

ART. V.—STUDIES ON ISAIAH: THE ASSYRIAN  
INVASION.

CHAP. VII. 17-25; X. 5-38.

THE arrangement of the matter in this passage is a task of extreme difficulty. Whether the sequence of the prophecies was dislocated at an early period, or whether their alternation is to be accounted for on the principle of the swing of the pendulum<sup>1</sup>—that is, the habit of the Hebrew prophets, and of Isaiah especially, to interwine passages of hope and promise with their warnings and threatenings—is by no means certain. Chap. vii. 17-25 (with which we may connect chap. viii. 5-8) seems to fit in with chap. x. 5-11. Then comes a passage (chap. x. 12-19) in which God's judgment is pronounced on Assyria for its pride. This appears closely linked with what precedes. Then follows the prophecy that, amid all the afflictions of Judah, she shall not utterly lose her national existence, as the other nations have done (chap. x. 20-27). This, again, seems in close connection with what precedes. Then (chap. x. 28-32) a sudden change of subject takes place. The invasion of the Assyrian from the north is vividly pictured. The change is so abrupt that one is almost compelled to infer a dislocation of the text here, though the modern critic elects to follow Professor Robertson Smith in suggesting a conjectural emendation of a confessedly difficult text. But conjectural emendations are always hazardous, and rarely scientific. It is easy to denounce, as one critic does, "the meaningless clause in the English version."<sup>2</sup> But the difficulty here, as every scholar may see who takes pains, is as old as the LXX., which gives us quite as "meaningless" a "clause" (reading *shichmaychem*, your shoulders, for *shemen*, oil). Then, again, there is another sudden reversion to the former prophecy of the destruction of the Assyrian power. And with this the chapter concludes. It is impossible under the circumstances to do other in our exposition of chap. x. 5-34 than follow the passage as it stands.

1. *The Judgment upon Jerusalem* (chap. vii. 17-25).—We have already reviewed the political situation—the three parties which existed at Jerusalem: one for submission to Rezin and Pekah, and for the establishment of a new dynasty; one for seeking the protection of the great and increasing power of Assyria; and one, headed by Isaiah, for placing one's confidence in the Divine protection alone. This last, the party

<sup>1</sup> See CHURCHMAN for December, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> The Revised Version is involved in this condemnation.

of faith in God, has always been, and is still, in the minority at a crisis. Accordingly, the prophet now threatens Judah with the judgments which must follow on her unbelief and disobedience. A worse calamity (ver. 17) has not befallen her since the secession of the Ten Tribes under Jeroboam. Egypt, as well as Assyria, shall fall upon her—a prophecy fulfilled, be it observed, in the invasion of Sennacherib, and in the subsequent overthrow and death of Josiah at the hands of Pharaoh-Necho (1 Kings xxiii. 29, 30; 2 Chron. xxxv. 20-24). It should be noted that this last event did not occur till more than one hundred years after the time of Isaiah, and that there was little in the condition of Egypt in his time to enable him to foresee it by ordinary means. We need have no hesitation in saying that criticism of the contents of the prophetic Scriptures, however minute, if it only be rational and impartial, must entirely dissipate the idea that prophecy is impossible except in the sense of intelligent anticipation of what is likely to happen.<sup>1</sup> Ver. 20 implies the *thoroughness* of Judah's humiliation and the indignities offered to her sons, as implied by the shaving of their bodies—a gross insult in the eyes of an Oriental (2 Sam. x. 4). The eating of butter and honey (ver. 22; cf. 15) signifies the destruction of all the crops of “corn, wine, and oil,” and the necessity of subsisting on the natural products of the land, as well as on the milk and butter with which their scanty flocks could supply them. The vines (vers. 23-25) shall be destroyed. The terraces for vine and olive, carefully dug over and hoed in prosperous times, shall be—as, indeed, they are now in the hill-country of Judæa—waste and desolate, covered with briars and thorns, or trampled down by cattle.<sup>2</sup> In chap. viii. 5-8 the punishment is definitely stated to be in consequence of the treachery to Jahveh involved in the proposition to overthrow the Davidic dynasty, and to substitute submission to apostate Israel and its ally. We cannot but be struck with the close similarity between the allusions here to the Assyrian invasion and the more detailed vision of it in chap. x. 28-32.

2. *The Pride of the Assyrian* (chap. x. 5-11).—The *reason* of the permission given to the Assyrian monarch to lay waste Judæa and to threaten Jerusalem is here once more repeated. The insolence of the conqueror, and his claim to regard Jahveh, God of Israel, as merely a tribal deity, like the gods of the other nations, is next dwelt upon. This passage is, I

<sup>1</sup> See preliminary observations.

<sup>2</sup> The difficulty in ver. 25 is best removed by adopting the translation in the margin of R.V., though even that requires some particle not found in the present text. The LXX. evades the difficulty by altogether leaving out the word translated “fear,” and substituting a paraphrase.

believe, on all hands admitted to be a prophecy, though not a prophecy which was beyond the power of the unassisted intellect of man. Yet, at least, we ought not to pass it by without observing its complete and literal fulfilment (chap. xxxvi. 16-20). The prophet takes care to assure Judah that the Assyrian is but the minister of Jahveh's vengeance on a corrupt and unbelieving people. The invader himself does not think so. He imagines that he is all wisdom and power and superiority. His officers are on a level with the kings of the people whose territories he invades. He proudly enumerates all the conquests he has made (*cf.* chap. xxxvi. 19). From the invader's point of view this was not a vainglorious boast. Carchemish, though not yet, apparently, finally annexed, had frequently been taken, and was at this time under Assyrian influence. Calno, if properly identified by the critics, was taken shortly after Arpad (chap. xxxvi. 21). Arpad itself was captured about 738 B.C., in the victorious advance of Tiglath-Pileser. Hamath, in the mouth of the great valley between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, was reduced about the same time. Damascus fell in or about 732, not long after Isaiah's prophecy about the two "smoking stumps," Rezin and Pekah. The fall of Samaria was delayed till 721, it having endured a three years' siege. Thus, humanly speaking, his self-glorification was not without reason. And so he dares to confound Israel's God with the gods of the surrounding nations. A terrible judgment is therefore prophesied for him, a prophecy which was strikingly fulfilled. Yet, on the modern critical view, where was his mistake? Jahveh, we have repeatedly been told, *was* nothing but a tribal deity after all, and therefore not to be distinguished from the gods of the surrounding nations. It is, at least, *some* difficulty in the way of this theory that the supposed "tribal deity" of an obscure hill-folk in Palestine, whose resources and riches were far below that of other nations whom Sennacherib and his predecessors had subdued (ver. 10), is stated, in documents which have not yet been proved unhistorical, to have been revealed to Abraham and Moses. He is worshipped still by countless millions, on the strength of those and subsequent revelations. In spite of the invasion of Judæa in full strength by the mightiest monarch of the world at that time; in spite of the cowering of even good King Hezekiah before him; in spite of the captivity at Babylon, the return to Jerusalem of a weak and despised remnant, and their ultimate dispersion after the destruction of their city by the Roman power;—in spite of all this, the walls of millions of temples throughout the world echo to the cry in regard to this "tribal deity": "Jahveh,

He is the God! Jahveh, He is the God!" Is there nothing in this beyond the reach of human sagacity and foresight—nothing which conflicts with the "undisputed conclusions" of modern criticism and modern enlightenment?<sup>1</sup> This passage is a rehearsal beforehand of the actual language of Sennacherib recorded in chap. xxxvii. 12, 13.

3. *God's Sentence on the Assyrian* (vers. 12-19).—When the Assyrian has performed the task assigned him by the Lord of the whole earth, he, too, as well as Israel, shall suffer the punishment due to his pride and cruelty. For his pride, see above and ver. 12; for his cruelty, see vers. 13, 14, 28-32. The same fate befell the other great Powers of the ancient world—Egypt, Babylon, Media, Persia, Greece, Rome—though it is remarkable that the last and greatest of these, Rome, did not disappear swiftly, like the others, but slowly and imperceptibly melted into a modern Christian society during the space of some 1,400 years. And this because, even in the Gentile world, there was moral growth and development, infinitely slow though it was. Assyrian and Babylonian power was possibly a declension from the earlier and worthier rule and religion of Egypt. But Persia, under Cyrus, was an advance upon Mesopotamia under Tiglath-Pileser and his successors, Assyrian and Babylonian. Greece surpassed Persia intellectually and even morally. And Rome was remarkable for her enthronement—albeit incomplete—of *law* in the place of force, and for this reason the break-up of her empire was slow, and it left permanent traces behind it.

It has already been said that the pride of the Assyrian conqueror was, humanly speaking, not altogether unreasonable. Not only had he subdued cities without number, but he inhabited the cradle of the human race—the territory where the Old Testament, which on this point has received no slight confirmation from modern scientific research, represents man as having been at first placed, because it was as a garden of God. We are told how it was watered by four noble rivers (Gen. ii. 10-14), which spread fertility and prosperity far around. The Egyptian power, since the days of Rameses II., had been crushed. The Hittite Empire had disappeared. Semitic Syria, though near the sea and watered by noble rivers, such as the Orontes, had not recovered sufficiently from the sway of her Turanian masters to consolidate herself into a world-power. The insignificant tribes

<sup>1</sup> If we are to regard ver. 9 as an allusion to a past event, and not a forecast of a future one, this prophecy is fixed for a far later date than that of chaps. vii. and viii., and, together with chaps. xi. and xii., it becomes a repetition of the prophecies in chaps. vii. to ix. But, if critically distinct, they are homiletically homogeneous.

of Palestine lay helpless and divided before the attack of a powerful and united nation. Their numbers were small, their resources—with the exception of those of Tyre and Sidon—contemptible. Tyre and Sidon themselves, civilized and wealthy though they were, were cities, and no more. They possessed no territory, and their resources were due to their foreign and sea-borne trade. They were the early prototypes of the great free cities of the Middle Ages, in Italy and the Low Countries especially.

All these failed eventually to maintain their freedom and separate existence against the consolidated and corporate life of great monarchies. Then, again, Israel—in spite of her admirable constitution, religious and civil, which seemed likely at one time to give her the sovereignty of the world—was no larger than Wales. Moab and Edom, mere strips of territory, were inhabited by mere uncivilized hordes. Philistia was little better. The hill country of Palestine, arid and bare, fed by mountain torrents which run dry in summer and rush rapidly to the ocean in winter, afforded comparatively little pasture for cattle, and cultivation was only carried on with great difficulty. The rolling hills of Moab—the *Mishor*, as they were called—were more fitted for cattle, but they could not, in this respect, compare with the plains of Esdraelon and Sharon, or the land of the Philistines, still less with the magnificent valley known to the Greeks as *Cœle Syria*, to the Hebrews as the *Bik'ah*, less still with Syria proper, and not at all with the land of Mesopotamia itself. If Mesopotamia is a desert now, it is by reason of misgovernment, or, rather, the absence of any government whatever. But in the infancy of civilization and of the human race it possessed resources with which it was as yet impossible for other lands to cope. There was reason, then, humanly speaking, for the haughtiness of one who possessed these resources, and possessed beside the power to organize and develop them—to weld them into the machinery of a world-power. Making allowance for the changed circumstances of the time, we find the Czar of All the Russias even now deluding himself into a similar misconception of his importance—making war with a light heart, and expecting all nations to be no more than the foils of his self-consequence. But Israel had long been taught (see Deuteronomy *passim*, which I must continue to regard, whoever may have been the author, to have been a production of the Mosaic age) that faithfulness to Jahveh, the Lord of the whole earth, was the sole condition of success and empire. And Judah was to have a remarkable confirmation in the catastrophe which happened to Sennacherib of the warning in Deut. viii. 17-

ix. 6. The human and natural element was not, of course, altogether wanting. The spirit of manliness fostered by conflict with natural difficulties, together with the inaccessibility of mountain fastnesses, have often compensated for a contracted territory and scanty resources. The history of Switzerland, Wales, and the Highlands are instances of this. And the visible and the human bulks larger in the minds of men than the invisible and the supernatural. Yet, however much we may be inclined to forget it, there is but one real and permanent source of prosperity—dependence upon God, and obedience to His holy will. Yet “the axe” is ever ready to “boast itself against him that heweth therewith.” “The saw” is only too much inclined to “magnify itself against him that shaketh it.”

But though “the kings of the earth may set themselves up, and the rulers take counsel together, against Jahveh and His Anointed, yet He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh them to scorn, and Jahveh shall have them in derision.” So it has been, and so it shall be, with ourselves as with other nations. We all remember the stirring passage:

“Come the three corners of the world in arms,  
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,  
If England to itself doth rest but true.”

“King John,” Act V., Sc. vii.

But England can only be true to herself by being true to her God.

4. *The Prophecy of the Remnant* (vers. 20-27).—This, again, is clearly an instance of a prophecy which exceeds the bounds of ordinary intelligence. It was, doubtless, *suggested* by the captivity of Israel, and the imminent danger of Judah. But the only possible fulfilment of it was the return from the Babylonian captivity. No such event as the prophesied “return” of the “remnant” had ever been known. Yet this prophecy of the remnant was a portion of Isaiah’s special mission to his countrymen. His son (chap. vii. 3) was named “The remnant shall return” (Shear-jashub), and those words are found *twice* in this prophecy (vers. 21, 22).<sup>1</sup> The prophecy

<sup>1</sup> The word *shear* (remnant) is described by Gesenius as “a word of the later Hebrew.” It only occurs in Isaiah and in the confessedly post-exilic books. But, strange to say, it is found in the undisputed chapters of Isaiah (vii. 3, 20-22, xvii. 3, xxviii. 5), and in xi. 11, 16, xiv. 22, and xxi. 17. The two last prophecies are said (“Cambridge Bible for Schools,” pp. lxviii, lxix) to have been written “near the end of the exile.” Strange to say, the word *never appears at all* in what is described as the “second Isaiah,” though it, too, is declared to have been written “near the end of the exile.” Surely criticism has hardly said its last word on so complicated a problem as the analysis of style. Here is a word

of the remnant is found repeatedly in the prophets, though different Hebrew words are used to designate it. Thus in Jer. xxiii. 3 the "remnant" is referred to in connection with Jeremiah's prophecy of the "branch," just as Isaiah's is in close proximity to a similar prophecy. In Jer. xl. 11 the remnant is distinctly that which was left in Judah by the King of Babylon. So Ezek. vi. 8, xi. 13; see also Ezra iii. 8, ix. 8, 14; Neh. i. 3. Nor does there appear to be any period beside the captivity in Babylon to which the prophecy could apply. It is obvious that one single instance in which definite prophecy can be proved or reasonably inferred to have taken place is destructive of the assumptions on which the analytic criticism rests. Nothing could have been antecedently more improbable than the return of the Jewish captives to their homes. Nothing is more clear than that it was steadily predicted by many of the prophets that this antecedently improbable event should take place.

A future captivity, then, of the Jewish nation is here predicted, and their return from it promised. To whatever author Isa. xxxix. 5-7 is assigned, there is a distinct prediction, attributed to Isaiah, that Babylon should be the place with which this captivity and return should be connected. A "consumption," or rather *destruction*, is decreed for the land. But it will be only an instance of God's righteousness (ver. 22; cf. xxviii. 22). Judah has sinned, and she must therefore suffer. But God's covenant with her shall not be broken. It will but receive a higher and more spiritual fulfilment. Therefore, again the trembling inhabitant of Judæa is admonished not to faint or be dismayed at the approach of the Assyrian (ver. 24). His oppression shall be harsh and cruel, as was that which Israel had endured in Egypt (*ibid.*). But God has decreed (ver. 26) a similar deliverance (note the allusion to Moses lifting up his rod over the Red Sea).<sup>1</sup> The burden of the oppressor shall be removed, and his yoke broken off *before the presence of the oil*. This is the literal translation of the latter part of ver. 27. There seems, on the whole, no need (see above, p. 199) to resort to a conjectural emendation of the text. The "oil" here referred to is most

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constantly in use in the post-exilic period. It is not found in Jeremiah nor Ezekiel, nor, in fact, in any other prophet but Malachi. It is not found in Isa. xl.-lxvi. (In Isa. xlvi. 3 the word is the more usual *shearith*.) But it *is* found in the writings admitted to have been Isaiah's.

<sup>1</sup> The passage in Exodus to which the undisputed Isaiah makes reference is assigned by modern critics to an *exilic* or *post-exilic* writer. In fact, in Exod. xiv. 21 the verse is broken into *three parts*, of which that which refers to the stretching out of Moses' hand over the sea is *especially assigned* to the later writer, who is here quoted some 300 years before he wrote!

probably that with which David was anointed king (unless it signifies prosperity, of which oil is not infrequently a figure in the Old Testament), and the promise of consecration then given to his descendants and the people over whom they ruled (see Old Testament *passim*, and especially Ps. lxxxix. 19-37). Whatever calamities should fall on them, God would fulfil His promise. As we know, it has been gloriously fulfilled in Jesus the Anointed. And Judah is only excluded from its blessings because he stumbles at the inclusion of all mankind in God's covenanted mercies. When his heart shall "turn to" his covenant God, then he also shall be "grafted in" (2 Cor. iii. 16; Rom. xi. 15-36).<sup>1</sup>

5. *The Assyrian's Advance and its Sudden Check* (vers. 28-33).—A full consideration of the phenomena presented in these verses suggests rather, on the whole, the swing of the pendulum than the disarrangement of the text. For here, again, after a vivid picturing of the Assyrian's advance, and the terror struck into the people by it, we are once more (vers. 33, 34), as in the preceding section, met by words of comfort. A power, not of earth, but of heaven, shall arrest the invader's course when he is within a very short distance from Jerusalem. The haughty shall be humbled, and he who had exalted himself as high as Lebanon shall have a fall proportioned to the height of his pride and presumption.

It would seem as if this prophecy were written immediately after the fall of Samaria, 721 B.C. The terror which the near approach of the Assyrian caused gave the idea to the prophet of an immediate march against Judah. Hezekiah, we know, had been preparing for such a catastrophe. He had fortified Jerusalem, and looked after its water-supply. And relying upon Isaiah, at once his political and spiritual adviser, he had refused, in spite of the appalling superiority of his opponent's resources, to pay the tribute his father had engaged to pay. Sargon, in whose reign, as we are now aware from the monuments, Samaria was taken, did not venture at that time to chastise his vassal for his contumacy, but marched into Philistia and defeated the Egyptian, or rather Ethiopian, army. He then turned his attention to Southern Mesopotamia, where he drove out Merodach-Baladan from Babylon. Hezekiah, therefore, had a period of respite from his imminent peril. The actual invasion did not take place until after the accession of Sennacherib. And it took place, not from the north, as the passage we are now considering represents it as having taken place, but from the west or south-west

<sup>1</sup> "The Cambridge Bible for Schools" says that the words *El Gibbôr* in ver. 21 mean "Mighty God," but not in chap. ix. 6. Why?



(chap. xxxvi. 2; 2 Kings xviii. 17). Consequently, we have here a purely ideal picture of an advance of the victorious army of 721 B.C., flushed with the spoils of Samaria, toward Jerusalem through the passes of Ebal and Gerizim, Ai and Michmash. The march is thus in the opposite direction to that of Joshua's campaign, which proceeded from Jericho in the south-east, thence through the defiles of Michmash (1 Sam. xiv. 4) to Ai, and thence to Gibeon. The Assyrian invader is supposed to leave his baggage at the entrance of the narrow defile at Michmash, and to proceed with rapid steps to Jerusalem. His warriors rest for the night at Geba. But their approach spreads terror all around. Gibeah of Saul is deserted by its inhabitants. The panic spreads to Ramah and Anathoth. At last the conqueror halts at Nob, in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem, where he prepares for the assault. But suddenly there is a check. Some entirely unexpected occurrence removes the peril. And the fall of the mighty conqueror (ver. 34) is as sudden and terrible as his pride had been.

On this one or two remarks are needed. First, we are told by the modern critic that the Hebrew prophet "had no magical means for foretelling the future, but simply his own spiritual convictions, and his observation of history."<sup>1</sup> Now, Isaiah on *four several occasions* repeats this prophecy: here; in chap. xxix. 1-8, 14 (where the deliverance is predicted as taking place "at an instant, suddenly"); xxx. 30-35; and xxxi. 6-9. There is not, in these passages, "a vision of the future in actual detail," for the details do not correspond in particulars with the event. But there is a *distinct prediction* of some marvellous exercise of Divine power, which no "spiritual convictions" or "observation of history" could enable a man to foresee, and the exact character of which remained unknown until the moment of fulfilment. Just now it is the mode to explain all the phenomena of Holy Scripture on principles of pure naturalism. But a higher authority than the modern critic tells us that "no prophecy is the particular interpretation of the individual" of the facts which come before him. "It was not brought into existence by the will of man, but holy men of old spake as men who were borne along by the Spirit" of the Eternal God (see 2 Pet. i. 20, 21, in the Greek). We may rely upon it that this, the earliest, will also be the ultimate verdict of the Christian conscience on the question of Hebrew prophecy.

The next point which calls for remark is the terror inspired by the Assyrian invasion. Ruthless indeed were Assyrian

<sup>1</sup> See CHURCHMAN, January, 1904, pp. 210-212; April, 1904, p. 363.

methods of campaigning. The king has delineated it himself for future ages in the monuments his pride has left us. He tells us how on one occasion he impaled the corpses of rebels against his authority on stakes around the city he had captured. He boasts how he took 200,150 persons, small and great, as spoil. Large numbers of them were torn from their homes to live as captives and slaves in strange lands. Wives and virgins were offered in service to the licentious worship of the Babylonian Venus. To understand this we need the pencil of Erckmann-Chatrion, who has described the miseries consequent on Napoleon's Russian campaign, and the great *débâcle* after the Battle of Leipzig. Longfellow, in his "Évangeline," has painted for us the cruelty of removing a people from the hearths and homes of their childhood—a fate, however, more terrible in post-Christian times than could have been the case in the harder and sterner days of the heathen world, though even then keenly felt, as the Greek dramatists make clear to us in their pictures of Hecuba and other Trojan captives. We have also the touching lament of the captives of Judah by the waters of Babylon, and the allusion to the tears which never ceased to flow when they were called upon to "sing the Lord's song in a strange land." And the daughters of Judah, who had been taught to value female purity as no other ancient race would seem to have valued it,<sup>1</sup> must have writhed with grief and shame at being degraded to the level of a priestess of Mylitta. (See Lam. i. 4, 15; ii. 10, 13; v. 11.)

What lesson may we draw for ourselves from all this? If we cannot apply the prophecies of Isaiah to our own day, they remain as a sealed book to us. But there are lessons on the face of this history which we ought to be able to read as plainly as could the Jews of Isaiah's day. *Human policy must never for a moment conflict with our duty to God.* That is a principle which it is easy to state, but difficult to carry out in practice. Men do not easily raise themselves from the level of present hopes and fears to the height of spiritual facts. And so one man is an opportunist, and staves off inconvenient questions by unsatisfactory compromises. Another boldly casts principle to the winds, and declares that all we need do is to look after our own interests. Such modes of dealing with national affairs, Isaiah tells us, are suicidal. If we wish for prosperity and peace, we must do the will of God. But what *is* His will? Important questions await solution in the century upon which we have now entered. In what spirit are we to meet them? Not, I venture to think, in the way in which many earnest and sincere men among us would bid us

<sup>1</sup> See Professor König, "Bibel und Babel," p. 49.

meet them—by exaggerating our past crimes, mistakes, and refusing to thank God for the blessings with which He has endowed us, and which we have not altogether neglected to use aright. Such conduct involves gross ingratitude to Him. Prosperity (Deut. xxviii. 1-12; *cf.* Ps. cxlvii. 11-20) is a sign of God's favour, and is never vouchsafed to any nation which systematically disobeys Him. If, therefore, He has given us prosperity and pre-eminence among the nations of the earth, it is because we, as a nation, have not forgotten Him altogether, but have endeavoured to "defend the poor and fatherless," and to "see that such as are in necessity have right." Only one offensive war can be laid to our charge during the century which is now past,<sup>1</sup> and that was due to our belief, sound or unsound, that Russia had shamelessly broken faith with Turkey and Europe in general. British rule has established permanent peace among 400,000,000 of our fellow-creatures for years past. Even Bishop Butler's seemingly extravagant vision of a Power so generous and so just that men seek to come under its beneficent rule,<sup>2</sup> has from time to time been fulfilled in India. We have doubtless sinned much in the past, and continue to sin. But we have, nevertheless, no right to forget the "good hand of our God upon us." We ought not to disparage British rule, which, on the whole, has stood for peace, liberty, and fair play to all. Love, beginning in the home, should extend thenceforth to the family, to the parish, the district, the nation, and the Empire, thence to our Christian brethren in other lands, and ultimately to the world at large. Had the policy of Isaiah been followed, Judah must have become supreme over all the nations of the earth. If we hold the high position we do, it must be because on the whole our rulers have followed such a policy. Instead of denying this obvious truth, let us act upon it. Let us strive to make our imperfect obedience as a nation to God's will ever more thorough and complete, and we shall more and more realize the glorious prospect which, in chaps. xi. and xii., we shall next be called upon to contemplate, and which is surely, if slowly, coming into actual existence.

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<sup>1</sup> Some will mention the "opium war" of 1842, but that is a question on which we are bound to admit that men of character and principle have taken opposite sides.

<sup>2</sup> "Analogy," Part I., chap. iii., 5.

