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The Doomed City - 1868

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DOOMED CITY.

BY
A PRESBYTER.

Written by Samuel B. Scheffelin

"HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR."

NEW YORK.

1869

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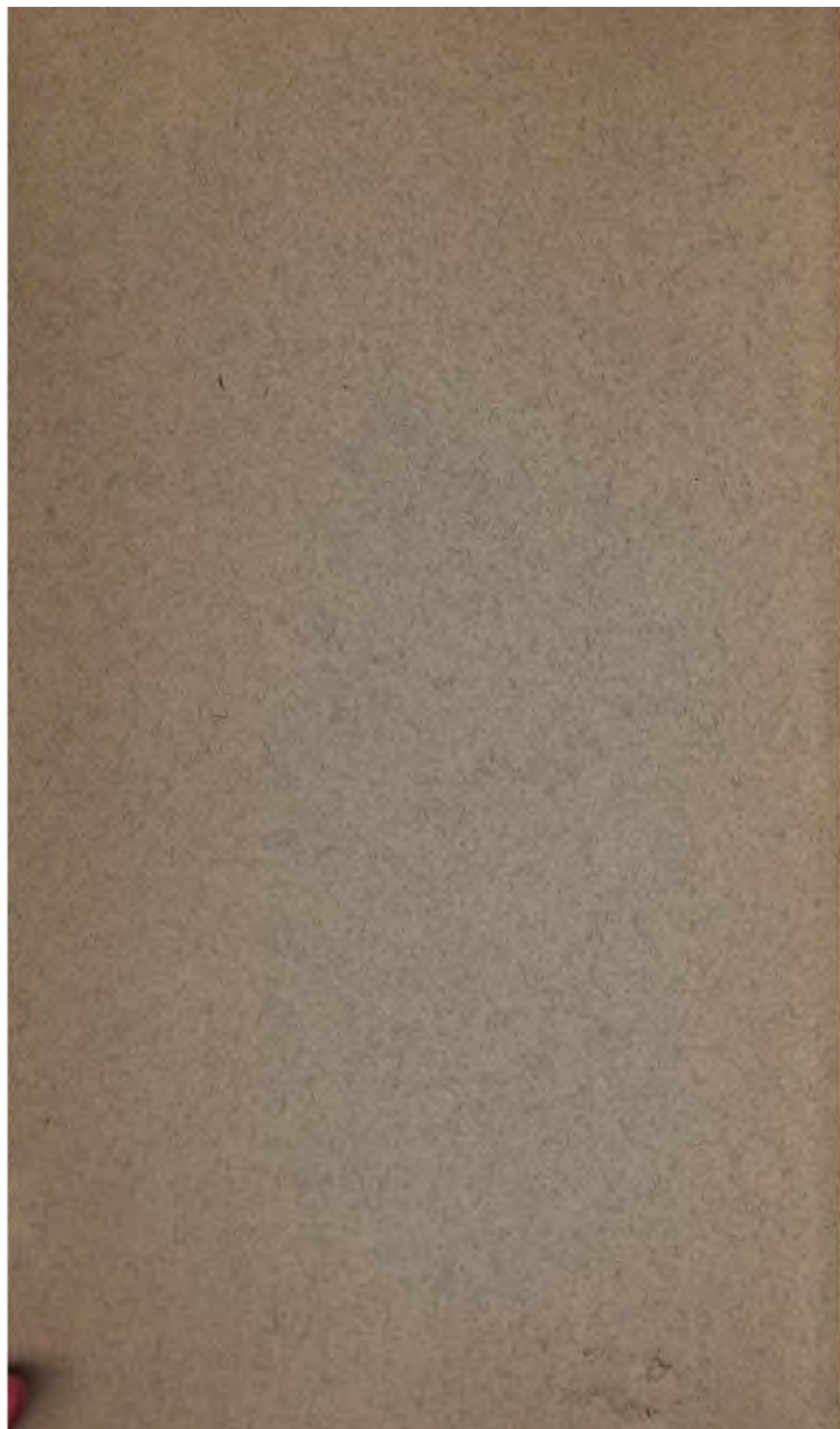
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“HE that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

THE time has come when the disciples of Christ should be looking for the fulfillment of the last of that series of wonderful predictions contained in the word of God, relating to certain great cities, which, because of their opposition to Him and His people, have, from time to time, been doomed to destruction. In exact accordance with those predictions several of the greatest cities, which in their day ruled the earth, have already been utterly destroyed.

Nineveh, once an exceeding great city, twenty miles long and twelve miles broad, with walls a hundred feet high, and so broad that three chariots could drive abreast on them—a city which, for fourteen hundred years, was the mistress of the east—has long since suffered the vengeance of the Lord, and has been made, as his prophets foretold, “empty, void, and waste;” “a desolation dry like a wilderness.” (Isaiah 10 : 12; Nahum 1 : 1; 2 : 10; 3 : 5; Zeph. 2 : 13.) It was so completely destroyed that, for about two thousand years, even the traces of Nineveh were lost.

After the destruction of Nineveh, Babylon rose to be the capital of the world and the ruler of all nations ; a city sixty miles in circumference, with walls three hundred feet high and seventy-five feet wide. A century before it had reached the zenith of its power, the word of the Lord came, saying, " Babylon, the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation : neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there ; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there : but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there ; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures ; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces." (Isaiah 13 : 19 ; 14 : 22 ; 47 : 1.) Eighteen centuries ago, Pliny wrote that Babylon was at that time "decayed, unpeopled, and lying waste ;" and Isaiah's prophecy, uttered twenty-five hundred years ago, describes Babylon as it is at this day.

Ancient Tyre, while rejoicing over the troubles of Jerusalem, received this message, " Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come against thee," " and they shall make a spoil of thy riches ; and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses ; and shall lay thy stones in the midst of the water. And I will make the noise of thy songs to cease ; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. And

I will make thee like the top of a rock ; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon ; thou shalt be built no more." (Ezek. 26 : 3, 12, 14.) And such is now the state of the once proud city of Tyre.

It is worthy of notice that the prophecies regarding these cities, like the prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews, (Deut. 28 : 37, 52, 64 ; Matt. 24 : 2 ; Luke 21 : 6, 24,) are not figurative, but they have been literally fulfilled. The manner in which those cities were destroyed, and the places which they once occupied, not only bear witness to the truth of God's word, but also teach us that where that word speaks of judgments to come upon a nation or a city, we must look for its fulfillment to the letter.

The last of the cities, long doomed by the word of God, is yet standing ; and, as has been the case with the other doomed cities, its destruction is sure. Reference is made to its rise as an idolatrous and persecuting power in several places in the Old and New Testaments. Daniel spoke of it as the last of the great kingdoms, which were successively to rise, and said, "It shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down," "and he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws ; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." (Dan. 7 : 7, 23.) It is more particularly described and designated in the last book written, the Revelation. It is there expressly stated to be the city

“seated on seven hills, (Rev. 17 : 9,) that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” (Rev. 17 : 18.) When John wrote the Revelation, about A.D. 95, he was an exile in Patmos, “for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ,” having been banished there by the Emperor Domitian. At that time the city of Rome, “seated on seven hills,” was, as she has been nearly ever since, “that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;” and even at the present day she “sitteth on peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” (Rev. 17 : 1, 15.)

In the Scriptures the Lord, when his people had forsaken him and worshiped idols, speaks of it as “whoredom.” (Isa. 57 : 3; Jer. 3 : 3, 9; 13 : 27; Ezek. 16 : 28; Hosea 5 : 3; 6 : 10, etc.) And the apostle John may well call that city “the great whore,” (Rev. 17 : 1, 4, 18;) for, of all the cities that have ever acknowledged God it has been for many centuries, and is now, the most idolatrous city in the world; the only city where the word of God is bound and forbidden to be circulated; the only city where the disciples of Christ are not allowed to assemble themselves together in his name; Christians from Great Britain and America being compelled, while in Rome, to go outside of the walls of the city when they wish to attend divine worship. Rome has three hundred and sixty-five churches, every one of which is an idolatrous temple: in every one, every day, a piece of bread is turned by a priest into a god, and is adored as such. All the worship, and prayers, and vows made in those churches

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most sacred book, the *Breviarium*, they must address her, "Gaude, Virgo Maria: cunctas hæreses sola interemisti in universo mundo"—"Rejoice, Virgin Mary; for thou *alone* hast destroyed all the heresies in the world!" And, instead of saying with Paul, "Lord Jesus Christ our hope," (1 Tim. 1 : 1,) they say to her, "Quia tu es spes *unica* peccatorum"—"For thou art the *only* hope for sinners."

The apostle wrote, "I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus;" "and in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." (Rev. 17 : 6 ; 18 : 24.) For eighteen hundred years the history of Rome, under its heathen emperors and the popes, has been one series of persecutions and slaughters of Christians. In the first three hundred years, there were ten general persecutions against the followers of Christ in the Roman empire; and afterward, for over a thousand years, the popes and their officers were hunting the saints to death. Rome has to answer for the slaughter of the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Wickliffites, the Hussites, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, the Inquisition, etc., etc. The blood of tens of millions of the followers of Christ, shed by her, has long been crying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6 : 10.) "Her sins have reached unto heaven," and "God will avenge the blood of his servants at her hand." (Rev. 18 : 5 ; 19 : 2.)

There is every reason to believe that the time of the destruction of the doomed city is near at hand. The nations of the earth are now being shaken by great moral earthquakes. The sealed gates of China and the long-closed ports of Japan have suddenly been thrown wide open; and the walls of all nations have been thrown down. The way is prepared for the fulfillment of what John saw, an "angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying, with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." (Rev. 14 : 6.) All the prophecies concerning the rise and progress, and the time of the duration of Rome, as a persecuting and idolatrous power, have been fulfilled. Her pope, her cardinals, and her bishops have long been, and are now, "arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones." (Rev. 17 : 4.) Her bishops and deacons, instead of being the "husband of one wife," (1 Tim. 3 : 2; Titus 1 : 6,) have "departed from the faith, forbidding to marry." (1 Tim. 4 : 1, 3.) "That man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he

as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God," (2 Thess. 2 : 3,) has been for many years revealed. The pope at stated times, seated on a throne, receives the homage of the cardinals and bishops as the vicegerent or representative of God ; he has taken upon him to control divine and human institutions ; he has assumed despotic authority over the consciences of men, and thus, in effect, asserts that he is God ; his commands are obeyed, instead of the word of God, by the millions of his subjects ; and he is now seeking to be declared infallible. The "time and times and half a time," (Dan. 7 : 25 ; Rev. 12 : 14,) equal to three and a half years or twelve hundred and sixty days, and the "thousand and two hundred and threescore days," (Rev. 11 : 3 ; 12 : 6,) and the "forty and two months," or twelve hundred and sixty days, (Rev. 13 : 5,) each representing twelve hundred and sixty years, have expired. During that time Rome has had the power "to blaspheme and to make war with the saints, and to overcome them ; and has had power over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations," (Rev. 13 : 6 ;) and the kings of the earth have joined in her idolatry or whoredom, and the inhabitants of the earth made drunk with it, (Rev. 17 : 2,) and "all nations deceived." (Rev. 18 : 23.) The ten kings, who had not yet received their kingdoms when the prophecy was written, (Rev. 17 : 3, 12,) have in accordance with it arisen since ; and for many centuries with one mind they gave their power and strength unto the beast, (Rev. 13 : 17 ;) and now, as it was foretold, they have all, ex-

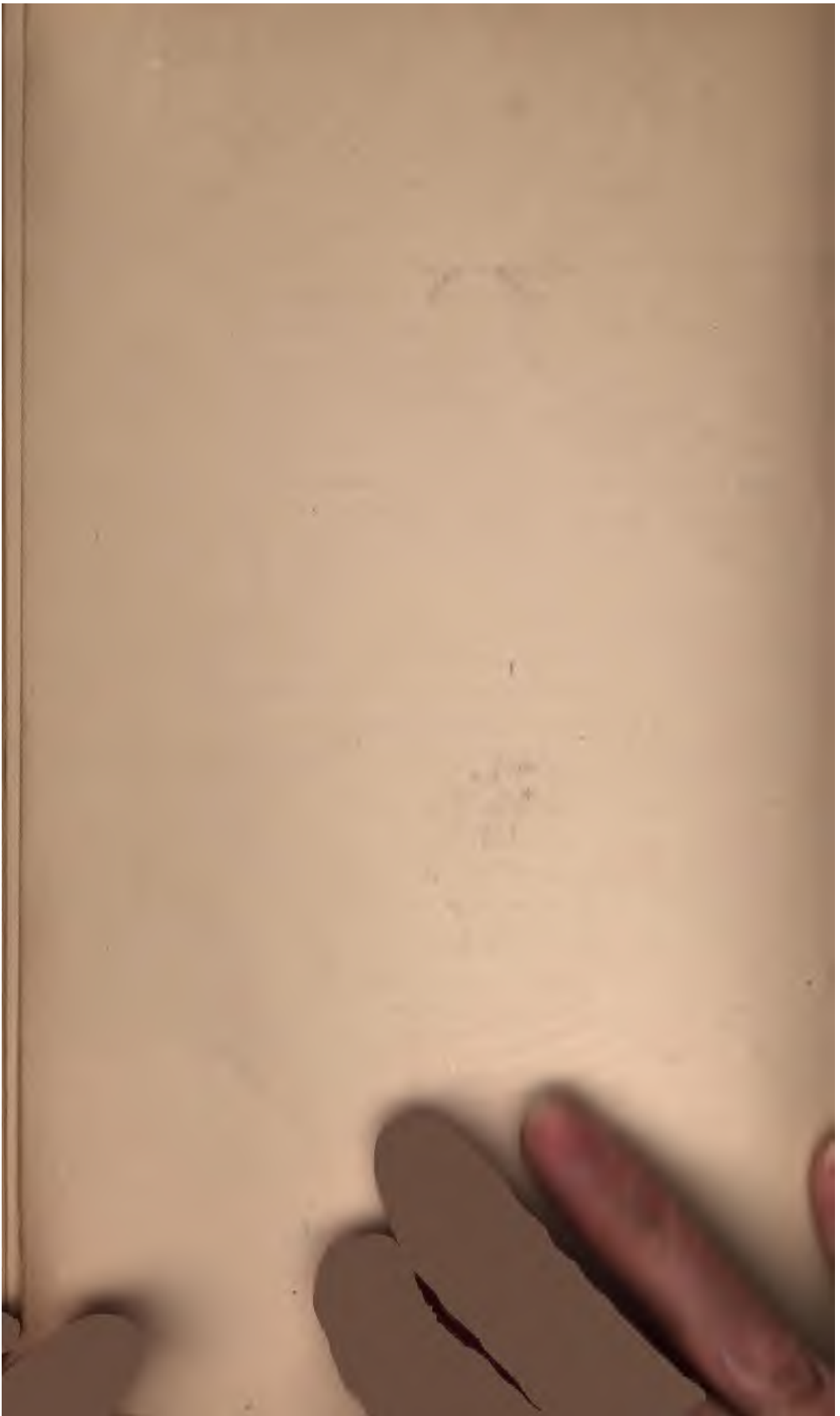
cepting France, withdrawn their kingdoms from her—Spain and Austria having done so only lately. Nearly all of the ten kingdoms now “hate the whore, and have made her desolate and naked, and have eaten her flesh,” (Rev. 17 : 12, 16;) they have stripped her of all those ornaments which they so profusely lavished upon her, by abolishing abbeys, and monasteries, and ecclesiastical benefices, and appropriating their lands and their endowments to themselves. When all of these kingdoms shall have been brought to withdraw themselves from her, the word of God shall be fulfilled concerning “that great city,” which, for so long a period, reigned over the kings of the earth. (Rev. 17 : 18.)

“Her plagues shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire,” “that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls,” “in one hour so great riches is come to naught.” (Rev. 18 : 8, 16, 19.) “And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all, and the voice of musicians shall be heard no more in thee; no craftsman, of whatever kind, shall be found any more in thee, and the sound of the millstone heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle,” which now abounds in such profusion in all the churches and processions, “shall shine no more at all in thee.” (Rev. 18 : 21.) Her bishops and priests, who have been for centuries “the mer-

chants of the earth, which were made rich by her," by making "merchandise of the bodies and souls of men," (Rev. 18 : 11, 13, 15 ;) by the sale of relics, indulgences, dispensations, absolutions, masses to deliver from purgatory, etc., etc.; while such of them as may escape being destroyed with her, "shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment," and "shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more," (Rev. 18 : 11, 15 ;) heaven and the apostles and prophets are called upon to rejoice, for God hath avenged them on her; and there shall be "heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up forever and ever." (Rev. 18 : 20; 19 : 1.)

In connection with these prophecies there is a warning to the people of God, which should be heeded by those who visit Rome. When Sodom was to be destroyed, Lot was warned to go out of it: he did so, and saved his life. (Gen. 19 : 12.) When the Lord was about to do his pleasure on Babylon, he told his people, "Go ye forth from Babylon." (Isaiah 48 : 14, 20.) When he was about to destroy Jerusalem, he gave his disciples warning, "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in

Judea flee to the mountains." (Luke 21 : 20.) Accordingly, when the Roman army under Cestus Gallus came against Jerusalem, and unexpectedly raised the siege, many of the noble Jews departed out of the city; and when Vespasian afterward drew toward it, all who believed in Christ left Jerusalem, and thus escaped the fearful judgments which fell upon that city, so that we do not read of one who perished in it. In like manner the Lord has told his people of his purpose to destroy Rome, and warns them, "saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18 : 4.) They will do well to heed the warning; for a breath of the Almighty may, at any moment, burn the city, by means of the subterranean fires which are now burning under the whole surrounding region; or, as was the case with Nineveh, and Babylon, and Tyre, and Jerusalem, he may destroy her by the instrumentality of man; by the kings, who "shall make her desolate, and naked, and burn her with fire." (Rev. 17 : 12, 16.) Rome is ripe for destruction; the people in and about her are kept back only by the life or caprice of the man who, at present, upholds Rome with French bayonets. Those very bayonets may assist in her destruction. When the fixed time is come, all of the ten kings "shall hate the whore," "and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." (Rev. 17 : 17.)





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