

# THE APOCALYPSE

LOOKED AT AS

THE FINAL CRISIS OF THE AGE.

*WITH A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE PROPHETIC  
WORKS OF MR. AND MRS. GUINNESS, ETC.*

BY

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## IN MEMORIAM.

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THIS handbook is ascribed *in memoriam* of some of the great and recent dead whose writings and communications have aided many, and the writer also, in the study of prophecy. Foremost in our judgment amongst them come up the names of Sir E. Denny, Dean Alford, John N. Darby, and Rev. F. Dowling. The last-named expressed himself shortly before his death as much struck with the construction of the Apocalypse in the following sections, in which he fully agreed. He was admittedly the first of Bible students in the knowledge of Scripture, and withal of a most retiring and childlike simplicity.

The *Divisions and Sections* given in the following papers are not merely theories or sections arbitrarily chosen, but the divisions of the Divine writer himself. And they help immensely in unravelling the contents of this wondrous book. For the author believes their neglect has been one chief

cause of the confusion and contradiction that have filled the volumes already written on the Apocalypse ; and he is not aware that they have been noticed previously by any writer.

May the Lord's blessing rest on the reader, who may be assured that the term 'Israel of God' in the title-page is not meant to refer to any known name or denomination, but, according to the largeness of the Apostle's intention, to the children of God and all who, in every place, call on the Lord in spirit and in truth.



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# THE APOCALYPSE LOOKED AT AS THE FINAL CRISIS OF THE AGE.



## PREFATORY REMARKS.

‘Now is the judgment (*κρίσις*, crisis) of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out.’

THE observations on the Apocalypse which we intend to outline, and to which are now added a few prefatory remarks, have been weighed for some time in the balances of Scripture thought, and to some they have formed a clear guide in the midst of many conflicting beliefs with respect to the notable incidents which mark that wonderful book.

But we are not going to write as against any one view in particular, or as against any particular school of interpretation, our design being to state facts and show the harmony of the parts in the different sections to which they belong, but not to become prophets. In essaying to do this, one may come into collision with works already out, but that cannot be helped, and we may say, at the outset, that the Apocalypse explains itself to a greater extent than is usually supposed.

## SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE.

The language of the book being symbolic, instead of increasing the difficulties, renders the subjects more easy of interpretation. No language is more clear and definite than symbolic language, or less liable to misconception. All our Lord's parables are clothed in symbols, and even our ordinary conversation, divested of symbol, would descend to dull routine and circumlocution.

## TWO MAIN LINES IN PROPHECY.

But there are two main lines running through all prophecy, and they are each distinct and opposite one from the other, viz., 'The sufferings of Christ' on the one hand, 'and the glories (*δόξας*, plural) that should follow' on the other; and these two lines, St. Peter tells us, the Prophets, and the Spirit of Christ in the Prophets beforehand, signified (1 Pet. i. 11). Nothing is more noted in Scripture than these two lines. The Psalms show them in the clearest manner—for instance, Ps. xxii., the sufferings; Ps. xxiv., the glory; Ps. lxi., the sufferings; Ps. lxxii., the glory; and so on in other Psalms which the reader can easily find. It is observable that St. Peter uses the plural word '*glories*,' because our Lord has many glories, so to speak; or, as the Apocalypse expresses it, 'and on His head many crowns' (xix. 12). His is the Glory as Son of God in creation; His is the Glory as Son of Man in redemption; His is the Glory as Son of Abraham in national blessing and national renovation; His is the Glory as Son of David in dynastic supremacy, 'King of kings and Lord of lords'—all of which are distinct. Yet are they concentrated in His person, to be taken up and entered upon by Him at the stated period

—but all of them resting on a common basis, viz., His death and resurrection—which, being accomplished, enables God to erect and carry out upon them every superstructure or purpose ‘hid in Himself’ or otherwise, according to the counsel of His own will.

#### CONFUSION OF SUBJECTS.

Now, it is the confusion of these two opposite lines of sufferings and glory that, in our judgment, has caused so much discord in the views of interpreters, and has gone to such an extent that ‘the coming’ of Christ can mean anything, or everything, or nothing !

Take, for instance, the last ‘Commentary on the Revelation,’ by the Bishop of Ripon, and edited by the Bishop of Gloucester (Cassell and Co., London), and the coming of our Lord is described in this way : ‘There are many comings of Christ. Christ came in the flesh as in a mediatorial Presence ; Christ came at the destruction of Jerusalem ; Christ came in a Spiritual Presence when the Holy Ghost was given ; Christ comes now in every signal manifestation of redeeming power : any great reformation of morals and religion is a coming of Christ ; a great revolution, like a thunderstorm violently sweeping away evil to make way for the good, is a coming of Christ. The “coming of Christ” viewed from the Divine side is as a single act, in which all subordinate applications are included. There is no past or future with God’ (pp. 15, 16).

To accept this mixture as an ‘Introduction’ to the Apocalypse is simply to eviscerate all definiteness from these Divine records.

But there is such a thing as ‘rightly dividing the word of

truth,' which if not done only makes confusion and darkness more dense. If when the Lord in speaking of His Spirit says, 'I will not leave you orphans, I will come unto you' (John xiv.), is to be taken all the same and under the same category as, 'The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment,' etc., then there is an end to all specific meaning in the Word of God. For we are told that 'the coming of Christ, viewed from the Divine side, is a single act, in which all subordinate applications are included!' So that if a moral revolution had occurred in Asia Minor, and the Bishops of Ripon and Gloucester were there at the time, they could have told the Churches that it was to them 'the coming of Christ.' A more effectual method could scarcely be devised for neutralising the Apocalypse! and akin to it is 'the historic view.' For if the scenes described in the book can be reduced to the ordinary events of history and observation, then, of course, there can be nothing special or unique in the direct heaven-sent judgments of the Revelation. And if the terrible events recorded in the book have occurred all the same hitherto in the world, then there is in them nothing to be expected either singular or exceptional, whereas the whole design of it is to show that they are so singular and exceptional in their character. But this aberrancy will appear more particularly under the next headings. If, for instance, the Lord has 'consumed with the spirit of His mouth,' through the Gospel, the Papacy, since the Reformation, as some tell us, why may not 'some great reformation of morals and religion' be 'the brightness of His coming,' as the two Bishops tell us? Harmony at least would thus be preserved in both cases.



THE DESIGN AND OBJECTIVE CHARACTER OF THE  
APOCALYPSE.

The very idea of an Apocalypse is that it brings out into the open what was previously hidden and incipient. It is a revelation (*αποκαλυψις*) or open manifestation of Divine action, and so becomes an objective development in *crisis* of all those forces of evil which were all along working under limited conditions. And, on the other hand, a development of the Divine forces, which were in Providence secretly and hiddenly restraining the evil during the period preparatory to this development. And hence the blessing pronounced on the reader and hearer of the book who keeps the things written therein ; for in keeping them he avoids the paths which lead up step by step to those various issues which are headed up in *crisis*, and presented in this book as in a panorama.

CRISIS.

It may be necessary here to touch briefly on what is meant by *crisis* (*κρίσις*). It means, primarily, not the result of judgment, which would be another word (*κρίμα*), but a process of judgment. It is used generally of the terminus or turning of events ; and also in reference to disease, when a decisive point is reached either for death or for life. Both these ideas seem to be included by our Lord, when He says, ' Now is the judgment (*crisis*) of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out ; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me ' (John xii. 31, 32). This was, of course, a proleptic or anticipatory declaration. For the time was near when the world and its

prince would cast the Son of God out of His own world, a sin which brought the world's guilt and that of its prince to a climax, and consequently a crisis that must bring in its consequences the utmost judgment. But, on the other hand, His being 'lifted up' would draw all (πάντας) unto Him and eventuate in redemption. So that on the one side it was to be death and judgment, and on the other life and righteousness.

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## SECTION I.

### CHAPTER I.

'The things thou hast seen.'

THE prologue begins thus : 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants the things which must shortly come to pass ; and He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John.'

To prevent confusion afterwards and keep the subject clear it is requisite to consider the very first word. There has been much divergence of opinion as to how the term *revelation* is here to be taken ; whether in an objective sense as a revelation of Jesus Christ in His manifested glory, or in a subjective sense as a revelation of the ultimate purposes of God given to Jesus Christ in order to show them, by His angel, to His servant John, etc.

To our thinking there need be no divergence of conception in this respect, as the book itself clearly sustains both aspects. If taken in an objective sense respecting the

manifested kingdom and glory of the Lord, we see it in the results that follow when the thrones are set in the heavens (chap. iv.), and the thrones when set on the earth (chap. xx.). And in this sense the term *revelation* is employed, also in the Apostolic Epistles, 'Waiting for the *manifestation* of the sons of God' (Rom. viii. 19); 'Waiting for the *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. i. 7); 'When the Lord Jesus shall be *revealed* from heaven' (2 Tim. i. 7); 'Honour and glory at the *appearing* of Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. i. 7); 'The grace that is to be brought to you at the *revelation* of Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. i. 13); 'That when His glory shall be *revealed*,' etc. (1 Pet. iv. 13).

#### APOCALYPSE, ITS FORCE.

In all these passages the same word occurs, and refers to the kingdom, power and glory of the Lord as manifested, and to which reference in the Lord's Prayer is made. 'Thy kingdom come, and Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven;' a deliverance from evil which never can be till 'the evil one' is cast out of the scene with the sin and death brought by him into the world, and the Lord takes to Him His great power and reigns (Rev. xi. 17).

But if 'the *Revelation* which God gave unto Him' be taken in a subjective sense, as a communication concerning it, 'to show to His servants things which must shortly come to pass,' then we are forcibly reminded of our Lord's reply to the disciples, Acts i., 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power.' But the time and season had now come for the Father to give the revelation concerning the kingdom, all of which comes out in the Book of Revelation. It is a revela-

tion from the Father to the Son as 'Son of man.' Just as David gave to Solomon the pattern of the Temple, which in the LXX. is put very clearly. 'David gave (ἔδωκε) all to Solomon in the Lord's handwriting, according to the knowledge afforded him (David) of the work of the pattern' (1 Chron. xxviii. 11-19).

Therefore the contents of the Book of Revelation sustain both views. It is a book announcing the actual appearance of the coming One (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) and also a book announcing the events connected therewith.

#### THE DIVINE EXORDIUM.

The opening address proceeds from the triune God—'Grace to 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; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth; unto Him that loveth us and washed (loosed us, as some read it) from our sins, and He made us kings and priests (a kingdom, as some read) unto His God and Father, to Him be the glory and dominion for ever and ever.'

But previous to the terrific aspect of our Lord as revealed to the Churches, the privileges and blessings of His people are first assured; not only the ablution from their sins, but their kingship and priesthood towards God are affirmed. These are the privileges of the children of God, to which St. Peter refers when he says: 'But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession' (1 Pet. ii. 9, R.V.), styled a royal priesthood, being in line with Melchisedec, and lodged in the Church

of the first-born ones ‘(πρωτοτόκων) enrolled in heaven’ (Heb. xii. 23), which is the only priesthood that could be known in heaven, and of which the former earthly priesthood was a type and fashion going before. For the Lord Himself could not be a priest on earth as we are told (Heb. viii. 4). But He is now High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, and ‘Prince of the kings of the earth,’ which does not mean the kings of the earth who now are, but refers to those afterwards spoken of, viz., to the ‘armies of heaven’ who follow Him in white robes, and upon white horses in executive government, and who are seated on thrones of judgment (Apoc. xix.-xx.). These are the kings of the earth of whom the Lord is Chief (for as was said in the preface, the Lord has many glories), and when Christ takes up His glory in this connection, the saints are not *subjects*, but associates in glory with Him.

But before the seer is called to look at the Churches, he sees first the effects of the *manifestation* of the Redeemer on Israel, and says : ‘Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they which pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth (the land) shall mourn over Him. Even so, Amen’ (ver. 7). Why does he say ‘Even so, Amen’? Is it that the Apostle was happy and content at the thought of the people of the earth wailing and mourning in despair? Not at all! The expression refers to the repentant mourning of the tribes of Israel mentioned by the prophet Zechariah, when Israel will look on Him whom they had pierced (Zech. xii.). The Apostle John at the crucifixion had his mind fixed on this prophecy when he records as follows : ‘But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side . . . and he that saw it bare record,

and his record is true,' etc., and afterwards quotes the Scripture that saith : 'They shall look on Him whom they pierced' (John xix. 34-37). But now he contemplates their actual repentance, from the same prophet who described it all beforehand : 'And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born,' etc. The prophet said that Israel would return and repent, expressing it thus : 'The land shall mourn every family apart' (κόψεται ἡ γῆ κατὰ φυλὰς φυλὰς, LXX.); and St. John says : 'All the tribes of the land shall mourn (κόψονται ἐπ' αὐτὸν πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς) over him' (ver. 7, R.V.). It is clear, therefore, that the apostle and prophet are speaking of the same matter. And the repentance of Israel who before had crucified Him being thus vividly foreseen and contemplated by St. John, drew from him at once the Divine ejaculation, 'Even so, Amen !'

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## SECTION II.

### CHAPTERS II., III.

'The things which are.'

IN the preface we explained the word *crisis*, that it means in the first instance, not the *result* of judgment, but a *process* of judgment; and stated that the *Revelation* proceeds from '*God, from the seven spirits before the throne, and*

from Jesus Christ,' etc. On this ground each and all operate in unity, for the seven spirits are described (v. 6) as the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb, and so in the address to Sardis: 'These things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.'

But the *crisis* was now setting in of whose issue St. Peter said: 'For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God?' Observe the language—'*the House of God*' and '*us*.' Now we know that the Lord was placed 'as a Son over His own house, whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end' (Heb. iii. 6). So that this house thus spoken of had to stand by faith, and St. Paul compares it to Israel as a people, and that as God broke off the house of Israel for not standing by faith as a corporate witness, so also would it be with the Gentile Church. 'If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee;' and that if the Gentile Church did not continue in His goodness, 'thou also shall be cut off' (Rom. xi. 21, 22). What, then, do we find? We find defection and declension setting in upon it even whilst the Apostles were yet alive. For instance, 'the mystery of iniquity doth already work,' St. Paul says (2 Thess. ii.). And St. John says there were many antichrists in his day, 'whereby we know it is the last time.' St. James gives the same note in his Epistle, and says: 'The judge standeth at the door;' and St. Jude paints the picture so dark, that the evil beginning in the Church expands to the world in the end, till the corruption brings down the Lord Himself, with the ten thousand

of His saints. And what shall we say of the two Epistles to Timothy, in which the defection in the doctrine and the defection in practice are so distinctly drawn out? (1 Tim. iv. ; 2 Tim. iii.). So clear and so immanent in the Church was this defection, that Rationalists say those Epistles are not written by St. Paul, for it is not possible to conceive that failure could have so soon set in during the lifetime of an Apostle, as is therein contemplated, and consequently they must have been written by another hand long after !

#### FAILURE AT THE HEAD OF DISPENSATIONS.

Had the Rationalists understood even a little of what they talk about, they would have found that failure had always set in at the beginning of every dispensation or economy of God committed to the hands of men. So with Adam in the garden ; with Noah after the flood ; with Israel and the golden calf ; with Nadab and Abihu in the Priesthood ; with the kingdom of Israel in Solomon ; with the Gentile dynasty in Nebuchadnezzar, and, finally, the Churches as divine organizations (golden candlesticks) ere the Apostles were off the scene in the Revelation. In all these cases failure set in at the head or beginning of each economy of Divine administration or dispensation on earth, teaching us that in the hands of man no Divine arrangement committed to him has stood its ground. And thus the signal proof of the necessity for the coming of the Son of Man who takes up all that belongs to these economies in their integrity and carries them to perfection in His own person.\*

\* On the other hand, the spirit of faith shone out at the onset in the examples given to follow for those that came after—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham in the Patriarchs, Moses in the Law, David in the



## THE CHURCHES.

The seven Churches of the Apocalypse, styled 'all the Churches' (Apoc. ii. 23), represent 'all the Churches of the Gentiles' in the words of St. Paul. Seven being a complete number, 'all the Churches' at the time were pictured as 'seven golden candlesticks' (or lamps). There might be few or there might be many persons in each assembly. In some cases a Church in a house. But whether few or many, nothing was ever called or could be called the Church of God on the earth in the absence of *Divine government*. Whilst Divine government remained on earth, during its continuance each and every assembly was 'the house of God' or 'the Church of God.' Hence we find designations such as this: 'The Church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ,' a designation, the reality of which required Divine environment and Divine government. For this reason the Churches here are designated *Golden candlesticks*, golden implying that they were still held and kept in immediate Divine relations, whilst the stars or angels were held fast (κρατῶν) in His right hand, so that whatever was needed, Divine government and rule were present to meet it and operate in due time. Otherwise the assemblies would have been mere human organizations, either good or bad, as the case might be, but not *golden candlesticks*, and this is the last aspect of the Church of God on earth given in Scripture, and called a 'mystery.'

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Kings, 'the goodly company of the Prophets,' and, finally, our Lord and His Apostles in their ways, so that God never leaves Himself without individual witnesses, come what may. See Heb. vi. 12; James v. 10; Phil. iii. 17.

## ANGEL MINISTRY.

It is not a little remarkable that the last book of the Old Testament and the last book of the New Testament should wind up with an *angel ministry* to the people of God. Malachi signifies *my messenger*, and is translated messenger or angel (αγγελου) in the Greek version. He also says: 'Behold I will send *My messenger* (angel, ἄγγελον), and he shall prepare the way before Me, and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the *messenger* (angel, ἄγγελος) of the covenant, whom ye delight in,' etc., a passage quoted in three of the Gospels (Matt. xi. 10; Mark i. 2; Luke vii. 27). John the Baptist was then the angel or messenger sent before the Lord to prepare His way before Him, 'to make ready a people prepared for the Lord' (Luke i. 17). It is true that if His people hearkened to John he would have been Elias to them. ('If ye will receive him, this is Elias which was for to come.') But they did not receive him, and as our Lord says: 'They have done unto him whatsoever they listed,' etc. However, such was the nature of the ministry of the angel prophet sent before the Lord, to awake the people 'whether they would hear or whether they would forbear,' and thus prepare the way of the Lord. Such was the office and such the action of the angel or messenger in the case of John the Baptist. And so is it precisely with the angels or messengers commissioned to the Churches of the Revelation—they go before Him and call on the Churches, in the name of the Lord, to repent—and on the effects of this announcement the Lord's personal and direct action follows, and that in the aspect already delineated in Chapter I.

And as the ministry of John the Baptist ('my *messenger* or *angel*') surpassed the ministry of the Prophets, who went before him, as our Lord tells us (Luke vii. 28), because of his pointing directly to the Messiah, whose kingdom was immanent; so also the ministry of the angels in the Churches surpasses the ministry of the Prophets of the New Testament which went before, inasmuch as they announce the immediate personal action of Christ in the Churches, and were sent before Him for that purpose.

The messenger was one sent and charged with a message directly from Him who sent him, and those who heard him were immediately responsible to listen to the message under pain of punitive judicial action on the one hand, or immediate blessing on the other. His credentials consisted in carrying a message directly from the Lord Himself, under pain of refusal by those to whom the message was delivered. Hence the angels of the Churches are depicted as held fast in the Lord's right hand, and consequently testifying in the power of 'the seven spirits before the throne,' which were also the 'seven eyes and seven horns of the Lamb'—a judicial aspect.

It is noticeable that our Lord in these chapters takes up the personalities of the Father, 'is, was, and is to come' (i. 8), and of the Holy Spirit as having 'the seven spirits of God' (iii. 1).

#### THE ANGEL MINISTRY, AND AFTER.

After the angel ministry thus spoken of had concluded, what followed? An important question! 'Elders had been ordained in every Church' at the first (Acts xiv. 23). In short, elders or bishops and deacons, with gifts suited to

their functions, had been there all along called 'helps and governments,' etc. These were not merely titular, but had Divine power attaching to them, for 'the kingdom of God is not in word but in power.' As the Apostle puts it elsewhere, 'having in readiness to revenge all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled' (2 Cor. x. 6), and showing thus that Divine gift and power coincided with human qualifications (1 Tim. iii.). And so the Apostle, when writing about the incestuous man at Corinth, says: 'When ye are gathered together, and my spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh,' etc., etc. (1 Cor. v.). The two instruments used at the time to effect the Divine ends were the power of *Grace* and the power of *Judgment*, as we see in Corinth, for example. Both being of course essential to the keeping straight (καταρτισιν) anything that could be designated 'the Church of God' in the world (2 Cor. xiii. 9, Greek).

The next question that arises is: Was the Church made for government, or government for the Church? There can be but one answer given—that they were made for the Church. And it is to be observed that these functions were not generalized like those mentioned in Eph. iv., 'Apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists,' but were local, with the view of keeping the Churches as lamps or candlesticks shining in their several localities. On the differences between these gifts and functions Scripture is very explicit. (See 1 Tim. iii. with Eph. iv.)

#### FAILURE IN THE EPISCOPATE AND IN THE CHURCHES.

But the Apostle Paul to the congregated elders at Ephesus (Acts xx.) anticipates failure in the episcopate after his decease, and throws them for their resource on

‘God and the Word of His Grace.’ These would remain for guidance when all else had failed. And he lays down the same lines for Timothy. For in his first Epistle to Timothy he contemplates (chap. iv.) apostasy in the faith of Christianity, and in the second Epistle apostasy in the practice of Christianity, and then throws Timothy on God and His Word, saying that ‘from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus’ (see 2 Tim. iii. 1-6-17). Here we see that the Apostle takes precisely the same course with Timothy when contemplating the lapsed state of Christianity itself as he did with the elders at Ephesus when contemplating the failure of the Episcopacy. When, however, we draw towards the close of the canon we discover the Churches presented as undergoing a judicial process with angels or messengers in the foreground, held in the right hand of the Lord Himself (ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ).

#### ARCHBISHOP TRENCH ON THE SUBJECT.

But Archbishop Trench, in his valuable work on ‘The Seven Churches in Asia,’ looks on the *angels* as diocesan Bishops, and if taken in that way he quite agrees with the above. He says, ‘For the great Bishop of souls who is here on His spiritual visitation, everywhere holds the angel responsible for the spiritual condition of the Church, for the false teaching which he has not put down, for the false teachers that he has not separated from the communion of the faithful; in short, for every disorder in doctrine and discipline which has remained unrepressed. But Christ could not so deal with them, could not charge them person-

ally with these negligences and omissions unless upon the ground that they had been clothed with power and authority sufficient to have prevented them, so that these evils could not have existed but through their neglect and allowance' (pp. 55, 56, third edition).

If this be the case, and if this be the final phase of Episcopal government and the final state of the Churches on earth presented in Holy Writ, two questions arise : What is Apostolic succession a succession of? and, on the other hand, where are the Golden Candlesticks to be looked for ever since? Questions naturally arising out of these facts.

Now facts, as has been said, find admittance to men's minds, not simply as soon as it becomes possible to attest them—for in that stage it is often the worst for the facts; but in an order of filiation dependent more on the constitution of the mind than of the facts—a circumstance very observable at present.

#### A MOST SINGULAR EPISODE.

We have now to record perhaps the most singular episode, not only in Church history, but perhaps in all history; and our space will not permit of more than a bare outline of it. There is a blank just hereabouts in Church history, night is on it, and out comes Ignatius in the twilight.

#### THE BLANK, AS DESCRIBED BY BISHOP LIGHTFOOT.

The evidence of this blank we take from Bishop Lightfoot, in his 'Dissertation on the Christian Ministry.' On the Epistle to the Philippians, he says: 'As late, therefore, as the year 70 no distinct signs of Episcopal govern-

ment have hitherto appeared in Gentile Christendom.' Yet, to account for its 'widely established position afterwards,' he adds, 'Thus, during the last three decades of the first century, and consequently during the life-time of the latest surviving Apostle, this change must have been brought about. But the circumstances under which it was effected are shrouded in darkness.' Again, 'In the mysterious period which comprises the last thirty years of the first century, and on which history is almost wholly silent, Episcopacy must, it is true, have been mainly developed' (*sic*). Again, 'There was a crying need for some organization which should cement together the diverse elements of Christian society and prevent it from disintegration. Out of this need the Catholic Church arose' (pp. 199-204).

We need quote no more to show, what all admit, that the last thirty years of the first century form a blank and a darkness in Church history. Now, it was just at this period that the apocalyptic addresses were sent to the Churches, and the seven spirits energizing the seven angels, with the Lord's own presence in the midst. After that the canon closes, and no more is heard of the Church or the Churches as such in the Divine account, as to their status on earth afterwards.

'HIS SERVANT JOHN.'

And the *Peshito* or Syriac version, made in the first century—the first and chiefest of all the ancient versions—omits the Apocalypse altogether. And so far as the Church of the period was concerned, St. John might as well not have been sent to it at all, nor the angel messengers, for they were not heeded.

## IGNATIUS.

But Ignatius, venerable and conservative as he was, something like Jonathan of old, joined with Saul, was equal to the occasion, and had a remedy prepared and ready to meet all the difficulty—and his remedy was that of an *exalted and organized Diocesan Episcopacy*. And as Mr. Welland says, who follows Bishop Lightfoot, ‘The testimony he bears to *Episcopacy* is notorious, and in my opinion insurmountable.’ And so it was, no doubt, in the opinion of the Church at the time also ! So much so that ‘out of this the Catholic Church arose,’ as Bishop Lightfoot expresses it—and what then ? The very Church that would not listen to the voice of the Lord addressed to it by St. John, but ignored his testimony for two centuries, turned both ears to the ‘notorious and insurmountable testimony’ of Ignatius\*—and what was it ? ‘To look on the Bishops as God, and the Deacons as Jesus Christ,’ using language of the most extravagant character, that can only be accounted for in two ways : either through the excitement of nervous hysteria, or else from the desperate state of the Christian community at the time, thinking that no ebullition of language could give weight enough to his remedial measures !

Ignatius had indeed learnt from the divine writers that nothing was known in the New Testament as ‘*the Church of God*’ in the absence of the power of Divine government, ‘for the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power,’ and he jumped to the conclusion that this could be *imitated*. Those whom ‘the Holy Ghost made overseers’ (Acts xx. 28) had divine power and gifts for the function. But to

\* It was about two centuries after ere the *Apocalypse* was received into the Canon.



make an imitation of power is childish, just as children play at kings and queens. He forgot that 'helps and governments' came to an end with 'tongues and the working of miracles' (1 Cor. xii. 28, and iv. 20-21). And that consequently the Lord Himself had to take up the government into His own hands for the last time, ere it was set aside and removed as a corporate witness or Golden Candlestick out of its place. He forgot that the tares had now so covered 'the field' that the word had gone out, 'Let both grow together till the harvest.' And where, under these circumstances, could the golden candlesticks be found? He forgot all this, and prescribes his panacea accordingly: 'It is good to know God and the Bishop. He that doeth anything without the Bishop serveth the devil.' 'He that obeys his Bishop obeys not him, but the Father of Jesus Christ, the Bishop of all.' Again, 'Let all men respect the Deacons as Jesus Christ, even as they should respect the Bishop as being a type of the Father, and the Presbyters as the council of God and as the college of the Apostles.' These extracts, which might be multiplied, will sufficiently show the reader the panacea of Ignatius for the state of things at the time. And it was more congenial to adopt the remedy he prescribed than to 'repent.' So the Church threw itself on the arm of the Episcopate, made much of the Bishops, set them up as successors of the Apostles; like Israel of old, 'They set up kings, but not by Me.' And what was the upshot? Why, it was too much for human nature to stand, and by-and-by the Bishops fell out among themselves for supremacy. A fierce and long contention ensued, which culminated eventually in the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. This, as everyone knows, is a brief outline of what

actually took place. Such were the results originating in the sententious counsels given to the Church by Ignatius, whilst the Church turned a deaf ear to the voice of God by the mouth of St. John ; the fruits of which are seen up to this day in the claims of Apostolic succession, and the environments attaching thereto. Nevertheless the Good Shepherd finds means of feeding ‘ His own sheep,’ though *the wolf* has prevailed to *scatter* them. And still ‘ the words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies which are given from one Shepherd.’ Blessed be His name. We must next proceed to look at ‘ the things which shall be hereafter.’

### SECTION III.

#### CHAPTER IV. I—XI. 18.

‘ The things which shall be hereafter.’

WE now come to look at ‘ the things which shall be hereafter;’ when the thrones are set in heaven, and the government and judgment of the world undertaken (Rev. iv., v.). This is the time of which it is said in Psa. ii., ‘ He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.’ And the time of which Daniel speaks and says, ‘ I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit : his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool ; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him ; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand

stood before him : the judgment was set, and the books were opened' (Dan. vii. 9, 10, R.V.).

Is it not evident that in these Scriptures we find the thrones placed in the heavens ; placed there for the first time with the view of acting directly on the world below ? Afterwards the thrones are set on earth (chap. xx.) as symbolising the regal and sessional rule of the Lord and His saints over the world. 'Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world,' says St. Paul (1 Cor. vi. 2). It is the time to which the Lord's Prayer refers, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.' These all of course come under the head of 'the things which shall be hereafter,' and are distinctly stated in Psa. ii. and the other passages referred to.

#### FIVE OPENINGS IN THE BOOK.

Whilst there are seven divisions or sections in the Book of Revelation, beginning with the prologue, so to speak, in chapter i., and ending with the epilogue, chapter xxii. 10-21, there are five *openings* marked, each of which forms a section or division in itself. It is from not attending to this that arbitrary divisions of the book have been adopted, and much confusion in consequence has followed, nor are we aware that they have been noticed before.

1. 'A door was opened in heaven,' in chapter iv. 1, and the section runs on and continues to xi. 18. This is the first opening.

2. 'The Temple of God was opened in heaven,' chapter xi. 19, and the section continues to xv. 4. This is the second opening.

3. 'And behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the

testimony in heaven was opened,' chapter xv. 5, and the section continues to xix. 10. This is the third.

4. 'And I saw heaven opened,' chapter xix. 11, and the section continues to xx. 15. This is the fourth opening.

5. 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth,' chapter xxi. 1, and the section continues to xxii. 10. This is the fifth and final heavenly state.

All these are not arbitrary or human divisions, but are the Divine divisions of the Prophet himself. They also contemplate the issues from different standpoints, just as do the four Gospels, each of which pictures our Lord's history on distinct lines, yet the picture itself is one. Thus the Churches, '*or the things which are,*' having concluded in apocalyptic judgment, a long gap or interval succeeds. And the next great picture is that of the judgment on the world itself, under the head of '*the things which shall be hereafter,*' a crisis which is of course yet to come, but all of it an *apocalyptic* or an open manifestation. And we must bear in mind these five openings.

#### THE THRONE.

In chapters iv., v. we see the throne and its surroundings, exhibiting judicial purity (the twenty-four elders in white raiment). Those twenty-four elders represent the heavenly redeemed ones in their priestly purity and completeness at the throne. The thunderings, lightnings, and the seven lamps of fire, which in chapter v. are described as the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb sent forth into all the earth, are seen. These of course depict the terrible characteristics of the crisis which now sets in, and signified by 'lamps of fire burning before the throne,' etc. Still the Lord is not seen on His own throne, but 'at the right hand,'

as in Psa. cx., 'The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.' This now begins.

But before the judgments proceed from the throne the after-results are foreshown in the blessings pronounced by the redeemed, by the angels, and by the whole creation (chap. v.)—blessings resulting from the Lamb taking up the inheritance. For He now taketh the book of the inheritance out of 'the right hand of Him that sat on the throne.' He then proceeds to clear the inheritance of the enemies (by the seals, trumpets, and vials) before 'the kingdom is established in righteousness.' It was His death as the Lamb slain that now gives Him title.

The twenty-four elders correspond to the twenty-four orders of priests (1 Chron. xxiv.), and are here presented as a *royal Priesthood on 'thrones,'* having also a Melchisedec aspect, who met Abraham of old on the slaughter of the kings and blessed him (Gen. xiv. 18, 20). In these two aspects they symbolise the claims of God and Christ both in creation and redemption—claims and titles to which they were now giving effect in a judicial form never before manifested; for Melchisedec represented God to Abraham as 'Possessor of heaven and earth' in power.

#### THE CHERUBIM.

The Cherubim—Heads of Genera—are the *archetypal personation of life creation*, as evidenced in the *eyes* (symbols pre-eminently of life force). Hence they are the *chaiioth* of the Hebrew Scriptures and the *zoa* of the Greek Scriptures, words which mean *living ones or living creatures*. It is observable that they are placed in various associations and connections in Holy Writ, beginning with *Genesis* and

ending with the *Revelation*, but always expressing the relations of the creature to the God of creation, of government, and of redemption, subsequent to the fall of men and angels. And they give prominence alternately to the several connections to which these relations belong. But to trace these connections and relations, were we to speak particularly, would require a volume instead of the barest outline which we can give in a handbook.

The whole creation, upper and lower, was affected and marred by the fall of angels and of men. But, notwithstanding this, the headships which the cherubim personate appear here at the throne to the glory of God—which means that though men and angels by sin marred the principalities to which they belonged, and their environments, yet they, in a renewed condition, appear and come out again in new creation, under the power of redemption. And so, consequently, they were at first placed at the entrance of Eden to show to faith that, whatever might be the consequences of the fall, the purposes of God towards creation would remain fixed; but should thenceforth be accomplished through judgment (signified by the flaming sword which turned every way). And so they are here found at the throne itself, denoting that those divine purposes are about now to be accomplished and the creation to be restored to the state originally designed by God. To speak of them separately, they seem to appear as follows :

THE LION—the archetypal formal personation of earthly dominion and kingly royal government, committed to Adam at the first, but marred by the fall in the lower creation ; but now restored in more than pristine glory on earth in the tribe of Judah, and personated by the Lion at the throne—

thus fulfilling the original design of God in government (Gen. i. 28).

THE CALF—Bull (*Par. Heb.*)—The archetypal personation of life-production in the lower creation, 'subjected at first to vanity' by the fall, but delivered therefrom by the wisdom of God as effected in redemption (Rom. viii. 19-23), and this deliverance is represented by the Calf at the throne, the groaning and travailing 'creation brought into the liberty (ἐλευθερίαν) of the glory of the children of God' (R.V.).

THE MAN—the archetypal personation of the creature fashioned after the image and likeness of God, and from which he fell, but now renewed in that image and likeness—and so is represented at the throne as the highest type of divine formation and creature excellence; whose Head is the material link between God and the universe in redemption, 'for the head of every man is Christ.'

THE EAGLE — the archetypal personation of heavenly dominion and government in the saints when the Lord's glory is 'set above the heavens' (Psa. viii. 1), and in which the saints are *joint heirs* with Him—for the saints will judge the angels as well as judge the world (1 Cor. vi. 2). This high glory, as we take it, the eagle represents at the throne—for the eagle, as presented in this aspect, the following passages may be cited: 'Doth the eagle mount up at thy command?' (Job xxxix. 27); 'Riches fly away as an eagle toward heaven' (Prov. xxiii. 5); 'Though thou shouldst make thy nest high as the eagle' (Jer. xlix. 10); 'Though thou exaltest thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy name among the stars,' etc. (Obad. 4). The aspect of the eagle varies in different parts of Scripture. The particular aspect of it here, as well as of the Lion, must be taken from

the context and the subject treated of. The lion at times symbolizes the power of the Lord, and at other times the power of the enemy. So the eagle at times symbolizes a destructive power, and at other times a high and exalted power, and such we here take it to mean.

Thus we have, if this view of the cherubim be true, the heavens and the earth with their pillars, so to speak, proleptically personated in the fulness of their perfection in redemption at the throne. And this view is further confirmed by the *Amen* at the end of the doxology (chap. v.). For when the blessings and praises of all creation in heaven and earth are uttered by their respective classes to God and to the Lamb, for whose 'pleasure they are and were created,' and His double title in creation and redemption declared and asserted; *then* the four living creatures say *Amen*. That is, when the Lamb takes the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne, they and the twenty-four elders 'fell down before the Lamb,' these last having each (*ἑκάστος*) harps, etc. The living creatures are prostrate in worship before Him, but do not utter until the whole doxology is sounded, and then they say *Amen* (chap. v. 14). All of which is in keeping, for then the whole creation in heaven and earth, of *which* they are the living personations at the throne, is brought into harmony by Him who is 'the MELCHISEDEC.' Consequently the whole scene in these two chapters (iv., v.) comes under the head of 'the mystery of God,' which the reader will see fully borne out if he takes pains to study Colossians i. and ii., and Ephesians i. and iv.\*

\* The critics are puzzled by the two mysteries mentioned in Col. ii. 2, and have brought in other readings to smooth it (see R.V.). But



## CHAPTER VI.

It must be steadily kept in mind that the book taken out of the right hand of Him who sat upon the throne, written within and on the backside and sealed with seven seals, embraces the whole course of the prophetic roll to the end. And the inheritance being cleared ultimately, then the after results appear. Thus showing to us the unity of conception running through this wondrous book amid the variety of instrumentalities brought into play. And the seals, trumpets, and vials having filled up the active judgments of God on the world of nations, wind up with the coming of the Lord Himself; then the sessional thrones of the millennial kingdom appear. And after that 'the great white throne' of final judgment. Then the new heavens and the new earth, when all things are made new.

## THE FOUR HORSES.

The four horses here correspond to the '*four sore judgments*' of the Prophet Ezekiel upon Jerusalem: 'the sword, the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast;' as saith the Prophet (Ezek. xiv. 21). The devil who is now cast down from heaven, and in the prophetic sense, on earth with his angels, as we shall see afterwards, has ripened the world up

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the Apostle is simply putting together, in the verse, the two great subjects of which he spoke so fully in the former chapter, so that internal evidence proves the common version correct, as also that of the vulgate—*Mysterii Dei Patris et Christi Jesu*—The Mystery of God the Father and of Christ Jesus—the two mysteries of which he had previously spoken in Col. i.

to that state and condition, that 'the Lord God to whom *vengeance* belongeth shows Himself' (Psa. xciv. 1), and the four living creatures set as it were the chariot wheels of the Lord in motion (Psa. lxxx. 1).

'When the Lamb had opened one of the seals, I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four living creatures saying, Come and see.' And to summarize the four aspects of judgment pictured in the four horses we have: (1) The rider on the white horse with a bow going forth to conquer, who thus presents the subjugation of nations under the crushing effects of imperial campaigns. (2) The red horse with his rider who has power given him to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another with the sword, seems to refer to the terrible social and civil death struggles incited by political and religious hate one towards the other. (3) The black horse with his rider who had a pair of balances in his hand, and the voice which said 'A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny: and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.' Does it not refer unmistakably to famine on the masses, whilst the abundance of the rich remains? (4) The pale horse and his rider with death and hell following him, uses indiscriminate means of destruction on the classes and the masses, with pestilence in his wake ('death and hell').

All these exhibit direct heaven-sent judgments from the throne, which Satan as the energizing force behind is only too glad to execute. And those judgments increase in intensity as they go on one after another without producing any visible moral effect on the world. On the contrary, the world, notwithstanding the shocks given to it, recovers itself, and in-

creases in boldness and hostility till it reaches the climax in chapter xix., when they come against the Lord Himself. Just as happened of old in the time of Joshua and the Kings of Canaan. For when the Kings heard at first how the Lord had wrought for Israel at the Red Sea and the Jordan 'their heart melted, neither was their spirit in them any more' (Jos. v.). But when afterwards they heard that *Jericho* and *Ai* were taken, they gathered and became emboldened and took courage to fight with Joshua and Israel. And in a similar way this evil generation in the end shows its satanic boldness in the closing scenes of Christendom's history.

#### THE FIFTH SEAL AND THE SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR.

'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.' What altar is this? And how comes it to be seen here? The thrones and the Cherubim were seen, but what of the altar? It is the Golden Altar, and the Tabernacle consequently appears, the pattern shown to Moses of old in the mount. He that now dwelt between the Cherubim is about to shine forth. Let the earth be moved (Psa. xcix. 1). And so the altar, the golden altar is seen. But alas! what is seen there? Those who were slain for the word of God and the testimony which they held. It does not say 'for the testimony of Jesus,' as in chapter xx. 4. And so we take them to be the souls of the prophets who declared the word of God, and had been persecuted and killed beforehand, and of whom our Lord speaks and says: 'Shall not God avenge His own

elect which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you He will avenge them speedily' (Luke xviii. 7-8). Language which signifies that the death of the prophets and righteous men, and their blood, like that of Abel, has a continuous voice before the throne, as if they themselves were speaking. For this reason, as we understand, the fifth seal expands into the seven trumpet judgments (chapter viii.); and the sixth seal expands into the seven vials; and the seventh seal brings on the scene the Lord Himself, with the results that follow to the end. And thus the seven-sealed book is closed.

The symmetry of these three conclusions will appear as we analyze the sections, and the book will interpret itself accordingly. But between the sixth and seventh seals, chapter vii. comes in, parenthetically, bringing in to view the 144,000, and 'the great multitude which no man could number.' Of all these and of 'the white robes,' we will speak more particularly afterwards.

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## CHAPTER VII.

BETWEEN the mention of the sixth and seventh seals there comes in a parenthesis, in which a view is given of the 144,000 that were numbered out of the Tribes of Israel, and of 'the great multitude that no man could number.'

The 144,000, 'having the seal of the living God in their foreheads,' which in chapter xiv. is interpreted to mean, 'His Father's name written in their foreheads,' when they stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion. These are what may be

styled 'the Elijah Remnant,' which, like him, bear witness against the evil of those days, and are translated without death. For if in the antitype Enoch is represented by the Gentile portion of the saved, so also is Elijah by the final Jewish portion, and both under distinct and different circumstances. On the other hand, the great multitude that come out of the great tribulation correspond to the Ahab witnesses in the time of Elijah whom Jezebel slew. For when Obadiah hid in the cave those that escaped, the death sentence went out against them all, and there were found '7,000 that had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.' Thus they in their day came out of great tribulation (1 Kings xviii., xix.). In this way may not these types have their antitypes here? And further, this palm-bearing, victorious multitude had the faith of the Lord Jesus, 'the testimony of Jesus,' as the ground of their confidence—for 'they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' They are those *reaped* (xiv. 15, 16).

Now these parties are seen here beforehand anticipatively, but appear again, in chapter xiv., after they have finished their testimony in the crisis; we shall consequently have to look at them again when we reach that chapter.

## CHAPTER VIII.

This chapter begins with the opening of the seventh seal, and 'there is silence in heaven for about the space of half an hour' (verse 1). This silence indicates that the prayers of the saints are going up, and the din of battle and conflict ceases till this is done, the souls under the altar having been told that they should rest awhile, etc. (*ἀναπαύσονται*). *Silence* is used in Scripture to indicate that something of

awe is going to happen : 'Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord, for He is raised up out of His holy habitation' (Zech. ii. 13).

This silence also is to give time to the fifth and sixth seals to operate under the trumpets and vials, before the action of the seventh seal sets in, when the Lord Himself comes out—for the reader will observe that there is nothing scarcely at all said at first about the judgments that come under the fifth and seventh seals. And so, consequently, the fifth seal ushers in the trumpet judgments, and the sixth seal the vial judgments, which will appear evident as we proceed with the subject.

#### THE ANGEL AT THE GOLDEN ALTAR.

The heavens and the earth being now, as we have seen, brought into close contact, the angels play a conspicuous part in the Book of Revelation, and come to the front, even more than in other Scriptures. And so here we see that an angel comes and stands at the golden altar (the altar that appears under the fifth seal of which we have spoken), 'having a golden censer, and there was given him much incense that he should offer it, with the prayers of all (the) saints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne' (viii. 3). The article of 'renewed mention' shows that it refers to the souls that cry under the altar as above. The Revisers, despite the grammar of the language, omit the article, as does the old version also. But the prayers of those saints come up now before the throne, and the results issue forth in the seven trumpets : 'Shall not God avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him?' etc. The time has now come for the cry to take effect from the

throne 'set in the heavens.' And the prayers referred to are not of those on earth, but of the souls that cry under the altar in heaven. So that the passage does not at all support the idea of angels offering up the prayers now of people on earth. Besides, the angel here depicted is 'the Angel of the Covenant.'

#### THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPET JUDGMENTS.

The seven trumpet judgments are divided into four and three; the last three are woe trumpets.

If we take the first four trumpets (chapter viii.) literally, they produce famine, with perplexity in earth and sea and sky, with distress of nations also, and plague-stricken men. But whatever they effect, it reaches but 'a third part.' The filling-up of 'the wrath of God' on the same objects is seen in the pouring out of the seven vials afterwards. The reason for which is that the trumpet judgments act with a view to bring men to repentance, as stated in chapter ix. 20, 21; for when the judgments must come on the world, and woe, 'because offences'—even then 'mercy rejoices over judgment' (see Psa. ii. 10-12).

In the last verse '*the inhabitants of the earth*' on whom the woes are to operate are identical with those about whom the cry is made from the souls under the altar, the language being the same (τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς), a further proof in itself that the trumpet judgments are connected with the fifth seal after it opens, and fall on the class referred to.

## THE WOE TRUMPETS.

In the ninth chapter of the Apocalypse two of the woe trumpets are sounded, and very appalling events follow. The imagery and symbolism are chiefly Eastern, so that we may conclude that it is the Eastern nations that are mainly affected by the two woe trumpets here. For the whole of 'the quick' or living nations are now, as the Apostle puts it, under judgment 'at His appearing and His kingdom.'

## THE STAR FALLEN.

St. John says, 'I saw a star fallen from heaven' (R.V.)—not *fall*, as in the old version, but *had fallen*, from heaven, and so remained (πεπτωκότα); and 'there was given to him the key of the pit of the abyss' (ix. 1). We are not told how soon after he had fallen from heaven the key was given to him, and that he opened the pit of the abyss. The facts only are noted. And we can call to mind Isaiah's prophetic exclamation, 'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning!' and also our Lord's prophetic words, 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall (πεσοντα) from heaven'—a circumstance formally and officially, so to speak, brought before us afterwards in Rev. xii., as the result of the conflict with Michael and his angels.

## THE LOCUSTS.

The contents of chapter ix. now come before us, and the pit of the abyss being opened, 'there arose smoke out of the pit as the smoke of a great furnace,' etc., 'and there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth,' etc. And these were commanded 'that they should not hurt the grass of the



earth, nor any green thing, but only those men who had not the seal of God upon their foreheads;’ the Lord thus showing how He watches over His people, and ‘knows them that are His.’ The imagery is taken from the Prophet Nahum against Nineveh, but, as is always the case, drawn out and extended to final events. ‘Thy crowned are as the locusts, and Thy captains a great swarm of locusts’ (Nah. iii. 17, Heb.). The supra-natural character given them in not touching the grass of the earth, or any green thing (the usual food of locusts), but only the men who have not the seal of God upon them, shows that they are a special, infernal, and demoniacal horde let loose from the abyss to possess the wicked and hurry them on to the destruction of their fellows, and at the same time parading their *humanity*; for ‘their faces were as the faces of men, and they had hair as the hair of women’ (verse 7). And the star which had fallen from heaven and opened the pit now becomes their king, and his name is *Destroyer*. Satan has various designations in Scripture—as ‘a roaring lion,’ destroying; as a ‘serpent,’ deceiving and beguiling; as ‘the devil,’ accusing; as ‘an angel of light,’ assuming religion; as ‘the dragon,’ swallowing up classes of men in perdition; as ‘Satan,’ the hostile adversary. These names are grouped together when the time comes for him to be personally bound—names indicating the varied means by which he operated to deceive the world and the Church (Rev. xx.); and he now heads this host as the angel of the pit of the abyss. It is not said that he came out of the pit along with the locusts, but only that ‘they had a king over them, which is the angel of the pit of the abyss.’ In short, he first opens the pit, and when the locusts come out he heads them, still showing their

supra-natural nature. 'For the locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands' (Prov. xxx. 27). But he is now their King!

#### THE SIXTH WOE.

The sixth woe is announced by the Prophet saying, 'I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,' etc., which is another link in the chain of connection between the fifth seal with the souls under the altar, etc., and the seven trumpet judgments, as has been said above. For in the seven trumpets the woe pronounced on 'the world because of offences' is found to come, and 'God's elect are avenged which cry day and night unto Him.'

#### THE FOUR ANGELS BOUND IN EUPHRATES.

And the voice from the golden altar said to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, 'Loose the four angels which are bound at the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men' (ix. 13, 15, R.V.). This does not mean that for that extended period men are killed. But they were loosed to execute judgment at the exact time determined by God—not only the hour, but the day; not only the day, but the month; not only the month, but the year; showing us that with God there is an exact time appointed, though man may not know the day nor the hour. The article, as Dean Alford says, makes this meaning 'imperative.'

The four angels need not cause us difficulty when we remember the part they play in the world-kingdoms of Daniel. There we see the Prince-angel of Israel, and the

Prince of Persia withstanding him, and the Prince of Grecia also mentioned, all of whom are angel princes in conflict, conducting or else thwarting the armies of the world (Dan. x.). The evil angels, of course, thwarting, as far as possible, God's providential designs, and leading the armies of men either to their own destruction or the destruction of those kingdoms given up to their devastation. And such, it would seem, are the special characteristics of the angels here in connection with the terrific judgments portrayed. If we are to distinguish between the locusts and the angels at Euphrates, the locust horde would seem to correspond more to the demons of the Gospels, a legion of whom could take possession of one man (Mark v.); whereas the Prince-angels correspond to the angels 'greater in might and power,' of whom St. Peter and St. Jude speak. The devil himself is a Prince-angel, and contended on equal terms with Michael the archangel, as is told us in Jude. And thus, as there are two classes of angels on the side of heaven, angels and archangels or Prince-angels (Dan. x. 13), so there are two classes of angels on the side of hell, Prince-angels and demons.

Now, the imagery of chapter ix. being so entirely Eastern, it is natural to suppose that the Eastern nations form the scene of those judgments. Hence the historical commentators see in the 'two hundred thousand thousand horsemen' *the Turkish cavalry*, noted in former days, though not very formidable now. But the Apocalypse being, we may say, our Lord's commentary on St. Paul's later epistles—that He 'shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom' (2 Tim. iv. 1), the *seals*, *trumpets*, and *vials* become the *avant-coureurs* and precursors to His absolute

appearance in chapter xix., and proceed under the head of the judgment of the *quick* or *living*, whilst the judgment of the dead follows after (chapter xx.). By observing this outline the reader will easily understand the unity and design of the book itself, and will be able to grasp the whole subject, notwithstanding those difficulties that may arise in the details. But to proceed.

#### CHAPTER X. TO XI.

Before the sounding of the seventh trumpet there are certain striking incidents mentioned of an episodal character. A mighty angel is seen with one foot on the sea and the other foot on the land, his face as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire, with a little open book in his hand, and when he cries aloud seven thunders uttered their voices. These voices and thunders are sealed up and not allowed to be written, showing us that, besides the things especially foretold and revealed, there are more behind not revealed to us at all. And such is the case with many departments of Divine revelation, for we only ‘know in part and prophesy in part,’ as St. Paul says. Therefore we forbear to speculate upon them, as if prophets ourselves.

But the angel himself announces one thing, ‘and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever (εἰς τοῦς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων) that there shall be time no longer—that is, *delay* (χρῶνος);\* but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel

\* χρῶνος, *delay*, signifies *time* in relation to its succession. *For ever and ever* signifies time in relation to its permanence. The fundamental idea of αἰών, *ever*, is that of duration, an unbroken continuity co-existent with the existence of the subject (from αἰ-ῶν, always existing—Aristotle). Hence, if it refers to things in this world, it is co-existent with this world; if it refers to things of the next world, it is co-existent

when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which He declared to His servants the prophets' (x. 6, 7, R.V.). Observe the term *is finished* (prophetic aorist), noting the fixed determination regarding it as *un fait accompli*, because decided in the purposes of God.

And when the seventh angel does sound his trumpet, the Lord then *takes* His great power and reigns ; and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ (xi. 15-18).

Let the reader here observe the difference between the power of the Lord when *given* to Him on His resurrection, and the power of the Lord when *taken* by Him on His coming in glory. At the first, *when all power* (ἐξουσία, authority) *is given Him* in heaven and on earth, He uses it in mercy, grace, and salvation, and sends His disciples to evangelize the nations. At the last, when He *takes His great power* (δύναμιν) and reigns, He uses it in judgment, righteousness, and wrath to come (see Matt. xxviii. 18-20 with Rev. xi. 15-18). So that, as far as the events concerned, the seventh angel with his trumpet ends the book, and all the great outlines are noted and concluded. It does, in fact, end the first book.

But now we return to the episode, and St. John is told to take the little book out of the angel's hand. It is then found sweet to him as confidant entrusted with it, but the

with the next world. The Universalists tell us that it has always a limited extent, and try to persuade themselves and others that this is true. And if so, there would be no eternal blessedness for the saved any more than eternal misery for the wicked—*i.e.*, so far as the words go, there is no word in holy writ to express it ! and this proves too much ; and whatever proves too much proves nothing.

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contents are bitter. 'And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before' (or 'concerning,' R.V.) 'many peoples and nations and tongues and kings' (x. 11). Which injunction, as we understand, refers to the second book of this prophecy, beginning with chapter xii., or rather xi. 19—a prophecy which goes back on the sources of evil behind the scenes, and then brings them to the front, when they reach the climax announced under the seventh angel's trumpet that went before, but with more detail.

## CHAPTER XI.

In the Gospels *Jerusalem* is styled '*the Holy City*,' and the temple is styled '*the Temple of God*' and '*My Father's House*.' Those were their Divine designations notwithstanding their practical departure at the time from their original determinations—God originally designed those determinations—and they remained permanent always in the Divine conception. Hence the judgments on their profanation become the more conspicuous; for the greater the Divine privileges, the greater the responsibility.

The angel here (in chapter xi.) says to the Prophet, 'Rise and measure the temple ( $\tauὸν ναόν$ ) of God, and them that worship therein, and the court that is without the temple leave without ( $\text{ἐκβαλε ἔξω}$ ) and measure it not; for it hath been given unto the nations; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months' (Rev. xi. 1, 2, R.V.).

The language implies that 'the court which is without' is the holy city itself—that is, that the temple is the *centre* and the city is the circumference and *outer court*; and that whilst the Divine worship of the sanctuary, for the period



spoken of, is guarded, the city itself is trodden down by the hostile nations. But even so, God leaves not Himself without witness against them.

#### THE FORTY AND TWO MONTHS.

The forty and two months are three and a half years ; and these seem to coincide with the first half of Daniel's last week, during which the Covenant is being 'confirmed with many for one week' in the sanctuary (*τὸν ναὸν*), and Jehovah's worship is carried on with the testimony of Jesus as Messiah in the foreground. Such, we take it, is the character of the worship at this time in the sanctuary at Jerusalem ; for it is a prophecy concerning the temple worship before the action of the beast in the latter half sets in.

#### THE TWO WITNESSES.

During the first half of this period the two witnesses prophesy in the Holy City, or outer court, in mourning garments, for 1,260 days—the days expressing continuance and persistent, ceaseless testimony. So that we have the inside worship and the external testimony, both carried on at the same time and during the same period, *i.e.*, for the first half of Daniel's last week—the 70th week. Now, in the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles there is a picture something like this. The Apostles and early Christians are seen worshipping in the Temple, whilst an external testimony is carried on outside in the face of the Jews and of the Gentiles (see Acts iii. and iv. 25-29). For 'the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.' Such was it then, and such it will be by-and-by, *when* 'the latter rain,' mentioned in Joel's prophecy, falls upon Israel ; for it cannot be maintained

that the prophecy was exhausted at Pentecost. But the witnesses are 'clothed in sackcloth,' *i.e.*, in mourning apparel, indicating that their testimony was to make for repentance. In fact, it produces, as we believe, the mourning of 'the different families of Israel' mentioned in Zechariah. On the other hand, they provoke the hostility of their enemies, just as it was in the early chapters of the Acts. And 'when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them and kill them,' etc. (Rev. xi. 7, R.V.).

The Lord watches over His servants till they finish their testimony. The witnesses' testimony continues for 1,260 days, or to the end of the first half of the week. After that they are killed; but who kills them? The beast out of the abyss. But where does he come from? Hitherto he has not appeared on the scene, and his history is reserved to chapter xiii. He is the one that comes up from the sea, after the devil is cast down from heaven, and is the vassal of the angel of the abyss (chapter x.), of whom we have already spoken; just as Herod, who kills James and imprisons Peter, was the vassal of the devil in Acts xii.

The outer testimony now comes to an end. But, having killed the witnesses, the beast then invades the worship of the sanctuary, and 'the man of sin sits for the rest of the week in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God.' (2 Thess. ii., R.V.), or, as the Prophet Daniel expresses it, 'In the midst of the week, or for the half of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease' (Dan. ix. 27, R.V.). In other words, he substitutes himself as the object of worship for the rest of the period—for the last half week. So that the worship of God in the sanctuary, and the

external testimony of 'the two olive-trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth,' end together : and after that the triumph of the beast and 'the nations' is complete. And this triumph is further evidenced by the bodies of the slain witnesses lying dead for three days and a half in the street of the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.\*

If the three days and a half be taken literally, then we must understand that 'the nations,' through their representatives, who follow after the beast, 'rejoice over them and make merry and send gifts one to another, because these two Prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth.' But after three days and a half they rise up and ascend into heaven, 'and their enemies beheld them.' This was an exceptional case to that of our Lord, for His enemies never beheld Him in resurrection. And it is now at last presented as if nothing would be omitted on the part of God to produce repentance in men by seeing those witnesses raised from the dead and their after ascension into heaven, and this being accompanied by a great earthquake that follows, 'the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven' (Rev. xi. 8-13). In other words, these events wrought repentance in the rest, after that 7,000 were slain. This was the number of those who were slain in the earthquake, but whether literal or symbolic, we cannot say ; the material part of it is, that those not killed repented, and 'the rest were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven,' showing to us that 'when Thy judgments are in the earth,

\* Jerusalem is called 'the Great City' as well as 'the Holy City' (Jer. xxii. 8 ; Neh. vii. 4).

the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness,' and 'mercy rejoiceth over judgment.' But now that the witnesses are killed, the beast has it all his own way, invades the sanctuary, and sits in the temple of God as 'the man of sin,' showing himself that he is God.

#### THE TWO WITNESSES, WHO ARE THEY?

The two witnesses cause torment to the dwellers on earth, whilst they cause repentant mourning in many, as we have seen, so that they must be personages of strange appearance sent of God at this time of *crisis*. But who, then, are they? We may easily judge of who they are from the nature and extent of their actions. 'These have the power to shut the heaven that it rain not during the days of their prophecy; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague as often as they shall desire' (xi. 6, R.V.). These are the exact things that Moses and Elias did in their former testimony, and the renewal of them now in the *crisis* is brought up to show that they are the same witnesses sent of God to Israel for a final testimony. And the reasons for which are so important and urgent, as well as interesting, that we must review them.

#### THE PROOFS.

The proofs for this conclusion are many. (1) In the first place, the last of the prophets had said, 'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet (the Tishbite, LXX.) before the great and terrible day of the Lord come, and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the earth

with a curse' (Mal. iv. 5, 6). (2) And our Lord confirms this prophecy when He says, 'Elijah, indeed, cometh, and shall restore all things;' but that John the Baptist, had they believed him, would have been Elijah to them, 'and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they listed, even so shall the Son of Man also suffer of them' (Matt. xvii. 11-13). Thus Israel would not believe, and as Isaiah said, 'If ye will not believe, neither shall ye be established.' When John himself was asked if he were Elijah he answered 'No.' So consequently Elijah is yet to come, and prevail in bringing them to repentance. But again, (3) Moses and Elias are personally present at *the Transfiguration*, and 'spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem,' representing in this way *the Law* and *the Prophets*. They are by St. Luke described as '*two men*' (ἄνδρες δύο, Luke ix. 30). St. Luke also pictures them at the tomb after His resurrection as '*two men* in shining garments' (Luke xxiv. 4), and again at the ascension he says, 'Behold, *two men* stood by them in white apparel' (Acts i. 10).

We have, then, as we understand it, those *two men* speaking of His *decease*, and witnessing His death, and also His resurrection and ascension at Jerusalem afterwards. The two men (ἄνδρες δύο) appear all through, and their garments are white like those of the Lord Himself in the Transfiguration. They were, therefore, witnesses of all that 'came to pass in those days at Jerusalem.' And when the devil prompted the Jews at the crucifixion to say, 'He calleth for Elias,' it was because he knew that Elias was there, yet could not deliver; but it served his purpose as part of the mockery of our Lord.

## FURTHER PROOFS.

(4) The necessity for these connections will be more apparent when we consider the repentance of Israel in the latter day. For the great sin which overtopped all their other sins was the murder of their Messiah, and the cry, 'His blood be on us and on our children.' But God now deals with them according to His own law. And of the crime of murder the law said : 'Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses ; but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die ' (Numb. xxxv. 30).

Now, when God comes to deal with the nation in the last days for the death of His Son, He does not go behind His law. Yet if the covenant people refuse to accept their guilt and challenge the accusation, where are the witnesses to be found ? God then confronts and confounds them with the two witnesses who spake of His decease, and witnessed it at Jerusalem, and thus brings home the guilt to their consciences, and then they mourn and weep (Zech. xii.). ' Their heart then turns to the Lord, and the veil is taken away ' (2 Cor. iii. 15, 16). They look on Him whom they had pierced, and mourn bitterly.

## THE BODY OF MOSES.

(5) The body of Moses becomes the great difficulty here ; for did not Moses die, and did not God bury him ? (Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6). How, then, can he die again ? All very true ! But here one of the most singular coincidences of any given in Holy Writ occurs ; for had not St. Jude supplied the link in the chain we should be left without any clue to the after history. But St. Jude tells us that 'Michael the Archangel,

when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke thee' (Jude 9, R.V.). That is, that Michael dare not (*οὐκ ἐτόλμῃσεν*) act judicially against the devil on that occasion, and why? Because the devil contended for his rights; and as the one who 'had the power (*κράτος*) of death,' maintained those rights judicially until sin was expiated, and death itself destroyed, and life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel. So that Michael could only rescue *the body*, by calling for an arrest of judgment on the part of God, who was over them both. But Michael having thus succeeded before the time, we see that Moses appears *bodily* in the transfiguration, and finally with Elijah appears as one of the witnesses. For both have been preserved of God in heaven bodily. And, when the time comes for it, both these witnesses die, and after that rise and ascend to heaven in bodies glorified like the Lord, over whom 'death hath no more dominion.' There were many raised from the dead who died again. But our Lord was the first that should rise from the dead (Acts xxvi. 23)—that is, in immortality and incorruptibility, in which 'death hath no more dominion over Him' (Rom. vi. 7). If this link in the chain were wanting, we should fail to account for the two witnesses. But the spirit of God supplies the link as if incidentally in the Epistle of St. Jude.

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## SECTION IV.

## CHAPTER XI. 19; XV. 5.

## THE TEMPLE IN HEAVEN.

‘And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His covenant : and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.’

THIS is the second opening, and we enter on a new scene. The seer is still in heaven, whither he had been called up (iv. 1), and was told that he was ‘yet to prophesy *concerning* many peoples and nations, and tongues and kings’ (x. 11, R.V.). And so he starts afresh, as it were, and unfolds in this section the sources whence the energies of the nations and ‘the dwellers on earth’ proceed, and the resources of God in frustrating them.

The resources of God are found in His *temple in heaven*. ‘And there was seen in His temple the ark of His covenant, and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake and great hail.’ These terms show that God is going to take up Israel as a nation ; and St. Paul traces the antecedents that pertain to our Lord’s relations to them thus : ‘Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants, the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises ; whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.’ All this is symbolically pictured here by St. John, and the imagery taken from the Old Testament, as Gen. xxxvii. 9. He sees ‘a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars ;’ and the woman



brings forth a man-child, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And another Old Testament Scripture tells who this child is: 'The Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen (the nations) for Thine inheritance. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel' (Psa. ii.).

This, therefore, is the child, in the first place, whom the dragon sought to devour. And, in the second place, it refers to the elect members of His body, of whom He says, 'And he that overcometh and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, 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' (Rev. ii. 26, 27). Symbolically and prophetically it refers to Christ and the Church, here called '*the Man-Child*,' just as it is said of Adam and Eve, 'Male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called *their name Adam* in the day when they were created' (Gen. v. 2). When the Church is spoken of in unity with Christ, it is looked at as His Body and masculine. 'So also is Christ' (1 Cor. xii. 12). But when looked at in itself it is feminine. So it was with our first parents: 'Adam was first formed, then Eve.' But when spoken of in unity, 'Their name was called Adam in the day when they were created.' All of which was typical.

If this be so, then the Church at this time is represented as translated to heaven, and the interval is passed over between the time of the Lord's ascension and the ascension of His Body the Church, and the fact alone dwelt on as

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The resources of God are found in His *temple in heaven*. ‘And there was seen in His temple the ark of His covenant, and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake and great hail.’ These terms show that God is going to take up Israel as a nation ; and St. Paul traces the antecedents that pertain to our Lord’s relations to them thus : ‘Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants, the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises ; whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.’ All this is symbolically pictured here by St. John, and the imagery taken from the Old Testament, as Gen. xxxvii. 9. He sees ‘a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars ;’ and the woman

brings forth a man-child, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And another Old Testament Scripture tells who this child is: 'The Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen (the nations) for Thine inheritance. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel' (Psa. ii.).

This, therefore, is the child, in the first place, whom the dragon sought to devour. And, in the second place, it refers to the elect members of His body, of whom He says, 'And he that overcometh and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, 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' (Rev. ii. 26, 27). Symbolically and prophetically it refers to Christ and the Church, here called '*the Man-Child*,' just as it is said of Adam and Eve, 'Male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called *their name Adam* in the day when they were created' (Gen. v. 2). When the Church is spoken of in unity with Christ, it is looked at as His Body and masculine. 'So also is Christ' (1 Cor. xii. 12). But when looked at in itself it is feminine. So it was with our first parents: 'Adam was first formed, then Eve.' But when spoken of in unity, 'Their name was called Adam in the day when they were created.' All of which was typical.

If this be so, then the Church at this time is represented as translated to heaven, and the interval is passed over between the time of the Lord's ascension and the ascension of His Body the Church, and the fact alone dwelt on as

one. So that Christ and His body the Church are seen now together at the throne in a concrete form.

‘And there was (ἐγένετο) war in heaven,’ but when this war took place we are not told; yet it was clearly before the Lord’s throne was set there, as in chapter iv. For until Satan and his angels were cast down from the heavens no other throne could be set there. But Michael and his angels expel from the heavens the dragon and his angels, ‘and their place was not found any more in heaven.’ And then it is said, ‘Rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.’ ‘Who are those said to dwell in the heavens but the Church taken to the Lord?’ at least, the great Gentile contingent, if one may so say. And ‘the Church, which is His body,’ enters now on the different glories belonging to Christ, being one with Him, viz., His glory as the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David. These are ‘the *glories* that should follow’ the sufferings, as St. Peter puts it (1 Pet. i. 11, δόξας). But the glory which is His as *Son of the Father* the Church is also brought into (John xvii.); but that is not a *revealed* glory; it is not Apocalyptic, and consequently not seen in the Apocalypse.

But now Satan is cast down from heaven to earth, and has great wrath: ‘The accuser of the brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night, and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb (διὰ, with accusative, on the ground of the blood, etc.) and the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.’ This was, so to speak, ‘the victory of the vanquished.’ They overcame him in suffering unto death, like Him who went before them in a like path.

## SATAN IN THE HEAVENS.

When the Holy Spirit conflicts with Satan it is with spiritual weapons (Eph. vi.); when Christ deals with him it is by angelic ministry, at the time when the Lord asserts His headship 'over all principalities and powers.' The same principle is seen in the parable of the *tares of the field* (Matt. xiii.). The spiritual progress of good and evil go on in the world till the harvest. Then it is not the Spirit, but the angels who are sent forth to gather the tares in bundles, to burn them, and gather the wheat into the barn.

But once Satan is cast down from the heavens, of course then the spiritual conflict of the Church with him in 'the heavenly places' ceases. For whilst Satan occupies the heavenly places he acts in heaven and on earth in a twofold way. His accusations reach the throne of God against the saints as anti-priest, and he operates on earth against them by various methods (*μεθοδίας*, Eph. vi. 11). But he is met at the throne by the Great High Priest and answered (to this St. Paul refers, Rom. viii. 33, 34). And the prayers of the saints likewise ascend to the throne, and on earth they become victors through suffering, as we see in the closing verses of Rom. viii. However, it is a mistake to think that Satan is present at the throne of God—his accusations reach it; just as the prayers of saints on earth also reach it; but he is not present there. However, the direct conflict with him in heavenly places ceases, and the character of the testimony is changed from this period on to the end.

## THE DEVIL ON EARTH WHEN CAST DOWN.

The devil when cast down to earth does three things, as we are told: (1) He persecutes the woman that brought forth the man-child; (2) he goes to make war with the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ; (3) and raises up the two beasts spoken of in chapter xiii., one described as raised up out of the sea, the other out of the earth.

First, he persecutes *the woman*. But who is this woman? We take her to be Israel, and especially the ten tribes in the wilderness (see Ezek. xx.; Hosea ii.). The old prophets distinctly refer to the circumstances of it; and this he does at the onset when cast down, and afterwards he departs (went away, ἀπῆλθεν, R.V.) to make war with the remnant of her seed, etc. But where does he go, or to whom does he depart? He goes to Jerusalem, as we understand, where he incites the beast to kill the witnesses, who then sits in the temple of God as the Man of Sin (2 Thess. ii.), of which we spoke in the last chapter. If this be so, the last week of Daniel—the seventieth week—is thus divided. In its first half the dragon pursues the woman in the wilderness. Then he, after that, *goes away* or *departs*, and finishes up the week along with the beast at Jerusalem (chapter xi.).

There is no difficulty in looking at the ten tribes as *the woman*, for this the old Prophets do also (Hos. ii. 14-16) (the part put for the whole by the figure *Synechdoche*). And St. Paul speaks of them all, though scattered, in the singular

number (δωδεκάφυλον, as the twelve-tribed people), and Peter and James write to them in the same character.

#### THE WOMAN.

The woman, then, as we apprehend, is the covenant people of God, chosen in the Fathers, and ‘of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came.’ However the Church, when looked at in dispensation, comes in for the ‘spiritual things’ of Israel (Rom. xv. 27), and Abraham is the father of the faithful. In external earthly connections, such is its aspect. Whilst in the form of the heavenly election, and, as the Body of Christ, it is before and outside of all covenants. For in the Ephesians and Colossians and John xvii. there is no mention at all of covenant relations, nor could there be. But here, in Rev. xii., the subject being the kingdom in its Davidic character, the *man-child* takes up and rules in the kingdom and the throne, both to shepherd and to break the nations (Psa. ii. and cx.), and the Apostles sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. But it is important to bear in mind that the imagery of this chapter, as all through the Apocalypse, is taken from the Old Testament. For example, Pharaoh is described as ‘the dragon lying in the midst of his rivers,’ and he essayed to swallow up Israel of old; but Israel was God’s son, and was rescued from his grasp. Again, we read that ‘Pharaoh went in with his chariots and his horsemen into the sea in pursuit of the people, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them, but the children of Israel went on dry land, in the midst of the sea’ (Ex. xv. 19). What was this but the typical symbolical likeness of what here also takes place in respect to the tribes in the wilderness? viz., that 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 ; but the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth (Rev. xii. 15, 16). The sea swallowed up the forces of the enemy (the dragon) in former times, but the earthquake swallows them up in the end ; *i.e.*, 'The earth helped the woman.' Both these divine methods of the deliverance of God's children are given us in this chapter. The man-child at the first is taken away from the dragon to God and His throne in heaven, having overcome the accuser in suffering and in death ; and the efforts of the serpent to destroy *the woman* are completely frustrated on the earth afterwards. In the last verse of this chapter, instead of 'I stood' it should be 'He stood on the sand of the sea' (R.V.), and thus properly opens chapter xiii., for it refers to the serpent or dragon. And the result of his being cast down from heaven to earth is that *one beast* is seen to rise up from the sea, and the other from the earth. Space prevents us from going farther with this outline.\*

In the next chapter on 'The History of the Beast,' we shall have to revert to the *letting or hindering power*, in relation to 'the man of sin,' of which St. Paul says : 'He who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way' (2 Thess. ii. 7).

\* In type also, Enoch was translated before the flood, whilst Noah was preserved in the flood.



## CHAPTERS XII., XIII.

## THE DRAGON'S FALL AND THE RESULTS.

This last prefatory outline opens the second book or fourth section of the Apocalypse, and chapters xii. and xiii. should be connected together, for the latter shows the results of Satan's downfall from heaven to earth. Observe, *the beast* is the product of the devil on earth, as *Babylon* is the product of the devil in the heavens, of which we shall have to speak afterwards. In both cases he deceives the world, but in opposite forms, and his angels are now cast down with him, as expressed also in the symbol, 'his tail draweth (σύρει) the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth' (R.V.).

In the last chapter we said that the reading should be, 'He stood on the sand of the sea,' instead of 'I stood on the sand of the sea,' and thus heading chapter xiii. 'He stood' refers to the dragon, and then *the beast* is at once seen to rise up out of the sea. This *beast* is described as having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten diadems, or crowns—his horns are crowned. The dragon also is described as having seven heads and ten horns, but his seven heads are crowned (xii. 3). One cannot fail here to observe the similarity as well as the diversity in the symbols. And what is it?

## THE SOURCE AND COURSE OF THE WORLD POWERS.

The sources whence the energies and courses of the world powers proceed (styled beasts—*θηρία*—in Daniel) are propelled by one behind the scenes, and that one was coincident with them from the first, and his seven heads are crowned to show that in each of the seven empires he was the potential

head operating ; the ten horns representing the final form of the empires.

Hence the seven heads coincide with the great dynasties of the world and their relations to the covenant people. They are afterwards spoken of as seven kings (xvii. 10), as will appear by-and-by—Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome—and this last empire rising from the abyss in its final state, embracing the area of all the empires that went before. These are the seven empires, the source of whose energies lay in the dragon. To this our Lord referred before Pilate when He said, ‘Thou couldst have no power at all against Me except it were given thee from above : therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin.’ That is, the authority (ἐξουσία) given to the *Powers* of the world was from God, therefore the one who delivered (ὁ παραδίδους) Me unto thee hath the greater sin, viz., of urging on the event by his own hands. For the Lord said, ‘This is your hour and the power of darkness,’ and ‘the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me.’ The same epithet is applied to Judas : ‘He that betrayed’ or delivered Him (ὁ παραδίδους), for he and Satan were one in this matter (John xxi. 20). And so it is found that the sin of Satan and the sin of the world reached a climax at the same time (see John xvi. 9-11). The sin of rejecting the Son of God out of His own world lies at the door of the devil and of the world (Jew and Gentile) from that hour, and is a very solemn consideration.

#### THE ELECT ANGELS AND THE EVIL ANGELS.

From the fact that Satan *draweth* (σέρει) the third part of the stars of heaven, we gather that the fall of angels,

now drawn down with him, affected but a third part of the angel host. For the stars and the angels are in Scripture connected together, sometimes in a heavenly and sometimes in an earthly connection. In Job the time is recalled 'when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.' On the other hand, there was 'the star of the God Remphan,' to which Stephen alludes (Acts vii. 43).\*

Now the angels are not a *race*, standing in federal headship as Adam is to us, but each stands in his own elevation, like the trees in a wood, otherwise all would be involved, in their fall, like mankind. Consequently we read of 'elect angels' and 'evil angels,' with their respective environments. So that the fall of some does not constitute the fall of all. Therefore there are 'the elect angels' that 'do His commandment, hearkening to (or on hearing, *Heb.*) the voice of His word.' Just as the evil angels or demons obey the voice of their prince.

From this it will be seen how tenacious must be the principalities and powers in the heavenly places and the world rulers of darkness (Eph. vi.) in maintaining their superior position in those places, and how dire must be the conflict when the time comes for their expulsion and dislodgment from those places. But the result is final. Let us look at it.

#### 'WAR IN HEAVEN.'

'And there was war in heaven.' 'Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his

\* On this subject the reader is referred to a valuable small pamphlet worth reading, 'The Star Worlds and their Destiny,' by R. J. Mahony. Dublin: Sealy, Bryers and Walker, Middle Abbey Street.

angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven,' etc. (Rev. xii. 7, 8). It is evident from this description that Satan holds on to the heavens as long as it is possible for him to do so; nor does he relinquish them till forced from them.

But so long as Satan holds the heavenly places iniquity works in a mystery. 'The mystery of iniquity doth already work,' saith the Apostle; that is, that Satan while there can transform himself into an 'angel of light,' and deceive the Church and the world by an appearance of religion, which so often is corrupted both in doctrine and practice. To this aspect of evil all the late Apostolic epistles bear witness. But when Satan is cast down from the heavens it is no longer a defaced Christianity working in the form of righteousness, but an open and avowed ignoring of God and of Christ that is found. 'Then shall that wicked one be *revealed*, etc., even him whose coming is often the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders,' etc. These are the things which are found in chapter xiii., after Satan and his angels are cast down from on high, or, as the Apostle puts it, *from the midst* (ἐκ μέσσου). And again St. John sees three unclean spirits like frogs proceed from the dragon, from the beast, and from the false prophet: '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 the great day of God Almighty' (xvi. 14).

#### THE LAWLESS ONE.

When that wicked one is revealed on the removal of Satan from the heavenly places, then all these things suc-

ceed ; viz., great wonders are done on earth below, and fire comes down from heaven in the sight of men (as Elias did), and they are deceived 'by those miracles which he (the false prophet) had power to do in the sight of the beast,' etc. (Rev. xiv. 13, 14). And so, with few exceptions, they worship *the beast*. 'All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him,' etc. (Rev. xii. 8). Our contention, therefore, is that those chapters run parallel with 2 Thess. ii., and the lines taken by the two Apostles are the same. And further, that the language itself confirms it, as we shall now see ; viz., that Satan who *holds on* to the heavens until he is taken out of the way (or from the midst), and then that wicked one is revealed ; or, in other words, *the beast* makes his appearance *on earth* ! And it shows how oblivious have been our conceptions of the character of the enemy and his devices, when this view of the matter has not been, we may say, at all considered. Yet it is a view of it in which one Scripture confirms another, and consequently not mere speculation nor imagination, like those views current on the subject.\*

‘HE WHO NOW LETTETH.’

We now give the translation as in the old version ; for the new version does not improve on it. ‘For the mystery of iniquity doth already work ; only he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that wicked one be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the bright-

\* (1) The Roman Empire is not *taken out of the way*, for the ten kings are the last form of it. (2) The Church is not meant, for the words used are masculine and neuter, and not feminine. (3) The Holy Ghost is not meant, for He then *comes* as the ‘latter rain’ (Joel. ii. 28-32).

ness of His coming' (2 Thess. ii. 7, 8). The old Anglo-Saxon word '*let*' is used for '*hinder*,' and we still say '*Let or hindrance*' in common language. But the equivalent of this word in Greek is not that which is here used. It means *to hold fast* (κατέχω), which could signify *to hinder* only in a very indirect way, as if one *holds fast* his own property he of course hinders another from taking possession of it. And to hold fast is the true sense of the word here. Just as it is in the first Epistle to the same Church, '*hold fast* (κατέχετε) that which is good.' The word occurs eighteen times in the New Testament, yet never means to hinder anyone or anything. Consequently, it means that Satan *holds fast* his place in the heavens until he be removed from the midst (ἐκ μέσου, 2 Thess. ii. 7), and then '*that wicked or lawless one, the beast*, is revealed on earth. But for further criticism on the text the reader is referred to the note below.\*

#### THE BEAST.

The exploits of the beast with the devil at his back when cast down, are given next. He is described as having seven heads and ten horns, and his horns crowned, because the dynastic activity of the revived empire in its final *denouement* is centred now in the ten kings, of which we

\* \* The word used always for *hinder* is *koluo* (κωλύω) a word followed by an accusative, as '*We hinder him*' and '*hinder him not*' (μὴ κωλύετε αὐτον). But here it is another and entirely different word, and is also a participle, both masculine and neuter, without any accusative following—το κατεχον and ὁ κατεχων. The former rendered '*what holdeth*' (R.V.), the latter *he that holdeth fast*. And this one who *holdeth on* or *holdeth fast* is taken from the midst (ἐκ μέσου): that is, from between heaven and earth, and when cast down to the earth has great wrath, and raises up the beast and false prophet to play the final rôle on the scene, as it is said. '*Then shall that wicked one be revealed,*' etc.—(See Wordsworth here on the participles.)

shall have to speak afterwards (chapter xvii.). The constituents of the former empires figure in his *personality*, the *leopard*, the *bear*, the *lion*, embracing the area of all the preceding empires to their utmost limits and influences. We are then told that the dragon gives him his power and his throne and great authority (ἐξουσίαν), and that one of his heads was wounded to death (*i.e.*, one of the seven imperial heads), ‘and his deadly wound was healed, and all the world wondered after the beast, and they worshipped the dragon who gave power (ἐξουσίαν) to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?’ (Rev. xiii. 3, 4). Language showing the dynastic element in the foreground. For whilst power and authority are at present given to the nations from God (Rom. xiii.), they pervert its use unto evil (even the Roman Empire turned its sword against the Son of God), until finally they adopt the beast as their chief, whose *authority* comes direct from the dragon. And this sums up *the final apostasy of power* on earth, which was originally given by ‘the God of heaven’ (Dan. ii.). The issues are very grave! And the *animus* of the beast is shown (verse 6) in ‘blasphemy against God, His name and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.’ Here we again see those who dwell in heaven, and over whom the heavens rejoice (Rev. xii. 12). These are the objects of blasphemy to the beast and his associates, viz., the heavenly saints and members of Christ rapt to heaven, as was before stated.

#### THE TRINITY OF EVIL.

The devil now succeeds in what he failed to effect in the *temptation*, viz., in putting his nominee over the kingdoms

of this world (Luke iv.), and bends the heart of the nations to worship himself and *the beast*, for such was his object with the Son of God in the temptation ! Observe how here he counterfeits the action and purposes of God in reference to Christ, travestying in this manner the great '*mystery of God*' ! For after the revival or resurrection of the imperial head 'which had the wound by the sword and did live, as is said ; then the dragon gives him his throne, his power and great authority.' Just as after our Lord's death and resurrection He announces that 'all power (*ἐξουσία*) in heaven and earth was given unto Him.' But the other beast that rises up as ally of the former, called afterwards 'the false prophet,' doeth great wonders, and deceiveth those that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast,' etc. To whom does he correspond but to the Holy Ghost, who wrought miracles and signs by the Apostles in order to bend the hearts of men to the Messiah ? Thus the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, this trinity of evil, counterfeit the action of God, and of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, as presented in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. And the deception will, with the generation to come, obtain a far larger following than the reality of God's power in Christ with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven obtained in His day. And it will progress until the fulfilment of our Lord's determinate words, 'Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out.' The process of these final events, in their details, forms the subject of the Book of Revelation. As to the number of the beast, and the mind that hath wisdom, we lay no claim to the solution of it. It will be revealed in due time.



But there have been different views as to the letting or hindering obstacle in reference to 'the man of sin,' in 2 Thess. ii., and we now mention them in a summary. But we must first admit that it was natural to think that whatever hindered the manifestation of this evil power must in itself be good. And it arose, as we believe, from misapprehension of what the Apostle actually did say in relation to the matter, as is pointed out above, and his actual teaching on the subject.

1. First, it is said that the Holy Ghost is the *letter*, and must be taken out of the way before 'the man of sin' is revealed. But the manifestation of the Spirit, which began in *Acts* according to the Joel prophecy, will again be poured out on Israel in the latter day. There will be 'the latter rain as well as the former rain.' How, then, can the Holy Spirit be taken out of the way?

2. Next, it is said that the Church is the hindrance referred to. But how could a Greek noun in the neuter, and given also in the masculine, refer to the Church, which always, when spoken of alone, is in the feminine? 'He who letteth' could not refer to a personage of the feminine gender.

3. Next, the Roman Empire: this was the hindrance in the view of the Fathers. But 'the little horn' and eighth head of the beast is the head centre and constituent of the revived empire in its ten-horned shape; and how can he be taken out of the way, as he is the beast himself in its final form?

4. The last is the Roman Catholic view, taken from the notes of Cardinal Mai's Greek Testament, with the approbation of Cardinal Cullen as follows: 'If a revolt from the

faith, or widespread apostasy of sovereigns from the faith, is to precede Antichrist, and to prepare the way for him, then it must be said that the Catholic faith, and its public profession, the reverence and submission of kings and kingdoms towards the holy Roman Church, is the obstacle which detains Antichrist and retards his approach.'

The reader will observe that all these views proceed on one assumption, that whatever delays the appearance of 'the man of sin' must be in itself good. But the foregoing investigation shows them to be, however natural, an entire misconception of the Apostolic teaching on this great subject, and are, besides, contradictory in themselves. For on this great subject a cloud of guesswork has been followed without any serious outlook.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

THE fourteenth chapter is that concerning *the first-fruits* and *the harvest*, where the same parties are brought before us as in chapter vii. In chapter vii. the 144,000 were sealed on their foreheads 'with the seal of the living God.' Here they are seen on Mount Sion with the Lamb, 'having his Father's name written in their foreheads,' showing them to be the same people, notwithstanding (as some urge) the absence of the *article* in the Greek, which is often omitted with numerals (*Winer*), for these were *numbered*. On the other hand, there is the great multitude which no man 'could number *from* all nations, etc., which came out of the great tribulation' (vii. 9), and which correspond to the wheat harvest here gathered in by 'the Son of man' in the end.

From which we gather that one of these parties is trans-

lated to heaven, like Elijah, without death ; whilst the other party is left in testimony, like Elisha, on earth, and ends that testimony in suffering and death. Both these parties are seen afterwards ‘before the throne on the sea of glass mingled with fire,’ denoting the victory obtained over the Beast, and also their sufferings unto death, ‘for his name sake.’ And its twofold aspect is chanted afterwards in ‘the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb’ (xv. 2, 3) ; the song of Moses (Ex. xv.) referring to the destruction of the enemy by the heaven-sent judgments ; the song of the Lamb referring to *the victory of the vanquished*, who ‘loved not their lives unto the death.’ The first note of the songs is given in xv. 2, 3, and ‘Mount Sion,’ here, we take in a heavenly sense as it is in Heb. xii. 22—‘Ye are come to Mount Sion,’ etc.

THE 144,000 AND THE GREAT MULTITUDE, WHO ARE THEY?

In the crisis and looked at prophetically, the 144,000 form a contingent of the twelve tribes of Israel marked off for preservation and translation, as we understand ; they belong to the class spoken of in Daniel xii. 12 : ‘Blessed is he that *waiteth* and *cometh* unto the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.’ Blessedness is there pronounced on those remaining and waiting (alive) to the end of a given period, when they will be translated or taken to heaven, as Elijah was. Elijah testified against Ahab and Jezebel, as these do against the Beast. On the other hand, Daniel was not to have a lesser blessedness, but was to ‘stand in his lot at the end of the days.’ And so it is found here in respect to those left in testimony who suffer unto death. ‘Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord *from henceforth* (ἀπ’ἀρτι),

yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, for their works follow with them' (verse 13, R.V.).

In Daniel it is said: 'Blessed is he that waiteth' (*ὑπομένων*, LXX.), just as the Thessalonians were to wait (*ἀναμένειν*) for His Son from heaven (1 Thess. 1-10). In both cases they are blessed (see John xxi. 18-22).

But why is it said *from henceforth*? Because those in testimony at the time are living in expectation of the 'restoration of the kingdom to Israel,' like the thief on the cross, and the disciples of our Lord, and the early Church in the Acts of the Apostles. But they have now a higher blessedness allotted to them than what entered into their faith and expectations—which is seen very conspicuously in the case of the thief on the cross.

#### THE THIEF ON THE CROSS.

The thief on the cross in his faith and hope was a sample of those spoken of in this chapter (Rev. xiv.). He said: 'Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom'—wondrous faith! He believed that the one dying by his side as a malefactor was the very Messiah promised in the prophets, who was to establish the kingdom when 'the will of God will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven.' This was divine Messianic faith in Jesus. But the Lord does not let him wait till that day of which he speaks, but says to him, 'To-day (*σήμερον*) shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.' Now *Paradise*, as St. Paul tells us, is *the third heavens* (2 Cor. xii. 2-4). The thief did not look for this exaltation, but he got it; the Lord rewarded his faith far beyond his own expectations. The word *to-day* does not mean the twenty-four hours in which the Lord was speaking;

but *to-day* in contrast to the time of the future kingdom for which the thief was straining—a meaning of the word very frequent in such connections. It is a generic term to express the present as distinct from past or future time; as, for instance, *to-day* (σήμερον), ‘if ye hear His voice, harden not your hearts.’ No one would think of limiting the term in such cases. And as used here, consequently, it means *now*, or *at present*. That is, in contrast to the future time of the Messianic kingdom for which he looked, the thief was to be now with the Lord Himself in Paradise. Oh, how blessed! And the principle of this was entirely the same in reference to the disciples at the first and the Pentecostal saints in the Acts of the Apostles. They were all looking for the Messianic kingdom and ‘the glory of the Lord to be revealed when all flesh would see it together.’ But they afterwards develop into higher things under St. Paul, who was himself caught up into Paradise, and was the chosen vessel of God to unfold the mystery of God and of Christ and the heavenly calling. Such is the reason, as we take it, that the term *from henceforth* (ἀπάρτι) is pointedly brought in here. In chapters vii. and xiv. the two parties seem to be witnesses against the last throes of the woman and against the negation of all Christianity by the Beast, after that Satan is cast down from heaven—and they each belong to the people of Israel, ‘the great multitude’ referring especially to *the dispersion* (διασπαρὰ) with ‘a mixed multitude’ of Gentile proselytes following, as it was in the Exodus from Egypt (Ex. xii. 38).

## SECTION V.

## CHAPTERS XV. 5 ; XIX. 11.

## THE OPENING IN THE HEAVENS.

THIS Section begins with a renewed opening in the heavens. The terms of it are similar to those of chapter xi. 19, where 'the Temple of God was opened in heaven,' etc. And here 'the Temple of the Tabernacle of testimony in heaven is opened,' etc. In the former is seen 'the ark of the covenant, and also lightnings and thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.' And, in the latter, 'the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven last plagues.' These seven plagues follow upon the seven vials, and fill up the wrath of God on all those subjects which had previously been judged in the third part under the trumpets.

But the seven angels with the vials had, as it were, their action stayed and interrupted until the parenthetical and prophetic descriptions given of the dislodgment of the *devil* from the heavens, and consequent appearance of the great *beasts* from the sea and from the earth, and also of the *first-fruits* and the *harvest* (xii.-xiv.) take place. The action of the seven angels is deferred until the several parties are delineated and their end anticipated. So that we may say those chapters form a kind of parenthesis between the trumpet judgments and the vial judgments, in order to show out afterwards the righteousness of God, both in 'mercy and judgment,' respecting each of the parties in the scene.

## THE SEVEN VIALS.

The seven vials are found to be an expansion in detail of the sixth seal, as the seven trumpets were of the fifth seal. For this there are two reasons. One is that the sealed book—the book of the inheritance, given from the right hand of Him who sat on the throne to the Lamb *at His right hand*—contained and should contain all that was afterwards enlarged upon in the Apocalypse. So that all the Apocalyptic visions, from the sixth chapter on, are but detailed narratives of the contents of the seven sealed books which the Lamb opens. The other reason is that the terms of the outline in chapter vi. of the fifth and sixth seals are found to have such close correspondence with the trumpets and vials that the enlargement of them in the sequel becomes almost self-evident.

In the sixth seal, for instance, when it is opened, 'the stars are seen to fall from heaven to the earth, the heavens depart as a scroll, and every mountain and island are moved out of their places. The sun becomes black, and the moon as blood' (Rev. vi.). All these are reproduced, expanded, and enlarged upon in the seven vials—'The sun scorches men with fire, the kingdom of the beast is full of darkness, and the earthquake so great that there was not such since men were on the earth, so mighty and so great, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found' (xvi. 17, 20). What are all these but the sixth seal expanded and drawn out? Thus there is an expansion in chapter xvi. of what was contained in chapter vi., and the nature of the inflictions is similar to those on Egypt of old. Nothing can be plainer than the tracing.

## THE TRUMPETS AND VIALS COMPARED.

Their similarity appears in the following :

The first angel's vial brings 'a noisome and grievous sore upon the men who had the mark of the beast,' etc. So in Egypt the dust which Moses threw up 'became a boil breaking forth upon man and upon beast throughout all the land of Egypt' (Ex. ix. 10). And the second angel poured out his vial on the sea, and it becomes as 'the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea;' and the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of water, and they became blood; which again corresponds to Egypt, for 'Moses and Aaron lifted up the rod and smote the waters, and they became blood.'

When we particularize, it is found that the vials are the filling up of the judicial wrath of God on what had previously been affected in a third part under the trumpets, with a view unto repentance.

When the second angel sounded his trumpet, as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and the sea became blood, and the third part of the creatures in the sea died, and the third part of the ships were destroyed (viii. 7, 8); and when the second vial is poured out on the sea, 'it became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea' (xvi. 3).

When the third angel sounded his trumpet, 'there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell on the third part of the rivers and fountains of waters. The star is called Wormwood, etc., and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter' (viii. 10, 11). And when the third vial is poured out on the rivers and



fountains of waters, they become blood ; and it is added : 'Thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy ; for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets,' and 'Thou art righteous, O Lord, who hast judged thus' (xvi. 4, 7) —language expressing the full and dire nature of the vial judgments.

When the fourth angel sounds his trumpet, 'the third part of the sun is smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars,' etc. (viii. 12). And when the fourth vial is poured out, 'it is upon the sun, and power was given him to scorch men with fire, etc., and men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God who had power over these plagues, and they repented not to give Him glory' (xvi. 8, 9).

When the fifth angel sounded his trumpet, 'the bottomless pit was opened, and smoke came out of the pit, and the sun and air were darkened ; and there came forth locusts with stings as scorpions,' etc. (ix. 1-3).

And when the fifth angel poured out his vial, it is upon the throne of the beast, and his kingdom is full of darkness, 'and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds' (xvi. 10, 11).

When the sixth angel sounded his trumpet, 'the four angels are loosed which were bound in the great river Euphrates, prepared at the hour and day and month and year to slay the third part of men' (viii. 14, 15).

And when the sixth vial is poured out, it is upon the great river Euphrates, and the waters thereof were dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And with this also three unclean spirits like frogs are seen

to come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, etc. 'They are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty' (xvi. 13, 14).

#### FINAL ISSUES.

When the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, there are 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,' etc. (xi. 15-18).

The prophet thereupon draws out in a general outline the effects of this event down to the end, even to the time of the great white throne when the dead are judged (chapter xx.).

And when the seventh vial is poured out there came 'a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, saying, It is done' (*γέγονεν*); and thus a realization is made of what comes under the sixth seal, with the words added, *it is done*, and the final infliction of 'the wrath of the Lamb' is presented preliminary to His own personal appearance in chapter xix.—that is, a detailed notice is given of what was pictured at the first under the sixth seal. There is 'a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great, 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, and every island fled away and the mountains were not found, 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 thereof was exceeding great' (xvi. 18-21).

Now the solemnity of these judgments under the trumpets and under the vials cannot be estimated or measured, yet they are after all but the *avant coureurs*, or precursors, to our Lord's own personal appearance as King of kings and Lord of lords in chapter xix. These fulfil in their expansion all that was summarized under the fifth and sixth seals, and the opening of the temple in heaven. But the seventh seal has not come on yet, and, as we apprehend, does not come until the next *opening of the heavens* (xix. 11), defined above as belonging to the next section. Of this we shall have to speak afterwards. Meantime, we implore the reader to weigh well what has been said, and consider the structure and harmony of this wondrous book, and pray for the Lord's blessing as promised.

Very weighty things have to come before us yet in *the finale*. But previously, and to prepare for it, a full description is next given us of 'the beast' and of 'the woman'—the two great mysteries that lie over against 'the mystery of God' and 'the mystery of Christ' (xvii., xviii.).

Concerning these we shall have to speak more particularly in the next chapter, the Lord helping us. But of this one is more and more persuaded, that the pivot on which the whole book turns—and this pivot is in the centre of it—is, the presence of Satan in the heavenlies and his presence on earth afterwards. And it is from not seeing this that mountains of books have laboured on the Apocalypse, only to bring forth mice, as Æsop says in the 'Fables.'

## CHAPTERS XVII., XVIII.

It is well here to remind the reader that we are examining the Apocalypse in the light of our Lord's determinate sentence, 'Now is the judgment (*crisis*) of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out' (John xii. 31). The sentence was prophetic, anticipating the consummate results of His death and resurrection. This is what is meant by *crisis*, as was stated at the first; and the whole book of Revelation is the commentary on it; for then the *crisis* sets in and runs on from chap. iv. to the end, 'because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth' (Rom. ix. 28).

## THE TWO MYSTERIES.

The next thing to be noticed is that in these chapters there is not one mystery only spoken of, but two mysteries. When the angel says, 'I will tell thee the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carrieth her,' the reader might think that the *woman and the beast* formed but one mystery—no! the repetition of the article in the original proves that two are spoken of, and consequently the distinct history of both parties is depicted accordingly by the angel to the prophet.

## THE MYSTERY OF THE WOMAN.

'The mystery of the woman'—*the woman* is the product of the devil in heaven, as 'the mystery of *the beast*' is the product of the devil on earth. While the devil retains and holds on to the heavenly places, as aforesaid, he is the source of all false religion in the world and of every false way, and thence as an *angel of light* deceives the world. In

nothing is this more conspicuous than in the corruption and metamorphosis of Christianity itself. So much so that the Apostle when he sees the woman mounted on the beast and clothed in gorgeous array, and 'drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus, he wondered with great astonishment' (*θαῦμα μέγα*).

To think that that Church, as a corporate witness on earth, and over which the Apostle had watched 'in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,' could become on earth so metamorphosed in its history as to answer to the picture of it given by the angel, amazed him beyond measure ; yet so it was ! That she who was at the first the expression of 'the mystery of Christ' (Eph. iii., iv.) should become 'the mystery of the woman and mother of harlots' in her long history, astonished him. Her picture, which was according to the design of Christ at the first, and according to the design of the devil at the last, was utterly amazing to him ! Like in kind to the Jewish history.

#### THE MYSTERY OF THE BEAST.

As *the woman* was the product of the devil in heaven, and *the beast* the product of the devil on earth, their long history now comes to a crisis. The woman had been mounted on the beast, and the beast carried her. But at the end in *crisis* the beast throws her off, tears her flesh, and burns her with fire. In this manner he and his ten kings deal with her ; 'for God hath put in their hearts to do His mind, and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast until the words of God should be accomplished' (Rev. xvii. 17, R.V.). After that the beast, as we have seen, works in his own field under the dragon, and

'blasphemes God and His tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven' (xiii. 6). Having centred in himself the prerogative of all power and worship, he blasphemes God openly and avowedly ; and this forms the climax of governmental or dynastic revolt upon earth. In proof of this the reader need only consult Dan. vii. and Rev. xiii. But a brief outline of the history must now be given.

#### THE KING'S VISION.

It was said to Nebuchadnezzar, the head of the kings of the earth at the time, 'The God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength and glory, and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and fowls of heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all' (Dan. ii. 37, 38). Now it is observable that the terms of this commission and the dominion were similar to those of Adam at the first when placed under God in government (Gen. i.) and the dominion of the Son of Man at the last (Psa. viii. ; Heb. ii.). This power was the direct gift of God—'Once have I heard, yea, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God'—and so consequently 'The powers that be are ordained of God,' as St. Paul teaches.

But in prophecy these powers degenerate as they go along. The head is *gold*, the arms and breast *silver*, belly and thighs *brass*, legs of *iron*, feet part of *iron*, part of *clay*. Such is the image in the king's vision. It is splendid ! But 'a stone cut out without hands' falls on it and crushes the whole image to powder, and fills its place in Divine government afterwards (Dan. ii.). It was under the dynastic judgment of this image or the Roman power that our Lord

was crucified; the power fell on Him as on a rival. And to it He refers when He says, 'The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner, and whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder' (Matt. xxi. 42-44). The Roman power fell on Him and was broken; but when He falls on the whole *image* it will be with crushing and extended judgment; as is also plainly told in the second Psalm. And the crash begins on the feet and toes, which are part of iron and part of clay—*i.e.*, the democratic or 'constitutional' form of government as it is called. Government by 'the masses' is destined to be the last and shortest-lived of all the forms of government pictured in the image.

#### THE PROPHET'S VISION OF THE SAME POWERS.

But the prophet Daniel views the same *Powers* as *beasts*, wild beasts (*θηρία*), the designation also by which St. John pictures the last king who heads up those that went before, as well as the kingdom or empire of which he is now the chief (Dan. vii.; Rev. xvii.). 'The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition'\*—and then St. John adds, '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; and the beast (*θηρίον*) that was, and

\* The striking sentence—'The Beast that thou sawest was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit,' etc. (Rev. xvii. 8). What is the force of the term 'is not'? It means that the imperial power would be for a period subject to '*the woman*,' mounted on it and guiding it—that is, the false world—Church dominating the world-power, during which the governmental authority proper to itself was, as it were, in abeyance.

is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.' This term '*is of the seven*' (καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ ἑστί) means, that he is the outcome of the seven, and is the climax and sum of all that went before, and therefore styled 'the eighth.' On this subject Dean Alford has the following judicious note: 'If I understand them (the five fallen empires) the forms of government, adopted and laid down on occasions, I can give no account of the verb *fallen* (ἔπεσαν). But if I understand them as forms of empire, one after another heading the anti-Christian, anti-religious secular power, violently overthrown and done away with, then I have this verb in its appropriate sense—πιπτω, *pipto*\*—is used for the violent overthrow of kings and kingdoms. And this very beast thus described is the one who with his ten kings measures his strength against the Lord Himself and His saints, in chapter xix. He sums up the apostasy and revolt of all governmental authority on earth—so that 'power' originally given of God to the nations ends, according to Daniel and John, in open revolt against God and Christ, under the energy of the devil now cast down on earth—and thus marks the final apostasy of power, as the woman did that of religion. Thus the apostasy of power in the hands of nations is a distinct thing in itself, and ends in judgment on the powers; just as the apostasy of religion in the hands of professed Christians winds up in the judgment of Babylon.

\* Dean Alford notes the *five* kings as they are above symbolized in chapter xiii.—*Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece*; with the whole power of the previous empires, now concentrated in the Beast. The Beast signifies the empire itself again revived, and is the head of it—as Louis XIV. and Napoleon *le Grand* used to say, '*Et moi je suis l'Empire.*'



## SECTION VI.

## CHAPTERS XIX. 11—XX. 15.

WE now come to the Sixth Section, in which the heavens open and the Lord Himself appears. But first it is requisite to notice the loud hallelujahs in heaven on the fall of Babylon. There are no less than *four* hallelujahs in the first six verses of Rev. xix., and these are from voices of a *great multitude* (ὄχλου πολλοῦ) in heaven—a Greek term not applied to angels, and must here apply to the number of the saved ones already above, who had witnessed a good confession whilst the star of ‘the woman’ was in the ascendant, and the devil was in the heavens. Hence, the hallelujahs are described as *in heaven*, and all around the throne rejoice over her fall. In fact, the same parties are seen as in chapter iv.

## THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB.

The marriage of the Lamb has now arrived, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteous judgments (τὰ δικαιώματα) of the saints (xix. 8). This term is not *the righteousness*, as in A.V., nor the *righteous acts*, as in R.V.; but the *righteous judgments* of the saints, as the same word is rendered in xv. 4: ‘Because Thy *judgments* are made manifest.’ The term in both these passages refers to the active righteous judgments of God which go forth (and is frequent in LXX.).

For the time has now come for the manifested judgments in righteousness of the Lord and the saints. As St. Paul says : ' Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world ? ' ( 1 Cor. vi. 2 ). And white is the symbolic colour when judgment is in the front, as it contrasts with the darkness and blackness of the world, and expresses the judicial purity of the throne, and of those who act from it. Hence, the armies in heaven who follow the Lord are clothed in fine linen *white and clean*, and they ride on *white* horses. And afterwards we read of the great *white* throne and the judgment of the wicked dead (xx. 11). So that *white* is the symbol of righteous judgment, whether in providence or in person ; and here contrasts with all that which from its impurity becomes the subject of judgment. Just as at the first also, when the Lord entered on the government of the Churches, ' His head and His hair were *white* like wool, as *white* as snow,' etc. (Rev. i.). In this form likewise He appeared in the transfiguration, with garments white as snow ; for the transfiguration expressed in prophetic form the kingdom of the Messiah in power and majesty (2 Peter i.).

#### THE BRIDE MADE READY.

Why was not the bride of the Lamb made ready previously ? For we saw that the saints of the present dispensation—that is, of the Gospel under St. Paul (to whom a dispensation of the Gospel was committed, 1 Cor. ix. 17)—were taken up to heaven on or before Satan's expulsion from heaven ; and they rejoice at his overthrow as above seen in chapter xii. Why, then, was the Bride not ready

at that time? Because those who were to be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb were not yet added on.\*

But who are those of whom it is said, 'Blessed are they that have been called (*κεκλημενοι*) to the marriage supper of the Lamb'? They now belong to the band who follow the Lord to the great battle, with the rest of the saints, for 'they that are with Him are called and chosen and faithful' (Rev. xvii. 14)—(*κλητοι και εκλεκτοι και πιστοι*) terms used by St. Paul and St. Peter in the highest sense. But these give 'the testimony of Jesus' against the Beast, after that Satan and his host are cast down on the earth—'for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy'—and they belong to the multitude of Israel, with Gentiles also, of whom we spoke on chapters xiv., xv. They are those directly contemplated in the Epistles of Peter and James, who come up in the end to 'the day of God' (2 Pet. iii. 12). These all correspond to those mentioned as disciples in the Acts of the Apostles—both Jews and Gentiles who lived in the hope of the coming kingdom. And as those disciples at that time developed afterwards into heavenly relations under St. Paul, so these also now develop into heavenly relations, at the time of 'the supper of the Lamb.' And this is what we understand to be meant by the words, 'And His wife hath made herself ready.' They come under the head of 'the spirits of the just perfected,' as was said. Obs.—Enoch was taken up before the judgment of the flood, and therein the Gentile Church is typified; and in

\* The hortatory addresses in this book are of general character, and apply to all the people of God: 'Blessed is he that readeth,' etc.; 'Blessed is he that watcheth,' etc.; and 'Blessed are the dead,' etc.; and 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection,' etc.

Elijah, taken up during the predominance of the apostate power, we can see the Jewish section (so to speak) typified. In this way both these types are satisfied. But space would fail us to enter into details. We can only give the bare outlines. Besides, the wise man said : ' All things are double—one against the other, and He hath made nothing incomplete ' (Ecclus. xlii. 24). They are not merely ' guests ' invited to the supper, but formulate into the Bride at the time specified.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEVENTH SEAL.

To simplify the remaining chapters of the book, the reader is called on to observe that the three great stages in the Divine procedure are distinctly marked in the three following chapters (xix., xx., xxi.), and they fulfil the seventh seal. (1) In chapter xix. is presented the executive active judgment on the kings of the earth and the living nations by Him who rides upon the white horse, with the armies from heaven following Him, and the whole action follows that of Psa. ii.

(2) In chapter xx. the thrones are set, and the formal sessional reign of the Lord with the saints established. ' For He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death ' (1 Cor. xv. 25, 26), and this is precisely what comes before us up to the end of the chapter. (3) But in chapter xxi. comes on the blessed and peaceful and new state of things consequent on the finishing up of the judgments going before—both the active executive judgment on ' the quick ' in chapter xix. and the sessional judgment of the thrones and of the dead in chapter xx.

These three stages of Divine procedure we have to consider separately, and will do so as briefly as possible; the first two of which belong to our present section. When these three stages in the final action of the Lord are clearly grasped and understood, the next thing to be noticed is the *unknown intervals*. There is an unknown interval between the active judgment on the ten kings and their armies in chapter xix. and the judgment of the thrones in chapter xx.; and another unknown interval between the judgment of the dead in chapter xx. and the new heavens and new earth in chapter xxi.

That is, between chapters xix. and xx., and again between xx. and xxi., there are intervals, and what those intervals are no one living can tell. They allow for certain events to occur which are recorded in Old Testament prophecy, but what the duration of them is no one living can tell. However, the heavens now open, and the Lord Himself comes out in final judgment on quick and dead—the quick at the first, the dead at the last.

#### THE TEN KINGS AND THEIR ARMIES.

The ten kings and their armies symbolise the last form of dynastic power and government on earth, and their fall is the fall of human-satanic force, and the overthrow and the downfall of military monarchy on earth follow.\*

Democracy, socialism, and anarchy throw the world at last into the arms of military monarchy, the former styled the *miry clay* and the latter *the iron* which form the feet of Daniel's image (Dan. ii.).

\* At least on the *prophetic earth* or sphere of government embraced by the four empires of Gentile dominion.

These now having destroyed 'the woman' and her following, nothing stands before them on the earth. And 'all the world wonders' after him and says, 'who is like unto the Beast, and who is able to make war with him?' We know that these ten kings and the Beast are those spoken of in Daniel—the Beast here corresponding to 'the little horn' foretold by the prophet. And they are urged to their work by 'the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty' (Rev. xvi. 14). In fact, the second Psalm gives a full commentary on the whole proceeding, and so also does Psa. cx., and to these Psalms the reader is referred.\* But the time has now come for the Beast and his kings to be consumed by the sword of His mouth, and by the brightness of the appearing of Him who is called 'the *Word of God*, the *King of kings*, and the *Lord of lords*'—titles which belong to Him in relation to the *creation* itself and also His headship over 'all principality and power' in heaven and on earth. For these are 'the glories (δόξαι) that should follow,' of which St. Peter tells us (1 Pet. i. 11). And the Lord has many glories referred to above, as, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David; and these glories are now taken up and entered on by Him.

\* 'The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand till I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet,' which refers to the time when they will be crushed and broken. It is often quoted in the New Testament. But the commentators give the verse an opposite meaning, viz., that by the Gospel the Lord is gradually subduing His enemies until the world itself be converted. If it were a gradual result of anything it would be not an aorist but a present subjunctive. But 'till I put,' etc. (ἕως ἂν θῶ), is an aorist referring to a point of time. And the Lord is from henceforth expecting till that point of time comes (Heb. x. 13). Then judgment sets in, as the psalm itself explains.

## THRONES OF GLORY AND OF JUDGMENT.

In chapter xx. the first thing seen is an angel with a great chain in his hand to bind Satan and cast him into the abyss, or bottomless pit ; the chain showing in symbol the personality of Satan, described also as the devil and old serpent ; under which designations he deceived the whole world. And then the thrones are seen with all the saints upon them, and noted as 'This is the first resurrection !' But, as was said above (chapter iv.), the throne was not set in heaven till Satan was cast down from thence to earth ; so here also the thrones are not set on earth till Satan is cast from the earth into the abyss. The principle of which is very simple. Two superior and opposite powers could not be present alike on the same plane : one must give way to the other. Hence Satan must be dethroned from the heavens at the first and dethroned from the earth at the last, ere the Divine thrones are set in heaven (chapter iv.) or afterwards on earth. For the Psalmist says : 'Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with Thee, which frameth mischief by a law ?' (Psa. xciv. 20). Of course in symbol *thrones express kingly power and government, with a central authority*. And as 'the saints shall judge the world,' they are here represented as living and reigning with Christ a thousand years ; from which term the period is called *millennial*. But what may be the duration of this symbolic period we know not. We do know that the Lord must 'reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet ; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death' (1 Cor. xv. 25, 26). And that is precisely what we get in this chapter. Death and all its belongings are swallowed up after the judgment

of the great white throne. Death was the first enemy to come in and is the last to go out. 'And there shall be no more death' (Rev. xxi. 4). Amen.

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## SECTION VII.

### CHAPTERS XXI. 1.—XXII. 10.

#### THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH.

THE governmental session of the thrones in the last chapter effects that process of regeneration to which our Lord refers thus: 'Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Matt. xix. 28).

And it has been well and pithily said, 'That at present righteousness *suffers*; in the millennium righteousness *reigns*; in the new heavens and new earth *righteousness dwells*.' 'The day of God,' we are told, 'is as a thousand years,' and, like every other day, has a morning and an evening. In the morning of that day the thrones of judgment are set; in the evening of that day death and all its belongings are abolished. And afterwards St. John says: 'I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away,' etc. Now, this day is the eighth day, or the day after the close of *the old creation* over which death reigned from the beginning; for the seven days belonging to it had already run out.

But in another aspect it is the first day, or the com-



mencing day of the *new creation*, as it is said : 'Behold, I make all things new . . . and I saw a new heaven and a new earth,' etc. This whole process, therefore, denotes '*the regeneration*,' in a worldwide sense, of which our Lord speaks in the foregoing passage.

#### THE NEW JERUSALEM.

The judicial form of the seventh seal having run out in chapters xix., xx., the holy city, the Salem, the city of peace, now comes down from heaven : 'And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, etc. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new' (xxi. 1-5). Thus the morning cometh after the night. It is post-millennial.

But it is observable that as 'one of the seven angels which had the seven vials' carried away St. John in spirit into the wilderness to behold 'the woman, mystery, Babylon' (xvii. 1); so here, also, 'one of the seven angels which had the seven vials' carries him away in spirit to a great and high mountain to behold 'the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious,' etc. The same agency is employed to show the Apostle the city which represents the climax of wickedness and corruption on the one hand, and the city which represents the climax of light and blessing on the other. For these contrast one with the other in antagonistic parallels—one city the product of Satan in heavenly places, the other city the offspring of the *God of heaven*. Then the wall of the city lying four-

square has twelve gates with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel written thereon, and twelve foundations, 'and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.' In the description given after this, the Apostle exhibits all the most costly things known to man as adorning this wondrous city, with a view to convey to human conception the heavenly beauty and glory of that city 'whose builder and maker is God ;' for without such imagery no conception of it to the human mind could be formed.

#### ST. PAUL.

And this glorious city is styled *the Bride, the Lamb's wife*. The angel says, 'Come hither, I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife' (xxi. 9). And the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb are at the foundations; for the Church is 'built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone' (Eph. ii. 20). The above designation, as we saw, was given her immediately on the hallelujahs over the fall of Babylon (xix.).

But why is St. Paul's name omitted from the foundations? This is an important question. Because the Bride in this aspect is presented in her Apocalyptic official glory like the Lord Himself. For she takes up with Him all the glories which belong to Him as Son of Man, Son of Abraham, Son of David, and that also in which His headship of creation is manifested. In all these glories the heavenly Church or Bride of the Lamb shares. 'When Christ who is our life shall appear, or be manifested (*φανερωθῇ*), then shall ye also appear or be manifested (*φανερωθῆσεσθε*) with Him in glory' (Col. iii.). And this manifestation of 'the Lord of Glory' is what the Apocalypse presents, forasmuch as it is

an Apocalypse. And the reason why the Bride shares in common with Him all these glories is because she is His body—‘the Church which is His body,’ and of which He is the Head. There is nothing greater than these in manifested power and glory and majesty.

But those glories thus manifested are connected with creation and the promises made to the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, all of which the twelve tribes were to inherit and realize on earth. But the ideal and centre of it lies in the heavenly city with the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb as its shrine (*ναός*, xxi. 22). Hence the twelve gates have written on them the names of the twelve Tribes of Israel, with the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, corresponding at the foundations. But the name of St. Paul is omitted.

#### THE SON OF GOD.

But all these glories referred to have their value from the person of Him who heads them—the Son of God. But the special glory belonging to the Son of God Himself is not a revealed glory, hence it is not seen in the Apocalypse. The reader can study the nature of it in our Lord’s prayer on the eve of His departure from this world, in that most wonderful of all chapters, John xvii.

And St. Paul was raised up to unfold ‘the mystery hid in God from the foundation of the world,’ and communicate in a doctrinal way the special relations belonging to Christ and His Church in the glory of the Father (Eph. i. 3).

This wonderful revelation, and of which the Gentiles also were to be partakers, the Apostle calls ‘my Gospel,’ and which Gospel he goes up afterwards to communicate to the Apostles at Jerusalem (Gal. ii.). He was chosen out-

side the circle of the twelve for another purpose of God altogether—‘one born out of due time’—and tells us that ‘a dispensation (*οἰκονομία*) of the Gospel is committed unto me’ (1 Cor. ix. 17). And though this expression has often an active sense, meaning a *stewardship*, here it has a passive sense, referring to an *administrative arrangement* on the part of God Himself—as it is said, ‘That in the *dispensation* of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ,’ etc. (Eph. i. 10). Again, ‘According to the *dispensation* of God which is given me for you,’ etc. (Col. i. 25). And so Cremer, in his *Lexicon*, very properly says of the word in these connections: ‘It is the Divine purpose which here is said to be administered’ (p. 451); the Apostle Paul, therefore, being a chosen vessel in which was deposited this Divine purpose in God (Eph. i. 11), besides that which appears in the Apocalypse, it is to us a sufficient reason for the omission of his name in the Apocalyptic city.

#### THE SAVED NATIONS.

Of the city it is said, ‘And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour unto it, etc.’; ‘and they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it’ (xxi. 24, 26).

The distinction is here unmistakably marked between the city itself and the saved nations, corresponding to what has been said above—a difficulty to those who think that in the final state everything merges in the Church—for these two chapters are post-millennial, and relate to the final state of things.

Dean Alford, with his usual candour, and in a very interesting way, presents this difficulty in his notes on the Revelation, and says : ‘ If, then, the kings of the earth, and the nations, bring their glory and their treasures into her, and if none shall ever enter into her that is not written in the book of life, it follows that these kings, and those nations, are written in the book of life. And so perhaps some light may be thrown on one of the darkest mysteries of redemption. There may be—I say it with all diffidence—those who have been saved by Christ without ever forming a part of his visible organized Church.’

The difficulty is natural, for as the salvation and the ground of the salvation are common to all the saved, how then, it is asked, can there be these broad distinctions in the final state? It is true that the ground and foundation of the salvation is common to all that ever have been or ever shall be saved. But God having Himself laid this foundation, can erect upon it any purpose that He pleases ‘after the counsel of His own will ;’ just as an architect who lays down the foundation of a large building can erect upon it different structures according to his own designs.

Then the question is : Has God revealed anything of this kind with respect to His own purposes and designs? Yes, certainly. We find the Jews and the Gentiles as nations, and the very creation itself in so many Scriptures brought under the power of redemption. Both the Old and New Testaments clearly reveal it (see Rom. viii. and xi.). And to the paternity of God in this respect St. Paul refers : ‘ For this cause I bow my knees to the Father, from whom *every family* in heaven and earth is named,’ etc. (Eph. iii. 14, 15,

R.V.), and winds up with the special belongings and glory of the Church in the end of the same chapter.

#### THE FALL OF ANGELS.

If we believe in a 'new heaven and a new earth,' as St. Peter says, and then remember the words of St. Paul, 'There are celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial; that the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another,' we need not puzzle ourselves as to how these things can be. But if so, it is clear that the celestial is above the terrestrial. Now, as angels fell in the heavens, the glory of their state is taken up by the Church in the new heavens; for Christ with His Church is raised above all principality and power (Eph. i.). Man also fell upon the earth, and the terrestrial glory belongs to Christ, as the second Adam, and a permanent and fixed state of terrestrial glory is consequently in store for the Jewish and Gentile nations in the final state; and this is what comes out in these chapters in the simplest and fullest way.

#### THE CLIMAX.

Death and all the antagonistic powers and forces being now extinguished, God takes His place in the front with the Lamb—or the Son in humanity, as the material link between God and the universe. And this is what is meant by St. Paul: 'Then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him that put all things under Him,' etc. And the Lamb will also be the *administrative* as well as the *material* link between God and His restored creation. For God is a Spirit,

and hence the necessity for the incarnation of the Son of God, who, having accomplished redemption and brought all enemies under, becomes the ordained channel of connection for ever between God and the universe in a new condition, just as these last chapters unfold.

The term *subject* (υποτάσσω) refers to *arrangement*, and such will necessarily be the Divine arrangement in the fixed eternal state of manifested glory. The Lord Christ will ever remain as 'the Head of all principality and power,' but with God as centre in a universe no longer in discord but in harmony (Rom. viii. 19-22), thus fulfilling the great purposes of God 'after the counsels of His own will.'

#### OPPOSITE PARALLELS.

The following opposite parallels present the unity of revelation in a singularly remarkable way, showing the correspondence between the first chapters of Genesis and the last chapters of the Apocalypse. There are seven steps in each series :

#### *Genesis.*

#### *Apocalypse.*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Satan enters on the scene.   | 1. Satan bound.  |
| 2. Sin follows.   | 2. Sin restrained and finally ended.   |
| 3. Death as a consequence.  | 3. No more death.  |
| 4. The curse rests on creation.   | 4. No more curse.  |
| 5. Expulsion from Paradise.   | 5. Paradise restored.  |
| 6. Exclusion from the tree of life.   | 6. The tree of life in the midst.  |
| 7. Shut off from the face and presence of God—<br>'From Thy face shall I be hid' (Gen. iv. 14). | 7. 'They shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads' (Rev. xxii. 4). |

These unified parallels, the three Apostles, as already mentioned confirm : St. Peter in his second Epistle (iii. 7-14); St. Paul in Romans (viii. 18-20), again in Corinthians (1 Cor. xv. 24-28); and St. John (Rev. xxi., xxii.)—a ‘three-fold cord’ which cannot be broken. Then the *saved nations* will have the pure lip—*i.e.*, one language and one faith, as told by the prophet Zephaniah (iii. 9), and being in a fixed state of terrestrial glory, of course reproduction and decay are no more present in the scene.

#### THE WATER OF LIFE.

When we proceed with the details, the first verse of chapter xxii. reads in R.V. thus : ‘And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof’—symbolic language, descriptive of ‘life more abundantly’ in the future age. For the Lord said, ‘I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’ St. John never uses *water* to express baptism, except when referring to the Baptist, but always in a way peculiar to himself. To the woman of Samaria the Lord says, ‘Thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee the living water’ (John iv.). Again, at the Feast of Tabernacles, He says, ‘He that believeth on Me . . . out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water’ (John vii.). Again, in Revelation, ‘I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely’ (Rev. xxi. 6); ‘And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely’ (Rev. xxii. 17). Now let us consider what all these statements signify—Divine statements of vital import to every thirsty soul.



## THE LORD'S HUMANITY.

On a comparison of these our Lord's words one with the other, and as distinguished from 'the Spirit,' when He says to Nicodemus, 'Born (begotten, γεννηθῆναι) of water and the Spirit,' they signify (with reverence be it spoken) the *divine life of the Son of God flowing from above (ἄνωθεν) to Christians through His humanity*. 'He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.' Of course it is the Holy Ghost who applies this life to the soul, for it is 'the Spirit that quickeneth.' But it is 'the eternal life,' or that life *proper to the Son of God*, and flowing now in connection with His humanity, which constitutes the distinguishing characteristic of personal Christianity. And to this the terms *water* and *water of life* refer, for the believer 'hath eternal life abiding in him,' the communication of which is by the Holy Spirit. In St. John's teaching one must always look for something deeper than external rites, however good these may be in themselves. Hence in his Gospel neither baptism nor the Eucharist is mentioned, save the former in historic allusion to the ministry of the Baptist. It is of importance to note this fact.

## THE TREE OF LIFE.

*The tree of life* (verse 2) is presented as the gift and the sustainment of life in fellowship with God, and thus we have a double symbol. For just as of old in Israel, they had the water from the rock that followed them, and also the manna from heaven to feed them. Both these sustained the people, and were, of course, but types of things to come after. And even in *the Garden* 'the tree of life' was present as

the Divine gift of life ; for the creature was to live in communion with and dependence on God, even had he not fallen, but never independently of Him.

#### THE LEAVES OF THE TREE.

‘And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.’ It should be for the *health* (εἰς θεραπείαν) of the nations—that is, to sustain them in health ; not to cure them from sickness, as in the next verse : ‘There shall be no more curse,’ and if so, consequently no more sickness nor death. The word for *health* signifies primarily *household service*, and, in a derived sense, service for the benefit of those needing it as for their healing. In the following quotations it is thus used : ‘Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord will make ruler over his *household*’ (θεραπείας, Matt. xxiv. 45) ; ‘And healed those that had need of *healing*’ (θεραπείας, Luke ix. 11) ; ‘Whom his lord shall make ruler over his *household*’ (θεραπείας, Luke xii. 42) ; and in O.T. : ‘It pleased Pharaoh well and his *servants*’ (καὶ ἡ θεραπεία αὐτοῦ, Gen. xv. 16, LXX.).

From these references it will be seen that the word is used for service of any kind, and so, of course, for the service of the sick ; but its force is to be determined by the context in each case. If the absolute healing of sickness were meant, the term would be the same as in Ezekiel. The Vulgate and Latin versions render the word here *ad sanitatem*, for the health, on which Poole’s Synopsis adds : ‘*Non reparandam, quia morbi tunc nulli erunt, sed tuendam, sive servandam.*’

From all which it is evident that the passage refers not

to the millennium, but to the post-millennial or final state. It is true that it may be said the allusion is to Ezek. xlvii. 9-12, where the leaf of the tree is '*for medicine*' (ἐἰς ὑγίειαν) —a different word from the other, referring absolutely to *sickness*, and so referring to the millennial state. But, as all the other allusions and imagery in the Apocalypse derived from the Old Testament have an expansive and extended sense in keeping with the advanced and ulterior connections of this book; so here the ulterior connections belong to a state of things in which 'there is no more curse' and 'no more death,' and consequently no more need of healing, but yet dependent upon God and the Lamb for continued sustenance.

#### CULMINATION—XXII. 10 TO END.

The hortatory blessings and warnings in the Apocalypse are frequent. 'Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy,' etc. (i. 3); 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord,' etc. (xiv.); 'Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments,' etc. (xvi.); 'Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb,' etc. (xix.); 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection,' etc. (xx.); and here, 'Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city' (xxii.). The Vulgate has a beautiful reading of this verse—'Blessed are they who wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb,' etc. (xxii. 14). The warnings also are most graphic; for example:

## WITHOUT THE CITY.

‘For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie’ (xxii. 15). This terrible sentence is conclusive as to the permanent place of the wicked, depicted thus in the final and everlasting state. They are *outside* (ἐξω) the city and its blessedness. The statement is short and decisive, but the result fixed and unending, and ‘the lie’ that was loved refers to the negation of the Gospel, and is marked so often by the divine writers (John viii. 44 ; 2 Thess. ii. 9 ; 1 John ii. 21-27 ; Rev. xxi. 27). When all things are new and eternal blessedness established, yet these are left outside the gates of the city—a decided proof against the doctrines of annihilationism and universalism to any who respect revelation.

## THE ANGEL PROPHET.

‘I, Jesus, have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things *for* the Churches’ (verse 14, R.V.). It was remarked above that when the people of God are no more recognised or addressed corporately, the counsels of God concerning the world are addressed to the prophet as outside of them, but for their admonition and instruction. So it was with Daniel in Babylon. Who the angel prophet is in this case there is a great probability ; but as it would come more under the head of conjecture than of proof, there is no need to mention it.

## THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, COME.

Now the Church in her heavenly and normal aspect is called on to express her desires—‘And the Spirit and the

Bride say, Come (that is, to Christ); and he that heareth let him say, Come' (that is, to Christ). And then, on the other hand, the evangel and mission call is uttered—'And let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely' (verse 17). Observe here, to the two first calls the Lord Himself replies: 'He which testifieth these things saith, Yea, I come quickly' (verse 20, R.V.). And then St. John, as representative of the desire of the Bride, replies and says, 'Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus.' How beautiful! Thus ends this wondrous book—the last and dearest legacy left on earth until He comes and takes to Himself His people to be with Him where He is for ever.

#### THE DUALITY OF PETER AND JOHN—THE TERMINAL EPISODE—JOHN XXI.

We have just said that St. John was a *representative man*, and it brings to mind the terminal episode in the last verses of his Gospel. It is one of the most beautiful and significant incidents in holy writ, besides forming a most apt sequel to the Apocalypse—we mean the incident relating to Peter and John. Both these were representatives in their persons of the dual aspect of the Church until the Lord comes—that is, in the dual character of *suffering* and *waiting*. Peter was to suffer even unto death, and John was to wait. Both expectations were to animate the saints of God during the absence of Christ, and both of which also appear in St. Paul. He says, 'For Thy sake we are killed all the day long;' and again, 'We who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord,' etc. This dual state of mind declares

the normal attitude of the people of God unto the end, and is expressed in a personal way by these two Apostles in their after-history.

St. Peter speaks of 'putting off this my tabernacle, even as my Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.' He speaks of his decease (exodus), using the same word as Moses and Elias did to the Lord in the transfiguration (Luke ix. 31; 2 Pet. i. 14, 15). On the other hand, St. John never speaks of his death, but brings up the saints with himself to the coming of the Lord. And when the Lord here says, 'I am coming (ερχομαι) quickly,' St. John, in the person of the living Church, responds and says, 'Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus.' Thus do these two Apostles personate the dual attitude of the Church to the coming of the Lord.

Even the grammar of the language helps out this view of the matter by the emphasis put on the pronouns. For after the Lord had said to Peter, 'But when thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This He spake, signifying by what death he should glorify God.' And 'Peter turning about (ἐπιστραφείς) seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following. . . Peter seeing him saith, And what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he (αὐτον) tarry while I am coming (ὥς ἔρχομαι), what is that to thee? follow thou (σύ) Me.' *Thou* here is emphatic, contrasting with the preceding *he*, which is also emphatic. Why, it may be asked, did Peter *turn about*? Because his attention was attracted by the Lord contemplating John, and then asks, 'And this man what?' (R.V.). Then the Lord's language leaves St. John hanging on the hope of His coming, without definitely saying when that

would be. He was therefore a representative man, personating the Church, or that portion of it living up to the end. And when the Lord said this the curtain drops. But happy it is for us to know that the Lord still contemplates with joy those His people who desire to see Him, to be like Him, and to be with Him for ever.

## THE BABYLON AND THE NEW JERUSALEM OF THE APOCALYPSE.

WE cannot well close the chapters on the Apocalypse, and refer to the *historic view*, without alluding to *Babylon* and the *New Jerusalem*. Those who will have it that the Babylon on the Euphrates and the earthly Jerusalem of the old prophets are one and the same with those mentioned in the *Revelation*, can have but little real conception of the great subjects handled by St. Paul, called 'The Mystery of God and of Christ.'

Would it be harmonious or congruous with the nature of the Apocalypse that the Lord Jesus should send His angel to inform the Churches about Babylon on the Euphrates, or about Jerusalem on earth? For on those subjects the old prophets had abundantly spoken already—where all that appertains to these cities could be easily ascertained.

And as to the former city—Babylon on the Euphrates—if it were to be rebuilt, there could scarcely be in its re-erection, if so, any extraordinary 'mystery' such as is here described (Rev. xvii.). Nor is it very clear what connection the 'holy apostles and prophets' could have with it so as to say 'for God hath avenged you on her.' And how could it be said of the Babylon on the Euphrates, 'In her was



found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth'? (Rev. xviii. 24). How could this be? (See Matt. xxiii. 35.)

#### SYMMETRY OF THE APOCALYPSE.

But beside this, the nature of the Book of Revelation is to apply Old Testament history and imagery to ulterior scenes and objects, when developing '*the mystery of God and of Christ*' in contrast to '*the mystery of the woman and of the beast*,' all of which are presented in a displayed form at the Lord's 'appearing and His kingdom.' And if those contrasts are not apprehended, the symmetry of the book is lost, and its great outlines turn out to be mere guesswork. In fact, the book itself forbids it—for the nature and drift of the Apocalypse is to give new revelation, whereas to bring it back to the lines of the old prophets would only make it a repetition of the same things which they had given already in detail.

In addition to this, the very idea of the restoration of ancient Babylon to its former greatness is made to rest on a negative inference drawn from the language of some of the old prophets—the inference is that the present desolations of ancient Babylon do not satisfy the language in which they are described, and in order to satisfy the description, Babylon must be again restored and again desolated—such is the inference and the argument on the subject! Let us, then, compare the prophecies respecting the ruin and desolation of Babylon with those respecting Jerusalem, remembering that their fulfilment upon Jerusalem has not been questioned.

## THE TWO CITIES.

Of Babylon it is said, 'And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant' (Jer. li. 37). And of Jerusalem it is said, 'And I will make Jerusalem heaps, a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate without an inhabitant' (Jer. ix. 11). We see that similar language is employed in both cases, respecting Babylon and Jerusalem, etc., etc. And ordinary people infer that the desolations already experienced by both cities and the regions belonging to them fully satisfy the prophetic imagery, as all such language is *relative*, i.e., relative in comparison to what those cities and countries had been in their former state and glory. But some will say, if the language regarding the desolation of those two cities be equal, may not their restoration be equal also? No. In the latter case the language is not equal, but far otherwise.\*

And this is just where the whole theory breaks down; for the prophecies are distinct and numerous concerning the restoration of Jerusalem. But not one word is said concerning the restoration of Babylon. On the contrary, a determined and continuous desolation without relief to the end. Indeed, no one can read the Prophets without seeing the antithesis they present in this respect one to the other. Where, then, is to be found any promise about the restoration of Babylon? Nowhere. (See Jer. l., li.) It is all

\* Another reason given for the rebuilding of ancient Babylon is that its final destruction is put in juxtaposition with the restoration of Israel and Jerusalem. But this will apply equally to Edom and Tyre, and is no reason at all, prophetic intervals in Scripture being so common.

theory and imagination, pure and simple, without a shred of *positive* Scripture to build upon.

But even if it were otherwise, Babylon in Chaldea could no more coincide with the Babylon in Revelation than could the earthly Jerusalem coincide with 'the heavenly Jerusalem, that comes down from God out of heaven' (Rev. xxi.). To make them *earthly* cities destroys the nature of the book. And those who speak of the earthly Jerusalem as 'the bride, the Lamb's wife,' Rev. xxi., seem to know very little indeed of the subject or its bearings.

Now, this woman that is called Babylon in the Apocalypse has 'upon her forehead a name written, *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.*' The very term *Mystery* in the forefront shows that religion holds the topmost part in the picture, and that Christianity, as reflected by her, is of that deceptive character that 'the kings of the earth' fall into her embrace, 'for by her sorceries (*φαρμακεία*) were all nations deceived.' She drugged the nations with poisoned religion gilded with worldliness; for such is her portrait as given in Rev. xvii., xviii., all of which began with 'the mystery of iniquity' in the Apostles' day. And as the expression of a false Christianity, she is the product of the devil in heaven, or 'in heavenly places' (Eph. vi.).

'*The Beast*,' on the other hand, we saw to be the product of the *devil on earth*. For when the devil is cast down from heaven to the earth the *beast* at once rises up out of the sea (Rev. xii., xiii.). In the former position the devil deceived the nations by the corruption of Christianity—in the latter by the negation of all Christianity. For the *woman* and the *beast* are each the *product* of the devil in their own

spheres. Now, whilst Christ our Lord is hid in heaven (Col. iii.), this woman of the world and of Babylon religion plays her *rôle* openly upon earth—the devil made use of her to deceive the nations from his standpoint in the heavenly places. But when he is cast down she no longer answers his purpose, and he raises up the beast and his confederates, who openly ‘blaspheme God and His tabernacle,’ etc., to destroy her utterly.\*

Observe this, however, till after *the beast* appears in the scene our Lord does not appear for judgment (Rev. xix.). All the time that the woman was deceiving the world through the agency of Satan in the heavenly places, the Christians were suffering, but their ‘lives were hid with Christ in God’ (Col. iii. 3, 4). They lived by faith upon earth and in spiritual conflict with the enemy whilst Christ was hid above. But now that Christ comes out against the Beast and his host the saints ‘appear with Him in glory.’ For ‘the Lord will come with ten thousand of His saints to execute judgment.’ We see, then, how incumbent it is upon us to ‘rightly divide the word of truth’ as the Apostle teaches, and not to confound ‘the things which differ’ (2 Tim. ii. 15; Phil. i. 10).

#### CONTRASTED PARALLELS.

In the parallels that follow the contrasts are conspicuous, showing in symbol one city as the centre of corruption to the nations of the earth, and the other as the centre of light and blessing to them :

\* We showed in Rev. xii. that the *holding on power* (κατέχων), 2 Thess. ii. 6, 7, before *the man of sin* is manifested is the devil; and that the grammar as well as the harmony of Scripture support it—two things which are lacking in the other views of the subject.

## BABYLON.

1. Her light is as the light of a candle (xvii. 23).

2. The woman is decked with gold and precious stones, and meretricious attire in order to attract (xvii. 4).

3. The habitation of devils and the hold of every foul spirit and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird (xviii. 2).

4. The kings of the earth committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her, and the nations also (xviii. 9).

5. On her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, Mother of Harlots, etc. (xvii. 5).

6. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her (xviii. 20).

7. For by thy sorceries were all the nations deceived (xviii. 23, R.V.).

## THE NEW JERUSALEM.

1. Her light, like jasper, clear as crystal, and 'no night there' (xxi. 11).

2. The streets and foundations of the city are gold and precious stones (xxi. 18-21).

3. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life (xxi. 27).

4. The nations walk in the light of the city, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it (xxi. 14).

5. They shall see His face and His name shall be in their foreheads (xxii. 4).

6. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb (xxi. 14).

7. For without ( $\epsilon\zeta\omega$ ) the city are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie (xxii. 15).

It is clear from those comparisons that what God had designed the heavenly Jerusalem to be in righteousness, and announced by St. John beforehand, the devil, knowing it,

sets up an imitation of it in wickedness, with a view to draw in and deceive the whole world (Rev. xii. 9), and this he does effectually, as the book itself explains.

But in the end God will bruise Satan under the feet of His people (Rom. xvi. 20). For Christ was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, the fulfilment of which is seen in the official manifestation of the heavenly city, when sin, Satan and death, with all their belongings, are excluded from the scene, and God is able to announce, and announce righteously, both in mercy and judgment, 'Behold, I make all things new.'

## ADDENDUM.

### THE CURIOSITIES OF THE HISTORIC VIEW OF THE APOCALYPSE.

‘The things which shall be hereafter.’—APOC. IV.

IF the boasted historic coincidences will no more apply to the great world judgments in the end, than the *imitation* in ecclesiastical courts of after-ages to the form of government that the Apostles set up, the following remarks will not be out of place.

#### THE LIVING CREATURES.

The four *living creatures* at the throne, we are told by Dean Alford, are taken by many ancient and modern commentators to symbolize the *four Gospels*: Matthew, the Lion; Mark, the Ox; Luke, the Eagle; John, the Man; yet with some discrepancies. Others take them to represent the *four elements*, others the *four cardinal virtues*, and others again the *four powers of the human soul*. Such are those supposed to be who ‘fell down before the Lamb’ and said ‘Amen,’ thus winding up the doxology in chapter v.

## THE SEALS.

Again, the first four seals have furnished such a field for imagination and speculation that one gets somewhat bewildered at them. The first—the white horse—we are told, denoted a ‘condition in the world of almost unexampled national prosperity, and the period in which the human race was most happy extended from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus.’ The other horses denote great and dire calamities ; but why the rider on the white horse should denote prosperity, and so stand opposed to the rest, we are not told, for he goes forth ‘conquering and to conquer!’ It may be somewhat like the first Napoleon. (See A. Clarke, *in loco*.) But it is when we come to the sixth seal that the skill of the historic view becomes severely tested, for the language being so strong, it is not easily got rid of. It is taken from our Lord’s words (Luke xxiii. 30), who Himself quotes from the prophecy of Isa. ii. 19-21.

However, in the historic view, it signifies that the calling on the mountains to fall on them, and hiding themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, is simply ‘the downfall of paganism by the adoption of Christianity through the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century. Its sun set, its stars were quenched, and its firmament covered with blackness’ (Elliott, *in loco*). In the other aspect this adoption of Christianity by Constantine is taken as the beginning of the millennium. In this way the sixth seal, strangely enough, contains both these contradictory significations.



## THE TRUMPETS AND THE TWO WITNESSES.

The seven trumpets are taken to represent mainly the inroads and irruptions of the northern nations into the Roman Empire—the Huns, Goths, Vandals, by which the great empire was devastated and broken up—all of which is true, and the history very interesting. But as an interpretation, it is strange that the millennium, which began with Constantine, should so soon have those trumpet judgments opened on it. In vain, however, we look for symmetry or consistency in any one part of the *historic view*. Chapter ix. refers to the Mahomedan hosts which invaded and destroyed the idolatrous Greek Empire. Again, *the two witnesses* are by some said to be *the Old and New Testament*. By others the Waldenses and the Hussites. Others, again, take them to be a series of individuals beginning with Augustine and Vigilantius; and their being killed, and their bodies lying in the street of the great city, are interpreted to signify the extinction of their testimony; and the beast that killed them was the Pope! Certainly, the Papacy has persecuted unto death multitudes of God's dear people and faithful witnesses, even as our Lord foreshowed (John xvi. 2). But the Papacy has been weakened in this respect, and its power, if not its will, is checked. Whereas the Beast of the Apocalypse never loses his power or is weakened, but grows stronger and stronger, backed by the ten kings, up to the end. In this way he is pictured, all out.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE MAN-CHILD AND THE DRAGON.

The woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, the Roman Catholics say is the Virgin Mary. Others, that it is the Christian Church, and the twelve stars on her head are the twelve Apostles, and the moon under her feet the Jewish Church.

However, these interpretations come afterwards into difficulties, for when did the Virgin Mary flee into the wilderness? and, on the other hand, if paganism was dethroned under Constantine and his successors, and the millennium installed, why should the Church flee into the wilderness afterwards? For these last interpretations explain the Man-child as '*the dynasty of Christian emperors*' who succeeded Constantine. Indeed, that which was called *the Church* at the time had quite another history than that of fleeing into the wilderness! *But the earth helped the woman, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth*, which means, according to the historic view, that 'the barbarians were rather swallowed up by the Romans than the Romans by the barbarians; the heathen conquerors, instead of imposing their own, submitted to the religion of the conquered Christians' (A. Clarke, *in loco*). The ingenuity with which theories are adopted, be they ever so incongruous, shows the wonderful elasticity of the human mind. But when one is prosy enough to look at the facts they seldom fit in with the theories.

Yet nothing could more clearly show the blindness that Satan has induced on Christendom as to his personality

than the usual interpretations given of this chapter. Even good men have been deceived by him. For this chapter, as we said before, forms the hinge on which the Apocalypse turns.

## CHAPTERS XIII., XIV.

### THE TWO BEASTS.

The Beast which rises up out of the sea is not, we are told, the Roman Empire in itself, but only the Latin Empire, or the western half of it, and called *the holy Roman Empire*, as giving support to *the Church*. And it is added that 'in the subsequent centuries the power of the Romish hierarchy ascended even above that of the emperors, and led into captivity the kings of the whole Latin world.' And thus formed the other Beast who rises out of the earth, and who has two horns like a lamb, which means *the regular* and *secular* clergy, or else two orders of monks. These were the two horns like a lamb—and those things did occur, as a matter of history—and show that the *hidden leaven* in the parable, or, as the Apostle expresses it, 'the mystery of iniquity,' had obtained great dimensions at the time. But how it comports with the woman (the Church) that now fled into the wilderness for a period of 1,260 years, it is not easy to understand. We are further informed that *the name* of the Beast means the Latin Empire, and the *mark* of the Beast the Latin worship. But if the *name* of the Beast signifies the secular Latin Empire, and the *mark* of the Beast the Latin religion existing at the time (and long before the Council of Trent), yet was anyone by

acknowledging either, or by receiving the name or the mark, threatened to be tormented day and night for ever and ever? Would not this seem to contradict St. Paul's teaching of subjection to the powers that be? (Rom. xiii.).

#### THE FLYING ANGEL.

On the other hand, the Angel who flies in mid-heaven with the everlasting Gospel, to preach to them that dwell on the earth, etc., is understood to mean the Bible Society, which has translated the Scriptures into so many languages of the world. But perhaps the most singular incident of all, or rather co-incident, is found in the fearful judgment recorded at the end of chapter xiv., when '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.' 'It is said that *the States of the Church*, or St. Peter's patrimony, extends from Rome to the Po—200 Italian miles, which make exactly 1,600 furlongs. If this be really so, the coincidence is certainly surprising—surprising, no doubt, to these expositors! (See Clarke's Commentary, *in loco*, who mostly quotes from Bishop Newton.) Senor Crispi, however, the Italian Minister, may think that so far as the *States of the Church* are concerned, the Papacy has lost them without any such calamity following; nay, that the Italian people themselves are not the worse for it.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

##### THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON.

The Prophet says: '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. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon' (verses 13, 14, 16).

Here our critics tell us that St. John's grammar is at fault, as is often the case in this book; for instead of '*he gathered* them together' (verse 16), it should be, 'they gathered them,' etc., in order to be in agreement with the 'three unclean spirits.' What wise people we sometimes are! But what if St. John wanted to show that whilst the immediate promptings come from the devil, God's overruling providence was really gathering them for judgment, and so the divine and supranatural nature of the subject could not be better or more tersely expressed, or more simply narrated than it is?

'But what is the battle of Armageddon?' asks Dr. Clarke; and here he falls foul of his fellows in the historic school, and answers as follows: 'How ridiculous have been the conjectures of men relative to this point! Within the last twenty years this battle has been fought in various places, according to our purblind seers and self-inspired prophets! At one time it was *Austerlitz*, at another *Moscow*, at another *Leipsic*, and now *Waterloo*! And thus they have gone on, and will go on, confounding and being confounded.' (A. Clarke, *in loco*.) And, indeed, some of our recent friends might lay this monition to heart with great profit if they could only think so themselves!

## CHAPTERS XVII., XVIII.

## THE WOMAN AND THE BEAST.

Assuming that the Woman, mystic Babylon, symbolizes the World-Church, or Churches, whose centre is at Rome, the description of her characteristics given by the historic interpreters is very true. Taking the symbols employed as the mass of all the different human interests that she had drawn to herself during the several centuries of her existence, and now accumulated for the final 'hour' and final issue, the language is most graphic.

She sat as a queen for so long, saying: 'I shall see no sorrow,' during which time she corrupted the nations by overlaying Christianity with worldliness and false doctrine, whilst her pretensions were at the same time of a character the most sacred.

But here again the historic interpreters contradict themselves, telling us that if their views be not received, then the Apocalypse takes no account of the great events of Christendom from first to last!

But we do not know any events in Christendom greater in the sight of God than a deception and systematic delusion practised on the world by the *deceiver* of men, who set himself for ages to destroy by whatsoever means the Christianity to which our Lord and His Apostles set their names and seals with their own blood.

This at length is shown up in full-blown form, and '*her hour*' comes. But who are the instruments in her destruction? The Beast and his kings, in the first instance. For of these the Prophet writes: 'And the ten horns which

thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire. 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' (Rev. xvii. 16, 17). Here the historic view says: 'By which is evidently meant, when connected with what follows, that the *whole* of the ten kingdoms in the interest of the Latin Church shall finally despise her doctrines, be reformed from Popery, assist in depriving her of all influence and in exposing her follies, and in the end consign her to utter destruction' (A. Clarke, *in loco*). Just as some recent writers tell us that the Lord has been *consuming\** the Papacy since the Reformation by the Gospel, which is 'the spirit of His mouth.' (See Mr. M'Guinness, 2 Thess. ii. 8.)

#### THE BEAST AND HIS KINGS.

Unfortunately for this view, the very reason which Dr. Clarke gives for it is the very reason which destroys it, viz., 'when connected with what follows.' And what is it that follows? The very kings and beast who destroy the woman come up against Christ Himself immediately after. And so far from being 'reformed,' as the doctor says, they become the direct allies of the devil, and end all *political government* on earth under the devil at the hands of Christ. This at least is what St. John puts before us in chapters xvii., xix.: It will be one of the great instances in which God maketh the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder

\* If the expositors had taken pains to look at the original, they would have found that the word was incapable of any such meaning.

of wrath will He restrain. He shall cut off the spirit of princes, He is terrible to the kings of the earth' (Ps. lxxvi. 10-12). So far from 'reformation' in any sense, these chapters show the *denouement* of all the ecclesiastical and political power of Christendom in judgment.

### CHAPTERS XIX., XX.

The historic view regards the saints on white horses, clothed in fine linen, to be 'a prediction that the Church should become more *pure* in her *doctrines*, more *pious* in her *experience*, and more *righteous* in her *conduct* than she had ever been from her formation' (Dr. Clarke, *in loco*), and notes those on thrones afterwards, who live and reign with Christ, marked as 'the first resurrection.' This means that Christians will no longer be found here in low places, but that all the high offices and chief positions in the world will be occupied by them. Such is 'the first resurrection' in the view of these writers. And we may here say that *this historic view*, when consistently carried out, ends not only in ignoring the first resurrection, but all resurrection; and with this the personality of Satan also. Yet they are more consistent who deny these things than those who adopt the historic view only up to chapter xx., and adopt the literal view of the Lord's coming from that on.

We now close this sketch in the memorable words of Dean Alford's Commentary on Revelation xx. 4-5: 'It will be long anticipated by the readers of this Commentary that I cannot consent to distort its words from their plain sense and chronological place in the prophecy, on account of any considerations of difficulty or any risk of abuses



which the doctrine of the millennium may bring with it. As regards the text itself, no legitimate treatment of it will extort what is known as the spiritual interpretation now in fashion. If in a passage where *two resurrections* are mentioned where certain souls lived (ψυχαι ἔζησαν) at the first, and the rest of the dead lived (νεκροὶ ἐζήσαν) only at the end of a specified period, etc.—if in such a passage the first resurrection may be understood to mean spiritual rising, while the second means literal rising from the grave, then there is an end of all significance in language, and Scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to anything' (Alford, *in loco*).

Wherefore then let us, as St. Peter advises, gird up the loins of our mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation (ἀποκαλύψει, *Apocalypse*) of Jesus Christ (1 Peter i. 13).

## A REVIEW.

- I. *The Approaching End of the Age.* By H. GRATTAN GUINNESS.  
II. *Fallacies of Futurism.* By Mr. and Mrs. H. GRATTAN GUINNESS. III. *Light for the Last Days.* By Mr. and Mrs. H. GRATTAN GUINNESS. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

MR. AND MRS. GUINNESS have published a new work—*Light for the Last Days*—the last of a series, by which this dark world is to be enlightened and put right on the subject of prophecy.

We shall give an outline of the main subjects, and it may be better in the first place, when considering the theories briefly, to give a sketch of some of the chief statements of the programme cut out and put forward, so that the reader may have before him the sum of the matter in small compass.

Under the following heads, therefore, we may classify some of the statements, noting them consecutively as they appear to us:

1. Deficiency in Primitive Revelation.
2. The Antichrist of Prophecy is alone the Papacy.
3. Destroyed 'by the Spirit of His mouth,' its meaning.
4. The Expiration of the Roman Empire and the ten Kingdoms that follow after.
5. The coming Prince who takes away the daily Sacrifice.

6. The Apocalypse—what is it?

7. Strange criticism of the Beast and the Horns.

In the articles that we write we shall merely state the position taken by the authors, with as few remarks upon them as are absolutely necessary to show the untenableness of the theories. But with their delineation of the Papacy and its evils we fully agree, which to our thinking is portrayed in its antecedents and developments under the aspect of 'the Woman'—the 'Babylon,' but not the Beast of the Apocalypse. For there are different forms of evil, and 'the wiles of the wicked one' are in nothing more conspicuous than in presenting sin and evil in opposite and apparent antagonisms, whilst in reality they work unto one end—for Satan is not divided against himself—but he adopts this method in order to confuse the creature man respecting his actings. We shall, in the first place, give our authors' views with regard to the revelation given to the primitive Christians, and that very briefly. The quotations give the pith and marrow of their principles. For details the reader can consult the works at the head of this article.

#### DEFICIENCY IN PRIMITIVE REVELATION.

'The first generation of believers (as Mr. G. says) took all the promises of His speedy return literally, and lived in the hope that they might remain to the blessed moment, and not sleep but be changed. The Holy Ghost did not undeceive them to any considerable extent. . . . But *this hope was born of inexperience.* . . . The cold logic of facts proved it ill-founded and mistaken, but did not render it the less sanctifying and cheering. Blessed be God, there is

another kind of hope, born of patience and experience, and founded, not on ignorance, but on knowledge.' And again, speaking of the futurist view, he says: '*The futurist view denies progressive revelation*, and asserts that the early Church understood the Apocalypse better than the Church of after-times, which is contrary to the analogy of Scripture and to the apparent purposes of God.'\* The italics are the author's, and he means that till *the solar and lunar cycles* were discovered by Mr. and Mrs. Guinness, and 'the end of the age' or world struck at A.D. 1919,† the hope which the primitive Church had, and which 'was founded on ignorance,' could not be realized. They were looking for Him to come indeed! not knowing whether it was to be 'at even or at midnight, at the cockcrow, or in the morning.' But 'the cold logic of facts proved it ill-founded.'

The primitive believers might, and did, hope to remain to the Lord's return; and was this hope then 'ill-founded' when the Lord spoke of His return as 'in the evening or at midnight, or at the cockcrow, or in the morning'? (Mark xiii. 35). But we are told that we have 'another kind of hope, born of patience and experience and founded upon knowledge.' And this is the hope which the 'progressive revelation' gives, and which they say the futurist view 'denies'! And this 'progressive revelation' culminates in the *solar and lunar cycles*, and the ideas derived therefrom, as presented by Mr. and Mrs. Grattan Guinness in two books—'The Approaching End of the Age' and 'Light for the Last Days.' And now has come the 'progressive revela-

\* 'The Approaching End of the Age,' pp. 88-98, first ed.

† At least the end of Christendom. For Mohamedanism (as Mr. G. tells us) extends the time farther.

tion.' Mr. and Mrs. Guinness are very excellent persons, and the best excuse that can be made for them is that they are unconscious of the nature of those sentiments, and like others on other subjects, are carried away by theories which enchant the brain.

The idea of *the Holy Ghost not undeceiving Christians to any considerable extent*, as above stated, implies that He deceived them to some extent ! and the idea of *progressive revelation* implies the deficiency and imperfectness of primitive revelation ! Both these ideas are subversive of Christianity itself, and also profane in conception. For if these things were true, inspired revelation is no longer perfect, complete and positive ; but a philosophy and a science in embryo that has to be developed. Inspiration only supplies the *materia informis* (or what is commonly called the *raw material*) ; and this is developed into *doctrina formata*, or formulated positive doctrine, by the inspired human intellect. Yet such is the nature and character of the books published by our novitiate prophetic friends. Mr. Guinness himself seems to be so sensible of it that he brings in a special pleading for prophetic doctrine as an exception to other Christian doctrines. He says : ' A return to primitive *doctrine* is good ; no progressive revelation of the dogma of justification by faith, for instance, was to be expected ; innovation in questions of faith is condemned. We are earnestly to contend for the faith *once delivered to the saints*. But prophecy is not doctrine, and its very nature implies that it must be capable of receiving elucidation from the course of Providence.'

*Receiving elucidation* is one thing, but *progressive revelation* is another. Doctrine is teaching, and formal teaching is

dogma. It is the thing taught, not the view or idea or judgment the mind forms of it. Hence the humility requisite, and the responsibility in receiving Divine teaching. I may be ignorant of the Divine teaching or doctrine on any given subject, but my ignorance cannot make it the less dogmatic. In fact, it cannot be anything else when it comes from God.

And are we to understand that when St. Paul is speaking of 'the mystery of iniquity and the man of sin' (2 Thess. ii.), that this 'prophecy is not doctrine'? That, when foretelling the 'apostasy from the faith of Christianity' (1 Tim. iv.), 'and also from the practice of Christianity' (2 Tim. iii), that this 'prophecy is not doctrine'? And that when St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude are foretelling 'the last times' with such accuracy, and the character of them, that all these are to be excluded from dogma, because 'Prophecy is not doctrine'? The Apocalypse itself denounces him who will add or take from it. One may be ignorant of any particular truth of revelation, and hold what is false, but to justify it by saying that 'the Holy Ghost does not deceive me to any considerable extent,' and that I need a 'progressive revelation' to make me see differently, places me at once on the high road to rationalism; and any theory based on such views we regard as refuted, when refuted in its principles. Nor will this appear less clear when we look at the details and results which proceed from those principles. Some of those results on the subjects above referred to will be dealt with afterwards. But space does not permit us going farther at present, excepting to say that our good friends seem little aware how they contradict themselves, when they speak and say that 'Prophecy is not doctrine.' For when they essay

to expound 'a hope founded not on ignorance but on knowledge,' one would think that such language savoured a little of dogma and doctrine ; indeed, there are few books which treat on the subject of prophecy with greater dogmatism.

Let us now see where these untoward principles carry us. We first come to consider the Antichrist of Scripture, who is 'consumed with the spirit of His mouth and destroyed with the brightness of His coming.' And this Antichrist, which we are told is the Papacy and the 'little horn' of the Prophet Daniel, and 'the Beast' of the Revelation, is thus introduced : 'That Beast, as we know, symbolized the Roman Empire ; and the little horn, which had eyes and a mouth speaking great things, . . . represents a power which was to arise in the latter days of that empire, which would be, *like* the other horns, a *civil and political power*, and unlike them at the same time a *religious power*—unquestionably the Roman *Papal* dynasty' ('End of the Age,' p. 418, first edition). In the second place, we are told that this Papal dynasty was started on its course by the Emperor Phocas in 606, and was to continue for 1,260 years from that date to 1866-1870, when the French troops were withdrawn from Rome to fight Germany. And, in the third place, we are told that the Lord has been 'consuming the man of sin or Beast with the spirit of His mouth,' ever since the Reformation, that is, by the Gospel and its effects.

#### THE USURPER PHOCAS.

Now, in support of such a staring and glaring event as the start of the true Antichrist on his course, it was incumbent on our long-day interpreters to give us true and consistent

history at all events. There were, according to the calendar of the Roman Church, no less than sixty-four Popes before the time of Phocas and Boniface III. How comes it that none of these was the Antichrist till then? or why was it that he had to be set up by Phocas at all? Was he one of those kings that was to give 'their power and strength to the Beast'? Oh no! Phocas usurped the Roman Empire of the East, its Eastern limb or leg, where, according to Mr. Guinness, none of the ten kings are to be looked for. How then was it that he was entitled to 'give power and strength to the Beast'? This is a very awkward question for our friends, no doubt. However, they have as good a right to set up Phocas as a promoter of the Antichrist, as Canon Farrar and the Rationalists to set up Nero as Antichrist himself! Why not? But, even thus, the most respectable historians question and minimize the fact altogether as a hazy story of one called *Paul the Deacon*. Hallam says: 'But there are several strong objections to our considering this as a leading fact, much less as marking an era in the history of the Papacy. Its truth, as commonly stated, is more than questionable. The Poman Pontiffs, Gregory I. and Boniface III., had been vehemently opposing the assumption of this title (of universal Bishop) by the Patriarch of Constantinople, not as due to themselves, but as one to which no bishop could legitimately pretend. There would be something almost ridiculous in the Emperors immediately conferring an appellation on themselves which they had just disclaimed' ('Speaker's Commentary,' p. 696, last volume). So that Hallam, the great historian, does not believe in it at all as a fact. And now let us hear what Mosheim says about it: 'The Emperor Phocas decreed that



the Roman Church should be the first. The Constantinopolitan had before this assumed to be the first of all. By being the first and head, both the Bishop of Constantinople and the usurper Phocas, seem to have understood merely priority of rank, and not that supreme authority and dominion which the Roman Pontiffs afterwards claimed. It was intended as a compliment, but it was constructed into a grant of unlimited power.' So says Mosheim ('Eccles. Hist.,' p. 245, Murdock's edition). Mosheim here looks on the matter, if it did occur, as a mere complimentary title, but made much of afterwards, of course. But the long-day interpreters make such great capital out of it as to start the 1,260 days (years) from this period. Mr. and Mrs. Guinness say: 'But the main reckoning of the period is unquestionably between A.D. 606, and 1866-1870, the former being the date at which the title of Pope, or universal Bishop, was by the Emperor Phocas conferred upon Boniface III., and the latter that of the overthrow of Austria and France, and the *consequent loss of the last vestige of temporal power* by Pius IX., when Victor Emmanuel moved his court to the Quirinal and became king of United Italy' ('End of the Age,' p. 423; 'Light of the Last Days,' p. 277).

#### A FALSE START.

To begin the running of *the Papacy* with the usurper of the Greek or Eastern Empire and Boniface III., would be, according to the best historians, to give it, in racing language, 'a false start;' and when it comes to the finish up with Pius IX., Mr. and Mrs. Guinness may well say that '*the last vestige of temporal power*' was gone in 1870—for, indeed, any real temporal power of the Popes had gone

long before. And if so, how does all this comport with the ten kings, agreeing in Scripture, and 'giving their power and strength to the Beast and having one mind with him'? (Rev. xvii.). It is nowhere said that they take it away from him, but just the contrary. 'Progressive revelation' would indeed be required to settle this matter and get over this difficulty and contradiction somehow.

#### THE PAPACY.

The truth is that neither Phocas nor the Pope himself so understood it at that stage of the history ; nor for centuries after was the term or office of *Papa*, or Pope, allowed in the *universal sense*. So that this statement, indeed, is very far from being accurate, for even as matter of history, everyone knows that it was Gregory VII. (Hildebrand), by a decree made at a council held in Rome, who fixed the title Pope in the sense of universal Bishop, and then it was first assumed by the Pontiffs. Hitherto it was merely titular—a priority to that of Constantinoplé, which previously held the priority. So that, if we are to interpret according to history, let us have accurate and true history, and start the 1,260 days (years) from Gregory VII., A.D. 1073—when the Popes did decree supremacy for themselves over all Churches, kings and nations—and it will have the additional mark of plausibility, at all events, that it was done '*in their own name*' (John v. 43). But this accuracy will destroy the whole theory, and the 1260 years cannot come out in 1866 or 1870—but yet will be so far in line with Scripture. Now that the Papacy, the Greek Church, and Mohamedanism are fearful antichristian systems is most true ; and St. John,

even in his day, says there were many Antichrists. But it is the special 'Antichrist' of prophecy—the 'Beast' of the Revelation and the little horn of the Prophet Daniel that we are considering. And we are trying, as far as we can, to keep one subject at a time before the eye of the reader—a matter not very easy amidst the diffusely scattered variety of subjects in the works under review.

#### THE CONSUMPTION OF THE WICKED.

We next light on a novel interpretation—at least, novel to those who have any conception of the Lord's second coming—viz., that when St. Paul is speaking of *the wicked one* (2 Thess. ii. 8), he says: 'Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth.' The term *consume* (ἀναλώσει) refers to the Gospel and its effects,' our authors tell us: 'For the last three hundred years, ever since the Reformation, the Papacy has been in process of consumption by the spirit of our Lord's mouth. It will ere long be destroyed by the brightness of His coming.' So say Mr. and Mrs. Guinness ('End of the Age,' p. 223, first edition; 'Light for the Last Days,' p. 117). It is, then, to the Gospel and its effects that the term applies! But if so, why may not 'the brightness of His coming' refer to the Gospel also, but intensified? And there is no doubt that General Booth and the Salvation Army would so interpret the passage, for they are to convert the whole world on being supplied only with men and money.\* And as they have already interpreted 'blood and fire,' the term of Joel's

\* See 'Book of Doctrines,' by General Booth, Salvation Army Book Stores, Paternoster Row, London.

prophecy, to mean '*the blood of Christ and the fire of the Holy Ghost*,' it will be all in harmony, and both members of the sentence will have the advantage of hanging together in unison. But no person ever heard till now of the Gospel or its effects *consuming* anyone, directly or indirectly. The word *consume* (ἀνάλωσει) is always used for severe judgment, direct and straight, on the person or persons who are the objects of it, and has nothing whatever to say to the Gospel, but the opposite. A few examples will show this: 'All that found them (the Israelites) *devoured* them (ἀνήλισκον αὐτοῦν)' (Jer. l. 7). 'It is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire *devoureth* both ends (εἰς ἀνάλωσιν)' (Ezek. xv. 4). And again, in the New Testament: 'Wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and *consume* them (ἀνάλωσει αὐτοῦς), even as Elias did?' (Luke ix. 54). 'Take heed that ye be not *consumed* one of another' (ἀνάλωθῇτε) (Gal. v. 15). In all cases the word is applied directly to the object *devoured* or *consumed*. So far the term *consume*. And when the wicked is said to be consumed 'with the spirit of His mouth' we need not go far to find the meaning. Job says: 'By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of His nostrils are they *consumed*' (Job iv. 9). And of the rod of Jesse Isaiah says: 'He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked' (*the wicked one*, Isa. xi. 4), the passage from which St. Paul quotes in 2 Thess. ii. 8. These passages do not sound very like the Gospel nor its effects since the *Reformation*, any more than 'the blood and fire and vapour of smoke' of the Prophet Joel sound like '*the blood of Christ and the fire of the Holy Ghost*,' as interpreted by the Salvation Army.

Mr. Guinness also tells us that Daniel's *week* of seven years includes 2,520 days, and that these days are years; and further, that Daniel's 'seven times' had four beginnings and four endings, each including 2,520 years, as follows:

1. When the Assyrian Pul invaded Palestine, B.C. 770, which ended A.D. 1750-1.

2. The fall of Samaria and captivity of the ten tribes, B.C. 721, which ended A.D. 1798.

3. The third from the captivity of Manasseh and the remnant of the ten tribes, B.C. 676, which ended A.D. 1844.

4. From the full captivity of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 602, which is to end in A.D. 1919.

Mr. Guinness then informs us that the end is to be in 1919; but, according to Piazzzi Smith's calculations, in 1881, and, according to Mr. Baxter, the end is to be within the next seven years.

How well it is to have prophets amongst us even up to now in this nineteenth century! If this be so, however, it may be asked of our present authors, How is it that those four periods begin with Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem, and their endings have nothing to do with Jerusalem at all, but with us Gentiles; and that the Jews have nothing to say to Daniel's last king, nor to the 'idol Shepherd' who was to come in his own name and be received by them (John v. 43), all of whom, according to the theory, refer to the Papacy, with which the Jews never had any relation whatever?

Nevertheless, they have a great advantage in the interpretation of Scripture who claim for themselves '*progressive revelation*,' and this advantage 'the futurists' have not.

'*The futurist view denies progressive revelation*, and asserts

that the early Church understood the Apocalypse better than the Church of after-times,' etc. (The italics are theirs.)

We then said that such a doctrine would be 'subversive of Christianity as such, and also profane in conception;' for it assumes that *revelation* as it came from God in the canon of Scripture was not closed and final, for this is what the notion of progressive revelation means. The only excuse that could be made for such a statement is the innocent ignorance of what it carries. However, our authors are quite in earnest, and it certainly may be said that the nature of the arguments in support of their theories would require a *progressive revelation* to verify their conclusions. Without further preface, let us look at the next main subject referred to; viz., the ten kings that appear on the scene at the close of the fourth and last of the empires.

#### THE TEN KINGS 'ELASTIC.'

These kings and kingdoms are numerically elastic, we are told by our authors. They are sometimes more, and sometimes less. Whether more or less, they are always to be found on the left foot of the image, or western side of the Roman Empire. Their reason for which is obvious; for the Pope being to them the Beast and the final Antichrist, he had no sway in the East at all, but only in the West, consequently the ten kings must be found only in the West; and though the kingdoms are 'elastic' and the interpretation 'elastic,' yet the authors insist upon it as follows:

'The number of distinct kingdoms into which the Roman Empire in Europe has been divided has always been about

ten, at times exactly ten, sinking at other times to eight or nine, and rising occasionally to twelve or thirteen, but averaging on the whole *ten*’ (‘End of the Age,’ p. 163). Again : ‘There would, as a rule, throughout the whole period, be ten kingdoms, occupying the sphere of the Western Empire of Rome ; the number would be elastic, sometimes more, sometimes less, but always *about* ten. Alexander’s Empire was represented by *one* notable “horn,” and the dynasties that arose out of its broken fragments by *four* “horns.” But Daniel foretells that Rome was to break up into a larger number, and that *ten* different kingdoms would appear upon the scene, and occupy, even to the end, the territory belonging to Rome, still having that great city as in some sort their centre and bond of union. These ten kings should be looked for in the territory of the Western Empire of Rome only’ (‘Light for the Last Days,’ p. 94 and note).

Now, an ordinary person would suppose that when the same Prophet defined one empire as broken into ‘*four*’ and another empire as broken into ‘*ten*’ kingdoms, that the definition of the number would be as exact in one case as in the other ; or else, if it be an ‘elastic’ number in the one, why not in the other also ? It is inconsequent to make the same Prophet numerically true and exact in one case, and loose and elastic in the other. But the exigency of our authors’ theory, backed by ‘progressive revelation,’ needs that it should be so. They are bent on having the number *four* in the Greek Empire exact, but the number *ten* in the Roman Empire *elastic*.

However, the whole theory vanishes like a cloud when reduced to Scripture facts ; but to make it plain to the reader, we shall mark the salient points of the prophecy under three

headings, and briefly revert to them afterwards : (1) Repetition. (2) Coincidence. (3) Confusion.

#### VISIONS REPEATED.

I. First, whenever a prophecy is *repeated* in Scripture it marks the exactness and certainty of the event, as is said in Joseph's dream (Gen. xli. 32) : *and for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice ; it is because the thing is established by God,* etc. And here also in Daniel's vision of the 'four horns,' interpreted to be the four broken divisions of Alexander's Empire, it is an exact prophecy of what took place. And when in the king Nebuchadnezzar's vision the Roman Empire is seen as ten toes, and interpreted by the Prophet as broken into ten parts, it establishes the prophecy as exact (Dan. ii. 45). But the Prophet himself had another vision of the same empire and the ten kings, and also the angel's interpretation of them at the time. That is, those same *ten* kings and kingdoms are four times repeated in the Book of Daniel, and it is rather too much to say that no exactness is intended, but only what is loose and 'elastic.' If repetition shows exactness, how could exactness be more clearly stamped on any prophecy? And, moreover, when St. John refers to these very *ten* kings in the Apocalypse, in their duplex aspect as 'horns' and 'kings,' it puts the matter of exactness beyond controversy to anyone who submits to God's revelation.

#### COINCIDENCE.

II. The next head is that of *coincidence*. The ten kings coincide with the Beast, and 'give their power and strength



unto him. For God did put in their hearts to do His mind (γνώμην), and to come to one mind (μὴ ἓν γνώμην), and to give their kingdom unto the Beast until the words of God should be accomplished' (Rev. xvii. 13-17, R.V.).

This language unmistakably shows the meaning of the symbol of 'the Beast with seven heads and ten horns.' The angel says : 'The horns which thou sawest are ten kings, etc., who receive power as kings one hour with the Beast' (Rev. xvii. 7-10).

The horns being 'upon the Beast,' show that they are indissolubly joined together. Scripture does not know or recognise the horns without the Beast nor the Beast without the horns up to the end, 'until the Word of God should be accomplished.' In fact, 'the Beast' would be no Beast at all without the horns, for they are his power and strength, and he never loses the power and strength of the ten horns up to the end.

#### CONFUSION.

But our friends tell us that the Papacy and the Beast are identical, and draw the picture of him accordingly, saying :

'Now, as Babylon has existed for twelve or thirteen centuries, *this beast must have been in existence for the same period*, and the eighth and last and peculiarly evil and anti-christian form of Roman power, predicted in prophecy, *cannot* be a short-lived individual, but must be a DYNASTY, or succession of rulers, like all the other "beasts;" and further, since no *other* succession of rulers have swayed the Roman earth from Rome during the career of Babylon, *must be the line of Roman Pontiffs*' ('Fallacies of Futurism,' pp. 63, 64).

If, then, 'the Beast' be the Papacy, what have we? The papal Beast hating and tearing itself to pieces, as follows :

'The nations of Europe do thus hate the Roman Catholic Church, to which in bygone ages they all yielded admiration, affection and obedience. The last century has witnessed an ever-growing and deepening disaffection on their part towards the Church, as one which had loved them not for their sakes or for their good, *but for filthy lucre's sake to their injury*. Rulers and people have alike lost their love of Popery, and despise, and hate, and oppose Ultramontanism ; they seek to be freed from the odious incubus they have so long borne' ('Fallacies of Futurism,' pp. 31, 32).

According to this theory, Mr. Guinness's Beast has lost his 'horns.' Thus pictured by our authors, how will it comport with 'the Beast' pictured in the Apocalypse? Where is the identity?\* It only shows how a pet theory can be made to drive a coach-and-six through the plainest statements of Scripture ; and when this is backed by 'progressive revelation,' subjection to the word always goes to the winds—for if 'the Beast' is the Papacy, how could it 'hate the Roman Catholic Church' ? It is all confusion !

#### THE UNITY OF THE IMAGE.

III. Under the third heading, the integrity of the image in the first vision of Nebuchadnezzar must be kept in view. From not doing so much error has arisen on all sides ; on

\* The absurd criticism on the difference of readings in 'the ten horns on the beast,' and 'the ten horns *and* the beast,' one passes over as too childish to argue, as if one or other could make any difference in the facts.

the side of 'the futurists' as well as that of the long historians. That four imperial powers holding supreme dominion on the earth up to the end appear in *the image* in one colossal human form. Literally it is, '*Thou, O King, wast seeing one image (צֶלֶם הָרַק) that was great*' (Dan. ii. 31). And though the kingdoms composing it are of different materials—gold, silver, brass, iron, clay—yet all form one image and concrete dynasty in *time*, styled by our Lord 'the times of the Gentiles.' And the two feet of the image (in the Roman Dominion) are united with the whole body in its totality. Now, the Roman dominion begins with 'the legs of iron.' The reason to be given for two legs was because whilst the former empires swayed the East, the Roman Empire swayed both East and West. It was an oriental and an occidental empire at the same time, and it took in under its power or shadow the whole area represented by the image. And the dominion over the whole earth given of God to the golden head remains unchanged in its perpetuity, and continues down to the feet—for the feet are united with the head as well as the arms and shoulders and legs, for the image is all one. And so St. Paul says, 'The powers that be are ordained of God.' The ordinance of God descended from the head of gold without change.

Consequently, when 'the stone cut out of the mountain without hands' falls, it breaks the whole image in its totality, beginning with the feet, and therefore must embrace in destruction all that belonged to East and West together. And further, when the stone does actually fall on the image, the feet and toes (or the ten kingdoms) are then and there crushed in the onset, for so they are drawn in the Divine picture. The stone strikes the image on its feet and the

destruction extends to the whole image. The ten toes of Daniel's image, or the ten kings, as afterwards interpreted, by St. John with the Beast ('little horn') are joined together in one destruction (Rev. xix.).

But let us see what Scripture says of the last empire before it comes to this point. There is a *little word* used three times by St. John, and it is so small that the authors do not deign to notice it even once in any of their prophetic writings, yet it is so important that it overthrows the whole theory of their ten kings in Western Europe who filled up fifteen centuries of time, a longer period than the Roman Empire and all the empires put together. But that little word, '*is not*' (οὐκ ἔστι), what does it signify? 'The beast that thou sawest was and *is not*, and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition' (Rev. xvii. 8-11, R.V.). What does this mean? It means what it says, that there was a gap in the history of the empire, when it is shorn of its integral strength, and no unity of active energy in its imperial force. And when was that? At the very time when those 'elastic' kings so eloquently described by our authors were measuring themselves against each other; whilst the woman was mounted, and exercising anile sway under the name of religion over that which held the place of empire, and they at the time submitting to her dictation. During this period the cohesion of imperial power and the strength of dynastic inherent authority are, as it were, non-existent. All that force which marked the empire originally gone, and not to be revived in this aspect until it comes up 'out of the abyss' with the energy of the devil under its last head. Consequently, no fitter term could be used to express the weakness and

absence of cohesion in the empire as such than the term '*is not*' (*non est*), a period as it were of non-existence in respect to proper imperial power in force. The kingdoms that existed were '*elastic*' in many senses as well as in the numerical sense. Their very elasticity shows the dormant and non-existent state of the great empire as such. In the end the ten kings come out in force. However, our authors tell us that 'Babylon and "the Beast" are represented *as coming to an end at one and the same time*' ('End of the Age,' p. 229). Where are they so represented? St. John (Rev. xviii., xix.) states the very opposite, as can be seen at once on reading the chapters.

#### APOCALYPSE—WHAT IS IT?

What is the Apocalypse (*αποκάλυψις*) but the open manifestation of the Lord in glory? And, we ask, were not all the events which have happened on earth since the Lord came similar in their nature to the events that happened on earth before He came? That is, they all come under the head of hidden providence, God secretly interfering and often overruling them. But the Apocalypse, as the word means, refers to open manifestation in active judgment and direct government. It is crisis (*κρίσις*). We do not say that the historic events of Christendom have no connection with this crisis—they have a very great connection, as preparing the way and ripening the world for the last days. For the crisis shows that during the previous period the world not only disbelieved the Gospel, but abused it and turned it into a lie, traded on it and aggrandized themselves to its injury in their long history. But now the

judgment (the crisis) comes. The Lord takes up His great power 'and a short work will the Lord make upon the earth' (Rom. ix. 28). Such is the very nature of *the Apocalypse*. Consequently, it is not a mere human history of passing events, but a final crisis in judgment on the forms of evil brought to a head at last and closed by the second advent.

#### THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

Having spoken in the former articles about the Pope and the Roman Empire and the ten kings, we have now to glance at the seventy weeks and the exploits of 'the Coming Prince' in Daniel ix. And to do so and make it explicit, we transcribe the four last verses of the chapter, quoting from the Revised Version, verses 24, 25, 26, 27, as follows :

24. 'Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression and make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy, or a most holy place' (Marg. R.V.).

25. 'Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks ; it shall be built again with street and moat, even in troublous times.'

26. 'And after threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one (Messiah) be cut off, and shall have nothing ; and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary ; and his end shall be with a

flood ; and even unto the end shall be war ; desolations are determined.'

27. 'And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week ; and for the half of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease ; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate ; and even unto the consummation, and that determined, shall *wrath* be poured out on the desolator.' (R.V.)

#### CRITICISMS OF THE AUTHORS.

Let us now glance at the criticism and exposition of these verses. The criticism is one of adaptation—that is, of adaptation to the theory of the authors. The word *determined or decreed* (24) they say '*should be cut off.*' 'From what? From the interval, they say, of 2,300 years previously mentioned' ('End of the Age,' p. 427). But the Hebrew word does not mean *cut off* in that way ; there is no example of any such meaning. The word is quite different from that in verse 26, where Messiah is *cut off*. Then, again, in verse 27, 'He shall make a covenant with many for one week,' should be, we are told, 'during the course of one week.' But there are no words in the original for 'during the course of,' nor anything corresponding to them. It would not do for the theory to say that 'the new covenant' was made only for 'one week'—hence it was necessary to change the sentence, and say *during the course of one week*, which is quite another thing. However, such are the criticisms in adaptation of the theories of the authors. (See 'Fallacies of Futurism,' p. 24.) The exigency of the interpretation which makes Messiah and the Prince of the desolation to be the same, necessitates those strange criticisms.

## EXPOSITIONS.

And so the expositions of our authors on this famous passage come under two headings—(1) The time when the seventy weeks began and ended. (2) And the Prince who makes the covenant for one week, in verse 27. They proceed to show that the seventy weeks or 490 years began from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, when Nehemiah went up to Jerusalem (Neh. ii.).

In doing this the authors' view is not singular; on the contrary, it is very general; although the proofs they give in support of it are singular enough. These are as follows:

'But the prophecy states that the Messiah was to be cut off *before* the close of the seventy weeks (or 490 years). *After* the sixty-ninth had elapsed, and before the seventieth fully ran out, that is to say, *in the course of the seventieth week*, He was to be cut off in the midst of the week.' And then they add the following paragraph:

'This chronological prediction was fulfilled on the solar scale from the *first* Edict of Artaxerxes (Ezra vii.), and on the lunar scale to *a day* from the *second* (Neh. ii.). A simple calculation shows this: Seventy weeks are 490 years, but  $69\frac{1}{2}$  weeks are  $486\frac{1}{2}$  years; *this* is, therefore, the number of years predicted to elapse *between Artaxerxes' Decree and the death of Christ*. Hence  $69\frac{1}{2}$  weeks of lunar years from Passover to Passover *did* extend between Artaxerxes' Decree, in the twentieth year of his reign, and the crucifixion, or cutting off, of "Messiah the Prince," A.D. 29. Thus the prophecy was accurately fulfilled, even to a day, *on the lunar scale*.' ('Light for the Last Days,' pp. 86, 87).

This is very wonderful, and no doubt, if true, must be



considered a test case in proof of the *solar* and *lunar scales and cycles* that form the 'progressive revelation' of the authors. Dr. Anderson, as well as we remember, draws the same conclusions, but they are from profane or secular history.

Now, the great difficulty to anyone who believes in the inspiration of Scripture, is that this theory brings the Angel Gabriel, and Daniel, and the Prophet Zechariah all into direct collision. For Daniel prayed thus: 'And cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake, etc. . . . And while I was presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God' (*i.e.*, the Temple on Mount Zion). Then the Angel Gabriel comes and informs him that seventy weeks were determined on his people, saying, 'Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks; and threescore and two weeks,' etc.

This chronological prophecy did not set in, we are told, when Cyrus decreed the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon and when Ezra built the Temple and wall. Nor till the twentieth year of Artaxerxes in Nehemiah's time—that is, till ninety or a hundred years after. So that the words 'to restore and build Jerusalem' did not refer at all to the Temple, which was the very centre of the city and the chief subject of the prayer, but only to the city itself and its walls. Nor, if this be so, was anything that could be called a commandment respecting Jerusalem given for nearly one hundred years after! Can anyone believe this? Yet, such is the established contention of our modern expositors!

And more than that; the Prophet Zechariah is found encouraging the people to build the city in his prophecy at the time of Ezra, who was acting under the decree of Cyrus—which he should not have done at all—as the Divine decree about the building of the city was not to come forward for ninety or one hundred years later. Haggai encouraged the people to build the Temple, Zechariah both city and Temple. And this inspired Prophet for their encouragement says: ‘I lifted up mine eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof. . . Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls,’ etc. (Zech. ii.). There is no need to multiply quotations; this is sufficient to show that the Prophet moved the people at the time to build the city. That is certain. Now if the Angel Gabriel in his prophecy, and the Prophet Daniel who received it, did not contemplate the building of the city at the time, nor for nearly one hundred years after, until another decree was to go forth from Artaxerxes, it is evident that the Prophet who exhorted the people to build beforehand was in collision with the Angel Gabriel and the Prophet Daniel, and was entirely out of his reckoning. Yet such are the conclusions which must follow if the views of our *solar* and *lunar* and modern prophets are true. But whilst the effort to harmonize the time of the chronology is praiseworthy in itself and laudable if supported by revelation, yet when this method involves the surrender of Divine inspiration, humility might infer that there must be some flaw in the calculations. The idea of a Divine Prophet exhorting the people to do beforehand what was not to be

done at all until the issue of a Divine decree one hundred years after, is too absurd to be entertained—or if entertained would only exhibit in an adverse light the modern conception of Divine inspiration. Until this great difficulty can be explained, who can be expected to receive the interpretation?

## WEEKS BROKEN.

We have now to approach the most crucial part of the subject, and pray that we may be able to make it at least plain to the reader.

It is observable as well as remarkable that this ninth chapter of Daniel stands between the two visions of the Old Testament Antichrist, to comfort the faithful with the view of Him who was to 'make reconciliation for iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness.' For chapters vii. and viii. on the one side, and x. to xii. on the other, portray the antichristian apostasy of the last days. And the Prophet proceeds thus (ix. 25): 'Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore' (build again, marg.) 'and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks—and the street shall be built again' (return and be builded, marg.), 'and the wall even in troublous times.'

Does not the very language show that *the commandment* refers to something known to the Prophet? and is that which is spoken of previously in verse 23, where the angel says, 'At the beginning of thy supplication *the commandment* (רַבִּי נְצִי) went forth' (R.V.), ἐξῆλθε λόγος. This cannot refer to a particular permission to be issued 90 or 100 years after under Artaxerxes, of which Daniel could have no knowledge whatever. It can only refer to the commandment or decree

of Cyrus which had then gone forth at the time, if the language is to have meaning, and the aorist tense could not apply at all to the remote future in this way.

The next thing to notice is the break in the weeks. They are divided into three unequal parts, seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. Surely there must be a Divine reason for so dividing them. Otherwise it were easier for the Prophet, if one continuous unbroken period was meant, to speak of it accordingly.

There were then seven weeks and sixty-two weeks—that is, sixty-nine weeks—in two broken periods from Cyrus's decree unto 'Messiah the Prince.' And after that 'Messiah was to be cut off.' But the Prophet notices at the end of verse 25 that they would 'return and build the wall in troublous times,' which was a prophecy of what did actually take place long after under Nehemiah.\* However, the LXX. adopt another reading altogether different from this. Instead of '*troublous times*,' they render the Hebrew words thus, '*and the periods shall be made void*' (και ἐκκενωθησονται οἱ καιροί). The corresponding Hebrew words literally are—'in straitness the times,' which the Greek translators understood to mean that the intervals or periods between the weeks would be made void and not counted; thus giving to Gentile readers the sense of the passage, as they often do. But it presents another side of the subject entirely, and is very observable.

#### GAPS IN HISTORIC PROPHECY.

But whether the Greek translators were right or wrong in their view of the above passage is another matter; however,

\* The wall built by Ezra had been thrown down by 'the adversaries of Judah.' And Nehemiah now goes to rebuild it 'in troublous times.' Compare Ezra ix. 9, with Nehemiah i. 3, 4.

there can be no doubt at all events of the way and manner in which gaps and breaks appear in Divine prophecy and history. They are very constant—there was a gap between Joseph and Moses on which Scripture is silent—a gap between Joshua and the Judges—a gap between the first and second part of the Book of Ezra of 57 years, as shown by all commentators. And in this very Book of Daniel are several gaps and breaks, *e.g.*, there is in it no mention of the first year of Cyrus, save one incidental remark, viz. : That Daniel continued to stand in the palace ‘until the first year of King Cyrus’ (Dan. i. 21). But when Belshazzar falls, it is Darius who is seen in the front, although we know that Cyrus preceded him\* (all the kings are given in order in Ezra vi. 14). For it was Cyrus who took Babylon, and he was clearly the first king. However, Darius afterwards takes the kingdom, and comes to the front, whether as the gift of Cyrus, as the historians say, or not, nobody can tell. At all events, after Belshazzar, Darius is placed in the front, and doubtless, with the view of narrating the faithfulness of Daniel and the den of lions. For the ignoring of the God of heaven, by Darius substituting himself as an object of worship, could not have occurred in the reign of Cyrus, who owned ‘the Lord God of heaven,’ as we see in Ezra i. Hence the commandment referred to here had gone forth in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia.†

\* Though Cyrus in time certainly precedes Darius, yet Cyrus’ reign is placed after that of Darius in Dan. vi. 28 ; and so also we see the last year of Belshazzar placed before his first year (see Dan. v., vii.), the chronological or time order giving place to the events prominent in the Divine arrangement communicated to the Prophet.

† Professor Sayce’s inferences as to Cyrus cannot be accepted. That Cyrus may have been a polytheist before God took him up, perhaps is

## THE ANGEL GABRIEL (VERSES 26, 27).

Now the same Angel Gabriel, who here unfolds the seventy weeks to Daniel, makes further revelation in chapter xi., and in the opening of the chapter says, 'And now I will show thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will,' etc. Here, says St. Jerome, '*It is to be noted that the Prophet, having enumerated four kings of the Persians after Cyrus, slippeth over nine, and passeth on to Alexander, for the prophetic spirit did not care to follow the order of history, but only to touch on the most famous events.*'—'*Notandum quod quatuor post Cyrum regibus Persarum enumeratis, novem præterieret, et transieret ad Alexandrum. Non enim curæ fuit spiritui prophetali historię ordinem sequi; sed preclara quæque perstringere.*' Behold, then, the large gap made by the angel in this revelation of the kings of Persia: nine of them passed over, their reigns not being of moment as connected with Israel, and attention is fixed on Alexander, 'the mighty king' that was to come after!

Any careful reader of prophecy can see that attention is constantly fixed on the salient points, so that gaps and breaks in it are the rule rather than the exception. And, indeed, in whatever way the last week of the seventy is viewed, there

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quite true; but he certainly was not a polytheist when he issued the decree (Ezra i.). St. Paul calls himself an enemy of God before God took him up (Rom. v. 10), but how strange would it be to speak of him as such afterwards!

must be a gap, for if it set in with our Lord's final testimony—the 'desolations,' under Titus, did not take place for over thirty years after, and 'the most holy place' is not yet anointed—there is a gap and break here that must be admitted on all hands, interpret the passage as we may. And 'the abomination of desolation' spoken of by our Lord was then future to Him. Some of the Fathers were very clear on this subject. Hippolytus, in the third century, writes : *'For when the sixty-two weeks have been fulfilled, and Christ has come, and the Gospel has been everywhere preached (the times having been made void, ἐκκενω=θῆντων τῶν καιρῶν), there shall be left one week—the last—in which Elias and Enoch shall be present, and in the half of it shall appear the abomination of desolation,'* etc.

Now, though there were few subjects on which the primitive Fathers agreed, there was 'unanimous consent' amongst them upon the second coming and millennial kingdom of Christ. And this 'unanimous consent' is ignored up to the present day by none more than those who boast in the 'unanimous consent of the Fathers,' viz., all ritualists and ultramontanes. And also ignored by all Nonconformist ministers, with but few exceptions. Of course we do not care to allude to the large rationalist school of ministers such as of Dr. Parker of London, and the late Ward Beecher, and Canon Farrar. But even ministers, orthodox in other respects, still dream of converting the world by their efforts, whilst at no time in the world's history were nations armed to the teeth as at present. But Scripture is dead against all such ideas, that is, if we like to submit to Scripture ; for all the Apostles who write on the subject draw the darkest picture of the times to follow after them till the Lord comes.

## APPROXIMATE COMPUTATION.

If, then, a gap or a break be admitted in respect to the last week of the seventy, the principle is established of breaks in the other periods. And if we subtract the period at which the work ceased and was frustrated, (1) 'all the days of Cyrus, king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius, king of Persia' (Ezra iv. 5); (2) and again, the period of fifty-seven years between Darius and Artaxerxes, in the second part of the Book of Ezra, which all admit; (3) and, finally, the period of transition between the reformation effected under Ezra and the time of Nehemiah's arrival at Jerusalem (Neh. ii.), we come to the probable solution of the whole question. And it has this advantage, that it does not oblige us to ignore any Scripture in order to uphold a theory (such as in the case of Isaiah or Cyrus). And it finds us also on the lines of Divine computation; for, not having got '*progressive revelation*' for ourselves, we are bound to follow the language and lines of Scripture in the matter. And the probable reckoning, as we take it, brings us remarkably near the period when we take Cyrus at 536 B.C.—then our Lord's life at 33 years—total 569 years; subtract from this total 57 years between the first and second parts of Ezra according to all commentators, and 22 years for the two periods above mentioned in which the work ceased, and the time of transition set in; and subtracting thus 79 years from 569—there remains 490 years. Of course we only use these figures or this chronology approximately. The chronology of our Bibles makes the periods between Ezra i. and Nehemiah i. to be about 90 years. But whatever the interval be, it is certain



that the decree referred to by Daniel was that of Cyrus, who is put next to 'the God of Israel' in the issuing of 'the commandment' (Ezra vi. 14). And when this passage is put alongside Isaiah xlv. 28 and xlv. 19, there can be no reasonable doubt of the matter. For Ezra says, 'And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the Prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, and they builded and finished, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.' Now of Cyrus the Lord saith, 'He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.' Again, 'He shall build My city, and he shall let go My captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of Hosts.' It is clear, therefore that the decree or commandment referred to went forth from Cyrus, and must reckon from thence. But after sixty-nine weeks 'Messiah the Prince' is cut off, and has 'nothing.' (He had not even where to lay His head.) But 'the Prince of the people that shall come' makes desolation, and 'causes the sacrifice and oblation to cease.' Now though Titus made desolations, he certainly set up no 'abomination,' and though Antiochus Epiphanes long before took away the daily sacrifice, and set up the abomination of swine's flesh on the altar for three years (1 Macc. i.), yet all this was but a forecast of the future, for our Lord in His day refers to 'the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place' as future (Matt. xxiv. 15).

We have, then, in Daniel four passages in which *the daily sacrifice* is said to be 'taken away,' every one of which must refer to the same time, because of the identity of the lan-

guage. In chapter viii. 11-13, 'the daily sacrifice is taken away.' In chapter ix. 27, 'the sacrifice and oblation is caused to cease.' In chapter xi. 31, 'they take away the daily sacrifice, and place the abomination that maketh desolate.' And, finally, in chapter xii. 11, the time is mentioned when 'the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination of desolation set up.' Now in all conscience and in all simplicity, there can be no doubt that these passages refer to the same circumstances and to the same period, the language of the Prophet being identical in each case, and if so, each and all of them are future, because so interpreted by our Lord, and therefore the future Prince is yet to come.

But there are two Princes mentioned by the Angel in those verses (25-27), '*Messiah the Prince*,' and '*the Prince of the people*,' etc. The latter is the one who 'shall make desolate' (verse 27). In short, he is the final antichrist who makes a covenant alliance with the Jews; and of whom our Lord speaks, saying to them: 'If another (*Messiah*) shall come in his own name, him ye will receive' (John v. 43). Our Lord speaks here evidently in reference to this very passage in Daniel.

#### THE CONCLUSION IN THE FUTURE.

If, therefore, there be gaps and breaks in the seventy weeks, which the very language itself implies, then the silent intervals so frequent in Scripture in respect to Israel are evident. And those periods of silence are not reckoned,

as, for instance, in the history of the Judges.\* Therefore there are occasions in which Divine computation does not calculate when Israel's covenant relations are in abeyance. The same principle is seen in reference to 'THE CROWN.' For as long as it is off the head of Israel's king, it is considered as 'in the dust,' and a thing that is '*no more*' until He come whose right it is' (Ezek. xxi. 25-27). The foregoing remarks are but suggestions, and only suggestions, with a view to put the Christian student on what the writer considers the right track in connection with this great prophecy. But to explode all Mr. and Mrs. Guinness's imaginative theories one would have to write volumes.

The reader is to observe respecting this great prophecy that verse 24 gives an outline of *the Messiah's history*, and winds up with His 'making reconciliation for iniquity, bringing in everlasting righteousness and anointing the most holy,' which means *the most holy place*, for the term is exactly that of Ezek. xlv. 3 (*Kodesh Kodashim, the holy of holies*). In other words, the Messiah's history was to end in the salvation and restoration of Israel and the setting up of the Temple. But observe the last verses of the prophecy (26, 27); instead of finishing up in accordance with this outline, it ends with nothing but ruin, desolation, and abomination (to which our Lord refers, Matt. xxiv. 15), and there stops. Why, then, is this? Because the Messiah was 'cut off and had nothing.' He was rejected by His own people. 'The stone that the builders rejected,' etc., comes to pass.

\* Sir E. Denny formerly, and Dr. Anderson lately in his book, 'The Coming Prince,' referred to the times of Israel's captivities in the Book of Judges being 'made void.' And in this way the 480 years mentioned 1 Kings vi. 1 are to be harmonized and computed.

Isaiah's word then set in against them : ' If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established ' (Isa. vii. 9). But ' shall their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God ? God forbid ! ' It only puts off the final blessing till the people come to repentance (Rom. xi.). And in the end the prophecy of *Gabriel* as to the ultimate restoration and anointing of the most holy place will be fulfilled to the letter. Whilst in the meantime ' the spiritual things ' which Israel refused to have passed over to us Gentiles. The whole chequered history is sketched by St. Paul in Rom. xi. May the Lord give us all wisdom to understand these things, and stamp the power of them on our hearts from day to day. Amen.

NOTE.—As this little book has been written, not for those who believe not, but for those who believe the Scriptures, we have not dwelt on the eternity of the judgment in Apoc. xx. 10, nor on the eternity of the blessedness (Apoc. xxii. 5); the language itself being commensurate in each case. And the Lord Himself, both in the Gospels and in the Apocalypse, is throughout the strongest witness on the subject.

THE END.