

re-establishing of the temple service, the testimony and works of the two witnesses, the overthrow of the "Christian" systems of religion, the resurrection, judgment and final appearance of the glory of God.

THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

The Prophet, having mentioned all these briefly in chapter 12, describes a vision relating to the apostolic church and her fate, thereby giving us to know beyond the possibility of doubt, if we are willing to know, what befel her in the early age of her existence. It may be stated that the history of the church during the first five hundred years more than confirms the prophetic vision.

The apostolic church is represented as a woman clothed with the sun, brilliant in her array of righteousness, having the moon, the ordinances of the old covenant, under her feet, and upon her head a crown of stars, the Twelve Apostles. She is seen in heaven, for her origin is not the earth. She is also bringing forth a child, the destiny of which is to rule supreme over all the earth. But a great red dragon, the devil, represented by Pagan Rome, stood ready to devour the child and to kill the church. God, therefore, took the child up to heaven, and for the church a room was prepared in the wilderness, where she should be kept for 1260 days, *i. e.* years. The ascension of the child, the whole priesthood, happened, I think, very soon after the Apostles had been martyred. Still the church remained for a time, perhaps to the year 570 or thereabout; for there was a long struggle between the dragon and Michael (Rev. xii: 7-12) concerning this, and when the dragon was cast out he commenced his persecution of the church, upon which she fled to her hiding place. The priesthood had now been taken away, the church had fled. Then the dragon poured a stream of false doctrines after the woman, but the earth swallowed the stream. The false doctrines only affected the dominion of the dragon, not the hidden church; and from this time the war commenced between the dragon and the "remnant" of the seed of the church (Rev. xii: 17).

This last expression is very important for a right understanding of the true position of the people in our own dispensation. On the basis of the word of God, we assert that the church had disappeared for 1260 years. But we do not understand this to mean that there was no piety, no righteousness, no faith, nothing good on the earth during all this time, as our opponents believe we hold. On the contrary, there were many men and women on this earth of whom it can be said that they were a remnant of the seed of the church, and that they kept the commandments of God to a certain extent; indeed, as far as they could be kept without the holy priesthood, and also that testimony concerning Jesus, for the were witnesses. Many such men could be mentioned. But that this "remnant" of the seed of the church was

the church herself cannot be asserted, unless a remnant can be said to be the thing of which it is only a remnant. A church of Christ is an organization, and where the organization is not the church is not, although people may exist who still have, to a large extent, the same faith which the members of the church had. It was the one great object of the apostolic church to leave such "seed" in the world when she fled, and against this remnant, the dragon, through his representatives, has waged an awful war. I take Bishop Newton's statement for it that sixty millions of martyrs have been slaughtered in this warfare. How wonderfully true and exact is the word of God!

I have pointed out the year 570 as the one in which the church disappeared. About this time we lose almost every trace of a pure apostolic organization. The ordinances of our Lord had already been perverted, the celibacy of the clergy preached, the virgin adored, and so on. The way had been prepared, so that shortly after this time the Bishop of Rome could claim the title of universal Bishop, thus proclaiming the ascendancy of Papacy on the throne. In the year 571 Mohammed was born, the man who by his doctrines should inspire the hordes that were destined to inflict awful punishment upon an apostate world. Is it not reasonable to suppose that the scourge of God should have prepared immediately when the church had been compelled to flee? It is also remarkable that Gregory the Great, who lived at this time (died 604) is by common consent among historians considered to be the *last church father*.

If we, then, take 570 as the year of the disappearance of the church, and to it add 1260 years during which she should be in the wilderness, we arrive at the year 1830 as the date of her reappearance.

THE ANTI-CHRIST.

The next vision (chapter xiii) represents the rise and reign of the great anti-christian power, the man of sin. This power rises out of the sea—out of the commotions of the nations—and is clearly meant to represent a great world ruling power. It is followed by a second beast having the resemblance of the Lamb, which caused an image to be made in the likeness of the first beast.

This vision forms one of the most prominent parts of the Apocalypse, and has already occupied the attention of Daniel and of Paul (II Thessalonians ii: 3, 8-10; I Timothy iv: 1, 2). In the Revelation it is further referred to (chapters xvii: 2-5; xviii: 2-5; xix: 2). All agree that these passages refer to anti-Christ.

His marks are. 1st, eminent corruption of religion, which corruption, by fraud as well as force, it spreads and maintains throughout the world. 2nd, gross immorality and licentiousness, combined with hypocritical and self-righteous asceticisms. 3rd, arrogant and blasphemous pretensions, usurpation of divine prerogatives, opposition

against God and persecution of His people. 4th, great wealth, magnificence and luxury. 5th, reliance upon the support of worldly powers, whose tyranny he sanctions and upholds.

Such is the picture drawn. When we look around for its original we cannot be mistaken. When we find a professed church—eminent for its gross corruption of the doctrines of Christ—compulsory celibacy and uncommended austerities, continued with meretricious splendor and a counterfeit of Jewish ritual, blasphemous assumptions of divine titles and honors, claims of infallibility and supreme authority over the conscience, dispensations and absolutions of sins, pretended prophecies and miracles, oppression and persecution, carried on with the help of earthly rulers—all these marks have been exhibited in the "church," whose dominions extend almost everywhere, and whose seat is Rome. Commentators have therefore not hesitated to designate the first beast as the Roman church, the second as the Roman priesthood, and the image as the Pope himself.

CLOSING SCENES.

These are not, however, the closing scenes. The works of the servants of God follow in chapter 14. The judgments of antichrist form the visions of chapters 15-18, and the book closes with a representation of the final triumph of the Church of Jesus Christ. The fearful errors of apostasy are swept away. The "wicked" or "lawless ones" the Lord consumes with the spirit of His mouth." (2 Thess. ii: 8.) He that did corrupt the earth is judged (Rev. xix: 2). This great event, which will cause mourning to those on earth, whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of life, causes the greatest joy in heaven. The redeemed again and again, and again shout "Alleluia," and all the ends of the earth are summoned to join the songs of praise. J. M. S.

"JUNIUS" ON RELIGION.

Frederick Harrison says that the question of questions, the great problem of the present day, is: "Can religion become one with our highest science about the world and about man? And can this religious science, or this scientific religion, directly inspire our activity on earth? He further asks which of the many creeds, and the many philosophers, has duly solved the question?" He says:

"It is the chief and precious quality of our modern culture that it is nothing if not historical, complete, comprehensive. It insists that every age and phase of man's manifold civilization shall be sifted, understood, seen at its best. We will have nothing left out, nothing trampled on. The bigots, the pedants, the iconoclasts, the levelers all not rob us of any single work or quality of man. All shall be saved, studied, cared for. It is a humanistic age, somewhat eclectic, keenly historical, sympathetic, many-sided, just: