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ARTICLE I.—*Œuvres divers de Fénelon*.—Paris: Chez Lefèvre, 1844.

WE are no friends to Popery; to its doctrines, institutions, and ceremonies; and hesitate not to regard it as the great scheme of the evil one for frustrating the leading objects of Revelation. We repel with indignation her claims to infallibility; we abhor her despotism and tyranny; we regard as mere Paganized Christianity many of her rites and observances; we esteem, as unscriptural and irrational, much of her theology as consecrated by the Council of Trent. We have embraced all proper opportunities to oppose its errors and corruptions, its false doctrines and evil practices; and shall continue to do it as long as we have power to “contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.”

But while we thus bear our decided testimony against the Church of Rome, does it imply an excision of *all* the members of its communion? Should there not be a distinction between the dogmas of a church viewed in its corporate authority, and the character of its members considered in their private capacity? Adopting the test which our Saviour gives, “by their fruits ye shall know them,” we are bound to admit that many in that community have “brought forth the fruits of the Spirit,”

What is that secret? Where lies his great power which thus touches our souls? It is the spirit of *Christian love*, liberally shed upon all he did, and wrote, and said; that love which subdues selfishness; which binds our hearts to our fellow-men, and unites us indissolubly to God. We love him, because he is so much like the Apostle John; because he made his words the motto of his life; "*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for GOD IS LOVE.*"

ART. II.—*The Religious Significance of Numbers.*

ALL that it will be necessary to premise respecting the authorities referred to in this article, can be stated in a few words. The symbolical character and use of numbers have been most elaborately investigated by Bähr. His writings are classical upon this subject, and no discussion of it can be considered satisfactory, in which the facts and reasonings that he has brought forward do not receive their just measure of attention. In his *Symbolik des Mosaischen Cultus* he devotes to it an entire chapter of one hundred and thirty-six closely printed octavo pages, besides many occasional remarks scattered through the rest of the work. It recurs again in his later publication on Solomon's Temple, in which he modifies to some extent the opinions formerly expressed. The views of Bähr are, with a few unessential alterations, adopted by Kurtz, in an article in the *Studien und Kritiken*, for 1844, on the Symbolical Dignity of Numbers in the Tabernacle. Professor Stuart has given, in an excursus at the close of his commentary on the Apocalypse, some fragments of Bähr's principal chapter in a diluted state. Hengstenberg's ideas regarding it appear incidentally in the course of his various commentaries, particularly those upon the History of Balaam, the Psalms, and the Revelation. The change of sentiment which Hengstenberg has undergone in the interval of these successive publications,

is very remarkable. From being an opponent of Bähr on the side of moderation, he has run into an extravagance far beyond him. Vitringa, in his *Anacrisis Apocalypsios*, or Examination of the Apocalypse, has entered into the question of the significance of the numbers which occur in the course of that book. Winer has also given his views briefly upon it in his *Biblisches Real-Worterbuch*, under the word *Zahlen*. The extended explanations of sacred numbers found in Philo, Josephus, and other ancient writers philosophically inclined, cannot be accepted as either rational or consistent, or as anything but heaps of idle and arbitrary fancies.

There is no small diversity of opinion respecting this subject, both in the authors named, and in others who have less formally and largely spoken their mind upon it. Such is the measure of indefiniteness unavoidably connected with symbolic representation, and so much must be left to be mentally supplied by those who interpret it, that even where there is entire agreement as to the thing signified in the main, there is scarcely to be expected a complete coincidence in opinion as to the meaning of its minor features, especially where these are examined in their minuter details. It is the same even with figures of speech, metaphors, fables, allegories, and parables. Their general purport may be plain enough, but there will always be embarrassment and divergence of opinion, when the attempt is made to settle with precision all the particulars to which the significance extends. There is no palpable boundary separating the significant from that which is not. The former fades away so gradually and insensibly into the latter, that its termination cannot be evidently marked, and one will lose sight of it at a point where it can still, in the imagination of another, be more or less perceptibly traced.

The numbers are in any case a very subordinate part of the Scripture symbols. The chief significance resides in the body of the symbols themselves, and not in their numerical relations. And yet it is not impossible, that these may have their appropriateness and significance likewise. There have been not a few to claim that they have, and to imagine that they could discover a fitness and a meaning in them, such as would well repay the labour bestowed upon their study. With-

out placing an undue estimate upon these investigations, and without putting confidence in all their results, we yet think them not undeserving of attention, both for the sake of the history of opinion involved, and because of some aspects of the subject which have a real importance in the interpretation of Scripture. Our aim, as we here forewarn our readers at the outset, is not to propound nor to establish a theory of our own, so much as to acquaint them with what others have thought and written upon the matter.

The first questions to be raised concern of course the character and the foundation of the alleged use of numbers. What is meant precisely by sacred or symbolical numbers? And what proof is there of a sacredness, or ideal significance attached to some particular numbers rather than to others? Then having informed ourselves as to the fact, we shall be at liberty to ask after its reasons, and to search out the extent of its application.

The grounds upon which the existence of numerical symbols is assumed, are a use of numbers pervading the Bible, which cannot be otherwise than ideally explained—a marked preference, so to speak, a partiality for particular numbers in sacred connections—a recurrence of the same numbers too frequent and too uniform to be accidental and undesigned—a use of them which cannot have arisen from necessity, from considerations of convenience or symmetry, nor from the indefinite employment of them as round numbers; for why should seven be a round number rather than six or eight? The force of these considerations is enhanced by an appeal to the symbolical use of different numbers in many nations of antiquity, besides the Hebrews, and by attempts to show how such a use might readily have arisen.

But in order to exhibit these grounds in a more definite form, let us follow the leading of Bähr. He first comes in contact with this subject, in explaining the draught of the Mosaic tabernacle. He has the advantage in his argument of coming with a presumption gained from the symbolical character of the whole structure, that its various parts were symbolical. Not only the general plan of the building, and its furniture, but its materials and its colours, have all their signi-

fiance and their appropriateness. This granted, it is natural to suppose that the same may be the case with the forms and numbers likewise. Then, the minuteness of the specifications is such, that unless explicable from their ideal import they would border upon triviality. Why must there be just so many boards in the frame? Why must the covering consist of precisely such a number of pieces, and these fastened together by exactly so many loops and taches? This cannot be accounted for by any reasons of convenience, or of adaptation to the purposes for which the building was erected. It was not with the sole design of ensuring symmetry of form, or the preservation of architectural proportions. The religious structures and symbolic representations of the Hebrews, and indeed of the East generally, unlike those of Greece, were governed less by a regard for symmetry and beauty, than by the desire faithfully to embody the religious conception, and that, though the resulting form might be inelegant, or even grotesque. But apart from this, the minuteness of detail in things which would not in the slightest affect its appearance, cannot be thus accounted for. This is confirmed by the detailed measures given by Ezekiel in the closing chapters of his prophecy, whose occurrence there it would be hard to explain, even were they literal measures, either reminiscences of the temple of Solomon, or prescriptions to guide in the construction of the temple of Zerubbabel. But as they demonstrably were neither, and the building described is an ideal one, that never in fact was, nor was designed to be erected, these details must have an ideal significance, or none at all. Again, in Rev. xi. 1, 2, the measuring of the temple marks its sacred character; that which was to be given up to profanation was left unmeasured.

If, now, it be conceded that an ideal reason must in all these cases be assumed, it is not enough to look for that in the bare fact of measuring by divine authority, while the numerical relations discovered or enjoined are left out of view as unimportant. The whole truth is not exhausted, by saying that it was a matter of indifference what particular numbers were to have place in the Mosaic sanctuary; that the total of their significance lay in the fact of God's having directed what they

should be; that it was of no consequence whether one set of numbers appeared in the draught of the tabernacle or another, but only that the numbers, whatever they might be, should be divinely prescribed. This is part of the truth, no doubt. The tabernacle was to be a divine structure; and to mark this more evidently, the directions given were not merely general, but specific. The plan was given, not simply in its outline, but in its minutest details, so that it might not need the most trifling human addition. All was designed of God. Just as the detailed prescriptions as to clean and unclean meats, had the same end in regard to the everyday life of Israel, teaching by symbol what the apostle has thus translated into New Testament language: "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." But there is a significance, it is claimed, lying back of all this, back of all considerations of adaptation and of symmetry, back even of the divine character to be impressed upon the structure. In the draught which God gave to Moses of this building, one class of numbers is systematically preferred to all others. Every other end could have been answered as well, without so large a use of these particular numbers. But there was a propriety arising out of the symbolic conceptions of the Hebrews, to which God adapted himself in this, as in the rest of the ceremonial institutions, that precisely these numbers, rather than any others, should predominate in that sacred edifice.

A brief survey of the principal numbers of the Levitical institutions, will put the reader in possession of the facts, and will enable him to judge for himself of the necessity or applicability of the doctrine of numerical symbols. Some of the numbers to be met with in other parts of Scripture, for which a similar explanation is proposed, will be exhibited subsequently.

The sanctuary consisted of 3 parts—the court, the holy place, and the holy of holies—all quadrangular, and set by the cardinal points of the compass; the last a perfect cube, its length, breadth, and height, each 10 cubits. The tabernacle proper measured 10 cubits in breadth and height, and 3×10 cubits in length. There were 4×12 boards in its frame. Over this were laid 4 coverings; the lowermost was composed of 10 pieces, 4 cubits broad by 4×7 long, and joined 5 to 5 by 5×10 taches.

The second covering differed from this, in having its pieces 3×10 cubits in length. In the most holy place were the tables containing the 10 commandments; 4 pillars supported the veil which separated this from the adjoining apartment. In this stood 3 sacred vessels, the altar of incense, the candlestick with its 7 lamps, and the table of shew-bread with its 12 loaves. The court was 10×10 cubits long, and 5×10 broad, surrounded by pillars 5 cubits high and 5 cubits apart, with 4 pillars forming the entrance to it from without, and 5 the entrance from it to the tabernacle.*

In the temple of Solomon, the same arrangement and proportions were preserved, the measures only being doubled. The difficult question as to the height of the temple, need not here be raised. The two cherubim of olive wood, set in the holy of holies, were each 10 cubits high, and 10 cubits between the tips of their wings; 10 candlesticks and 10 tables were put in the holy place, and in the court 10 lavers, 10×10 golden basins, and a molten sea 10 cubits in diameter and 5 cubits high, supported by 12 oxen, 3 facing toward each of the 4 points of the compass. The porch before the temple was twice 10 cubits long, by 10 broad.

The sabbatical system was a complete series of sevens. The 7th day of the week was to be kept holy; the first day of the 7th month was hallowed by the blowing of trumpets; the 7th year was a sabbatical year; and the 7×7 th was followed by the year of jubilee. All Israel was required to appear thrice in the year before the Lord at the 3 great festivals. The passover lamb was to be selected on the 10th, and killed on the twice

* Friederich, in his *Symbolik der Mosaischen Stiftshütte*, maintains the idea derived from some expressions employed by Luther, that the sanctuary symbolizes man, or human nature, as the dwelling of God's Spirit; and he accordingly undertakes to make out that the numbers of the frame and its coverings have their counterpart in man's anatomical structure. In his view, consequently, they are significant in this sacred edifice, and contribute to its correspondence with that which it symbolizes; not, however, ideally, but literally and physically. His palpably strange misconception of the intent of the entire building, and the forcing to which he is obliged to resort in the details, as well as the fact that there are other numbers no less remarkable than those of the tabernacle for which not the semblance of an explanation can be furnished on this method, throw his theory completely out of the question, and render it unnecessary to give it more than this passing notice.

7th day of the month, after which the feast lasted for 7 days; 7×7 days were numbered from the passover to the feast of weeks. In the 7th month there was a cluster of sacred services. Besides the hallowing of its first day already mentioned, the great day of atonement occurred on the 10th, and after the twice 7th followed the feast of tabernacles, which lasted for 7 days. The sacrifices upon this, as upon some other occasions, were multiples of seven; 7×10 bullocks for the entire feast, and twice 7 lambs for each day. Children were circumcised after they had completed their 7th day. Periods of purification from uncleanness were according to the nature of the several cases, 7, twice 7, 40, and twice 40 days. When persons or houses were suspected of leprosy, they were shut up 7 days, in order to a renewed examination. In their cleansing they were to be sprinkled 7 times. In sacrifices of more than ordinary solemnity, as that on the day of atonement, or one offered for the sins of a priest, or for those of the whole congregation, the sprinkling of the blood was repeated 7 times.

There were 3 orders of ministers in the sanctuary, the high priest, the priests, and the Levites. The priests were distributed by David into twice 12 courses. One 10th of all the produce of the land was given annually to the Levites, and every 3d year an additional 10th was bestowed upon the poor. Of the tithes which they received, the Levites were required to offer one 10th to the Lord. They had 4×12 cities assigned to them, with adjoining tracts of land lying 4 square, set by the points of the compass, and measuring $10 \times 10 \times 10$ cubits in each direction from the cities. Of these twice 3 were selected as cities of refuge. The sacred vestments of the priests were composed of 4 pieces; those of the high priest of twice 4. The breastplate of the high priest was adorned with 12 precious stones, set in 3 rows of 4 each. In the consecration of the priests, which lasted 7 days, they were anointed with the holy oil of 4 ingredients. The sacred incense was likewise compounded of 4 ingredients. Parts of 4 different creatures made up the cherubim. The legally prescribed encampment of the 12 tribes in the wilderness, was a hollow square, set by the points of the compass, with the sanctuary and its ministers in the centre, and 3 tribes lying upon each of its 4 sides.

It is not necessary in order to make out a case in favour of numerical symbols, that all the members which have been recited, should have an ideal significance. Many of them may have been, some very probably were, suggested by considerations of symmetry or convenience. But leaving all such out of view, there will still remain a frequency and regularity in the recurrence of a few favourite figures which cannot have been accidental. From these and similar facts gathered from other parts of Scripture, two conclusions have been drawn. The first is, that there are certain sacred numbers, or such as occur with marked frequency in the religious institutions of the Hebrews, and to which the preference seems always to have been accorded, when there was no antecedent reason of convenience, necessity or the like, for selecting another. This is generally admitted to be the case with 7, 10 and 12. Bähr contends for more than these; so do others, as will be seen in the sequel. The second conclusion is, that there are specific differences and gradations among the sacred numbers themselves, peculiarities of signification, so to speak, or of usage belonging to each, which determines with some degree of definiteness the respective range of their employment, and make one more suitable than another in its own particular sphere. As instances may be noted, the tens in the measures of the tabernacle as contrasted with the fives of the court, and the predominance of seven in the cycle of sacred seasons.

The complete proof of the symbolical import of numbers can however only be furnished by their interpretation. If a consistent and rational explanation can be made of them, which shall be in constant harmony with the connection in which they are found, the matter is settled. Everything depends upon whether such an explanation is possible. The proof of the correct interpretation of symbols, as that of the answer to an enigma, lies in the appositeness and the adequacy of the solution itself. This requires, however, that we should first examine the meanings or ideal values attributed to these various numbers. And in order to this it will be necessary to institute an investigation into the reasons of this significance. Upon what is it founded, and whence is it derived? Here we are met by several different theories. We may name

them the historical, the typical, the speculative, the astronomical, the chronological, and the realistic. A formidable list, truly! And yet it may prove not to be very difficult, after all, to select out those of them to which we may most reasonably look for whatever significance the numbers appear to have.

The historical theory supposes the sacredness of numbers to rest upon scriptural facts in which those numbers are prominent, and to which there is always a reference more or less distinct in their religious use. The plainest instances of this are twelve and seven. It is undeniable that twelve is often employed with designed allusion to the number of the tribes of Israel. From the duodenary division of this chosen race, twelve became the signature, so to speak, of the people of God, or of the Church. It was this, as is evident, which determined the number of jewels in the high priest's breastplate. This is positively asserted in many other cases, *e. g.* Ex. xxiv. 4. Josh. iv. 18. 1 Kings xviii. 31. Under the employment of this number, was couched an allusion to the twelve tribes. The loaves of shew-bread were to represent a combined offering from all the tribes. The oxen under the molten sea, and perhaps the boards of the tabernacle, numerically represented the same thing, they marked the sacred edifice in which they were found as designed for the worship of the twelve tribes. Bähr, though admitting all these facts, contends that there must have been some anterior reason for the sacredness of twelve, some reason other than the bare historical one which made it appropriate that the chosen people should be a whole made up of twelve confederated communities. 1. Because a duodenary division of tribes occurs in other ancient nations; also, *e. g.* the Arabs in Gen. xvii. 20; xxv. 16, and in the time of Mohammed, the ancient Persians, according to Xenophon, and even the ideal state of Plato. 2. Because the tribes were always numbered twelve, although there were in fact thirteen. Bähr's own explanation will be given below. Here it is sufficient to say that the number of Jacob's sons was twelve. And although the two tribes springing from Joseph, increased this number by one, yet this was balanced by the singular position occupied by Levi. Twelve tribes only received inheritance in the promised land.

The sacredness of seven is quite as plainly due to the sanctification of the seventh day at the creation. This is expressly declared in the fourth commandment to have determined the selection of the Sabbath day; and upon this is evidently built the whole round of Sabbatic institutions, governed as they are by sevens, throughout the whole of which the reference is plain to the primeval rest of God. Consequent upon this is a farther extension of its use. As seven marked sacred time, it came to mark other sacred things. Hence the seven branches of the candlestick, and other uses of the number detailed above, or to be mentioned hereafter. And it perhaps deserves consideration, whether out of the employment of this number in the book of Genesis, may not be derived an argument of some importance in favour of the original institution of the Sabbath immediately upon the creation. The force of the arguments can never be successfully set aside, which are drawn from the almost universal septenary division of time among all ancient nations; the importance of a day of religious rest to the patriarchs, no less than to their descendants, the distinct mention of the Sabbath before the arrival at Sinai, the word "Remember" in the fourth commandment, the extended Sabbatic system of the Mosaic law, seemingly implying a previously existing foundation upon which it was based, and the explicit testimony of Gen. ii. 3. But it may be worth inquiring, whether the ante-Mosaic sacredness of seven is not an additional argument to be co-ordinated with the foregoing. We shall not dwell upon this here, but only refer in passing to the ante-diluvian evidence of its sacredness in the sevenfold vengeance to be taken of the slayer of Cain, and the seventy and seven fold boasted of by Lamech; then the septenary division of time in the days of Noah, the seven clean beasts and birds he took with him into the ark, circumcision in the family of Abraham, performed after the seventh day, seven ewe lambs taken to witness the oath made with Abimelech, the constitution of the Hebrew language itself, in which "swear" and "seven" have a common etymology—not to mention cases in which its religious use is less apparent, as the seven years which Jacob served for Leah, and seven again for Rachel, the seven times he bowed himself to Esau, and the sevens of Pharaoh's dreams.

The explication of other numbers upon this theory is less evident and satisfactory. Ten might be referred to the ten plagues of Egypt, or the ten commandments; but the sacredness of the number is more easily explained as the cause than as the effect in these cases. The speculative theory seems to offer the best solution here. Hengstenberg, after denying in his *Bileam*, p. 90, the symbolic character of three, and specifically that it had such a character in the sacerdotal blessing, Num. vi. 22, in his later writings finds evidences of its sacredness almost without limit, and makes it the number of the blessing.* We confess, however, that we are unable to see in the instances adduced by him or by others, the evidence of any thing more than a rhetorical or a graditative employment of the number three. And we do not see why his own previous appeal to Jer. vii. 4; xxii. 29; Ez. xxi. 27, does not remain valid against his later conclusions. Nor, to our mind, is there any more proof of the symbolical character of the number in the three successive compartments of progressive sacredness forming the sanctuary, than there are in the three ordinary degrees of comparison. The only cases in which we are disposed to think it significant, are those in which it appears in immediate connection with the divine names, *e. g.* in the sacerdotal blessing, that pronounced by Jacob upon Joseph, Gen. xlvi. 15, 16, or the thrice holy of Isa. vi. 3. There may be in passages like these, obscure intimations of the doctrine elsewhere taught in the Old Testament, and clearly revealed in the New, of a trinity of divine persons. But the proof seems to be wanting of anything beyond this, of any extended use of the number with designed allusion, whether to the Divine Being, (Bähr,) his blessing, (Hengstenberg,) or the secret mystery of his nature, (Lampe, †) or even a more vague and general employment of it in sacred connections.

* In his preliminary remarks upon Ps. xxvi. and xxvii., Hengstenberg recites what he at that time held to be "all the significant numbers of the Old Testament;" twelve, the number of the covenant people; ten, the signature of completeness; seven, the signature of the covenant; and three, the number of the blessing. In his *Commentary on the Revelation*, he not only adds the number four, but adopts regarding it the opinion of Bähr, which he had before distinctly repelled, that it is the signature of the earth. See on Rev. iv. 6.

† See *Comment. in Joannem* vi. 67. In this passage, which we make no apo-

Vitringa may be taken as the representative of the typical theory. An inordinate fondness for types is a well-known characteristic of this learned and able expositor, and it has frequently betrayed him into extravagant and fanciful views. The strong conviction which he entertained of the intimate connection between the two dispensations, led him into the belief that everything in the Old Testament bore a designed relation to something which was to appear in the New. This same idea governed his explanation of at least one of the sacred numbers, viz. seven. His views regarding it are given at considerable length in his comment upon Rev. i. 20. He contends that there is always involved in it, wherever it occurs, in the Old Testament and in the New, a mystical reference to the seven periods through which the Church of Christ is to pass before the end of all things, as set forth in the seven mystical churches of Asia, and the seven seals; a view, the adoption of which, he thinks, will "shed immense light" upon the typical institutions of the Old Economy, and the various passages of Holy Writ in which this number is mentioned or

logy for quoting at length, it will be perceived that Lampe gives to both *three* and *four* ideal meanings. He agrees with Vitringa in attributing to seven a typical sense, and with Bähr in making the composition of twelve and seven from three and four significant, while as to the primary sacredness of twelve, he adopts the historical view stated above. "Collegium Apostolorum frequenter in historia Evangelica dicitur *αριθμησις* non solum propter numerum quem conficiebant, sed etiam propter singulare mysterium quod sub eorum duodenario latet, quod ipse servator innuit Matth. xix. 28, nempe quod hic numerus respondeat xii. patriarchis, filiis Jacobi, totidem tribuum Israelis capitibus, quorum antitypus erant apostoli, filii Israelis mystici, fundamenta et capita totius populi Dei in N. T. et capropter per duodenarium fontium in Elin, gemmarum in pectorali Pontificis maximi, duodecim lapides in Jordane erectos, duodecim boves maris ænei etc. præfigurati. Unde universa Ecclesia N. T. toties in Apocalypsi per duodenariorum duplicationem et in unum corpus cum Ecclesia V. T. collecta per duodenarium duplicatum seu xxiv. presbyteros respondentem ephemeridi Sacerdotum et Levitarum, recensetur. Nec sine mysterio esse videtur, quod duodenarius constet ternario per quaternium multiplicato, cum non solum ternarius et quaternarius conficiat septenarium, omnes periodos ecclesiæ connectentem, sed etiam ternarius respondeat Trinitati, quaternarius Ecclesiæ per quatuor partes orbis terrarum dispersæ. Divisio enim duodenarii in ternarios et quaternarios mysticos fundata est tum in castrametatione Num. ii. tum in portis Hierosolymæ secundum Ezechielem xlvi. 31—34, distinctis, quarum *δωδεκα* Spiritus Sanctus Apoc. xxi. 13 non obscure innuit."

alluded to. He admits that in the Sabbath there is a commemoration of the creation, but argues that the Old Testament, as a whole, is not commemorative of the past, but typical of the future; and that every thing centres, not in the old work of the original creation, but in the promised creation of a new heavens and a new earth, in the grander work of redemption to be consummated under the New Economy, and in this latter, not in the former, he would seek the antitype of every Old Testament fact and institution. If the basis upon which this explanation rests were more secure, it might deserve to be further inquired into. But are any such seven periods certainly predicted of the Christian Church?

Whether Vitranga extends this theory to other numbers, is not so clear. He says of ten, Rev. ii. 10, that it is a number "absolutus et perfectus," but without giving the grounds upon which, in his view, its perfection rests. It is hard to see what typical reference it could be imagined to have. Of twelve he says, Rev. xiv. 1, that it exhibits the church founded upon the doctrine of the twelve apostles, the true antitype of the old Jewish church, divided into twelve tribes.

The speculative theory has been most ably presented and advocated by Bähr, and after him by Kurtz. It proceeds upon the supposition that there is an ideal signification inherent in numbers themselves, and not derived to them from any subject to which they belong, and with which they have been associated; one which follows from the universal and necessary laws of the human mind acting upon simple numerical relations. This obliges them to seek the same essential ideas in the numerical symbols of all nations, only modified in their character and applications by the nature of the system in which they are each time found. Bähr largely substantiates this view by the testimony of ancient writers, particularly the Pythagoreans and the later Platonists, into whose philosophy speculation upon the abstract nature of numbers so largely entered. To our mind the scheme is for the most part the merest fancy, even as regards the explanation of the numbers of the heathen mythology and worship, and wholly foreign to the Mosaic system and the scriptural system generally, in

which its subtleties and refinements find not the slightest countenance, expressed or implied.*

Bähr's view of the matter, as nearly as we can state it in a brief compass, is this. Two awakens the idea of division, of opposition, of contrast. This duality is removed by the addition of another unit which mediates, as it were, between the previously divided parts. Thus arises a fresh unity, not like that of the uncompounded monad in which there was no opposition, and no contrast to reconcile, but a higher and more perfect unity with contrarieties reconciled and differences set at rest. A perfect whole is conceived as consisting of three parts, beginning, middle, end. So time has its three divisions, past, present, future; and space its three dimensions, length, breadth, thickness. The triangle is the simplest of all rectilinear figures. Now, as the idea of the Deity is the most perfect of all ideas, and it is to the Deity that perfect existence exclusively belongs, three is the divine number, the signature of that Being, who is, and was, and is to come.† This use of the number he traces not only in the triad of the Hindoos, but among the Chinese and other Oriental nations, the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Northmen, and even some American tribes. Compare in the classical mythology, the three-forked lightning of Jupiter, the trident of Neptune, the three-headed dog of Pluto, the tripod of Apollo, the three Fates, three Furies, three Graces, thrice three Muses, &c. In the Mosaic tabernacle, there are found no triangular forms, as there are again and again in heathendom, as symbols of the Deity. This would have been in direct contravention of the Mosaic statute to make no visible representation of God. It is not until the times of the Cabbala, that we find this use of the triangle among the Jews. But things bearing a divine character and specially devoted to God occur in triplets.

* Vitringa's pithy reply to this theory is *Anacrisis*, p. 43. *An res sunt propter numerum, num potius numerus propter res? * * * Certe cum numerus mœra sit collectio unitatum, unitas vero unitate non sit per se præstantior, nulla etiam numeri hujus (7) per se præ alio erit præcellentia.* The arguments by which it is supported, he calls, *ineptas subtilitates, quæ si subjicerentur rigidiori examini vel sanum sensum non darent, vel discussæ abirent in fumos.*

† Compare Schætgen's *Horæ Heb. et Talmud*, on Rev. i. 4.

As four proceeds from three, so the world from God; this therefore is the number of the world. The same appears too from the constitution of the world, its four elements, four cardinal points, four seasons. As the world is that in which the Deity reveals himself, four becomes the number of divine revelation; hence the four-sided figure of the Mosaic altars and of the sanctuary, as the seat of revelation, and the holy of holies, whence God communed with Moses, was a cube, each side of it a perfect square.*

Three and four combined make seven, the signature of the union of God and the world. In the heathen symbols this has to do with mere cosmical relations, and the harmony of the universe. In the Mosaic system it suggests the covenant relation between God and his chosen people, and may be affixed to anything specially belonging to that covenant, its preservation, &c.; hence its connection with circumcision, the Sabbath, sacrifices, purifications. Twelve is formed from the same numbers, not by addition but by multiplication. It is a four conditioned, inhabited by the three, a totality in which God is, and in which he reveals himself. In Scripture symbols it is the signature of the covenant people, and is best illustrated by the encampment in the wilderness, in the form of a square with three tribes on each side, and God's tabernacle in the midst.

Ten closes the series of units; all numeration is but a constant succession of decades. Ten thus represents the whole numerical system, and becomes in consequence the symbol of completeness. It represents a system of units forming together one entire, complete and perfect whole. Hence the ten avatars of India, the ten spheres of Pythagoras, the ten periods of the Etruscans, the ten sephiroth of the Cabbalists, &c. The ten commandments form a complete rule of duty; the judgments upon Egypt ran their fearful course in ten successive plagues. Hence, too, tithes; the sum of a man's possessions is reckoned

* The square figure of the Temple and of the New Jerusalem, according to Vitringa, p. 899, and Hävernick (Comment. Zum Ezech. p. 691,) suggests the ideas of firmness and regularity. According to Bähr, the tabernacle was set by the points of the compass, so as to correspond with God's dwelling in the universe, which it mediately represented; according to Keil and to Kurtz, to symbolize the future extension of the kingdom of God over all the earth.

ten, of which he gives the first part to God in token of grateful acknowledgment to him from whom he has received the whole. The explanation which Bähr has given of the significance of this number is the obvious one, bating a refinement of speculation in which it is impossible to follow him. The decimal division of numbers prevailing among all nations is the basis of all that is significant in ten. But as for any "universal laws of thought," which lie behind this, and require that mankind should count by tens rather than by nines or twelves, these belong to the "ineptae subtilitates." Great as is the contempt in which the opinion is held both by Bähr and Kurtz, we shall have to confess ourselves guilty of the flatness of those who think that the ten fingers of the human hands have determined the number of the digits, as their very name implies. We have however, quite as little respect for the notion of Grotius, for which Friederich who follows him, cites Prov. vii. 3, that the number of the commandments was ten, in order that the people might recite them upon their fingers, and thereby impress them upon their memory, as we have for the no less strange idea of Kurtz, that in the creation of man those immutable laws of thought were regarded, which determine him to count by tens, and ten fingers were given him to correspond.

Five set over against ten represents perfection, as it were, half attained. It is the number of relative imperfection. Hence the fives of the court, as compared with the corresponding tens in the measures of the tabernacle.

The astronomical view refers seven and twelve to the seven planets and the twelve signs of the zodiac. The chronological derives their sacredness from the twelve months in the year, and the seven days in each lunar phase. The realistic seeks the meaning of the sacred numbers in the various physical relations or phenomena, celestial and terrestrial, into which they enter, *e. g.* seven is found in the septentriones, the pleiades, the musical sounds, the Greek vowels, the climacterics, etc. These three views, either singly or combined, are commonly regarded as exhibiting the sources of all sacredness in numbers among the heathen. Winer would thus explain the mystic use of seven among the Hebrews, but is prevented from thus explaining twelve by the indubitable historical evi-

dence of the existence among them of twelve tribes. If the seven days of creation had been to him equally indubitable he would no doubt have felt that it was quite as unnecessary to assume any other ground than this of the sacredness of seven. It is surprising to find even Hengstenberg partially falling in with these views, and claiming that the Hebrews derived their ideal use of numbers from the heathen. If the historical grounds of sacredness, in the case of seven and twelve at least, were not so plain, and were not expressly asserted to be the true ones; and if symbols drawn from the physical features of the universe, however familiar to heathenism, were not totally unknown to the Scriptures, such a view would be more pardonable. We cannot but think that in the utterance of such an opinion, Hengstenberg must have been biassed by the comparisons which he had recently been instituting between the things of Israel and those of heathen Egypt, and the anxiety with which he had been grasping after analogies as proofs of the true Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch.

It is chiefly the numerical relations of the Levitical institutions, which have been exhibited hitherto. It is time now to ask what light can be thrown upon this subject from other parts of Scripture. We have looked a little at the beginning of the sacred volume; let us now pass at once to its close. That the book of Revelation is largely symbolical, all admit. Much of it, most of it, if not all of it, must be so explained. It cannot by possibility be literal. This creates a presumption that its numbers, too, may have a mystical value. The symbols of this book are also, in great part, borrowed from the Old Testament. Much of its language, many of its ideas, find their basis there. There are no heathen symbols in it, as can be shown, not even the palms in the hands of the rejoicing multitude before the throne. There are the mystical tribes of Israel, the song of Moses, the tree of life, the lamb slain, the ark of the covenant, the feast of tabernacles. All this favours the impression that laws of interpretation derived from the Mosaic symbols will be valid here. Still farther, many of the numbers of the Revelation, it must be admitted, can have no other than an ideal application. The number sealed of each of the tribes cannot be a literal number, whether understood exactly or approximately. If it have any

signification whatever, it must be a mystical signification. The measures of the new Jerusalem cannot be literal numbers. And even those interpreters by whom the numbers designating time are subjected to computation, reckon them, not literally as they stand, but by principles and methods which have quite as much need of proof to establish their correctness, as the symbolical view of the subject has.* And that mode of calculating the number of the beast from the numerical powers of letters, which, without intending any disrespect, we may call semi-cabbalistic, has, to say the least, quite as strong a presumption against it, and quite as little analogy from the Scriptures in its favour, and perhaps no more that is satisfactory and convincing in the result, than a symbolical understanding of it would have. The ten horns of the beast are very commonly interpreted of precisely ten kingdoms, and yet there is great diversity in their enumeration. We must not be understood to be the advocate of any theory. We do not set up to be an interpreter of the book of Revelation. We have no desire further than to lay the facts before the reader, unbiassed by prepossessions and foregone conclusions, and to gain for the symbolical system a candid hearing.

The prominence of the number seven in this book is particularly marked. There are 7 churches of Asia, 7 stars, 7 golden candlesticks, 7 spirits of God, the lamb with 7 horns and 7 eyes, the book with 7 seals, 7 angels with 7 trumpets, 7 thunders, 7 vials with the 7 last plagues, the earthquake destroying 7 thousand men, the beast and the dragon having each 7 heads and 10 horns. The witnesses prophesy in sackcloth the half of 7 years, and lie unburied the half of 7 days. The half of 7 years also marks the woman's stay in the wilderness, the

* That even English divines of learning and ability, are not so much at one upon this point as seems to be commonly taken for granted, at least in this country, may be seen from the following remarks of Brown, in his *Ordo Seclorum*, or *Chronology of the Holy Scriptures*, p. 24:—"I earnestly disclaim and protest against all attempts at calculating the times which are yet future. Notwithstanding the deference due to a few venerated names, I am bound to declare my conviction that all such attempts are alike futile and presumptuous. The hypothesis in particular, which makes the periods assigned by Daniel and St. John, of 1260 and 2300 days, to be that number of *years*, is a mere fiction, proved to have been invented at first by heretics, and since adopted chiefly as a weapon of controversy."

continuance of the beast, and the trampling of the holy city under foot by the Gentiles. Interpreted symbolically this says, that the duration of the enemy's triumph is measured, and that by a broken number; the half of 7, after the analogy of the half of 10, symbolizing what is incomplete and transitory.

Twelve appears everywhere appropriately as the number of God's people, of the Church. The twice 12 elders before the throne represent the Church of both dispensations; 12 thousand of each of the 12 tribes are sealed as God's elect. The woman symbolizing the people of God wears a crown of 12 stars. The redeemed on Mount Sion are 12×12 thousand. The New Jerusalem, imaging forth the perfect Church, bears the appropriate number in every possible way. Upon its gates surmounted by 12 angels are inscribed the names of the 12 tribes. Its 12 foundations bear the names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb. Its length, and breadth, and height, are each 12 thousand cubits, constituting it a perfect cube like the holy of holies, God's immediate dwelling place in both the tabernacle and the temple. Its wall measures 12×12 cubits; its gates are 12 pearls; and the tree of life within it bears 12 manner of fruits. On the other hand, the beast which made war upon the Church is marked with the half or broken twelve, which is thrice repeated 666, to carry the idea to its utmost intensity; there is thus intimated, in spite of his seeming victory, his essential inferiority to the true people of God.*

Other numbers are less conspicuous and pervading in their use. The 10th part of the great city fell in the earthquake, the locusts had power to torture men the half of 10 months, the broken number here again denoting imperfection and limitation. The number of the horsemen under the conduct of the 4 angels

* This is Hengstenberg's view as we understand it. It is slightly modified from that of Vitranga, whom Hengstenberg has yet followed in the main. Vitranga says, *Numerus ecclesiæ veræ est 12. Numerus ecclesiæ falsæ et corruptæ est senarius 6, quia duodenarium dividit in duas partes, hoc est, destruit et dissolvit.* * *Regnum bestię destruit, quantum in se est, verum regnum Christi.* * * * *Quod autem numerum hunc bestię Spiritus efferre voluerit tribus senariis, quippe ex senariis monadum, decadum, et hecatontadum conflatum, haud dubie ob hanc factum est rationem, ut senarium nobis exhiberet in omni sua perfectione.*

bound in Euphrates, is, in the judgment of Vitranga, made up from a peculiar combination of 10 and 3. Three successive multiplications, first of ten into itself, then of each successive product into itself, will yield as their result the number as it appears in a few manuscripts, or the half of the number as it is in the received text; the whole conveying the idea of the most perfect multitude, an immense innumerable host. The tail of the great red dragon drew the 3d part of the stars; 3 unclean spirits issued from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet; the great city was divided into 3 parts by a mighty earthquake; the judgments denounced in chapters viii. and ix. constantly destroyed the 3d part of their respective objects. The signature of the earth appears in the 4 beasts, symbolizing, according to Hengstenberg, all terrestrial animated things, in the 4 angels standing on the 4 corners of the earth, holding the four winds, and in the blood flowing from the wine-press by the space of 4×4 hundred furlongs.

Our limits compel us to pass more rapidly over the intermediate books of Scripture. It will be sufficient to refer to some of the more marked examples. In compassing the city of Jericho, 7 priests, bearing 7 trumpets of rams' horns, preceded the ark; they thus marched about the city 7 days, and on the 7th day 7 times. As a magical charm, Samson was bound with 7 green withs, and 7 locks of his head were woven with the web. Hannah sang "the barren hath borne 7." God offered to David in punishment for his sin 3 things, 7 years of famine, 3 months of flight before his enemies, or 3 days' pestilence. Naaman was bidden to wash 7 times in Jordan. The words of the Lord are as silver purified 7 times. To wisdom's house Solomon assigns 7 pillars. Jeremiah foretold a captivity in Babylon for 7×10 years, and at its close Daniel predicted the advent of Messiah in 7×10 weeks of years. Matthew divides the interval from Abraham to Christ into 3 periods of twice 7 generations each. We read of 12 apostles, 7×10 disciples, and 7 deacons. The Saviour spake parables respecting 10 virgins, and 10 pieces of silver, and 10 servants, to whom were delivered 10 pounds. He told Peter that he must forgive his brother not 7 times merely, but 70 times 7.

A much more questionable application has been attempted of the sacred numbers to the history and chronology of the Bible. This has been done by two entirely different classes of men, and with exactly opposite ends in view. Sceptical writers have sought, as a means of bringing the truth of the sacred history into question, to show that like the mythologies of the heathen, it is built upon certain favourite numbers, and is pervaded by an obvious or concealed uniformity of periods. Mr. Browne, in his *Ordo Seclorum*, has, on the other hand, sought to vindicate the truth and the divinity of the Scripture history by this very means, and to show, by a train of numerical relations, that "it must be the Lord's doing, and ought to be marvellous in our eyes."

It is probable, however, that most persons will think neither party successful. The occasional occurrence of these particular numbers may have been quite casual; there is, at least, no need of supposing that God conducted his providence with the design of weaving these numbers into it.* Their appearance is by no means so uniform as to create the impression of a plan consistently pursued. The most remarkable instances which have been alleged are the following. The antediluvian genealogy embraces ten names, of which the seventh, Enoch, and the tenth, Noah, have remarkable histories connected with them. Abraham, again, is the tenth from Shem. Noah had three sons; so had Terah. Jacob had twelve sons; so had Ishmael. The life of Moses is divided into three periods of uniform length, each forty years. Seven years were spent in the conquest of Canaan; seven also in building the temple. David reigned forty years; so did Saul, as we learn from Acts xiii. 21, though this is not stated in the Old Testament; so did Solomon. From the exodus to the building of the temple was twelve times forty years. Von Bohlen, in his *Genesis*, p. lxiv.,

* This seems to be the view of Hofmann in his *Weissagung und Erfüllung*, I. p. 85. Noah was the tenth in order from Adam and Seth, as afterwards Abraham was again the tenth in order from Shem. The number ten is in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as it is in itself by reason of the number of the fingers and toes, the number of the natural of man (*des menschlich natürlichen*), the number in which it finds its termination; whilst seven is the number of divine possibilities and activities, and Enoch was accordingly the seventh.

has succeeded in picking out seventeen forties, either days or years, between the first of Genesis and the last of Kings, in a period of more than three thousand years. And by the aid of forcing and conjectural emendation, a few more may be created. Evidently it is only the singling out of these numbers, and bringing them together, which produces the impression of any thing unusual. A little ingenuity can do the same with any other history. The ages of the American Presidents exhibit coincidences more striking than any in the sacred history, and if these are to be taken as proof of mythical character, the past period of our government must be set down as fabulous. Some ingenious person has culled from the life of Buonaparte instances to show that the same number recurs with surprising frequency in his history. This deserves to be added to the proofs by which Whately demonstrated that upon sceptical principles the Corsican was a fabulous personage. The numbers in the statement of Job's family and possessions form one of the matters in dispute between those who regard the book in whole or in part as a moral fiction, and those who take it to be a literal narrative.

A more recondite use of these numbers has of late been maintained in the constitution of books, the arrangement of verses and sentences, and even the collocation of words. If the extreme views of some upon this subject be adopted, it would almost seem as though the sacred penmen thought of little else but how they might exhibit these numbers with the greatest frequency, and to the best advantage. Kurtz insists upon the significance of the fact, that ten books of generations are to be found in Genesis, and he makes this an argument in defence of its unity and its Mosaic origin. His view has been approved by several able scholars, although we perceive in the *Studien und Kritiken* of last year, an article by Tiele in opposition to it; in which he urges that the formula "These are the generations, &c.," occurs eleven and not ten times, and that it cannot, in all cases, be regarded as introducing a fresh section of the book. It is not the truth of this view, however, which at present concerns us, but only the fact of its having been maintained. Bertheau contends that the legislation of the three middle books of the Pentateuch is built upon seven groups of

laws, each containing seven decalogues. It requires some application of the higher criticism to exhibit this, and it is not defensible in all its rigour. And yet he has developed some very interesting coincidences, and such as are deserving of examination. The book of Judges, according to the same writer, treats of its twelve judges in seven separate sections. He divides Proverbs, likewise, into seven parts, each distinguished by its separate title, the number being completed by assuming that xxii. 17 contains such a title, and that the alphabetical structure xxxi. 10—31 renders a title superfluous. The arrangement of the book of Job, it has been claimed, exhibits an application of the sacred numbers. Zullig, whom Hengstenberg follows in this respect, with some little alteration, finds the Revelation to consist of seven co-ordinate groups or visions.

The ten commandments is an undisputed instance of a significant number entering into a composition, and determining its form. Some reckon seven beatitudes, and seven petitions in the Lord's prayer, and think the seven parables in Matth. xiii. significant. Hengstenberg, (*Comment. Psalm iv. 2*, p. 242) finds a mystical import in the number and arrangement of the verses in Isa. liii., but either he has miscounted, or we cannot arrive at his meaning. The most extended theory of this kind, is that of the last named author, who undertakes to show that the sacred numbers enter generally into the structure of the Psalms, and supply the place of rhyme and measure in the poetry of other languages. He everywhere finds the verses thrown into tens and twelves, and sevens and threes, and fours; these with the aid of elevens, (half the number of the Hebrew letters,) and fives ought, one would think, to enable him to make out a scheme for the most refractory Psalm, especially as he allows himself the liberty of introducing ones and twos to serve in occasional emergencies. If we may judge from its reception thus far, this theory is not likely to meet with universal acceptance very soon, nor to be considered by many besides its author, as uncovering the long buried mystery of Hebrew verse. Even Keil, whom we scarcely remember to have seen contradicting his preceptor before, refuses to follow him in this.

A significance in the frequency with which the divine names

are used in certain Psalms, is a part of the same theory. Hengstenberg refers to thirty-three Psalms, or about one-fifth of the whole number, in which he thinks that this is the case. If any one will take the trouble to examine the table given by Delitzsch,* of the number of divine names occurring in each of the Psalms, he will discover anything but regularity and evidence of design. Following the method that Hengstenberg did, however, sometimes adding all the divine names together, sometimes reckoning each separately, sometimes counting them in part of a Psalm, sometimes in the whole, and still again in two Psalms or even more, the wonder is not that he found the sacred numbers so often, but that he did not find them oftener. And among 150 Psalms, it is not strange if there should occasionally be found one, which seems to him who looks at that alone, to fall in remarkably with the theory. To give the reader a better idea of the theory in operation, we shall here present the numerical scheme supposed to be found in Psalms xxviii. and xxix. These are in the judgment of Hengstenberg himself unusually favourable specimens. The first verse of Ps. xxviii. is the introduction, the last the conclusion; rejecting these there will remain seven verses for the body of the Psalm, four contain the prayer, three in the midst of which the name Jehovah occurs three times, contain the assurance of being heard. In Ps. xxix., two verses are lopped off as introduction, and two as conclusion, leaving again seven for the body of the Psalm; in these "the voice of Jehovah" occurs seven times, and Jehovah itself ten times. The sum of the verses in the two Psalms is twice ten, which just equals the number of times that Jehovah occurs in them both.

The sacred numbers have also been sought elsewhere in the collocation of words. The enumeration of the Canaanitish nations contains sometimes seven names, once ten. The fact that the number more commonly mentioned is six, would to some be an argument that the other enumerations were accidental, to others that they were designed. Seven attributes of the Spirit are by many counted in Isa. xi. 2. In the Revelation groups of three frequently occur, *e. g.* works, labour, patience; lightnings, thunderings, voices, &c. Groups of four:

* In his *Symbolæ ad Psalmos illustrandos isagogicæ*, pp. 2, 3.

heaven, earth, sea, and fountains of waters; kindred and tongue, and people and nation. Seven: blessing and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honour and power, and might; power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour and glory, and blessing. If any have time and inclination for such learned trifling, they can find any number more of the same sort in the section on the numerosity of the Apocalypse, in Stuart's Commentary, vol. i. pp. 131-150.

 It was not until this article had been concluded and sent to press, that our eye fell upon the closing paragraph in the supplementary remarks by Delitzsch, in his Exposition of Genesis, p. 412. He there gives the following summary of Hofmann's views regarding the significance of numbers, as communicated to him in writing by his "dear friend and colleague:" "3 ist die Zahl Gottes, sie bedeutet Gott in der einheitlichen Geschlossenheit seines wesens; 4 die Zahl der welt, die welt in der einheitlichen Geschlossenheit ihres Bestandes; 12 (3×4) die Zahl der welt Gottes, der Gemeinde; 7 die Zahl der göttlichen Möglichkeit, das Göttliche in der Mannigfaltigkeit seiner Entfaltung; 10 die Zahl der menschlichen Möglichkeit, das Menschliche in der Mannigfaltigkeit seiner Entfaltung; 70 (7×10) die gottgeordnete Mannigfaltigkeit des menschlichen; 40 (4×10) die weltlich begrenzte Zeit des menschen; 70 (7×10) die göttliche bestimmte Zeit des Menschen; 49 (7×7) die Zeit Gottes." Delitzsch himself ascribes to 10 the idea of perfection, but modified by its being based upon its constituents 7 and 3. "Die Zahl 10 bedeutet die vollendete offenbarung Gottes vor sich selbst und nach der welt hin, die siebenfache Ausstrahlung des in sich selbst Dreifaltigen."

In proof of the arrangement of books of Scripture according to significant numbers, he refers to the quintuple division of the Pentateuch and of the Psalms, and to the triple division of the second portion of Isaiah, viz: into three sections of three discourses each. In the New Testament he alleges, and promises at some future time to prove, a quintuple division of one gospel, that of Matthew, and a triple division of another, that of John.