THE SIEGE
OF JERUSALEM

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BY THE

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INTRODUCTION.

It is as true of history as of the world of nature, that God works by law, in other words, that regular order and similarity are to be observed in His doings. This could not but follow from His infinite wisdom. For just as in the work of any man, in proportion as he is wise or skilful, there may be observed system and law, so this is above all the case in the work of Him Who acts always according to perfect reason. Accordingly in the history of God’s continuous dealings with mankind there may be traced always these two things; on the one side, the Divine Hand guiding and doing all; on the other, the regular following of effect on cause, under laws known to men. And if history is to be understood, neither of these two aspects of it must be ignored.

Unhappily the grand division of history into "sacred" and "profane" tends to the neglect of
one or the other side in turn. We are led to think of events mentioned in the Bible, as if they were not part of the general history of the world, in which men are the agents and certain regular principles of cause and effect are traceable: and on the other hand to treat the progress and decline of Greece and Rome or the wars and societies of modern Europe as if in them no illustration of God's dealings could be found. This separation is bad. We ought to see in all parts of history both things; God the Author, and man the agent; God the Architect, and man the builder. Otherwise the religious reader is making here the same error which is too often made in other cases, that of keeping religion apart from ordinary life. We have our Sunday clothes and our week-day clothes, our Sunday books and our week-day books, our "sacred" history, in which we refuse to see man, and our "profane" history, in which we cannot see God. But just as religion is not meant to make part of our life quite different from the rest, but to run through all, and show the divine side of all; so revelation does not so much describe a peculiar state of the world, and events which stand in no relation to those which uninspired historians narrate; rather
It draws away the veil from one part of a continuous scene, that we may know that the same background of divine ordering which is disclosed to us here, underlies also all the rest, though we may not see it there so clearly.

If the reader will look at the matter in this way he will consider the history of the Jews, not as that part of the world's history in which ordinary causes did not produce their ordinary results, but as that in which the hidden plan of God's government,—a plan which exists in all cases,—has been laid bare. There are, it is true, peculiarities about the history of the Jewish nation: not only do we know God's plan there as not elsewhere, but He dealt with them as not with others. As He has revealed the true aspect of their history to us, so He revealed it to them from time to time; and His Hand, which He has taught us works at all times, though concealed, worked then, from time to time, visibly. This frequent revelation or open interference, as we call it, did give no doubt a peculiar character to the conduct and fortunes of the Jews, especially in the earlier ages; but not even then, and certainly not in their later history, to such an extent as to prevent us from tracing reverently,
in the development of national strength, the
weakening effects of prosperity, the succession of
ruin to sin, and such like, the same laws which
may be traced in the story of any other nation.

It has been necessary to make these remarks
at starting, because the Siege of Jerusalem holds
so peculiar a position in the minds of many
Christians. Its history is regarded as an appendix
to the Bible, as a completion of the historical
part of the New Testament. It is this; and this
view of it is the most important that can be
taken, if not that which most needs insisting on.
The destruction of Jerusalem was one of the
most striking proofs of the truth of revelation,
as a fulfilment of the words of Prophets from
Moses to our Lord; it was the most terrible illus-
tration of God's just wrath against an apostate
people and His vengeance for all the righteous
blood that they had shed; it was the last scene
in the most interesting of histories; it marked
the final transference of revealed religion out of
a narrow local and national sphere into the wider
area of the world;—all this and more is meant by
calling it the completion of New Testament his-
tory. And when it can be viewed in aspects so
important, each of them, it would seem, so all-
engrossing, one might almost think it would be foolish to leave them all even for a moment, to try to view it in any other light. And yet sometimes the rising sun may be seen as well upon the western hills which it illuminates, as in the bright east whence it comes. And if we should sometimes even turn our backs upon Judæa and look towards Rome, or cease for a while to dwell upon the immediate government of God, to observe the human and earthly agency by which He works, it may be we shall learn more of both.

Convinced of this, in the following sketch, while it will be our chief aim to point to the wonderful fulfilments of prophecy, and the awful illustration of God's justice, we shall also observe what aspect the Jewish Rebellion and its issue bore to the rest of the world at that time, and trace the steps by which, in the period that followed the birth of our Lord, the fall of the nation was, humanly speaking, brought about. These years of unequalled suffering to the Jews, what were they to the Roman politician? An anxious and humiliating conflict with a stubborn province, hitherto little known and much despised, and the establishment of a new dynasty on the Imperial Throne by the successes of Vespasian.
What were they to the Roman philosopher? The ruin of a famous city, and the extinction of an objectionable form of religion.

Again,—to show how we may trace the causes which, humanly speaking, brought about the Fall of Jerusalem,—Why did Pilate mingle the blood of the Galilæans with their sacrifices? It was only one among many cases in which insults offered by the Romans to the Jewish faith had been met and again provoked by sedition and riot, especially in Galilee, by which was fostered that bitter hatred between Jew and Roman which culminated in the final revolt. How came forty men, in the employment of the chief priest, to bind themselves by an oath not to eat or drink till they had killed Paul? Because the Assassins, a set of desperate fanatics, to whose lawless principles a great portion of the misery of the revolt was due, had already grown numerous and powerful, and had even earned, as Josephus tells us, the countenance of some of the rival factions of the priests?

Of these two instances the former case, that of the Galilæans,—which, if it were mentioned by Josephus, would be enumerated, and quite rightly, among the natural causes that inevit-
ably led to the catastrophe, and as one of the early indications of its coming,—is treated by our Lord as the illustration of a great principle which God, in His infinite wisdom, observes in His dealings with mankind. And the second instance, that of the Assassins, which the uninspired historian would rightly treat as showing the extent to which the foundations of society were already sapped, is shown by St. Luke to have been also part of God's arrangement for the trial of St. Paul, and the further preaching of His Word.

Thus we may see each great event as well as each smaller detail, in its two aspects, the earthly and the divine, and keep these close together. This constitutes the immense value of those parts of history which we find related both by inspired and by merely human writers; that, having here both sides of truth presented, we may learn, where only one is given, to find the other.
THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.

CHAPTER I.

Even at the time of our Lord's birth the Holy Land was a land of quarrels and bloodshed. Fierce hatred was raging between the Jews and their rulers, and among the people themselves discord and lawlessness were rife. When we read of the unhesitating cruelty with which Herod ordered the massacre of the innocents of Bethlehem and its neighbourhood, we can understand that among a people so oppressed disaffection could not but exist. Yet this was a comparatively insignificant instance of the king's atrocious tyranny; it is not even mentioned by Josephus. It affected only a small district and a few children. In the course of the incessant
quarrels by which his own family had been divided, and amid the suspicions to which these had given rise, his fury had been felt repeatedly by both Jews and Romans. On one occasion he grievously offended the religious feelings of the Jews, by setting up a large golden eagle, the symbol of Roman dominion, over the temple gate. This some zealous youths demolished, trusting apparently to a rumour of Herod's death. They were taken and burnt alive; the high priest, Mattathias, who was supposed to have been in the conspiracy, was deposed. The king had intended to compel his subjects to mourn when he died, if not because he was dead, by imprisoning a great number taken from the chief families of Judæa, and giving orders that on his death they should be slaughtered. This inhuman command was disregarded; but the knowledge of it must have contributed to the indignation of the Jews.

The accession of Archelaus in his father's room was the occasion for new riots. During the life of Herod no one had dared to speak a word in vindication of the destroyers of the eagle; but now men gathered together, and demanded, with loud complaints, the punishment of Herod's
advisers, and the deposition of the high priest who had been set up in place of Mattathias. The moderation of Archelaus only encouraged the clamorous crowd; the tumult grew into a rebellion, which in the now crowded city, for it was the time of the Passover, might have had lasting results, had not Archelaus promptly sent a large force and routed the insurgents. Three thousand Jews were slain. And not long after, while Archelaus was absent in Rome, gone into a far country to receive the kingdom at the hands of Augustus, a still more serious revolt took place at the feast of Pentecost; the Roman governor, Sabinus, intentionally provoking the insurgents, that their crime might give him an excuse for plunder. A great number of the citizens were killed, and a large portion of the sacred treasure seized from the temple. Meanwhile, in other parts of Judæa, says the historian, revolts were frequent; and the leaders of these robber-bands who infested all parts, but especially Galilee and the neighbourhood of the Jordan, availed themselves eagerly of such opportunities for gratifying their greed and ambition.

1 To this time belongs probably the impostor Theudas, spoken of in Acts v. 36.
Thus early, all the causes of its misery were at work in this unhappy country. Such was its condition during the lifetime of our Lord; a society in itself disorganized and excited, a hostile soldiery always ready to find an excuse for the slaughter of a people whom they considered enemies of the human race; governors, who fostered rebellion for the sake of the plunder which, in suppressing it, they might acquire for themselves. Such was the state of things when John the Baptist warned the soldiers, who came to hear him, "to do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely."

But there was one cause at work more ruinous perhaps in its effects than bandit or oppressor, though it sprang out of a source not wholly evil, but had in it something of truth, and something of patriotism. "All the people," as St. Luke tells us, "were in expectation." On all sides men were looking for some Great One, who should "restore the kingdom to Israel." Prophecies pointed to this time as that in which, as it was thought, all foreign yokes should be flung off for ever; and so liberty seemed to be the cause of God's truth, and to endure servitude not only base but impious. Excited by these expectations, the people lent a ready ear to teachers who main-
tained that God was their only lawful king, that to pay tribute to Caesar was unlawful, and that no violence need be spared in resistance. The taxing that was made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria called out the growing discontent. The doctrine of resistance found teachers especially in the turbulent Galilee, and it was no unmeaning question which was asked of our Lord when Pharisees and Herodians combined to inquire whether He favoured these rebellious views or not. One man especially, Judas the Gaulonite, fired it may be with a true enthusiasm, gathered round him many followers; some, like himself, patriots; many, attracted from the ranks of adventurers and robbers. This lawless multitude "proceeded," says Josephus, "to the most outrageous violence; murders, robberies, and depredations, without distinction of friend or foe, universally prevailed, under a pretence of advancing the common cause of liberty and property, but in reality to subvert all government and good order, gratify the vilest of passions, and promote the private interest of the most abandoned members of society." Robbers and cut-throats, like Barabbas, "who committed murder in an insurrection," filled the prisons of Palestine, and were
not entirely without encouragement from their fellow-citizens. To the fatal principles disseminated by Judas and his sect the historian attributes all the miseries that followed, and the ruin of the city and the temple.

On the appointment of Pilate to be governor of Judæa new insults were offered to the Jews' religion. The new praetor transferred his troops from Cæsarea—where they had been safely distant from the crowded and turbulent metropolis—to Jerusalem, and brought into the city several standards with the image of Cæsar, in violation of the Jewish law against images, which hitherto the Roman governors had respected. He demanded money from the sacred treasury, to build an aqueduct, and suppressed with reckless sternness the tumult which the demand awakened. A similar ruthless massacre is narrated by St. Luke, when some Galilæans, probably in consequence of a revolt, were put to death while in the act of offering sacrifice.

But the name of Pilate is connected inseparably with that awful act—the one act in which Jew and Roman for a moment were united—which marked the culmination of the people's sin, and made their judgment certain. For as no nation
ever had it in its power to commit a sin so dreadful, so never had any been blessed with such favour of God, or had such opportunities of doing Him service. To reject the very Son of God, when He came, in all the tenderness of human love, to restore to life and favour the race which had offended Him; to be blind to the very Light of Light in the day of its full revealing; to have no sympathy with truth and holiness, but rather shun them as making the falsehood and foulness of men apparent—all this was, we may say, the whole world's act; the end and consummation of all the sin which since the fall had been accumulating upon the earth. But of all this the Jews were the exponents; in their great refusal of good and choice of evil, they represented the whole fallen race. And as they stood forward to represent the world in sin, they were deservedly made the example of its punishment. As the crucifixion of Jesus was the sum of sin, so the destruction of Jerusalem was the type of judgment. Nor was it by any arbitrary or unjust selection that one nation was thus distinguished in guilt and suffering. For it had been distinguished not less in blessing. We need not repeat the instances of God's favour to the chosen
people, with whom He dealt as with no other; whether by promises, or by gifts, and help conferred, whether by moral guidance or by revelation of Divine truth, they were isolated and set above all other men. But this we must remember here—that their whole past history was not only a series of mercies, and warnings, and instruction, which should have made them good and grateful, and sure to refuse the evil and to choose the good; but that it was throughout a preparation for the reception of God's goodness in exactly that form in which it eventually came. The Jews might have been described as the people who were, from the days of Moses and earlier, being educated to welcome the Messiah. God had designed, in His mercy, this Redemption for mankind, and selected one nation to be the immediate recipients of His bounty for the rest; into every part of their national and domestic life the preparation was interwoven; all that met their eyes or ears spoke of the promise; the Law by all its services prefigured Christ; their Prophets age after age foretold Him; they were warned in language all but unmistakable that His appearance would be humble, and that some would reject Him; and yet when at last He came to those
whom He had made His own, His own would not receive Him, but stultified their whole national history, and rejected the great part which it was theirs to play, and chose to represent the world in its apostasy rather than in its repentance. And so, though all the world was full of wickedness, yet Jerusalem was above all "the slayer of the Prophets," and it was fit that upon her should come all the righteous blood that had been shed not only in Judæa from the days of Moses, but all that since the death of Abel was constantly being poured out upon the earth. This awful pre-eminence the Jews accepted for themselves when they cried, "His blood be upon us and on our children."
CHAPTER II.

To foreign nations, and in their own estimation also, the Jews were the followers of Moses; from loyalty to his name at least they never swerved. This very Moses, whom they so revered as under God the founder of their constitution and religion, had sketched out for them, in prophecy, the very course of blessings despised, teachers rejected, a Messiah looked for and then refused, and final abandonment, as a nation, by Jehovah, which the reader of history sees worked out by them so blindly. "A Prophet," he had said, "shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear" (Deut. xviii. 15). The Jews understood this to mean especially the Messiah, for when He came they were expecting "that prophet;" and as if to identify Jesus beyond all possibility of error as Him of whom Moses spoke, a voice from heaven at the Transfiguration said, "Hear ye Him." "And it shall come to pass," continues
the prophecy of Moses, "that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him." The prophecy refers no doubt to the whole line of Prophets as well as to our Lord, and the whole line the Jews rejected: till at last the Son Himself was sent, and they "filled up the measure of their iniquity." Then what was said of every one who rejected an individual Prophet, became applicable to the whole nation who had rejected the one Chief Prophet; "Every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be cut off from among the people" (Acts iii. 23). "And hath not this terrible denunciation," says Bishop Newton, "been fully executed upon the Jews? Those who believed in His name, by remembering the caution and following the advice which He had given them, escaped from the general ruin of their country like firebrands plucked out of the fire. The main body of the nation either perished in their infidelity, or were carried captive into all nations: and have they not ever since perished in the same infidelity? been obnoxious to the same punishment, and been a vagabond, distressed, and miserable people in the earth? The hand of God was scarce ever more visible in any of His dis-
pensations. 'We must be blind not to see it: and seeing, we cannot but admire and adore it.'

In the following pages we shall see by what steps the threatened ruin followed on the sin against which so many warnings had been given, and how the more exact threatenings of Moses and of the Messiah Himself were fulfilled to the very letter. For as if it were not enough that through the whole course of their existence as a nation the warning of their Lawgiver should be sounding in their ears, He Whom they had looked for came Himself, and repeated with increased minuteness the prophecy of Moses (Matt. xxiv.).

After the Ascension of our Lord the misfortunes of the Jews continued gradually to increase. In A.D. 36 Pilate was recalled, on account of disturbances in Samaria, which he was thought to have suppressed with too little moderation; and in the next year Caligula succeeded Tiberius on the Roman throne. During his reign we read of several indications of the growth of ill-will against the Jews, and that not only in Judæa. The emperor began by an attempt which was an insult to the religion and the self-respect of all his subjects who had either of these remaining, but which was felt and resented especially by
the Jews. He determined to compel, from the whole Roman empire, that profane worship of himself which had been offered willingly by a few to his predecessors. The statue of the emperor was to find a place in every national worship. In Alexandria, in particular, the attempt was made to set up Caligula's statue in the Jewish places of prayer, and this wanton outrage was followed up by a general attack upon the Jewish residents, great numbers of whom were killed with every form of cruelty that malice could devise, and others imprisoned, tortured, and exposed to the worst indignities. A similar outburst of calamity fell about the same time upon the Jews of Babylonia, a rich community, whose own aggressions drew down upon them the vengeance of their Greek and Parthian neighbours; fifty thousand of them were slain. "It might seem," says Milman, "as if the skirts of that tremendous tempest, which was slowly gathering over the native country and metropolis of the Jewish people, broke and discharged their heavy clouds of ruin and desolation successively over each of the more considerable though remote settlements of the devoted people." Nor was Jerusalem without its own share in these indica-
tions of the gathering storm. By the advice of an Egyptian and a Syrian, enemies of the Jews, who were among his favourites, Caligula gave orders that a colossal statue of himself should be set up in the Holy of Holies, and that the Temple should be dedicated to himself under the title of the younger Jupiter. The horror-stricken people received the tidings without violence: in immense multitudes they assembled, clad in mourning and unarmed, to declare that no fear of death would induce them to admit this affront to their God. For forty days the people remained in their attitude of respectful refusal, their land remained unsown the while, till they had prevailed on the Syrian governor, to whom the enforcement of the mandate had been entrusted, to delay at least its execution until the emperor could be petitioned. The petitions of Agrippa, who undertook the cause of the Jews, were at length successful: the decree was suspended, and very soon the assassination of Caligula put an end to the affair; but not until pretext had been given for similar attacks upon the Jewish faith in other cities of the empire. These the new Emperor Claudius forbade. Agrippa, whom we have seen the energetic friend of his Jewish subjects, endeavoured
to please them at home by exactness in obedience to the Mosaic law, and by stern repression of all deviations from it. It was with this view that he began to persecute the Christians, who, during the excitements and distractions of Caligula’s time had been left in peace (Acts ix. 31), and “killed James the brother of John with the sword, and because he saw it pleased the Jews, proceeded further to take Peter also.” (Acts xii. 2). This fondness of Agrippa for the Jews, though at first it served to protect them, yet tended no doubt to excite the jealousy and hatred of the Greeks and Romans, especially in Cæsarea.

After Agrippa’s death Judæa became again a Roman province, and the evils which were considerable under king and emperor, were increased tenfold under the rule of a succession of governors, each of whom was anxious to secure all the plunder that he could, not knowing how soon he might be superseded. During the short governments of Cuspius Fadus and Tiberius Alexander, little open disturbance occurred; but false prophets and seditious teachers, together with the grievous famine spoken of by St. Luke (Acts xi. 28), were fostering discontent and preparing
misery. Among the false prophets, of whom our Lord had prophesied, one Theudas, probably not the first of his name (an earlier one is mentioned Acts v. 35), was conspicuous about this time. "He led out," says Josephus, "a large body of followers to the banks of the Jordan, professing that he would divide it miraculously and lead them through." Among the seditious teachers were James and Simon, sons of that Judas the Gaulonite of whom we have heard before, as inciting the Jews to revolt during the taxation by Cyrenius. Tiberius seized them and crucified them.

The next governor was Cumanus; and in his time several serious disturbances occurred. A soldier in Jerusalem during the Passover, insulted the priests in the midst of their sacred functions, and so furious a tumult arose, that as they fled from the soldiers through the narrow streets, twenty thousand Jews, if we may believe Josephus, perished.\(^1\) Sometimes the Jews were needlessly sensitive. Some soldiers whom Cumanus had sent to search some houses, in the ordinary

\(^1\) Joseph., Wars of the Jews, ii. 11, § 1. The numbers throughout Josephus appear to be exaggerated. One-tenth of his number would often seem more credible.
course of justice, after a robbery had been com-
mitted, happening to find a copy of the books of
Moses, tore it to pieces and threw it into the fire.
A tumult was excited, which the execution of the
guilty soldiers scarcely allayed. Another event
which occurred during the time of Cumanus was
very significant, as showing the growth of a lawless
rabble in Jerusalem itself, who under the guise of
patriotism were disposed to acts of violence and
sedition, from which the better judgment of the
respectable citizens could not always restrain
them. A quarrel took place between the Jews of
Galilee and those of Samaria: the rabble of
Jerusalem took of course the side of the Gali-
læans, and, in spite of all remonstrance, marched
out in a body into the borders of Samaria and
laid waste all before them, putting men, women,
and children to the sword. Cumanus cut off
some of this lawless band, and the rest were at
last persuaded to return, but not till the leading
men of Jerusalem had gone out in garb of mourn-
ing to beg them "not to destroy Jerusalem for
the sake of vengeance on Samaria: to have pity
upon their temple, their city, their wives, which
were all at stake, and not to sacrifice all that was
dear to them for the sake of a single Galilæan."
But acts of violence and open robbery were rife everywhere: the unscrupulous could commit every crime, generally with impunity as regarded themselves, though they were drawing down the anger of their rulers upon the nation. And already probably the governors were encouraging rather than appeasing sedition: we may gather this at least from the fact that Cumanus, when these affairs had been inquired into, was banished by the emperor, and Celer his officer was disgraced and beheaded.

Cumanus was succeeded by Claudius Felix.

Felix, says the Roman historian, thought he might commit all crimes with impunity. The worst disturbers of the country's peace, the robbers and the assassins—the sect who practised murder under the pretext of religion,—met with encouragement from him; the former, that he might share their booty, the latter, that they might assist his private enmities. Beginning by the murder of the high priest in the very temple, these men went on in a course of unpunished slaughter, according as the wealth or the worth of each excited their covetousness or their fears. Throughout the country life was insecure, while the false prophets and preachers of sedition
began day by day more numerous. It was about this time that "that Egyptian," for whom Claudius Lysias mistook or pretended to mistake St. Paul (Acts xxii. 38), led out "four thousand men that were murderers," with others according to Josephus ("Wars of the Jews," ii. 12, § 4), to the number of thirty thousand, into the wilderness near Jerusalem, intending to march upon the city and expel the Romans. The frequency of such disturbances naturally made the Roman captains suspicious and energetic; so that we may rather admire the moderation of Claudius Lysias, than condemn his promptness. At the same time, a great quarrel arose in Cæsarea, the residence of the governor, between the Syrian and Jewish inhabitants, each claiming the city for their own; the Roman soldiers took the Syrian side, and immense numbers on both sides, but especially of Jews, were killed, some in warfare, some by the executioner's hand. After Felix had been succeeded by Gessius Florus, this disturbance reached its height, and the new governor fomented or would not suppress the

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2 Tac., Ann. xii. 54. See Hist. v. 9. Josephus gives a rather more favourable character to Felix (Bell. Jud. ii. 12), because he suppressed brigandage.
strife; some acts of insult to the religion of the Jews, followed up by mockery and cruelty from Florus, led at last to open rupture. The excitement soon reached Jerusalem, where the inhabitants were indignant at the wrongs of their countrymen; Florus had little difficulty in goading the already seditious part of the population to acts of rebellion, though all efforts were used by the leading citizens to repress them; he turned the Roman soldiers loose upon the city, to satisfy their animosities and their rapacity—neither innocence nor helplessness was a protection; and in one day, it is said, 3600 fell. Notwithstanding the supplications of Bernice, sister of Agrippa, who continued the Jews' firm friend till alienated by their own madness, Florus continued his inhuman system of kindling insurrection, and suppressing it by massacre; it was his fixed design, apparently, to drive the people to open revolt from Rome. At this time the conduct of the priesthood and chiefs was temperate and judicious; they saw how near their nation had come to the crisis of revolt and inevitable vengeance, and endeavoured by submission, even the most humiliating, to appease the Romans, and by every argument and solemn
appeal to pacify the factious rabble. But it was too late. The fire of God's wrath was already kindled in the very heart of every Jewish city; concealed for a time in one place, it broke out in another; by slow but certain process, fanned by enmity and cruelty from without and fed by faction within, the flames were gathering strength, by which, in this day of His sore displeasure, He would burn up the ungodly. The immediate cause which turned the scale in favour of revolt was the increasing influence of the zealots, or preachers of sedition, with the assassins and robbers who followed so closely in their train.

They succeeded in committing the whole nation, in one signal instance, to their principles. It was usual in ancient times for kings to offer gifts from time to time at the chief temples throughout the world, as well as in their own dominions. The Roman emperors professed to recognize on principle the deities of the nations subject to their sway, and had sent annual offerings to the temple at Jerusalem. But now Eleazar, son of Ananias the chief priest, persuaded the lower orders of the priests to reject the imperial offerings. The turbulent were glad of this means of finally asserting their revolt; the chief priests
and Pharisees, still opposed to all sedition, argued and begged in vain; they even entreated Florus to send a force to compel allegiance, but Florus preferred to see the revolt made certain. Agrippa was persuaded to send 3000 horse; Eleazar occupied the strongest part of the city, and resisted; for a long time open war raged within the city, Agrippa’s troops, and the peace party among the Jews, being on the one side, a large body of zealots with all from Jerusalem and from the country who had anything to hope from anarchy, being on the other. The insurgents were finally successful, chiefly through the arrival of one Manahem, a third son of Judas the Gaulonite, who came, flushed with success in many smaller insurrections in the province, to be the leader of the rebels. They used their success, as revolutionary leaders do, without faith and without mercy. The Roman troops surrendered under a promise that their lives should be spared, a promise ratified with oaths and all solemnity, and broken. They were slain, unresisting; such leaders of the Jewish peace party as were taken were put to death. Manahem himself met the common fate of such champions; growing arrogant, and seeming inclined to play the tyrant, he
was seized by the populace and cruelly put to death.

Thus the insurrectionary spirit grew and spread, and what had been at first the tenets of a sect, and the violence of scattered bands of robbers, became the principles and feelings of the nation. It was on the very same day—while in Jerusalem the victorious rebels were thus violating their promise, and challenging, as it were, their foes to a contest of cruelties—on the very same day, and that the Sabbath, that the Greeks in Cæsarea rose against the Jewish residents, and massacred, it is said, twenty thousand. The Jews in all quarters were exasperated. Their hand was now against every man, and every man’s hand against them. Town after town was burnt or pillaged throughout Syria and the other neighbouring districts; the Jews sometimes and sometimes the Syrians beginning the work of massacre. “Every city was, as it were, divided,” says Milman, “into two hostile camps. The great object was to anticipate the work of carnage. The days were passed in mutual slaughter, the nights in mutual dread.” The animosity between Jew and Roman had become wild war between the Jews and all the rest of mankind. Even into distant places,
where Jews were numerous, the infection of this fury spread. What happened in Alexandria, the most important of such cities, may serve as a type of all. A disturbance which arose in the amphitheatre sufficed to give an occasion for the outburst of enmity which had long been rankling; the Greeks attacked the Jews as intruders; the whole Jewish population rose, and they were with difficulty prevented from burning the building and the assembled Greeks within it. After vain attempts to appease them, the governor turned his troops loose upon them, to plunder and destroy, and the ruthless massacre did not cease till fifty thousand of the Jews had fallen.

The disciples had asked our Lord what should be the sign of His coming; and surely those who lived to see the scenes which we have sketched could be at no loss to recognize the fulfilment of His words:—"Many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places; all
these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all men for My Name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure to the end the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

How wonderfully these predictions had been accomplished! The sad series of wars and intestine strife we have described: from A.D. 54 to A.D. 65, the point our narrative has reached, a grievous famine, that foretold by Agabus (Acts xi. 28), was raging; and how persecution, all the time, was falling on the disciples, the Acts of the Apostles tells abundantly. The year 63, in which St. Paul reached Rome, was marked at Jerusalem by the martyrdom of St. James the Just, the Bishop of Jerusalem, and at Rome by the outbreak of the persecution by Nero, the most atrocious in its cruelty of all persecutions, though not the most extensive. It ended about A.D. 67,
soon after the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul. Of the other Apostles it is supposed that nearly all had been martyred before that date. And the Gospel of the kingdom had now been preached in all the known world, for a witness to all nations, though all were not of course converted. The two years, 63—65, were those during which St. Paul lived in his own hired house at Rome, preaching the kingdom of God; and during the two next probably he accomplished his design of carrying the Gospel to the west of Europe. Other Apostles had been preaching, meanwhile, in all known parts of Africa and Asia. And now the end was to come.

Nor had the Jews been without warning. Awful prodigies were at least believed to have occurred. A comet, in the form of a sword, hung, it is said, for a whole year over the city. Chariots and armies were seen arrayed for battle in the sky; a voice was heard within the temple, “Let us depart hence,” and a great sound as of deity departing. These may have been, in part at least, imaginary terrors; but there was one warning

3 The comet and the fiery hosts seem an exact fulfilment of our Lord’s words, Luke xxi. 11, “Fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.”
which could not be mistaken. "While the city was yet at peace, and in prosperity, a countryman named Jesus, son of Ananus, began suddenly to cry aloud in the temple:—‘A voice from the east! a voice from the west! a voice from the four winds! a voice against Jerusalem, and against the temple! a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides! a voice against the whole people! Day and night in the narrow streets of the city he went about repeating these words with a loud voice. No efforts or punishment could silence the cry, ‘Woe, woe to Jerusalem!’ nor extort from him any other. All the four years that intervened before the war, he paid no attention to any one, and never spoke, excepting the same word, ‘Woe, woe to Jerusalem!’ He neither cursed any one who struck him, nor thanked any one who gave him food. His only answer was the same melancholy presage. He was particularly active during the festivals, and then with greater frequency, and still deeper voice, he cried, ‘Woe, woe to the city and to the temple!’ At length, during the siege, he suddenly cried out, ‘Woe, woe to myself!’ and was struck dead by a stone from a balista.”

* Milman’s Hist. of Jews, ii. 216.
We will conclude this sketch of "the beginning of sorrows," by a few sentences from an admirable American writer:—

"From the reign of the Emperor Tiberius to the destruction of the Holy City, the Jews were becoming constantly more entangled in seditions, tumults, plots, and insurrectionary movements. They had chosen Barabbas instead of Christ, and every Barabbas who offered himself to them was hailed as a Messiah. The wanton tyranny of Caligula exasperated this spirit, by placing the abomination of idols in Jewish houses of worship. Hence riots and massacres, both in Egypt and in Palestine. The reign of Claudius, Caligula's successor, was marked by similar commotions; and in a disturbance that took place in Jerusalem during the week of the Passover, more than 20,000 persons are said to have been slain, or trampled to death. A famine of several years added to the sufferings of this period. When Nero came to the throne, the sacred city and the whole of Palestine had fallen a prey to fanatical sects; and robber bands and assassins flourished under the guise of patriotism and religion. A glimpse is afforded us of this state of things, and

5 Mahan's Church Hist. of First Seven Centuries," pp. 34—38.
of its effect upon the security of the Christians, in the account given us in the Acts, of St. Paul's eventful visit to the sacred city of his people. Not long after, similar tumults arising, James of Jerusalem was put to death. This again was followed soon by the commencement of the Judaic war, in consequence of which, according to the testimony of Josephus, a fearful commotion seized upon the populace throughout all Syria, and every where the inhabitants of the cities destroyed the Jews without mercy, so that the streets were strewn with unburied and naked corpses.

It was a time, in fact, of universal madness and misrule. Nero's tyranny was succeeded by the wilder, and still more bloody, anarchy of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. The page of the philosophic historian of the Romans is as black as that of the learned Jew with the tragic record of treasons, plots, conspiracies, portents in the natural and civil world, horrible massacres and a recklessness of human life passing all imaginations.”

Surely there was even then “distress of nations with perplexity;” “men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which were coming on the earth.”
CHAPTER III.

Local disturbances and national excitement had reached their height in Palestine. Even those inhuman governors who had fomented revolt, could find no more to do. It was time for strong measures of repression from without. Cestius Gallus, the prefect of Syria, the province of which Palestine formed a part, a violent but irresolute man, collected a large force. With nearly five and twenty thousand men he marched into Northern Galilee, ravaged the country there, and advanced, almost unopposed, to Cæsarea. Taking up his quarters there, he laid waste the neighbourhood with great severity, and at length approached and entered Jerusalem itself. He thought, no doubt, and it must have seemed inevitable, that all troubles from this most troublesome of provinces would now be ended. The outer suburb of the city, a new part, called Bezetha, was left unprotected; the inhabitants all fled into the temple and other fortified parts of the upper city, and Cestius advanced unchecked
to the very gates of the inner wall. Had he pursued his advantage, the war might indeed have ended there, but he was irresolute, and the troubles were only begun. After fruitless delays, and attempts to gain admission by an understanding with the peace party within the walls, Cestius, without apparent reason, retreated from the city. The Jews, who had anticipated destruction, were elated with new hope, and pursued the retiring Romans all that night and the next day, inflicting great loss upon them. After two days' encampment at Gabao, a place some seven miles from Jerusalem, Cestius ordered a general retreat, so incessant were the attacks of the Jewish skirmishers. This retreat proved fatal. The Romans got entangled in the ravines about Bethoron; the Jews pressed on them with ever-increasing fury; the legions, and especially the cavalry, had no room to act; they were enclosed and in great part cut to pieces; night only saved

1 It has been thought, and with good reason, that this unexpected retreat of Cestius gave the Christians who were in the city the opportunity of departing. They had been warned by our Lord of this time, and bidden to take refuge in flight; and now they found a place of safety in the valley of the Jordan and the mountains of Perea, eventually settling at the little town of Pella.
them. Cestius himself, and the remainder of his army escaped, but nearly six thousand of his followers had fallen.

Here was news for Rome! In a province, hitherto the obedient vassal of the imperial city, a distant, half-barbarous country, scarcely known except for its great wealth and strange religion, the Roman arms had suffered a defeat such as had not been endured for many years. The legions of Rome were unaccustomed to disgrace: this was an insult to be avenged with all the power and determination which a Roman general could command. Judaean arms! A Roman army routed! Who shall go out to punish this rebellious people, and silence the last tongue that dares to mutter of resistance? No less a leader than the most distinguished general of the day, a man whose victorious arms Germany and subject Britain had acknowledged, a man whom even the emperor's jealousy could not pass over; the prompt and unflinching Vespasian. Sending his son to Alexandria, to bring thence two legions by sea, Vespasian himself hastened round by land to Syria, "collecting, as he went, all the Roman troops and forces from the neighbouring tributary kings." In the early spring of 67 A.D. he arrived
at Antioch; at Ptolemais he was joined by Titus, their united forces making up an army of sixty thousand soldiers.

"The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

"A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old or show favour to the young.

"And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.

"And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land; and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee." 2

We need not trace the steps by which all the country north of Jerusalem was gradually subdued. Desperate resistance was offered almost everywhere, and the number of the Jews who fell

2 Deut. xxviii. 49—52.
was almost incredible. Many a persistent siege, with all its accompaniments of famine, and plague, and intestine discord, gave a sad type of what was coming upon Jerusalem. One is naturally led to compare this history with that of the late invasion of France; the modern war and siege are happily no parallel to the horrors of the old; but the advance of the German forces and the siege of Paris come nearer, perhaps, than any others of late times to the Judaic war. Jotapata and Gamala were the Strasbourg and Phalsbourg of Palestine, but both of these had fallen before the actual siege of Jerusalem began. Many a city famous in the records of our Lord's life was now the scene of misery and slaughter; especially about the borders of the sea of Tiberias the fury of war was kindled, and one dreadful massacre took place upon the lake itself, till its waters were crimson with Jewish blood. All through that summer the course of devastation was pursued: in the winter Vespasian remained at Cæsarea. With the return of spring hostilities began again, and the attack of Jerusalem seemed immediately impending, when the death of Nero called away the attention of Vespasian, and made him anxious to keep his army fresh and unbroken for any crisis
which might occur. So during the whole of the next year Jerusalem had a respite. At the end of the year tidings came that the fall of Vitellius had opened the way for Vespasian to assume the empire of the world. He returned in haste to Italy, and committed to his son Titus the task of finishing the Jewish war.

The long interval of respite had brought no help to the unhappy city. Her own discords had been doing the Romans' work. The incessant quarrels between the Zealots, who, in the spirit of robbers more than of patriots, advocated resistance to the Romans, and the more peaceful party, of whom the high priests were leaders, were themselves enough to fill the city with misery and blood. But the provinces supplied more robbers and more unscrupulous chieftains, who kept pouring into Jerusalem, to increase the already overcrowded population, and add new factions to those that already existed. One of the last Galilæan towns that fell before the Romans was Gischala. It had resisted stubbornly under the crafty and warlike John, son of Levi. On its fall, John marched, with the remainder of his forces, to Jerusalem, and, pretending to aim at the restoration of union, was admitted. For a time he appeared to
favour the party of peace, but soon joined himself, at first secretly and then openly, to the Zealot faction, which now proceeded to still greater enormities. The murder of many of the respectable citizens, and at length an attempt to set up a priesthood of their own party, brought about open conflict: the party of the high priests, of whom Ananus was the chief, were at first successful, and the Zealots were driven into the temple. The temple was very strongly built and situated—it was indeed the strongest position in Jerusalem, and its wide outer courts could contain a great army. Of these Zealots, Eleazar, the man who had persuaded the people to reject the imperial offerings some years before, was still chief, though John of Gischala was rapidly becoming the recognized head of a rival party. Shut up thus in the temple, the Zealots contrived to send a messenger to the neighbouring tribe of Idumæans, a people always ready for any quarrel, and these came in large force to help them. After delays, and fruitless negotiations, the Idumæans got into the city, let the Zealots loose, and a general massacre of citizens took place, not only of those who had sided with Ananus, but of all, however unoffending, who were not openly on the Zealots' side.
But these Idumæans, once admitted, remained, many of them, to join the Zealot robbers; and when John openly separated from Eleazar, they formed a large portion of his party. There was yet a third faction. Simon, the son of Gioras, the desperate leader of an army of robbers, who had been ravaging all the country round, turned his attack upon Jerusalem. For a time the Zealots resisted him with success, but at length the Idumæans, growing jealous of John, united with the chief priests in admitting Simon, the few friends of peace who still remained thinking, perhaps, that he might help their cause. They were sadly mistaken if they did. There were now three armies openly at war; three positions fortified; three desperate foes working together for the ruin of their country. Eleazar occupied the inner courts of the temple—the very Holy of Holies itself hardly secure from scenes of cruelty and bloodshed—John occupied the outer courts, and Simon the opposite hill of Sion.

Such was the condition within when Titus, at the head of his legions, ordered in magnificent array, encamped about a mile from the northern wall at the little village of Scopus. He had not reached that position without some effort, for the
Jews had twice attacked his advancing line with wild ferocity; twice the general himself had been in danger, and the Jews had carried off enough of victory to stimulate their infatuated courage. At Scopus, Titus, with part of his force, encamped; another portion lay a short distance behind him, farther from the wall, and one part, the Tenth Legion, had formed a camp on the slope of the mount of Olives, quite at the other side, the S.E. or temple side of Jerusalem.

Scopus, or "Prospect," was so named from the excellent view of the city which it afforded. It lay low, but the city rose in front. Looking across a fertile plain, with gardens and fountains, to the high walls with their towers at intervals, Titus could see the city, lowest and least thickly built at its nearest point, but higher and more crowded farther away, till its craggy heights were crowned by the glorious Temple, and by great buildings on the Hill of Sion. The nearer part was Bezetha, a newer suburb; the farther part contained the Lower and Upper City, these two divided from one another by a deep ravine called Tyropoeon. The Upper City, or Sion, was on the right; at the S.W. of the whole, the Hill of Acra, on which the Lower City was built, rose
towards the left and ended at the S.E. corner of Jerusalem in the eminence on which the Temple stood, an eminence precipitous on three sides, on that towards Sion, and on the S. and E.; indeed, on the fourth side the ground of Acra had been levelled so as to leave a face of rock there also.

To the E. side of this Temple-hill the Tenth Legion looked across over the Kedron Valley from their position on the Slope of Olivet. Wall within wall, each rising higher than the last, with colonnades of gleaming marble and high towers and gates inlaid with brass and silver; roofs shining with gold, and above all the glorious front of the inmost Temple; it was a sight to which even the soldier cannot have been insensible.

There were thus three divisions of the city—Bezetha, or the New City, on the N.; Sion, or the Upper City, on the S.W.; and the rest was Acra, or the Lower City, with the Temple.

It will be observed that the city, being comparatively level with the plain on its northern side, and in all its southern part precipitous, must have been surrounded on three sides by valleys. The Valley of Hinnom ran under the western wall, turned eastward at the southern
corner and under the southern wall to the S.E. corner, beneath the Temple, the point at which the ravine of Tyropoeon ended in the Pool of Siloam; while on the eastern side lay the Valley of Jehoshaphat, down which the Kedron flowed, and beyond which rose the Mount of Olives; so that three valleys, Hinnom and Jehoshaphat, which embraced the city, and Tyropoeon, which divided it, met near the Siloam Pool, and thence ran southward in one main valley towards the Dead Sea.

And as there were three "cities," there were three walls. The oldest and strongest surrounded Zion on the N., W., and S., and then joined the Temple wall on the E. It was in great part only the completion of the natural defences which the nature of the ground afforded, but it was of immense strength, and overlooked, especially in its northern part, by gigantic towers, the work of Herod. The most famous of these was called Hippicus, and stood at the N.W. angle of Sion. A second wall enclosed the Lower City, meeting the northern part of the inmost wall, somewhat to the E. of Hippicus. Finally, the newest, or outer wall, which had been built by Agrippa, enclosed both Acra and Bezetha; running due north from
Hippicus, it turned eastward at a tower called Psephina, and continued thence in an easterly and then southerly direction till it ended at the Kedron Valley, close to the Temple.

The city was utterly impregnable from the S. and S.E., while from the N. there were these three walls to be encountered, except in one place, it seems,—the part of the inmost wall between Hippicus and the western part of the second wall. This part being outside the second wall, Sion could here be entered by passing only two walls. It was towards this part that Titus at first directed his attack, though the wall of Sion here proved impassable.

It is a dull thing for us, and it might have been sad even for an enemy, to look on the hill of Sion, that fair place, the joy of the whole earth, with the cold or hostile survey of the engineer; but the Lord had set a plumb-line in the midst of His people, and the heathen were to come into His inheritance, to destroy the holy places, and make Jerusalem a heap of stones.3 It was the

3 "The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Sion: He hath stretched out a line, and hath not withdrawn His hand from destroying; therefore He hath made the rampart and wall to lament." (Lam. ii. 8.)
time of the Passover. Though foes were at the gates, Jews came in multitudes to be present at the feast. For the last time, as they drew near the city, those songs were heard in which so many generations had expressed their joy at coming from their less favoured homes to the Holy City. "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar." "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." "Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord." "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem;" "Peace be within thy walls." Nearer and nearer the pilgrims came, and the hills they loved were seen. "As the mountains," they cried, "are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even for ever." And they sang of their joyful return from captivity long ago, and of the city that the Lord defends, and of the good man's peace and happiness among his children's children, while he sees Jerusalem in prosperity all his life long; and as the Temple towers were plain, and they seemed to hear already the chant of priests, and saw the incense ascending, they cried, "We will go into His tabernacles, we will worship at His
footstool: arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy strength;" till they called at last to the servants of the Lord who stood in His courts, "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord."

Look through the Psalms and see how they loved Jerusalem, and you may understand part of the grief that was coming on the Jews, and believe that even patriotic love was not without its share in the sacred tears that flowed forty years before upon the Mount of Olives.

Titus' position at Scopus was separated from the city wall by a mile of highly-cultivated ground, gardens and fountains and every kind of fragrant and flowering tree, the pleasant resort in happier days of those who now watched the progress of its destruction. For this smiling valley was to be filled up and levelled that the machinery of war might be brought close up to the walls. Even while the Romans were engaged upon this work, the Jews managed, by pretended signs of dissension among themselves, as if the peace party had got the upper hand and were expelling their opponents, to entice some of the soldiers to approach the gate. The Jews then fell upon them and surrounded them, while some from the walls
threw down stones upon them. Considerable loss was thus inflicted, and the incident was an indication of the craft and ferocity which the Jews showed throughout.

The work of levelling the ground was soon complete, and the Romans prepared to assault the first or outer wall. Titus encamped along the north part of the western wall, on nearly the same ground as Pompey had occupied many years before, when Judæa was first subjected to the Romans; his own tent was pitched at the north-western corner, where the strong tower of Psephina seemed to defy assault; another part of his force was stationed opposite the gigantic fort or tower called Hippicus. The tower of Psephina was 122 feet high; Hippicus was 140 feet in height and 44 feet in length and breadth. Besides these there were many others, ninety in all in the first wall, none of them less than 35 feet high, and built of the most solid masonry. The whole of this first wall was 35 feet high, with battlements again upon the top, and to half of that height it was built of masses of solid stone, each block, we are told, 35 feet in length. Such was the fortification, and this only the first of three, which the Romans
undertook to pass. And that they were not mere walls of stone alone, but defended by men of desperate ferocity, the Romans had soon reason to believe. An officer could not venture near the wall, even with the most friendly intention, without being saluted by a shower of arrows. Such vigilant hostility must have suggested caution; it certainly provoked relentless hostility in the assailants. For every Jew was now on the alert to resist the foe; the quarrels of John's party and Eleazar's party and Simon's party ceased for a time in the unanimous determination to drive off the Roman.

Titus had collected timber from the neighbouring hills, and from the fair gardens and groves of the immediate suburbs; all had been levelled with the ground to provide materials for his attack. He chose a part of the wall around Bezetha, the outer city, where it was lowest and least protected. The construction and preparation of the towers and battering-rams by which the wall was to be assailed occupied some time, and was the occasion of many a fierce engagement. The Jews, all factions now united, stood along the wall, and watched the Romans working ceaselessly under their pent-houses of wicker-work.
They tried with slings and arrows to interrupt their progress, but could do but little. The Romans had gigantic engines for casting stones and great iron arrows: huge masses of stone were thrown, not from so great a distance, it is true, but with an effect almost as fatal as the modern cannon-ball. The missile, where it struck, mowed down whole files of men. The Jews set men to watch for these stones, and warn the rest: at first, the white stones were easily seen, and so avoided even in the night; but soon the Romans blackened the stones, and then it was no longer safe to remain upon the wall. The Jews had themselves a few such engines—they had taken them from Cestius; but they knew not how to use them, except when, here and there, they got help from a deserter. All that they could do was by sudden sallies to burn and throw down the scaffolding and coverings which the Romans made for mounting and protecting their engines. For this was then the method of a siege: to raise high wooden towers which should overlook the walls, so as to prevent the besieged from manning them, and, under cover of these, to advance the battering-rams which were by successive blows to break down the wall. Without the towers it
would have been impossible to use the rams, for the defenders would have burnt them, by throwing down fire; or intercepted their blows with sacks, or such like. At first the Jews succeeded often in setting fire to the instruments; even the horsemen and archers of Titus could not entirely protect his machinery; but when high towers were erected, plated with iron, against these the Jews had no resource. The rams were brought up: these were immense beams suspended between high poles: the end of each beam was loaded with a heavy mass of iron, the "ram's head:" the beam was pulled back, away from the wall, by a great number of men, and allowed to fall suddenly, with immense weight and impetus, upon the spot selected. After long battering, a tower which stood upon the wall fell down; but the solid wall was still unbroken. Jews rushed down from time to time to fire the scaffolding, or to kill the engineers; and displayed heroic courage. In one such sally they had nearly achieved complete success: from a gate under the tower Hippicus they poured out in numbers, overran at first all that opposed them, and, but for the opportune arrival of a body of Alexandrian horse, would have destroyed all the engines. One Jew who was taken
in this engagement, Titus, by way of a signal example, caused to be crucified—the first instance, in the siege, of this awful punishment, whose constant use afterwards formed so significant a part of the great retribution.

At length the largest battering-ram, called already by the Jews "the Conqueror," made a breach; the Jews, either disheartened or ill-advised, retired from the first wall, and the Roman army marched in over the now-abandoned suburb to attack the second wall, that which defended Acra and the high ground of Sion and Moriah. Titus' front was now extended across the whole width of the city, from the tower Hippicus, upon his right, to the end of the Temple hill, where it hung steeply over the valley of the Kedron. The eastern half of this extent of wall, from Hippicus to the monument of John the High Priest, was defended by Simon and his followers; while the western half, the strong fortress Antonia, and the Temple itself, were in the hands of John of Gischala. The Romans were now occupying, by a remarkable coincidence, the ground which from Sennacherib's invasion had been called the camp of the Assyrians. But no Hezekiah now laid the matter before the Lord; no
Isaiah was sent to announce the promise of deliverance; no Angel of the Lord to smite the foe. Beneath the steep walls of the Temple, and round the well-defended gates, the battle raged fiercely for days; the Romans disciplined and used to victory, the Jews driven to a desperate courage as they fought for life and home. Each side had a worthy general: Titus, for the Romans, was a model of courage without rashness; on the Jewish side there were none who would not follow where Simon led. Thus, with perpetual sallies perpetually repulsed, the struggle continued. But soon the battering-rams, "city-takers," as they called them, began to work. The Jews did what they could, by force and craft, to interrupt the work; but before long they were compelled to retreat from the eastern part, and abandon this second wall also to the enemy. Titus, with a thousand picked men, entered the city. Within the wall he came first to a crowded labyrinth of streets, on a level much lower than the hill of Sion, which lay beyond, within the third wall; a district in which the manufacturing classes of the city, clothiers, braziers, salesmen, chiefly lived. Titus was reluctant to destroy the city, even now. He ordered his men to abstain
from pillage, and offered most advantageous terms to the inhabitants, representing himself as willing to be the restorer of peace, and arbitrator between the contending factions. But this humanity the warlike party mistook for weakness. Threatening or punishing with death all who spoke of treaty, they attacked the Romans with renewed vigour. In the narrow streets, with which the Romans of course were unacquainted, the Jews had a manifest advantage: they sprang out upon the intruders from unexpected quarters, and surrounded detached bands of them. The Romans hastened to retreat, but the breach through which they had entered was narrow, and they could get out but slowly; it was only with great difficulty and considerable loss that Titus saved the greater part of his force. Thus the second wall was lost again. But it was soon recovered. With a breach once made, the wall could only be defended by a succession of men who replaced one another in the hopeless attempt to resist legions and missiles and engines. For three days, with almost incredible courage, fighting upon a rampart of dead bodies, they kept the Romans out; but on the fourth day Titus entered again, and, to prevent a recurrence of his former
mishap, threw down most of the wall and destroyed a great part of the lower city.

There now remained the last and strongest wall. A continuous line of steep cliff and impregnable fortress lay before the Romans; the front of Sion on their right, then the Antonia, and on their left the Temple. Titus hesitated to attack; he hoped still to save the city, and to avoid the toil. In order to overawe and discourage the defenders, he ordered a grand review of all his troops beneath the wall. Their swords flashing, their armour shining, the legions were drawn up in long, well-ordered ranks,—the cavalry, with led horses gorgeously caparisoned, added to the splendour, so that the whole field, says the historian, seemed covered with gold and silver; there was no sign of thinned ranks or dimmed lustre or failing cheerfulness. The Jews crowded upon the walls to see the pageant, and often their eyes turned sadly to one another's faces, where famine and hardship and despair had marked their traces, and many a heart sank at the thought of their diminished numbers and resources almost exhausted. But still there was no yielding. For four days the legions were employed in review and in victualling; on the fifth
Titus renewed the siege. Half of his army concentrated its energies upon the monument of the High Priest, in Simon's part of the wall, the other half upon the Antonia; the general hoping, if he could take the fortress, so to make his way into the Temple. Without gaining the Antonia no force could long hold the city. When the siege-works at these two points were begun, Titus again tried persuasion. Probably no man could have moved the Jewish determination, but the ambassador chosen was the least likely to be successful. It was Josephus, the historian; a man of great ability in politics, and still greater cunning: he had done his country good service in Galilee, during Vespasian's first campaign, but had meanly deserted the cause, after the taking of Jotapata, and gone over, pretending that he did so by divine direction, to the Roman side. The long and pedantic harangue which he professes to have delivered on this occasion was not likely, from any lips, to persuade a furious and half-famished soldiery—from his, it only increased their determination. From their high walls they poured down upon the Romans stones and arrows, and the heavy bolts of the balista and catapult, for they had now learnt to use these
with precision; and any voice within the city that might plead for capitulation they silenced in a moment. The prospect of siege, to be worked out with every horror to its bitter end, lay now clearly before the wretched inhabitants; meanwhile, it was already becoming difficult to find subsistence; immense numbers accordingly stole out and deserted, carrying out, to buy their lives from the soldiers, all that they could seize of gold and jewels, commodities cheap enough by this time in Jerusalem. The leaders, John and Simon, watched every outlet, and put to death all whom they suspected of intending flight, and many more against whom there lay no such suspicion, if by wealth or influence they had excited the envy of the insurgents. For these factions, now united, though the defenders of the city, were the worst foes of its inhabitants. As the famine increased, their robber origin showed itself more and more. They searched every house in which it was supposed that food might be; and tore the food, if they found it, from the mouths of the wretched owners; those who looked well fed were tortured to make them reveal their stores, those whose starved frames proved them innocent of that fault were put to death lest they should eat.
We need not follow the historian into his description of the cruelties and miseries of this time, even at the beginning of the siege. He represents the factions, who had agreed to provoke from the Romans every calamity for the city over which they had usurped authority, as showing no regard whatever for the sufferings they had caused; rather as vieing with one another in violence and rapacity.

To what degree they had provoked the Romans, they now became dreadfully aware. With an inhumanity which a Roman, with all his sternness, did not often show, Titus determined to frighten the citizens by the terror of some punishment worse than death. Some of the poor inhabitants, unwilling to desert, because their wives and children would in that case have been killed by the factions, used to creep out at night, to gather what miserable food they might. Titus—imcredible meanness!—sent out a detachment of horse to waylay them; and having caught them, he had them crucified before the walls. The story would be too hideous to relate, had it not such an awful significance. "They were all crucified," says Josephus, "but in various ways and postures: some to express rage, some in attitudes of hatred;
others even in postures that mocked the gestures of mockery and contempt; but the number of the prisoners was so great that they wanted room for more crosses, and crosses for the bodies."

And these things, he goes on to say, did not soften the Zealots; they used the sight of them to terrify those who were inclined to peace. Dragging the relations of the victims to the wall, they pointed to the spectacle of horror; and "this," they said, "comes of trusting to the Romans."

It was now late in May (A.D. 70), when the Roman works were at last completed. They had been already nearly a month engaged upon the siege, and had only now begun the hardest part of their task. Embankments were raised against the wall in four places: the engines were mounted on them, and all was ready for the assault, when suddenly, as with an earthquake, the ground moved and heaved and broke open between the embankments and the wall; smoke and soon flames burst forth; then all the surface fell in, the bank sank, catapults and rams and all, into the fiery abyss, and the work of seventeen days was consumed in a minute. The Jews had undermined the whole, and filled the cavity with sulphur, pitch and such like. This was in the
part that John defended. Simon, on his part, was not to be outdone. Rushing out suddenly with blazing torches, and forcing way through the startled Romans, his party succeeding in setting fire to the battering rams, and thence the fire spread to the other works. They followed up their success, and though the Roman engines were pouring stones and darts like rain upon them, they yet pressed on in ever-increasing numbers, till the legions were upon the point of abandoning their ground. The opportune appearance of Titus, so Josephus tells us, prevented the further progress of the disaster.

Thus baffled in his assault, Titus, after some deliberation, determined to subdue the city by starvation. He proceeded to draw a trench round the whole city, and build towers for the garrison who should guard it. The circuit was five miles; from the camp of the Assyrians the line ran eastward to the Valley of the Kedron, southward along the foot of Olivet, turning westward near Siloam, round the precipices of Mount Sion, northward again so as to enclose Bezetha, passing outside Hippicus and Psephina, and returning southward. Yet this wide circuit, so complete was the organization of a Roman army, was
accomplished in three days. The whole city was surrounded, and no hope remained, for if they could resist the continued assault, yet sooner or later to famine all must succumb. There must have been some there who had been on the Mount of Olives forty years before, and heard of the prophecy, uttered in sorrow, "The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (St. Luke xix.43). A wall Josephus calls it, and no doubt a wall was raised; but first a trench was dug, and the materials taken out of the trench formed the wall. All night the soldiers kept guard in the towers: it was no longer possible now for the inhabitants to steal out to pick up even the wretched food which grew on the neighbouring hills, or was thrown away by the Romans. Famine without alleviation now came upon the city. The streets and houses were full of corpses; those who still lived were too feeble to bury the dead, or cared not to do it, not knowing how soon their own turn would come.
And yet in all this misery no sound nor groan was heard: the agony of hunger overpowered every other passion. "The city," says Josephus, "was all wrapped up in a profound silence, and the night was full of death. And yet the robbers were worse than these. They broke into houses and plundered the dead, stripping them and insulting their nakedness. As each expired he turned his eyes towards the Temple, but only to see these ruffians in possession of it. At first they ordered the dead to be buried at public expense, because the stench was intolerable; but soon this method failed to keep pace with the numbers, so they threw the corpses down from the walls into the ravines below." So awful was the scene that even Titus, as he went round the walls and saw every hollow filled with bodies, groaned and held up his hands to heaven, calling God to witness that the deed was not his.

Through all this history Josephus treats the Zealots as the true enemies of Jerusalem. Titus

4 The most harrowing incidents connected with this famine the historian may be excused for passing over in a horror-stricken silence. Such is the story which Josephus tells of "the tender and delicate woman" whose natural affection towards her child had been so lost in the agonies of hunger that she fulfilled to the letter the awful predictions of Deut. xxviii. 56 and Lam. iv. 10.
he represents as merciful to the people generally, but resolutely determined to punish the Zealots. It is clear, at any rate, that the Romans well knew the state of things within the city, and were aware that it was to John and Simon that they owed this long resistance. This knowledge afterwards embittered their revenge.

Though it was clear that famine must now reduce the city in course of time, Titus was reluctant to wait for that issue; he wanted a more glorious success. Accordingly, the works were repaired; new timber was fetched with great labour from distant woods, for all that were near had been exhausted; and four embankments, larger than the former, were raised against the Antonia alone. And as he went from spot to spot and hastened on the work, Titus did his best to show the Zealots that they were at his mercy. But remorse was dead within them: they tore the dead to pieces like dogs, and the weak they cast into prison. Many of the leading citizens who did not belong to the Zealot party—to the robbers, as Josephus calls them—were put to death with cruelty and insult; his own father and mother, the historian tells us, were put in prison. He represents himself as having used his influence with
Titus—for all this time Josephus was in the Roman camp—in the interests of "the people" and against "the robbers," and as giving useful advice to the former and warning to the latter. At any rate, he had the best opportunity any historian could have for learning what went on both within and without the city, for he was a sort of mediator. Many are the harrowing stories that he tells. Some of the Jews who had deserted were found to have swallowed gold before they left the city; this got known, and immediately, especially among the Syrian auxiliaries, the legions cut open the bellies of all who thus deserted, in hopes of finding such treasures in them. In this way, he says, in one night two thousand perished! He describes the crimes of the robbers within the city; how they pillaged all that was most sacred in the Temple. This he thinks the worst of all their crimes; and at this point, "I cannot refrain," he cries, "from giving vent to my feelings. Had the Romans delayed the calling of these wicked people to an account, the city, I believe, must either have been swallowed up by an earthquake, or drowned by a deluge, or destroyed by the thunderbolts of Sodom; for it contained a generation far worse than those. It
was for these men’s madness that the whole people perished.”

Had we a history of the siege written by one of Simon’s party, its aspect might be different. We should find “the robbers” called “the patriots,” and the party which Josephus favoured “traitors;” and might look upon the story as that of a heroic resistance on the part of men who would rather perish than be slaves, instead of as the wanton violence of a band of greedy robbers hurrying a harmless nation into misery for the sake of their own shortlived supremacy. Neither view would be quite the truth, and it is hard to strike the right line between them; but we, to whom “the arm of the Lord” behind all men’s turmoiling has been revealed, look past the question of contending parties, and hear in all this the voice of our Lord’s prophetic warning and its terrible ratification by the Jews themselves, “His blood be on us and on our children.”
Nearly three weeks of misery had been endured since the completion of the blockade, when the works and engines were at last ready again. Wood had been collected with difficulty; within ten miles round Jerusalem not a tree was left; the whole region was turned into a desert. Especially in the immediate neighbourhood of the city, a sad scene was presented to the eyes of those who had known in their days of peace and beauty the terraces and gardens, and cool-watered avenues, which had now given way to a dismal solitude, or the still more dismal works of war. But at last the mounds were finished, and the battering-rams began their work upon the walls of the Antonia. At first the spirit of the Jews did not fail; rather it rose to the occasion, as they felt that with the issue of this assault would be decided the fate of Jerusalem. The Romans, on the other hand, were wearied and disheartened, but they too were excited to vigorous efforts by the knowledge
that if these engines were burnt there could be no material found for new ones. An attempt made by John's party to fire the machinery as the rams were being advanced was ill planned and unsuccessful; and the showers of missiles which were poured down from the walls on the assailants were rendered ineffectual by the ingenuity and energy of the Romans. They locked their shields together above their heads, so as to form a continuous shelter, and under this strong roof they worked in safety till with crowbars they had succeeded in loosening four large stones in the lower part of the wall. Thus they worked and the Jews resisted all the first day; but during the night, partly perhaps shaken by the rams, but more because it had been undermined in that part by the Jews themselves when they destroyed the former embankments, the wall fell of itself. And yet the morning found the Jews not dismayed, and the Romans had hardly cause to be elated, for the breach only disclosed a second wall which the foresight of the indefatigable John had built within. But a great loss had been sustained. The ruins of the outer wall gave access to this new one, and the latter from its newness had not settled into such firmness as could resist the ram.
Notwithstanding this advantage, which appeared to be a manifest interference of heaven in favour of the Romans, Titus had great difficulty in encouraging his men. It was a Syrian, named Sabinus, a little man, says Josephus, whom you would never have taken for a soldier, who volunteered to lead a forlorn hope. Eleven others followed him. With desperate valour he climbed the wall, forcing his way upward through a shower of stones and darts, and by the sheer force of his courage struck panic into the Jews. But at length he fell and was overpowered; his comrades also all of them perished; and their failure probably dispirited the rest, for no further attempt was made at that time. But two days after, by a night-surprise, some twenty soldiers with a trumpeter got over the wall: slew the watch and blew their trumpet. The rest of the guards fled; the Romans followed into the fortress, and the Antonia was taken. This was the strongest fort in Jerusalem, and close to the Temple. The Romans pressed on to take the Temple too, but here the united forces of John and Simon resisted them successfully: there was a long struggle, but the Jews held their ground.

At this point Titus made another attempt to
save the Temple and what remained of the city. He offered John free egress if he would come out to fight, and save the Temple from defilement. But it was in vain: John rejected his offers with scorn, saying that the city could not be taken, because it was the City of God. Through certain leading Jews who had deserted, men of priestly rank, sons, some of them, of men whom the Zealots had murdered, Titus endeavoured to persuade the people to capitulate and spare their temple from a siege. But the Zealot faction would allow no terms to be accepted, and resolutely prepared to defend the Temple to the last.

At last, finding all his offers and expostulations useless, Titus determined reluctantly on resuming the attack. His whole force could not be brought up to the wall; there was not space; but he selected the best men from each Century, and ordered a night attack. He would have joined the assault in person, says Josephus, had not his generals restrained him: as it was, he took his post on a commanding part of the Antonia, that in his sight the soldiers might fight bravely. Josephus speaks here with the vivid force of an eye-witness, and we can well realize from his description the strange excitement with which Titus
watched from his lofty tower the beginning of this unparalleled attack. From this height he could survey the temple courts with their mingled splendour and foulness of blood and death stretched out beneath him, and could look up to the gilded roofs of the gigantic towers of the gateways, whose brightness still shone unsullied above the dismal scene.

The reader will remember that the southern part of Jerusalem stood on two hills precipitous towards south, west, and east, and divided from one another by a deep ravine. The larger of these hills, that of Sion, the ancient city, was to the west; that to the east was Moriah, and was covered by the Temple. The Temple stood, an inaccessible stronghold, upon a platform of rock, whose steep sides, with the fortifications surmounting them, formed walls on south and east of at least three hundred feet in height. On the west the ravine was crossed by a bridge, which connected the south-west corner of the Temple with the Royal Palace and other buildings of Mount Sion. This bridge formed the most usual entrance from the Upper City to the Temple. Let us suppose ourselves to have crossed it. We enter at once the great colonnade or cloister
of Herod, a building about as long and broad as the largest of our cathedrals, and, like them, divided into nave and aisles, but utterly unlike in architecture. It is flat roofed, and its length unbroken by transept, tower, or chapel. The roof is supported by four rows of Corinthian pillars, of gorgeous workmanship; the middle, or nave, is a hundred feet; the sides, or aisles, fifty feet in height. On the south, on our right as we enter, the cloister is closed by a wall; but the left side is open, and between the pillars we may walk into the Temple courts. It will be observed that this cloister or colonnade has about it nothing oriental; it is an addition of Roman magnificence to the original Jewish structure. Cloisters of the same kind, though of less splendour, run along the western side from the bridge to the Antonia, and along the eastern side above the valley of the Kedron. If we look inwards from this royal colonnade, we see a low wall or rail of stone, of beautiful design, on which are pillars, placed at intervals, with inscriptions in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin, warning all strangers to keep away from the sacred enclosure within. A little way beyond rises a range of steps, which, running round the whole square area enclosed by the clois-
ters, separates from the lower courts the inner court of the Israelites. This court is surrounded by a wall of immense height, through which admission is obtained by gateways, whose towers rose high above the adjoining wall; and round the court ran a range of cloisters, smaller, but not less magnificent, than those of the outer court. These gateways were of wonderful size and beauty, seventy feet in height; the doors, the door-posts, and the lintels, rich with gold and silver. The finest of them was that on the east—the Beautiful Gate. Its height was eighty-seven feet, according to Josephus; the doors themselves being seventy feet high, and plated all over with gold and silver. It led into the eastern part of the court of the Israelites, which was appropriated to women. Within the court of the Israelites, again, a second low wall surrounded the area on which the Holy Place itself and the great Altar of Burnt-offerings stood, and the priests ministered while the people waited without. This altar was of brass, and of immense size—Josephus says seventy-five, others fifty feet square by twenty high. West of the altar stood the Temple itself, an oblong building placed east and west, with an eastern front extending to a width
much greater than that of the body of the temple. This front, or propylæon, was, like the cloisters, a late addition, and resembled them in architecture. Behind it was the actual Holy Place, quite a small building, not more than ninety feet in length; one-third of that length, the western, or inmost part, being the Holy of Holies. It was surrounded by chambers, or small rooms, one above the other. Such was the plan of the Temple, as Titus saw it. The Holy Place itself, a small oblong building, with broad façade; in front of it the altar; all these on the innermost quadrangle: outside, a second square, the court of the Israelites, with its high wall and gateway: outside this, again, but much below it, the court of the Gentiles, and the surrounding cloisters. But all was decorated with a richness far surpassing that of any buildings to which we are accustomed. The floors and pavements were of polished marble, the ceilings of cedar, often sheeted with gold; the roof of the Holy Place had been set all over with sharp golden spikes, to prevent the birds from settling there; and the walls were covered entirely with gold. The Beautiful Gate had doors of Corinthian brass, more precious than gold itself. The Gate of Nicanor, which led
into the inmost quadrangle, was faced with gold, and from it hung the celebrated Golden Vine. The pillars in the colonnades were of solid marble, of dazzling whiteness; and all glowed under the unbroken rays of the Eastern sun, streaming through the clear eastern atmosphere. Such was the scene of beauty which was now to be abandoned to desolation.

These gorgeous courts and marble staircases were now streaming with blood or heaped with corpses; arms were piled along the porticoes or hung upon the gilded walls; all the accompaniments of camp-life at its worst, dirt and crowding, evil words, and quarrelling, and murder, filled the sacred precincts which had seen for so many years the daily sacrifice, and had been trodden by the Saviour's feet.

The first assault was repulsed. The Zealots fought with indomitable courage, but blindly at first, for the attack was made by night, but the contest lasted all the next morning, and neither

1 "This extraordinary piece of workmanship had bunches, according to Josephus, as large as a man. The Rabbins add that 'like a true natural vine, it grew greater and greater; men would be offering, some, gold to make a leaf, some a grape, some a bunch: and these were hung upon it, and so it was increasing continually.'" (Milman.)
side had gained or lost ground. But the brave defenders found themselves attacked on every side: in four separate places the wall of the outer court was assailed by the engines of war, and the Jews could do little to protect them. They made one or two attempts, by sallying out suddenly from the city, to break through the outer wall, and so get food, or timber, or help, but it was in vain. They were driven to a desperate measure; to save the rest they sacrificed a part. In order to put a distance between the Roman works and the most accessible part of the temple, they set on fire the portico which led from the Antonia to the temple; the Romans set fire to part of the cloister itself, and thus the whole of that space between the fortress and the temple was cleared. It was now clear that the Romans could reach the roof of the outer cloister. Accordingly, throughout the western side the Jews filled the hollow of the roof with pitch and sulphur, and dry wood, and then retreated from the defence as if exhausted. Many of the Romans were enticed by this stratagem to climb upon the roof; the Jews at once fired the train; the result may be imagined. The few who escaped the flames were surrounded by the Jews and cut to pieces to a man.
The western cloister was thus destroyed by the Jews themselves; the Romans set on fire the northern side, where it stood above the vast precipices that hung over the valleys. The whole outer court was thus in the hands of the besiegers, who now, early in August, began to thunder against the eastern chambers of the inner court. The rams which had shaken every other wall were ineffectual here, or the impatience, it may be, of the Romans would not give them time. They preferred to try to scale the walls, but here again they were repulsed. The Jews upon the higher level easily slew their opponents as they reached the top, or dashed them down again, or thrust away the ladders as they climbed; till Titus, seeing that this course was hopeless, gave orders to set fire to the gates. Soon the timbers were in a blaze, and the plates of silver melted; and the flame was spreading to the adjoining cloisters. The Jews were bewildered, they stood gaping upon one another, while the flames encircled them; not an effort was made either to extinguish the fire or to escape. All that day and the night following the fire went on, till gradually the whole range of cloisters was consumed. It was then put out by Titus' orders, and ways
were cleared and levelled for the army to march in.

A council of war was then held to discuss the expediency of destroying the temple itself. Some of the officers, regarding it a fortress rather than a temple, were eager for its destruction: the rebellious Jews, they said, could never be suppressed, so long as this stronghold remained to them. Titus, on the other hand, was reluctant to spoil so splendid an ornament of the empire, and his wishes naturally prevailed in the council. It was determined to use the building as a fort, from which the remainder of the city could be easily overpowered. But the Jews in the inner temple still resisted furiously, they even sallied out and attacked the guards of the outer court, and were with difficulty driven back into the temple. Their position was now a truly miserable one. A great number were cooped up in a narrow space, they were half starving, and many of them wounded; and the scene of this wretchedness was the place in which all their national pride and devotion centred, the place from which they had still hoped against hope that deliverance yet might come. And now came the 10th of Ab (August), the very day on which the former temple had been
destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. There must have been gloomy thoughts as the fatal day came on; still all was quiet; the Romans were resting and preparing for the next day's attack. The evening came. That omen had passed by—but no! on the north side smoke and flames arose; a wild cry burst from the crowd, "It is on fire!" In a moment the flame gathered strength, the dry cedar timbers cracked and fell, the gilded ceilings dropped in—all must be burnt together. But a swifter destruction still was at hand. The Roman soldiers, now excited beyond all discipline, rushed in; resistance in the crowd was hardly possible; the voice was heard here and there, amid the tumult, of an officer trying to restrain his men, or commanding them to quench, if they could, the growing fire; but it was disregarded; the soldiers pretending to misunderstand, even spread the flame. Meanwhile priest, woman, soldier, sick and wounded, all alike were being slaughtered together, those who tried to fly were trampled down by one another, or crushed by the falling beams, while still the red glare shot up in flashes between the gilded walls and the tall gate towers; and many an eye that had closed in the faintness of famine, was opened once more, for one moment of agony, to see the blood-stained
court around, the whole city beyond it, and the farther mountains, red with one awful light, and the gleaming helmets of "the nation of fierce countenance," as the soldiers rushed about on their work of carnage. The pavement, the altars, were heaped with dead; here were a few attempting a vain resistance, there a few surrendering themselves in a body—all the rest was butchery. There was no time for plunder, the massive gold and hoards of jewels could not tempt the maddened soldiers to pause from slaughter. Six thousand of the most defenceless, women and children who had been led by a false prophet into the temple, as the place in which God had promised them security—were huddled together in a part of the outer cloister to which the flames had not reached. The soldiers set fire to the building, not a soul escaped.

Thus the temple of God, so long the scene of His Presence, the House for which our Lord had been so zealous, was utterly destroyed. Titus, we are told, did his best to save it, but when the rashness of one soldier had begun the work, the rest could not be checked. A stronger will than that of Titus had decreed its ruin. "The Lord hath accomplished His fury"—are they
THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.

words of prophecy or of history?—"He hath poured out His fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion; and it hath devoured the foundations thereof."

Even after the temple had been thus destroyed, and the last of those miserable bands who had taken refuge in the few still standing buildings had surrendered at last under the compulsion of famine, the resolute defenders of the Upper City still held out. Separated from the temple by a deep ravine, which was crossed only by one bridge, and rising to a height considerably above the level of the outer temple courts, the hill of Sion, with its precipitous cliffs and massive walls, presented a face apparently impregnable to the Romans in Moriah. On two other sides, the south and west, Sion was equally inaccessible, where its famished garrison looked down several hundred feet into the vale of Hinnom, and south-east towards the Siloam pool. On the north alone the approach was not precipitous; but here the upper city was defended by the enormous masonry of the old wall, and by Hippicus, Mariamne, and Phasaelus, the gigantic towers of Herod.

2 Lam. iv. 11. See the whole of this chapter.
The defenders proposed a conference, and Titus, willing, it may be, to spare what remained of the city, and certainly willing to avoid the tedious labour of further siege, consented to meet the chiefs. On the bridge which joined Moriah to Sion the two parties stood—Titus by the temple-gate, surrounded by his eager soldiers, whose shouts it was not easy to repress, and on the eastern end of the bridge the haggard faces of the weary Jews crowded round their too-relentless captains, John and Simon. The Roman spoke first, through an interpreter, in words of expostulation. He pointed out the hopelessness of their position, reminded them how many overtures he had already made to them, and offered them their lives on condition of immediate surrender. "Wretched men," he ended, "on what do you rely? Your people have no life left in them; your temple is gone; your city is in my power, your life in my hands; and yet you talk of honour in facing death! I will not bandy words with your desperate folly. Throw down your arms, and surrender your persons, and I will grant you your lives. I shall deal with you as a lenient master with his slaves—punish the incorrigible, and keep the rest." His terms were
refused. They demanded free egress for their wives and children, and promised themselves to leave the city and go away into the wilderness; but surrender, they said, was impossible, for they had sworn never to submit to it. Titus was indignant, and announced to them that they need not hope now for either egress or quarter; henceforth he would follow out the law of war to the uttermost. Thereupon he gave leave to his soldiers to plunder and to burn. The next day the work of destruction was resumed. The public buildings and palaces, and all the houses of Acra, and of Ophla, the southern suburb, were set on fire, all in short that remained outside the hill of Sion. This was not done without resistance: especially about the royal palace, a strong building in which much treasure had been stored,—here the party of John and Simon obtained a temporary advantage; but it was a victory over Jews rather than Romans, for though the latter were repulsed, many hundreds of helpless citizens who had taken refuge there were put to death. The Romans soon regained the mastery, and burnt all the outer suburbs, down to the pool of Siloam, while the murderous Zealots in the upper city spent the time that remained in continued
outrages on their fellow-citizens, hunting in every vault and passage for supposed deserters, and driving many to seek at the hands of the Romans, who now gave no quarter, a more merciful or less lingering death.

The Jewish chiefs had still one hope. There were under all this upper city many subterranean passages, the result partly of the beneficent labour of old days for drainage and supply of water, partly of the needs to which constant sieges had forced the citizens. In these they hoped to conceal themselves, till the Romans should have come and gone; and in these passages during the short interval that remained many a hideous scene of famine and murder was enacted.

Titus did not attempt to assail the eastern front of Sion, but carried his chief attack round to the western corner, where the royal palace abutted on the inmost wall, in the part defended by Herod's three great towers. At the same time he raised a mound also on the opposite side against the bridge and the Xystus, or gallery which connected Sion and Moriah. It was eighteen days before the new works could be completed, for timber had to be fetched from distances of nine or ten miles; all that was nearer
Jerusalem having been already exhausted. During those eighteen days an immense number of the inhabitants deserted, and were sold as slaves by the Romans. Hitherto deserters had been put to death by order of Titus; but his soldiers were now weary of slaughter, and his own more merciful temper prevailed. Upwards of forty thousand, according to Josephus, were allowed to go free, and vast numbers sold, though they fetched, in the over-abundant supply, very low prices. Among those who thus escaped we read of a priest, who compounded for his life by giving up many of the sacred vessels, and candlesticks, and jewels of the temple; and of another, the keeper of the sacred treasure, who produced immense stores of vestments, and purple, and scarlet stuffs, and cinnamon and spices.

This last attack was not met by the same heroic resistance as former ones. The spirit of the Jews was broken; a large proportion fled from the walls as soon as the engines were advanced, and took refuge in the lower city, or in the subterranean vaults and passages, while those who did fight fought without courage, and were disturbed by constant panics. Wherever the engines gained any slight success, the defenders
abandoned the point, and rumours that the Romans were in the city, that the towers had fallen, were invented every moment by their fears. "These men," says Josephus, "who had been but now so sturdy in their impious arrogance, were to be seen so cowering and trembling, that one could not but pity them, villains as they were." The three towers, Mariamne, Phasaelus, Hippicus, could have been defended as long as men could live to hold them; but the chiefs, in their despair, abandoned even these, and took to flight. The historian traces in this the immediate providence of God, Who had thus put into the hands of the Romans towers which could never have been taken, and had thus infatuated John and Simon. As they fled towards the valley of Siloam, these wretched leaders made one last attempt upon the Roman defences there; but were easily beaten back, and hid themselves in the gutters and vaults of the city.

The Romans entered in triumph, and "planted their colours upon the towers with joyous shouts and songs of victory, to find the end of the war so much easier than the beginning." And yet it must have seemed to them that all their fighting had left them little to win; they found only a
small remnant of the immense population which had been at first enclosed, and this remnant starved and welcoming death—they found streets heaped with mouldering corpses, and houses filled with death; yet through this scene of horror the soldiers rushed to and fro, killing every one they met, and burning all that was still standing.

But while his savage soldiers were thus glutting their thirst for blood, Titus himself, now finding his work accomplished, and looking round him, from the high ground and towers of Sion, on the strength of the fortresses that had fallen into his hands, and seeing too on every side the traces of the long months of misery which had been endured, felt, we are told, some sense of awe and wonder! felt, perhaps, that more had been done than a man could well bear to be responsible for. "God," he cried, "has fought with us; no human power could have driven the Jews from forts like these? what could human hands or engines have done against these towers?" And we may well feel that this was no ordinary siege, but that in its unequalled horrors and marked retribution, the right hand of the Lord, which works less openly in all human history, was
specially revealed in judgment on the nation which He had made specially His own.

And now, that the word of the Lord might be fulfilled, "They shall not leave in thee one stone upon another," the historian thus concludes: "Caesar gave orders for the whole city and the temple to be razed to the ground, leaving only the towers, which overtopped all else, Phasaelus, Hippicus, and Mariamne, and the wall upon the west of the city; this he preserved to be a barrack for a garrison, and the towers to be a memorial to posterity of the strength and greatness of the city which Roman valour had subdued. The whole of the rest of the circuit of the city the destroyers so thoroughly levelled with the ground, that no one who came there would believe it had ever been inhabited at all."

"The Lord hath done that which He had devised; He hath fulfilled His word that He had commanded in the days of old: He hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and He hath caused thine enemy to rejoice over thee, He hath set up the horn of thine adversaries" (Lam. ii. 17).

When at last the soldiers were weary of slaughter, Titus gave injunctions that only those who resisted should be killed, but the soldiers
went beyond their orders, and put to death most of the infirm and aged, as being unsaleable. The rest were driven together into a court of the temple, and selection made. Those who were distinguished for stature or beauty were reserved to grace the conqueror's triumph, the rest were sent into the various provinces to fight as gladiators in the theatres, or into Egypt to the mines. It is added by Josephus that during the short period of selection many thousands died for want of food. The whole number killed during the siege is said to have been 1,100,000, and the number of prisoners 97,000. Those who had fallen even in the miseries of starvation were perhaps more happy than those who were sent as gladiators to be "butcher'd to make a Roman holiday," or dragged at the Conqueror's wheels up to Jove's temple on the Capitoline hill. The triumph, or triumphal procession, with which Titus on his return to Rome celebrated his victory surpassed all former displays in splendour; and the Emperor Vespasian, who had begun the war, shared the glories with his son. The scene is thus described by Milman:—"Besides the usual display of treasures, gold, silver, jewels, purple vests, the rarest wild beasts from all quarters of the globe.
there were extraordinary pageants, three or four stories high, representing, to the admiration and delight of those civilized savages, all the horrors and miseries of war; beautiful countries laid waste, armies slain, routed, led captive, cities breached by military engines, stormed, destroyed with fire and sword; women wailing, houses overthrown, temples burning, and rivers of fire flowing through regions no longer cultivated or peopled, but blazing far away into the long and dreary distance. Among the spoils, the golden table, the seven-branched candlestick, and the book of the law from the temple of Jerusalem, were conspicuous.

The triumph passed on to the capitol, and then paused to hear that the glory of Rome was completed by the insulting and cruel execution of the bravest general of the enemy. This distinction fell to the lot of Simon, the son of Gioras. He was dragged along to a place near the throne, with a halter round his neck, scourged as he went, and there put to death.

After hiding for some time in subterranean passages, Simon had suddenly presented himself, as if out of the ground, in the midst of a group of Roman soldiers. He had hoped to overawe them by this supernatural appearance, but his desire failed, and he was kept for the cruel end above described.
The antiquary still endeavours to trace among the defaced and mouldering reliefs of the arch raised to Titus, 'the delight of human kind,' and which still stands in the Forum of Rome, the representation of the spoils taken from the temple of Jerusalem—the golden table and candlestick, the censers, the silver trumpets, and even the procession of captive Jews.
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We have now traced, at first in outline, and as the end approached in more detail, the history of the last struggle and final fall of the Jewish nation. We saw how under successive governors the Roman yoke grew more and more oppressive, while a spirit of restless dissatisfaction and lawlessness within broke up the foundations of society; how when revolt was openly declared the nation contended against its stern masters with no united patriotism, but was divided into hostile parties as bitter towards one another as towards the foe. Strangest of all, we have seen this intestine discord unable to check the energy or entirely destroy the strength of their obstinate resistance, though it doubled, or more than doubled, the misery of the long and hopeless contest and the severity of defeat—a spectacle of such wretchedness as is perhaps unparalleled in history, and of a ruin certainly unsurpassed. The causes which, humanly speaking, seem to have
done most to bring about the catastrophe were, on the one hand the increasing insolence of Rome, and on the other the influence of those fanatics who taught sedition under pretext of religion. It is well worth noticing that nothing gave so much weight to these Galilaean leaders as the expectation, still felt throughout the nation, of the Messiah's coming; an expectation constantly increased with each occasion in which it was thought for a time, or by a few, to have been realized. This hope, the real strength and treasure of the nation, became in its perversion a cause of the nation's ruin.

Another point which the reader will hardly have failed to observe is the absence from our narrative of any mention of the Christians. They must have been by this time fairly numerous, and one might have expected that during the factious times of the siege we should find the hatred of Christianity among the motives which excited the cruelty of the Zealots. That we hear of nothing of this kind is an indirect but valuable proof that the Christians remembered their Master's warning, and retired in a body from the guilty city.

And now let us glance, in conclusion, at the story as a whole. Apart from those considerations
which make it so important to us, who are able to trace in it the revealed providence of God, the fall of Jerusalem is a prominent fact in the history of the world. Persian had yielded to Greek, and Greek to Roman, and the empire of Europe had been firmly established in the hands of the Caesars; but all the time, not out of reach of either, a little nation had been living on with a civilization peculiar to itself, a religion and history entirely its own, and it was not till Roman power had reached its highest that it came fairly into conflict with this unnoticed people. Strange things were believed of the wealth of Jerusalem, of the misanthropic isolation in which her people lived, and of the hideous superstitions they were supposed to cultivate; but the event must have been more strange than the expectation when there was found in these despised barbarians a discipline and indomitable valour, a reliance on the supernatural, and a confidence in the national destiny, which Rome had never found in any other of her foes. It was in the completeness of their national character, so strongly marked, but so unlike all others, that the world-wide interest of the Jewish people consisted. They filled a place outside the Roman world not unlike that which
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China occupies in the modern, though with this great difference, making the Jewish position the stranger of the two, that they were not separated from the world, as China is, by the impassable walls of a vast territory, but were to be found in every port and every market, living all over the world side by side with Greek and Roman, but everywhere maintaining their obstinate isolation. Their nationality formed the strongest fortress which the Roman had to destroy, and when, by the fall of Jerusalem, from which it had derived its strength, it was virtually destroyed, there was henceforward no important civilization left which was not Roman. Now the universal spread of Roman civilization was one of the conditions by which God brought about the universal spread of the Christian Church. Persecuted she was by the Roman empire, but she owed to the existence of that empire her wide extension and the form of her polity. Had the Jewish localized civilization remained unaltered, the narrow limits of Jewish religion might also have been maintained. Our Lord had said, "The time cometh when neither at Jerusalem nor yet in this mountain shall men worship the Father;" but while the Holy City stood, there could not but remain, even in the
Christian Church, something of a narrower attachment to a local birthplace. The fall of Jerusalem proved for ever that the old system had passed away, and that henceforth the old distinctions could have no place. It was the formal abolition of the old covenant, a condition necessary to that realizing of the wide brotherhood of man which characterizes the later ages of the world.

As regards the Jews themselves, the destruction of their city was only the climax of their rejection of the trust committed to them. God had chosen to hide Himself for ages from the world in general, and to assign to one nation the task of keeping His truth on earth; the Jews had been selected to receive the Messiah for the blessing of all nations,—and to both these trusts they had proved faithless. They had been called to a high responsibility, and the penalty of failure was signal. It is in this light, as the history of a gift rejected, that we can learn most from the narrative before us.

Our Lord connects the fall of Jerusalem very closely with the end of the world and His own return to judgment. Nor is it possible to separate in thought any special judgment from that of the Last Day. In this, as in so many other cases,
great and final instances of the principles upon which God deals with men are preceded by a long series of smaller instances, each of which is called a type of the final one, or is scarcely distinguished from it in prophecy. Each in the series is an example of the same principle which underlies the rest. In this series the Day of Judgment will be the final time of reckoning with the whole human race and with each individual for the gifts and responsibilities which have been entrusted to each. The Fall of Jerusalem is one of the most conspicuous of the earlier instances in the same series. But it differs from the rest in degree only, not in kind. To every man has been entrusted the high responsibility of witnessing the faith and welcoming the Messiah. For that service God has chosen and trained him, and if he fails in it, a retribution awaits him as certain as that which befell Jerusalem. It may be worked out by natural causes, or by actions of his own, and may seem to take its place among the necessities of his life, but it is no less a judgment, no less the immediate work of God. And men have gifts and responsibilities in the nation to which they belong, as well as in their own lives. In national life there may
be a trust neglected, an offer rejected, a faith abandoned, and for these there remains a retribution. Let us not leave the siege of Jerusalem without a prayer that we ourselves and our nation may find out and know to what we have been called, and ponder well the certainty of judgment. Prophet after prophet was sent to Jerusalem, but she would not hear; the one great Prophet has come once for all, and speaks still His special prophecy to each, and still the one principle that was true for the Jews is true for ever. "Every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people."

THE END.