five, now a mockery instead of a praise;—and, finally, the different fate of many cities particularly defined,—the long subjection of Jerusalem to the Gentiles,—the buildings of Samaria cast down into the valley, its foundations discovered, and vineyards in its stead, all so clearly marked, both in the prophecy and on the spot, that they serve to fix its site,—Rabbah-Ammon, the capital of the Ammonites, now a pasture for camels, and a couching-place for flocks,—the chief city of Edom brought down,—a court for owls, and no man dwelling in it,—the forsaken Gaza, bereaved of a monarch, bald of all its fortifications, or defenceless,—Ashkelon, desolate, without an inhabitant,—and Ekron rooted up: these are all ancient prophecies, and these are all present facts, which form of themselves a phalanx of evidence which all the shafts of infidelity can never pierce.

Though the countries included in these predictions comprehend a field of prophecy extending over upwards of one hundred and twenty thousand square miles, the existing state of every part of which bears witness of their truth; yet the prophets, as inspired by the God of nations, foretold the fate of mightier monarchies, of more extensive regions, and of more powerful cities: and there is not a people, nor a country, nor a capital which was then known to the Israelites whose future history they did not clearly reveal. And, instead of adducing arguments from the preceding very abundant materials, or drawing those facts already adduced to their legitimate conclusion, they may be left in their native strength, like the unhewn adamant; and we may pass to other proofs which also show that the temple of Christian faith rests upon a rock that cannot be shaken.

CHAPTER VI.

NINEVEH.

To a brief record of the creation of the antediluvian world, and of the dispersion and the different settlements of mankind after the deluge, the Scriptures of the Old Testament add a full and particular history of the He-
brews for the space of fifteen hundred years, from the
days of Abraham to the era of the last of the prophets. While the historical part of Scripture thus traces, from
its origin, the history of the world, the prophecies give a
prospective view which reaches to its end. And it is
remarkable that profane history, emerging from fable,
becomes clear and authentic about the very period when
sacred history terminates, and when the fulfilment of
these prophecies commences, which refer to other na-
tions besides the Jews.

Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, was for a long time
an extensive and populous city. Its walls are said, by
heathen historians, to have been a hundred feet in height,
sixty miles in compass, and to have been defended by
fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high. Al-
though it formed the subject of some of the earliest of
the prophecies, and was the very first which met its pre-
dicted fate, yet a heathen historian, in describing its
capture and destruction, repeatedly refers to an ancient
prediction respecting it. Diodorus Siculus relates, that
the King of Assyria, after the complete discomfiture of
his army, confided in an old prophecy, that Nineveh
would not be taken unless the river should become the
enemy of the city;* that, after an ineffectual siege of two
years, the river, swollen with long-continued and tem-
pestuous torrents, inundated part of the city, and threw
down the wall for the space of twenty furlongs; and
that the king, deeming the prediction accomplished, de-
spaired of his safety, and erected an immense funeral
pile, on which he heaped his wealth, and with which
himself, his household, and palace were consumed.†

The book of Nahum was avowedly prophetic of the de-
struction of Nineveh: and it is there foretold “that the
gates of the river shall be opened, and the palace shall
be dissolved.” “Nineveh of old, like a pool of water—
with an overflowing flood he will make an utter end of
the place thereof.”‡ The historian describes the facts
by which the other predictions of the prophet were as
literally fulfilled. He relates that the King of Assyria,
elated with his former victories, and ignorant of the re-
volt of the Bactrians, had abandoned himself to scan-
dalous inaction; had appointed a time of festivity, and
supplied his soldiers with abundance of wine; and that

† Ibid. p. 84.
‡ Nahum ii. 6-8.
the general of the enemy, apprized, by deserters, of their negligence and drunkenness, attacked the Assyrian army while the whole of them were fearlessly giving way to indulgence, destroyed great part of them, and drove the rest into the city. The words of the prophet were hereby verified: "While they be felden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble full dry."† The prophet promised much spoil to the enemy: "Take the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold; for there is no end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture."‡ And the historian affirms, that many talents of gold and silver, preserved from the fire, were carried to Ecbatana.§ According to Nahum, the city was not only to be destroyed by an overflowing flood, but the fire also was to devour it;|| and, as Diodorus relates, partly by water, partly by fire, it was destroyed.

The utter and perpetual destruction and desolation of Nineveh were foretold:—"The Lord will make an utter end of the place thereof. Affliction shall not rise up the second time. She is empty, void, and waste.—The Lord will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. How is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in!"¶ In the second century, Lucian, a native of a city on the banks of the Euphrates, testified that Nineveh was utterly perished—that there was no vestige of it remaining—and that none could tell where once it was situated. This testimony of Lucian, and the lapse of many ages during which the place was not known where it stood, render it at least somewhat doubtful whether the remains of an ancient city, opposite to Mosul, which have been described as such by travellers, be indeed those of ancient Nineveh. It is, perhaps, probable that they are the remains of the city which succeeded Nineveh, or of a Persian city of the same name, which was built on the banks of the Tigris by the Persians subsequently to the year 230 of the Christian era, and demolished by the Saracens in 632.** In contrasting the then existing great and increasing population, and the accumulating wealth of the proud

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* Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 81, 84. † Nahum i. 10; iii. 2.
†† Lib. ii. 9. ‡ Diod. p. 87. || Nahum iii. 15.
§ Nahum i. 8, 9; ii. 10; iii. 17, 18, 19. ¶ Zeph. n. 13, 14, 15.
inhabitants of the mighty Nineveh, with the utter ruin that awaited it,—the word of God (before whom all the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers) by Nahum was—"Make thyself many as the canker-worm, make thyself many as the locusts. Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the canker-worm spoileth, and flyeth away. Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers which camp in the hedges in the cold day: but when the sun riseth, they flee away; and their place is not known where they are," or were. Whether these words imply that even the site of Nineveh would in future ages be uncertain or unknown; or, as they rather seem to intimate, that every vestige of the palaces of its monarchs, of the greatness of its nobles, and of the wealth of its numerous merchants would wholly disappear; the truth of the prediction cannot be invalidated under either interpretation. The avowed ignorance respecting Nineveh, and the oblivion which passed over it, for many an age, conjointed with the meagerness of evidence to identify it still, prove that the place was long unknown where it stood, and that, even now, it can scarcely with certainty be determined. And if the only spot that bears its name, or that can be said to be the place where it was, be indeed the site of one of the most extensive of cities on which the sun ever shone, and which continued for many centuries to be the capital of Assyria—the "principal mounds," few in number, which "show neither bricks, stones, nor other materials of building, but are in many places ove. crown with grass, and resemble the mounds left by trenches and fortifications of ancient Roman camps," and the appearances of other mounds and ruins less marked than even these, extending for ten miles, and widely spread, and seeming to be "the wreck of former buildings,"* show that Nineveh is left without one monument of royalty, without any token whatever of its splendour or wealth; that their place is not known where they were; and that it is indeed a desolation—"empty, void, and waste," its very ruins perished, and less than the wreck of what it was. "Such an utter ruin," in every view, "has been made of it; and such is the truth of the divine predictions."†

† See Bishop Newton's Dissertations.
BABYLON.

If ever there was a city that seemed to bid defiance to any predictions of its fall, that city was Babylon. It was, for a long time, the most famous city in the whole world.* Its walls, which were reckoned among the wonders of the world, appeared rather like the bulwarks of nature than the workmanship of man.† The temple of Belus, half a mile in circumference and a furlong in height—the hanging gardens, which, piled in successive terraces, towered as high as the walls—the embankments which restrained the Euphrates—the hundred brazen gates—and the adjoining artificial lake—all displayed many of the mightiest works of mortals concentrated in a single spot.‡ Yet, while in the plenitude of its power, and, according to the most accurate chronologers, 160 years before the foot of an enemy had entered it, the voice of prophecy pronounced the doom of the mighty and unconquered Babylon. A succession of ages brought it gradually to the dust; and the gradation of its fall is marked till it sink at last into utter desolation. At a time when nothing but magnificence was around Babylon the great, fallen Babylon was delineated exactly as every traveller now describes its ruins. And the prophecies concerning it may be viewed connectedly, from the period of their earliest to that of their latest fulfilment.

The immense fertility of Chaldea, which retained also

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† The extent of the walls of Babylon is variously stated: by Herodotus at 480 stadia, or furlongs, in circumference; by Pliny and Solinus at sixty Roman miles, or of equal extent; by Strabo at 385 stadia; by Diodorus Siculus, according to the slightly different testimony of Ctesias and Chianarchus, both of whom visited Babylon, at 360 or 365; and to the last of these statements that of Quintus Curtius nearly corresponds, viz. 368. The difference of a few stadia rather confirms than disproves the general accuracy of the last three of these accounts. There may have been an error in the text of Herodotus of 480, instead of 380, which Pliny and Solinus may have copied. The variation of 20 or 25 stadia, in excess, may have been caused by the line of measurement having been the outside of the trench, and not immediately of the wall. And thus the various statements may be brought nearly to correspond. Major Reuvel, estimating the stadium at 491 feet, computes the extent of the wall at 34 miles, or eight and a half on each side. The opposite and contradictory statements of the height and breadth of the wall may possibly be best reconciled on the supposition that they refer to different periods. Herodotus states the height to have been 200 cubits, or 300 feet, and the breadth 50 cubits, or 75 feet. According to Curtius, the height was 150 feet, and the breadth 32; while Strabo states the height at 75 feet, and the breadth at 32 feet.
the name of Babylonia till after the Christian era,* corresponded, if that of any country could vie, with the greatness of Babylon. It was the most fertile region of the whole east.† Babylonia was one vast plain, adorned and enriched by the Euphrates and the Tigris, from which, and from the numerous canals that intersected the country from the one river to the other, water was distributed over the fields by manual labour and by hydraulic machines,‡ giving rise, in that warm climate and rich, exhaustless soil, to an exuberance of produce without a known parallel, over so extensive a region, either in ancient or modern times. Herodotus states, that he knew not how to speak of its wonderful fertility, which none but eyewitnesses would credit; and, though writing in the language of Greece, itself a fertile country, he expresses his own consciousness that his description of what he actually saw would appear to be improbable, and to exceed belief. In his estimation, as well as in that of Strabo and of Pliny (the three best ancient authorities that can be given), Babylonia was of all countries the most fertile in corn, the soil never producing less, as he relates, than two hundred fold, an amount, in our colder regions, scarcely credible, though Strabo, the first of ancient geographers, agrees with the "father of history" in recording that it reached even to three hundred, the grain, too, being of prodigious size.§ After being subjected to Persia, the government of Chaldea was accounted the noblest in the Persian empire.|| Besides supplying horses for military service, it maintained about seventeen thousand horses for the sovereign's use. And, exclusive of monthly subsidies, the supply from Chaldea (including perhaps Syria) for the subsistence of the king and of his army amounted to a third part of all that was levied from the whole of the Persian dominions, which at that time extended from the Hellespont to India.¶ Herodotus incidentally mentions that there were four great towns in the vicinity of Babylon.

Such was the "Chaldee's excellency," that it departed not on the first conquest, nor on the final extinction of its capital; but one metropolis of Assyria arose after

* Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 743.
‡ Herod. lib. i. c. 192.
§ Ibid. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 742.
|| Herod. lib. i. c. 192.
¶ Ibid.
another in the land of Chaldea, when Babylon had ceased to be "the glory of kingdoms." The celebrated city of Seleucia, whose ruins attest its former greatness, was founded and built by Seleucus Nicator, king of Assyria, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, in the year before Christ 293,—three centuries after Jeremiah prophesied. In the first century of the Christian era it contained six hundred thousand inhabitants.* The Parthian kings transferred the seat of empire to Ctesiphon, on the opposite bank of the Tigris, where they resided in winter; and that city, formerly a village, became great and powerful.† Six centuries after the latest of the predictions, Chaldea could also boast of other great cities,‡ such as Artemita and Sitacene, besides many towns. When invaded by Julian it was a "fruitful and pleasant country." And at a period equally distant from the time of the prophets and from the present day, in the seventh century, Chaldea was the scene of vast magnificence, in the reign of Chosroes. "His favourite residence of Artemita or Destagered, was situated beyond the Tigris, about sixty miles to the north of the capital (Ctesiphon). The adjacent pastures," in the words of Gibbon, "were covered with flocks and herds; the paradise, or park, was replenished with pheasants, peacocks, ostriches, roebucks, and wild boars, and the noble game of lions and tigers was sometimes turned loose for the golden pleasures of the chase. Nine hundred and sixty elephants were maintained for the use and splendour of the great king; his tents and baggage were carried into the field by twelve thousand great camels, and eight thousand of a smaller size; and the royal stables were filled with six thousand mules and horses. Six thousand guards successively mounted before the palace gate, and the service of the interior apartments was performed by twelve thousand slaves. The various treasures of gold, silver, gems, silk, and aromatics were deposited in a hundred subterranean vaults."§ "In the eighth century, the towns of Samarrah, Horounieh, and Djasserik formed, so to speak, one street of twenty-eight miles."||

|| Malte Brun's Geography, vol. ii. p. 119. Historical documents are not wanting to prove that the richness of Chaldea, down to the time of the Arabian califs, was such as to give the charm of truth (which, indeed, it is generally admitted that they possess) to many of the splendid descriptions which abound in the otherwise fictitious narratives of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.
Chaldea, with its rich soil and warm climate, and intersected by the Tigris and Euphrates, was one of the last countries in the world of which the desolation could have been thought of by man. For to this day "there cannot be a doubt, that if proper means were taken, the country would with ease be brought to a high state of cultivation."

Manifold are the prophecies respecting Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans; and the long lapse of ages has served to confirm their fulfilment in every particular, and to render it at last complete. The judgments of Heaven are not casual, but sure; they are not arbitrary, but righteous. And they were denounced against the Babylonians and the inhabitants of Chaldea expressly because of their idolatry, tyranny, oppression, pride, covetousness, drunkenness, falsehood, and other wickedness. So debasing and brutifying was their idolatry,—or so much did they render the name of religion subservient to their passions,—that practices the most abominable, which were universal among them, formed the very observance of some of their religious rites, of which even heathen writers could not speak but in terms of indignation and abhorrence. Though enriched with a prodigality of blessings, the glory of God was not regarded by the Chaldeans; and all the glory of man with which the plain of Shinar was covered has become, in consequence as well as in chastisement of prevailing vices, and of continued though diversified crimes, the wreck, the ruin, and utter desolation which the word of God (for whose word but his?) thus told from the beginning that the event would be.

The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amos did see.—"The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people: a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the Lord of Hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.—Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom

* Bombay Philosophical Transactions, vol. i. p. 194.
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and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there: and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces.”

“The oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.—Thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. Thou art cast out of the grave like an abominable branch—I will cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, the son and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

“Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.”

“Thus saith the Lord, that saith unto the deep, be dry; and I will dry up thy rivers: that saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure,—and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut.”

“Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon: sit on the ground, there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans. Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called the lady of kingdoms. Thou hast said, I shall be a lady for ever.—Hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children. But these two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection, for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness, &c. Therefore shall evil come upon

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* Isa. xiii. 1, 4, 5, 9, 10, 22.
† Ibid. xiv. 4, 11, 19, 22, 23.
‡ Ibid. xxv. 9.
§ Ibid. xxvi. 27, 28; xiv. 1.
|| Ibid. xli. 1.
thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth; and mischief shall come upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know."*

"I will punish the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands."† "The word that the Lord spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet. Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not; say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein; they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast."‡ "For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a spoil; all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord. Behold the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land and a desert. Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate; every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues."§ "Her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down; for it is the vengeance of the Lord: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest; for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land."¶ —"Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod; waste and utterly destroy after them.—A sound of battle is in the

* Isa. xlvi. 1, 5, 7-11.
† Jer. i. 1, 2, 3. § Ibid. 9-13.
¶ Ibid. 15, 16.
land, and of great destruction. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, 0 Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the Lord. The Lord hath opened his armory, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this is the work of the Lord God of Hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. Come against her from the utmost border, open her storehouses; cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly, let nothing of her be left.”* “Let none thereof escape; and the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up; I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.”† “A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men. A sword is upon the liars;—a sword is upon her mighty men;—a sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her;—a sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed. A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols. Therefore the wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein; and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord, so shall no more man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein. Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. They shall hold the bow and the lance; they are cruel, and will not show mercy; their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride on horses, every one put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, 0 daughter of Babylon.—Behold he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan into the habitation of the strong: but I will make them suddenly run away from her: and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? For who is like me? And who will appoint me the time? And who is that shepherd that will stand

* Jer. l. 21-26. \† Ibid. 29, 32.
BABYLON.

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before me? Therefore hear ye the counsel of the Lord that he hath taken against Babylon; and his purposes that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans; surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them. *—I will send unto Babylon fanners that shall fan her, and shall empty her land. —The slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans. —Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed; howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed; forsake her, and let us go every one unto his own country; for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies. †—The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; for his device is against Babylon to destroy it, &c.—O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thin- end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness. The Lord of Hosts hath sworn by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillars; and they shall lift up a shout against thee. ‡—Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and I will make thee a burnt mountain.—Set up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Aschenaz; prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land shall tremble and sorrow; for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in their holds; their might hath failed; they became as women; they have burnt her dwelling-places; her bars are broken.—One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the King of Babylon that his city is taken at one end; and that the passages are stopped. —Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor—it is time to thresh her: yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come:§—I will dry up her sea, and make

* Jer. i. 35-45. † Ibid. li. 2, 8, 9. ‡ Ibid. 11, 13, 14. § Ibid. 25-32.
her springs dry. And Babylon shall become heaps, a
dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hiss-
ing, without an inhabitant.—In their heat I will make
their feasts,—that they may sleep a perpetual sleep, and
not wake:—how is the praise of the whole earth sur-
prised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among
the nations! The sea is come upon Babylon; she is
covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. Her
cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a
land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of
man pass thereby. And I will punish Bel in Babylon;
and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he
hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow to-
gether any more unto him; yea, the wall of Babylon
shall fall—a rumour shall come one year, and after that
in another year shall come a rumour, and violence in the
land, ruler against ruler. Therefore, behold, the days
come that I will do judgment upon the graven images of
Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and
all her slain shall fall in the midst of her, &c.* And I
will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her cap-
tains, and her rulers, and mighty men: and they shall
sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King,
whose name is the Lord of Hosts. Thus saith the Lord
of Hosts,*The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly
broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and
the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire,
and they shall be weary.—And it shall be when thou
hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt
bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates:
and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall
not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.†

The enemies who were to besiege Babylon, the cow-
ardice of the Babylonians, the manner in which the city
was taken, and all the remarkable circumstances of the
siege were foretold and described by the prophets as the
facts are related by ancient historians.

Go up, O Elam (or Persia); besiege, O Media. The
Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes,
for his device is against Babylon to destroy it. The kings
of Persia and Media, prompted by a common interest,
freely entered into a league against Babylon, and with
one accord entrusted the command of their united armies

* Jer. li. 36, 37, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47. † Ibid. 57, 58, 63, 64.
Cyrus,* the relative, and eventually the successor of them both.—But the taking of Babylon was not reserved for these kingdoms alone: other nations had to be prepared against her.

Set up a standard in the land: blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Aschenaz: Lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country, &c.—Cyrus subdued the Armenians, who had revolted against Media, spared their king, bound them over anew to their allegiance by kindness rather than by force, and incorporated their army with his own.† He adopted the Hyrcaneans, who had rebelled against Babylon, as allies and confederates with the Medes and Persians.‡ He conquered the united forces of the Babylonians and Lydians, took Sardis, with Cræsus and all his wealth, spared his life after he was at the stake, restored to him his family and his household, received him into the number of his counsellors and friends, and thus prepared the Lydians, over whom he reigned, and who were formerly combined with Babylon, for coming up against it.§ He overthrew also the Phrygians and Cappadocians, and added their armies in like manner to his accumulating forces.|| And by successive alliances and conquests, by proclaiming liberty to the slaves, by a humane policy, consummate skill, a pure and noble disinterestedness, and a boundless generosity, he changed, within the space of twenty years, a confederacy which the King of Babylon had raised up against the Medes and Persians, whose junction he feared, into a confederacy even of the same nations against Babylon itself,—and thus a standard was set up against Babylon in many a land, kingdoms were summoned, prepared, and gathered together against her; and an assembly of great nations from the north—including Ararat and Minni, or the greater and lesser Armenia, and Aschenaz, or, according to Bochart, Phrygia—were raised up, and caused to come against Babylon. Without their aid, and before they were subjected to his authority, he had attempted in vain to conquer Babylon; but when he had prepared and gathered them together, it was taken, though by artifice more than by power.

† Ibid. l. iii. p. 156.
‡ Ibid. l. iv. p. 215, 217.
§ Ibid. l. ii. p. 408-416.
|| Ibid. l. iv. p. 427, 428.
They shall hold the bow and the lance—they shall ride upon horses—let the archer bend his bow—all ye that bend the bow shoot at her. They rode upon horses. Forty thousand Persian horsemen were armed from among the nations which Cyrus subdued; many horses of the captives were besides distributed among all the allies. And Cyrus came up against Babylon with a great multitude of horse;*—and also with a great multitude of archers and javelin men†—that held the bow and the lance.

No sooner had Cyrus reached Babylon, with the nations which he had prepared and gathered against her, than, in the hope of discovering some point not utterly impregnable, accompanied by his chief officers and friends, he rode round the walls, and examined them on every side, after having for that purpose stationed his whole army round the city.‡ They camped against it round about. They put themselves in array against Babylon round about.

Frustrated in the attempt to discover, throughout the whole circumference, a single assailable point, and finding that it was not possible, by any attack, to make himself master of walls so strong and so high, and fearing that his army would be exposed to the assault of the Babylonians by a too extended and consequently weakened line,—Cyrus, standing in the middle of his army, gave orders that the heavy-armed men should move, in opposite directions, from each extremity towards the centre; and the horse and light-armed men being nearer and advancing first, and the phalanx being redoubled and closed up, the bravest troops thus occupied alike the front and the rear, and the less effective were stationed in the middle.§ Such a disposition of the army, in the estimation of Xenophon, himself a most skilful general, was well adapted both for fighting and preventing flight; while the Christian, judging differently of their successive movements, may here see the fulfilment of one prediction after another. For as in this manner “they stood facing the walls,” in regular order and not as a disorderly and undisciplined host, though composed of various nations, they set themselves in array against Babylon, every man put in array.

A trench was dug round the city—towers were erected—Babylon was besieged—the army was divided into

† Ibid. p. 429.  
‡ Ibid.  
§ Ibid. p. 430.
twelve parts, that each, monthly by turn, might keep
watch throughout the year;*—and though the orders
were given by Cyrus, the command of the Lord of Hosts
was unconsciously obeyed—let none thereof escape.

The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight. They
have remained in their holds; their might hath failed, they
became as women. Babylon had been the hammer of the
whole earth, by which nations were broken in pieces, and
kingdoms destroyed. Its mighty men carried the terror
of their arms to distant regions, and led nations captive.
But they were dismayed, according to the word of the
God of Israel, whenever the nations which he had stirred
up against them stood in array before their walls. Their
timidity, so clearly predicted, was the express complaint
and accusation of their enemies, who in vain attempted
to provoke them to the contest. Cyrus challenged their
monarch to single combat, but also in vain;† for the hands
of the King of Babylon waxed feeble. Courage had departed
from both prince and people; and none attempted to
save their country from spoliation, or to chase the assail-
ants from their gates. They sallied not forth against
the invaders and besiegers, nor did they attempt to disjoin
and disperse them, even when drawn all around their walls
and comparatively weak along the extended line. Every
gate was still shut; and they remained in their holds. Being
as unable to rouse their courage, even by a close block-
ade, and to bring them to the field, as to scale or break
down any portion of their stupendous walls or to force
their gates of solid brass, Cyrus reasoned that the greater
that was their number, the more easily would they be
starved into surrender, and yield to famine, since they
would not contend with arms nor come forth to fight.—
And hence arose, for the space of two years, his only
hope of eventual success. So dispirited became its peo-
ple, that Babylon, which had made the world as a wilder-
ness, was long unresistingly a beleaguered town. But,
possessed of many fertile fields and of provisions for
twenty years, which in their timid caution they had plen-
tifully stored, they derided Cyrus from their impregnable
walls, within which they remained.‡ Their profligacy,
their wickedness, and false confidence were unabated;
they continued to live carelessly in pleasures, but their
might did not return: and Babylon the great, unlike to

‡ Ibid. l. vi. p. 434. Herod. l. i. c. 190.

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many a small fortress and unwalled town, made not one effort to regain its freedom or to be rid of the foe.

Much time having been lost, and no progress having been made in the siege, the anxiety of Cyrus was strongly excited, and he was reduced to great perplexity, when at last it was suggested and immediately determined on, to turn the course of the Euphrates. But the task was not an easy one. The river was a quarter of a mile broad, and twelve feet deep, and in the opinion of one of the counsellors of Cyrus, the city was stronger by the river than by its walls. Diligent and laborious preparation was made for the execution of the scheme, yet so as to deceive the Babylonians. And the great trench, ostensibly formed for the purpose of blockade, which for the time it effectually secured, was dug around the walls on every side, in order to drain the Euphrates, and to leave its channel a straight passage into the city, through the midst of which it flowed. But in the words of Herodotus, "if the besieged had either been aware of the designs of Cyrus, or had discovered the project before its actual accomplishment, they might have effected the total destruction of their troops. They had only to secure the little gates which led to the river, and to man the embankment on either side, and they might have enclosed the Persians as in a net, from which they could never have escaped."* Guarding as much as possibly they could against such a catastrophe, Cyrus purposely chose, for the execution of his plan, the time of a great annual Babylonish festival, during which, according to their practice, "the Babylonians drank and revelled the whole night." And while the unconscious and reckless citizens "were engaged in dancing and merriment," the river was suddenly turned into the lake, the trench, and the canals; and the watchful Persians, both foot and horse, so soon as the subsiding of the water permitted, entered by its channel, and were followed by the allies in array, on the dry part of the river.† "I will dry up thy sea, and make thy springs dry. That saith to the deep, He dry, I will dry up thy rivers.

"One detachment was placed where the river first enters the city, and another where it leaves it."‡ And one post did run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the King of Babylon that his city is taken at

* Herod. lib. i. c. 191.
‡ Herod. lib. i. 191.
the end, and that the passages are shut. "They were taken," says Herodotus, "by surprise; and such is the extent of the city, that, as the inhabitants themselves affirm, they who lived in the extremities were made prisoners before any alarm was communicated to the centre of the place,"* where the palace stood. Not a gate of the city wall was opened; not a brick of it had fallen. But a snare was laid for Babylon—it was taken, and it was not aware; it was found and also caught, for it had sinned against the Lord. How is the praise of the whole earth surprised! For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness, and thy wisdom, and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee, therefore shall evil come upon thee, and thou shalt not know from whence it riseth, and mischief shall come upon thee, and thou shalt not be able to put it off, &c.—None shall save thee.

In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord. I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, &c. I will make drunken her princes and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men, and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, &c. Cyrus, as the night drew on, stimulated his assembled troops to enter the city, because in that night of general revel within the walls many of them were asleep, many drunk, and confusion universally prevailed. On passing, without obstruction or hinderance, into the city, the Persians, slaying some, putting others to flight, and joining with the revellers, as if slaughter had been merriment, hastened by the shortest way to the palace, and reached it ere yet a messenger had told the king that his city was taken. The gates of the palace, which was strongly fortified, were shut. The guards stationed before them were drinking beside a blazing light when the Persians rushed impetuously upon them. The louder and altered clamour, no longer joyous, caught the ear of the inmates of the palace, and the bright light showed them the work of destruction, without revealing its cause. And not aware of the presence of an enemy in the midst of Babylon, the king himself (who, as every Christian knows, had been roused from his revelry by the handwriting on the wall), excited by the warlike tumult at the gates, com.

* Herod. lib. i. 101.
manded those within to examine from whence it arose; and according to the same word, by which the gates (leading from the river to the city) were not shut, the loins of kings were loosed to open before Cyrus the two-leaved gates. At the first sight of the opened gates of the palace of Babylon, the eager Persians sprang in. The King of Babylon heard the report of them—anxious took hold of him,—he and all who were about him perished: God had numbered his kingdom and finished it: it was divided, and given to the Medes and Persians; the lives of the Babylonian princes, and lords, and rulers, and captains closed with that night's festival: the drunken slept a perpetual sleep, and did not wake.*

Her young men shall fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day. Cyrus sent troops of horse throughout the streets, with orders to slay all who were found there.—And he commanded proclamation to be made, in the Syrian language, that all who were in their houses should remain within; and that, if any one were found abroad, he should be killed. These orders were obeyed.† They shall wander every man to his quarter.

I will fill thee with men as with caterpillars. Not only did the Persian army enter with ease as caterpillars, together with all the nations that had come up against Babylon, but they seemed also as numerous. Cyrus, after the capture of the city, made a great display of his cavalry in the presence of the Babylonians, and in the midst of Babylon. Four thousand guards stood before the palace gates, and two thousand on each side. These advanced as Cyrus approached; two thousand spearmen followed them. These were succeeded by four square masses of Persian cavalry, each consisting of ten thousand men: and to these again were added, in their order, the Median, Armenian, Hyrcanian, Caducian, and Scacian horsemen,—all, as before, riding upon horses, every man in array,—with lines of chariots, four abreast, concluding the train of the numerous hosts.‡—Cyrus afterward reviewed, at Babylon, the whole of his army, consisting of one hundred and twenty thousand horse, two thousand chariots, and six hundred thousand foot.§ Babylon, which was taken when not aware, and within whose walls no enemy, except a captive, had been ever seen,

was also filled with men as with caterpillars, as if there had not been a wall around it.—The Scriptures do not relate the manner in which Babylon was taken, nor do they ever allude to the exact fulfilment of the prophecies. But there is, in every particular, a strict coincidence between the predictions of the prophets and the historical narratives both of Herodotus and Xenophon.

On taking Babylon suddenly, and by surprise, Cyrus, as had been literally prophesied concerning him, and as the sign by which it was to be known that the Lord had called him by his name (Isa. xlv. 1-4), became immediately possessed of the most secret treasures of Babylon. No enemy had ever dared to rise up against that great city. To take it seemed not a work for man to attempt; but it became the easy prey of him who was called the servant of the Lord. And as at this day,—from the perfect representation given by the prophets of every feature of fallen Babylon, now at last utterly desolate,—men may know that God is the Lord, seeing that all who have visited and describe it show that the predicted judgments against it have been literally fulfilled; so, at that time, Cyrus—who for two years could only look on the outer side of the outer wall of Babylon, and who had begun to despair of reducing it by famine—was to know by the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places being given into his hand, that the Lord, which had called him by his name, was the God of Israel. And when the appointed time had come that the power of their oppressor was to be broken, Babylon was taken; and when the similarly prescribed period of the captivity of the Jews, for whose sake he was called, had expired, Cyrus was their deliverer.

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him. Cyrus, commencing his career with a small army of Persians, not only succeeded to the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, first united under him, but the Hynarians yielded also voluntarily to his authority. He subdued the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabs, Cappadocians, both Phrygias, the Lydians, Carians, Phenicians, and Babylonians. He governed the Bactrians, Indians, and Cilicians, and also the Sacians, Paphlogonians, and

* Isaiah prophesied above one hundred and sixty years before the taking of Babylon, two hundred and fifty years before Herodotus, and nearly three hundred and fifty before Xenophon.

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tude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness, &c. They did come upon them in their perfection, when their wives and children were strangled by their own hands; and so suddenly, as before, in a moment, in one day, did these things come upon them, that the victims were assembled for the sacrifice; so general was the instant widowhood, that fifty thousand women were afterward taken, in proportionate numbers, from the different neighbouring provinces of the empire, to replace those who had been slain; and the very reservation of their mothers multiplied the lamentations for the loss of children. But trust in their wickedness brought them no safety. For, while they were thus instrumental in the infliction of one grievous judgment, for which such murderers were ripe; their iniquity was not thereby lessened, and therefore, at however great a price, they procured not any security against another judgment, which also had been denounced against Babylon for its wickedness. They deemed themselves absolutely secure against famine and against assault. The artifice of Cyrus could not again be a snare; and an attempt to renew it was, along with every other, entirely frustrated. But still it was not in vain that Darius besieged Babylon.

In the twentieth month of the siege, a single Persian, whose body was covered over with the marks of stripes and with blood, and whose nose and ears had been newly cut off, presented himself at one of the gates of Babylon,—a helpless object of pity, and, if not a great criminal, indeed, the obvious victim of wanton and savage cruelty. He had fled, or escaped, from the camp of the enemy. But he was not a common deserter, such as they might not have admitted within their walls,—but it was Zophyrus, who was well known as one of the chief nobles of Persia. He represented to the Babylonians, that, not for any crime, but for the honest advice which he had given to Darius to raise the siege, as the taking of the city seemed to all impossible; the enraged tyrant (his pride wounded, or his fears perhaps awakened, that his army would be discouraged by such counsel) had inflicted upon him the severest cruelties, caused him to be mutilated as they saw, and to be scourged, of which his whole body bore the marks;—to one of his proud spirit and high rank disgrace was worse than suffering; and he came to join the revolters, his soul burning for ven-
geance against their common tyrant. "And now," addressing them, he said, "I come for the greatest good to you, for the greatest evil to Darius, to his army, and to the Persians. The injuries which I have suffered shall not be unrevenged, for I know, and will disclose all his designs."

On such proofs, and cheered by such hopes, the Babylonians did not doubt the sincerity of Zophyrus, nor his devotion to their cause, identified, as it clearly seemed, with the only hope of revenge against the cruel author of his wrongs, towards whom they could not conceive but that he would cherish an inflexible hatred. He sought but to fight against their enemies. At his request, they gladly and unhesitatingly intrusted him with a military command. Forgiveness of injuries was not then reckoned a virtue,—which it is too seldom practically accounted even in a Christian land; and vengeance, still called honour, sleeps not in an unforgiving breast. Zophyrus soon satisfied the Babylonians that his wrongs would not long be unavenged. To their delight, having watched the first opportunity, he sallied forth from the gates of Semiramis, on the tenth day after his entrance into the city, and falling suddenly on a thousand of the enemy, slew them every one. After an interval of only seven days, twice that number were, in like manner, slain, near to the Ninian gates. The men of Babylon were animated with new vigour and new hopes; and the praise of Zophyrus was on every tongue. He received a higher command. But the Persians, seemingly more wary, were nowhere open to attack for the space of twenty days. On the expiry of that period, however, Zophyrus, by a noted exploit, again proved himself worthy of still greater authority, by leading out his troops from the Chaldean gates, and killing, in one spot, four thousand men. In reward for such services, and such tried fidelity, skill, and courage, as none, they thought, could be more worthy of the honour and of the trust, they not only raised him to the chief command of their army, but appointed him to the dignified and most responsible office in Babylon, which it was his aim to attain, that of (τεκτονικὸς) guardian of their walls.*

Darius, as if to be secure against the continued repe-

* Herod. c. 152-157, p. 166-172.
tion of such desultory carnage of his troops, advanced with all his army to the walls. They were manned to repel the assault. But the treachery of Zophyrus, however incredible, and unknown and unsuspected alike by the Babylonians and the Persians, became immediately apparent. Intrusted as he was, in virtue of his office, with the gates of the city, no sooner had the enemy approached, and the armed citizens ascended the wall, than he opened the Belidian and the Cissian gates, close to which the choicest Persian troops were stationed.\* The whole scheme was a preconcerted snare, known only to Darius and Zophyrus, and invented solely by the latter, the mutilation of whose body was his own voluntary act. To the glory of the deed were added the greatest gifts and honours, and the governorship of Babylon without tribute, for his reward. The numbers of the different detachments of the Persian troops who fell, their positions, and the precise time of their successive advancements, had all been resolved on and arranged. And Darius as freely sacrificed the lives of seven thousand men as Zophyrus had inflicted incurable wounds upon himself. “Thus,” says Herodotus, “was Babylon a second time taken.” And thus was the word of God,—from whom nothing, past, present or future, can be hid,—a second time fulfilled against Babylon—none shall return in vain.

Babylon was a third time taken by Alexander the Great. Mææus, the Persian general, surrendered the city into his hands, and he entered it with his army drawn up “as if they were marching to battle.”\† Again was it filled with men—and literally was every man put in array, like a man to the battle. The siege of so fortified a city‡ would have been a work of great difficulty and labour, even to the conqueror of Asia. But the inhabitants eagerly flocked upon the walls to see their new king, and exchanged, without a struggle, the Persian for the Macedonian yoke.—Babylon was afterward successively taken by Antigonus, by Demetrius, by Antiochus the Great, and by the Parthians. But whatever king or nation came up against it, none returned in vain.

Each step in the progress of the decline of Babylon was the accomplishment of a prophecy. Conquered,

\* Herod. c. 158-159.
\† Quadrato argumento, quod ipse ducebat, velut in aciem iurent. Ingredi suas jubet.—Quin. Curs. lib. v. c. 3.
\‡—Tam munus urbis.—Ibid.
Babylon.

for the first time,* by Cyrus, it was afterward reduced from an imperial to a tributary city. *Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon: sit on the ground, there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans.*—After the Babylonians rebelled against Darius, the walls were reduced in height, and all the gates destroyed.† *The wall of Babylon shall fall, her walls thrown down.*—Xerxes, after his ignominious retreat from Greece, rifled the temples of Babylon,‡ the golden images alone in which were estimated at 20,000,000l., besides treasures of vast amount. *I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he has swallowed up; I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon.*§—Alexander the Great attempted to restore it to its former glory, and designed to make it the metropolis of a universal empire. But, while the building of the temple of Belus, and the reparation of the embankments of the Euphrates were actually carrying on, the conqueror of the world died, at the commencement of this his last undertaking, in the height of his power, and in the flower of his age.|| *Take balm for her pain, if so be that she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed.*¶—The neighbouring city of Seleucia, which was built with that intent, was the chief cause of the decline of Babylon as a city, and drained it of great part of its population.** And at a later period, or about 130 years before the birth of Christ, Humerus, a Parthian governor, who was noted as excelling all tyrants in cruelty, exercised great severities on the Babylonians, and having burned the forum and some of the temples, and destroyed the fairest parts of the city, reduced many of the inhabitants to slavery on the slightest pretexts, and caused them, together with all their households, to be sent into Media.†† *They shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.*‡‡ The "golden city" thus gradually verged for centuries towards poverty and desolation.—Notwithstanding that Cyrus resided chiefly at Babylon, and sought to reform the government and remodel the manners of the Baby-

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melancholy face of a smoking and naked desert."* But "the second city of the province, large, populous, and well fortified," in vain resisted a fierce and desperate assault; and a large breach having been made by a battering-ram in the walls, "the soldiers of Julian rushed impetuously into the town, and after the full gratification of every military appetite, Perisabor was reduced to ashes; and the engines which assaulted the citadel were planted on the ruins of the smoking houses."† When, in after-ages, the Romans, under Heraclius, penetrated to the royal seat of Destagered, and spread over Chaldea to the gates of Ctesiphon, "whatever could not be easily transported they consumed with fire, that Chosroes might feel the anguish of those wounds which he had so often inflicted on the provinces of the empire: and justice might allow the excuse," says Gibbon, "if the desolation had been confined to the works of regal luxury, if national hatred, military license, and religious zeal had not wasted with equal rage the habitations and the temples of the guiltless subjects."‡ The fierce Abassides, proverbially reckless of committing murder, which was the very work that their missionaries went forth to execute, long reigned over Chaldea; and Bagdad, its new capital, distant about fifteen miles from Seleucia and Ctesiphon, was their imperial seat for five hundred years.¶—"Their daggers, their only arms, were broken by the sword of Holagou, and except the word assassin, not a vestige is left of the enemies of mankind,"||—for again and again has it proved true of the land of Chaldea—I will destroy the sinners thereof out of it.—The Mogul Tartars succeeded as the guilty possessors and cruel desolators of the land of Babylon. "Bagdad, after a siege of two months, was stormed and sacked by the Moguls, under Holagou Khan, the grandson of Ghengis Khan."¶¶ And Tamerlane, another great king, "reduced to his obedience the whole course of the Tigris and Euphrates, from the mouth to the sources of these rivers: and he erected on the ruins of Bagdad a pyramid of ninety thousand heads."** Finally, not with abated, but if possible with increasing or with more persevering cruelty, the Turks, aided by Saracens, Coords, and Tartars, have become the weapons of the indignation of the Lord, brought forth

out of his armory which he hath opened; for—fearful as a
token of judgment, and clear as the testimony of truth —this is the work of the Lord God of Hosts in the land of
the Chaldeans.—Waste and utterly destroy after them. A
sword is upon the Chaldeans. A sound of battle is in the
land, and of great destruction. I will kindle a fire in
his cities, and it shall devour all round about him. A
sound of great destruction cometh from the land of the
Chaldeans.

And Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be
satisfied, saith the Lord. Come against her from the utmost
border, open her storehouses. A sword is upon her treasures,
and they shall be robbed. O thou that dwellest upon many
waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the
measure of thy covetousness. On taking Babylon sud-
denly and by surprise, Cyrus became immediately pos-
sessed of the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of
secret places. On his first publicly appearing in Babylon,
al the officers of his army, both of the Persians and
allies, according to his command, wore very splendid
robes, those belonging to the superior officers being of
various colours, all of the finest and brightest die, and
richly embroidered with gold and silver; and thus the
hidden riches of secret places were openly displayed. And
when the treasures of Babylon became the spoil of an-
other great king, Alexander gave six minæ (about 15l.)
to each Macedonian horseman, to each Macedonian sol-
dier and foreign horseman two minæ (5l.), and to every
other man in his army a donation equal to two months' pay.
Demetrius ordered his soldiers to plunder the land
of Babylon for their own use. But it is not in these in-
stances alone that Chaldea has been a spoil, and that all
who spoil her have been satisfied. It was the abundance
of her treasures which brought successive spoliators.
Many nations came from afar, and though they returned
to their own country (as in formerly besieging Babylon,
so in continuing to despoil the land of Chaldea), none re-
turned in vain. From the richness of the country, new
treasures were speedily stored up, till again the sword
came upon them, and they were robbed. The prey of the
Persians and of the Greeks for nearly two centuries after
the death of Alexander, Chaldea became afterward the
prey chiefly of the Parthians, from the north, for an equal

* Plutarch, Life of Demetrius.
period, till a greater nation, the Romans, came from the coasts of the earth to pillage it. To be restrained from dominion and from plunder was the exciting cause, and often the shameless plea, of the anger and fierce wrath of these famed, but cruel, conquerors of the world. Yet, within the provinces of their empire, it was their practice, on the submission of the inhabitants, to protect and not to destroy. But Chaldea, from its extreme distance, never having yielded permanently to their yoke, and the limits of their empire having been fixed by Hadrian on the western side of the Euphrates, or on the very borders of Chaldea, that hapless country obtained not their protection, though repeatedly the scene of ruthless spoliation by the Romans. The authority of Gibbon, in elucidation of Scripture, cannot be here distrusted, any more than that of heathen historians. To use his words, "a hundred thousand captives, and a rich booty, rewarded the fatigues of the Roman soldiers,"* when Ctesiphon was taken, in the second century, by the generals of Marcus. Even Julian, who, in the fourth century, was forced to raise the siege of Ctesiphon, came not in vain to Chaldea, and failed not to take of it a spoil; nor, though an apostate, did he fail to verify by his acts the truth which he denied. After having given Perisabor to the flames, "the plentiful magazines of corn, of arms, and of splendid furniture were partly distributed among the troops, and partly reserved for the public service; the useless stores were destroyed by fire, or thrown into the stream of the Euphrates."† Having also rewarded his army with a hundred pieces of silver to each soldier, he thus stimulated them (when still dissatisfied) to fight for greater spoil—"Riches are the object of your desires? those riches are in the hands of the Persians, and the spoils of this fruitful country are proposed as the prize of your valour and discipline."‡ The enemy being defeated after an arduous conflict, "the spoil was such as might be expected from the riches and luxury of an oriental camp; large quantities of silver and gold, splendid arms and trappings, and beds and tables of massy silver."§

When the Romans under Heraclius ravaged Chaldea, "though much of the treasure had been removed from Destagered, and much had been expended, the remaining

‡ Ibid. p. 364.  § Ibid. p. 369.
wealth appears to have exceeded their hopes, and even to have satiated their avarice."*

While the deeds of Julian and the words of Gibbon show how Chaldea was spoiled—how a sword continued to be on her treasures—and how, year after year, and age after age, there was rumour on rumour and violence in her land—more full illustrations remain to be given of the truth of the same prophetic word. And as a painter of great power may cope with another by drawing as closely to the life as he, though the features be different, so Gibbon's description of the sack of Ctesiphon, as previously he had described the sack and conflagration of Seleucia (cities each of which may aptly be called "the daughter of Babylon," having been, like it, the capital of Chaldea), is written as if, by the most graphic representation of facts, he had been aspiring to rival Yolney as an illustrator of Scripture prophecy. "The capital was taken by assault; and the disorderly resistance of the people gave a keener edge to the sabres of the Moslems, who shouted with religious transport, 'This is the white palace of Chosroes; this is the promise of the apostle of God.' The naked robbers of the desert were suddenly enriched beyond the measure of their hope or knowledge. Each chamber revealed a new treasure, secreted with art, or ostentatiously displayed; the gold and silver, the various wardrobes and precious furniture, surpassed (says Abulfeda) the estimate of fancy or numbers; and another historian defines the untold and almost infinite mass by the fabulous computation of three thousands of thousands of thousands of pieces of gold. One of the apartments of the palace was decorated with a carpet of silk sixty cubits in length and as many in breadth (90 feet); a paradise, or garden, was depicted on the ground; the flowers, fruits, and shrubs were imitated by the figures of the gold embroidery, and the colours of the precious stones; and the ample square was encircled by a variegated and verdant border. The rigid Omar divided the price among his brethren of Medina; the picture was destroyed; but such was the intrinsic value of the materials, that the share of Ali alone was sold for 20,000 drachms. A mule that carried away the tiara and cuirass, the belt and bracelets of Chosroes, was overtaken by the pursuers; the gorgeous

* Gibbon, p. 339.
trophy was presented to the commander of the faithful, and the gravest of the companions condescended to smile when they beheld the white beard, hairy arms, and uncouth figure of the veteran who was invested with the spoil of the great king."

Recent evidence is not wanting to show that, wherever a treasure is to be found, a sword, in the hand of a fierce enemy, is upon it, and spoliation has not ceased in the land of Chaldea.

"On the west of Hilleh, there are two towns which, in the eyes of the Persians and all the Shiites, are rendered sacred by the memory of two of the greatest martyrs of that sect. These are Meshed Ali and Meshed Housein, lately filled with riches, accumulated by the devotion of the Persians, but carried off by the ferocious Wahabees to the middle of their deserts."†

And after the incessant spoliation of ages, now that the end is come of the treasures of Chaldea, the earth itself fails not to disclose its hidden treasures, so as to testify that they once were abundant. In proof of this an instance may be given. At the ruins of Hoonania, near to those of Ctesiphon, pieces of silver having (on the 5th of March, 1812) been accidentally discovered, edging out of the bank of the Tigris, "on examination there were found and brought away," by persons sent for that purpose by the Pasha of Bagdad's officers, "between six and seven hundred ingots of silver, each measuring from one to one and a half feet in length; and an earthen jar, containing upwards of two thousand Athenian coins, all of silver. Many were purchased at the time by the late Mr. Rich, formerly the East India Company's resident at Bagdad, and are now in his valuable collection, since bought by government, and deposited in the British Museum."† Amid the ruins of Ctesiphon "the natives often pick up coins of gold, silver, and copper, for which they always find a ready sale in Bagdad. Indeed, some of the wealthy Turks and Armenians, who are collecting for several French and German consuls, hire people to go and search for coins, medals, and antique gems; and I am assured they never return to their employers empty-handed,"§ as if all who spoil Chaldea shall

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‡ Captain Mignet's Travels, p. 53.
§ Ibid. p. 74.
be satisfied, till even the ruins be spoiled unto the uttermost.

The past history of the land of the Chaldeans may be briefly closed in the language of prophecy: for the prophets, in their visions, saw it as it is; although historians knew not, even after its grandeur was partially gone, how to tell of its fertility, which they witnessed, and hope to be believed. Those who recorded the word that the Lord spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans, had no such fear, though two thousand four hundred years have elapsed since they described what is now only at last to be seen.

I will punish the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations; cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest. A drought is on her waters, and they shall be dried up. Behold the hindmost of the nations, a dry land and a desert. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a land where no man dwelleth, neither doeth son of man pass thereby. I will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and empty her land. The land shall tremble and sorrow; for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. The land of the Chaldeans was to be made perpetual or long-continued desolation.—Ravaged and spoiled for ages, the Chaldees' excellence finally disappeared, and the land became desolate, as still it remains. Rauwolf, who passed through it in 1574, describes the country as bare, and "so dry and barren that it cannot be tilled."* And the most recent travelers all concur in describing it in similar terms.

The land of Babylon was to be fanned and emptied,—to be a dry land, a wilderness and a desert, &c.—On the one side, near to the site of Opis, "the country all around appears to be one wide desert, of sandy and barren soil, thinly scattered over with brushwood and tufts of reedy grass."† On the other, between Bussorah and Bagdad, "immediately on either bank of the Tigris, is the untrodden desert. The absence of all cultivation,—the sterile, arid, and wild character of the whole scene, formed a contrast to the rich and delightful accounts delineated in Scripture. The natives, in travelling over these pathless deserts, are compelled to explore their

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* Rauwolf's Travels, in Rey's Collection of Travels, 1693, p. 174.
way by the stars.”

“The face of the country is open and flat, presenting to the eye one vast level plain, where nothing is to be seen but here and there a herd of half-wild camels. This immense tract is very rarely diversified with any trees of moderate growth, but is an immense wild bounded only by the horizon.”

In the intermediate region, “the whole extent from the foot of the wall of Bagdad is a barren waste without a blade of vegetation of any description; on leaving the gates the traveller has before him the prospect of a bare desert,—a flat and barren country.”

“The whole country between Bagdad and Hillah is a perfectly flat and (with the exception of a few spots as you approach the latter place) uncultivated waste. That it was at some former period in a far different state, is evident from the number of canals by which it is traversed, now dry and neglected; and the quantity of heaps of earth covered with fragments of brick and broken tiles, which are seen in every direction,—the indisputable traces of former population. At present the only inhabitants of the tract are the Soeide Arabs. Around, as far as the eye can reach, is a truckless desert.”

“The abundance of the country has vanished as clean away as if the ‘besom of desolation’ had swept it from north to south; the whole land from the outskirts of Babylon to the farthest stretch of sight lying a melancholy waste. Not a habitable spot appears for countless miles.”

The land of Babylon is desolate without an inhabitant. The Arabs traverse it; and every man met with in the desert is looked on as an enemy. Wild beasts have now their home in the land of Chaldea; but the traveller is less afraid of them,—even of the lion,—than of “the wilder animal the desert Arab.” The country is frequently “totally impassable.”

“Those splendid accounts of the Babylonian lands yielding crops of grain two or three hundred-fold, compared with the modern face of the country, afford a remarkable proof of the singular desolation to which it has been subjected. The canals at present can only be traced by their decayed banks.”
"The soil of this desert," says Captain Mignan, who traversed it on foot, and who, in a single day, crossed forty water-courses, "consists of a hard clay, mixed with sand, which at noon became so heated with the sun's rays that I found it too hot to walk over it with any degree of comfort. Those who have crossed those desert wilds are already acquainted with their dreary tediousness even on horseback; what it is on foot they can easily imagine."

Where astronomers first calculated eclipses, the natives, as in the deserts of Africa, or as the mariner without a compass on the pathless ocean, can now direct their course only by the stars, over the pathless desert of Chaldea. Where cultivation reached its utmost height, and where two hundred-fold was stated as the common produce, there is now one wide and uncultivated waste; and the sower and reaper are cut off from the land of Babylon. Where abundant stores and treasures were laid up, and annually renewed and increased, sowers have fanned, and spoilers have spoiled them till they have emptied the land. Where labourers, shaded by palm-trees a hundred feet high, irrigated the fields till all was plentifully watered from numerous canals, the wanderer, without an object on which to fix his eye, but "stinted and shortlived shrubs," can scarcely set his foot without pain, after the noon-day heat, on the "arid and parched ground," in plodding his weary way through a desert, a dry land, and a wilderness. Where there were crowded thoroughfares, from city to city, there is now "silence and solitude;" for the ancient cities of Chaldea are desolations,—where no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby."

* Mignan's Travels, p. 2, 31-34.

† Sin has wrought desolation in Chaldea, as finally, if unrepented of, it must in any and in every land. But justice shall yet dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And, not in Judea alone, on the restoration and conversion of all the house of Israel, but throughout all nations, when enlightened by the word of God, and renewed by his Spirit, moved by whom the prophets spake—the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever (Isa. xxxii. 15-17); and it is pleasing to pause for a moment, and to turn from the direful retrospect of sin, judgment, and desolation, which the past history of Chaldea holds up to view, to a word of Scripture (one word, if rightly interpreted, is enough), which, like a bright star in the east, shines as the harbinger of a brighter day, after the long night of darkness which has rested on that land which was full of wickedness, and therefore has been emptied in judgment. And seemingly commencing convulsions, in the war and the trial of principles, throughout the wide world, that must come,—the rising "hurricane" which, controlled by the Lord, shall yet sweep every moral
Her cities are desolations. The course of the Tigris through Babylonia, instead of being adorned, as of old, with cities, and towns, is marked with the sites of "ancient ruins."** Sitace, Sabata, Narisa, Fuchera, Sendia "no longer exist."† A succession of longitudinal mounds, crossed at right angles by others, mark the supposed site of Artemita, or Destagered. Its once luxuriant gardens are covered with grass; and a higher mound distinguishes "the royal residence" from the ancient streets.‡ "Extensive ridges and mounds (near to Hounania), varying in height and extent, are seen branching in every direction."§ A wall, with sixteen bastions, is the only memorial of Apollonia.|| The once magnificent Seleucia is now a scene of desolation. There is not a single entire building, but the country is strewed for miles with fragments of decayed buildings. "As far," says Major Keppel, "as the eye could reach, the horizon presented a broken line of mounds; the whole of this place was a desert flat."¶ On the opposite bank of the Tigris, where Ctesiphon its rival stood, besides fragments of walls and broken masses of brickwork, and remains of vast structures encumbered with heaps of earth, there is one magnificent monument of antiquity, "in a remarkably perfect state of preservation," "a large and noble file of building, the front of which presents to view a wall three hundred feet in length, adorned with four rows of arched recesses, with a central arch, in span eighty-six feet, and above a hundred feet high, supported by walls sixteen feet thick, and leading to a hall which extends to the depth of one hundred and fifty-six feet," the width of the building.**

"pestilence" from the earth,—seem in their beginning to betoken, that the time may not be distant when the effect of the vision shall be seen. Then said I to the angel that talked with me (Zechariah, v. 10, 11). Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar; and it shall be established, and set there on its own base,—in the land of Shinar, but it is not said, in the city of Babylon. Building, establishing, and setting, all appear to be significative of blessing—of reconstruction, on a new base, and not reducible to heaps; and though the previous vision be of judgment, he whose name is THE BRANCH is immediately after spoken of; and, in "building the temple of the Lord," his office is redemption. But, without a metaphor, it is said, and, without a doubt, it shall prove true—All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord. The whole earth shall reprove,—the wilderness, and the solitary places shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

* See Chart prefixed to Major Keppel's Narrative.
† Plan of the Environs of Babylon, &c. in Major Rennell's Geography of Herodotus. p. 335.
¶ Keppel's Narrative, p. 276. ¶¶ Ibid. p 125. ** Ibid. p 130.
A great part of the back wall, and of the roof, is broken down; but that which remains "still appears much larger than Westminster Abbey."* It is supposed to have been the lofty palace of Chosroes; but there desolation now reigns. "On the site of Ctesiphon, the smallest insect under heaven would not find a single blade of grass wherein to hide itself, nor one drop of water to allay its thirst."† In the rear of the palace; and attached to it, are mounds two miles in circumference, indicating the utter desolation of buildings formed to minister to luxury. But, in the words of Captain Mignan, "such is the extent of the irregular mounds and hillocks that overspread the sites of these renowned cities, that it would occupy some months to take the bearings and dimensions of each with accuracy."‡

While the ancient cities of Chaldea are thus desolate, the sites of others cannot be discovered, or have not been visited, as none pass thereby; the more modern cities, which flourished under the empire of califs, are "all in ruins."§ The second Bagdad has not indeed yet shared the fate of the first. And Hillah—a town of comparatively modern date, near to the site of Babylon, but in the gardens of which there is not the least vestige of ruins—yet exists. But the former, "ransacked by massacre, devastation, and oppression, during several hundred years," has been "gradually reduced from being a rich and powerful city to a state of comparative poverty, and the feeblest means of defence."|| And of the inhabitants of the latter, about eight or ten thousand, it is said that "if any thing could identify the modern inhabitants of Hillah as the descendants of the ancient Babylonians, it would be their extreme profligacy, for which they are notorious even among their immoral neighbours."¶ They give no sign of repentance and reformation to warrant the hope that judgment, so long continued upon others, will cease from them; or that they are the people that shall escape. Twenty years have not passed since towns in Chaldea have been ravaged and pillaged by the Wahabees; and so lately as 1823, the town of Sheereban "was sacked and ruined by the Coords," and reduced to desolation.**

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* Mignan's Travels, p. 79.
† Buck, p. 441.
‡ Mignan's Travels, p. 81.
§ Ibid. p. 82.
¶ Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. p. 182, 183.
** Ibid. p. 272, 273.
ruined cities, whether of a remote or more recent period, abound throughout the land. The process of destruction is still completing. Gardens which studded the banks of the Tigris have very recently disappeared, and mingled with the desert,—and concerning the cities also of Chaldea the word is true that they are desolations. For "the whole country is strewn over with the debris of Grecian, Roman, and Arabian towns, confounded in the same mass of rubbish."*

But while these lie in indiscriminate ruins, the chief of the cities of Chaldea, the first in name and in power that ever existed in the world, bears many a defined mark of the judgments of heaven.

The progressive and predicted decline of Babylon the great, till it ceased to be a city, has already been briefly detailed. About the beginning of the Christian era, a small portion of it was inhabited, and the far greater part was cultivated.† It diminished as Seleucia increased, and the latter became the greater city. In the second century nothing but the walls remained. It became gradually a great desert; and, in the fourth century, its walls, repaired for that purpose, formed an enclosure for wild beasts, and Babylon was converted into a field for the chase—a hunting-place for the pastime of the Persian monarchs.‡ The name and the remnant were cut off from Babylon; and there is a blank, during the interval of many ages, in the history of its mutilated remains and of its mouldering decay. It remained long in the possession of the Saracens; and abundant evidence has since been given, that every feature of its prophesied desolation is now distinctly visible—for the most ancient historians bore not a clearer testimony to facts confirmatory of the prophecies relative to its first siege and capture by Cyrus, than the latest travellers bear to the fulfilment of those which refer to its final and permanent ruin. The identity of its site has been completely established.§ And the truth of every general and of every particular prediction is now so clearly demonstrated, that a simple exhibition of the facts precludes the possibility of any cavil, and supersedes the necessity of any reasoning on the subject.

It is not merely the general desolation of Babylon,—however much that alone would have surpassed all human foresight,—which the Lord declared by the mouth of

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his prophets. In their vision, they saw not more clearly, nor defined more precisely, the future history of Babylon, from the height of its glory to the oblivion of its name, than they saw and depicted fallen Babylon as now it lies, and as, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, it has, for the first time, been fully described.* And now when an end has come upon Babylon, after a long succession of ages has wrought out its utter desolation, both the pen and the pencil of travellers, who have traversed and inspected its ruins, must be combined, in order to delineate what the word of God, by the prophets, told from the beginning that that end would be.

Truth ever scorns the discordant and encumbering aid of error: but to diverge in the least from the most precise facts would here weaken and destroy the argument; for the predictions correspond not closely with any thing, except alone with the express and literal reality. To swerve from it, is, in the same degree, to vary from them: and any misrepresentation would be no less hurtful than iniquitous. But the actual fact renders any exaggeration impossible, and any fiction poor. Fancy could not have feigned a contrast more complete, nor a destruction greater, than that which has come from the Almighty upon Babylon. And though the greatest city on which the sun ever shone be now a desolate wilderness, there is scarcely any spot on earth more clearly defined—and none could be more accurately delineated by the hands of a draftsman—than the scene of Babylon’s desolation is set before us in the very words of the prophets; and no words could now be chosen like unto these, which, for two thousand five hundred years have been its “burden”—the burden which now it bears.

Such is the multiplicity of prophecies and the accumulation of facts, that the very abundance of evidence increases the difficulty of arranging, in a condensed form, and thus appropriating its specific fulfilment to each precise and separate prediction, and many of them may be viewed connectedly. All who have visited Babylon concur in acknowledging or testifying that the desolation is exactly such as was foretold. They, in general, apply the more prominent predictions; and, in minute details,

* Niebuhr, Ives, Irwin, Ottar, Evirs, Thevenot, Della Valle, Texeira, Edrisi, Abulafia, and Bahlil were consulted by Major Kennell—to these may now be added Mr. Rich, Sir Robert Ker Porter, Captain Frederick, the Hon. Major Baggot, Colonel Kinnier, Mr. Buckingham, and Captain Mignan,—most of whom were accompanied by others.
they sometimes unconsciously adopt, without any allusion or reference, the very words of inspiration.

Babylon is wholly desolate. It has become heaps—It is cut down to the ground—brought down to the grave—trod on—uninhabited—its foundations fallen—its walls thrown down, and utterly broken—its loftiest edifices rolled down from the rocks—the golden city has ceased—the worms are spread under it, and the worms cover it, &c. There the Arabian pitches not his tent; there the shepherds make not their folds; but wild beasts of the desert lie there, and their houses are full of doleful creatures, and owls dwell there, &c. It is a possession for the bittern, and a dwelling-place for dragons—a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert—a burnt mountain—pools of water—spoiled—empty—nothing left—utterly destroyed—every one that goeth by it is astonished, &c.

Babylon shall become heaps. Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, is now the greatest of ruins. "Immense tumuli of temples, palaces, and human habitations of every description" are everywhere seen, and form "long and varied lines of ruins," which, in some places, "rather resemble natural hills than mounds which cover the remains of great and splendid edifices."—Those buildings which were once the ha'our of slaves and the pride of kings, are now misshapen heaps of rubbish.—"The whole face of the country is covered with vestiges of building, in some places consisting of brick walls surprisingly fresh, in others, merely a vast succession of mounds of rubbish, of such indeterminate figures, variety and extent as to involve the person who should have formed any theory in inextricable confusion."† "Long mounds, running from north to south, are crossed by others from east to west;" and are only distinguished by their form, direction, and number from the decayed banks of canals. "The greater part of the mounds are certainly the remains of buildings, originally disposed in streets, and crossing each other at right angles."‡ The more distinct and prominent of these "heaps" are double, or lie in parallel lines, each exceeding twenty feet in height, and "are intersected by cross passages, in such a manner as to place beyond a doubt the fact of their being rows of houses or streets fallen to decay."§ Such was the form of the streets of Babylon, leading towards

* Porter’s Travels, vol. i. p. 294, 297. 
† Rich’s Memoirs, p. 2. 
§ Ibid. p. 289.
the gates: and such are now the lines of its heaps—
"There are also, in some places, two hollow channels, and three mounds, running parallel to each other for a considerable distance, the central mound being, in such cases, a broader and flatter mass than the other two, as if there had been two streets going parallel to each other, the central range of houses which divided them being twice the size of the others, from their being double residences, with a front and door of entrance to face each avenue."* "Irregular hillocks and mounds, formed over masses of ruins, present at every step memorials of the past."†

From the temple of Belus and the two royal palaces, to the streets of the city and single dwellings, all have become heaps; and the only difference or gradation now is, from the vast and solid masses of ruins which look like mountains, to the slight mound that is scarcely elevated above the plain. Babylon is fallen, literally fallen to such a degree that those who stand on its site and look on numerous parallel mounds, with a hollow space between, are sometimes at a loss to distinguish between the remains of a street or a canal, or to tell where the crowds frequented or where the waters flowed. Babylon is fallen, till its ruins cannot fall lower than they lie. It is cut down to the ground. Her foundations are fallen; and the ruins rest not on them. Its palaces, temples, streets, and houses lie "buried in heaps."‡ And "the view of Babylon," as taken from the spot, is truly a picture of utter desolation, presenting its heaps to the eye, and showing how, as if literally buried under them, Babylon is brought down to the grave.

Cast her up as heaps. Mr. Rich, in describing a grand heap of ruins, the shape of which is nearly a square of seven hundred yards length and breadth, states that the workmen pierce into it in every direction, in search of bricks, "hollowing out deep ravines and pits, and throwing up the rubbish in heaps on the surface."§ "The summit of the Kasr" (supposed to have been the lesser palace) is in like manner "covered with heaps of rubbish."

Let nothing of her be left. "Vast heaps constitute all that now remains of ancient Babylon."|| All its grandeur is departed; all its treasures have been spoiled; all its

‡ Porter's Travels, p. 294.
§ Rich's Memoir, p. 22.
|| Keppel's Narrative, p. 196.
excellence has utterly vanished; the very heaps are searched for bricks, when nothing else can be found; even these are not left wherever they can be taken away, and Babylon has for ages been "a quarry above ground," ready to the hand of every successive despoiler. Without the most remote allusion to this prophecy, Captain Mignan describes a mound attached to the palace ninety yards in breadth by half that height, the whole of which is deeply furrowed, in the same manner as the generality of the mounds. "The ground is extremely soft, and tiresome to walk over, and appears completely exhausted of all its building materials: nothing now is left save one towering hill, the earth of which is mixed with fragments of broken brick, red varnished pottery, tile, bitumen, mortar, glass, shells, and pieces of mother-of-pearl,"*—worthless fragments, of no value to the poorest. From thence shall she be taken—let nothing of her be left. One traveller, towards the end of last century, passed over the site of ancient Babylon, without being conscious of having traversed it.†

While the workmen cast her up as heaps in piling up the rubbish while excavating for brick, that they may take them from thence, and that nothing may be left; they labour more than trebly in the fulfilment of prophecy, for the numerous and deep excavations form pools of water, on the overflowing of the Euphrates, and, annually filled, they are not dried up throughout the year. "Deep cavities are also formed by the Arabs, when digging for hidden treasure."‡ "The ground is sometimes covered with pools of water in the hollows."§

Sit on the dust, sit on the ground, O daughter of the Chaldeans. The surface of the mounds, which form all that remains of Babylon, consists of decomposed buildings reduced to dust; and over all the ancient streets and habitations there is literally nothing but the dust or the ground on which to sit.

Thy nakedness shall be uncovered. "Our path," says Captain Mignan, "lay through the great mass of ruined heaps on the site of 'shrunken Babylon.' And I am perfectly incapable of conveying an adequate idea of the dreary, lonely nakedness that appeared before me."¶

† Transactions of the Literary Society at Bombay, vol. i. p. 130  Note Cunningham's Journey to India, 1785.
‡ Mignan's Travels, p. 213.
¶ Mignan's Travels, p. 110.
**Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness.** There reigns throughout the ruins "a silence profound as the grave."* Babylon is now "a silent scene, a sublime solitude."†

*It shall never be inhabited, nor dwell in from generation to generation.* From Rauwolf's testimony it appears that in the sixteenth century "there was not a house to be seen."‡ And now the "eye wanders over a barren desert, in which the ruins are nearly the only indication that it had ever been inhabited." "It is impossible," adds Major Keppel, "to behold this scene and not to be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present, that she should never be inhabited; that the Arabian should not pitch his tent there; that she should 'become heaps;' that her cities should be 'a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness.'"§ "Babylon is spurned alike by the heel of the Ottomans, the Israelites, and the sons of Ishmael."|| It is "a tenantless and desolate metropolis."¶ *It shall not be inhabited, but be wholly desolate. Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their folds there.* It was prophesied of Ammon that it should be a stable for camels and a couching-place for flocks; and of Philistia, that it should be cottages for shepherds, and a pasture of flocks. But Babylon was to be visited with a far greater desolation, and to become unfit or unsuiting even for such a purpose. And that neither a tent would be pitched there, even by an Arab, nor a fold made by a shepherd, implies the last degree of solitude and desolation. "It is common in these parts for shepherds to make use of ruined edifices to shelter their flocks in."*** But Babylon is an exception. Instead of taking the bricks from thence, the shepherd might with facility erect a defence from wild beasts, and make a fold for his flock amid the heaps of Babylon; and the Arab, who fearlessly traverses it by day, might pitch his tent by night. But neither the one nor the other could now be persuaded to remain a single night among the ruins. The superstitious dread of evil spirits, far more than the natural terror of the wild beasts, effectually prevents them. Captain Mignan was accompanied by six Arabs, completely armed, but he "could not induce them to remain towards night, from

the apprehension of evil spirits. It is impossible to eradicate this idea from the minds of these people, who are very deeply imbued with superstition." And when the sun sunk behind the Mujelibe, and the moon would have still lighted his way among the ruins, it was with infinite regret that he obeyed "the summons of his guides."* "All the people of the country assert that it is extremely dangerous to approach this mound after nightfall, on account of the multitude of evil spirits by which it is haunted."† Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their flock there. But,

Wild beasts of the deserts shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs (goats) shall dance there, &c. "There are many dens of wild beasts in various parts. There are quantities of porcupine quills (kephud?)." And while the lower excavations are often pools of water, "in most of the cavities are numbers of bats and owls."‡ "These souterrains (caverns), over which the chambers of majesty may have been spread, are now the refuge of jackals and other savage animals. The mouths of their entrances are strewed with the bones of sheep and goats; and the loathsome smell that issues from most of them is sufficient warning not to proceed into the den."§ The king of the forest now ranges over the site of that Babylon which Nebuchadnezzar built for his own glory. And the temple of Belus, the greatest work of man, is now like unto a natural den of lions. "Two or three majestic lions" were seen upon its heights, by Sir Robert Ker Porter, as he was approaching it; and "the broad prints of their feet were left plain in the clayey soil."|| Major Keppel saw there a similar footprint of a lion. It is also the unmolested retreat of jackals, hyenas, and other noxious animals.¶ Wild beasts are "numerous" at the Mujelibe, as well as on Birs Nimrood. "The mound was full of large holes; we entered some of them, and found them strewed with the carcasses and skeletons of animals recently killed. The ordure of wild beasts was so strong that prudence got the better of curiosity, for we had no doubt as to the savage nature of the inhabitants. Our guides, indeed, told us that all

* Travels, p. 201, 235.
the ruins abounded in lions and other wild beasts; so literally has the divine prediction been fulfilled, that wild beasts of the desert should lie there, and their houses be full of doleful creatures; that the wild beasts of the island should cry in their desolate houses."

The sea is come upon Babylon. She is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. The traces of the western bank of the Euphrates are now no longer discernible. The river overflows unrestrained; and the very ruins, with "every appearance of the embankment," have been swept away. "The ground there is low and marshy, and presents not the slightest vestige of former buildings, of any description whatever."† "Morasses and ponds tracked the ground in various parts. For a long time after the general subsiding of the Euphrates, great part of this plain is little better than a swamp, &c."‡ "The ruins of Babylon are then inundated, so as to render many parts of them inaccessible, by converting the valleys among them into morasses."§ But while Babylon is thus covered with the multitude of waves, and the waters come upon it, yet, in striking contrast and seeming contradiction to such a feature of desolation (like the formation of pools of water from the casting up of heaps), at all times the elevated sun-burnt ruins, which the waters do not overflow, and generally throughout the year, the "dry waste" and " parched and burning plain,"¶ on which the heaps of Babylon lie, equally prove that it is a desert, a dry land, and a wilderness. One part, even on the western side of the river, is "low and marshy, and another an arid desert."||

It shall never be inhabited. It shall be utterly desolate. "Ruins composed, like those of Babylon, of heaps of rubbish impregnated with nitre cannot be cultivated."** "The decomposing materials of a Babylonian structure doom the earth on which they perish to lasting sterility. —On this part of the plain, both where traces of buildings were left, and where none had stood, all seemed equally naked of vegetation; the whole ground appearing as if it had been washed over and over again, by the coming and receding waters, till every bit of genial soil was

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† Buckingham’s Travels, vol. ii. p. 278.
¶ Buckingham’s Travels, vol. ii. p. 302, 305.
|| Mignet’s Travels, p. 139. Plan.
** Rich’s Memoir, p. 16.
swept away; its half-clay, half-sandy surface being left in ridgy streaks, like what is often seen on the flat shores of the sea, after the retreating of the tide."* Babylon, which in its pride did say, I shall be a lady for ever, is no more called the lady of kingdoms, but is desolate for ever.

Bel boweth down. The temple of Belus, or Baal, here evidently spoken of, was a stadium, or furlong, in height, computed by Major Rennell at five hundred, and by Prideaux at six hundred feet. By the lowest computation it was higher than the greatest of the pyramids. The highest of the heaps which now constitute fallen Babylon is the Birs Nimrood, generally supposed to have been the temple of Belus. The heap occupies a larger space of ground than that on which the temple stood, having spread, in falling down, beyond its original base. It rests not now upon its ancient foundations, but lies upon the earth an enormous mass of ruin. "At first sight it presents the appearance of a hill, with a castle at the top,"† so as not only to deceive the eye in beholding it at a distance, or in looking on its picture; but, "incredible as it may seem, the ruins on the summit of it are actually those spoken of by Père Emanuel, who takes no sort of notice of the prodigious mound on which they are elevated. It is almost needless to observe, that the whole of the mound is itself a ruin;"‡ and it is altogether needless to add another word, to show that it is bowed down, as may be seen by the sketch of the comparative ancient and modern height annexed to the plan of Birs Nimrood, in Sir Robert K. Porter's Travels.§

Bel is confounded. Originally constructed of eight successive towers, one rising above another, it is now consolidated into one irregular hill, presenting a different aspect, and of different altitudes on every side,—a confused and misshapen mass. "The eastern face presents two stages of hill; the first showing an elevation of about sixty feet, cloven in the middle into a deep ravine, and intersected in all directions by furrows channelled there by the descending rains of succeeding ages. The summit of this first stage stretches in rather a flattened sweep to the base of the second ascent, which springs out of the first in a steep and abrupt conical

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† Mignan's Travels, p. 192.
§ Vol. ii. p. 323.
form, terminated on the top by a solitary standing fragment of brick-work, like the ruin of a tower. From the foundation of the whole pile to the base of this piece of ruin measures about two hundred feet; and from the bottom of the ruin to its shattered top are thirty-five feet. On the western side, the entire mass rises at once from the plain in one stupendous, though irregular, pyramidal hill, broken in the slopes of its sweeping accivities by the devastations of time, and rougher destruction. The southern and northern fronts are particularly abrupt.”* Such, and so confounded, is now the temple of Belus.

I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. On the summit of the hill are “immense fragments of brick-work of no determinate figures, tumbled together, and converted into solid vitrified masses.”† “Some of these huge fragments measured twelve feet in height, by twenty-four in circumference; and from the circumstance of the standing brick-work having remained in a perfect state, the change exhibited in these is only accountable from their having been exposed to the fiercest fire, or rather seathed by lightning.”‡ “They are completely molten—a strong presumption that fire was used in the destruction of the tower, which, in parts, resembles what the Scriptures prophesied it should become, ‘a burnt mountain.’ In the denunciation respecting Babylon, fire is particularly mentioned as an agent against it. To this Jeremiah evidently alludes, when he says that it should be ‘as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,’ on which cities, it is said, ‘the Lord rained brimstone and fire.’—‘Her high gates shall be burned with fire, and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.’”§ “In many of these immense unshapen masses might be traced the gradual effects of the consuming power, which had produced so remarkable an appearance; exhibiting parts burnt to that variegated dark hue, seen in the vitrified matter lying about in glass manufactories; while, through the whole of these awful testimonies of the fire (whatever fire it was!) which, doubtless, hurled them from their original elevation” (I will roll thee down from

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† Rich's Memoir, p. 36.
‡ Mignan's Travels, p. 207.
§ Keppel's Narrative, p. 194, 195.
the rocks), "the regular lines of the cement are visible, and so hardened in common with the bricks, that when the masses are struck they ring like glass. On examining the base of the standing wall, contiguous to these huge transmuted substances, it is found tolerably free from any similar changes, in short, quite in its original state; hence," continues Sir Robert Ker Porter, "I draw the conclusion, that the consuming power acted from above, and that the scattered ruin fell from some higher point than the summit of the present standing fragment. The heat of the fire which produced such amazing effects must have burned with the force of the strongest furnace; and from the general appearance of the cleft in the wall, and these vitrified masses, I should be induced to attribute the catastrophe to lightning from heaven. Ruins by the explosion of any combustible matter would have exhibited very different appearances."*

"The fallen masses bear evident proof of the operation of fire having been continued on them, as well after they were broken down as before, since every part of their surface has been so equally exposed to it, that many of them have acquired a rounded form, and in none can the place of separation from its adjoining one be traced by any appearance of superior freshness, or any exemption from the influence of the destroying flame."†

* The high gates of the temple of Belus, which were standing in the time of Herodotus, have been burnt with fire; the vitrified masses which fell when Bel bowed down rest on the top of its stupendous ruins. The hand of the Lord has been stretched upon it; it has been rolled down from the rocks, and has been made a burnt mountain,—of which it was further prophesied,

They shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations, but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord. The old wastes of Zion shall be built; its former desolations shall be raised up: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. But it shall not be with Bel as with Zion, nor with Babylon as with Jerusalem. For as the "heaps of rubbish impregnated with nitre" which cover the site of Babylon "cannot be cultivated,"‡ so the vitrified

† Buckingham's Travels, vol. ii. p. 373.
‡ Rich's Memoir, p. 16.
masses on the summit of Birs Nimrood cannot be rebuilt. Though still they be of the hardest substance, and indestructible by the elements, and though once they formed the highest pinnacles of Belus, yet, incapable of being hewn into any regular form, they neither are nor can now be taken *for a corner or for foundations*. And the bricks on the solid fragments of wall, which rest on the summit, though neither scathed nor molten, are so firmly cemented, that, according to Mr. Rich, "it is nearly impossible to detach any of them whole,"* or, as Captain Mignan still more forcibly states, "they are so firmly cemented, that it is utterly impossible to detach any of them."† "My most violent attempts," says Sir Robert Ker Porter, "could not separate them."‡ And Mr. Buckingham, in assigning reasons for lessening the wonder at the total disappearance of the walls at this distant period, and speaking of the Birs Nimrood generally, observes, "that the burnt bricks (the only ones sought after) which are found in the Mujelibe, the Kasr, and the Birs Nimrood, the only three great monuments in which there are any traces of their having been used, are so difficult, in the two last indeed so impossible, to be extracted whole, from the tenacity of the cement in which they are laid, that they could never have been resorted to while any considerable portion of the walls existed to furnish an easier supply: even now, though some portion of the mounds on the eastern bank of the river" (the Birs is on the western side) "are occasionally dug into for bricks, they are not extracted without a comparatively great expense, and very few of them whole, in proportion to the great number of fragments that come up with them."§ Around the tower there is not a single whole brick to be seen.||

These united testimonies, given without allusion to the prediction, afford a better than any conjectural commentary, such as previously was given without reference to these facts.

While of Babylon, in general, it is said, that it would be *taken from thence*; and while, in many places, *nothing is left*, yet of the *burnt mountain*, which forms an accumulation of ruins enough in magnitude to build a city,
men do not take a stone for foundations nor a stone for a corner. Having undergone the action of the fiercest fire, and being completely molten, the masses on the summit of Bel, on which the hand of the Lord has been stretched, cannot be reduced into any other form or substance, nor built up again by the hand of man. And the tower of Babel, afterward the temple of Belus, which witnessed the first dispersion of mankind, shall itself be witnessed by the latest generation, even as now it stands, desolate for ever,—an indestructible monument of human pride and folly, and of Divine judgment and truth. The greatest of the ruins, as one of the edifices of Babylon, is rolled down into a vast, indiscriminate, cloven, confounded, useless, and blasted mass, from which fragments might be hurled with as little injury to the ruined heap, as from a bare and rocky mountain's side. Such is the triumph of the word of the living God over the proudest of the temples of Baal.

Merodach is broken in pieces. Merodach was a name, or a title, common to the princes and kings of Babylon, of which, in the brief Scriptural references to their history, two instances are recorded, viz. Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, King of Babylon, who exercised the office of government, and Evil-Merodach, who lived in the days of Jeremiah. From Merodach being here associated with Bel, or the temple of Belus, and from the similarity of their judgments—the one bowed down and confounded, and the other broken in pieces—it may reasonably be inferred that some other famous Babylonian building is here also denoted; while, at the same time, from the express identity of the name with that of the kings of Babylon, and even with Evil-Merodach, then residing there, it may with equal reason be inferred that, under the name of Merodach, the palace is spoken of by the prophet. And next to the idolatrous temple, as the seat of false worship which corrupted and destroyed the nations, it may well be imagined that the royal residence of the despot who made the earth to tremble and oppressed the people of Israel, would be selected as the marked object of the righteous judgments of God. And secondary only to the Birs Nimrood in the greatness of its ruins is the Mujelibe, or Makloube, generally understood and described by travellers as the remains of 'the chief palace of Babylon.'

The palace of the King of Babylon almost vied with
the great temple of their god. And there is now some controversy, in which of the principal mountainous heaps the one or the other lies buried. But the utter desolation of both leaves no room for any debate on the question,—which of the twain is bowed down and confounded, and which of them is broken in pieces.

The two palaces, or castles, of Babylon were strongly fortified. And the larger was surrounded by three walls of great extent.* When the city was suddenly taken by Demetrias, he seized on one of the castles by surprise, and displaced its garrison by seven thousand of his own troops, whom he stationed within it.† Of the other he could not make himself master. Their extent and strength, at a period of three hundred years after the delivery of the prophecy, are thus sufficiently demonstrated. The solidity of the structure of the greater as well as of the lesser palace might have warranted the belief of its unbroken durability for ages.—And never was there a building whose splendour and magnificence were in greater contrast to its present desolation. The vestiges of the walls which surrounded it are still to be seen, and serve with other circumstances to identify it with the Mujelibé, as the name Merodach is identified with the palace. It is broken in pieces, and hence its name Mujelibé, signifying overturned, or turned upside down. Its circumference is about half a mile; its height one hundred and forty feet. But it is "a mass of confusion, none of its members being distinguishable."‡ The existence of chambers, passages, and cellars, of different forms and sizes, and built of different materials, has been fully ascertained.¶ It is the receptacle of wild beasts, and full of doleful creatures; wild beasts cry in the desolate houses, and dragons in the pleasant palaces—"venomous reptiles being very numerous throughout the ruins."‖ "All the sides are worn into furrows by the weather, and in some places where several channels of rain have united together, these furrows are of great depth, and penetrate a considerable way into the mound."¶¶ "The sides of the ruin exhibit hollows worn partly by the weather."*** It is brought down to the grave, to the sides of the pit.

* Diodor. Sic. lib. 2. Herod. lib. i. c. 181.
† Plutarch's Life of Demetrias.
§ Ibid. p. 274. ¶¶ Mignan's Travels, p. 108.
** Mignan's Travels, p. 167.
They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms? Narrowly to look on and to consider even the view of the Mujelibé, is to see what the palace of Babylon, in which kings, proud as "Lucifer," boasted of exalting themselves above the stars of God, has now become, and how, cut down to the ground, it is broken in pieces.*

"On pacing over the loose stones, and fragments of brick-work which lay scattered through the immense fabric, and surveying the sublimity of the ruins," says Captain Mignan, "I naturally recurred to the time when these walls stood proudly in their original splendour,—when the halls were the scenes of festive magnificence, and when they resounded to the voices of those whom death has long since swept from the earth. This very pile was once the seat of luxury and vice; now abandoned to decay, and exhibiting a melancholy instance of the retribution of Heaven. It stands alone,—the solitary habitation of the goatherd marks not the forsaken site."† Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy vials; the worms are spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

Thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet. "Several deep excavations have been made in different places into the sides of the Mujelibé; some probably by the wearing of the seasons; but many others have been dug by the rapacity of the Turks, tearing up its bowels in search of hidden treasure,"—as if the palace of Babylon were cast out of its grave. "Several penetrate very far into the body of the structure," till it has become as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword. "And some, it is likely,

* By the kindness of Sir Robert Ker Porter's family, in his absence abroad, the author was presented with the original drawings of the Birs Nimrood and Mujelibé, for engravings. His Travels in Persia, Babylonia, &c. contain four views of each, which show how, on every side, they are bowed down and broken in pieces. Small engravings of them are inserted in Minas de l'Orient, Vienne, in Rich's Memoirs on the ruins of Babylon, and in Mr. Buckingham's Travels. There is a view of each in Captain Mignan's Travels. The curious reader may contrast the Mujelibé with Martin's splendid picture of "Belshazzar's Feast." The place, no longer a palace, is the same. Every child is familiar with the common picture of the temple of Belus, the ancient magnificence of which could not well be exaggerated, any more than the faintest resemblance to it could be recognised in what now it is—the Birs Nimrood.

† Mignan's Travels, p. 172, 173.
have never yet been explored, the wild beasts of the desert literally keeping guard over them."* "The mound was full of large holes"†—thrust through.

Near to the Mujelibe, on the supposed site of the hanging gardens which were situated within the walls of the palace, "the ruins are so perforated in consequence of the digging for bricks, that the original design is entirely lost. All that could favour any conjecture of gardens built on terraces are two subterranean passages.—There can be no doubt that both passages are of vast extent; they are lined with bricks laid in with bitumen and covered over with large masses of stone. This is nearly the only place where stone is observable."‡ Arches built upon arches raised the hanging-gardens from terrace to terrace, till the highest was on a level with the top of the city walls. Now they are cast out like an abominable branch—and subterranean passages are disclosed,—down to the stones of the pit.

As a carcass trodden under feet. The streets of Babylon were parallel, crossed by others at right angles, and abounded with houses three and four stories high; and none can now traverse the site of Babylon, or find any other path without treading them under foot. The traveller directs his course to the highest mounds; and there are none, whether temples or palaces, that are not trodden on. The Mujelibe "rises in a steep ascent, over which the passengers can only go up by the winding paths worn by frequent visits to the ruined edifice."¶

Her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces; all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground. "This place," says Beauchamp, quoted by Major Rennell, "and the mount of Babel, are commonly called by the Arabs Makloube, that is, turned topsy-turvy. I was informed by the master mason employed to dig for bricks, that the places from which he procured them were large thick walls and sometimes chambers. He has frequently found earthen vessels, engraved marbles, and about eight years ago a statue as large as life, which he threw among the rubbish. On one wall of the chamber he found the figure of a cow, and of the sun and moon, formed of varnished bricks. Sometimes idols of clay are found representing human figures."|| "Small figures

† Keppel's Travels, vol. i. p. 173.
‡ Ibid. p. 205.
¶¶ Rennell's Geography of Herodotus, p. 308.
of brass or copper are found at Babylon."* "Bronze antiques, generally much corroded with rust, but exhibiting small figures of men and animals, are often found among the ruins."†

The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken. They were so broad, that, as ancient historians relate, six chariots could be driven on them abreast; or a chariot and four horses might pass and turn. They existed as walls for more than a thousand years after the prophecy was delivered; and long after the sentence of utter destruction had gone forth against them they were numbered among "the seven wonders of the world." And what can be more wonderful now, or what could have been more inconceivable by man, when Babylon was in its strength and glory, than that the broad walls of Babylon should be so utterly broken that it cannot be determined with certainty that even the slightest vestige of them exists.

"All accounts agree," says Mr. Rich, "in the height of the walls, which was fifty cubits, having been reduced to these dimensions from the prodigious height of three hundred and fifty feet" (formerly stated, by the lowest computation of the length of the cubit, at three hundred feet), "by Darius Hystaspes, after the rebellion of the town, in order to render it less defensible. I have not been fortunate enough to discover the least trace of them in any part of the ruins at Hillah; which is rather an unaccountable circumstance, considering that they survived the final ruin of the town, long after which they served as an enclosure for a park; in which comparatively perfect state St. Jerome informs us they remained in his time."‡

In the sixteenth century they were seen for the last time by any European traveller (so far as the author has been able to trace), before they were finally so utterly broken as totally to disappear. And it is interesting to mark both the time and the manner in which the walls of Babylon, like the city of which they were the impregnable yet unavailing defence, were brought down to the grave, to be seen no more.

"The meanwhile," as Rauwolf describes them, "when we were lodged there, I considered and viewed this ascent, and found that there were two behind one another"

* Rich's Second Memoir, p. 58. † Mignan's Travels, p. 239. ‡ Rich's Memoirs, p. 43, 44.
(Herodotus states that there was both an inner, or inferior, and outer wall), "distinguished by a ditch, and extending themselves like unto two parallel walls a great way about, and that they were open in some places, where one might go through like gates; wherefore I believe that they were the wall of the old town that went about them; and that the places where they were open have been anciently the gates (whereof there were one hundred) of that town. And this the rather because I saw in some places under the sand (wherewith the two ascents were almost covered) the old wall plainly appear."

The cities of Seleucia, Ctesiphon, Destagered, Kufa, and anciently many others in the vicinity, together with the more modern towns of Mesched Ali, Mesched Hussein, and Hillah, "with towns, villages, and caravansaries without number,"† have, in all probability, been chiefly built out of the walls of Babylon. Like the city, the walls have been taken from thence, till none of them are left. The rains of many hundred years, and the waters coming upon them annually by the overflowing of the Euphrates, have also, in all likelihood, washed down the dust and rubbish from the broken and dilapidated walls into the ditch from which they were originally taken, till at last the sand of the parched desert has smoothed them into a plain, and added the place where they stood to the wilderness, so that the broad walls of Babylon are utterly broken. And now, as the subjoined evidence, supplementary of what has already been adduced, fully proves,—it may verily be said that the loftiest walls ever built by man, as well as the "greatest city on which the sun ever shone," which these walls surrounded, and the most fertile of countries, of which Babylon the great was the capital and the glory,—have all been swept by the Lord of Hosts with the besom of destruction.

A chapter of sixty pages in length, of Mr. Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, is entitled, "Search after the walls of Babylon." After a long and fruitless search, he discovered on the eastern boundary of the ruins, on the summit of an oval mound from seventy to eighty feet in height, and from three to four hundred feet in circumference, "a mass of solid wall, about thirty feet in length, by twelve or fifteen in thickness, yet evidently once of much greater dimensions each way, the work being, in

* Ray's Collection of Travels, p. 177, 178.
its present state, broken and incomplete in every part;"* and this heap of ruin and fragment of wall he conjectured to be a part—the only part, if such it be, that can be discovered—of the walls of Babylon, so utterly are they broken. Beyond this there is not even a pretension to the discovery of any part of them.

Captain Frederick, of whose journey it was the "principal object to search for the remains of the wall and ditch that had compassed Babylon," states that "neither of these have been seen by any modern traveller. All my inquiries among the Arabs," he adds, "on this subject completely failed in producing the smallest effect. Within the space of twenty-one miles in length along the banks of the Euphrates, and twelve miles across it in breadth, I was unable to perceive any thing that could admit of my imagining that either a wall or a ditch had existed within this extensive area. If any remains do exist of the walls, they must have been of greater circumference than is allowed by modern geographers. I may possibly have been deceived; but I spared no pains to prevent it. I never was employed in riding and walking less than eight hours for six successive days, and upwards of twelve on the seventh."†

Major Keppel relates that he and the party who accompanied him, "in common with other travellers, had totally failed in discovering any trace of the city walls;" and he adds, "the Divine predictions against Babylon have been so literally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah,—the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken."‡

Babylon shall be an astonishment.—Every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished. It is impossible to think on what Babylon was, and to be an eyewitness of what it is, without astonishment. On first entering its ruins, Sir Robert Ker Porter thus expresses his feelings, "I could not but feel an indescribable awe in thus passing, as it were, into the gates of fallen Babylon."§—"I cannot portray," says Captain Mignan, "the overpowering sensation of reverential awe that possessed my mind while contemplating the extent and magnitude of ruin and devastation on every side."||

† Transactions of the Literary Society, Bombay, vol. i. p. 130, 131.
How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder! How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!—The following interesting description has lately been given from the spot. After speaking of the ruined embankment, divided and subdivided again and again, like a sort of tangled network, over the apparently interminable ground—of large and wide-spreading morasses—of ancient foundations—and of chains of undulated heaps—Sir Robert Ker Porter emphatically adds:—"The whole view was particularly solemn. The majestic stream of the Euphrates, wandering in solitude, like a pilgrim monarch through the silent ruins of his devastated kingdom, still appeared a noble river, under all the disadvantages of its desert-tracked course. Its banks were hoary with reeds; and the gray osier willows were yet there on which the captives of Israel hung up their harps, and, while Jerusalem was not, refused to be comforted. But how is the rest of the scene changed since then! At that time those broken hills were palaces—those long undulating mounds, streets—this vast solitude filled with the busy subjects of the proud daughter of the East.—Now, wasted with misery, her habitations are not to be found—and for herself, the worm is spread over her."*

From palaces converted into broken hills;—from streets to long lines of heaps;—from the throne of the world to sitting on the dust;—from the hum of mighty Babylon to the death-like silence that rests upon the grave to which it is brought down;—from the great storehouse of the world, where treasures were gathered from every quarter, and the prison-house of the captive Jews, where, not loosed to return homewards, they served in a hard bondage, to Babylon the spoil of many nations, itself taken from thence, and nothing left;—from a vast metropolis, the place of palaces and the glory of kingdoms, whither multitudes ever flowed, to a dreaded and shunned spot not inhabited nor dwelt in from generation to generation, where even the Arabian, though the son of the desert, pitches not his tent, and where the shepherds make not their folds;—from the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, to the taking away of bricks, and to an uncovered nakedness;—from making the earth to tremble, and shaking kingdoms, to being cast out of the

grave like an abominable branch; — from the many nations and great kings from the coasts of the earth that have so often come up against Babylon, to the workmen that still cast her up as heaps and add to the number of pools in the ruins; — from the immense artificial lake, many miles in circumference, by means of which the annual rising of the Euphrates was regulated and restrained, to these pools of water, a few yards round, dug by the workmen, and filled by the river; — from the first and greatest of temples to a burnt mountain desolate forever; from the golden image, forty feet in height, which stood on the top of the temple of Belus, to all the graven images of her gods, that are broken unto the ground and mingled with the dust; — from the splendid and luxuriant festivals of Babylonian monarchs, the noise of the viols, the pomp of Belshazzar's feast, and the godless revelry of a thousand lords drinking out of the golden vessels that had been taken from Zion, to the cry of wild beasts, the creeping of doleful creatures of which their desolate houses and pleasant palaces are full, the nestling of owls in cavities, the dancing of wild goats on the ruinous mound as on a rock, and the dwelling-place of dragons and of venomous reptiles; — from arch upon arch, and terrace upon terrace, till the hanging gardens of Babylon rose like a mountain, down to the stones of the pit now disclosed to view; — from the palaces of princes who sat on the mount of the congregation, and thought in the pride of their hearts to exalt themselves above the stars of God, to heaps cut down to the ground, perforated as the raiment of those that are slain, and as a carcass trodden under feet; — from the broad walls of Babylon, in all their height, as Cyrus camped against them round about, seeking in vain a single point where congregated nations could scale the walls or force an opening, to the untraceable spot on which they stood, when there is nothing left to turn aside, or impede in their course, the worms that cover it; — and finally, from Babylon the great, the wonder of the world, to fallen Babylon, the astonishment of all who go by it; — in extremes like these, whatever changes they involve, and by whatever instrumentality they may have been wrought out, there is not to this hour, in this most marvellous history of Babylon, a single fact that may not most appropriately be ranked under a prediction, and that does not tally entirely with its express and precise fulfilment, while at the same time they
all united show, as may now be seen,—reading the judgments to the very letter, and looking to the facts as they are,—the destruction which has come from the Almighty upon Babylon.

Has not every purpose of the Lord been performed against Babylon? And having so clear illustrations of the facts before us, what mortal shall give a negative answer to the questions, subjoined by their Omniscient Author to these very prophecies?—"Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord? and there is no god beside me;—declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done—saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Is it possible that there can be any attestation of the truth of prophecy, if it be not witnessed here? Is there any spot on earth which has undergone a more complete transformation? "The records of the human race," it has been said with truth, "do not present a contrast more striking than that between the primeval magnificence of Babylon and its long desolation."* Its ruins have of late been carefully and scrupulously examined by different natives of Britain, of unimpeached veracity, and the result of every research is a more striking demonstration of the literal accomplishment of every prediction. How few spots are there on earth of which we have so clear and faithful a picture as prophecy gave of fallen Babylon, at a time when no spot on earth resembled it less than its present desolate solitary site! Or could any prophecies respecting any single place have been more precise, or wonderful, or numerous, or true,—or more gradually accomplished throughout many generations? And when they look at what Babylon was, and what it is, and perceive the minute realization of them all—may not nations learn wisdom, may not tyrants tremble, and may not skeptics think?

TYRE.

TYRE was the most celebrated city of Phoenicia, and the ancient emporium of the world. Its colonies were numerous and extensive. "It was the theatre of an immense commerce and navigation—the nursery of arts.

and science, and the city of perhaps the most industrious and active people ever known."* The kingdom of Carthage, the rival of Rome, was one of the colonies of Tyre. While this mart of nations was in the height of its opulence and power, and at least one hundred and twenty-five years before the destruction of old Tyre, Isaiah pronounced its irrevocable fall. Tyre on the island succeeded to the more ancient city on the continent; and—being inhabited by the same people, retaining the same name, being removed but a little space, and, perhaps, occupying in part the same ground—the fate of both is included in the prophecy. The pride and the wickedness of the Tyrians, their exultation over the calamities of the Israelites, and their cruelty in selling them to slavery are assigned as the reasons of the judgments that were to overtake them, or as the causes of the revelation of the destiny of their city. And the whole fate of Tyre was foretold.

Bishop Newton shows, at length, how the following prophecies were all exactly fulfilled, as well as clearly foretold, viz. that Tyre was to be taken and destroyed by the Chaldeans, who were, at the time of the delivery of the prophecy, an inconsiderable people, and particularly by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon;—that the inhabitants should fly over the Mediterranean into the islands and countries adjoining, and even then should not find a quiet settlement;—that the city should be restored after seventy years, and return to her gain and merchandise;—that the people should in time forsake their idolatry, and become converts to the true religion and worship of God;—and, finally, that the city should be totally destroyed, and become a place only for fishers to spread their nets upon.

But, instead of reviewing the whole of these, a few of the most striking predictions which were accomplished after the era of the last of the Old Testament prophets, and the fulfilment of which rests on the most unexceptionable testimony, shall be selected.

One of the most singular events in history was the manner in which the siege of Tyre was conducted by Alexander the Great. Irritated that a single city should alone oppose his victorious march, enraged at the murder of some of his soldiers, and fearful for his fame,—even

his army's despairing of success could not deter him from the siege. And Tyre was taken in a manner the success of which was more wonderful than the design was daring; for it was surrounded by a wall one hundred and fifty feet in height, and situated on an island half a mile distant from the shore. A mound was formed from the continent to the island; and the ruins of old Tyre,* two hundred and forty years after its demolition, afforded ready materials for the purpose. Such was the work, that the attempts at first defeated the power of an Alexander. The enemy consumed and the storm destroyed it. But its remains, buried beneath the water, formed a barrier which rendered successful his renewed efforts. A vast mass of additional matter was requisite. The soil and the very rubbish were gathered and heaped. And the mighty conqueror, who afterward failed in raising again any of the ruins of Babylon, cast those of Tyre into the sea, and took her very dust† from off her. He left not the remnant of a ruin—and the site of ancient Tyre is now unknown.‡ Who then taught the prophets to say of Tyre,—"They shall lay thy stones, and thy timber, and thy dust in the midst of the water—I will also scrape her dust from her. I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more. Thou shalt be sought for, yet thou shalt never be found again?"§

After the capture of Tyre, the conqueror ordered it to be set on fire. Fifteen thousand of the Tyrians escaped in ships. And, exclusive of multitudes that were cruelly slain, thirty thousand were sold into slavery. Each of these facts had been announced for centuries:—"Behold the Lord will cast her out—he will smite her power in the sea, and she shall be devoured with fire—I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee—I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth. Pass ye over to Tarshish—pass over to Chittim. The isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.—Thou shalt die the death of them that are slain in the midst of the sea. The children of Israel also, and the children of Judah, have ye sold. I will return the recompense upon your own head."

But it was also prophesied of the greatest commercial

* Magna vis saxorum ad manum erat, Tyro vetere præbente.—Quint. Cur. lib. iv. cap. 9.
‡ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. Pococke's Description of the East, b. i. c. 20. Buckingham's Travels, p. 46
§ Ezek., xxiv. 12, 21.
city of the world, whose merchants were princes,—
whose traffickers were the honourable of the earth,—
"I will make thee like the top of a rock. Thou shalt be a
place to spread nets upon."* The same prediction is re-
peated with an assurance of its truth:—"I will make her
like the top of a rock; it shall be a place for the spreading of
nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken it."

Tyre, though deprived of its former inhabitants, soon
revived as a city, and greatly regained its commerce.
It was populous and flourishing at the beginning of the
Christian era. It contained many disciples of Jesus,
in the days of the apostles. An elegant temple and
many churches were afterward built there. It was the
see of the first archbishop under the patriarch of Jerusalem.
Her merchandise and her hire, according to the
prophecy, were holiness to the Lord. In the seventh
century Tyre was taken by the Saracens. In the
twelfth by the Crusaders—at which period it was a
great commercial city. The Mamelukes succeeded as
its masters; and it has now remained for three hun-
dred years in the possession of the Turks. But it was
not excluded from among the multitude of cities and of
countries whose ruin and devastation, as accomplished
by the cruelties and ravages of Turkish barbarity and
despotism, were foretold nearly two thousand years
before the existence of that nation of plunderers. And
although it has more lately, by a brief respite from the
greatest oppression, risen somewhat from its ruins, the
last of the predictions respecting it has been literally
fulfilled, according to the testimony of many witnesses.
But that of Maundrell, Shaw, Volney, and Bruce may
suffice:—

"You find here no similitude of that glory for which
it was so renowned in ancient times. You see nothing
here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, &c.
Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches,
harbouring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting
chiefly upon fishing, who seem to be preserved in this
place by Divine Providence, as a visible argument how
God hath fulfilled his word concerning Tyre."† "The
port of Tyre, small as it is at present, is choked up to
that degree with sand and rubbish, that the boats of
those fishermen who now and then visit this once re-

* Ezek. xxvi. 14, 15.
† Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 82.
nowned emporium, and dry their nets upon its rocks and ruins, can with great difficulty only be admitted."

And even Volney, after quoting the description of the greatness of Tyre, and the general description of the destruction of the city, and the annihilation of its commerce, acknowledges that "the vicissitudes of time, or rather the barbarism of the Greeks of the Lower Empire and the Mahometans, have accomplished this prediction.—Instead of that ancient commerce, so active and so extensive, Sour (Tyre), reduced to a miserable village, has no other trade than the exportation of a few sacks of corn and raw cotton; nor any merchant but a single Greek factor, in the service of the French of Saide, who scarcely makes sufficient profit to maintain his family." But though he overlooks the fulfilment of minuter prophecies, he relates facts more valuable than any opinion, and more corroborative of their truth:—"The whole village of Tyre contains only fifty or sixty poor families, who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground and a trifting fishery. The houses they occupy are no longer, as in the time of Strabo, edifices of three or four stories high—but wretched huts, ready to crumble into ruins."† Bruce describes Tyre as "a rock whereon fishers dry their nets."

It matters not by what means these prophecies have been verified; for the means were as inscrutable, and as impossible to have been foreseen by man, as the event. The fact is beyond a doubt that they have been literally fulfilled—and therefore the prophecies are true. They may be overlooked—but no ingenuity can pervert them. No facts could have been more unlikely or striking—and no predictions respecting them could have been more clear.

EGYPT.

EGYPT was one of the most ancient and one of the mightiest of kingdoms, and the researches of the traveller are still directed to explore the unparalleled memorials of its power. No nation, whether of ancient or of modern times, has ever erected such great and durable monuments. While the vestiges of other ancient monarchies can hardly be found amid the mouldered ruins

of their cities, those artificial mountains, visible at the distance of thirty miles, the pyramids of Egypt, without a record of their date, have withstood, unimpaired, all the ravages of time. The dynasty of Egypt takes precedence, in antiquity, of every other. No country ever produced so long a catalogue of kings. The learning of the Egyptians was proverbial. The number of their cities,* and the population of their country, as recorded by ancient historians, almost surpass credibility. Nature and art united in rendering it a most fertile region. It was called the granary of the world. It was divided into several kingdoms, and their power often extended over many of the surrounding countries.† Yet the knowledge of all its greatness and glory deterred not the Jewish prophets from declaring, that Egypt would become a base kingdom, and never exalt itself any more among the nations. And the literal fulfilment of every prophecy affords as clear a demonstration as can possibly be given, that each and all of them are the dictates of inspiration.

Egypt was the theme of many prophecies, which were fulfilled in ancient times: and it bears to the present day, as it has borne throughout many ages, every mark with which prophecy had stamped its destiny:—

"They shall be a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of kingdoms. Neither shall it exalt itself any more among the nations: for I will diminish them that they shall no more rule over the nations. The pride of her power shall come down. And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted. I will make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be desolate of that whereof it was full. I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked. I will make the land waste and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it. And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt—The sceptre of Egypt shall depart away."

Egypt became entirely subject to the Persians about three hundred and fifty years previous to the Christian era. It was afterward subdued by the Macedonians, and was governed by the Ptolemies for the space of two

* Twenty thousand—Herod. lib. ii. c. 177.
‡ Ezek. xxx. 6, 7, 19, 13; xxviii. 15. Zech. x. 11.
hundred and ninety-four years; until, about thirty years before Christ, it became a province of the Roman empire. It continued long in subjection to the Romans—tributary first to Rome, and afterward to Constantinople. It was transferred, A. D. 641, to the dominion of the Saracens. In 1250 the Mamelukes deposed their rulers, and usurped the command of Egypt. A mode of government the most singular and surprising that ever existed on earth was established and maintained. Each successive ruler was raised to supreme authority, from being a stranger and a slave. No son of the former ruler—no native of Egypt succeeded to the sovereignty; but a chief was chosen from among a new race of imported slaves. When Egypt became tributary to the Turks in 1517, the Mamelukes retained much of their power, and every pasha was an oppressor and a stranger. During all these ages, every attempt to emancipate the country, or to create a prince of the land of Egypt, has proved abortive, and has often been fatal to the aspirant. Though the facts relative to Egypt form too prominent a feature in the history of the world to admit of contradiction or doubt, yet the description of the fate of that country, and of the form of its government, shall be left to the testimony of those whose authority no infidel will question, and whom no man can accuse of adapting their descriptions to the predictions of the event. Gibbon and Volney are again our witnesses of the facts:

"Such is the state of Egypt. Deprived twenty-three centuries ago of her natural proprietors, she has seen her fertile fields successively a prey to the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and, at length, the race of Tartars distinguished by the name of Ottoman Turks. The Mamelukes, purchased as slaves, and introduced as soldiers, soon usurped the power and elected a leader. If their first establishment was a singular event, their continuance is not less extraordinary. They are replaced by slaves brought from their original country. The system of oppression is methodical. Every thing the traveller sees or hears reminds him he is in the country of slavery and tyranny." *

*A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised than that which condemns the

natives of a country to perpetual servitude, under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves. Yet such has been the state of Egypt above five hundred years. The most illustrious sultans of the Baharite and Borgite dynasties were themselves promoted from the Tartar and Circassian bands; and the four-and-twenty beys, or military chiefs, have ever been succeeded, not by their sons, but by their servants.”* These are the words of Volney and of Gibbon: and what did the ancient prophets foretell? “I will lay the land waste and all that is therein by the hands of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it.—And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt.—The sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.” The prophecy adds:—“They shall be a base kingdom—it shall be the basest of kingdoms.” After the lapse of two thousand and four hundred years from the date of this prophecy, a scoffer at religion, but an eyewitness of the facts, thus describes the same spot: “In Egypt there is no middle class, neither nobility, clergy, merchants, landholders. A universal air of misery, manifest in all the traveller meets, points out to him the rapacity of oppression and the distrust attendant upon slavery. The profound ignorance of the inhabitants equally prevents them from perceiving the causes of their evils, or applying the necessary remedies. Ignorance, diffused through every class, extends its effects to every species of moral and physical knowledge. Nothing is talked of but intestine troubles, the public misery, pecuniary extortions, bastinadoes, and murders. Justice herself puts to death without formality.”† Other travellers describe the most execrable vices as common, and represent the moral character of the people as corrupted to the core. As a token of the desolation of the country, mud-walled cottages are now the only habitations where the ruins of temples and palaces abound. Egypt is surrounded by the dominions of the Turks and of the Arabs; and the prophecy is literally true which marked it in the midst of desolation:—“They shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.” The systematic oppression, extortion, and plunder which have so long prevailed, and the price paid for his authority and power by every Turkish pasha, have ren-

† Volney’s Travels, vol. i. p. 190, 198.
dered the country desolate of that whereof it was full, and still show, both how it has been wasted by the hands of strangers, and how it has been sold into the hand of the wicked.

Can any words be more free from ambiguity, or could any events be more wonderful in their nature, or more unlikely or impossible to have been foreseen by man, than these prophecies concerning Egypt? The long line of its kings commenced with the first ages of the world, and, while it was yet unbroken, its final termination was revealed. The very attempt once made by infidels to show, from the recorded number of its monarchs and the duration of their reigns, that Egypt was a kingdom previous to the Mosaic era of the deluge, places the wonderful nature of these predictions respecting it in the most striking view. And the previous experience of two thousand years, during which period Egypt had never been without a prince of its own, seemed to preclude the possibility of those predicted events which the experience of the last two thousand years has amply verified. Though it had often tyrannized over Judea and the neighbouring nations, the Jewish prophets foretold that its own sceptre would depart away; and that that country of kings (for the number of its contemporary as well as successive monarchs may warrant the appellation) would never have a prince of its own; and that it would be laid waste by the hands of strangers. They foretold that it should be a base kingdom—the basest of kingdoms—that it should be desolate itself and surrounded by desolation—and that it should never exalt itself any more among the nations. They described its ignominious subjection and unparalleled baseness, notwithstanding that its past and present degeneracy bears not a more remote resemblance to the former greatness and pride of its power, than the frailty of its mud-walled fabrics now bears to the stability of its imperishable pyramids. Such prophecies, accomplished in such a manner, prove, without a comment, that they must be the revelation of the Omniscient Ruler of the universe.*

* Egypt has, indeed, lately risen, under its present spirited but despotic pasha, to a degree of political importance and power unknown to it for many past centuries. Yet this fact, instead of militating against the truth of prophecy, may, possibly at no distant period, serve to illustrate another prediction, which implies that, however base and degraded it might continue to be throughout many generations, it would, notwithstanding, have strength suf-
On a review of the prophecies relative to Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Egypt, may we not, by the plainest induction from indisputable facts, conclude that the fate of these cities and countries, as well as of the land of Judea and the adjoining territories, demonstrates the truth of all the prophecies respecting them? And that these prophecies, ratified by the events, give the most powerful of testimonies to the truth of the Christian religion? The desolation was the work of man, and was effected by the enemies of Christianity; and would have been the same as it is, though not a single prophecy had been uttered. It is the prediction of these facts, in all their particulars infinitely surpassing human foresight, which is the word of God alone. And the ruin of these empires, while it substantiates the truth of every iota of these predictions, is thus a miraculous confirmation and proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures. By what fatality is it, then, that infidels should have chosen for the display of their power this very field, where, without conjuring, as they have done, a lying spirit from the ruins, they might have read the fulfilment of the prophecies on every spot!—Instead of disproving the truth of every religion, the greater these ruins are, the more strongly do they authenticate the Scriptural prophecies; and it is not; at least, on this stronghold of the faith that the standard of infidelity can be erected. Every fact related by Volney is a witness against all his speculation—and out of his own mouth is he condemned. Can any purposed deception be more glaring or great than to overlook all these prophecies, and to raise an argument against the truth of Christianity from the very facts by which they have been fulfilled? Or can any evidence of divine inspiration be more convincing and clear, than to view, in conjunction, all these marvellous predictions and their perfect completion?
CHAPTER VII.

THE ARABS.

The history of the Arabs, so opposite, in many respects, to that of the Jews, but as singular as theirs, was concisely and clearly foretold. It was prophesied concerning Ishmael:—“He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand will be against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. I will make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly; and I will make him a great nation.”* The fate of Ishmael is here identified with that of his descendants: and the same character is common to them both. The historical evidence of the fact, the universal tradition, and constant boast of the Arabs themselves, their language, and the preservation for many ages of an original rite, derived from him as their primogenitor,—confirm the truth of their descent from Ishmael. The fulfilment of the prediction is obvious. Even Gibbon, while he attempts, from the exceptions which he specifies, to evade the force of the fact that the Arabs have maintained a perpetual independence, acknowledges that these exceptions are temporary and local; that the body of the nation has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies; and that “the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia.”† But even the exceptions which he specifies, though they were justly stated, and though not coupled with such admissions as invalidate them, would not detract from the truth of the prophecy. The independence of the Arabs was proverbial in ancient as well as in modern times; and the present existence, as a free and independent nation, of a people who derive their descent from so high antiquity, demonstrates that they had never been wholly subdued, as all the nations around them have unquestionably been; and that they have ever dwelt in the presence of their brethren. They not only subsist unconquered to

this day, but the prophesied and primitive wildness of their race, and their hostility to all, remain unsubdued and unaltered. "They are a wild people; their hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against them."

In the words of Gibbon, which strikingly assimilate with those of the prophecy, they are "armed against mankind." Plundering is their profession. Their alliance is never courted, and can never be obtained; and all that the Turks, or Persians, or any of their neighbours can stipulate for from them is a partial and purchased forbearance. Even the British, who have established a residence in almost every country, have entered the territories of the descendants of Ishmael to accomplish only the premeditated destruction of a fort, and to retire. It cannot be alleged, with truth, that their peculiar character and manner, and its uninterrupted permanency, is the necessary result of the nature of their country. They have continued wild or uncivilized, and have retained their habits of hostility towards all the rest of the human race, though they possessed for three hundred years countries the most opposite in their nature from the mountains of Arabia. The greatest part of the temperate zone was included within the limits of the Arabian conquests;* and their empire extended from India to the Atlantic, and embraced a wider range of territory than ever was possessed by the Romans, those boasted masters of the world. The period of their conquest and dominion was sufficient, under such circumstances, to have changed the manners of any people; but whether in the land of Shinar or in the valleys of Spain, on the banks of the Tigris or the Tagus, in Araby the Blessed or Araby the Barren, the posterity of Ishmael have ever maintained their prophetic character: they have remained, under every change of condition, a wild people; their hand has still been against every man, and every man's hand against them.

The natural reflection of a recent traveller, on examining the peculiarities of an Arab tribe, of which he was an eyewitness, may suffice, without any art of controversy, for the illustration of this prophecy:—"On the smallest computation, such must have been the manners of those people for more than three thousand years: thus in all things verifying the prediction given of Ishmael."

mael at his birth, that he, in his posterity, should be a wild man, and always continue to be so, though they shall dwell for ever in the presence of their brethren. And that an acute and active people, surrounded for ages by polished and luxuriant nations, should, from their earliest to their latest times, be still found a wild people, dwelling in the presence of all their brethren (as we may call these nations), unsubdued and unchangeable, is, indeed, a standing miracle—one of those mysterious facts which establish the truth of prophecy.”*

Recent discoveries have also brought to light the miraculous preservation and existence, as a distinct people, of a less numerous, but not less interesting race—“a plant which grew up under the mighty cedar of Israel, but was destined to flourish when that proud tree was levelled to the earth.”† ‘Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.”‡ The Beni Rechab, sons of Rechab, still exist, a “distinct and easily distinguishable” people. They boast of their descent from Rechab, profess pure Judaism, and all know Hebrew. Yet they live in the neighbourhood of Mecca, the chief seat of Mahometanism, and their number is stated to be sixty thousand. The account given of them by Benjamin of Tudela, in the twelfth century,§ has very recently been confirmed by Mr. Wolff; and, as he witnessed, and heard from an intrepid “Rechabite cavalier,” there is not wanting a man to stand up as a son of Rechab.

SLAVERY OF THE AFRICANS—EUROPEAN COLONIES IN ASIA.

Not only do the different countries and cities which form the subjects of prophecy exhibit to this day their predicted fate, but there is also a prophecy recorded as delivered in an age coeval with the deluge, when the members of a single family included the whole of the human race—the fulfilment of which is conspicuous even at the present time. And while the fate of the Jews and of the Arabs, throughout many ages, has confirmed, in

* Sir Robert K. Porter’s Travels, p. 304.
† Quarterly Review, No. lxxv. p. 142.
‡ Jer. xxxv. 19.
§ Basnage’s History, p. 620.
every instance in which the period of their prediction is already past, the prophecies relative to the descendants of Isaac and of Ishmael—existing facts, which are prominent features in the history of the world, are equally corroborative of the predictions respecting the sons of Noah. The unnatural conduct of Ham, and the dutiful and respectful behaviour of Shem and Japhet towards their aged father, gave rise to the prediction of the future fate of their posterity, without being at all assigned as the cause of that fate. But whatever was the occasion on which it was delivered, the truth of the prophecy must be tried by its completion:—“Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.”* 

The historical part of Scripture, by its describing so particularly the respective settlements of the descendants of Noah, “after their generations in their nations,” affords to this day the means of trying the truth of the prediction, and of ascertaining whether the prophetic character, as given by the patriarch of the post-diluvian world, be still applicable to the inhabitants of the different regions of the earth which were peopled by the posterity of Shem, of Ham, and of Japhet. The Isles of the Gentiles,† or the countries beyond the Mediterranean, to which they passed by sea, viz. those of Europe, were divided by the sons of Japhet. The descendants of Ham inhabited Africa and the south-western parts of Asia.‡ The families of the Canaanites were spread abroad. The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon.¶ The city of Tyre was called the daughter of Sidon; and Carthage, the most celebrated city of Africa, was peopled from Tyre. And the dwellings of the sons of Shem were unto the east,|| or Asia. The particular allotment, or portion of each, “after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations,”||| is distinctly specified. And although the different nations descended from any one of the sons of Noah have intermingled with each other, and undergone many revolutions, yet the three great divisions of the world have remained distinct, as separately peopled and possessed by the posterity of each of the sons of Noah. On this subject the

* Gen. ix. 25, 26, 27. † Ibid. x. 5. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid. x. 6, 18, 19. ¶ Ibid. x. 30. || Ibid. x. 31, 32. — See Moeh. Die. L. p. 277, &c.
earliest commentators are agreed before the existence of those facts which give to the prophecy its fullest illustration. The facts themselves by which the prediction is verified are so notorious and so applicable, that the most brief and simple statement may suffice. Before the propagation of Christianity, which first spoke peace to earth, taught a law of universal love, and called all men brethren, slavery everywhere prevailed, and the greater part of the human race, throughout all the world, were born to slavery, and unredeemed for life. Man can now boast of a nobler birthright. But, though long banished from almost all Europe, slavery still lingers in Africa. That country is distinguished above every other as the land of slavery. Slaves at home, and transported for slavery, the poor Africans, the descendants of Ham, are the servants of servants, or slaves to others. Yet so unlikely was this fact to have been foreseen by man, that, for centuries after the close of the Old Testament history, the inhabitants of Africa disputed with the Romans the empire of the world. But Hannibal, who was once almost master of Rome and of Europe, was forced to yield to, and to own the fate of Carthage.*

"God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." Some of the ablest interpreters of prophecy, of a former age, conceived that this prediction was fulfilled, not only by the conquests which the Macedonians and the Romans obtained over many of the countries of Asia, but that the promise or blessing of enlargement to Japhet was also verified in a metaphorical sense, by the extension of the knowledge of true religion to the nations of Europe. But it stands not now in need of any questionable interpretation, having received a literal accomplishment. What is at present the relative situation or connexion of the inhabitants of Europe and of Asia, the descendants of Japhet and of Shem? May not the former be said literally to dwell in the tents of the latter? Or what simile, drawn from the simplicity of primeval ages, could be more strikingly graphic of the numerous and extensive European colonies in Asia? And how much have the posterity of Japhet been enlarged within the regions of the posterity of Shem? In how many of their ancient cities do they dwell? How many settlements have they established?

* Liv. i. 27.
while there is not a single spot in Europe the colony or the property of any of the nations whom the Scriptures represent as descended from Shem, or who inhabit any part of that quarter of the world which they possessed. And it may be said, in reference to our own island, and to the immense extent of the British Asiatic dominions, that the natives of the Isles of the Gentiles dwell in the tents of the East! From whence, then, could such a prophecy have emanated, but from inspiration by Him whose presence and whose prescience are alike unlimited by space or by time?

Whatever events the prophecies reveal, they never sanction any iniquity or evil. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, though it be made to praise him. And any defence or attempted justification of slavery, or of man having any moral right of property in man, must be sought in vain from the fulfilment of this prediction. Nebuchadnezzar was the guilty instrument of righteous judgments; and although, in the execution of these, he was the servant of the Lord, it was his own gain and glory which he sought, and after having subdued nations not a few, he was driven from men, and had his dwelling with the beasts. Never were judgments more clearly marked than those which have rested on the Jews in every country under heaven. Yet he that toucheth them toucheth the apple of his eye; and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion shall be the day of the Lord's vengeance, when he will plead with all flesh for his people and for his heritage. And if these examples suffice not to show that it is a wrestling of Scripture to their destruction, for any to seek from them the vindication of slavery, because Canaan was to be the servant of servants unto his brethren, yet they who profess to look here to the holy Scriptures for a warrant, because that fact was foretold, should remember, that though Christ was delivered into the hands of his enemies "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; it was by wicked hands that he was crucified and slain." God hath made of one flesh all the nations of the earth. And, were the gospel universally and rightly appealed to, no other bond would be known among men but that of brotherhood.
CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

Incomplete as has been the view given in the foregoing pages of the Evidence of Prophecy, yet do not the joint clearness of the prophecies themselves, and the profusion of precise facts which show their literal fulfillment, bid defiance to the most subtle skeptic to forge or feign the shadow of a just reason to prove how they could all have been spoken, except by inspiration of God? The sure word of prophecy has indeed unfolded many a desolation which has come upon the earth; but while it thus reveals the operation, in some of its bearings, of the “mystery of iniquity,” it forms, itself, a part of the “mystery of godliness;” and it is no less the testimony of Jesus, because it shows, as far as earthly ruins can reveal, the progress and the issue of the dominion of “other lords” over the hearts of the children of men. The sins of men have caused, and the cruelty of men has effected, the dire desolations which the word of God foretold. Signs and tokens of his judgments there indeed have been, but they are never to be found but where iniquity first prevailed. And though all other warnings were to fail, the sight of his past judgments, and the sounding of those that are to come, might teach the unrepenting and unconverted sinner to give heed to the threatenings of His word, and to the terrors of the Lord, and to try his ways and turn unto God, while space for repentance may be found, ere, as death leaves him, judgment shall find him. And may not the desolations which God has wrought upon the earth, and that accredit his word, wherein life and immortality are brought to light, teach the man whose god is the world to cease to account it worthy of his worship and of his love, and to abjure that “covetousness which is idolatry,” till the idol of mammon in the temple within shall fall, as fell the image of Dagon before the ark of the Lord, in which “the testimony” was kept?

But naming, as millions do, the name of Christ, without departing from iniquity, there is another warning
voice that may come more closely to them all. And it is not only from the desolate regions where heathens dwelt, which show how holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; but also from the ruins of some of the cities where churches were formed by apostles, and where the religion of Jesus once existed in its purity, that all may learn to know that God is no respecter of persons, and that he will by no means clear the guilty. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

What church could rightfully claim, or ever seek, a higher title than that which is given in Scripture to the seven churches of Asia, the angels of which were the seven stars in the right-hand of Him who is the first and the last—of Him that liveth and was dead and is alive for evermore, and that hath the keys of hell and of death; and which themselves were the seven golden candlesticks in the midst of which He walked? And who that hath an ear to hear may not humbly hear and greatly profit by what the Spirit said unto them.*

The Church of Ephesus, after a commencement of their first works, to which they were commanded to return, were accused of having left their first love, and threatened with the removal of their candlestick out of its place, except they should repent.† Ephesus is situated nearly five miles north of Smyrna. It was the metropolis of Lydia, and a great and opulent city, and (according to Strabo) the greatest emporium of Asia Minor. It was chiefly famous for the temple of Diana, "whom all Asia worshipped," which was adorned with one hundred and twenty-seven columns of Parian marble, each of a single shaft, and sixty feet high, and which formed one of the seven wonders of the world. The remains of its magnificent theatre, in which it is said that twenty thousand people could easily have been seated, are yet to be seen.‡ But "a few heaps of stones, and some miserable mud cottages, occasionally tenanted by Turks, without one Christian residing there," are all the remains of ancient Ephesus." It is, as described by different travellers, a solemn and most forlorn spot. The Epistle to the Ephesians is read throughout the world; but there is none in Ephesus to read it now. They left their first love, they returned not to their first

* Rev. ii. and iii. † Rev. ii. 5. ‡ Acts xix. 29. § Arundel's Visit to the Seven Churches of Asia, p 27.
works. Their candlestick has been removed out of its place; and the great city of Ephesus is no more.

The Church of Smyrna was approved of as "rich," and no judgment was denounced against it. They were warned of a tribulation of ten days (the ten years' persecution by Dioclesian), and were enjoined to be faithful unto death, and they would receive a crown of life. * And, unlike to the fate of the more famous city of Ephesus, Smyrna is still a large city, containing nearly one hundred thousand inhabitants, with several Greek churches; and an English and other Christian ministers have resided in it. The light has indeed become dim, but the candlestick has not been wholly removed out of its place.

The Church of Pergamos is commended for holding fast the name of the Lord, and not denying his faith, during a time of persecution, and in the midst of a wicked city. But there were some in it who held doctrines and did deeds which the Lord hated. Against them he was to fight with the sword of his mouth; and all were called to repent. But it is not said, as of Ephesus, that their candlestick would be removed out of its place. † Pergamos is situated to the north of Smyrna, at a distance of nearly sixty-four miles, and "was formerly the metropolis of Hellespontic Mysia." It still contains at least fifteen thousand inhabitants, of whom fifteen hundred are Greeks, and two hundred Armenians, each of whom have a church.

In the Church of Thyatira, like that of Pergamos, some tares were soon mingled with the wheat. He who hath eyes like unto a flame of fire discerned both. Yet happily for the souls of the people, more than for the safety of the city, the general character of that church, as it then existed, is thus described: — "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first." ‡ But against those, for such there were among them, who had committed fornication, and eaten things sacrificed unto idols, to whom the Lord gave space to repent of their fornication, and they repented not, great tribulation was denounced: and to every one of them was to be given according to their works. These, thus warned while on earth in vain, have long since passed,

* Rev. ii. 8-11. † Ibid. ii. 12-16. ‡ Ibid. ii. 19.
where all are daily hastening, to the place where no repentance can be found, and no work be done. “But unto the rest in Thyatira (as many as have not known the depths of Satan), I will put upon you, saith the Lord, none other burden.”* There were those in Thyatira who could save a city. It still exists, while greater cities have fallen. Mr. Hartley, who visited it in 1826, describes it as “imbosomed in cypresses and poplars. The Greeks are said to occupy three hundred houses, and the Armenians thirty. Each of them have a church.”

The Church of Sardis differed from those of Pergamos and Thyatira. They had not denied the faith; but the Lord had a few things against them, for there were some evil-doers among them, and on those, if they repented not, judgment was to rest. But in Sardis, great though the city was, and founded though the church had been by an apostle, there were only a few names which had not defiled their garments. And to that church the Spirit said, “I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest and art dead.” But the Lord is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And the church of Sardis was thus warned:—“Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I shall come upon thee.”†

The state of Sardis now is a token that the warning was given in vain; and shows that the threatenings of the Lord, when disregarded, become certain judgments. Sardis, the capital of Lydia, was a great and renowned city, where the wealth of Crœsus, its king, was accumulated, and became even a proverb. But now a few wretched mud huts, “scattered among the ruins,” are the only dwellings in Sardis, and form the lowly home of Turkish herdsmen, who are its only inhabitants. As the seat of a Christian church it has lost—all it had to lose—the name. “No Christians reside on the spot.”

“And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write, These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth

* Rev. v. 21. † Ibid. iii. 3, 4.
and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;—I know thy works; behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.—Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world."  * The promises of the Lord are as sure as his threatenings. Philadelphia alone long withstood the power of the Turks, and, in the words of Gibbon, "at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia," he adds, "Philadelphia is still erect; a column in a scene of ruins."† "It is indeed an interesting circumstance," says Mr. Hartley, "to find Christianity more flourishing here than in many other parts of the Turkish empire; there is still a numerous Christian population: they occupy three hundred houses. Divine service is performed every Sunday in five churches." Nor is it less interesting, in these eventful times, and notwithstanding the general degeneracy of the Greek church, to learn that the present bishop of Philadelphia accounts "the Bible the only foundation of all religious belief," and that he admits that "abuses have entered into the church which former ages might endure, but the present must put them down." It may well be added, as stated by Mr. Hartley,‡ "the circumstance that Philadelphia is now called Allah-Shehr, the city of God, when viewed in connexion with the promises made to that church, and especially with that of writing the name of the city of God upon its faithful members, is, to say the least, a singular concurrence." From the prevailing iniquities of men many a sign has been given how terrible are the judgments of God. But from the fidelity of the church in Philadelphia of old, in keeping his word, a name and memorial of his faithfulness has been left on earth, while the higher glories, promised to those that overcame, shall be ratified in heaven; and towards them, but not them only, shall the glorified Redeemer confirm the truth of his blessed words, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God;" even as assuredly as Philadelphia, when all else fell around it,

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* Rev. ii. 8, 10.  † Hist. c. lxiv.  ‡ Missionary Register, June, 1837.
“stood erect,” our enemies themselves being judges, “a column in a scene of ruins.”

“ And unto the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write,—These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.—I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see.”* All the other churches were found worthy of some commendation; and there was some blessing in them all. The church of Ephesus had laboured and had not fainted; though she had forsaken her first love, and the threatened punishment, except she repented, was the removal of her candlestick out of its place. A faithless and wicked few polluted the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira by their doctrines or by their lives; but the body was sound; and the churches had a portion in Christ. Even in Sardis, though it was dead, there was life in a few who had not defiled their garments: “and they shall walk with me in white, said the Lord, for they are worthy.”

But in what the Spirit said to the church in Laodicea, there was not one word of approval; it was lukewarm, without exception; and therefore it was wholly loathed. The religion of Jesus had become to them as an ordinary matter. They would attend to it just as they did to other things which they loved as well. The sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross was nothing thought of more than a common gift by man. They were not constrained by the love of Christ more than by other feelings. They could repeat the words of the first great commandment of the law, and of the second that is like unto it; but they showed no sign that the one or the other was truly a law to them. There was no Dorcas among them, who out of pure Christian love made clothes for the poor.

* Rev. iii. 14, &c.
There was no Philemon, to whom it could be said, "The church in thy house," and who could look on a servant as "a brother beloved." There was no servant who looked to the eye of his Father in heaven more than to that of his master on earth, and to the recompense of eternal reward more than to the hireling wages of a day: and who, by showing all good fidelity, sought to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things. There was nothing done, as every thing should be, heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

They neither felt nor lived as if they knew that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Their lukewarmness was worse, for it rendered their state more hopeless than if they had been cold. For sooner would a man in Sardis have felt that the chill of death was upon him, and have cried out for life, and called to the physician, than would a man of Laodicea, who could calmly count his even pulse, and think his life secure, while death was prey ing on his vitals. The character of lukewarm Christians, a self-contradicting name, is the same in every age. Such was the church of the Laodiceans.—But what is that city now, or how is it changed from what it was!

Laodicea was the metropolis of the Greater Phrygia; and, as heathen writers attest, it was an extensive and very celebrated city. Instead of then verging to its decline, it arose to its eminence only about the beginning of the Christian era. "It was the mother-church of sixteen bishoprics." Its three theatres, and the immense circus, which was capable of containing upwards of thirty thousand spectators, the spacious remains of which (with other ruins buried under ruins) are yet to be seen, give proof of the greatness of its ancient wealth and population, and indicate too strongly that in that city where Christians were rebuked, without exception, for their lukewarmness, there were multitudes who were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. The amphitheatre was built after the Apocalypse was written, and the warning of the Spirit had been given to the church of the Laodiceans to be zealous and repent; but whatever they there may have heard or beheld, their hearts would neither have been quickened to a renewed zeal for the service and glory of God, nor turned to a deeper sorrow for sin, and to a repentance not to be repented of. But the fate of Laodicea, though opposite, has been no less marked than that of Philadel-
phia. There are no sights of grandeur nor scenes of temptation around it now. Its own tragedy may be briefly told. It was lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot; and therefore it was loathsome in the sight of God. It was loved, and rebuked, and chastened in vain. And it has been blotted from the world. It is now as desolate as its inhabitants were destitute of the fear and love of God; and as the church of the Laodiceans was devoid of true faith in the Saviour, and zeal in his service, it is, as described in his Travels by Dr. Smith, "utterly desolated, and without any inhabitant, except wolves, and jackals, and foxes." It can boast of no human inhabitants, except occasionally when wandering Turkomans pitch their tents in its spacious amphitheatre. The "finest sculptured fragments" are to be seen at a considerable depth, in excavations which have been made among the ruins.* And Colonel Lake observes,† "there are few ancient cities more likely than Laodicea to preserve many curious remains of antiquity beneath the surface of the soil; its opulence, and the earthquakes to which it was subject, rendering it probable that valuable works of art were often there buried beneath the ruins of the public and private edifices." A fearful significance is thus given to the terrific denunciation, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Each church, and each individual therein, was weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, according to their works. Each was approved of according to its character, or rebuked and warned according to its deeds. Was the church itself pure, the diseased members alone were to be cut off. Was the church itself dead, yet the few names in which there were life were all written before God, and not one of those who overcame would be blotted out of the book of life. All the seven churches were severally exhorted by the Spirit according to their need. The faith delivered to the saints was preached unto them all; and all, as Christian churches, possessed the means of salvation. The Son of man walked in the midst of them, beholding those who were and those who were not his.

* Arundel's Travels, p. 85.  † Journal, p. 252.
THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

By the preaching of the gospel, and by the written word, every man, in each of the churches, was warned, and every man was taught in all wisdom, that every man might be presented perfect in Christ Jesus. And in what the Spirit said unto each and all of the churches, which he that hath ears to hear was commanded to hear, the promise of everlasting blessedness, under a variety of the most glorious representations, was given without exception, restriction, or reservation to him that overcometh. The language of love, as well as of re- monstrance and rebuke, was urged even on the lukewarm Laodiceans. And if any Christian fell, it was from his own resistance and quenching of the Spirit; from his choosing other lords than Jesus to have dominion over him; from his lukewarmness, deadness, and virtual denial of the faith; and from his own wilful rejection of freely offered and dearly purchased grace; sufficient, if sought and cherished, and zealously used, to have enabled him to overcome and triumph in that warfare against spiritual wickedness to which Christ hath called his disciples; and in which, as the finisher of their faith, he is able to make the Christian more than conqueror.

But if such as the Spirit described them and knew them to be were the churches and Christians then, what are the churches, and what are Christians now? Or rather, we would ask of the reader, what is your own hope towards God, and what the work of your faith? If, while Christianity was in its prime, and when its divine truths had scarcely ceased to reach the ears of believers from the lips of apostles, on whose heads the Spirit had visibly descended, and cloven tongues, like as of fire, had sat; if, even at that time, one of the seven churches of Asia had already departed from its first love; if two others were partially polluted by the errors in doctrine, and evils in the practice, of some of their members; if another had only a few names that were worthy, and yet another none; and if they, who formed the last and worst of these, thought themselves rich and increased with goods, and that they had need of nothing; and knew not that, being lukewarm, they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; have you an ear to hear or a heart to understand such knowledge? and do you, professing yourself a Christian, as they also did, see no cause or warning here
to question and examine yourself; even as the same Spirit would search and try you, of your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience, and thy works, and the last more than the first?

What is your labour of love, or wherein do you labour at all for his name's sake, by whose name you are called? What trials does your faith patiently endure, what temptations does it triumphantly overcome? Is Christ in you the hope of glory, and your heart purified through that blessed hope? To a church, we trust, you belong; but whose is the kingdom within you? What principles ever actuate you which Christ and his apostles taught? Where, in your affections, and life, are the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance? Turn the precepts of the gospel into questions, and ask thus, what the Spirit would say unto you, as He said unto the churches?

What the Spirit said unto primitive and apostolic churches, over which "the beloved disciple" personally presided, may suffice to prove that none who have left their first love, if ever they have truly felt the love of Jesus—that none who are guilty of seducing others into sin and uncleanness—that none who have a name that they live, and are dead—and that none who are lukewarm, are worthy members of any Christian communion; and that, while such they continue, no Christian communion can be profitable to them. But unto them is "space to repent" given. And to them the word and Spirit speak in entreaties, encouragements, exhortations, and warnings; that they may turn from their sins to the Saviour, and that they may live and not die. But were there one name in Sodom, or a few in Sardis, that are the Lord's, he knows and names them every one; and precious in his sight is the death of his saints. Some, on the other hand, may be sunk into the depths of Satan, though in outward fellowship, with a church, were such to be found, as pure as once was that of Thyatira. Whatever, therefore, the profession of your faith may be, seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness; that kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and that righteousness which is through faith in Christ, who gave himself for the church that he might sanctify and cleanse it. And whatever dangers may then encompass you around, fear
not—only believe; all things are possible to him that believeth.

It was by keeping the word of the Lord, and not denying his faith, by hearing what the Spirit said, that the church of Philadelphia held fast what they had, and no man took their crown, though situated directly between the church of Laodicea, which was lukewarm, and Sardis, which was dead. And dead as Sardis was, the Lord had a few names in it which had not defiled their garments—Christians, worthy of the name, who lived, as you yourself should ever live, in the faith of the Lord Jesus—dead unto sin, and alive unto righteousness; while all around them, though naming the name of Jesus, were dead in trespasses and sins. Try your faith by its fruits; judge yourselves that you be not judged; examine yourself whether you be in the faith; prove your own self; and, with the whole counsel of God, as revealed in the gospel, open to your view, let the rule of your self-scrutiny be what the Spirit said unto the churches.

If you have seen any wonderful things out of the law of the Lord, and have looked, though from afar off, on the judgments of God that have come upon the earth, lay not aside the thought of these things when you now lay down this little book. Treat them not as if they were an idle tale, or as if you yourself were not to be a witness—and more than a witness—of a far greater judgment which shall be brought nigh unto you, and shall be your own.

If, in traversing some of the plainest paths of the field of prophecy, you have been led by a way which you knew not of before, let that path lead you to the well of living waters, which springeth up into everlasting life to every one that thirsts after it and drinks. Let the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be to you this well-spring of the Christian life. Let the word of God enlighten your eyes, and it will also rejoice your heart. Search the Scriptures, in them are no lying divinations; they testify of Jesus, and in them you will find eternal life. Pray for the teaching and the aid of that Spirit by whose inspiration they were given. And above all Christian virtues that may bear witness of your faith, put on charity, love to God, and love to man, the warp and woof of the Christian’s new vesture without a seam; even that charity, or love, by which faith work-
eth; which is the fruit of the Spirit, the end of the commandment, the fulfilling of the law, the bond of perfectness, and a better gift and a more excellent way than speaking with tongues, or interpreting or prophesying; and without which you would be as nothing, though you understood all mystery and all knowledge. From the want of this the earth has been covered with ruins. Let it be yours, and however poor may be your earthly portion, it will be infinitely more profitable to you than all the kingdoms of the world, and all their glory. Prophecies shall fail; tongues shall cease; knowledge shall vanish away; the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up; but charity never faileth.

If you have kept the word of the Lord, and have not denied his name, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. But if heretofore you have been lukewarm, and destitute of Christian faith, and zeal, and hope, and love, it would be vain in closing a chapter on such a subject to leave you with any mortal admonition; hear what the Spirit saith, and harden not your heart against the heavenly counsel, and the glorious encouragement given unto you by that Jesus of whom all the prophets bear witness, and unto whom all things are now committed by the Father:—“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see as many as I love I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”
CHAPTER IX.

DANIEL'S PROPHECY OF THE THINGS NOTED IN THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH.

There is a connected series of predictions, emphatically denominated the Things noted in the Scripture of Truth, which forms a commentary upon some of the more obscure prophecies—which give a condensed but precise account of the history of many kings—which marks the propagation, the persecution, the establishment, and the corruptions of Christianity—and which, while it commences with the reign of Cyrus, who delivered the Jews from their first captivity, describes, with the utmost precision, the rise, extent, and fall of that power which was to possess Judea in the latter times, previous to their final restoration. The prophecy is both local and chronological. It is descriptive of the government of the same identical region, and of the chief facts which relate to it, for many successive ages, and also of the spiritual tyranny which reigned for so long a period over Christendom. The events follow in succession, in the exact order of the prediction. They are not shadowed under types or figures, but foretold, in general, with the plainness of a narrative, and with the precision of facts. And Daniel relates them, not as delivered by him to others, but as declared in a vision to himself by an angel. These claims upon attention might well command it, even although the prophecy referred not, as it does, to a subject peculiarly interesting at the present critical period of the history of the world.

To enumerate all the particulars would be to transcribe all the words of the prophecy;—but they afford too conclusive an evidence to be passed over in silence. The observations of Sir Isaac Newton on this prophecy contain a circumstantial detail of the historical events, and of their application to the prediction. A succinct
and general view may be here given. The prophecy includes the whole of the eleventh chapter of Daniel:—

"And now I will show thee the truth. Behold there shall stand up three kings in Persia (Cambyses, and Darius Hystaspes), and the fourth (Xerxes) shall be far richer than they all; and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king (Alexandér the Great) shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven: and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those."

Soon after the death of Alexander the Great, his kingdom was divided towards the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity; four of his captains, Ptolemy, Antigonus, Lysimachus, and Cassander, reigned over Egypt, Syria, Thrace, and Greece. The kingdoms of Egypt and of Syria became afterward the most powerful: they subsisted as independent monarchies for a longer period than the other two; and, as they were more immediately connected with the land of Judea, which was often reduced to their dominion, they form the subject of the succeeding predictions.† Bishop Newton gives even a more copious illustration of the historical facts, which verify the whole of this prophecy, than that which had previously been given by his illustrious predecessor of the same name—who has rendered that name immortal. He quotes or refers to authorities in every instance; and his dissertation on that part of the prophecy which relates to the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt is wound up in these emphatic words; "It may be proper to stop here, and reflect a little how particular and circumstantial this prophecy is concerning the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, from the death of Alexander to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. There is not so complete and regular a series of their kings—there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs to be found in any author of these times. The prophecy is really more perfect than any history. No one historian hath related so many circumstances, and in such exact order of time, as the prophet hath foretold

* Dan xi. 2, 3, 4
| Ibid. v. 5, 30. |
them; so that it was necessary to have recourse to several authors, Greek and Roman, Jewish and Christian; and to collect here something from one, and to collect there something from another, for better explaining and illustrating the great variety of particulars contained in this prophecy." So close is the coincidence between the prophetic and the real history of the kings of Egypt and of Syria, that Porphyry, one of the earliest opponents of Christianity, laboured to prove its extreme accuracy, and alleged from thence that the events must have preceded the prediction. The same argument is equally necessary at the present hour to disprove the subsequent parts of the same prophecy—though none can urge it now. The last of those facts to which it refers, the accomplishment of which is already past, are unfolded with equal precision and truth as the first—and the fulfilment of the whole is yet incomplete. The more clearly that the event corresponds to the prediction, instead of being an evidence against the truth, the more conclusive is the demonstration that it is the word of Him who hath the times and the seasons in his own power.

The subject of the prophecy is represented in these words:—"I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days for the vision is for many days."* And that which is noted in the Scripture of Truth terminates not with the reign of Antiochus. At that very time the Romans extended their conquests towards the East. Macedonia, the seat of the empire of Alexander the Great, became a province of the Roman empire. And the prophecy, faithfully tracing the transition of power, ceases to prolong the history of the kings of Egypt and of Syria, and becomes immediately descriptive of the progress of the Roman arms. The very term (shall stand up) which previously marked the commencement of the Persian and of the Macedonian power is here repeated, and denotes the commencement of a third era or a new power. The word in the original is the same in each. And arms (an epithet sufficiently characteristic of the extensive military power of the Romans) shall stand up, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that

* Dan. x. 14.
maketh desolate.* All these things, deeply affecting the Jewish state, the Romans did—and they finally rendered the country of Judea "desolate of its old inhabitants." The propagation of Christianity—the succeeding important events—is thus represented:—The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many. The persecutions which they suffered are as significantly described:—Yet they shall fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil many days. Now, when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help, and many shall cleave to them with flatteries.† And such was Constantine's conversion and the effect which it produced. No other government but that of the Romans stood up—but the mode of that government was changed. After the days of Constantine, Christianity became gradually more and more corrupted. Previous to that period there had existed no system of dominion analogous to that which afterward prevailed. The greatest oppressors had never extended their pretensions beyond human power, nor usurped a spiritual tyranny. But, in contradiction to every other, the next succeeding form of government, unparalleled in its nature, in the annals of despotism or of delusion, is thus characterized by the prophet:—And the king (the ruling power, signifying any government, state, or potentate)‡ shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished.§ This description is suited to the history of the Eastern or Western Churches—to the government under the Grecian emperors at Constantinople, or of the popes at Rome. The extent of the Roman empire might justify its application to the latter; but the connexion of the prophecy, as referable to local events, tends to limit it to the former. In either case it is descriptive of that mode of government which prospered so long in the east and in the west—and which consisted in the impious usurpation of spiritual authority—in the blasphemous assumption of those attributes which are exclusively divine, and in exalting itself above the laws of God and man. But instead, perhaps, of being confined exclusively to either, it may have been intended to represent,

* Dan. xi. 31. † Ibid. ver. 32, 33, 34, 35. ‡ See Bishop Newton on this Prophecy. § Dan. xi. 36, &c.
as it does characterize, the spiritual tyranny, and the substitution of the commandments of men for the will of God, which oppressed Christendom for ages, and hid from men the word of God. The prevalence of superstition, the prohibition or discouragement of marriage, and the worship of saints, as characteristic of the same period and of the same power, are thus prophetically described:—"Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers nor the desire of women (or matrimony), neither shall he regard any god."* But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces—mahuzzim—protectors or guardians, a term so applicable to the worship of saints and to the confidence which was reposed in them, that expressions exactly synonymous are often used by many ancient writers in honour of them—of which Mede and Sir Isaac Newton have adduced a multiplicity of instances. Mahuzzim were the tutelary saints of the Greek and Romish churches. The subserviency, which long existed, of spiritual power to temporal aggrandizement, is also noted in the prophecy: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.† And that the principal teachers and propagators of the worship of Mahuzzim—"the bishops, priests, and monks, and religious orders, have been honoured, and revered, and esteemed in former ages; that their authority and jurisdiction have extended over the purses and consciences of men; that they have been enriched with noble buildings and large endowments, and have had the choicest of the lands appropriated for church lands;—are points of such notoriety that they require no proof, and will admit of no denial."‡

Having thus described the antichristian power, which prospered so long and prevailed so widely, the prophecy next delineates, in less obscure terms, the manner in which that power was to be humbled and overthrown, and introduces a more particular definition of the rise, extent, and fall of that kingdom which was to oppress and supplant it in the latter days. And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him.¶ The Sarracens extended their conquests over great part of Asia and of Europe: they penetrated the dominions of the Grecian empire, and partially subdued, though they could not entirely subvert it, nor obtain possession of

* Dan. xi. 37 38. † Ibid. v. 39. ¶ Bishop Newton. § Dan. xi. 40.
Constantinople, the capital city. The prediction, however brief, significantly represents their warfare, which was desultory, and their conquest, which was incomplete. And Arabia is situated to the south of Palestine. The Turks, the next and the last invaders of the Grecian empire, were of Scythian extraction, and came from the north.* And while a single expression identifies the Saracen invasion—the irruption of the Turks, being of a more fatal character and more permanent in its effects, is fully described. Every part of the description is most faithful to the facts. Their local situation, the impetuosity of their attack, the organization of their armies, and the success of their arms, form the first part of the prediction respecting them. And the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots and with horsemen and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.† Although the Grecian empire withstood the predatory warfare of the Saracens, it gave way before the overwhelming forces of the Turks, whose progress was tracked with destruction, and whose coming was indeed like a whirlwind. Chariots and horsemen were to be the distinguishing marks of their armies, though armies, in general, contain the greatest proportion of foot soldiers. And, in describing their first invasion of the Grecian territory, Gibbon relates, that "the myriads of Turkish horse overspread a frontier of six hundred miles from Tauris to Arzeroum, and the blood of one hundred and thirty thousand Christians was a grateful sacrifice to the Arabian prophet."‡ The Turkish armies at first consisted so exclusively of horsemen, that the stoutest of the youths of the captive Christians were afterward taken and trained as a band of infantry, and called janizaries (yengi cheri) or new soldiers.‖ In apparent contradiction to the nature of their army, they were also to possess many ships. And Gibbon again relates, that "a fleet of two hundred ships was constructed by the hands of the captive Greeks."‖ But no direct evidence is necessary to prove that many ships must have been requisite for the capture of so many islands, and the destruction of the Venetian naval power, which was once the most celebrated in Europe. "The words, shall

* Gibbon's Hist. vol. iv. 136; vol. v. 527.
† Dan. xi. 40.
‡ Gibbon's Hist. vol. v. p. 538, c. 57.
‖ Ibid. vol. v. p. 553.
§ Ibid. vi. p. 297, c 64.
enter into the countries and overflow and pass over, give us an exact idea of their overflowing the western parts of Asia, and then passing over into Europe.***

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown.† This expression, the glorious land, occurs in the previous part of this prophecy (v. 16), and, in both cases, it evidently means the land of Israel; and such the Syriac translation renders it. The Holy Land formed part of the first conquest of the Turks. And many countries shall be overthrown.‡ The limits of the Turkish empire embraced the ancient kingdoms of Babylon, Macedon, Thrace, Epirus, Greece, &c. and the many countries over which they ruled. The whole of Syria was also included, with partial exceptions. These very exceptions are specified in the prophecy, though these territories partially intersect the Turkish dominions, and divide one portion of them from another, forming a singular contrast to the general continuity of kingdoms. And, while every particular prediction respecting these separate states has been fully verified, their escaping out of the hands of the Turks has been no less marvellously fulfilled. But these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.§ Mede, Sir Isaac and Bishop Newton, in applying this prophecy to the Turkish empire, could only express, in general terms, that the Arabs possessed these countries, and exacted tribute from the Turks for permitting their caravans to pass through them. But recent travellers, among whom Volney has to be numbered, have unconsciously given the most satisfactory information, demonstrative of the truth of all the minutiae of the prediction. Volney describes these countries in part—Burckhardt traversed them all—and they have since been visited by other travellers. Edom and Moab are in possession of the Bedouin (or wandering) Arabs. The Turks have often attempted in vain to subjugate them. The partial escape of Ammon from their dominion is not less discriminating than just. For although that territory lies in the immediate vicinity of the pachalic of Damascus, to which part of it is subjected,—though it be extremely fertile by nature,—though its situation and its soil have thus presented, for several centuries, the strongest temptation to Turkish

* Bishop Newton. † Dan. xi. 41 ‡ Ibid. § Ibid.
rapacity,—though they have often attempted to subdue it, —yet no fact could have been more explicitly detailed, or more incidentally communicated, than that the inhabitants of the greater part of that country, particularly what adjoins the ancient but now desolate city of Ammon, “live in a state of complete independence of the Turks.”

* He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries.† How significantly do these words represent the vast extent of the Turkish empire, which alone has stretched its dominion over many countries of Asia, of Europe, and of Africa? Ill-fated Egypt was not to escape from subjection to such a master. And the land of Egypt shall not escape; but he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt.‡ The Turks have drained Egypt of its wealth, of its gold and of its silver, and of its precious things: and such power have they exercised over them, that the kingdom of the Pharaohs, the land where everlasting pyramids were built, despoiled to the utmost, is now one of the poorest, as it has long been the basest, of kingdoms. The Libyans and Ethiopians shall be at his steps.§ These form the extremities of the Turkish empire, and were partially subject to its power. “After the conquest of Egypt, the terror of Scarm’s victories,” says the historian, “spreading wide, the kings of Africa, bordering upon Cyrenaica, sent their ambassadors with offers to become his tributaries. Other more remote nations also towards Ethiopia were easily induced to join in amity with the Turks.”¶ Exclusive of Egypt, they still retain the nominal power over other countries of Africa. Such is the prophetic description of the rise and extent of that power which was to possess Judea in the latter days; and it is a precise delineation of the rise and extent of the Turkish empire, to which Judea has been subject for centuries.

Every succeeding fact, from the time of Cyrus to the present age, gives as sure a confirmation as the voice of an angel could have done, that the things noted in this prophecy are those of the Scripture of truth. His-


† Dan. xi. 42.

‡ Ibid. 43.

§ Ibid.

¶ Pauli Jovi Hist. quoted by Bishop Newton.
tory interprets every part of it. It brings a multiplicity of witnesses, if we will listen to their testimony, from a long succession of ages, each arising to testify to its truth. And although the names of the countries be not mentioned, and the prophecy has received a variety of interpretations, yet we apprehend that it presents us, like every spot on earth which was the subject of Scriptural prophecies, with ocular demonstration that there is a God who ruleth among the nations; and that the Christian religion, the purest and the best on earth, has that God for its author.

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The whole of the preceding brief and imperfect sketch forms little else than an enumeration of some of the more striking prophecies, and of facts which demonstrate their fulfilment; and a recapitulation of all the particulars would be an unnecessary repetition. The numerous obscure prophecies which contain much and striking evidence have hitherto been omitted, that the charge of ambiguity, too generally and indiscriminately attached to them all, might be proved to be unfounded. But, having seen, in hundreds of instances, that prophecies which were plainly delivered have been as clearly fulfilled, comprehending them all in a single argument, and leaving the decision to the enemies of Christianity, or to those who are weak in the faith, and appealing to their reason without bespeaking their favour,—may it not, in the first instance, be asked if it be an easy task which is assigned them, to disprove even this part of the positive evidence to the truth of the religion of Jesus. If they have ever staggered at the promises or threatenings of the Scriptures because of unbelief—discrediting all revelation from on high—can they not here discern supernatural evidence in confirmation of supernatural truths? May not sight lead them to faith? Must they not concede that the Christian has some reason for the hope that is in him? And may they not, at the very least, be led from thence to the calm and unprejudiced investigation, not only of the other prophecies, but of all the evidence which Christianity presents?
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It cannot be alleged, with truth, that the prophecies which have been selected are ambiguous; that they bear the character of those auguries which issued from the cloud that always overhung the temple of Apollo, or of those pretended inspirations which emanated from the cave of Hera. It cannot be denied that they were all foretold hundreds or thousands of years before the events which even at the present day demonstrate their fulfilment, though every other oracle has ceased for ages to appeal to a single fact. And the historical and geographical facts, which were so clearly foretold, are, in general, of so wonderful a nature, that the language of prophecy, though expressive of literal truths, seems at first sight to be hyperbolical, and the prophecies of Isaiah in particular have been charged with being "full of extravagant metaphor;"* the more extravagant the metaphor, or the more remarkable the predicted fact, the further are the prophecies removed from all possibility of their having been the words of human invention.

The following comprehensive and luminous statement of the argument, extracted from a review of the former edition of this treatise, is here so apposite, that no apology need be offered for inserting it at length.

"This geographical argument (viz. the fulfilment of those prophecies which describe the future fate of particular nations, and the future aspect of their countries) has always appeared to us one of the most impregnable strongholds of Christian prophecy; or rather one of the

* Were it not for the impiety with which they are conjoined, the remarks of Paine on the prophecies would, to those who have studied these at all, be sufficiently amusing. He characterizes the book of Isaiah as "one continued bombastical rant, full of extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning." The predictions respecting Babylon, Moab, &c. are, forsooth, compared "to the story of the Knight of the Burning Mountain, the story of Cinderella," and such like. Isaiah, in short, "was a lying prophet and impostor." And "what can we say," he asks, "of these prophets, but that they were all impostors and liars?" Such words are not merely harmless; they may be also useful, as they show, that while every possible corroboration from history, fact, reason, and even the unconscious testimony of infidels themselves, is given to the truth of the prophecies; nothing can be alleged on the other hand but what in the sight of all men manifestly is "bombastical rant, and extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning." And since both speak not the truth, who is the liar? Isaiah the prophet or Paine the infidel? And "what can we say" of this stanch assertor of rights, but that his right to the title is undisputed, and that these very words of his, were others wanting, must in every "age of reason" rivet to his unblasted memory the foul aspersions he so falsely applied? Argument in such a case would be an idle waste of words. But while it would be an act of mere prodigality and folly to cast pearls before swine, the filth which they have snorted out may well be cast into their own kennel again, that they and their kind may partake of what pertains to them.
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most resistless and wide-ranging instruments of aggressive evidence. There is no obscurity in the language of the prophet. There is no variety of opinion with regard to the object in his view. There is no denying of the change which he predicts. There is no challenging of the witnesses who prove the facts of the case. The former glory of these regions and kingdoms is recorded by ancient heathen historians, who knew nothing of the fall foretold. Their present state is described by recent and often infidel travellers, who knew often as little of the predictions which they were verifying by their narratives. It is not a particular event which has passed away, or a particular character who has perished, for whose era we must search in the wide page of history, and of whose description we may find so many resemblances as to become perplexed in our application. The places and the people are named by the prophet, and the state in which they now exist is matter of actual observation. The fulfilment of the prediction is thus inscribed as upon a public monument, which every man who visits the countries in question may behold with his own eyes; and is expressed in a language so universally intelligible, that every man may be said to read it in his own tongue. To these scenes of Scripture prophecy we may point with triumph as to ocular demonstration; and say to the skeptical inquirer in the words of the evangelist, 'Come and see.' The multitude of travellers who have recently visited the Holy Land and the adjacent regions have furnished ample and authentic materials for the construction of so irrefragable an argument. Many of these travellers have discovered no intention of advocating by their statements the cause of revealed truth; and some of them have been obviously influenced by hostility to its claims. Yet, in spite of these prejudices, and altogether unconsciously on their part, they have recorded the most express confirmation of the Scripture prophecies, frequently employing in their descriptions the very language of inspiration, and bringing into view (though evidently without design) those features of the scene which form the precise picture painted in the visions of the prophet."

Willingly might the Christian here rest his assurance "in the faith once delivered to the saints," and leave to the unbeliever his hopeless creed. But the reasonings of one class of infidels must be combined with the re-
searches of another to give full force to the *Evidence of Prophecy*: and they jointly supply both the clearest facts and the strongest arguments, and have made ready the means which need only to be applied for bringing the controversy with them, in its various bearings, and in their own words, to a short issue.

The metaphysical speculations of Hume, and the mathematical demonstrations of La Place, which have been directed against the credibility of the miracles, rest entirely on the "Theory of Probability." Assuming its logical and legitimate application to the testimony of any supernatural evidence of a divine revelation, it is argued that the improbabilities of the occurrence of miracles, being contradictory to uniform experience, are

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* It may not be here amiss to allude to that kind and courteous admonition to Christian writers so meekly given, and with wisdom rivalling its modesty, by this great master of *ideal* philosophy, in which, in order perhaps to bring their arguments to cope the better with his own, he prescribes to them, as best suited to their cause, the total rejection of reason! After quoting a passage from Lord Bacon's works, which has a very different application, he adds—This method of reasoning (about monsters, magic, and alchemy, &c.) may serve to confound those dangerous friends or disguised enemies of the Christian religion who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it, to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure.—(Hume: *Essays* § 10, v. ii. p. 136–7, Ed. Edin. 1800.) If these words may not justly be retorted against the "unbeliever's creed," excluding the epithet of holy; or if Mr. David Hume was better acquainted with the principles of the Christian religion than the Author of it, who appealed to the reason of men, and asked them why they did not of themselves judge that which was right, and than the apostles Peter and Paul, who enjoin Christians to try all things, and to hold fast to that which is good, and to be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them; then the writer of this treatise, having only the hard alternative of being either "a dangerous friend or a disguised enemy of the Christian religion," would, with whatever reluctance, prefer the former, and has to lament the evil he has done, and the "sure method" he has taken of "exposing it." And although he may hope that Christians in their charity will forgive him, he must yet leave to unbelievers the comfort and the joy of the triumph, which in the exercise of that reason which they have monopolized, these pages must necessarily give them. Or if, on the other hand, in somewhat stricter accordance with the truths of Scripture, the author of the Essay on *Human Nature* supplies, by the prefixed words, as clear practical proof, in his "Academical Philosophy," or *Skepticism in Theory*, that it is one of the characteristics of the heart of man to be deceitful above all things, as mere worldly wisdom and infidelity in practice too frequently demonstrate that it is also desperately wicked: and if Scripture prophecy can "endure the trial of reason," and its evidence be rejected—then the disciples of Hume, the traducers of the Christian religion—as not founded on reason, holding to "human nature," as of itself it is, and deriding the idea of its professed ransom from the guilt, and rescue from the power of sin, have need, without exhausting their reason in abstract speculations, to look to their own harder alternative, and (if both be not possibly conjoined) to choose between the incomparable deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart within—evils greater far than all that the Christian can ever fear for himself from all the sneers of the sophist, or the railings of the ungodly.
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so extreme as to destroy entirely the validity of any testimony to their truth which has been transmitted through so many ages. "And upon the whole, we may conclude," says Hume, "that the Christian religion, even at this day, cannot be believed by any reasonable person without a miracle." What then is the evidence, that, even at this day, there are subsisting miracles which must command the belief of every person to the truth of the Christian religion, who is not so utterly unreasonable, and his mind so steeled against conviction, as not to be persuaded even by miraculous demonstration? And in what better or less exceptionable "method" can this evidence be meted out than according to the very "measure of probability" in use with unbelievers; and by means of which they profess to have discovered the deficiency of testimony to the truth of ancient miracles?

Archimedes demanded only a spot whereon to stand that he might move the world. If the most reasonable concession from the infidel be not as impossible to be obtained as the demand of Archimedes, and if he will admit either the truth of his own principles or the force of mathematical proof, or if his prejudices be not immoveable as a world, the existing and obvious fulfilment of a multiplicity of prophecies might well excite his attention, and convince him of the truth. •

The doctrine of chances, or calculation of probabilities, has been reduced into a science, and is now in various ways of great practical use, and securely acted upon in the affairs of life. But it is altogether impossible that short-sighted man could select, from the infinite multitude of the possible contingencies of distant ages, any one of such particular facts as abound in the prophecies; and it is manifest, that upon the principle of probabilities, the chance would be incalculable against the success of the attempt, even in a single instance. Each accomplished prediction is a miracle. But the advocate for Christianity may safely concede much, and reduce his data to the lowest terms. And if the unbeliever reckon not his own cause utterly hopeless, and "by no means fitted to endure the trial of reason," he must grant that there was as great a probability that each prediction would not as that it would have been fulfilled; or that the probabilities were equal for and against the occurrence of each predicted event. The Christian may fearlessly descend to meet him even on this very lowly
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ground. And, without enumerating all the particulars included in the volume of prophecy respecting the life and character and death of Christ—the nature and extent of Christianity, &c.—the destruction of Jerusalem—the fate of the Jews in every age and nation—the existing state of Judea, of Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, the Arabs, &c., the Church of Rome, and the prophetic history which extends throughout two thousand three hundred years; may it not be assumed (though fewer would suffice, and though incontestable evidence has been adduced to prove more than double the number) that a hundred different particulars have been foretold and fulfilled. What, then, even upon these data, is the chance, on a calculation of probabilities, that all of them would have proved true,—the chance diminishing one-half for every number (or what, in other words, is the hundredth power of two to unity)?* Such is the desperate hazard to which the unbeliever would trust, that even from these premises, it is mathematically demonstrable that the number of chances is far greater against him than the number of drops in the ocean, although the whole world were one globe of water. Let the chance at least be counted before it be confided in. But who would risk a single mite against the utmost possible gain, at the stake on which unbelievers here recklessly put to certain peril the interests of eternity.

But each prediction recorded in Scripture, being a miracle of knowledge, is equal to any miracle of power, and could have emanated only from the Deity. "All prophecies are real miracles, and as such only can be admitted as proof of any revelation."† They may even be said to be peculiarly adapted, in the present age of


† Hume's Essays, vol. ii. p. 137.: This statement of Hume's, combined with the manifest truth of prophecy, shows how all his theory against the truth of miracles may easily be overthrown by an admission of his own Prophecy being true, and uniformly true, and all prophecies being real miracles, miracles are not contrary to universal, or even in a restricted sense, to uniform experience. They "are rendered probable by so many analogies" (ibid. p. 134), that on sufficient testimony they become proveable, even upon Hume's own principles, especially when the inspiration of those very Scriptures which record the disputed miracles is verified by other miracles, the truth of which is established and experienced. And thus the boldest dogmas of skepticism may not only be braved but reversed; and it is more wonderful that the testimony, sealed in blood and rendered credible by miracles equally great, should be false, than that the miracles should be true.
extended knowledge and enlightened inquiry, for being the testimony of Jesus;" and they cannot justly be viewed as of inferior importance or authority to any miracles whatever.

Though the founder of a new religion, or the messenger of a divine revelation, and his immediate followers, who had to promulgate his doctrine, would give clear and unequivocal proof, by working miracles, that their commission was from on high; yet, the relation between any miraculous event, wrought in after-ages, and a religion previously established, might not be so apparent. Or, even if it were, yet any single and transient act of superhuman power, being confined to a particular region, and cognizable only by a limited number, the testimony of these witnesses would be regarded only as secondary evidence, and could not, at least in a Christian land, be substantiated by proof so complete as that which was sealed by the blood of martyrs. And even if perpetual manifestations of miraculous power (however much men in apparent vindication of their unbelief may unreasonably ask such proof) were submitted to the inspection and experience of each individual in every age, they would only seem to distort the order and frame of nature, and by thus disturbing the regularity and uniformity of her operations, would, from their very frequency, cease to be regarded as supernatural; and, influenced by the same skeptical thoughts, those who now demand a sign would then be the first to discredit it. And true to reason and to nature it is, that those who will not believe Moses and the prophets would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

For the prophecies bear a direct reference to religion that is easily comprehended, and that cannot be misapplied. They have a natural and obvious meaning that may be known and read of all men. "Thus saith the Lord," is their prefix; this is the fact, is their proof. Instead of being weakened by the greatness of their number, the more they are multiplied, or the more frequently that facts formerly unknown, or events yet future, spring up in their verification, their evidence is redoubled, and they are ever permanent and existing witnesses that the word is of God. And, further, the testimony which, in every passing age, confirms their truth cannot be cavilled at: it is not "diluted by transmission through many ages;" it is borne, not to events
in themselves miraculous, but to natural facts, whether historical or geographical, which have been proved by conclusive evidence, and which in numerous instances still subsist to stand the test of any inquiry. And even many of the facts (such as the whole history of the expatriated Jews) are witnessed by all, and need no testimony whatever to declare them. And the records of the prophecies, preserved throughout every age by the enemies of Christianity, are in every hand. If, then, no evidence less exceptionable, more conclusive, or more clearly miraculous could be given, the disciples of Hume, in resigning an "academic" for a Christian faith, have only to apply aright the words of their master—"A wise man proportions his belief to the evidence,"* and they may thus find—what he in vain thought that he had discovered—an "everlasting check" against "delusion."†

It was the boast of Bolingbroke, in summing up his "Philosophical" labours, that "he had pushed inquiry as far as the true means of inquiry are open, that is, as far as phenomena could guide him." Christian philosophy asks no more. It lays open the "means of inquiry," and presents, in the fulfilment of many prophecies, "phenomena" more wonderful than external nature ever exhibited, and demands only integrity of purpose, and that "inquiry be pushed unto the uttermost," that candour and reason may thus guide the impartial inquirer, by the light of positive evidence and miraculous proof, to the conviction and acknowledgment of the inspiration of the Scriptures.

The argument drawn by Volney from "The Ruin of Empires" is completely controverted by facts stated by himself, which, instead of militating against religion, directly establish the truth of prophecy;—and the unsubstantial fabric which he raised needs no other hand but his own to lay in the dust.

But ridicule alone has often supplanted reason, and has been held as a test of the truth, and directed especially against the prophecies. And may not an evidence of their inspiration be found even in this last retreat of infidelity? The ruins of the moral world are as obvious in the sight of Omniscience as the ruins of the natural—of cities or of kingdoms; and his word can foretell the one as well as the other. And if those who scoff at

† Ibid. p. 116.
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religion can perceive no evidence from any historical facts, or any external objects, they might look within, and they would find engraven on their own hearts, in characters sufficiently legible, a confirmation of the prophecies. And if they substitute railing for reason, and think to mar religion with their mockery, to all others they stand convicted the living witnesses of the truth. "There shall come, in the last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willfully are ignorant of that, by the Word of God, the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was perished." "There shall be mockers in the last time."

* 2 Peter iii. 3. Jude v. 18.

The Christian religion has thus to rank among its enemies many false teachers who were to arise, and who, as characterized in Scripture, speak evil of the things that they understand not, who despise government, who are presumptuous and self-willed, who speak great swelling words of vanity to allure others, promising them liberty, while they themselves are the children of corruption, and foaming out their shame.—2 Peter, chap. i. verses 1, 10, 12, 18. Blasphemy, obscenity, and unmeaning abuse are the weapons of their warfare: they seek to debase religion into a conformity with their gross and grovelling imaginations, speaking of things that they know not, they utter great swelling words of vanity as if by a mere glance of their jaundiced mental vision they could compass at once the whole of religious truth. But their arguments are as weak as their principles are base. And so manifestly does reason disclaim them, that for subverting their false assumptions, it is only necessary, in general, to make the contradiction as flat as the assertion is positive. As an example, it may be remarked, that in a list of aphorisms which lately issued from the London mart of infidelity, the most specious of the whole was thus expressed:—"All other religions are false, and, therefore, the Christian religion is false also," or, as the argument may be more logically stated,—all other religions are false, and, therefore, the Christian religion is true. Yet who can look but with sorrow for the fate, as well as disgust and derision at the efforts of such pitiful cavillers, carping at the truth of the Christian religion—like unto foul and small fry (the less dignified the more befitting is the simile) nibbling at some weeds that have been cast by human hands upon a rock, and pressing with all their little strength to move it.

But there is another and a different class of unbelievers, to whom the words in the text no less strikingly apply; for they may be brought to confute the subtlest arguments of the ingenious skeptic, as well as to condemn the profane mockery of the most senseless railler. The great argument of infidelity, urged so strenuously in these last days, against the credibility of miracles, from the inviolability of the laws of nature, could not be more plainely or forcibly stated than in the words of the apostle, declaring what that argument, the result of modern science, would be. If it had not been urged, a part of Christian evidence, derived from the fulfilment of this prediction, would still have been wanting, and we would still have had to wait for the last argument of infidelity, from whence to draw a new illustration of the truth. But the apostle not only states, he also confutes, what scoffers in the last days would say, and not from Scriptural authority, unavailing with them, but on philosophical principles, or from facts of which they are willingly ignorant,—viz. the creation of the world, and its having been overflowed by
CONCLUSION.

But if unbelievers lay just claim to wisdom, and make a fair appeal to reason, then, rather than place their security in abstract speculations, and tamper thus with the immortal hopes of their fellow-men, rather than trust in ridicule as the test of religious truth, and call an assumed and yet unpaid license to blasphemy by the name of liberty—does it not behoove them to look first to the positive evidence and miraculous proof of revelation, to detect its fallacy or own its power, and to quit their frail intrenchments, if, indeed, they find that the standard of Christian faith may, in despite of all their efforts, be fixed upon the proudest towers of infidelity? Let them, in the words of the prophet, bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified, or let them hear, and say it is truth.

But, in conclusion, it may in reason be asked, if there be not something repugnant to the principles of Christianity in the mind of that man who will not hear Moses and the prophets, and who is slow of heart to believe all that they have spoken, though they afforded the means of detection in every prediction which they uttered, if their prophecies had been false—though they appealed to a vast variety of events which distant ages would bring into existence—though history has answered, and ocular demonstration has confirmed that appeal, our enemies themselves being witnesses—and although there never was any other truth that could be tried by such a test? Might he not be convinced of a doctrine less moral, or not quite according to godliness, by evidence less miraculous? Is there no reason to fear that the water, which show that all things are not as they were at the beginning of the creation. Hume, Beetham, and La Place must yet veil their heads, in the academy as well as in the temple, before the humble fisherman of Galilee. And their reasonings need only to be rightly applied, that they may as strongly advocate the undoubted evidence which miracles give that the doctrine is of God, as the facts attested by Gibbon and Volney demonstrate that the prophecies of Scripture were given by inspiration of God.—But such a subject can only be touched on in a concluding note; and abundant is the evidence of prophecy, seeing that it here needs only to be thus noticed. The transference of the leading argument of infidelity,—which a text and a fact may suffice to transfer,—into an additional and fundamental evidence of the truth, merits a more full consideration, which it is the purpose of the writer to endeavour to give in a general and connected view of the Evidences of Christianity, which he is preparing for the press, and which he hopes to be able to compress in a small compass, in the form of such a manual as the present. In the mean time, this new method of dealing with the Deist is here referred to, that it may be free to every Christian's use; for it rests not on human invention, but is drawn from the infallible word of the living God—the same Scriptures which, to all who search them, are ever full of treasures, and in which are to be found the words of eternal life.
light of evidence, though sufficient to dispel the cloud upon the understanding, is yet unable to penetrate "the veil upon the heart." Skepticism, at best, is not a subject for boasting. It is easy to exclude the noontide light by closing the eyes; and it is easy to resist the clearest truth by hardening the heart against it. And while, on the other hand, there are minds (and Newton's was among the number) which are differently affected by the evidence of prophecy, and which cannot be callous when touched by the concentrated rays of such light from heaven, whence can this great dissimilarity of sentiment arise from the same identical and abundant proof? And into what else can the want of conviction be resolved than into the Scriptural solution of the difficulty—an evil heart of unbelief? "They will not come unto the light because the light would make them free."

But while the unbeliever rejects the means of conviction, and rests his hope on the assumed possibility that his tenets may be true—the positive evidence of Christianity convinces the unprejudiced inquirer, or rational and sincere believer, that it is impossible that his faith can be false. And when he searches out of the book of the Lord, and finds that none of them do fail, he looks on every accomplished prediction, even though it be the effect of the wrath of man, as a witness of God—he knows in whom he believes—he sees the rise and fall of earthly potentates and the convulsions of kingdoms, testifying of Him who ruleth among the nations, and accrediting his word—he experiences the conviction that the most delightful of all truth, the hope which perisheth not, is confirmed by the strongest of all testimony, that heaven itself hath ratified the peace which it hath proclaimed—he rests assured that prophecy came not of old time by the will of man, but that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost—and, although he knows not the mode of the operations of the Spirit, he sees the demonstration of his power. And "taking heed thus unto the sure word of prophecy until the day dawn and the day-star arise in his heart" the true believer learns, from the things that are past, the certainty of the things that are to come hereafter—he rests not satisfied with a mere name that he liveth, while yet he might be dead—but, having obtained that "precious faith," the germ of immortality, which springeth
up into eternal life, he experiences the power of the world to come, and unites the practice with the profession of religion—he copies the zeal of those who spend their strength for that which is in vain, and their labour for that which profiteth not, but he directs it to the attainment of an incorruptible inheritance—for he knows that his labour shall not be in vain while he yields obedience to that Word which is the charter of his salvation, and which so unequivocally bears the seal and superscription of the King of kings.

THE END.