

THE
Presbyterian Magazine.

VOL. 1.

SEPTEMBER, 1843.

No. 9.

Remarks on Isaiah, Chapter xviii.

REV. SIR :—

I send you the following extract from the dissertations of Bishop Horsley, which appears to be one of the best expositions of this difficult chapter extant. If you could find room for it in "The Presbyterian Magazine" perhaps you might oblige others as well as

Yours, &c.

J. D.

It has been assumed by most interpreters, 1st. That the principal matter of this prophecy is a woe or judgment : 2nd. That the object of this woe is the land of Egypt itself or some of the contiguous countries : 3rd. That the time of the execution of the judgment was at hand, when the prophecy was delivered.

I set out with considering every one of these assumptions as doubtful ; and the conclusion to which my investigations bring me, is, that every one of them is false. First, the Prophecy indeed predicts some woeful judgment. But the principal matter of the prophecy is not judgment but mercy ; a gracious promise of the final restoration of the Israelites. Secondly, the prophecy has no respect to Egypt, or any of the contiguous countries. What has been applied to Egypt is a description of some people or another destined to be principal instruments in the hand of Providence, in the great work of the settlement of the Jews in the Holy Land ; — a description of that people by characters by which they will be evidently known when the time arrives. Thirdly, the time for the completion of the prophecy was evidently remote, when it was delivered, and is yet future.

Ver. 1. Ho land ! many interpreters render the exclamation by "Woe to."—But this particle is not here necessarily comminatory. Sometimes it is an exclamation of surprise ; and very often it simply calls persons at a distance : and so it is to be taken here.

"*Shadowing with wings.*" The shadow of wings is a very usual image in the prophetic language for the protection afforded by the stronger to the weaker.—God's protection of his servants is described by their being safe under the shadow of his wings. And in this passage the broad shadowing wings may be intended to characterise some great people who