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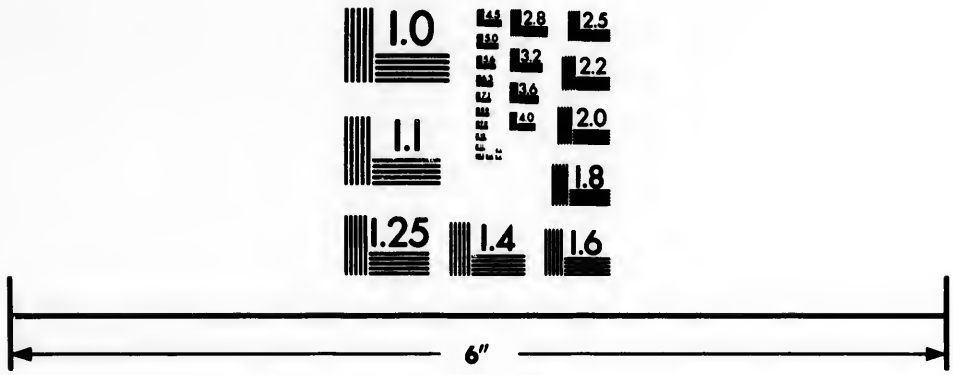

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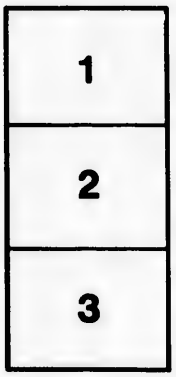

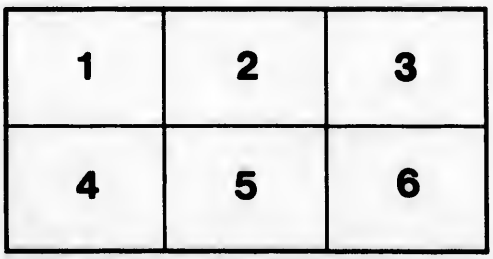

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APOCALYPTIC SKETCHES,

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OF

THE VIEWS OF THE MOST EMINENT WRITERS UPON

THE PROPHECIES

OF

REVELATION, DANIEL, ISAIAH, &c.,

RESPECTING

THE SECOND COMING

OF

Our Lord

WITH ALL HIS SAINTS AT THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. xx. 6.

First Canadian Edition.

GALT:
PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM MARCH,
AND FOR SALE BY
R. & A. MILLER, 87 YONGE STREET, TORONTO.
1860

CONTENTS.

PREFACE TO THIS EDITION.

This condensed, but comprehensive, work was first published in London, in 1829.

In a comparative small compass it contains the substance of the large and expensive works of Fleming, Jones, Frere, Dr. Cumming, Elliott, and other writers on Prophecy.

The work had a great circulation in England and Scotland, but is supposed to be now out of print, which has induced the Editor and Publisher of this Edition to lay it again before the public in a cheap and popular form.

What will render this work of great interest to the Religious Public of the present day is the fact, that much which necessarily was conjecture with the Author in 1829, is now a matter of History in 1860—and the inference is therefore fair, that what is still unfulfilled may be as literally fulfilled.

There is no doubt that the great Religious Revival which is now going on in many parts of Europe, America, and Asia, is a work of the Holy Spirit—to prepare the Church for the speedy advent of our Lord—and that the cry may possibly now have gone forth "*Behold the Bridegroom cometh.*" In which case, does it not become the duty of the "*Wise Virgins*" to be trimming their Lamps and be prepared to enter in before the "*Door is shut.*"

Should this little work, in any way, aid in this great and important preparation, the end desired by the re-publication of this Book will have, in so far, been obtained by,

THE EDITOR.

Galt, 8th February, 1860.

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PREFACE.

It is admitted by all commentators, that the prophecies contained in the Revelations to St. John at Patmos are of a far more enlarged and comprehensive character, and include ampler revelations of the will and purpose of God, than is to be found in any other prophecy contained in the inspired volume. The object for which this prophecy is given to the Christian Church through the beloved disciple is evidently of a consolatory character, and calculated to cheer the prospects and animate the courage of the Church, during those various vicissitudes and persecutions which should attend her footsteps under the brutal oppression of the fourth beast of Daniel, or the Roman Empire, in its Pagan, Papal, and Infidel form of government; and extending through all the history of the Church, until Christ himself should come and deliver his saints from the dominion of the fourth beast, when the time should arrive when the kingdom over the whole earth should be given unto the Son of Man, and to the Saints of the Most High God, who are to possess it for ever and ever. To this period in the prophetic record, the author has given a concise interpretation; which he does not offer as sufficient in itself, (for the revelation is upon that grand and ample scale, that none can ever exhaust the comprehensive subject,) but rather as a guide for the students of this most blessed book; in order, if possible, to assist them in further research for its hidden treasures. To those who have been so far enlightened by the Spirit of truth, as to have overcome the prejudice which is too prevalent against the study of this prophecy, nothing need be offered as incitements to its perusal; but to those who are still labouring under this delusion of Satan, it may be as well to observe, that such can have little conception of the rich profusion of Divine treasure which is couched under this symbolical prophecy; both as affording abundant sources of consolation to himself,

(as composing one of the complete body of Christ,) and likewise as containing in its ample folds deep openings of Divine truth, scattered like gems throughout the whole. Such an exuberant collection of magnificent truths, and conveyed in such splendid imagery, is no where else to be found; so truly does that blessing of our Lord, to whom the revelation was first given, and then bequeathed to his Church, descend upon the diligent and reverent inquirer into these holy mysteries. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." (chap. i. 3.)

It will be necessary to offer a few remarks on the internal structure of the book, and likewise upon the nature of symbolic prophecy.

It has been laid down by an eminent commentator,* that a symbolical prophecy should be studied solely with respect to the symbols, and the structure of the book thus first ascertained from internal sources, previously to any attempt being made at an interpretation; and the strict observance of this most important rule is the only effectual preventative to the encroachment of fanciful interpretations.

The character of symbolical prophecy necessarily affords a larger scope to the interpreter than the more literal; because it is not found difficult to mould events so as they shall assume, in some one respect or other, an apparent assimilation to the prophecy; and thus a spurious interpretation has doubtless often been presented to the church. Before any interpreter, therefore, commences his arduous task of explaining symbolical prophecy, he should take good heed to confine his researches within such limits as the prophecy itself will not fail to present, when its structure and arrangement is determined from the symbols themselves. Acting upon this invaluable and only safe course to be pursued, Mr. Frere† has rendered a service to the church

* Mede.

† The author cannot omit expressing to this gentleman, his own sense of obligation for the benefit and instruction he has received from the "Combined View of the Prophecies of Daniel and St. John;" and also from a small pamphlet since published, entitled, "On the general Structure of the Apocalypse, being a brief Introduction to the minute Interpretation." From both of these works he has received much information necessary to the arrangement of this interpretation.

which she can scarcely ever repay, by establishing the structure of this Apocalypse upon a basis of truth which nothing has ever shaken; and the interpretation which naturally flows in upon the erection of such a frame-work is the best proof of its accuracy; for that book, which formerly was considered enveloped in mysticism and obscurity, will appear to those who study it upon that gentleman's scheme, to be a body of heavenly light scarcely less characterised by the capacity and distinctness it casts upon every other part of Scripture, than by the simplicity and beauty of the interpretation to which it conducts. The author refers the reader to the pamphlet, entitled, "On the general Structure of the Apocalypse, being a brief Introduction to its minute Interpretation, by James Hatley Frere, Esq.," which he would recommend to his most diligent and attentive perusal. He will, however, avail himself of an extract, as compressing in a short compass the arrangement of the prophecy, referring the reader to the pamphlet itself for the arguments upon which it is founded.

TABLE OF THE CONTENTS OF THE APOCALYPSE.

Chap. I. contains, in verses 1—9, a general introduction, or preface; and in verses 10—18, a vision of our Lord Jesus Christ, referred to in chap. i. 19, by the words, "Write the things which thou hast seen."

Chaps. II, III. consist of the epistles to the seven churches which are in Asia, described in the same verse (chap. i. 19) as relating to "the things which are."

The remainder of the Revelation consists of the prophetic history of future events described in the same verse (chap. i. 19) as "the things which shall be hereafter," and contains as under, namely.

Chaps. IV. V. VI. VII.—The communication by the cherubic voices, of the history of the Western Roman Empire; chaps. IV. and V. being prefatory.

Chaps. VIII. IX, X. 1—7.—The communication by the voices of trumpet angels, or the history of the Eastern Roman Empire; chap. viii. 1—6, being prefatory.

Chap. X. 8, to the end, and chap. XI.—The first part of the little open book, communicated by "the voice from heaven," or the

history of the church in brief; chap. x. 8—11 being prefatory.

Chaps. XII. XIII. and XIV.—The remainder of the little open book, communicated by "the voice from heaven," repeating the church history at large, or in the details of its three successive periods.

Chaps. XV. XVI.—The supplementary history, containing the account of the pouring out of the seven golden bowls or vials of wrath, which are common to the last period of the three preceding histories.

Chaps. XVII. XVIII. XIX. 1—10.—The explanation of the angel relative to the first history, namely, that of the Western Roman Empire, announced by the cherubic voices.

Chap. XIX. 11 to the end, XX. XXI. 1—8.—The explanation of the angel relative to the second history, namely, that of the Eastern Roman Empire, announced by the voices of the seven trumpets.

Chap. XXI. 9, to the end, and XXII.—The explanation of the angel relative to the third history; namely, that of the church announced by "the voice from heaven," and contained in the little open book.

The author has one observation to make upon the nature of symbolical language in general. Whilst this mode of instruction is the most comprehensive and durable, it is likewise the most simple and natural. It is the universal language of mankind; the heavenly method of teaching man truth; for natural words will not express spiritual things. Thus it is written in the xixth Psalm, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." The same truth, that the visible creation is to be regarded as setting forth the invisible, is declared by the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, i. 20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." This is the true character of symbolical language; the whole world is one great symbol, the perfection of the Deity

seen and known in all his visible works: this is the sublime origin of all symbols, and the only true method of arriving to the knowledge of any deep truths in the spiritual and invisible world. We are hereby furnished with an argument in favour of the truth of our holy religion, in contradistinction to that of the surrounding impostures of the heathen nations; for if the hidden mysteries of our religion are found enclosed in the fold of the visible creation, who could be the originator of that religion but the Creator himself? For he alone who from chaos produced this world of light, and life, and beauty, could shape things seen so as to represent and shadow forth things unseen: who can know the hidden mysteries of nature—but nature's Lord?

As an illustration of the comprehensiveness of the symbolic language, the sun and moon may be instanced, which the reader will recognize as continually alluded to in Scripture, as symbolical of the Sun of Righteousness, even Christ: and the moon, as emblematical of his church, his chaste spouse. By an accurate examination of the natural fact, and comparing it with the thing signified, it will be seen with what exactness the one shadows forth the other. The sun (as far as it respects our planetary system) is an independent body of light: so is Christ the source of all spiritual blessing to his church. The moon is in herself an opaque body: so the church has neither form nor comeliness, and possesses no beauty in herself, but as she derives it from the imputed righteousness of Christ; and being clothed with which, she sheds her borrowed lustre upon a world lying beneath her, in darkness and in error. The sun's rays are hid from that portion of the earth, which is immersed in the darkness of night, and is apparently all unconscious of his existence —not so the moon, who still enjoys the full blaze of his effulgent brightness. Thus the true church can by faith recognize and enjoy the presence of her Lord, and receive that consolation and support from the light of his countenance, of which a world, lying in wickedness, is wholly ignorant. The similarity might be carried to a greater extent, but this probably will suffice, as an example of the fulness of the symbolical style.

The author has annexed a short symbolical dictionary, in order to obviate the impression that the interpretation of the symbols is arbitrarily assumed, and likewise to assist the student

of this interesting prophecy. It is an abbreviated extract from Mr. Frere's "Combined View of the Prophecies;" to which the reader is directed for a more enlarged explanation.

The Earth.....	The territories which were the seat of the four great empires.
The third part of the Earth	The Eastern Roman Empire, of which Constantinople was the capital, being that portion which fell to Constantine, on the division of the empire by Constantine the Great, among his three sons.
The fourth part of the Earth.....	Italy, together with the Roman Province of Africa, being one of the four prefectures into which the Roman Empire was divided by Constantine the Great. (Rev. vi. 8.)
An Earthquake.....	A popular commotion, threatening the overthrow of a kingdom.
Sun.....	The Lord of day, in temporals, the King; spiritually, the Sun of Righteousness; Christ.
Moon	The Queen of heaven; the consort of the sun, the queen; spiritually, the church.
Stars	The princes and nobles of a kingdom; spiritually apostles or ministers of the church.
Heavens.....	The political system of government, in which these symbolical planets appear.
Great Waters.....	Multitudes of people. The noise of many waters is as the noise of a multitude of people.
Sea	"The untilliable and barren deep," peoples in an unfruitful state, subject to storm, &c.
Sea of Glass.....	Population in a tranquil state.
Four Winds.....	The spirit of violence and discord, which when let loose acts on the sea, or population.
River Euphrates....	The Turkish Empire, which first rose in the neighbourhood of that river.
Air.....	Descriptive of universality.
Beasts.....	Savage, indicate political brutal power; beasts of Rev., various significations, Infidel power and Papacy.
Heads of a Beast...	The rulers of a kingdom or empire.
Chaste Woman.....	Spouse of Christ, the true church, bringing forth spiritual children.

Unchaste Woman...	The great harlot, the Papacy, who induce kings of the earth to commit fornication.
Fornication.....	Spiritual Idolatry.
Kings of the Earth..	The rulers of the Papal nations.
Babylon.....	The Papacy and its adherents.
Holy City, Jerusalem	Used symbolically of the present visible church literally that city which comes down from God.
Temple.....	Holy of holies symbolizes heavenly things, the New Jerusalem the presence of God. Holy place symbolizes the spiritual church on earth, the true priesthood. Outer court symbolizes professors of religion only, not spiritual worshippers.
Living Creatures...	The church, taken from the four banners of Judah, Ephraim, Reuben, and Dan, who usually encamped around the tabernacle.
Incense, or Sweet Odours	The prayers of saints.
White Robes.....	The righteousness of Christ.
Rain	The Holy Spirit.
Grass.....	True believers flourishing under the waters of the Spirit of God.
Rivers and Fountains	Sources of religious instruction.
Flood of Waters....	A large body of men, an army in motion.
Storm of Hail.....	Northern armies, where hail is supposed to generate.
Flight of Locusts...	Southern armies, whence locusts came.
Ships.....	Establishments of those who make a gain of godliness.
Shipmaster, or Merchants.....	Venal Ecclesiastics.
Wings	Emblematical of swiftness.
Horse.....	Emblematical of power and authority.
Tail of Scorpion...	Seat of poison—false and deadly doctrines.
Prophetic Day.....	A year.
Month	30 years.
Time	360 years.
Half a Time.....	180 years.
Prophetic Hour....	A month, or twelfth part of a year, a short period.
Harvest of Mercy...	Protection and ingathering of the saints.
Harvest of Wrath..	Act of judgment.
Vintage, or Treading Wine-press.	Last act of judgment after the harvest.
Fire	Destruction inflicted upon an enemy.
Lightning	Fire from heaven, a manifest act of vengeance.

Voice of Thunder, or Voice of Trumpet.	Voice of the church in heaven, and declaration of God's judgement on his enemies.

It now only remains for the author to acknowledge the deep debt of gratitude he owes to the Rev. Edward Irving, to whose exposition of the Apocalypse, delivered at the Scotch Church, during the year 1828, he is chiefly indebted for the interpretation of the prophetical parts of the book, and whose enlightened ministry he must regard as instrumental to his attainments of any theological truths contained in this commentary. He has not deemed it requisite to state such authority in the body of the work, in the very many instances, wherein the ideas are presented almost as genuine as they proceeded from him, because the work would have abounded with a too-frequent repetition of such acknowledgments, seeing that he has arrived to the understanding of almost every Divine truth by instructions received from the lips of his respected pastor. This acknowledgment is offered to the public, rather in compliance with the maxims of this world's wisdom, than to be regarded as the expression of his own obligations; for they are of too sacred a character to admit of their allusion in terms of common courtesy.

The author has one observation to offer for the consideration of the reader, previously to closing these few preliminary remarks; and in this, a careless reader will peruse this book, and derive as little benefit as though he never read it: but let him attentively compare the interpretation offered, with the text, making every adequate allowance for the essential difference between a symbol and an historical fact, the sign and the thing signified, and by the blessing of God he may not only become a wiser but a better man; for, assuredly, the blessing rests upon him who "readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy."

Into the hands of Almighty God the Author commits this feeble attempt to make known the truths contained in this holy prophecy, praying that he will graciously pardon the many imperfections it contains, and also if he has unknowingly and heedlessly "added unto these things, or taken any away from the words of the book of this prophecy," that the punishment threatened against such may not alight on his head, seeing that he

hath done it in ignorance; but rather that his name may be found written in the Book of Life, and that he may have inheritance in that holy city which cometh down out of heaven from his God, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

London, May, 8, 1829.

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CHAPTER I.

This first chapter comprises the things which the Apostle *had seen* (v. 19), and which he was told by our Lord to write. The most enlarged and comprehensive views of the mysterious doctrine of the blessed Trinity will be found contained in it, with the various offices and character of the Persons in the Godhead.

1 *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:*

This book is justly entitled the Revelation of Jesus Christ, both because it contains a prophetic communication made by God the Father to Jesus Christ, in virtue of his resurrection as Son of Man (see Mark xiii. 32); and more especially because its ultimate object is the glorious coming of Jesus Christ, to redeem his suffering church, avenge her oppressors, and establish in everlasting power his own kingdom on earth, on the ruins of the antichristian kings. The Angel through whom it was communicated to John, was one of the church in heaven. (See xix. 10; xxii. 9; v. 10.)

2 *Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.*

"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." The beloved disciple, who bare the "true record" of Christ's humility (John xix. 35), was selected as the witness of his majesty and glory.

3 *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

There can scarcely exist a more animating encouragement to the study and continual observance of the things declared in this most holy prophecy, than is contained in this verse; such a manifest incitement to its perusal being found attached to no other prophecy in the inspired Volume; and which, coupled with the instruction to the Apostle (xxii. 10), "Seal

not the sayings of the prophecy of this book," distinctly unequivocally notifies to the church, that the mysteries ther contained were never designed by its Divine Author to be sea to them: but, though it foretold them of the "much tribulat through which they were to enter into the kingdom of Go yet likewise spake of a redemption and of an inheritance "n at hand."

4 *John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne.*

5 *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood;*

6 *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

This Revelation is addressed seven churches of the Eastern E pire, which has the preceden inasmuch as it was so long the ch seat of the church, was the princi theatre of Christ's suffering and h mility, and is hereafter to be the s upon which his glory will be m strikingly manifested. Seven chur es are addressed, as representing the whole; the number seven being dicative of totality, or perfecti The benediction is that of the ev blessed Trinity; the seven spi characterizing the Holy Ghost, so much in his eternal subsisten as in his diffusive and illuminati influence extended over the church proceeding from the Son of Man, w sitteth on the throne. "The Pri of the kings of the earth" is Christ's true and proper title; the investiture in which dignity this prophecy most especia refers; and in the participation of which kingly power he instal all those who have been "washed from their sins in own blood," and will make them kings and priests unto G and his Father, when he shall give the kingdom to the saints the Most High, who shall possess it for ever, even for ever a ever. Amen.

7 *Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kin-*

The future glorious revelation Jesus Christ is here set forth as great object of the prophecy, bei the grand and momentous ev

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ich all the various dispensations God's providence, revealed therein the Divine plan are demed to accelerate, and in which y shall all terminate; the latter part of the verse clearly noting the terrific judgments with which he will visit the tions of the earth at his advent.

dreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

This is a commencing as well as erminating text (xxi. 6, and xxii.), setting forth the power and dhead of Christ, who is the author the prophecy. The same characistic being applied to the First rson in the Trinity in verse 4, declares his equality and oness with the Father.

8 *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

St. John here introduces himself the accredited agent of communiting to the church this consolatory ophecy; and begins by stating his alification for the office, in having rticipated in the trials and suffer- g of the saints, in the patient durance of which the Apostle nd there was great reward.

9 *I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

The day of the resurrection was st appropriately chosen by our rd for the abundant outpouring of Spirit on the Apostle, to prepare n for the important service in which he was about to be emyed. The similitude of a voice, as of thunder, or a trumpet, pressive of sublimity and abruptness, is the voice of the urch which ought ever to be regarded with fear and reverence. ee chap. iv. 1; viii. 13; xiv. 2).

10 *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's-day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.*

The Apostle is here commanded write those revelations in a book ich were about to be communica- to him; signifying that the apcation and use was not confined the seven churches to whom they

11 *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia*

unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

were particularly addressed, b like the Epistles, (many of whi were likewise directed to separa churches), they were intended f the church universal, until the e of time: which view of the extend reference of all these Epistles is confirmed chap. ii. 25, where the church at Thyatira is directed to "hold that fast which s had till Christ come."

12 *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks,* (the visible churches).—

The seven golden candlesticks a lude to the candlestick with a branches and seven lamps in t tabernacle (Exod. xxv. 31—37), t candlestick being the sustainer a container of the seven lamps which were constantly kept bu ing in the tabernacle; and which we find, from chap. iv. denoted the Spirit of God, the Light of the world, to be fou alone in the true visible church: which interpretation of t emblematical character of the candlesticks our Lord hims condescends to give the Apostle. (see verse 20).

13 *And in the midst of the seven candlesitcks, one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment* (priestly) *down to the foot and girt about the paps with a golden girdle* (kingly).

Christ is here represented as arra ed in his priestly robes, as the S of Man, walking amongst and wat ing over his churches; the gold girdle being also significant of h kingly character. The figure aptly expressive of this proximity his church during persecution or affliction; for we likewise re that one like the son of Man was seen walking with the th children of Israel in the fiery furnace, and delivered them fr the flames.

14. *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire:*

This description coincides w that of the Ancient of Days in Dani affording one of the many eviden that every revelation made to us God the Father is of God in Christ. His eyes being like a fla of fire, indicate his discernment of the thoughts and intents the heart; as when on earth he needed not that any sho testify of man, for he knew what was in man.

This figure of feet like unto fine brass, we find on the like occasions in visions of Jesus Christ—as Ezek. i. 7; Dan. x. 6—used only as descriptive of the Son of Man, and seems to point out the unrelenting character of those judgments, when he will tread the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God. His voice, as the sound of many waters, is applied to the living creatures in Ezek. i. 24, and to the cherubim in Rev. xiv. 2; the former, emblematical of the church in heaven; the latter, of the church on earth.

15 *And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters*

Christ himself interprets this symbol (v. 20) to be the seven angels or ministers of the churches; and his holding them in his right hand, conveys the same encouraging truth as when he declared of his sheep that none should ever pluck them out of his hand. The sword going forth from his mouth, has reference to the great and dreadful judgment, which, as the sword of God, he will execute upon his enemies and the enemies of his church in the last days. (chap. xix. 21.) His countenance shining as the sun, corresponds with his appearance when he manifested himself to St. Paul, as well as at the transfiguration, which were both typical of his future glorious appearance.

16 *And he had in his right hand seven stars* (the ministers of the churches) *and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword* (ch. xix. 21), *and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.*

The Apostle, being, like the Prophet Daniel, struck down with awe at the heavenly vision, is encouraged by Christ laying his right hand upon him; as in that instance the prophet was strenghtened. And by his declaration, that He it was that was dead, and yet liveth, he conveyed the important truth to St. John, that "to him belonged the issues from death" (Psa. lxviii. 29), and that he possessed the keys of the first and of the second death. (Rev. xx. 14.)

17 *And when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:*

18 *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the keys of hell and of death.*

The revelation is here divided into

19 *Write the things which*

thou hast seen and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter:

three distinct parts: first, The glorious vision which the Apostle had just seen; second, The things which are, consisting of the Epistles to the seven churches (chap. ii. and iii.) exhorting them to patience and faithfulness during the period of the Pagan persecutions, under which they were then suffering; and, third, The things which shall be hereafter, commencing at chap. iv. and containing the three descriptions of persecutions through which the church would have to pass—the Pagan, the Papal, and the Infidel—and thus following the history of the church, until Christ her Head, should himself appear for her deliverance.

20 *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars, are the angles of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven churches.*

Christ here explains the meaning of the vision, as in Dan. xii. 7; thereby confirming the accuracy of the symbol of the candlesticks as more fully interpreted, verse 12, and that of the stars in our comment on verse 16. With such Divine authority for our guide, there can exist little danger of an erroneous interpretation of these symbols, so often occurring in the prophetic writings.

CHAPTERS II. AND III.

The second and third chapters comprise the things *which are* (i. 19), and present our Lord in the character of universal Bishop of his Church.

EPHESUS was one of the most splendid cities of Asia Minor, being remarkable for its opulence, its voluptuousness, and its idolatry; and was considered the metropolis of all Asia. The church of Ephesus was planted by St. Paul, and afterwards transferred to the charge of Timothy: St. John also ministered in it after his return from Patmos. Christ addresses individually the ministers of the churches, communicating through them to their people: and by commending them when their flocks are distinguished for faithfulness, or by reproving them when they have forsaken the faith, it is evident the great Head of the church considers his ministers representative of, and responsible for, the spiritual condition of their respective charges. There is a uniform consistency and peculiar propriety in these epistles, which it is most necessary to keep in view; and which preliminary observations will strictly apply to each separate address. The Divine Author of these epistles announces his authority and headship over the churches, by a reference to the sublime vision of him-

1. *Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.*

2 *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.*

3. *And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.*

4 *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

5. *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

6. *But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*
7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

self, which he had just exhibited to his faithful Apostle: and as the superscription is different to each church, St. John's description of the vision is divided for this purpose into seven parts. The address is a commentary on the superscription; or rather the latter is selected as a motto indicative of the religious state of the church. The encouraging promise with which each address terminates, will be likewise found peculiarly adapted to revive the courage and strengthen the hopes of the church whose spiritual condition is the subject of address, and its universality of application, and right of appropriation to all ages of the church of Christ, until his second coming is placed beyond all question, by each promise being scrupulously introduced in every instance, announcing its propriety to "all that overcome;" and by the concluding declaration that its blessings comprehend encouragements to all "that have an ear." The promises likewise contained in each address, all refer to a period of blessedness subsequent to the Lord's coming, to be enjoyed in the New Jerusalem condition of the church; which was consequently to be considered as an object of the church's expectation, *until he came*. The promise to him that overcometh, held out to the church of Ephesus, of the "tree of life," in the paradise of God, is pregnant with important meaning; and is found twice referred to, in the description of the millennial state, in the last two chapters of this book. (chap. xxii. 2, 14.) The paradise contained in the first chapters of Genesis, is but the type of the paradise of the last two chapters of the Apocalypse; the former the generation, the latter the regeneration of all things; the inspired volume thus exhibiting, according to the Jewish notion in the space of a week of seven thousand years, the original creation, subsequent fall, and final restitution of all things. In the first paradise, Adam was fully invested with dominion and lordship over all things (Gen. i. 26); the tree of life in the garden, and Eve taken from his bleeding side. In the second paradise, Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, whose

power extends to all things both in heaven and earth, to principalities and powers (Heb. ii. compared with Psa. viii.); and joining with him in this universal sway his faithful spouse, the church, likewise (in the figure) taken from his side. In both, there is the tree of life; but inasmuch as in the former it was prohibited, and in the latter, the regeneration, a participation thereof is held out as a high reward, the conclusion is obvious from this, as from every other particular narrated, that the paradise of which Christ is the head will as far transcend that of Adam in magnitude and glory, as the character and attributes of Him who will re-constitute and in himself sustain all things, was superior to his through whose defection the dominion of the world, and man's eminence in the scale of God's creatures, was lost. There is a hidden signification in the act of eating, which we seem little disposed to attach to it. It is the outward symbol, chosen by our Lord, to set forth one of the deepest mysteries of our holy religion, the believer's participation of his body and blood. It was made the test of obedience to our first parents; by which tenure they held their ample dominion; but failing in this, and eating of the forbidden fruit, we learn consequent upon that act, their instant moral recognition of good and evil. (Gen. iii. 22.) It was God's solicitude lest they should likewise put forth their hand and take also of the tree of life and live for ever, that induced him, in mercy, to banish them from the garden of Eden. We see, therefore, from analogy, every reason to conclude that high and eternal spiritual benefits may be intimately associated with the outward act of participation of the tree of life in the paradise of God, promised to the faithful of the church of Ephesus. They, however, took not Christ's warning, and the candlestick is removed; Ephesus is now a heap of ruins, containing a few wretched inhabitants and no church.

Smyrna, in the time of the Apostles, was considered the second city in Asia. As the church at Smyrna was in tribulation and poverty, and was furthermore to undergo severe persecutions, Christ announces himself as the First and the Last, which was dead and is alive again; and

8 *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive:*

9 *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I*

know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

10 *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

11 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches: He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

encourages them to fear none of those things which they should suffer, by the animating assurance that he, their Lord and Head, had also suffered death; through which he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and by his resurrection had acquired victory over him. We may here learn, by the commendations which Christ bestows on the church at Smyrna, not only that affliction and poverty are favourable to the advance of true spirituality, the saints being perfected through sufferings, even as Christ himself was (Heb. ii. 10), but, from comparison with the other churches, who are represented in more prosperous conditions, we may fairly infer, that such is absolutely necessary to a continuance of growth in grace. Satan is here pointed out as the great instigator of all persecutions, acting in his true character, as accuser of the brethren. The ten days, more particularly referred to, in all probability allude to the final persecution under Dioclesian and his successors, which is always described by the ancient writers as the Ten-Years' Persecution.* As the church of Smyrna, to purify her faith, was destined to the fiery ordeal of death, she is incited to its patient endurance by the hope of a crown of life, which, St. Paul informs us, the Lord the righteous judge shall give unto all that fight the good fight, and keep the faith, in that day of his appearing (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8); which we know, from chap. xix. 11—21 to be immediately preceding the establishment of Christ's millennial reign. If they overcome, and endure unto the end, they shall be made participators in the first resurrection, on whom the second death hath no power. (chap. xx. 6—14; xxi. 8).

* See Milner's Church History, vol. ii. p. 4; also Cave's Introduction to Lives of the Fathers: in which the Pagan persecutions are divided into ten acts, the last of which continued ten years; beginning in the reign of Dioclesian, Feb. 23, 303, and terminating in that of Constantine, A. D. 321.

Smyrna still continues a chief commercial city of the Levant, and contains in her a Christian church.

Pergamos, the ancient capital of the line of Attalus, was celebrated for its literature and libertinism, its philosophy and its magnificence; and therefore it is said, "even where Satan's seat is." Riches, and their accompaniments, ever have been a powerful engine in Satan's hands to destroy the church. The minister is commended for holding fast the faith, surrounded with such combinations to infidelity: whilst, on the other hand, he is reproved for laxity of discipline, in not visiting with judicial excommunication those who held the doctrines of Balaam, and of the Nicolaitanes. Christ therefore, announces himself as He who hath the sharp sword with two edges (chap. xix. 15—21), with which he executes judgment; and threatens, unless they repent, he will fight against them with the sword of his mouth, and deal to them that righteous judgment, which, from a principle of expediency and accommodation, they neglected to observe towards these heresies. The doctrine of Balaam was to corrupt, not so much by outward opposition, as by holding out inducements to commit sin; even as that prophet, by listening to and temporising with Balac the king of Moab, occasioned that forbidden intercourse with the Moabitish women, which speedily led to an adoption of their idolatrous worship. Of the Nicolaitanes little

12 *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges:*

13 *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is; and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.*

14. *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*

15 *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.*

16 *Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

17 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that*

overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

is known. Commentators have not been able to acquire authentic information. Scott says it was the Antinomian heresy. But of this we may be satisfied, from the mention of it in another church, that it was at that period a prevailing error, which peculiarly attracted the indignation of our Lord. To those who overcome is promised the hidden manna. "I am the bread of life," says Christ (John vi.): "whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." The bread of life, even Christ, is now hid from our sight; but hereafter to be revealed at his second coming.—They shall likewise have a white stone; and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. The white stone refers to the mode of acquittal adopted by the Areopagus, and indicates the first resurrection, which shall declare those who partake in it to be the sons of God with power. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Christ is represented, chap. xix. 12 (which contains a most sublime description of his second advent), to have on that occasion a new name written, that no man knew, but he himself: no doubt referring to the same mystery contained in the promise to the church of Pergamos.

Pergamos still continues in existence in Asiatic Turkey, the Christian population amounting to about 3000.

18 *And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;*

19 *I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.*

Thyatira was a considerable city in Asia, and is mentioned in Acts xvi. 14, as the residence of Lydia. The declaration of Christ in the superscription, that he is the Son of God, is peculiar to this address; and the reason is, doubtless, because the concluding promise refers to that dominion he is to have over the nations of the earth, and which he will exercise by delegating that power to his risen saints (Ps. ii. 9; chap. xix. 15.) His

eyes like unto a flame of fire, denote the penetration with which he searcheth the heart and reins (ver. 23); and his feet like fine brass (Dan. x. 6) signify the unrelenting severity of those judgments, spoken of in Micah iv. 12, when he shall gather together the nations as the sheaves into the floor, and trample upon many people, as with horns of iron and hoofs of brass. The symbol describes the character of that dominion of the Son of God prophesied of in the 110th Psalm—and participation of which is held out as a great object of hope to the church at Thyatira (ver. 26, 27)—when he shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath, and rule his enemies with a rod of iron. After enumerating wherein the minister of the church had shewn stability and spiritual improvement, Christ proceeds to acquaint him that he has something against him. The defection appears to consist in not counteracting the heretical opinions of a certain woman, who is here represented allegorically as Jezebel the wife of Ahab, who kept four hundred idol prophets at her table, and exerted all her influence to promote idolatry. Adultery, and similar expressions, when used of a church, invariably mean a declension of true religion and adherence to a false one: and those who had given way to this temptation, are threatened with a bed of infirmity, sickness, and death, unless they speedily repent of

20 *Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*

21 *And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not.*

22 *Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.*

23 *And I will kill her children with death and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

24 *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.*

25 *But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.*

26 *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my*

works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

27 *And he shall rule them with a rod of Iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father.*

28 *And I will give him the morning star.*

29. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

their deeds. We may learn, from the great importance that our great Head attaches to purity of doctrine, in this and the epistle to the angel at Pergamos, that any defection in this respect is the first step towards complete apostasy from the truth. Those who are exempt from this form of heresy in the church at Thyatira, are encouraged to hold that fast until Christ comes (ver. 25): which expression affords us additional proof that the exhortations and promises, contained in these epistles, were intended for general application until that event. The "morning star" is the first resurrection (Ps. xlix. 14, &c.); and, being taken in connection with the expression in the 25th verse, "till I come," indicates that those who are faithful shall then receive that better resurrection from Him "to whom belongeth the issues from death," who is himself the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning-star (chap. xxii. 16).

Thyatira still exists—but the church repented not; the threatenings were fulfilled against her; and no vestige of a church remains.

CHAP. III.—1 *And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.*

2. *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God.*

3 *Remember therefore how*

SARDIS was the ancient seat of the Lydian Kings, and memorable as the city of Crœsus. It was, like the chief cities of Asia, magnificent, intellectual, and profligate. In the epistle to the church of Ephesus, Christ is said to hold the seven stars in his right hand; but here he claims "to have" the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars. The seven Spirits of God (see chap. v. 6,) is the Holy Ghost, as proceeding from the Father through the humanity of Christ: the figure here represents

him as the great dispenser of the Spirit to his churches: as when he said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter (which is the Holy Ghost) will not come unto you: but if I depart I will send him unto you" (John xvi. 7): see also John xiv. 16, 26, and John xv. 26. The stars or ministers of the churches, are Christ's by special propriety. He asserts his authority over the angel of the church at Sardis, and justifies his right to call him to a strict account of his stewardship. But he was negligent and faithless in the discharge of that high office, with which he had been invested by the great Bishop; for we are informed he had, "a name to live, whilst he was dead." He was like a tree dead at the root, having a shew of life in the leaf. Yet not beyond recovery; and he is therefore urged to be watchful, and to strengthen the things that remain, that were ready to die. But should he continue in such an unprofitable state, Christ threatens to come upon him in judgment, with the suddenness of a thief; and he shall be surprised in the careless condition of those who look not for their Lord's return. It is by the unfaithful alone that Christ's coming is to be regarded with apprehension, for to the church at Philadelphia his speedy approach is held out as an object of encouragement. There were still a few names, even in Sardis: and he promises these shall walk with him in white raiment, the wedding-garment of his own righteousness (vi. 11; vii. 9, 13, 14; and xix. 8) whose names shall be retained in the book of life, and whom the Lamb will acknowledge before his Father and the holy angels.—How pregnant is this epistle with spiritual instruction! Alas! how imperceptibly, yet how fatally, does negligence and worldly-

thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy.*

5 *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*

6 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

mindedness steal upon our souls, and thus gradually introduc an utter forgetfulness of the higher ends of our being! We hav here an awful truth presented to our reflection; that it is po sible for a society of persons, all professing godliness, and su porting a consistent reputation in the estimation of men, yet b far the greater majority still to continue in the gall of bitterne and in the bond of iniquity:—though having a name to live i the eyes of their fellow-men, and reposing in such a fallacio dependency, they possibly may be going down to hell with a lie i their right hand. Surely such a state of self-gratulation an security, ought ever to be regarded with suspicion, for it resem bles the ominous stillness and fatal ease which ever preced the dissolution of a corrupt and gangrenous body.

Sardis perished in the general decay of Asia Minor.

7 *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth:*

8 *I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*

9 *Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.*

Philadelphia had been a flourish ing city in Asia, situated by th river Cogamus, twenty-seven mile E. S. E. of Sardis. This is the onl instance, in the address of these seve epistles, that the attributes by whic Christ announces himself to the ang are not contained, in the expre words, in the vision to the Apostl They are, however, implied; an each conveys to us a deep and im portant truth. Christ is the onl creature who is holy: he was pro nounced holy from his conception and rose from the dead in virtue o his spotless purity; being a hig priest "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." He wa emphatically the True One: Joh says, chap. i. 17, "the law was give by Moses, but grace and truth cam by Jesus Christ." In the person o Jesus Christ the truth was embodi ed: he who was the source of ligh to the prophets of old, was now i

man form: the Word become sh. Therefore, he, and he only uld say, "I am the truth." (John v. 6.)—These things saith "he that th the key of David." In this ex-ssion, Christ is represented as ward of the king's house: proba-y here introduced to describe his adship over all temporalities, as ll as over the churches; and rticularly to be regarded as the sertion of his authority over the use of Israel, applicable to those oublesome Jews, whom he threat-s to make of the synagogue of tan, and bring to submission, be-re the feet of his faithful minister. he angel had been entrusted only ith a little power, but he had em-oyed it to the glory of his Master: had kept his word, and had not de-ed his name: therefore Christ will ep him from the hour of temptation, hich shall come on all the world, try them. Christ, in inflicting dgment, will ever distinguish be-een him who serveth God and him who serveth him not. atient endurance, and perseverance in faithfulness, cannot il of reaping their due reward; for it is those only who dure unto the end that shall be saved. St. Paul pre-nts the same truth as our Lord, in his Epistle to the alatians, whom he encourages "not to be weary in well-doing r in due season they shall reap, if they faint not:" for there ere some among them who did run well for a time, but were ndered. Alas! how large a proportion are there who receive e Gospel with joy, and yet have not sufficient depth of soil to dure trial or temptation! If the Great Bishop had not known e angel of the church at Philadelphia was beset by tempta-

10 *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

11 *Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

12 *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*

13 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

tions, the exhortation would have been supererogatory, that he should hold that fast which he had, that no man might take his crown. There is scarcely any injunction so constanly held up to the observance of the Christian, as constancy in watchfulness: and surely no condition of mind can be more pregnant with danger than a presumptuous and heedless confidence. The fullest assurance of faith is compatible: nay, it is but an ill-grounded hope if it be unaccompanied with a holy fear. Christ cheers the angel's warfare by the bright expectation of his near approach—which is ever the grand object of the church's hope—for then should he receive a crown of glory, and an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. The rewards and encouragements held out to him that overcometh in this address to the Philadelphian church, are far larger and more explicit than to any other; and are all to be found contained in that description of the heavenly city, in the last two chapters of this book.

Philadelphia still exists in Asiatic Turkey, in the town now called Allah-shehr, or Alashehr, which means "The City of God." The number of houses is said to be about three thousand, of which two hundred and fifty are Greek. The Christians have twenty-five places of worship, five of them large and regular churches, a resident bishop, and twenty inferior clergy.

14 *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; these things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God.*

15 *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.*

16 *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

Laodicea was an opulent city upon the river Lycus, situated not far from Colossæ, as we learn from the association of these two churches in St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, ch. iv. There is a wonderful sublimity and comprehension in the titles which Christ assumes to himself in this address to the angel of the Laodicean church. The appellation "Amen" conveys to us, that as in Christ all the promises and prophecies centre, so is he pledged by the appropriation of this title to himself to the steadfast fulfilment of them:

it represents his stability, in opposition to the variableness of every other creature. This dignity seems to be peculiarly attached to the promise of Christ's advent, (see ch. i. 7. and xxii. 20.) as though to give this glorious truth a double surety in the eyes of men, because the Holy Ghost foresaw "that in the last days there should arise scoffers, who should say, Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Pet. iii. 4.)

The expression also signifies the ratification or confirmation of a covenant. All the promises of old were given on condition of man's obedience, but none performed the requirements of God till Christ fulfilled the law, which having done, he gathered them all into himself, as his own indefeasible right, and thus became the great Amen to all that had been written in the law. He is "the faithful and true Witness;" the same expression occurs in the inscription in chap. i. 5, and also when he comes in judgment on the infidel Antichrist and the false prophet. (chap. xix. 11.) As a witness, he is to be regarded as testifying of the Father, of whom none but the Son could be a true and faithful witness, because he alone had been with the Father from the beginning. This title carries with it conviction, not only of the pre-existence of our Saviour, but also of his distinct personality from the Father. To constitute a witness, it is requisite that he should have seen the person witnessed of (see John xv. 27; iii. 11; v. 36); and, accor-

17 *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

18 *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

19 *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent.*

20 *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

21 *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

22 *He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

dingly we find it declared, that "the Word was with God in the beginning;" and "that no man hath seen God at any time, but the Son, which is in the bosom of the Father" (John i, 1, 18 and 18): also, that the persons should be distinct, for no man can be a witness in his own cause. Distinction of persons, therefore, and knowledge of the party witnessed of, are essential to a true witness.

He is "the Beginning of the creation of God." The manifestation of the Godhead in the creature form was the first grand object of the creation; and to which every other created thing was to be considered subordinate. He was the first in the purpose of God, though not in the manifestation. Adam, and all that went before, was but a type or foreshewing of him that was to come. It does not appear that our Lord brings any charge of false doctrine against the angel of the Laodicean church; from which we may learn, that orthodoxy in doctrine does not necessarily ensure purity and holiness of life. An assent to established truths in religion, does not constitute a Christian, if the belief does not affect the heart, and influence the conduct; for it is the life that evinces the true disciple. It is to be feared that there are two many in this flowery day of profession, who talk of brotherly love, and other Christian graces, but who find it very inconvenient and troublesome to be required to exhibit it in action. The Laodicean church was exposed to the temptation of prosperity, both in spiritual and temporal affairs; and she fell into the snare from which few escape, who are similarly tried; she became lukewarm and indifferent. If men were really conscious of the evil influence of riches, surely they would not be so eager in acquiring the glittering snare. Many can endure adversity who fall at the first onset of a course of prosperity; for, though the force of the expression seems to be now explained away, yet it is equally true, as when our Saviour uttered it, "How hardly shall a rich man enter into the kingdom of heaven!"

He that overcometh is promised to sit with Christ in his throne even as he also overcame, and is sat down in his father's throne. Here is a manifest distinction observed between the Father's throne and Christ's throne: the saints are promised a participation in the latter, but they never shall expect to obtain the former.

It is the same promise as that conveyed to the church at Thyatira; a share in the glory and dominion of Christ's reign, over the universe, as it is written in one sublime and comprehensive expression in this book (Rev. xxi. 7), "He that overcometh shall inherit all things."

Laodicea, after the many fluctuations of the Greek Empire in Asia, sunk in the general decay, and is now a heap of ruins. There is a small village called Eskihisar near its site, containing about fifty inhabitants, and two solitary Christians*, who are the only melancholy remnant, to record that a church once existed at Laodicea.

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*Lindsay's Letters.

CHAPTER IV.

Christ revealed as Prince of the kings of the earth, in the fourth and fifth Chapters, being prefatory to the sixth, which properly commences the prophecies of the sealed book.

CHRIST having revealed himself in the character of universal Bishop, in the foregoing Epistles to the seven churches, we find in the following chapters, he is introduced in the Apostle's vision, as the King-Priest; and prevailing to open that sealed book, which none other, save him, in heaven or earth, could accomplish. The prophetic parts of this book are composed of detached chronological histories, each of which is separately introduced by an appropriate preface. As the prophecies which extend through this Revelation, from the sixth chapter, contain events, included in all time, until the second advent of our Lord, the whole is ushered into notice, with a peculiar dignity and circumstance, corresponding to the magnitude and sublimity of the Revelation. We consider, therefore, the two following chapters as introductory to that which follows.

1 *After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.*

In the first verse, our Lord himself informs the Apostle that he is now entering on the things which should be hereafter (chap. i. 19); and the seer is conscious of a sudden transition from contemplating the state of the Asiatic churches, to a vision in heaven. A door was opened in heaven; that is, into the secret and invisible; not a place, except so far as the body of Christ, wherever it is, gives it that name; as a place it is only contemplated in the Divine counsel. It describes the invisible as distinguished from the visible; it is the condition of existence of angels, separate spirits, and invisible beings. The Apos-

tle heard a voice, as it were of a trumpet speaking to him (chap. i. 10.) This similitude is used to denote the voice of Christ, or of the church in heaven; and as we learn from chap. xix. 10, and xxii. 9, that this vision was communicated through one who confessed himself to be of St. John's fellow servants, the prophets, we conclude that in this case it represented the latter.

2 *And immediately I was in the Spirit; and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.*

3 *And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.*

The Apostle is here presented with a sublime representation of Christ, seated on a throne, as King. He was to look upon, like a jasper and a sardine stone; from the addition to the former, in chap. xxi. 11, having a similitude to jasper, and clear as crystal, it does not appear to be the stone usually described as a jasper, but the diamond.—In the above passage, the jasper stone is emblematical of the glory of God; the sardine stone is of a blood-red or flesh colour: a combination of these two symbols conveys to us the glory of the Godhead, seen through the human nature of Christ. A rainbow surrounded the throne, in sight like unto an emerald—that is, of a green hue, the colour most grateful to the eye. The rainbow is God's token of the covenant made with Noah (Gen. ix. 17); and as the throne seen by the Apostle was approachable only through the rainbow, so we cannot draw nigh unto God save through that covenant of mercy made with our Mediator Jesus Christ. The rainbow is formed by the rays of the sun lighting upon the descending particles of water, and by them refracted: so the "rainbow surrounding the throne" may be considered as formed by the beams of that Sun of Righteousness, who is the only source of spiritual life, thrown upon the promises contained in the covenant, which only thus receives its glory, or is capable of being apprehended by the believer's faith.

The vision presents Christ to us as our great Covenant Head, in his priestly character; and likewise God the Father seen in Christ on the throne, the person of the Father exhibited or presented in Christ; the great mystery of the Trinity consisting in the essential invisibility of the Father, and that the object of

worship should ever continue unseen. A similar vision occurs in Dan. vii. 9, also Ezek. i.

4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

The four and twenty elders compose a circle round the throne, in the form of the Jewish Sanhedrim. The expression here, is to receive explanation by the consideration of the character, as comprehended in the Jewish, and not in the Christian economy; and upon reference to the Pentateuch, it will be found rather to convey the idea of a governor or judge, than as pertaining to Christian church-discipline. Their having crowns of gold on their heads, and being clothed with white raiment, point out their character as priests and kings. The white garments were worn by the high priest, when he went into the holy of holies, and is here expressive of the church within the vail; that is, in the heavens. The elders represent the church as having received this kingdom (see chap. v, 8—10) which passage is conclusive as to the correctness of this interpretation.

5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

These characteristics of judgment, proceeding from the throne, (see also chap. viii. 5; xi. 19; xvi. 18,) exhibit to us a truth too much forgotten, that though Christ will keep his covenant with those who lay hold of it by faith, yet that there remains an awful day of reckoning, for those who have trampled upon and despised it, and counted it an unholy thing. The latter clause of the verse, as has been previously explained (see note to chap. i. 4), sets forth the Holy Ghost in diffusion, but still maintaining his oneness of character. Seven is a perfect or complete number, representing diffusion gathered into union. The science of music illustrates this truth: sound being determined by seven distinct notes, an eighth would resolve itself into the first again, and thus describe a circle—the emblem of completeness and of perpetuity. The same truth is also illustrated from the nature and properties of colours. There are seven principal colours; an eighth therefore can only be a varia-

tion of one of the seven, or a mixture of some portions of them.

6 And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

The sea of glass, like unto crystal, signifies the state of unruffled calmness and peacefulness of all before the throne. The word translated beasts, is better rendered living creatures; as in Ezek. i. 5, and in chap. x., which evidently contain a similar vision, and wherein the same appearances are denominated cherubims. We have seen the church in its kingly character, represented in this chapter, verse 4, under the emblem of twenty-four elders. The living creatures reveal her in her wilderness, or militant condition marching round the ark, and supporting Christ's kingly power. The emblem appears to be taken from the order in which the twelve tribes of Israel were arranged in their march through the wilderness. (Num. ii.) The tabernacle being placed in the centre, the tribes were thus disposed of: Judah to the east, with two tribes, under his standard of a lion; Reuben to the south, with two tribes, under his standard of the face of a man; Ephraim, on the west side, with two tribes, under his standard of a young bull; and Dan, to the north, with two tribes, under his standard of an eagle. The powerful and dominant character of the symbols chosen, leave no alternative than the conclusion that they denote that church which shall yet be made kings and priests unto God, and be thereby installed into supremacy over all creation. They are not in possession of the power—as the crowned elders—but progressing in its acquirement. It is for these reasons that the four living creatures are supposed to denote the church on earth. But that they have some representative character of the church is put beyond all doubt, by a reference to the following chapter, v. 8—10; wherein they are uniting with the elders in ascriptions of praise and glory to him who was slain, and had redeemed them to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and peo-

ple, and nation, and are looking forward to reigning on the earth, which promise exclusively belongs to the saints of God.

The church militant is here presented to us, as not resting day or night, but as continually ascribing Holiness to the Lord God Almighty, with thanksgivings. This characterises the constant watchfulness necessary to such a state of warfare; and their being full of eyes, appears to convey the truth, that the church on earth are the grand manifestators of God's providence. It is God the Father, seen in Christ that is the object of worship on the throne, and who is designated by that title, only applicable to the eternal Godhead, having neither beginning nor end. (see chap. i.)

8 *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

9 *And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever.*

10 *The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,*

11 *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

The homage which the four and twenty elders pay to Him that sat on the throne is that due unto the King of kings as their supreme Head; and Christ as the representative and manifestation of the person of the Father, receives the worship of all created things both in heaven and on the earth. The elders casting their crowns before the throne, and their ascription of all power to him, by whom and for whom all things were made, is the acknowledgment to their great King; that it is from him they receive, and for his pleasure they employ their delegated honours. This act of homage receives illustration from the coronation of a Christian prince, whose nobles surround the throne, remaining uncovered with their coronets in their hands until the king is crowned; when they place them on their heads, to signify, that it is from him, as their earthly sovereign, all their possessions and honours are derived.

CHAPTER V.

1 *And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within, and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.*

2 *And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?*

3 *And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.*

4 *And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.*

This book, seen in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, was rather a roll, sealed with seven seals, written within and without: that is, its contents were full and complete, each seal containing a separate mystery, which it would be necessary to break to arrive at. This sealed book formed a part of this Apocalypse, in which is included all the events of God's providence, and the demonstration of his power, until the consummation of all things.

The highest importance and dignity is attached to this book in heaven; and notwithstanding the proclamation of the angel, no one is found able to open it, neither to look thereon. The Apostle, wrapt in the spirit, is overwhelmed with disappointment, having been seized with an earnest desire to become acquainted with its contents: and he wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and to read it. By which we may learn that it is not the mark of an unholy and culpable curiosity, to search into the purposes of God, as revealed in his word. (See also chap. i. 1, 3, xiii, 18, and xxii. 18, 19.)

5 *And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*

The anxiety which the Apostle evinced to become acquainted with the mysteries of this book, evidently meets with the Divine approbation; for one of the elders is sent to inform him that there is one who can accomplish the arduous task—even the

Lion of the tribe of Judah. This affords us another proof, th this sealed book is included in the Apocalypse; which, we a informed in chap. i. 1, "God gave unto Jesus Christ to sh unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." Th appellations given unto Christ here pertain to his manhood and shew us that it is to Him, as Son of Man, this revelation given.

Christ having been represented as the great King, he is here introduced as the atoning sacrifice, the Lamb slain from before the foundations of the world. The great High Priest, who, by the one sacrifice of himself, hath for ever put away sin.

It is in this chapter that he prevails to open the book (see v. 9); for it was that in which he suffered, being made perfect through suffering. The act of God's giving this revelation to him spoken of, chap. i. 1, is here narrated. The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes. Th horn is emblematical of power (Deut. xxxiii. 17), and conveys t us the idea of that given unto Christ after his resurrection, whe he said. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. xxviii. 18.) The seven eyes are interpreted in the tex to be the seven Spirits of God—and are here introduced, parti cularly as indicative of Christ's omniscience and discernment We have before observed, that the sevenfold representation o the Spirit of God instructs us in the mystery of the Holy Ghost diffused over, and possessed by, an extended yet a limited an complete number. And we learn also from this text, that grea truth, supported by all Scripture, that Jesus Christ is endued i his priesthood by the Father with the gift of the Holy Ghost and that it is he that sends him forth into all the earth—unto a many as God the Father shall see fit in the good pleasure of hi will to give unto him. As it is a most important point of sound doctrine, that the person of the Father is only seen in Jesus Christ it was necessary—as Christ had to represent two distinct cha

6 And I beheld, and, l in the midst of the thro and of the four beasts, a in the midst of the elder stood a Lamb as it had be slain, having seven horn and seven eyes, which a the seven Spirits of Go sent forth into all the earth 7 And he came and to the book out of the righ hand of him that sat upo the throne.

ctors in this vision, namely, that of the Father on the throne, d his own as Priest—that the machinery of the prophecy ould be so arranged, as to present the appearance of two per ns, though, in fact, it is only Christ that is seen throughout. similar vision takes place in Daniel, chap. vii. 22.

8 *And when he had taken he book, the four beasts and our and twenty elders fell own before the Lamb, having every one of them harps nd golden vials full of dours, which are the prayers of saints.*

9 *And they sang a new ong, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to pen the seals thereof: for hou wast slain, and hast edeemed us to God by thy lood out of every kindred, nd tongue, and people, nd nation;*

10 *And hast made us unto ur God kings and priests: nd we shall reign on the arth.*

In the previous chapter the elders take the precedency in their higher function of kings; but here the four living creatures are first mentioned, because it is in his character as Lamb that Christ obtains the book, therefore the living creatures are first to celebrate the act. They had harps and vials full of odours. There had been no event in heaven to call forth such loud hosannahs, as the redemption of a fallen creation by the blood of the Lamb; and therefore they tuned their harps to sing a new song of praise and of prayer.

This passage affords us conclusive evidence that the twenty-four elders and four living creatures will admit of no other interpretation than the church in heaven—for those only could sing this new song who had een redeemed out of every kindred and tongue, and people nd nation. This interesting representation of the church in eaven, before the resurrection, likewise establishes the conscious blessedness of redeemed souls after death and their ctive employment in the service of their Lord. It conveys to us, likewise, the important intelligence, that they are till in a longing condition, waiting for the consummation of their appiness—when they shall be endued with power and holiness, nade kings and priests, and reign with Christ on the earth. They re the same characters under the fifth seal, chap. vi. 10, who are crying out to God to avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth, for they knew that the day of his vengeance was the

year of their full recompense. (Is. xxxiv. 8.) Accordingly w ld, *Amen.* find, after Christ's coming, set forth in the nineteenth chapt d *twenty* when he destroys, at the battle of Armageddon, the beast of i d *worshi* fidelity and the false prophet of Rome, with the armies of t *veth for e* kings of the earth; that the twentieth chapter introduces us in hap. iv.) this millennial reign of the saints, which all enjoy who have bo ddressed made participators in the first resurrection. ver and e

The angels are here represented encompassing as a guard the elders and living creatures, and looking upon the mystery of an elect Church standing ready to fulfil their office of ministering spirits (Heb. i. 14,) to the church of Christ.

11 *And I beheld, and heard the voice of many a gels round about the thro and the beasts and the e ders: and the number them was ten thousa times ten thousand, a thousands of thousands;*

The church in heaven (see v. 9, 10) sing of redemption and of electing love, and conclude with the delightful anticipation of being made kings and priests unto God; but the angels celebrate his power over creation, and ascribe the possession and dominion of all things to him who is creation's Lord. They waited for the song of the church, an then added their hosannahs of praise and sevenfold ascription o power and glory to the Lamb that was slain, yet liveth for eve and ever.

12 *Saying with a lo voice, Worthy is the La that was slain to recei power, and riches, and wi dom, and strength, and h nour, and glory, and bles ing.*

Here the whole visible creation join in this song of praise; all creatures both in heaven and earth ascribe to Him that sitteth upon the throne blessing, and honour, and glory, (see Ps. cxlviii. and Rom. viii. 19, 22.)

13 *And every creatu which is in heaven, and o the earth, and under th earth, and such as are i the sea, and all that are i them, heard I saying, Bles ing, and honour, and glory and power, be unto hi that sitteth upon the thro and unto the Lamb for ev and ever.*

They now contemplate the two persons in one substance, two seen in one; the Father ruling for Christ until he hath put all things under his feet (Ps. cx. 1), and Christ ac-

14 *And the four beast*

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knowledged as the manifested head of all power in heaven and earth.

This sublime and comprehensive vision is concluded as it begun, (chap. iv.) by a simultaneous act of worship from the church, addressed to Him that sitteth on the throne, and that liveth for ever and ever.

CHAPTER VI.

The prophecies of the sealed book commence with this chapter.

The contents of the book seen in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, and which only the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevailed to open, (chap. v.) are in this, and the following chapters, revealed to the Apostle. They represent seven successive acts of power, by which the enemies of Christ's church are scattered, and thereby the way prepared for the establishment of his own kingdom. The seven seals respect the western branch of the Roman empire—the fourth monarchy, or ten kingdoms of Daniel (chap. ii. 44, and vii. 23, 27). In the first four seals, we have four successive emperors; in whose times, and by whose chief instrumentality, Paganism, the first enemy of the church, was judged and brought to its end. In chap. ii. 10, we find a reference to ten years' persecution which the church at Smyrna was to undergo, and which we have referred to that period of Diocletian's reign, when the Christians underwent that sore trial. As this was included in that portion of this book, denominated "the things which are," according to Christ's own division of the prophecy (chap. i. 19), it is evident we must not look for this commencing act of retribution on Paganism until after this period, A. D. 303—312. During the first three centuries of the Christian era, the church experienced from the Pagan Roman emperors one continued course of persecutions; interrupted during that whole period only by occasional variations in severity and barbarity. After the death of Diocletian, Con-

1 *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts* (representing the church in her prophetical and priestly character, chap. iv. 6, v. 8) *saying, Come and see.*

2 *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him* (Constantine) *had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

tantine the Great was raised to the throne of the Roman Empire, A. D. 306. He is represented as seated on a white horse, mblematical of imperial power and of conquest. He gave the rst blow to Paganism by constituting Christianity the established religion of the empire, which took place after his conversion, A. D. 312. It is related of him, that in a vision he saw a ross, with this inscription, "In this overcome;" and Eusebius ecords, that such ever after continued to be his motto. "Constantine gave the most perfect toleration to Christians through he whole extent of his dominions; Providence was still with im in enlarging his kingdom, that, like another Cyrus, he ight give peace and liberty to the church*."

3 *And when he had opened the second seal, I heard he second beast say, Come nd see.*

4 *And there went out another horse that was red:* emblematical of war and loodshed) *and power was iven to him* (Theodosius) *at sat thereon to take eace from the earth,* (by vil war,) *and that they ould kill one another: d there was given unto m a great sword.*

During the reign of Constantine the Great, after his conversion, A. D. 312, and for many successive years, Christianity enjoyed comparative protection; but in the year 361, Julian the Apostate, Constantine's nephew, succeeded Constantius, and openly declared for Paganism†. Julian reigned one year and eight months, during which period he exerted the most consummate artifice and the most unwearied perseverance, to exterminate Christianity and to re-establish Paganism. These objects he proposed effecting more y a systematic course of artful policy, than by the exercise of pen violence; and truly, for the short period of his reign, Paanism owned a most active apostle. Amongst the extraordiary expedients to which he resorted, to vilify and degrade the hristian religion, one deserves particular notice, from its sinlar conception and its audacious impiety. Perceiving the spersion of the Jews, and the continued desolation of their emple to be predicted of in the prophecies, he encouraged the

* See Milner's Church History, vol. ii. p 31.

† See a full account of Julian's introduction of Paganism, in Milner's urch History, vol. ii. chap. 8, who has himself followed Cave's History the Julian Apostacy, in his History of the Fathers, sect. iii. p. 284.

Jews to rebuild it; his design being to oppose the truth of the prophetic record, and thus to prove Christ's prediction an imposture. For this purpose he committed the execution of the affair to Alypius of Antioch, who was assisted by the governor of the province; but an earthquake, attended with horrible balls of fire breaking out near the foundations, rendered the place inaccessible to the terrified workmen, and the enterprise was ultimately relinquished. Marvellous as this story may appear, it has the authority of ecclesiastical writers of unquestioned credibility, many of whom lived at the period; amongst these are Gregory Nazianzen, Ambrose, and Chrysosotm, with many others, as well as of the Jewish rabbis*. But it was vain for him to contend with Omnipotence. He received a mortal wound in his expedition against the Persians. It is recorded of him, that, conscious of his approaching end, he exclaimed, "O, Galilean! Thou hast conquered" After Julian's death, a succession of emperors came to the throne, variously disposed towards Christianity and Paganism; but the periods of their reign were too short to enable any one to effect a permanent alteration in favour of either, until Theodosius the Great (v. 4.) became master of the Roman Empire, originally raised from a private condition to the imperial dignity by the emperor Gratian.

Paganism sought again to rally itself under the usurpers Maximus and Eugenius; the former governing in Britain, A. D. 383—the latter, who usurped the empire of the West, by the murder of the emperor Valentinius. But Theodosius who reigned in the East, after a civil war in which he took peace from the earth (v. 4), defeated and killed the former, A. D. 388†: and the latter met a similar fate soon after his usurpation‡. Theodosius having thus become sole governor of the Roman Empire, set hinself to the extirpation of the Pagan idolatry with the most decisive vigour. He destroyed all the Pagan temples and made it a capital crime to sacrifice or attend the Pagan rites‖. Paganism never lifted up its head in strength after this

* Warburton's Julian—also Cave's Lives of the Fathers—S. Cyril of Jerusalem, p. 561.
† Eusebius Ecclesiast. Hist. lib. v. chap. xiv. p. 338.
‡ Eusebius Ecclesiast. Hist. lib. v. chap. xxv. p. 350.
‖ Cave's Introduction to the Lives of the Fathers, vol. ii. sect. 5.

and though it still lingered on an existence until the fourth seal, habit alone supported it, and the fourth century closes with the establishment of Christianity in the Roman empire as the religion of the state*.

5 *And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse,* (emblematical of defeat, the reverse of white,) *and he that sat on him* (Honorius) *had a pair of balances in his hand.*

6 *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and wine.*

Though Paganism, as a system, was by these two blows of the first and second seals, wounded to death throughout the empire, yet it still lived in Rome; from which, as from a centre of Satan's tyrannic power, had issued all those successive persecutions which had assailed the Christian church since her establishment, filling the whole empire with the blood of her martyrs. Accordingly we find the judgments of the third seal directed towards Pagan Rome and her dependencies. God visits a nation for her national crimes, committed as a collective body—whose guilt he allows to accumulate from generation to generation, until her iniquity is full and she has thus ripened herself for the Divine vengeance.

The opening of the third seal presents us with the emblems of an emperor; but neither with the bow of far-ranging conquest, nor with the great sword of civil warfare, but with a pair of balances in his hand; signifying that his power should be taken up not with arms, but with weighing and measuring, in exact scales, the allowances of his people; in what kind is taught us by the interpretation of a voice, saying, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, (prices for the necessaries of life, indicative of famine;) and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine;" which expression points out the unusual care to be observed of these articles of life. He rode upon a black horse, indicating the reverse of conquest; namely, defeat, sorrow, and dejection. This heavy affliction fell upon the city of Rome, in the time of the emperor Honorius; when

* Milner's Church History, vol. ii, p. 207.

Alaric the Goth, after three devastations of Italy, and two beleaguerments of the capital, at length took and sacked it, A. D. 410, sparing the Christians, and putting another hand to the Pagan superstition in the conflagration of the Heathen temples*. Italy remained in possession of the Goths till A. D. 414, when it was evacuated by treaty.

The fourth seal contains a second judgment upon the Roman empire, which came to pass in the reign of Justinian, falling particularly on Africa and Italy (the fourth part of the Roman earth). The rider on the pale or livid horse—indicative of corruption—represents the emperor Justinian: and he is called death, or the Destroyer; to denote the enormous destruction of human life, that should attend the flux and reflux of conquest, of which that portion of the Roman empire was made the theatre. Italy was so laid waste by this devastating war, carried on by his general Belisarius, who took Rome from the Goths, A. D. 536, and ultimately expelled them from Italy, that many of her fairest provinces relapsed into a state of savage nature, and the country became so depopulated, that wild beasts began to gain the ascendancy over man (v. 8.) Famine and disease, the usual accompaniments of the sword, came in this terrific train of desolating judgment; and thus the four scourges of the human race mentioned in the text, slaughter, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts, had during this period exerted by turns their exterminating ravages over the whole of Italy. Thus have we in four great acts of God, working through the instrumentality of human power, the process by which he overthrew Paganism, the first great enemy of the church of Christ. This interpretation receives

7 *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.*
8 *And I looked, and behold a pale horse:* (of a livid green, the colour of corruption:) *and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him* (Justinian). *And power was given unto them over the fourth part of earth,* (that is, one of the four prefectures into which the Roman empire was divided by Constantine) *to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*

* Irving's Babylon Foredoomed, vol. i. p. 185.

remarkable confirmation, from the fact that Echard, and most historians, when treating of that period of the Roman history in which we have traced the fulfilment of the first four seals, from A. D. 312 to A. D. 536, narrates the historical events in these four grand divisions. History is but a comment on prophecy. Indeed it has not an object, if not applied to develop the purposes of God, and display the manifestations of his providence amongst the nations of the earth.

9 *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:* (during the period of the Pagan persecutions)

10 *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

11 *And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season,* (that is, the period of 1260 years during which the saints were given into the hands of the little horn of Daniel, which is the Papacy: see Dan. vii. 25,) *until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed* (by the Papal persecutions) *as they were* (by the Pagan), *should be fulfilled.*

Paganism having thus been suppressed and rooted up, so that scarcely any vestige of it remained; we find the fifth seal introduces to us another form of superstition, which was designed in the Divine purpose, to have the ascendency over the saints of God, for its limited period.

At the opening of the fifth seal, the Apostle sees a vision in heaven. The altar stood in the temple: and when the victim was sacrificed, the blood was received below—the blood is the life. The souls under the altar, therefore represent the martyrs who had been slain by the Pagan persecution. This heavenly vision is not to be considered in time, subsequent to the previous seals, but as a cry for vengeance, on their persecutors, which had continued through, and of which, those judgments were the consequence. White robes were put on by the priests, when they entered into the holiest of all; and this figure here represents (verse 9) the saints who had been martyred, as having entered into heaven itself. When the Pagan judgments had terminated, they were expecting that their enemies should be judged, and that they

should realize the fulfilment of that promise, to which they were looking (under another symbol, in chap. v. 10) with so much desire, to reign on the earth with Christ, but they are told they must wait a little season (chap. xii. 12), until their brethren should be likewise killed (ver. 11) by another form of superstition, the Papacy, and accordingly they are found rejoicing, when her judgment takes place, (see chap. xvi. 5, and xix. 2.) This fifth seal therefore takes in the whole compass of that Papal period; but gives no particulars of its fulfilment, because it is not comprehended in the purpose of prophecy to give the growth of evil powers, but to shew forth their punishment when arrived at maturity; and also, because they are given during this period of forty-two months, or 1260 days in the xith chapter.

It is admitted by all Protestant commentators, with scarcely one exception, that the time, times, and the dividing of time of Daniel, during which the saints were to be given into the power of the little horn, is the period of 1260 years of the Papacy (a time, according to the Jewish computation, being 360 years; times, being double, and the dividing of time half that period). There can be little doubt that if we can ascertain the completion of the Pagan persecution, we shall have made great progress in fixing the rise of the Papal: for it is to be supposed, that Satan no sooner found himself defeated in one form of enmity to the church, than he would instantly assume another; otherwise if an interval were admitted to occur between the extinction of the one, and the rise of the other, the church would, during such time, be exempt from Satan's malice: which is altogether inconsistent with the activity that he has ever manifested against the truth. If therefore, as we think we have satisfactorily shewn, in our interpretation of the fourth seal, that Paganism, after enduring repeated shocks from the Arian nations, which for this purpose God brought upon the Roman Empire, was finally put down and extinguished in the reign of Justinian; and to no other period in history can its extinction be traced; it is likewise in this reign we must expect to find a commencing date to this new persecuting power, referred to in this seal, and which, we learn from Daniel, is to last 1260 years (Dan. vii. 25, 26),

at the expiration of which the judgment is to sit, and his dominion is to be taken away.

There has arisen no question in the prophetic writings more important, or one which has occasioned deservedly more discussion than that of fixing the commencement of this Papal period of 1260 years; because, if ascertained, an addition of seventy-five years, at its termination, would lead us to that time which Daniel pronounced to be blessed; and as he is promised to stand in his lot, it can mean none other than the first resurrection, and the coming of our Lord. It is only within the last few years, that any unanimity has existed upon this interesting subject; and we can venture to affirm, that little diversity of opinion is now entertained by modern commentators, and the students of prophecy. The question is, at what time were the saints given into the hands of the Papacy; and we shall find the answer remarkably to coincide with our supposition, that it must be found in the reign of Justinian, when Paganism was finally put down, and never afterwards raised its head as a persecuting power. By an edict, bearing date March, 533, authority was given to the Bishop of Rome to settle all controversies in the church, of which he was declared to be the infallible head, *and power was given him by such enacted law of the empire, against whomsoever he deemed heretical.* It was not merely one edict, but a systematic course of policy, whereby the Papacy was stamped the imperial religion; (just as much as Christianity was by Constantine:) so that its very image is delineated in the beginning of Justinian's code of laws; the celibacy of the clergy, the intercession of the Virgin Mary, the adoration of the cross, &c. &c. In fixing the year 533, as the commencement of the 1260 years, we have a corroborative proof, almost equal to demonstration, if the events spoken of in prophecy to take place at its termination should be found to receive an exact and minute accomplishment at the precise time. The expiration of the 1260 years therefore would occur, A. D. 1792: and accordingly we find the events predicted in the sixth seal, which ended in the French Revolution of Aug. 10, 1792, accompanied with such a variety of minute particulars, presents us with an adequate fulfilment, which nothing but the truth itself could furnish.

Adding seventy-five years to 1792 will bring us down to 1867, by which time, we have no doubt, the day of wrath will have passed over—Christ's enemies be destroyed—and that blessed period will have arrived, when the saints are to possess the kingdom for ever and ever. (See also chap. xii. 16.)

In strict accordance with the observation last advanced, we find the sixth seal announced by a great earthquake on a portion of the Papal kingdoms, which was God's first act of retributive justice on that apostacy. The period of this seal is from A.D. 1789, occupying the four last years of the Papal period of 1260 years. It describes a popular revolution of an established government, with the total eclipse of the kingly power: the subversion of all authority, and the degradation and banishment of the dignities of the land.

The fourth monarchy of Daniel, (see chap. vii. 24,) or Roman Empire, now become Papal (Rev. xvii. 12), was to be divided into ten kingdoms; and it is to be expected, if this seal only operated partially, that such kingdom would be selected by God, that had most prominently distinguished herself in the erection and support of the Papal hierarchy. Accordingly, we find, on consulting history, that in the reign of Pepin of France, the most considerable accessions of territory and temporal power were secured to the Pope, chiefly through his instrumentality, A. D. 705; and that subsequently his son and successor, Charlemagne, sub-

12 *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake* (popular revolution); *and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair*, (eclipse of kingly power,) *and the moon became as blood*, (death of a queen).

13 *And the stars of heaven* (the nobles of the political hemisphere) *fell unto the earth* (degraded in dignity to the common level), *even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.*

14 *And the heaven* (political government) *departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island* (eminences of power and authority) *were moved out of their places.*

15 *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free-*

an, hid themselves in the ns and in the rocks of e mountains.

16 *And said to the moun-ins and rocks, Fall on us d hide us from the face f him that sitteth on the rone, and from the wrath f the Lamb:*

17 *For the great day of is wrath is come; and ho shall be able to stand?*

dued for him the kingdom of Lombardy, A.D. 774, and invested him with considerable portions of the conquered territory. France has likewise ever presented herself a willing instrument to persecute the true saints of God; for there is no nation whose historic records are so deeply stained with the blood of the martyrs of Christ. The persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenses in the thirteenth century*, nd, in later times, the massacres of her Protestant subjects, fficiently mark her pre-eminence in the annals of blood, to irect our expectations to her, as the first object of Divine wrath. ccordingly, we find the prophecies contained in this seal eceive a most remarkable accomplishment in France, to the ery letter; and which, commencing in the year 1789, ran hrough four years of political contention, finally terminating in he memorable revolution of Aug. 10, 1792: when the king was eprived of all power, and ultimately ended his life upon a caffold, Jan. 21, 1793. This is the same king prophesied of in aniel xi. 20; the raiser of taxes, who was to precede the vile erson, or the wilful king, Napoleon Bonaparte.

The stars of heaven are said to fall as untimely figs, and the slands to be only moved out of their places, because the time vas not arrived for their final destruction; this being reserved or the last act of wrath, under the seventh vial, when it is said chap. xvi. 20), "and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." Accordingly, we find, that at, and subsequent to, that period, every dynasty in the ten Papal kingdoms of Europe, with the exception of England (see comment on chap. ii.), which had been established for centuries, were swept in he course of a few years from their eminence, carrying in their ownfall all that adhered to them. They are now restored gain—as at the first—we judge, preparatory to their demolition

* See Milner's Church History, vol. iii. chap. iv.

for ever. This seal derives additional importance from the consideration that the signs they contain are those by which the day of wrath and judgment is ushered in, every where throughout the prophecies, as preceding the glorious day of the coming of Christ, and his blessed reign upon the earth. And they stand here as a great mark of synchronism, with all that is written in the Prophets from the time of Joel to the time of Christ.

The [illegible] three verses are anticipative, and prophetical of the great concluding act of God's wrath upon the Papal nations, of which this sixth seal was but a feeble type, introductory to the pouring out of the seven vials of wrath (see xvi. and three following chapters). A similar mark of synchronism in time is found in chap. ix. 20, after the sounding of the sixth trumpet, when the rest of the men are represented as not repenting. The final day of wrath is with more propriety referred to, in this instance, as taking effect on the western branch of the Roman empire, to which the seals have respect.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *And after these things saw four angels standing n the four corners of the arth, holding the four inds of the earth, that the ind should not blow on he earth, nor on the sea, or on any tree.*

2 *And I saw another angel ascending from the east aving the seal of the living God: and he cried ith a loud voice to the our angels, to whom it as given to hurt the earth nd the sea.*

3 *Saying, Hurt not the arth, neither the sea, nor he trees, till we have sealed he servants of our God in heir foreheads.*

4 *And I heard the number of them which were ealed: and there were ealed an hundred and orty and four thousand of ll the tribes of the children of Israel.*

5 *Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve*

From the lamentations, in the latter part of the sixth seal, uttered by the kings and great men of the earth, who call upon the rocks to fall on them, because the great day of wrath was come, we should be led to conclude that the succeeding seal would contain the particulars of that day; but, on the contrary, the narrative being carried down to the sixth seal, and having sounded a note of coming judgment, we find this chapter commences by the sealing of a people, until the completion of which the four destroying angels are commanded not to hurt the earth. The structure of this book, as laid down in the Preface, would not allow of the opening of the seventh seal; but the Prophetic History of the Western branch of the Roman Empire having been brought down to that period, just preceding the last sevenfold act of consummating wrath (chap. xvi.), it was necessary to return, and bring the other two histories, down to the same point. The sealing, therefore, of the true servants of God is here introduced with perfect propriety; and the question arises, who are these favoured people? It is evidently a whole nation to whom this

act of mercy is extended. The character of this book forbids our interpreting it literally; besides one of the tribes (Dan) is omitted, as if purposely, to prevent such an explanation; and also in the xiv th chapter, where the same sealed nation is spoken of, they are represented as following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, which the Jews do not, but continue his greatest enemies. For these reasons, therefore, it cannot be the twelve tribes of Israel; and we are driven to the conclusion, that they are here introduced as a symbol to denote an entire nation, who should receive protection from the judgments contained under the seventh seal (chapter xvi.), in consequence of their being distinguished as a true church from the surrounding apostacy. Viewing this prophecy, therefore, as affecting the Western Roman earth, it may be asked, what nation answers to the description contained in the text? It is obvious the symbol can receive an adequate accomplishment only in the British Protestant nation. She alone, of all the ten Papal kingdoms, so effectually extricated herself from that apostacy at the time of the Reformation, as to present at this period a national church, founded upon the pure doctrines of the Bible; and she alone, of all these kingdoms, presents herself as receiving fulfilment of the prophecy by the most extraordinary exemption from the judgments which have been poured out since the year 1792, in the first six vials of wrath (chap xvi.), upon the other nine kingdoms of Christendom. Every capital in Christian Papal Europe, excepting England, has, in its turn, been possessed by the infidel Emperor of France, the country deluged with blood and rapine, and

thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

6 *Of the tribe of Asher were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.*

7. *Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.*

8 *Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*

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very dynasty and form of government therein brought down or disgraced, and trampled upon, by this scourge of the Papal nations. France, Spain, Austria, Portugal, Naples, Tuscany, and the three church-states in Italy, Lombardy, Ravenna, and Rome, have all in their turn experienced the heavy hand of this instrument of God's wrath; who has gone forth as a burning meteor, withering men by his presence, as though conscious of the Divine commission given him under the fourth vial, in the imperial symbol of the sun, to scorch men with fire. (chap. xvi. v. 8.)

9 *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;*
10 *And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*
11 *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.*
12 *Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*
13 *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me,*

It is evident that the vision which ensues in this chapter carries us on to a period subsequent to that event, predicted in the former part, from its introductory intimation that it was after this the Apostle beheld the great multitude which no man could number, of *all nations* and kindred, and people, and tongues, who stood before the throne: whereas the former vision consisted of a *single nation* whose express number is heard by the Apostle, and is therefore to be regarded as indicative of limitation. The symbols in the whole of this book are taken from the Jewish temple and service; and from the mention of the multitude before the throne having palms in their hands, we are referred to the feast of tabernacles, one of the three great feasts of the Jewish nation, when all Israel were present. See Lev. xxiii. 33—44.

The nation sealed in the former part of the chapter, are protected *during the pouring out of those judgments upon the rest of the nations*: but the vision here contemplates that peaceful condition of the church,

when she shall be in the possession of the heavenly things, and which is subsequent to those acts of Divine wrath. It is contemporaneous with the feast of tabernacles predicted in Zechariah xiv. 16—19, which all the nations upon earth shall come up to Jerusalem to keep from year to year; whilst the risen saints of God, shall serve him night and day, in that New Jerusalem which cometh down from heaven, chap. xxi. 2, xxii. 3.—5.—The above conclusion receives additional confirmation from the following considerations. In the 15th verse this glorious assemblage, who have been redeemed from much tribulation, are represented as being in the immediate presence of God, as having entered into the Holiest of all, in which interior recess of the temple, the throne of God was situated, and his glory appeared to the high priest, the antitype to which is unquestionably the Heavenly City. (chap. xxi. 22, to the end of the book) It is only when the seventh angel is to sound, when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ (chap. xi. 19), that the temple is said to be opened; and in the xvth chapter we further learn, that though the temple is then opened, yet no man was able to enter into it, because it was filled with smoke of the glory of God and from his power, *until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.* Now, as the last of the seven plagues contain the consummating act of the judgments in the battle of Armageddon, the destruction of the infidel Antichrist, and of the mystical Babylon, and which is immediately succeeded by Christ's millennial reign upon

What are these which are arrayed in white robes and whence came they?

14 *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

15 *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*

16 *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.*

17 *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

e earth, (see chap xvi. to xx.) it follows, as a necessary onsequence, that the vision of the palm-bearing multitude, now nder consideration, must represent the church in that state of lessedness during the Millennium, to which all the prophecies f this book, as well as every other, converges, as to a common entre. We are supported, in this conclusion, by a careful comarison of their condition, as is here expressed, with that decription of the millennial glory, contained in the xxi st and xxii d hapters of this book,—wherein God is exhibited, as in this essage likewise, as dwelling with his church (xxi. 3) in the ew Jerusalem; whose servants are represented (xxii. 3, 4) as erving him continually, neither enduring any more sorrow, or crying, nor pain, because God shall wipe away all tears from heir eyes (xxi. 4); and the Lamb, who is the light of the city, hall feed them and shall lead them to waters of life (xxi. 6, and xii. 1), and they shall reign for ever and ever.

We are presented, in verse 14, with a confirmation of that undamental doctrine of the Christian religion, that it is the lood of Ch. ist alone that can cleanse from all sin, and that it s through much tribulation that we can be rendered participators of the blessings of that happy period. (see also chap. 1. 5.)

CHAPTERS VIII. AND IX.

Commencement of Trumpet History, or Eastern Branch of the Roman Empire.

THE history of the seals, and the first of the three main prophecies having been terminated, this chapter introduces that of the trumpets, or second series, in the Apostle's vision.

1 *And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.*

2 *And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.*

The silence in heaven which immediately follows the opening of the seventh seal, which it is to be supposed, as usual, would have contained the peculiar subject of that seal, intimates to us that the particulars are reserved for another portion of the prophecy; and that now the Apostle is about to begin a new act in the Apocalyptic drama, which should be introduced as events consequent upon the sounding of the seven trumpets, given to the seven angels, and which must receive their interpretation in the eastern branch of the Roman Empire.

There is a prefatory introduction to this, as to every chronological prophecy contained in this book, which seems to have been adopted as a Divine expedient, to act as a landmark to the comprehension of its structure.

3 *And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.*

4 *And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.*

If these verses be read in a parenthesis, it will be found that their omission altogether does not interfere with the sense of the passage; but that the commencement of the sixth verse is closely connected with the latter clause of the second. In

is parenthesis, then, is contained n introduction to the whole; but pecially taking a prophetic glance the seventh trumpet, when the rthquake takes place, mentioned chap. xi. 19, and also is detailed ith other accompaniments of Divine

5. *And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*

engeance, at the pouring out of the seventh vial, in chap. xvi. e angel standing at the altar, having the golden censer, with uch incense, represents our Lord in his character of High riest. The symbols employed, carry us back to Leviticus xvi. , 13; and a comparison of the two passages leads us to nclude, that the event referred to, and typified by this emblem the day of atonement. The seventh trumpet answers the me end, in the dispensations of God to the Gentile church, as e day of atonement did to Israel. It is the day of vengeance d year of recompence, as it is written in Isaiah lxiii. 4: "The y of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed come." See also Isaiah xxxiv. 8.

The trumpets exclusively apply to e eastern branch of the Roman pire, being one of the three parts o which Constantine the Great vided it; and hence the frequent currence of the expression, peculiar the trumpet history, of the third rt of the earth, the third part of n, &c. Agreeably, therefore, to s rule, we interpret the first trumpet signify the Gothic eruption in the gn of the emperor Valens, A.D. 376.

6 *And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

7 *The first angel sounded and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.*

sounding was followed by hail and fire mingled with blood. il, in symbolic language, denotes war from a northern quar- , (hail being supposed to generate in the north); and fire and ood accompanying it, point out the destructive character of e warfare which should ensue. The descent of this hail upon e trees, and grass, is strictly consistent with the analogy of e symbol, and denotes the ruin brought upon the inhabitants the empire. In the year 376, the Visigoths driven from their

possessions to the north of the Danube, by an invasion of the Huns, received permission of Valens to settle themselves in the Roman dominions; which they had scarcely effected, before they rose up in arms against the Roman power, and, after defeating the general sent against them, ravaged the whole country south of the Danube. Uniting their forces with the Ostrogoths and other barbarians, whom they invited to cross the Danube in two years after their entrance, they defeated and slew the emperor Valens at the battle of Adrianople; and, after destroying two-thirds of his army, desolated the provinces as far as the confines of Italy. They were afterwards driven back by the emperor Theodosius; but his death, occurring January 395, prepared the way for another Gothic invasion, contained in the second trumpet *.

8 *And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood:*

9 *And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.*

A mountain is often used in Scripture, to describe a destroying power, as in Zech. iv. 7, and in Jer. li. 25. It may either receive a personal application, as in the first instance, where the infidel king is addressed, or the more usual signification attached to the figure in symbolic language, may be applied in the interpretation of this second trumpet: in this sense, it would mean a kingdom. In the year following the death of Theodosius the Great, Alaric the Goth came in upon the Greek provinces like a volcano. In describing which irruption, Gibbon says (chap. xxx), "The fields of Phocis and Bœotia were covered by a deluge of barbarians; the whole territory of Attica, from the promontory of Sunium to the town of Megara, was blasted with their baneful presence; and Athens itself resembled the bleeding and empty skin of a slaughtered victim. Corinth, Argos, Sparta, yielded without resistance to the arms of the Goths; and the most fortunate of the inhabitants were saved by death, from beholding the slaughter of their families, and the conflagration of their cities." It is well known, that whole nations transported themselves in these irruptions, with their families and property, into the invaded

* See Gibbon, chap. xxvi.

territories, carrying fire and sword and desolation wherever they came: which terrible and overwhelming destruction could scarcely receive a more comprehensive symbol, than a great mountain burning with fire being cast into the sea.

The sea being turned into blood, in ver. 8, clearly directs our attention, in solving this emblem, to the extinction of human life, in the third part of the Roman earth; and the destruction of the third part of ships, in ver. 9, to the utter annihilation of all civil and ecclesiastical establishments, which sunk beneath the overpowering violence of these barbarous invaders.

10 *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.*

11 *And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.*

A star, agreeably to the interpretation of our Lord himself (chap. i. 20), means a minister of religion; and consistently with the dictionary of the symbolic language, as laid down in the preface, we are led to expect the apostacy of a conspicuous head in the ecclesiastical hemisphere, whose defection from the true doctrine should operate with peculiar malignancy on the church, emblematized by the rivers and fountains of waters, as the source and streams of Christian knowledge, which are represented in the text as becoming so polluted as to cause men to die. The star is denominated Wormwood, to accord with the accuracy of the figure, and to express more fully the deleterious and pernicious character of his false doctrine. In directing our researches, therefore, into the history of the Eastern Church for such a defaulter, we find Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, present himself to our view, as a singular fulfilment of this prediction. Eusebius informs us*, that he was termed "the Father of Blasphemy; and that were he to compose a history of the heresies of the church, he should begin with the impious Nestorius, whose false doctrine occasioned a great dissension in the Constantinopolitan church;" and he adds, "the war of the churches had its origin from hence; and this adulterate coin, stamped

* See Eusebius Ecclesiast. Hist. of Evagrius Scholasticus, Lib. i. ch. 2—7.

by him, refilled the church with innumerable wars, making an inundation of civil blood."

The peculiar error of Nestorius was his doctrine respecting the person of Christ; he denied the orthodox opinions of the church; that Christ united the Divine with the human nature, in one person for ever. He contended that he had two persons, the Divine and the human. From his own words, quoted by Eusebius, "I cannot term him God, who was two months and three months old," we judge his sentiments partook of those of the modern Socinians, than which a fouler or more deadly error never entered the church; the very groundwork of the Christian faith consisting in the human nature being united and reconciled to the Divine nature in the person of Christ. Nestorius's opinions were condemned at a synod of the bishops, held at Ephesus; he himself divested of his episcopal dignity, and excluded from all manner of sacerdotal convention. It is the method adopted in this Book, to view a heresy in itself a judgment; and that which succeds as the consequence, as the Papal period under the fifth seal. It is thus in this and the ensuing trumpets the heresy of Nestorius is here given as the operating cause, of which the fourth, fifth, and sixth present us first, with the darkening influences, which its promulgation had upon the churches; entailing upon them the calamitous visitations of the fifth and sixth trumpet. This heresy sprung up, A. D. 429, in the reign of Theodosius II.

12 *And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*

Notwithstanding the sentence of the synod of Ephesus, upon Nestorius, and the condemnation of his heretical tenets, they still existed, and were perpetuated in the Eastern Church, as Arianism was in the Western. We are disposed to attach primarily an ecclesiastical signification to the symbols in this verse; and they will therefore denote the obscuration or eclipse of spiritual light, as proceeding from the Sun of Righteousnes, even Christ; and that declension of vital godliness which visited the Eastern Church and her ministers,

towards the close of the fifth century, consequent upon the propagation of the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies*. Milner says "Whilst speaking of the state of religion in the East, at this period, "I am disgusted with the prospect. It grows worse towards the end of the century. Doctrinal feuds and malignant passions involve the whole†"—We consider this trumpet to last until the time of Heraclius, in whose reign the first woe-trumpet began to sound. We may learn from this heresy and its awful consequences, that the more subtle and refined it may be in its character, the more destructive it becomes in its effects; and those especially, which have respect to the person of our Saviour, ought to be guarded against by the church, with singular pertinacity, opposed with unremitting vigour, and denounced with unshaken fidelity.

The way having been thus prepared, the three other trumpets are herein announced by a proclamation

13 *And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of hea-*

* The Eutychian heresy consisted in ascribing only one nature to Christ, and which naturally introduced another form of error, A.D. 630, called the Monothelite heresy, which gave him only one will (see Milner, vol. iii. chap. iii.) The true doctrine of Christ's person, according to the standards of the Churches of England and Scotland, (see Common-Prayer Book, and the Confession of Faith,) is that the Person of the Son of God took upon himself our fallen nature, being of the substance of the woman contended with, and overcame sin in the flesh, and thus conquered Satan in his stronghold, even fallen humanity, which by his subtlety he had won in Adam. That Christ, in virtue of this conquest, rose from the dead, became heir of all things, as Son of Man: and is now glorified, and seated at the right hand of God, having redeemed human nature from the giant grasp of the devil. The Person of Jesus Christ has, therefore, two natures and two wills, united in him for ever, perfect God and perfect man; but both conjoined centered and included in the one Person, Jesus Christ, who although he be God and man, yet is he not two, but one. How far the reception of this belief into the creed of a Christian may affect the ultimate salvation of the soul, we pretend not to determine; but this we do say, that a mere glance at ecclesiastical history for the first few centuries, will afford abundant evidence that armies of martyrs would have rushed to the stake, and triumphantly died in the vindication of the purity of their faith, from the encroachments of heretical tenets: and after perceiving how churches when once impregnated with such moral poison, drew down the vengeance of Almighty God on whole nations; it may or ought to be sufficient to startle the contracted selfishness of the religionists of these present times, whose sum total in theology seems limited to an assent to the doctrine of the atonement, and whose extent of belief appears comprehended in the individual inquiry, Am I safe? True religion is not a selfish thing: it rather consists in its outward manifestation in zeal for the truth and glory of God. We leave others to reconcile these discrepancies, with the boasted prosperity of the church: for our parts we perceive, and hesitate not to declare, that the judgments of God cannot long be withheld from such Laodicean blindness.

† See Milner's Church History, vol. ii. chap. xii.

ven, saying with a loud voice. Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

CHAP. IX.—1 *And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.*

2 *And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.*

of woe, from the angel, indicating that the judgments upon the Eastern Church are about to commence.

We find that this chapter brings us down to the beginning of the seventh century, when Christianity in the East was laid prostrate by the Saracenic invasion, contained in the first woe-trumpet of the following chapter.

This chapter is introduced by an announcement of a star falling from heaven, or a Christian minister, to whose defection is to be traced the origination of the events which follow.

This star represents Sergius, a Nestorian monk, an Italian by birth, who was banished from Constantinople, in consequence of having imbibed the Arian heresy. The smoke out of the bottomless pit describes a false religion, which should darken the sun and the air; that is, should obscure the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness, by its extensive reception amongst mankind. It was chiefly attributable to the instructions and artifices of this friar, that Mohammed concocted this audacious imposture. His whole system of superstition is a compound of Christianity, Paganism, Judaism, and Arianism. In forming this false religion, he was assisted by this Sergius and a Jew*; the former of whom, as the chief agent, and as a minister of the Christian Church, is alluded to by the star in the text, as having the key of the bottomless pit, or power permitted for the scourge of the apostate Eastern Church, to let loose on mankind a false religion with all its attendant deceptions and evil consequences.

3. *And there came out of*

We have here announced under

* See Milner's Church History, vol. iii. p. 122.

the symbol of a swarm of locusts, the Saracenic invasions under the false prophet, Mohammed, and his successors. God had suffered the success of his imposture, as a scourge to the Eastern Church, whose iniquity was ripe for punishment. After the capture of Damascus by the Saracens, Jerusalem was taken, A. D. 637; Antioch and Alexandria successively sunk under their victorious arms. The locusts furnish a very correct figure to describe the Arabian armies, because it is from that country they generally proceed (see Exod. x. 13; Judges vii. 12). Upon a careful examination of the symbol employed, a remarkable correspondency will be observable, in the natural history of these animals, and those they are chosen to signify. They have power given unto them like unto scorpions, whose sting is attended with excruciating pain, though not fatal in its effects.

the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Their being commanded not to hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, demonstrates that these were not natural, but symbolical locusts. It is remarkable, the injunctions to the Arabian commanders and officers were to destroy no palm trees, nor burn any fields of corn; cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle only such as you kill to eat†."

4. *And it was commanded them, that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.*

It frequently occurs in prophetical language, that what is spoken figuratively is likewise literally fulfilled, as in this instance. Their commission was only against those who had not the seal of God in their foreheads; that is those who were corrupt or idolatrous Christians; and it is remarkable in history, that in those countries of Asia, Africa, or Europe, where the Saracens exhibited their conquests, the Christians were generally guilty of idolatry, in the worshipping of saints, if not of images; indeed, this was made the pretext of Mohammed and his

† Ockley's History of the Saracens, vol. i. p. 25.

followers, to chastise them, and to re-establish the unity of the Godhead.

Grass is put in opposition to the men who were not sealed. This corresponds with the sealing of the British nation, at the opening of the seventh seal (chap. vii), who were protected as a true church, from the judgments which then fell on the rest of the nations of Christendom. Thus, when the first woe-trumpet is sounded, containing a commission to hurt, and the second woe-trumpet follows, to kill those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads, the true servants of God are protected from their effects. Accordingly, we find in history, that whenever they attempted to extend their conquests into upper Armenia, Mesopotamia, or into Savoy, Piedmont, and the southern parts of France, where the truth still existed in its least adulterated state, they were ever repulsed and driven back, and were not able to maintain any advantage against them.

5 *And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.*

6 *And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.*

As the power committed to the inflictors of these judgments on the Eastern branch of the Roman Empire was definite in its object, it was likewise limited in its operation.

The expression in the first clause of this verse applies to the Christians, not as individuals, but as a collective body, a state or empire; the eradication of which formed no part of their commission. They never could succeed in the capture of Constantinople, though they continued a siege of upwards of seven years. It is said, that they should be tormented five prophetic months: which taking a month at the Jewish computation of thirty days, and a day for a year (Num. xiv. 34), is one hundred and fifty years; that is, during that period they should be exposed to most grievous oppression, and subject to such excessive exactions as usually accompany the occupation of a country by a cruel and barbarous conqueror. The Saracenic invasion took place A. D. 632, and after Mohammed had subdued the countries in Arabia, and until

the year 782; during this period, whilst they had one king over them (see ver. 11), the rapidity and extent of their conquests almost exceeds credibility. Palestine, Syria, and indeed almost all Asia Minor, fell into their possession. About the year 762 the Caliph Almansor built Bagdad, to fix there the seat of his empire; and when the caliphs, who before had removed from place to place, fixed their habitation there, then the Saracens ceased from their excursions and ravages like locusts, and became a settled nation: they made no more such rapid and amazing conquests; their power and glory began to decline, and their empire gradually to moulder away*.

Their power was to torment men as a scorpion; not to kill, but to afflict them by such a course of oppressive cruelty, that in their anguish they should seek death, as a relief from their tormentors, but should not find it.

In these, and the two following verses, the nature of these locusts are given; and which symbol is made available, as in the instance of the Prophet Joel (chap. ii), when setting forth the character of a powerful invading army. The first peculiarity is their being like unto horses prepared for battle, which is expressed in similar words, in Joel, chap. ii. 4. Many authors have observed that the head of a locust resembles that of a horse: indeed the Italians denominate them little horses. The Arabians have been in all ages famous for their horsemanship, it being well known that their strength mainly consists in their cavalry. They had, as it were crowns of gold on their heads. A distinguishing mark of the Arabs is their head-dress, consisting of turbans or mitres: they even boast of their common people wearing diadems, which mark of ornament and distinction in other countries is regarded solely as the privilege of kings.

7 *And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.*

8 *And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.*

* See Dissertations on the Prophecies, by Bishop Newton, p. 549; from whose valuable work, the writer is indebted for the interpretation of these two woe-trumpets.

The crowns may likewise signify the kingdoms and dominions which they should acquire by conquest.

They had faces like men; that is, they wore their beards and mustachoes as men, and their hair was said to be as the hair of women, because it was their custom to allow it to flow and to plait it. Another property adopted from Joel's prophecy, is their teeth being as the teeth of lions (see Joel i. 6), which expression denotes their strength to devour and consume.

9 *And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.*

As the teeth in the former verse denote the offensive arms of the Saracens, the breastplates are here designed to express their defensive armour. The locust has a hard shell or skin, which authors when relating their description, have compared to defensive armour, with which nature has furnished them. The sound of their wings being as the sound of many horses running to battle, refer us again to the Prophet Joel, chap. ii. 5 where a similar figure occurs to express the resistless power of a conquering army. The noise which accompanies the flight of one of these insects, is almost equal to that of a bird.

10 *And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.*

It has been before noticed that the sting of a scorpion, though not fatal, is attended with the most intense suffering. The emblem is here applied to point out the false religion, which the Saracens should succeed in establishing in those countries, over which their arms had triumphed, according to the explanation of this symbol in Isa. ix. 15: "The prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail." It is well known what astonishing success attended the propagation of the pernicious tenets of the Mohammedan superstition; for they proceeded as it were with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, it being their purpose, acknowledged by Mohammed and his successors, to force all mankind to submit to their faith. It is worthy of observation, how exact the portrait is in every respect, shewing us how comprehensive is the symbolic language of Scripture. It is again repeated, they hurt men five months. We have

already given our interpretation (see ver. 5), as significant of the duration of this Saracenic woe, comprising a period of one hundred and fifty years; but we have now to notice other minute particulars, which the emblem conveys to us. The locusts are produced about April; and they die in September: scorpions likewise are noxious only during this period of the warm months; and if we take the expression in its literal sense, then it receives a singular fulfilment: for as the natural locusts live, and the scorpions are injurious for only five months, so the Saracens made their excursions between April and September, retreating in the latter month into winter quarters, as the best authorities concur in stating.* It has also been remarked,† that "the Saracens made inroads into all those parts of Christendom, where the natural locust is wont to be seen and to do mischief, and nowhere else, and that too in the same proportion. This may be easily verified from history." Thus in every respect the type receives a most correct and adequate accomplishment.

They had a king over them, whose name is Abaddon, or Apollyon, which is *destroyer*. Mr. Mede supposes "that this is some allusion to the name of Obodas, the common name of the kings of that part of Arabia, from whence Mohammed came, as Pharaoh was the common name of the kings of Egypt, and Cæsar of the emperors of Rome. However that may be, the interpretation of the name agrees perfectly well with Mohammed and the Caliphs, his successors, who were the authors of all those horrid wars and desolations, and who openly taught and professed that their religion was to be propagated by the sword.

11 *And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*

12 *One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.*

The angel announces in verse 12, a pause corresponding to that which occurs between the sixth and seventh vial; and indicates to us, that an interval should take place after the woe

* Dissertation on the Prophecies, by Bishop Newton, p. 547.
† Daubuz, p. 409.

of the Arabian locusts, before the succeeding woe of the Euphratean horsemen should come.

13 *And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God.*

14 *Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.*

When the angel sounds the sixth trumpet, a voice is heard from the four horns of the golden altar; which reference to the temple receives explanation from chap. vi. 9, when the souls of them that were slain for the word of God are represented as crying out for vengeance. This introduction, therefore, of the second woe, is to be regarded as an answer to their prayers; and the commission proceeding from them, to loose the four angels that are bound in the great river Euphrates, teaches us that it is to God's faithful servants that the administration of justice is intrusted. "Shall not God avenge his own elect?"

The river Euphrates is mentioned by name, to point out the locality of the nation here referred to; and which can receive but one interpretation, and that to be the Turkish power. The four angels are the four sultanies, or kingdoms, of the Turks; bordering upon the river Euphrates; namely, Bagdad, Damascus, Aleppo, and Iconium, all of which were established between A. D. 1055 and 1080. The Turkish power therefore was made the executioner of this new woe.

15 *And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.*

The woe of the Saracenic locusts did not extend to extermination, but only to torment men; but the commission given to the Turkish horsemen, is to slay the third part of men, —that is, to annihilate and dispossess the Roman Empire of her dominions in the East, where the Christian Church had reached its height of corruption. Accordingly all Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Thrace, Macedon, Greece, and all the countries which formerly belonged to the Greek or Eastern Cæsars, the Othmans have conquered and subjugated to their dominion. The duration of this woe is given in the text, and which we interpret agreeably to the pro-

phetic Scriptures: thus a year of three hundred and sixty days, a month of thirty days, and a day and an hour, each day for a year (Numbers xiv. 34), is three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days. Constantinople fell into their hands A. D. 1453, in the reign of Mohammed, their seventh emperor: at which date we may consider their dominions in the East as fully established, and reckoning back these three hundred and ninety-one years will bring us to 1062, which we have seen is the average date of the constitution of their four sultanies. So that the whole period of the Othmans slaying the third part of men, or subduing the Christian states in the Greek or Eastern Roman Empire, is three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days. But though the time is thus limited for their slaying men, yet no period is fixed for the duration of their empire; only this second woe will end, when the third woe (chap. xi. 14) shall be about to commence, when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ. In the full anticipation of the nearness of this glorious epoch in the world's history, we anxiously turn our eyes towards this power, and we find that her present situation amongst the surrounding nations tells full well of her speedy downfall; for we read in chap. xvi. 12, that the sixth vial takes effect upon the river Euphrates; and she is thus affording to Europe a momentous and magnificent synchronism in the prophecies, by which all men may learn, if they will, that the last woe is about to be inflicted, the grand consummation of God's wrath upon the nations.

Their armies are represented in history as very numerous, consisting of myriads of myriads. At the siege of Constantinople, Mohammed the Second had in his army about four hundred thousand men, besides a powerful fleet of thirty larger and two hundred lesser ships. They are described as horsemen; and it is well known that their armies consisted chiefly of cavalry, especially before the order of Janizaries was instituted by Amurath the First.

16 *And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.*

In the Apostle's vision, that is, in appearance, not in reality, they had

17 *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and*

them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and of brimstone; the colour of fire is red; that of jacinth, or hyacinth, blue; and of brimstone, yellow; which three warlike colours are particularly conspicuous in the dress of the Othmans. In appearance also, the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions, to denote their strength, courage, and ungovernable fierceness. Out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. This is a manifest allusion to guns and gunpowder, which were invented under this trumpet, and were of such signal service to the Othmans in their wars. Indeed a large army of horsemen drawn up and discharging artillery could scarcely receive a more accurate representation than that of fire and smoke proceeding from their mouths.

18 *By these three was the third part of men killed; by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.*

Amurath the Second broke into Peloponnesus, and took several strong places, chiefly by the means of his artillery. But his son Mohammed, at the siege of Constantinople, employed such great guns as were never made use of before. One is described to have been of such a monstrous size, that it was drawn by seventy yoke of oxen, and by two thousand men. This cannon discharged a ball of three hundred pounds weight; and the report is said to have been so great, that all the country round about was shaken, to the distance of forty furlongs. For forty days the walls of Constantinople were battered by these guns; and so many breaches were made, that the city was taken by assault, and an end put to the Grecian Empire *.

19 *For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents; and had heads, and with them they do hurt.*

Having described their power in their mouth, to consist in that tremendous artillery with which the Othmans made such havoc and destruction in the Greek or Eastern Empire, we find them likewise represented as

* Dissertation on the Prophecies, by Bishop Newton, p. 554.

having tails like unto serpents, with which they do hurt. This figure, as in the Saracenic woe (verse 10), denotes the corrupt and poisonous doctrines, which should accompany the establishment of their dominions. The Turks profess and propagate the same imposture as the Saracens. In the text, the tails are accommodated to the different creatures; the tails of scorpions to locusts; the tails of serpents, with a head at each end, to horses. How well the Euphratean horsemen or Turkish power has fulfilled its commission against the Eastern Church and Empire, we have little occasion to record. The history of their wars and government is filled with enormities exercised over the subdued Greeks; and in our own times they have exhibited such barbarous oppression, that having first elicited the sympathy of all men, we have seen within the last few years, an association formed amongst the European powers, to interfere on their behalf. It may be asked, why did not the condition of the Greek nations excite the commiseration of the civilized world at an earlier period, when the same cause had so long existed, which now has occasioned such universal sympathy? and the answer is, because she had not yet drunk the cup to the dregs, which God had given her in his wrath. But the time has now arrived, and God, who "is governor amongst the nations," and presideth in the counsels of every cabinet, though unseen, and may be unregarded, hath so guided the hearts of these princes and peoples, as shall best promote the accomplishment of his own mighty purposes. It would be well if we could regard the evolutions of empires less with a political eye, and with a greater deference to the will and mind of Him who ever maketh the wrath of man to praise him, in whose eyes the nations are "as the drop of a bucket, and who taketh up the isles as a very little thing."

Having arrived at the end of the sixth trumpet or second woe, we find the history of the trumpets, or Eastern branch, synchronises in time with that of the seals, or Western branch of the Roman Empire. Accordingly, these two verses contain a similar notification to that in chap.

20 *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of*

wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

21 *Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*

vi. 15—17; by which mark, we perceive that both histories are now brought to the eve of that great day, which is the subject of the seventh seal and trumpet, contained in the seven subdivisions of the vials of wrath. (See chap. xvi.) Though the Greek Church had thus been desolated and ruined in the sight of all nations, yet we learn that the rest of the men, (that is, the Latin Church, which had pretty well escaped these calamities,) repented not of their evil deeds. There is scarcely any description of the Papacy in the Holy Scriptures which presents to us so full and genuine a representation as that contained in these two verses.

They still maintained the worship of saints, ascribing to them a mediatorial office, when there is but one Mediator, even Christ, and blindly persisted in their adoration of idols of gold and silver, by which miserable superstition Satan has procured for himself that worship due only to God. Neither repented they of their murders, their persecutions and inquisitions, nor of their sorceries, their pretended miracles and revelations, nor of their fornication nor of their thefts, their exactions and impositions on mankind; and which condition of hardened impenitence has fully ripened the Western Roman Empire or Papal Christendom, for that tremendous act of vengeance which is about to be poured down upon her, with such unmitigated severity.

CHAPTER X.

HAVING thus arrived at the end of the sixth trumpet (after narrating the contents of which, we find a similar notification to that which occurred in the parallel history of the seals), this chapter begins with the vision of an angel, and not the events which we are led to expect would follow the sounding of the seventh trumpet, in regular chronological order. Instead of this, therefore, we have a sublime representation of our Saviour under the character of a mighty angel, taking possession of the earth, and the sea, which is his rightful inheritance. (Zech. ix, 10; xiv. 10, &c.) There will exist, no doubt that this mighty angel is Christ, when we compare this vision with that contained in chap. iv. 3; where he that sat upon the throne, was surrounded with a rainbow, which, being a symbol of a covenant, can only be appropriate to God in Christ, in covenant with his people. His being clothed with a cloud, denotes that this is not his personal manifestation, as in chap. xix. 11, &c. His face shone as the sun, as when St. Paul was struck to the earth with a similar vision; and St. John records the same appearance in chap. i. 16, when our Lord presented himself to communicate to him his Epistles to the Asiatic churches. He had a little open book in his right hand, when he set his right foot upon the sea, and his

1 *And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:*

2 *And he had in his hand a little book open; and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,*

3 *And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried seven thunders uttered their voices.*

4 *And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.*

left on the earth, signifying his right of possession. It was a custom among the Jews, when an estate was sold, to have two books, containing the regular transfer of the property; the one sealed and deposited with the elder, as a public functionary: the other was allowed to be open, and remained with the purchaser, as token of legal possession. It is in reference to this custom, that when Christ comes to claim his inheritance, he is represented with a little open book in his hand. When the angel cried, seven thunders uttered their voices, which when the Apostle heard, he was about to write, as heretofore; but he is instructed by a voice, to seal those things, and to write them not. The seven thunders are the seven subdivisions of the last trumpet, which are comprehended in the supplementary history of chap. xvi.; and being narrated with full particulars in their appropriate place, it would have been premature to have given them here, being the same as the seven vials, which are common to all three histories, thus comprising the last period of each, and including them in the final consummation of God's wrath. We are informed (chap. xi. 15), that when the seventh angel sounded, the kingdoms of the world became the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ; and that the time was come to give judgment and power unto the saints. The voice of the angel was as the voice of a lion, which is frequently used in Scripture as a symbol of wrath. Thus, in Jer. xxv. 29—38, where it is made synchronical with the treading of the wine-press of the wrath of God, which we know to be the final act of judgment upon the Gentile nations, under the seventh vial.

5 *And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea, and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,*

6 *And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things*

This sublime passage is the counterpart of Daniel's vision, in chap. xii. 7. In that prophet the angel is represented as lifting up both hands, probably signifying that the oath in that instance had respect to the times of both the Jewish and Gentile churches: the duration of the captivity, and punishment of the former, and the termination of the dispensation of grace to the latter: for St.

Paul informs us (Rom. xi. 25), that these great events are contemporaneous; for he says, "that blindness in part is happened to Israel, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*" There is considerable difficulty in the interpretation of this passage. We have here two things declared to be synonymous, with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the ending of time, and the finishing the mystery of God; and as it is said of the latter that it should be, when the angel should begin to sound, it follows that this declaration is equally true of the former.

which are therein that there should be time no longer:

7 *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

From a comparison of this passage, with chap. xi. 15, it would appear that the following events are to occur synchronically: first, the sounding of the seventh angel; second, the end of time, third, the completion of the mystery of God; and, fourth, the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdons of our Lord, and his Christ, and that these are to happen when the angel shall begin to sound. Upon such a supposition, if we can ascertain the period of either event, we determine that of the others. With four such important landmarks in the prophetic chart as our guide, it would appear an easy task to arrive at a satisfactory result; but the embarrassment arises in accurately determining upon either point, without subjecting the conclusion to well-founded objections. We will, however, as clearly as we can, state the arguments which occur to us, as bearing upon the question, and leave our readers to form their own opinion of their respective weight. The question for resolution is, whether the symbolic act of the seventh angel sounding took place, A. D. 1792, at the French Revolution, when the seven vials, or thunders, the seven-fold act of the last seal, began to be poured out, or whether it is still future, and is to occur at the pouring out of the seventh vial. As the sounding of the trumpet by the angel is clearly a symbolical representation to distinguish a period of time, and can only be determined by events otherwise cognizable to us, it is evident our inquiries must be directed to the other prophetical events; and as the

last of the above (chap. xi. 15), mentioned at the sounding of the seventh angel, is advanced in support of each position, our attention must be directed to the ending of time, and the finishing the mystery of God. The mystery of God, or of Christ, in the Epistles, invariably refers to God's calling out an elect church from the Gentiles (see Romans xi. 25, xvi. 25; Col. i. xxvi. 27; 1 Cor. ii. 7; Eph. i. 9, iii. 3—6, 9, vi. 19; 1 Tim. iii. 9, 16). Assuming this, therefore, to be the correct view of the passage, it may be argued, as the mystery of God cannot be finished until the completion of the Gentile election, and as we can perceive daily evidence that it is still going on, it follows as a consequence that the seventh angel has not yet sounded, but is still future, and synchronises with the pouring out of the seventh vial, when the angel thus sounding becomes the last trump of St. Paul, which closes the day of grace, and ushers in the day of vengeance. In support of this view also, it may be further urged, that the events mentioned in chap xi. 15—19, as immediately consequent upon the angel sounding, are those which are found contained only under the seventh vial (chap. xvi. 17, 21), namely the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord, the earthquake with great hail &c., the battle of Armageddon, and the reign of the saints; and, as we perceive none of these events to have taken place, the conclusion follows, that the sounding is still future. On the other hand, it is contended, that as the thunders are admitted to be the same as the vials (ch. xvi) and as the seven thunders are mentioned (chap. x. 3) when the seventh trumpet is expected to sound, it is fair to infer that the thunders are the seven subdivisions of the seventh trumpet, as the vials are of the seventh seal; and as it is admitted on all hands that the first vial was poured out immediately following the French Revolution, the seventh trumpet must likewise have sounded then. This is confirmed by a reference to other parts of this book, to which we are directed by the announcement, in chap xi. 18, that on the sounding of the seventh angel, the day of wrath is arrived. A similar notice occurs at the expiration of the sixth seal (chap. vi. 17), just before the pouring out of the seven vials (ch. xvi.) which are in fact the seven-fold division of that day of wrath. In further support of

this view, the oath of our Lord (v. 6), that at the sounding of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, that time should be no longer, leads us almost imperceptibly to connect the termination of the period in question with Daniel's more minute explanation; wherein it is expressly declared, that it refers to the time, times, and a half (Dan. xii. 7), or 1260 years, and that the angel, (who in both vlsions is evidently Christ himself,) alludes to the prophetic times of 1260 years, in contradistinction to the seventy-five days or years, which were to follow their expiration before that period arrived, pronounced "blessed." Upon this supposition the seventh angel sounded, A. D. 1792, when the vials began to be poured out, the judgments on Papal Christendom began; and when (though in a hidden and mysterious sense) the first blow was aimed, by Christ, at the Antichristian kings, which is speedily to end in their entire removal from their vicegerency. The first act of Christ's power to possess himself of his kingdom, not being manifested to the cognizance of man, is rather confirmed by Daniel (chap. ii. 45), wherein the stone which smites the ten toes of the image, is cut out without hands though afterwards it becomes a great mountain, which fills the earth, to denote that the blow will come from an invisible power. As it is admitted, the appearance of our Lord in the commencement of this chapter is a symbolical action, and not his personal advent, we confess we see no objection to give the declaration in chap. xi. 15, that "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord," a symbolical, or rather a prophetical announcement; and we see not why this should be made any ground of objection to the personal advent of our Lord, contained in the xixth chapter, because, though one event it might have been often exhibited to the view of the apostolic seer, acting as the one concentric point, which would be ever presenting itself through the intervals of the subordinate representations. This is corroborated by a reference to other occasions of the angels rejoicing in this book. In chap. xvi. 4, where the third vial is poured out, and the first act of judgment takes place on the Papal apostacy, the angel of the waters, and the voice from the altar, which is the church in heaven, are represented as singing songs of triumph, as though the judgments

were full and complete; and we see, therefore, no reason why the announcement in chap. xi. 12, consequent upon the sounding of the seventh angel, that "the Kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ," should not be strictly appropriate to the arrangement of this revelation, and regarded as a note of exultation, when the first hidden blow was given to the apostate kingdoms, and prophetical of that final destruction in the 18th verse of the xith chapter, and that contained in the xixth chapter of this book.

It is, however, evident, whichever period is assigned to this symbolic act of sounding the seventh trumpet, that it is included within the limits of that fearful day of wrath, beginning in the year 1792, and the consummation of which, we are now on the eve of witnessing, and are expecting with such intense anxiety.

8 *And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.*

9 *And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.*

10 *And I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it up: and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.*

11 *And he said unto me,*

These verses are to be considered as prefatory to the contents of this little book, which contains the history of the church, in the four ensuing chapters; the xi th being in brief, or a summary of the whole, until the end of time; and the three following, the detailed particulars of the three forms of enmity to Christ's church, manifested in the Pagan (chap. xii), the Papal (chap. xiii), and the Infidel periods (chap. xiv). We are now commencing, therefore, a new series of visions, intimated to the Apostle (v. 11), when he is informed that he must prophesy again, or recommence his vision, and return in time to the same period, from which he had brought down the two previous prophetic histories.

This new revelation is made under the form of a little open book. It is not like the sealed book which none but Christ could open; but

having opened it, all the other parts of the prophecy, including the whole mystery of God, became his by such act, and therefore it is from his hand that St. John is directed to take the little book, and to eat it. There is one other instance in Scripture, of a prophet being directed to eat a book or roll (Ezek. iii). The full signification of this figure is not clear; but we should think it conveyed the same instructions to both prophets, which the act of eating is so well calculated to express: a perfect incorporation of the revelations about to be committed to them, and that previously to giving forth the substance to others, they were to be digested first by themselves. The Apostle found the book sweet in his mouth, but bitter in his belly; from which we gather, as in Ezekiel's case, that though the instant of receiving the revelation was attended by a consciousness of the distinguished honour which God had conferred upon them, by selecting them as the means of communicating to his church, yet, inasmuch as Ezekiel's roll was written within and without with lamentations, mourning and woe: and that to St. John contained a heavy detail of the church's persecutions, apostacy, and final destruction, the knowledge of those calamities about to happen, filled them with bitterness of soul.

Thou must prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

CHAPTER XI.

Church History in Brief.

1 *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.*

2 *But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*

By the reed given to the Apostle John, with which he was to measure the temple and altar of God, he was instructed that a revelation was about to be made to him of the condition of the Gentile Church, during the period of the 1260 years, extending to the end of time. A somewhat similar vision occurs in Zechariah ii.; with this exception that the measurement of Jerusalem in that prophet, had reference to the condition of the Jewish Church, after their restoration (Zech. ii. 6); whereas that given to St. John has a symbolical fulfilment in the Gentile Church, until the close of their dispensation of mercy, as is evident from the prophecy extending through the period of the forty and two months, in verse 2. The prophecies contained in this book are expressly designed for the Gentile Church, though given in an emblematical form, under the symbol of the Mosaic temple and ceremonial worship. Indeed, without considering the aptitude of the one chosen, as being familiar to the Apostle, a more appropriate device could scarcely have been selected, seeing that the Jewish economy was expressly designed to embody and typify, in its carnal ordinances, the more spiritual form of worship of the Gentile dispensation. The Jewish temple was divided by a veil, which shut in the holy of holies; before this inner veil was the golden altar, upon which the priests offered incense every morning. On one side was the golden candlesticks, and on the other the shewbread. Outside

of the temple, before the porch of the holy place, stood the brazen altar in a court; round which court there was a division, beyond which was the court of the Gentiles, and farther than this barrier they were not allowed to penetrate, it being reserved for the Jewish, the only true visible church. Keeping these symbols in view, therefore, upon which our interpretation must be built, it will greatly assist us in the comprehension of this vision. The Apostle was directed "to measure the temple and the altar, and them that worship therein," which we have seen included only the Jewish nation; and we are thereby led to the conclusion, that the measurement is applicable only to a true visible church—that is, the Protestant Church,—and the individuals who are to be the objects of this token of care, to mean the true and spiritual worshippers contained therein. The court which is without the temple, the Apostle is directed "not to measure, for it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." or 1260 years. In following out the symbol, as just explained, we should involuntarily be led to the interpretation of the court being the false church, in opposition to the true one, yet retaining some semblance of worship to God, as those Gentiles did of old, for whom a place in the precincts of the temple was appropriated: but there is another distinguishing mark with which the text furnishes us, and which affords no alternative than the conclusion that it refers to the Papacy; namely, the mention of the forty-two months, which we know, at the Jewish computation of thirty days for a month, is the same period of 1260 years of Dan. vii. 25, during which the saints, symbolized by the holy city (1 Pet. ii), were given into the hands of the little Papal horn.

Of whom are these two emblematical witnesses to be interpreted? Not of any two men, because none ever lived the prophetic period here described, neither can it apply to any two visible churches, for it is indisputable there is only one catholic church, and not two. They can be no other than the Old and New Testament, which

3 *And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*

prophesied during the Papal period, clothed in sackcloth; that is, they were hidden in an unknown tongue, and likewise obscured from the understanding of men, by false interpretations: how exactly this prediction has been fulfilled, as to the duration of that obscuration we shall see, as we proceed in the interpretation of this chapter.

4 *These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.*

They are represented as two olive-trees. Oil is the emblem of the Holy Ghost. Aaron the high priest and his sons were anointed with the oil of holy ointment compounded by God, which was so sacred that it was death even to attempt a like composition (Exod xxx. 25—33). This oil shadowed forth the Holy Spirit, as when it is prophesied of Christ in Psa. lxxxix. 19, 20, that God's Holy One should be anointed with his holy oil. It is likewise predicted of the Messiah, in Isa. lxi. 1, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek;" which Christ takes up and applies to himself, in Luke iv. 18—21. This figure, therefore, describes the Holy Ghost teaching through the written word. They are likewise represented as "the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth," that is, as containing and upholding the true light.

5 *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.*

The word of God contains the record of his judgments, of which not one jot or tittle shall ever pass unfulfilled. "If any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed;" that is, by wresting their testimony, and perverting their true signification, he doth it to his own destruction, thus the very nature of his offence becoming the occasion of his punishment.

6 *These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

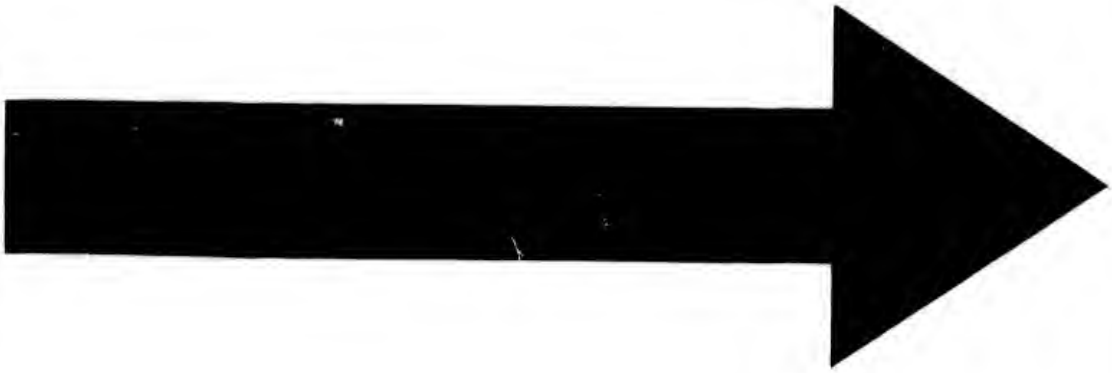
By the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and thus preventing the instruction which they were designed to communicate, the Holy Spirit, of which rain is one of the constant emblems, withholds that influence, which doubtless would have accompanied a more faithful

teaching of the Divine word. Their "having power over the waters," conveys to us, that, as the Bible is the only record of truth, by shutting up this source, all branches of religious knowledge must necessarily become corrupt; for how can the streams be pure, if the fountain be adulterated? The figure seems to be taken from the three-years-and-ahalf drought in Israel, at the expiration of which, the Prophet Elijah prayed for rain: this three years and a half likewise brings out the 1260 years of the Papacy, during which period of the witnesses' pro[illegible] it rained not *. It is remarkable, that, when three yea[illegible] half came to an end, Elijah sent his servant to the to[illegible] Carmel seven times, that he might observe the signs o[illegible]her; he went six times and saw nothing, but at the seventh, described a little cloud, which proved the harbinger of plentiful rain (1 Kings xviii. 42—46.) May not this signify, that at the expiration of the 1260 years, an eager desire should be raised for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, symbolized throughout Scripture by the latter rain; but that such expectation should not be realized during the first six vials of wrath, but that at, or consequent upon, the pouring out of the seventh, this blessed promise to a faint and fading church should be fulfilled? St. James (chap. v. 17, 18) directly applies this figure of Elias, to the pouring out of the latter rain of the Spirit, which affords much strength to the above supposition, that it may be regarded as a true type.

We are here brought down to the expiration of the testimony of the two witnesses, which they were to fulfil in sackcloth, or the end of the 1260 years, when "the beast that ascendeth up out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them and slay them." This is the beast of infidelity, as an evil principle, and is the same under a personified head, who takes the power of the ten kingdoms; first, to

7 *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*

* Thus, a time, times, and half a time, are three times and a half—a time being significant of a Jewish year of 360 days—"a day for a year." (Num. xiv. 34.)



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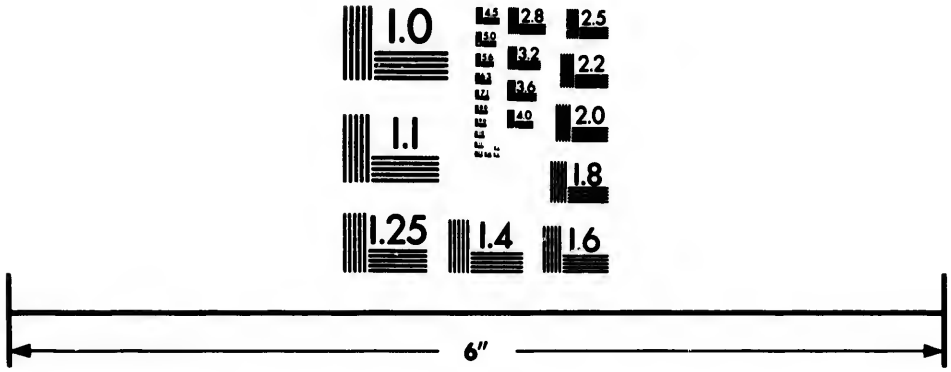

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destroy, as God's instrument, the Papacy, and afterwards conducts the grand Antichristian confederacy against the Lamb. (See chap. xvii.) This prophecy, accordingly, was fulfilled at the termination of the 1260 years. And surely no period in the annals of the world can compare with those events which took place in France, at the latter end of 1792, and in the beginning of the year 1793, (for it was upon a tenth part of the Papal city that these things were to occur, see v. 13.) This beast was to slay the witnesses. The Convention of France stamped the government and country of that nation, as the great head and seat of infidelity, in May 1793, when the nation by a solemn decree denounced Christianity. The naked person of a prostitute was worshipped as the goddess of Reason, upon the altar of the cathedral church of Nôtre Dame in Paris, and Atheism received the public homage and honours due only to the Supreme Being. The Scriptures were declared to be a fable, death an eternal sleep, the Sabbath abolished, and the reckoning of time by decades instead of weeks, instituted as if for the purpose of rooting out the very remembrance of a Sabbath. They began to count their time from the first year of the French Republic; thus declaring to all the world, that one of God's remarkable periods was closed.

In the city of Lyons, the Scriptures were publicly dragged through the streets, with circumstances of marked contempt and derision. Thus for a short period did the beastly principle of infidelity triumph over the religion of Christ, and his revealed word. Truly was it said by Napoleon, just as he was about to pass the political Rubicon, and dissolve the constitutional executive council, "Nothing in history ever resembled the end of the eighteenth century *.

8 *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*

The act of slaying these two witnesses was to be transacted in the street of the great city; that is, in one of the main divisions of Papal Christendom, the city of confusion, the mystical Jerusalem: which street is designated, as Sodom, a sink of gross wickedness, and Egypt

* Life of Napoleon, by the Author of Waverley, vol. iv. p. 175.

emblematical of spiritual darkness, where also our Lord was crucified; that is, within the precincts of the holy city—Christendom—for every one that is baptised is in holy covenant with God, and, if reprobate, will be judged as an apostate from the truth. Thus our Lord said (Luke xiii. 33), "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem; and to crucify our Lord afresh is a frequent Scripture expression, to denote a revolt from his doctrine, and a denial of his name.

9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

The period during which Christianity was abolished by the government of France, and the worship of Reason publicly sanctioned, was three years and a half, when the Roman-Catholic religion was again established as the religion of the state. It is well known that the great apostles of infidelity maintained an organized correspondence throughout Europe, for the effectual propagation of their false principles; and when this temporary triumph over every thing sacred took place, the public journals abounded with congratulations and rejoicings, as though some great public good were attained. It was truly a frenzied festivity which seized the whole of France at this period. The provincial towns, as well as the capital, partook in the delirium; and became the scene of civic festivals, exhibitions, and shows of the most extravagant description. The theatres were unusually crowded, the chief representations consisting in performances in honour of the triumph of Reason. Ten days after Gobet and the priests had abjured religion, a grand festival was celebrated by order of the government dedicated to "Reason and Truth," Nov. 11, 1793, at which the National Convention of France, and all the other authorities in Paris attended. These rejoicings and mutual gratulations took place, because, by the abolition of Christianity, every restriction seemed now to be removed to the full and uninterrupted indulgence of every licentious appetite.

11 *And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.*

12 *And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.*

Three years and seven months after Gobet, the bishop of Paris, had renounced Christianity, at the head of all the Republican priests, Nov. 1, 1793, the National Convention appointed a committee to consider the state of religion; and on the 17th June, 1797, Camille Jourdan brought up his memorable report on the "Revision of the Laws relative to Religious Worship," containing regulations for the protection of the worship of God, which France had never before enjoyed. The sudden transition from a profane desecration of every thing sacred, to comparative protection and reverence, could not find a fitter emblem of representation, than a complete resurrection of the two witnesses, by the Spirit of life from God entering into them. It may well be imagined, the fear and consternation which seized the enemies of true religion, when they beheld such an unexpected and miraculous revival. We cannot fail to remark, that at the instant this great measure was resolved on, the judgments on the Romish hierarchy began, by the invasion of the Papal states by the Republican General Bonaparte. From this time, therefore, the two witnesses were restored to life and liberty, for their testimony in sackcloth has ceased, and they ascended up to heaven; that is, they acquire a dignity and glory which they had not before: this was especially observable in Britain, where great exertions began to be made for the effectual circulation of the Scriptures. Bible and Missionary Societies were established, and such measures adopted for the extensive circulation of the Scriptures, that at the present period they are to be found translated into upwards of one hundred and fifty languages. So truly may it be said that they ascended up into heaven in a cloud of glory.

13 *And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earth-*

At the same hour in which the two witnesses were slain (ver. 7), a great earthquake, or popular revolution, is predicted to happen upon

a tenth portion of the Papal city. It will be unnecessary to enlarge on this earthquake, as it is the same as that which takes place under the sixth seal (chap. vi. 12); and received particular notice in commenting on that passage. We cannot, however, fail to remark what a connected chain of evidence its insertion here corroborates; the interpretation is as consistent and satisfactory as the revelation is definite and circumstantial in its predictions. "And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand;" that is, a large and complete number. Let the annals of the reign of terror in France, during Robespierre's ascendency, tell how well and truly this was fulfilled. "And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to God." We conceive this remnant to be the British Protestant nation; for no other of the ten kingdoms of Christendom had discernment to perceive, or grace to acknowledge, the hand of God in the appalling events which accompanied the French Revolution.

quake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

This verse is evidently inserted here as a mark of synchronism, to inform us that this history likewise is brought down to the eve of this great day of wrath, and to announce that the third and last woe cometh quickly upon the events just narrated.

14 *The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.*

Having dilated so largely in our observations on chap. x. 7, upon the sounding of the seventh angel, and the events consequent thereon, we have no occasion to repeat our remarks here.

15 *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

It is in woe that the kingdom of our Lord is to be established; to which declaration agree all the prophets. As he said at his first coming, he came not to judge, but to save; so may it be said at his second coming, he comes, not to save, but to judge. The period to which the

16 *And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,*

17 *Saying, We give thee*

thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come: because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

church in heaven looked forward with such longing desire, is at length arrived (chap. v. 10; vi. 10). The elders are here introduced as worshipping God, and giving him thanks because he had taken unto himself his great power and reigned. The four living creatures are here omitted, either because it was a song more appropriate to the elders, as appertaining to the kingly character; or because the church on earth—which we understand, the living creatures represented in the heavenly vision—were for the first period of Christ's iron reign, when his judgments appear to come from an unseen hand, unconscious as a body of its having commenced*.

18 *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.*

This is a most comprehensive verse, for it contains the combination of the apostate nations (see Psalm ii); the destruction of the Papacy, being that great whore that did corrupt the earth with her fornication (chap. xix. 2), the first resurrection, and the kingdoms of the earth given to the saints of the most high God. By the expression, "and the time of the dead is come, that they should be judged," we understand the time of the dead incorruptible, that they should be raised and righted,

* Although the above remark may apply to the church in its collective capacity, yet it is not to be supposed that God left himself without witnesses, to declare the expiration of such a momentous period in the history of the church, and of Christendom, as that of the 1260 years of the Papal supremacy, and that the time was arrived to judge her for all her abominations. There is no supposition entertained by the opposers of these views of the speedy termination of the present state of things, so injurious to themselves, or more unfounded in fact, than that these opinions are the growth of the last two or three years. No sooner had the eventful period expired, than a voice of testimony was raised in this land, from many quarters, all directing the church's attention to the important subject. Witness "the Illustrations of Prophecy," published in 2 vols. in the year 1796, "Simpson's Plea for Religion," "Mr. Bicheno's Signs of the Times," &c. &c. &c.

The French Revolution had been predicted by many Protestant divines, from the Apocalyptic writings, long before it took place; for a list of such authorities, see Illustrations on Prophecy, vol. i. chap. viii. Dr. Gill expressly foretold a revolution in France; see his Exposition, vol. v. p. 584. 4to.

or have judgment given into their hands, and reign upon the earth; hence the thanksgiving of the twenty-four elders, because their prayers were answered. From the expression, "small and great," we should be inclined to regard this promise as including in this glorious assemblage of resurrection saints, all the righteous dead, although chap. xx. 4 would rather seem to infer a particular selection of eminent martyrs to enjoy the privilege of the first resurrection. All these momentous events are to occur, and are included in the seventh trumpet; "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Rom. ix. 28.

This concluding verse of the epitome of the Church History clearly refer us to the events which occur upon the seventh angel pouring out his vial of wrath. There is the last earthquake mentioned, accompanied with hail, which distinguishes it from the earthquake of the French Revolution in chap. vi. 12, and likewise alluded to in the 13th verse of this chapter. If hail denotes in symbolic language a northern invasion, then are we to expect this mighty convulsion to be attended with an eruption from a Northern power. The temple of God was opened, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his Testament; by this also we know that this verse alludes to the final catastrophe, because it sets forth the day of atonement in the Jewish service, when the veil was taken away, and the priests could enter into the holy place and see the ark: the antitype to which we have before observed (see note to chap. viii. 3—5). is at once the deliverance of the church, and the final act of vengeance on her enemies.

19 *And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

CHAPTER XII.

History of the Church during the Pagan Period.

1 *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:* The vision is still in heaven. The explanation of these symbols is very simple and easy of interpretation, upon a reference to our dictionary in the preface. The church is constantly emblematized by a chaste woman; and she is here represented as clothed with the Sun of Righteousness, with the brightness of the righteousness of Christ: the moon being under her feet, which is likewise an emblem of the church, must be considered as a designation, just as a statue or picture receives a written character at its foot. Upon her head was a crown of twelve stars. She was ornamented by her most eminent ministers, which are the twelve Apostles.

2 *And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.* From a comparison of this verse with the 5th, we perceive that this child was to rule over all nations with a rod of iron. This is predicted in Psa. ii. and cx, &c, of Christ, primarily; but we know from chap. ii. 27, it is equally true of all his elect church; for he there pledges himself to the participation of this honour, with all those who overcome. We are inclined to the opinion that the child more especially refers to the saints, particularly those brought forth under the Pagan persecutions, the pain being the heavy afflictions which the church endured when delivered of these children, amidst suffering and death.

3 *And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads* This does not mean that the great red dragon was in heaven, but that the Apostle's vision still continued there. This red dragon with seven

heads and ten horns, we are told (v. 9), is Satan. If the woman is an emblem of the church, then is the serpent that of the devil. Satan does not work in the invisible form; but he influences the spirits of mankind, and thus accomplishes his malicious purposes, through the instrumentality of wicked men, either in their individual capacity, or in an associate political body. He tempted Eve in the garden of Eden, in the form of a serpent. Here he is represented as embodied in a polity, and influencing its actions. From the characteristics here given, we are referred to Daniel for an explanation, who informs us (chap. vii. 22, 23), that the beast with ten horns is the fourth monarchy that shall arise, or Roman empire, which should subsequently be divided into ten kingdoms: the seven heads mean, in this instance, the seven hills upon which is the seat of the empire. The crowns being upon the heads, and not on the horns, as in chap xiii. 1, signify that, during the period of which this portion of the vision treats, the power should be invested in the emperorship, the seat of which was imperial Rome. The mention of these seven heads, which is interpreted in the prophecy itself, to have a double signification, one of which receives explanation in "the seven mountains" (see chap. xvii. 9), gives locality to the prophecy, and fixes its interpretation to be of the seven-hilled city, Rome. The seven hills upon which the woman sitteth when the empire assumed its Papal form, we think, may be given, not merely to determine its locality, but likewise to denote the perfection of iniquity. Accordingly we find that the pagan persecutions of the church, during the first three centuries, all emanated from, and received the sanction and encouragement of, the emperors of Rome, as may be seen by reference to the "Introduction to Cave's History of the fathers," wherein it is most evident that the condition of the Christian Church enjoyed comparative respite, or suffered severe persecutions, just in proportion to the reigning emperor's hostility to the Christian religion.

and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

The 4th verse is introduced by a reference to the false and corrupt doctrines which the dragon succeeded in disseminating in the third part

4 *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth; and the dra-*

gon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

of the earth, or the Eastern Roman empire, by which that church was brought to destruction, as we have shewn in the trumpet history. (See also Dan. viii. 10.) The dragon, who had impregnated the third part by the poison of his tail, is here represented as holding himself in readiness to devour the child as soon as it was born; that is, to destroy by violence; which he attempted to do by instigating the Pagan Roman emperors to those ten successive persecutions, many of which, and especially the last under Diocletian, were commenced with the avowed object of exterminating every Christian from the face of the earth; but "he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." He maketh the wrath of man to praise him. Notwithstanding all the diabolical attempts to expel the truth, it still flourished: the blood of the martyrs was made the seed of the church, and those who fell in the conflict were caught up unto God, and composed part of that glorious assembly, symbolised in the iv th and v th chapters, by the four and twenty elders.

5 *And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*

6 *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days.*

Similar expressions occur in the 14th verse of this chapter; only the time, times, and a half are here given in days, or 1260 years; during which period the woman was to be in the wilderness. The particulars of the woman's sojourn so exactly repeated in the latter part of this chapter, where her history is more dwelt on, seems here introduced for the purpose of identifying her as the same, and by way of connecting the commencement of the period of 1260 years, with the historical event alluded to in the 15th verse (see comment).

7 *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.*

This is a revelation of some mysterious act in the invisible world, of which necessarily we can know but little. Satan is here spoken of personally in his character as a rebel

angel, not mystically. A reference to other parts of Scripture, however, will perhaps throw some little light on this subject. It is clear from 2 Chron. xviii. 21, 22, and Job ii. 1, that Satan had access to the presence of God, after his fall from his original elevation, and that these instances show him in the character of accuser of the brethren. It is evident, also, from our Saviour's allusions to the casting out of Satan from heaven, before his crucifixion, that his privileges were about to receive limitation; and it is not improbable, that Christ's expressions occurring immediately preceding the close of his earthly warfare, and when he declared also "that the prince of this world came and had nothing in him," conveys to us the truth, that Christ having achieved the victory over him in flesh, he knew it was an earnest of that victory which he should further accomplish after his ascension in the expulsion of Satan from heaven, and that these words were spoken prophetically by Christ, as significant of such an act having already entered into the Divine purpose. As it is supposed by some that Michael represents our Lord, as in Dan. x. 21, and xii. 1. the notion that this war in heaven took place between Christ and his angels, and the dragon and his angels, receives strength from the same angelic character being represented by name as taking the lead in this contest. This opinion seems likewise confirmed, if we contemplate Christ as the great actor of the purposes of God, in which light the whole of revelation seems to regard him. When this important victory was gained over the dragon and his angels, and their place in heaven was no more found, a voice is heard saying, (ver. 10), "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ," which note of exultation

8 *And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.*

9 *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

10 *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

seems to acknowledge this mighty achievement as the first manifestation of Christ's power and kingdom, consequent upon his entrance into heaven. And we further find that when he comes to reign upon the earth (see chap. xix. and xx), Satan is then ejected from this world also, of which our Lord himself informs us he is now the prince. His degradation, however, will not then be complete; his judgment is progressive, for we know there is still reserved for him the yet deeper punishment of the lake of fire, which is the second death (xx. 10).

In support of this view, see also comment on verse 13. The passage does not seem to compose any integral part of the Apostolic vision, but to be an interpolation, for the purpose of introducing the cause which had thus incited the serpent's rage against the seed of the woman.

11 *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

Nothwithstanding the accuser of the brethren was cast down from heaven to commence his persecutions of the church, in great wrath, yet were they enabled to overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the faithfulness of their testimony, surrounded with trial and with death. It is the brethren who are represented as loving not their lives to the death, which affords another proof that the Man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron (see v. 5) is Christ mystical in his body, which is the church, and not merely in his personal character.

12 *Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

Here is a song of triumphant joy from the inhabitants of heaven, that Satan is for ever expelled their blessed abodes; but a note of woe is sounded to those who dwell on the earth, because he is come down to them, having great wrath. If the persecutions referred to in the 13th verse allude to those of the Pagan-Roman power, of which conclusion there can be little doubt, then is it evident that they were subsequent to

13 *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted*

this casting out of Satan from heaven, and are represented as being the result of such expulsion. In Luke x. 18*, when the seventy disciples who had been sent out returned again to our Lord with joy, and told him the devils were subject unto them through his name, Christ exclaimed, as if the circumstance had conveyed as earnest of the still greater power of his church over the wicked spirits, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Now it may fairly be inferred that Satan's expulsion had not taken place before, and consequently we fix the period of this mighty contest in heaven, between this event in our Lord's life, and the commencement of the Pagan persecutions; and thus we have additional evidence coupled with those arguments which have been advanced above, we think, as conclusive as the case will admit; that this mighty contest in heaven took place at our Lord's ascension into glory. "For this purpose was the son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John iii. 8.

the woman which brought forth the man child.

The elect church of Christ must be here meant by the woman who was nourished in the wilderness, for a time, times, and half a time, or during the Papal supremacy. She is represented as being carried on the two wings of a great eagle; that is, she is supported and sustained by the providence of God: as, when addressing the children of Israel, God said, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." (Exod. xix. 4.) The protection which the church is here described as experiencing during the 1260 years, (and no interpretation will apply unless connected with this period,) is from the face of the serpent; that is, from the Pagan persecutions which Satan stirred up; from which peculiar form of the serpent's rage, manifested in openly confessed enmity to the Christian religion, she was sheltered by that power which was now invested in the bishop of Rome. The place of the church's

14 *And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

* See also John xii. 31, and xvi. 11.

security is described as a wilderness; that is, the wilderness state of the church, barren and unproductive.

It is no objection to this interpretation to urge that the Papacy itself afterwards became a persecuting power; for this new form of the serpent's enmity to the truth, is a distinct prophecy, and treated of separately in the following chapter: it is equally true, that the same power which Justinian gave into the hands of the bishop of Rome, in all ecclesiastical affairs, A. D. 533, ostensibly for the better preservation of the truth against heretics, served likewise as an effectual protection to the church from the brutal rage of the Pagan persecutors. Indeed Satan has never since evinced an open opposition to the Christian faith, but has proceeded more subtilly, as we shall see when treating of the Papal period.

15 *And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*

16 *And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*

These two verses afford us another grand key, by which we are enabled to fix the commencement of the Papal period of 1260 years, because the 17th verse connects this new species of diabolical warfare, with the swallowing up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth, which we shall see was effected by the Roman emperor Justinian, at the time of the formation of his celebrated code of laws, which gave the saints into the hands of the Papacy, A. D. 533. When Christianity was incorporated as the religion of the Roman empire, and after various fluctuations assumed the established form of the Papacy in the reign of Justinian, Satan found himself foiled in all his attacks which he made by means of his faithful servants, the Pagan emperors of Rome; and seeing Christianity thus triumph in spite of his efforts to exterminate it, he straightway adopted a new expedient alluded to in the 15th verse, "he cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman." The angel, in chap. xvii. 15, gives us the true interpretation of waters, to be "peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues." This, therefore, can mean nothing less than those hordes of Arian invaders, whom Satan, having first

impregnated with their poisonous doctrines, brought upon the Roman empire and church, in such a deluge as would assuredly "have carried her away of the flood," if the earth, or Roman empire, had not helped the woman. This was effected by the emperor Justinian by his general Belisarius, who, when he came to the throne, A. D., 527, found the western part of the Roman empire subdued and under the rule of the Arian nations, and the orthodox religion persecuted. Having prepared his code of civil laws, by which enactments, bearing date March 533, such full powers was invested in the bishop of Rome, and which served, with other manifestoes to identify this as a religious contest; he commenced his grand onsets upon the Arian powers, whereby they were destroyed and finally driven from the empire. Thus Justinian at once stood forth to retrieve theorthodox church from the Arian nations, "swallowing up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth;" and at the same time invested that power in the pope, by which the saints were delivered into his hands for a time, times, and a half, A. D. 533. This is a most appropriate place for the introduction of the Arian heresy—for it rose at the close of the Pagan superstition—and was put down at the commencement of the Papal.

17 *And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

The dragon was again foiled, and therefore it is said, "he was wroth with the woman, and went to renew the war with the remnant of her seed;" to denote that his rage had not subsided, but that a new manifestation of his enmity was about to appear. As he had not succeeded in carrying away the woman by the flood of Arian nations, his object being defeated by the Roman emperor Justinian appearing in behalf of the church, and extricating her from the impending ruin, A. D. 533, the serpent whose rage by this failure had received further aggravation, now addresses himself to the task of concocting a fresh project of malice against the truth. This proves to be the Papal apostacy, and being announced in this verse as immediately consequent upon his defeat as described in the 15th and 16th verses, affords us additional evidence that the period of the

Papal superstition, or 1260 years of the supremacy of Daniel's little horn, is to take the date of its commencement from the same period, in which Justinian, or the Roman earth, helped the woman or the church, A. D. 533. Thus confirming our remark made in commenting on the fifth seal, chap. vi. 9, that the rise of a new form of enmity to the truth, is to take its date from the suppression of the preceding superstition.

CHAPTER XIII.

History of the Church during the Papal Period.

THIS chapter contains a description of the war which the dragon was about to maintain against the remnant of the woman's seed, mentioned in the last verse of the preceding chapter. The beast in this verse is the Roman empire, divided into its ten kingdoms, which is said to arise out of the sea; that is, nations in a turbulent unsettled condition; and it was exactly into such a state the western Roman empire was brought previous to its division into separate kingdoms. For forty years before the whole of Europe was agitated by the Goths, the Visigoths, the Alans, and the empire seemed to have no settled master. The crowns, emblematical of regal power, in chap. xii. 3, were said to be on the seven heads; but here they are removed to the ten horns, denoting that the Papal supremacy, of which this chapter treats, should be exerted over the western empire when it was divided into ten kingdoms. Upon this beast's heads, instead of the crowns was the name of blasphemy; whereby is pointed out, that instead of Rome being the seat of imperial power, as under the Pagan persecutions, it is now become the seat of blasphemy; from whence, as from a centre of iniquity, the pope should issue his impious bulls and decrees, and upon which theatre he should exhibit to Christendom his blasphemous mimicries of the offices and character of Christ. The seven-hilled city of Rome (the perfection of iniquity) is hereby identified, as the seat of that power which the Papacy was to exert over the saints of God for 1260 years. The western Roman empire is the seat of the prophecy, which is represented under three forms: first, the Pagan; second, the Papal; and third, the Infidel,—under whose

1 *And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.*

influence she comes to her end, after enlisting in the cause of the last form of the Infidel beast. See chap. xvii.

2 *And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.* The description of the beast which came up out of the sea given in this verse, identifies it as the fourth monarchy which Daniel saw was to arise; combining in this fourth form of brutal power all the qualities of the three preceding kingdoms, chap. vii. 23, 24: the fleetness of the leopard, the terrible claws, and savage ferocity of the bear, and the destructiveness of the roaring lion. Satan is here represented as transferring that power and authority to the Papal-Roman power, which he possesses as the usurping prince of the kingdoms of this world, and had formerly exercised against the saints, through the Pagan emperors.

3 *And I saw one of its heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast.* It has been before, remarked, that the seven heads so often referred to, have two separate significations; the one identifying the seat of this beast, the seven mountains, and the other descriptive of seven distinct forms of government. This important key to the interpretation we learn from the angel, chap. xvii. 9, 10. In this verse the latter is meant, a sevenfold sovereignty: thus kings, consuls, consular tribunes, decemvirs, dictators, emperors, were the first six; for we learn in John's time (chap. xvii. 10) that five had fallen, or passed away, one then was, the emperorship of Rome, and another was yet to arise. The verse before us speaks of one of these heads being wounded to death, which took place when the emperor Augustulus resigned the title. The reason why the falling of the imperial title is described as being caused by a deadly wound, effected by a sword (v. 14,) seems to be, because all the other revolutions of authority in the Roman empire designated as heads, were brought to pass by internal revolution, and not by external conquest. Though the head is wounded to death, yet it does not kill the body, for it is afterwards healed; that is, the imperial title was again revived about three centuries after-

wards, in the emperor Charlemagne, and continued in the emperors of Germany until the year 1806, when Napoleon Bonaparte obliged the emperor of Austria to renounce the title, which, with the authority he afterwards centred in himself and son, thus constituting the seventh and eighth headship, chap. xvii. 11, the first and second form of the last Infidel antichrist. He reserved the power to himself, making Rome and her dependencies a province of France, and giving the title of "king of Rome" to his infant son, by which designation Napoleon himself announced him at his birth to his courtiers*. Thus Napoleon annihilated the sixth headship or sovereignty of the Roman empire, which from Charlemagne had continued down through the emperors of Germany for so many centuries, and afterwards constituted himself the seventh head; and that this statement may appear no strained interpretation to build up a system, we quote the following, to prove it to be an unquestioned historical fact. "We have not yet concluded the important changes introduced into Europe by the consequences of the fatal campaign of Austerlitz. The confederation of the Rhine, which withdrew from the German empire so large a portion of its princes, and, transferring them from the influence of Austria, placed them directly and avowedly under the protection of France, was an event which tended directly to the dissolution of the Germanic league, which had subsisted since the year 800, when Charlemagne received the imperial crown from pope Leo III†." "Pope Leo, he (Napoleon) remembered, had placed a golden crown on the head of Charlemagne, and proclaimed him emperor of the Romans. Pius VII. he determined should do the same for a successor to much more than the actual power of Charlemagne‡." "France became therefore in a great measure the successor to the influence and dignity of the holy Roman empire, as that of Germany had been proudly styled for a thousand years; and the empire of Napoleon gained a still nearer resemblance to that of Charlemagne. At last France succeeded to the imperial influence exercised by Austria and her empire, over all the south western provinces of that powerful district of Europe||.

* Life of Napoleon, by the author of Waverley, vol. vii. p. 124. † Ibid vol, v. p. 273. ‡ Ibid. vol. v. p. 156. || Life of Napoleon, vol.v. p. 277.

It is the more necessary to establish Napoleon Bonaparte as the seventh sovereignty of the Roman empire, as the right comprehension of this portion of the prophecy furnishes us with an important clue to the interpretation of the mystery of an eighth head about to arise, for a short time, who is yet of the seven. (see chap. xvii. 11.) "And all the world wondered after the beast," that is, when his deadly wound was healed; and the title which had been laid dormant for three centuries, was so suddenly revived in Charlemagne, who was thus constituted head of the Papal Roman empire, and of whom medals still exist, with the inscription "emperor revived." Unusual magnificence attended this event, attracting for a time the attention of the whole of the Roman earth.

4 *And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?*

This verse points out to us the true character of that worship which is offered to any other than the Supreme Being. It is Satan's grand object to seduce the homage of men from the true God, and to centre it in himself. Thus every form of idolatry, (and it is not necessarily confined to bowing down to images,) is in fact a worship of demons. The worship of the dragon and of the beast are here mentioned as synonymous.

The beast described in this verse we understand to be of a two-fold character, though represented as one beast. The Roman empire, the fourth monarchy united with the Papal apostacy, the harlot committing fornication with the kings of the earth, the secular power of the Roman empire, having originally established and continuing its support and prostituting its power in helping forward the persecutions of the little Papal horn. This beast therefore is the Papacy, considered as a corrupt apostate system, incorporated into and conjoined with the apostate kings of Christendom. This has always been the case since the emperor Justinian first gave unlimited authority in the church to the bishop of Rome: they have ever mutually supported each other's power, and united in the oppression of God's saints. (see comment, verse 12.) The most severe persecutions have ever been conducted by the secular arm, at the instigation

of the Papacy; and as they have been united in iniquity, they will not be separated in judgment, chap. xix. 20; see also Daniel vii. 18-27.

The inquiry, "Who is like unto the beast, who is able to make war with him?" conveys to us the undisputed power which the rulers of the Papal kingdoms represented by their imperial head should retain, and which they have exercised for so many centuries, without any encroachments being effected upon their authority.

It is the little Papal horn into whose hands the saints are given for 1260 years; but it is the secular power which constituted the authority of the Romish church and assisted in her iniquity. Thus when the inquisition had condemned a heretic to death, he was always delivered over to the civil power for execution. Thus Daniel, chap. vii. 20 and 25, says of this little horn, "he had a mouth that spake very great things and he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and they shall be given into his hand until a time, times, and a half;" which is the same period of 1260 years, here expressed by forty-two months, of thirty days to a month, a day for a year. "And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." The unlimited controul which the Papal hierarchy exercised over the nations and kings of Christendom, during the middle ages, is too well known to need any argument to establish her as that blasphemous power which should have such ascendency over the nations. The Pope, as head of the Papal hierarchy, dethroned and excommunicated kings; releasing their subjects from their allegiance at his pleasure; whilst their armies were ever at his command, to dispatch them on a religious crusade, or to assist him in the subjugation of any prince

5 *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.*
6 *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.*
7 *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

who dared to dispute his universal authority. Thus, in the words of the prophet Daniel, "his look was more stout than his fellows." Dan. vii. 20.

8 *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

All that dwell on the Roman earth shall fall into the delusion of this apostacy, excepting "those whose names are written in the book of life;" and it was consequently against these faithful ones who maintained the truth, that the persecuting war of the beast was directed. Those who do not preserve a bold and consistent testimony against the Romish abominations, do not excite her vengeance, for they are confederate with her in iniquity, and shall assuredly participate in her judgment; as it is written, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone," chap. xiv. 9, 10. This verse plainly and unequivocally declares, that exemption from all the Papal abominations shall constitute the distinction of those whose names are written in the book of life; and how is that to be evinced but by protestation against them? And when this ceaseth, either as a nation or individually, the apostacy of Rome put on a level with the religion of Christ, and the same honours and privileges extended to a corrupt as to a pure religion, the same reverence given to a lie as to the truth, then is that nation or individual included in that confederacy, and, continuing incorrigible in such a state, is to be considered as contemplated in its fate.

9 *If any man have an ear, let him hear.*

10 *He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*

This announcement is given for the comfort of those who should suffer under the Papal persecutions, and likewise affords us a key note, by which we recognize an allusion to the fifth seal (chap. vi. 10), whereby we conclude that it is during this Papal supremacy that the patience of the saints in heaven as well as on

the earth is exercised. Accordingly, when that period of 1260 years expired, the judgments on the Papacy commenced, under the third vial (chap. xvi. 4), being a foreshewing of her ultimate destruction, under the seventh vial of wrath (chap. xvi. 19). From Dan. vii. 26, we gather that the consumption of the Papacy will occupy a certain space of time, and not be completed "until the end." The first blow was given by the French Republic, in Feb. 1798, when the Roman people proclaimed their independence, a republican form of government was established, and the cardinals were compelled to renounce all temporal authority. The Pope himself was banished from Rome: and shortly afterwards died, it is supposed, of a broken heart, at Valence, in France. There was not a cardinal to be seen in Rome; and the purple, which had so recently been an object of envy, soon became a mark for insult, which they were glad to resign, and seek their protection in obscurity and exile. The whole Papal hierarchy were sent into captivity, and every appearance of authority wrenched from their hands (see comment on third vial, chap. xvi. 4).

11 *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.*

This beast that comes up out of the earth (that is, in opposition to the turbulence of the sea, representing the more settled state of the nations) describes the Pope in his individual capacity, as a temporal prince. He was like "a lamb in appearance, yet he spake as a dragon;" though assuming the character and offices of Christ, the Lamb of God, yet he was, dragon like, tyrannical and merciless in persecuting the saints all being exercised under the plausible pretext of zeal for the true church. This hypocritical assumption of clemency towards his victims, comprises one of the most remarkable features, by which we are enabled to identify this beast with the Pope of Rome. Every record which has eluded the vigilance, and has escaped from the walls of the inquisition, of the enormities transacted within its horrid confines, abound in instances of this affectation; even their forms of address are couched in this disgusting hypocrisy, and it was not unusual to offer sympathy, whilst their victim was enduring the most excruciating tortures,

after which they would perhaps consign him to an ignominious death, with the assurance that such a sentence proceeded from a compassionate regard for the welfare of his soul.

12 *And he exercieth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*

Pope Leo III. revived in Charlemagne the title of Emperor of the Roman Empire, in return for his endowing him with the kingdom of Lombardy, A. D. 774. This composed the third horn, which Daniel prophesies this little horn was to pluck up by the roots; and which the angel interprets, in chap. vii. 24, to be the subjugation of three kings. By the revival of this title, he thus "caused the earth, and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed;" that is, to do homage to that power, which was under the influence of the dragon. "He exercised all the power of the first beast before him" (in his presence), by gradually assuming that temporal sovereignty, which was more largely possessed by the imperial head, as representative of the secular rulers of the Roman Empire.

13 *And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.*

14 *And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.*

These verses allude to the false miracles to which the Pope resorted, in order to establish his authority over the minds of men. Fire is an emblem of Divine wrath: Elias called down fire from heaven, by which his mission was authenticated; and the Pope constantly appealed to the truth of his miracles, as evidences of his being appointed the representative of Christ upon the earth. It was by a systematic course of such deceptions, such impious mimicry of Divine power, that he chiefly acquired and succeeded in maintaining his ascendency in those dark ages of the church, over the minds of men. It was by the exercise of this unbounded authority be reconstituted that homage to the imperial headship which had received the wound by a sword, and yet now lived.

By the expression, "the image of the beast," we understand that imitative assumption of temporal power by the Pope of Rome, which the imperial headship of the Roman Empire had so long enjoyed. It is the same prophecy as that referred to in Dan. vii. 20, wherein is described three kingdoms falling before, or into subjection to the little Papal horn. These kingdoms were Rome, Ravenna, and Lombardy. Rome was taken from the Greek Emperor Leo, A.D. 730, after an insurrection had been raised by the Pope against the Emperor, in consequence of his discouragement of image worship. About A.D. 755, the exarchate of Ravenna was wrested from the hands of the King of Lombardy. The Pope claimed this territory as the spoil of an excommunicated Emperor (Leo); and Pepin, King of France, at the suggestion of the Pope, marched an army into Lombardy to enforce the claim, and ultimately compelled him to cede to him the object of contention. The third and last addition to the Pope's temporal dominions was made about A. D. 774. The Pope having quarreled with Desiderius, King of Lombardy, the latter, after having seized several towns belonging to the church, prepared to besiege Ravenna, upon which the Pope applied to Charlemagne, King of France, who marched an army into Lombardy, took Pavia the capital city, and put an end to the kingdom of the Lombards; a considerable portion of whose territories were granted by the Emperor to the Pope *. Thus the Pope had "power given unto him to put life into the image of the beast;" and by the possession of these kingdoms, and by the exercise of all authority as a temporal prince, he caused it to speak, and had power to inflict death on such as should dispute his sway.

15 *And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

In these verses are pointed out, not only the exclusive intolerance of the Popish religion, but at the same time the unlimited extent of its pre-

16 *And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their*

* Frere's Combined View of the Prophecies, p.p. 194, 195.

right hand, or in their foreheads.

17 *And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

sumptuous power. The Pope's prohibitory interdicts and excommunications, his arbitrary and unprincipled dissolution of the most sacred engagements which bind man to man, when it suited his selfish or ambitious purposes, were equally felt by the king on the throne and by the meanest of his subjects. "Both small and great, rich and poor," were alike exposed to his deceptive arts, and fell into his snares. Such as submitted to his will, and acknowledged the truth of his arrogant pretensions, are described as having a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads, or his name, or the number of his name, which must be understood symbolically to signify a wicked acknowledgement of the Pope's supremacy, and audacious usurpation of the offices and character of Christ, as Head of the Church, or universal Bishop; as likewise his arrogant assumption of power as prince of the kings of the earth, and a concurrence with every other abomination which has been graffed upon his apostacy from the truth.

Such various distinctive marks may possibly point out degrees of criminality; in which case, it is to be inferred, as implicating those who are not included in that class, who pay unconditional homage to the Romish Church, but yet incur guilt by approximating to the accursed thing. To hold friendly communication or clandestinely to listen to the suggestions of an enemy for the acquirement of any power, without the authority of a lawful and rightful sovereign, would justly expose such an individual to the suspicion of base collusion, and incur the charge of high treason against his king. And shall not the same jealous exaction of fidelity be allowed the King of kings, which we are willing to extend to an earthly sovereign, whose breath is in his nostrils? Assuredly, Christ will not regard those to be his faithful servants who have basely and ignominiously tampered, or held any terms of accommodation with his greatest enemy and the most determined persecutor of his church, which is the Popish Antichrist, with all his apostate hierarchy.

18 *Here is wisdom. Let*

The number of the beast is here

thrown out as a holy enigma, affording us another evidence of the purpose of God, that this prophecy was expressly revealed for the Christian's elucidation and belief. It appears as though the Holy Ghost, foreseeing the impressions which Satan would raise in the minds of men, against the study of this revelation, resorted to this expedient by way of attracting them to its perusal, in order that they might reap the full blessing which it encloses. Speaking of this mystery, Bishop Newton says*, "No name appears more proper and suitable than that famous one mentioned by Irenæus, who lived not long after St. John's time, and was the disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John. He saith, that the name Lateinos contains the number of 666; and it is very likely, because the last kingdom is so called, for they are Latins who now reign."—"The thing agrees to admiration," continues the bishop "for after the division of the empire, the Greeks called the people of the Western Church, or Church of Rome, Latins. In short, all things are Latin: Mass, Prayers, Hymns, Litanies, Canons, Decretals, Bulls, are all conceived in Latin, the Pope having communicated his language to the people under his dominion, as the mark and character of his empire."

him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.

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* Dissertations, p. 619.

CHAPTER XIV.

Containing the History of the Church during the Infidel Period.

1 *And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*

THIS chapter is the history of the church during its last period; and commences from 1792, when infidelity burst forth at the French Revolution, and began to take the power and to disseminate its pernicious doctrines over the Roman empire. The Pope is said, in chap. xiii. 11, to be *like a lamb*, that is imitating Christ; but here the true Lamb is presented to us on Mount Sion, surrounded with his true church, in opposition to the apostacy, which is seated in the seven-hilled city, Rome. These one hundred and forty-four thousand appear to be the same as were sealed from the judgments of the first six vials, in chap. vii. It does not mean, in its primary sense, a church merely, but a church embodied in a nation, a national church. They have "their Father's name written in their foreheads;" these have the seal of the true God; as the apostacy have received their mark of condemnation, by having "the name of the beast, or his mark, or the number of his name, in their right hand or in their foreheads." This does not refer individually to the elect, but to a true visible church, including the elect. It is an introduction of this British nation as pure in doctrine amidst the surrounding apostacy, and therefore so far honoured of God to perform those services, which are afterwards particularized in this chapter.

2 *And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of*

This is the voice of the church, and is compared to the noise of a great thunder. Their harping with their harps is expressive of that tranquility and peace, which as the seal-

ed nation, they should enjoy, whilst the judgments were pouring out in rapid succession upon the other nations of Christendom. They sung a new song before the Throne. When this expression occurs, it always denotes the true church. The emblem is taken from the Jewish temple: the throne in the holy of holies was shut out by a veil; the altar is said to be before the throne, although it was before the veil. The Levites, who typified the elect church were not permitted to go within the veil, though they filled the holy place without the veil. The song is said to be a new song, because it is a fresh note of praise and wonder at the mighty acts which God was bringing to pass around them. It was to be sung only by those who were sealed from the judgments, who are thus represented as setting forth a declaration of the hand of God, which was about to be extended over the nations. Accordingly, at this time, a voice was raised in this land to direct the attention of the church to the fulfilment of prophecy in the downfall of the Papacy. (See note to chap. xi 17, p. 80.)

harpers harping with their harps:

3 *And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*

The Protestant nations is here pointed out as separating from the Papacy at the time of the Reformation. The false church is regarded under her usual figure of an unchaste woman; and those who have got the victory over the beast, and are redeemed, and become the first fruits of God and to the Lamb, are represented as undefiled with the abominations of the great harlot of Babylon. They are said "to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," to denote the devotedness with which the Reformers should prosecute their holy purpose of protestation against the corruptions of the Church of Rome.

4 *These are they which were not defiled with women: for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

This verse conveys a full descrip-

5 *And in their mouth*

was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

tion of the sincerity which should characterise the first Reformers, who were chiefly instrumental in rescuing this country from the ignorance and bigotry of the Papal superstition; for no nation has so effectually subverted Popery as England. It likewise describes the purity of doctrine and discipline of the reformed Protestant churches as established in this kingdom.

6 *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.*

7 *Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

These angels must be understood symbolically; the first clearly denotes an extensive propagation of the word of God, and the preaching of the everlasting Gospel to all nations. It is remarkable that the Bible Society have had these words of the first angel put upon their medals. That this has been so fulfilled in the Bible, Missionary, and other religious societies in this country, is one of the many evidences that, since the year 1792, we have been in the latter days by which we understand the prophet Daniel's last seventy-five years after the expiration of the 1260, and which have been running their course unnoticed by the majority of the church since that date. It is written, Matthew xxiv. 14, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." This last expression seems to connect it with this angel as a sign of the end, for it is said, "the time of his judgment is come." As this has been peculiarly the work of England, the accomplishment of this portion of the prophecy affords additional evidence to the correctness of our interpretation, that the one hundred and forty-four thousand who stood on Mount Sion, and who are here represented as performing this dissemination of the everlasting gospel, can be none other than Protestant England. The general character of the Revelation leads us to such a conclusion, and the accomplishment confirms its accuracy.

The first angel seems to represent an extensive declaration of the Gospel of the kingdom of Christ, which received its accomplishment in the extraordinary efforts made to effect this grand purpose of God since the year 1792; for the Gospel has certainly been more widely circulated during the last thirty-five years, than the whole previous period of the Christian era. The two angels which follow in succession, however, have a different commission to perform. The second appears to be a prophetic denunciation of the terrible fate which just awaits the Papacy and its adherents: and the third angel to be a last warning voice addressed to the Papal nations, of the cup of indignation which is prepared for all those who persist in their blind and obstinate worship of the beast and his image. Some modern commentators consider, that the second and third angel are to receive interpretation from particular societies recently established; one of which, the Continental Society, has for its object the preaching of the Gospel in the midst of the Papacy; and the other to point out that prophetic voice which has so generally sprung up in this land, and has continued to sound the note of approaching judgments for the last three years. But we pretend not to decide, whether the prophecies symbolized by the last two angels have received an accomplishment, or point out other duties of the church in this land, which she may hereafter be called on to perform, probably in the midst of the judgments. We are, however, rather in-

8 *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

9 *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.*

10 *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:*

11 *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

clined to think the latter is the case, and that the prophecies in these verses have not yet received an adequate interpretation.

12 *Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.* Here is another notification, which has already occurred in chap. xiii. 10, of the patience of the saints in connexion with the judgment of the Papacy. It was that for which the saints in heaven longed and waited. (chap. vi. 10.) The day of wrath is arrived, and their cry for vengeance no longer remains unanswered.

13 *And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.* This announcement of the happy condition henceforth of those who have died in the Lord, and are now made partakers in the first resurrection, is here introduced with much beauty and propriety, after the works of the church just narrated are finished, and "they shall rest from their labours." It answers to that period referred to in the prophet Daniel (chap. xii. 12), when those who come to the end of the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days or years, are pronounced "blessed;" and when he himself is promised to stand in his lot, and therefore can mean none other than the resurrection state. There is likewise a similar declaration of that holy and happy era in the church's history in chap. xx. 6, when the reign of the saints on the earth, which has been the hope of the church in heaven, shall commence, it is said, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

14 *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.* This is no representation of the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, as in chap. xix. 11 to the end, but is part of the vision; that is the Apostle John saw the Son of man, sitting on a cloud with a golden crown upon his head, the attitude of mildness and peace, and of

15 *And another angel*

regal dignity. There are two harvests constantly referred to in Scripture, and which it is very necessary to keep distinct; a harvest of mercy and a harvest of wrath. Thus John says, in his prophecy of Christ (Matt. iii. 12), "he will gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." The angel coming out of the temple shews us, that it is the cry of the church on earth; a prayer extorted from the church in her peril. When she feels the foundations failing beneath and around her, and the iniquity of the surrounding nations is ripe, the true elect then call for their King to come to their deliverance. The great Harvestman "thrusts in his sickle, and the earth is reaped." This is evidently referring to that signal deliverance which the church shall experience in the day of trouble: when, no doubt, there will be a demonstration of God's mighty power, in rescuing his saints from that overwhelming destruction which shall come upon the infidel Antichrist, and the armies of the earth.

came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

16 *And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.*

This angel comes out of the temple which is in heaven: whereby we learn, that as the voice in the 15th verse proceeded from the church on earth, so this is made to issue from the church in heaven; that is, from the altar, underneath which the souls of the saints reposed who had been slain for the word of God (ch. vi. 9). Fire is an emblem of the wrath of God; thus in chap. viii. 5, which passage refers to the same act of Divine vengeance. The church is constantly compared to a vine in the prophetic Scriptures *, and her iniquity is here declared to be fully ripe. This is parallel with that passage in the prophet

17 *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.*

18 *And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.*

* Jerem. ii. 21; Hos. x. 1; Joel, i. 12; Isaiah, v. 1—7.

Joel (chap. iii. 13), "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great."

19 *And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.*

20 *And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*

The treading of the winepress is a constant emblem used to denote the final act of the wrath of God, and particularly as applicable to the great battle of Armageddon, detailed in chap. xix. of this Revelation, when Christ personally comes to inflict destruction on his enemies. Thus it is said (Isaiah lxiii. 1. 3), "Who is this that cometh from Edom (or Europe), with dyed garments from Bozrah? (the capital city, or Rome *,) this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength! I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garment like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."

This concluding act in the church history is the same event as that contained in the seventh vial of chap. xvi., and is the last consummating act of wrath detailed in the xvi th to the xix th chap-

* Bozrah was the capital city of the land of Idumea, anciently called Edom. We read (Gen. xxxvi. 1) "Esau is Edom;" and again (ver. 43) "Esau, the father of the Edomites." Now Esau was a type of the Gentile church, as Jacob was of the Jewish. The destruction of the Gentiles, that is Christian Europe, when their times shall be fulfilled, is constantly prophesied of in Scripture, under the symbol of Edom or Idumea, as the reader may perceive by consulting the following passages with their contexts; by which will be seen that such judgments can only apply to the day of God's wrath upon the Gentile church, and the restoration of the Jewish nation: Obadiah 1; Ps. lx. 8, cviii. 9, 10, lx. 9; Isaiah xi. 14, xxxiv. 5, 6; Ezek, xxxv. 15; Jerem. xlix. 13—17; Amos i. 12, ix. 12.

If the reader be in any doubt, as to Edom shadowing forth the Gentile Christian church, let him ask any intelligent Jew, what Edom means, when applied to unfulfilled prophecy, such as those cited in the above passages, and he will invariably receive the reply, Europe.

ters. It is the day of atonement and the day of vengeance. The winepress is not within the bounds of the mystical city, or Roman empire; Scripture points it out in Joel iii. as the valley of Jehoshaphat, which nearly all commentators agree to be a descriptive name denoting the same place as Armageddon. The horses' bridles refer to the winepress being drawn round by horses; and thus, by continuing the figure it is kept consistent throughout. The expression points out the immense destruction of human life which shall take place in that day of the Lord, when he cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth. The space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs is supposed, by Mede and other calculators, to allude to the dimensions of the Holy Land. This opinion is confirmed by a comparison with Scripture. In the prophet Daniel we read (chap. xi. 45), that the last form of the wilful king, or Infidel Antichrist of chap. xix. of Revelations, "shall come to his end in the glorious holy mountain;" and it is under this eighth head of the beast, who is yet of the seven, that the kings of the earth are marshalled to the last fatal conflict. See also Zech. xiv. wherein the whole scene of the gathering of the nations, and the coming of Christ to the discomfiture of his enemies, is represented as taking place in the Holy Land.

CHAPTER XV.

Preface to the Supplementary History of the xvi th Chapter, common to the Seals, the Trumpets, and the Church History.

1 *And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.*

EVERY distinct Revelation in this book, as we have had occasion to observe, is introduced with a short preface. The last chapter closed the church history, or third main branch of the prophecy, and, consequently, we have all three; namely, the seals, or Western Roman empire, the trumpets, or Eastern Roman empire; and the church history; all equally brought down to the same period in time, each containing also a note of synchronism which refers the completion and consummation of all three to one common series of events, contained in the seven vials of wrath, detailed in the supplementary history of the xvi th chapter. In this first verse, the seven last plagues or vials, in which is filled up the wrath of God, are announced as about to be poured out; and having given such intimation, that all is now ready for the final catastrophe, the remaining portion of this xv th chapter is introduced as a preface, agreeably to the invariable arrangement of the book. This preface contains in it a number of synchronisms and notes of identification, where each history had broken off abruptly; whereby is intimated, that the thread is about to be resumed, and the threefold stream of the prophecy is to be united and gathered into one, before it enters upon that consummation which equally applies to all. In this supplementary history of chapter xvi., is contained a full and final description of the conclusion of these now combined histories, in those seven successive acts of judgment, which should include all three branches in one indiscriminate undistinguished ruin.

2 *And I saw as it were a*

There can be no doubt that the

servants of God referred to in this verse, are the same as the one hundred and forty-four thousand of chap. vii. who were sealed from the judgments as a nation; and also described as standing on Mount Sion with the the Lamb, in chapter xiv., when it was necessary to introduce them as forming a prominent character in the history of the church. It is the same protesting nation, for whose protection and safety the four winds of the earth were for a time withheld from blowing on and agitating the sea (chap. vii.); and accordingly they are here represented as standing upon, what appeared to the Apostle to be, a sea of glass, that is, in calm and unruffled serenity whilst the vials of wrath are pouring out upon the other nations of Christendom. They are the same protesting nation, here spoken of as having "gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark;" who are represented in chap. xiv. as "being redeemed from the (Papal) earth, as not defiled with women, as having no guile, being the first-fruits to God and the Lamb." They have likewise the "harps of God," which they, in both passages, tune to a song of praise and glory; all which remarkable features of assimilation, do undoubtedly prove them to be the same protesting nation, who are with much propriety here introduced in a condition of security and peace; whilst the rest of the nations should be afflicted with the vials of God's wrath. There is, however, fire mingled with this sea of glass, which is an emblem of wrath; and points out that this nation thus sealed should be employed as the instrument of God, when it suited his purpose against the Papal nations; or in bringing to his end that scourge which God should raise up for the execution of his vengeance, when his appointed work should be accomplished.

sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

They sung the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. Feeling a holy assurance of their safety, they sung the triumphant song of Moses, after the chil-

3 *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord*

God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

4 *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

dren of Israel had passed through the Red Sea, and they, in security, saw the destruction which came upon Pharaon and his host. How similar was the situation of this nation, whilst the vials were pouring out upon Papal Christendom. This land alone was kept sacred from the foot of a hostile invader; this country alone, of all the ten kingdoms, was a stranger to the sword and to the horrors of war. They sung the song of the Lamb, (see chap. v. 8—10, and vii. 9—12,) thus celebrating the "great and marvellous works of God," because "his judgments were made manifest;" for the time was now near at hand, as is prophecied by Zechariah ch. xiv, "when all nations should come and worship before the Lord of hosts, and keep the feast of tabernacles;" the time was fast hastening, when he who alone is "just and true," should be "King over the nations of the earth."

5 *And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened*

6 *And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.*

This symbol in taken from the Jewish temple. It is called "the tabernacle of the testimony," or witness, and is said to be in heaven. From Hebrews ix. we learn, that the holy of holies shadowed forth heaven; in which passage, Christ's entrance into heaven is compared with the high priest entering into the holy of holies once every year, in the day of atonement, which was then made for the people of Israel not without blood. This opening of the temple, therefore shews that reference is made to an atonement, and which is always described in Scripture as being likewise a day of vengeance: (see Isaiah xxxiv. 8, lxiii. 4;) what ensues, therefore, in the following chapter, (that is, the pouring out of the vials of the seven angels that came out of the temple,) is to be regarded as the grand day of atonement and consummating act of vengeance. The seven angels represent the church in heaven

as priests and kings, having garments of holiness and righteousness, and golden girdles of kingly dignity and power.

The contents of these seven vials are declared to be the full measure of the wrath of Almighty God. The temple was "filled with smoke from the glory of God, and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." When the holy of holies was opened, the Glory of God which was above the mercy seat, is here represented as filling the entire temple. In almost every instance in the Old Testament when the glory of the Lord fills the tabernacle, the priests are rendered incapable of standing before it, and performing their various services. Though, therefore it is said in verse 5, that the "tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened," yet it is evident that the heavenly things of which the holy of holies was a type, was not yet made manifest to the church; nor could be, as we learn from verse 8, until the seven plagues were fulfilled. Viewing, therefore, the whole period of the seven vials as the day of atonement, a careful examination of the Jewish ceremonies of that day may probably conduct us to some light upon the events comprehended in the antitype. The high priest went into the holy of holies only once every year, on the day of atonement; and though it was necessarily opened for his entrance, yet as long as he continued within the veil, the people mourned over their sins and the sins of their nation; but immediately as he reappeared it was a signal of extraordinary joy, because it was a token that their sacrifice had been accepted, and an atonement made for the iniquities of the whole land. It was at the close of that day that the high priest came out from the holy of holies. As our High Priest, even Christ, is declared by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ix. 24—28, to be gone into heaven itself, and his second coming is compared to the reappearance of the high priest on the day of atonement; it follows, if we may be allowed

7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power: and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

to reason by strict analogy, that the glorious appearance of our High Priest is to take place under the seventh vial, at the close of that day,—and, that the seven plagues being fulfilled, he will bring with him those heavenly things which shall then be no longer obscured from the church's enraptured vision, but into the full enjoyment of which our great High Priest himself will introduce his faithful servants, and install them in everlasting possession.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Supplementary History, commencing A. D. 1792, being the pouring out of the seven vials in which "is filled up the wrath of God." As all the three preceding histories are brought to a close before the termination of these vials, they are now combined and treated as a united history, because included in one common destruction.

1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

This verse links the prophecy to the first verse of the preceding chapter, pointing out to us its connexion; and that, in respect of time, we have made no further progress in the prophecy, than when we had arrived to the announcement, in that instance, of the seven angels having been commissioned with the seven last plagues. So, in this verse, the same angels receive directions from the church in heaven, "to go their ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth."

2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

A sore on the human body is indicative either of inward disease or outward corruption, most probably proceeding from internal causes. We can be at no loss in ascertaining what this symbol of bodily infirmity is intended to shadow forth in the spiritual. The prophet Isaiah sets forth under the figure of human sickness and corruption, the total defection from true religion, and debased demoralization of the children of Israel (chap. i. 5, 6).—The effects of this vial were to be felt by those men who had the mark of the beast, and who dwelt in the bounds of the earth, or Papal-Roman Empire. God's judgments are generally manifested at the head; and,

accordingly, we should look to France as "the elder son of the pope," as exhibiting most conspicuously a fulfilment of this prophecy. We have seen, from the interpretation of Scripture itself, that this "noisome and grievous sore" is a people given over to the abandonment of all religious and moral obligations. To the enquiry, where was this spirit of infidelity nursed and matured, and brought to display its heidous character before the astonished world; none other answer can be given than France, which may be denominated the hot-bed of atheism and infidelity, from which proceeded the poisonous stream to the other nations of Christendom; so that at the period of the French Revolution the crusade of all men against every religious obligation in church and state, was of that wild and frenzied character, that, unless it receives solution by acknowledging such a spirit of hellish delusion as a judgment from God, it can be accounted for upon no rational principle whatever. All Europe stood aghast at the awful scene which was transacting at this period on the the theatre of that devoted country. Surely such audacious wickedness, such outrageous blasphemies were never before committed since the world's creation! But we will refer to a celebrated modern writer, who has recorded the history of these fearful times, from the period of which this chapter treats, whose words we shall, often have occasion to quote, and whose talents seem pressed by God into the service of an historical commentator upon this chapter of our own times*. The author of Waverley has well discoursed of the state of France, once so ignorantly superstitious, then so wildly infidel just prior to the French Revolution. We quote the following detached sentences: "French literature, more that any other in Europe, has been liable to the reproach of lending its powerful arm to undermine whatever was serious in morals, or hitherto considered as fixed in principle†." "The licentiousness which walked abroad in such disgusting and undisguised nakedness was marked with open infamy, deep enough to have called down, in the age of miracles

* No man could write a closer comment on the first and second vial of chapter xvi., than is contained in the author of Waverley's first two volumes of the Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, wherein he traces the origin, progress, and effects of the French Revolution.

† Life of Napoleon, by the Author of Waverley, vol. i. chap. 2.

an immediate judgment from Heaven; and crimes, which the worst of the Roman emperors would have at least hidden in his solitary isle of Caprea, were acted as publicly as if men had no eyes, or God no thunderbolts*." "Religion cannot exist where immorality generally prevails, any more than a light can burn where the air is corrupted; and accordingly, infidelity was so general in France, as to predominate in almost every rank of society." "Men of the most distinguished parts in France became allied in a sort of anti-crusade against Christianity, and indeed against religious principles of every kind. How they succeeded is too universally known†." "The world, for the first time heard an assembly of men, born and educated in civilization, and assuming the right to govern one of the finest of the European nations, uplift their united voice to deny the most solemn truth which man's soul receives, and renounce unanimously the belief and worship of a Deity. For a short time the same mad profanity continued to be acted upon.‡" "It was to such men as these that Heaven, IN PUNISHMENT OF THE SINS OF FRANCE AND OF EUROPE, AND PERHAPS TO TEACH MANKIND A DREADFUL LESSON, ABANDONED THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION§." We will refrain from quoting the many passages which might be produced from the same writer, and satisfy ourselves, for the sake of brevity, with only one other quotation:—"These men belonged to that class of atheists, who, looking up towards heaven, loudly and literally defied the Deity to make his existence known by launching his thunderbolts. Miracles are not wrought upon the challenge of a blasphemer more than on the demand of a sceptic; but these men had probably before their death reason to confess, that in abandoning the wicked to their own free will, a greater penalty results even in this life, than if Providence had been pleased to inflict the immediate doom which they had impiously defied‖." Such was France under this first vial; and every history of these times amply testifies, how the propagation of these atheistical principles in religion and government was assiduously persisted in wherever the Republican French arms secured them influence; the very spirit of in-

* Life of Napoleon by the Author of Waverley, vol. i. pp. 54, 55.
† Ibid. vol. i. p, 58.
‡ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 305. § Ibid. vol. i. p. 61. ‖ Ibid. vol. ii. p, 371.

fidelity or liberalism, being that of relaxing every restraint, and the removal of all established authority which religion and good government impose on the evil passions of mankind.

3 *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.*

The second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, emblematical of peoples, in a tumultous and restless condition; and describes the period of the reign of terror in France, from the 10th August 1792 to July 1794, when Robespierre was executed. During this interval all bulwarks and ancient landmarks were removed, the empire was convulsively agitated, and the whole face of things underwent a change. Paris appeared given up to murders: it resembled nothing but a human slaughter house: the guillotine scarcely ever remained inactive; the streets ran with blood; and when one set of executioners were exhausted with fatigue, reserves relieved them from their horrid and revolting duties. Multitudes were butchered, not in the heat of contest, but in cold blood; aptly described in the text by the "blood of a dead man." "The quantity of blood," says the author of Waverley, "which the revolutionary tribunal caused to be shed, was something unheard of even during the proscriptions of the Roman empire*." It was computed that upwards of two millions perished by the hands of the common executioner, and by judicial murders *en masse*, in Paris and the departments of France during this "reign of terror." Human nature recoils from contemplating the history of this period, during the operation of this second vial, when cold-blooded murder was regarded as a familiar pastime. "We have mentioned the murders committed at Lyons; but even these, though hundreds were swept away by volleys of musket-shot, fell short of the horrors perpetrated by Carrier at Nantes, who, in avenging the republic on the obstinate resistance of La Vendée, might have summoned hell to match his cruelty without a demon venturing to answer his challenge. Hundreds, men, women, and children were forced on board of vessels which were scuttled and sunk in the

* Life of Napoleon, by the Author of Waverley. vol. ii. p. 285.

Loire, and this was called republican baptism. Men and women were stripped, bound together and thus thrown into the river, and this was called republican marriage. But we have said enough to shew that men's blood seems to have been converted into poison and their hearts into stone, by the practices in which they were daily engaged. Many affected even a lust of cruelty, and the instrument of punishment was talked of with the fondness and gaiety with which we speak of a beloved and fondled object. It had its pet name of the Little National Window, and others equally expressive; and although saints were not much in fashion, it was, in some degree, canonized by the name of the Holy Mother Guillotine*. Every writer who has narrated the horrors of this period, concur in representing them as the most remarkable development of human wickedness ever recorded in the history of mankind. It has been well remarked, that history is but the record of the crimes of men; but the period of the reign of terror in France must stand distinguished from the black catalogue, as bearing fearfully on its front the hand of a righteous and indignant God, and marking by its extraordinary character a new era in the history of the world, and that era to be the commencement of the day of God's retributive wrath and vengeance.

The third vial describes the first act of judgment poured out on the Papacy, emblematized by "rivers and fountains of waters," the sources of instruction to the people. The 6th verse clearly points out that this act of vengeance takes place upon a body of men, who "have shed the blood of saints and prophets."

It is predicted in chap. xiii. 10, which treats of the Papal persecutions, that a time should arrive, when "he that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity, he that

4 *And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.*

5 *And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.*

6 *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given*

* Life of Napoleon, vol. ii. p. 296.

them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

7 *And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.*

killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword;" and it is recorded, when the judgment of Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, is completed, that "in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth" (chap. xviii. 24). There can be no doubt, therefore, both from the symbolical language in the text, and from the close similarity of expressions, in the above references, (both passages manifestly alluding to the Papacy,) that this vial describes the first act of judgment upon the Papal hierarchy. Accordingly, we find the next remarkable feature in those eventful times was the two several campaigns into Italy, the seat of the papacy, which the republican armies made, under Napoleon, in the years 1797 and 1798. In the former year Bonaparte advanced towards Rome, and was prevented from the seizure of the papal throne, only by the treaty of Tolentino, which was obtained by the Pope at the sacrifice of three of his legations, Ferrara, Bologna, and Romagna; an immense sum of money, and the plunder of the chefs d'œuvre of the Vatican. But this was only a temporary indulgence. The year following the French army, under Berthier, entered Rome, took the city, made the Pope and his Cardinals prisoners, and banished them their capital. The Pope afterwards died in captivity. Rome was declared a republic, and the tree of liberty planted in the seat of the sacerdotal tyrant, who for so many centuries had held Christendom under his bondage.

Such a revolution of opinion towards the Romish Church, which had so long enthralled the minds of men, can only be regarded as the work of an Omnipotent Being. Her hour was come and therefore the angel of the waters ascribes righteousness to him "who is, and was, and shall be, because he had judged thus: and a voice from the altar, or the church in heaven, acquiesces in her doom. The martyrs in heaven had been longing for her destruction, which, in chap. xiii. 10, is expressly declared to be "the patience of the saints." We cannot regard such a singular innovation upon the established prejudices of centuries, as an

ordinary event; and how applicable the history has proved to the prophecy, we shall see by a reference to the same author from whom we have already made such copious extracts. This author describes Bonaparte* as having "first shaken the Papal authority, and as boasting, in his Egyptian proclamations, that he had thereby destroyed the emblem of Christian worship." In another part he says, when alluding to the degradation to which Bonaparte had reduced the Roman See, "Such was the celebrated compact, by which Pius VII, surrendered to a soldier whose name was five or six years before unheard of in Europe, those high claims to supremacy in spiritual affairs, which his predecessors had maintained for so many ages against the whole potentates of Europe. A PURITAN MIGHT HAVE SAID OF THE POWER SEATED ON THE SEVEN HILLS, "BABYLON IS FALLEN, IT IS FALLEN, THAT GREAT CITY†.

The particulars of this vial, as brought upon the Papacy by the instrumentality of Bonaparte, is more minutely described in the Prophet Daniel (xi. 22—28), wherein the two Italian campaigns are given in the history of the vile person, who obtains the kingdom by "flatteries," and thus becomes the wilful king, or the first form of the infidel Antichrist. But this visitation, terrible as it was, was but a foretaste of the final doom of the Papal apostacy.

The extraordinary individual, who was made the principal instrument for the infliction of the third vial, is here introduced individually, under the symbol of the sun. The sun is an emblem of imperial dignity. The principle of Infidelity, described as ascending out of the bottomless pit, in chap. xi. 7, and which we interpreted, in that instance, as influencing the government of a state, here assumes a personality as infidel head, the first form of Antichrist, the seventh head, or beast, of chap. xvii. 10.

8 *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.*

9 *And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.*

* Life of Napoleon, by the Author of Waverley, vol. iv. p. 197.
† Ibid. vol. iv. p. 340.

He is represented as being invested with the imperial emblem of the sun. This can only refer to France, as it was the sun of France that was darkened (chap. vi. 12); and that country has been the chief seat of the prophecy since, because destined to be the principal theatre of the European drama. It was in France the witnesses of God were slain, infidelity engendered, and after undergoing herself a bloody ordeal of the Divine vengeance under the second vial, became the inflictor of God's judgment on the Papal nations. It is, therefore, Napoleon Bonaparte, late Emperor of the French, that is symbolized by this sun of the fourth vial, to whom was given power to scorch the men of the Papal earth with fire." How truly he fulfilled his commission of scourge of the Papal nations, is well-known. He made the round of all the ancient monarchies of Christendom, deluged every country with fire and blood, and mastered and took possession of every capital city of the Roman earth (save this sealed land), oppressing the people by every species of exaction, and subverting or encroaching upon every form of government which had hitherto withstood the vicissitudes of successive ages. The "suns of Napoleon" was an expression in every French soldier's mouth: indeed, he acquired during his Egyptian campaign, from the rolling fire of musketry, by which his victories were achieved, the oriental appellation of "King of Fire *."

He constantly regarded himself as commissioned by the Deity for the chastisement of the nations. The following occurs in his address to the inhabitants of Cairo:—"Is there any one blind enough not to see that I am the agent of Destiny, or incredulous enough to call in question the power of Destiny over human affairs? Make the people understand, that since the world was a world, it was ordained, that having destroyed the enemies of Islamism, and broken down the Cross, I should come from the distant parts of the West to accomplish the task designed for me. Shew them that in more than twenty passages of the Koran †

* Life of Napoleon, by the Author of Waverley, vol. iv. p. 60—74.

† It is to be remembered that the Koran is a mixture of the truths of the Old and New Testament, with the absurdities of the Mohammedan impostor; and to this cause is to be ascribed the knowledge which the Turks at the present moment possess, of the speedy downfall of their empire, and which was so unequivocally acknowledged in the first proclamation that issued from the Sultan at the commencement of the present war with Russia.

my coming is foretold: the day will come when all shall know from whom I have my commission, and that human efforts cannot prevail against me *." "It was no wonder that others, nay that he himself, should have annexed to his person the degree of superstitious influence, claimed for the chosen instruments of Destiny, whose path must not be crossed, and whose arms cannot be arrested †." At no period did this imperial sun appear invested with more powerful influence than in the month of May, 1812, at the rendezvous of the city of Dresden, previous to his celebrated Russian campaign, when all the Papal kings seemed to move around him, and to perform the subordinate offices of satellites, at his will and pleasure.

The duration of this vial, because of its extended application, we regard as continuing during the entire period of Napoleon's successful career as an Emperor, from A.D. 1802, to A.D. 1814, in which time, it is computed, upwards of 6,000,000 perished in the prosecution of his ambitious views; but, nevertheless, "they repented not to give him glory."

10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain.

11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores and repented not of their deeds.

The seat of the Papal beast cannot be here meant, because that beast passed from the prominent stage of the prophecy at the expiration of the forty-two months, or 1260 years, when another beast came up and slew the witnesses; which we have seen, in our interpretation of chapter xi., is the spirit of Infidelity in France. The seat of this infidel beast, therefore, is France, and Napoleon Bonaparte the personification of this beast. If any doubt should arise as to the consistency of the sudden transition in the symbols of the prophecy applicable to the same person; in the one verse represented as "the imperial sun," and in another as the beast; such difficulty is solved by a reference to another part of this prophecy (chap. xvii. 10, 11), in which instance the interpreting angel explains the seven heads on the symbolic monster to be seven kings, and then immediately denominates the seventh "the beast."

* Life of Napoleon, vol. iv. p. 87. † Ibid. vol. vi. p. 300.

We observed in commenting on chapter xi., that the beast which slew the witnesses was to be there regarded as the principle of Infidelity incorporated into the government of the French nation; but the beast is here for the first time presented to us as the personified head of Infidelity, or the first form of the personal Antichrist, the two-fold scourge, as the "King of Babylon" in Isa. xiv., the double representation of Daniel's "wilful king," and the "seventh-eighth" head of the beast of chap. xvii. We cannot omit one anecdote of this remarkable personage, as narrated by the Author of Waverley, and which, we think, singularly bears upon the appellation given unto him in the text. Napoleon once asked one of his courtiers what the people of Vienna thought of his actions, and received the following reply: "Some think you an angel, sire; some a devil; but all agree you are more than man*." We conclude, therefore, that France, as the seat of the beast, was the subject of this fifth vial; and which we interpret to be the bloody contest which attended the overthrow of Napoleon's power, waged in France, in the army of occupation of the allies for four years, proving to that proud nation a darkening dispensation, in which was totally eclipsed for a time her national glory. The imposition of those restraints which were enforced upon the French at this period, were eminently calculated to prove a source of intense mortification and chagrin, under a sense of which they are described in the text, as "gnawing their tongues for pain." Yet it is recorded they continued to "blaspheme the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."

12 *And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.*

This sixth vial has ever been regarded by all commentators as the most important clue to the right interpretation of the prophecy of this chapter; for as no difference of opinion exists as to the river Euphrates, referring to the Turkish power, this prophecy respecting it stands as a grand synchronism in the Apocalypse, by which we may assuredly know we have arrived

* Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, vol. vii. p. 405.

at the sixth vial, when the Othman Empire shall begin to wane. The waters of the river are described as gradually drying up, from which we infer a progressive consumption of this power. We consider this vial began its operations in the year 1820, when the revolt of Ali Pacha, followed by the insurrection of the Greek provinces, was the first manifestation to Europe, of the declension of the Turkish power. How this has been accelerated by political events since, it is quite unnecessary to state. She is now engaged in a war with Russia; that is exhausting her resources, and diminishing her power, and which we think will prove one of the causes, amongst others, ordered in God's providence, to fulfil the purposes expressed in this prophecy.

The kings of the East, or from the sun-rising, we conceive, can refer to none others than the long-lost Ten Tribes of Israel; who will then come up with their King at their head, to perform those mighty achievements in the land of Idumea (or Europe), foretold by all the Old-Testament prophets*.

Whilst the power, which has so long held in possession the East, is undergoing the judgment of this vial, there is another operation going forward, probably less apparent to the observation than the consumption of the Turkish power; but, nevertheless, it is busily accomplishing its destined work.

13 *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

14 *For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty*

"The spirits of three devils are gone forth to the kings of the earth, and of the whole world," to prepare them for the last mighty Antichristian confederacy, by undermining every righteous and holy principle, and possessing mankind with every species of demoniacal delusion. The spirit coming out of the mouth of the dragon, represents the brutal tyranny and oppression of the rulers of the Roman earth, struggling to

* We refer the reader to a full exposition of the argument on the subject of this verse, to a Sermon by the Rev. Edward Irving, in vol. iii. of "Occasional Discourses."

retain in their convulsive grasp their tottering power and authority. That out of the mouth of the infidel beast, describes the revolutionary spirit of anarchy and revolt, of insubordination and resistance to all rule, and impatience to every moral and religious restraint, which has been foisted upon Europe, as the result of increasing knowledge, and speciously demanding a more extended and enlightened liberality. The nations of Christendom are eaten up with this false principle : it is making its insidious progress into the most sacred precincts. But if it be a light, it is, as the text describes, a gleam borrowed from the deepest hell. The Papacy is meant by the false prophet: which designation is retained in chap. xix., to distinguish this superstition from the infidel power, who is henceforth denominated the beast. This describes the efforts of the Papal hierarchy to re-establish itself; and surely no period of its history exhibits more extended or indefatigable exertions to re-constitute its lost influence, than has been put forth since its resumption of political and ecclesiastical power. This she has effected, through the assistance of this spirit of demoniacal liberality, and has acquired a footing in this Protestant country, which she never could attain unto since the Reformation. But it is like those dynasties which were successively swept from their base, and have now received temporary restoration, in order to their utter demolition at the battle of Armageddon.

The whole of Europe is one vast theatre of these conflicting spirits of absolute rulers, liberals, and apostolicals, and men's hearts seem conscious of some indefinite change about to happen, some mighty crisis near at hand, which shall alter the features of society, and develop some momentous era in the history of the world. And thus it is—but none of the wicked shall understand—though "the wise shall understand."

15 *Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth; and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*

In this awful crisis, O reader, do we now stand!* Five acts of judgment have passed over; the sixth is working its slow but sure effects on the Turkish power, and that portion of the vial which is preparing

* What was thus only conjecture respecting the fulfilment of the remaining part of the prophecy in 1829 is now so far history in 1860.

the kings of the earth and the inhabitants of the world for the great day of God Almighty, we can perceive has well nigh accomplished its preparatory work prior to the final catastrophe. The clouds have been long gathering around us, threatening and blackening as they approach, accumulating in one dense and portentous mass over our devoted heads. A few big drops have escaped, harbingers of the terrific tempest. There is an ominous silence, fearful and appalling: "men's hearts failing them for fear," yet still interchanging assurances of peace and safety, though doubting the meaning of their own words. All is ripe, all is ready: what hinders the bursting of that cloud so charged with heavy vengeance? A voice of warning; one short moment; peradventure one soul may repent. "Behold I come as a thief! blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments." *We are now arrived at the termination of the fulfilled prophecy,*

AND EVERYTHING PREDICTED HENCEFORTH REMAINS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

This verse seems to be connected with the prophecy to the 14th, the intervening verse being introduced as a notification of warning of the speedy approach of our Lord. It is for the battle of Armageddon that the kings of the earth and the inhabitants of the world are gathering together. It is acknowledged by most commentators to be the same as that referred to by the prophet Joel, chap. iii., described as occurring in the "valley of Jehoshaphat," when the mighty men of the earth are collected to be trodden in the wine-press of the wrath of Almighty God. It is the same final conflict which is the burden of every prophet from Moses to St. John; when the iniquity of mankind shall be ripe, and Christ shall reveal himself, to the utter destruction of his enemies.

16 *And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.*

As we are now entering upon that portion of the prophecy still future, any attempts at the explanation of the text we offer as deducible from

17 *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air, and there came a great voice out of the temple of*

heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

the passage itself, or by comparison with other parts of Scripture. Though the outline of unfulfilled prophecy may be pretty accurately ascertained from the Scriptures, yet the peculiar manner and circumstances of its accomplishment must be ever left to the inscrutable wisdom of God, who ordaineth all things according to the pleasure of his own will. The seventh angel poured his vial into the air, by which expression is conveyed to us its universality of application. This vial is the consummating act of God's wrath; and is of such importance, that the events consequent on its pouring out are detailed at length in the descriptions contained in the three following chapters. Immediately after the seventh angel had poured out his vial into the air, a voice is heard from the church in heaven, saying, "It is done;" by which declaration, we conceive, is announced that therein is contained the full cup of the wrath of God, the final catastrophe of the Gentile church, the ingathering of the elect, and the total destruction of the reprobate. Some render it, "It is generated;" which likewise conveys the same truth, including the commencement of the new order of things in the same act in which the present perish for ever.

18 *And there were voices and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*

19 *And the great city was divided into three parts and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*

The first grand effect of the pouring out of the seventh vial is a mighty earthquake, or political revolution; so extensive in its application and so disastrous in its consequences, that such a convulsion of nations was never before known "since men were upon the earth." During the operation of this earthquake we are informed that the great city is divided into three parts, when the cities of the nations fell, apparently indicating that in the struggle and confusion the shattered powers of the Papal earth should form themselves under three predominant headships or kingdoms. The city of confusion is broken down, and the time for judging Babylon the

great, the mother of harlots, is at length arrived. The interpreting angel, in the following chapter, has left little room for scepticism in determining the question what Babylon means. In verse 5, Babylon is symbolized by a woman; in verse 9, we are informed that it is upon seven mountains the woman sitteth; and in verse 18, the angel clears up the mystery by declaring, that the "woman which the Apostle saw, was that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;"—demonstration sufficient to satisfy the most sceptical if the devil had not blinded their eyes.

The effects of the symbolic earthquake, or revolution of the sixth seal (chap. vi. 12—14), was attended only with "a removal out of their places" of the islands (the established forms of government), and the mountains (the eminences of political power); and which we have seen was so remarkably fulfilled at the period of the French Revolution, and the years succeeding, in the dethronement or debasement of every prince and dynasty in Christendom. But the effects of this last vial on such human associations of political power, now restored to their former ascendancy, are felt commensurate with the commotion here predicted; for "every island shall then fly away, and the mountains shall not be found." So complete shall be the destruction, so overwhelming the ruin, no vestige of their former existence shall remain. "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Dan. vii. 26, 27.)

20 *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

It is the peculiar characteristic of this last earthquake of the seventh vial, and distinguishes it from the earthquake of the sixth seal, that it is accompanied with a "great hail." This symbol, we have before observed, denotes a hostile invasion

21 *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague there-*

from the North, where hail may be *of was exceeding great.* supposed to generate. Viewing the present state of Europe, we should feel little hesitation in pronouncing this to be spoken of Russia, whose extensive accessions of territory and ambitious strides for power, point her out with sufficient distinctness as that northern hail which forms such a conspicuous feature in the prophetic writings as a distinguished instrument of inflicting God's judgments in the last days. (Jer. vi. 22, 23, xxv. 32, l. 3, 40, 42; Ezek. xxxviii. 22; Isai. xxx. 30, &c. &c.) "Every stone about the weight of a talent," conveys to us the resistless fury and overwhelming destruction with which this power will accomplish her appointed task. Every infliction of previous judgment left the men of the earth impenitent: there is now no time for repentance as heretofore; for having proved incorrigible after such successive warnings, they are now consumed without hope in this exterminating judgment, and die blaspheming God, whose righteous vengeance their impieties have called down upon their guilty heads.

CHAPTER XVII.

Commencement of the Explanatory Histories; this chapter introducing that of the History of the Seals, or Western branch of the Roman Empire, under its last Infidel head, during the period of the Seventh Vial.

EVERY historical prophecy, like the Apocalypse and that of Daniel, is composed of two parts, of which the former is symbolical, containing the prophecy; and the latter is introduced as an exposition of the same, generally delivered to the seer by an interpreting angel sent by God for that purpose. From the beginning of this chapter to the end of the book we have given to us an exposition of all that preceded; and as the vision consisted of three distinct parts, so likewise does the explanation. "One of the seven angels which had the seven vials" is here commissioned with an enlargement, and an interpretation of one of those grand events announced as following the pouring out of the seventh vial: "and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath" (chap. xvi. 19). It is the Papal hierarchy, the apostate church of Rome, who is designated as the "great whore" with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication.

1 *And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:*

2 *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabiters of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

The true church is ever represented as the chaste spouse of Christ, the affianced bride of our Lord, waiting for her espousals at his second coming. On the other hand, the apostate church it emblematized under the figure of a harlot, as having forgotten her allegiance, and departed from her fidelity to her true lord and husband.

3 *So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*

In this verse is again represented the compound emblem of the Papacy interwoven with the Roman Empire with seven heads and ten horns, or seven successive sovereignties and ten ruling kingdoms. It is the same beast that is mentioned in chapters xii. and xiii. In the former, under the Pagan superstition, the crowns were on the heads of the beast (ver. 3); that is, the supreme authority was invested in the emperors of Rome. In the latter, under the Papal superstition, the crowns were on the ten horns of the beast (ver. 1), signifying that the Empire was then in its divided state of ten kingdoms. In the verse before us, the beast or Roman Empire is represented carrying the woman, scarlet coloured and full of names of blasphemy; but no crowns are mentioned. Some commentators have supposed that this omission is because, in the mystery, the kingdoms of the earth passed to Christ, upon the supposition that his iron reign commenced in the year 1792, when the first vial was poured out, and the "stone cut out without hands first smote the ten toes of the great image." (Dan. ii. 34.) But we think a more simple interpretation can be offered of this interesting particular in the prophecy. It is admitted by all, that the scarlet-coloured beast full of names of blasphemy, with seven heads and ten horns, is the Roman Empire in its last form of infidelity. We have seen infidelity as a principle in chapter xi. and afterwards assuming a personification in Napoleon Bonaparte, the sun of the fourth vial and the beast of the fifth vial. Napoleon, therefore, is the first infidel king of the Papal earth. We have already referred to him, and shall again have occasion to shew that he is the seventh head or sovereignty of the Roman Empire. He is now passed away, but an eighth head is yet to appear who is of the seven; and if our conjecture be true (and we can perceive no other solution of the enigma), that this remains still to be fulfilled in his son, the present Duke of Reischadt,* who

* As the Duke has been dead these many years, we must look for the eighth head elsewhere: is it not much more likely to be the present Emperor, Louis Napoleon, who is undoubtedly *of the seven*.

would be "of the seven," the father and the son would present that double fulfilment of the infidel Antichrist, which is uniformly presented in Scripture as consisting of a twofold character. Upon this assumption of Napoleon Bonaparte being the first infidel head of the Roman Empire, we are to furnish a reason why the crowns are removed from the beast in this last stage of apostacy. We think this is sufficiently accounted for in the history of this remarkable personage, who is constantly distinguished in prophecy from the other kings of the earth, and regarded as "a vile person to whom they should not give the honour of the kingdom, but who should possess it by flatteries" (Dan. xi. 21); and in Isai. xiv. 18, he is placed in direct contrast to the other "kings of the nations, who all lie in glory, every one in his own house: but he is cast out of his grave as an abominable branch, who shall not be joined with them in burial." It is a truth that has prevailed undisputed in Christendom, until within the last few years, that "by God kings rule and princes decree justice;" and every Christian king acknowledges his consent to this fundamental principle of earthly sovereignty, by receiving his crown at the hand of the church, who is regarded in this ceremony as the delegate of the King of kings. But Napoleon Bonaparte, as if to stamp his assumption of imperial power as his own wilful act, and in open defiance and contempt of any higher authority than his own military prowess had acquired, he refused to receive the emblem of imperial dignity from the hands of the distinguished ecclesiastic who assisted at his coronation, and placed the crown upon his own head. By this extraordinary act, never before transacted in Christendom, in a most eminent manner he discarded the character of a Christian prince, and declared himself to be the infidel head of the Roman monarchy. We cannot refrain from extracting the following from the same work to which we have already been so largely indebted. "The Emperor took his coronation oath, as is usual on such occasions, with his hands upon the Scripture, and in the form in which it was repeated to him by the Pope. But in the act of coronation itself, there was a marked deviation from the universal custom, characteristic of the man, the age, and the conjuncture. In all other similar solem-

nities the crown had been placed on the sovereign's head by the presiding spiritual person, as representing the Deity, by whom princes rule. But not even from the head of the Catholic church would Bonaparte consent to receive as a boon the golden symbol of sovereignty, which he was sensible he owed solely to his own unparalleled train of military and civil successes. The crown having been blessed by the Pope, Napoleon took it from the altar with his own hands, and placed it on his brows. He then put the diadem on the head of his empress, as if determined to shew that his authority was the child of his own actions."* We consider, therefore, from the coronation of Napoleon, the Roman Empire to be under its seventh head. It is for this reason, we conceive, no crowns are seen upon the beast of the Roman Empire when arrayed under her infidel head; because God does not acknowledge any king in a Christian country that refuses to receive the crown from the ecclesiastical hand, any more than he acknowledges an individual in covenant with him who has not submitted to the initiatory ordinance of Christian baptism.

4 *And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:*

The woman who is represented, in verse 3, as sitting on the beast, is arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones; these conspicuous and gorgeous colours the Papal hierarchy peculiarly affect in their apparel, with every other demonstration of costliness and grandeur, to attract the admiration and secure the respect of mankind. "She has a golden cup in her hand full of abomination and filthiness." This cup in the harlot's hand is in contrast with the cup of our holy communion; which cup she is represented as having polluted and filled with her abominations. The same figure of the mystical Babylon occurs in the prophet Jeremiah, chap. li. 7—9. "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her;

*Life of Napoleon, vol. v. p. 159.

take balm for her pain, if so she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed; forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country; for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies."

5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

The woman is here announced to be the great mystery of all the prophets, the mystical "Babylon, the mother of harlots." So plain a declaration can scarcely leave a cavil for scepticism itself, as to the true application of this prominent object in the prophetic writings, so often denounced as sustaining the whole weight of the Divine vengeance. The literal Babylon to which the prophecies primarily applied had long ceased to exist; and yet we find Babylon the great, in Saint John's time, reserved for future punishment, and her destruction still a subject of inspired prophecy. The conclusion, therefore is obvious, without any fear of contradiction, that the grand object which all the prophecies have in view is the mystical Babylon of the last times, apostate Christendom; and that they had reference to the literal Babylon only in that primary yet subordinate degree, which is the invariable custom in the prophetic writings to shadow forth a deeper and far more important mystery;—the immediate and palpable fulfilment of the prophecy thus affording a sure and certain pledge of its ultimate accomplishment.

6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

The woman is still in existence, when the beast has become infidel, with blasphemy written all over him, although she is carried by him, helpless in herself, and reduced to the condition of impotency, being "drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." Thus, when the third angel pours out his vial upon her, it is recorded (chap. xvi. 6), "She shed the blood of saints and prophets;" and when utterly destroyed (chap. xviii. 24), it is said. "In her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." The Apostle wondered to see the woman, carried on

the beast of blasphemy or infidelity. From the particulars contained in this and the preceding verses, we conclude, that though the infidel beast shall deprive the Papacy of all remains of her former influence and power, yet she shall still struggle on a feeble existence, probably sustained by him to suit his own purposes, as the infidel Antichrist; and reserved by God, for their mutual destruction at the battle of Armageddon (chap. xix. 20).

7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition; and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of fe from the foundation of he world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

The interpreting angel proposes an explanation to the Apostle, of the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the "seven heads and ten horns," by which, we have already seen, is identified the fourth monarchy of Daniel, the Pagan, Papal, and Infidel Roman Empire of the Apocalypse. The beast that the Apostle had just seen carrying the drunken woman, is the Roman Empire in its last stage, and under its last twofold infidel head. We are, therefore, to account for the enigma of the beast "that was, and is not, and yet is;" not in the situation of the Roman Empire, as it was when this interpretation was given to the Apostle, under the Pagan emperors, or during the Papal period, when the woman exerted her influence over the kings of the Papal earth: but in that peculiar feature of its last stage, when the crowns are removed, and blasphemy is written over the body of the beast, and when the woman herself is shorn of all power, reduced to the helpless condition of a drunkard, and distinguished only by the black record of her crimes. The period of suspension from active existence, conveyed in the significant words of the text, when the beast "was, and is not, and yet is," has been most appropriately selected by God, as the most fit occasion to enlighten his church upon this curious prophetic enigma. It

would have been useless and premature to have attempted any explanation of this double personification of the infidel beast, before the first form should have run his appointed course. The first part of the prophecy having been fulfilled in the person of Napoleon Bonaparte, the first infidel king of Babylon, who is the seventh head of the beast mentioned in verse 10, we are now standing, in point of time, precisely in the situation which the angel supposes in his interpretation of the mystery. Napoleon appeared for a few short feverish years, as a burning meteor blazing and astonishing the inhabitants of the world: he is now sunk beneath the political horizon; and he, for whose insatiable ambition the world was too limited, now occupies a few feet of unconsecrated ground, on a remote and barren rock, fit habitation for the infidel blasphemer! The man who once had Europe at his nod, and boasted that he had established a dynasty, which should give the world a race of successive princes*, died in a foreign country, a stipendiary prisoner; and was refused the solitary satisfaction of a grave in that land over which he had once exercised such undisputed sway. The stupendous power and mighty dominion, which kept the world in awe, exists now only in history; his influence apparently extinguished, and his astonishing career remembered and recorded, as the irruptions of a volcano, or the convulsions of an earthquake, that had once visited the world, but which was never expected to recur. His family of kings and princes are reduced to the rank of private individuals, being sunk into obscurity; and mankind have scarcely ceased from their mutual congratulations, because the "feller is laid low." But what saith the Prophet Isaiah, in describing the period, which the interpreting angel contemplates in this interval of deceitful peace in which we now stand? "He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet, they break forth into singing. Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.... Thy pomp is brought down to the

* Life of Napoleon, vol. v., p. 161.

grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!....They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit, as a carcase trodden under feet. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial (that is, in the sepulchre of Royalty), because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evil doers shall never be renowned." (Isa. xiv.)

Could the state of Europe, after the downfall of Napoleon, be more closely depicted than in these verses, when a long course of peace and prosperity was universally expected after that scourge of the nations was laid low? *

But what saith the Prophet Isaiah to such congratulations of peace and safety? "Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina (which is Christendom, the seat of the visible church), because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent;" and then immediately follows the destruction of Christendom: for it is added, "Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou whole Palestina art dissolved." And who is this flying fiery serpent, that is to bring such destruction upon those nations, who are represented as congratulating themselves that their scourge had been laid low? Doubtless the same mystery as that contained in the text, the beast that "was, is not, yet is, the eighth head of the beast, though of the seven," who is to lead up the confederation of the kings of the earth, to make war with the Lamb, and whom "Christ will destroy with the breath of his mouth, and consume with the brightness of his coming?"

* Life of Napoleon, vol. ix. pp. 47—51.

Does the reader ask, When are we to look for a development of this new character who is thus predicted to appear in such fearful terms, who is "to ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition;" and at whose sudden re-appearance, "they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the Book of Life?" we answer, Await a few short years, and thou shalt be at no pains in answering the question. God will reveal him in his own time; but in the interval, we will throw out for thy meditation, that Napoleon left a son, who was ushered into being, with the ominous title of King of Rome, or Babylon; and we doubt not, God will bring him forth from his youthful retirement, to the astonishment of Europe, to the end that he may complete the work which his father began. We leave thy own discretion to decide, (if our conjecture prove to be true,) with what accuracy and nicety this curious enigma of the beast that "was, is not, and yet is," who is the "eighth, yet of the seven," hath been explained*. We cannot fail, however, to notice that it is those whose names are not written in the Book of Life, who shall wonder at the beast; by which we recognize the oft-repeated assurance in Scripture, that "the wise shall understand, but the wicked shall not understand."

9 *And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.*

10 *And there are seven kings; five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come: and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.*

We are here taught by the angel that the seven heads which have been represented in the beast, whenever he has made his appearance upon the Apocalyptic drama, have two significations; the one expressive of the locality of the seat upon which the woman sitteth, by which every one must recognize the seven-hilled city of Rome; and the other is declared by the angel to mean seven kings or sovereignties, which were to have their appointed time in exercising rule over the Roman Empire. Five of these are pronounced to have fallen; and one was then in exis-

* For an enlargement of the arguments on this interesting portion of the unfulfilled prophecies of this book, see "Frere's Combined View of the Prophecies," pp. 477—500.

tence, at the time the Apostle saw the vision. The first five are kings, consuls, consular tribunes, decemviri, dictators; and the sixth, which then was, is emperors: the "other," or the seventh, was "not yet come:" and before looking for its manifestation, it was of course necessary that the sixth should first disappear. This did not take place until the year 1806, when the Emperor of Austria ceded the title before the victorious arms of Napoleon.

It is the common method of historians, when writing the history of the emperors, to carry on a connected narration from the Roman Cæsars, down in succession, to the Emperors of Germany, who succeeded to the title after its revival in the West by Charlemagne. Immediately after this imperial headship was destroyed by Napoleon, he centered the power in himself, at the confederation of the Rhine; and thus constituted the seventh head, who, we are informed, was "to continue a short space," in opposition to the lengthened duration of his predecessor in the dignity. Accordingly, we have seen, he did continue only a short period, to make way for another head about to be revealed.

11 *And the beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.* Here we have introduced the double personification of the infidel beast, who is "the eighth, and is of the seven;" two persons, though represented as one, in character and in purpose;—the former possessing the power, the latter the title; but hereafter to possess both the power and the title. The solution we have already given, we think, is reduced to as clear a demonstration as unfulfilled prophecy will admit; the seventh head being Napoleon Bonaparte; the eighth, yet to come, in the person of his son,* under which last personification of the infidel Antichrist, the kings of the earth, and their armies, with the false prophet, are to meet their final doom. Compare Isaiah xiv. and Daniel xi. with chap. xix. of this Revelation—all of which treat of the same mystery, and terminate in the same catastrophe, at the battle of Armageddon.

12 *And the ten horns* It is curious, as well as instructive,

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doubt his Nephew.

to observe the critical accuracy of the prophecy, as if God was willing to meet even the scepticism of the age, to which it particularly referred. The Apostle is informed, that the "ten horns are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet," the Roman Empire not being in its divided state at the time the prophecy was given, but that "they should receive power as kings one hour with the beast." During the period of Napoleon's ascendency, the kings of the Papal earth could scarcely be considered as exercising kingly authority; for they were all, or nearly all, more or less, under his control: but they seem now to be restored, only to retain their power "one hour," when the eighth head of the beast is revealed; for it is evident that he is to possess uncontrolled authority over these ten kings of the Papal earth. How he is to acquire this ascendency we pretend not to define. When the judgment of the first six vials were poured out upon the Papal nations, we have seen that this British nation, one of the ten kingdoms, in virtue of her Protestant church (chap. vii.) was sealed from their direful effects; but, in the text before us, no exception is provided, by which we should assuredly have concluded, that some national iniquity had been committed, by which she would have included herself in the common fate that awaited the other Papal nations. The fact of her submission to the infidel beast, about to arise, is so plainly declared in the prophecy, that it would be impossible to evade its application, had we even difficulty in conceiving such fatal apostacy; but we are left no room for mere conjecture. The act now passing the British Legislature*, by which the adherents of the Papal harlot are admitted to the same rights and privileges as the servants of the true church; the formal and deliberate abrogation of every Protestant feature in our constitution, and the free and unchallenged admission of men of every religion to offices in a state, which heretofore exacted such righteous and solemn tests of Christianity, we consider to be an

which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

13 *These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast*

* The above was written during the month of March, 1829.

act so marked with apostacy, that men could not fail of acknowledging it, were they not given over to believe a lie. But it is so written; and let God be true, and every man a liar. England, thy doom is sealed! A short interval—ah, how short!—will prove thy coward expediency, thy subtle infidelity, miscalled liberality, the treacherous rock upon which thou shalt meet thy destruction.

14 *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

This verse seems introduced as a parenthesis, to signify that it is this infidel beast, and these ten kings, that make war with the Lamb; and who meet their fate at the battle of Armageddon, detailed in chap. xix. 11. The "Lamb shall overcome them, because he is King of kings, and Lord of lords." It is the same grand confederacy of the kings of the earth, mentioned in Psalm ii. and the parallel passages. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." He comes to this act of judgment with all his saints, "who are called, and chosen, and faithful."

15 *And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

In the first verse of this chapter it is declared, that the woman "sitteth upon many waters;" and this verse furnishes us with the angel's interpretation of this expression, to mean "peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues;" otherwise, those ten Papal nations, who profess her religion or acknowledge her authority. (See also Jer. li. 13, 42, 55).

16 *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the*

The same powers which have been so long held in superstitious bondage to the Papal harlot, shall at last

grow weary of her servitude, and shall give their power unto the infidel beast, for the purpose of promoting her destruction. This last incarnation of Infidelity shall complete the work which the first accomplished only in part, at the pouring out of the third vial (chap. xvi. 4), when the Pope and his cardinals were banished from Rome, their possessions confiscated, their palaces plundered; and the whole system of their superstition for a time abolished. But now the demolition of the Papacy, as an ecclesiastical power and establishment shall be complete, for the set time of her destruction is come, when "the words of God shall be fulfilled." No vestige of her shall remain; for it is written, they "shall hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

17 *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.*

This concluding verse sums up the interpretation of the mystery, in terms most intelligible and expressive—"The woman is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth,"—and can apply, when compared with other circumstances of the prophecy, to none other than the seven-hilled city of Rome, miscalled the "eternal city," and which has been for so many revolving ages the chief seat of the enemies of Christ and his church. First under the Pagan emperors of Rome, then that of the Pope and his myrmidons; and, when these are removed, we suspect likewise to prove the seat of the last infidel Antichrist.

18 *And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

Containing the Destruction of the Mystical Babylon.

1 *And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.*

2 *And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.*

3 *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.*

This angel appears to be parallel with the second angel in the xiv th chapter, and indicates, as we there expressed, a prophetic voice proceeding from the true church, announcing the speedy downfall of the Papal Apostacy. It cannot be a voice of triumph, after the destruction of Babylon, because the second angel that follows, in ver. 4, is made to utter an exhortation to God's people to come out of her, previous to the infliction of her plagues: and it therefore follows, that she has not met with her destruction at the time this angel is represented as exclaiming, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen," but that it is a prophetic announcement of her fate, preparatory to the address of the second angel. How similar is the language employed in ver. 2. to that contained in the Prophet Isaiah, chap. xxxiv. describing the utter desolation which shall take place in the land of Idumea, or Papal Christendom, upon the people of God's curse, when he cometh to judgment. An attentive comparison of the two passages will leave no doubt in the mind of the reader, that they describe the same event. The act of vengeance is not only upon the Papal Hierarchy, symbolized in the preceding chapter as a drunken harlot, but "The kings of the earth that have committed fornication with

her, and the merchants of the earth who have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies," shall likewise "drink of the wrath of her fornication." The rulers and nations of the earth have been connected with her in iniquity, and they shall not be separated in punishment.

The judgment of Babylon having been pronounced by the preceding angel, the voice of this angel is directed to the people of God to come out of her. Though we do not object to the application of this remarkable expression occurring, wherever the destruction of Babylon is spoken of in the Prophets, to a separation from her abominations, yet we do most strenuously oppose the limitation of its full meaning to this interpretation, by which we consider the passage to be spiritualized away, and the church deprived of the consolation the prophecy is intended to convey. It is the wisdom of an interpreter of Scripture, not to allow the literal to be frittered away by the spiritual, and at the same time to preserve distinct and entire the spiritual, whilst giving full effect to the literal accomplishment of the prophecy. Here are errors to be avoided on both sides of the question; the danger is in the limitation or contraction of the words of Scripture. The address in ver. 4, is to the people of God, whom it is presupposed have come out of, or separated from, the abominations of the Papal apostacy, and are not confederate with her iniquity; for an apostate from the truth, still continuing an adherence to the apostacy, cannot be denominated one of the people of God. The "partaking of her sins," in the text is one thing; and "the receiving of her plagues," is another. Those who have participated in the former, shall be included in the latter. If the judgment be literal, then also is the exemption literal. If the arm of God's vengeance is to come down upon "the people of his curse," dwelling in the mystical Babylon, and which is ever described in Scripture as soaking the land with the blood of the victims, then surely the call to "come out of her," is to be un-

4 *And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

5 *For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.*

derstood as an act of faith in the church, departing from the precincts of the doomed land: even as Noah built his ark, Lot went out of Sodom, and the Christians escaped to Pella, by faith in God's warning voice; and thus avoided those several judgments predicted in each instance above referred to. Compare Isaiah xlviii. 20; lii. 11; Jer. l. 8; li. 6, 9, 45—50.

6 *Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.*

Her judgment is here declared to be the same in kind, as she has dealt out to God's saints, though double in degree, as it is written, Jer. l. 15, "Take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her," and recorded in this Prophecy, chap. xiii. 10, and xvi. 6.

7 *How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.*

The Papacy is here again introduced as the woman sitting upon many waters, that ruled over the kings of the earth: she is represented as living in secure enjoyment, totally unconscious of her approaching fate. A similar vision occurs in the Prophet Isaiah, chap. xlvii. "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called, the lady of kingdoms. And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever; so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: But these two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood; they shall come upon thee in their perfection, for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments."

8 *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and*

Her judgment shall come upon her in the height of her pride and confidence, abrupt in its approach, rapid

and complete in its execution; as it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee: thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know," (chap. xlvii. 11.) There is no hope of escape for her, for "strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.'

famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God, who judgeth her.

The kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, are represented as lamenting her miserable downfall and doleful end. These kings are not to be understood as the ten kings in chap. xvii. 16, 17; of whom it is recorded, "they shall hate the whore, and make her desolate;" but they appear introduced as representative of the long line of Papal kings, who have drunk into the abominations of the Papal harlot, and supported her by their authority in the times of her supremacy. They are brought forward as the subordinate parts in the scene, to give consistency and completeness to the representation, as bewailing the fate of their partner in iniquity. "Alas, alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come."

9 *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.*

10 *Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.*

Babylon is constantly set forth in the prophets as a great city. Thus it is said in Jeremiah, xxv. 29, when the destruction of the mystical Babylon is prophesied of, "For lo! I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name;" and in Isaiah, xiv. 31, "Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved;" and Isaiah, xxiv. 10, "The city of confusion (or Babylon which being interpreted means confusion) is broken down." The ecclesiastical rulers and chief men

11 *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.*

of the mystical city are therefore designated merchants, in order to preserve the consistency of the figure. These merchants are they who make a profit of the commerce of the place signified, and they are here represented as bewailing her, because the source of their gain was destroyed, "for no man buyeth their merchandise any more."

12 *The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass and iron, and marble.*

13 *And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.*

Under the symbol of various articles of merchandize, the covetousness and selfishness of the Papal ecclesiastics is set forth. It is said of the woman, in chap. xvii. 4, "that she was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls." Their ostentatious display of this gaudy apparel, and the costly profusion of their ornaments, united to a form of service eminently calculated to excite and gratify the senses of mankind, have proved some of the strongest means by which they have deluded and enslaved the minds of an ignorant and superstitious people. It is truly a religion of sense, and no wonder therefore, they should seek an object of worship in idols of wood and of stone. This is the true essence of all idolatry, to which sin the mind of man is peculiarly prone, the rejection of the worship of an invisible God to bestow it upon an object cognizable to the senses of man: as the former elevates the soul and lifts it up to the contemplation of a higher state of existence; so, in proportion, the latter debases and brutalizes it beneath the level of the irrational creation.

The catalogue of her merchandize is summed up with "slaves and souls of men;" the one pointing out her horrid traffic in the slave trade, which all the treaties and exertions of this country have never been able effectually to suppress; and the latter, the deeper responsibility they have incurred in the destruction of men's souls, by their sale of indulgences, dispensations, and ab-

solutions. We think the mention of the rich articles of commerce in these two verses calculated to convey a true idea of the splendour, luxury, and ostentation, that has ever been so conspicuous in the magnificent seat of the Papal hierarchy.

But such wickedness was destined to have its end: The termination of the career of thy prosperous iniquity is at length arrived, and thy hideous traffic can now no longer be tolerated and prosecuted with impunity; for "the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee," no more to return for ever. Thy gorgeous apparel, thy costly trappings, and thy blasphemous assumptions will not avail to save thee from the burning anger of Him who judgeth thee! And the merchants who formerly trafficked in thee, are fain to stand afar off for the fear of thy torment, weeping and wailing for thy disastrous plight—thy unmitigable torment—thy irremediable woe! Saying, "Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!"

14 *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.*

15 *The merchants of these things, which were made rich, by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing.*

16 *And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls.*

Her destruction is again declared to come in one hour. The figure of a merchant city is still retained: "And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea;" that is all who profited by her establishment, and trafficked in her abominations, converting her iniquity into gain; are represented as contemplating and sympathising in her direful downfall; for her ruin is perfected, her fate hopeless; "and they cried

17 *For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off.*

18 *And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying What city is like unto this great city!*

19 *And they cast dust on their head, and cried, weep-*

ing and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness, for in one hour is she made desolate.

when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!" Thus it is written in the Prophet Isaiah: "And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch; and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched, night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever, from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever." It is well worthy of remark, how often in this chapter the expression occurs, that in one hour her visitation cometh; by which repetition, is assuredly conveyed, the fearful abruptness with which judgment will overtake the Papal apostacy; and in one consummating act of God's vengeance, she shall be laid prostrate in frightful ruin, in irretrievable desolation.

20 *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*

There is no sympathy in heaven with her downfall, no commiserating pity heard from the apostles and martyrs there, but a shout of unmingled triumph at her misery: her sins have reached up into the heavens, and her judgment is true and righteous; for she had shed the blood of martyrs and of saints, and God hath now heard their cry for retribution upon her, and hath avenged them. How shall we compare the holy exultation of these apostles and prophets when she is thus judged, with the affected clemency of our rational and liberal religionists whose complacency and enlightened liberality would surely induce them to extend the right hand of fellowship to Satan himself, seeing that they are so willing to offer it to his prime minister and his chief representative? Surely the conclusion is irresistible; that in so far as we cannot cordially sympathize with the song in heaven, so far are we removed from that standard of purity and holiness which undoubtedly they have attained unto. It is an accursed thing, a damnable apostacy, black with iniquity against Heaven, bloated with wickedness and blasphemy, and ripe for destruction, for whom pity is a crime, and mercy high treason against Christ the King.

21 *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*

This verse represents the violence and completeness of her destruction. What figure could be more expressive? What vestige would remain? What memento left behind of a millstone cast into the capacious sea? The language is taken from the Prophet Jeremiah, li. 63, after enlarging upon the overthrow of the mystical Babylon, which he sums up, by declaring that "it shall be cut off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast; but that it shall be desolate for ever:" the prophet instructs Seraiah, when he has made an end of reading this book, to bind a stone to it and cast it into the midst of Euphrates; and he adds, "Thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.

22 *And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a milstone shall be heard no more at all in thee:*

23 *And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.*

How solemnly impressive is this description! how expressive of that dreary waste, that desolate solitude, which shall exist in lands where now only is heard the busy hum of men, all eagerly engaged in the pursuit of some perishable worldly object! Who, that reads this affecting passage, but feels an unconscious sadness steal over his mind, at the melancholy condition which sin has entailed on mankind, the awful consequences attending a departure from the living and true God! A few short years, and what a change will be exhibited in Europe? Human nature may shrink at the picture herein described: but faith exclaims, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." We cannot refrain from quoting the parallel passage in the Prophecies of Isaiah, describing

the same event; and, in equally affecting and sublime terms, he sets forth the utter desolation that shall come upon the land of Idumea, or Europe (chap. xxxiv. 11); "But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also, and the raven shall dwell in it; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof; and it shall be a habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow; there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate."

Thus complete shall be Babylon's destruction! Where there is now fertility and beauty, decked in nature's loveliest garb, behold! barrenness, and the wildness of dreary solitude. The song of mirth, the festal dance, the hour of careless joy, shall be succeeded by a frightful silence, interrupted only by the discordant notes of nature's wildest creatures; the hideous echo, reverberating through the dismal waste, adding to the gloomy horrors of the scene. The perpetual contentions for wealth, the unceasing struggles for honourable distinctions, the pride of pomp, the splendour and circumstance of rank, the brilliancy of talent, ah! where is it all? Passed away for ever? Wealth has no owners, coronets have no claimants. they lie tarnished and unnoticed; sceptres unchallenged, for there are none to contend for them; kingdoms and thrones, but, behold, there are none found to fill them: and thus will the land exist, a dreadful record to after-ages, that, though God is gracious and full of tenderness and compassion, yet man's iniquity can arrive at ripeness, and God's long suffering patience hath a limit.

24 *And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.* In this verse, it is declared, that in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth. Thus we

found, in chap. vi. 11, that the martyrs under the Pagan persecutions were told "they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled;" which we explained to refer to the Papal persecutions; and having filled up the cup of her iniquity, she is judged for the blood she has shed, and which is found contained in her.

CHAP. XIX.—*And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour and power, unto the Lord our God.*

2 *For true and righteous, are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*

3 *And again, they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.*

We have, in the first eight verses of this chapter, a procession of praise and thanksgiving for the destruction with which God has at length visited "the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication;" proceeding, as we are informed, verse 5, from "all the servants of God, both small and great." It is the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy (chap. lii. 47, 48); "Therefore, behold, the days come that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon; and her whole land shall be confounded; and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her. Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon." The song contained in these first three verses, is that of the church on earth, though the apostle heard the song in heaven. Thus it is written, Isaiah xxiv. 13—16; after describing the utter desolation which shall come upon the city of confusion in that day of God's vengeance, it is added,—"When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea. From the uttermost parts of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous." There will be some, therefore, even on earth

who shall exult with a holy joy in the miserable downfall of Babylon; and shall echo back the song of triumph that proceeds from the heavenly host, "saying, Alleluia! Salvation, and glory and honour, and power unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments." If the reader be one of those who still dreams of the flourishing condition of the church, let him try his opinion by this test. Where is this holy indignation now to be found? Does he reply, he also is anxious for the removal of the Papal superstition; but it is by the exhibition of the true light, in order that their darkness might sink beneath its beams. Ah! reader, where dost thou find that blood, and fire, and pestilence and famine, and the instruments of the Gospel missionary? We read, that the harlot of Babylon has blood given her to drink because she has shed the blood of saints; that her body is consumed and burned with unquenchable fire; and we shall hereafter see, that all that adhere to her, and the infidel beast, are slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." But there shall be some, who, in that day, are found to give praise to God; and if they are not to be found in the present liberal professing church, God will be at no loss to gather in the high ways and hedges to give the glory due unto his great and holy name. We doubt not there is still a rich harvest to be gleaned amongst such outcasts, who will present to God abundant fruits from the good soil of an honest heart.

4 *And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.*

5 *And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants and ye that fear him, both small and great.*

6 *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multi-*

We have endeavoured to shew, in our comment on chaps. iv. and v., that the four-and-twenty elders and the living creatures represent the church in heaven; and they are here described as uniting in an act of worship to God that sat upon the throne. A voice proceeded from the throne, calling "on all the servants of God, both small and great," to join in a simultaneous ascription of praises and thanksgivings to God, because he had answered the prayers

of the martyrs, and had judged that corrupt harlot, who was so deeply imbued with their blood. "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke xviii. 7, 8:) In this passage in the Gospel, the church is represented under the symbol of a widow, crying to God for vengeance, whose long suffering mercy, ever unwilling to inflict judgment, is presented under the figure of an unjust judge, whose tardiness hath the appearance of injustice, though not so in reality. We see when the judgment is consummated,—"when the Son of Man cometh;" which truth, we shall find as we proceed, is enlarged on in the sequel of this xixth chapter of Revelation. The church in heaven are continually presented in this prophecy as anticipating the judgment of Babylon; for they knew when her time should arrive, that then "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and that the saints should possess the kingdom.

tude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

If the church were not immersed in the grossest blindness and ignorance of the purposes of God as revealed in his word, we should not find that tolerance and complacency now ripened into confederacy with the abominable thing which the Lord hateth. To listen to the proposals of an enemy, would be regarded as high treason against an earthly king: Christ's faithful servants ought cordially to hate Christ's enemies. If Satan can but secure a parley, he has half entangled his victim. The present church is steeped in this spirit of liberality and toleration of Christ's enemies; fostering the deception, by imagining it proceeds from superior charity, and a more merciful and compassionate disposition of mind. This deep delusion has entirely arisen from neglecting the prophetic word of God. If men will not look

7 *Let us be glad and rejoice; and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

8 *And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

into his revealed will, they will necessarily follow the corrupt bent of their own depraved hearts, and thus subject themselves to be taken captive by Satan at his will. The whole company of the elect church in heaven and earth are described as saying, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to God." True holiness is that which most closely assimilates, and most cordially acquiesces in the will and purposes of God, whatever they may be; and every sentiment of the heart that rises in opposition, however it may recommend itself to the natural man, is so far opposed to the standard of true piety, and is to be unhesitatingly condemned as rebellion against God. God only is good, and everything out of him, or opposed to his will, is only evil. Implicit obedience, unconditional submission, and conformity to the mind and will of God, alone can be regarded as true piety, and every pretension to its possession that falls short of this, is either wilful hypocrisy or satanic delusion. "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and the bride is arrayed in fine linen, white and clean;" that is, decked in her priestly garments of righteousness with which her Lord hath clothed her, and now appeareth clean and bright in all her loveliness and beauty.

9 *And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*

10 *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God; for the testimony of Jesus, is the spirit of prophecy.*

As St. John was formerly directed to write chap. xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; so now he is instructed to "Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." The period has arrived that Daniel pronounced blessed," in which he is promised to stand in his lot at the end of the days; and blessed will all those be who are made participators in the same. The xlvth Psalm contains the key to understanding the expression "the marriage supper of the Lamb," wherein Christ is represented as uniting his church to himself, under the symbol of a bride. In the xlvith and xlviiith Psalms she is set forth under the emblem of a city

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In the Apocalypse both these are taken up and blended together, significant of the redeemed church, and their heavenly dwelling-place; the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and hereafter to be revealed on the earth, when the kingdom of heaven shall be established here. St. John would have worshipped the interpreting angel; but he was prevented, with the assurance that he was not an object of worship, for he was of John's fellow-servants, and of his brethren, who had the testimony of Jesus, for "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." With such a declaration before us, how awfully impious does the conduct of those individuals appear who discourage the study of that portion of God's word, and who prefer its remaining a sealed, and therefore unprofitable book, rather than search into the mysteries it contains, and especially of this prophecy, which was given with the express assurance that the sayings of this Book were not to be sealed, (chap. i. 3; xxii. 10.) Surely if the spirit of prophecy be the testimony of Jesus such men are resisting the Holy Ghost, and to them may be applied the awful words of our Lord, in Matt. xxiii. 13, "that they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for they neither go in themselves, neither suffer they them that are entering to go in." With this verse ends the explanatory history of the seals or Western branch of the Roman Empire, during the operation of the seventh vial, having brought it down to the consummation of all things in this present dispensation.

CHAPTER XIX.

The commencement of the explanatory history of the Eastern Branch of the Empire, during the Period of the Seventh Vial.

11 *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

HAVING considered the angel's explanatory vision, wherein the history of the western branch of the Roman empire is brought to its termination, the ten-kingdomed city of Babylon finally overthrown and judged, and the announcement given, that the marriage of the Lamb is come, the scene of the Apocalyptic drama shifts from contemplating the Western to the Eastern branch of the Roman Empire, because the grand battle of Armageddon takes place in the land of Judea (Dan. xi. 44, 45; Zech. xiv. 2); when Christ himself is revealed against that confederation of the kings of the earth on Mount Olivet, Zech. xiv. 4, and Jerusalem and the land of Judea (comprehended in the Eastern division of the Roman Empire) becomes the chief seat, the metropolitan centre of the millennial reign of Christ over the earth.

The explanation therefore of the interpreting angel must be regarded. from this verse as referring to the grand events which are to happen within the boundaries of the Eastern branch of the Roman Empire; and it will be found by our interpretation, that whilst the former explanatory history from chap. xvii. was exclusively confined to that of the Western, (in which the Gentile dispensation was brought to a close,) this as scrupulously is limited to that of the Eastern, the seat of the new dispensation of things, which Christ will establish after the present shall have been swept away. This sublime portion of the vision commences with the declaration of the Apostle, that "he saw heaven itself opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him

was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

We have here a fifth horse and rider presented in the Apocalypse, a symbol of imperial power and of conquest. This is a magnificent symbolic representation of the second coming of Christ, when he shall appear as a man of war, taking vengeance upon his enemies (Is. lxiii. 1—3). It can apply to none other, for of him alone can it be said, that he was "faithful and true," a title which Christ appropriates to himself in the character of Universal Bishop, in which this vision first presented him to our attention (see chap. i. 5, iii. 7—14; John xiv. 6). This and the following verses contain an enlargement of that grand event which was declared to be the object of the revelation expressed in the title, the APOCALYPSE OF JESUS CHRIST: "Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, amen." It is a more detailed description of that mighty act of the coming of the Lord to judgment, found in every prophet in the inspired volume. Though the representation be symbolical, yet the event predicted must be real, and describes his personal bodily coming, because the God-man, Christ Jesus, is united to human nature for ever. The actings of Jesus Christ, therefore must be those, of a man; the Godhead acting in the glorified man, Christ. "In righteousness he doth judge and make war." Thus it is written in Ps. xlv. 3, 4; "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things."

Every characteristic of this rider on the horse corresponds with descriptions and titles applied to Christ in the sacred volume. Thus "his eyes were as a flame of fire" agrees with the vision of our Lord which the Apostle saw at the commencement of this revelation (chap. i. 14), and which expression Christ applies to himself, as Son of God, when addressing the angel of the church at Thyatira (chap.

12 *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself.*

ii. 18): "On his head were many crowns;" by which is conveyed the truth, that the crowns have passed from the earthly sovereigns in consequence of their apostacy, and now rest only with him who is King of kings. It signifies his coming to take possession of his kingdom, the purchased inheritance. The kingdoms of this world are now become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ. "He had a new name that no man knew but he himself;" which new name Christ promises to him that overcometh, in the Philadelphian church; "And I will write upon him my new name." (chap. iii. 12.)

13 *And he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood and his name is called, The Word of God.* In Psalm cviii. 10, it is written, "Who will bring me into the strong city, who will lead me into Edom (or Europe)? wilt not thou, O God?" This is spoken of Christ; and we find the prophet Isaiah celebrating his return from Edom, after inflicting vengeance on the land. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speaketh in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment: for the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." This is Christ, as a man of war, covered with the blood of his enemies.—"And his name is called the Word of God." If we were at any loss in ascertaining who the rider on the white horse represented, the title in these words would resolve any doubt that could exist; for the same Apostle informs us in his Gospel (John i. 1) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;" and afterwards, that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

14 *And the armies which were in heaven followed* Every prophecy of Christ's manifestation for judgment is almost in-

variably accompanied with the prediction that his saints shall come with him. Thus we learn from Jude 14, "that Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all;" and in the prophet Zechariah, xiv. 5, when prophesying of Christ's appearance, when his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, described in this chapter of the Apocalypse, "And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." They were clothed in fine linen, white and clean; which has been explained (ver. 8) by the interpreting angel to mean the righteousness of saints. That the saints shall assist in that great day of wrath is evident from Psalm cl. 5—9: "Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouths, and a two-edged sword in their hands; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the Lord."

him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

We have before observed, that, though the event here predicted is a reality, yet the method of its presentation to the Apostle is in strict conformity to the general character of the book, which is that of a symbolical prophecy. We read, Eph. vi. 17, "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" and again, Heb. iv. 12, "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow." That such power of the sword of the Spirit, proceeding out of the mouth of Christ, is not limited to a spiritual meaning, we refer to St. John, xviii. 6, where it is recorded, that as soon as Christ announced himself to Judas, and the band who went out to take him, "they went backward and fell to the ground." "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron;" as it is declared in Psalm ii. 7, "Thou art my Son, this

15 *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." In chap. xiv. 19, we learn that the vine of the earth (which, in our comment on that text, we saw was the Christian church), was cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God, which was trodden until "blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horses' bridles." We can be at no loss in finding a parallel to the truth contained in this verse, as we find it declared, in Isaiah lxiii. by Him "that speaketh in righteousness, mighty to save," "I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me." "For I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury."

16 *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written,* KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

We cannot pretend to determine whether the designation, contained in this verse, is the new name referred to in verse 12; but it is evidently a title indicative of that assumption of Christ's kingly power, which is the object of the entire prophecy. It conveys the same dignity as that title contained in chap. i. 5: "And from Jesus Christ, the Prince of the kings of the earth."

17 *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God.*

18 *That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free*

We have considered the sun as an emblem of imperial power, wherever it occurs; and in this verse it refers to the ascendant power at the time. The prophecy alludes to an angel placed in the sun, from whom proceeds the call to the fowls of heaven. This angel appears to be introduced by way of preserving the propriety of the symbol, as it would be inconsistent with the uniform accuracy of symbolical language for a voice to proceed from the sun. The combined symbol represents the same individual alluded to in chap. xvii. 17, "the

eighth head of the beast, who is yet of the seven, to whom the ten kings shall agree to give their kingdoms, until the words of God be fulfilled." No question can arise as to this identity with the eighth head; for in the 14th verse of the same chapter it is expressly said, "*These* shall make war with the Lamb." It is worthy of observation, that a similar transition in the symbols takes place in the verses before us, as that which occurred in the fourth and fifth vial, in the xvi th chapter; which we interpreted, in that instance, to refer to Napoleon Bonaparte, the first form of the infidel Antichrist. So in the present case the last personification of the infidel Antichrist is represented first under the symbol of the imperial sun (ver. 17); and immediately afterwards, in verse 19, under a similar designation of a beast. It is evident, therefore, from this passage compared with the xvii th chapter, that it is this eighth head of the beast, who shall be in being, and possess the ascendancy over the kingdoms of the Roman earth, and head this last confederacy of the kings of the earth, and their armies, against the Lamb, and those that are with him (chap. xvii. 14); or, as it is written in our text (ver. 19), "And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." This is the final confederacy of the kings of the earth, mentioned in Psalm ii.: "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." Then follows the result of this combination to oppose the Lord's anointed, as shortly expressed in this Psalm, but as detailed at more length in the following chapter of this Revelation, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." The fearful carnage that shall attend this last conflict, called (chap. xvi. 16) the battle of Armageddon, is continually prophesied of

and bond, both small and great.

19 *And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse and against his army*

in Scripture, under various imagery. It is here set forth as "the supper of the great God." So also in Ezek. xxxix. 17—20: "And thou Son of Man, thus saith the Lord God; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice, that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God."

It is no new thing for the human intellect to be so deadened and stupified, and man's heart to become so hard, as to fight against the Almighty. Sennacherib and his host had audacity enough to defy the living God; and there perished in one awful night 185,000 souls, a hecatomb to the offended Majesty of heaven (2 Kings xix. 35). Pharoah and the host of Egypt persisted in their pursuit of the children of Israel, notwithstanding the God of Israel looked upon them in anger from out of the cloud; and he and his host perished in the rash and unequal contest (Exod. xiv. 24). The final destruction of that wicked or lawless one, we learn from 2 Thess. ii. 8, is reserved for Christ himself, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders."

20 *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive*

The beast, or last form of the infidel Antichrist, who is the eighth, yet of the seven, is the head and leader of the civil rulers and authorities of the Roman Empire, and the false prophet of Rome, is the acknowledged head of the ecclesiastical estate, the apostate church of Christendom. It appears from the text,

before us, that although the Papal hierarchy, as an established church, is destroyed, and her influence annihilated, and the Roman empire ranged, not under the spell of that superstition, but under their infidel head; yet, the false prophet has lingered out his existence, till the final catastrophe. From this verse we should gather that the infidel king, after destroying the power of the false prophet, as it now exists in the Papal hierarchy, obliges him to act a part subordinate to the accomplishment of his own ends; for it is said, "the false prophet wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them them that had the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image." One delusion of Satan invariably leads to the adoption of others. Thus, those who had submitted to the abominable superstitions of the Papacy are found easy dupes to Satan's more subtile form of infidelity. It was thus at the time of the French revolution, which we cannot but regard in every respect, as a foreshewing of that course of events, contained under the seventh vial, about to be transacted upon the European stage. It was no difficult step, from the blindest and most degrading superstition to the wildest atheism that ever infatuated a race of men.—"They were both cast alive into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone." It is singular that these characters are both cast into the final state of punishment before the Millennium; the second death (chap. xx. 14); whereas, we shall find Satan himself is cast only int the bottomless pit, the lake of fire being reserved for his reception at the end of the Millennium (chap. xx. 10) This seem s to mark out the Infidel and Papal apostacy, as of a deeper dye of wickedness, than that of Satan himself. There is something remarkable in the expression, "they were taken alive, and cast into the burning lake;" as if Satan's mimicry of the truth, so observable in every fabric of iniquity which he has raised upon the earth, should receive a similarity in the last great act. A s the saints are changed without seeing death, so these apostates are cast into the second death, without undergoing the common lot of humanity.

into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Thus it is written of Christ, the stem of Jesse, the Branch that shall

21 *And the remnant were slain with the sword of him*

that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

grow out of his roots, "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."(Isaiah xi. 4.) The destruction of this Anti-christian confederacy shall be complete, none shall escape. The details of this fearful day of the Lord are given at more length in the prophet Isaiah chap. xxxiv: "Come near, ye nations, to hear, and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies; he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: beheld, it shall come down upon Idumea (or Europe), and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood; it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of kidneys of rams; for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah; and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea,"

THUS ENDETH THE FOURTH MONARCHY OF DANIEL, THE ROMAN EMPIRE; FIRST PAGAN, THEN PAPAL, AND, LASTLY, INFIDEL. THE THREE CONLCUDING CHAPTERS OF THIS HOLY PROPHECY RELATE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THAT HEAVENLY KINGDOM, SPOKEN OF IN THE PROPHET DANIEL, WHICH IS TO LAST FOR EVER AND EVER!

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