestant expositions, and so into casting aside one of the mightiest weapons against Rome's errors and Rome's assaults.

Soon after, another cause appeared, which wrought with very great power to spread and to give weight to these anti-Protestant opinions.

In 1833 began the publication of the Oxford Tracts, one main object of the writers—soon developed—being to unprotestantize the Church of England. How, then, could they overlook or avoid availing themselves of the help of these labourers in the Futurist school, whose views set aside all application to the Roman Papacy of the fearful prophecies respecting Antichrist, and left Protestantism open to the charge of unjustifiable schism, and the Papacy open to the catholic desires and aspirations of the Tractarians for reunion? Accordingly, as the Tractarian views spread and found favour, so likewise did the Futurist anti-Protestant views more and more widely prevail.

Hence the change of opinion on Apocalyptic Interpretation, and the gradual but rapid advance of the new English Futurist School, during this period. The influx of German literature into England during the same period began to familiarize the English mind more and more with the most popular German views on Scripture Prophecy, generally Præterist; and helped on the abandonment of the Continuous Historic, or as it may rightly be called, the Protestant system of Prophetic interpretation.

At the present day, however, a reaction has plainly set in, and several excellent works have appeared on the Continuous-Historic lines; some of them from

writers who had at first held Futurist views, but found themselves compelled to abandon them on closer examination. The passing wave of Futurism is but one of the methods of attack adopted by the spirits now abroad.

Trouble and Distress.

The era of the Sixth Vial includes not only the judgment upon the Turkish Power, a lengthy preliminary, but also the active agency of the three unclean spirits whose purpose is to seduce mankind against the Lord of all. Though these agencies have been for several centuries at work, the latter portion of the Era of the Sixth Vial is characterized by a fresh and considerable outbreak of their activity, which is to bring about the period of disorder, revolution, and warfare, leading up to the great final gathering of the nations to war, in which this dispensation is to close. That final great storm forms the subject of the Seventh Vial. These evil influences, even now at work, may be expected to operate with increased effect as the crisis draws nearer, and to bring about a state of general distress, revolution, and anarchy which will culminate in the great final war.

Har-Magedon.

"*To gather them together. . . .*" Here is a passing notice of the successful advance of the three unclean spirits of delusion, in their object of gathering the kings of the earth, including of course the people of their kingdoms, or the majority of them, towards the scene of the great conflict. Their parentage is evil, so is their object, and they act with unity of effect and purpose, be outward appearances what they will. There has generally been an effective playing into each other's hands, even in the natural and necessary antagonism at

times of the infidel spirit of the one with the superstitious spirit of the other two, especially in relentless opposition to evangelical religion.

"*Unto the war. . . .*" The idea of a certain duration and continuance attaches to this word, such as does not attach to the word "battle." It is not some single battle in Judaea or elsewhere; there is indeed a great final conflict on a great battlefield there, but this is as the climax of a universal war. See Revelation xix. 19.

Physical Force.

In his early warfare against Christianity, the Dragon of Heathen Rome carried it on first for two centuries by appeal through the heathen priests to the superstition of the populace, and the infidel arguments and sneers of heathen philosophers. But then came decisive wars by physical force on the battlefields of nations. So here under the two last Vials. First go forth vauntingly the spirits of infidelity and superstition, then comes the appeal to physical force, in the war of the great day of God Almighty. We have to look for the same terrible agency of war, under leaders animated by each and every one of the unclean spirits here described, against Evangelic Protestant Christianity, and doubtless against that country most especially which for over three hundred years has been its favoured home—England. Will our country lay this solemn warning to heart, and recognize which are its truest and most formidable enemies, however disguised?

"I come as a Thief."

"*I come as a thief,*" that is, during that war to which reference has just been made. But this seems to refer especially to the outside world. Christ's true people are "not in darkness that that day should overtake

them as a thief " (1 Thess. v. 4). They will have studied the prophecies, and will have had light on them that will have given them the needful warning. They may not know the very day or the hour, but they will be prepared, as Daniel was prepared by more than one Vision to expect and recognize the Second Kingdom when it came. It is a striking feature of the religious thought of the present day, that a steadily increasing wave of interest on the subject of the Lord's approaching return seems to be spreading among Christians.

" *Blessed is he that watcheth. . . .*" A warning suited to every age of the Church, but doubly so when the spirits of delusion are abroad, the night far spent, and the cry already raised, as it would seem, of the day of Christ's coming being near at hand. Then, if ever, should His servants, and especially the ministers and watchmen of His Temple, be watchful against putting off, like indecorous slumberers, or men drugged to sleep by the poison draught of some spirit of delusion, those garments of righteousness and salvation of which He Himself was the giver; lest, seeing them naked, He should shut them out of His heavenly temple and kingdom, and their spiritual nakedness and shame be exposed before the world. Personal living union to and personal trust in the Divine Saviour Himself is the true safeguard, the most effectual antidote against the poison of these evil spirits, and this is brought about by the Holy Ghost.

Many think there is in this passage an allusion to the Jewish custom of the Prefect of the Temple going his rounds at night, to see that the watchmen were awake at their posts (see Ps. cxxx. 6).

" *And they gathered them together.*" " They," that is, the three evil spirits, " gathered them," that is, the kings of the earth. The Three Spirits extend their voice and influence into the Seventh Vial. It is agreed

on all hands that the War of Har-Magedon takes place under the Seventh Vial, and is the conflict immediately before the consummation. All the great hostile *dramatis personæ* of the history of Christendom come on the stage as the end approaches. "Har-Magedon" is "The Mountain of Gathering," or "Destruction." The name has a meaning ominous of the great overthrow that is to take place there. No doubt it is the same as the Winepress of Revelation xiv. 19, 20.

The Revolutions of 1848.

The year 1848 was one of special importance in the fall of Papal and despotic power. Such a year of revolution was probably never known in Europe before or since. One nation caught the revolutionary fever from another; the infection rapidly spread, and produced a kind of political delirium. Constitutional freedom was everywhere demanded, and everywhere granted. In many of these revolutionary movements emancipated Jews took a leading part.

The year was a great prophetic crisis. On the year-day system, four distinct periods came to their termination in 1848: (1) "Seven times" solar from the era of Nabonassar, with the added 75 years (Dan. xii. 11). (2) "Seven times" lunar from the Jehoiachim date. (3) "Time, times, and an half," or 1,260 solar years, from the bisection date of Gregory the Great. (4) The same period calendar from the bisection date of the Pope-exalting Decree of the Emperor Phocas.

"The year 1830 was a memorable year; we might say that 1848 was a yet more memorable year, were it not that 1848 is so clearly a second step in a career in which 1830 was the first step. The events of 1830 were by no means the first revolt against the arrangements of 1814–15; but they were the first great and successful revolt, the first assertion on a great scale of the doctrine, that it is not for certain sovereigns or diplomatists to meet together and settle the destinies of nations, but that

it was for the nations to settle their destinies for themselves. The events of 1848 were the fresh assertion of this doctrine on a still greater scale; they were the strivings—strivings for the most part stifled and blighted at the time, but destined to bear fruit in season—after the results which were won in 1859 and 1860, in 1866 and 1871" (Freeman).

The Papacy since 1860.

The year 1860 was one of sore trouble and dismay to the Papacy, which then lost a considerable part of its remaining territories, and had the mortification of seeing a free constitutional kingdom established in Italy. It was the central year of Garibaldi's romantic and striking exploits on behalf of his cherished ideal of Italian unity.

The Pope, inspired with distrust of the French garrison who were upholding him in Rome, organized a mongrel army of his own, consisting of French, Austrian, Belgian, and Irish Volunteers. Garibaldi, after liberating Sicily and Naples, and uniting them to the Italian kingdom of Victor Emmanuel, retired from the scene. The Italian army crossed the frontier of the States of the Church, overran Umbria and the Marches, routed and crushed the Papal forces, and obliged them and General Lamoricière to capitulate in the fortress of Ancona. The Pope, as usual, cursed his foes but could not conquer them, and his dominion in Italy was henceforth limited to Rome itself.

In 1866 the Romish Empire of Austria was worsted by Protestant Prussia at the memorable battle of Sadowa, a battle the results of which were as decisive as those of Waterloo. Austria received a shock from which she has never recovered, and was forced to cede Venetia, which was annexed to the kingdom of Italy, while Prussia became one of the greatest powers in Europe. Thus the battle of Sadowa set in motion the train of events that issued in the downfall of the Temporal Power of the Pope in 1870.

In 1868 the Spanish Revolution took place; Queen Isabella fled, and Spain was plunged into years of cruel strife, in the course of which the Jesuits were banished, their monasteries and churches confiscated, and sold or pulled down; and the bones of the martyrs were brought to light in the Quemadero.

The Encyclical of Pius IX.

In July, 1868, there was issued Pius IX's famous Encyclical Letter, summoning an Oecumenical Council to assemble at Rome in the December of 1869. In the terms of the address of the Encyclical, there appeared a most remarkable variation from all Bulls of the same character. Whereas in those the secular princes of Western Christendom were always summoned to attend, either in person or by deputy, as well as Roman Catholic Bishops, and certain other high ecclesiastics of that Church, in the present Bull it was Papal ecclesiastics alone.

The omission was too remarkable to escape notice. Thus the Roman Catholic paper at Paris, *L' Univers*, said: "The Bull does not invite sovereigns to sit in the council. The omission is remarkable. It implies that there are no longer Catholic Crowns." It was indeed in one way most remarkable, as holding out to the world, under the Pope's own sign manual, an admission of the ending of the predicted period of the Kings of Western Christendom spiritually subjecting the power of their kingdoms to his; that is, of the ending of the 1,260 years.

After the ending of the great revolutionary and Napoleonic wars by the Peace of Paris, there had been a return on the part of some of the Western Kingdoms to their old spiritual allegiance to the Pope, with some of the old intolerance of Protestantism, designated heresy, and with the enforcement by the secular arm of the

Papal decrees and the laws of the Romish Church. But now, God's appointed period for this having been fulfilled, the Kings no longer give the power of their kingdoms to the Beast. This, however, does not of necessity carry with it the formal rejection of Popery by the Kings themselves, or their peoples as a whole.

Great Words.

Greater than ever were the words that the Little Horn at this time spake. Six Archbishop princes, 49 Cardinals, 11 Patriarchs, 680 Archbishops and bishops, 28 Abbots, 29 Generals of Orders, in all 803 spiritual rulers, representing the Church of Rome throughout the world, obeyed the summons to attend the Vatican Council, which solemnly decreed the dogma that the occupant of the Papal Chair is, in all his decisions as to faith and morals, infallible. Arrangements had been made to reflect a glory around the person of the Pope by means of mirrors at noon, when the decree was made, July 18, 1870; but the sun shone not that day. A violent storm broke over Rome; the sky was darkened by tempest, and the voices of the Council were lost in the rolling of the thunder.

Fall of the Temporal Power.

On the very day after this culmination of Papal arrogance and self-exaltation, that terrible Franco-German war was declared in which the French Empire of Louis Napoleon—by whose soldiers the Pope was being maintained on his tottering throne—fell; and the Temporal Sovereignty of the Papacy fell with it. No sooner had the French troops been withdrawn from Rome, and the French Empire had collapsed, than the Italian Government announced its intention of entering the Roman States, and did so. On September 20, 1870,

Rome was declared the capital of the kingdom of Italy, and became the residence and the seat of the government of Victor Emmanuel. The *Times* summary for that year says :—

"The most remarkable circumstance in the annexation of Rome and its territory to the kingdom of Italy, is the languid indifference with which the transfer has been regarded by Catholic Christendom. A change which would once have convulsed the world has failed to distract attention from the more absorbing spectacle of the Franco-German War. Within the same year, the Papacy has assumed the highest spiritual exaltation to which it could aspire, and lost the temporal sovereignty which it had held for a thousand years."

But not yet of the Spiritual.

The Temporal dominion of Rome Papal has already been consumed. Not a nation in Europe remains under it, and men marvel that they ever bowed beneath it. In the estimation of many, its downfall is the severest blow that has fallen upon Rome for a thousand years past. But the spiritual power of the Papacy remains, and will remain to the end.

XXIII

BABYLON REMEMBERED

THE SEVENTH VIAL: REV. xvi. 17–21

THIS, the last Vial of Judgment, is poured out "*upon the air.*" Not into, but upon the air or atmosphere of the Apocalyptic world. As the natural atmosphere is the region of storms, the medium through which the heavenly luminaries shine on us, and the element we breathe, a great physical disturbance in the air must affect it in each of these functions; and if it be thus in the symbol, so likewise must it be in what is symbolized.

The symbol has been used before, under the Fifth Trumpet, of the smoke from the pit darkening the air, this smoke being the false Mohammedan religion. When the political atmosphere was darkened by the smoke of Mohammedanism, there resulted agitation and moral taint in Greek Christendom, as well as a darkening of the ruling authorities in the political heaven. The symbolic sun, moon, and stars communicate to us their influences, their light and heat, through the medium of the political constitutions of the states to which they belong. This, then, would be the air or atmosphere upon which the Vial is poured. The action of the Vial signifies the vitiation of the very elements of thought and principle, religious, moral, and political, within the affected area.

We have now passed out of the present into the future, and no longer have the guidance of accomplished historical facts to aid us to the explanation of the symbols of this Vision. We cannot therefore tread as firmly as we have been doing hitherto ; but these Visions, no less than the others, are intended to be understood, and we may not neglect or ignore their teaching, even though some of it may still be obscure.

On the Air.

The Vision teaches that after a certain progress of the Three Unclean Spirits now abroad, such as to marshall their strength in Western Christendom and its colonial dependencies against Christ's cause and Church ; and after a cry of Christ's coming as near at hand, such as seems now surely begun, there is to arise all suddenly some extraordinarily fearful vitiation and darkening of the political atmosphere ; the permitted effect perhaps, in God's righteous judgment, of the working to a crisis of those evil principles.

Doubtless the vitiation of the political atmosphere in Western Europe will be unprecedentedly awful. The very elements of thought and feeling, of social affection and moral principle, by which society and its natural polities are in God's wonderful wisdom constituted and preserved, may be so affected as very much to intercept all genial influences of the ruling authorities ; to minister disease instead of health to the body politic ; and perhaps, with terrible convulsions, to resolve society for a while into its primary elements.

Politically, a revolution is to follow, more mighty, more subversive and awful, than any previously described, and resulting in the Tripartition of the constituency of the Ten Kingdoms.

It is quite possible that some ominous derangement

of the natural atmosphere may furnish a literal groundwork for the figure; some vitiation of the physical air such as to awaken general awe and attention, affecting with its poison the animated world, and the health and life of man.

"It is Done."

As Christ ended His sufferings on the cross with this voice, "It is finished," so the Church's sufferings are concluded with a great voice out of the Temple of heaven, and from the throne of God and Christ there—not from any mere human or earthly source—saying, "It is done." The words and their meanings, however, differ in the two places. The Word from the Cross means, "It is ended"; that in this place means, "It is come to pass." This Voice is heard by St. John in his representative character; which doubtless signifies that some powerful impression, corresponding with this, will be produced at the time upon those whom he represents.

Summary of the Vial.

Verses 18–21 are a summary of the events that are to take place under the Seventh Vial, more fully developed in what follows. Similarly there was given a summary before the sounding of the First Trumpet (Rev. viii. 6), and on the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet (Rev. xi. 19). After the great Voice has been heard, the order of events is this:—

1. Lightnings, voices, thunders.
2. A very great earthquake.
3. Tripartition of the great city, and fall of the cities of the nations.
4. Babylon remembered and judged. At Revelation xviii. 4 (below) this has not yet taken place, for God's people are then called to come out of her.

5. Islands and mountains disappear.
6. Great hail falls, and men blaspheme.

The Great Earthquake.

The " lightnings, voices, and thunders " are the well-known symbols of wars and tumults. Then follows the mighty earthquake, greater than any before; that is, greater than that on the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity, Revelation vi. 12; at the Gothic invasions, Revelation viii. 5; at the Reformation, Revelation xi. 13; and at the French Revolution, Revelation xi. 19. This tremendous upheaval of the fabric of human society, this greatest of all revolutions, affects especially " the great city." Compare Revelation xi. 8. This cannot be the literal Jerusalem.

The chief nations of the old Roman earth, that is, Western professing Christendom, are now in marked political ascendancy before the whole world, Heathen, Mohammedan, and Jewish. Ever-increasing intercourse between mankind forces the eyes of all nations on this same Roman earth, as being the very focus of commerce, science, and political power. A great moral and political disturbance here, therefore, would mightily affect the whole world.

The purpose of the Anarchists has been declared plainly enough. They aim at the subversion of the present state of society. Here are two pronouncements made during 1901 :—

" No more laws. No more judges. Burn the guillotines; demolish the prisons; drive away the judges, policemen, and informers, the impurest race upon the face of the earth; treat as a brother the man who has been led by passion to do ill to his brother."

" Free Work. Free use of things. Communal possession of all the means of social wealth, and the machinery of production, of ways and communication, of land, of mines, of water,

etc. The abolition of all private property. The doing away with Government, with class, with militarism, with judges, with the nobility and bureaucracy. Social emancipation. Anarchy."

In short, ignore the terrible facts that man is a fallen and sinful being, and that he has an evil heart within and a powerful tempter without; and abolish all the safeguards and restraints that God has provided and that social order has devised. What an awful prospect!

A writer in the *Daily Mail*, shortly after the assassination of the American President McKinley, thus laid bare the true source of Anarchism :—

"There is no difficulty whatever in tracing Anarchism to its true source, which is the Atheistic materialism that has obtained so extensive a vogue in many parts of the Continent. In England militant Atheism, as distinct from mere religious indifference, finds but an infinitesimal number of Votaries; on the Continent it is an active volcanic social force that has to be reckoned with. Obviously, if the Divine Government of the world is wholly denied, there is nothing illogical in the ultimate refusal of the individual to render obedience to any authority whatever. The Anarchist says, in effect: 'There is no God, and therefore there is no source of authority, and no justification for the claim of any one man to control the conduct of any other man.' On this view each man is a law to himself and a bitter opponent to any system of Government, human or divine. The whole theory was effectively summed up long ago in the words, '*Ni Dieu, ni maitre.*'"

The Tripartition.

"*The great city was divided into three parts.*" As the result of this earthquake, a most remarkable change is foreshown as destined to befall the European Commonwealth; nothing less than the final breaking up of that decem-regal form of the Papal Empire which has characterized it for now nearly thirteen centuries, and the change into a new and tripartite form. This tripartition may probably be, like the earlier separation of the Tenth Part of the great city, both religious and

political. Territorial tripartition certainly seems included; and it may be supposed that the predicted threefold division will have a threefold purpose.

It is plain that the expected tenfold division of the Roman Empire which some are looking for is not to be. A tenfold division of Western Rome has existed for many centuries, but it is to pass into a threefold division at the end.

"*The cities of the nations fell.*" In Revelation vii. 9; x. 11; xiv. 6, etc., the term "nations" may have a meaning extending beyond the Roman World; but in Revelation xi. 2, 9, it seems used restrictedly of the Latinized Christians of the Popedom. The cities "fell"; compare Revelation xi. 13, "the tenth part of the city fell," meaning, that it fell away from the Papacy. But there, having regard to the connexion and to what is revealed in Revelation xvii., the expression may mean—fell from their allegiance to Babylon or the Romish Church. For it does not appear that they fall away from allegiance to the Papal Power; the Beast and the Kings are together to the end. See below, on Revelation xvii. 1, the judgment of the great Harlot.

Babylon Remembered.

The Tripartition of the European Commonwealth is to be the very alarum bell for the long-delayed judgment on Babylon the Great. Now at length she comes up in remembrance before God, and receives her own final and appalling doom.

Babylon is not the Popedom, but the Romish Church and city, and what is here briefly summarized is presently expanded in full detail. If the supplemental Vision of Revelation xiv. 8 be taken in its proper chronological order, that is, parallel with Revelation xviii. 1–3, then this passage, Revelation xvi. 19, is the first mention

of Babylon the Great; but it implies—That she has already had a long and triumphant career, that that career has been so evil as to call for a specially awful judgment from God. Her character, career, and doom are forthwith described (Rev. xvii., xviii.). She has been engaged in a savage warfare against Christ's saints, so much so that she is now seen drunken with their blood. During all that long time she has been apparently forgotten by God, but now at last she is "remembered" for judgment (see Rev. xviii. 5).

Islands and Mountains Flee.

"*Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*" This earthquake affects the sea, or maritime parts, as well as the mainland. In the earthquake of the Sixth Seal (Rev. vi. 14), the mountains and islands were only "moved out of their places," in the change from Heathen supremacy to Christian. But here they no longer appear when looked for; all the prospect has been reduced to one dead level, mountains and islands having been levelled down to earth and sea.

Here is a suggestive forecast:—

> The revolutionary movement in Russia is regarded by the whole of the Social Democratic Press as the final rehearsal for *the coming revolution in all Continental States* (*Volkszeitung*, Cologne; in the *Daily Mail* of November 10, 1905).

Former revolutions have implied only a change from one form of government to another; but this one seems to involve the disorganization of government itself, and of the social fabric altogether. If the waters and the valleys lying level or low represent the people at large, then hills and mountains that rise above them represent those who are above the rest in authority or social position; and the islands represent institutions or organizations in some social way marked off from the

rest and rising above them, though standing in their midst. Compare, by way of illustration, the levelling down during the French Revolution :—

"France . . . has shattered her own internal social constitution, even to the minutest fibre of it, into wreck and dissolution. Utterly it is all altered; from king down to Parish Constable, all authorities, Magistrates, Judges, persons that bore rule, have had, on the sudden, to alter themselves, so far as needful; or else, on the sudden, and not without violence, to be altered" (Carlyle: *French Revolution*, Vol. III., Bk. II. ch. I.).

The Great Hail.

This mention of the hail comes after, not before, the Tripartition. If the analogy of the First Trumpet be followed, the hail would seem to indicate a judgment from the North. There may be that which shall literally answer to the prediction, but the Apocalyptic figurations generally require first a symbolic explanation. To resist the spread of the great French Revolution of 1789, there was founded a coalition of the European Powers against France, and fearful warfare and carnage ensued, and a plague of leaden hail. This may be the same, on a much larger scale, and with the continually improved modern weapons. It may be a hail of rifle bullets or of lyddite shells in their latest and most deadly form.

The Judgment of the Great Harlot: Rev. xvii.

This was revealed to St. John by one of the seven Angels that had the Seven Vials, this signifying that the complete historical revelation here given belongs to the era of the Vials. That particular Vial Angel may be supposed the revealer, in the time of whose Vial-outpouring a full understanding would prove to be given of the Woman and the Beast; doubtless the Seventh and last. If so, this exposure belongs chronologically to the time of the outpouring of the Seventh Vial, just

as it stands in the sacred text. Not till then would the Woman fully appear in the depicted relationship to the Beast and his Horns. The picture would be premature at any earlier period, though it embodies a long previous history.

This figuration in Revelation xvii. relates to the end, and that in Revelation xiii. to the beginning, of the Beast's history. So important is the description of the Beast that it is twice given; and at the second time several divinely given interpretations are added, which open a door to the understanding of other Visions in this prophecy.

The Vision of Revelation xvii. is introductory to the judgment on Babylon, and explanatory to St. John, as the symbolic man, of its causes and reasonableness. This is God's usual method, when about to execute any very notable act of vengeance. He shows His Church its justice beforehand, thus vindicating His honour, and warning such of His people as may have been deceived, to separate themselves in order to escape imminent doom. So with Lot and Sodom; Babylon, Jeremiah li. 6; our Lord and Jerusalem.

Doom of Babylon Foreshown.

"*I will show thee the judgment of the great harlot.*" Not, "I will show thee the great harlot," but "the *judgment* of the great harlot"; with whom the kings and the inhabitants of the earth, that is, all classes of persons, have committed fornication. This is described in verses 16, 17. But St. John is so overcome with astonishment at what he sees, that the Angel gives him fuller and further explanations, before describing the judgment itself. The Angel, verse 7, promises the explanation of (1) the Woman, (2) the Beast, but begins with (2). This is in strict accordance with the chronology, for it is not till near the end of the Beast's history

that the Woman appears in this condition and this relation to him.

The Great City which reigneth.

Babylon, the great Harlot, is described to St. John (Rev. xvii. 18) as the great city existing in his time, and *at that time* actually reigning over the kings of the earth ; moreover, to continue many centuries, for her destruction is accompanied by events that have not yet taken place. The literal Assyrian Babylon had long ceased to be a reigning city when St. John wrote. Nearly all the great cities of that age have fallen into decay ; almost the only one which existed and ruled then, and exists and rules now, is Rome ; the city reigning over the kings of the earth in St. John's time, Imperial Rome with its sword of conquest. At the date when the Apocalypse was written Rome governed the world.

> From her came the laws and the language that had overspread the world ; at her feet the nations laid the offerings of their labour ; she was the head of the Empire and of civilization, and in riches, fame, and splendour far outshone as well the cities of that time as the fabled glories of Babylon or Persepolis (Bryce : *Rome in the Second Century*).

The Harlot Babylon is not only a Church, but a Church ruling nations, claiming a temporal as well as a spiritual sway. This is peculiar to that Church alone. There has arisen within the limits of the Roman Empire, and there has reigned in and from the literal city of Rome, the seven-hilled city of the Cæsars that existed in St. John's day, just such a power as is predicted in the Apocalypse. Translate the symbolic language of the prophecy into plain non-figurative terms, and it becomes the history of the last twelve or fourteen centuries.

The Harlot woman Babylon is the Church of Papal Rome. From this picture it would seem that whatever

injury the Beast or the Woman might have sustained under the Vials—as from the outpouring of the Fifth upon the throne of the Beast, fulfilled in the anti-Papal acts and fury of the French Revolutionists, or from the progress of the Angel with the everlasting Gospel—all would have been in appearance repaired by the time of the Vision, just a little before the Harlot's final destruction. So that up to the very last Rome's Harlot Church will appear putting on all her former bravery and boastings and charms; still, as of old, holding out to the world her cup of abominations; still, as of old, breathing out her spirit of persecution against the true saints of Christ.

Upon Many Waters.

"*That sitteth upon many waters.*" These are emblematic as well as literal. As the Seven Heads or mountains were not only a natural feature of the scene, but also symbolized the Seven Forms of Government Rome would previously have experienced; so the waters that inundated the base of those Hills, where the Harlot had her seat, were not only literally true, but also were an apt symbol (ver. 15) of the barbarian floods which, after pouring into and desolating the Empire, would at length constitute nations, tribes, and languages, subject to Papal Rome's dominion.

A Wilderness.

"*He carried me away in the spirit.*" The Vision was out of the usual routine and order, as displaying a phenomenon of not less than 1,260 years' duration, and consequently that which Christ's people living at the era of the Vials could see only mentally, and not by the bodily eye.

The result of this secret spiritual teaching is seen in

Revelation xviii. 1, 2. That exposure is public and notorious. It seems to represent the several sections of the Christian Church uniting in opinion as to Rome being Babylon the Great, after the secret teaching.

"*Into a wilderness.*" Not *the* wilderness into which the Woman, the true Church, fled and was hidden; nor the desolation, total and final, destined to befall the Harlot at last through the judgment by fire from God; for the Harlot is here depicted not as suffering under judgments of either human or divine origin, but as in all the wantonness, pride, and gaudiness of a prospering harlotry. The desert appeared to a considerable extent flooded with water round where the Harlot was seated on her subject Beast. Moreover, she was said to be seated on Seven Hills, symbolized by the Seven Heads of the Beast that bore her.

The Roman Campagna.

By almost necessary inference, this desert scene was the Campagna of Rome. St. John might ask, How could this be the Roman Campagna, which in his time, and for centuries, had been most cultivated? The present desolate state of the Campagna began at the time when first, after the Ten-Horned Beast of Western Christendom had emerged into existence, the Harlot Church of Rome rose on its back to supremacy; and it has so continued ever since.

The Ten Gothic Powers spoiled, desolated, and burned Imperial Rome in the fifth and sixth centuries; and so desolated her Campagna as in fact to originate that desert region out of which she rose up again as Papal Rome, and which attached to her ever after. This desert state of the Roman Campagna continued most remarkably the constant characteristic of the scene all through the 1,260 years of Papal Supremacy, a notable contrast between Rome Imperial and Rome Papal.

Gibbon, when about to describe Rome's revival and restoration to dominion in the new character of Rome Papal, under Gregory I, about the close of the sixth century, gives a descriptive sketch of the Campagna which one might suppose to have been drawn for the express purpose of illustrating this passage (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, VIII, chap. xlv.). Chiefly from the long-continued harass of barbarian invasions, "the Campagna was reduced to the state of a dreary wilderness; the land barren, the waters impure, the air infectious." Further desolation was caused by the inundations of the Tiber.

Though the city rose again in its new and ecclesiastical character, the Campagna remained a scene of desolation. In consequence of depopulation after the barbarian invasions, districts once highly cultivated, above all in Italy, were changed into forests or marshes. In every other country, as civilization and population advanced, the recovery of these lands was successfully accomplished, but not so in the vast plain round Rome. From the days of the Goths and Gregory down to the present, the traveller is struck by the waste and dreary Campagna that surrounds the city. The Tiber still from time to time overflows his banks as of old; and then from the distant hills Rome is often to be seen actually sitting upon many waters.

Thus the desert scene associated with the Harlot in the Vision was a landscape admirably perfect, drawn from nature; a true and faithful picture of the Campagna of Rome as from that date it appeared, and has continued ever since.

The Woman and the Beast.

The Woman and the Beast are here shown distinct, though in close connexion; the Beast's body, that is, his popular constituency, both upholding and being

subject to the Harlot that sat on it. By the Woman sitting on the Beast's body is signified that superintending and guiding power which the rider possesses over his beast; than which nothing could be chosen more apt to represent the superiority claimed and exercised by the See of Rome over the secular kingdoms of Western Christendom. Under the figure of the Woman and the Beast are represented a professing Church, and a great secular Empire.

An Apostate Church.

In the light of the accompanying and contrasted symbol of "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife" (Rev. xix. 1–9), this Harlot Woman is interpreted to represent an Apostate Church, the Church of Rome. The Woman is a Visible Church, an earthly corporation, with a local connexion. The contrast with the Bride settles the general meaning of the symbol. It is not the Papacy as a temporal power, and with a ruling dynasty at Rome, but the Church of Rome as an ecclesiastical system; long submitted to by the Roman World, but in the latter days, according to the prophecy, hated, despised, and despoiled by the Ten Kingdoms.

As the Beast's body both upheld and was subject to the Harlot that sat on it, so the Papal Empire of the West, with the power of its Ten Kingdoms and many peoples, upheld and was at the same time ruled by Papal Rome, as the recognized Mother and Mistress Church of Christendom. The Beast's ruling Head, the Pope for the time being, in his twofold character, took part in the same act, sustaining his Church upon the Seven Hills as one married to her, according to the phraseology of the Roman Law.

The acquiescence of the Western kingdoms in the Hildebrandine theory of the Roman Supremacy, is typified by the Beast taking the Woman Babylon, who

represents the Seven-hilled City and the Roman Church, on its back (not on its Heads) as its guide and director. Down to near the time of the Harlot's final destruction, the Ten Kings, during the chief period of their connexion with the Beast as his constituency, support her; but towards the end they tear and desolate her. At last she is suddenly and utterly destroyed; and when the Beast himself comes to his end (Rev. xix. 19), though the False Prophet is still with him, the Woman is no longer there; before this she has entirely disappeared.

A Scarlet-coloured Beast.

A deeper red than before struck the Apostle's eye, and is specially noted here. No doubt the colour was deeper now because of the blood of saints shed during the Beast's career. The colour is the same as that of the royal robe put in mockery on the Lord Jesus, as described by St. Matthew; in St. Mark and St. John it is called purple. In the description of the Woman's dress, verse 4, the two are combined, "purple and scarlet." As the Beast is being ridden, it would have on its housings, hiding its body, and their colour might possibly be ascribed to the Beast. In like manner the names of blasphemy have accumulated during the 1,260 years. In Revelation xiii. 1, "names of blasphemy" are said to be on the Beast's Heads. Here it is simply said that he is "full of names of blasphemy," or "names full of blasphemy." They may still have appeared on the heads; nothing is said about their being on his body.

No Diadems.

"*Having seven heads and ten horns.*" The Seventh Head has grown out of the wound of the previous Seventh Head, wounded to death (Rev. xiii. 3); but it

is really, in order of time, the Eighth. Since the Great Earthquake and the Tripartition (Rev. xvi. 19), the Ten Horns are no longer dominant, hence they are now mentioned last (see Rev. xii. 3; xiii. 1). The Beast still has the Ten Horns, but there is now no mention as before of diadems on the Horns. All has been reduced to a dead level; dominion has now passed entirely to the democracy. Does not this connect this vision with the Seventh Vial and the Great Earthquake? However, whether diademed or not at present, the angel expressly declares that they are kings, lines of chief rulers of some kind or other. They have been associated with and subordinate to the Beast "Until the words of God should be accomplished" (ver. 17). The symbol here seems meant to represent the normal kindly relationship between the Beast and them during the 1,260 years.

The Woman's Array.

Purple, scarlet, gold, and gems. As said of the Romish Church, this is a truly characteristic picture, drawn from the life. The dress-colour specified is distinctively that of the Romish ecclesiastical dignitaries, the scarlet being reserved by her to her Pontiffs and Cardinals. The ornaments are those with which she has been bedecked beyond any Church called Christian.

"*In her hand a golden cup.*" This cannot be Imperial Rome, which is far otherwise represented on medals, coins, and monuments; it is Rome in the cup-bearing form, that is, Rome Papal, holding forth the drugged cup of her superstitions. The Woman is represented under a double character, as a harlot to the Ten Kings, and as a vintner or tavern-hostess, vending wines to the common people—two characters often united of old.

So the Church of Rome interchanged mutual favours with the kings of Western Christendom, such as might suit their respective circumstances and characters;

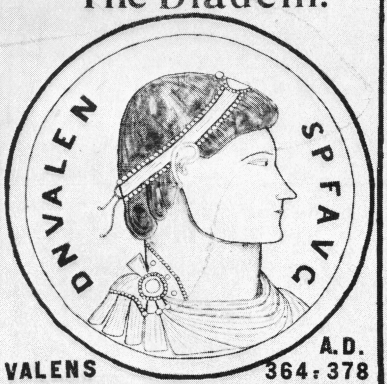
The Crown.

NERVA A.D. 96-98

Rome Imperial.

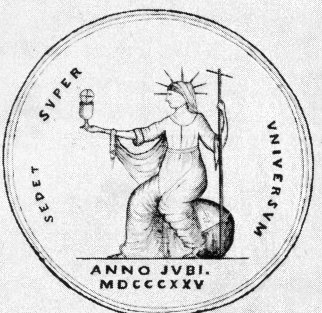
VESPASIAN A.D. 69-79

The Diadem.



VALENS A.D. 364-378

Rome Papal.



Pope LEO XII A.D. 1823-29

while to the common people she dealt out for sale the wine of the poison of her fornication, that is, her indulgences, relics, masses, etc., therewith in the spiritual sense drugging them and making them besotted and drunk. All the features of the description are symbolical. Rome's sin has been that of leading men astray from the right worship of God, and of substituting for the purity and unwordliness of Christian living the irreligious and worldly spirit of the earth. God commands men to use the endowments of reason and conscience, and not to give them away. But the Church of Rome requires men to sacrifice them to her will; and then she pours into their minds a delirious draught of strange doctrines, with which she makes the head dizzy, the eyes to swim, the feet to stagger, and this intoxication she calls faith.

The Woman's Name and Character.

"*Upon her forehead a name.*" In allusion to the custom of certain notorious prostitutes of having their names written on a label on their foreheads. Fornication and adultery, throughout the Old Testament, are the emblems of religious degeneracy. In numerous passages both terms are used to describe Israel's departure from the worship of Jehovah, and the degrading sensuality by which such idolatry was everywhere accompanied. In some important respects "fornication" is the more suitable of the two expressions, for it brings out more strongly the ideas of playing the harlot with "many lovers" (Jer. iii. 1), and of sinning for "hire" (Micah i. 7).

The name is upon her forehead, so that every one can see and read it. It is visible to all others, though not to the Harlot herself. The name is in contrast to the words "Holiness to the Lord" on the forefront of the mitre of the High Priest, also in contrast to what is

described in Revelation xiv. 1. Who has written that name there? Not she herself. Is it history that has now written it? If so, this means that at the epoch to which this Vision belongs, her true character and doings will have become known to all without mistake.

"*Mystery.*" This indicates a spiritual meaning. Something lies behind, which will be made manifest in due time; the meaning is not simply literal. Heathen Rome was no "Mystery" in Christian eyes, but how many professing Christians have been deceived by Rome Papal! There is evidently an allusion to St. Paul's predicted "mystery of iniquity" (2 Thess. ii. 7, 8); and it is in contrast to the "mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. iii. 16).

"*Babylon the Great.*" The very parody of the title Rome arrogates, "Rome, Mother and Mistress."

"*The mother of the harlots.*" That is, of the Roman Catholic Churches in other lands, she herself being the mother and progenitress of the rest. All this spiritual fornication and corruption are owing to her, and to her example and teaching. "*And of the abominations.*" The word especially designates an object of idolatrous worship. Not only is she first and greatest of these, but she is herself the origin of the rest.

So far from the interpretation which identifies the Church of Rome with the Apocalyptic Babylon dating only from the Reformation, the truth rather is that it did very much to bring about the Reformation. Even if it were a late interpretation, this Vision, at the era of the Seventh Vial, leads us to expect fresh and convincing light on that very subject in this later time.

The Woman Drunken.

St. John does not see her drinking the blood of the saints; she had done this abundantly in the past, and under the influence of those draughts in times gone by,

she was now drunk. This drunkenness must of course have a symbolical meaning; and this Vision must be intended to represent her at the end, not at the beginning, of her evil career. The great antichristian persecution has taken place during the reign of Babylon, not after her destruction; and her destruction is followed not by that great antichristian persecution, but by the Marriage of the Lamb (Rev. xix.).

"*Drunken with the blood of the saints . . . and martyrs.*" The applicability of this to the Romish Church, throughout the latter half of the 1,260 years, is written in deep-dyed characters on the page of history. What other professedly Christian Church has slain fifty millions of Christians for no crime but that of being true Christians, as she has done? The persecuting Church always handed her victims over to the secular power to be dealt with by it, and with a mockery of mercy always enjoined the secular power to deal leniently with her children. Even the Inquisition never burned its own victims, but called upon kings and princes to kindle the flame of the *auto da fé*.

The Beast called forth by the Dragon had power given him (by the Dragon) "to make war with the saints, and to overcome them" (Rev. xiii. 7). The Attendant Beast causes "that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed" (Rev. xiii. 15). The Harlot that rode on the Beast is seen, not "drinking," but "drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus" (Rev. xvii. 6. See also Rev. xi. 7). Therefore the Beast, the Attendant, and the Harlot, are contemporaneous in their warfare against the Witnesses of Jesus, and the result of their warfare is the second series of Martyrs foretold under the Fifth Seal (Rev. vi. 11). The first series was slain by Rome Heathen; the second is slain by Rome Papal.

It was only by means of the Ten Horns and the mouth of the Eighth Head that the Woman was thus enabled to persecute and slay the saints, and to become drunk with their blood. The Beast under its revived wicked and persecuting Eighth Head is contemporary with Babylon prospering, and is not subsequent to Babylon destroyed by the Ten Horns. The persecutions were Babylon's, yet effected by the Beast on which she sat. It was she that instigated crusades of slaughter against heretics, and that compelled the Ten Horns to rend and destroy. The Beast's body was under her control, so that though the actual bloody deeds might be his, the responsibility was hers. It is the Beast that wars against the Witnesses of Jesus.

When at last inquiry is made—and it will be made—" in her was *found* the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth " (Rev. xviii. 24).

Two marks of identification are given; the one present and visible throughout the earth to-day, viz.—Worldwide extension, and propagation of unscriptural doctrines; the other past and historical, viz.—Slaughter, on an immense scale, of Christ's saints.

(1) Widespread extension among the peoples of the world (Rev. xvii. 2, 15; xviii. 3). Rome's boasted " Catholicity " is thus one of the marks of identification. With all this extension goes corruption of God's truth. The important matter is to test by God's Word the doctrines taught and enforced, and it soon appears what kind of " wine " is offered in her cup to the souls of men to drink. (2) Shedding the blood of Christ's saints and witnesses on a prodigious scale (Rev. xvii. 6; xviii. 24). This is writ large, in terrible characters of fire and blood, on the pages of history, and cannot be wiped away.

It is not either of these marks alone, but the union of the two in the past history and present extension of

the same power, that so unmistakably establishes the identification.

St. John Wonders.

This is a proof that St. John did not conceive the symbol to represent Heathen Rome. It could have caused him no astonishment that the Heathen city should persecute Christianity. But that Rome should not only become a Christian Church, but being such should also be a more bitter persecutor of Christians than ever Heathen Rome had been—this was astonishing indeed. Heathen Rome doing the work of heathenism in persecuting Christ's Church was no mystery. But a Christian Church calling herself the Mother of Christendom, and yet drunken with the blood of the saints, this was indeed a mystery; a Christian Church boasting herself the Bride, and yet being the Harlot.

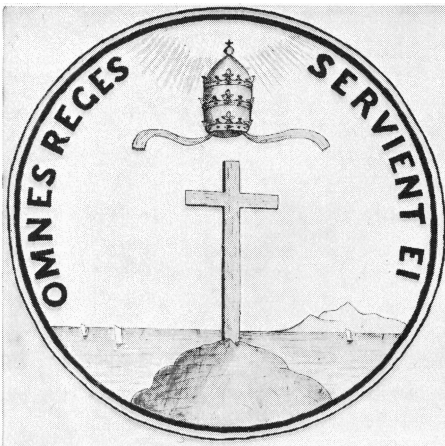
This wondering comes at the end of the Harlot's career, as here shown. St. John, as a symbolic man, has the whole of this career before him when he wonders. The prophets had spoken of Israel and Judah as harlots, when they had allied themselves with the world and its dark idolatries. Did St. John see in this Vision a hint that after the lapse of years the Church of Christ, like Israel of old, might fall from her high calling, and become the ally of the worldly power? The hint certainly was there. His wondering, he being a symbolic man, may mean that even to the end Babylon will seem powerful, having recovered from former judgments, and being in no apprehension of her approaching destruction. But God will teach His servants, from these very Visions, that the Romish Harlot is about to be suddenly destroyed. This is signified by the action of the Angel towards St. John, in removing his astonishment.

The Mystery of the Woman.

The Harlot must be exposed, branded, and destroyed, ere the manifestation of the Bride. The rise, pretensions, persecutions, and decay of the Papal Church have been beyond all controversy the greatest and most important facts in Church history. The early Christians were not in danger of relapsing into heathen idolatry; but a Christian idolatry was to arise; Antichrist was to sit on the throne of Christ, in God's temple, that is, in the professing Church; a fearful apostasy was to take place in the Church itself. It was an object well worthy of Divine inspiration to expose this new and specious form of evil, which, rising slowly and imperceptibly, was destined to attain such gigantic proportions, and to endure more than a thousand years.

For a true understanding of the prophecies of Babylon and the Beast, a clear idea of the relations of Church and State during the Dark Ages is needful—the relations between the Church of the Seven Hills and the Kingdoms of Western Europe. Had there been prefigured only a persecuting Church, or only a persecuting State, half the truth would have been omitted. What actually existed for ages, and consequently had to be depicted in prophetic Vision, was Church and State distinct in themselves as secular and spiritual, united in the persecution of the saints, the one acting through the other, the head of both co-operating, and sharing the blood-guiltiness.

What creates apparent complexity is the strange fact that the head of the one was the head also of the other; that a succession of priests claiming descent and authority from Peter became also a dynasty of sovereigns, of longest continuance in Europe; assuming, moreover, to be the supreme rulers of the kings and temporalities of the Roman world. The twofold character of the Pope must be kept distinct:—



The Tiara.

Symbol of
TEMPORAL SOVEREIGNTY
AND OF CLAIM OF
HEADSHIP OVER ALL
Kings & Peoples

MEDAL OF
Pope CALIXTUS III
A.D. 1456

The Mitre, Symbol of ECCLESIASTICAL authority

AND OF CLAIM OF **HEADSHIP OVER**
The Church

(1) The immeasurably higher, mightier, but usurped character of Christ's Vicegerent upon earth, with consequent headship over kings and people. This is Royal, or rather super-Royal. It is signified by the Tiara.

(2) His Patriarchal headship of the clerical body belonging to the Church of Rome. This is sacerdotal, or ecclesiastical, and is signified by the Mitre.

These two distinct characters and functions are united in the same person.

The Beast is a political power; the Woman an ecclesiastical system; and these two are not one, whatever the relation between them. The Roman Empire under its last ruling head, that is, the Papal dynasty, is very closely connected with the Romish Church. But the members of that dynasty have been not only heads of a Church, they have been also European monarchs, temporal sovereigns, who enthroned at Rome, succeeded to the Western Empire of the Cæsars, governed, and for more than twelve centuries united in the bond of a common obedience to themselves, all the nations of the Western Empire of Rome. The Church of Rome, as such, never did this.

The Popes and their Church.

St. John saw a Woman sitting upon a scarlet-coloured Beast; not a Beast apart from a Woman, nor a Woman apart from a Beast. An important connexion exists between the Roman Empire under its last governing Head, and the Roman Catholic Church. The symbols employed distinctly show that connexion to be close and of long continuance. The Woman, or Church, is carried or supported by the Beast, or Empire. The Church and the Empire in this its last stage are represented not by two distinct and separate symbols, but by one double one.

St. John is told in explanation that the peoples, na-

tions, and tongues, forming the Latin Empire, under its last Head, would first uphold and obey the Woman, or Church, and then in the end turn against and rend her. The Beast would first bear her up and accept her guidance, and then at last hate, insult, and destroy her. In neither case are the two associated. There is a relation between them, but not identity.

There is a vast difference between the Papacy and the corrupt Church which it governed, and used as a tool; a difference infinitely less in degree, yet not dissimilar in character, from that existing between the Head of the true Church and that Church which He founded, governs, and uses as an instrument to accomplish His will in the World. Many things are true of the Lord Jesus that are not true of the Church which is His body, close and inseparable as is the connexion between them. So likewise with the parody of these great things; much is true of the Papacy which is not true of the Roman Catholic Church, close as is the connexion between them.

Widely different hieroglyphics are chosen to prefigure the two in the Apocalypse, and yet the closeness of the connexion between them is very clearly indicated. They are never confounded, yet never are they disjoined.

History of the Beast.

The Beast that St. John sees, bearing up the Harlot, has a long history, and his Heads are not to be viewed as contemporaneous, but as successive. At the time when the Angel was revealing this Vision to St. John, some of the Heads were past, one was present, some still future.

"*The Beast which was*" is the Roman Heathen Dragon, cast down and politically slain under its Seventh Head (Rev. xii. 9).

"*And is not,*" in respect of its old form of existence.

This does not mean that it was absolutely non-existent. The Seventh Head had received a deadly wound.

"*And is about to come up.*" The "let" or "hindrance" having been removed, the Beast was about to come up as the Beast from the Sea or Abyss, in the new form and under the new Head under which he revives. This is the era of the Eighth Head, or revived Seventh. The Beast had not yet so come up when the Angel was speaking; hence it cannot be the Roman Heathen Empire then in existence. It is this Beast that makes war on the Witnesses (Rev. xi. 7), hence it must have appeared and have grown to maturity and power before the time of that war.

"*And to go into perdition.*" Therefore under this Eighth Head he is in his final form, that in which he receives final judgment. He now represents the last form of Roman Power. He does not fall like the others, but goes on and meets his own destruction at the hand of the Lord (2 Thess. ii. 3).

Those four statements, from "was" to "go," cover or correspond with the whole of the Supplementary Visions, from Revelation xii. 1 to xiv. 20.

How marvellously concise yet comprehensive are these inspired symbolizations! In that one symbol of the Beast as now seen by St. John is represented the whole course of Roman history, from B.C. 753 to an end still future.

Seven Heads, and Mountains.

"*Seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.*" The Woman being the City which then, in St. John's time, ruled over the kings of the earth (ver. 18), these mountains could only mean the far-famed Seven Hills of Rome. Constantinople, the only other city besides Rome famed as built on Seven Hills, had not then been built, much less had it acquired rule. The unanimous

voice of Roman poetry, during more than 500 years, including the age of St. John, proclaimed Rome as the Seven-Hilled City. On the Imperial medals of that age, still preserved, we see Rome represented as a Woman sitting on Seven Hills, precisely as is here described.

"*Sitteth on them.*" This necessarily associates the Beast, bearing these Seven Heads so interpreted, wth the Seven-Hilled Rome for Capital. It binds the Power symbolized, through all its various mutations, to that same locality. The Seven Hills of Rome were to be the Beast's seat or throne of Empire, as they had been of the Dragon before him (Rev. xiii. 2).

Seven Forms of Government.

"*And they are seven kings.*" A second mystery is symbolized by the Beast's Seven Heads. Had they meant hills or mountains only, how could we explain the wounding to death and the revival of one of them? They are "kings," the word being used in the dynastic sense, as meaning not mere individuals, but a succession of them (see Dan. ii. 37, 38; vii. 17, 23, 24; viii. 22, 23).

They are the number of Forms of Government, of successive Governing Heads, of bestial character—that is, lines of heathen-like ruling governors—which the same Seven-Hilled Roman Empire would be under, from its early origin to its final destruction. They are all of them Heads of the same Beast; the body is the same, though at different epochs under a different Head. A Beast carries its own Heads only. The first seven belong to that Power or Empire in its Draconic or Heathen form; the Eighth, or revived Seventh—the Popes of Rome—belongs to it in its Bestial form, the last phase of Roman power. See the diagram of the Heads, page 431.

These Heads could not be Egypt, Assyria, Babylon,

Persia, Greece, or any such separate Powers. Those are whole Beasts, not Heads only, and so some of them are represented in Daniel. A Head is a Form of Government, ruling the body to which it belongs. If that Beast represent the Roman constituency, then the Heads of that Beast must represent Forms of Government that have prevailed over that Roman constituency.

History of the Heads.

The very symbol of a Dragon or Wild Beast necessarily excludes the supposition that it could represent a truly Christian Power; besides, it is said of the Heads generally, that they had on them names of blasphemy (ver. 3, and Rev. xiii. 1). When the Vision was revealed, the Heads were past, present, and future; and it must be remembered that the Seventh Head Visible on the Beast was really, in order of existence, his Eighth.

The historian Tacitus names the first six ruling Heads that had had the supreme executive authority legally attached to them at Rome. Five had passed away, and the sixth bore rule when Tacitus wrote. He belongs to the same era as St. John, to whom the Angel said:—

"*The five are fallen.*" These are Kings, from B.C. 753; Consuls, from B.C. 509; Dictators, from B.C. 498; Decemvirs, from B.C. 451; Military Tribunes, from B.C. 443. These five had fallen, or ceased to rule, before the time at which St. John saw the Vision.

"*The one is.*" This is Emperors, the Imperial Head, beginning with Augustus, B.C. 31. This Head was in power in St. John's day. The "crown," or wreath of bay leaves, was the Imperial Emblem worn.

"*The other is not yet come.*" This is Absolute Monarchs, beginning with Diocletian, A.D. 292. He introduced a fundamentally new constitution, and with it adopted the "Diadem," the fillet of pearls worn round the head, an Oriental badge of empire. This Head or

Form of Government was wounded, even to death, at the final downfall of Heathenism, A.D. 395.

It was to continue only "a little while"; little, as compared with those before and after it. It lasted only about 100 years, from its establishment by Diocletian, A.D. 292, to its final downfall, A.D. 395. Whereas Augustus' Imperial Head, the one next before this, had lasted some 300 years; and the Beast's Eighth Head, next following, was to last 1,260 years.

The Eighth Head.

"*The Beast . . . is himself also an eighth.*" One of the Heads was "wounded to death" . . . but healed, a fresh Head having sprouted up in place of the old Seventh cut down. The Seventh Head visible would thus be really the Eighth. So did the Beast become, under its new and last Head, what the Angel called him, "The Beast that was, and is not, and yet is."

But was not the next governing Head of the Roman Empire Christian Emperors, such as Constantine and Theodosius? True; but the Beast's Heads meant Rome's Seven Hills as the seat of government, as well as the successive governing Heads themselves; thus excluding any but those that had their seat of Empire at Rome.

Most remarkably, Constantine, when he adopted the Christian faith, removed the seat of his empire to Constantinople. Even after the division of the Empire into Eastern and Western, never did the Western Emperors again enthrone themselves at Rome, but at Milan or Ravenna. It was not till the Gothic flood had swept once again over Italy, and had utterly desolated old Rome itself, that Rome became again a seat of empire; and even then, not the seat of any new secular emperors or kings, but of its Bishops or Popes, who in their assumed character of successors of St. Peter, and so

vicegerents of Christ upon earth, claimed universal empire.

Thus does history mark out the Roman Popes to be the Eighth or last ruling Head of the Roman Beast; subsequently to the Gothic desolations of Rome, and their own usurpation of the prerogative and title of Christ's Vicar; itself a "name of blasphemy," as is said of the titles written on the Beast's Heads.

This Eighth Head is a revival of a professedly Heathen headship, that of Diocletian and successors, wounded to death.

The veritable inheritors of Pagan rites, images and superstitions; actually the continuators, under a different name, of the same worship in the same places; that of the Virgin for that of Venus, Cosmas and Damian for Romulus and Remus, the image of Peter for that of Jupiter Tonans.

He is of the Seven.

"*And is of the seven.*" He is similar in spirit and character to the seven previous Heads; though professedly Christian, yet essentially Heathen; professedly gentle as a lamb, but really cruel against Christ's saints as the Dragon, of whom he is the creature, the representative, and the chosen delegate. What an awful indictment for a professedly Christian Power! But these inspired Visions tell the real truth, whether or not it agree with popular notions.

The symbol employed to prefigure this evil Power demands its dynastic character, and forbids the thought that an individual man is intended. It is represented as an Eighth Head of the Roman Beast, an eighth Form of Government, having its seat at Rome. Now none of the previous Heads of the Roman World were individual rulers, but each consisted of a series of rulers. The Man of Sin was to be the last and the most important of these Heads of this same Roman Beast. If he be a

race of rulers enthroned at Rome, and thence governing the Roman World for more than twelve centuries, he keeps in proportion and harmony with all the rest. But if the Eighth Head represent only one individual man, who exercises authority for only a very short period, there is a violation of symmetry and proportion in the symbol. Analogy demands that the last Head, like all the previous ones, be a race or succession of rulers.

But it must be borne in mind that though a certain Power may be a race or succession of rulers, yet at any one date, such as a particular year, the then representative of the succession will be an individual. Thus we speak of " the King of England," meaning thereby the whole succession of our kings and queens. But in A.D. 1066, suppose, this corporate King of England was an individual, William the Conqueror ; in 1568 Elizabeth ; in 1900 Victoria ; in 1901 Edward VII. And so with any other race or succession of rulers.

Therefore though we understand by " the Antichrist " the whole succession of the Popes at Rome, yet at any one particular date we have to do with the individual Pope who at that time fills the chair of St. Peter. If, then, we are referring to some one particular date in the future, it is not incorrect to speak of a future personal Antichrist as existing at that date ; only he will be that particular Pope in the series who happens to be then reigning, one individual out of a long succession ; and not an entirely distinct personage, without father, without mother, and without genealogy, suddenly appearing upon the scene, and continuing but a short time.

If the Papacy be indeed what these Visions represent it to be, the very masterpiece of Satan, then anything may be expected of it in the future. Whatever the Popes now are or have been, some future Pope may

develop such features of Satanic power and wickedness as the world has never yet seen.

Woman and Beast Contemporaneous.

The Woman is contemporaneous, not with any earlier form of Roman Power, nor with the brief interval in which Roman Power seemed wounded to death; but with its last revived form, that is, with the Eighth Head. Now as Babylon, the Romish Church, has existed for more than twelve centuries, this Beast must also have been in existence for the same period; and therefore the eighth and last and peculiarly evil and antichristian form of Roman Power predicted cannot be a short-lived individual, but must be a dynasty or succession of rulers, like all the other Heads. And further, since no other succession of rulers have swayed the Roman earth from Rome during the career of Babylon, that must be the line of Roman Pontiffs.

If an Antichrist still future were to be the destroyer of Rome, and the raiser up of a new empire at Jerusalem, there would be five great empires before Messiah's kingdom, instead of four, as in Daniel ii. and vii.

The Ten Horns receive Authority.

These Ten Kingdoms which were to arise out of Rome's Western Empire, and were to receive power together and to be allied with Rome, did not yet exist in St. John's age. Heathen Rome was destroyed before any such kingdoms arose.

"*They receive authority as kings, with the beast.*" But the real sovereign of their subjects is the Beast. "*For one hour,*" that is, they retain their authority as kings only for a very short time, and then they give their power and authority to the Beast. The verb "give" is in the perfect tense, meaning a continuing act. The

Pope is their common father and head, and they do not exercise their authority apart from him. These war against the Lamb, under the leadership of the Beast.

The Waters where the Harlot sitteth are peoples. This is an inspired explanation of one symbol in these Visions, a guide to the interpretation of the rest.

The Judgment on the Harlot.

"*The ten horns . . . and the beast . . . shall hate the harlot.*" This is a description of the judgment itself, a description promised by the Angel in verse 1, but delayed owing to the astonishment shown by St. John, and the need of fuller explanation as to the history and relations of the Beast and the Woman. Here is a reversal of the attitude of the Kings to the Harlot, maintained for twelve centuries before (see Rev. xvi. 19). "*And the cities of the nations fell; and Babylon the great was remembered . . . to give unto her the cup.*" This seems to mean that as the Tenth Part of the Great City fell from the Papacy at the Reformation (Rev. xi. 13), so now the cities of the Ten Kings fall from their allegiance to the Romish Church. To hate, after having loved, represents ceasing to be under that influence to which the person before was subject.

Taking "Beast" in its broadest sense, the statement is—that the kingdoms of Western Europe, the mass of the people as well as their rulers, the entire body politic, "the Ten Horns and the Beast," shall at last come to hate and forsake the Harlot, the corrupt Roman Church; they shall strip her of her glory, cast her down from her high position among them, eject her religious orders, limit the powers of her priesthood, refuse her doctrines, scoff at her authority, appropriate her revenues and substance to secular uses, and at last adjudge her to destruction. The flesh of the Harlot denotes her tem-

poral possessions, and "devouring" is the confiscation or secularization of her temporalities.

This process is now actually begun; it is in fact the state of things amidst which we are living. Ever since the French Revolution, when judgment began, and the Romish Church in France was despoiled, the Ten Horns, as was foretold, have been making her desolate and naked, eating her flesh, and burning her with fire. All through "the time of the end" this process has been going on, and will continue at an accelerated rate until the final fall comes.

The Roman Catholic nations of modern Europe have begun to hate the Roman Catholic Church, to which in bygone ages they all yielded admiration, affection, and obedience. The past century has witnessed an ever growing and deepening disaffection. Entire nations have defied that Church's censures, confiscated her property, and wrested every department of politics from her control. The full results of this modern movement are not seen as yet, for it is only in progress, not completed. We see that the very nations which for ages, under the Papacy, upheld and obeyed the Roman Catholic Church, now hate, despise, and despoil her. Witness the recent expulsion from France of the Religious Orders, and the rupture of diplomatic relations between France and the Papacy. The separation of France from political connexion with the Papacy, by the Law of December, 1905, for the disestablishment of the Romish Church in that country, is an act of momentous importance, dissolving the alliance with the Papacy formed by Napoleon's *Concordat* in 1801.

In December, 1906, the rupture between France and the Papacy became still more disastrous to the latter. The Pope forbade French Roman Catholics to form the religious associations allowed under the Disestablishment Law, which would have granted them control of Church

property and fabrics, and enabled them to continue their religious services. The French Government replied by placing outside the pale of the law those Roman Catholic clergy who failed to comply, at the given date, with the legal requirements. The Papal Representative was promptly expelled from France, episcopal palaces and residences seized, cathedrals and churches closed, church property confiscated, State payments to the priesthood stopped, and divinity students preparing for the priesthood compelled to undergo military training like other laymen.

In October, 1910, there was a Revolution in Portugal; a Republic was proclaimed, and the King and Royal Family took to flight. The policy of the Republic, as officially announced, included: "Throwing wide to everybody the door of Education: expulsion of the monks and nuns; closing of the Roman Catholic Schools; compulsory civil registration of births, deaths, and marriages; separation of Church and State." The news of the flight of the Royal Family caused consternation at the Vatican. The Pope and Cardinal Merry del Val, no longer able to doubt the success of the Republic, were very downcast. They were convinced that the Republican régime would show itself hostile towards the Vatican, and that one of its first acts would be to suppress the Portuguese embassy at the Vatican. The Pope is unwilling to recognize the Republic. When he received news of the Republican Government's decision to expel the monks from Portugal, he was greatly irritated. He was bitterly grieved by the action of the Latin races, including even Spain, and declared that Roman Catholics enjoy liberty only in Great Britain, the United States, Germany, Holland, and Switzerland. The monks and nuns were ordered to quit Portugal at twenty-four hours' notice.

In 1911 the separation was made between Church

and State, and all the property of the Roman Catholic Church in Portugal was taken from her.

Conjectures as to its Final Form.

It may be permitted to offer some conjectures—and they are no more than conjectures—as to the form that this judgment on the Harlot may finally take.

The Papal Power, in its secular character, remains quite to the last, and is destroyed only at our Lord's appearing. It heads the great Revolution and Rebellion of the Seventh Vial, and it would seem that under the name of Gog it is the leader of the hosts that invade Palestine to destroy the Jewish Nation (Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.). Hence the Papacy in its last form, and fully developed character at the close of its career, must be in entire sympathy with all those movements, and must share their spirit; that is, it must then be practically if not openly atheistic.

Mr. J. McCabe, formerly a Romish priest, in his book on *The Decay of the Church of Rome*, gives as his general thesis that "Instead of showing signs of increase, the Church of Rome is rapidly decaying, and *only a dramatic change of its whole character can save it from ruin*" (italics ours). What will that change be?

The Antichrist of the end, then, is not a new and short-lived creation of Satan, but an awful final development of the Antichrist that has existed all along for the 1,260 years. Nothing could be more natural, if the Papacy be, as these Visions describe it, the creation of Satan himself. The only difference will be, that then it will have thrown off all disguise, and will appear in its true character.

The Horns and the Beast hate and destroy the Harlot, but remain in close confederacy to the very last conflict. But when the Beast, Ten Kings, and False Pro-

phet appear, in the final warfare with the Lamb (Rev. xix. 19), the Harlot (who represents the Church of Rome as an ecclesiastical system) is seen there no more ; before this date she has disappeared. The False Prophet is with the Beast to the very end (Rev. xix. 20). This seems to imply that the Papal clergy, as well as the Papacy, or a considerable proportion of them, will also have become of like spirit with their leader, will have cast off their allegiance to their Church and religion, and joined in supporting the Papacy in its last infidel efforts.

Putting all this together, it seems to mean that at that era the Papacy will have become atheistic or infidel ; and, leagued with the Ten Kings and their peoples, and aided by the False Prophet, will have cast off the Romish Church. She does not see the fearful gravity of the situation, but still says in her heart, " I am no widow " (Rev. xviii. 7), though cast off by her husband, who has now become a military rather than an ecclesiastical leader.

But all in a moment God's judgment is executed on her by revolutionary fire. Revelation xviii. 8, " Therefore in one day [ver. 10, ' in one hour '] shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine ; and she shall be utterly burned with fire ; for strong is the Lord God which judged her."

That these are not unreasonable conjectures will appear from what was done by atheistic France to the Romish Church there established, at the time of the great French Revolution. It was as it were a first rehearsal of this part of the great drama. This has already been referred to, (see page 506).

" Hébert and other ultra democrats made a furious assault on the Christian religion, the very profession of which they determined to root out from France, well knowing it to be the foundation of all morality and social order. By their instiga-

tion a petition to this effect was presented to the Convention by Gobel, the 'constitutional' Bishop of Paris, and his clergy, who publicly renounced their belief and functions as ministers of the Catholic Church, and declared that henceforth they would recognize no public worship but that of liberty, equality and reason. A decree was forthwith passed in accordance with this appalling act of apostasy. The religion of Jesus Christ was formally proscribed and suppressed." (Murray's *Student's France*, chap. XXVII; § 5; p. 559–60.)

Note also the following:—

Rénan (*Hibbert Lectures*) contemplates the possibility of Rome's making terms even with the agnostic and the infidel, by practically representing all religions as a dream, and opening her arms to receive all, and to provide for all alike the satisfaction of their spiritual yearnings.

When God's hour has struck, ideas that had dawned perhaps on only a few grip the minds of multitudes, and are speedily translated into action. Hence the interest of discerning, anywhere in current thought, the germs of schemes in accordance with what is foreshown in these wonderful prophetic visions.

Here is a suggestive newspaper cutting:—

"As a matter of fact, Ultramontanism, which in Italy seeks the restoration of the Temporal Power, and which elsewhere corrupts the public life of Catholic countries with a view to securing political predominance, is quite distinct from the Roman Catholic religion. Even on the Continent the majority of Catholics now contemplate with dismay the consequence of the ruthless campaign which has for so many years been carried on by the Pope, in whose councils there is an overwhelming Italian majority as indifferent to the purely religious requirements of other nationalities as to those of their own." (*Times* Correspondent from Vienna, January 18, 1901.)

The *Daily Mail* of May 2, 1901, had a striking article from a special correspondent on "A Union of the Latin Races." The writer says:—

"A definite understanding, political and financial, between the Latin countries has long been a possibility and a problem in European politics. The success of Great Britain and Germany in the race for world power has been watched with jealous interest by the Latin peoples. The sudden apparition of America armed and the consequent Spanish-American war served to stimulate the desire of certain statesmen to give the Latin countries the strength that lies in union. Theoretically a union of the threatened races has always been quite possible, only in practice has it been impossible hitherto. . . . France will direct the union, and in the direction lie its stability and power. . . . The power of the purse will make France the predominant partner. . . . We in Great Britain cannot afford to ignore the revival of the hopes of a Latin union."

In October, 1901, an anarchist was arrested in Rome, who, it was said, had come there for the express purpose of assassinating the Pope. He declared that he wanted to kill Leo XIII in order to make room for another Pope *who would inaugurate an era of Catholic social democracy.*

In reference to the great strike of postal and other employés in Paris :—

There can no longer be much room for doubt as to the revolutionary character of the postal strike. Every feature of it points to the movement as an outline of the great political revolution which is being persistently and mathematically prepared by the leaders of the "syndicates" or "unions," and which they hope to bring about within the next ten or fifteen years at the very latest. This movement aims at the complete overthrow of the existing parliamentary Republican constitution in France, and the implanting in its place of a sort of "syndicalist" Republic. (*Daily Mail*, March 22, 1909.)

Note to page 596. Two marks of identification of Babylon as the Romish Church have been given. There is a third, of great importance ; in these Visions she is connected not only with the Seven Hills, but also with the Ten-Horned Diademed condition of the Western Roman Empire ; that is, with Mediæval and Modern Europe. These three marks occur *together*, in the history and present position of that Church, and completely establish the identification.

XXIV

THE HARVEST. THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB. THE VINTAGE

REV. XVIII., XIX.

"Babylon is Fallen": Rev. xviii. 1–3.

THIS Vision seems to mean that shortly before the destruction of Babylon there will be a diffusion of light upon the history, character, and doom of the Romish Church; and a sounding forth of strong appeals founded on her character, and on the imminence of her destruction. All will be able to see and to take warning, except those that wilfully, or from pride, worldliness, or indifference to the truth, shut their eyes and ears to the evidence. The number of those who from hatred to the truth will resist all evidence will even at the last be large; for see what is said at Revelation xix. 19–21, as to those gathered together against the Lamb (see also 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12).

This Angel had great authority, probably as the appointed executor of the coming judgment; the earth was lightened with his glory, and he cried with a mighty voice. All this shows that the branding of Babylon as such, and the proclamation of her near doom, are to be published far and wide throughout the world. This agrees with the fact of her name being seen written upon her forehead. This open, public, notorious recog-

nition follows upon the teaching of Revelation xvii., which was "in the spirit," and "in a wilderness." As a sudden illumination of parts of God's truth brought about the Reformation (Rev. x. 1), so now a like illumination of these prophetic Visions and their historical explanation would correspond with what is here foreshown.

At the time corresponding with the opening of this chapter, the actual sudden destruction of Babylon has not yet taken place. There is first (ver. 2, 3) some awful change in her for the worse, some great moral downfall, now recognized and proclaimed far and wide over the earth. Then (ver. 4–7) a warning voice to any of God's people who may still be in her, at their peril; together with a declaration of the retributive character of the judgment now imminent. After which (ver. 8 . . ., 21 . . .), the long-delayed destruction comes upon her all in a moment, and she disappears like a millstone flung into the sea.

"*Fallen, fallen is Babylon.*" This ranges with the voice of the Second Angel, in Revelation xiv. 8, but with notable additions, such as "is become a habitation of devils. . . ." It is still anticipative, for the cry "Come out of her . . ." follows; but the interval before the catastrophe may be but short, considering the effulgence of the light and the strength of the cry, the time being urgent. No such destruction has yet befallen Rome.

"Come out of her": Rev. xviii. 4–8.

This warning voice from heaven is heard loud and distinct, by St. John in his symbolic character, as the representative of Christ's true saints and servants then living. This indicates a conviction strongly to be impressed on the mind of God's people at the time prefigured. Up to this point, Babylon has not yet been

"remembered" for the execution upon her of God's wrath, as foretold in the summary of the Seventh Vial (Rev. xvi. 19). Moreover, the Rapture of the Saints cannot yet have taken place, for some are still in Babylon.

The warning is like that to Lot on the night before the destruction of Sodom; or that of Moses to Israel before the earthquake that swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; or like that of Christ to His disciples, "Then let them which be in Judæa flee to the mountains." God knows how to deliver His people from among the guilty ones upon whom His judgments are about to fall.

As all were not Israel that were of Israel, so all are not really Papists that are subject to the Papacy. This warning shows that some of God's true saints are in Babylon or in the kingdom of the Beast, as Lot in Sodom, even to the very eve of its destruction. They would surely not be knowingly in an openly infidel system; "Babylon," then, must be a professedly Christian Church, in which some of Christ's true servants are even then to be found, professedly belonging to Antichristian Rome, yet not partaking of her Antichristian spirit. They are, however, in imminent danger of sharing in the coming destruction, if through mistaken judgment or slothful lingering they delay to escape. So Lot's wife, though brought out, shared in the destruction of Sodom. Is it not, then, all-important that Christian people should be very clear as to the character of the system thus solemnly denounced from heaven?

Her Sins and her Plagues.

After the warning, the same voice apparently, addressed still and all through to the saints, describes in vivid detail the catastrophe, as if enacted before the Evangelist's eyes on the scene of Vision; though with the mixture of future and past with present which is so common in the descriptions of prophecy. "*Her sins*

have reached unto heaven." When Sodom's cry was said to have come up to heaven, its judgment was close at hand. "*Render unto her.*" The saints are the injured ones, and in God's retributive justice they are the avengers of those wrongs.

Her Sudden Destruction.

The destruction of the mystic Babylon is to be effected all unexpectedly to those remaining in her, as well as to herself. Complete carnal security to the very end is the characteristic of Babylon and her constituents. To the last she says, "I sit a queen. . . ." It is effected by the sudden and tremendous agency of earthquake and volcanic fire. The expressions may be understood symbolically in reference to the Romish Church in the sense of revolutionary earthquake and fire; and literally in reference to the literal city Rome. The very nature of the soil of Italy has forced on many a mind, in different ages, the thought of its physical preparedness for such a catastrophe. The territory of the Western Roman world may be included, and the thrill of this earthquake be felt throughout the whole habitable earth.

After the burning of the Harlot, the Pope still remains as a great leader of men. The destruction of Babylon by fire and earthquake precedes, by whatever interval, that of Antichrist, the Beast, with his confederates.

Mourning over her: Rev. xviii. 9–20.

There is implied some kindly feeling towards Rome on the part of the Western Kings, at the epoch of her great and final destruction. There are lamentations over her fall first from them, then from merchants, shipmasters, and sailors, that were enriched by or took part in the various branches of traffic. All this is to be symbolically understood. The Great City is seated

upon the waters, or nations in the perpetual turmoil of worldly politics; and, like opulent natural cities, it is said to have abundance of merchants and shipmasters. These merchants, who enrich themselves by trading with her, are declared to be the great men of the earth, or the Princes of the Roman territory. "*Standing afar off.*" This most graphic touch shows that no mere burning of Rome by human agency is intended, else why all this terror?

"*Rejoice . . . heaven . . . saints.*" Mingled among those selfish lamentations is heard the rejoicing voice of a righteous heaven. The saints are summoned to rejoice because the law of Divine retribution has worked on her; not their judgment of her, but God's.

The Shock of Babylon's Fall: Rev. xviii. 21–23.

"*Into the sea.*" Understanding "waters" of "people," this agrees with the idea of the destruction of Babylon by revolutionary action, swallowed up suddenly by the people. Compare Matthew xviii. 6, the doom Christ foreshadowed as awaiting those who caused His little ones to stumble and fall.

The manner of the catastrophe is with violence as of the shock of a millstone hurled into the waters. It is to be sudden, instantaneous, not gradual like the previous stages of the "consuming." As some old building, long tottering and undermined, falls at last with a sudden crash, so shall this vast and ancient ecclesiastical system of Rome fall. It is not slowly to be taken down piecemeal from some external scaffolding so as to avoid a shock, as is the case with the Ottoman Empire; but with a sudden, startling collapse, like that of a millstone thrown into the sea, the system is to sink out of sight for ever. The totality of the catastrophe is such that all life is quenched. Her fall is final. The earth is cleansed of a great counterfeit Christianity.

Reasons for the Judgment.

One reason assigned is, that all nations had been deceived by her sorceries. She has led the people under her influence to anything and everything except to God, the Judge of all, to Jesus Christ the only Saviour, and to the Scriptures which testify of Him.

The other reason is, that "in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth." This implies that inquiry is to be made, history is to be investigated; with the result that in Babylon is found the blood of God's servants slain by her, or at her instigation. Even if she handed them over to the secular power for punishment, it was she who pronounced the sentence and who had taught and established the wrong notions of religion, justice, and toleration, which made such punishment possible. The guilt is hers, and she is held responsible for it all. From the date of the Apocalypse, Rome Pagan and Papal has been the slayer of Christ's people.

Here is the testimony of a traveller: In the early part of 1870 I crossed the Pyrenees, and on reaching Madrid went with a friend to see the newly opened Quemadero. Some workmen employed in cutting a road across the summit of a low hill close to the city had inadvertently dug into a broad bank of ashes, which had been buried for one or two centuries. Mingled with the ashes they had found a large quantity of charred human bones, together with fragments of rusted iron and melted lead. The spot was speedily verified as the famous Quemadero, or place of burning, one of twelve places where so-called "heretics" were annually burned in Spain, during the reign of the Inquisition. I found the road had been cut through the centre of this bank of blackened bones and ashes. The strange stratum displayed seemed about six feet in depth, and covered quite a large area. There, then, exposed to the light of day, were the ashes of Spanish martyrs. I stood in silence, and looked at the ghastly monument. I had seen before not a little of Romanism on the continent and in other countries, and had read of the multitude of martyrs who had suffered cruel deaths in past centuries

at the hands of Spanish priests and inquisitors, on account of their faith in the pure Gospel of the grace of God, and their opposition to Popish superstitions and idolatries. Now, for the first time, I found myself face to face with a terrible demonstration of the truth of these histories. There, lying before me, were the bones and ashes of Spanish confessors and martyrs who had suffered death at the stake. I could examine them and satisfy myself of their character. I could handle them, and did. Reverently I removed some burnt bones from the general mass, and wrapped them, together with a quantity of ashes, in a Spanish newspaper which I still possess, bearing the date of the day.

Another eyewitness says—There, in the banks at each side, were the stratified layers of human ashes; between each *auto da fé* it was evident that the remains had been covered with a layer of earth; finally, at the top of these smaller bands of black ashes, came one huge deposit, which marked the scene of the last gigantic *auto*. This ghastly bonfire was sixty feet square and seven feet high, as history records, when 105 victims were slowly tortured to a frightful death. . . . while the King, Charles II, and his Court, and the howling rabble of Madrid looked on with savage enjoyment.

The reluctance to shed blood which had so honourably distinguished the Fathers completely passed away [in the twelfth century], or, if we find any trace of it, it is only in the quibble by which the Church referred the execution of her mandates to the civil magistrate, who, as we have seen, was not permitted to delay that execution for more than six days, under pain of excommunication. Almost all Europe, for many centuries, was inundated with blood, which was shed at the direct instigation or with the full approval of the ecclesiastical authorities, and under the pressure of a public opinion that was directed by the Catholic clergy, and was the exact measure of their influence.

That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant that has a competent knowledge of history. The memorials, indeed, of many of her persecutions are now so scanty, that it is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it is certain that no powers of imagination can adequately realize their sufferings. . . . These atrocities were not perpetrated in the brief paroxysms of a reign of terror, or by the hands of obscure sectaries, but were inflicted by a triumphant Church, with every

circumstance of solemnity and deliberation (Lecky: *Rationalism in Europe*, Ch. IV.).

(See Appendix III of *Daniel and its Critics*, by Dr. C. H. H. Wright.)

There are few more remarkable productions of the twentieth century than the work on the "Public Ecclesiastical Law of the Church of Rome," by P. M. de Luca, S.J., Professor in the Gregorian University of Rome. It was warmly commended by the late Pope Leo XIII. No book more opposed to the spirit of our age has perhaps ever been issued from the Papal press.

[Large extracts are given, then it is added:—]

The foregoing extracts are sufficient to prove decisively, not only that the Church of Rome has persecuted in the past, but that she is perfectly ready, whenever she gets the power, to continue the same savage rule. Roman Catholic advocates have striven in vain to show that their Church was not responsible for the great persecutions which have stained so deeply her character in past days. Some of these persecutions, these advocates assert, were really undertaken for political purposes, and ought not to be laid to the charge of the Church itself. But in these volumes, written in the blaze of the twentieth century, the most despotic power is asserted as bestowed by Christ Himself upon the Church. In these volumes she reasserts all the most revolting claims of the Middle Ages, and quotes the actions of men in those days as justifying the Church, whenever she may be able, in exercising despotic power, and mercilessly persecuting heretics to the death. Everything, according to Rome's idea, must be done "according to the nod and will of the priest." Other Churches have at various times persecuted persons who dared to oppose their tenets. But no other Church has ever claimed "Divine right" for such scandalous acts, or has laid down in her canon law so clearly the right and duty of persecution.

"More and more, it is probable, as the historical spirit grows, as historical methods are pursued and the scientific mind is acquired, men will desire to know impartially what really happened. They will be dissatisfied with partizan histories of events and institutions. The popular conception of the Papacy must be affected by these causes. The Papacy will be judged by history, instead of judging it; it will no longer be accepted blindly at its own valuation by apologists and partizans; nor

will it be misjudged by ignorant, blatant and prejudiced opponents" (Rev. Arthur Galton: *Our Attitude towards English Roman Catholics*, ch. XVI.).

At this point comes in Revelation xiv. 9–13, the Voice of Warning as to the doom of the Beast and his followers. This is in the supplemental Visions of the "Writing Without."

Harvest of the Earth.

Then comes Rev. xiv. 14–16, the Harvest of the Earth, the first of the two great acts of judgment. This is the destruction of Babylon.

Hallelujah: Rev. xix. 1-4.

After Babylon's destruction, which is here mentioned in verses 2, 3, as the subject of this song of adoration, a burst of praise is heard to resound from a great multitude in heaven. The language used to describe this song is now Hebrew, "Hallelujah." It has hence been supposed that the Jews will perhaps join in or lead the earthly Church's song on this occasion. Twice that song of praise is uttered, and then the twenty-four elders and four living creatures take it up and repeat it. It is the last act related of them.

"*Her smoke goeth up for ever.*" The instrumentality employed against Babylon, is at first revolutionary or volcanic fire, or both, but is at last fire eternal.

The Marriage of the Lamb: Rev. xix. 5-10.

The Marriage of the Lamb, or Rapture of the Church, is not symbolized by any special Vision. It is announced as taking place at this point in the series of Visions; but it is an event too brief, too rapid, to be dramatized like the historic episodes; it takes place "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

It could not be represented as taking place in the Roman earth, for the first Resurrection will take place all the world over ; nor in the symbolic heavens, for it has nothing to do with the governmental sphere ; nor in the upper and true heavens above, for " the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven " when He comes to receive His people, and they are caught up to meet Him in the air. In fact, it is not a material event at all ; for the bodies in which we are to rise are spiritual bodies, and the union which is to take place is a spiritual union. Hence it is represented by an emblem which avoids all that would be inaccurate, and comprises all that is essential.

The Lord's Second Coming : Rev. xix. 11–16.

There is no secrecy about the Lord's Coming for His Saints. That event is heralded by signs of world-wide publicity for ear and eye, all occurring together : a " shout," " the voice of the archangel," " the trump of God," " a great sound of a trumpet," and as " the lightning " seen from east to west, " every eye shall see Him " (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17 ; Matt. xxiv. 31 ; Rev. i. 7). The Advent has indeed two very different aspects, according to the condition of those whom it affects, but the Advent itself is one, not two.

When the Lord comes from above, He is followed by the armies of heaven on His way to this earth. Before He actually reaches it, and while still " in the air," He is met by the whole multitude of His saints ; those who had died being raised again, and those still living being transformed. This meeting is the Marriage of the Lamb. Attended by these two great companies—the celestial warriors and the saints—He comes to this earth to overthrow the foes that are ranged together against Him. When executing judgment on Babylon, the Romish Church, He was seen on a white cloud, wearing a golden crown (Rev. xiv. 14) ; now, when judging the Beast *and the kings*, He has many diadems. This means that sovereignty passes from all earthly Powers to Him alone.

An enemy yet remains to be overcome ere full blessedness be attained. As the Harlot must be exposed and destroyed ere the manifestation of the Bride, so must the usurper, the self-vaunting king of kings and lord of lords, ere the establishment of the kingdom of the rightful Lord.

"*I saw the heaven opened.*" Compare Acts iii. 21, "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things." The heaven is now opened, to allow the passage to earth of One seated beyond the visible heaven; that the Lord may thence issue forth with His hosts.

"*A white horse.*" The colour of triumph. If the horse in the Seals represents an Empire, that of Rome, the horse here may also represent the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be established upon the earth, He being its direct Ruler.

"*Faithful and true.*" Faithful to His promises to avenge His saints; and who will not suffer one word that He has promised to fail.

"*In righteousness he doth . . . make war.*" No mere vindictiveness, but the strictest justice; long delayed, but at last executed.

"*Many diadems.*" Having all authority; combining in His person all royal dignity and power.

"*Sprinkled with blood.*" Having already begun to tread the Winepress of God's wrath (see Isa. lxiii. 1–6: Rev. xiv. 20).

Call to Birds of Prey.

It is known beforehand that all this great assemblage of foes is gathered together against the Lord, and that the issue is not doubtful, notwithstanding the infatuation of them all. They are doomed.

"*An Angel standing in the sun.*" Denoting either his universal visibility, or the supreme royalty that dictated

his words. Compare Revelation xii. 1. See also Jeremiah xlvi. 10.

"*All the birds.*" To show the greatness and wide extent of the coming slaughter. There is a close resemblance between this passage and that in Ezekiel xxxix. 17, as though both referred to one and the same event.

"*The flesh of horses.*" Does this suggest that Turkish horses (Sixth Trumpet) are amongst these hosts ?

Warfare of the Beast and the Kings : Rev. xix. 19-21.

"*I saw the beast.*" . . . *The* Beast ; the same Beast all through, though seen at different epochs under different phases. This may be the "Leviathan" of Psalm lxxiv. 14, and Isaiah xxvi. 20–xxvii. The Woman is there no more ; before this she has been destroyed.

St. John sees the symbolic figures of the Beast and the False Prophet leading kings and armies against Christ and His armies. This symbolic prediction of the final crisis of that general war of nations that takes place at the close of this dispensation, and that is foretold in Ezekiel, Zechariah, and other scriptures, shows that these two Powers—the Papal Imperial Power, and the body of the Romish Priesthood—will be chief agents in bringing about that war, and in that sense will be actors in it. This war culminates in an attack on Jerusalem, when the Lord Jesus will descend from heaven with His saints, and as Zechariah tells us, "His feet will stand at that day on the Mount of Olives."

"*The kings . . . and their armies gathered together.*" The scene immediately preceding Christ's destruction of Antichrist is that of a battlefield, to which Antichrist and his confederate powers have been gathered, under the guidance of the three associated spirits of evil ; for one great final conflict, the culmination of a "war"

against Christ's cause and people that has been going on long before. It is with Christ Himself that they war; it may outwardly appear to be with some people of His, but in reality it is from hatred to Him and His cause. Compare Acts ix. 4, 5.

They have meanwhile gathered to the scene of conflict, as the grapes are brought to the winepress (Rev. xiv. 19, 20); perhaps to some country or place outside the territories of the Popedom. This would account for their destruction following after, and so being distinct in time and place, from that of Babylon. Compare Revelation xiv. 20, "The winepress was trodden *without the city*."

The Beast and the False Prophet taken: Rev. xix. 20, 21.

The False Prophet continues with the Beast to the end. By the article "*the* false prophet," and the description that follows, this False Prophet is positively identified with the Two-horned Lamb-like associate of the Beast from the sea (Rev. xiii. 11–17). Hence this Beast, in its last form and last conflict, in the passage we are now considering, is also positively identified with the Beast from the Sea (Rev. xiii. 1–10).

Both the False Prophet and the Beast are cast alive into the lake of fire, and therefore are living up to that date; but doubtless this means alive in the symbolical sense, in contrast to symbolical death, when they can no longer act. This sentence on them remains in force till Revelation xx. 10, when it is made eternal.

The Beast and the False Prophet are said to be both "cast alive into the lake that burneth with brimstone." Similarly in Revelation xx. 14, "Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire"; and here it is obvious that two actual individuals cannot be meant, but that the description is simply a figurative way of foretelling that

the conditions of Death and Hades will then be finally done away with. So what St. John saw cannot be taken to mean that two remarkable personages of the future are to be carried bodily from the battlefield, and thrown into a fiery lake; the doom foreshadowed is that the Power of the Papacy and that of the Romish Priesthood, as evil agencies in the world, are at that crisis to be brought to an end at once and for ever. They are "alive" when cast into the lake, symbolizing that these Powers remain in active existence right up to the coming of Christ, and then are suddenly overthrown and destroyed. Compare Daniel vii. 12.

"*The rest were killed.*" These are the kings and other earthly adherents of the Beast.

All this describes some signal, total, most tremendous destruction of the Papal Antichrist and of the kings and others leagued with him. It is to follow after the destruction of Babylon, and is to be accompanied by some striking manifestation of Christ and of His power and glory, who is then to be publicly revealed as the true King of kings and Lord of lords.

So ends the second great Act of Judgment described in these Visions. It is followed by the Millennial Reign, during which Satan is bound. The Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet have remained on the scene throughout; now all three receive their doom.

The Judgment of the Righteous: Rev. xx. 4–6.

At this stage the Judgment of the Righteous takes place. We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; but for those who in this life have placed their trust in Him, and have washed their robes white in His precious blood, there is no condemnation, nothing to fear from the Judge who is Himself their Advocate and the Propitiation for their sins. Yet

there is for them also a judgment for assignment of Rewards and Positions in the Lord's Kingdom, according to the Parables of the Pounds and of the Talents.

When the Lord appeared He was followed by the Armies of Heaven, and was met in the air by His risen and transformed Saints. Attended by these two great companies, He overthrows the Beast, the False Prophet, and their followers. Next, Satan is seized, bound, and imprisoned, to remain there for the whole Millennium. These foes having been thus disposed of, the ordering of the Lord's Kingdom is taken in hand—Rev. xx. 4–6—and here comes in the Judgment of the Righteous. Among them the two groups of Martyrs, under Rome Heathen and Rome Papal, are specially prominent and are specially honoured, but they are not alone. They live and reign with Christ throughout the Millennial Age.

The Seventh Vial.

The Seventh Vial is poured out upon the political and social atmosphere, and it develops through revolution into conditions very like those of anarchy. It has been called the Vial of Democracy.

The importance of England in the Prophetic Programme, and the significance of what happens there, have already been pointed out. Now, shortly after the passing of the Parliament Act in August, 1911, by which a heavy blow was struck at the British Constitution, in the overthrow of the Lords' Veto and the consequent disablement of the House of Lords—a step in the direction of democracy—there followed an extraordinary and inexplicable outburst of unrest, in Britain and her dependencies as well as in other countries. The newspapers were full of it, and endeavoured to account for it in a variety of ways.

Unreasoning strikes on a vast scale, with revolution-

ary spirit and violence, and not seldom against the will of the leaders of the working classes, broke out in many parts of the world, and had to be put down with a firm hand if society was to be preserved. All these upheaval movements showed a spirit ominously like what is foretold under the Seventh Vial, the Vial of Democracy; and even if these doings were only preliminaries, they were most significant, and conveyed a grave warning.

A Date Suggested.

No wonder that that date, followed as it has been by what has just been described, as well as by most terrific warfare, should have arrested the attention of prophetic students at home and abroad, and should have suggested itself as the commencement of the Seventh Vial, the last of the series, the closing section of the Seventh Trumpet. The Sixth Vial, with the drying up of Turkey and the outgoing of the three unclean spirits, had lasted since 1820, that is about ninety years.

Warfare on a Gigantic Scale.

During the subsequent years, in accordance with what is foretold in the Vial, there followed warfare on a gigantic scale. "*lightnings, voices, and thunders,*" as never before in the history of mankind. First in the regions of the Balkans against Turkey, and then between the Powers that had been fighting Turkey. The result was the thrusting away of Turkey from her European territories towards Asia Minor, leaving her only Constantinople and a narrow strip along the Sea of Marmora.

Next, there broke out the most terrible warfare, begun by Germany and Austria against Belgium and France, but presently spreading over the whole of Europe, including our own country, and drawing in our Colonies, India, and the United States of America. Turkey joined with Germany against us and our Allies,

and in consequence lost Egypt, Cyprus, parts of Asia Minor, of Mesopotamia, and of Palestine. In 1917 the British took from the Turks their ancient capital Bagdad, as well as the Holy City Jerusalem, and much territory in both regions.

Two New Features.

In the tremendous warfare of the present time two new and notable features have appeared, that fit in as auxiliary illustrations of what is foreshown under this Vial, the Vial that is poured out "*upon the air*," and one of the judgments of which is "*a great hail out of heaven.*" The emblems used in these visions are generally to be understood as symbols, but in some instances there is literal fulfilment as well, by which attention is the more forcibly drawn to the deeper meaning intended.

We have seen an immense development of warfare in the air, by aircraft of various kinds, these being used not for scouting only, but also as fighting units and for dropping bombs out of the sky. Never before in history has there been anything like this. Add thereto the use of poisonous gases poured out into the air to asphyxiate the opposing fighters, and of liquid fire.

There is also a tremendous increase in the power and use of artillery with high explosive shells and rapid and far-ranging fire. Guns are now made that throw great shells to a distance of seventy or eighty miles. The middle of their trajectory being several miles high, these huge missiles may well seem to be coming down "out of heaven." This also was unknown until the present warfare broke out. The "hail about the weight of a talent" may represent a great development in bomb-dropping by monster aeroplanes.

It is surely significant that these new features should be appearing at the present time. Still, too much importance should not be attached to the merely literal, as though it satisfied all that was signified.

The Great Earthquake.

The next great event in sequence to the thunderstorm of warfare is the "*great earthquake*," greater than any before; a mighty Revolution, resulting in the Tripartition of the Great City, and followed by the destruction of the Roman Catholic Church. This last event is represented as an episode in the Great Revolution, for the Revolution continues, and developes into a complete levelling of everything in the social fabric: "*Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*"

Revolution began in 1917 in Russia. Was this the first premonitory shock? The ancient dynasty of the Tsars was dethroned, and the constitution of that once great empire was reduced to a state of chaos.

A Solemn Warning.

It must not be forgotten that the Three Unclean Spirits like frogs extend their voice and operations from the Sixth into the era of the Seventh Vial, and may be expected to work with increased energy and success as the end and their doom draw nearer.

They are spirits, not flesh and blood, though acting through human instrumentality and making use of flesh and blood and brain for their purposes. To a certain extent they possess supernatural powers, working signs, and impressing the minds of the ignorant and unwary; themselves invisible to the human eye, but revealing their presence and influence by the results of their operations. He must be blind indeed who fails to discern their doings in the world around; but it needs Spirit-enlightened sight to penetrate their many disguises.

Here is something greater and far more momentous than any sagacious forecasts of statesmen or politicians,

or the newspaper explanations of present troubles. We are nearing the end of the Dispensation, and are witnessing the spiritual preparations for the last great Conflict. We have to war against wicked spirits, the prince of the power of the air and his evil demons and subordinates. Let us be warned, and be quick to recognize these foes. Their great aim at present is the ruin of England. Let their action be firmly resisted wherever it is to be found, in Church or State.

Concluding Remarks.

The entire series of these inspired symbolic Visions down to this point has now been surveyed, taking them in their natural order. There has also been passed in review the whole course of European history for nineteen centuries down to the present time, the historic facts being taken in the order in which they have occurred ; and Visions and History have been laid alongside of each other. What is the impression left upon the mind by this mighty array of prophecy and of accomplished fact ?

Let the matter be presented to the eye in the following manner. On the left hand, a column of italic letters to represent the Visions in their regular order, capital letters being used to represent what seem to be the more important symbolizations. On the right hand a column of Roman type letters, to represent the facts of history, in the order of their occurrence, capitals being used for the events of special importance. Thus :—

Symbolic Visions in their order.	Historic facts in their order.
a	a
B	B
c	c
d	d
E	E
f	f
g	g
etc.	etc.

What have we found ? Not that symbol *c* bears some resemblance to fact *g*, or that symbol *E* might perhaps be made to fit fact B ; but that symbol *a* fits fact a, symbol *B* fits fact B, *c* fits c, *d* fits d, *E* fits E, and so on with the utmost regularity and precision, up to it may be a hundred consecutive particulars in each series, in fact, throughout the entire course of history from St. John's Day to the present time.

Can this possibly be chance ? Is it only an accident that each and all the wards of this historical key so accurately fit the lock ; or was not the one made for the other by the same Almighty Ruler of events, who sees the end from the beginning ? To be asked to believe that all this is accidental, a remarkable coincidence and no more, that the real fulfilment of these Visions is still to come, is to have too great a strain put upon our credulity, not to say upon our reason and commonsense. The historical fulfilment is too plain to be gainsaid. This is the finger of God.

In such a wide survey, taking in hundreds of facts, dates, and other particulars, it is impossible but that slips and blunders have been made ; and the writer will be thankful to have such pointed out to him. But he begs students of prophecy not to let their attention be drawn aside by mere trips, trivialities, or side issues, from the tremendously important revelation that is herein made to the Church of Christ. Let them read the standard histories and authorities for themselves, and see whether these things be so or not. What has been given in these Papers is but a meagre summary of the history of the events in question ; wider and more exact historic investigation will only deepen the impression, by displaying yet more luminously the marvellous prescience, the absolute accuracy, of these Divine portraitures.

The correspondence is not merely between the individual symbols and the events that fulfil them respectively ; but it is a correspondence between the entire series regarded as a whole, and the entire course of

history. It extends to the relations of the symbols to each other, their succession and mutual proportions. Historicism and Futurism cannot both be true ; no one can rationally expect a repetition of the entire course of history.

If this be so, then we have here God's own Philosophy of History, His own view of the course of events, of their proportion, significance and connexion. What can be desired more important, more helpful, more necessary for the guidance of the servants of God here below ? And what will they not be losing if they neglect this so great revelation ? "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy." "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the Churches."

XXV

A SURVEY OF EZEKIEL XXXVI. TO XLVIII

AT Ezekiel xxxvi. begins a whole series of prophecies referring to the times of the end of this dispensation, and to the new order of things afterwards. Their subject is, almost exclusively, the People of Israel; their range includes the events preceding and leading up to the Second Advent of our Lord, and the subsequent establishment of His eternal kingdom; subjects and events of the very deepest interest to the world at large, and especially to all true servants of the Lord, to whatever branch of His Church they may belong.

These prophecies are not fragmentary and irregular, but full of detail, and following one upon another as they stand. They deal not with the past, nor only with the present, but with the future leading out of the present.

The Land: xxxvi. 1-15.

The first subject treated of—xxxvi. 1–15—is the restoration of the Land to fertility, as a preparation for the complete restoration of the People.

The prophecy is addressed first "unto the mountains of Israel," not to the people. When we read "land," "mountains," "hills," "watercourses," "valleys," etc., let them be understood in their plain literal meanings.

Take that sense first, whatever may follow after. We have no right to evaporate the plain sense by giving only spiritual meanings to all these.

The passage, especially 8–11, describes the gradual change of the land from desolation, barrenness, and depopulation, to cultivation, fruitfulness, restoration of the cities, and increase of the inhabitants; the reason being, 2, 3, not the worthiness of the people, but in order to still the long-continued reproaches of the enemy. For this restoration to fertility there are required, an increasing population, bestowing an increased amount of labour on the land; an increasing rainfall; and a more enlightened government, with more liberty, and security of property.

This implies and requires immigrants, and here it is repeatedly affirmed that they are to come; not Turks, nor Russians, nor Europeans at all, but of God's ancient people Israel; 8. "My people Israel"; 10. "*All* the house of Israel, even *all* of it." To them originally was the Land given; to them now it is to be restored; and the immigration accordingly is not of certain Tribes only, but is representative from all the people of Israel.

There is nothing sudden in this restoration and re-population. Every part of the prophecy speaks of it as being gradual, certainly for some considerable time at first. It is not a sudden rush upon the land, but a steady immigration and settling, gradual even if rapid. It may therefore be expected not to attract much outside attention; it will be accounted for in a variety of ways, from obvious political or other reasons. There is all the more need, then, to know what these prophecies say about it, that the true significance of the events may not be missed as they come to pass under our eyes.

It is to be a final settlement; 11. ". . . better than at . . . beginnings." The state of things is to be better than when the people were first settled there, and the

land flowed with milk and honey. 14, 15. " . . . neither bereave thy nation any more." When they do thus come back, however feeble they may for a time appear, whatever powerful adversaries may arise, whatever assaults may be made on them when settled—and such are described in this prophecy—the people are never to be again dispossessed, but are to hold their land for an everlasting possession.

Repopulation Begun.

At the present time this seems to be beginning to take place. Repopulation has certainly begun. There is in Palestine a steady and continuous increase of the Jewish population. Jewish colonies are rising rapidly in several quarters. Railways are being made, and traffic is being developed. Since 1850, before which date the population had for long remained stationary, the increase has been at the rate of several hundred per cent.

This fact may attract little attention from the world at large, but to the devout student of God's Word it is of immense interest. Enlightened by these prophecies he will see, in events little noticed by the world, the incipient fulfilment of the sure promises of God to the seed of Abraham, after long centuries of waiting. His own faith will be strengthened, and his interest and expectation keenly excited ; for he knows that in these events are the early indications of the approaching return of His Lord.

The whole People Gathered : xxxvi. 16-38.

The next subject—xxxvi. 16–38—is the gathering back of the whole people of Israel. They are gathered back, 24, from all the countries ; not from one only, as Egypt of old, nor from two, as from Assyria and Babylonia ; but from a much wider area, a much more exten-

sive dispersion, from all countries, all points of the compass (xxxiv. 11–16; Isa. xi. 11–13).

They have eighteen centuries of banishment and suffering to look back upon, and to account for, but they return still apparently under the Old Covenant, as when they first entered the Land, and not yet as a nation converted to Christ. There is nothing to show that as yet they have nationally recognized Jesus as their Messiah. This comes later in the series of events, at and after the actual appearing of the Saviour Himself (Zech. xii. 10–13). So far as the prophecy seems to show, they come now under the same conditions and circumstances as when they first entered the Land, but, with the promise of a new and better heart to be given them. The cleansing of the people, 33, and the restoration of the Land, both come to pass in the same "day", or period.

Two sections of the prophecy next follow in order, both in chapter xxxvii.; the Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones, and that of the Joining of the Two Sticks, of Judah and Israel, in the prophet's hand. These represent respectively—the Revival of their National Life, and their Reunion into one Nation. These sections must not be taken out of their order; the succession of events as here laid down must not be disturbed. Other great events follow, but these stand here before them.

The Valley of Dry Bones: xxxvii. 1-14.

The Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones describes their restoration to national life, from a condition of national death. We must beware of spiritualizing away this passage, or taking it out of its proper connexion as here, or applying it otherwise than to the House of Israel. True—the same Divine power can produce like results under like conditions elsewhere, and spiritual use may be made of the Vision in that way; but verse 11 plainly

affirms that the Vision refers to "the whole house of Israel," and describes something that is to happen to them—the descendants of the patriarch Jacob—in connexion with the Land of Palestine.

"Resurrection" and cognate terms are often used figuratively to denote a revival national, official, or spiritual; but in all cases the resurrection and the death must correspond, must be of the same kind. Thus, national death or extinction, and national revival; political or official annihilation, and political or official resuscitation; spiritual death, and spiritual life, as is said of the Prodigal, "This my son was dead, and is alive again." We have only to ascertain what was the death, in order to understand what is represented by the resurrection. Similarly, when it is said that Christ is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, we have but to ascertain what has been the fall, in order to understand what is meant by the rising again.

Ezekiel is made to view them first, 2, and to observe their forlorn and apparently hopeless condition. No doubt in this he is a representative man, as is St. John in Revelation. The people have population, "very many" dry bones, but no political organization, no national life or power of action. They are long dead, slain, "very dry"; a nation for centuries utterly extinct in the political sense, and its revival to all outward appearance hopeless. This description of utter decay and death, and burial in graves, applies to the whole house of Israel, 11. It is impossible to believe that it applies at the present time, as some theories would require, to the greatest and most powerful of living nations, England and North America.

Prophesying over the Bones.

The prophet is bid to prophesy over these bones, 4; and during the prophesying, by degrees, not suddenly,

they begin to gather together, and recover sinews, flesh, skin, and breath, strength, form, beauty and symmetry, life and action; and they stand forth an exceeding great army. Here is the political revival of a nation, long slain and decayed, back into national life, vigour, and action. The restoration is to take place in successive and perfectly distinct stages. A tendency to outward organization is to be looked for in the scattered nation. The hearts are to be turned towards each other, as a first step. There is to be prophesying over the bones before they return to life; the preaching of repentance, like that of John the Baptist, "in the spirit and power of Elias" (Mal. iv. 5, 6). Its purpose and effect is to promote unity, to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children."

An Earthquake.

While Ezekiel prophesies, 7, there is an earthquake, the familiar scripture symbol of a revolution. Is this the great Earthquake of the Seventh Vial, Revelation xvi. 18–20? Is it that great European convulsion? If so, what more natural or likely than that as a consequence or an accompaniment of some great European convulsion, Israel should regain their nationality, their independent national existence, in their own land? Something of the kind has happened at every previous convulsion of the Great Powers; some new nationality has emerged. Why not this one, especially considering the decayed condition of the Turkish Power? It would be quite possible, and indeed according to precedent, that the Powers of Europe, actuated it might be merely by mutual distrust and political jealousy, or it might be by higher motives, should agree to reinstate the Jews in the Land of their forefathers.

Revival of National Life.

"These slain stood up upon their feet," 9, 10. As a nation they were slain, politically extinct; now they revive, and stand upon their feet. So it is said of the Two Witnesses (Rev. xi. 11), that they revived and stood upon their feet; which was explained of the consolidation and firm attitude of the Reformed Body. The whole house of Judah and Ephraim are in their graves, but they are brought out of that condition into their old Land. The phrase shows that the language is still used figuratively of the resuscitation of the dead nation, and not literally of the resurrection of deceased individuals. Those who speak are the living members of the nation, and it is of the nationality that they speak. The destruction and dissolution of the nation appear to them final, as though it could no more be revived than the dry bones be made to live.

It is not enough that even great numbers of the people be brought back into their old territory. A mere gathering of persons, however numerous, is not of itself a nation; they are only a collection of individuals, and not an organized living and acting political body. But here it is promised that they shall again be organized into a nation, with their own form of government, representative institutions, and all the regular machinery of political life. God promises to put fresh national life into them, so that as a nation they shall live and move and act. He who can raise the dead can and will restore this nation, however improbable it may seem, and whatever difficulties statesmen or politicians may discern; and that is what is here foretold. The prophecies have been most literally fulfilled that foretold their dispersion, sufferings, and present condition; why doubt the like exact fulfilment of the parts of these visions yet unfulfilled? "Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead?"

Easy for Them.

Restoration to political life will be easy for them. Some peoples have been so ground down by long oppression, that they have no men of light and leading among them, none capable of filling the higher offices essential to carrying on the machinery of government. These have to be slowly trained up.

Not so this people of Israel. They have all ready for immediate use, and in far larger proportion than any other people. They know every country, speak every language, understand all national customs, for they are dispersed everywhere. They have representatives of every rank, in every profession, every social position, every calling, every craft. The nation could be born, as a nation, in a day.

The Two Sticks : xxxvii. 15-28.

Here is a further step. In this revived national life they are to be no longer two, but one nation. In these verses is described a solemn Act of Union, by which God makes them once more one nation.

For a long while before the Captivities they had been divided into two nations. Solomon was the last king who ruled over the united people. For his sins in forsaking God's law and ways, the division into two was permitted ; it was pronounced by God through His prophet Ahijah the Shilonite, and was fulfilled under Rehoboam, Solomon's son (1 Kings xi. 29–39 ; xii.). It was the solemn act of God, officially announced by Him, and duly carried out by His providence ; nor was Judah allowed to use the sword to try to undo it. It was a Divine Act of Separation.

That Act has never yet been repealed ; it is still in force to-day. Their Dispersion may have obliterated the division *as a matter of fact*, and no doubt has done

so, and has restored the spiritual unity of the nation; but there has yet been no formal and official annulling of what God pronounced by Ahijah, no reunion *as a matter of law*, no Act of Union formally and legally annulling the Division. This must proceed from the same source, and be carried out with the same authority, as the Act of Separation. The division is to be formally repealed, and this passage prefigures the annulling of what took place in the days of Rehoboam, the repeal of what was then decreed by God.

In order rightly to understand this reversal or repeal, we must carefully note what took place when the separation was effected, as recorded in 1 Kings xii. It was to all outward appearance a mere political act, brought about by a blunder of administration on the part of the king; but in reality it was the result of God's decree, as the punishment for Solomon's sin. The representatives came to Rehoboam, and not obtaining their request, separated themselves, and set up a Government of their own. The people said, 16, 17, "To your tents, O Israel"; yet, 24, the thing was from God.

The Reunion.

Ezekiel was to take one Stick for Judah and for the Children of Israel his companions, and another for Joseph and for all the house of Israel his companions, and join them together, and they should become one in his hand, 16, 17. The meaning of this is explained, 19–22. It is all Israel who are in a like condition of dispersion, and who till then are two distinct nations. They are gathered "on every side," and when brought "into their own land," are made legally one nation. Their division was decreed and foretold under Solomon; their reunion takes place under Him of whom Solomon was type; "a greater than Solomon is here."

The division was represented by a garment—the new

garment of the prophet Ahijah—being rent by the prophet into twelve pieces, and ten being given to Jeroboam. The reunion is represented by the blending into one of two sticks in Ezekiel's hand, for Judah and for Joseph. This symbolical action is the exact opposite of that of Zechariah (Zech. xi. 14). when he cut asunder the Staff "Bands," to signify the breaking of the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

No Movement of Population.

There need be no movement of population. Judah and Israel dwelt beside each other in the same Land; in actual fact and to all outward appearance one People. God decreed that they should become two Peoples, and so they did. Not that either moved out of their own territory, or away from the other. They abode each in their accustomed dwelling places.

Though a great schism had taken place, and a rival government had been set up, with a different form of worship, there was no movement whatever of the population, no transference of the Ten Tribes or any of them, to some region away from the Two Tribes. All the Tribes had been dwelling near each other in the Land, and after the legal separation they continued to dwell in the same relative positions for 250 years, till the captivity of Israel began. But though near neighbours throughout that time, they were all the while, in God's sight, as well as by form of Government, two peoples, not one. There were two separate governments, and administrations, and histories.

An Act of Reunion.

Here the representatives of the two kingdoms are once more in the Land. This implies their previous gathering in thither. After many centuries of disper-

sion, the scattered remnants of the people have been gradually brought back to their own Land, from various parts, and representing all the Tribes of Israel. They are again settled therein, and have been organized into a nation, with their own form of government, representative institutions, and all other machinery of political life.

But be they to all appearance ever so much like one nation outwardly, yet, though even dwelling together, they are still two, not one, in God's sight, and by God's act, His decree of separation having never been reversed. They may all be dwelling together and acting together; it may be difficult or impossible for most of them to trace their tribal descent, yet before God they are not one nation but two; He has not yet made them one again.

Now by this Act of Reunion the division is to be formally abolished, and the Two Peoples legally reunited for ever. There need be no more movement of population for the Reunion than there was for the Separation. Before this Act they might have been practically reunited and be dwelling together; but now they would be reunited by law, by due legal process; and however this might be brought about, it would be recognized as the good hand of God upon them, just as the Separation was declared to be His Chastisement.

How Passed?

How will this be carried out? In the constitution of the revived nation there must be a Representative Assembly with legislative powers. What if there be brought in and passed an Act, declaring that from henceforth, and notwithstanding many centuries of legal separation, they shall be one people, and that this long-standing Schism shall at last be healed; and what if the legal unity of the people were formally pro-

nounced by the Assembly, it may be amidst indescribable enthusiasm? All this might seem to be, as the Separation, a purely political act; yet it would be God that inclined their minds thereto, and that prepared the circumstances that enabled them to carry it out.

In Zechariah xii. repeated mention is made of the House of David. This may mean literally that a descendant of that royal house is again on his father's throne at Jerusalem, reigning over the re-constituted nation. If the Act were initiated by Judah, as being then in power in David's house—who in Rehoboam provoked the Schism—Judah would thereby "walk with," or "to Israel" (Jer. iii. 18).

England and Scotland.

The two countries, England and Scotland, geographic, ally one, existed before the days of Queen Anne; so also did the English and Scotch peoples, on opposite sides of the Border. But they were two separate peoples, till the Act of Union in the reign of Queen Anne, in 1707. That Act legally established the Union. Henceforth they became one people, and are one now. For this no movement or transference of populations was required, only an Act of Parliament.

National Life.

The closing verses of the chapter, xxxvii. 24–28, describe fully, by anticipation, their revived national life after this Reunion. They are to dwell in their Land for ever; David is to be their prince for ever; and God will set His Sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. All this will have a great effect on the other nations of the earth.

These matters are mentioned here by anticipation, to complete the history of the Reunion; but later on in

these chapters we find it all fulfilled. The establishment of the Sanctuary is not described till chapter xl., after the great Battle and the destruction of Gog's army, in chapters xxxviii-ix.

A Time of Trouble : xxxviii.

There has been described a revived national life ; a reunited people, once more settled in their own Land, with God's favour resting on them, and prosperity once more smiling around. But now are presented very different scenes. " It is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be delivered out of it."

Having regard to the position of the chapter in relation to what is before and after, and seeing the direct statements made therein, what is here foretold takes place after the people have been restored to their land and are settled therein, 8, 11 ; after the land had long lain waste, and the people had been widely scattered away from it ; but now they dwell securely in it, without any fortifications or means of defence. They have begun to enjoy prosperity, 12, and to accumulate property, but are apparently defenceless, dwelling in security. It is this that furnishes occasion for what is described.

A great expedition, under a leader known in this prophecy as Gog, comes from the north [1] with a great confederacy of peoples, against the Land of Israel, in which the people are now settled, and have begun to accumulate wealth. He sees their wealth, 11, 12 and defenceless condition, and disregarding the prophecies that might have warned him of his peril, he marks that people out for his certain prey. An evil thought comes into his mind, 10, to go up to this Land, to turn his

[1] As to the wide meaning of " the north," compare Ezekiel xxvi. 7.

hand against the people that dwell there, and to rob them of their property. He recks not that they are the people of the Lord, who has said, "Whoso toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." He comes into the Land itself, 8, upon the mountains. His prey seems within his grasp. Jerusalem is taken, Zechariah xiv. 1–3. But the Lord Himself appears, and overwhelms Gog and all his confederates with an utter destruction.

No doubt also, as Israel are the people of God, and through all the vicissitudes of their history are the strongest evidence of the truth of God's Word; this hater of God and God's people and God's truth is desirous of sweeping them away altogether.

Who is Gog?

Several clues are given here, and in Genesis x., and in other prophecies, to guide us to Gog's identity.

His habitation. He is "of the land of Magog" (xxxviii. 2). Magog is a son of Japheth (Gen. x. 2). His jurisdiction extends beyond his land of Magog; "prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal," or "Chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." These are two more of the sons of Japheth (Gen. x. 2).

His confederates. "Gomer and all his hordes." Gomer is the eldest son of Japheth (Gen. x. 2). "The house of Togarmah, in the uttermost parts of the north." Togarmah is a son of Gomer, and grandson of Japheth (Gen. x. 3).

Thus Gog is closely connected with Gomer, Magog, Tubal, and Meshech; that is, with the first generation from Japheth, son of Noah; four of Japheth's seven sons, besides his grandson Togarmah. Not his remote descendants, but his own sons. That must mean the greater part of the countries originally peopled by him, the majority of those descended from him. If only some distant descendant were mentioned, that would

mean only some small portion of his original regions or descendants. But here are named Japheth's own sons, and four out of the seven.

We must not be misled by the mere sound of these names, but observe their relations in Scripture ; remembering also that prophecy speaks not of one nation coming against Israel, but of many.

The descendants of Japheth occupied " the isles of the Gentiles " (Gen. x. 5), that is, the coastlands of the Mediterranean, in Europe and Asia Minor, whence they spread themselves over the whole Continent of Europe, and a considerable portion of Asia. It was from these very regions that the Goths, Vandals, and Huns came, who overturned the Western Roman Empire, settled down amongst its ruins, and founded the kingdoms that now appear as modern Europe.

Gog, then, is a European leader, whose habitation is there ; but with a confederacy also European, which must comprise a large portion of Europe, even assuming that Japheth's seven sons each peopled an equal area. What Power is there now in Europe that might be expected to do these great things, to have such influence over these kingdoms as to lead them in this confederacy ?

How Destroyed.

Another clue is supplied in the description of his destruction. This foe is destroyed, at the time of his assault upon God's ancient people, not by man, but by the Lord's own personal appearing and intervention, 22, 23. And though not named till xxxviii. 2, nor elsewhere mentioned by the name " Gog," yet he has been the subject of prophecy ; he is the same Power of whom, under other names, other of God's prophets will by that time have prophesied. In those prophecies he must appear under some other name or description.

We must take care, then, to identify him with the

Power described in other prophecies as being at the last destroyed by the personal appearing of our Lord. If in those prophecies we discern a great Power, the enemy of God's people, rising up against the Lord Himself, and heading a great confederacy of peoples, we may know assuredly that this is none other than the Gog of Ezekiel, whose daring and destruction are here so awfully described (see Dan. vii. 11 ; 2 Thess. ii. 8 ; Rev. xix. 19).

Gog enters the Land.

The time when this takes place is " after many days," " in the latter years " (Ezek. xxxviii. 8 ; Dan. xi. 40), " at the time of the end." The place to which he comes is " upon the mountains of Israel," " my land " (xxxx. 2, 16, 18). The condition of that land is, 8, 12, that it has long lain waste, but is now re-peopled. Its people have been gathered back out of the nations, and have begun to enjoy prosperity, and to accumulate property ; they again occupy their own country, and are cultivating their land, thinking themselves secure, though defenceless. The evil thought comes into Gog's mind, to go to that land, to that defenceless people, and prey upon them and spoil them (see Ps. lxxxiii.).

He has abundance of the sinews of war (Dan. xi. 43). His troops are " clothed in full armour " (Ezek. xxxviii. 4). The complete armour of the prophet's day would represent the latest developments of war material in the days of Gog's expedition.

Ham aids him.

Gog is aided against God's people, in their own land, by some of Ham's descendants (xxxviii. 4, 5), " Persia, Cush, and Put." Here are sons of Ham, brother of Japheth (Gen. x. 6) ; these occupy the lands where

Mohammedanism has sway. It is, in fact, a "Pan-Islamic" confederacy.

I lunched a little while ago with four men—experts in knowledge of Islam and of the Mohammedan field. One had been Lieutenant-Governor of a province of India; another was the greatest known traveller in Asia Minor, Sir William Ramsay; two others had visited Palestine and the East again and again, in connexion with the Palestine Exploration Fund. I asked them, "Is there, in your judgment, throughout the Mohammedan world an effective sense of unity? If the Sultan or the Sheikh-ul-Islam ordered a holy war against the Christian nations—is there in your judgment such a unity in spite of its sects; that Islam would rise as one body against the Christian nations and try its best to defeat them?" Every man answered "Yes."—Rev. G. A. Johnston Ross, M.A., in *Regions Beyond*, September, 1907.

The members of this vast army are thus first cousins, sons of Japheth and of his brother Ham. Why this immense display of force? Not because of the strength of the people attacked, for they are apparently helpless; but in order to overawe those who would come to their aid, for they have powerful sympathizers and friends.

Protests.

Though multitudes are with Gog in his impious undertaking, there are still some who not only do not join him, but who protest against his rapacity (xxxviii. 13); "Sheba and Dedan," Arabian names, on the East of the Red Sea, also representing the Indian population derived from them, the grandsons of Cush. Are not the "merchants of Tarshish," or of the Western coasts, at the present time in possession of the trade of India? Does not Britain cover the sea with her ships, laden with merchandise? Does she not possess a magnificent empire in the East, holding in subjection in India many millions of the descendants of Cush? Does she not respect the Bible as no other nation does, the Bible that contains these very prophecies? And is

she not now, whatever she may have been in the past, the firm friend of the people marked out by Gog as his prey? In what country are the people of Israel more safe, more free, more respected, than within British dominions? Any position, from Cabinet Minister downwards, is open to them, and has been filled by them. Moreover, what country can show such a splendid array of colonies, of "young lions," as she?

It would be in accordance with historical facts, and with the spirit of our nation, that England, with her Indian Empire and her colonies, should be the one to utter this protest. If this be the interpretation of the verse, it shows that England will be taking the right side in that great conflict; and at this every true patriot will rejoice.

The Invasion.

These protests, however, are of no avail to stay the designs of Gog and his hosts. The protests trouble him, yet he goes forth with great fury to destroy (Dan. xi. 44). He comes over the land like a cloud (Ezek. xxxviii. 15, 16); Jerusalem is besieged (Dan. xi. 45) and taken (Zech. xiv. 2). The siege is described with full detail; the city is in the very grasp of the enemy, and a division is actually sent into captivity, after the ransacking. So complete is the subjugation, that the enemy in perfect 'security shall portion out the spoil amongst the victorious hosts in the very midst of her.

The Lord Appears.

At this decisive moment the Great Deliverer appears, and destroys the invader (Ezek. xxxviii. 18–23; Joel iii. 16; Dan. xii. 1; 2 Thess. ii. 8; Rev. xix. 11–16). The Lord comes down on the same Mount of Olives whence He ascended into heaven. Micah's prophecy

had told with certainty where, at His first coming, the Christ was to be born (Matt. ii. 4–6); and the prophecy of Zechariah xiv. 3, 4, tells with equal certainty where He is to come the second time. But His second coming will be instantly known all over the world, as the lightning flash; that is, probably, by some form of electric communication, a "Lord's signal," perhaps by some perfected development of wireless telegraphy. He comes not alone (Zech. xiv. 5), but "all the holy ones" with Him. This is as old as the prophecy of Enoch, "The Lord cometh, with ten thousand of His saints."

The Mount of Olives cleaves in the midst, and removes north and south, leaving a great valley between. Here is a literal description of a great convulsion of Nature acknowledging the presence of the Deity, when the Redeemer first manifests Himself at Jerusalem.

Revelation xix. 19 shows the Beast, the kings, and their armies gathered together, but does not say where. Ezekiel and Zechariah tells us that the gathering is in the Land of Israel. Revelation tells that there are more than motives of plunder; it is "to make war against him that sat upon the horse," that is, against Christ Himself and His army. Psalm ii. 1–3 had its first fulfilment on the very spot (Acts iv. 27), and a Roman governor took part therein. Here is the complete fulfilment of that prophecy. At the same time, exactly consonant with Isaiah xxxiv. 5, 9, 10; Daniel vii. 11, there is fire on Magog, the judgment on the country whence come Gog and a part at least of his confederates. To this epoch belongs that magnificent song of victory (Isa. lxiii. See also Ps. lxxvi., cxxiv.)

An idea of the magnitude of the expedition and of the destruction may be gathered from the fact that birds and beasts are called to feast upon this great sacrifice. The words in Ezekiel xxxix. 17–20 and Revelation xix.

17, 18, are almost the same; but in Ezekiel the place is definitely stated, "a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel." "Beasts of the field" are called, as well as birds of prey. Also it is the Lord's own act, "*My* sacrifice . . . which *I* have sacrificed for you." The burning of Gog's weapons and the burial of his army are also described, in order to impress us with a vast idea of the multitudes overthrown by the Divine Vengeance in their attack upon God's ancient People and their Land and City. These ancient weapons represent modern war material as it will be at the period of Gog's invasion.

The manner of the destruction is described (Zech. xiv. 12, 13, and Ezek. xxxviii. 21, 22). There is a consuming plague, panic and confusion, mutual slaughter, pestilence, hailstones, fire and brimstone (see Luke xix. 27).

Surprise at the Result.

The result of this siege of Jerusalem is to be astonishing and confounding, not only to the peoples who take part in it, but to other nations also. To their amazement, Judah and Jerusalem, so weak, obtain deliverance, and the hosts of their adversaries are utterly destroyed (Zech. xii. 1–8). Henceforth there is an entire change of opinion on the part of Israel themselves, and also of the nations of the earth. They now understand, as they never did before, the long course of God's dealings with His own people, His goodness and His severity (Ps. cxxvi.).

The House of David.

In Zechariah xii. 7, 8, 10, 12, xiii. 1, repeated mention is made of the House of David; and from Ezekiel xliii. 7, it appears that there are to be Princes over the re-

stored People of Israel. This seems to show that the royal House of David is not extinct among the Jews, and that descendants of his will be found among those settled at Jerusalem, before the troubles of these times. If it be so, and with God all things are possible, what more natural than that descendants of their own ancient line of kings should again be occupying the position that belongs to them, by God's gift, and by long-established right? God can make the genealogy clear, if it so please Him.

A great Mourning in the Land.

The prophet Zechariah informs us that at this time there is to be a great mourning in Jerusalem and in the land (Zech. xii. 10–12); like that for the loss of their king Josiah, who fell in the plain of Megiddo, when all Judah lamented his untimely fate (2 Chron. xxxv. 24, 25).

This is strange. A great and wonderful national deliverance has been wrought, yet it is followed by a time of universal mourning. Two families are singled out, the kingly and the priestly, as examples of the rest (Zech. xii. 12–14). In each case, to show the pervading character of the grief, the family or tribe is first described by its general and inclusive name, and then one branch of it is mentioned, to show that to every part and division the widespread mourning shall extend.

The sorrow is universal, but also individual; the whole land, and family by family; the royal family, in the direct line of its kings, and in a branch from Nathan, a son of David, and whole brother of Solomon (1 Chron. iii. 5), which was continued on in private life, yet was in the ancestral line of our Lord (Luke iii. 31). In like way the main priestly family from Levi, and a subordinate line from a grandson of Levi, the family of Shimei

(Num. iii. 21); and all the remaining families, each with their separate sorrow.

Why all this? They "shall look unto Me whom they have pierced." Then He has appeared. The Lord whom long ago they rejected and crucified, has come again, and shows Himself to the very people who pierced Him. They shall look. This plainly marks the first recognition, by the rulers and inhabitants of Jerusalem, of Jesus whom they crucified. The House of David recognize their own royal relative, their bone and their flesh; and the people recognize in Him their true Messiah.

Recognition of the Messiah.

It seems clear, then, that until this time the people established in the Land have not recognized their true Messiah; that though they may have been restored in a spirit of submission to God's law, as under the Old Covenant, yet, till now, they do not know their Deliverer to be the same whom their rulers crucified and slew. They are not, as to the main body of them, converted to the Christian faith, but are still Jews, and the mistaken followers of Moses, with the veil on their hearts.

But now is the time of their obtaining mercy. This is the result of the outpouring of God's Spirit upon them, bringing them to a sense of sin, and desire for cleansing. The restoration of Israel appears to be utterly incomplete before the Advent, for some of its principal stages, as is clearly stated in Scripture, will follow, and not precede, that event.

The Fountain Opened.

"*In that day*" (Zech. xiii. 1), a fountain will be opened for sin. This refers to the time when all are mourning for their sin; and it is provided for the House

of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. No doubt it is the same precious remedy for sin that we ourselves trust in ; there is indeed no other ; but this is something specially for them, and for the special guilt of having rejected Him. But for them, too, and for their sin, the same remedy avails.

No More Superstition.

Not only is there to be pardon, but also (Zech. xiii. 2–6) henceforth there is to be purity of worship and of teaching. Idolatry and superstition shall be banished and forgotten. No false doctrine will be tolerated in the Land. Against a false teacher even the hands of his nearest relatives and friends will be lifted up.

The Mountain of the Lord's House.

The portion of Ezekiel's prophecies comprised in chapters xl.–xlviii. is separated by an interval of twelve or thirteen years from those we have been considering. It is a picture of the religious and civil life of the People in their final condition of redemption and felicity during the Millennial Dispensation. All is described, as seen by Ezekiel in Vision, with the plainest literalness, and ought to be so understood, whatever further spiritual meanings may be drawn therefrom. The literal first, whether there be allegory in it or not.

There is seen the Mountain of the Lord's House ; not a city, but like one in size and appearance ; a Temple and its courts, surrounded by massive walls. In the New Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 3, 22), after the Millennium, there is no Temple. It is to be noticed also (Ezek. xli. 3), that though Ezekiel, being a priest, enters the Holy Place along with his guide, he refrains from entering the Most Holy Place, which the angel alone enters.

The measurements of the House and Courts are all

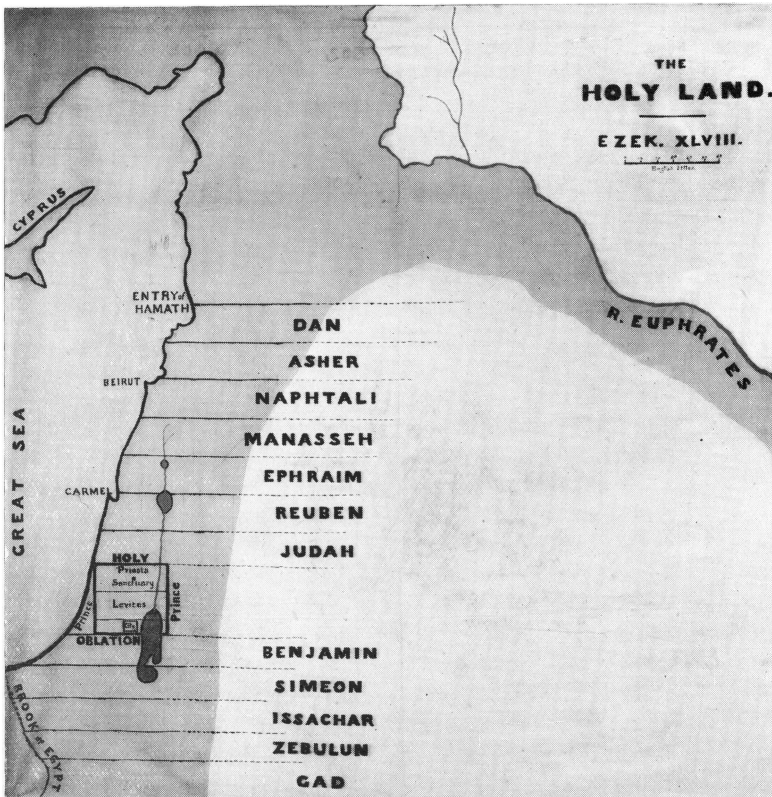
given, so that it is possible to draw the architectural plans from them, as is done in the *Speaker's Commentary*. Regulations are laid down for the Prince and his sons, the Levites, the Priests, the Working days and Sabbath, and the Sacrifices. These no doubt are retrospective and commemorative, pointing back to the One Sacrifice on the cross, as of old they pointed forward. Sin still exists (Ezek. xlv. 19, 20). It must be remembered that this is done only at that one Temple, by Priests and Levites of Israel, and by God's ordinance; moreover, that the Priests of this temple have to be provided for, and they will live of these Sacrifices.

Physical Changes.

The watershed and water supply of the country are all changed (Zech. xiv. 8–11). From Jerusalem—the renewed city—go forth two rivers, that towards the East through the great valley of verse 4. From the Lord's House, one great river (Ezek. xlvii.).

The Land is re-divided among the Twelve Tribes (Ezek. xlvii. 13–xlviii.; see Matt. xix. 28). The children of Leah and Rachel occupy the centre, and the sons of the handmaids are placed at the extremities. The two halves of Manasseh are now reunited. The Tribe-names may mean that the Land is divided into counties or provinces, each called after the old names of the Tribes. In the original division of the Land the larger Tribes had the larger areas, the allotment being according to population; but now the areas are marked off by parallel lines at equal distances, running from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates.

The City (xlv. 6) has twelve gates, suburbs, and market gardens (xlviii. 15, 18, 19); and it would seem that City and suburbs cover a space forty miles by eight. Those who live in the city live from the city's domain. Outside the great rectangle of "The Offering"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HOLY LAND.
EZEK. XLVIII.
CYPRUS
ENTRY of HAMATH
DAN
ASHER
BEIRUT
NAPHTALI
MANASSEH
R. EUPHRATES
GREAT SEA
EPHRAIM
CARMEL
REUBEN
JUDAH
HOLY
Priests
Sanctuary
Levites
City
Prince
Prince
OBLATION
BENJAMIN
SIMEON
ISSACHAR
ZEBULUN
GAD

and the City are the lands belonging to the Prince (xlviii. 21, 22), who is a married man with family.

Peoples go up to Worship.

The deliverance of Israel and the judgments on their enemies are to have a converting influence on the remainder of the Gentiles, who shall become worshippers of Jehovah, and go up—by their ambassadors or representatives—every year to keep the Feast of Tabernacles at Jerusalem, the last and greatest festival of the Jewish year, gathering up into itself the year's worship, and at the same time typifying the ingathering of all nations into the Church of God. During the Millennial reign there will still be sin, in the way of possible rebellion, insubordination, or contempt of the Lord God, on the part of certain " families " of the earth, and punishment will be meted out accordingly. But the promises to Abraham and to his seed, and to the peoples of the earth through him, will now receive their abundant accomplishment.

XXVI

SATAN BOUND. THE MILLENNIUM. THE ETERNAL REIGN.

REV. xx–xxii.

THIS Paper consists of detached notes on some of the remaining portions of the Book of Revelation.

Binding of Satan: Rev. xx. 1-3.

The Beast, the False Prophet, and the Dragon remained on the scene throughout. The first two have received their doom, now the Dragon also. Here he is described, not merely as the actuating spirit of Heathen Rome, with seven heads and ten horns, but as the Devil himself, apart from any agency or creature of his own. "*The old serpent . . . Devil . . . Satan.*" He who had given his might and his throne and great power to the Beast; he whose instruments the other enemies were. "*Old*"; the same that from the beginning to the end had been the spirit ruling in the hearts and polities of the children of disobedience. In the days of the Apostles this great enemy was free and unchained, and went about in the earth as a roaring lion. No time can be mentioned since the rise of the Gospel, which does not show that this mighty deceiver was still busily at work in the earth.

Now he is cast into "*the abyss,*" whence he himself

had called forth the Beast and the smoke of the Fifth Trumpet. Compare 1 Peter ii. 4. "*Sealed.*" Compare the sealing over Daniel in the lion's den, and over our Lord's body in the tomb. The removal of Satanic temptation does not mean freedom from sin, but it naturally implies the absence of all confederacies of evil. The cohesion of wickedness is then withdrawn. Without the secret arts of this mighty builder, the separate grains of ungodliness do not cohere and combine together. Yet man will still have his own evil heart of unbelief to contend against, and will still be heir of a fallen nature.

The Millennial Reign: Rev. xx. 4.

Comparatively little detail is given here, or indeed in the New Testament generally, as to the Millennial Reign. For two reasons: (1) Its glories and blessings have already been fully developed in the Old Testament. What was wanted in the last Prophecy therefore was not details, but a clear indication of its chronological position in relation on the one hand to the "times of the Gentiles," and on the other to the eternal state. (2) By the law of prophetical perspective, the description of the far distant Millennium is short as compared with the description of previous events closer at hand.

St. John saw "thrones" of royalty and judgment. It is a reign, and this implies subjects, people to be reigned over, on this earth, in the midst of "the nations." In the Parable of the Pounds, the Nobleman comes back to whence he went away, and there rewards his faithful servants by authority over cities. This implies continuance of political and social existence and organization. They who sit upon the thrones are the Apostles (Matt. xix. 28), and the risen saints (Dan. vii. 22; 1 Cor. vi. 3).

The Two Resurrections: Rev. xx. 4-6.

Of these saints it is said, verse 4, "*They lived*," being now equal to the Angels, "*and reigned . . . a thousand years*," the same years as those of Satan's incarceration.

Of the rest it is said, verse 5, "*The rest . . . lived not until the thousand years . . . finished.*" This is to be fulfilled in the general uprising of the dead to judgment before the Great White Throne, as distinguished from the martyrs and confessors raised before the Millennium to live and reign with Christ.

Two Classes of Risen Saints.

Two classes of Christ's saints are noticed by St. John as especially conspicuous and honourably distinguished amid the royal company. They are not the only beings present, but occupy a high and honourable place among them. They particularly arrested St. John's regard, and he had particular reasons for recording them. Whom indeed might we expect to see prominent among the saints of the first resurrection, if not the noble army of martyrs?

The present Vision is that of a ceremony of inauguration, a kind of coronation scene, the subject being the enthronement of the saints of Christ's Millennial Reign. As in a picture of a coronation ceremony the artist would fill his foreground with portraits of the most distinguished personages, or as the reporter of such a scene would say, "We saw there present such and such persons," mentioning those of rank and position; so St. John, in the vision of this coronation scene, "saw" the martyrs enthroned, not implying that only these were there, but simply that they were conspicuous in the foreground, and especially engaged his attention. We who live in an age of comparatively comfortable Christianity cannot grudge the martyrs a conspicuous position

in the kingdom. We can easily imagine how such a Vision must have comforted St. John and others who had to endure the bitter hatred of the enemies of Christ.

"*The souls.*" This designates generally their state just previous, and specially identified some of the enthroned ones with the "souls" St. John had seen long before under the Altar, the victims of Rome Pagan. It no more indicates that they were still incorporeal souls than "the dead" of verse 12 implies that they were still dead men at the time of standing before the throne. Compare the statement in the Gospel, "the dead man sat up."

Martyrs and Confessors.

Beheading was a usual mode of putting to death in the Pagan times in which St. John lived, and an axe was the familiar Roman emblem of capital punishment. The martyrs are so prominently mentioned, to connect this with the vision of the souls under the altar, in the Fifth Seal. To those souls slain by Pagan Rome, an avenging was promised. They had been told to wait till another series of martyrs, those to be slain under Papal Rome, should have been added to them.

Accordingly St. John sees, in addition to those, others also—"*and such as worshipped not*"—who had not worshipped, and did not at the time of judgment worship, the Beast and his Image. These are the martyrs and confessors under Papal Rome, who had had a similar trial of faith and patience, and a similar resting on the promises. "Such" embraces all of them. Their conflict, the conflict of all the enthroned that had not worshipped the Beast, must have preceded the thousand years' reign. Here it was strikingly set forth that though long delayed, the promise had not been forgotten.

These are described not by the manner of their death,

for they died in many ways; but by the character of their protest, and by their refusing worship, allegiance, or obedience to the Power that claimed such blasphemous authority.

The two companies are now combined. These saints, this noble army of martyrs, slain by Rome at different periods of her history, live and reign with Christ a thousand years. They are His assessors in reigning and in judgment. The present Vision represents the answer to the longings, and the time of the reward, of the souls seen in vision under the Fifth Seal.

A Thousand Years.

Are they literal or mystical? The Millennium is not included in the time of waiting for the Lord to which the year-day principle applies. The future, which for the sake of the early Church required to be hidden under a veil of mystery, was only the future of this dispensation. But after the return of the Lord, the same concealment was not requisite, as regards subsequent events and their duration. There is found an air of mystery about the times and seasons mentioned prior to the Advent Vision, and an absence of it after. The real length of this age of sin and suffering was to be hidden for a time, but there is no need to hide the real length of the blessed age of purity, peace and joy that is to succeed it.

The coming kingdom is to be divided chronologically into two parts: a first or opening section, to last for a thousand years, which accordingly is called the Millennium; and a second, or main portion, which is to last for ever, and which is therefore called the Eternal kingdom. The one is the brief introduction to the other. The Millennium is a transition state from the present dispensation since the creation of man, and the everlasting reign after the Great Judgment.

Character of the Millennial Reign.

The Millennial Reign of Christ is an introductory time of putting down all rule and authority and power, of bringing everything into subjection to Divine Authority, of giving men one last supreme season of probation under the righteous governing of Christ Himself. It is the final stage in the work of redemption, prior to the introduction of its eternal results. It closes by the destruction of the last enemy, death, together with the final expulsion and punishment of its author; and the eternal kingdom dates from this close and completion of the redeeming work of Christ.

To mankind at large the Millennial Reign is indeed the Sabbath of its long week of sin and sorrow, toil and suffering, a bright earnest of the full blessedness which awaits it in the "new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Nevertheless it is widely different from that perfected condition; for not until it is over, not until after the final judgment of the wicked, and the destruction of Satan and of death, is it said of the state of things that is to succeed the Millennium and to last for ever, that "death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away," and all things are made new.

Even the glorious Millennial Reign is closed by a fresh outbreak of rebellious apostasy, bringing down fresh judgments and destructions; but from the new heavens and new earth such experiences are for ever excluded. It is not only introduced by an era of judgment (Rev. xix. 19–23), but, like all previous dispensations, it closes with a similar era (Rev. xx. 7–15). The opening era witnesses the destruction of the Roman Beast, with his False Prophet, and worshippers, and of the kings of the earth and their armies; together with the binding of Satan for a thousand years. The closing era witnesses the final doom of Satan and of the rebel hosts gathered

through his deceptions; as well as the destruction of the last enemy, Death and Hades being cast into the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 10, 13).

Then the Eternal Kingdom.

Then the work of redeeming the race of the First Adam having been fully accomplished by the Second Adam, the Woman's Seed having crushed the Serpent's head, the Mediatorial Kingdom of Christ passes into His eternal Kingdom (1 Cor. xv. 24–27). As Mediator He delivers up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; as God and man He continues to reign for ever and ever, for the eternal throne is the throne "of God and of the Lamb." The Kingdom of the Son of Man and of His Saints, which is to succeed that of Rome, is an everlasting Kingdom, never to be succeeded by another; it is the last form of government which this earth is to know. The Millennium is only the first thousand years of this never-ending reign. It is the last of a long series of divine tests by which man in the flesh has been proved by God.

Loosing of Satan: Gog and Magog: Rev. xx. 7–10.

Satan is now loosed for a little time, in order to seal his condemnation. After each successive rebellion against God, he falls to a lower depth. He comes forth "to deceive the nations." From the first, man has been the object of his crafts and assaults; so no sooner is he again released than he again directs his schemes against man, and, strange to say, succeeds only too well. He is unchanged, and man's heart is still the same.

What a humbling display of man's weakness and readiness to fall! Here are vast multitudes of people, who for many generations have been enjoying the direct rule and governance of the King of Righteousness, the

Lord Jesus Christ; who have been basking all these long years in the full sunshine of His light and truth and grace. Yet no sooner has Satan the opportunity of again getting at them and tempting them, than they at once succumb, and let themselves be led by that arch-deceiver against their rightful Lord and His saints. How human nature needs a total renewal, with new bodies, free from the very taint of sin!

To Deceive the Nations.

But not the whole human race then existent, for there are "holy ones," and a beloved city. There has been in existence all through the Millennial Reign a "camp of the saints" and a beloved city which stands on this earth, where the attacking hosts can "go up" to it. It is not the heavenly Jerusalem of the new state of things, which comes down from heaven; it must be an earthly city, for it is compassed about by men from all parts of the earth (see Ezek. xlviii.), from the "corners," that is, the extremities, the places furthest removed from, and least controlled by, the good influences that have emanated from the Holy City.

That City has been the headquarters of the holy government of the world, for against it are Satan's final assaults directed, and hither he leads the hosts of mankind whom once more he has succeeded in deceiving. Once again he seeks to dispossess the rightful Lord, and to reign himself over the world of which under a former dispensation he was the Prince.

During the binding of Satan these nations on earth, besides the saints reigning with Christ, have been quiet and willing subjects of the kingdom; but on his being let loose, they are again subjected to his temptations, which stir them up into rebellion against God.

Gog and Magog.

During the Millennium there have been nations in the four corners of the earth, numerous and populous as the sand of the sea; now they are called Gog and Magog. But these are not the same as those in Ezekiel xxxviii., for what is spoken of there takes place before the Millennium and the personal appearing of the Lord, whereas here it is after the Millennium. This new confederacy, however, much more numerous than the old one, has the same end in view—the destruction of God's people. No doubt, then, these new enemies adopt the old names, as expressing their sympathy with their predecessors, and their identity of aim.

How long is the "little time" (Rev. xx. 3)? To organize this mighty revolt, to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth, to gather them together to battle in numbers as the sand of the sea, to mobilize such vast armies, and to conduct them to the siege of the beloved city, and to carry on the siege itself—all this, according to our present notions and experience, must surely take up a considerable time.

Fire from Heaven: Rev. xx. 9.

Compare 2 Peter iii. 8–13. In verse 10 it is to be observed that it is not "the Lord," but the "day of the Lord," that will come as a thief. That "day" will suddenly and unexpectedly begin, at His coming. But verse 8 states that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years." The "day" of the Lord will include all the Millennium. A day has a dawn, a noon, an evening. In the course of that "day," at its close, great convulsions of Nature take place, "The heavens shall pass away . . . the earth . . . shall be burned up," as is here described. By this fire, however, the earth is not annihilated but purified. Then follows 2 Peter iii. 13, the new state of things. The passage admits, and

even seems to require, the survival of a portion of the human race after the Judgment, seeing that it refers to the Flood as to a parallel case.

There is therefore no contradiction between 2 Peter and Revelation. Expand the one passage to admit what is added by the other, and all harmonizes into one complete picture.

The Beast and the False Prophet: Rev. xx. 10.

See Revelation xix. 20. At the same crisis at which the Beast and the False Prophet receive their doom, the power of Satan is to be broken, and kept in restraint during the Millennial Reign of Christ, as is symbolized by the binding and casting into the abyss. At the end of the Millennium he is permitted for a time to resume his evil work, and then at last his power is crushed for ever, and the final doom is pronounced upon him, the same that was pronounced upon the Beast and the False Prophet. The mention of these two symbolical personifications still being in the lake of fire shows that the sentence pronounced on them at the beginning of Christ's Millennial Reign still remains in force at the end of it, and will never be repealed. The sentence of the "Lake of fire" is a final one, not only upon Satan, but also upon Death and Hades, and upon the lost (ver. 15). They are tormented "day and night for ever"; the same strong phrase as in Revelation xix. 4, for the smoke of the fire of Babylon.

The Great White Throne: Rev. xx. 11-15.

The throne is "great," in contrast with the thrones of the Millennial Reign, and as befitting the Majesty of Him that sat upon it; "white," as emblematic of His purity and holiness. The old heaven and earth flee away before His face, to make room for the new heaven and earth of Revelation xxi. 1.

The Second Resurrection (Rev. xx. 12) is not of the wicked only, but also of all the righteous, who have died during the Millennial age. Those righteous who had died before the Millennium rose at the Second Advent, and reigned with Christ throughout the Millennium.

"Death" (ver. 14) may be regarded as the slayer and custodian of the bodies, and "Hades" as the custodian of the souls, of the departed; and as they are both represented as yielding up those in their keeping, it is here indicated that there is to be after the Millennium a general resurrection, a rising again of the bodies of all, righteous and wicked, who will then be judged.

New Heavens and new Earth: Rev. xxi. 1.

The old heaven and earth had fled away before the face of Him that sat upon the Throne. The "new heavens" may even be literally understood as follows:—

Our annual progress through space, though expressed by 150,000,000 miles, would appear from the nearest fixed star little more than one-third of a second of space. We know not how long our race may exist in this world; but if it be destined to outlive the completion of this vast course, strange and unimagined glories will be revealed to future generations. The heavens of our time will wax old and disappear ("are passed away," left behind, in our course through space); new constellations, new suns and systems will advance, open out their splendours, and fill the sky with their glory, then recede (*Bible Teachings in Nature, The Pleiades*, Rev. Hugh Macmillan).

The Sea no More.

If this referred to events at the opening of the Millennium, it might possibly mean that what was known as "the sea" of the ancient world, i.e. the Mediterranean, had disappeared. By the convulsions at the beginning of the Millennium it might have had its bed raised, and

have become dry land. But this seems to mean something much greater, connected as it is with a new heaven and a new earth, and following after the action of fire from heaven. It may mean a redistribution of the oxygen and hydrogen now combined in such abundance in the waters of the sea. This will be accounted for by the renovation by fire (2 Pet. iii. 10). . . . The former sea as well as the former heaven and earth had passed away. Evidently the same sea is spoken of that was before described as yielding up the dead that were in it.

The New Jerusalem : Rev. xxi. 9.

St. John had been shown the Harlot ; now he is shown the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. This Vial-Angel is probably the Seventh, and the reason for these things being shown by one of the Vial Angels is to mark that the things shown were to be part of the Seventh Trumpet period, the consequence or sequel of these Vial outpourings.

" *The names of the twelve tribes* " on the City gates. This decides the Christian meaning of these Jewish symbols. The names of the Twelve Tribes are on the gates of the New Jerusalem ; and as through these gates so inscribed all the redeemed will go in and out, so, as belonging to these Twelve Tribes, will all the redeemed be reckoned, whether they were while on earth Jews or Gentiles. The names of the Apostles are on the foundations ; on the gates, which are built after the foundations, are the names of the Twelve Tribes. This gives the tribes a Christian meaning.

The " twelve Apostles of the Lamb " in the figurative language of St. John represent the Apostolate, perhaps the general body of Christian pastors, as the elect of the twelve tribes represent the elect of Christendom (Bishop Lightfoot: *Galat.* p. 95).

There will be an earthly Jerusalem, the Mother Church of a Christianized universe; upon or over which the glory of the New Jerusalem is to rest, as Jehovah's pillar of fire on the Tabernacle in the wilderness. It is the meeting-point of earth and heaven. It belongs to New Testament times, for on its foundations are the names of the twelve Apostles; but it includes Old Testament saints, for on its gates are the names of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

Cube, or Pyramid? Rev. xxi. 16.

The cubic form of the New Jerusalem is beautifully apt and significant. It is made up of the successive generations of the 144,000 of Christ's spiritual Israel, "the called and chosen and faithful," now in the resurrection state glorified as "the Sons of God"; perfect, according to the Redeemer's intercessory prayer, in number and unity as well as in glory; Augustine's "City of God" now at length made complete; the Jerusalem above, the mother of us all (see Rev. iii. 12). As the Holy of Holies, in the Tabernacle and the Temple, was a cube, the meaning here is that the whole city is henceforth the same as was the Holy of Holies—the place of the immediate manifestation of God. This is the reason that St. John "saw no temple therein"; it is itself, taken as a whole, the perfect temple.

Another explanation is, that the City includes the hill or rock on which it was placed, and which may be imagined as descending with it. Thus is formed the cube described. This recalls somewhat the form of the earthly Jerusalem on its escarpment above the Valley of the Kedron.

The pyramidal form will also meet the requirements of the text as to equal length, breadth and height, and agrees better with our architectural ideas of the shape and appearance of a city set on a hill. See Ruskin,

Seven Lamps of Architecture, Power, § VI, as to the pyramidal shape and its impression.

God with Men. No Temple. Rev. xxi. 3, 22.

The presence of God Himself, without the need of a Mediator with the children of men, can only be when the Mediator has fulfilled His office, and when Death, the last enemy, is destroyed.

Verse 4. "*Death . . . no more, neither mourning . . . nor pain.*" Then there have been these throughout the Millennium up to this time. Not till after the Judgment of the Great White Throne are Death and Hades cast into the Lake of Fire.

Verse 24. "*The nations shall walk*" . . . "*and the kings.*" These nations and kings must be distinct from the celestial Bride, though brought into close and blessed relationship to her. They are some of the subjects over whom the saints reign for ever and ever. The eternal kingdom of God will be something widely different from the vague heaven of popular theology; it is to be a kingdom distinctly connected with the globe on which we live.

Verse 27. ". . . *Anything unclean.*" . . . Do such still exist on the earth? Compare Revelation xxii. 15. ". . . *Without are the dogs. . . .*" This warning is given in St. John's time, and applies all through the succeeding centuries, not to the Millennial Age alone.

Words Faithful and True: Rev. xxi. 5; xxii. 6.

The Vision is at an end. It is followed up naturally by the attestations of that which has been shown, and of the Angel's mission. The Angel solemnly affirms the reality of his own teaching, and of his own commission. As he mentions that the things "must shortly come to pass," the voice of Jesus Himself breaks in to affirm it

again with a Benediction, and to ratify the teaching of the Book that contains the record of these wonders.

Revelation xxii. 8. St. John, who has to attach as it were his own signature to his work, does it in words which almost seem the assurance to himself of his own identity, in presence of all that he has been shown. He now gives to his work the authority of his name, and attests by a solemn assertion the reality of the revelation. It was not a mere allegory, meditation, or dissertation of his own concerning divine things; not a mere digest of earlier prophecies, with interpretations and applications of his own; but the record of things actually seen and heard, in the Visions of God, and from the voice of Angels, and of One greater than the angels.

Christ's Benediction upon His Book having been received, there seemed to St. John nothing left but to take an adoring farewell of his Angel guide. Unable to restrain his emotion, even this second time, towards the heavenly messenger who had taught him a whole revelation, he "fell down to worship" the Angel, but once again the Angel forbids it. It is false worship to adore the purest, holiest, wisest of creatures. Their part is still service; adoration is for God alone.

John is told, "Seal not up the words . . ."; the opposite to what Daniel was bidden, "Seal the book. . . ." This witnesses to the finality of the revelation now completed.

"He that is Unrighteous . . ." Rev. xxii. 11.

This is a solemn statement of the responsibility of man, a solemn lesson as to the eventual stereotyping of human character. There comes a time, there will come a time to each, when whatever we are, that we shall be; when the seal of permanence will be set upon the spiritual condition; when the unjust man shall be unjust for

ever, and the righteous man shall be for ever righteous. It is a declaration of the ever terrible truth—that men are building up their destiny by the actions and habits of their present lives. Change while there is time.

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