

man's hatred was of a character, content to move at a tardy pace, provided success should ultimately attend his efforts, hence he spent one twelve-month (ch. iii. 7.) in casting lots, with a view to secure a propitious day; at the expiration of that period, like Satan at the ear of Eve, he broached his counsels to the king; with such apparent success did he cajole the monarch that the ten thousand talents with which he was willing to reward the executioners, were returned to him, and "*the people (given) also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee* (v. 11.); these Israelitish sheep (apparently without a shepherd) were scattered over provinces so numerous and vast, that another twelve months must elapse before the purposed slaughter could be executed; "the king's scribes were called *on the thirteenth day of the first month*" at the bidding of Haman, and the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, *on the thirteenth of the twelfth month*, etc." The narrative-comment on the transaction is-- "The king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan bewailed it," (v. 15). What more, from Haman's point of view, could be desired? for he knew not that "He who keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps," he could not have imagined that the labor he bestowed in selecting the most favorable day on which to perpetrate his contemplated massacre, was itself a means in the hands of an invisible ruler, of frustrating the project. Mr. Hogg briefly commented on the hackneyed objection to the book of Esther, that the name of God does not occur in it, and observed that the book is replete with evidence of the providential action of the Almighty; in illustration of this, he inquired, what or rather who it was that brought about the circumstances recorded in the words, "On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of

records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the king said, what honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants who ministered to him, 'There is nothing done for him.' The preacher proceeded to enlarge on that prerogative of the Almighty which all history illustrates, of causing "the wrath of man to praise Him," and commented on the vast issues which were involved in the preservation of the chosen people, the progenitors of the Messiah. The second division of this discourse related to the fact that God habitually overthrows transgressors in the ruin of their own schemes; of this, from the building of Babel onwards, sacred and secular history are alike redundant. Supreme among the illustrations of this verity stands that transcendent act by which death, and he who had the power of it, were vanquished by Him who voluntarily tasted it, (Heb. ii. 14). A third consideration in connection with this subject is the interesting fact that the Almighty characteristically accomplishes his purposes by trivial means; the sleeplessness of the king, and the reading of the chronicles of the Persian kingdom in the present instance; the flies, frogs, lice, and locusts of Egypt, the stone of David's sling, the dream of Joseph, and the finding of Moses, all serve as illustrations of this principle; in modern days the accidental firing of a musket acted as the match to the powder of the French revolution, and of the first shot fired by Great Britain at the forts of Alexandria, it will be difficult at the present moment to fortel the result. From these and similar illustrations of the Almighty's mode of accomplishing great ends, the reverend gentleman argued that He can, in his own time, reverse the moral order of the world; he