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Nahum
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INTRODUCTION TO THE PROPHET NAHUM

The prophecy of Nahum is both the complement and the counterpart of the Book of Jonah. When Moses had asked God to show him His glory, and God had promised to let him see the outskirts of that glory, and to proclaim the Name of the Lord before him, “the Lord,” we are told, “passed by before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty” (^{<02346>}Exodus 34:6,7). God proclaimed at once His mercy and His justice. Those wondrous words echo along the whole patch of the Old Testament. Moses himself (^{<04447>}Numbers 14:17,18), David (^{<0885>}Psalms 86:15; 103:8; 145:8), other Psalmists (^{<03104>}Psalms 111:4; 112:4; 116:5), Jeremiah (^{<02328>}Jeremiah 32:18,19), Daniel (^{<02004>}Daniel 9:4), Nehemiah (^{<04697>}Nehemiah 9:17) all pled to God or recounted some words in thanksgiving. Joel repeated such words as a motive for repentance (^{<02123>}Joel 2:13). Upon the repentance of Nineveh, Jonah had recited to God the bright side of His declaration of Himself, “I knew that Thou art a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and of great goodness” (^{<03002>}Jonah 4:2), repeating to God His words to Moses, and adding a change of heart concerning the harm. Nineveh, as appears from Nahum, had fallen back into the violence of which it had repented. Nahum then, in reference to that declaration of Jonah, begins by setting forth the awful side of the attributes of God. First, in a stately rhythm, which, in the original, reminds us of the gradual Psalms, he enunciates the solemn threefold declaration of the severity of God to those who will be His enemies.

***A jealous God and Avenger is the Lord;
An Avenger is the Lord, and lord of wrath;
An Avenger is the Lord to His adversaries:
And a Reserver of wrath to His enemies.
(^{<03002>}Nahum 1:2)***

Then, Nahum too recites that character of mercy recorded by Moses, “The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power” (^{<03003>}Nahum 1:3). But anger, although slow, comes, he adds, not the less certainly on the guilty; “and will not at all clear the guilty” (^{<03003>}Nahum 1:3). The iniquity is full. As a whole, there is no more room for repentance. Nineveh had had its prophet, and had been spared, and had sunk back into its old sins. The office of

Nahum is to pronounce its sentence. That sentence is fixed. “There is no healing of thy bruise” (³⁴⁸⁹Nahum 3:19). Nothing is said of its ulterior conversion or restoration. On the contrary, Nahum says, “He will make the place thereof an utter desolation” (³⁴⁰⁸Nahum 1:8).

The sins of Nineveh spoken of by Nahum are the same as those from which they had turned at the preaching of Jonah. In Jonah, it is, “the violence of their hands” (³⁴⁸⁸Jonah 3:8). Nahum describes Nineveh as “a dwelling of lions, filled with prey and with ravin, the feeding-place of young lions, where the lion tore enough for his whelps” (³⁴²¹Nahum 2:11,12); “a city of bloods, full of lies and robbery, from which the prey departeth not” (³⁴⁰¹Nahum 3:1).

But, amid this mass of evil, one thing was eminent, in direct antagonism to God. The character is very special. It is not simply of rebellion against God, or neglect of Him. It is a direct disputation of His Sovereignty. Twice the prophet repeats the characteristic expression, “What will ye devise against the Lord?” “devising evil against the Lord;” and adds, “counselor of evil” (³⁴¹¹Nahum 1:11). This was exactly the character of Sennacherib, whose wars, like those of his forefathers, (as appears from the cuneiform inscriptions (See the note on “Daniel the prophet”). There were religious wars, and Sennacherib blasphemously compared God to the local deities of the countries, which his forefathers or himself had destroyed (²³⁶⁸Isaiah 36:18-20; 37:10-13). Of this enemy Nahum speaks, as having “gone forth;” out of thee (Nineveh) hath gone forth (³⁴¹¹Nahum 1:11) one, devising evil against the Lord, a counselor of Belial. This was past. Their purpose was inchoate, yet incomplete. God challenges them, “What will ye devise so vehemently against the Lord?” (³⁴⁰⁹Nahum 1:9). The destruction too is proximate. The prophet answers for God, “He Himself, by Himself is already making an utter end” (³⁴⁰⁹Nahum 1:9). To Jerusalem he turns, “And now I will break his yoke from off thee, and will break his bonds asunder” (³⁴¹³Nahum 1:13). Twice the prophet mentions the device against God; each time he answers it by the prediction of the sudden utter destruction of the enemy, while in the most perfect security. “While they are intertwined as thorns, and swallowed up as their drink, they are devoured as stubble fully dry” (³⁴¹⁰Nahum 1:10); and, “If they are perfect” (³⁴¹²Nahum 1:12), unimpaired in their strength, “and thus many, even thus shall they be mown down.” Their destruction was to be, their numbers, complete. With no previous loss, secure and at ease, a mighty host, in consequence of their prosperity, all were, at one blow, mown down; “and

he (their king, who counseled against the Lord) shall pass away and perish.” “The abundance of the wool in the fleece is no hindrance to the shears,” nor of the grass to the sythe, nor of the Assyrian host to the will of the Lord, After he, the chief, had thus passed away, Nahum foretells that remarkable death, in connection with the house of his gods; “Out of the house of thy gods I will cut off the graven image and the molten image: I will make thy grave” (³⁰¹⁴Nahum 1:14). There is no natural construction of these words, except, “I will make it thy grave”.^{f163} Judah too was, by the presence of the Assyrian, hindered from going up to worship at Jerusalem. The prophet bids to proclaim peace to Jerusalem; “keep thy feasts — for the wicked shall no more pass through thee.” It was then by the presence of the wicked, that they were now hindered from keeping their feasts, which could be kept only at Jerusalem.

The prophecy of Nahum coincides then with that of Isaiah, when Hezekiah prayed against Sennacherib. In the history (¹²⁹⁰⁴2 Kings 19:4,22-28), and in the prophecy of Isaiah, the reproach and blasphemy and rage against God are prominent, as an evil design against God is in Nahum. In Isaiah we have the messengers sent to blaspheme (²³⁷⁰⁴Isaiah 37:4,23-29); in Nahum, the promise, that “the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.” Isaiah prophesies the fruitlessness of his attempt against Jerusalem (²³⁷³³Isaiah 37:33,34); his disgraced return; his violent death in his own land (²³⁷⁰⁷Isaiah 37:7); Nahum prophesies the entire destruction of his army, his own passing away, his grave. Isaiah, in Jerusalem, foretells how the spontaneous fruits of the earth shall be restored to them (¹²⁹²⁹2 Kings 19:29; ²³⁷³¹Isaiah 37:30), and so, that they shall have possession of the open corn-country; Nahum, living probably in the country, foretells the free access to Jerusalem, and bids them to (³⁰¹⁵Nahum 1:15; 2:1 (verse 2 in Hebrew)) keep their feasts, and perform the vows, which, in their trouble, they had promised to God. He does not only foretell that they may, but he enjoins them to do it. The words (³⁴⁰⁰Nahum 2:2 (verse 3 in Hebrew)), “the emptiers have emptied them out and marred their vine branches,” may relate to the first expedition of Sennacherib, when, Holy Scripture says, he “came up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them,” and Hezekiah gave him “thirty talents of gold and 300 talents of silver” (¹²⁹¹³2 Kings 18:13,14; ²³⁷⁰¹Isaiah 36:1). Sennacherib himself says (Dr. Hincks in Layard Nin. and Bab. pp. 143, 144. Sir H. Rawlinson, quoted ib. and Rawlinson, Barnpt. L. p. 141),

“Hezekiah, king of Judah, who had not submitted to my authority, forty-six of his principal cities, and fortresses and villages depending upon them of which I took no account, I captured, and carried away their spoil. And from these places I captured and carried off as spoil 200,150 people,” etc.

This must relate to the first expedition, on account of the exact correspondence of the tribute in gold, with a variation in the number of the talents of silver, easily accounted for (See Layard *ib.* pp. 144, 145. Rawlinson, B. L. p. 143). In the first invasion Sennacherib relates that he besieged Jerusalem. (Sir H. Rawlinson, transl. in B. L. *ibid.*):

“Hezekiah himself I shut up in Jerusalem his capital city, like a bird in a cage, building towers round the city to fence him in, and raising banks of earth against the gates, so as to prevent escape.”

It is perhaps in reference to this, that, in the second invasion, God promises by Isaiah; “He shall not come into this city, and shall not shoot an arrow there; and shall not present shield before it, and shall not cast up bank against it” (²³⁷³Isaiah 37:33). Still, in this second invasion also, Holy Scripture relates, that “the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army” (²³⁸¹Isaiah 36:2; ¹²⁸⁷2 Kings 18:17). Perhaps it is in regard to this second expedition, that God says, “Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more” (³⁰¹²Nahum 1:12); i.e., this second invasion should not desolate her, like that first. Not that God absolutely would not again afflict her, but not now. The yoke of the Assyrian was then broken, until the fresh sins of Manasseh drew down their own punishment.

Nahum then was a prophet for Judah, or for that remnant of Israel, which, after the ten tribes were carried captive, became one with Judah, not in temporal sovereignty, but in the one worship of God. His mention of Basan, Carmel and Lebanon alone, as places lying under the rebuke of God, perhaps implies a special interest in Northern Palestine. Judah may have already become the name for the whole people of God who were left in their own land, since those of the ten tribes who remained had now no separate religious or political existence. The idol-center of their worship was gone into captivity.

The old tradition agrees with this as to the name of the birthplace of Nahum, “the Elkoshite.” “Some think,” says Jerome (Praef. to Nahum),

“that Elcesaeus was the father of Nahum, and, according to the Hebrew tradition, was also a prophet; whereas Elcesi

([Ελκεσαι](#) , [Ελκασαι](#) (Theod. Haer. Fab. i. 27); [Ηλκαι](#) (Hippol. Philosoph. ix. 4. etc.); [Ηλξαι](#) , [Ηλξαιος](#) , [Ελκεσσαιος](#) (Epiph. Haer. xix. 5, xxx. 3, liii. 1); [Ελκασαιος](#) or [Ελκεσαιος](#) (Method. Conviv. in Combef. Nov. Coll. p. 234. A.)

is even to this day a little village in Galilee, small indeed, and scarcely indicating by its ruins the traces of ancient buildings, yet known to the Jews, and pointed out to me too by my guide.” The name is a genuine Hebrew name, the “El,” with which it begins, being the name of God, which appears in the names of other towns also as El’ale, Eltolad, Elteke Eltolem. The author of the short-lived Gnostic heresy of the Elcesaites, called Elkesai, elkasai, elxai, elxaios, Elkasaios (Ibid.), probably had his name from that same village. Eusebius mentions Elkese, as the place “whence was Nahum the Elkesaeon.” Cyril of Alexandria says, that Elkese was a village somewhere in Judaea.

On the other hand “Alcush,” a town in Mosul, is probably a name of Arabic origin, and is not connected with Nahum by any extant or known writer, earlier than Masius toward the end of the 16th century (Assem. Bibl. Or. i. 525), and an Arabic scribe in 1713 (Ibid. iii. 1. 352). Neither of these mention the tomb. “The tomb,” says Layard (Nin. i. 233), “is a simple plaster box, covered with green cloth, and standing at the upper end of a large chamber. The house containing the tomb is a modern building. There are no inscriptions, nor fragments of any antiquity near the place.” The place is now revered by the Jews, but in the 12th century Benjamin of Tudela (Travels i. 310. ed. Asher) supposed his tomb to be at Ain Japhata, South of Babylon. Were anything needed to invalidate statements more than 2000 years after the time of Nahum, it might suffice that the Jews, who are the authors of this story, maintain that not Jonah only but Obadiah and Jephthah the Gileadite are also buried at Mosul (Niebuhr Voyage en Arabie ii. 289, 290). Nor were the ten tribes placed there, but “in the cities of the Medes” (⁴²⁷⁶2 Kings 17:6). The name Capernaum, “the village of Nahum,” is probably an indication of his residence in Galilee. There is nothing in his language unique to the Northern tribes. One very poetic word (³⁴⁸²Nahum 3:2; ⁴⁰⁶²Judges 5:22), common to him with the song of Deborah, is not therefore a “provincialism,” because it only happens to occur in the rich, varied, language of two prophets of North Palestine. Nor

does the occurrence of a foreign title interfere with “purity of diction” (doubtless a Ninevite title, probably signifying “noble prince,” as Prof. Lee conjectured. Lee denies that it bears in Persian the meaning ascribed to it by Bohlen. Richardson renders *tabсар* as “an elevated window;” Vullers notes “in others it occurs not.” Gesenius was satisfied with no explanation of those before him). It rather belongs to the vividness of his description.

The conquest of No-Ammon or Thebes and the captivity of its inhabitants, of which Nahum speaks, must have been by Assyria itself. Certainly it was not from domestic disturbances (Ewald’s theory); for Nahum says, that the people were carried away captive (^{<3430>}Nahum 3:10). Nor was it from the Ethiopians (Vitranga, Grotius); for Nahum speaks of them, as her allies (^{<3430>}Nahum 3:9). Nor from the Carthaginians (Heeren.); for the account of Ammianus (xvii), that “when first Carthage was beginning to expand itself far and wide, the Punic generals, by an unexpected inroad, subdued the hundred-gated Thebes,” is merely a mistaken gloss on a statement of Diodorus, that (Excerpt. ex. L. xxiv. T. ii. p. 565) “Hanno took Hekatompylos by siege;” a city, according to Diodorus himself (v. 18. T. i. p. 263), “in the desert of Libya.” Nor was it from the Scythians (Gesenius literally, *Zeit.* 1841. n. 1); for Herodotus, who alone speaks of their maraudings and who manifestly exaggerates them, expressly says, that Psammetichus induced the Scythians by presents not to enter Egypt (i. 105); and a wandering predatory horde does not besiege or take strongly-fortified towns. There remain then only the Assyrians. Four successive Assyrian Monarchs Sargon, his son, grandson and great grandson, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, Asshur-bani-pal, from 718 B.C. to about 657 B.C., conquered in Egypt (See Rawlinson *Five Empires* ii. 409-486). The hostility was first provoked by the encouragement given by Sabacho the Ethiopian (Sab’e (Oppert *les rapports de l’ Eg. et de l’ Ass.* p. 12) in the cuneiform inscriptions, S b k, in Egyptian), the So of Holy Scripture,^{f164} to Hoshea to rebel against Shalmaneser (^{<2774>}2 Kings 17:4). Sargon, who, according to his own statement, was the king who actually took Samaria (Layard, *Nin. and Bab.* p. 618, Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 472, *Five Empires* ii. 406), led three expeditions of his own against Egypt. In the first, Sargon defeated the Egyptian king in the battle of Raphia (Rawlinson, *Five Emp.* ii. 414); in the second, in his seventh year, he boasts that Pharaoh became his tributary (Rawlinson, *Ibid.* pp. 415,416); in a third, which is placed three years later, Ethiopia submitted to him (Rawlinson, *Ibid.* pp. 416,417). A seal of Sabaco has been found at Koyunjik, which, as has been

conjectured (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 473, note 1), was probably annexed to a treaty. The capture of Ashdod by the Tartan of Sargon, recorded by Isaiah (~~20:1~~ Isaiah 20:1), was probably in the second expedition, when Sargon deposed its king Azuri, substituting his brother Akhimit (Inscription in Oppert, les rapports de l' Eg. etc. p. 18): the rebellion of Ashdod probably occasioned the third expedition, in which as it seems, Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled, that Egyptians and Ethiopians, young and old, should be carried captive by the king of Assyria. The king of Ashdod, Yaman, is related to have fled to Egypt, which was subject to Merukha or Meroe; and to have been delivered up by the king of Meroe who himself fled to some unnamed desert afar, a march of (it is conjectured) months (Ibid. p. 19). The king of Meroe, first, from times the most distant, became tributary. (Ibid.):

“His forefathers had not” in all that period “sent to the kings my ancestors to ask for peace and to acknowledge the power of Merodach.”

The fact, that his magnificent palace, “one of the few remains of external decoration,” Layard says (Nineveh and Babylon p. 130), “with which we are acquainted in Assyrian architecture,” “seems” according to Mr. Fergusson, (Palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis restored, p. 223, quoted by Layard Ibid. Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 474), “at first sight almost purely Egyptian,” implies some lengthened residence in Egypt or some capture of Egyptian artists.

Of Sennacherib, the son of Sargon, Josephus writes (Ant. x. 1. 4), “Berosus, the historian of the Chaldee affairs, mentions the king Sennacherib, and that he reigned over the Assyrians, and that he warred against all Asia and Egypt, saying as follows.” The passage of Berosus itself is missing, wether Josephus neglected to fill it in, or whether it has been subsequently lost; but neither Chaldee nor Egyptian writers record expeditions which were reverses; and although Beresus was a Babylonian, not an Assyrian, yet the document, which he used, must have been Assyrian. In the second expedition of Sennacherib, Rabshakeh, in his message to Hezekiah, says, “Behold thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, upon Egypt” (~~2 Kings 18:21~~ 2 Kings 18:21). The expression is remarkable. He does not speak of Egypt, as a power, weak, frail, failing, but, passively, as crushed by another. It is the same word and image which he uses in his prophecy of our Lord, “a bruised reed *kaneh* ~~h-7070~~ *ratsuts* ~~h-7533~~”

shall He not break," i.e., He shall not break that which is already bruised. The word implies, then, that the king of Egypt had already received some decided blow before the second expedition of Sennacherib. The annals of Sennacherib's reign, still preserved in his inscriptions, break off in the eighth of his twenty-two years (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 478), and do not extend to the time of this second expedition against Hezekiah (See Rawlinson, i. 479, note 1). Nor does Holy Scripture say, in what year this second expedition took place. In this he defeated (Inscr. in Oppert Rapports pp. 26,27) "the kings of Egypt and the king of Meroe at Altakou (Elteke) and Tamna (Timnatha)."

Sennacherib's son Esarhaddon appears for the time to have subdued Egypt and Ethiopia, and to have held them as kingdoms dependent on himself. "He acquired Egypt and the inner parts of Asia," is the brief statement of Abydenus (In Eusebius, Chronicles Arm. P. i. c. 9.) (i.e., of Berosus): "He established" (his son relates) "twenty kings, satraps, governors in Egypt" (Inscr. in Opp. Ibid. pp. 51, 53), among which can be recognized Necho, (the father of Psammetichus) king of Memphis and Sais; a king of Tanis, or Zoan (now San); Natho (or, according to another copy, Sept), Hanes, Sebennytus, Mendes, Bubastis, Siyout or Lycopolis, Chemmis, Tinis, and No. These were all subordinate kings, for so he entitles each separately in the list, although he sums up the whole (Ibid. p. 58), "These are the names of the Kings, Pechahs, Satraps who in Egypt obeyed my father who begat me." Tearcho or Taracho himself, "king of Egypt and Ethiopia" (Ibid. pp. 51, 62,63), was in like way subject to Esarhaddon. The account of the revolt, which his son Asshur-bani-pal quelled, implies also a fixed settlement in Egypt. The 20 kings were involved in the rebellion through fear of Taracho, but there is notice of other servants of Esarhaddon who remained faithful and were maltreated by Taraoho (Inscr. in Opp. p. 64). Asshur-bani-pal says also, that he strengthened his former garrisons (Ibid. pp. 58, 68). One expedition of Esarhaddon (probably toward the close of his reign, since he does not mention it in his own annals which extend over eight years) is related by his son Asshur-bani-pal (Rawlinson, 5, Emp. ii. 474, 475).

"He defeated Tirhakah in the lower country, after which, proceeding Southward, he took the city, where the Ethiopian held his court,"

and assumed the title (Ibid. 475. He also entitles himself, "king of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Meroe and Ethiopia." Oppert Sargonides, p. 53. Rawlinson, Ibid. 484), "king of the kings of Egypt and conqueror of Ethiopia." On another inscription in a palace built for his son, at Tarbisi, now Sherif-khan, he entitles himself (Inscript. Oppert Rapp. p. 41) "king of the kings of Egypt, Pathros, Ethiopia." We do not, however, find the addition, which appears to recur upon every conquest of a people not before conquered by Assyria, "which the kings, my fathers, had not subdued." This addition is so regular, that the absence of it, in itself, involves a strong probability of a previous conquest of the country.

The subdual apparently was complete. They revolted at the close of the reign of Esarhaddon (as his son Asshur-bani-pal relates) from fear of Taracho (Ibid. p. 58) rather than from any wish of their own to regain independence. Asshur-bani-pal accordingly, after the defeat of Taracho, forgave and restored them (Ibid). Even the second treacherous revolt was out of fear, lest Taracho shall return (Ibid. p. 59), upon the withdrawal of the Assyrian armies. This second revolt and perhaps a subsequent revolt of Urdamanie (p. 77) a stepson of Taracho, who succeeded him, Asshur-bani-pal seems to have subdued by his lieutenants (Ibid. 70, where he speaks of sapite-ya, "my judges" pp. 77,78. In another inscription, however, Oppert observes that Asshurbanipal speaks, as if he had been there in person. pp. 73-76. It has been observed, long since, that the Assyrian monarchs speak at times of what was done by their generals as done by themselves. This, however, scarcely appears here, where he says "I returned in safety to Nineveh." p. 76), without any necessity of marching in person against them. Thebes was taken and retaken; but does not appear to have offered any resistance. Taracho, upon his defeat at Memphis, fled to it, and again abandoned it as he had Memphis, and the army of Asshur-bani-pal made a massacre in it (Ibid. 66, 68). Once more it was taken, when it had been recovered by Urdamanie (Ibid. p. 79. In p. 75 it is said that Urdamanie abandoned No and fled to Kipkip), and then, if the inscriptions are rightly deciphered, strange as it is, the carrying off of men and women from it is mentioned in the midst of that of "great horses and apes." "Silver, gold, metals, stones, treasures of his palace, dyed garments, berom and linen, great horses, men, male and female, immense apes — they drew from the midst of the city, and brought as spoils to Nineveh the city of my dominion, and kissed my feet."

All of those kings having been conquerors of Egypt, the captivity of No might equally have taken place under any of them. All of them employed the policy, which Sargon apparently began, of transporting to a distance those whom they had conquered (See the note at Amos 1:5). Yet it is, in itself, more probable, that it was at the earlier than at the later date. It is most in harmony with the relation of Nahum to Isaiah that, in regard to the conquest of Thebes also, Nahum refers to the victory over Egypt and Ethiopia foretold by Isaiah, when Sargon's general, the Tartan, was besieging Ashdod. The object of Isaiah's prophecy was to undeceive Judah in regard to its reliance on Egypt and Ethiopia against Assyria, which was their continual bane, morally, religiously, nationally. But the prophecy goes beyond any mere defeat in battle, or capture of prisoners. It relates to conquest within Egypt itself. For Isaiah says, "the king of Assyria shall lead into captivity Egyptians and Ethiopians, young and old" (~~2300~~ Isaiah 20:4). They are not their choice young men, the flower of their army, but those of advanced age and those in their first youth, such as are taken captive, only when a population itself is taken captive, either in a marauding expedition, or in the capture of a city. The account of the captivity of No exactly corresponds with this. Nahum says nothing of its permanent subdual, only of the captivity of its inhabitants. But Esarhaddon apparently did not carry the Egyptians captive at all (Rawlinson, *Ibid.* 474, 475). Every fact given in the Inscriptions looks like a permanent settlement. The establishment of the 20 subordinate kings, in the whole length and breadth of Egypt, implies the continuance of the previous state of things, with the exception of that subordination. No itself appears as one of the cities settled apparently under its native though tributary king (Rawlinson, *Ibid.* p. 485).

In regard to the fulfillment of prophecy, they who assume as an axiom, or *petitio principii*, that there can be no prophecy of distant events, have overlooked, that while they think that, by assuming the later date, they bring Nahum's prophecy of the capture of Nineveh nearer to its accomplishment, they remove in the same degree Isaiah's prophecy of the captivity of Egyptians and Ethiopians, young and old, from its accomplishment. "Young and old" are not the prisoners of a field of battle; young and old of the Ethiopians would not be in a city of lower Egypt. If Isaiah's prophecy was not fulfilled under Sargon or Sennacherib, it must probably have waited for its fulfillment until this last subdual by Assurbanipal. For the policy of Esarhaddon and also of Assurbanipal, until repeated rebellions wore his patience, was of settlement, not of

deportation. If too the prophecy of Nahum were brought down to the reign of Assurbanipal, it would be the more stupendous. For the empire was more consolidated. Nahum tells the conqueror, flushed with his own successes and those of his father, that he had himself no more inherent power than the city whose people he had carried captive. Thebes too, like Nineveh, dwelt securely, conquering all, unreached by any ill, sea-girt, as it were, by the mighty river on which she rested. She too was strengthened with countless hosts of her own and of allied people. Yet she fell. Nineveh, the prophet tells her, was no mightier, in herself. Her river was no stronger defense than that sea of fresh water, the Nile; her tributaries would disperse or become her enemies. The prophet holds up to her the vicissitudes of No-amon, as a mirror to herself. As each death is a renewed witness to man's mortality, so each marvelous reverse of temporal greatness is a witness to the precariousness of other human might. No then was an ensample to Nineveh, although its capture was by the armies of Nineveh. They had been, for centuries, two rivals for power. But the contrast had far more force, when the victory over Egypt was fresh, than after 61 years of alternate conquest and rebellion.

But, anyhow, the state of Nineveh and its empire, as pictured by Nahum, is inconsistent with any times of supposed weakness in the reign of its last king: the state of Judah, with reference to Assyria, corresponds with that under Sennacherib but with none below. They are these. Assyria was in its full unimpaired strength (³⁴¹²Nahum 1:12; 2:12). She still blended those two characters so rarely combined, but actually united in her and subsequently in Babylon, of a great merchant and military people. She had, at once, the prosperity of peace and of war. Lying on a great line of ancient traffic, which bound together East and West, India with Phoenicia, and with Europe through Phoenicia, both East and West poured their treasures into the great capital, which lay as a center between them, and stretched out its arms, alike to the Indian sea and the Mediterranean. Nahum can compare its merchants only to that which is countless by man, the locusts or the stars of heaven (³⁴¹⁶Nahum 3:16). But amid this prosperity of peace, war also was enriching her. Nineveh was still sending out its messengers (such as was Rabshakeh), the leviers of its tribute, the demanders of submission. It was still one vast lion-lair, its lions still gathering in prey from the whole earth (³⁴²²Nahum 2:12,13), still desolating, continually, unceasingly, in all directions (³⁴¹⁹Nahum 3:19), and now, especially, devising evil against God and His people (³⁴¹⁰Nahum 1:9,11). Upon that

people its yoke already pressed, for God promises to break it off from them (^{<3013>}Nahum 1:13); the people was already afflicted, for God says to it, “Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more” (^{<3012>}Nahum 1:12), namely, by this invader. The solemn feasts of Judah were hindered through the presence of ungodly invaders; Belial, the counselor of evil spoken of under that name, already passing through her. War was around her, for he promises that one should publish peace upon her mountains (^{<3015>}Nahum 1:15). This was the foreground of the picture. This was the exact condition of things at Hezekiah’s second invasion, just before the miraculous destruction of his army. Sennacherib’s yoke was heavy, for he had exacted from Hezekiah “three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold” (^{<12814>}2 Kings 18:14); Hezekiah had not “two thousand horsemen” (^{<12823>}2 Kings 18:23); the “great host” (^{<12817>}2 Kings 18:17) of the Assyrians encircled Jerusalem. They summoned it to surrender on the terms, that they should pay a new tribute, and that Sennacherib, whenever it pleased him, should remove them to Assyria (^{<12831,32>}2 Kings 18:31,32).

At no subsequent period were there any events corresponding to this description. Manasseh was carried captive to Babylon by Esarhaddon; but probably this was no formidable or resisted invasion, since the book of Kings passes it over altogether, the Chronicles mention only that the Assyrian generals took Manasseh prisoner in a thicket (^{<4311>}2 Chronicles 33:11, accordingly not in Jerusalem, and carried him to Babylon. Probably, this took place, in the expedition of Esarhaddon to the West, when he settled in the cities of Samaria people of different nations, his captives (^{<4312>}Ezra 4:2,9,10). The capture of Manasseh was then, probably, a mere incident in the history. Since he was taken among the thickets, he had probably fled, as Zedekiah did afterward, and was taken in his place of concealment. This was simply personal. No taking of towns is mentioned, no siege, no terror, no exaction of tribute, no carrying away into captivity, except of the single Manasseh. The grounds of his restoration are not mentioned. The Chronicles mention only the religious aspect of his captivity and his restoration, his sin and his repentance. But it seems probable that he was restored by Esarhaddon, upon the same system of policy, on which he planted subjects of his own in Samaria and the country around Zidon, built a new town to take the place of Zidon, and joined in the throne of Edom one, brought up in his own palace. For, when restored, Manasseh was set at full liberty to fortify Jerusalem (^{<4314>}2 Chronicles 33:14), as Hezekiah had done, and to put “captains of war in all the cities

of Judah” (~~4334~~2 Chronicles 33:14). This looks as if he was sent back as a trusted tributary of Esarhaddon, and as a frontier-power against Egypt. At least, 60 years afterward, we find Josiah, in the like relation of trust to Nebuchadnezzar, resisting the passage of Pharaoh-Necho. However, the human cause of his restoration must remain uncertain. Yet clearly, in their whole history, there is nothing to correspond to the state of Judaea, as described by Nahum.

A recent critic writes (Ewald, *Proph. i.* 349),

“Nahum’s prophecy must have been occasioned by an expedition of mighty enemies against Nineveh. The whole prophecy is grounded on the certain danger, to which Nineveh was given over; only the way in which this visible danger is conceived of, in connection with the eternal truths, is here the properly prophetic.”

Ewald does not explain how the danger, to which “Nineveh was given over” was certain, when it did not happen. The explanation must come to this. Nahum described a siege of Nineveh and its issue, as certain. The description in itself might be either of an actual siege, before the prophet’s eyes, or of one beheld in the prophet’s mind. But obviously no mere man, endowed with mere human knowledge, would have ventured to predict so certainly the fall of such a city as Nineveh, unless it was “given over to certain danger.” But according to the axiom received in Ewald’s school, Nahum, equally with all other men, could have had only human prescience. Therefore, Nahum, prophesying the issue so confidently, must have prophesied when Nineveh was so “given over.” The a priori axiom of the school rules its criticism. Meanwhile the admission is incidentally made, that a prophecy so certain, had it related to distant events, was what no man, with mere human knowledge, would venture upon. Ewald accordingly thinks that the prophecy was occasioned by a siege of Phraortes; which siege Nahum expected to be successful; which however failed, so that Nahum was mistaken, although the overthrow which he foretold came to pass afterward! The siege, however, of Nineveh by Phraortes is a mere romance. Herodotus, who alone attributes to Phraortes a war with Assyria, has no hint, that he even approached to Nineveh. He simply relates that Phraortes “subdued Asia, going from one nation to another, until, leading an army against the Assyrians, he perished himself, in the second year of his reign, and the greater part of his army.” It is not necessary to consider the non-natural expositions, by which the simple

descriptions of Nahum were distorted into conformity with this theory, which has no one fact to support it. Herodotus even dwells on the good condition of the Assyrian affairs, although isolated from their revolted allies, and seemingly represents the victory as an easy one. And, according to Herodotus, whose account is the only one we have, Phraortes (even if he ever fought with the Ninevites, and Herodotus' account is not merely the recasting of the history of another Median Frawartish who, according to the Behistun Inscription, claimed the throne of Media against Darius, and perished in battle with him (In Rawlinson, i. 409)) had only an unorganized army. Herodotus says of Cyaxares, his son (i. 103),

“He is said to have been more warlike far than his forefathers, and he first distributed Asiatics into distinct bands, and separated the spearmen and archers and horsemen from one another, whereas, before, everything had alike mixed into one confused mass.”

Such an undisciplined horde could have been no formidable enemy for a nation, whom the monuments and their history exhibit as so warlike and so skilled in war as the Assyrians.

Another critic, (Hitzig, followed by Davidson, iii. 293), then, seeing the untenableness of this theory, ventures (as he never hesitated at any paradox) to place the prophet Nahum, as an eye-witness of the first siege of Cyaxares.

Herodotus states that Cyaxares, the son of Phraortes, twice besieged Nineveh. First, immediately after his father's death, to avenge it (i. 103); the second, after the end of the Scythian troubles, when he took it (i. 106). The capture of Nineveh was in the first year of Nabopolassar 625 B.C. The accession of Cyaxares, according to Herodotus, was 633 B.C. Eight years then only elapsed between his first siege and its capture, and, if it be true, that the siege lasted two years, there was an interval of six years only. But, at this time, the destruction of Nineveh was no longer a subject of joy to Judah. Since the captivity of Manasseh, Judah had had nothing to fear from Assyria; nor do we know of any oppression from it. Holy Scripture mentions none. The Assyrian monuments speak of expeditions against Egypt; but there was no temptation to harass Judah, which stood in the relation of a faithful tributary and an outwork against Egypt, and which, when Nineveh fell, remained in the same relation to its conquerors, into whose suzerainty it passed, together with the other dependencies of

Assyria. The relation of Josiah to Babylon was the continuation of that of Manasseh to Esarhaddon.

The motive of this theory is explained by the words, “With a confidence, which leaves room for no doubt, Nahum expects a siege and an ultimate destruction of Nineveh. The security of his tone, nay that he ventures at all to trope so enormous a revolution of the existing state of things, must find its explanation in the circumstances of the time, out of the then condition of the world; but not until Cyaxares reigned in Media, did things assume an aspect, corresponding to this confidence.” It is well that this writer doffs the courteous language, as to the “hopes,” “expectations,” “inferences from God’s justice,” and brings the question to the issue, “there is such absolute certainty of tone,” that Nahum must have had either a divine or a human knowledge. He acknowledges the untenableness of any theory which would account for the prophecy of Nahum on any human knowledge, before Cyaxares was marching against the gates of Nineveh. Would human knowledge have sufficed then? Certainly, from such accounts as we have, Nineveh might still have stood against Cyaxares and its own rebel and traitorous general, but for an unforeseen event which man could not bring about, the swelling of its river.

But, as usual, unbelief fixes itself upon that which is minutest, ignores what is greatest. There are, in Nahum, three remarkable predictions.

(1) The sudden destruction of Sennacherib’s army and his own remarkable death in the house of his god.

(2) The certain, inevitable, capture of Nineveh, and that, not by capitulation or famine, not even by the siege or assault, which is painted so vividly, but the river, which was its protection, becoming the cause of its destruction.

(3) Its utter desolation, when captured. The first, people assume to have been the description of events past; the second, the siege, they assume to have been present; and that, when human wisdom could foresee its issue; the third, they generalize. The first is beyond the reach of proof now. It was a witness of the Providence and just judgment of God, to those days, not to our’s. A brief survey of the history of the Assyrian Empire will show, that the second and third predictions were beyond human knowledge.

The Assyrian Empire dated probably from the ninth century before Christ. Such, it has been pointed out, is the concurrent result of the statements of Berossus and Herodotus. Moses, according to the simplest meaning of his words, spake of the foundation of Nineveh as contemporary with that of Babylon. "The beginning of the kingdom of Nimrod," he relates, "was Babel and Erech, and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh" (^{Q100}Genesis 10:10,11). Oppressed probably and driven forth by Nimrod, Asshur and his Semitic descendants went forth from the plain of Shinar, the Babylonia of after-ages. Had Moses intended to express (what some have thought), that Nimrod "went forth out of that land to Assyria," he would doubtless have used the ordinary style of connected narrative; "And he went forth thence." He would probably also have avoided ambiguity, by expressing that Nimrod "went forth to Asshur" (^{Q25}Genesis 25:18) using a form, which he employs a little later. As it is, Moses has used a mode of speech, by which, in Hebrew, a parenthetical statement would be made, and he has not used the form, which occurs in every line of Hebrew narrative to express a continued history. No one indeed would have doubted that such was the meaning, but that they did not see, how the mention of Asshur, a son of Shem, came to be anticipated in this account of the children of Ham. This is no ground for abandoning the simple construction of the Hebrew. It is but the history, so often repeated in the changes of the world, that the kingdom of Nimrod was founded on the expulsion of the former inhabitants. Nimrod began his kingdom; "Asshur went forth."

It is most probable, from this same brief notice, that Nineveh was, from the first, that aggregate of cities, which it afterward was. Moses says, "And he builded Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir and Calach and Resen, between Nineveh and Calach; this is that great city" (^{Q101}Genesis 10:11,12). This cannot be understood as said exclusively of Nineveh; since Nineveh was mentioned first in the list, of cities, and the mention of the three others had intervened; and, in the second place where it is named, it is only spoken of indirectly and subordinately; it is hardly likely to be said of Resen, of whose unusual size nothing is elsewhere related. It seems more probable, that it is said of the aggregate of cities, that they formed together one great city, the very characteristic of Nineveh, as spoken of in Jonah.

Nineveh itself lay on the Eastern side of the Tigris, opposite to the present Mosul. In later times, among the Syrian writers, As shur becomes the name for the country, distinct from Mesopotamia and Babylonia (Bar-Hebr. in

Tuch de Nino urbe pp. 9, 10), front which it was separated by the Tigris, and bounded on the North by Mount Niphates.

This distinction, however, does not occur until after the extinction of the Assyrian empire. On the contrary, in Genesis, Asshur, in one place, is spoken of as West (^{<0024>}Genesis 2:14. There is no reason, with Keil, to disturb the rendering. *kedem* ^{<16924>} is most naturally rendered “Eastward” in the other three places; Michmash was E.S.E. of Bethaven (^{<0135>}1 Samuel 13:5), but was not over-against it, being some four miles from it, in a valley. The battle which began at Michmash, “passed over to Bethaven.” (^{<0123>}1 Samuel 14:23). The Philistines too were obviously facing Saul who was at Gilgal (^{<0132>}1 Samuel 13:12). In ^{<2591>}Ezekiel 39:11, the words “eastward of the sea,” express that the carcasses were outside the promised land. In ^{<0046>}Genesis 4:16, Cain was not one to linger “over-against” the lost “Eden.” Probably he went Eastward, because then too the stream of population went Westward. In ^{<2072>}Isaiah 7:20 the king of Assyria is spoken of as “beyond the river,” i.e., the Euphrates) of the Hiddekel or Tigris, so that it must at that time have comprised Mesopotamia, if not all on this side of the Tigris, i.e., Babylonia. In another place, it is the great border-state of Arabia on the one side, as was Egypt on the other. The sons of Ishmael, Moses relates, (^{<0258>}Genesis 25:18), dwell from Havilah unto Shur that is before Egypt, as thou goest to Assyria; i.e., they dwelt on the great caraven-route across the Arabian desert from Egypt to Babylonia. Yet Moses mentions, not Babylon, but Asshur. In Balaam’s prophecy (^{<0422>}Numbers 24:22), Asshur stands for the great Empire, whose seat was at one time at Nineveh, at another at Babylon, which should, centuries afterward, carry Israel captive.

Without entering into the intricacies of Assyrian or Babylonian history further than is necessary for the immediate object, it seems probable, that the one or other of the sovereigns of these nations had an ascendancy over the others, according to his personal character and military energy. Thus, in the time of Abraham, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, in his expedition against the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, took with him, as subordinate allies, the kings of Shinar, (or Babylon) and Ellasar, as well as Tidal king of nations, a king probably of Nomadic tribes. The expedition was to avenge the rebellion of the petty kings in the valley of Siddim against Chedorlaomer, after they had been for twelve years tributary. But, although the expedition closed with the attack on the live kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar, its extent on the East side of

the Jordan from Ashteroth Karnaim in Basan to Elparan (perhaps Elath on the Red Sea), and the defeat of the giant tribes, the Rephaim, Zuzim, Emim, Horites, the Amalekites and the Amorites in their several abodes, seems to imply one of those larger combinations against the aggressions of the East, which we meet with in later times (Sir H. Rawlinson, in Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 446). It was no insulated conflict which spread over nearly three degrees of latitude. But it was the king of Elam, not the king of Babylon or of Asshur, who led this expedition; and those other kings, according to the analogy of the expeditions of Eastern monarchs, were probably dependent on him. It has been observed that the inscriptions of a monarch whose name partly coincides with that of Chedorlaomer, namely, Kudurmabuk, or Kudurmapula, show traces of a Persian influence on the Chaldee characters; but cuneiform decipherers having desponded of identifying those monarchs ("On the one hand the general resemblance of Kudurmapula's legends to those of the ordinary Chaldaean monarchs is unquestionable; on the other hand it is remarkable that there are peculiarities in the forms of the letters, and even in the elements composing the names upon his bricks which favor his connection with Elam." Sir H. Rawlinson in Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 436.), Chedorlaomer appears as yet only so far connected with Babylon, that its king was a tributary sovereign to him or a vice-king (Rawlinson, Five Empires i. 206) like those of later times, of whom Sennacherib boasts, "Are not my princes altogether kings?"

Assyria, at this time, is not mentioned, and so, since we know of its existence at an earlier period, it probably was independent. Lying far to the North of any of the nations here mentioned, it, from whatever cause or however it may have been engaged, took no share in the war. Subsequently also, down to a date almost contemporary with the Exodus, it has been observed that the name of Asshur does not appear on the Babylonian inscriptions, nor does it swell the titles of the king of Babylon (Ibid. p. 447). A little later than the Exodus, however, in the beginning of the 14th century B.C., Asshur and Egypt were already disputing the country which lay between them. The account is Egyptian, and so, of course, only relates the successes of Egypt. Thothmes III, in his fortieth year, according to Mr. Birch, received tribute from a king of Nineveh (From statistical tablet of Karnak, quoted by Layard Nin. and Bab. c. xxvi. p. 631, Birch in *Archaeologia* Vol. xxxv. pp. 116-66). In another monument of the same monarch, where the line, following on the name Nineveh, is lost, Thothmes

says that he (Ibid. p. 630, note 1) "erected his tablet in Naharaina (Mesopotamia) for the extension of the frontiers of Kami" (Egypt). Amenophis III, in the same century, represented Asiatic captives (Ibid), with the names of Patens (Padan-Aram), Asuria, Karukamishi (Carchemish"). "On another column are Saenkar (Shiner), Naharaina, and the Khita (Hittites)." The mention of these contiguous nations strengthens the impression that the details of the interpretation are accurate. All these inscriptions imply that Assyria was independent of Babylon. In one, it is a co ordinate power; in the two others, it is a state which had measured its strength with Egypt, under one of its greatest conquerors, though, according to the Egyptian account, it had been worsted.

Another account, which has been thought to be the first instance of the extension of Babylonian authority so far northward, seems to me rather to imply the ancient self-government of Assyria. (Sir H. Rawlinson from the Shergat Cylinders in Rawlinson, Herodotus Ess. vi. i. 433. note 1):

"A record of Tiglath-pileser I. declares him to have rebuilt a temple in the city of Asshur, which had been taken down 60 years previously, after it had lasted for 641 years frp, the date of its first foundation by Shamas-Iva, son of Ismi-Dagon."

Sir H. Rawlinson thinks that it is probable (although only probable) (Ibid. p. 456. note 5), that this Ismi-Dagon is a king, whose name occurs in the brick-legends of Lower Babylonia. Yet the Ismi-Dagon of the bricks does not bear the title of king of Babylon, but of king of Niffer only (Ibid. p. 437); "his son," it is noticed, "does not take the title of king; but of governor of Hur (Ibid. Section 7)." The name Shamas-Iva nowhere occurs in connection with Babylonia, but it docks recur, at a later period, as the name of an Assyrian Monarch (Sir H. Rawlins., Journ. As. Soc. xvi. P. 1. Ann. Rep. p. xii. sq. Rawlinson, Herodotus i. p. 466). Since the names of the Eastern kings so often continue on in the same kingdom the recurrence of that name, at a later period, makes it even probable, that Shamas-Iva was a native king. There is absolutely nothing to connect his father Ismi-Dagon with the Ismi-Dagon king of Niffer, beyond the name itself, which, being Semitic, may just as well have belonged to a native king of Nineveh as to a king of Lower Babylonia. Nay, there is nothing to show that Ismi-Dagon was not an Assyrian Monarch who reigned at Niffer, for the name of his father is still unknown; there is no evidence that his father was ever a king, or, if a king, where he reigned. It seems to me in the last degree

precarious to assume, without further evidence, the identity of the two kings. It has, further, yet to be shown that Lower Babylonia had, at that time, an empire, as distinct from its own local sovereignty. We know from Holy Scripture of Nimrod's kingdom in Shinar, a province distinct from Elymais, Mesopotamia, Assyria, and probably Chaldaea. In Abraham's time, 1900 B.C., we find again a king of Shinar. Shinar again, it is supposed, appears in Egyptian inscriptions, in the 14th century, B.C. (Mr. Birch in Layard. Nin. and Bab. p. 631); and, if so, still distinct from Mesopotamia and Assyria. But all this implies a distinct kingdom, not an empire.

Again, were it ever so true, that Shamas-Iva was a son of a king in Lower Babylonia, that he built a temple in Kileh-Shergat, as being its king, and that he was king, as placed there by Ismi-Dagon, this would be no proof of the continual dependence of Assyria upon Babylonia. England did not continue a dependency of France, because conquered by William of Normandy. How was Alexander's empire broken at once! Spain under Charles the V was under one sovereignty with Austria; Spain with France had, even of late, alike Bourbon kings. A name would, at most, show an accidental, not a permanent, connection.

But there is, at present, no evidence implying a continued dependence of Assyria upon Babylon. Two facts only have been alleged;

- 1) that the cuneiform writing of inscriptions at Kileh-Shergat, 40 miles South of Nineveh, has a Babylonian character;
- 2) that, on those bricks, four names have been found of inferior Satraps.

But 1) the Babylonian character of the inscriptions would show a dependence of civilization, not of empire. Arts flourished early at Babylon, and so the graven character of the Inscriptions too may have been carried to the rougher and warlike North. The garment, worked at Babylon, was, in the 15th century B.C., exported as far as Palestine, and was, for its beauty, the object of Achan's covetousness (^{<0172>}Joshua 7:21).

2) in regard to the satraps whose names are found on the bricks of Kileh-Shergat, it does not appear, that they were tributary to Babylon at all; they may, as far as it appears, have been simply inferior officers of the Assyrian empire. Anyhow, the utmost which such a relation to Babylon would evince, if ever so well established, would be a temporary dependence of

Kileh-Shergat itself, not of Nineveh or the Assyrian kingdom. Further, the evidence of the duration of the dependency would, be as limited at its extent. Four satraps would be no evidence as to this period of 700 years, only a century less than has elapsed since the Norman conquest. The early existence of an Assyrian kingdom has been confirmed by recent cuneiform discoveries, which give the names of 8 Assyrian kings, the earliest of whom is supposed to have reigned about 3 1/2 centuries before the Commencement of the Assyrian Empire (Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 291; compare i. 212).

The "empire," Herodotus says (i. 95), "Assyria held in Upper Asia for 520 years;" Berosus (Fragm. II), "for 526 years." The Cuneiform Inscriptions give much the same result. Tiglath-pileser (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 457), who gives five years' annals of his own victories, mentions his grandfather's grandfather, the 4th king before him, as the king who "first organized the country of Assyria," who "established the troops of Assyria in authority." The expression, "established in authority," if it may be pressed, relates to foreign conquest. If this Tiglath-pileser be the same whom Sennacherib, in the 10th year of his own reign, mentions as having lost his gods to Merodach-ad-akhi, king of Mesopotamia, 418 years before (Dr. Hincks, from Bavian Inscription in Layard Nin. and Bab. pp. 212, 213), then, since Sennacherib ascended the throne about 703 B.C.,^{f165} we should have 1112 B.C. for the latter part of the reign of Tiglath-pileser I, and counting till and the six preceding reigns at 20 years each,^{f166} should have about 1252 B.C. for the beginning of the Assyrian empire. It has been calculated that if the 526 years, assigned by Berosus to his 45 Assyrian kings, are (as Polyhistor (In Euseb. Chronicles Arm. pp. 40, 1) states Berosus to have meant) to be dated back from the accession of Pul who took tribute from Menahem, and so from between 770 B.C. and 760 B.C., they carry back the beginning of the dynasty to about 1290 B.C. If they be counted, (as is perhaps more probable) from the end of the reign of Pul (~~1259~~ 2 Kings 15:19), i.e., probably 747 B.C., "the era of Nabonassar," the Empire would commence about 1273 B.C. Herodotus, it has been shown (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 407), had much the same date in his mind, when he assigned 520 years to the Assyrian empire in upper Asia, dating back from the revolt of the Medes. For he supposed this revolt to be 179 years anterior to the death of Cyrus 529 B.C. (and so, 708 B.C.) plus a period of anarchy before the accession of Deioces. Allowing 30 years for this period of anarchy, we have 738 B.C. plus 520, i.e., 1258 B.C., for the date of the

commencement of Assyrian empire according to Herodotus. Thus, the three testimonies would coincide in placing the beginning of that Empire anyhow between 1258 and 1273 B.C.

But this Empire started up full-grown. It was the concentration of energy and power, which had before existed. Herodotus' expression is "rulers of Upper Asia." Tiglath-pileser attributes to his forefather, that he "organized the country," and "established the armies of Assyria in authority." The second king of that list takes the title of "ruler over the people of Bel" (Rawlinson, i. 458), i.e., Babylonia. The 4th boasts to have reduced "all the lands of the Magian world." Tiglath-pileser I claims to have conquered large parts of Cappadocia, Syria from Tsukha to Carchemish, Media and Muzr. According to the inscription at Bavian (Layard N. and B. 207-12. 614. Rawlinson, 459), he sustained a reverse, and lost his gods to a king of Mesopotamia, which gods were recovered by Sennacherib from Babylon. Yet this exception the more proves that conquest was the rule. For, had there been subsequent successful invasions of Assyria by Babylonia, the spoils of the 5th century backward would not have been alone recovered or recorded. If the deciphering of the Inscriptions is to be trusted, Nineveh was the capital, even in the days of Tiglath-pileser I. For Sennacherib brought the gods back, it is said, and put them in their places, i.e., probably where he himself reigned, at Nineveh. Thence then they were taken in the reign of Tiglath-pileser. Nineveh then was his capital also.

Of an earlier portion we have as yet but incidental notices; yet the might of Assyria is attested by the presence of Assyrian names in the Egyptian dynastic lists, whether the dynasties were themselves Assyrian, or whether the names came in through matrimonial alliances between two great nations.^{f167}

With few exceptions, as far as appears from their own annals (and these are in the later times confirmed by Holy Scripture), the Assyrian Empire was, almost whenever we hear of it, one long series of victory and rapine. It is an exception, if any monarch is peaceful, and content to "repair the buildings"^{f168} in his residence, "leaving no evidence of conquest or greatness." Tiglath-Nin, father of the warlike Asshur-i-danipal or Sardanapalus, is mentioned only in his son's monument (Sir H. Rawlinson, *Ibid.* in Rawlinson, Herodotus 1. 460, n. 7), "among his warlike ancestors, who had carried their arms into the Armenian mountains, and there set up stelae to commemorate their conquests." Civil wars there were, and

revolutions. Conquerors and dynasties came to an untimely end; there was parricide, fratricide; but the tide of war and conquest rolled on. The restless warriors gave no rest. Sardanapalus terms himself (In Layard N. and B. pp. 361, 2 Rawlinson, p. 461),

“the conqueror from the upper passage of the Tigris to Lebanon and the great sea, who all countries, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, has reduced under his authority.”

His son, Shalmanubar or Shalmaneser, in his thirty-five years of reign led, in person twenty-three military expeditions. 20,000,16,000, are the numbers of his enemies left dead upon a field of battle with Benhadad and Hazael (Rawlinson, *Ibid.* 464, 5). Cappadocia, Pontus, Armenia, Media, Babylonia, Syria, Phoenicia (Nimrud Obelisk translated by Dr. Hincks, in *Dubl. Univ. Mag.* Oct. 1853. pp. 422, 5, 6. Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 462), 15 degrees of longitude and 10 of latitude, save where the desert or the sea gave him nothing to conquer, were the range of his repeated expeditions. He circled round Judaea. He thrice defeated Benhadad with his allies (on several occasions, twelve kings of the Hittites). His own army exceeded on occasions 100,000 fighting men. Twice he defeated Hazael. Israel trader Jehu, Tyre, Sidon, 24 kings in Pontus, kings of the Hittites, of Chaldaea, 27 kings of Persia are among his tributaries (Dr. Hincks, *Athenaeum N.* 1476. p. 174. Rawlinson, *Ibid.* Five Emp. ii. 360); “the shooting of his arrows struck terror,” he says, “as far as the sea” (Indian Ocean); “he put up his arrows in their quiver at the sea of the setting sun.” His son Shamesiva apparently subdued Babylonia, and in the West conquered tribes near Mount Taurus, on the North the countries bordering on Armenia to the South and East, the Medes beyond Mount Zagros, and (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 466. Five Emp. ii. 374) “the Zimri (²⁴⁵⁵Jeremiah 25:25) in upper Luristan.” His son Ivalush III or IV received undisturbed tribute from the kingdoms which his fathers conquered, and ascribes to his god Asshur the grant of (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 467, Five Empires ii. 380) “the kingdom of Babylon to his son.” Thus “Assyria with one hand grasped Babylonia; with the other Philistia and Edom; she held Media Proper, S. Armenia, possessed all Upper Syria, including Commagene and Amanus, bore sway over all the whole Syrian coast from Issus to Gaza, and from the coast to the desert.” Tiglath-pileser II and Shalmaneser are known to us as conquerors from Holy Scripture (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 470). Tiglath-pileser, we are told from the inscriptions, warred and conquered in Upper Mesopotamia, Armenia, Media, Babylonia, drove into exile a Babyionian

prince, destroyed Damascus, took tribute from a Hiram king of Tyre, and from a Queen of the Arabs (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 470). And so it continued, until nearly the close of the Monarchy.

The new dynasty which began with Sargon were even greater conquerors than their predecessors. Sargon, in a reign of seventeen or nineteen years, defeated the king of Elam, conquered in Iatbour beyond Elam, reigned from Ras, a dependency on Elam, over Poukoud (Pekod), Phoenicia, Syria, etc. to the river of Egypt, in the far Media to the rising sun, in Scythia, Albania, Parthia, Van, Armenia, Colchis, Tubal to the Moschi: he placed his lieutenants as governors over these countries, and imposed tribute upon them, as upon Assyrians; he, probably, placed Merodach-Baladan on the throne of Babylon, and after 12 years displaced him; he reduced all Chaldaea under his rule; he defeated “Sebech (i.e., probably, So), Sultan of Egypt, so that he was heard of no more;” he received tribute from the Pharaoh of Egypt, from a Queen of Arabia and from Himyar the Sabaeen. To him first the king of Meroe paid tribute. He finally captured Samaria: he took Gaza, Kharkar, Arpad and Damascus, Ashdod (which it cost Psammetichus 29 years to reconquer), and Tyre, (which resisted Nebuchadnezzar for 13 years). He added to the Satrapy of Parthia, placed a Satrap or Lieutenant over Commagene and Sentaria, Kharkar, Tel-Garimmi, Gamgoum, Ashdod, and a king of his own choice over Albania. He seized 55 walled cities in Armenia, 11, which were held to be “inaccessible fortresses;” and 62 great cities in Commagene; 34 in Media; he laid tribute on the “king of the country of rivers.” He removed whole populations at his will; from Samaria, he carried captive its inhabitants, 27,800, and placed them in “cities of the Medes” (¹²⁷⁰⁶2 Kings 17:6; 18:11); he removed those of Commagene to Elam; all the great men of the Tibareni, and the inhabitants of unknown cities, to Assyria; Cammanians, whom he had conquered, to Tel-Garimmi, a capital which he rebuilt; others whom he had vanquished in the East he placed in Ashdod: again he placed “Assyrians devoted to his empire” among the Tibareni; inhabitants of cities unknown to us, in Damascus; Chaldaeans in Commagene,^{f169} extracted from the *Annales de Philosophie Chretienne* T. vi. (5e serie). Oppert p. 8, gives as the meaning of his name, “actual king,” “roi de fait.” Sargon himself, if Oppert has translated him rightly, gives as its meaning, “righteous prince,” p. 38). (Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 423. This statement is not in Oppert’s Inscriptions):

“The Comukha were removed from the extreme North to Susiana, and Chaldaeans were brought from the extreme South to supply their place.”

“Seven kings of Iatnan, seven days voyage off in the Western seas, whose names were unknown to the kings” his “fathers; hearing of” his “deeds, came before” him to Babylon with “presents:” as did the king of Asmoun, who dwelt in the midst of the Eastern sea (the Persian gulf). He placed his statue, “writing on it the glory of Asshur his master,” in the capital of Van, in Kikisim (Circesium) as also in Cyprus, which he does not name, but where it has been discovered in this century (Now in the Royal Museum at Berlin. Layard, Bab. p. 618). The Moschian king, with his 3000 towns, who had never submitted to the kings his predecessors, sent his submission and tribute to him.

Sennacherib, the son of Sargon, says of himself, “Assour, the great Lord, has conferred on me sovereignty over the peoples; he has extended my dominion over all those who dwell in the world. From the upper Ocean of the setting sun to the lower Ocean of the rising sun, I reduced under my power all who carried aloft their head.” He defeated Merodach Baladan and the king of Elam together (Oppert Sarg. p. 41); took in one expedition (Oppert Sarg. p. 41), “79 great strong cities of the Chaldaeans anti 820 small towns;” he took prisoners by hundreds of thousands; 200,150 in his first expedition against Hezekiah, from 44 great walled cities which he took and little villages innumerable (Ibid. p. 45); 208,000 from the Nabathseans anti Hagarenes (Layard Bah. p. 141); he employed on his great buildings 360,000 men, gathered from Chaldea and Aramaea, from Cilicia and Armenia (Rawl Herodotus i. 476); he conquered populations in the North, which “had of old not submitted to the kings my brothers (Opp. pp. 42,43),” annexed them to the prefecture of Arrapachitis and set up his image (Opp. pp. 42,43); he received tribute from the governor of Khararat (Opp. pp. 42,43), wasted the 2 residencecities, 34 smaller cities of Ispahara king of Albania, joining a part of the territory to Assyria, and calling its city, Ilhinzas, the city of Sennacherib (Ibid. p. 43.); he reduced countries of “Media, whose names the kings his brothers had not heard (Ibid. p. 43); he set a king, Toubaal, over the great and little Sidon, Sarepta, Achzib, Acco, Betzitti, Mahalliba; the kings of Moab, Edom, Bet-Amman, Avvad, Ashdod, submitted to him (pp. 43,44); he deteated an “innumerable host” of Egyptians at Altakou (p. 44) (Elteke); sons of the king of Egypt fell into his hands; he captured Ascalon, Bene-Barak, Joppa, Hazor (p. 44); put

back at Amgarron (Migron) the expelled king Padi, who had been surrendered to Hezekiah (pp. 44,45); gave portions of the territory of Hezekiah to the kings of Ashdod, Migron, Gaza (p. 45); he drove Merodach-baladan again to Elam, captured his brothers, wasted his cities, and placed his own oldest son, Assurnadin, on the throne of Babylon (p. 46) took seven impregnable cities of the Toukharri, placed like birds' nests on the mountains of Nipour (p. 46); conquered the king of Oukkou in Dayi, among mountains which none of his ancestors had penetrated; took Oukkou and 33 other cities (p. 47); attached Elam, "crossing" the Persian gulf "in Syrian vessels" (p. 47); capturing the men, and destroying the cities (pp. 47,48); in another campaign, he garrisoned, with prisoner-warriors of his own, cities in Elam which his father had lost (pp. 48); destroyed 34 large cities and others innumerable of Elam (pp. 48). His account of his reign closes with a great defeat of Elam, whom the escaped Souzoub had hired with the treasures of the temples of Babylon, and of 17 rebel tribes or cities, at Khalouli, and their entire subdual (pp. 49-51). He repelled some Greeks in Cilicia, set up his image there, with a record of his deeds, and built Tarsus, on the model of Babylon (Polyhist. in Eus. Chronicles i.c. 5. Abyden. ib. c. 9). It has been noticed, what a "keen appreciation of the merits of a locality" (Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 456) his selection of its site evinced. The destruction of his army of 185,000 men, at the word of God, might well deter him from again challenging the Almighty; but we have seen, in the wars of Napoleon I, that such losses do not break the power of an empire. It was no vain boast of Sennacherib, that he had "gathered all the earth, and carried captive the gods of the nations." The boast was true; the application alone was impious. God owned in him the instrument which He had formed, "the rod of His anger." He condemned him, only because "the axe boasted itself against Him Who hewed therewith." Victorious, except when he fought against God, and employed by God "to tread down the people as the mire of the streets" (~~23015~~ Isaiah 10:5-15; 36:18-20), Sennacherib was cut off as God foretold, but left his kingdom to a victorious son.

His son, Esarhaddon, takes titles, yet more lofty than those of Sennacherib. He calls himself (Oppert p. 53),

"King of Assyria, Vicar of Babylon, King of the Sumirs and Accads, King of Egypt, Meroe and Cush, who reigned from sunrising to sun-set, unequalled in the imposition of tributes."

In Armenia, he killed Adrammelech (Abyden. in Eus. Chronicles Arm. p. 53.), his half-brother, one of his father's murderers, who fled to Armenia, probably to dispute thence his father's crown. In every direction he carried his conquests further than his powerful father (The murder then of Sennacherib was no sign of the decadence of the empire, but one of the common fruits of the polygamy of Eastern monarchs). He speaks of conquests in the far Media (Oppert pp. 56,57), "where none of the kings, our fathers," had conquered, whose kings bore well-known Persian names (Sitirparna and Iparna).

They and their subjects were carried off to Assyria. Others, who "had not conspired against the kings my fathers and the land of Assyria, and whose territories my fathers had not conquered," submitted voluntarily in terror, paid tribute and received Assyrian governors. (Ibid. Two of the names again, Rawlinson, observes (5 Emp. ii. 473), are Aryan, Zanasana and Ramatiya; a 3d is Arpis)

In the West, he pursued by sea a king of Sidon who rebelled, divided the Syrians in strange countries, and placed mountaineers, whom his bow had subdued in the East, with a governor, in a castle of Esarhaddon which he built in Syria. He warred successfully in Cilicia, Khoubousna, and destroyed 10 large cities of the Tibareni and carried their people captive; trod down the country of Masnaki, transported rebels of Van; he established on the Southern shore that son of Merodach-baladan who submitted to him, removing the brother who trusted in Elam, himself reigned in Babylon (Babylonian tablet in Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 482), where he carried Manasseh (⁴³¹2 Chronicles 33:11). He reconquered "the city of Adoumou (Edom), (the city of the power of the Arabs,) which Sennacherib had conquered, and carried off its people to Assyria;" he named as Queen of the Arabs, Tabouya, born in his palace; put the son of Hazael on his father's throne. An expedition to ^{f170} "a far country to the bounds of the earth beyond the desert," Bazi (Buz), reached by traversing 140 farsakhs (?) of sandy desert, then 20 farsakhs (?) of fertile land and a stony region, Khazi (Uz), looks like an expedition across Arabia, and, if so, was unparalleled except by Nushirvan. Some of the other names are Arabic. Anyhow, it was a country, where none of his predecessors had gone; he killed 8 kings, carried off their subjects and spoils. He conquered the Gomboulou in their marshes. twelve kings on the coast of Syria whom he recounts by name, (Ba'lou king of Tyre, Manasseh king of Judah, and those of Edom, Maan, Gaza, Ascalon, Amgarron, Byblos, Aradus,

Ousimouroun, Bet-Ammon, Ashdod) and 10 kings of Yatnan in the sea (Cyprus) — Aegisthus (Ikistonsi), King of Idalion (Idial), Pythagoras (Pitagoura) K. of Citium (Kitthim), Ki ..., K. of Salamis (Silhimmi), Ittodagon (“Dagon is with him,” Itoudagon), K. of Paphos (Pappa), Euryalus (Irieli), K. of Soil (Sillou), Damasou, K. of Curium (Kuri), Ounagonsou, K. of Limenion (Limini), Roumizu, K. of Tamassus (Tamizzi,) Damutsi of Amti-Khadasti, Puhali of Aphrodisium (Oupridissa) (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 483, 4. 5 Emp. ii. 483, Oppert p. 58), held their rule from him.

The names of the countries, from which he brought those whom he settled in Samaria, attest alike his strength and the then weakness of two of the nations, which afterward concurred to overthrow his empire. The colonists, according to their own letters to Artaxerxes (^{<1540>}Ezra 4:9), comprehended, among others, Babylonians; Archevites i.e., inhabitants of Erech, mentioned in Genesis (^{<1100>}Genesis 10:10), as, together with Babel, part of the beginning of the kingdom of Nimrod; Susanchites, i.e., inhabitants of Susiana or Chusistan; Dehavites, Daans in Herodotus (i. 125), one of the wandering Persian tribes, whose name (Taia) still exists; (Ritter Erdk. vii. 668) Elamite’s (^{<2200>}Isaiah 21:2; 22:6) or the dwellers on the Persian gulf, bordering on Susiana; Apharsites or the Persians in their original abode in Paraca, Paraic, now Farsistan. It seems also probable that the Apharsachites (^{<1516>}Ezra 5:6. Rawlinson, Journ. of Asiat. Soc. xv. p. 164) are those more known to us as Sacae or Scythians, whom Esarhaddon says that he conquered (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 481); and that the Apharsachthites (with the same word Aphar prefixed) are the Sittaceni on the Caspian. The Dinaites and the Tarphelites are as yet unidentified, unless the Tarpetes (Strabo xl. 2. 8. 11) of the Palus Maeotis near the Sittaceni, or the Tapiri (Id. xl. 8. and 13. 2) in Media be a corruption of the name. The Samaritan settlers add, “And the rest of the nations, whom the great and noble Asnapper carried captive, and settled in the cities of Samaria and the rest on this side the river.” Under this general term, they include the Mesopotamian settlers brought from Avvah and Sepharvaim, and those from Hamath (^{<1273>}2 Kings 17:24), probably wishing to insist to the Persian Monarch on their Persian, Median, or Babylonian descent. They attest at the same time that their forefathers were not willingly removed but “transported, carried into exile” (^{<1540>}Ezra 4:10), and accordingly that Esarhaddon, in whose reign they were removed, had power in all these countries. The condensation also of settlers from twelve nations in so small

a space as the cities of Samaria (analogous as it is to the dispersion of the Jews over so many provinces of their captors) illustrates the policy of these transportations, and the strength which they gave to the empire. Nations were blended together among those foreign to them, with no common bond except their relation to their conqueror. A check on those around them, and themselves held in check by them, they had no common home to which to return, no interest to serve by rebelling. Esarhaddon built 36 temples in Assyria by the labor of foreign slaves, his captives, who worshiped his gods (Assyr. texts p. 16, Oppert p. 57, Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 482).

This collection of people of twelve nations in the cities of Samaria represents moreover one portion only of the conquests of Esarhaddon, and, for the most part, that furthest from Judaea. For the principle of the policy was to remove them far from their own land. Ethiopian and Egyptian captives would be placed, not here from where they could easily return, but, like Israel in the cities of the Medes, from where they could find no escape.

The son of Esarhaddon, Assurbanipal II. (Or Asordanes, Layard Nin. and B. p. 452), yet further enlarged and consolidated the conquests of his conquering father. His expeditions into Egypt have been already dwelt upon; his victories were easy, complete. Tirhaka, himself a great conqueror, fled into unknown deserts beyond reach of pursuits. His stepson Urdaminie attempted to recover his kingdom, was defeated at once, fled and his capital was taken. In Asia, he took away tim king of Tyre, who offended him; made conquests beyond Matthew Taurus, where his fathers had never been (Rawlinson, remarks that the names are new); received an embassy from Gyges; attached to Assyria a tract of Minni or Persarmenia, took the capital of Minni; took Shushan (The name is spelled as in Daniel) and Badaca; killed their kings, united Susiana to Babylonia; subdued anew Edom, Moab, Kedar, the Nabathaeans; received the submission of the king of Urarda, Ararat (Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 484-493). While Assyria was extended wider than before, its old enemies were more incorporated with it, or, at least, more subdued; it was more at one within itself. Egypt, the great rival Empire, had tried to shake off the yoke, but was subdued; no people in Syria or the valley of the Euphrates stirred itself; the whole tract within the Taurus, once so rife with enemies, lay hushed under his rule: hushed were the Hittites, Hamathites, the Syrians of Damascus, the Tibareni who had once held their own against his father; war was only at

the very extremities, in Minni or Edom, and that, rather chastisement than war; Babylon was a tranquil portion of his empire, except during the temporary rebellion of the brother, whom he had placed over it, and whom he pardoned. His death, amid the tranquil promotion of literature (Ibid. 495,496), when he had no more enemies to conquer or rebels to chasten, left his empire at the zenith of its power, some 22 years before its destruction. "Culno" had become, as Sennacherib boasted (^{230D} Isaiah 10:9), "like Carehemish; Hamath like Arpad; Samaria as Damascus." He "had removed the bounds of the people and gathered all the earth, as one gathereth eggs, left" (^{230E} Isaiah 10:13,14) by the parent bird, undefended even by its impotent love. There was not a cloud on the horizon, not a token from where the whirlwind would come. The bas-reliefs attest, that neither the energy nor the cruelty of the Assyrians were diminished (See plates in Layard Nin. and B. pp. 467,468. Rawlinson, 5 Emp. iii. 504, and Layard Monuments Ser. 2. Pl. 47,49. quoted Ibid.).

Of those twenty-two years, we have nothing reliable except their close. There was probably nothing to relate. There would not be anything, if Asshurbanipal had consolidated his empire, as he seems to have done, and if his son and successor inherited his father's later tastes, and was free from the thirst of boundless conquest, which had characterized the earlier rulers of Assyria. Anyhow, we know nothing authentic. The invasion of Assyria by Phraortes, which Herodotus relates, is held, on good grounds, to be a later history of a rebellion against Darius Hystaspes, adapted to times before the Medes became one nation (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 408, 409). There was no reason why it should not have been recorded, had it taken place, since it is admitted to have been a total defeat, in which Phraortes lost his life (Herodotus i. 402). The invasion of the Scythians, which is to have stopped the siege of Nineveh under Cyaxares, was reported in a manifestly exaggerated form to Herodotus. The 28 years, during which Herodotus relates the Scythian rule to have lasted (Ibid. 106), is longer than the whole of the reign of the last king of Assyria; and yet, according to Herodotus, is to have been interposed between the two sieges of Cyaxares. And as its empire gave no sign of decay, so far as we can trace its history within 22 years before its destruction, so, with the like rapidity, did the empire rise, which was to destroy it. The account which Herodotus received, that the Medians had thrown off the yoke of Assyria before Deioces (i. 95,96), is in direct contradiction to the Assyrian inscriptions. This was, they state, the time, not of the revolt, but of the conquest of

Media. They are confirmed by Holy Scripture, which says that the Assyrian king (Sargon) placed “in the cities of the Medes” (~~2~~¹²⁷¹⁶2 Kings 17:6) his Israelitish captives. The utmost, which Herodotus ascribes to Deioces however, is, that he consolidated the six Median tribes and built a capital, Agbatana (Herodotus i. 101). It is an union of wild hordes into one people, held together for the time by the will of one man and by their weariness of mutual oppressions. Even according to their accounts, Cyaxares (about 633 B.C., i.e., 8 years before the fall of Nineveh) first organized the Median army; the Greeks, in the time of Aeschylus, believed Cvaxares to have been the first of the Median kings (Persae 761-764); rebels in Media and Sagartia claimed the Median throne against Darius, as descended from Cyaxares, as the founder of the Monarchy (Behistun Inset., quoted by Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 409).

Further, the subsequent history supports the account of Abydenus against Herodotus, that not the Medes, but the rebel general of the last Monarch of Nineveh was, with his Babylonian troops, the chief author of the destruction of Nineveh. The chief share of the spoil, where no motives of refined policy intervene, falls to the strongest, who had chief portion in the victory. “The Medes,” says Herodotus, “took Nineveh, and conquered all Assyria, except the Babylonian portion” (i 106). But Babylon was no spared province, escaping with its independence as a gain. Babylonia, not Media, succeeded to the Southern and Western dominions of the Assyrian empire, and the place, where Nineveh had stood, Cyaxares retaining the North. This was a friendly arrangement, since subsequently too we find a Babylonian prince in the expedition of Cyaxares against Asia Minor, and Medians assisting Nebuchadnezzar against the king of Egypt (Rawlinson, Herodotus i. 415,416). Abydenus represents the Babylonians and Medes, as equal (Conf. Tobit 14:15. “Before he died, he heard of the destruction of Nineveh, which was taken by Nabuchonosor and Ahasuerus”), but exhibits the rebel general, as the author of the attack (Euseb. Chronicles P. 1. c. 9). “After him (Sardanapal), Sarac held the empire of Assyria, who, being informed of a horde of mingled troops which were coming against him from the sea, sent Busalossor (Nebopalassar) general of his army, to Babylon. But he, having determined to revolt, betrothed to his son, Nebucbodrossor, Amuhea, daughter of Asdahag, prince of the Medes, and soon made a rapid attack on Nineveh. King Sarac, when he knew the whole, set the palace Evorita on fire. Then Nehuchodrossor, attaining to the empire, encircled Babylon with strong walls.”

The “horde of mingled troops” “from the sea” were probably those same Susians and Elymaeans, whom the Assyrians had, in successive reigns, defeated. If the account of Herodotus were true, the father of the Median Monarch had perished in conflict with Assyria. The grandfather of the Assyrian Monarch had himself reigned in Babylon. Assyria ruled Babylon by viceroys to the end. It has been noticed that Nahum mentions no one enemy who should destroy Nineveh. True, for no one enemy did destroy her.

Even now its fall is unexplained. The conquests of its Monarchs had not been the victories of talented individuals. They were a race of world-wide conquerors. In the whole history, of which we have the annals, they are always on the aggressive. They exacted tribute where they willed. The tide of time bore them on in their conquests. Their latest conquests were the most distant. Egypt, her early rival, had been subdued by her. The powers, which did destroy her, had no common bond of interest. They were united, for one reign, not by natural interests, but, as far as we see, by the ambition of two individuals. These crushed, at once and for ever, the empire which for so many centuries had been the ravager of the world. But who could have foreseen such a combination and such results, save God, in Whose hands are human wills and the fate of empires?

The fiery empire of conquerors sank like a tropic sun. Its wrath had burned, unassuaged, “from” (in their own words) “the rising to the setting sun.” No gathering cloud had tempered its heat or allayed its violence. Just ere it set, in those last hours of its course, it seemed, as if in its meridian. Its bloodstained disk cast its last glowing rays on that field of carnage in Susiana; then, without a twilight, it sank beneath those stormy waves, so strangely raised, at once and for ever. All, at once, was night. It knew no morrow.

Its fall is inexplicable still. It may have accelerated its own destruction by concentrating the fierce Chaldees at Babylon. It was weakened by the revolt of its own general, and with him the defection of an army. Still, in those days, the city of 1200 towers, each 200 feet high, its ordinary wall 100 feet high and of such breadth, that three chariots could drive on it abreast (Diod. Sic. ii. 3), could not be taken by mounds, except by some most gigantic army with patience inexhaustible. Famine could not reduce a city, which, in its 60 miles in circumference, enclosed, like Babylon, space for much cattle, and which could, within its walls, grow enough grain for

its population of 600,000 (^{301E}Jonah 4:11). With its perennial supply of provision, it might have laughed to scorn a more formidable foe than the Medes, Elamites and Babylonians, unaccustomed to sieges, except in as far as any had fought in its armies, while the Ninevites possessed the hereditary skill of centuries. Babylon, smaller than Nineveh (Strabo xvi. p. 757), was at rest amidst the siege of the more powerful grandson of Cyaxares. Cyrus could only take it by stratagem; Darius Hystaspes, by treachery. Then, every Ninevite was a warrior. Their descendants, the Kurds, are still among the fiercest and most warlike people of Asia. The bas-reliefs, which bear internal evidence of truth, exhibit a wonderful blending of indomitable strength of will, recklessness of suffering, inherent physical energy, unimpaired by self-indulgence. A German writer on art says (Kugler Kunst-Geschichte, (2) p. 75, 6. in Strauss Nahum p. li), “You recognize a strong thick-set race, of very powerful frame, yet inclined to corpulence, a very special blending of energy and luxury. The general impression of the figures, whether men, women or eunuchs, has uniformly something earnest and imposing.” An English writer says still more vividly (Edwards in Kitto Scr. lands. pp. 50, 1); “All the figures indicate great physical development, animal propensities very strongly marked, a calm, settled ferocity, a perfect nonchalance amidst the most terrible scenes; no change of feature takes place, whether the individual is inflicting or experiencing horrid sufferings. The pictures are very remarkable as indicating the entire absence of higher mental and moral qualities: and the exuberance of brutal parts of man’s nature. At the same time, there is not lacking a certain consciousness of dignity and of inherent power. There is a tranquil energy and fixed determination, which will not allow the beholder to feel any contempt of those stern warriors.”

How then could it fall? The prophecy of Nahum describes, with terrible vividness, a siege; the rousing of its king from a torpor of indolence; “he remembereth his nobles” (^{311E}Nahum 2:5 (6)); the orderly advance, the confused preparations for defense; and then, when expectation is strung, and we see besiegers and besieged prepared for the last decisive strife, there is a sudden pause. No human strength overthrows the city “The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved. And it is decreed, she shall be led away captive” (^{311E}Nahum 2:6,7 (7,8)). Her captivity follows on the opening of “the gates of the rivers.” The “rivers,” ordinarily her strength, were also her weakness. The annals of Sennacherib relate, how he repaired a palace which had been undermined by the Tigris.

(Assyr. Texts p. 7): “The small palace, which was become very ruinous in every part, because the river Tigris, during 16 years, had undermined and ravaged it, (I repaired.)” Dionysius, the Jacobite patriarch, relates how in his own time, 763 A.D. (Ass. B. O. ii. 112): “the Tigris, overflowing, laid waste all the towns around it, and especially Mosul” (opposite to Nineveh). Barhebraeus, in four different years, mentions the destruction of houses in Bagdad through the overflow of the Tigris (835, 941, 988, 1211 A.D. Barh. p. 153, 188, 204, 500). He mentions also a city-wall, overthrown by an inundation, so that 3,000 men were drowned in their houses (Ibid. p. 153). Ives relates (Voyage 1773. p. 281): “The Bishop (of Babylon) remembers that” about 1733 “the Euphrates and Tigris were so overflown, that the whole country between them appeared as one large sea. Over all the plain between Bagdad and Hilla, people could pass only in boats. The water flowed quite up to the glacis, the ditch was full, the city also overflown, and the foundation of most of the buildings hurt; 300 houses were entirely destroyed. To prevent as much as possible” the recurrence of such a calamity, “the Turks now face the foundation-wall of their houses with a composition of charcoal, ashes, and Demar (bitumen).” “The river Khosar,” also, which would be swollen by the same causes as the Tigris, “entered the city,” says Ainsworth (Travels ii. 142,143), “by an aperture in the walls on the East side, which appears to have formed part of the original plan and to have been protected by a gateway and walls, vestiges of which still remain.” “The Khausser,” says Mr. Rich (Koordistan, ii. 56), “is generally drawn off for irrigating the cotton-plantations in the alluvial ground of the river; when it is much overflowed, it discharges itself into the Tigris above the bridge.” (Ibid. p. 64): “The Khausser now (Dec. 1. after “very heavy tropical rain,”) discharges itself direct into the Tigris, and brings an immense body of water.” (Layard N. and B. p. 77): “After rain, it becomes an impetuous torrent, overflowing its banks and carrying all before it.” (Ibid. p. 64): “The stone-bridge was carried away one night by the violence of the Khausser, on a sudden inundation.” On a lesser swelling of the river — (Ibid. p. 64) “the water-wheels were removed” in precaution “and the bridge of boats opened.” Cazwini, the Arabic geographer, speaks of (Quoted by Tach de Nino urbe p. 24) “the rivers of Nineveh.”

Ctesias, being a writer of suspected authority, cannot safely be alleged in proof of the fulfillment of prophecy. Yet in this case his account, as it is in exact conformity with the obvious meaning of the prophecy of Nahum, so it solves a real difficulty, how Nineveh, so defended, could have fallen. It

seems certain that the account of the siege taken from him by Diodorus, is that of the last siege. It has been remarked (Hawl. Herodotus i. 413) that the only event of the siege, known from any other source, namely, that the last Assyrian king; when he had learned the combination of the Medes and Babylonians against him, set fire to his palace, is related also by Ctesias. Ctesias has also the same fact, that the Babylonian revolt was recent; the name of the revolted general in Ctesias, Belisis, is the latter half of that given to him by Abydenus, (Abydenus in Euseb. Chronicles Can. P. i. c. 9), Nebopalassar, omitting only the name of the god, Nebo. The rest of the history is in itself probable. The success of the Assyrian monarch at first against the combined armies, and the consequent revelry, are that same blending of fierceness and sensuality which is stamped on all the Assyrian sculptures, continued to the end. The rest of his relation, which, on account of the filets of nature, which we know, but which, since they are gathered from sources so various, Ctesias probably did not know, is, in itself, probable, accounts for what is unaccounted for, and corresponds with the words of Nahum. It is (In Diod. Sic. ii. 27. Diodorus has "Euphrates" in conformity with his own error, that Nineveh was on that river), "Sardanapalus, seeing the whole kingdom in the greatest danger, sent his three sons and two daughters with much wealth to Paphlagonia to Cotta the Governor, being the best-disposed of his subjects. He himself sent by messengers to all his subjects for forces, and prepared what was needed for the siege. He had an oracle handed down from his forefathers, that no one should take Nineveh, unless the river first became an enemy to the city. Conceiving that this never would be, he held to his hopes, purposing to abide the siege and awaited the armies to be sent by his subjects." "The rebels, elated by their successes, set themselves to the siege, but on account of the strength of the walls, could in no wise injure those in the city." "But these had great abundance of all necessaries through the foresight of the king. The siege then being prolonged for two years, they pressed upon it; assaulting the walls and cutting off those therein from any exit into the country." "In the 3rd year, the river, swollen by continuous and violent rains, inundated a part of the city and overthrew 20 stadia of the wall. Then the king, thinking that the oracle was fulfilled, and that the river was plainly an enemy to the city, despaired of safety. And, not to fall into the enemy's hands, he made an exceeding great pile in the palace, heaped up there all the gold and silver and the royal apparel, and having shut up his concubines and eunuchs in the house formed in the midst of the pile, consumed himself and all the royalties with them all. The rebels,

hearing that Sardanapalus had perished, possessed themselves of the city, entering by the broken part of the wall.”

Yet Nahum had also prophesied, “the fire shall devour thy bars;” “fortify thy strong holds, there shall the fire devour thee;” “I will burn her chariots in the smoke” (^{<340B>}Nahum 3:13,15; 2:13), and all the ruins of Nineveh still speak from beneath the earth where they lie interred, that, overthrown as they have been by some gigantic power, fire consumed them within. (Rawlinson, Herod. i. 488. quoting “Layard Nin. and its Remains i. 12, 27, 49. etc. Nin. and B. (of Nimrud) p. 351, 357, 359. etc. Vaux Nineveh and Persepolis p. 196-8. Botta Letter ii. p. 26. iii. p. 41. etc.” “They (the human-headed bulls) had suffered, like all those previously discovered, from the fire.” Lay. N. and B. p. 71. “It (the wall) contained some fragments of calcined sculptured alabaster, evidently detached from the bas-reliefs on the walls.” Ibid. Add of Kouyuniik, Athenaeum N. 900. Jan. 25. 1845. p. 99): “The palaces of Khorsabad (Dur Sarjina) and Nimrud shew equal traces of fire with those of Koyunjik.” (Rawlinson, Ibid. note 2):

“The recent excavations have shown that fire was a great instrument in the destruction of the Nineveh palaces. Calcined alabaster, masses of charred wood and charcoal, colossal statues split through with the heat, are met with in parts of the Ninerite mounds, and attest the veracity of prophecy.”

(Bonomi p. 461).

“It is evident from the ruins that Khorsabad and Nimroud were sacked; and set on fire.”

Yet this does not exhaust the fullness of the prophecy. Nahum not only foretold the destruction of Nineveh, that it should “be empty, void, waste, there is no healing of thy bruise,” but in emphatic words, that its site also should be a desolation. “With an overrunning flood He shall make the place thereof (mekomah) a desolation” (^{<340B>}Nahum 1:8). This was then new in the history of the world. Cities have remained, while empires passed away. Rome, Constantinople, Athens, Damascus, Alexandria, Venice, abide, although their political might is extinct. No or Thebes itself survived its capture by Sargon and a yet later loss of its inhabitants nearly two centuries, when the more fatal conquest of Cambyses, anti perhaps the rise of Memphis perpetuated its destruction. Nahum foretells emphatically as to

Nineveh, “He will make the place thereof an utter consumption.” Not only would God destroy the then Nineveh; but the very place or site thereof should be an utter desolation. There was, then, no instance of so great a city passing away. Such had not been Babylonian, Assyrian, Egyptian policy. It had become an established policy in Sennacherib’s time to remove populations, not to destroy cities. And these two policies were incompatible. For a conqueror who would remove populations must have, whither to remove them. Nineveh itself had conquered Babylon and Shushun, and the cities of the Medes; but had placed her own lieutenants in them. The mere destruction of such a city as Nineveh was “contrary to experience.” Even later than this, Babylon, notwithstanding its rebellions, was spared by its first conqueror, and survived to be the grave of its second, Alexander. Xenophon describes Nineveh under the name of Mespila (of which Mosul has been supposed to be a corruption) (Anab. iii. 4. 10)

“a wall, void, large, lying against the city — the basement was of polished stone, full of shells, its width 50 feet, its height 50 feet. Thereon was built a wall of brick, its breadth 50 feet, the height 100; the circuit was six farsangs,”

i.e., 22 1/2 miles. The shell remained; the tumult of life was gone. Its protecting bulwarks remained; all, which they protected, had disappeared. They had forgotten already on the spot what it had been or by whom it had perished. (Ibid. 12):

“The Medes inhabited it formerly. It was said that Media, a king’s wife, had fled thither, when the Medes were losing their power through the Persians. The Persian king, besieging this city, could not take it, either by time or force; but Zeus made the inhabitants senseless, and so it was taken.”

A little later, Alexander marched over its site to gain the world, not knowing that a world-empire, like that which he gave his life to found, was buried under his feet.^{f171} Gaugamela, near which Darius lost his empire, must have been close to its site. Yet three centuries, and history, not its mere neighbors only, had forgotten when it had perished. Strabo says (xvii. 1. 3), “It was effaced immediately after the destruction of the Syrians.” Nearly two centuries later is Lucian’s saying (Charon c. 23), “Nineveh has perished, and there is no trace left where it once was.” Yet before this time, in the reign of Claudius, the Romans had built a new Nineveh which they

called by his name “Ninive Claudiopolis.” In the 6th century, it is mentioned as a Christian see (See Ass. B. O. iii. 1. p. 104). Its episcopate was taken away, probably on account of its decline, early in the 9th century; and it was united to Mosul (By Jesus Bar Nun Catholicus 820-824 A.D. Ass. iii. p. 344, coll. p. 165). It was still in being at the beginning of the 14th century (Ebedjesu, who died 1318 A.D., (Ass. i. 539) wrote to the Ninevites on the plague. Ass. iii. 1. 143).

Yet, in the 12th century, as a whole, “it was desolate, but there were there many villages and castles.” This was not the Nineveh of prophecy; but it too was swept away, and a few coins alone attest the existence of the Roman city. “The city, and even the ruins of the city,” relates Gibbon (c. 46) of the last victory of Heraclius, “had long since disappeared; the vacant space afforded a spacious field for the operation of the two armies.” A line of lofty mounds, on the East of Tigris long drew but a momentary gaze from the passers-by; a few cottages surmounted the heaps, which entombed the palaces of kings, who were the terror of the East; the plow turned up, unheeded, the bricks, which recorded their deeds; the tide of war swept over it anew; the summer’s sands again filled up (Layard, Nineveh i. pp. 6,7) “the stupendous mass of brick-work, occasionally laid bare by the winter rains.” The eyes rested on nothing but (Layard, Nineveh i. pp. 6,7) “the stern shapeless mound, rising like a hill from the scorched plain.” (Layard, Nineveh i. pp. 6,7): “The traveler is at a loss to give any form to the rude heaps, upon which he is gazing. Those of whose works they are the remains, unlike the Roman and the Greek, have left no visible traces of their civilization or of their arts; their influence has long since passed away. The scene around him is worthy of the ruin he is contemplating; desolation meets desolation; a feeling of awe succeeds to wonder, for there is nothing to relieve the mind, to lead to hope, or to tell of what has gone by. Those huge mounds of Assyria made a deeper impression upon me, gave rise to more serious thoughts and more earnest reflection, than the temples of Baalbee and the theaters of Ionia.”

In 1827, Buckingham still wrote (Travels ii. 49-52,62):

“we came in about an hour to the principal mounds which are thought to mark the site of the ancient Nineveh. There are four of these mounds, disposed in the form of a square; and these, as they shew neither bricks, stones, nor other materials of building, but are in many places overgrown with grass, resemble the mounds left by

entrenchments and fortifications of ancient Roman camps. The longest of these mounds runs nearly N. and S. and consists of several ridges of unequal height, the whole appearing to extend for four or five miles in length. There are three other distinct mounds, which are all near to the river, and in the direction of East and West — There are appearances of mounds and ruins extending for several miles to the southward; and still more distinctly seen to the Northward of this, though both are less marked than the mounds of the center. The space between these is a level plain, over every part of the face of which, broken pottery, and the other usual debris of ruined cities are seen scattered about.”

“Mounds and smaller heaps of ruins were scattered widely over the plain, sufficient to prove, that the site of the original city occupied a vast extent.” Niebuhr had ridden through Nineveh unknowingly. (*Reisebeschr.* ii. 353):

“I did not learn that I was at so remarkable a spot, until near the river. Then they showed me a village on a great hill, which they call Nunia, and a mosque, in which the prophet Jonah was buried. Another hill in this district is called Kalla Nunia, or the Castle of Nineveh. On that lies a village Koindsjug. At Mosul, where I dwelt close by the Tigris, they showed me in addition the walls of Nineveh, which in my journey through I had not observed, but supposed to be a set of hills.”

“It is well-known,” begins an account of the recent discoveries (W. S. V. Vaux in *Geogr. Dict.* ii. 438),

“that in the neighborhood of Mosul, travelers had observed some remarkable mounds, resembling small bills, and that Mr. Rich had, thirty years ago, called attention to one called Koyunjik, in which fragments of sculpture and pottery had been frequently discovered.”

And yet, humanly speaking, even if destroyed, it was probable before hand, that it would not altogether perish. For a town near its site was needed for purposes of commerce. Of the two routes of commerce from the Persian gulf to the North by the Euphrates or by the Tigris, the Tigris-route was free from the perils of the arid wilderness, through which the line by the Euphrates passed. If, for the downward course, the Euphrates itself was navigable, yet the desert presented a difficulty for caravans returning

upward from the Persian gulf. Arrian, who mentions the two lines of travel, says that Alexander (Arr. iii. 7. The same route was recommended to Antiochus the great. Polyb. v. 51. Xenophon relates the scarcity in Cyrus' advancing army on the Euphrates route, Anab. i. 5. 4; Dio Cassius, the sufferings of the army of Severus L. lxxv. 1), having crossed the Euphrates at Thapsacus, chose the less direct line by the Tigris, as (Ibid.) having a better supply of all things, food for his cavalry, and a less scorching heat. The mention of Haran (afterward Carrhae) Canneh, and Asshur in Ezekiel, (in one verse (^{<26723>} Ezekiel 27:23. "Eden" (Ibid.) is mentioned in ^{<21912>} 2 Kings 19:12, as having been subdued by Assyria; "Chalmad" remains unknown; "Sheba" spread too widely to the desert of Syria (Strabo xvi. 4. 21) for the mention of it to be any indication that those thus grouped together did not live in the same direction.)) seems to indicate the continuation of the same line of commerce with Tyre, which must have existed from praehistoric times (i.e., from times of which we have no definite historic account), since there is no ground to question the statement of the Phoenicians themselves in Herodotus, that they had come from the Erythraean sea (Herodotus i. 1. vii. 89 and Rawlinson ib. and App. to B. vii. Essay 2. T. iv. pp. 241ff), i.e., the Persian gulf. The later hindrances to the navigation of the Tigris by the great dams (probably for irrigation), were of Persian date; but they could have had no great effect on the actual commerce; since for the greater part of the upward course on the Tigris line, this also must, on account of the rapidity of the river, have been by caravans. The route was still used in the middle ages (Abulpharsj Hist. Dyn. p. 218 following quoted by Tuch de Nine urbe p. 32. Colossians Chesney counts Mosul among the flourishing commercial centers in the time of Abu'l Abbas 749 A.D. Expedition ii. 581). (Ainsworth Travels ii. 337. Tuch quotes also Campbell's land journey to India, p. 252, that "the merchants still, from the nature of the country, go from the Persian gulf to Armenia and Syria and thence again to Bagdad by the same route through Mosul and Arbela, by which large booties of men went formerly"): "The ancient road and the modern one on the upper Tigris follow, pretty nearly throughout, the same line, it being determined by the physical necessities of the soil." In the 16th century (Chesney's Expedition ii. 589),

“from the head of the Persian gulf two commercial lines existed: by one of them goods were carried some way up the Euphrates, and then by land to Bir, Aleppo, Iskonderun. By the other they

followed the Tigris to Baghdad and were carried by Diyar-Bekr and Sires to Terabuzum.”

(But Mosul was necessarily on the way from Baghdad to Diyar Bekr). Mosul still lies on the line of commerce, from the Persian gulf, Basrah, Baghdad, Mosul, Mardin, Diyar-Bekr to Iskenderun, the port of Aleppo (Ibid. ii. 595), or Trebizond (Tarabuzum (Ibid. 596)). It still carries on some commerce with Kurdistan and other provinces (Ibid. i. 21) (beside Diyar-Bekr and Baghdad). Colossians Chesney, in 1850, advocated the advantages of extending the line of commerce by British stations at Diyar-Bekr and Mardin, in addition to and connection with those already existing at Baghdad and Mosul (“The Tigris being already provided with stations at Bagdad and Mosul — it only requires another at Diyar Bekr, and the neighboring town of Mardin, since the connection of the former places with the countries about it would speedily cause a revival of its ancient commerce.” Chesney Expedition ii. 602).

There is, in fact, a consent as to this. Layard writes (Nin. and Bab. p. 469):

“The only impediment between the Syrian coast and the Tigris and Euphrates in any part of their course, arises from the want of proper security. The navigation of the Persian gulf is, at all times, open and safe; and a glance at the map will shew that a line through the Mediterranean, the port of Suedia, Aleppo, Mosul, Baghdad, Busrah, and the Indian Ocean to Bombay is as direct as can well be desired. With those prospects, and with the incalculable advantages, which a flourishing commerce and a safe and speedy transit through, perhaps, the richest portions of its dominions would confer upon the Turkish empire, it would seem that more than Eastern apathy is shown in not taking some steps, tending to restore security to the country watered by the Tigris and Euphrates.”

Ainsworth suggests a still wider commerce, of which Mosul might be the center. (Travels ii. 127):

“With a tranquil state of the surrounding country, Mosul presents mercantile advantages of no common order. There are several roads open to Persia, across the mountains; a transit from five to seven days, and by which, considering the short distance and good roads from Mosul to Iskenderun, British manufactures might be

distributed into the heart of Persia, in a time and at an expense, which the line of Trebizond Erzurum and Tabriz, that of Bushire and Baghdad, or the Russian line of Astrakhan Bakhu and Mazenderan can never rival.”

But although marked out by these advantages for continuance, even when its power was gone, Nineveh was to perish and it perished. Nor ought it to be alleged, that in other cases too, “if the position of the old capital was deemed, from political or commercial reasons more advantageous than any other, the population was settled in its neighborhood, as at Delhi, not amidst its ruins.” For

- 1) there was, at the time of Nahum, no experience of the destruction of any such great city as Nineveh;
- 2) In the case of conquest, the capitol of the conquering empire became, ipso facto, the capital of the whole; but this did not, in itself, involve the destruction of the former.

Babylon, from having been the winter residence of Cyrus, became the chief residence of the Persian Emperor at the time of Alexander, and continued to exist for many centuries, till the foundation of Seleucia, although it ceased to be a great city (See Dict. of Greek and Romans Geogr. i. 358). And this, notwithstanding its two rebellions under Darius (Behistun Inser. in Rawlinson, Herodotus ii. 595-597, 608), and that under Xerxes (Ctesias Ext. Pers. 22). There was no ground of human policy against Nineveh’s continuing, such as Mosul became, anymore than Mosul itself. It existed for some time, as a Christian See.

The grandeur, energy, power, vividness of Nahum, naturally can be fully felt only in his own language. The force of his brief prophecy is much increased by its unity. Nahum had one sentence to pronounce, the judgments of God upon the power of this world, which had sought to annihilate the kingdom of God. God, in His then kingdom in Judah, and the world, were come face to face. What was to be the issue? The entire final utter overthrow of whatever opposed God. Nahum opens then with the calm majestic declaration of the majesty of God; Who God is, against whom they rebelled; the madness of their rebellion, and the extinction of its chief (Nahum 1); then in detail, what was to come long after that first overthrow, the siege and capture of Nineveh itself (Nahum 2); then, in wider compass, the overthrow of the whole power (Nahum 3). It was to be

the first instance, in the history of mankind, of a power so great, perishing and forever. Nahum's office was not, as Jonah's, to the people itself. There is then no call to repentance, no gleam of God's mercy toward them in this life. Nineveh was to perish wholly, as the habitable world had perished in the time of Noah. The only relief is in the cessation of so much violence. There is no human joy expressed at this destruction of the enemy of God and of His people; no sorrow, save that there can be no sorrow; "who will bemoan her? whence shall I find comforters for her?" (^{340E}Nahum 3:7).

In conformity with this concentration of Nahum's subject, there is little in outward style or language to connect him with the other prophets. His opening (as already observed (p. 556)) bears upon God's declarations of mercy and judgment; but, Nineveh having filled up the measure of its iniquities, he had to exhibit the dark side of those declarations; how much lay in those words, "that will by no means clear the guilty." (Davison on Prophecy, p. 369):

"Jonah and Nahum form connected parts of one moral history, the remission of God's judgment being illustrated in the one, the execution of it in the other: the clemency and the just severity of the divine government being contained in the mixed delineation of the two books." His evangelic character just gleams through, in the eight tender words, in which he seems to take breath, as it were; "Tob Yhvh lemaoz beyomtsarah, veyodeah chose bo,"

"Good is God (Yhvh), refuge in day of trouble, and knowing trusters in Him" (^{340E}Nahum 1:7); then again, in the few words, which I think Isaiah expanded, "Lo on the mountains the feet of a good-tidings-bearer, peace-proclaimer" (^{340E}Nahum 2:1). Else there is only the mingled tenderness and austereness of truth, which would sympathize with the human being, but that that object had, by putting off all humanity, alienated all which is man. "Who will bemoan her? Whence shall I seek comforters for thee?" Who? and Whence? None had escaped evil from her. "Upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?"

It is difficult for us, who have to gather up our knowledge of the sacred language from the fragments which remain, in which also the number of words forms and idioms, which stand out singly here and there, seem but so many specimens of lost treasure, to judge with any certainty, whether any approximation of idiom, which we may observe, implies any connection between the writers in whom it occurs. Nahum has, especially

in his picture of the capture of Nineveh, so many of those hapax legomena), consisting often of slight modifications, his language is so rich and so original, that one the more doubts whether in those idioms, in which he seems to approximate to other prophets, the expressions in common do not belong to the common stock of the language; and that the more, since mostly part of the idiom only coincides, the rest is different. As for the so-called Aramaisms or other peculiarities of language which Hitzig would have to be evidences of a later date, and from some of which others would infer that Nahum lived at Nineveh itself, “the wish has been father to the thought.” One only solid ground there would be why Nahum should not have written his prophecy, when, according to all history, it could alone have any interest for Judah, long before the event itself, namely, if He to whom all, past and future, are present, could not or did not declare beforehand things to come. If there be prophecy, the siege of Nineveh might be as vividly presented to the prophet’s mind, as if he saw it with his bodily eyes (“Nahum must have seen this peril with his own eyes.” Ewald Proph. i. 349).

THE BOOK OF NAHUM

NOTES ON NAHUM 1

<300>Nahum 1:1. *The burden* Jerome: “The word *massa* ^{<4853>}, ‘burden’ is never placed in the title, except when the vision is heavy and full of burden and toil.”

of Nineveh The prophecy of Nahum again is very stern and awful. Nineveh, after having “repented at the preaching of Jonah,” again fell back into the sins whereof it had repented, and added this, that, being employed by God to chasten Israel, it set itself, not to inflict the measure of God’s displeasure, but to uproot the chosen people, in whom was promised the birth of Christ (Rup.). It was then an antichrist, and a type of him yet to come. Jonah’s mission was a call to repentance, a type and forerunner of all God’s messages to the world, while the day of grace and the world’s probation lasts. Nahum, “the full of exceeding comfort,” as his name means, or “the comforter” is sent to (^{<816>}John 16:6,8.) “reprove the world of judgment.” He is sent, prominently, to pronounce on Nineveh its doom when its day of grace should be over, and in it, on the world, when it and “all the works therein shall be burned up” (^{<610>}2 Peter 3:10). With few words he directly comforts the people of God (^{<3015>}Nahum 1:15); elsewhere the comfort even to her is indirect, in the destruction of her oppressor. Besides this, there is nothing of mercy or call to repentance, or sorrow for their desolation (as in ^{<2482>}Jeremiah 3:12; 8:18,21), but rather the pouring out of the vials of the wrath of God upon her and on the evil world, which resists to the end all God’s calls and persecutes His people. The Book of Jonah proclaims God, “a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, who repents Him of the evil.” Nahum speaks of the same attributes, yet closes with, “and will not at all acquit the wicked.” (Rup.):

“The Merciful Himself, who is by Nature Merciful, the Holy Spirit, seemeth, speaking in the prophet, to laugh at their calamity.”

All is desolation, and death. The aggression against God is retorted upon the aggressor; one reeling strife for life or death; then the silence of the graveyard. And so, in its further meaning (Jerome),

“the prophecy belongs to the close of the world and the comfort of the saints therein, so that whatsoever they see in the world, they may hold cheap, as passing away and perishing and prepare themselves for the Day of Judgment, when the Lord shall be the Avenger of the true Assyrian.”

So our Lord sets forth the end of the world as the comfort of the elect. “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh” (^{<2128>}Luke 21:28). This is the highest fulfillment of the prophecy, for “then will the wrath of God against the wicked be fully seen, who now patiently waiteth for them for mercy.”

The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite (Cyril, On the prophet, and his country which Cyril says, he had “learned by tradition to be expressed by the addition, the Elkoshite,” see the introduction to Nahum)

“He first defines the object of the prophecy, whereto it looks; then states who spake it and whence it was;”

the human instrument which God employed. The fuller title, “The book of the vision of Nahum” (which stands alone) probably expresses that it was not, like most prophecies, first delivered orally, and then collected by the prophet, but was always (as it is so remarkably) one whole. “The weight and pressure of this ‘burden.’ may be felt from the very commencement of the book.”

^{<300>}**Nahum 1:2.** *God is jealous and the Lord revengeth* Rather (as the English margin) God “very jealous and avenging is the Lord.” The Name of God, YHVH ^{<3068>}, “He who Is,” the Unchangeable, is thrice repeated, and thrice it is said of Him that He is an Avenger. It shows both the certainty and greatness of the vengeance, and that He who inflicts it, is the All-Holy Trinity, who have a care for the elect. God’s jealousy is twofold. It is an intense love, not bearing imperfections or unfaithfulness in that which It loves, and so chastening it; or not bearing the ill-dealings of those who would injure what It loves, and so destroying them. To Israel He had revealed Himself as “a (^{<2105>}Exodus 20:5,6) jealous God, visiting iniquity but shewing mercy;” here, as jealous for His people against those who were purely His enemies and the enemies of His people (see ^{<3014>}Zechariah 1:14), and so His jealousy burns to their destruction, in that there is in them no good to be refined, but only evil to be consumed.

The titles of God rise in awe; first, “intensely jealous” and “an Avenger;” then, “an Avenger and a Lord of wrath;” One who hath it laid up with Him, at His Command, and the more terrible, because it is so; the Master of it, (not, as man, mastered by it; having it, to withhold or to discharge; yet so discharging it, at last, the more irrevocably on the finally impenitent. And this He says at the last, “an Avenger to His adversaries,” (literally, “those who hem and narrow Him in”). The word “avenged” is almost appropriated to God in the Old Testament, as to punishment which He inflicts, or at least causes to be inflicted,^{f173} whether on individuals (<0045>Genesis 4:15,24; <0242>1 Samuel 24:12; <0048>2 Samuel 4:8; <0307>2 Kings 9:7; <2412>Jeremiah 11:20; 15:15; 20:12), or upon a people, (His own (<0025>Leviticus 26:25; <0908>Psalm 99:8; <2308>Ezekiel 24:8) or their enemies (<0534>Deuteronomy 32:41,43; <0988>Psalm 18:48; <2308>Isaiah 34:8; 35:4; 47:3; 59:17; 61:2; 63:4; <3054>Micah 5:14; <2460>Jeremiah 46:10; 50:15,28; 51:6,11,36; <2554>Ezekiel 25:14,17), for their misdeeds. In the main it is a defect.^{f174} Personal vengeance is mentioned only in characters, directly or indirectly censured, as Samson (<0707>Judges 15:7; 16:20) or Saul^{f175}. It is forbidden to man, punished in him, claimed by God as His own inalienable right. “Vengeance is Mine and requital” (<0525>Deuteronomy 32:35, compare <0901>Psalm 94:1). “Thou shalt not avenge nor keep up against the children of My people” (<0808>Leviticus 19:18). Yet it is spoken of, not as a mere act of God, but as the expression of His Being. “Shall not My soul be avenged of such a nation as this?” (<2480>Jeremiah 5:9,29; 9:9).

And a Reserver of wrath for His enemies The hardened and unbelieving who hate God, and at last, when they had finally rejected God and were rejected by Him, the object of His aversion. It is spoken after the manner of men, yet therefore is the more terrible. There is that in God, to which the passions of man correspond; they are a false imitation of something which in Him is good, a distortion of the true likeness of God, in which God created us and whisk man by sin defaced. (Augustine, Conf. B. ii. n. 13,14):

“Pride doth imitate exaltedness: whereas Thou Alone art God exalted over all. Ambition, what seeks it, but honors and glory? Whereas Thou alone art to be honored above all and glorious for evermore. The cruelty of the great would fain be feared; but who is to be feared but God alone, out of whose power what can be wrested or withdrawn, when, or where, or whither, or by whom? The tendernesses of the wanton would fain be counted love: yet is

nothing more tender than Thy charity; nor is aught loved more healthfully than that Thy truth, bright and beautiful above all. Curiosity makes semblance of a desire of knowledge; whereas Thou supremely knowest all. Yea, ignorance and foolishness itself is cloaked under the name of simplicity and uninjuriousness: because nothing is found more single than Thee; and what less injurious, since they are his own works which injure the sinner? Yea, sloth would fain be at rest; but what stable rest beside the Lord? Luxury affects to be called plenty and abundance; but Thou art the fullness and never-failing plenteousness of incorruptible pleasures. Prodigality presents a shadow of liberality: but Thou art the most overflowing Giver of all good. Covetousness would possess many things; and Thou possessest all things. Envy disputes for excellency: what more excellent than Thou? Anger seeks revenge: who revenges more justly than Thou? Fear startles at things unaccustomed or sudden, which endanger things beloved, and takes forethought for their safety; but to Thee what unaccustomed or sudden, or who separates from Thee what Thou lovest? Or where but with Thee is unshaken safety? Grief pines away for things lost, the delight of its desires; because it would have nothing taken from it, as nothing can from Thee. Thus doth the soul seek without Thee what she finds not pure and untainted, until she returns to Thee. Thus, all pervertedly imitate Thee, who remove far from Thee, and lift themselves up against Thee. But even by thus imitating Thee, they imply Thee to be the Creator of all nature; whence there is no place, whither altogether to retire from Thee.”

And so, in man, the same qualities are good or bad, as they have God or self for their end. (Rup.):

“The joy of the world is a passion. Joy in the Holy Spirit or to joy in the Lord is a virtue. The sorrow of the world is a passion. The sorrow according to God which works salvation is a virtue. The fear of the world which hath torment, from which a man is called fearful, is a passion. The holy tear of the Lord, which abides forever, from which a man is called reverential, is a virtue. The hope of the world, when one’s hope is in the world or the princes of the world, is a passion. Hope in God is a virtue, as well as faith and charity. Though these four human passions are not in God, there are four virtues, having the same names, which no one can have, save from God, from the Spirit of God.” in man they are “passions,”

because man is so far “passive” and suffers under them, and, through original sin, cannot hinder having them, though by God’s grace he may hold them in. God, without passion and in perfect holiness, has qualities, which in man were jealousy, wrath, vengeance, unforgivingness, a “rigor of perfect justice toward the impenitent, which punishes so severely, as though God had fury;” only, in Him it is righteous to punish man’s unrighteousness. Elsewhere it is said, “God keepeth not for ever” (^{<3430>}Psalm 103:9), or it is asked, “will He keep forever?” (^{<3435>}Jeremiah 3:5), and He answers, “Return, and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, saith the Lord, I will not keep for ever” (^{<3432>}Jeremiah 3:12). Man’s misdeeds and God’s displeasure remain with God, to be effaced on man’s repentance, or “by his hardness and impenitent heart man treasureth up unto himself wrath in the day of wrath and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will reward each according to his works” (^{<3415>}Romans 2:5,6).

^{<3405>}**Nahum 1:3.** *The Lord is slow to anger* Nahum takes up the words of Jonah (^{<3342>}Jonah 4:2) as he spoke of God’s attributes toward Nineveh, but only to show the opposite side of them. Jonah declares how God is “slow to anger,” giving men time of repentance, and if they do repent, “repenting Him also of the evil;” Nahum, that the long-suffering of God is not “slackness,” that “He is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

And strong in power Divine long-suffering goes along with Divine power. God can be long-suffering, because He can, whenever He sees good, punish. His long-suffering is a token, not of weakness, but of power. He can allow persons the whole extent of trial, because, when they are past cure, He can end it at once. “God is a righteous judge, strong and patient, and God wraths every day” (^{<3071>}Psalm 7:11). The wrath comes only at the last, but it is ever present with God. He cannot but be displeased with the sin; and so the Psalmist describes in the manner of men the gradual approximation to its discharge. “If he (the sinner) will not return (from evil or to God), He will whet His sword; He hath trodden His bow and directed it: He hath prepared for him instruments of death; He hath made his arrows burning” (^{<3072>}Psalm 7:12,13). We see the arrow with unextinguishable fire, ready to be discharged, waiting for the final decision of the wicked, whether he will repent or not, but that still “the Day of the Lord will come” (^{<3419>}2 Peter 3:9,10). “He will not at all acquit.” The words occur originally in the great declaration of God’s attributes of mercy by Moses, as a

necessary limitation of them (^{<02307>}Exodus 34:7. The Samaritan Pentateuch characteristically changes the words into “the innocent shall be held guiltless by him”); they are continued to God’s people, yet with the side of mercy predominant (^{<2801>}Jeremiah 30:11; 46:28); they are pleaded to Himself (^{<0448>}Numbers 14:18); they are the sanction of the third commandment (^{<0207>}Exodus 20:7; ^{<0651>}Deuteronomy 5:11). He “will not acquit” of His own will, apart from His justice. So He saith, “I can of Mine own self do nothing” (^{<0630>}John 5:30), i.e., (in part), not as unjust judges, who “call good evil and evil good,” following their own will, not the merits of the case; but, “as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just.” He cannot even have mercy and spare unjustly, nor without the lowliness of penitence. Even if it is Jerusalem, over which He wept, or His “companion, His own familiar friend” (^{<0654>}Psalm 55:14), He, who is no “accepter of persons,” cannot of mere favor forgive the impenitent.

The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm The vengeance of God comes at last swiftly, vehemently, fearfully, irresistibly. “When they say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them” (^{<0818>}1 Thessalonians 5:3), and all creation stands at the command of the Creator against His enemies. “He shall take to Him His jealousy for complete armor, and make the creature His weapon, for the revenge of His enemies” (Wisd. 5:17).

And the clouds are the dust of His feet Perhaps the imagery is from the light dust raised by an earthly army, of which Nahum’s word is used (^{<0330>}Ezekiel 26:10). The powers of heaven are arrayed against the might of earth. On earth a little dust, soon to subside; in heaven, the whirlwind and the storm, which sweep away what does not bow before them. The vapors, slight on outward seeming, but formed of countless multitudes of mist-drops, are yet dark and lowering, as they burst, and resistless. “The Feet of God are that power whereby He trampleth upon the ungodly.” So it is said to the Son, “Sit Thou on My Right Hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.” Tempests have also, without figure, been used to overthrow God’s enemies (^{<0247>}Exodus 14:27; ^{<0601>}Joshua 10:11; ^{<0050>}Judges 5:20; ^{<0020>}1 Samuel 2:10; and ^{<0070>}1 Samuel 7:10; ^{<0225>}2 Samuel 22:15).

^{<3006>}**Nahum 1:4.** *He rebuketh the sea and maketh it dry* Delivering His people, as He did from Pharaoh (^{<3949>}Psalm 106:9), the type of all later oppressors, and of antichrist. “His word is with power; to destroy them at once with one rough word (Wisd. 12:9). The restlessness of the barren and

troubled sea is an image of the wicked. “And drieth up all the rivers” (^{<257D>}Isaiah 57:20), as He did Jordan. His coming shall be far more terrible than when all the hearts of the inhabitants of the land did melt. “Bashan languisheth and Carmel; and the flower of Lebanon languisheth” (^{<462D>}Joshua 2:11). Bashan was richest in pastures; Carmel, according to its name, in gardens and vineyards; Lebanon, in vines also and fragrant flowers (^{<314D>}Hosea 14:7; Cant. 4:11), but chiefly in the cedar and cypress; it had its name from the whiteness of the snow, which rests on its summit. These mountains then together are emblems of richness, lasting beauty, fruitfulness, loftiness; yet all, even that which by nature is not, in the variety of seasons, wont to fade, dries up and withers before the rebuke of God. But if these things are “done in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?” All freshness, beauty, comeliness, show of outward nature, shall fade as grass; all ornament of men’s outward graces or gifts, all mere show of goodness, shall fall off like a leaf and perish. If the glory of nature perishes before God, how much more the pride of man! Bashan also was the dwelling-place of the race of giants, and near Libanus was Damascus; yet their inhabitants became as dead men and their power shrank to nothing at the word of God.

^{<306D>}**Nahum 1:5.** *The mountains quaked at Him, and the hills melted* As of their own accord. The words are a renewal of those of Amos (^{<319D>}Amos 9:13). Inanimate nature is pictured as endowed with the terror, which guilt feels at the presence of God. All power; whether greater or less, whatsoever lifteth itself up, shall give way in that Day, which shall be “upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up” (^{<212D>}Isaiah 2:13,14). “And the earth is burned” (rather lifteth itself up; as an earthquake it seems, as it were, to rise and sink down, lifting itself as if to meet its God or to flee. What is strongest, shaketh; what is hardest, melteth; yea, the whole world trembles and is removed. (Jonathan):

“If,” said even Jews of old, “when God made Himself known in mercy, to give the law to His people, the world was so moved at His presence, how much more, when He shall reveal Himself in wrath!”

The words are so great that they bear the soul on to the time, when the heaven and earth shall flee away from the Face of Him “Who sitteth on the

throne, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat” (^{<611>}Revelation 20:11; ^{<610>}2 Peter 3:10). And since all judgments are images of the Last, and the awe at tokens of God’s presence is a shadow of the terror of that coming, he adds,

^{<300>}**Nahum 1:6.** *Who can stand before His indignation?* This question appeals to our own consciences, that we cannot (As in ^{<201>}Joel 2:11; ^{<302>}Malachi 3:2: renewed ^{<617>}Revelation 6:17). It anticipates the self-conviction at every day of God’s visitation, the forerunners of the lust. The word rendered “indignation” is reserved almost exclusively to denote the wrath of God. (Rup.):

“Who can trust in his own righteousness, and, for the abundance of his works or consciousness of his virtues, not be in need of mercy? ‘Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified;’ and in Job it is said truly, ‘Behold He put no trust in His servants, and His Angels He charged with folly. How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which we crushed before the moth?’ (^{<1048>}Job 4:18,19). It were needless now to prove, that man’s own deserts suffice to no one, and that we are not saved but by the grace of God, ‘for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God’ (^{<1023>}Romans 3:23). Wherefore he saith, ‘before His indignation,’ standing face to Face before Him in wrath.”

Literally, “in the Face of:” guilt cannot look in the face of man, how much less, of God. The bliss of the righteous is the punishment of the wicked, to behold God face to Face. For (Rup.)

“whoever trusts in his own works deserves His indignation. and thinking he stands, righteously does he fall.”

His fury is poured out naathak^{<543>} is used of the pouring out of God’s wrath, ^{<202>}Jeremiah 7:20; 42:18; ^{<1427>}2 Chronicles 12:7 (as more commonly *shaphak*^{<8210>} here its native meaning is brought out the more, by adding *kaesh*^{<784>}).

like fire, sweeping away, like a torrent of molten fire, him who presumes that he can stand before His Face, as He did the cities of the plain (Genesis 19), the image of the everlasting fire, which shall burn up His enemies on every side. “And rocks are thrown down” (^{<197B>}Psalm 97:3; 50:3; 68:3;

18:8). The rocks are like so many towers of nature, broken down and crushed “by Him” literally, “from Him.” It needs not any act of God’s. He wills and it is done. Those who harden themselves, are crushed and broken to pieces, the whole fabric they had built for themselves and their defenses, crumbling and shivered. If then they, whose hearts are hard as rocks, and bold against all peril, and even Satan himself, whose “heart is as firm as a stone, yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone” (^{<3842>}Job 41:24), shall be crushed then, who shall abide?

^{<3007>}**Nahum 1:7.** *The Lord is good: a stronghold in the day of trouble* “Good and doing good,” and full of sweetness; alike good and mighty; good in giving Himself and imparting His goodness to His own; yea “none is good, save God” (^{<2889>}Luke 18:19); Himself the stronghold wherein His own may take refuge; both in the troubles of this life, in which “He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able” (^{<6013>}1 Corinthians 10:13), and in that Day, which shall hem them in on every side, and leave no place of escape except Himself.

And He knoweth them that trust in Him So as to save them; as Rahab was saved when Jericho perished, and Lot out of the midst of the overthrow and Hezekiah from the host of Sennacherib. He knows them with an individual, ever-present, knowledge. He says not only, “He shall own them,” but He ever “knoweth them.” So it is said; “The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous” (^{<3006>}Psalm 1:6); “The Lord knoweth the, days of the upright” (^{<3578>}Psalm 37:18); and our Lord says, “I know My sheep” (^{<3004>}John 10:14,27); and Paul, “The Lord knoweth them that are His” (^{<3109>}2 Timothy 2:19). God speaks of this knowledge also in the past, of His knowledge, when things as yet were not, “I have known thee by name;” or of loving kindness in the past, “I knew thee in the wilderness” (^{<3175>}Hosea 13:5), “you alone have I known of all the families of the earth” (^{<3182>}Amos 3:2), its contrariwise our Lord says, that He shall say to the wicked in the Great Day, “I never knew you” (^{<4073>}Matthew 7:23). That God, being what He is, should take knowledge of us, being what we are, is such wondrous condescension, that it involves a purpose of love, yea, His love toward us, as the Psalmist says admiringly, “Lord, what is man that Thou takest knowledge of him?” (^{<3933>}Psalm 144:3).

Them that trust in Him It is a habit, which has this reward; “the trusters in Him,” “the takers of refuge in Him.” It is a continued unvarying trust, to which is shown this everpresent love and knowledge.

Yet this gleam of comfort only discloses the darkness of the wicked. Since those who trust God are they whom God knows, it follows that the rest He knows not. On this opening, which sets forth the attributes of God toward those who defy Him and those who trust in Him, follows the special application to Nineveh.

^{<3008>}**Nahum 1:8.** *But with an overrunning flood He will make an utter end of the place thereof* that is, of Nineveh, although not as yet named, except in the title of the prophecy, yet present to the prophet's mind and his hearers, and that the more solemnly, as being the object of the wrath of God, so that, although unnamed, it would be known so to be. Image and reality, the first destruction and the last which it pictures, meet in the same words. Nineveh itself was overthrown through the swelling of the rivers which flowed around it and seemed to be its defense (see the note at ^{<3406>}Nahum 2:6). Then also, the flood is the tide of the armies, gathered from all quarters, Babylonians (Diod. Sic. ii. 25), Medes, Persians, Arabians, Bactrians, which like a flood should sweep over Nineveh and leave nothing standing. It is also the flood of the wrath of God, in whose Hands they were and who, by them, should "make a full end of it," literally, "make the place thereof a thing consumed," a thing which has ceased to be. For a while, some ruins existed, whose name and history ceased to be known; soon after, the ruins themselves were effaced and buried (See the introduction to Nahum). Such was the close of a city, almost coeval with the flood, which had now stood almost as many years as have passed since Christ came, but which now defied God. Marvelous image of the evil world itself, which shall flee away from the face of Him who sat on the throne, "and there was found no place for it" (^{<6311>}Revelation 20:11).

And darkness shall pursue His enemies Better, "He shall pursue His enemies into darkness" (So Jerome, The punctuators marked this by the *makkeph*.) Darkness is, in the Old Testament, the condition, or state in which a person is, or lives; it is not an agent, which pursues. Isaiah speaks of the "inhabitants of darkness" (^{<2347>}Isaiah 42:7), "entering unto darkness" (^{<2347>}Isaiah 47:5); "those who are in darkness" (^{<2349>}Isaiah 49:9). "The grave is all darkness" (^{<1982>}Psalms 88:12; ^{<1873>}Job 17:13), "darkness, and the shadow of death" (^{<1812>}Job 10:21). Hence, even Jews rendered (Jonathan), "He shall deliver them to hell." Into this darkness it is said, God shall pursue them, as other prophets speak of being "driven forth into darkness" (^{<2322>}Isaiah 8:22; ^{<2322>}Jeremiah 23:12 "in darkness, into which they shall be driven and fall therein").

The darkness, the motionless drear abode, to which they are driven, anticipates the being cast into “the outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Rup.: “The vengeance of God on” these who remain “His enemies” to the last, “ends not with the death of the body; but evil spirits, who are darkness and not light, pursue their souls, and seize them.” They would not hear Christ calling to them, “Walk, while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you” (^{<48125>}John 12:35). “They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof” (^{<48243>}Job 24:13). “They loved darkness rather than light” (^{<48189>}John 3:19). And so they were driven into the darkness which they chose and loved.

^{<3009>}**Nahum 1:9.** The prophet had in few words summed up the close of Nineveh; he now upbraids them with the sin, which should bring it upon them, and foretells the destruction of Sennacherib. Nineveh had, before this, been the instrument of chastising Israel and Judah. Now, the capture of Samaria, which had cast off God, deceived and emboldened it. Its king thought that this was the might of his own arm; and likened the Lord of heaven and earth to the idols of the pagan, and said, “Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?” (^{<12835>}2 Kings 18:35). He sent “to reproach the living God” (^{<12916>}2 Kings 19:16) and “defied the Holy One of Israel” (see ^{<12915>}2 Kings 19:15-34). His blasphemy was his destruction. It was a war, not simply of ambition, or covetousness, but directly against the power and worship of God.

“What will ye so mightily devise” (The Hebrew form is doubly emphatic), “imagine against the Lord?” He (The use of the pronoun in Hebrew is again emphatic) Himself, by Himself, is already “making an utter end.” It is in store; the Angel is ready to smite. Idle are man’s devices, when the Lord doeth. “Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us” (^{<2380>}Isaiah 8:10). While the rich man was speaking comfort to his soul as to future years, God was making an utter end. “Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee.”

Affliction shall not rise up the second time Others have understood this, “affliction shall not rise up the second time,” but shall destroy at once, utterly and finally (compare ^{<9218>}1 Samuel 26:8; ^{<1000>}2 Samuel 20:10); but:

(1) the idiom there, “he did not repeat to him,” as we say, “he did not repeat the blow” is quite different;

(2) it is said “affliction shall not rise up,” itself, as if it could not. The causative of the idiom occurs in ^{<3021>}2 Samuel 12:11, “lo, I will cause evil to rise up against thee;” as he says afterward, “Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more” (^{<3012>}Nahum 1:12). “God,” He had said, “is good for a refuge in the day of affliction;” now, personifying that affliction, he says, that it should be so utterly broken, that it should rise up no more to vex them, as when a serpent’s head is, not wounded only but, crushed and trampled underfoot, so that it cannot again lift itself up. The promises of God are conditioned by our not falling back into sin. He saith to Nineveh, “God will not deliver Judah to thee, as He delivered the ten tribes and Samaria.” Judah repented under Hezekiah, and He not only delivered it from Sennacherib, but never afflicted them again through Assyria. Renewal of sin brings renewal or deepening of punishment. The new and more grievous sins under Manasseh were punished, not through Assyria but through the Chaldeans.

The words have passed into a maxim, “God will not punish the same thing twice,” not in this world and the world to come, i.e., not if repented of. For of the impenitent it is said, “destroy them with a double destruction” (^{<2478>}Jeremiah 17:18). Chastisement here is a token of God’s mercy; the absence of it, or prosperous sin, of perdition; but if any refuse to be corrected, the chastisement of this life is but the beginning of unending torments.

^{<3010>}**Nahum 1:10.** *For while they be leiden together as thorns* that is, as confused, intertwined, sharp, piercing, hard to be touched, rending and tearing whosoever would interfere with its tangled ways, and seemingly compact together and strong; “and while they are drunken as their drink” (wine, ^{<2402>}Isaiah 1:22; ^{<2448>}Hosea 4:18), not “drinkers” only but literally, “drunken,” swallowed up, as it were, by their drink which they had swallowed, mastered, overcome, powerless, “they shall be derogated as stubble fully dry” (For the imagery of the devouring of the stubble by fire, see ^{<2324>}Isaiah 5:24; 47:4; ^{<2405>}Joel 2:5; ^{<3018>}Obadiah 1:18), rapidly, in an instant, with an empty crackling sound, unresisting, as having nothing in them which can resist. Historically, the great defeat of the Assyrians, before the capture of Nineveh, took place while its king, flushed with success, was giving himself to listlessness; and having distributed to his

soldiers victims, and abundance of wine, and other necessities for banqueting, the whole army (Diod. Sic. ii. 26) was negligent and drunken.” In like way Babylon was taken amid the feasting of Belshazzar (^{<2701>}Daniel 5:1-30); Benhadad was smitten, while “drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him” (^{<11216>}1 Kings 20:16). And so it may well be meant here too, that Sennacherib’s army, secure of their prey, were sunk in revelry, already swallowed up by wine, before they were swallowed up by the pestilence, on the night when the Angel of the Lord went out to smite them, and, from the sleep of revelry, they slept the sleep from which they shall not awake until the Judgment Day. God chooses the last moment of the triumph of the wicked, when he is flushed by his success, the last of the helplessness of the righteous, when his hope can be in the Lord alone, to exchange their lots. “The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked comes in his stead” (^{<2018>}Proverbs 11:8). Spiritually (Rup.), “the false fullness of the rich of this world, is real leanness; the greenness of such grass (for all flesh is grass) is real dryness. Marvelous words, “fully dry.” For what is dryness but emptiness?” They are perfected, but in dryness, and so perfectly prepared to be burned up. “The thorns had, as far as in them lay, choked the good seed, and hated the Seed-corn, and now are found, like stubble, void of all seed, fitted only to be burned with fire. For those who feast themselves “without fear is reserved the blackness of darkness forever” (^{<6012>}Jude 1:12,13).

^{<3011>}**Nahum 1:11.** *There is one come out of thee* that is, Nineveh, “that imagineth”^{f176} deviseth, (As ^{<49504>}Psalm 35:4), “evil, Lord, Sennacherib, against the the rod of God’s anger” (^{<2305>}Isaiah 10:5-7), yet who “meant not so,” as God meant. “And this was his counsel,” as is every counsel of Satan, “that they could not resist him, and so should withdraw themselves from the land of God, “into a land like their own” (^{<2306>}Isaiah 36:16,17), but whose joy and sweetness, its vines and its fig-trees, should not be from God, but from the Assyrian, i.e., from Satan.

^{<3012>}**Nahum 1:12.** *Though they be quiet and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down* Literally, “If they be entire,” i.e., sound unharmed, unimpaired in their numbers, unbroken in their strength, undiminished, perfect in all which belongs to war; “and thus many even thus shall they be mown down (or shorn), and he passeth away”.^{f177} With might outwardly unscathed, “without hand” (Dan 2:34), and “thus many,” i.e., many,

accordingly, as being unweakened; as many as they shall be, “so shall they be mown down, and he,” their head and king, “shall pass away and perish” (compare ^{<1904>}Psalm 48:4). Their numbers shall be, as their condition before, perfect; their destruction as their numbers, complete. It is wonderful how much God says in few words; and how it is here foretold that, with no previous loss, a mighty host secure and at ease, in consequence of their prosperity, all are at one blow mown down, like the dry grass before the scythe, are cut off and perish; and one, their king, “passeth away,” first by flight, and then by destruction. As they had shorn the glory of others (^{<2072>}Isaiah 7:20), so should they be shorn and cut down themselves.

Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more^{f178} Unless by new guilt thou compel Me. God always relieves us from trouble, as it were with the words, “sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee” (^{<4514>}John 5:14). In the end, afflictions shall be turned into joy, and “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be anymore paid” (^{<6204>}Revelation 21:4).

^{<3013>}**Nahum 1:13.** *For now will I break his yoke from off thee* God, lest His own should despair, does not put them off altogether to a distant day, but saith, now. Historically, the beginning of the fall is the earnest of the end. By the destruction of Sennacherib, God declared His displeasure against Assyria; the rest was matter of time only. Thus, Haman’s wise men say to him, “If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him” (Est. 6:13); as He saith in Isaiah, “I will break the Assyrian in My land, and upon My mountains tread him underfoot; then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders” (^{<2345>}Isaiah 14:25). (Rup.):

“In that He saith, not ‘I will loose,’ ‘will undo,’ but ‘I will break,’ ‘will burst,’ He sheweth that He will in such wise free Jerusalem, as to pour out displeasure on the enemy. The very mode of speaking shows the greatness of His displeasure against those who, when for the secret purpose of His judgments they have power given them against the servants of God, feed themselves on their punishments, and moreover dare to boast against God, as did the Assyrian, ‘By

the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom’
(²³⁰³Isaiah 10:13).”

³⁰¹⁴**Nahum 1:14.** *And the Lord hath given a commandment concerning thee, O Assyrian* In the word “I have afflicted thee,” the land of Israel is addressed, as usual in Hebrew, in the feminine; here, a change of gender in Hebrew shows the person addressed to be different. (Alb.): “By His command alone, and the word of His power, He cut off the race of the Assyrian, as he says in Wisdom, of Egypt, “Thine Almighty word leaped down from heaven, out of Thy royal throne; as a fierce man of war into the midst of a land of destruction, and brought Thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death,” (Wisd. 18:15,16), or else it may be, He gave command to the Angels His Ministers. God commands beforehand, that, when it comes to pass, it may be known (Jerome) “that not by chance,” nor by the will of man, “nor without His judgment but by the sentence of God” the blow came.

No move of thy name be sown As Isaiah saith, “the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned” (²³⁴⁰Isaiah 14:20). He prophesies, not the immediate but the absolute cessation of the Assyrian line. If the prophecy was uttered at the time of Sennacherib’s invasion, seventeen years before his death, not Esarhaddon only, but his son Assurbanipal also, whose career of personal conquest, the last glory of the house of the Sargonides and of the empire, began immediately upon his father’s reign of thirteen years, was probably already born. Assurbanipal in this case would only have been thirty-one, at the beginning of his energetic reign, and would have died in his fifty-second year. After him followed only an inglorious twenty-two years. The prophet says, “the Lord hath commanded.” The decree as to Ahab’s house was fulfilled in the person of his second son, as to Jeroboam and Baasha in their sons. It waited its appointed time, but was fulfilled in the complete excision of the doomed race.

Out of the house of thy gods will I cut off graven image and molten image
As thou hast done to others (²³⁷⁹Isaiah 37:19), it shall be done to thee.
(Rup.):

“And when even the common objects of worship of the Assyrian and Chaldean were not spared, what would be the ruin of the whole city!”

So little shall thy gods help thee, that (Jerome)

“there shalt thou be punished, where thou hopest for aid. ‘Graven and molten image’ shall be thy grave; amid altar and oblations, as thou worshippest idols,”

thanking them for thy deliverance, “shall thy unholy blood be shed,” as it was by his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer. (²³⁷³Isaiah 37:38.) “I will make it thy grave” (He does not use the word “made,” but “appointed” it, set it to be. “There I will make thy grave,” Jonathan. Even Ewald has “making them thy grave”); (Rup.), what God makes remains immovable, cannot be changed. But He “maketh thy grave” in hell, where not only that rich man in the Gospel hath his grave; but all who are or have been like him, and especially thou, O Asshur, of whom it is written, “Asshur is there and all her company; his graves are about him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword. Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit and her company is round about her grave: all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of the living” (³⁷²²Ezekiel 32:22,23). “Graven and molten image,” the idols which men adore, the images of their vanity, the created things which they worship instead of the true God (as they whose god is their belly), in which they busy themselves in this life, shall be their destruction in the Day of Judgment.

For thou art vile Thou honoredst thyself and dishonoredst God, so shalt thou be dishonored (From Dionysius), as He saith, “Them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed” (¹⁰²³1 Samuel 2:30). So when he had said to Edom, “thou art greatly despised” (³¹⁰²Obadiah 1:2), he adds the ground of it, “The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee. For thou art vile” (³¹⁰³Obadiah 1:3). Great, honored, glorious as Assyria or its ruler were in the eyes of men, the prophet tells him, what he was in himself, being such in the eyes of God, light, empty, as Daniel said to Belshazzar, “Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting” (²⁰⁵⁷Daniel 5:27), of no account, vile.^{f179}

³⁰¹⁵**Nahum 1:15.** *Behold upon the mountains, the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace* From mountain-top to mountain-top by beacon-fires they spread the glad tidings. Suddenly the deliverance comes, sudden its announcement. “Behold!” Judah, before hindered by armies from going up to Jerusalem, its cities taken (¹²⁸¹³2 Kings 18:13), may now again “keep the feasts” there, and “pay the vows,” which “in trouble she promised;” “for the wicked one,” the ungodly Sennacherib, “is utterly cut off, he shall no more pass through thee;” “the army and king

and empire of the Assyrians have perished.” But the words of prophecy cannot be bound down to this. These large promises, which, as to this world, were forfeited in the next reign, when Manasseh was taken captive to Babylon, and still more in the seventy years’ captivity, and more yet in that until now, look for a fulfillment, as they stand. They sound so absolute. “I will afflict thee no more,” “the wicked shall no more pass through thee,” “he is utterly (literally, the whole of him) cut off.” Nahum joins on this signal complete deliverance from a temporal enemy, to the final deliverance of the people of God. The invasion of Sennacherib was an avowed conflict with God Himself. It was a defiance of God. He would make God’s people, his; he would “cut it off that it be no more a people, and that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance” (¹⁹⁸⁰ Psalm 83:4). There was a more “evil counselor” behind, whose agent was Sennacherib. He, as he is the author of all murders and strife, so has he a special hatred for the Church, whether before or since Christ’s Coming. Before, that he right cut off that Line from whom “the Seed of the woman” should be born, which should destroy his empire and crush himself, and that he might devour the Child who was to be born (⁶⁶⁰ Revelation 12:4). Since, because her members are his freed captives, and she makes inroads on his kingdom, and he hates them because he hates God and Christ who dwells in them. As the time of the birth of our Lord neared, his hate became more concentrated. God overruled the hatred of Edom or Moab, or the pride of Assyria, to His own ends, to preserve Israel by chastising it. Their hatred was from the evil one, because it was God’s people, the seed of Abraham, the tribe of Judah, the line of David. If they could be cut off, they of whom Christ was to be born according to the flesh, and so, in all seeming, the hope of the world, were gone. Sennacherib then was not a picture only, he was the agent of Satan, who used his hands, feet, tongue, to blaspheme God and war against His people. As then we have respect not to the mere agent, but to the principal, and should address him through those he employed (as Elisha said of the messenger who came to slay him, “is not the sound of his master’s feet behind him?” (²⁰⁶² 2 Kings 6:32)), so the prophet’s words chiefly and most fully go to the instigator of Sennacherib, whose very name he names, Belial. It is the deliverance of the Church and the people of God which he foretells, and thanks God for. To the Church he says in the Same of God, “Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more” (³⁰¹² Nahum 1:12). The yoke which He will burst is the yoke of the oppressor, of which Isaiah speaks, and which the Son, to be born of a Virgin, “the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace,” was to break

(~~2004~~ Isaiah 9:4,6); the yoke of sin and the bands of fleshly pleasure and evil habits, wherewith we were held captive, so that henceforth we should walk upright, unbowed, look up to heaven our home, and “run the way of Thy commandments when Thou hast set my heart at liberty.” Behold, then, “upon the mountains,” i.e., above all the height of this world, “the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,” i.e., of remission of sins and sanctification by the Spirit and the freedom and adoption as sons, and the casting out of the Prince of this world, “that publisheth peace.” “O Judah,” thou, the true people of God, “keep thy solemn feasts,” the substance of the figures of the law. (Origen contra Celsus viii. n. 22):

“He who is ever engaged on the words, deeds and thoughts of Him, who is by nature Lord, the Word of God, ever lives in His days, ever keeps Lord’s days. Yea he who ever prepares himself for the true life and abstains from the sweets of this life which deceive the many, and who cherishes not the mind of the flesh but chastens the body and enslaves it, is ever keeping the days of preparation. He too who thinks that Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us, and that we must keep festival, eating the flesh of the Word, there is no time when he keeps not the Passover, ever passing over in thought and every word and deed from the affairs of this life to God, and hastening to His city. Moreover whoso can say truthfully, we have risen together with Christ, yea and also, He hath together raised us and together seated us in the heavenly places in Christ, ever lives in the days of Pentecost; and chiefly, when, going up into the upper room as the Apostles of Jesus, he gives himself to supplication and prayer, that he may become meet for the rushing mighty wind from heaven, which mightily effaces the evil in men and its fruits, meet too for some portion of the fiery tongue froth God.”

(Cyril):

“Such an one will keep the feast excellently, having the faith in Christ fixed, hallowed by the Spirit, glorious with the grace of adoption. And he will offer to God spiritual sacrifice, consecrating himself for an odor of sweetness, cultivating also every kind of virtue, temperance, continence, fortitude, endurance, charity, hope, love of the poor, goodness, longsuffering: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Every power of the enemy, which before had dominion over him, shall pass through no more, since Christ

commanded the unclean spirits to depart into the abyss and giveth to those who love Him power to resist the enemy, and subdue the passions, and destroy sin and tread on serpents and scorpions and every power of the enemy.”

And these feasts were to be kept “in the spirit not in the letter. For what avails it to keep any feast without, unless there be the feast of contemplation in the soul?” (Rup.). Wherefore he adds, “and pay thy vows,” i.e., thyself, whom in Baptism thou hast vowed: for the Wicked One shall no more pass through thee. (Rup.):

“For from what time, O Judah, Christ, by dying and rising again, hallowed thy feasts, he can no longer pass through thee. Thenceforth he perished wholly. Not that he has, in substance, ceased to be, but that the death of the human race, which through his envy came into this world, the two-fold death of body and soul, wholly perisheth. Where and when did this Belial perish? When did the death which he brought in, whence himself also is called Death? When Christ died, then died the death of our souls; and when Christ rose again, then perished the death of our bodies. When then, O Judah thou keepest thy feast, remember that thy very feast is He, of whom thou savest that by dying He conquered death and by rising He restored life. Hence it is said, Belial shall no more pass through thee. For if thou look to that alone, that Sennacherib departed, to return no more, and perished, it would not be true to say, Belial hath wholly perished! For after him many a Belial, such as he was, passed through time, and hurt thee far more. Perchance thou sayest, ‘so long as Nineveh standeth, how savest thou, that Belial has wholly perished? So long as the world standeth, how shall I be comforted, that death hath perished? For lo! persecutors tamed with death have stormed, and besides them, many sons of Belial, of whom antichrist will be the worst. How then sayest thou, that Belial has wholly perished?’ It follows, “the Scatterer hath gone up before thee.” To Judah in the flesh, Nebuchadnezzar who went up against Nineveh, was worse than Sennacherib. Who then is He who went up before thee, and dispersed the world, that great Nineveh, that thou shouldest have full consolation? Christ who descended, Himself ascended; and as He ascended, so shall He come to disperse Nineveh, i.e., to judge the world. What any persecutor doth meanwhile, yea or the Devil himself or antichrist,

takes nothing from the truth, that Belial hath “wholly perished.” “The prince of this world is cast out.” For nothing which they do, or can do, hinders, that both deaths of body and soul are swallowed up in His victory, who hath ascended to heaven? Belial cannot in the members kill the soul, which hath been made alive by the death of the Head, i.e., Christ; and as to the death of the body, so certain is it that it will perish, that thou mayest say fearlessly that it hath perished, since Christ the Head hath risen.”

Each fall of an enemy of the Church, each recovery of a sinful soul being a part of this victory, the words may be applied to each. The Church or the soul are bidden to keep the feast and pay their vows, whatever in their trouble they promised to God. Jerome: “It is said to souls, which confess the Lord, that the devil who, before, wasted thee and bowed thee with that most heavy yoke hath, in and with the idols which thou madest for thyself, perished; keep thy feasts and pay to God thy vows, singing with the angels continually, for no more shall Belial pass through thee, of whom the apostle too saith, What concord hath Christ with Belial? The words too, Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace” belong, in a degree, to all preachers of the Gospel. (Theoph.):

“No one can preach peace, who is himself below and cleaves to earthly things. For warn are for the good things of earth. If thou wouldest preach peace to thyself and thy neighbor, be raised above the earth and its goods, riches and glory. Ascend to the heavenly mountains, whence David also, lifting up his eyes, hoped that his help would come.”

NOTES ON NAHUM 2

The prophet, having foretold the destruction of Sennacherib, find in him how the enemy of Judah is wholly cut off, goes on to describe the destruction of Nineveh, and with it of his whole kingdom, and, under it, of antichrist and Satan.

<341B> Nahum 2:1. *He that dasheth in pieces* Rather, “the Disperser,” the instrument of God, whereby he should “break her in pieces like a potter’s vessel, or should scatter” her in all lands, is come up against thy face, O Nineveh, i.e., either, over against thee” (As **<0E32>**Genesis 32:22), confronting her as it were, face to face, or directed against thee (As **<0213>**Psalm 21:13, “went up against,” as **<127B>**2 Kings 17:3; 18:25; **<2006>**Joel 1:6).

From the description of the peace of Judah, the prophet turns suddenly to her oppressor, to whom, not to Judah, the rest of the prophecy is directed. Jacob and Israel are spoken of, not to (**<341B>**Nahum 2:2. Jonathan, Rashi, Kimchi, Abarb. would have it, that Judah is addressed). The destroyer of Nineveh “went up against the face of Nineveh,” not in the presence of Judah and Jacob, who were far away and knew nothing of it. “Keep the munition.” While all in Judah is now peace, all in Nineveh is tumult. God whom they had defied, saying that Hezekiah could not “turn away the face of one captain of the least of his servants” (**<2349>**Isaiah 36:9), now bids them prepare to meet him whom He would send against them. “Gird up thy loins now, like a man” (Job. 40:7). Thou who wouldest lay waste others, now, if theft canst, keep thyself. The strength of the words is the measure of the irony. They had challenged God; He in turn challenges them to put forth all their might.

Fence thy defenses we might say. Their strong walls, high though they were, unassailable by any then known skill of besiegers, would not be secure.

The prophet uses a kindred and allusive word, that their protection needed to be itself protected; and this, by one continued watchfulness. Watch, he adds, the way: spy out (as far as thou canst), the coming of the enemy; strengthen the loins, the seat of strength. Elsewhere they are said to be girded up for any exertion. “Fortify thy strength exceedingly.” The expression is rare (It occurs **<1015>**Proverbs 24:5, of the man of

understanding, and ^{<3024>}Amos 2:14, of what man cannot do): commonly it is said of some part of the human frame, knees, arms, or mind, or of man by God.

The same words are strong mockery to those who resist God, good counsel to those who trust in God. “Keep the munition, for He who keepeth thee will not sleep (^{<3018>}Psalm 121:3); watch the way,” by which the enemy may approach from afar, for Satan approacheth, sometimes suddenly, sometimes very stealthily and subtly, “transforming himself into an angel of light.” Jerome: “Watch also the way by which thou art to go, as it is said, ‘Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein;’” (^{<2016>}Jeremiah 6:16), so that, having stood in many ways, we may come to that Way which saith, ‘I am the Way.’” Then (from Jerome), “make thy loins strong,” as the Saviour commands His disciples, “Let your loins be girded about” (^{<0125>}Luke 12:35), and the Apostle says, “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth” (^{<0164>}Ephesians 6:14); for nothing so strengthens as the Truth. For Christ being the Truth, whose with his whole heart hath belived in Christ, is strong against himself, and hath power over the loins, the seat of the passions. Then, since this warfare is hard, he adds, be strong, “fortify thy power mightily;” resist not listlessly, but vehemently; and that, in His strength who hath strengthened our nature, taking it to Himself and uniting it with the Godhead. For without Him, strong though thou be, thou wilt avail nothing.

^{<002>}**Nahum 2:2.** *For the Lord hath turned away* (rather restoreth) *the excellency of Jacob* Speaking of what should come, as already come. For Nineveh falls, because God restores His people, whom it had oppressed. The restoration of God’s favor to His Church is the season of His punishment of their enemies; as, again, His displeasure against her enemies is a token of His favor to her. When Herod was smitten by God, “the word of God grew and multiplied” (^{<0124>}Acts 12:24). A long captivity was still before Judah, yet the destruction of the Assyrian was the earnest that every “oppressing city should cease” (^{<2301>}Isaiah 33:1).

The excellency of Jacob The word, “excellency,” is used in a good or bad sense; bad, if man takes the excellency to himself; good, as given by God. This is decisive against a modern popular rendering (See the introduction to Nahum); “has returned to the excellency of Jacob;” for Scripture knows of no “excellency of Jacob,” except God Himself or grace from God.

Jacob, if separated from God or left by Him, has no excellency, to which God could return.

As the excellency of Israel Both the ten and the two tribes had suffered by the Assyrian. The ten had been carried captive by Shalmanezzer, the two had been harassed by Sennacherib. After the captivity of the ten tribes, the name Jacob is used of Judah only. It may be then, that the restoration of God's favor is promised to each separately. Or (Sanct.), there may be an emphasis in the names themselves. Their forefather bore the name of Jacob in his troubled days of exile; that of Israel was given him on his return (^{<0328>}Genesis 32:28). It would then mean, the afflicted people (Jacob) shall be restored to its utmost glory as Israel. The sense is the same.

For the emptiers have emptied them out Their chastisement is the channel of their restoration. Unlike the world, their emptiness is their fullness, as the fullness of the world is its emptiness. The world is cast down, not to arise, for "woe to him that is alone when he falleth: for he hath not another to help him up" (^{<2040>}Ecclesiastes 4:10). The Church falleth, but "to arise" (^{<3078>}Micah 7:8): the people is restored, because it had borne chastening (^{<3343>}Ezekiel 36:3,6,7); "for the Lord hath restored the excellency of Jacob, for the emptiers have emptied them. out and marred their vinebranches" (see ^{<1802>}Psalms 80:12,13), i.e., its fruit-bearing branches, that, as far as in them lay, it should not bear fruit unto God; but to cut the vine is, by God's grace, to make it shoot forth and bear fruit more abundantly.

^{<3418>}**Nahum 2:3, 4.** Army is arrayed against army; the armies, thus far, of God against the army of His enemy; all without is order; all within, confusion. The assailing army, from its compactness and unity, is spoken of, both as many and one. The might is of many; the order and singleness of purpose is as of one. The shield, collectively, not shields. "His mighty men;" He, who was last spoken of, was Almighty God, as He says in Isaiah; "I have commanded My consecrated ones; I have also called My mighty ones, them that rejoice in My highness" (^{<2338>}Isaiah 13:3).

Is reddened Either with blood of the Assyrians, shed in some previous battle, before the siege began, or (which is the meaning of the word elsewhere), ^{f180} an artificial color, the color of blood being chosen, as expressive of fiery fierceness. The valiant men are in scarlet, for beauty and terror, as, again being the color of blood (Aelian V. H. vi. 6. Val. Max. ii. 6. 2). It was especially the color of the dress of their nobles (Xenophon (Cyrop. viii. 3. 3), implies that they were costly treasures which Cyrus

distributed.) one chief color of the Median dress, from whom the Persians adopted their's (Strabo xi. 13. 9). "The chariots shall be with flaming torches," literally, "with the fire of steels (see the introduction of Nahum), or of sharp incisive instruments. Either way the words seem to indicate that the chariots were in some way armed with steel. For steel was not an ornament, nor do the chariots appear to have been ornamented with metal. Iron would have hindered the primary object of lightness and speed. Steel, as distinct from iron, is made only for incisiveness. In either way, it is probable, that scythed chariots were already in use. Against such generals, as the younger Cyrus (At Cunaxa, Xen. Anab. i. 8) and Alexander,^{f181} they were of no avail; but they must have been terrific instruments against undisciplined armies. The rush and noise of the British chariots disturbed for a time even Caesar's Roman troops (De bell. Gall. iv. 33,34). They were probably in use long before^{f182} attributes their invention to Cyrus. For Xenophon, who was a good witness as to what he saw, shows himself ignorant of the previous history (See ab. p. 123). He himself quotes Ctesias an an authority (Ahab. i. 8). The, exaggerations of Ctesias are probably those of his Persian informants). Their use among the ancient Britons (Sil. Ital. xvii. 417, 418. Tac. Agric. 35,36. Mela iii. 6. Jornandes de reb. Goth. c. 2), Gauls (Mela iii. 6) and Belgians (Lucan i. 426. Jerome in Isaiah ult.), as also probably among the Canaanites,^{f183} evinces that they existed among very rude people. The objection that the Assyrian chariots are not represented in the monuments as armed with scythes is an oversight, since these spoken of by Nahum may have been Median, certainly were not Assyrian. "In the day of His preparation" (as in ~~2464~~ Jeremiah 46:14; ~~3074~~ Ezekiel 7:14; 38:7), when He musters the hosts for the battle; "and the fir-trees shall be terribly shaken;" i.e., fir-spears (See the note at ~~3448~~ Hosea 14:8, vol. i. p. 140) (the weapon being often named from the wood of which it is made) shall be made to quiver through the force wherewith they shall be hurled.

The chariots shall rage (Or madden (The words are adopted by ~~2469~~ Jeremiah 46:9), as the driving of Jehu is said to be "furiously," literally, in madness) "in the streets." The city is not yet taken; so, since this takes place "in the streets and broad ways," they are the confused preparations of the besieged. "They shall jostle one against another," shall run rapidly to and fro, restlessly; "their show (English margin) is like torches," leaving streaks of fire, as they pass rapidly along. "They shall run" vehemently, "like the lightnings," swift; but vanishing.

341B Nahum 2:5. *He shall recount his worthies* The Assyrian king wakes as out of a sleep, literally, “he remembers his mighty men” (as **341B Nahum 3:18**; **405B Judges 5:13**; **448B Nehemiah 3:5**); “they stumble in their walk,” literally, paths,^{f184} not through haste only and eager fear, but from want of inward might and the aid of God. These whom God leads stumble not (**253B Isaiah 63:13**). (Cyril): “Perplexed every way and not knowing what they ought to do, their mind wholly darkened and almost drunken with ills, they reel to and fro, turn from one thing to another, and in all” labor in vain.

They shall make haste to the walls thereof, and the defense (literally, “the covering”) *shall be prepared* The Assyrian monuments leave no doubt that a Jewish writer (Kimchi) is right in the main, in describing this as a covered shelter, under which an enemy approached the city; “a covering of planks with skins upon them; under it those who fight against the city come to the wall and mine the wall underneath, and it is a shield over them from the stones, which are cast from off the wall.”

The monuments, however, exhibit this shelter, as connected not with mining but with a battering ram, mostly with a sharp point, by which they loosened the walls.^{f185} Another covert was employed to protect single miners who picked out single stones with a pick-axe (See picture in Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 82). The Assyrians sculptures show, in the means employed against or in defense of their engines, how central a part of the siege they formed.^{f186} Seven of them are represented in one siege (Ibid. p. 79). The “ram” (**300E Ezekiel 4:2**) is mentioned in Ezekiel as the well-known and ordinary instrument of a siege.

Thus, **341B Nahum 2:3** describes the attack; and **341B Nahum 2:4** describes the defense; the two first clauses of **341B Nahum 2:5** describes the defense; the two last describe clauses the attack. This quick interchange only makes the whole account more vivid.

(Jerome): “But what avails it to build the house, unless the Lord build it? What helps it to shut the gates, which the Lord unbarreth?” On both sides is put forth the full strength of man; there seems a stand-still to see, what will be, and God brings to pass His own work in His own way.

341B Nahum 2:6. *The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved* All gives way in an instant at the will of God; the strife is hushed; no more is said of war and death; there is no more resistance or

bloodshed; no sound except the wailing of the captives, the flight of those who can escape, while the conquerors empty it of the spoil, and then she is left a waste. The swelling of the river and the opening made by it may have given rise to the traditional account of Ctesias, although obviously exaggerated as to the destruction of the wall. The exaggerated character of that tradition is not inconsistent with, it rather implies, a basis of truth. It is inconceivable that it should have been thought, that walls, of the thickness which Ctesias had described, were overthrown by the swelling of any river, unless some such event as Ctesias relates, that the siege was ended by an entrance afforded to the enemy through some bursting in of the river, had been true. Nahum speaks nothing of the wall, but simply of the opening of “the gates of the river,” obviously the gates, by which the inhabitants could have access to the rivers,^{f187} which otherwise would be useless to them except as a wall. These “rivers” correspond to the “rivers,” the artificial divisions of the Nile, by which No or Thebes was defended, or “the rivers of Babylon” (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 137:1) which yet was washed by the one stream, the Euphrates. But Nineveh was surrounded and guarded by actual rivers, the Tigris and the Khausser, and, (assuming those larger dimensions of Nineveh, which are supported by evidences so various (See the introduction to Jonah, vol. i.)) the greater Zab, which was “called (Kaswini, quoted by Tuch p. 35) the frantic Zab on account of the violence of its current.” “The Zab contained (says Ainsworth (Ainsw. Tr. ii. 327)), when we saw it, a larger body of water than the Tigris, whose tributaries are not supplied by so many snow-mountains as those of the Zab.” Of these, if the Tigris be now on a level lower than the rains of Nineveh, it may not have been so formerly. The Khausser, in its natural direction, ran through Nineveh where, now as of old, it turns a mill, and must, of necessity, have been fenced by gates; else any invader might enter at will: as, in modern times, Mosul has its “gate of the bridge.” A break in these would obviously let in an enemy, and might the more paralyze the inhabitants, if they had any tradition, that the river alone could or would be their enemy, as Nahum himself prophesied. Subsequently inaccuracy or exaggeration might easily represent this to be an overthrow of the walls themselves. It was all one, in which way the breach was made.

The palace shall be dissolved The prophet unites the beginning and the end. The river-gates were opened; what had been the fence against the enemy became an entrance for them: with the river, there poured in also the tide of the people of the enemy. The palace, then, the imperial abode,

the center of the empire, embellished with the history of its triumphs, sank, was dissolved,^{f188} and ceased to be. It is not a physical loosening of the sun-dried bricks by the stream which would usually flow harmless by; but the dissolution of the empire itself. (Jerome): “The temple, that is, his kingdom was destroyed.” The palaces both of Khorsabad and Kouyunjik lay near the Khausser.^{f189} “The Khosr-su, which runs on this side of the Khorsabad ruins, often overflows its banks, and pours its waters against the palace-mound. The gaps, North and South of the mound, may have been caused by its violence.” Ibid. i. 358) and both bear the marks of fire (See ab. p. 122 n. c.).

⚔️ **Nahum 2:7.** The first word should be rendered, “And it is decreed; She shall be laid bare. It is decreed.” All this took place, otherwise than man would have thought, because it was the will of God. She (the people of the city, under the figure of a captive woman) “shall be laid bare,” in shame, to her reproach; “she shall be brought up” (As in c. iii. 5; ⚔️ Isaiah 47:2,3), to judgment, or from Nineveh as being now sunk low and depressed; “and her maids,” the lesser cities, as female attendants on the royal city, and their inhabitants represented as women, both as put to shame and for weakness. The whole empire of Nineveh was overthrown by Nabopalassar. Yet neither was the special shame wanting, that the noble matrons and virgins were so led captives in shame and sorrow. “They shall lead her, as with the voice of doves,” moaning, yet, for fear, with a subdued voice.

⚔️ **Nahum 2:8.** *But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water* that is, of many peoples (⚔️ Revelation 17:1), gathered from all quarters and settled there, her multitudes being like the countless drops, full, untroubled, with no ebb or flow, fenced in, “from the days that she hath been,” yet even therefore stagnant and corrupted (see ⚔️ Jeremiah 48:11), not “a fountain of living waters,” during 600 years of unbroken empire; even lately it had been assailed in vain (By Cyaxares Her. i. 106); now its hour was come, the sluices were broken; the waters poured out. It was full not of citizens only, but of other nations poured into it. An old historian says (Ctesias ap. Diod. ii. 3), “The chief and most powerful of those whom Ninus settled there, were the Assyrians, but also, of other nations, whoever willed.” Thus, the pool was filled; but at the rebuke of the Lord they flee. “Stand, stand,” the prophet speaks in the name of the widowed city; “shut the gates, go up on the walls, resist the enemy, gather yourselves together,

form a band to withstand,” “but none shalt look back” to the mother-city which calls them; all is forgotten, except their fear; parents, wives, children, the wealth which is plundered, home, worldly repute. So will men leave all things, for the life of this world. “All that a man hath, will he give for his life” (^{<381B>}Job 2:4). Why not for the life to come?

^{<341B>}**Nahum 2:9.** *Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold*

Nineveh had not hearkened of old to the voice of the prophet, but had turned back to sin; it cannot hearken now, for fear. He turns to the spoiler to whom God’s judgments assigned her, and who is too ready to hear. The gold and silver, which the last Assyrian King had gathered into the palace which he fired, was mostly removed (the story says, treacherously) to Babylon. Arbaces is said to have borne this and to have removed the residue, to the amount of many talents, to Agbatana, the Median capital (Diod. Sic. ii. 28). “For there is none end of the store.” Nineveh had stored up from her foundation until then, but at last for the spoiler. “When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled” (^{<231B>}Isaiah 33:1). Many “perish and leave their wealth to others” (^{<191B>}Psalms 49:10). “The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just” (^{<131B>}Proverbs 13:22). “And glory out of all the pleasant furniture,” (literally as in the margin, “glory out of all vessels of desire”) i.e., however large the spoil, it would be but a portion only; yet all their wealth, though more than enough for the enemy and for them, could not save them. Her “glory,” was but a “weight” to weigh her down, that she should not rise again (^{<311B>}Zechariah 5:8; ^{<151B>}Exodus 15:10). Their wealth brought on the day of calamity, availed not therein, although it could not be drawn dry even by the spoiler. Jerome: “They could not spoil so much as she supplied to be spoiled.”

^{<341B>}**Nahum 2:10.** *She is empty and void and waste* The completeness of her judgment is declared first under that solemn number, Three, and the three words in Hebrew are nearly the same (*bookah*^{<1950>} *oomebookah*^{<4003>} *oomebulaah*^{<1110>}), with the same meaning, only each word fuller than the former, as picturing a growing desolation; and then under four heads (in all seven) also a growing fear. First the heart, the seat of courage and resolve and high purpose, melteth; then the knees smite together, tremble, shake, under the frame; then, much pain is in all loins, literally, “strong pains as of a woman in travail,” writhing and doubling the whole body, and making it wholly powerless and unable to stand upright, shall bow the very loins, the seat of strength (^{<1117>}Proverbs 31:17), and, lastly, the faces of them all

gather blackness (see the note at ^{<3016>} Joel 2:6), the fruit of extreme pain, and the token of approaching dissolution.

^{<3421>} **Nahum 2:11.** *Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding place of the young lions?* Great indeed must be the desolation, which should call forth the wonder of the prophet of God. He asks “where is it?” For so utterly was Nineveh to be effaced, that its place should scarcely be known, and now is known by the ruins which have been buried, and are dug up. The messengers of her king had asked, “Where are the gods of Hamath and of Arpad? of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?” (^{<2834>} 2 Kings 18:34). And now of her it is asked, “Where is Nineveh?” It had “destroyed utterly all lands,” and now itself is utterly destroyed. The lion dwelt, fed, walked there, up and down, at will; all was spacious and secure; he terrified all, and none terrified him; he tore, strangled, laid up, as he willed, booty in store; but when he had filled it to the full, he filled up also the measure of his iniquities, and his sentence came from God. Nineveh had set at nought all human power, and destroyed it; now, therefore, God appears in His own Person.

^{<3421>} **Nahum 2:13.** *Behold I, Myself, am against thee* (Literally, “toward thee”). God, in His long-suffering, had, as it were, looked away from him; now He looked toward (as in ^{<3571>} Psalm 37:20) him, and in His sight what wicked one should stand? “Saith the Lord of hosts,” whose power is infinite and He changes not, and all the armies of heaven, the truly angels and evil spirits and men are in His Hand, whereto He directs or overrules them. “And I will burn her chariots in the smoke.” The Assyrian sculptures attest how greatly their pride and strength lay in their chariots. They exhibit the minute embellishment of the chariots and horses (See Rawlinson, 5 Empires ii. 4-21). Almost inconceivably light for speed, they are pictured as whirled onward by the two (Rawlinson, Ibid. 10. 11. 13) or, more often, three (Layard, Monuments, Series i. Plate 18,21,23,27,28) powerful steeds with eye of fire (See a striking illustration in Rawlinson, ii. 15. (from Boutcher)), the bodies of the slain (Layard, Ser. i. 27,28; ii. 45,46) (or, in peace, the lion (Rawlinson, Ibid. 13. Layard, Nineveh, ii. 77)) under their feet, the mailed warriors, with bows stretched to the utmost, shooting at the more distant foe. Sennacherib gives a terrific picture of the fierceness of their onslaught. “The armor, the arms, taken in my attacks, swam in the blood of my enemies as in a river; the war-chariots, which destroy man and beast, had, in their course, crushed the bloody bodies and limbs” (In

Oppert Sargonides, p. 51. The general accuracy of the deciphering is alone presupposed).

All this their warlike pride should be but fuel for fire, and vanish in smoke, an emblem of pride, swelling, mounting like a column toward heaven, disappearing. Not a brand shall then be saved out of the burning; nothing half-consumed; but the fire shall burn, until there be nothing left to consume, as, in Sodom and Gomorrah, “the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. And the sword of the vengeance of God shall devour the young lions” (^{<01B>}Genesis 19:28), his hope for the time to come, the flower of his youth; “and I will cut off thy prey,” what thou hast robbed, and so that thou shouldest rob no more, but that thy spoil should utterly cease from “the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall be no more heard,” such as Rabshakeh, whereby they insulted and terrified the nations and blasphemed God.

In the spiritual sense, Nineveh being an image of the world, the prophecy speaks of the inroad made upon it through the Gospel, its resistance, capture, desolation, destruction. First, He that “ruleth with a rod of iron,” came and denounced “woe to it because of offenses;” then His mighty ones (From Dionysius) in His Name. Their shield is red, “the shield of faith,” kindled and glowing with love. Their raiment too is red, because they wash it in the Blood of the Lamb, and conquer through the Blood of the Lamb, and many shed their own blood “for a witness to them.” “The day of His preparation” is the whole period, until the end of the world, in which the Gospel is preached, of which the prophets and apostles speak, as the day of salvation (^{<23B>}Isaiah 49:8; ^{<40B>}2 Corinthians 6:2); to the believing world a day of salvation; to the unbelieving, of preparation for judgment. All which is done, judgments, mercy, preaching, miracles, patience of the saints, martyrdom, all which is spoken, done, suffered, is part of the one preparation for the final judgment. The chariots, flashing with light as they pass, are “the chariots of salvation” (^{<31B>}Habakkuk 3:8), bearing the brightness of the doctrine of Christ and the glory of His truth throughout the world, enlightening while they wound; the “spears” are the word of God, slaying to make alive.

On the other hand, in resisting, the world clashes with itself. It would oppose the Gospel, yet knows not how; is “maddened with rage, and gnashes its teeth, that it can prevail nothing” (Jerome). On the broad ways which lead to death, where “Wisdom uttereth her voice” and is not heard,

it is hemmed in, and cannot find a straight path; its chariots dash one against another, and yet they breathe their ancient fury, and run to and fro like lightning, as the Lord saith, "I beheld Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven" (~~2018~~ Luke 10:18). Then shall they "remember their mighty ones," all the might of this world which they ascribed to their gods, their manifold triumphs, whereby in pagan times their empire was established; they shall gather strength against strength, but it shall be powerless and real weakness. While they prepare for a long siege, without hand their gates give way; the kingdom falls, the world is taken captive by a blessed captivity, suddenly, unawares, as one says in the second century (Tertullian, Apol. c. 1. and p. 3. note 9, Oxford Translation);

"Men cry out that the state is beset, that the Christians are in their fields, in their forts, in their islands!"

These mourn over their past sins, and beat their breasts, in token of their sorrow; yet sweeter shall be the plaint of their sorrow, than any past joy. Sit they shall mourn as doves, and their mourning is as melody and the voice of praise in the ear of the Most High. One part of the inhabitants of the world being thus blessedly taken, the rest are fled. So in all nearness of God's judgments, those who are net brought nearer, flee further. "They flee, and look not back, and none heareth the Lord speaking, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings" (~~2012~~ Jeremiah 3:22). So then, hearing not His Voice, stand, stand, they flee away from His presence in mercy, into darkness for ever. Such is the lot of the inhabitants of the world; and what is the world itself? The prophet answers what it has been. A pool of water, into which all things, the riches and glory, and wisdom, and pleasures of this world, have flowed in on all sides, and which gave back nothing. All ended in itself. The water came from above, and became stagnant in the lowest part of the earth. "For all the wisdom of this world, apart from the sealed fountain of the Church, and of which it cannot be said, the streams thereof make glad the city of God nor are of those waters which, above the heavens, praise the Name of the Lord, however large they may seem, yet are little, and are enclosed in a narrow bound" (~~2018~~ Luke 10:18). These either are hallowed to God, like the spoils of Egypt, as when the eloquence of Cyprian was won through the fishermen (The Apostles, Augustine), or the gold and silver are offered to Him, or they are left to be wasted and burned up. "All which is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, all under the sun," remain here. (Bern. in Adv. Sermon. 4): "If they are thine, take them

with thee. When he dieth, he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend after him” (^{<4947>}Psalm 49:17). True riches are, not wealth, but virtues, which the conscience carries with it, that it may be rich forever.” The seven-fold terrors (^{<3120>}Nahum 2:10), singly, may have a good sense (Jerome), that the stony heart shall be melted, and the stiff knees, which before were not bent to God, be bowed in the Name of Jesus. Yet more fully are they the deepening horrors of the wicked in the Day of Judgment, when “men’s hearts shall fail them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth” (^{<4226>}Luke 21:26), closing with the everlasting confusion of face, “the shame and everlasting contempt,” to which the wicked shall rise. As the vessel over the fire is not cleansed, but blackened, so through the judgments of God, whereby the righteous are cleansed, the wicked gather but fresh defilement and hate. Lastly, the prophet asks, “Where is the dwelling of those who had made the world a den of ravin, where the lion,” even the devil who is “a roaring lion,” and all antichrists (^{<6128>}1 John 2:18), destroyed at will; where Satan made his dwelling in the hearts of the worldly, and “tore in pieces for his whelps,” i.e., killed souls of men and gave them over to inferior evil spirits to be tormented, and “filled his holes with prey,” the pit of hell with the souls which he deceived? (Dionysius). The question implies that they shall not be. “They which have seen him shall say, Where is he?” (^{<1807>}Job 20:7). God Himself answers, that He Himself will come against it to judgment, and destroy all might arrayed against God; and Christ shall “smite the Wicked one with the rod of His Mouth” (^{<23104>}Isaiah 11:4), and the “sharp two-edged sword out of His mouth shall smite all nations” (^{<6016>}Revelation 1:16; 19:15,21), “and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever” (^{<6441>}Revelation 14:11); and it should no more oppress, nor “any messenger of Satan” go forth to harass the saints of God.

NOTES ON NAHUM 3

The prophecy of the destruction in Nineveh is resumed in a dirge over her; yet still as future. It pronounces a woe, yet to come.^{f190}

Nahum 3:1. *Woe to the bloody city* Literally, “city of bloods” (As in the English margin. The phrase occurs ^{<321>}Ezekiel 22:2; 24:6,9), i.e., of manifold bloodshedding, built and founded in blood (^{<322>}Habakkuk 2:12; ^{<323>}Jeremiah 22:13), as the prosperity of the world ever is. Murder, oppression, wresting of judgment, war out of covetousness, grinding or neglect of the poor, make it “a city of bloods.” Nineveh, or the world, is a city of the devil, as opposed to the “city of God.” (Augustine, de Civ. D. xiv. 28):

“Two sorts of love have made two sorts of cities; the earthly, love of self even to contempt of God; the heavenly, love of God even to contempt of self. The one glorieth in itself, the other in the Lord.”

(Ibid. c. 1.):

“Amid the manifold differences of the human race, in languages, habits, rites, arms, dress, there are but two kinds of human society, which, according to our Scriptures, we may call two cities. One is of such as wish to live according to the flesh; the other of such as will according to the Spirit.”

“Of these, one is predestined to live forever with God; the other, to undergo everlasting torment with the devil.” Of this city, or evil world, Nineveh, the city of bloods, is the type.

It is all full of lies and robbery Better, “it is all lie; it is full of robbery” (rapine). “Lie” includes all falsehood, in word or act, denial of God, hypocrisy; toward man, it speaks of treachery, treacherous dealing, in contrast with open violence or rapine (The verb is used of the merciless “tearing” of the lion, “rending and there is no deliverer.” ^{<308>}Psalm 7:3).

The whole being of the wicked is one lie, toward God and man; deceiving and deceived; leaving no place for God who is the Truth; seeking through falsehood things which fail. Man “loveth vanity and seeketh after leasing” (^{<304>}Psalm 4:2). All were gone out of the way. Alb.:

“There were none in so great a multitude, for whose sake the mercy of God might spare so great a city.”

It is full, not so much of booty as of rapine and violence. The sin remains, when the profit is gone. Yet it ceases not, but perseveres to the end; “the prey departs not;” they will neither leave the sin, nor the sin them; they neither repent, nor are weary of sinning. Avarice especially gains vigor in old age, and grows by being fed. “The prey departeth not,” but continues as a witness against it, as a lion’s lair is defiled by the fragments of his prey.

^{<402>}**Nahum 3:2.** *The noise* (literally, “voice”)

of the whip There is cry against cry; the voice of the enemy, brought upon them through the voice of the oppressed. Blood hath a voice which crieth (^{<0040>}Genesis 4:10) to heaven; its echo or counterpart, as it were, is the cry of the destroyer. All is urged on with terrific speed. The chariot-wheels quiver^{f191} in the rapid onset; the chariots bound, like living things; the earth echoes with the whirling swiftness^{f192} of his mighty ones” (i.e., steeds, ^{<4086>}Jeremiah 8:16; 47:3; 50:11)) of the speed of the cavalry. The prophet within, with the inward ear and eye which hears “the mysteries of the Kingdom of God” (^{<4031>}Matthew 13:11,16) and sees things to come, as they shall come upon the wicked, sees and hears the scourge coming, with,^{f193} a great noise, impetuously; and so describes it as present. Wars and rumors of wars are among the signs of the Day of Judgment. The “scourge,” though literally relating to the vehement onset of the enemy, suggests to the thoughts, the scourges of Almighty God, wherewith He chastens the penitent, punishes the impenitent; the wheel, the swift changes of man’s condition in the rolling-on of time. “O God, make them like a rolling thing” (^{<4034>}Psalms 83:14).

^{<408>}**Nahum 3:3.** *The horseman lifteth up* Rather, “leading up:^{f194} the flash of the sword, and the lightning of the spear.” Thus, there are, in all, seven inroads, seven signs, before the complete destruction of Nineveh or the world; as, in the Revelations, all the forerunners of the Judgment of the Great Day are summed up under the voice of seven trumpets^{f195} and seven vials. Rup.: “God shall not use homes and chariots and other instruments of war, such as are here spoken of, to judge the world, yet, as is just, His terrors are foretold under the name of those things, wherewith this proud and bloody world hath sinned. For so all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” (^{<4062>}Matthew 26:52). They who, abusing their

power, have used all these weapons of war, especially against the servants of God, shall themselves perish by them, and there shall be none end of their corpses, for they shall be corpses forever: for, dying by an everlasting death, they shall, without end, be without the true life, which is God.” “And there is a multitude of slain.” Death follows on death. The prophet views the vast field of carnage, and everywhere there meets him only some new form of death, slain, carcasses, corpses, and these in multitudes, an oppressive heavy number, without end, so that the yet living stumble and fall upon the carcasses of the slain. So great the multitude of those who perish, and such their foulness; but what foulness is like sin?

348B Nahum 3:4. *Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favored harlot* There are “multitudes of slain” because of the “multitude of whoredoms” and love of the creature instead of the Creator. So to Babylon Isaiah saith, “they (loss of children and widowhood) shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, for the great abundance of thine enchantments” (^{2340B}Isaiah 47:9). The actual use of “enchantments,” for which Babylon was so infamous, is not elsewhere attributed to the Assyrians. But neither is the word elsewhere used figuratively; nor is Assyria, in its intimate relation to Babylon, likely to have been free from the longing, universal in pagandom, to obtain knowledge as to the issue of events which would affect her. She is, by a rare idiom, entitled “mistress of enchantments,” having them at her command, as instruments of power. Mostly, idolatries and estrangement from God are spoken of as “whoredoms,” only in respect of those who, having been taken by God as His own, forsook Him for false gods. But Jezebel too, of whose offences Jehu speaks under the same two titles (^{4102B}2 Kings 9:22), was a pagan. And such sins were but part of that larger all-comprehending sin, that man, being made by God for Himself, when he loves the creature instead of the Creator, divorces himself from God. Of this sin world empires, such as Nineveh, were the concentration. Their being was one vast idolatry of self and of “the god of this world.” All, art, fraud, deceit, protection of the weak against the strong (^{4267B}2 Kings 16:7-9; ^{4831B}2 Chronicles 28:20,21), promises of good (^{2336B}Isaiah 36:16,17), were employed, together with open violence, to absorb all nations into it. The one end of all was to form one great idol-temple, of which the center and end was man, a rival worship to God, which should enslave all to itself and the things of this world. Nineveh and all conquering nations used fraud as well as force, enticed and entangled others, and so sold and deprived them

of freedom. (see ^{<34RB>} Joel 3:3). Nor are people less sold and enslaved, because they have no visible master. False freedom is the deepest and most abject slavery. All sinful nations or persons extend to others the infection of their own sins. But, chiefly, the “wicked world,” manifoldly arrayed with fair forms, and “beautiful in the eyes of those who will not think or weigh how much more beautiful the Lord and Creator of all,” spreads her enticements on all sides “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,” “her pomps and vanities,” worldly happiness and glory and majesty, and ease and abundance, deceives and sells mankind into the power of Satan. It is called well-favored (literally, good of grace), because the world has a real beauty, nor (Augustine, Conf. iv. 13), “unless there were a grace and beauty in the things we love, could they draw us to them.” They have their beauty, because from God; then are they deformed, when (Ibid. x. 27 and iv. 12 end note m.) “things hold us back from God, which, unless they were in God, were not at all.” We deform them, if we love them for our own sakes, not in Him; or for the intimations they give of Him. (Cyril):

“Praise as to things foul has an intensity of blame. As if one would speak of a skilled thief, or a courageous robber, or a clever cheat. So though he calls Nineveh a well-favored harlot, this will not be for her praise, (far from it!) but conveys the heavier condemnation. As they, when they would attract, use dainty babblings, so was Nineveh a skilled artificer of ill-doing, well provided with means to capture cities and lands and to persuade them what pleased herself.”

She selleth not nations only but families, drawing mankind both as a mass, and one by one after her, so that scarce any escape.

The adultery of the soul from God is the more grievous, the nearer God has brought any to Himself, in priests worse than in the people, in Christians than in Jews, in Jews than in pagan; yet God espoused mankind to Him when He made him. His dowry were gifts of nature. If this be adultery, how much sorer, when betrothed by the Blood of Christ, and endowed with the gift of the Spirit!

^{<34RB>} **Nahum 3:5.** *Behold I am against thee, saith the Lord of Hosts*

Jerome: “I will not send an Angel, nor give thy destruction to others; I Myself will come to destroy thee.” Cyril: “She has not to do with man, or war with man: He who is angered with her is the Lord of hosts. But who

would meet God Almighty, who hath power over all, if He would war against him?" In the Medes and Persians it was God who was against them. "Behold I am against thee," literally, "toward thee." It is a new thing which God was about to do. "Behold!" God in His long-suffering had seemed to overlook her. Now, He says, I am toward thee, looking at her with His all-searching eye, as her Judge. Violence is punished by suffering; deeds of shame by shame. All sin is a whited sepulchre, fair without, foul within. God will strip off the outward fairness, and lay bare the inward foulness. The deepest shame is to lay bare, what the sinner or the world veiled within. "I will discover thy skirts," i.e., the long-flowing robes which were part of her pomp and dignity, but which were only the veil of her misdeeds. "Through the greatness of thine iniquity have thy skirts been discovered," says Jeremiah in answer to the heart's question, "why have these things come upon me?" Upon thy face, where shame is felt. The conscience of thy foulness shall be laid bare before thy face, thy eyes, thy memory continually, so that thou shalt be forced to read therein, whatsoever thou hast done, said, thought. "I will show the nations thy nakedness," that all may despise, avoid, take example by thee, and praise God for His righteous judgments upon thee. The Evangelist heard "much people in heaven saying Alleluia" to God that "He hath judged the whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication" (^{<6901>}Revelation 19:1,2). And Isaiah saith, "They shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that hath transgressed against Me" (^{<2361>}Isaiah 66:24).

^{<3486>}**Nahum 3:6.** *And I will cast abominable filth upon thee* Alb.: "like a weight, that what thou wouldest not take heed to as sin, thou mayest feel in punishment." "Abominable things had God seen" (^{<2437>}Jeremiah 13:27) in her doings; with abominable things would he punish her. Man would fain sin, and forget it as a thing past. "God maketh him to possess the iniquities of his youth" (^{<3833>}Job 13:26), and binds them around him, so that they make him to appear what they are, "vile" (compare Wisd. 4:18), "These things hast thou done and I kept silence; — I will reprove thee and set them in order before thine eyes. And will set thee as a gazing-stock" (^{<3572>}Psalms 50:21), that all, while they gaze at thee, take warning from thee (compare ^{<4473>}2 Chronicles 7:20). "I will cast thee to the ground; before kings will I give thee, for them to gaze upon thee" (^{<3587>}Ezekiel 28:17). (Ptol. Proverbs up. Alb.): "Whoever does not amend on occasion of others, others shall be amended on occasion of him."

<34RT> Nahum 3:7. *All they that look upon thee shall flee from thee* through terror, lest they should share her plagues, as Israel did, when the earth swallowed up Korah, Dathan and Abiram; and they who “had been made rich by Babylon, stand ajar off, for the fear of her torment. All they who look on thee” (**<68IS>** Revelation 18:15). She was set as a thing to be “gazed at.” He tells the effect on the gazers. “Each one who so gazed” at her should flee; one by one, they should gaze, be scared, flee (compare **<68II>** Psalm 31:11; 64:8). Not one should remain. “Who will bemoan her?” Not one should pay her the passing tribute of sympathy at human calamity, the shaking of the head at her woe (compare **<8106>** Job 16:4,5). Whoever had no compassion shall find none.

<34RS> Nahum 3:8. *Art thou better* More populous or more powerful, “than the populous No?” rather than No-Ammon, so called from the idol Ammon, worshiped there. No-Ammon, (or, as it is deciphered in the Cuneiform Inscriptions, Nia), meaning probably “the portion of Ammon”, ^{f196} was the sacred name of the capital of Upper Egypt, which, under its common name, Thebes, was far-famed, even in the time of Homer, for its continually accruing wealth, its military power, its 20,000 chariots, its vast dimensions attested by its 100 gates. ^{f197} Existing earlier, as the capital of Upper Egypt, its grandeur began in the 18th dynasty, after the expulsion of the Hyksos, or Semitic conquerors of Egypt. Its Pharaohs were conquerors, during the 18th to 20th dynasties, 1706-1110 B.C. — about six centuries. It was then the center of a world empire. Under a disguised name (Sesostris. Herodotus, ii. 102-110, and notes in Rawlinson, Herodotus, Diod. i. 53-59, Strabo xv. 1. 6; xvi. 4. and 7; xvii. 1. 5), its rulers were celebrated in Greek story also, for their worldwide conquests. The Greek statements have in some main points been verified by the decipherment of the hieroglyphics. The monuments relate their victories in far Asia, and mention Nineveh itself among the people who paid tribute to them. They warred and conquered from the Soudan to Mesopotamia. A monument of Tothmosis I (1066 B.C.) still exists at Kerman, between the 20th and 19th degrees latitude, boasting, in language like that of the Assyrian conquerors; “All lands are subdued, and bring their tributes for the first time to the gracious god” (Brugsch Hist. d’Eg. p. 88). “The frontier of Egypt,” they say (Ibid. and (Tothmosis iii.) p. 109), “extends Southward to the mountain of Apta (in Abyssinia) and Northward to the furthest dwellings of the Asiatics.” The hyperbolic statements are too

undefined for history,^{f198} but widely-conquering monarchs could alone have used them. (Brugsch ib. pp. 89-107):

“At all periods of history, the possession of the country which we call Soudan (the Black country) comprising Nubia, and which the ancients called by the collective name of Kous (Cush) or Aethiopia, has been an exhaustless source of wealth to Egypt. Whether by way of war or of commerce, barks laden with flocks, corn, hides, ivory, precious woods, stones and metals, and many other products of those regions, descended the Nile into Egypt, to fill the treasures of the temples and of the court of the Pharaohs: and of metals, especially gold, mines whereof were worked by captives and slaves, whose Egyptian name noub seems to have been the origin of the name Nubia, the first province S. of Egypt.” “The conquered country of Soudan, called Kous in the hieroglyphic inscriptions, was governed by Egyptian princes of the royal family, who bore the name of ‘prince royal of Kous.’”

But the prophet’s appeal to Nineveh is the more striking, because No, in its situation, its commerce, the sources of its wealth, its relation to the country which lay between them, had been another and earlier Nineveh. Only, as No had formerly conquered and exacted tribute from all those nations, even to Nineveh itself, so now, under Sargon and Sennacherib, Nineveh had reversed all those successes, and displaced the Empire of Egypt by its own, and taken No itself. No had, under its Tothmoses, Amenophes, Sethos, the Ousertesens, sent its messengers (^{<3423>}Nahum 2:13), the leviers of its tribute, had brought off from Asia that countless mass of human strength, the captives, who (as Israel, before its deliverance, accomplished its hard labors) completed those gigantic works, which, even after 2000 years of decay, are still the marvel of the civilized world. Tothmosis I, after subduing the Sasou, brought back countless captives from Naharina (Brugsch p. 90) (Mesopotamia); Tothmosis III, in 19 years of conquests, (1603-1585 B.C.) (Ibid. p. 104, the summary of pp. 95-103) “raised the Egyptian empire to the height of its greatness. Tothmosis repeatedly attacked the most powerful people of Asia, as the Routen (Assyrians?) with a number of subordinate kingdoms, such as Asshur, Babel, Nineveh, Singar; such as the Remenen or Armenians, the Zahi or Phoenicians, the Cheta or Hittites, and manymore. We learn, by the description of the objects of the booty, sent to Egypt by land and sea, counted by number and weight, many curious details as to the industry of the conquered peoples of

central Asia, which do honor to the civilization of that time, and verify the tradition that the Egyptian kings set up stelae in conquered countries, in memory of their victories. Tothmosis III. set up his stela in Mesopotamia, 'for having enlarged the frontiers of Egypt.'" Amenophis too is related to have (Ibid. p. 111) "taken the fortress of Neni (Nineveh)." (Ibid. p. 111):

"He returned from the country of the higher Routen, where he had beaten all his enemies to enlarge the frontiers of the land of Egypt"

(Ibid. p. 111):

"he took possession of the people of the South, and chastised the people of the North:"

"at Abd-el-Kournah" he was represented as (Ibid. 112)

"having for his footstool the heads and backs of five peoples of the S. and Four peoples of the North (Asiatics)."

(Ibid. 112):

"Among the names of the peoples, who submitted to Egypt, are the Nubians, the Asiatic shepherds, the inhabitants of Cyprus and Mesopotamia."

(On the sphinx of Gizeh Ibid. p. 113): "The world in its length and its breadth" is promised by the sphinx to Tothmosis IV. He is represented as (In the Isle of Konosso near Philee Ibid. p. 114) "subduer of the negroes." Under Amenophis III, the Memnon of the Greeks (Ibid. pp. 114,115),

"the Egyptian empire extended Northward to Mesopotamia, Southward to the land of Karou."

He enlarged and beautified No, which had from him the temple of Louksor, and his vocal statue (In Brugsch p. 116),

"all people bringing their tributes, their children, their horses, a mass of silver, of iron and ivory from countries, the roads whereto we know not."

The king Horus is saluted as (Ibid. pp. 124,125) "the sun of the nine people; great is thy name to the country of Ethiopia" (Ibid. pp. 124,125); "the gracious god returns, having subdued the great of all people." Seti I (or Sethos) is exhibited (Ibid. pp. 128-132), as revered by the

Armenians, conquering the Sasou, the “Hittites, Naharina (Mesopotamia), the Routen (Assyrians?) the Pount, or Arabs in the South of Arabia, the Amari or Amorites, and Kedes, perhaps Edessa.” Rameses II, or the great (Ibid. pp. 137 following) (identified with the Pharaoh of the Exodus (Ibid. p. 156)), conquered the Hittites in the North; in the South it is recorded (Ibid. p. 158), “the gracious god, who defeated the nine people, who massacred myriads in a moment, annihilated the people overthrown in their blood, yet was there no other with him.” The 20th Dynasty (1288-1110 B.C.) began again with conquests. (Ibid. p. 183):

“Rameses III. triumphed over great confederations of Libyans and Syrians and the Isles of the Mediterranean. He is the only king who, as the monuments shew, carried on war at once by land and sea.”

Beside many names unknown to us, the Hittites, Amorites, Circesium, Aratus, Philistines, Phoenicia, Sasou, Pount, are again recognized. North, South East and West are declared to be tributary to him, and of the North it is said (Ibid. p. 190),

“The people, who knew not Egypt, come to thee, bringing gold and silver, lapis-lazuli, all precious stones.”

He adorned Thebes with the great temple of Medinet-Abou (Ibid. p. 191) and the Ramesseum (Ibid. pp. 197, 198). The brief notices of following Rameses’ speak of internal prosperity and wealth: a fuller account of Rameses XII speaks of his (Ibid. p. 207) “being in Mesopotamia to exact the annual tribute,” how “the kings of all countries prostrated themselves before him, and the king of the country of Bouchten (it has been conjectured, Bagistan, or Ecbatana) presented to him tribute and his daughter.” (Ibid. p. 210):

“He is the last Pharaoh who goes to Mesopotamia, to collect the annual tributes of the petty kingdoms of that country.”

On this side of the Euphrates, Egypt still retained some possessions to the time of Necho, for it is said, “the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt” (¹²⁴⁷2 Kings 24:7). Thebes continued to be embellished alike by “the high priests of Ammon,” who displaced the ancient line (Brugsch p. 212), and kings of the Bubastite Dynasty, Sesonchis I or Sisak (Ibid. pp. 224-227), Takelothis II (Ibid. p. 223), and Sesonchis III (Ibid. p. 235). The Ethiopian dynasty of Sabakos and Tearko or Tirhaka in another way illustrates the

importance of No. The Ethiopian conquerors chose it as their royal city. There, in the time of Sabakos, Syria brought it tribute (Ibid. p. 244); there Tirhaka set up the records of his victories (Ibid. p. 244); and great must have been the conqueror, whom Strabo put on a line with Sesostris (xv. 1.6. He mentions him again for his extensive removals of people, which implies extensive conquests. i. 3. 21). Its site marked it out for a great capital; and as such the Ethiopian conqueror seized it. The hills on either side retired, encircling the plain, through the center of which the Nile brought down its wealth, connecting it with the untold riches of the south. (Joanne et Isambert, *Itineraire de P Orient*. p. 1039):

“They formed a vast circus, where the ancient metropolis expanded itself On the West, the Lybian chain presents abrupt declivities which command this side of the plain, and which bend away above Bab-el-molouk, to end near Kournah at the very bank of the river. On the East, heights, softer and nearer, descend in long declivities toward Louksor and Karnak, and their crests do not approach the Nile until after Medamout, an hour or more below Karnak.”

The breadth of the valley, being about 10 miles (Smith’s *Bible Dictionary*, “Thebes”), the city (of which, Strabo says (xvii. 1. 46), “traces are now seen of its magnitude, 80 stadia in length”) must have occupied the whole. (Brugsch *Geogr. d. Alt. Aeg.* p. 176):

“The city embraced the great space, which is now commonly called the plain of Thebes and which is divided by the Nile into two halves, an Eastern and a Western, the first bounded by the edge of the Arabian wilderness, the latter by the hills of the dead of the steep Libyan chain.”

The capital of Egypt, which was identified of old with Egypt itself,^{f199} thus lay under the natural guardianship of the encircling hills which expanded to receive it, divided into two by the river which was a wall to both. The chains of hills, on either side were themselves fenced in on East and West by the great sand-deserts unapproachable by an army. The long valley of the Nile was the only access to an enemy. It occupied apparently the victorious army of Assurbanipal (*Inscr. in Oppert, Rappports.* pp. 74,78,85) “a month and ten days” to march from Memphis to Thebes:^{f200}

“At Thebes itself there are still remains of walls and fortifications, strong, skillfully constructed, and in good preservation, as there are

also in other Egyptian towns above and below it. The crescent-shaped ridge of hills approaches so close to the river at each end as to admit of troops defiling past, but not spreading out or maneuvering. At each of these ends is a small old fort of the purely Egyptian, i.e., the ante-Hellenic period. Both above and below there are several similar crescent sweeps in the same chain of hills, and at each angle a similar fort.”

All successive monarchs, during more centuries than have passed since our Lord came, successively beautified it. Everything is gigantic, bearing witness to the enormous mass of human strength, which its victorious kings had gathered from all nations to toil for its and their glorification. Wonderful is it now in its decay, desolation, death; one great idol-temple of its gods and an apotheosis of its kings, as sons of its gods. (Stanley, Sinai and Palestine, Introduction, p. 38):

“What spires are to a modern city, what the towers of a cathedral are to the nave and choir, that the statues of the Pharaohs were to the streets and temples of Thebes. The ground is strewn with their fragments; the avenues of them towered high above plain and houses. Three of gigantic size still remain. One was the granite statue of Rameses himself, who sat on the rightside of the entrance to his palace. — The only part of the temple or palace, at all in proportion to him, must have been the gateway, which rose in pyramidal towers, now broken down and rolling in a wild ruin down to the plain.”

It was that self-deifying, against which Ezekiel is commanded to prophesy; “Speak and say; thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself” (~~29:3~~ Ezekiel 29:3). (Stanley, Ibid. p. 39):

“Everywhere the same colossal proportions are preserved. Everywhere the king is conquering, ruling, worshiping, worshiped. The palace is the temple. The king is priest. He and his horses are ten times the size of the rest of the army. Alike in battle and in worship, he is of the same stature as the gods themselves. Most striking is the familiar gentleness, with which, one on each side, they take him by each hand, as one of their own order, and then, in the next compartment, introduce him to Ammon, and the lion-

headed goddess. Every distinction, except of degree, between divinity and royalty is entirely leveled.”

Gigantic dimensions picture to the eye the ideal greatness, which is the key to the architecture of No. (Stanley, *Ibid.* p. 39):

“Two other statues alone remain of an avenue of eighteen similar or nearly similar statues, some of whose remnants lie in the field behind them, which led to the palace of Amenophis III, every one of the statues being Amenophis himself, thus giving in multiplication what Rameses gained in solitary elevation.”

(Wilkinson, *Anc. Eg.* iii. 266): “Their statues were all of one piece.” Science still cannot explain, how a mass of nearly 890 tons (“about 887 tons, 5 1/2 hundred weight.” Wilkinson *Mod. Eg.* ii. 145) of granite was excavated at Syene, transported^{f201} and set up at Thebes, or how destroyed (See Wilk., *Mod Eg.* ii. 144).

Nozrani, *In Egypt and Syria*, p. 278: “The temper of the tools, which cut adamantine stone as sharply and closely as an ordinary scoop cuts an ordinary cheese, is still a mystery.” Everything is in proportion. The two sitting colossi, whose “breadth across the shoulders is eighteen feet, their height forty-seven feet, fifty-three above the plain, or, with the half-buried pedestal, sixty feet, were once connected by an avenue of sphinxes of eleven hundred feet with what is now ‘Kom-el-Hettan,’ or ‘the mound of sand-stone,’ which marks the site of another palace and temple of Amenophis III.; and, to judge from the little that remains, it must have held a conspicuous rank among the finest monuments of Thebes. All that now exists of the interior are the bases of its columns, some broken statues, and Syenite sphinxes of the king, with several lionheaded figures of black granite” (Wilkinson, *Modern Egypt*, ii. 157, 158, 160, 162). The four villages, where are the chief remaining temples, Karnak, Luksor, Medinet-Abou, Kournah, form a great quadrilateral (Joanne et Isambert, *Itiner. de P Orient* pp. 1039, 1040), each of whose sides is about one and a half mile, and the whole compass accordingly six miles. The avenue of six hundred sphinxes, which joined the temple of Luksor with Karnak must have been one and a half mile long (Two kilometers, Joan. et Isamb. p. 1060): one of its obelisks is a remarkable ornament of Paris. Mostly massiveness is the characteristic, since strength and might were their ideal. Yet the massive columns still preserved, as in the temple of Rameses II (Memnonium. See Hoskins, *Winter in upper and lower Egypt. Frontispiece*), are even of

piercing beauty (Ibid.). And for the temple of Karnak! Its enclosure, which was some two miles in circumference^{f202} bears the names of Monarchs removed from one another, according to the Chronology, by above two thousand years (Osirtasen i, placed at 2803 B.C. to Tirhaka, 693. B.C., Wilkinson Mod. Eg. ii. 250, 252). (Lord Lindsay Letters on Egypt, etc., pp. 98,99):

“A stupendous colonnade, of which one pillar only remains erect, once extended across its great court, connecting the W. gate of entrance with that at its extremity. The towers of the Eastern gate are mere heaps of stones, poured down into the court on one side and the great hall on the other; giant columns have been swept away like reeds before the mighty avalanche, and one hardly misses them. And in that hall, of 170 feet by 329 feet, 134 columns of colossal proportions supported its roof; twelve of them, 62 feet high and about 35 in circumference, and on each side a forest of 66 columns, 42 feet 5 in. in height. Beyond the center avenue are seen obelisks, gateways and masses of masonry; every portion of these gigantic ruins is covered with sculpture most admirably executed, and every column has been richly painted.”

Stanley, Sinai and Palestine, p. xli.: “Imagine a long vista of courts and doorways and colonnades and halls; here and there an obelisk shooting up out of the ruins, and interrupting the opening view of the forest of columns. — This mass of ruins, some rolled down in avalanches of stone, others perfect and painted, as when they were first built, is approached on every side by avenues of gateways. East and West, North and South, these vast approaches are found. Some are shattered, but in every approach some remain; and in some can be traced, beside, the further avenues, still in parts remaining by hundreds together, avenues of ram-headed sphinxes. Every Egyptian temple has, or ought to have, one of those grand gateways, formed of two sloping towers, with the high perpendicular front between.” Then, over and above, is “their multiplied concentration. — Close before almost every gateway in this vast array were the colossal figures, usually in granite, of the great Rameses, sometimes in white and red marble, of Amenophis and of Thothmes. Close by them, were pairs of towering obelisks, which can generally be traced by pedestals on either side. — You have only to set up again the fallen obelisks which lie at your feet; to conceive the columns, as they are still seen in parts, overspreading the whole; to reproduce all the statues, like those which still remain in their

august niches, to gaze on the painted wails and pillars of the immense ball, which even now can never be seen without a thrill of awe, and you have ancient Thebes before you.” And most of these paintings were records of their past might. (Tacitus, Annals ii. 60):

“There remained on the massive buildings Egyptian letters, recording their former wealthiness; and one of the elder priests, bidden to interpret his native language, related that of old 700,000 of military age dwelt there; and with that army king Rhamses gained possession of Libya, Ethiopia, the Medes and Persians, the Bactrian and Scythian; and held in his empire the countries which the Syrians and Armenians and neighboring Cappadocians inhabit, the Bithynian also and Lycian to the sea. There were read tee the tributes imposed on the natives, the weight of silver amid gold; the number of arms and horses, and the gifts to the temples, ivory and frankincense, and what supplies of corn and utensils each nation should pay, not less magnificent than are now enjoined by Parthian violence or by Roman power.”

That was situate among the rivers Literally, “the dweller, she that dwelleth.” Perhaps the prophet wished to express the security and ease, in which she dwelt “among the rivers.” They encircled, folded round her, as it were, so that she was a little world in herself, secluded from all who would approach to hurt her. The prophet’s word, “rivers” (*Yeorim*^{<h2975>}), is especially used of the branches or canals of the Nile, which is also called the “sea”.^{f203} The Nile passed through No, and doubtless its canals encircled it. Egypt is said by a pagan to be (Isocr. Busir. ap. Boch. Phal. i. 1. p. 7) “walled by the Nile as an everlasting wall,” “Whose rampart was (rampart is) the sea.” Wall and rampart are, properly, the outer and inner wall of a city, the wall and forewall, so to speak. For all walls and all defenses, her enfolding walls of sea would suffice. Strong she was in herself; strong also in her helpers.

^{<409>}**Nahum 3:9.** *Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength* Literally, “Egypt was strength (Not literally, “her strength”), and Ethiopia, and boundless.” He sets forth first the imperial might of No; then her strength from foreign, subdued power. The capital is a sort of impersonation of the might of the state; No, of Egypt, as Nineveh, of Assyria. When the head was cut off or the heart ceased to beat, all was lost. The might of Egypt and Ethiopia was the might of No, concentrated in her. They were strength, and that strength

unmeasured by any human standard. Boundless was the strength, which Nineveh had subdued: boundless, the store (^{<3420>}Nahum 2:10) which she had accumulated for the spoiler; boundless (^{<3483>}Nahum 3:3) the carcasses of her slain. “And it was infinite.” “The people that came up with the king out of Egypt, were without number” (^{<4123>}2 Chronicles 12:3). The Egyptians connected with Thebes are counted by a pagan author (Cato in Steph. Byz. ap. Boch. iv. 27) at seven million. Put or Phut (Translated Lybians ^{<3440>}Jeremiah 46:9; ^{<3515>}Ezekiel 30:5; 38:5) is mentioned third among the sons of Ham, after Cash and Mizraim (^{<1006>}Genesis 10:6). They are mentioned with the Ethiopians in Pharaoh’s army at the Euphrates (Jer., loc. cit.), as joined with them in the visitation of Egypt (^{<3515>}Ezekiel 30:5); with Cush in the army of Gog (^{<3585>}Ezekiel 38:15); with Lud in that of Tyre (^{<3520>}Ezekiel 29:10); a country and river of that name were, Josephus tells us (Josephus, Ant. i. 6. 2), “frequently mentioned by Greek historians.” They dwelt in the Libya, conterminous to the Canopic mouth of the Nile (See Ges. Thes. s. v.).

And Lubim These came up against Judah in the army of Shishak (^{<4123>}2 Chronicles 12:3) against Rehoboam, and with the Ethiopians, “a huge host” under Zerah the Ethiopian against Asa (2 Chronicles 16.8. coll. Ibid. 14:9). The Ribou or Libou appear on the monuments as a people conquered by Menephtes (1341-1321 B.C. (Brugsch p. 172)) and Rameses III (1288 B.C. Ibid. 188,190,191). They were still to be united with Egypt and the Ethiopians in the times of Antiochus Epiphanes (^{<2714>}Daniel 11:43); so their connection with Egypt was not broken by its fall. Those unwearied enemies had become incorporated with her; and were now her help. These were (English Margin) in thy help; set upon it, given up to it. The prophet appeals to No herself, as it were, “Thou hadst strength.” Then he turns away, to speak of her, unwilling to look on the miseries which he has to portray to Nineveh, as the preludes of her own. Without God, vain is the help of man.

^{<3480>}**Nahum 3:10.** *Yet was site* (also (The word is emphatic: “She also,” her young children also. The same word also is repeated)) *carried away*, literally, “She also became an exile band,” her people were carried away, with all the barbarities of pagan war. All, through whom she might recover, were destroyed or scattered abroad; “the young,” the hope of another age, cruelly destroyed (see Hosea 14; ^{<2336>}Isaiah 13:16; ^{<1182>}2 Kings 8:12); “her honorable men” enslaved (see ^{<2983>}Joel 3:3), “all her great men prisoners.” God’s judgments are executed step by step. Assyria herself was the author

of this captivity, which Isaiah prophesied in the first years of Hezekiah when Judah was leaning upon Egypt (see Isaiah 20). It was repeated by all of the house of Sargon. Jeremiah and Ezekiel foretold fresh desolation by Nebuchadnezzar (²⁴⁶⁵Jeremiah 46:25,26; ²⁵¹⁴Ezekiel 30:14-16). God foretold to His people, “I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee” (²⁴⁰⁸Isaiah 43:3); and the Persian monarchs, who fulfilled prophecy in the restoration of Judah, fulfilled it also in the conquest of Egypt and Ethiopia. Both perhaps out of human policy in part. But Cambyses’ wild hatred of Egyptian idolatry fulfilled God’s word. Ptolemy Lathyrus carried on the work of Cambyses; the Romans, Ptolemy’s. Cambyses burned its temples (Diod. Sic. i. 46. Strabo xvii. 1. 45); Lathyrus its four-or five-storied private houses (They had been destroyed shortly before Diodorus Sic. Ibid. 45, 46); the Roman Gallus leveled it to the ground (“She was destroyed to the ground.” Jerome, Chronicles Eus. A. 1989). A little after it was said of her (Strabo l. c.), “she is inhabited as so many scattered villages.” A little after our Lord’s Coming, Germanicus went to visit, not it, but (Tac. Ann. ii. 62) “the vast traces of it.” (Juvenal, Sat. xv. 6): “It lay overwhelmed with its hundred gates” and utterly impoverished. No was powerful as Nineveh, and less an enemy of the people of God. For though these often suffered from Egypt, yet in those times they even trusted too much to its help (see Isaiah 30). If then the judgments of God came upon No, how much more upon Nineveh! In type, Nineveh is the image of the world as oppressing God’s Church; No, rather of those who live for this life, abounding in wealth, ease, power, and forgetful of God. If, then, they were punished, who took no active part against God, fought not against God’s truth, yet still were sunk in the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, what shall be the end of those who openly resist God?

³⁴⁸¹**Nahum 3:11.** *Thou also* As thou hast done, so shall it be done unto thee. The cruelties on No, in the cycle of God’s judgments, draw on the like upon Nineveh who inflicted them. “Thou also shalt be drunken” with the same cup of God’s anger, entering within thee as wine doth, bereaving thee of reason and of counsel through the greatness of thy anguish, and bringing shame on thee (The two images are united in ³⁰⁰⁶Obadiah 1:16), and a stupefaction like death. “Thou shalt be hid, a thing hidden”,^{f204} from the eyes of men, “as though thou hadst never been.” Nahum had foretold her complete desolation: he had asked, where is she? Here he describes an abiding condition; strangely fulfilled, as perhaps never to that extent

besides; her palaces, her monuments, her records of her glorious triumphs existed still in their place, but hidden out of sight, as in a tomb, under the hill-like mounds along the Tigris. “Thou also shalt seek strength, or a stronghold from the enemy,” out of thyself, since thine own shall be weakness. Yet in vain, since God, is not such to thee (^{<3400>}Nahum 1:7). “They shall seek, but not find.” “For then shall it be too late to cry for mercy, when it is the time of justice.” “He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy” (^{<3023>}James 2:13).

^{<3482>}**Nahum 3:12.** *All thy strong-holds shall be like fig trees, with the first ripe figs* Hanging from them; eagerly sought after (see ^{<3301>}Micah 5:1), to be consumed. Being ripe, they are ready to fall at once; “if they be shaken;” it needs but the tremulous motion, as when trees wave in the wind, “they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater,” not costing even the slight pains of picking them from the ground (Jerome). So easy is their destruction on the part of God, though it cost more pains to the Babylonians. At the end of the world it shall be yet more fulfilled (^{<4613>}Revelation 6:13), for then God will use no human instrument, but put forth only His own Almightyness; and all strong-holds of man’s pride, moral or spiritual, shall, of themselves, melt away.

^{<3483>}**Nahum 3:13.** *Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women* Fierce, fearless, hard, iron men, such as their warriors still are portrayed by themselves on their monuments, they whom no toll wearied, no peril daunted, shall be, one and all, their whole “people, women.” So Jeremiah to Babylon, “they shall become, became, women” (^{<2457>}Jeremiah 50:37; 51:30). He sets it before the eyes. “Behold, thy people are women;” against nature they are such, not in tenderness but in weakness and fear. Among the signs of the Day of Judgment, it stands, “men’s hearts failing them for fear” (^{<4226>}Luke 21:26). Where sin reigns, there is no strength left, no manliness or nobleness of soul, no power to resist. “In the midst of thee,” where thou seemest most secure, and, if anywhere, there were hope of safety. The very inmost self of the sinner gives way.

To thine enemies (This is, for emphasis, prefixed) not for any good to thee, but “to thine enemies shall be set wide open the gates of thy land,” not, “thy gates,” i.e., the gates of their cities, (which is a distinct idiom), but “the gates of the land” itself, every avenue, which might have been closed against the invader, but which was “laid open.” The Easterns, as well as the Greeks and Latins (The **Κασπιαί πυλαί** (Strabo xi. 12, 13), the **Αυδίαι**

Ibid. xiii. 65). See further Liddell and Scott, loc. cit.) the πύλαι ^{<4439>} της ^{<3588>} Κιλικίας ^{<2791>} και ^{<2532>} της ^{<3588>} Συρίας ^{<4947>}, Xen. Anab. i. 4. 14, the “Amsnicæ Pylæ” (Q. Curt. iii. 20). Pliny speaks of the “portæ Caucasias” (H. N. vi. 11) or “Iberias” (Albanias Ptol. v. 12.) Ibid. 15), used the word “gate” or “doors” of the mountain passes, which gave an access to a land, but which might be held against an enemy. In the pass called “the Caucasian gates,” there were, over and above, doors fastened with iron bars.^{f205} At Thermopylae or, as the inhabitants called them, Pylæ (Herodotus vii. 201), “gates,” the narrow pass was further guarded by a wall (Ibid. 176. 208). Its name recalls the brilliant history, how such approaches might be held by a devoted handful of men against almost countless multitudes. Of Assyria, Pliny says (Pliny, N. H. vi. 9. quoted by Tuch ii. 1), “The Tigris and pathless mountains encircle Adiabene.” When those “gates of the land” gave way, the whole land was laid open to its enemies.

The fire shall devour thy bars Probably, as elsewhere, the bars of the gates, which were mostly of wood, since it is added expressly of some, that they were of the iron (^{<19176>}Psalm 107:16; ^{<2340>}Isaiah 14:2) or brass (^{<1043>}1 Kings 4:13). (Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 83. who relates how “the city of Candahar was ignited from the outside by the Affghanees, and was entirely consumed in less than an hour.” Note):

“Occasionally the efforts of the besiegers were directed against the gate, which they endeavored to break open with axes, or to set on fire by application of a torch — In the hot climate of S. Asia wood becomes so dry by exposure to the sun, that the most solid doors may readily be ignited and consumed.” It is even remarked in one instance that the Assyrians (Bonomi Nin. p. 205. ed. 2. on Botta plate 93. See also Ibid. p. 221, 222, 225) “have not set fire to the gates of this city, as appeared to be their usual practice in attacking a fortified place.”

So were her palaces buried as they stood, that the traces of prolonged fire are still visible, calcining the one part and leaving others which were not exposed to it, uncalcined. (Ibid. Sect. iv. c. 1, pp. 245-247):

“It is incontestable that, during the excavations, a considerable quantity of charcoal, and even pieces of wood, either half-burnt or in a perfect state of preservation, were found in many places. The lining of the chambers also bears certain marks of the action of fire.

All these things can be explained only by supposing the fall of a burning roof, which calcined the slabs of gypsum and converted them into dust. It would be absurd to imagine that the burning of a small quantity of furniture could have left on the walls marks like these which are to be seen through all the chambers, with the exception of one, which was only an open passage. It must have been a violent and prolonged fire, to be able to calcine not only a few places, but every part of these slabs, which were ten feet high and several inches thick. So complete a decomposition can be attributed but to intense heat, such as would be occasioned by the fall of a burning roof.

“Botta found on the engraved flag-stones scoria and half-melted nails, so that there is no doubt that these appearances had been produced by the action of intense and long-sustained heat. He remembers, beside, at Khorsabad, that when he detached some bas-reliefs from the earthy substance which covered them, in order to copy the inscriptions that were behind, he found there coals and cinders, which could have entered only by the top, between the wall and the back of the bas-relief. This can be easily understood to have been caused by the burning of the roof, but is inexplicable in any other manner. What tends most positively to prove that the traces of fire must be attributed to the burning of a wooden roof is, that these traces are perceptible only in the interior of the building. The gypsum also that covers the wall inside is completely calcined, while the outside of the building is nearly everywhere untouched. But wherever the fronting appears to have at all suffered from fire, it is at the bottom; thus giving reason to suppose that the damage has been done by some burning matter falling outside. In fact, not a single bas-relief in a state to be removed was found in any of the chambers, they were all pulverized.”

The soul which does not rightly close its senses against the enticements of the world, does, in fact, open them, and death is come up into our windows (^{<2492>}Jeremiah 9:21), and then (Jerome) “whatever natural good there yet be, which, as bars, would hinder the enemy from bursting in, is consumed by the fire,” once kindled, of its evil passions.

^{<3484>}**Nahum 3:14.** *Draw thee waters for the siege, fortify thy strongholds*
This is not mere mockery at man’s weakness, when he would resist God. It

foretells that they shall toil, and that, heavily. Toil is added upon toil. Nineveh did undergo a two years' siege. Water stands for all provisions within. He bids them, as before (³⁴⁰¹Nahum 2:1), strengthen what was already strong; strongholds, which seemed to "cut off" all approach. These he bids them strengthen, not repairing decays only but making them exceeding strong (⁴¹¹²2 Chronicles 11:12). Go into clay. We seem to see all the inhabitants, like ants on their nest, all poured out, every one busy, every one making preparation for the defense. Why had there been no need of it? What needed she of towers and fortifications, whose armies were carrying war into distant lands, before whom all which was near was hushed? Now, all had to be renewed. As Isaiah in his mockery of the idol-makers begins with the forging of the axe, the planting and rearing of the trees, which were at length to become the idol (²³⁴²Isaiah 44:12, following), Nahum goes back to the beginning. The neglected brick-kiln, useless in their prosperity, was to be repaired; the clay, which abounded in the valley of the Tigris (Rawlinson, 5 Emp. i. 476), was to be collected, mixed and kneaded by treading, as still represented in the Egyptian monuments. The conquering nation was to do the work of slaves, as Asiatic captives are represented, under their taskmasters (Wilk., Ancient Egypt ii. 99), on the monuments of Egypt, a prelude of their future. Xenophon still saw the massive brick wall, on the stone foundation (Anabasis iii. 4, 4).

Yet, though stored within and fenced without, it shall not stand (see ²²⁷⁰Isaiah 27:10,11).

³⁴⁸⁵**Nahum 3:15.** *There* where thou didst fence thyself, and madest such manifold and toilsome preparation,

shall the fire devour thee. All is toil within. The fire of God's wrath falls and consumes at once. Mankind still, with mire and clay, build themselves Babels. "They go into clay," and become themselves earthly like the mire they steep themselves in. They make themselves strong, as though they thought "that their houses shall continue forever" (¹⁹⁹¹Psalms 49:11), and say, "So, take thine ease eat, drink and be merry" (²¹²⁹Luke 12:19,20). God's wrath descends. "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. It shall eat thee up like the canker-worm." What in thee is strongest, shall be devoured with as much ease as the locust devours the tender grass. The judgments of God, not only overwhelm as a whole, but find cut each tender part, as the locust devours each single blade.

Make thyself many as the cankerworm As though thou wouldest equal thyself in oppressive number to those instruments of the vengeance of God, gathering from all quarters armies to help thee; yea, though thou make thy whole self one oppressive multitude, yet it shall not avail thee. Nay, He saith, thou hast essayed to do it.

^{<3486>}**Nahum 3:16.** *Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven* Not numerous only but glorious in the eyes of the world, and, as thou deemest, safe and inaccessible; yet in an instant all is gone.

The commerce of Nineveh was carried back to prehistoric times, since its rivers bound together the mountains of Armenia with the Persian gulf, and marked out the line, by which the distant members of the human family should supply each others' needs. "Semiramis" they say (Diod. ii. 11),

"built other cities on the Euphrates and the Tigris, where she placed emporia for those who convey their goods from Media and Paraetacene. Being mighty rivers and passing through a populous country, they yield many advantages to those employed in commerce; so that the places by the river are full of wealthy emporia."

The Phoenicians traced back their Assyrian commerce (and as it seems, truly) to those same prehistoric times, in which they alleged, that they themselves migrated from the Persian gulf. They commenced at once, they said (Herodotus, i. 1), the long voyages, in which they transported the wares of Egypt and Assyria. The building of "Tadmor in the wilderness" (^{<1008>}1 Kings 9:18) on the way to Tiph-sach (Thapsacus) the utmost bound of Solomon's dominions (^{<1004>}1 Kings 5:4 (4:24)), connected Palestine with that commerce. The great route for couriers and for traffic, extending for 1,500 or 1,600 miles in later times, must have lain through Nineveh, since, although no mention is made of the city which had perished, the route lay across the two rivers (Herodotus, ii. 52), the greater and lesser Zab, of which the greater formed the Southern limit of Nineveh. Those two rivers led up to two mountain-passes which opened a way to Media and Agbatana; and pillars at the summit of the N. pass attest the use of this route over the Zagros chain about 700 B.C. (See Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 180, 181). Yet a third and easier pass was used by Nineveh, as is evidenced by another monument, of a date as yet undetermined (Ibid. 181,182). Two other lines connected Nineveh with Syria and the West. Northern lines led doubtless to Lake Wan and the Black Sea (Ibid. 182,183). The lists of

plunder or of tribute, carried off during the world-empire of Egypt, before it was displaced by Assyria, attest the extensive imports or manufactures of Nineveh^{f207} the titles of “Assyrian nard, Assyrian amomum, Assyrian odors, myrrh, frankincense (See Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 191,192), involve its trade with the spice countries: domestic manufactures of hers apparently were purple or dark-blue cloaks, embroidery, brocades, and these conveyed in chests of cedar; her metallurgy was on principles recognized now; in one practical point of combining beauty with strength, she has even been copied (Layard, Nineveh and Babylon, p. 191).

A line of commerce, so marked out by nature in the history of nations, is not changed, unless some preferable line be discovered. Empires passed away, but, at the end of the 13th century A.D., trade and manufacture continued their accustomed course and habitation. The faith in Jesus had converted the ancient paganism; the heresy of Mohammedanism disputed with the faith for the souls of men; but the old material prosperity of the world held its way. Mankind still wanted the productions of each others' lands. The merchants of Nineveh were to be dispersed and were gone: itself and its remembrance were to be effaced from the earth, and it was so; in vain was a new Nineveh built by the Romans; that also disappeared; but so essential was its possession for the necessities of commerce, that Mosul, a large and populous town, arose over against its mounds, a city of the living over-against its buried glories; and, as our goods are known in China by the name of our great manufacturing capital, so a delicate manufacture imposed on the languages of Europe (Italian, Spanish, French, English, German) the name of Mosul.^{f207}

Even early in this century, under a mild governor, an important commerce passed through Mosul, from India, Persia, Kurdistan, Syria, Natolia, Europe.^{f208} And when European traffic took the line of the Isthmus of Suez, the communication with Kurdistan still secured to it an important and exclusive commerce. The merchants of Nineveh were dispersed and gone. The commerce continued over-against its grave.

The cankerworm spoileth and fleeth away Better, “the locust hath spread itself abroad (marauded) and is flown.” The prophet gives, in three words, the whole history of Nineveh, its beginning and its end. He had before foretold its destruction, though it should be oppressive as the locust; he had spoken of its commercial wealth; he adds to this, that other source of its wealth, its despoiling warfares and their issue. The pagan conqueror

rehearsed his victory, “I came, saw, conquered.” The prophet goes further, as the issue of all human conquest, “I disappeared.” The locust (Nineveh) spread itself abroad (the word is always used of an inroad for plunder (^{<0094>}Judges 9:44 (twice); ^{<0277>}1 Samuel 23:27; 27:8,10; 30:1; ^{<3140>}1 Chronicles 14:9,13; ^{<4513>}2 Chronicles 25:13; 28:18), destroying and wasting, everywhere: it left the world a desert, and was gone. Ill-gotten wealth makes one poor, not rich. Truly they who traffic in this world, are more in number than they who, seeking treasure in heaven, shall shine as the stars forever and ever. “For many are called, but few, are chosen.” And when all the stars of light “shall abide and praise God (^{<3483>}Psalms 148:3), these men, though multiplied like the locust, shall, like the locust, pass away, destroying and destroyed. They abide for a while in the chillness of this world; when the Sun of righteousness ariseth, they vanish. This is the very order of God’s Providence. As truly as locusts, which in the cold and dew are chilled and stiffened, and cannot spread their wings, fly away when the sun is hot and are found no longer, so shalt thou be dispersed and thy place not anymore be known (See c. i. 8). It was an earnest of this, when the Assyrians, like locusts, had spread themselves around Jerusalem in a dark day of trouble and of rebuke and of blasphemy (^{<2378>}Isaiah 37:3), God was entreated and they were not. Midian came up like the grasshopper for multitude (^{<0094>}Judges 6:4,5; 7:12). In the morning they had fled (^{<0071>}Judges 7:21). What is the height of the sons of men? or how do they spread themselves abroad?” At the longest, after a few years it is but as the locust spreads himself and flees away, no more to return.

^{<4817>}**Nahum 3:17.** *Thy crowned are as the locust, and thy captains as the great locusts* What he had said summarily under metaphor, the prophet expands in a likeness. “The crowned” are probably the subordinate princes, of whom Sennacherib said, “Are not my princes altogether kings?” (^{<2308>}Isaiah 10:8). It has been observed that the headdress of the Assyrian Vizier has the ornament which (Rawlinson, 5. Empires i. 115) “throughout the whole series of sculptures is the distinctive mark of royal or quasi-royal authority.”^{f209} “All high officers of state, ‘the crowned captains,’ were adorned with diadems, closely resembling the lower band of the royal mitre, separated from the cap itself. Such was that of the vizier, which was broader in front than behind, was adorned with rosettes and compartments, and terminated in two ribbons with embroidered and fringed ends, which hung down his back.” “Captain” is apparently the title of some military ounce of princely rank. One such Jeremiah (^{<2617>}Jeremiah 51:27), in a

prophecy in which he probably alludes to this, bids place over the armies of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz, to marshall them against Babylon, against which he summons the cavalry like the rough locust. The “captains” are likened to the “great caterpillars,” either as chief in devastation, or as including under them the armies antler their command, who moved at their will. These and their armies now subsided into stillness for a time under the chill of calamity, like the locust (Jerome copied by Cyril and Theodotion) “whose nature it is, that, torpid in the cold, they fly in the heat.” The stiffness of the locusts through the cold, when they lie motionless, heaps upon heaps, hidden out of sight, is a striking image of the helplessness of Nineveh’s mightiest in the day of her calamity; then, by a different part of their history, he pictures their entire disappearance.^{f210}

“The locusts, are commonly taken in the morning when they are agglomerated one on another, in the places where they passed the night. As soon as the sun warms them, they fly away.”

“When the sun ariseth, they flee away,” literally, “it is chased away.” One and all; all as one. As at God’s command the plague of locusts, which He had sent on Egypt, was removed; “there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt” (^{<2019>}Exodus 10:19); so the mighty of Nineveh were driven north, with no trace where they had been, where they were. “The wind carried them away (^{<2416>}Isaiah 41:16); the wind passes over him and he is not, and his place knows him no more (^{<19316>}Psalms 103:16). The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the ungodly for a moment: though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet he shall perish for ever; they which have seen him shall say, where is he? He shall fly away, as a dream, and shall not be formal; neither shall his place any were behold him (^{<3015>}Job 20:5-9).

Where they are So Zechariah asks, “Your fathers, where are they?” (Zechariah 1). History, experience, human knowledge can answer nothing. They can only say, where they are not. God alone can answer that much-containing word, “Where-they.” They had disappeared from human sight, from their greatness, their visible being, their place on earth.

^{<3018>}**Nahum 3:18.** *Thy shepherds* that is, they who should counsel for the people’s good and feed it, and “keep watch over their flocks by night,” but are now like their master, the “King of Assyria,” are his shepherds not the shepherds of the people whom they care not for; these slumber, at once through listlessness and excess, and now have fallen asleep in death, as the

Psalmist says, “They have slept their sleep” (³⁹⁷¹⁶Psalm 76:6). The prophet speaks of the future, as already past in effect, as it was in the will of God. All “the shepherds of the people” (Homer, *passim*), all who could shepherd them, or hold them together, themselves sleep “the sleep of death;” their mighty men dwelt (Compare ³³²¹⁶Isaiah 22:16) in that abiding-place, where they shall not move or rise, the grave; and so as Micaiah, in the vision predictive of Ahab’s death, “saw all Israel scattered on the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd” (⁴¹²⁷⁷1 Kings 22:17), so the people of the Assyrian monarch shall be “scattered on the mountains,” shepherdless, and that irretrievably; no man gathers them.

³⁴⁸¹⁹**Nahum 3:19.** *There is no healing* (literally, “dulling”) *of thy bruise* It cannot be softened or mitigated; and so thy wound is grievous (literally, sick), incurable, for when the wound ever anew inflames, it cannot be healed. The word, bruise, is the more expressive, because it denotes alike the abiding wound in the body (⁴⁸²¹⁹Leviticus 21:19), and the shattering of a state, which God can heal (³⁹¹⁰⁴Psalm 60:4; ³²³¹⁶Isaiah 30:26), or which may be great, incurable (²⁸³¹²Jeremiah 30:12). When the passions are ever anew aroused, they are at last without remedy; when the soul is ever swollen with pride, it cannot be healed; since only by submitting itself to Christ, “broken and contrite” by humility, can it be healed. Nineveh sank, and never rose; nothing soothed its fall. In the end there shall be nothing to mitigate the destruction of the world, or to soften the sufferings of the damned. The “rich man, being in torments,” asked in vain that Lazarus might “dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue.”

All that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee For none can grieve at thy fall.

Nineveh sinks out of sight amid one universal, exulting, exceeding joy of all who heard the report of her. “For upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?” “In that he asketh, upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually? He affirms most strongly that his evil did pass upon all continually.” His wickedness, like one continual flood, which knew no ebb or bound, had passed upon the whole world and each one in it; now at length it had passed away, and “the whole earth is at rest, is quiet; they break forth into singing” (²³⁴⁰⁷Isaiah 14:7).

It is not without meaning, that having throughout the prophecy addressed Nineveh (in the feminine), now, in the close (Nahum 5:18,19), the prophet turns to him in whom all its wickedness is, as it were, gathered into one,

the soul of all its evil, and the director of it, its king. As Nineveh is the image of the world, its pomps, wealth, luxury, vanity, wickedness, oppression, destruction, so its king is the image of a worse king, the Prince of this world. (Jerome, Rup.):

“And this is the song of triumph of those, over whom ‘his wickedness has passed,’ not rested, but they have escaped out of his hands. Nahum, ‘the comforter,’ had ‘rebuked the world of sin;’ now he pronounces that ‘the prince of this world is judged.’ ‘His shepherds’ are they who serve him, who ‘feed the flock of the slaughter,’ who guide them to evil, not to good. These, when they sleep, as all mankind, dwell there; it is their abiding-place; their sheep are ‘scattered on the mountains,’ in the heights of their pride, because they are not of the sheep of Christ; and since they would not be gathered of Him, they are ‘scattered, where none gathereth.’”

“The king of Assyria (Satan) knows that he cannot deceive the sheep, unless he have first laid the shepherds asleep. It is always the aim of the devil to lay asleep souls that watch. In the Passion of the Lord, he weighed down the eyes of the Apostles with heavy sleep, whom Christ arouseth, ‘Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation’ (~~41B4~~ Matthew 26:41); and again, ‘What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch!’ ‘And no man gathers them,’ for their shepherds themselves cannot protect themselves. In the Day of God’s anger, ‘the kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains’ (~~61B5~~ Revelation 6:15). Such are his shepherds, and his sheep; but what of himself? Truly his bruise or breaking can not be healed; his wound or smiting is incurable; that namely whereby, when he came to Him in whom he found nothing (~~61B4~~ John 14:30), yet bruised His heel, and exacted of Him a sinner’s death, his own head was bruised.” And hence, “all who have ears to hear,” who hear not with the outward only, but with the inner ears of the heart, “clap the hands over thee,” that is, give to God all their souls’ thanks and praise, raise up their eyes and hands to God in heaven, praising Him who had “bruised Satan under their feet.” Ever since, through the serpent, the evil and malicious one has lied, saying, “ye shall NOT surely die, eat and ye shall be as gods,” hath his evil, continually and unceasingly, from one and through one, passed upon all men. As the apostle saith, “As by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin,

and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (~~4:15~~ Romans 5:12). Upon whom then hath not his sin passed? Who hath not been shapen in iniquity? and whom did not his mother conceive in sin? Yet, it passes only, for “the world itself also passeth away,” and we pass away from it, and all the evil it can do us, unless we share in its evil, is not abiding, but passing. This then is the cause, and a great cause, why “all that hear the bruit of thee” should “clap the hands over thee;” because thee, whose wickedness passed through one upon all, One Man, who alone was without sin, contemned and bruised, while He freed and justified from wickedness them who “hearing” rejoiced, and rejoicing and believing, “clapped the hands over thee.” Yet they only shall be glad, upon whom his “wickedness,” although it passed, yet abode not, but in prayer and good deeds, by the grace of God, they lifted up their hands to Him Who overcame, and Who, in His own, overcomes still, to whom be praise and thanksgiving forever and ever. Amen.

FOOTNOTES

ft163 So the Chaldee, the Syriac, Jerome and moderns, as soon as they have no bias, e.g., Rosenmuller, Ewald. It is not *asah*^{<h6213>}, but *sim*^{<h7760>}; i.e., not *ποιειν*^{<4160>}, but *θειναι*^{<5087>}; not, in our sense, I will “make a grave,” but “I will set” or “make” something else, namely, the house of his gods of which Nahum had just spoken, “to be his grave”

ft164 In the Septuagint, in different manuscripts *Σωα*, *Σοβα*, *Σωβα*, *Σουβα*; in the Complutensian *Σουα* Vulgate Sua. Sir G. Wilkinson in Rawlinson, Herodotus

ft165 His annals mention that, having expelled Mero-dach-baladan in the first year of his reign, he set up Belib in Babylon (Hincks in Layard Bab. and Nin. 140, 1); but, in the Dr. of Ptolemy the date of Belib is 703 B.C.

ft166 Rawlinson, gives this as the average of Assyrian reigns (Five Empires ii. 93). The whole calculation is his. An interregnum of 20 years, carries the whole back to the date of Berosus 1273 B.C.

- ft167 Rawlinson's conjecture. Five Emp. ii. 335. The period is one of "obscurity," as Rawlinson, says, but that very obscurity forbids our deciding, as he does, that it was one of "extraordinary weakness and depression"
- ft168 Asshur-adan-akhi and three following kings. See Rawlinson, Herodotus 1:460. The accession of Asshur-adan-akhi was placed by some, referred to by Rawlinson, *Ibid.*, at 1050 B.C., by himself, at 950 B.C., Five Emp. ii. 291
- ft169 The above account of Sargon is taken from Oppert's *Inscriptions Assyriennes des Sargonides*, p. 19-40
- ft170 Oppert p. 5C., Rawlinson, 8 Emp. ii. 470, I. Oppert does not identify the names of distances
- ft171 It is noticed, that Arrian alone mentions the name of Nineveh; and he too speaks of it, in relation to the course of the Tigris, not of the battle. "The lake, into which the Tigris discharges itself, which, flowing by the city Ninus formerly a great and wealthy city, forms the country between it (Tigris) and the Euphrates" *Ind.* p. 197. ed. Vall.
- ft172 "Did Nahum predict the downfall of Nineveh a century before the event? If he were a younger contemporary of Isaiah, he did so. He prophesied, say some about the 14th year of Hezekiah and graphically painted the overthrow of Assyria's metropolis. The interval consists of about one hundred years. Is not the analogy of Prophecy violated here? If a specific event be foretold long before it happened, what becomes of the canon or principle that prophecy presents nothing more than the prevision of events in the immediate future? (Dr. Ds. *italies.*) The principle in question is almost axiomatic" (*Introduction* iii. 298.) It passes for an axiom in the school, whose results Dr. Davidson gives to the English; i.e., it is a *petitio principii* applied to each prophecy in turn.
- ft173 ^{<030D>}Numbers 31:2,3; ^{<030D>}Psalms 149:9. Hence, almost the same as, punished by law, ^{<021D>}Exodus 21:20,21
- ft174 a self-avenger, ^{<030B>}Psalms 8:3; 44:17. It is punished by God, ^{<030D>}Ezekiel 25:12,15, being moreover unjust; ^{<030D>}Jeremiah 20:10,12; ^{<030D>}Lamentations 3:60, coll. 64
- ft175 ^{<030D>}1 Samuel 14:24; 18:25. Elsewhere only historically ^{<030D>}Proverbs 6:34; ^{<030D>}Esther 8:13. David thanks God for keeping him from it toward Nabal ^{<025D>}1 Samuel 25:32,33

- ft176 Those who explain this of the past, render, “Out of thee, Judah, is gone away, withdrawn, he who devised evil against the Lord.” But a person is said to “go forth” out of that which is his abode, from the city, gate, etc. or, to war. In the exceptions, ^{<2307>}Isaiah 49:17, “thy destroyers and wasters shall go forth from thee,” it is implied that they had long sojourned there, and were to give place to the children, who should return. In ^{<2482>}Jeremiah 43:12, where it is said of Nebuchadnezzar, “he shall go forth thence in peace,” it is first said, “he shall set up his throne there and shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment;” i.e., he shall make it wholly his own
- ft177 So it seems better to render it, than, as in the English Version, “and he shall pass through.” The word means alike “pass away” or “pass through,” but the act spoken of is later than the “cutting down” of the army and so probably the passing away, or flight of its king, to his destruction or final passing away
- ft178 “afflicted” relatively to God, is said of His chastisement of His people (^{<4882>}Deuteronomy 8:2; ^{<1272>}2 Kings 17:20) or of individuals (^{<4882>}Psalm 88:8; 90:15; 102:24; 119:75; ^{<8301>}Job 30:11) but nowhere of the enemies of God. whose destruction moreover is here spoken of. It cannot then refer to the Assyrian as some have done
- ft179 So in Job’s confession of himself, ^{<8404>}Job 40:4, which, as addressed to God, can only be said of his intrinsic worthlessness. It stands contrasted with those whom God honors, ^{<0023>}1 Samuel 2:30; in the Hiphil, “held cheap” (^{<10904>}2 Samuel 19:44; ^{<3220>}Ezekiel 22:7) put to dishonor, ^{<2382>}Isaiah 8:23. In ^{<01604>}Genesis 16:4,5, it is added “in the eyes of” another; it is used of a thing, ^{<01823>}1 Samuel 18:23; ^{<12701>}2 Kings 3:18. The physical sense “were lightened” (of the waters of the deluge ^{<0081>}Genesis 8:11) does not authorize the interpretation of some, “art lessened in number;” nor would this be a ground why God should make its grave
- ft180 The form **μDam**^{<119>} is used five times in Exodus of the artificial color of the dyed ramskins. But there is no proof of any such custom as to the shields. If reddened by actual blood, it must have been in a previous battle, since Nahum is thus far describing the preparations. The gleaming of the brass of the shields in the sun (1 Macc. 6:39) could hardly be called “their” being reddened

- ft181 At Arbela, Arr. iii. 13, Q. Curt. iv. 51, and, upon experience, by Eumenes, “haud ignarus pugnae,” Liv. xxxvii. 41, Appian Syr. 33. Diodorus (xvii. 58) describes their terrible vehemence, when not evaded. Uneven ground naturally disordered them. Tacitus, Agr. c. 36. Vegetius iii. 24
- ft182 Ctesias, who speaks of them as long prior (quoted by Diod. Sic. ii. 5) is, on Persian matters, much better authority than Xenophon who (Cyrop. vi. 1. as explained by Arrian, Tacticus c. 3
- ft183 The use of a little iron, more or less, in strengthening the wheels etc. could hardly entitle them to be called “chariots of iron,” ~~(676)~~ Joshua 17:16,18; ~~(676)~~ Judges 1:19; 4:3,13
- ft184 So the Hebrew text. Their many ways may be opposed to the oneness of the army of God (see Nahum 5:3)
- ft185 See in Rawlinson’s 5 Empires ii. 78. “All of them (the battering-rams) were covered with a frame-work of ozier, wood, felt, or skins, for the better protection of those who worked the implement; — some appear to have been stationary others in early times had six wheels, in the later times four only. Sometimes with the ram and its framework was a moveable tower containing soldiers, who, at once, fought the enemy on a level and protected the engine”
- ft186 “Fire was the weapon usually turned against the ram, torches, burning tow or other inflammable substances being cast from the walls upon its framework.” To prevent this (its being set on fire), the workers of the ram were sometimes provided with a supply of water; sometimes they suspended from a pole in front of their engine, a curtain of leather, or some other non-inflammable substance. In a bas-relief (Layard’s Monuments, Series ii. Pl. 21) where an enormous number of torches are seen in the air, every battering-ram is so protected. Or the besieged sought to catch the point of the ram by a chain drawing it upward; the besieger with metal hooks to keep it down.” from Rawlinson, Ibid. pp. 70,80, referring further to Layard’s Monuments, Series i. Pl. 17,19
- ft187 Such explanations as “gates whereby the enemy poured in as rivers” (Ros.), or “gates of Nineveh which was guarded by rivers” (Ewald) or “of the streets, where the inhabitants surged like rivers” (Hitz.) are plainly not literal

ft188 The word which occurs 18 times, is used of the melting of the earth at the voice or presence or touch of God, ^{<0407>}Psalm 46:7; ^{<3005>}Nahum 1:5; ^{<1005>}Amos 9:5; of the “melting away” of a multitude, ^{<0146>}1 Samuel 14:16; of all Philistia, ^{<2361>}Isaiah 14:31; (act.) of God working the dissolution of one being, ^{<8302>}Job 30:22, or of many, ^{<2606>}Isaiah 64:6; of the hearts of people, melting for fear, ^{<0255>}Exodus 15:15; ^{<0109>}Joshua 2:9,24; ^{<0704>}Psalm 75:4; 107:26; ^{<2402>}Jeremiah 49:23; ^{<3202>}Ezekiel 21:20: once only it is used physically of water, of the clods softened by showers, ^{<0511>}Psalm 65:11; and in the ideal image “the hills shall melt,” being dissolved, as it were; in the rich stream of the abundant vintage, ^{<1003>}Amos 9:13

ft189 See the introduction to Jonah, vol. i. Assurbanipal, the last great monarch of Assyria, built his palace on the mound of Kouyunjik. (Rawlinson, 5 Emp. ii. 496

ft190 **ywh**^{<h-1945>}, when signifying “woe,” is always of future woe, as lies in the word itself. It is used of classes of persons 25 times; against people, Samaria, Jerusalem or foreign nations, 13 times; of the past only as to the wailings at funerals. ^{<1133>}1 Kings 13:30; ^{<2028>}Jeremiah 22:18; 34:5

ft191 **v[r** of the chariots, ^{<2403>}Jeremiah 47:3, of the warhorse, Job. 39:24, of the loud tumult of battle, ^{<2104>}Isaiah 9:4; ^{<2402>}Jeremiah 10:22

ft192 The root only occurs beside ^{<0052>}Judges 5:22. “Then smote (the earth) the horse-hoofs from the whirlings, the whirlings (probably “whirling speed,” **rhd** i. q. **rwd**

ft193 ^{<6080>}2 Peter 3:10. The words in Hebrew are purposely chosen with rough “r” sounds: *ra’ash*^{<h-7494>} *doher*^{<h-1725>} *merakkedah*^{<h-7540>}

ft194 This division is the more likely, because the words stand very broken, mostly in pairs describing as it were, by the very order of the words, the successive onsets, wherewith the destruction from God should break in upon them

ft195 Revelation 6; 8. The foreboding cry “Woe! Woe!” before the destruction of Jerusalem, an image also of the Day of Judgment, was also seven-fold. See notes on Nah. 2:10

ft196 As the Septuagint (from their acquaintance with Egypt) render, **μερις Αμμων**. The Coptic manuscripts Martyrologies mention “the place of Ammon,” (Jablonski Opp. i. 163) and the Hieroglyphics. Lepsius, Chronol. d. Aeg. i. 272. The common name Ap-t or T-up was

the original of the name Thebes, by which it became known to the West through the Greeks

ft197 Iliad, ix. 381-384, (all the wealth) “as much as comes to the Egyptian Thebes where most possessions are laid up in the houses, which hath a hundred gates, and from each, 200 men go forth with horses and chariots”

ft198 “Notwithstanding the length of the like texts, recording the victories gained by the Pharaohs, the historical subject is treated as accessory, as an occasion of repeating, for the thousandth time the same formulas, the same hyperbolic words, the same ideas.” Brugsch pp. 89

ft199 “In old times Thebes (the Thebais) was called Egypt.” Herodotus ii. 15. “Formerly Egypt was called Thebes.” Aristotle, Meteor. i. 14

ft200 Miss Harris, the learned daughter of a learned Egyptologist; “In several hieroglyphical inscriptions and notably in a papyrus in Miss Harris’ possession, partly deciphered by her father and herself, there are minute accounts of fortresses existing at that date, about the time of the Exodus, she supposes, and of their armaments and garrisons.” Thebes then was fortified, as well as Nineveh, and Homer is confirmed by the Hieroglyphical inscriptions

ft201 “The obelisks, transported from the quarries of Syene at the first cataract, in latitude 24 degrees 5’ 23” to Thebes and Heliopolis, vary in size from 70 to 93 feet in length. They are of one single stone, and the largest in Egypt (that of the great temple at Karnak) I calculate to weigh 297 tons. This was brought about 138 miles from the quarry to where it now stands; those taken to Heliopolis, more than 800 miles. The power, however, to move the mass was the same, whatever might be the distance, and the mechanical skill which transported it five or even one, would suffice for any number of miles. The two colossi of Amenophis iii., of a single block each, 47 feet in height, which contain about 11,500 cubic feet, are made of a stone not known within several days journey of the place; and at the Memnonium is another of Rameses which, when entire, weighed upward of 887 tons, and was brought from E’Sooan to Thebes, 138 miles.” Wilk. Anc. Eg. iii. 329, 330

ft202 13 Stadia. (Diod. S. i. 46) “It will be found to surpass the measurement of the historian by at least two or three stadia.” Wilkins. ii. 240

ft203 ^{<388P>}Isaiah 18:2; 19:5. In Arabic, the Nile is called “the sweet sea” in contrast with “the salt sea,” or “the encircling sea;” a title given by Egyptian writers to the Mediterranean, as being connected with the Ocean. The “white Nile” is called “Bahr-el-Abiad,” the “blue Nile” Bahr-el-Azrek, and the great Ethiopian tributary to the Nile, the Albara, “Bahr-el-Aswad,” “the black sea.” Baker, Nile tributaries, p. 91. At Thebes, the Nile is usually about half a mile in width, but, at the inundation, overflowing the plain, especially upon the western bank, for a breadth of two or more miles. Smith’s Bible Dictionary, “Thebes.” “When the Nile overflows the country, the cities alone appear, surmounting it, like the islands in the Aegean; the rest of Egypt becomes a sea.” Herodotus ii. 97. “The water of the Nile is like a sea.” Pliny, H. N. xxxv. 11. “Homer gives to the river, the name ‘Ocean,’ because the Egyptians in their own language call the Nile, Ocean.” Diod. S. i. 96

ft204 The force of the substantive verb with the pass. part. as in ^{<388B>}Zechariah 3:3; as, with the act. part., it expresses continued action; ^{<0006>}Genesis 1:6; 37:2; ^{<8907>}Deuteronomy 9:7,22,24; 28:29; ^{<0086>}2 Samuel 3:6; ^{<0014>}Job 1:14; ^{<9004>}Psalm 10:14; 122:2; ^{<388D>}Isaiah 30:20. See Ew. Lebrb. n. 1680

ft205 After these are the Caucasian gates (by many very erroneously called the Caspian gates), a vast work of nature, the mountains being suddenly interrupted, where are doors, etc.” Pliny, H. N. vi. 11

ft206 “Dishes of silver with their covers; a harp of brass inlaid with gold; 823 pounds of perfumes” (Brugsch Hist. d’ Eg. p. 100); “10 pounds of true lapis lazuli, 24 pounds of artificial lapis lazuli; vessels laden with ebony and ivory, precious stones, vases, (Ibid. p. 203); beside many other articles, which cannot yet be made out”

ft207 “All those cloths of gold and of silk which we call ‘muslins’ (Mossulini) are of manufacture of Mosul.” Marco Polo, Travels c. 6. p. 37. ed. 1854. “The manufactures from fine transparent white cotton, like the stuffs now made in India under that name and like the bombazines manufactured at Arzingan, received in the following centuries the name ‘muslins;’ but not the silk brocades interwoven with gold, which had their name Baldachini from Baldak i.e., Bagdad, and perhaps were manufactured at that time at Mosul, unless indeed this name ‘muslin’ was then given to gold-brocades as wares of Mosul.” Ritter Erdk. x. 274, 275. “There is a very urge deposition of

merchandise (at Mosul) because of the river, wherefore several goods and fruits are brought thither from the adjacent countries both by land and water, to ship them for Bagdad." Rauwolf's Travels P. 2, c. 9. p. 205. A. 1573. Niebuhr still witnessed "the great traffic carried on there, as also linen manufactures, dyeing and printing (of stuffs)"

ft208 Olivier Voyage (1808) ii. 359. In 1766, one caravan, in which Niebuhr traveled, had 1,300 camel-loads of gall-apples from Kurdistan. It supplied yearly 2,000 centners of them. Nieb. ii. 274

ft209 Gosse, Assyria p. 463, who remarks that "the Ten Thousand in Xerxes' army," crossed the Hellespont "crowned with garlands." Herodotus, vii. 55

ft210 Casalis, on the proverb of the Bassouto "locusts are taken in the heap." Etudes sur la langue Sechuana r. 87. Paris 1842, referred to by Ewald ad loc. who also refers to Ibn Babuta (in the Journ. As. 1843, March, p. 240). "The chase of locusts is made before sunrise, for then they are benumbed by the cold and cannot fly"