

his eye has been turned away from the transitory to the spiritual and eternal.

'And these three are for the one,' *i.e.* they converge, in the witness that they bear, on one and the same thing; they agree with one another, *viz.* in this, that Jesus is the Son of God. It is only too common an experience to find that those who lay stress upon the objective attestation of Jesus (upon the historical Jesus), and those who lay stress upon the spirit (upon the spiritual world which He has brought into existence), are opposed to one another. Those who are always insisting upon the spirit imagine too readily that

this spirit is hostile to the historical flesh, in which the Redeemer has entered within the circle of human vision. By refining the Redeemer into a pure idea, an abstraction, they think they guarantee and secure His spirit. But we have the spirit of the Redeemer and the world of the spirit in general only by means of His historical appearing. To understand the latter is truly to understand the Christian spirit. The more we lay stress at once upon the historical and upon the ideal in Christ, so much the purer and the more vigorous does our Christianity become.

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Contributions and Comments.

The Victory that Overcometh the World.

ZECH. i. 18-21.

WHAT precisely are the world powers which the horns represent? The use of the preterite in vv. 19 and 21 and the mention of the two sections of the Hebrew nation indicate that the vision refers to the past in the first place. All the purposes, therefore, of a fair exposition are sufficiently answered if we take the figure (with Pressel and Wright) as descriptive of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and the Medo-Persian Empire. The list is not exhaustive, but the four powers noted are good representative types of the worldly spirit. Egypt, the proud and obstinate, well illustrated in the Pharaoh who persecuted the nation in its infancy; Assyria, the haughty, godless power insolently scornful of everything save the brute force of 'big battalions'; Babylon, represented by the self-sufficient pride of Nebuchadnezzar; Persia, under the successors of Cyrus, as we find in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, ever swaying between the opposite poles of persecution and patronage. These were the horns which up to Zechariah's time had scattered Israel. Every world power that succeeded resembled these four types as in pride of power, self-will, arrogant indifference to the religious convictions of a small

nation like that of Israel, contempt for all that cannot be valued in accordance with a worldly standard.

2. The vision then refers primarily to the past. But not wholly. Zechariah sees the horns before him. They are not spectres conjured up from the dead past, but real powers, a source of danger for present and future. In the future, as in the past, Israel must reckon with the brutish opposition which those horns represent. Often had the people of God been like an unarmed man suddenly exposed to the fury of a savage bull. That was ever the spirit of their enemies. *Vae victis!* 'What cared those brawlers for the name of Jehovah, or Righteousness, or Faith?' And the future was to be like the past, the world ever irreconcilably opposed to the cause of Jehovah and His people. Here the parable-vision touches ourselves. We also have to deal with our Egypt, our Assyria, all those manifestations of the worldly spirit which hinder the cause of the truth, and sorely we suffer at their hands. In the conflict with all the various forms of practical atheism, the engrossing demands of business and fashion, the assaults of animal passion, carrying destruction into the very ranks of the Lord's people, where is our hope?

3. The second part of the vision gives the answer. To drive off the four horns there go forth,