

Return
Please

77 GUILDFORD

A Look Round the Troubled World:

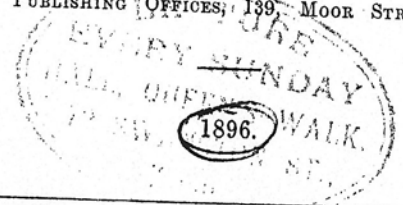
Or the Armaments of Europe, and the troubled condition of
International Politics considered as Portents in harmony
with

Bible Prophecy of
**A GREAT FINISHING CRISIS IN THE
WORLD'S AFFAIRS.**

*Being the Substance of six lectures delivered in Birmingham in the
Autumn of 1896, also in Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney,
in the Spring of the same year.*

By ROBERT ROBERTS of Birmingham.

BIRMINGHAM:
PUBLISHING OFFICES, 139, MOOR STREET.

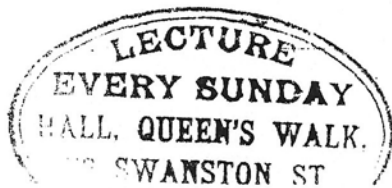


PRICE SIXPENCE.



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE. |
|---|-------|
| The Gathering Storm in Europe | 1 |
| Is it the Shadow of Armageddon? | 3 |
| The Foundation in Past Events | 5 |
| Turkey : Imminent Downfall of Her Empire ... | 7 |
| France : Cause of European Armament ... | 10 |
| Rome : The Fall of the Temporal Power ... | 13 |
| Russia : Her Military Greatness and European Ascendancy | 18 |
| Britain : Her Greatness and Maritime Strength | 25 |
| The Jews : Current Movements and Prospects ... | 32 |
| A Wonderful Age | 30 |



A LOOK ROUND THE TROUBLED WORLD.

A STORM is gathering in Europe. Its shadow lies over all the world, and grows darker every moment. Only the frivolous are unconscious of it. The thoughtful among mankind are alarmed at it. The only comfort the majority of them take is the thought that as the political heavens have so long worn a frowning aspect without breaking in storm that they may hold out long enough to allow of the clouds finally dispersing. But even this comfort they have found it impossible to take very heartily since the advent of the present year. Political perils have multiplied, and the nations, instead of slackening their preparations for war, are redoubling their diligence on all hands—peace-loving England taking the lead.

The mischief, speaking proximately, began with the adoption 20 or 30 years ago, by the leading nations of Europe, of the system of passing the entire male population through the army. Ever since, it has been plain to political observers that the world has been drifting into a situation, not only of crushing economic embarrassment, but of extreme political peril. National rivalries have kept pace with national armaments. The war spirit has been fostered by war preparations in spite of the doctrine with which public writers have tried to soothe the situation, to the effect that the best way to preserve peace is to be ready for war. A recent daily paper writes despairingly, thus :—

THE WAR SPIRIT.

“Not the least remarkable phenomenon of the present time is the development of the war spirit in the European nations.

Richard Cobden was not more mistaken when he predicted a universal acceptance of the doctrines of free-trade than were the Nationalists of 30 years ago, who were cocksure that the adjustment of political boundaries on racial and linguistic lines would introduce an era of permanent peace.

"The warlike preparations of all the European nations are on a scale far exceeding anything which has been seen before. It has been said that the wars of the last century were dictated by purely dynastic interests, and that any one of them would have been stopped by a plebiscite of the people concerned. But the family interests of rulers in our own day have only a faint influence on international politics. The foreign policy of Great Britain, France and Italy is not affected at all in that way, and the spirit of unrest which characterises all of them is clearly traceable to the working of the popular mind. It must be confessed that the prospects of continued peace are not encouraging.

"A spirit of Jingoism seems to have taken possession of all the civilised nations. It is observable, not only in the wild and whirling words of the German Emperor, but in the more restrained utterances of British statesmen, and in the everlasting declamation of the French, apropos of their visionary rights in Egypt. Even the Transvaal Boers talk of war with the British Empire! The universality of the spirit is illustrated by the recent attitude of the United States in relation to Venezuela and Cuba. Jingoism is no doubt encouraged by the enormous naval and military preparations in Europe. The possession of forces naturally engenders arrogance. The saying that preparation for war is the best guarantee of peace is only partially true, because the masters of legions and the owners of squadrons are tempted to adopt a high tone in their communications with other Powers, and the very possession of the means of waging war is apt to lead to their utilisation. Moreover, disturbing elements are apt to accumulate in time of peace, until their elimination becomes almost impossible without a resort to the dread arbitrament of war.

"The inoculation of whole nations with the war spirit is apt to take place much more rapidly in our own day than it did in past times. The progress of education has made all the European race readers, and the press communicates every wave of excitement with electric speed. At present there is not a newspaper that has not its daily intelligence of warlike preparations, of military and naval improvements, and speculations as to probable or possible international complications."

Many papers are speaking in the same way. The armed state of the world and the inflamed condition of international

feeling are not the only features of the gloom that overspreads the world. Business is depressed by the pressure of military burdens, and the effect of scarce employment and low wages is to render the labouring classes ready listeners to the suggestions of Socialism in its extreme forms. Dangerous theories are making rapid progress amongst them. Labour is organised as it never has been before, and stands sullenly face to face with capital, with which, every other now and then, it enters into deadly wrestle. Anarchism and Nihilism are not dead: they scarcely sleep. They are crouching in the dark corners into which they have been chased by repressive authority, ready for the opportunity which revolution may give them. All the elements are fermenting for a huge convulsion.

These are not the alarmist forebodings of hypochondria; they are the cool and accurate appreciations of an actual situation. They are simple statements of fact as known to every intelligent observer of public affairs.

The question is, Have these facts any significance? Different minds will be inclined to give different responses to this question. But it will be manifest that no temperamental or educational bias of individuals can alter or affect the facts. A wise man will desire to come into harmony with the facts irrespective of what may be the conventional views of them.

Some will say that the facts have no significance; that they are the circumstances inseparable from the development of population in separate nationalities; that convulsions are to be looked for in the progress of that development; and that the only remedy—however slow in its application—lies in the legislative embodiment of experience, age after age, tending to draw mankind into social unity.

Others, taking substantially the same view, will go further and say that there is really no ground for any definite hope whatever; that civilization, before now, has been overwhelmed by barbarism, and in all likelihood will be overwhelmed again: that the human species, though the highest upon earth, is the spontaneous growth of unregulated force, and must struggle its way through convulsions to a higher state, if it may be; to extinction, if it must be.

IS IT THE SHADOW OF ARMAGEDDON?

The suggestion of Bible light on the situation will be scouted by those who indulge in these dismal thoughts. The word "Armageddon" is a scare to the scientific class as effectual as a moving shadow on the water to a crowd of fish. Is it certain that natural truth, as discerned in the channel of scientific investigation, requires this aversion to the Bible? On the contrary, it becomes manifest on a complete purview of the subject

that the Bible and science are but co-ordinate departments of truth—understanding science to mean true science—demonstrated unquestionable fact as distinguished from speculative hypothesis. There is much in so-called science that is in the nature of a guess that cannot be proved. The progress of time (often a short time) is fatal to many a mere theory. Darwinism, which is chiefly responsible for the aversion to the Bible above referred to, is beginning to experience an ebb tide in scientific circles. Lord Salisbury, in a recent address to the British Association, pointed this out very clearly. He said that Darwinism had not conquered the universal assent of the scientific intellect; that it was beginning to be recognised that there is another view of the origin and organisation of life, consistent with the observed facts of nature. That other view leaves the way open for implicit belief in Christ, and in the Bible which he endorsed. This is being recognised. There is distinctly a turn in the tide against the mechanical law of evolution as the explanation of the universe. There is a fashion in scientific theories, as Mr. Gladstone observed some time ago. The Darwin fashion has had its day, but is going out, and a new fashion is coming in. Therefore, from an intellectual point of view, the way is open for the reception of any light that may come with the Christ point of view, as to the meaning of the present threatening aspect of the world's affairs.

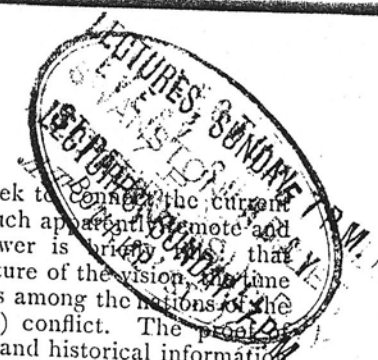
Armageddon is one of Christ's subjects, and as such, cannot be rejected while we accept him. It is one of his subjects in two ways: it is (without the employment of that particular term), a clear and ample theme of the prophets whom he endorsed; and it is a specific feature of the revelation sent by him to John in Patmos for the purpose, as expressly declared, "of shewing unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass" (Rev. i. 1). The word "Armageddon," as a Hebrew term (for it is Hebrew though occurring in a Greek document), means *heaps of slain*, and is applied geographically to the scene of a conflict in which Almighty Power takes part. Popularly, it is supposed to describe a "battle," owing to King James' translators having used that term instead of "war" in the phrase "the war of the great day of God Almighty" (Rev. xvi. 14). The Revisers have altered this; they have dropped the term "battle," which ought not to have been used, and have substituted "war"—the exact translation of the Greek word *polemos*. This gives the larger idea of a struggle,—which is in harmony with all revelation on the subject—a war at the close of the era of human government, during which human power is broken, human wickedness punished, and human wilfulness subdued, in preparation for the Divine Government of the new era.

If it be asked, why should we seek to connect the current political situation with a matter of such apparently remote and indeterminate significance, the answer is briefly that according to the chronological structure of the vision, the time has arrived for the situation of affairs among the nations of the earth, preparatory for (Armageddon) conflict. The proof of this lies in various lines of scriptural and historical information, which there will be some attempt to trace in the succeeding pages. Confirmation is found in the fact that in all the great streams of political development among men, the shape of events at the present hour is exactly what the prophetic indications require. This also there will be an endeavour to make manifest. The evidence of truth is for the wise.

THE FOUNDATION IN PAST EVENTS.

First, let us chalk out the ground in the leading outline supplied by the historic event of Christ's first appearance in the world 1800 years ago. That appearing had been the subject of Old Testament Prophecy, both as to manner, place and time. We need not dwell on the manner, except to note that it was an actual, visible, tangible, personal, literal appearance. The prophecy of Christ appearing as a sacrifice to take away the sin of the world was thus fulfilled. We need not dwell on the place, which is known to all the world, except to remember that it was in a country now forming part of that Turkish Empire which is in the throes of dissolution—namely, the Holy Land.

The time is to be noted as furnishing the key to the interpretation of the times now falling in. The prophecy was—(Dan. ix. 24-25) that in seventy weeks or 490 days from the issue of the Persian edict for the re-building of Jerusalem, the Messiah would be cut off as a sacrifice for sin. The date of the edict we get in Nehemiah ii. 1—"The twentieth year of Artaxerxes." This upon collation with general history is found to coincide with B.C. 456. Jesus, at the crucifixion, was in his 34th year. The two figures added give 490 as the number of years between the re-building edict and the offering up of Christ. But seventy weeks are 490 days,—not years. Yes, but the principle upon which time is signified in the prophetic visions was declared to Ezekiel thus: "I have appointed thee *each day for a year*"—(Chap. iv. 6). The 490 years elapsing between the date of the edict and the crucifixion of Christ was the literal period signified by the seventy weeks or 490 days, and gives the rule for the understanding of the periods associated with still future events.



There are specifications of time associated with the second appearing of Christ, and it is these specifications, on the day-for-a-year principle, that justify the driving in of the pegs of expectation in the current epoch. This will be seen on the consideration of the following simple points.

Peter says Christ must remain away until the arrival of "the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began"—(Acts iii: 20). Jesus says Jerusalem must remain down-trodden till the efflux of "the times of the Gentiles." Here are two methods of measurement generally expressed. Their definite bearing is brought out by the questions: 1. When do the times of restitution spoken of by all the prophets arrive? 2. How long do the times of the Gentiles last? The answer to these questions has been revealed in an epochal form, though "the day and the hour" is withheld. In answer to the first question, Dan. viii. 13 informs us that at the end of 2300 days from the advent of the Persian Empire, "the sanctuary shall be cleansed"—a phrase synonymous with the work of Israelitish restoration foretold by all the prophets. Understanding these as years, we are brought down to the day in which we live. In answer to the second question, 42 months (1260 days) are specified as the length of the Roman (papal) Christ-personating ascendancy in Europe—(Rev. xiii. 5; Dan. vii. 26)—at the end of which period the power to persecute would cease, but not the existence of the system. There would be a further 30 years to the beginning of the restitution work, and a further 45 years to its completion, as expressed by the further overlapping periods of 1290 and 1335—(Dan. xii. 11-13).

Both these methods of measurement bring us to our own era as the terminal point of the dispensation, for it is over 2300 years since the Persian Empire stood in full-blown double dynastied power in the political arena as foreshown in Dan. viii., and it is close on 1910 years since the Bishop of Rome received imperial investiture and recognition as the legalized lord of the human conscience, with the civil power at his back to enforce his claims.

This in brief is the reason that justifies an inspection of the present European situation in the light of the suggestion that the world is preparing for Armageddon. This inspection is most profitably conducted when it follows the great lines of current politics, which will be found to coincide with the great lines of prophetic forecast. These lines may be expressed in the terms: 1, Turkey; 2, France; 3, Papal-Rome; 4, Russia; 5, Britain; 6, The Jews.

1.—TURKEY: IMMINENT DOWNFALL OF HER EMPIRE.

That Turkey should have integral relation to the matter is most natural in view of her occupation of the Holy Land. The Holy Land is the geographical fulcrum of the Divine purpose upon earth. It has not only been the scene of the divine work so far as the work accomplished has been unfolded in the past; but it is the land that is destined to see the triumph of the work in its perfect form—(Isaiah ii. 1-4; xxv. 16-8; xxvi. 1). It is "the land of promise" in a higher sense than having witnessed the delivery of the promises: it is the land promised to Abraham as an everlasting personal inheritance in days when he was a stranger in it (Heb. xi. 8; Gen. xiii. 15), a promise not yet fulfilled—(Acts vii. 4; Heb. xi. 13). It is the land peculiarly involved in the "times of restitution" spoken of by the prophets; for it is the land of which we read: "They shall build the old wastes and raise up the former desolations." "Men shall say, this land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden." "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency"—(Isaiah lxi. 4; Ezekiel xxxvi. 35; Is. lx. 15).

If the lamp of divine revelation has been held up to throw light on the situation of human affairs existing prior to the divine interference, we should expect such light to fall above all others upon the power holding the Land of Promise in subjection. And this is what we find to be the case. Turkey under the symbol of her leading river—the Euphrates—is shown in a dried-up state at the crisis of the Holy Land's deliverance, and the thief-like advent of Christ in the earth—(Rev. xvi. 12-15). Her dried-up state is the most notorious fact of the present hour. The full extent of her political exhaustion can only be appreciated by those who remember the power she possessed a century ago. Her Empire was the most extensive upon earth, embracing Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, Egypt, Cyprus, Arabia, The Holy Land, Asia Minor, Greece, and all South Eastern Europe, up to the Danube; and Western Asia, up to the North of the Caspian Sea. Three hundred years earlier, she had, with extraordinary military prowess, overrun the Christian countries of Eastern Europe, overthrowing the Eastern Roman Empire in the capture of Constantinople. Two hundred years ago, a writer named Tillinghast said, "The people who at the present time are of all others accounted the greatest are the Turks."

Look at her now, against this background of greatness and renown. Within the last 60 years, she has shrunk in geogra-

phical extent and resources until she has become the weakest and most contemptible of the Powers, whose remaining territories are on the point of being partitioned among her powerful neighbours. She has already lost Greece, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Servia, Moldavia, Wallachia, Bulgaria, Roumania, the Caucasus, Cyprus, Egypt, Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco. Her finances are so low that she is not only unable to pay the interest on her national debt, but is unable to feed her own troops, or maintain her own fleet. Her provinces, through oppression, have gone out of cultivation. Her trade has dwindled nearly to the vanishing point; and now her cruel treatment of the Armenians has so exasperated England that the English Government has publicly renounced the policy of Turkish defence which England has followed for 50 years, and has virtually intimated to Russia that Russia will no longer find England obstructing Russia's advance to Constantinople—a hint on which Russian fleets and armies are certain shortly to act. An exhausted Turkish Empire at the point of collapse is the most conspicuous object in the field of foreign politics.

Such a fulfilment of the prophecy is all the more impressive from the remarkable way in which the Turkish advent in Europe, in the first instance, verified the earlier forecast of the same prophecy. The Mohammedan invasion, which at one time threatened to extinguish Christianity in Europe, was graphically foreshown in its two great historic phases—(Saracenic and Turkish)—in Rev. ix., under the figures, first, of a cloud of locusts issuing from an abyss for a tormenting mission of 300 days, divided into two periods of 150 days each; and then of the “loosing” of four angel powers in vast bodies of cavalry from the eastern side of the Euphrates for the “killing” of the country against which they should operate during a period of 391 days. The historic facts fit these figures in the exactest manner. The Saracens, under Mahomet, aided by new military instruments called scorpions, issued from Arabia, the home of the locust, in vast bodies of horse, and afflicted the eastern and African provinces of Rome, with a torment which Rome laboured in vain to suspend. For 150 years the Saracenic torment progressed victoriously to its highest point, and then, receiving a check at the battle of Chalons, its progress was arrested; but its “power” continued another 150 years, when it declined. Then the Turks came on the scene from Central Asia, and imparted a new impetus to the declining faith of the Caliph, by the marriage of their military chief (Togrul Beg) with the daughter of the Caliph of Bagdad, his investiture of the office of Commander of the Faithful, and his execution of a series of vast cavalry onslaughts on the declining Roman Empire of the East, which,

under repeated blows, fell at length in 391 years from the investiture of Togrul Beg to the fall of Constantinople.

The object of the abatement and exhaustion of the political Euphratean flood will be keenly appreciated by those who believe in the enunciated purpose of God to finish the human dispensation upon earth by setting up a kingdom of his own under Christ, for the rule of all the earth, in the land promised to Abraham. Turkey holds dominion over this land at the present moment, and while she does so, Turkey blocks the way: hence it is a natural association of ideas when we read that “the water of the Euphrates was dried up *that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared.*” While Turkish dominion over the Holy Land continues, the way of the new order of kings—Christ and his immortal brethren—cannot be prepared. It might be supposed that nothing could stand in their way when the hour of manifestation arrives, and that therefore there is no particular need for a weakening of the Turkish power beforehand, which would be true if we were to understand their “way” to mean merely their own presence, and the exercise of their power; but with all the testimony in view, it is impossible to understand it in this restricted sense. The opening of their way requires two things with which the continued existence of the Turkish Empire is inconsistent. It requires a preliminary and partial restoration of Israel to their land (Ezek. xxxviii. 8, 9, 12), and it requires a great overthrow of European military power under Russian headship in the Holy Land, as the beginning of the divine chastisement of the world, preparatory to its being called upon to submit to a Divine Government—(Exek. xxxix. 4, 7, 21, 22; Dan. xi. 40-45). The occurrence of these events was impossible while Turkey held sway; and therefore the gradual evaporation of the Turkish power has been a necessity. Without this gradual evaporation, the situation could not have been brought about to admit of all nations being brought into the valley of Jehoshaphat for judgment (Joel iii. 2, 12, 13), and the kingdom of David being re-established—(Amos. ix. 11, 15; Micah vii. 15, 17). It is a providential shaping of Gentile affairs for the grand climax contemplated from the beginning.

In the immediate neighborhood of the symbol of the dried Euphrates occurs this portentous intimation in parentheses: “Behold I come as a thief”—(Rev. xvi. 15). It is in connection with this that Armageddon appears: “And he gathered them—the kings of the earth and of the whole world—into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” As already observed, Armageddon means *heaps of slain*. Its being a Hebrew name intimates that the slaughter will be on Hebrew

ground. This agrees with the plainer prophecies: "Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel thou and all thy bands and the many people with thee"—(Ezek. xxxix. 4). "The earth shall no more cover her slain"—(Is. xxvi. 21). "The slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even to the other"—(Jer. xxv. 33). "My determination is to gather the nations, that I may pour upon them mine indignation"—(Zeph. iii. 1): see also Ezek. xxxviii., Joel iii., and 2 Thess. i.

The object of this holocaust is plainly stated, and commends itself to reason: "that the nations may know me"—(Ezek. xxxviii. 16); that the inhabitants of the earth may learn righteousness—(Is. xxvi. 9). God laid his hand on Egypt over 3000 years ago, for the same purpose—that Israel and all the world might have evidence of God's existence and supremacy.—(See Ex. viii. 22; ix. 14, 16; Deut. iv. 35). Ever since, in greater or less degree, God has been worshipped on the earth. But the effect of the lesson has nearly worn off, and God purposes a renewal of it on a larger and more impressive and more lasting scale, when the hour arrives to send his Son again. It is so testified, and all history shows that the word of God never fails. The effect will be very thorough: "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be laid low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day"—(Is. ii. 11). "All nations whom thou has made shall come and worship before thee, because thy judgments are made manifest"—(Rev. xv. 4).

2. FRANCE, THE CAUSE OF EUROPEAN ARMAMENT.

But it required something besides the exhaustion of the Turkish Empire to prepare the world for this conflict with divine power. The decadence of Turkey would never of itself have brought about the abnormal armament of the world implied in the summons: "Prepare war: wake up the mighty men: beat your ploughshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong"—(Joel iii. 9). Such a development, to be accomplished on natural principles, required a powerful inciting cause, operating concurrently with the drying of the river. This inciting cause is visible in the imagery of the sixth vial, in three frog-like spirits issuing from the mouths of three symbolical objects in the vision, described as the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. These frog-like spirits are said to "go forth to the kings of the earth and the whole world, to gather them (or to prepare them to be gathered, for the actual gathering has an

independent place two verses further on, to the great day of God Almighty."

There is no ground for the tendency to slipperiness manifested when this symbolism is introduced. It is not a divine hieroglyph with prophetic significance. The hieroglyphs of Egypt are gravely studied, notwithstanding their barrenness of sensible or useful significance. The hieroglyphs of authentic divine Revelation are entitled to reverential study.

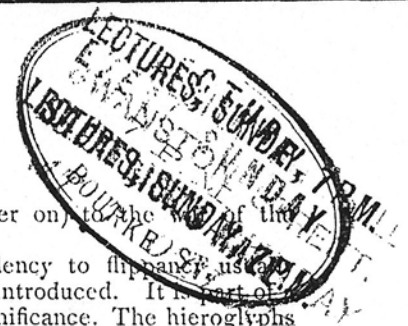
Political heraldry identifies the French with the frogs. Three frogs were their original coat of arms, as evident from ancient coins, shields, banners, and tapestry. "John Frog" is an occasional national *soubriquet* for the French, as John Bull is for the English; and though the lily was adopted by the Bourbon royal family that finally reigned over them, no confusion results, as it was the French in their democratic, as distinct from their royal, capacity that were to accomplish the war-preparing mission involved in the sixth vial.

The actual course of events has placed the meaning of the prophecy beyond doubt. And this course of events has run in the very channel of anticipation created by interpretation beforehand.

Let the facts be looked in the face. The world is armed as it never was at any previous time in the history of mankind. The entire male population of Europe (England excepted) is passed through the army, and organised in such a way, behind and underneath all their civil occupations, as to admit of their being instantly summoned to arms.

This development goes back nearly 50 years. It has a distinct history. Trace it out and you will find it is French work, and not only so, but French work performed by evolution from the very three political centres, symbolised by "the dragon, the beast and the false prophet," and that too in the very order of their enumeration. The dragon was the symbol of the Eastern Roman Empire, which established the Papacy in the west—(Rev. xiii. 2); its mouth was CONSTANTINOPLE. The beast was the political system in Europe, upholding the Roman Woman or State Church—(Rev. xiii. 11; xvii. 3, 18); it was known as the Holy Roman Empire, and had its seat or mouth at VIENNA. The False Prophet is the false-teaching Ecclesiastical Chief of Europe, having his mouth at ROME.

The interpretation, published 50 years ago (and since verified by events that have been continuously watched during the interval without a break), was to this effect: that as three frogs were seen to issue from the mouths of dragon, beast and false prophet, the French democracy, under an elected head, would so influence Constantinople, Vienna and Rome as to cause a



war-producing emission from these centres, tending to the preparation of the world, by armament, for the struggle of Armageddon.

The events fulfilling these expectations are well known to the grey heads of the present generation. In 1851, democratic revolution in France having previously prepared the way, Louis Napoleon, nephew of the great Napoleon, seized power, and to deliver the nation from the paralysis of factions, got himself elected Emperor, or Frog-in-chief. In this capacity, regarded with suspicion by the other powers, he went to work to conquer their respect by a display of military strength. He greatly increased the French army, and built war-ships,—and then created an opportunity to use them by stirring up the Eastern question, and so acting upon the Sultan of Turkey by assurances of support, in a quarrel that sprang up between Russia and Turkey, as to cause a declaration of war to issue from CONSTANTINOPLE. Thus the frog-like spirit went out of the mouth of the dragon. The Crimean war ensued, which was the first great waking up of the world from the military stagnancy which had prevailed since Waterloo. The war having ended in the crippling of Russia, there was an interval of peace.

VIENNA was due next. In three or four years, Louis Napoleon so antagonised Austria in Italy, as to stir up the Austrian Emperor to launch a declaration of war against France and Sardinia, and directly evoked that declaration by a studied affront of the Austrian Court in the Paris New-Year's Day reception of Ambassadors in 1859. The declaration was promulgated at Vienna, and thus the frog-like spirit came out of the mouth of the beast.

Next, ROME: In four more years the French Emperor entered into a convention with Victor Emmanuel, King of Sardinia, consenting to evacuate Rome in two years in exchange for the cession of the provinces of Nice and Savoy, necessary to complete the French frontier in the south-east. The convention was dated in 1864, and would expire in 1866. With this length of notice the Revolutionary party, under Garibaldi, made extensive preparations to seize Rome. When the time arrived the French troops were withdrawn, and the Pope beheld, with amazement, his enemies ready to devour him. He urgently applied to the French Emperor for advice. The Emperor answered: "Hold on; I will send back my troops"—upon which, the Pope issued a declaration of war against the Revolution. Thus the frog-like spirit went out of the mouth of the False Prophet.

The conjoint effect of these three French-caused European disturbances was to stimulate military activity all over the con-

continent, and give an impetus to improvement in weapons and in military organization of all kinds. The final impulse was imparted by the success of the Prussian needle gun, and universal military service, which were copied by all the European Governments. Even this finishing touch is traceable to the Frog-power. It was the first Napoleon who forced Prussia to adopt compulsory military service. He crushed her at Jena, and to keep her crushed compelled her to disband her army, and to restrict her total military establishment to 10,000 men. The Prussian chiefs signed the treaty, and carried it out so far as the number of men under arms at any one time was concerned, but they devised a system by which they drilled the whole population while having only 10,000 under arms. They passed every man through the ranks on a short term of service. This is the system which has been stirred into life and made the universal law of Europe, as the result of French stimulus applied successively at Constantinople, Vienna and Rome. The fulfilment of the prophecy is complete, and all the more noteworthy from having been preceded by the definite expectations created by the interpretation of the symbols.

3. ROME: THE FALL OF THE TEMPORAL POWER.

Another confirmation of the view that the world is nearing Armageddon is found in the change that has, within the lifetime of the present generation, come over the position of the Papacy in the world. At the first suggestion it strikes the mind as strange that there should be any connection between the two things. This feeling vanishes as soon as it is discerned that the central fact of Armageddon is the return of Christ to the earth; and the central peculiarity of Papalism, a claim to exercise the authority of Christ in his absence. The two things are related, though not in harmony. There is a prophecy of Paul's in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, which shows this clearly. He was writing to disabuse the mind of the brethren of the idea that Christ was to be expected soon. He told them that two things had to occur in the history of the Christian community before the day of Christ could arrive: the said community had to fall away from the truth, and there had to rise in their midst a pretender to godship whom it would be the Lord's special work to destroy at his coming (Thess. ii. 3-8). This is not an unnatural association of ideas. It is on the contrary perfectly fitting that the coming of the true Christ and the fate of the false Christ should be bound up together.

It would not have been possible [by Paul's epistle alone to

connect its prophecy with Rome, except in so far as the history of the Church exhibits to us the very counterpart of what he foretold: the development of a head, claiming to be the vicar of Christ, and the repository of the authority of God on earth. But other prophecies establish the identity conclusively and supply particulars that enable us to recognise a sign of the times in the fall of the Temporal Power. One of these is Daniel's prophecy of the four great empires, and notably the fourth (or Roman) empire. He not only foretells—in chapters ii., vii., and viii.—the overthrow of Greece by Rome, but he sketches the leading features of Rome's own career, foreshowing that after a period of imperial greatness she would become weak, and be broken up and divided among petty sovereignties, among whom one would arise, claiming authority over all the rest, into whose hands the saints of God would be given for 1260 years. Let any one read the chapters referred to in the light of the most superficial knowledge of history, and he cannot fail to recognise the Roman Papacy, which has completely filled the part assigned to it for many ages past. It has "made war with the saints and prevailed against them." It has "spoken very great things," and its "look" has been "more stout than its fellows." It has "thought to change times and laws," and the saints have been "given into his hand."

There are circumstantial details which admit of no denial in their application. The Papal horn had eyes and mouth, while the other horns were simple horns (or powers). When the Papal horn appeared, three of the other ten fell before it (see chap. vii. 8). Eyes are to enable its possessor to see. What power is known as the Roman *see*? An official mouth is for the fulmination of degrees: from what mouth have the famous "Bulls" of European history issued? Three of the original ten horns were "plucked up by the roots" before the little horn with eyes and mouth? What are those *three crowns* that encircle the Papal tiara? The token of sovereignty over "the States of the Church": but whose states were they originally? The answer will historically illustrate the vision.

When we add to these particulars the things revealed to John in Patmos on the same subject, uncertainty vanishes. They were revealed under different figures, but with even more obvious applications if it were possible. See the woman ride the ten-horned monster: "The woman that thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." What great city did this in John's day, or any other day? ROME. Here is a prophecy that Rome literal should sustain ecclesiastical relations with the Governments of the world, and inebriate the countries with false doctrine: "with whom the kings of the

earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."—(Rev. xvii. 12). John saw her "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus"—(verse 6). The character of Rome, in time past, as a persecutor and a destroyer is known to all the world.

The period revealed to Daniel as the time during which Papal Rome should have power to enforce her authority with the sword and the fagot was also revealed to John. The Revelation period is stated in different terms, but more valuable on that account as a confirmation of the other. Daniel's time is "time, times and dividing of time"—a Hebrew cypher representing 1260 days (or prophetic years). John's form is "*forty and two months*"—which are the same: $42 \times 30 = 1260$ days. During 1260 years, "it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"—(Rev. xiii. 5 and 8).

But how is this period of legal ascendancy in the ecclesiastical realm made to end in the 19th century? Obviously by reference to its commencement. The Roman Pontiff did not always possess the power to coerce mankind. That power had a well-marked beginning, preceded by a gradual growth, and it is by a study of this period that the basis for a calculation is found. There is no need for going into well-known historic particulars. Suffice it to say in brief that the rivalry between the Bishop of Rome and the Bishop of Constantinople, as to who should rank chief in the empire, ended in the promulgation of an imperial decree from Constantinople in favour of the Bishop of Rome; first, by the Emperor Justinian in A.D. 535, and secondly by Phocas in A.D. 606-8. Justinian's decree did not finally settle the conflict. It was not till the decree of Phocas that the primacy of the Roman bishopric became the accepted law of the Empire; from which time the Pope of Rome became the lord of mankind in spiritual matters, while claiming the headship in temporal matters as well. The spiritual lordship thus established was no matter of mere titular or sentimental supremacy; it became a legal tyranny of the most oppressive character. Though the Pope at this time had no "temporal power" in his own right, the temporal power was at his disposal, in so far as the civil magistrate took cognizance of and punished all acts of disobedience to his commands; an arrangement by which all dissentients (who included the saints) were "given into his hand." The rigour with which his authority was enforced in Europe for over 12 centuries is

testified on every page of history. It is profitable to make the acquaintance of this history, as it enables us to realise the great change that has taken place during the present century. During the Papal lease of power it is computed that fifty millions of human beings were tortured and put to death for no other crime than choosing to obey God rather than man—many of them suffering for merely having the Bible in their possession. The evil of the system is not to be measured by the number of actual victims. We have to remember the benumbing effects on the living populations on whom the power of priestcraft lay like a nightmare.

The change that has taken place is complete. It is most signally illustrated by the single fact that in Rome itself the Bible is now as freely circulated as in England, and dissenting chapels built and used as openly as in the Australian colonies. This change has coincided exactly with the chronology of the prophecy, which is the point particularly to be noticed for present purposes. In 1260 years from Justinian's (preliminary) establishment of the Roman See as the spiritual headship of mankind in A.D. 535, there occurred the preliminary overthrow of the Papal supremacy at the hands of the first Napoleon, who overran the kingdoms of Europe, deposed the Pope, secularised ecclesiastical property, and substituted the Code Napoleon for the Code Justinian, which had been the basis of public law in Europe for over a thousand years. From this preliminary overthrow, the Pope recovered so far as to be restored to the possession of the three Italian States, known for centuries as "The Patrimony of St. Peter," in which, by his inquisition and otherwise, he continued the diabolical coercive power of the dark ages. As regards the world in general, he did not recover from the terrific overthrow inflicted by the French Revolution. His power was restricted to "the States of the Church."

But now even that has fled. It disappeared exactly at the end of 1260 years from the final establishment of the Papacy, by the decree of Phocas, in A.D. 606-8. The events that led to this must be fresh in the memory of the elder generation, who can call to mind the invasion of the Papal States by Garibaldi, in 1866-8, and the return of the French, who took over the Papal government, threw open the prisons, demolished the Inquisition, and eclipsed the Pope. The temporal power finally vanished even in form, three years after, when the triumph of anti-papal Germany compelled the evacuation of Rome by the enforced transfer of the city and the states of the church to Victor Emmanuel, king of Sardinia.

There now remains not a shred of the terrible power that legally enslaved the European populations, for the very period

prophetically revealed. The Roman Canon which remains and the Papal claims remain; but as regards power, the Pope is, and in almost every official utterance complains that he is a prisoner. In current political parlance, he is the prisoner of the Vatican."

The significance of this fact from a Bible point of view can be seen in the contemplation of the event coming next in order in the divine revelation. Paul's way of putting it goes straight to the kernel: "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of HIS COMING" —(2 Thess. ii. 8)—which is in agreement with the more detailed statement of Daniel: "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy it to the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." (Dan. vii. 2-6.) Daniel saw the finish of the fourth beast iniquity (which includes Papalism) brought about by an event which he describes as "one like the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven," to whom was given "dominion, glory and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve and obey him."

Thus it will be seen that the next event dispensationally due after the expiry of the Papal term of supremacy is the return of Christ to the earth. But how long after? On the first blush of things, it seemed likely that it would be immediately after, and it was this that led to the expectation of the Lord's coming 30 years ago. But the reconsideration forced upon believers by the efflux of the 1260 without bringing the Lord has let them to perceive not only that the finishing of the Pope's power of oppression is one thing and the finishing of the Pope himself another, but that different times have been appointed for the two events. Dan. xii. 11, 13, supplies a 1290 period and a 1335 period, which, though not overlooked, were practically left out of consideration in being regarded as contemporaneous with the 1260 instead of being overlapping periods as they undoubtedly are. The first of these verses tells us that there would be 1290 days from the "setting up" of the abomination. Jesus identifies the abomination with Rome (Matt. xxix. 15). The "setting up" was the establishing in 606-8, at which we have already glanced. 1290 from 606-8 brings us to 1896-8, which would give 30 years of peace to the Papacy after being shorn of its power. Then what? Then the events leading to the state reached at the close of the 1335 period—which is 45 years further on. The nature of that state is expressed in the closing remark made to Daniel: "Thou shalt stand in thy lot (inheritance) at the end of the days."



Daniel standing in his lot, is Daniel inheriting the kingdom promised to all the people of God. The kingdom promised is the dominion of all the earth under Christ—(Rev. ii. 26; xi. 15). If Daniel is to inherit the kingdom at the end of 1335 years from the establishment of the Papacy, and we are now 44 years from that time, the kingdom must be taken from the governments now possessing it *during the interval elapsing* from the end of 1290 to the end of the 1335. We are now approaching the end of the 1290. The state of the world in all directions portends the arrival of the very crisis predicted: the overrunning of Turkey by Russia, and a struggle between Britain and a Russian confederacy for the dominion of the world—during which Christ intervenes for the subjection of the whole world to the re-built "Tabernacle of David." At all events, here is the great fact that at the exact ending of 1290 years, Papal power has fled; and the world is threatening to break into an uproar—in the very form and direction otherwise foretold.

4. RUSSIA: HER MILITARY GREATNESS AND EUROPEAN ASCENDANCY.

Russia is in many ways outside the European family of nations, and yet she has forced herself into the forefront of the affairs of that family. So while more extraneous to the divine scheme of things in the earth than a power that holds dominion in the Holy Land, she holds an overshadowing position in the group of events revealed as those that form the crisis of the latter days. Looking at her vast territorial expansion, and her dominating influence in politics at the present time, it would be a wonder if her form were absent from the prophetic delineations of the time. It is far from being absent. It is the most conspicuous object. Let a few sentences try to show it.

In the last two chapters of the book of Daniel is a prophecy of events extending from B.C. 540 down to our own day, and beyond—to the resurrection of the dead. This will be seen by comparing Dan. x. 1, with chaps. xi. 2 and xii. 2. It thus embraces a period of over 2500 years. You have the expedition of Xerxes and the appearance of Alexander the Great, and the subdivision of the Greek empire after his death; the collision between the various sections of the empire: the advent of the Romans: outlined with considerable detail. The fulfilment of the prophecy in the progress of history has been so exact as to force unbelievers into the gratuitous supposition that the prophecy must have been written after the events. We need not on this occasion occupy ourselves with the part of the prophecy which has become historic.—At verse 40 (chap. xi.), we reach "the time of the end," which is what concerns us more

particularly now. "At the time of the end," says this verse, "the king of the north" shall figure most largely on the theatre of military events. He shall "come against" the holder of the Holy Land "like a whirlwind" and overflow and pass over: overthrowing many countries, seizing Egypt, entering the Holy Land and there meeting his fate (see verses 40-46).

The phrase "king of the north" would of itself suggest Russia in modern times as the power monopolising the northern area of the globe. She is currently known as the "Colossus of the north." But the identification would not be complete if were not for two chapters in Ezekiel, which supply geographical terms that cannot be applied outside the Russian Empire. Those geographical terms are more obvious in the Revised Version than in King James' translation. The chapters as they stand in the Revised Version are addressed to "the Prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal"—in which it is not difficult to recognise the original form of the modern names "Russia, Moscow and Tobolski." King James' version has "*Chief* Prince of Meshech and Tubal." The difference turns on the word "Rosh," which is a Hebrew word for *chief* as well as the name of a people. The question to be settled was, in which of the senses was the word used in the chapters in question—as an adjective "chief" or as a proper name Rosh? The 70 Jews who translated the Hebrew scriptures into Greek for Ptolemy 300 years before Christ (and the version is extant at the present day, and known as the Septuagint) have treated it as a proper name; and as they lived not long after the time that Ezekiel wrote, when the intended sense was more likely to be known than 2000 years after, the Revisers have adopted their view as the correct one. Even without this aid, the Russian character of the power addressed is manifest from the statement in verse 15 (chapter xxxviii.): "Thou shalt come from *thy place out of the north parts*." It is said he will do this "in the latter days," also "in the latter years"—(see verses 16 and 18). As these are the years we have now reached, we have but to cast our eyes in the direction of "the north parts" to see that Russia alone is answerable to the description of the prophecy.

What then is the mission assigned to Russia in these latter days? When we have discerned this we see how completely events are tending in the direction of its fulfilment. She is to be leader and protector of many minor nationalities in military confederacy (verse 6). "Many people with thee. Be thou prepared and prepare for thyself, thou and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them." There is an enumeration of the peoples under this guardship. The names are not all recognisable in modern

political geography, but they represent races and countries having still an existence in modern times: "Persia, Ethiopia and Lybia: Gomer and the house of Togarmah of the north quarters and all his bands."

The first feature in the programme is *preparation*: "Be thou prepared and prepare for thyself." Who does not know that this is what Russia has been steadily and unostentatiously doing for 40 years past? She has been developing her military organisation on the basis of universal conscription, until now she is in a position to call ten millions of troops into the field. She has been perfecting her military armaments and building strategic railways on the leading frontiers of her constantly enlarging empire. Unhastily and unceasingly, she has been extending her dominion in Asia and Eastern Europe in the successive subjugation of the Asiatic Khanates and repeated annexation of Turkish territory till she stands astride the world in the most gigantic empire the world has ever seen. She has become "guard" to a number of peoples outside her own autonomy. The last instance is Bulgaria, over whom she has thrown the ægis of her power. She is about to perform the same part in Armenia.

If a comparison be made between the Russia of two centuries ago and the Russia of the present day, it will be seen that the inverse process has taken place in her to that which has been going on and is now nearly complete in Turkey. While Turkey has gradually shrunk from a nearly world-wide empire to a political nullity, Russia has enlarged from a barbaric principality to a military power of the first rank, under whose shadow even France is not ashamed to place herself.

The "preparation" is an evident fact of current history. Has the preparation gone far enough for the work to be done? It seems as if it has: time will show. The work to be done, is first of all the conquest of the now drained and exhausted Turkish empire. This will be perceived from the following extract from Dan. xi.: "The King of the North shall come against him" (that is against the power possessing the Holy Land, as the context shows, and therefore against Turkey) "like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen and many ships: and he shall enter into the countries, and overflow and pass over." This is the first stage of the work in which the triumph of Russia meets with no obstacle or check. She comes on victoriously, as with a mighty inundation, filling and overflowing the empty bed of the dried Euphratean river.

This of itself would not be a consummation to be particularly welcomed. If England at the present moment is inclined to withdraw her opposition to what the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs called "the manifest destiny of Russia," it is

not that she can cease to regard a Russian occupation of Constantinople as a menace to civilisation: It is only as a relief from the intense mortification excited by Turkey's defiance of her interference on behalf of the unhappy Armenians. It is the second stage of the prophetic programme that appeals to human interest, as opening the way for the realisation of the long-cherished hope that God would lay His hand on human violence, and Himself provide a refuge for the storm-tossed nations of the world. The second stage brings the Holy Land into view. "He shall enter also into the glorious land" (Dan. xi., 44). It is this entering into the Holy Land that is the chief theme of the Ezekiel prophecy (chaps. xxxviii. and xxxix.) The preliminary events in these chapters are condensed into the exhortation to the northern power to "prepare." The entering into the Holy Land is treated with elaborate minuteness. Both chapters are devoted wholly to it. It would be out of place to quote the chapters in their entirety. Readers can consult them at their leisure. A digest will be sufficient for the purpose of this pamphlet.

"In the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is bought back from the sword and is gathered out of many people; *against the mountains of Israel*, which have been always waste, but (now) brought forth out of the nations and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm. Thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands and many people with thee. . . . I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me when I shall be sanctified in Thee, O Gog, before their eyes."

Daniel says (xi. 45): "He shall come to his end and none shall help him." Ezekiel shows us the means by which he comes to his end: "I will call for a sword against him, throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God. Every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood, and I will rain upon him and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire and brimstone. . . . And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. . . . And all the nations shall see the judgment that I have executed, and the hand that I have laid upon them." (Ezek. xxxviii. 21-22; xxxix. 12-21.)

It is further stated (verse 20) that "all the men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at *my presence*." It will be found upon comparison with other prophetic delineations of the same events, that this "presence" involves the personal and visible presence of the Lord Jesus at his return. Thus

also in Zechariah: "I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle. . . . Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east" (Zech. xiv. 2-4).

It will be remembered that Christ ascended from the Mount of Olives; that he said he would return; and that two angels declared to the apostles his return would be "in like manner" to his departure (Acts i. 12; Matt. xxiv. 30, 31; Jno. xiv. 3; Acts i. 10). These facts combine to fix a literal meaning on the statement of Zechariah, and therefore to place the personal presence of Christ in the events of Ezekiel xxxviii.

Joel is not so explicit, still the same event is visible: "I will gather all nations and bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat. . . . Prepare war: wake up the mighty men: let all the men of war draw near . . . thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord" (Joel iii. 2, 9, 11). God's mighty ones are thus described by Paul: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance" (2 Thes. i. 7, 8). Christ himself defines them thus: "The Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him" (Matt. xxv. 31). The interposition of angels in such a mundane event as the overthrow of an army will seem incongruous to those who are unfamiliar with Bible truth. But even these, where professedly Christian, are bound to recognise the participation of the angels in the manifestation of Christ in the flesh 1800 year ago (Luke ii. 9-15; Matt. iv. 11; Luke xxi. 43), and in every material event associated with the national experience of Israel centuries before (Exodus xiv. 19-25; Is. xxxvii. 26). Therefore, any sense of incongruity they may experience is due, not to the intrinsic nature of the subject, but to their own habit of looking only at the human side of things. There is a divine side, though hidden during the present age of man's neglect of God. This side will cease to be hidden when these events occur.

Daniel's description of the way in which the king of the north comes to his end, with none to help him, involves the angelic element: "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince that standeth up for the children of thy people" (Dan. xii. 1). While this statement covers the occasion and involves the occurrence of the reappearance of Christ to whom the angels are subject (1 Pet. iii. 22), it is evident from the surroundings of the subject of Michael that it primarily refers to the angelic Prince with whom Israel's affairs are in charge. The angel Gabriel, sent from God to commune with Daniel on the subject of "what should befall his people in the latter days"

(Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21; x. 14; Luke i. 26), said, "There is none that holdeth with me in these things but *Michael* YOUR PRINCE," Israel's prince. This angelic prince showed himself to Joshua outside the walls of Jericho, before its fall. Joshua, not knowing him, said: "Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as *captain of the Lord's host* am I come" (Josh. v. 13). His appointment in this capacity appears early in the narrative of Israel's exodus from Egypt: "Behold I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him and obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for *my name is in him*" (and therefore he is *Michael: WHO-LIKE GOD*) (Ex. xxiii. 20). There has been no deposition of this angel prince from the position of Israel's head in national affairs. Consequently, it is in perfect order that at the last crisis of Israel's affliction he should "stand up" for Daniel's people. This does not exclude or obscure Christ's supremacy, because the angels attend him at his coming, and are subject to his direction. For the same reason, it does not interfere with the declaration of the apostle, that "to the angels he hath not put in subjection the world to come" (Heb. ii. 5). The saints reign with Christ, but the angels co-operate in the enormous work involved in the abolition of the present evil world, and the establishment in its place of "new heavens and new earth (politically speaking) wherein dwelleth righteousness." They take part in the final celebration, and swell the chorus of the jubilant saints when they ascribe "power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing" to him who redeems them from "every tongue and people and nation" (Rev. v. 11, 9 12).

The overthrow of the Russian hosts that descend upon the Holy Land is only the beginning of a work of judgment that extends to all the earth. Its extension is intimated in the Ezekiel prophecy thus: "And I will send a fire upon Magog (a term covering both the Russian and the German races), and upon them that dwell securely in the isles—the "sea-girt islands" will no longer be a place of security—and they shall know that I am the Lord" (xxxix. 6). This figurative sending of fire among those not affected by the local Armageddon involves the despatch of messengers, and the employment of "coercion" of a very effectual kind, as evident from another testimony on the subject: "I will send those that escape of them unto the nations Tarshish, &c. . . . that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory, that they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles" (Is. lxvi. 19). This embassy is symbolised in the Apocalypse as an angel proclaiming in mid-heaven: "Fear God and give him glory, for

5: THE POSITION OF BRITAIN.

Is there any prophetic indication that Britain will participate in any way in the sublime transactions that will change the face of the world?

Her actual position in the world at this moment is certainly one that challenges attention, and even excites admiration. A small cluster of islands on the remote confines of Europe, inhabited by a commercial race, with little of the military predilections of the nations on the continent, she wields dominion over nearly half the world, and holds the absolute empire of the sea. She has conquered this position by force of arms and command of money. Her exploits have chiefly been naval. She is supreme on the ocean. Her ships are more numerous than those of all other nations put together. Those who travel are the most struck with this fact. At every considerable seaport, British ships outnumber foreigners by nine to one. In actual voyage, the traveller has a pleasing illustration of her supremacy in a shape that doubtless causes a thrill of pride in most British breasts. The British vessel and the foreigner meet on the ocean. Jack tars on the British vessel get ready to hoist the ensign, but not till the other vessel dips her ensign do they perform that courtesy. All nations salute the British flag at sea. It is an element of international law enacted at the peace of Paris on the overthrow of the first Napoleon. Britain's naval power warrants this premiership of the sea. Ships are her great feature. She has about 30,000 of them, counting only vessels of a sea-going tonnage. All other nations do not muster so many together. As for her fighting ships, her fleet nearly equals the fleets of all the other powers. Her recently announced naval policy is to build one ship for every vessel two. This is not braggadocio but necessity. Her empire is so widely scattered and her very existence depends so much upon an uninterrupted supply of food by sea, that she must have a fleet equal to the collective fleets of the other nations in case of a possible combination on their part against her.

It is not the first time she has been in this position. Not a hundred years ago she had all the world against her when Europe lay at Napoleon's feet. She came out of the ordeal triumphant, and, with the restoration of peace, devoted herself to trade and science and art. It was supposed she had lost the old fighting vigour, but recent events have electrified the world with the discovery that she is prepared to face the world again if necessary. The situation has been graphically described in patriotic lines published in Canada, and quoted in the British press everywhere, to the following effect:—

the hour of his judgment is come" (Rev. xiv. 7). As regards the European nations, there is no favourable response to this summons, for John "saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies together make war against the Lamb" (Rev. xix. 19). "These shall make war with the Lamb, but the Lamb shall overcome them" (Rev. xvii. 14).

This is "the war of the great day of God Almighty" during which "the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day"—(Isa. ii. 11). This humbling of human pride is effected by the violent wrecking of all their armies: "The indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them: he hath delivered them to the slaughter. . . . It is the day of the Lord's vengeance and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. . . . Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not: Behold your God will come with vengeance; even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. . . . The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away"—(Is. xxxiv. 2, 8; xxxv. 4, 10).

The general object of the Armageddon slaughter, in which Russia figures so prominently at the beginning, is stated thus in Ezek. xxxix. 21: "And I will set my glory among the nations, and they shall see my judgment that I have executed and the hand that I have laid upon them. It will be remembered that one of the earliest promises was "The whole earth shall be filled with my glory." Here we have the *modus operandi* exhibited: the glory of God will overspread the earth when the glory of man is extinguished in blood. But works of devastation alone will not effect this. Works of construction and healing follow the overthrow: "He maketh wars to cease to the ends of the earth. . . . Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted in the earth"—(Psa. xlvi. 9). "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass"—(Ps. lxxvii. 2, 6). "He shall speak peace to the nations"—(Zech. ix. 10). "The isles shall wait for his law"—(Is. xlii. 4). "In mercy shall the throne be established: and he (the Messiah) shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness"—(Is. xvi. 5). "The law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and the nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more"—(Micah. iv. 2, 3).

THE QUEEN OF THE SEA.

"She wakes! in the furthest West, the murmur has reached our ears—
 She wakes! in the furthest East, the Russian listens and fears—
 She wakes! the ravens clamour, and winds cry overhead,
 The wandering waves take up the cry, "She wakes whom nations
 dread!"

AT LAST, ye have roused the Sea Queen; at last when the world
 unites,

She stirs from her scornful silence, and wakes to her last of fights;
 Alone, with the world against her, she has turned on the snarling
 crew,

No longer the Peaceful Trader, but the Viking North Seas knew.
 She calls, and her ships of battle—dragons her seas have bred—
 Glide into Plymouth Harbour, and gather round Beachy Head.
 She wakes! and the clang of arming echoes through all the earth,
 The ring of warriors' weapons; stern music of soldiers' mirth.
 In the world there may be nations, and there gathers round every
 throne

The strength of EARTH-BORN armies, but THE SEA is England's own.
 As she ruled, she still shall rule it, from Plymouth to Esquimalt,
 As long as the winds are tameless—as long as the waves are salt.
 This may be our Armageddon; seas may purple with blood and flame,
 As we go to our rest forever, leaving the world a name.
 What matter? There have been none like us, nor any to tame our
 pride;

If we fall, we shall fall as they fell, die as our forefathers died—
 What better? the seas that bred us shall rock us to rest at last,
 If we sink with the Jack still floating, nailed to the nation's mast."

This is very telling from the merely patriotic point of view. It is of no value as regards the knowledge of futurity: it is on the whole a Pagan effusion in this respect, and on a par with Egypt's ancient boast, "My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself" (Ezek. xxix. 3), which brought upon Egypt divine anathemas, as the context in the chapter referred to shows. Nevertheless, it is useful as illustrating the modern position and stimulating the enquiry concerning Britain with which this section opens.

It would be a wonder if in the light so fully shed upon the affairs of the world in the latter day, the position of a dominant sea-power like England should not be visible. As a matter of fact, it is not invisible, and, what is more interesting, there is clear indication of the part she is to play in the transition of the world from the government of men to the authority of the Kingdom of God. We say this without any reference to the preposterous theory of the late Mr. Hine, that England is the modern survival and the predicted exaltation of "the lost ten tribes." It was shown in the Exeter Hall debate that this theory is untenable on every point, and that England is as purely Gentile stock as France or Russia. The theory has been little heard of in England

since the debate, though still lingering in some corners of the Colonies.

But though England is not Israel, she has acted a friendly part towards Israel in the Jewish race (which in modern parlance is expressive of the whole race of Israel). She has removed Israelitish disabilities; she has cherished, circulated and defended the Israelitish scriptures, and she has taken a national and official interest in Israel's land (the Holy Land) in an exhaustive survey by an association headed by the Prince of Wales. These facts have a bearing on the question to which an answer will now be attempted.

A leading power with ships is conspicuous in the bright picture of Israel's restoration supplied in the 60th chapter of Isaiah: "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel because He hath glorified thee"—(verse 9). The answer turns upon the identification of Tarshish. As a Bible name, it must be identified on Bible principles. Tarshish originally was the name of a grandson of Japheth, the eldest son of Noah. It appears in the list of Noah's immediate descendants, who in families migrated to the various countries of the world, and of whom it is said, "By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands: every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations" (Gen. x. 1-5; 1 Chro. i. 5-7). The countries of the world were known to Bible writers from this point of view: the names of the settlers were given to the countries occupied, a process visible in many modern colonies. It is difficult to exactly connect these ancient names with modern designations because of the confusions and changes brought about by the wars that have raged between nations from the beginning. But as regards Tarshish, we happen to have a clue which is tolerably clear. Tarshish is mentioned in Ezek. xxvii. 12, as a country trading to the Phœnician port of Tyre with "silver, iron, lead and tin." Ancient history informs us that the source of the tin supply, as a scarce and valuable alloy for the tempering of swords, was a trade secret with the Phœnicians, and that their western-going vessels were often followed by Greek ships to find it out. Roman ships did the same, and ultimately discovered the source in islands outside the Straits of Gibraltar. These islands were named Cassiterides, or the tin islands. The Phœnicians called them Baratanac, which has the same meaning in their language. Now, in the map of the world drawn by Ptolemy about 1,800 years ago, the name Cassiterides is written over the British islands, from which it follows that the British Islands are the tin islands of the Greeks and Phœnicians, and, therefore, the Tarshish of Ezekiel xxvii. 12, which traded in the Tyrian fairs with tin and

other metals. That the Spirit of God should name the tin islands Tarshish is probably due to the Divine knowledge that the descendants of Tarshish, the grandson of Japheth, found their way to these islands in the early settlement of the earth.

There is evidence that the name was applied to other parts of the world (probably because colonised by Tarshishites at one time or other). Such as the country to the south of the Red Sea (some geographers think it India, others in Africa) from which a navy once in three years brought to Solomon "ivory, apes and peacocks" (1 Kings, x. 22). Some also identify Tarshish with a place in Spain, near the Straits of Gibraltar. But the confusion that might have been created by these differing applications is prevented by the fact that in the present day England holds sway over all the regions to which the term can, with any feasibility, be applied. She is lord of India, and of the Ophir districts in Africa, and even at the entrance of the Mediterranean her flag flies on the rock of Gibraltar.

This identification of "the ships of Tarshish" with the ships of Britain does not rest altogether on the source of Tyre's tin supply. It is confirmed in various ways by other Bible allusions. The human antagonist of the Russian Gog, for example, is thus described in Ezekiel xxxviii. 13: "Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all the young lions thereof shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil?" &c. Here Tarshish appears as *the mercantile power of the latter days* (for it is plainly stated "it shall be in the latter days"—verse 16). Two questions arise: Where are the merchants of the world at the present time? The answer lands the enquirer on the banks of the Thames. And if it be asked if "young lions" have any heraldic association with these merchants, there springs before us the notorious fact that the British Royal Standard displays young lions as its most characteristic feature, and that England's colonies are politically so many "young lions" that have recently shown a strong disposition to come to the help of the old lion. When we further consider that England is the natural antagonist of Russia in her southward movement, the evidence seems complete.

But further, we have the power befriending Israel in the latter days described in Isaiah xviii. in such a way as to make it impossible to miss England in the application. It is described as "a land shadowing with wings"—that is, a land exercising a protecting dominion over other wide-lying countries. It is said to be "beyond the rivers of Ethiopia"—that is, from the prophet's point of view, writing in the Holy Land. There were two

Ethiopias in the prophet's time—east and west. The statement that the land "shadowing with wings" lay "beyond the rivers of Ethiopia" is an intimation that it was no neighbouring power, such as Assyria or Egypt, but a land far away, which is found to be the case now that the time has come. But more than that, it was to be an island power, for it goes on to say that she "sendeth ambassadors *by the sea*." When a power must necessarily use the sea when she sends ambassadors, she must be an island power. Not only so, but her vessels, at the crisis contemplated by the prophet, were to be "*swift* messengers" (verse 2). In King James's translation, they are said to be "vessels of bulrushes," but this is allowed to be an inadequate representation of the naval architecture in the case. Translators are a little divided as to the exact significance of the word translated "bulrushes." The Revised Version gives us "papyrus," but this does not improve matters much as regards the stability of the swift vessels conveying the ambassadors of the land shadowing with wings. Vessels of papyrus would not be more seaworthy or sea-going vessels than vessels of bulrushes, though they might be safe enough on the smooth waters of the Nile. Another admissible rendering of the word, according to some translators, is "turning things" or "whirling things"—which would suit the case exactly; for the British island-power, with its widely extended wings of imperial dominion, sends its ambassadors by the sea in swift steam vessels of whirling things, whether screw or paddle.

There can be no doubt of the British power being intended by these prophecies. The part she plays in the coming change is clear when they are all put together. First (as in Ezek. xxxviii. 13), she defends Israel against Russian aggression, but in vain; for the northern hosts, descending "like a cloud to cover the land," capture Jerusalem and overrun the whole country, except the south-eastern districts of "Edom, Moab, and Ammon" (Zech. xiv. 1; Dan. xi. 41). Divine intervention alone averts destruction. The enemy is overwhelmed and driven out of the land at a moment when British power stands at bay, and Israel stands in danger of extermination. The power and glory of God are exhibited in the eyes of all the nations in the miraculous overthrow of the Russian armies in the very hour of their greatest triumph. Then England comes forward as the helper of the Jews on a larger scale. All the world ultimately helps in the work of restoration (Isaiah lxvi. 19, 20), but "the ships of Tarshish *first*."

Here is a counterpart to the typical situation—visible in the first establishment of the kingdom of David. Hiram, king of Tyre—the sea-power of the ancient world—co-

operated with David in the building of his throne—(2 Sam. v. 11, 12)—and on the occasion of the accession of Solomon (also a type of Christ) the same alliance of the sea comes clearly out in a message of Hiram's on record in 1 Kings v. 7, 12.

The prospect of England's participation in the work of "re-building the tabernacle of David that is fallen" must naturally be pleasing to all British-born believers in the word of God. It is no sentimental illusion, but a logical deduction from actual evidence. The participation, too, will not be the limited support of some voluntary "society" in the shape with which we are familiar in the religious movements of the age; it will be the service of the whole nation; the effectual work of a government with all the material resources and political prestige at Britain's command. "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles (in Bible language, the princes of the British royal family would be kings) shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts" (Psa. lxxvii. 10). "The daughter of Tyre (a latter day designation of Britain—the Tyre of the latter days)—shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour"—the favour of Messiah's bride (see the whole of Psa. xlv., of which this is verse 12). When their "royal highnesses" the Princes and Princesses of Britain and her wealthy aristocracy pay court at the throne of Israel's greatness, there will be a manifest fulfilment of the prophecy which says: "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising"; "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me" (Is. lx. 3; xlix. 23).

It is manifest that there must be a great change in England's mood before she takes this attitude of national subserviency to the throne of David. She is at present the proudest nation upon earth. What brings her to her knees before Israel's king? Is it the mere display of power in the overthrow of Russia's multitudes on the mountains of Israel? This is highly improbable. It is likely that the British authorities will at first regard that event as a chance convulsion of nature conveniently coinciding with England's political exigencies like the destruction of the Spanish Armada. It will require some more direct operation to make the Queen of the Sea the suppliant servant of the Lion of the tribe of Judah. She must be humbled before her services to Israel can either be offered or accepted. This appears to be distinctly intimated in the statement of Isaiah ii. 16—that "the day of the Lord shall be upon all the

ships of Tarshish." The object of that day is declared to be (verse 11) that "the day shall look down and the haughtiness shall be bowed down and the Lord alone exalted." The story of Britain's pride is her fleet; her rule of the waves her loudest boast. To touch her disastrously here would be the most effectual method of humbling her. The method of disaster appears to be hinted in Psalm xviii., a prophetic Psalm in which the Kingdom of God is exhibited to view, the earth summoned to His worship, and the events rehearsed by which His name has been exalted in the eyes of the nations. There is first an allusion to the discomfiture of the Gogian armies, and then we have these words: "Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind." England's ironclads meet with the fate of the Spanish expedition in the days of Elizabeth. The violence of divinely-directed storm will send them to the bottom like a stone. They are not among the ships of Tarshish that will bring Israel's sons from the ends of the earth. They are the fighting ships of Tarshish, for which the Lord has no need. Having humbled the power and pride of Tarshish by the destruction of her fighting ships, he will accept the service of her inoffensive mercantile marine, which will be useful both in bringing back the dispersed of Israel and in conveying the multitudes that will every year come up to Jerusalem for worship (Isaiah lxvi. 20-23; Zech. xiv. 16). "In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of Hosts, of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose lands the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts—Mount Zion" (Isaiah xviii. 7).

In the days of Moses, Pharaoh was demanded to let Israel go that they might serve God; in the days of "the prophet like unto Moses," all nations will be called on to bring Israel to their land as an acceptable present. "I will say to the North, give up; and to the South, keep not back; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth"—(Isaiah xliii. 6). Britain will be in the foremost ranks of those responding, and her ships among the most visible of the instruments employed; as it is written: "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them" (Isaiah lx. 9).

There is no prospect or project upon earth that could appeal so little to the ordinary current of human sympathies as the proposal to unite internationally for the restoration of the Jews

to their own land. Yet, when the time comes, it will become what is called "the rage." "Ten men out of all the nations shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, and shall say, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you" (Zech. viii. 23). The interest which the public cannot feel at present takes possession in advance of every intelligent man or woman who realises the facts and conclusions involved in the history of the Jews, as affecting both them and the world in time to come.

6. THE JEWS: CURRENT MOVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS.

Though the least interesting from the popular point of view, this is the most important of all the topics that have been introduced in connection with the Gathering Storm in Europe. It is indeed the key of the situation, as becomes manifest when the subject is sufficiently extended to embrace all its elements. No purview of the case is complete that leaves out the God of Israel and Christ, the King of Israel, and the prophetic scriptures of Israel, which the Apostle Peter declared were not the outcome of "the will of man," but the production of the spirit of God operating through "holy men of old" (2 Pet. 1. 21). As Christ endorsed the exhibition of things contained in these scriptures of Moses and the prophets, we need not be afraid to receive all that is involved in them with the most implicit faith.

When we ask, from this point of view, who the Jews are, we get away from the spectacle presented by their modern dispersion and get back to sublime facts in a far-off history, and forward to sublimer facts in a near future. When we ask why they are to be restored, and in what state, we get away from the contemplation of a downtrodden race of usurers and "ole clo' men," and find ourselves in the presence of the glory of God and a new world. When we ask why the Jews and the Holy Land, notwithstanding the sacred associations of history, are among the despised and repellent things of the earth, we get an explanation in accord with our highest notions of reason, and containing in it the seeds of the highest hope and well-being for all mankind.

The history of Israel goes back for more than 3,000 years. It is given to us authentically in the writings of Moses. There is no need to contend against the speculative, indeterminate, and changeful theories of higher criticism, on behalf of the authenticity of those writings, in the presence of Christ's endorsement of them (Jno. v. 46, 47; Luke xxiv. 44; Matt. v. 17, 18). This endorsement is conclusive against the ingenious

guesses of mere manuscript men, whose notions turn out every 20 years or so to be the vagaries of a mere scholastic ingenuity.

The writings of Moses show us Israel a chosen people. "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people to himself above all people that are on the face of the earth" (Deut. vii. 6). If it be asked why a chosen people should be given over to calamity and dispersion, the same writings supply the answer: "I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you, and evil will befall you in the latter days." "And it shall come to pass that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and to bring you to nought, and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people from one end of the earth even unto the other" (Deut. xxi. 29; xxviii. 63, 64). The dispersion of Israel among the nations is no evidence that God has finally rejected them as a nation, though they are cast off for the time being. It is rather a proof of their divine relation, in the light of Amos iii. 2: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; THEREFORE I will punish you for all your iniquities."

Israel's sufferings are thus a proof of their divine election; not only so, but they are likewise a pledge of Israel's coming deliverance, in the light of the following statement: "Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them *all the good that I have promised them*" (Jer. xxxii. 42). Here, coming good is commensurable with present evil. What is the coming good? God says he has promised it; can we find the specification of it? Abundantly. "It shall come to pass that like as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down and to throw down, and to destroy and to afflict, *so will I watch over them to build and to plant*, saith the Lord" (Jer. xxx. 28). "He that scattered Israel will *gather him*, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock" (verse 10). Some people imagine that this is the full measure of the divine intentions in the case—the gathering together of a scattered race into their original "fatherland." This would be an affair of very limited importance, and could not concern us practically at all. The purpose of God,—the good promised to Israel,—which he says he will perform as surely as he has brought evil,—will go infinitely beyond this. We get a glimpse of its greatness in this statement: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform *that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah*. —In those days, and at that time, will I cause THE BRANCH OF

RIGHTEOUSNESS to grow up unto David: and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely" (Jer. xxxii. 14). "I will gather them on every side and bring them into their own land, and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and ONE KING shall be king to them all, and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all" (Ezek. xxxvii. 2). "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and build it as in the days of old" (Amos. ix. 11). "I will make her that was cast far off a strong nation. And the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever" (Micah iv. 8). "And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep"—(chap. v. 1). "And many people shall go and say, come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem"—(Isaiah ii. 3). "At that time shall they call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the Lord to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil hearts"—(Jer. iii. 17). "The moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed when the Lord of Hosts shall reign on Mount Zion before his ancients gloriously. . . . In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things. . . . He will destroy the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in-victory. And the Lord God shall wipe away tears from all faces, and the rebuke (or derision) of his people shall he take away from all the earth. It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God: we have waited for him: we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isa. xxiv. 23; xxv. 6-9). "Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah iv. 3). "Men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed: for he shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also and him that hath no helper. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth". (Psa. lxxii). "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. xi. 9).

It will be seen from this citation of prophetic testimony that "the good thing promised" to Israel, which God says he will as certainly perform as all the evil that he has brought upon them (and that evil has been great), comprises the

utmost good that can be imagined for the entire human race. It involves, as will be noticed, the presence of Christ upon the earth, in accordance with the promise which he made himself and with which the New Testament abounds, that as he went away, so he would come again. It involves the establishment of a single government for all the earth, of which it stands greatly in need, for multiplicity of governments means wars and multiplicity of burdens and expenses for the people.

And the single government to be established is to be a divine one, an omnipotent one, an infallible one, a merciful, just and kind one:—and that, not, be it observed, as "a new departure," but as the resumption of a work already begun and only temporarily suspended, so far as visible operations among the nations at the present moment are concerned. It involves the re-building of the fallen throne of David; the re-establishment of the overthrown kingdom of Israel; the re-enactment of a divine constitution in the land that has been the theatre of all divine operations hitherto: the land promised to Abraham; the city that God honoured with his manifested presence in past times.

This aspect of the matter may enable us to understand why the gospel as defined in the New Testament is called "the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. iv. 23; ix. 37; xxiv. 14; Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 43; viii. 1; ix. 2; &c. &c.) and why the hope of the gospel is "the hope of Israel" (Acts xxviii. 20; xxvi. 7, 7; Jno. iv. 22; Rom. ix. 3-5; xi. 17; xv. 17).

Another thing it sets in a very clear light, and that is the meaning of Peter's association of the coming of Christ with "the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts iii. 20). He says "God shall send Jesus Christ," but that the heavens must hold him till then. Pulpit theology furnishes no counterpart to this. It provides neither for the coming of Christ, nor for any work of restitution to be done, as spoken of by the prophets. We look into the prophets, we find it is so; they all speak of "the times of restitution" (with perhaps the exception of Jonah); and it is only *one work of restitution* they all speak of, and that the restitution of the fallen kingdom of God in the land of promise, under a new constitution of things, in which "people shall be all righteous" (Is. lx. 21), and shall all know God from the least to the greatest (Jer. xxxi. 34).

This is the prospect that lies beyond the Gathering Storm in Europe, and imparts to it a meaning so glad some in the eyes of those who regard it from the Bible-point of view.

But to this work of restoration there are stages. The king-

dom of David does not start up in a night like Jonah's gourd. It first re-appears in embryo as a very frail thing, and in a natural form, upon the mountains of Israel, before the divine intervention which commences the overthrow of Gentile power at Armageddon. Its appearance in this form is the result of natural fostering. Anyone may satisfy himself of this by reading Ezek. xxxviii. The Russian Gog is there informed that the land of Israel which he invades "in the latter years" is a land of "desolate places now inhabited"—a land that has just "been brought back from the sword"; a land that has been always waste, but is now peopled by Israelites "brought forth out of the nations," yet in such a feeble way that they are "dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates"; a people that "have gotten cattle and goods, and dwell in the midst of the land." (See verses 10, 11, 12.)

Because of what is revealed in this respect, believers in prophecy have for the last 50 years been looking for the formation of agricultural Jewish colonies in Palestine. (For evidence of this, the reader is referred to page 395 of "Elpis Israel," written in 1849, by Dr. Thomas, since dead.) At the present moment this development is well advanced. Fifty years ago, there was nothing visible in this direction. The way was blocked by the power of the Turkish empire, one of whose fundamental laws was that no alien could hold land in any territory subject to her dominion, and, therefore, no Jew in Palestine. This legal obstacle was removed as the result of the Crimean War. In the Treaty of Paris, made internationally at the close of that war in 1855-6, a stipulation was inserted, allowing aliens to hold landed property in Turkey, and therefore Jews in Palestine. This was a very insignificant proviso in popular estimation; it was a very important step in the direction of divine purpose. In a certain way, it was parallel to the sale of Joseph to the Ishmaelites, which, on the surface a mere kidnapping incident, was the planting of a nation on Egyptian soil, and the first step in the preparation of a situation for the manifestation of the glory of God by Israel's deliverance from Egypt under Moses. The removal of the restriction against aliens holding land in Turkey, opened the way for Israel's return. The result was not instantly visible. It was too small to be seen even when it began. Next year a single Jew acquired land in the country of his fathers. In the year following, first one and then another followed his example. The work of preliminary re-settlement thus begun, finally received a great impetus from several distinct movements and occurrences.

First, the formation of a Jewish agricultural school at Jaffa, where, under its auspices, a wide extent of country has been put under cultivation for the growing of oranges and other products.

This settlement is increasing in prosperity from year to year. *Second*, the exploration and scientific survey of the land, "from Dan to Beersheba," by a British association with the Prince of Wales at its head. *Third*, the construction of a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, resulting in a large increase of the Jewish population in the latter city, which has now become Jewish to such an extent that no business can be done on the Jewish sabbath and the Jewish holidays. *Fourth*, the founding of a Jewish settlement outside Jerusalem in honour of Sir Moses Montefiore, by means of funds collected from all parts of the world in his 85th year. *Fifth*, the formation of Jewish agricultural colonies in various parts of the Holy Land, which have been taken over by the Rothschilds, and are now being conducted by managers of their appointment. The formation of these colonies was due to the outbreak of a terrific persecution against the Jews in Russia, which drove thousands out of the country, and sent them to Palestine for refuge.

In addition to these things are various other contributory schemes and movements, such as the incorporation of a company for the construction of a railway from Acre to Damascus—partly constructed; the contemplation of a railway from the Sea of Galilee to Egypt *via* Jerusalem; the acquisition and settlement of a large tract of land in Gilead, by a Company of Jewish gentlemen. Besides these organic developments, tending to the Jewish revival, has to be noted the vast change that has taken place in the position of the Jews among the nations of Europe. The fact is thus referred to in an article appearing in the *Melbourne Argus* for April 18th, 1896: "The rise of the Jews is, in fact, a feature of modern times. Fifty years ago, to quote a recent writer, the Jew was inert and imbecile. Now he exercises a power greater than in the days of David or Solomon. The Jews to-day influence more people, control more bullion, and exercise more legislative power, than they did when they had their temple, their land, and their sceptre."

Behind all is looming at the present moment a scheme of gigantic dimensions which is thus noticed in the same article: "Artists are not usually politicians, but a great English artist has conceived a political idea which has at least the merit of picturesqueness. Mr. Holman Hunt steeped his imagination for some years in the atmosphere and scenery of Palestine, and he is at the present moment pleading in the English press for a scheme to purchase Palestine from the 'Unspeakable Turk,' and set up on the soil of the Holy Land a Jewish republic. Mr. Holman Hunt argues that the Sultan is practically bankrupt, and would be very willing to realise on a remote and worthless bit of his estate such as Palestine is. Mr. Holman Hunt says that a syndicate of wealthy Jews could be easily formed—he hints,

indeed that it is in actual process of formation—who could readily float a loan of say, £100,000,000, and this sum would be ample to buy out all Turkish rights in Palestine, and organise a big scheme for transporting Jews to the ancient seat of their nation. Palestine, Mr. Holman Hunt thinks, is bound to become once more the cradle of the Jewish nation; and, if the Great Powers approve, the Holy Land will fall like a ripe pear into Jewish palms. And why should not the Great Powers approve? To create a Jewish Belgium in the East—a state that is guaranteed by the Great Powers,—would be to create a centre of order and stability in a realm which is to-day a mere cave of the winds. An authority like Sir Samuel Montague supports Mr. Holman Hunt's views, and thinks that to inhabit Palestine is an aspiration that may simply be said to form part and parcel of the Jewish race. *Events, he adds, are working towards the accomplishment of that golden dream.* What a gain to the world's peace it would be if the Jews, who dwell in all lands but belong to none, who are the gipsies of the world, a nation without a home, a common language, or an acknowledged government, could be set up in business as a nation for themselves on the ancient seat of their race! *As a matter of fact, the Jews, under the action of some unknown force, or as if in obedience to some mysterious signal, are drifting back to Palestine.* Tiny colonies of Jewish agriculturists are springing up everywhere; and, after an absence of two thousand years, the Jew may once more be seen ploughing the soil of his fatherland."

The editor of the *Argus* expresses the opinion that Mr. Holman Hunt's scheme will prove "a merely air-drawn vision." But this is the mere expression of a private opinion; it in no way invalidates the fact that such a scheme is in agitation amongst people who have the power to carry it out. Still less does it interfere with the fact, of which the editor of the *Argus* is probably ignorant or unbelieving; that the time has arrived for the success of some movement that will place Israel again in their land in a partial way, in preparation for the stupendous revolution connected with Armageddon.

Men who have no faith in the revealed purposes of God naturally look at current affairs with different impressions and calculations from those who take revelation into account. Time will show, as it has shewn in countless instances in the past, that the merely human point of view is the ephemeral misleading point of view in such matters, and that human affairs do, and must, and will, work out in the shape before appointed by Him who has made all things for Himself.

That the contingency of Christ's re-appearing should be involved in such perfectly natural movements may seem a

fantastic absurdity in the eyes of those who judge these affairs apart from the Bible. Yet some principles are acknowledged by them that ought at least to disarm the strong prejudice with which the coming of Christ is regarded. I saw the other day that a newspaper editor was preparing his readers for the possible occurrence of anything. His text was the recently-announced discovery of a method by which concealed objects can be photographed through the flesh. Some of his remarks were as follows:

THE PRESENT WONDERFUL AGE.

"The age of slow-moving and drab-coloured life is gone for ever. The moments are packed with incident. Every sort of human interest grows strangely vivid. Something is 'happening' at every moment and in every realm open to human knowledge. Politics certainly grow breathless. Thrice within the last three months, for example, Great Britain has been on the point of war. Africa is aflame. English troops are marching once more on the Nile. Italy has an army of 40,000 strong in Abyssinia. Japan in the Far East, and King Menelik in Abyssinia, are examples of the new forces and personages which are quickening the pulse of the world's politics. In science we have the new photography; in social affairs, the new woman; in exploration, Dr. Nansen and his alleged discovery of the North Pole; in mechanical science, the translation of Niagara into foot pounds of saleable energy, &c. No one can tell at what moment, or from what quarter, there may not break upon us some startling vision. Mr. Maxim may teach us how to fly, or Mr. Edison how to travel through air or water by electricity. Chemistry may give us a new weapon that shall make and unmake kingdoms, or a new and costless food which will revolutionise commerce, a new illuminant which will ruin all the gas companies, or a new form of mechanical energy which will treble the working power of the world. Science may suddenly give us a new medicine, which will blot out half the diseases of the race and widen the very term of human life. Or it may spell out some new syllable in the great grammar of natural law, and make a discovery as fruitful as Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation. Anything, in a word, is possible, and possible at any moment."

Now, if "anything is possible at any moment," why not the coming of Christ? I mean from the newspaper point of view? It is degrading the subject to make a plea for it on so low a ground; but this is a time when fools must be answered according to their folly. It does seem extraordinary that while clever natural observers are prepared to admit the possibility of unknown, unanticipated, and improbable things, they should

oppose such a wall of invincible scepticism against the occurrence of an event which has been expected for nearly 2,000 years; and the ground for which has been historically laid in transactions that cannot be impeached; the signs of which are blazing in the sky of human affairs, and the significance and need for which are so intelligible and so urgent. It is part of the madness of the world: part of the predicted condition of unfaith which is itself a sign of the great event at the door. It is not a condition in which a truly rational man—the man who gives all facts their place and their weight—will be willing to be found in the crisis that is fast coming on.

The general upshot of the considerations submitted in the foregoing pages, and proved by evidence, is to show that the world is getting closely into the neighbourhood of the second advent. It may seem incongruous that such a conclusion should be extracted from such premises. It may seem a strange mixing up of newspaper politics and Bible religion. It will only seem so to those who have not made themselves acquainted with the Bible for themselves. The appearance of strangeness will disappear when it is apprehended that the Bible scheme of religion is a scheme designed for the earth and the unhappy race of man that dwells upon it—an arrangement of God operative from the beginning for the bringing back of man into those harmonious relations with Himself, in which alone human well-being is to be found, and therefore a scheme embracing the affairs of the nations of mankind, among whom Daniel declared God rules invisibly for the guiding of matters to their appointed end.

Popular theology, deriving its main bias from Greek philosophy, has confused the bearing of things by interpreting Bible religion as a scheme for preparing a supposed immortal being for a supposed disembodied state in a supposed realm of *post mortem* existence. "God only hath immortality" (1 Tim. vi. 15). Man is mortal because of sin (Rom. vi. 23). The earth is the covenanted inheritance of God's reconciled children (Psa. xxxvii. 9; Matt. v. 5; Psa. ii. 8). When this is understood a great fog is lifted from every page of the Bible, and the affairs of the nations (divinely regulated) become an intelligible part of the revealed programme for the earth's deliverance.

The exact placing of the second appearing of Christ in that programme, as regards the fixing of a date, is impossible. All attempts to place it exactly in this sense, while based upon definitely revealed periods, have assumed an intention not expressed with regard to the events marking the close of those periods. There has always been an element of inference in the

argument, which, while carrying probability with it, did not amount to certainty. It is evident that the day and the hour have been withheld in any express form, though the time is indicated in the epochal sense.

The event itself is beyond all doubt or uncertainty. That Christ will return to the earth is as expressly declared as the fact of his crucifixion and resurrection. That it was to be "after a long time" is also declared in those very words. The approximate length of that "long time" has been clearly indicated, and the features of public life that would characterise the ending of that long time have been revealed with a plainness that enables us to recognise them as plainly visible in the great political facts of the hour. The trend of public events is converging from all directions upon the very neighbourhood and the very situation forming the crisis of God's long-foretold, visibly renewed and final interference in the affairs of men. Under such circumstances, the attitude of true intelligence is the one defined in the words of Christ: "Blessed is he that watcheth."

The man who is driven off the attitude of watchfulness by the mistakes of those who have confidently fixed upon particular dates is the victim of a logical aberration not creditable to intelligence. A condensed prophetic programme on the scale of centuries demands, and will receive at the hands of wisdom, some elasticity of application as regards the terminal events in detail, and some allowance will be made for the premature constructions of ardent anticipation and desire. The programme itself, in its broad features, stands massively established on centuries of accomplished history. It is not a bank of cloud, but a range of solid mountains stretching away into antiquity.

At last the finish will be reached. At last the Lord will come. The storm-cloud that is gathering will burst and disclose the shining figure of "Israel's hope and earth's desire," "revealed from heaven in flaming fire." His appearance will be the signal for such a time of trouble as has never been known upon earth, and yet the efficient cause of an age of blessedness such as the world has hitherto laboured and sighed for in vain. His mission, at first one of retribution and overthrow, then of education and reconstruction, and finally, of government and beneficence and peace, will give mankind rest at last, and make life in holiness in all the earth the beautiful thing that thoughtful men of all classes have hitherto contemplated only as an ideal and unattainable potentiality. Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.