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ART. I.—*Modern Explanations of the Doctrine of Inability.*

*The Inability of the Sinner to comply with the Gospel, his inexcusable guilt in not complying with it, and the consistency of these with each other, illustrated, in two discourses on John vi. 44. By John Smalley, D. D. New York: 1811.*

THIS little treatise has long been accounted standard among those who attach importance to the distinction between natural and moral inability, which it elaborately explains and vindicates. It is for the most part characterized by candour and good judgment. It clearly and ably sets forth much important truth. If we were to indicate objections to it, we should call in question certain portions of it, which seem to represent the inability of the sinner as being of the same sort as that of a man to perform any outward act, which he is no way unable, but simply indisposed to do. (pp. 10, 11.)

These instances, however, are few, and aside of the main drift of the treatise. The grand principle which it maintains and successfully vindicates, is that men labour under a real inability to obey the gospel; that this inability is moral, and therefore culpable, yet not, for this reason, any the less real and invincible, except by divine grace. A still more material

have not been killed by her plagues, have not repented of the works of their hands, but worship idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk. Rev. ix. 20. Come out of her and flee to Christ. Forsake the pope and embrace the Lord Jesus. Leave the city of the Seven Hills, and escape to the mountain, to Calvary.

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*John Henry Green.*

ART. III.—*Ebrard on the Apocalypse.*

*The Revelation of John,\* Explained by Dr. J. H. A. Ebrard, etc. etc. 1853. 8vo. pp. 667.*

OUR readers have already been notified of the appearance of this volume. The evangelical sentiments of Dr. Ebrard, coupled with the ability, originality, and thoroughness which he has displayed in his former publications, particularly his Commentary on the Hebrews, his treatise on the Gospel History, and his Systematic Theology, naturally create an interest in his views upon the Revelation. It shall be the aim of this article merely to report, without commenting on them, the contents of the volume before us.

The introduction discusses in one hundred pages the authorship of the Apocalypse, the history of its interpretation, the principles upon which it ought to be interpreted, and those points of Old Testament prophecy which here find their fuller expansion. Ebrard maintains, in opposition to Lücke and others, that this book is from the pen of no other John than the apostle, to whose gospel it stands related, somewhat as the Acts of the Apostles to the Gospel by Luke, of which it is the continuation. The pretended lack of unison between the spirit and teachings of the Apocalypse and those of the Gospel and Epistles of John, from which a diversity of authorship has been

\* Die Offenbarung Johannes, erklärt von Dr. J. H. A. Ebrard, Consistorialrath und Hauptprediger zu Speyer, Mitglied der historisch-theologischen Gesellschaft zu Leipzig und der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft.

argued, is answered by denying its existence. Alleged linguistic differences between this book and the other productions of the same apostle, are disposed of by pointing out their actual and striking coincidences of style,\* while the diversities that remain are accounted for by the new point of view under which, from the altered character of the composition, things are necessarily regarded, or by the hebraic style naturally adopted in a prophecy in imitation of the great and only existing models of the Old Testament.

The testimony to its apostolic origin is abundant and decisive. Papias, for twenty years a cotemporary, and, according to Irenæus, a pupil of the apostle John, is quoted by Andreas of the fifth century, to the effect that the Apocalypse is "worthy of credence." And although no specific testimony has been preserved from him that the apostle John was its author, rather than a presbyter of that name, (whose existence Ebrard admits, though Hengstenberg denies it,) yet as it was according to the unanimous voice of antiquity, the apostle John, who was banished to Patmos, Rev. i. 9, leaves it no longer an open question who wrote it, if it be a genuine and credible book. In the second century, to come no further down, witnesses can be brought from every region, and from all parties in the Church, from Chiliasts and Anti-Chiliasts, from Montanists and Anti-Montanists, from Syria, from the banks of the Rhone, and even from the bosom of the Apocalyptic churches themselves. This book is cited by Theophilus of Antioch, by Apollonius, by Clement of Alexandria, in the epistle of the churches of Lyons and Vienne. It was the subject of a special work by Melito of Sardis. Justin Martyr says expressly that its author was one of the apostles of Christ. Irenæus appeals in behalf of the correctness of the reading

\* Peculiarities common to the Apocalypse with the Gospel and Epistles of John are such as the nominative with the article in place of the vocative, ἔρχεσθαι for ἔσεσθαι, apposition instead of a genitive or adjective, ἐκ as a circumlocution for the partitive genitive, repetition of the possessive, e. g. John ii. 12; Rev. vi. 11, instrument denoted by ἐν, future with ἵνα in place of the conjunctive, οὐ μὴ with the indicative, ἵνα more frequent than ὅπως, καί in place of δέ or οὐν, nominative in apposition with an oblique case, lack of agreement between the adjective or relative and its noun, etc.

666 to the testimony of men who had seen John himself. Polycrates says that John, who lay on the breast of the Lord, became a priest with the breastplate; that is to say, he was privileged, like the high-priest bearing the Urim and Thummim, to enter the holy place, and receive divine communications.

There is repeated testimony also to the apostolicity of the Apocalypse in that barbarous and almost unintelligible fragment which goes under the name of the Canon of Muratori, an anonymous list of ecclesiastical, rather than of inspired writings, drawn up, it would seem, about A. D. 160. The omission of this book from the old Syriac version does not require the assumption of any doubts as to its inspiration or apostolic origin. It was omitted simply because it was not thought generally edifying, or adapted to the ordinary uses of public worship. For the same reason, it was passed over without mention in the Laodicean Canon, and in that of Cyril, both of which were designed to guide the private reading of catechumens, and the public reading of the churches; and there is evidence from Cyril's other writings that he regarded this book as canonical. The rejection of this book by an insignificant body of heretics, known as the Alogiani, is of no critical weight, as all admit. Dionysius of Alexandria was led, in his zeal against the Chiliasts, to deny the apostolic composition of this book; but that did not prevent Eusebius, also an Anti-Chiliast, from ranking the Revelation among the books whose inspiration was universally acknowledged; though there were some, as he afterwards adds, who (on grounds like those of Dionysius) counted it spurious.

As our author regards the history of apocalyptic interpretation from a point of view different from that which prevails among ourselves, his remarks on that head may not be devoid of interest. The earliest commentators upon the Revelation, set out with the presumption, that, as a book of prophecy, it must contain a summary of Church History, on to the end of time. They may, with their successors who adopt the same fundamental idea, be denominated the historiological school. The Revelation is made to tally throughout with the history; not by taking large and comprehensive views of its whole course,

investigating its true spirit, and determining the epochs and events which really mark the progress of the kingdom of God; but the book is treated as though its only design were the gratification of a prying curiosity, and the prophecy is linked with its fulfilment by no surer bond than that of a casual external similitude. The Abbot Joachim (1180) was one of the most distinguished among the earlier representatives of this school. He divided the history of the Church, up to the time in which he lived, into six periods, symbolized respectively by the first six seals, and repeated again substantially in the trumpets and the vials. Nicolaus de Lyra (†1340) explained the seven seals, of the history as far as the time of Julian; the trumpets, of the period from Julian to Mauritius; chapters xii. and xiii. brought the prophetic narrative down to Charlemagne, the vials to the Emperor Henry IV., &c. Vitringa, though addicted to the historiological method, combined with it idealizing tendencies. The seven epistles represent, according to his view, seven main periods in the history of the Church; the seals disclose the fate of the Church, the trumpets the fate of heathen Rome, and of Rome in the middle ages, the vials the final judgments upon Rome, as the mystic Babylon. The strangest mal-interpretations follow as of course upon the adoption of such a method, even to explaining the fifth vial of the removal of the Papal See to Avignon, and the horses of the sixth trumpet, from whose mouth issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone, of the invention of cannons and of gunpowder.

One branch of this school have busied themselves with attempted calculations of the mystical numbers with which this book abounds. So Whiston, Bengel, and many others since, unintimidated by the palpable failures in the reckonings of those who have preceded them.

The Reformation is an important epoch in Apocalyptic interpretation, though it gave rise to no school of commentators. The gain then effected was due, not so much to the direct application of exegesis to this book, as to the light which events shed upon the connected scheme of Providence and of prophecy. And the progress made is to be looked for, not so much in commentaries specially devoted to clearing up the

mysteries of this book, as in the more general Christian writings of the period. As the Reformers became increasingly sensible of the meaning and character of the times in which they lived, the conviction took irresistible hold of their minds that the great antichristian power which oppressed them was the beast of Rev. xiii. In this sentiment they were entirely unanimous: it was even by some Churches inserted among their articles of faith; and this must be regarded as a settled point in the exposition in all time to come. With this substantial correctness, however, of the conviction entertained by the Reformers upon this point, there was an error easy to be accounted for in the form in which it was commonly presented. The scheme of Providence was unfolded sufficiently to reveal the identity of the Roman hierarchy\* with the beast of Rev. xiii. But the indications were wanting then, which have since appeared, that this was to be succeeded by another power which in a new form should raise a yet more terrible opposition to the Church of God, the scarlet-coloured beast of Rev. ch. xvii, identical, or at least its head identical, with the man of sin, of whom Paul forewarned the Thessalonians, and with the personal antichrist in whom Satan becomes, so to speak, incarnate, spoken of in the epistles of John, whose appearance is immediately to precede the second advent, and who shall be directly destroyed by Christ at his coming. They were mistaken in confounding the Romish Babylon with the last and highest concentration of antichristian power. Their mistake, however, naturally grew out of the fact, that the developments of history had as yet cast no light upon what lay beyond their own times. This cannot vitiate the substantial correctness of the view then opened up to the consciousness of the Church.

The progress of the Reformation period was followed by a retrocession or a reaction, originating in two quite distinct quarters, viz., the hierarchy and unbelief. The champions of

\* The Reformers, as Ebrard adds here in a note, never regarded the Roman Catholic Church as antichrist, but only the Papacy in that Church. They always carefully distinguished between the hierarchy and the people composing its communion. Viewed under this latter aspect, they never denied that the *ecclesia Romana collectiva* was a part of the *ecclesia universalis visibilis*, or that it was *ecclesia vera quamquam impurissima*. Comp. Calv. Inst. IV. 2, 12. *Quum ergo ecclesie titulum non simpliciter volumus concedere Papistis, non ideo ecclesias apud eos esse infamiamur, sed tantum litigamus de vera et legitima ecclesie constitutione.*

the hierarchy thus sturdily attacked, were compelled to stand on the defensive. In order to maintain their ground, they were forced into an error directly opposite to that of the Reformers. Assuming, in common with their adversaries, the identity of the beast ch. xiii. with the scarlet-coloured beast ch. xvii., and the man of sin, 2 Thess ii. 3—9, they referred them all to the personal, individual antichrist of the future; the apocalyptic periods were regarded as literal chronological dates, and the fulfilment of the whole was expected in the three years and a half next preceding the second advent.

The retrocession of unbelief began with the Arminian Grotius and culminated in Rationalism. The Apocalypse was stripped of its proper prophetic character, and its sublime predictions were converted into dreamy anticipations or safe conjectures as to the triumph of Christianity over Judaism and heathenism. The only question was, whether its subject was the downfall of the Jewish state (Wetstein, Herder, Züllig,) the downfall of heathen Rome (Semler, Ewald, De Witte,) or that of both (Herrensneider, Eichhorn, Matthäi.)

The events of the French revolution opened the eyes of the Christians on the continent to the meaning of another part of this book. Since that time there has been a general agreement among the children of God in Europe as to the proper interpretation to be put upon the two beasts, Rev. xiii. and xvii. This, however, has not been expressed so much in commentaries as in other ways, and it has not been wrought up into the form of a systematic exegesis. As far as the commentaries of the present are concerned, this may be denominated the period of confusion. Principles, methods, and results are all unsettled. Even the boundaries between the symbolical and the literal have not been definitely drawn. The old Jesuitical view has been revived of late among Protestants (Hofmann, Hebart,) by which the whole is thrown into the future as a detailed account of three years and a half preceding the advent. The opposite rationalistic extreme also survives, by which every thing is explained of the very origin of Christianity, as "ideas" respecting the fall of Jerusalem, or that of heathen Rome, which did or did not meet their realization. Whilst the intermediate space is occupied by the

historiological school which continues its search after all the details of ecclesiastical history. The school which finds in the Revelation a disclosure of the grand epochs of the Church of God, and of the elements out of which its development should proceed—which finds in it not conjectural ideas, nor the barren details of Church history, or of eschatology, but true, real prophecy, is yet in its infancy.

Many of the disclosures of the Apocalypse are already anticipated with greater or less distinctness by the Old Testament prophets. There are predictions uttered by both Isaiah and Jeremiah, which did not meet their full accomplishment at the coming of Christ, and which shall not, until he comes again. It was not disclosed to them when the events which they foresaw were to be accomplished, nor by what long intervals they were to be separated. Up to the time when the visions were granted which are recorded in the book of Daniel, the people of God may not have known but that the termination of the exile would be immediately followed by Messiah's advent, and by the consummation of all that had been promised of the glories of his reign. To Daniel was first revealed, in their chronological succession, the four great empires of the world, whose character and fortunes were symbolized by the metallic image, and again by the four beasts of a later vision. And here our author presents us with a very original interpretation of the prophecy of the seventy weeks. These are weeks of years, and are to be reckoned from the close of Jeremiah's seventy years, over which Daniel had just been meditating and fasting, that is to say, from B. C. 538, when the captivity was terminated by the decree of Cyrus. "From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks:" where an error is assumed, on the authority of the text of the Septuagint, in the Codex Chisianus, which reads, seventy and seven weeks, (=539 years.) The year of the nativity would consequently fall in the 77th week, reckoning from B. C. 538. "Threescore and two weeks the street shall be built and the wall," *i. e.*, Jerusalem shall have been built up again for 434 years when Messiah comes. This complete rebuilding of Jerusalem is dated from the visit of Nehemiah, in the 20th year of Artax-

erxes Longimanus, B. C. 445. The 62 weeks would accordingly expire B. C. 11; and as Christ was born six years before the vulgar era, the advent falls within the very next week after the predicted term had elapsed.

Then follow Messiah's death, and the overthrow of the Jewish State; after which it is added, "He shall confirm the covenant with many in one week." This week does not commence when the threescore and two terminate, nor is it like them susceptible of computation. It is a mystic week of indefinite length, commencing at the death of Christ, and extending over the conversion of the Gentiles. This week is divided into two halves of unequal length, by the cessation of sacrifice and oblation at the destruction of Jerusalem, which took place just the half of 70 years after the death of Christ.\* The second half, of unknown duration, extends on from that point of division to the end of the present dispensation. This semi-septenary period is identical with the time, times and a half, of Israel's dispersion, Dan. xii. 7, and reappears as the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years, or 42 months, or 1260 days of the Revelation. It is not to be confounded, however, with another prophetic period, also semi-septenary, but briefer, described Dan. vii. 25, as a time, times, and the dividing of time, which marks the persecution of the post-Roman enemy of the Church, and which is identical with the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days of Antichrist's triumph in the Revelation.

The Revelation is divided into four visions: the first containing the epistles to the seven churches; the second the seals and trumpets; the third the woman persecuted by the dragon, the beast from the sea, and that from the earth, with the judgment upon them; the fourth the vials, and all that follows, to the end.

The angels of the seven churches to whom the epistles are addressed, were simply the messengers and representatives of those several churches, who visited John in Patmos, and were made by him bearers of these divine communications. That these epistles have not barely a historical, but, in addition, a

\* So p. 76. But on p. 334 the birth of Christ is made the beginning of this mystic week, and on pp. 494 and 583, his ascension is spoken of as the point of division.

typical and prophetic meaning, is argued from the prophetic character of the entire book, from their being addressed by Christ seen in vision to the churches which he holds as stars in his hand, as he in fact holds the universal Church; from the charge, repeated afresh in each epistle, "He that hath ears, let him hear," implying not only that all may gather instruction from them, but that they are directly addressed to all; and from the mystic character of the number seven. These churches were selected as apt types and representatives of the universal visible Church, not in all of its possible conditions, with the view of exhibiting the various forms of excellence or of degeneracy to be emulated or to be shunned; but they are a prophetic picture of actual conditions or states of the Church, and that not during seven successive periods, reaching from the ascension to the second coming of Christ, (Vitringa,) nor seven co-existing phases to be presented by the Church, immediately preceding the second advent, (Hofmann,) but partly consecutive, partly co-existent. The Old Testament allusions in the first four epistles are regarded as intimations of their successive character: in the first, paradise; in the second, temptation by Satan; in the third, the manna, and Balaam, both belonging to the times of the Exodus; in the fourth, Jezebel, and the kingdom of David, referred to in the "rule with a rod of iron." As this last is a prediction extending into New Testament times, and even to the latest period, and the only scriptural allusions in the epistles that follow refer to the same period—the book of life—the New Jerusalem—sitting on the Saviour's throne—this is held to be an intimation that the states of the Church therein set forth are cotemporaneous, extending side by side to the end of all things. In determining the particular periods or phases of the Church here represented, the names and the scriptural allusions are held to be significant, as well as the condition portrayed in each epistle. Ephesus is the representative of the apostolic Church, of which it was also in fact a part, and hence in this alone of the epistles a real name is introduced, that of the Nicolaitanes. Smyrna is the martyr Church, from the death of John, the last of the apostles, to Constantine, (A. D. 100—325); the ten days of tribulation are the ten general persecutions. Perga-

mos is the Church from the fourth to the ninth century; its characteristics are, possession of the imperial throne once Satan's seat, and consequent corruption, while nevertheless the true faith was carefully defined and rigidly adhered to. Thyatira is the Church of the middle ages. The remaining epistles represent phases of the Church springing from the Reformation: Sardis is the high Lutherans; Philadelphia the Reformed Churches of Britain, America, and the continent of Europe; Laodicea has no proper antitype in existing church organizations, but if the extreme Schleiermacher party were to form themselves into a separate body, it would answer precisely to them.

In the second vision, as is shown by its exordium, Christ no longer appears in his relation to the Church as its Shepherd, but in his relation to the world as its Sovereign Lord, who has already, as the slain Lamb, potentially vanquished his and his people's foes, and under whose omnipotent sway all the powers of nature shall be made to contribute to the advancement and final triumph of his kingdom. The four and twenty elders before the throne are the twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles, representing the Church of both dispensations. The thunders and lightnings proceeding from the throne betoken not the divine wrath, but the infinite glory and almighty power of the Lord of nature. The sea of glass before the throne in contrast with the turbulent sea symbolizing the restless, heaving nations of this world (Rev. xvii. 15) denotes the pure and peaceful multitudes of heaven, creatures in their true normal relation to the great Creator, the calm, unruffled mirror of their Maker's glory. The four living creatures set forth the Creator's power in the various modes of its manifestation in the universe.

The opening of the first four seals discloses not particular events to occur consecutively in the order there indicated, but general facts repeatedly recurring in the divine administration. Christ riding forth to victory upon the white horse, the same that is seen returning (Rev. xix. 11,) does not meet its accomplishment in any single historical event. The figure upon the white horse must be taken also not by itself, but in conjunction with those that come after upon the red, black, and pale horses. Christ rides forth to victory, to gain for his Church

the victory over the world: war, famine, and death follow in his train, are employed by him as instruments to effect the intended subjugation. These are not judicial inflictions upon the ungodly alone, but calamities sent in the ordinary course of Providence, from which both the righteous and the wicked suffer, but whose aim and actual result is the furtherance of the kingdom of the Redeemer. The fifth seal is likewise not an individual event, but a manifestation of the truth, that by such judgments as the foregoing, the blood of the martyrs is not yet avenged. It is thus far the period of the divine forbearance, a time of gracious respite to the unconverted, a time of trial to his believing people.

The sixth seal contains premonitions of the approaching judgment, the same precisely that our Lord himself foretold as antecedents and signs of his second coming. Matt. xxiv. 29-31. The opening of the seventh seal reveals the judgment itself expanded into seven distinct scenes, the seven trumpets. Before the last seal is opened, however, and the judgment has actually come, the people of God are set in safety from its effects. The vision of the seer is first directed to the Church militant on earth, then to the Church triumphant in heaven. The former appears under the form of the tribes of Israel, because at the period contemplated Israel shall be converted, and the heathen shall be incorporated into their communion. All the tribes named are now in actual existence: not that the ten tribes are for the present concealed in some undiscovered region, whence they shall at some future time be brought forth and recognized. The ten tribes returned to Palestine, in as full a sense as they ever are to return, when leave was granted them in common with the Jews by Cyrus. The name of Dan is missing from the list of the tribes (Manasseh being substituted in its place) simply because that tribe is no longer in existence: it had perished before the return from Babylon, as is shown by the circumstance that no registers were preserved of that tribe as of all the others. 1 Chron. iv.—vii. The sealing of the Israel of God denotes that those of his people who are living on the earth when the judgments of the Most High break in upon an ungodly world, shall be effectually protected from all harm. For this reason they are accurately numbered,

that every individual of them may be known and kept safely. The twelve thousand of each tribe is the mystic number of the patriarchs and apostles multiplied a thousand-fold. The innumerable multitude from all nations who next appear, are those who have died before the judgment is inflicted. They are seen already possessed of all the felicity and glory of heaven. God's true people, both those who are alive and remain and those who have fallen asleep, being thus provided for, the last seal is opened: for half an hour all heaven waits in breathless expectation, and then judgment is let loose.

The contents of the seventh seal are unfolded under the seven trumpets. It might be supposed, therefore, that the judgments symbolized by them were chronologically subsequent to the sixth seal. This, however, is not the case. In the sixth seal were seen the immediate precursors and signs of Christ's second coming, and the whole world was trembling before the wrath of the Lamb: and yet even under the sixth trumpet men are still living on in obduracy and sin. Is it possible to bring in six events, one of them of five months' duration, however that period be reckoned, between the sixth seal and the coming of Christ, which must be in fact simultaneous? Besides, in the sixth seal the sun and moon were already completely darkened in a literal, physical sense; and yet in the fourth trumpet the third part of the sun and moon is smitten. If this is to be taken in a literal sense, it cannot of course succeed their total obscuration; still less if it is to be figuratively understood, for it is a law of prophecy, that figurative and spiritual accomplishments precede the literal and full accomplishment, but never the reverse. The first six trumpets must consequently precede the sixth seal. The hands of the apocalyptic clock are not, however, here set back. The first four seals contained general calamities wrought by means of natural causes, and consequently have not the character of a judgment for the shed blood of the martyrs. The fifth contained a call for such a judgment; and in the sixth the day of the Lamb's wrath opens, in the mode predicted by Christ himself, by those great catastrophes in nature visible alike to good and bad, which are not themselves the judgment, but its heralds and precursors. In the first six seals is thus brought to a close every thing that

befalls the righteous in common with the wicked. For the seventh seal, or in other words, for the seven trumpets is reserved the whole of what is inflicted on the enemies of God alone and as such. The chronological order is not the thing regarded, but only the announcement of what those penalties shall be which are specially to overtake the haters of Christ and the enemies of his people; and in this announcement is included not barely the ultimate judgment to be inflicted at his second coming, but all that has been inflicted upon them from the very first. The distinction between the first six seals and the first six trumpets is thus not chronological, but qualitative: the former are calamities befalling good and bad alike; the latter appertain to the wicked exclusively.

From this it will be seen that the sealing which follows the sixth and precedes the seventh seal cannot be, at least as regards the earlier trumpets, a single event whose chronology is fixed by its place in the vision. But while there is in the eschatological period a particular event signified by it, it must in the case of the earlier trumpets merely indicate the altered relation in which the saints of God stand to the seventh, from that in which they stood to the other seals. They are secured against these judgments as they were not against the others.

In order to connect the judgments that follow more clearly with hostility to the saints, of which they are the righteous retribution, an angel appears with a censer and incense, which he is to "give to the prayers of the saints," *i. e.*, those prayers have ascended, but have not yet been answered; they are now to be made effectual, and to obtain a hearing. The incense is offered with fire from the burnt altar, beneath which the souls of the martyrs had been heard, vi. 9, 10, crying for vengeance, and on which they had been sacrificed. Coals are cast from that altar to the earth; thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake follow, and then seven angels with trumpets prepare to sound.

As the first four seals were general in their character, portending not single events, but classes of events, not individual calamities, but kinds of calamities which were repeatedly to recur, so the first four trumpets are predictive of as many

generic forms of judgment upon the ungodly, and in each case the physical stands as a symbol of the spiritual. The first trumpet is followed by a terrible storm of hail and fire like that of Egypt, whose terrors are enhanced by blood, the blood of the martyrs which those visited by it have shed, and which destroys the means of subsistence. The thing intended is the spiritual famine with which they are visited who resist the truth, and persecute its adherents: witness Spain, Italy, France. By the second trumpet, the medium of intercourse, and the sources of commercial wealth, are converted into a mass of corruption, and become a curse instead of a blessing. By the third, the springs of life and enjoyment are embittered and poisoned. By the fourth, the centres of light are struck with darkness; and intellectual power and culture, forsaken of God, instead of elevating and refining, only blinds, bewilders, and misleads. That it is the third, not the whole, which is every time affected by these judgments, intimates that the withdrawal of spiritual blessings, however alarming, is not yet absolute nor total.

The fifth and sixth trumpets portend individual events, both future, and both occurring under the instigation of evil spirits. The falling of the star from heaven, under the fifth trumpet, simply represents, under a visible symbol, that a sudden and supernatural effect is wrought on the earth, or the bottomless pit, by a potency proceeding from God out of heaven. The abode of Satan and his angels is opened, and demoniac locusts pour forth, with the commission, not like natural locusts, to devour grass and trees, but to torture men, and for a continuous period, for five months. Its precise chronological duration cannot be determined, as this, like other notes of time in the Apocalypse, is a mystical period. The interval between the ascension of Christ (destruction of Jerusalem?) and the entrance of the eschatological period, marked by the conversion of Israel, the fall of Babylon, and the setting up of the kingdom of Antichrist, is a mystic  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years; the dominion of the ten kings is to endure for one hour, xvii. 12; the triumph of Antichrist lasts  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days. As this plague endures for five months, it must precede, at least in its commencement, the reign of Antichrist, though its close may and does extend into the  $3\frac{1}{2}$

days. It is to be looked for, therefore, before the final fall of the Romish power. It lies still in the future, and its character cannot as yet be accurately defined. By the sixth trumpet, fresh hosts of infuriated demons are let loose, not to torture merely, but to slay. The hour, and day, and month, and year for which they are prepared, does not express the duration of their ravages, but only that the very hour when they shall commence is definitely fixed in the divine purpose. The four angels under whose leadership they rush forth, are spoken of as bound in the great river Euphrates, because it was upon that Babylon was situated. The mystic Babylon is the birth place of these wild and revolutionary hordes. Infidelity is the child of superstition. The might of Babylon still holds them bound; its fall shall be the signal for their being let loose. These judgments are the last, though still an ineffectual means to bring men to repentance.

Before the sounding of the seventh trumpet, there is an episode, whose aim is to set forth those means employed for the conversion of men which were not ineffectual. The little book in which these were revealed was first sweet, then bitter; sweet, because of the result, that men were to give glory to God; bitter, because of the sufferings through which the pious must first pass before that end is reached. The temple, with its worshippers, *i. e.*, the Church of Christ, as the true Israel, is to be saved from destruction, while Israel after the flesh, and their capital city, Jerusalem, are to be given up to the gentiles, and trodden under foot of them 42 months, a mystic period, extending from the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, to Israel's conversion and return. Meanwhile God's two messengers, the Law and the Gospel, continue to give their testimony during the whole of this period, calling a wicked world to repentance, bringing down upon them blessings and curses, torturing their consciences, and disquieting them in their sins; until, in the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days of Antichrist's sway, their testimony shall no longer be endured nor listened to, but laughed to scorn. But suddenly the despised, rejected volume of eternal truth shall retake its power to work on obdurate hearts, and fill them with anguish and dismay, and then it shall be immediately taken up from them. Simultaneously a fearful judgment, of what nature

can be known only from the event, shall overthrow a tenth part of the kingdom of Antichrist. The remainder of men shall be affrighted, and give glory to the God of heaven. With the seventh trumpet follows the end. Christ comes, and his triumphant kingdom is erected over all the earth.

The third vision exhibits the hostility of Satan and the world against the Church; first against Israel, before and after their conversion, chap. xii., next against the Church in its gentile form, chap. xiii. The woman seen in the vision is the literal Israel, not in so far as they have sinned, and still sin, by the rejection of Christ, under which aspect they are a synagogue of Satan, but in so far as in spite of their present unbelief they yet possess the promise of a future restoration, and are by consequence hated of Satan. She is clothed with the sun, and wears a crown of twelve stars, as the destined light of the world, and has the moon beneath her feet, as the conqueror of night. Her child is the Messiah, born to rule all nations with a rod of iron. The dragon, who stood ready to devour him, is Satan. His tail draws a third part of the stars of heaven, and casts them down, in allusion to his seducing great numbers of angels to their fall. He appears with seven heads and ten horns, as the prince of this world, whom the kingdoms of the world obey. The Messiah, whom he sought to destroy, was caught up from the cross to the throne. His rage was then turned against Israel. But an asylum was prepared for them in the wilderness of their present exile, where for eighteen centuries their preservation has been a standing miracle, and where they are still kept for what is yet in reserve for them. At the end of the appointed 1260 days of their banishment, Michael, Israel's guardian angel, Dan. xii. 1, shall make war upon the dragon who is in heaven as their accuser. He is able to continue those accusations as long as Israel remains in their guilt and unbelief. Michael's vanquishing him implies that he has no longer any right to accuse the people, that their guilt has been removed. See Zech. chap. iii. The meaning is therefore that Israel is now converted. Satan, no longer able to pursue his hostility by accusing them in heaven, persecutes them on earth. From this persecution the woman is shielded by receiving two wings of a great eagle to

bear her into the wilderness. This eagle is identical with that, viii. 13,\* which announced the woes at the sounding of the fifth trumpet. This is held to intimate a relation between that trumpet and the persecution of the woman. The fury of the abysmal locusts is for five months directed upon the enemies of God: toward the close of the period to which their duration is limited, the conversion of Israel takes place; and now, at Satan's instigation, the locusts turn their rage against them, or rather against the entire Church, which from the moment of the return to God of his ancient people, puts on the form of Israel, into which the believers from other nations are incorporated. The shelter afforded to Israel from this attack of Satan and his emissaries, is the event denoted in the second vision by sealing the twelve tribes. In the case of the earlier judgments, that sealing had simply an ideal character, representing the truth that the people of God were kept in safety. But now the sealing takes on an outward form, and is incorporated in the act of providing for them a secure retreat, probably Palestine. There they shall be guarded from every assault for a time, times and a half: this is not the longer, but the briefer semi-septenary period; not the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years, or 1260 days of their present dispersion, but the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days of Antichrist's triumph. Continuing his impotent hostility, Satan casts a flood out of his mouth after the woman, to reach her if possible in her asylum. This flood is the armies of Antichrist, or the vast ungovernable host of the sixth trumpet, which immediately precedes and partakes of the character of Antichrist. The earth opening her mouth to swallow up this flood is the same event as the cleaving of mount Olivet, Zech. xiv. 4, like a second Red Sea, for the escape of Israel, and the destruction of their foes, immediately consequent upon which is the coming of the Lord.

Baffled in his attempts to injure the woman, the devil goes to make war with the remnant of her seed, which as distinguished from the woman herself denotes the gentile believers who are also the seed of Israel in a spiritual sense. This hos-

\* The received text has "angel" in this passage, but the preponderance of critical authority seems to be in favour of "eagle."

tility against the gentile Church is described, not by continuing the account of the dragon's movements, but by opening a new scene: and as in two similar instances before (the trumpets, ch. viii., and the little book, whose contents are given, ch. xi.,) in which fresh scenes were introduced upon a vision already begun, the prophecy goes back and commences its portraiture of the new element from the beginning. A beast rises from the troubled sea of nations. It is a mixture of the leopard, the bear, and the lion, the beasts of Daniel's vision (Dan. vii.) to intimate that it combines them all in itself. It is the empire of this world in an absolute sense, of which the various empires which have in succession played their part upon the stage of history are but different phases. Its seven heads are the seven great empires which have been, or are to be, as explained xvii. 10, the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Macedonian, Syrian,\* Roman, and that of the ten kingdoms in their future separate existence. For the present these last are but the ten horns upon the sixth or Roman head, subsisting with it and regarded as a part of it, in the same way as the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image still formed part of the feet. The beast is here represented as persecuting the Church in its gentile form, that is to say, prior to Israel's conversion, when it puts on an Israelitish form: it must consequently be the Roman power, or that phase of the empire of this world indicated by the sixth head, which is especially intended. The same thing appears from the duration of its power being forty-two months, the mystic period from the destruction of Jerusalem to the conversion of Israel, during all of which Rome is to subsist. Hence there are crowns upon the ten horns of the sixth head to denote that the sovereignty is resident in that head for the time. The dragon, on the other hand, had crowns on all his seven heads, to indicate that he ruled in all the empires of the world, and that his hostility to Israel was exercised, not during the continuance of one empire alone, but during the whole of them. The head wounded to death and healed is the reigning head of the period, the

\* This is inserted on the ground of Zechariah's predictions relating to this empire. Hengstenberg leaves this out, and begins the list with Egypt.

Roman empire overturned by the incursions of the barbarians, but reviving again and rising to its former greatness, so that Rome under the pontiffs became the seat of as powerful a despotism as Rome under the emperors. It is to all intents and purposes the old empire revived. The distinction between secular and ecclesiastical dominion is merely formal, not essential, and is consequently not recognized by the prophecy. The Papacy was a worldly power, exercised over the kingdoms of the world, and on worldly principles. The beast from the sea is not the Papacy; but it represents, as already said, the kingdom of this world in its form as the Roman dominion, in which it subsists from the time of Christ to the future conversion of the Jews. The fulfilment shows that since the thirteenth century this dominion has been concentrated in the Romish See. The Papacy, therefore, is not excluded; but there is included with it everything that belongs to the kingdom of this world. The Papacy is only one of its phases.

This particular phase is now set forth under an additional emblem, that of a beast coming up out of the earth, *i. e.*, not out of the tumultuous agitation of the nations as the one before it had risen, but out of a firm and settled state of political relations. As it is called "the false prophet," xvi. 13 and xix. 20, it must be, in pretence at least, a spiritual power. Nothing is said of its form or appearance, except that it had two horns like a lamb. The horn is the symbol of power. It possesses, therefore, or rather claims to possess, the same power which belongs to the Lamb, or to Christ. That there are two horns may even find its explanation in claims like those of Gregory VII. *Sedes apostolica . . . spiritualia decernens dijudicat, cur non et saecularia?* echoed by Bernard, *Uterque ergo ecclesiae (est) et spiritualis scilicet gladius et materialis*. It does not appear that the beast resembled the Lamb in any other respect; he spake like the dragon, xii. 9, or Satan. Pretending to be Christ's vicar, he seduces men away from Christ, using dragon-like (Gen. iii. 5, Matt. iv. 4, etc.) God's words in perverted senses or for ungodly ends. The pseudo-lamb exercises all the power of the first beast before him, not merely similar or equal to his, not a co-ordinate, much less a rival power, but the very same. The pope has

taken into his hands the identical sceptre of the Cæsars. The papal supremacy is further set up as the image of the empire with all the *prestige* attached to its remembered greatness. Not only salvation, but the enjoyment of civil rights and privileges, is made dependent on receiving the name of the beast. Its number 666—*Λατίνος*,\* or *לטיני*, may have been intentionally so selected as to admit of interpretation from both the Greek and Hebrew, while the three figures of which it is composed are but the triple repetition of 6, Rome's number in the list of empires, xvii. 10.

This description of the enemies of the Church is followed by two consolatory scenes. First, the vision of the whole body of the persecuted saints in glory, to which they are translated immediately after death, without needing to wait for their recompense until their enemy is overthrown. Second, just judgment is inflicted on their great adversary. Three precursors are heralded by angels of the coming of Christ, which is to reap this harvest, ripe for vengeance, and to tread to overflowing the winepress of Almighty wrath. These are cotemporaneous with the three final woes inflicted under the trumpets on the ungodly. They are (1) the rapid and unprecedented spread of the gospel among the heathen, which, as the fulness of the gentiles is to come in before Israel's conversion, Rom. xi. 25, must take place before the expiration of the five months of the fifth trumpet. (2) The fall of Babylon, or of the Roman phase of the kingdom of this world, the sixth head of the beast. The beast itself is not yet finally destroyed. It is still in existence when the following angel makes his announcement, xiv. 9, in the form of the power represented by the seventh head, or that of the ten kingdoms in their separate and independent state, and after that the eighth or Antichrist, xvii. 11, 17. The Roman dominion, however, falls, and with it the Papal see. This overthrow of the kingdom of superstition is effected by the "infidel and democratic" hordes of the sixth trumpet, or second woe. (3) Warning is given of the approaching judg-

\* It is suggested in explanation of the use of *Λατίνος* rather than *Ῥωμαίος* to designate this power, that the latter in the age of the apostle would suggest a sway over the entire world, while the dominion intended was not to cover the East, but to be specifically Occidental, and Latin.

ment. Then Christ comes, and terrible vengeance is taken upon the realm of Antichrist.

The fourth vision winds up the affairs of the Church and the world, revealing their ultimate issues. It opens with a view of the saved triumphing in heaven. Then follow the seven vials, which are poured out during the mystic  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years, and produce not such calamities as affect both the righteous and the wicked like the seals, nor such judgments as are visited upon an ungodly world at large like the trumpets, but such as are inflicted specially upon the seat of the beast, upon his conscious and decided adherents. The last three vials are identical with the last three trumpets, differing only in the sphere within which they are regarded as operative. The first four vials cannot be identical with the corresponding trumpets, inasmuch as these do not represent specific and individual judgments, but kinds of judgments which are sent again and again. They are, however, analogous to them, only of heightened intensity. The trumpets were of a negative character, deprivations; these are positive inflictions. Under the first vial there is not merely the loss of spiritual food, there is spiritual torture. The second marks a more dreadful corruption than that of the second trumpet. The third gives them blood to drink who have shed blood, and it has met its accomplishment, as often as a people trained to a thirst for blood by scenes like that of Bartholemew's day, satisfy their tiger-cravings upon those by whom they were first excited. By the fourth, a perverted science is not quenched in darkness, but heated to fanaticism. From the fifth, it appears that the evil spirits of the fifth trumpet proceed from the seat of the beast, and make it their first object of attack. In the sixth vial, three foul spirits, political, ecclesiastical, and Satanic, Mobocracy, Pantheism, and God-defying Blasphemy, shall gather the hosts already seen under the sixth trumpet, first for the assault of Babylon, and then they shall arm themselves against God Almighty, to meet the fate of the Canaanites under Sisera at Megiddo, Judg. v. 19. The drying of the Euphrates signifies the capture of Babylon, with allusion to the expedient adopted by Cyrus, and foretold by Isaiah. The kings of the East are the captors of Babylon, they are so called because the literal

Babylon was taken by invaders from the East, as prophecy had repeatedly declared that it should be, Isa. xli. 2; xlii. 11, etc. They are identical with the four angels, the leaders of the host under the sixth trumpet.

As the seventh vial was poured out, the great city was divided into three mutually hostile parts. This great city, (the same with xi. 8, but not xvii. 18,) is not Babylon, but the realm or sphere of all that sets itself in opposition to Christ and to his people. The three parts correspond with the three foul spirits by which this mass of wickedness had been gathered, the three heterogeneous elements of which it is composed; the political shall be at war with the ecclesiastical power, and both in conflict with a power direct from the abyss, or that of Antichrist. Babylon sinks and Antichrist rises. This is more fully expanded and expounded in two special scenes, occupying respectively ch. xvii. and ch. xviii. In the former, the Roman dominion or the Papacy appears no longer identical with the kingdom of this world, but is reduced to a weak, defenceless woman, supported by an empire no longer hers. The crowns have fallen from the sixth head. It is now the dominion of Antichrist. The colour of the beast is that of blood freshly shed; the raiment of the woman that of blood shed long since. This beast is not compounded, as its predecessor was, of a leopard, bear, and lion. The former beast had names of blasphemy upon its heads; this beast is full of them. This beast was and is not; it had already existed and perished in the time of John; what this means shall be explained presently. It shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, not like the others out of the sea or earth, but directly from Satan out of hell. The seven heads, considered with relation to the woman who sits on them, are seven mountains; the woman is therefore unmistakably the seven-hilled city, Rome. The same heads, considered with relation to the beast, are seven kings, *i. e.*, seven successive empires. Five of these had fallen in the time of John; one, the Roman, was then in existence; and the other, not yet come, is that of the ten kingdoms, which, after subsisting for a while alongside of the Roman power as constituents of it, ultimately, for a brief space, rise into its place as a separate phase of the world's

kingdom. The beast that was and is not, *i. e.*, the one which John saw, the scarlet-coloured beast is both an eighth empire, and one of the previously existing seven. The key to this mystery is furnished by Daniel, who in ch. xi. of his prophecy, predicts a tyrant to arise after the Macedonian monarchy, Antiochus Epiphanes. In ch. vii. he predicts another tyrant to come after the fall of the Roman monarchy, and to continue until destroyed at Christ's second coming. The descriptions of the two tyrants run completely parallel. The post-Macedonian tyrant is a type and prefiguration of the post-Roman; the post-Roman is, as it were, the post-Macedonian risen again. The Syrian monarchy of Antiochus Epiphanes is, as stated above, the fifth of the seven heads: it shall rise again as the kingdom of Antichrist. This is true, not geographically, as though Antichrist were to rise in Syria, for according to Dan. vii. 20, he is to arise from the midst of three of the ten kingdoms; nor personally, as though Antiochus Epiphanes were to be identically raised as the Antichrist; but the spirit and character of the two are the same.

The woman, the ten horns, and the scarlet-coloured beast, correspond with the three parts into which the great city was divided; the Papacy, now impotent, no longer holding the reins of empire, the ten kingdoms dominant for one hour, and the Satanic empire of Antichrist. The ten kingdoms shall destroy the Papacy, then submit to Antichrist, and with him make war upon the Lamb, and be overcome in the unequal contest. In chap. xviii., Babylon's fall is more particularly described, and in the first verses of chap. xix., heaven's exultation at her overthrow.

After the fall of Babylon must be supplied from xi. 7—11 the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days of Antichrist's supremacy. During this time, the Lamb's wife is dressed in white, safely sheltered in the asylum which has been provided for her against the double attack of Antichrist, xii. 13—15. Then follows the coming of Christ, and the destruction of his foes, which completes the contents of the seventh vial.

Satan is next confined to his prison for a thousand years, a mystic period, not calculable, but immensely longer than the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years, not to say the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days, which preceded it.

That will be the Messianic period proper, in comparison with which the present preparatory stage shall be not worth mentioning in the insignificance of its duration. Christ's kingdom shall be set up in visible glory over all the earth. The martyrs, and all the true worshippers of every age, shall be raised from the dead, and the members of the Church then living shall be changed. 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 17. These reign with Christ, not in heaven, but on earth, over the nations which had not been included in the kingdom of Antichrist, but which shall now be christianized. The seeming incongruity of having the earth thus tenanted at once by the glorified saints, and by nations in their mortal state, is thought to be relieved by the fact of our Lord's continuance in the world for forty days after his resurrection. When the term of his confinement has expired, Satan shall deceive the unglorified nations once more, and gather them to war against the saints, and be with them miraculously overthrown, and cast into the lake of fire. Consequent upon this is the final judgment upon all the occupants of Hades, of whom there are two classes, those who died ignorant of Christ, and those who positively rejected him. This is succeeded by the physical renovation of the universe, and the coming down out of heaven of the New Jerusalem, in which shall dwell the reigning saints of the millennium, while the new earth generally shall be tenanted by such of the heathen dying ignorant of Christ as are found capable of healing by the leaves of the tree of life. What becomes of those among the nations who were converted during the thousand years, no intimation can be found. They are certainly not among those judged according to their works; for believers are not so judged. Perhaps they die, and are translated to heaven; perhaps they are successively changed as they live on earth.

In conformity with our design announced at the outset, merely to exhibit, not to discuss the views of our author, we leave them without remark to the judgment of our readers.