

THE
COVENANTER.

FEBRUARY, 1852.

[For the Covenanter.]

THE FIRST VIAL.

We have by a fair induction ascertained the object and the period of the series of judgments, entitled the seven last plagues, or "the seven vials." The Roman Empire in its present divided and antichristian form, is the object, and the period commences in the earlier part of the 18th century, when the last wo trumpet was blown, proclaiming the subversion of immoral and despotic civil power, ushering in the peaceful and joyful establishment of the kingdom of Christ. Without further preliminary remarks, I proceed to a mere sketch of an interpretation of these "sore judgments."

Rev. xvi. 2. "And the first went and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image."

I. The nature of this judgment is the first subject of inquiry. The imagery is borrowed from one of the Egyptian plagues. "And the Lord said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh, and it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt."—Exodus ix. 8.

It is not an infliction literally of some sore disease afflicting the human body, "a noisome and grievous sore," as the language is symbolical; but the figure represents a moral and spiritual malady, breaking out into a chronic ulcer, involving the communities of the nations in the most terrible calamities. A leprous disease, mental in its character, corrupting the morals and religion of the nations, and dissolving the sacred bonds which bind man to his fellow, as the noisome sore dissolves the strength and consistency of the human frame. The moral and religious depravity of the Jews in the time of the prophet Isaiah, are illustrated by a similar figure, "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."—Isaiah iv. 6.

The reason of the revolt of the Jews is found in their deep-seated and

I am aware that commentators do not thus exhibit it. They confound it with events of which it was the preparation. It deserves to stand forth as a distinct and most terrible infliction of divine wrath, viewed in its very nature and tendencies, as demoralizing the soul, and hardening the heart, and thus preparing its victims for the perpetration of "unheard of enormities:" and then, in its ultimate results, sealing his eternal damnation.

This judgment pervaded Europe and America. France was not alone, although the virus worked there in its intensity—but every where throughout the known world the poison was working, and had been working for years, hardening the souls of men in high and low degree, and preparing them for being eager actors in scenes of horrid butchery.

The minds of those who had been active supporters of immoral power, and debasing superstitions, and priestly despotism, were imbued with it; and the effect was, that alienating man from God, he became immediately alienated from his brother man, and being in this two-fold way more firmly fixed as the child of the devil, he was prepared to be the minister of vengeance upon his fellow.

Let us remember that the Messiah reigns in all this,—that this was a just infliction upon the Antichristian powers, from his hand. He gives men "up to strong delusions to believe a lie, because they believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness." It is a fearful retribution. The nations of Europe rejected the truth, and slaughtered, at the instigation of the Pope, the witnesses, who held, and defended, and illustrated it in their holy lives; and they were given up to the power of the demon of infidelity, that their hearts freed from all the restraints of even the least sense of religion, they might be callous to all noble and tender emotions, and prepared to wreak divine vengeance upon each other.

What an awful lesson is this to the professed Protestant community! This judgment followed the misimprovement and persecution of the gospel. It will follow in all like cases. How careful should the churches be to preserve the light and influence of the truth among them; lest careless of their high privileges, the fell spirit of infidelity, as a judgment, allowed to enter; and these communities where truth and love and peace now reign, be hardened under its infernal power, and be converted into scenes of debasing licentiousness and brutalizing cruelty.

What a monster of cruelty is infidelity, when God withdraws all restraint, and gives men up to its fell sway! what horrors of iniquity and relentless cruelty have men perpetrated under its dominion! May the Spirit of truth dwell in us, and enlighten and sanctify us more and more through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, that bound to our God, and to one another in love, we may be occupied continually in doing good, soothing the sorrows, and promoting the welfare of miserable man,—and fitted in the end for the abode of purity, love, and peace, where sorrows shall for ever have an end, and where everlasting joys are the inheritance of the saints. *

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GOG AND MAGOG.

They are described, Ez. xxxviii. 2; 3: "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him; and say, Thus saith the Lord God, *I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.*"

Meshech is Moscow, and Tubal is Tobolsk, the former the ancient capital of European Russia, the latter that of the Asiatic.* There is an account of the martial array—cavalry and infantry of the huge Russian army. Gomar, v. 5, was the grandson of Noah. (Gen. x. 3.) From him the Gomerans or Germans are descended. Togarmah was the third son of Gomar. He was the ancestor of the nations along the foot of the Baltic, the chief of whom are the Prussians. They are the same race as the Turkomans, who inhabited the mountains of Hindostan, from which issued hordes, who were called Scythians, now the Don Cossacs. They are dispersed to the west, now known as the Sarmatians, a people north of the Danube and the Rhine. These nations, Ezekiel says, are “of the north quarters,” xxxvii. 6. They are all vassals of the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. Persia, Ethiopia, on the head waters of the Nile, and Lybia, west of Egypt, are in the arms of this great Northern power. The Vandals, from ancient Vandalia, have often emigrated in large masses through Western Asia into Africa. In very many respects they retain the habits and manners of the Northern nations from which they sprung, and are of the same spirit. These Northern, European, Asiatic and African tribes are all acting together under one head, “the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.” The Hebrew word translated chief is ראש *rash*, or *rosh*, whence the name Russ or Russia is derived. This chief prince is the Emperor of Russia. He rules with iron sway a vast assemblage of tribes, from Kamschatka to the Gulf of Bothnia, and from the Arctic Ocean to the Danube in Europe, and the Caspian Sea. The realms of this potentate embrace a population of 61,000,000. Every year he drafts 200,000 young men, who are kept on drill two years. This process has been going on for 30 years. If the one half of these have died, there remain more than 3,500,000 drilled troops in Russia. Besides, a warlike spirit has been diffused through the whole empire,—it is one vast camp.

This is the storm cloud seen by Ezekiel, and recorded in the first chapter of his prophecies. It is the gathering of the fearful hail storm of the seventh vial. (Rev. xvi. 21.) One advance cloud burst over Poland, 1830, and another, the same year, on the lower Danube. In 1849, another spread fearful desolation through Hungary.

It is not strange that alarmed nations, even the mightiest, gaze at the rising tempest in dismay. This mighty despot of the North has his emissaries employed in every kingdom of Southern Europe and even in our own country. Greece is little more than an appanage of the chief prince of the North.

The prophet, for the consolation of the saints, predicts the entire overthrow of this tremendous Northern power after it shall have executed God's vengeance on the fourth beast, with seven heads and ten horns, “out of the bottomless pit,” the Roman Empire, and upon Popery—the harlot woman that rides the beast.

“I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands.” (Chap. xxxix. 3, 4.) The left hand is East and the right West, as the Russian Chief advances on the South, on which he has had his eye for more than 100 years. There has been a commencement of fulfilling this remarkable prophecy, in the failure of the Russian armies in Circassia. The bow has fallen almost out of his right

* Granville Sharp, and Paxton's Illustrations.

hand. He shall fall upon "the mountains of Israel." The Circassian battles, in which Russia has failed, are on the west side of the Euphrates, and so within the territory promised to the seed of Abraham.* (Joshua i. 2, 4.) But the full accomplishment is yet future and very near at hand. The destruction of human life, indicated in this war, can refer to no less than the battle of Armageddon, *הרמגדון* the highest mountain of Gad and Dan. The mountains of Israel, where the army of the North will be defeated.

In that war, the last on our planet, the Mahometan empire will fall to rise no more. Israel will be restored to his own land (Ez. xii.) immediately after the "temple will be built, the national Church will be organized, and the land divided." Thy kingdom come. J. R. W.

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SCHOOLS IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

The literary training of youth in academies and colleges for learned professions is scarcely less important than that of young children in the common schools. At the revolution all this passed from prelacy into the hands of the state government. A part of the ample funds of Trinity Church had been vested in the founding and support of Columbia College, in the city of New York. A few academies were founded in the interior of the State,—one in this neighbourhood on the Colden manor. These institutions, like the schools at present in Canada East, were designed for the sons of the aristocracy. The interests of Christ's Church, and the training of youth for the occupancy of "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," was not an element in these seminaries. This essential defect is perpetuated in *all* the learned foundations of this state. The class books were and are heathen. The Lord Jesus and his great salvation were not and are not much, if at all, in the thoughts of professors or pupils.

The natural, necessary, and obvious results of casting the minds of the young in pagan moulds were, that swarms of irreligious men, in medicine, law, the navy, army, and all the offices of state, turned away the minds of men in the walks of life, from the Creator, Redeemer, and Preserver of men. The more learned and powerful men have become, the greater the increase of ungodliness. The pulpit too has been fearfully desecrated. The power of prelacy has been prodigiously augmented. The influence of the Episcopacy through the funds of Trinity is not confined to the State of New York; it pervades every State in the Union.

The limitation of the funds of Trinity to a revenue of 5,000*l.* a year, by the law of this state, probably rather increased the pecuniary power of this corporation. The revenues are chiefly vested in the building of churches, and in the support of the clergy. A seminary for the education of ministers is maintained in the City of New York, and many young men educated as beneficiaries: it is Puseyite, or rather Popish. The professor, the late Bishop of the diocese of New York, has been suspended for immorality, but is continued in the professorship!

Theological education can scarcely fail to be corrupted, when all the fountains are polluted with the abominations of paganism. Every

* Keith's Land of Israel.