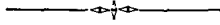


are signs of social convulsion, a tremor, a thrill, a quiver. Presently we may see a great awakening, and then many, I fully believe, will be brought to Christianity of those who have proved hitherto the hardest to win.

WILLIAM JOSEPH SMITH.



## ART. II.—THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

IN the following paper I do not propose to discuss the authorship, canonicity, or supposed bias of the Apocalypse. I accept the opening verses as they stand. It is "the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly be done: and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John; who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw."

It appears to me that the thing most needed for the understanding of the Revelation is a clear idea of the plan and structure of the book. Of all human helps to the interpretation of Holy Scripture this seems to occupy the highest place. When I undertook to write this paper, I had scarcely the shadow of a hope that I should be able to suggest such a plan, or to mark out the Apocalypse in the kind of way in which Genesis, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, or Judges can be divided, so that the relation of the parts to the whole becomes at once apparent. If I venture to attempt this process now, it is with fear and trembling.

The Epistles to the seven Churches may be treated separately from the rest of the book. It is allowed that these Churches are representative of the Church in all ages, although the time of this Dispensation does not appear to be apportioned to them in any exact way. That Philadelphia and Laodicea are discernible in our present surroundings I can hardly doubt.

But the real difficulty of the Book of Revelation begins later, and concerns not "the things which are," but "the things which are to be hereafter." The time of our Saviour's public ministry at His first coming was probably about three years and a half. I venture to think that the greater part of the Book of Revelation, in its final meaning, is concerned with a similar period of about three years and a half, pertaining to His second coming. "Behold He cometh with clouds" is the real beginning of this period. When "His feet shall stand (in that day) upon the Mount of Olives," those three years and a half will have come to a close.

I would ask my readers to suspend their judgment of what I

have to offer until they have read the whole. I attack no other man's interpretation of the Apocalypse. The view of Elliott that most of its prophecies have been realized already may be correct as far as it goes. I will only say that there must be *some* plain, final meaning to the book of this prophecy which will not demand an acquaintance with the pages of Gibbon in order to make it clear. The prophecies of our Saviour which were accomplished at His first coming required nothing but the Old Testament and His Personal history to make them perfectly plain. It will be just the same when the Apocalypse is fulfilled. And let me add that it is the *last* event predicted that *fulfils* the prophecy, not the first. The cup is filled full by the last drop. The interpretation of the Apocalypse which we want to discover is its *final* meaning. "And so much the more" as we "see the day approaching." "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand."

I begin with ch. iv. And I shall take the words as literal, except in those cases where Scripture itself proves that they have a symbolical meaning. In ch. iv. the throne of the God of Israel—the Jehovah Sabaoth of the Old Testament—is disclosed to our view. We see "the living creature that was under the God of Israel" when Ezekiel saw Him, and we hear the "Holy, holy, holy!" that caused Isaiah to feel himself "undone." "His ancients gloriously" sit about Him, and the Creator is praised for His glorious works. But there is (as yet) no note of redemption, no direct mention of the Redeemer and His work.

In ch. v. we see the same throne occupied by the Redeemer. "A Lamb as it hath been slain" is in the midst of it, and He takes the book of the covenant out of the Father's hand. The book of the covenant,<sup>1</sup> I say; not the book of prophecy alone. It is the title-deed of our redemption, the evidence "which is sealed" (not "that which is open" for inspection, Jer. xxxii, 11), and may not be opened until the debts charged upon the first covenant have been paid and the forfeited inheritance regained. But "the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed" to redeem it, and He can take the covenant-deed into His hand. "For Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed unto God by Thy blood—out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; . . . and they shall reign on the earth."

Louder and far wider than the praise of the Creator in Rev. iv. resound the praises of the Redeemer in Rev. v. And

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<sup>1</sup> For this thought I acknowledge my obligation to the lectures of Dr. Seiss.

then, without delay, He begins to exercise His Redeemer's right. Seal after seal of the deed is unfastened, and as each is broken the Redeemer asserts His claims over some fresh portion of the inheritance which He has redeemed. This brings us to the series in ch. vi. The first four seals have a distinct relation to the fourfold Gospel; for as each of them is opened, one of the four living creatures cries to Him that opened the seal,<sup>1</sup> "Come!" These successive cries of the four living creatures are succeeded by a further cry from the many souls under the altar—"How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not" come? And at the sixth seal every voice on earth acknowledges that "the great day of His wrath IS COME." They see "the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne," and foresee that "the wrath of the Lamb" is upon them; "and who shall be able to stand?"

If this sketch is true, we shall expect, under the first four seals, some progress in the spread of the fourfold Gospel<sup>2</sup> in the sphere (1) of Judaism; (2) of Gospel-workers among Jews and Gentiles alike; (3) of the Gentile world in which the Gospel has now taken root; and (4) of Christendom in general. The right of our Redeemer is established, and that soon; but, as the Gospel spreads, resistance increases. (1) Victory is followed by (2) conflict and persecution; this again by (3) establishment and starvation. Men may have the wheat and barley, the wine and oil, of the Gospel as a right, if they pay for it; but (4) rejection follows, and the four sore judgments of God are in the hand of Him Whose Godhead, asserted so emphatically by the fourth Gospel, the world is determined to deny. This sequence seems to prevail throughout the world under the present Dispensation, until at last the saints in Paradise—the "souls under the altar"—find the seal of Christ's dominion over their appointed place opened, and call to Him to "judge and avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth." And it is added, "*White robes were given to every one of them*,"—i.e., of these departed souls. This cannot be justification, for the saints are not justified in the grave. What is it, then? The *only real clothing for a soul is a body*. I take this to signify the resurrection of the just. These white robes cannot be Christ's righteousness, for "they *washed their robes, and made them white* in the blood of the Lamb" (vii. 14). In ch. vii. we find the same souls "clothed with white robes" before the throne. Does anyone think they

<sup>1</sup> If we read, "Come and see," the connection remains. But the issue of every seal is a step in His coming.

<sup>2</sup> The relation of the Gospel to the four living creatures is set forth by many writers. See "Jukes on the Gospels" for a fair statement of it.

are still disembodied? What, then, is the meaning of verses 16, 17, "They shall *hunger* no more, neither *thirst* any more; neither shall the *sun* light on them, nor any *heat*"? How could it, if they were still souls without bodies? What need have these of food, or water, or shade? But it is not their disembodied condition that protects them. No; it is because "the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their *Shepherd*, and shall lead them to living fountains of *waters*; and God shall *wipe away all tears from their eyes*."

I take the opening of the fifth seal to be the first stage of the first resurrection, which is completed at the last trump, after three years and a half. This seems to be indicated in the Lord's answer to the cry of the souls. They asked for vindication—*an avenging upon the earth*. This is not yet granted them. They receive, however, their white robes—*i.e.*, their glorified bodies—in which they stand before the throne, a great multitude (ch. vii. 9). But "it was said to them that they should *rest* yet for a little season" (before the vengeance is granted them), "until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled" —*i.e.*, to the end of the great tribulation. What is the meaning of that word "rest"? It is not sleep, but active enjoyment (Gr., *ἀναπαύσονται*). So the rich man said to his *soul*, in the parable: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. *Take thine ease*" (*ἀναπαύου*); "eat, drink, and be merry." There was no *sleep* indicated there; but what a contrast! Think of the enjoyment of heaven, the eating and drinking at His table there, and the "make merry and be glad" of the Father's house, for those that "were dead and are alive again," who "had been lost and *were found*"! For a little season this will be their portion who receive the white robes, until the time comes to give them their full reward in the kingdom in which they shall reign over the earth. Compare with Rev. vi. 11 the words spoken in ch. xi. 18, at the last trump, when *all* that are Christ's at His coming have been changed. I do not forget St. Paul's words in 1 Cor. xv. and 1 Thess. iv. But I hope to show that both passages, when carefully examined, confirm this view.

"We shall not all sleep," for some will be "alive and remain to the coming of the Lord;" "but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," (some in the moment when the fifth seal is opened, and the rest) "at the last trump." In the first instance, those who are alive will ascend with the dead who are raised, and probably at the last trump also. But if I understand the Book of Revelation rightly, a period of three and a half years separates the two. Dr. Seiss thinks that there will be several raptures during this period. But

this seems to create confusion. It is intelligible that if our Saviour's appearance is not followed *instantaneously* by His reign on earth, there should be conversion, persecution, martyrdom, and glorification in the interval. And if the Scripture says so, is there anything *à priori* impossible in this? I see nothing but the common notion of the "last day." And possibly that common notion may be based on a mistake. See 2 Peter iii. 8-16.

The sixth seal is followed by a description which anyone can interpret. "The sign of the Son of Man in heaven" is *seen*. The words "Every eye shall see Him" have been fulfilled. The terror that follows is manifest. But, (as is clear from Rev. i. 7 with Zechariah xii. 10), that sight which brings terror to the world of unbelievers (now that the Gentile Church is taken up) brings repentance to the house of Israel. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." This will prepare us for what follows next: Under the same sixth seal, in ch. vii., we see the Jews *sealed on earth*, while the Gentile Church is *in heaven*. This is a very simple distinction, but it generally escapes notice. Reading ch. vii. 1-3, we see that if the forces which threaten danger to *earth, sea, and trees* are restrained for the sake of God's servants who are to be sealed in their foreheads, those servants *must still be on earth*. Otherwise, they would not be in danger. The tribes of Israel are restored to the place of God's servants, and sealed in their foreheads, and go forth two and two (like the Apostles who are to rule over them) as missionaries to the world. We see the pairs distinctly:

Judah } ; Gad } ; Naphtali } ; Simeon } ; Issachar } ; Joseph  
 Reuben } ; Asher } ; Manasseh } ; Levi } ; Zebulon } ; Benjamin.

The beauty of this arrangement is manifest. In every case the children of the same mother are paired. Naphtali and Manasseh both count as children of Rachel; and *Dan* and *Ephraim* are absent from the list. The two brotherless brothers are given to make up each other's loss.

How these tribes are found and brought to God we are not told. But we remember that it is written, "There stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known to his brethren." The "great multitude" of all nations is elsewhere.

Thus the centre of gravity of the Church on earth is once more transferred from West to East, from the Gentile to the Jew. This is the key to much of the succeeding history. Meanwhile, "the great multitude that no man can number" of all "nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (words

recalling, with one most significant exception, the four divisions of the Gentile world in ch. x. of Genesis) are "resting for a little season in heaven before the throne and before the Lamb."

The seventh seal is broken, and all the voices in heaven are hushed into silence "for the space of half an hour." Why? It is an interval of prayer, before God's judgments are made manifest. We see one standing before the altar with a golden censer; "and there was given to him much incense" (the prayers of saints of old long kept in store, see ch. iv. 8, odours = incense) "in the golden vials," that he should add it to the prayers of *all saints* that are now in heaven on the golden altar before the throne, and surely the prayers of the King of saints will be there also. The prayers of *all saints* are here presented; both past and present, up to this last half-hour. "Shall not God avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him, though He be longsuffering over them?" Yes; "He will avenge them speedily;" and here we see the time close at hand. Before the wrath of God descends on the earth, the prayers of all saints are brought before Him, and presented before the throne on high. Will any of them change the cry for vengeance into intercession, like Elijah of old? This presentation of prayer is at once followed by the sounding of seven trumpets. These are evidently God's warning voices to the world. Each of them is a note of judgment. And not long after, these seven trumpet-notes are succeeded by the outpouring of seven vials of wrath, in which the judgment begun by the trumpets is completed. The following table will show the resemblance:

| 1ST TRUMPET.   | 2ND TRUMPET.  | 3RD TRUMPET.  |
|--|---|---|
| Hail, fire, and blood on earth. Ch. viii. 7.                   | Third part of the sea smitten. Ch. viii. 8, 9.                      | Third part of rivers and springs turned to worm-wood. Ch. viii. 10, 11. |
| 1st VIAL on the earth, man struck with sores. Ch. xvi. 2.      | 2nd VIAL turns the whole sea to blood. Ch. xvi. 3.                  | 3rd VIAL turns all rivers and springs to blood. Ch. xvi. 4-6.           |
| 4TH TRUMPET.   | 5TH TRUMPET.  | 6TH TRUMPET.  |
| Third (part) of sun, moon, and star light taken. Ch. viii. 12. | Darkness from the pit, and locusts. Ch. ix. 1-11.                   | Affects the River Euphrates. Ch. ix. 13-21.                             |
| 4th VIAL smites the sun. Ch. xvi. 8, 9.                        | 5th VIAL brings darkness on the seat of the beast. Ch. xvi. 10, 11. | 6th VIAL dries Euphrates up. Ch. xvi. 12-14.                            |

The *seventh trumpet* brings a great voice in heaven that the kingdoms of this world are become our Lord's, xi. 15. The *seventh vial* poured into the air brings the cry that *it is done*, xvi. 17. These two last appear to be almost simultaneous.

I do not here attempt to *interpret* these sevenfold plagues in their final fulfilment. I will not say that they may not have

received a partial accomplishment in this present dispensation. But if so, it is an accomplishment which simple souls cannot recognise, and the Bible was written for the poor. The final fulfilment, I believe, will be literal. Is there any reason why the words of Revelation should not mean, ultimately, *what they say*? I see none. The ten plagues of Egypt were over in less than one year. The course of judgment indicated by the trumpets proceeds with little interruption until six have sounded. Then there seems to be a pause. The world is still impenitent, as appears by ch. ix. 20, 21. And a solemn declaration is made (in ch. x. 7) that there will be *no more time given* for repentance, when the seventh or last trumpet shall sound. Then "*the mystery of God is finished.*" Is not this a reference to 1 Tim. iii. 16, taken as a summary of the whole mediatorial work of Christ, and is it not certain that "God"<sup>1</sup> is the true reading in that place? Meantime, the beloved disciple "who bare record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ" must still prophesy.

St. John is next bidden to "measure the temple of God (*ναὸς*), and the altar and the worshippers therein" (ch. xi. 1). But not the outer court. For the Gentiles still tread (*not* "tread under foot") the holy city for the space of forty-two months. This measuring recalls Ezekiel xl. to xlv., and indicates that the temple there foretold has been built at Jerusalem, with the altar; and that it has its worshippers, but apparently *within the holy house*, as is seemly, now that our Saviour has done away the veil. But the rest of that prophecy (Ezek. xlv. to end) is not fulfilled yet. Meantime God's two witnesses still prophesy, for the same period already indicated, 1,260 days, or forty-two months. That these witnesses may have a double meaning is clear, because they are described both as two candlesticks and as two olive-trees. A candlestick in Revelation, as in Zech. iv., signifies a church. The olive-tree possibly refers to an individual. There appear to be, therefore, at this period, both (1) a Jewish, and (2) a Gentile Church. I do not deny that the Jewish and Gentile churches of previous dispensations, or the Eastern and Western Church since Pentecost, may have contributed to the accomplishment of this figure. But I think its fulfilment must be as indicated here, and I am not indisposed to adopt Dr. Seiss's view of the individual witnesses, that they will be (1) Elijah for the Jews, and (2) Enoch for the Gentiles. For it is written, that "Elijah shall restore all things." And Enoch's prophecy (Jude 14, 15) is singularly appropriate to the time. This testimony continues until "*the beast,*" here mentioned for the first time, shall slay

<sup>1</sup> The numbered Greek MSS. which read θεός there is 300. What evidence can outweigh this fact?

the witnesses, and for three and a half *days* they will lie unburied: till the last trump. At this point in ch. xi. we reach the *end* of the period. But a further description is needful to explain the introduction of "the beast" in xi. 7. This is given in the succeeding chapters.

In ch. xii., the church of all ages is, as it were, unified, and presented to us under the figure of a woman bringing forth a man-child, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child is caught up to God and His throne. The dragon, as her enemy, stands before her. The sequel shows that he is "the old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." For he is before us continuously in the history of the beast, to whom he gives authority in the following chapter (xiii. 2), whom he aids in his deceiving work (xvi. 13), and whose judgment he finally shares (xx. 2, 10; xix. 20). The woman obviously includes in her history Eve's quarrel with the serpent and the divine promise to her, with its fulfilment in the birth of our Saviour. And the ascension of her child appears to include not only the personal exaltation of our Saviour, but also the subsequent exaltation of His members, which will have at this time taken place. Consequently we get a double series of events described in the ch. xii.: first, Satan's deposition by our Lord's death, as indicated in John xii. 31, 32; and secondly, his further deposition together with his angels after the ascension of the saints. Similarly his persecution of the woman for 1,260 days may have a partial application to the dispensation immediately succeeding the ascension of Christ Himself, and a more definite and final application to the things which shall follow the ascension of the saints. And so with the beasts in ch. xiii., there may be a partial fulfilment of the things there described already; and a final, definite, and more literal fulfilment, after the removal of the saints from this world.

But the special interest of Rev. xiii. lies in the fact that it connects the Apocalypse with the prophecies of Daniel, and brings out (when taken in connection with ch. xvii.) the development of the last antichrist in connection with all history, with a clearness that is almost startling to our view.

The beast of Rev. xiii. 1, with seven heads and ten horns, combines the four beasts of Dan. vii. It has the characteristics of the leopard, bear, and lion (Daniel's three first beasts) which preceded the fourth, or Roman, wild-beast power, which was in existence in the time of St. John.

But this wild beast of Revelation includes more than the four beasts of Daniel vii. Its *seven* heads embrace more than one earlier and one later power. In order to see what this means, we must anticipate somewhat, and turn to ch. xvii.



The angel who explains the mystery says that the seven heads correspond to *seven* kings or world-powers. And here I follow Dr. Seiss without any hesitation. The seven world-powers of Scripture are manifest at the first glance. They are (1) Egypt (2) Assyria, (before Daniel), (3) Babylon (4) Persia, (5) Macedonia, (6) Rome Pagan, and (7) Rome Papal represented by the little horn of Dan. vii. See now how this tallies with Rev. xvii. 10: "There are *seven kings*," it is said to St. John; *five are fallen*—viz., Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Macedonia: "and one is"—viz., Rome Pagan—reigning when St. John wrote, "and the other"—viz., Rome Papal—"is not yet come, and when he cometh he must continue a short space." Now what is the eighth? "The beast that was and is not, he is the eighth and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." What does this refer to? Clearly to that one "of the seven heads" which was "wounded to death by the sword" (xiii. 3), and his deadly wound was healed, so that "all the world wondered after the beast" (xiii. 3). Compare xvii. 8, which evidently refers to the same thing. Here we have, not an anti-Trinity, which has often been pointed out in ch. xiii., (1) dragon, (2) beast, and (3) false prophet, but what is equally appropriate under the circumstances—an *anti-resurrection*. What is the subject of it? *One of the seven heads of the beast*—not a *horn*, observe. Here is the error through which men have missed the interpretation—*i.e.*, the *final* interpretation, for of course there may be earlier partial meanings. It is one of the seven *heads* or world-powers that is restored again. Can we say which? The Book of Daniel enables us to answer without the slightest hesitation. It is the *third* of the four beasts described in Dan. vii., the *fifth* of the seven, that is restored to life. How do we know this? Because the only absolutely unfulfilled prophecy in Daniel (viii. and xi) concerns a wilful king who springs out of the *third* or Macedonian empire. His prototype is Antiochus Epiphanes. His source and origin are Greek. His representative in the present Dispensation is the Mohammedan power. But the sphere of his operation is the East, not the West, and, like Mohammedanism, he is an anti-christ for the Jewish rather than for the Gentile Church of God. The most manifest proof of this is the fact that Daniel's prophecy concerning him is written in Hebrew, the Jewish language, not in Chaldee (which is a Gentile tongue). These two languages, as employed in the bi-lingual prophecy of Daniel, clearly indicate the direction of the several portions of the prophecy of his book. The fact that Antiochus Epiphanes, the great persecutor of Jerusalem, is the prototype of this anti-christ, points the same way.

We have then, in Rev. xiii., exactly what we should expect, that the last great outburst of Satanic enmity, in the short period immediately preceding the kingdom of Christ at Jerusalem on earth, will be an anti-Jewish antichrist; possibly connected with the Mohammedan power, but an unmistakable resurrection of the Macedonian or Greek empire on the earth. *How* this will be I do not pretend to explain. Whether its Greek character will appear in language, government, scientific teaching, or by any kind of direct and literal resurrection, I cannot venture to forecast. But by some Satanic miracle one of the seven world-powers, which *was not* when St. John wrote, and had previously existed, will return to power. There are clear indications from Daniel that it will be identified with the power founded by Alexander the Great. Though how the identity will be established, it is not possible to say. It will be such a resurrection that "all the world" will "wonder after the beast." (See Dan. x. 20, "When I am coming, then, behold, the prince of Javan shall come.")

But Rev. xiii. indicates not only a restored beast, or head of the empire of rebellion, but a false prophet also, an earth-beast who enforces the worship of the other throughout the world. This beast has, I believe, an existence in the present dispensation also, and acts as false prophet to the seventh power whose day is not yet past. Unless I am mistaken, the thing I mean would transfer its allegiance bodily to Mohammedanism or anything else that could promise political ascendancy. But there are some things of which it is wiser not to speak too plainly.

The mark of the beast and number of his name are instruments by which the teaching is enforced and extended. What they have been under the seventh power is well known, and was known centuries ago. I have no doubt that *Romiith* and *Aareivos* were correct. What the new name which will fulfil the conditions under the eighth power may be, it is impossible to say until that power shall come.<sup>1</sup>

The reign of this antichrist sets in, apparently, as soon as the ascension of the saints is an accomplished fact. It extends over the whole world, and culminates in a concentrated attack on Jerusalem. The witnesses are slain, the city taken, and antichrist is victorious until the Lord goes forth. The events of the period are brought before us in a kind of rapid sequence in ch. xiv. First we see the sacred company on Mount Zion: the Shekinah manifested once more, as appears from Ezekiel xliii. and Rev. xiv. taken together. The 144,000 sealed in

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<sup>1</sup> A well-known signature, correctly transcribed in Greek letters, gives the number exactly now. But I prefer not to note the fact.

ch. vii. appear there, and the Lamb in the midst of them—a manifestation, apparently, of the Saviour's glory in His earthly temple once more. Those who are assembled there are able to catch the notes of praise which are uttered in heaven. The psalmody of the restored temple becomes an echo of that which is heard above. The music which is "as the voice of many waters," and "the voice of a great thunder," is now audible on Mount Zion. Only "no man could learn that song but the 144,000 which were redeemed from the earth." Others attempt to catch the notes in vain.

Meanwhile the everlasting Gospel is still preached up to the last moment. (Rev. xiv. 6, 7.)

The fall of Babylon is announced, and her judgment imminent (verse 8).

The wrath of God, poured out without mixture (the seven vials), is threatened on the worshippers of the beast and his image—an indication that the events of ch. xvi. are in rapid progress by this time (verses 9-12).

The immediate coming of Christ to reward His saints and the most recent of His martyrs is prophesied (verses 13-16); and in the reaping of the harvest by the sharp sickle that comes without its sharpness, this last part of the first resurrection is described.

The judgment of those who are *not* partakers of it is described as the gathering of the vine of the earth into the great winepress of the wrath of God. Meantime the seven vials have been poured out (ch. xvi.). And in ch. xv. we see the blessed company of these last martyrs who are getting the victory (*ταῖς νικῶντας*) over the beast, and his image, and his mark, and his number, standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

At the last vial, judgment falls on great Babylon, the literal metropolis of antichrist and his religion, wheresoever it may then be found. And then, this over (as described in ch. xviii.), the heaven is opened (xix. 11), and "the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee" (Zech. xiv. 5). He comes to tread the winepress (cf. xix. 15 with xiv. 19, 20—these passages are therefore simultaneous), and it is "trodden without the city." At this point, therefore, the prophecy in Zech. xiv. is fulfilled. The binding of Satan follows; the saints reign with Christ until the devil is released once more. Then we have the last gathering of the hosts of Gog and Magog (see Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix., and Rev. xx. 8, 9). But this is evidently later by a whole dispensation than Rev. xix. 20. The two points *cannot* be coincident, because when Satan is cast into the lake of fire (xx. 10), the beast and the false

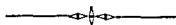
prophet are there already. Satan alone has a further probation granted to him at the last.

The final judgment of all the dead follows, and death and hell are destroyed in the lake of fire at last. Then we see the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

This appears to me to be the conspectus of the Book of Revelation. From ch. v. 1 to xi. 19 I take to be consecutive, excepting that xi. 1 goes back to the commencement of the events described in vii.-x. Parallel to xi. are xii., xiii., xiv., and details are filled up by xvi.-xix. The ends of xi., xiv., xix. are parallel passages, describing the same thing from different points of view.

I see nothing of all that this Book contains regarding our Saviour's Second Coming which may not be included in the space of three and a half years. It is a time of fearful conflict and tribulation. "Except the Lord had shortened these days no flesh should be saved." But I reserve all further comment until a later opportunity.

C. H. WALLER.



### ART. III.—ON THE EXTENSION OF THE EPISCOPATE.

THERE is a growing conviction in the minds of both clergy and laity that the demands now being made upon the time and strength of our Bishops render a further addition to their number a necessity. It may be useful to consider some of the reasons on which this conviction rests.

And first, there is the increase of our population. Surely it would seem to be reasonable that the number of Bishops should go on increasing with the increase of the population. But what are the facts? At the time of the Norman Conquest the population of England and Wales is believed to have been a little over a million, and there were 19 Bishops—say one to every *fifty* thousand. At the epoch of the Reformation the population had increased to *four* millions; but only two new sees had been added, making 21—or, say, one Bishop to every 190,000. The Reformers, persuaded that this was a greater charge than one Bishop ought to undertake, asked Henry VIII. to create 16 additional bishoprics, but obtained only 5—namely, Gloucester, Bristol, Oxford, Peterborough, and Chester. Thus there were 26 Bishops for a population of 4,000,000, giving roughly one Bishop to every 154,000—a number much too large, in the opinion of Archbishop Cranmer and his brother reformers, to be efficiently superintended by one Bishop.