



CITY OF VICTORIA, VANCOUVER ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

IV.—THE THIRD MESSAGE.

"And to the Angel of the Church in Pergamos write."—Rev. ii. 12.

PERGAMOS was a well-known city of ancient times. It was situated about sixty-four miles north of Smyrna, the city to which the message we last considered was sent. It was the capital city of Mysia, and was noted for a splendid library which had been founded there.

We have not space, however, to say much about the city, except what is laid before us by our subject in this third message which was sent to the Churches of Asia. The first was sent to Ephesus, the second to Smyrna and the third to Pergamos.

Whatever the magnificence or political power of Pergamos may have been, it certainly seems to have been a city noted for its wickedness. It is here called the seat or throne of Satan, and many learned treatises have been written to shew what this means. After reading much on the subject we may conclude that for some reason or other, unknown to us Pergamos was a very wicked city. It had in it some insidious power of temptation. There was an air of abandonment about the place which made it very hard for even members of the Christian Church to live the lives of purity which their holy religion, with unflinching voice, enjoined upon them.

We get a hint of the nature of the temptations in Pergamos from the reference made to Balaam. The Saviour in his message to the Church says: "I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam." And in order to know what grounds we are standing upon in reference to this matter, it will be necessary to have clearly before us what the exact sin of Balaam was. It is referred to here in such a way as to shew the nature of it. He is accused of having taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, and this took two forms; first, it caused them to eat things sacrificed unto idols; and second, it caused them to commit fornication.

There have been few worse men in the world than Balaam. True, he was an extraordinary man, and