ESTHER.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE.

(*Introversions and Alternations.*)

A[1] | 1. 1. AHASUERUS. REIGN. EXTENT OF KINGDOM.

B[1] | **D**[1] | 1. 2—2. 20. AHASUERUS. ON HIS THRONE.

E[1] | **F** | 2. 21-23. MORDECAI. DISCOVERY OF PLOT (BIGTHAN AND TERESH).

G | 3. 1-15. HAMAN. HIS PLOT.

F | 4. 1-3. MORDECAI. DISCOVERY OF HAMAN'S PLOT.

C[1] | 4. 4—5. 14. ESTHER. HER INTERCESSION.

B[2] | **D**[2] | 6. 1. AHASUERUS. ON HIS BED.

E[2] | **H** | 6. 2, 3. MORDECAI. KING'S INQUIRY.

J | 6. 4-9. HAMAN. KING'S INQUIRY.

H | 6. 10-14. MORDECAI. KING'S COMMAND.

C[2] | 7. 1. ESTHER. HER BANQUET.

B[3] | **D**[3] | 7. 2-. AHASUERUS. AT ESTHER'S TABLE.

E[3] | **K** | 7. -2. KING. INQUIRY AND PROMISE.

L | 7. 3, 4. ESTHER. PLEA FOR LIFE.

K | 7. 5-10. KING. INQUIRY AND WRATH.

C[3] | 8. 1-. ESTHER. HER ROYAL GIFT.

B[4] | **D**[4] | 8. -1, 2. AHASUERUS. ON HIS THRONE.

E | **M** | 8. 3-6. ESTHER. PLEA FOR HER PEOPLE.

N | 8. 7-17. KING. DECREE.

M | 9. 1-28. ESTHER. PLEA FOR HER PEOPLE.

C[4] | 9. 29-32. ESTHER. HER ROYAL AUTHORITY.

A[2] | 10. 1-3. AHASUERUS. REIGN. EXTENT OF KINGDOM.

THE
°BOOK OF ESTHER.

A¹ 472-422 (Regnal)

1 °Now it came to pass in the days of °Ahasuerus, (°this *is* Ahasuerus which reigned, ° from India even unto Ethiopia, *over* °an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:)

B¹ D¹ A¹ a (p. 655)

2 *That* °in those days, when the king ¹Ahasuerus °sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in °Shushan the °palace,

3 In °the third year of his reign, he made °a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the °power of °Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, *being* before him:

b

4 When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, *even* °an hundred and fourscore days.

a

5 And when these days were expired, the king made ³a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the ²palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's °palace;

6 *Where were* white, green, and blue, *hangings*, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the °beds *were of* gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble.

7 And they gave *them* drink in vessels of gold, (°the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal °wine in abundance, according to the state of the king.

8 And the drinking *was* according to the °law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every °man's pleasure.

9 Also °Vashti the queen made a feast for the women *in* the royal house which *belonged* to king Ahasuerus.

b

10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he °commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the °seven chamberlains that served in the presence of ¹Ahasuerus the king,

11 To bring ⁹Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the °people and the princes her beauty: for she *was* fair to look on.

12 But the queen ⁹Vashti °refused to come at

TITLE, Book of Esther. One of the five *Megilloth*. For its place in the Hebrew Canon see Ap. 1. Read at the Feast of Purim. Comes *chronologically* thus: (1) Daniel; (2) Esther; (3) Nehemiah; (4) Ezra. The Divine name does not occur, except five times in the form of an *Acrostic* (Ap. 6). See Ap. 60, and notes on Est. 1. 20; 5. 4, 13; 7. 5, 7.

1 Now it came to pass in the days of. See important note of Rabbinical commentators on Gen. 14. 1.

Ahasuerus = the venerable king. An appellative, like Pharaoh, Czar, Shah, &c. See notes on p. 618 and Ap. 57 and 58.

this. Implying that others were so called, from whom he is to be distinguished. This Ahasuerus was Astyages (Gr.), Arsames (Persian). See Ap. 57 and 58. "This Ahasuerus" emphasises the one who was specially renowned. Fig. *Parenthesis*. Ap. 6.

from India even unto Ethiopia: i.e. the two extreme boundaries of the known world.

an hundred and seven and twenty provinces. Dan. 6. 1 says 120 princes. The number continually altered to suit the requirements of government. Only in Dan. 6. 1 do we find 120. Plato says that "when Darius (i.e. 'the Maintainer' = Astyages) came to the throne, being one of the seven, he divided the country into seven portions" (*De Legibus* iii). These are the seven named in *vv.* 13, 14. When Babylon afterward fell into his hands, he divided his newly acquired kingdom into 120 parts (Dan. 9. 1. Cp. 6. 1). Why should he not have added these to the seven he already possessed, and thus have made the 127 of Est. 1. 1; 9. 30? In the later days of Darius (Hystaspis) these had reduced to twenty-three, as stated and named on the *Behistûn* inscription.

1. 2—2. 20 (D¹, p. 654). AHASUERUS. ON HIS THRONE. (*Division.*)

D¹	A¹	1. 2-12. Queen Vashti. Offence.
	A²	1. 13—2. 1. Queen Vashti. Degradation.
	A³	2. 2-20. Queen Esther. Substituted.

1. 2-12 (A¹, above). QUEEN VASHTI. OFFENCE. (*Alternation.*)

A¹	a	2, 3. Feast: king's to nobles.
	b	4. Display of riches.
	a	5-9. Feasts: king's to people; queen's to women.
	b	10-12. Display of Vashti.

2 in those days: i.e. the days when these events took place. At other times he dwelt at Ecbatana, or elsewhere. Verse 1 mentions the ruler; *v.* 2, the place; *v.* 3, the time. sat = took his seat, or came to.

Shushan. Now, the ruins of *Susa*, on the river Shapur, east of Persian Gulf.

palace = castle, or fortress. Cp. Neh. 1. 1.

3 the third year: i.e. in 471; six years after the destruction of Jerusalem. Astyages now seventeen or eighteen years. See Ap. 50. VII (5). In this year Xerxes (who is supposed to be this king), according to *Herod.* vii. 8, and *Diod. Sic.* xi. 2, was preparing his expedition against Greece; whereas this chapter presupposes a season of peace and quiet. a feast. For its own sake. No reason is given. power. Put by Fig. *Metonymy* (of Effect), Ap. 6, for those who exercised it: viz. the people of power. Persia and Media. In this book this is always the order, except 10. 2. In Daniel it is the reverse. **4** an hundred and fourscore days. This was to allow all peoples to be feasted in turn. Not all at the same time; or one feast of that duration. **5** palace = house, or, large house. **6** beds = couches. **7** the vessels. Note the frequent *Parentheses* (Ap. 6) in *vv.* 1, 7, 13, 14, 20. wine. Heb. *yayin*. Ap. 27. I. **8** law. Heb. *dath* = royal decree, or special mandate, as in *vv.* 13, 15, 19; 3. 8; 4. 11, 16. man's. Heb. *'ish*. Ap. 14. II. **9** Vashti. The daughter of Alyattes (king of Lydia), married by Cyaxares to his son Astyages after the battle of Halys. See Ap. 57. **10** commanded. Heb. *'âmar*. So rendered in *vv.* 15, 17; 2. 20; 4. 13; 6. 1; 9. 14, 25. Note the different words rendered "command" and "decree" in this book. seven chamberlains = seven eunuchs. This shows the minuteness of the writer's knowledge. **11** people = peoples. **12** refused. Probably because sent for by servants; not by the nobles (*v.* 3), and before the "peoples" (*v.* 5).

471 the king's °commandment by *his* chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

A² c (p. 656) 13 Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, ° (for so *was* the king's manner toward all that knew [8]law and judgment:

14 And the next unto him *was* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, *and* Memucan, the [10]seven princes of [3]Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, *and* which sat the first in the kingdom;)

15 "What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to [8]law, because she hath not performed the [10]commandment of the king [1]Ahasuerus [12]by the chamberlains?"

d 16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, [9]"Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the [11]people that *are* in all the provinces of the king [1]Ahasuerus.

17 For *this* deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, 'The king [1]Ahasuerus [10]commanded [9]Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.'

18 *Likewise* shall the °ladies of [3]Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus *shall there arise* too much contempt and wrath.

19 If it please the king, let there go a royal [12]commandment from him, and let it be written among the [8]laws of the [3]Persians and the Medes, that it be °not altered, That [9]Vashti come no more before king [1]Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she.

20 And when the king's °decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, [7](for °it is great,) °ALL THE WIVES SHALL GIVE to their husbands honour, both to great and small."

c 21 And the saying pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan:

d 22 For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to their writing thereof, and to every people after their language, that every [8]man should bear rule in his own house, and that *it* should be published according to the language of every people.

A³ B¹ **2** °After these things, when the wrath of king °Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered °Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.

2 Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, "Let there be fair young °virgins sought for the king:

3 And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young [2]virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the °custody of Hege the king's °chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given *them:*

4 And let the °maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of [1]Vashti." And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

commandment. Heb. *dāḇar* = word, precept. Occurs *v.* 19; 2. 8; 3. 15; 8. 14, 17. See note on *v.* 10.

13 for. See note on the parentheses, *v.* 7.

1. 13-22 (A², p. 655). QUEEN VASHTI. DEGRADATION. (*Alternation.*)

A² | c | 13-15. King's inquiry of wise men.
| d | 16-20. Advice. Given.
| c | 21. King's agreement with wise men.
| d | 22. Advice. Acted on.

18 ladies = princesses.

19 not altered. Cp. Dan. 6. 8.

20 decree = rescript. Only here and Ecc. 8. 11.
it is great: i. e. the decree is important.
ALL THE WIVES SHALL GIVE. This is the first of the five *Acrostics* (Ap. 6), exhibiting in the initials the Divine name. See Ap. 60.

2. 1-20 (A³, p. 655). QUEEN ESTHER. SUBSTITUTED. (*Repeated Alternation and Introversions.*)

A³ B¹ | 1-4. Maidens. Sought.
C¹ | e¹ | 5, 6. Mordecai. Position.
f¹ | 7. Esther. Relation.
B² | 8-. Maidens. Gathered.
C² | f² | -8, 9. Esther. Included.
e² | 10, 11. Mordecai. Solicitude.
B³ | 12-14. Maidens. Rotation.
C³ | f³ | 15-18. Esther. Selection.
e³ | 19, 20. Mordecai. Station.

1 After these things: i. e. in 467. Astyages was now twenty-one. In the seventh year (*v.* 16); one of these spent in preparations (*v.* 12).
Ahasuerus. See note on 1. 1.
Vashti. See note on 1. 9.

2 virgins. Heb. *bethūlah.* See note on Gen. 24. 43.

3 custody = hand. chamberlain = eunuch.

4 maiden = a young person. Heb. *na'ar.*

5 a certain Jew = a man (Heb. *'ish.* Ap. 14. II), a Jew. The contrast between Judah and Israel was lost in a strange land; and, as Nebuchadnezzar's campaign was against Judah, so "Jew" became the name used by Gentiles.
Mordecai. Daniel and Ezekiel taken to Babylon (2 Kings 24. 14, 15); Nehemiah and Mordecai to Shushan; and Mordecai dwelt in the royal palace, as did Daniel and others (Dan. 1. 4. 2 Kings 20. 16-18).
a Benjamite. Thus Mordecai, a Benjamite, ends Jehovah's war against Amalek. Ex. 17. 16. Cp. 3. 1 with 7. 10; 9. 10. A work entrusted to Saul (a Benjamite). 1 Sam. 15. 2-33.

6 Jeconiah = Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24. 6).
carried away. Cp. 2 Kings 24. 14, 15. Jer. 52. 24-34. 133 years before the generally received date (i. e. 598-465 = 133), which, therefore, cannot be correct. From the carrying away of Jeconiah to the marriage of Esther to Astyages in his seventh year was only twenty-two years (489-467). See Ap. 50. VII (5).

7 Hadassah = myrtle. Not living with Mordecai (who was in the palace, *v.* 5), but brought up by him.
Esther = star. But Rabbi Yehudah derives it from *sathar*, to hide, because she was hidden in her guardian's house; and her nationality also was concealed (*v.* 10).
father. Abihail: now dead. See *v.* 15; 9. 29.

5 *Now* in Shushan the palace there was °a certain Jew, whose name *was* °Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, °a Benjamite; C¹ e¹

6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with °Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had °carried away.

7 And he brought up °Hadassah, that *is,* °Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither °father nor mother, and the °maid *was* fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her f¹

father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.

8 So it came to pass, when the king's °commandment and his °decree was heard, and when many [4]maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the [5]custody of Hegai, that [7]Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.

9 And the [4]maiden pleased him, and she °obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as belonged to her, and seven [4]maidens, *which were* meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he °preferred her and her [4]maids unto the best *place* of the house of the women.

10 Esther had °not shewed her People nor her kindred: for [5]Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew *it*.

11 And [5]Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, °to know how [7]Esther did, and what should become of her.

12 Now when every [4]maid's turn was come to go in to king [1]Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, °(for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, *to wit*, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with *other* things for the purifying of the women;)

13 Then thus came *every* [4]maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house.

14 In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the [5]custody of Shaashgaz, the king's [5]chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.

15 Now when the turn of [7]Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's [5]chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And [7]Esther [9]obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.

16 So [7]Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house royal in the tenth month, which *is* the month °Tebeth, in the °seventh year of his reign.

17 And the king loved [7]Esther above all the women, and she [9]obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the [1]virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of [1]Vashti.

18 Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, *even* [7]Esther's feast; and he made a °release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king.

19 And °when the [1]virgins were gathered together the second time, then [5]Mordecai °sat in the king's gate.

20 Esther had [10]not *yet* shewed her kindred nor her People; °as [5]Mordecai had charged her: °for Esther did the °commandment of [5]Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

21 In those days, while [5]Mordecai [19]sat in the king's °gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the °door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

22 And the thing °was known to [5]Mordecai, who told *it* unto [7]Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king *thereof* in [5]Mordecai's name.

23 And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was °written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

3 °After these things did king ° Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the °Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that *were* with him.

8 commandment = word. Heb. *dāvar*. See note on 1.12.
decree = Imperial decree. Heb. *dāth*, as in 3. 15; 4. 3, 8; 8. 14, 17; 9. 1, 13, 14. 9 obtained = won.
preferred = promoted. Probably influenced by Mordecai.

10 not shewed. Not till 7. 3-5. This was Mordecai's wisdom. Cp. *v.* 20.

11 to know. This was Mordecai's solicitude. All this proves that these events must have taken place before the emancipation made by Cyrus (the son of this Astyages, Ap. 57), recorded in Ezra 1. No such secrecy would have been necessary, and no thought of allowing the People, whom he had just emancipated, to be exterminated, as is described in the book of Esther: But Cyrus, being her son, would be carefully prepared by her and Mordecai to begin his reign by such emancipation from Babylon (note, not from Shushan: cp. Ezra 1. 1 with Jer. 25. 11, 12), thus fulfilling Isa. 44. 28 and 45. 1-4.

12 for. Another *Parenthesis*. Ap. 6. See note on 1. 7.

16 Tebeth. See Ap. 51. VII. 5.
seventh year. The first feast was in the third year. The search probably took one year; the preparation another; oblations another. Other seasons are unnamed.

18 release = a holiday. Heb. *hănāḥah*.

19 when, &c. = while they were collecting, &c.
sat in the king's gate. Mordecai was of the king's household. See *v.* 5. This guarded Esther's interests, and enabled him to obtain all information. (N.B. Haman lived in his own house with his family in the city.)

20 as = according as.
for, &c. Thus revealing a new characteristic of Esther. This secrecy was hardly needed if the emancipation of Ezra 1. 1 had already taken place.
commandment. Heb. *'āmar*, as in 1. 10, 15, 17.

2. 21-23 (**F**, p. 654). MORDECAI. DISCOVERY OF PLOT. (*Alternation.*)

F | g | 21-. Mordecai. Station.
| h | -21. Conspiracy. Made.
| g | 22, 23-. Mordecai. Discovery.
| h | -23. Conspiracy. Punished.

21 gate. Heb. *sha'ar* = the lofty gate of a palace, not the same word as "door", *v.* 21; 6. 2.
door = threshold. Heb. *ṣaph*.

22 was known. Mordecai sat in the king's gate: the very place to hear all news.

23 written. See note on 6. 1.

3. 1-15 [For Structure see next page].

1 After these things. Haman was not made Grand Vizier till five years later. See *v.* 7.
Ahasuerus. See note on 1. 1.
Agagite. A descendant of Amalekite kings (Num. 24. 7. 1 Sam. 15. 8, 32). Called an Amalekite by Josephus (*Ant.* xi. 6. 5).

467 B² (p. 656) C² f² e² B³ C³ f³ e³ F g (p. 657) h g h G D i (p. 658)

467 2 And all the king's servants, that *were* in the king's °gate, °bowed, and reverenced Haman: for the king had so °commanded concerning him.

k (p. 658) But °Mordecai °bowed not, nor did *him* reverence.

3 Then the king's servants, which *were* in the king's gate, said unto [2]Mordecai, "Why °transgressest thou the king's commandment?"

4 Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether [2]Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he *was* a Jew.

E l 5 And when Haman saw that [2]Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

6 And he thought scorn to lay hands on [2]Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the People of Mordecai: wherefore °Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that *were* throughout the whole kingdom of [1]Ahasuerus, *even* the People of [2]Mordecai.

m 1st Nisan 462 7 In the first month, (that *is*, the month Nisan,) in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, °they cast °Pur, that *is*, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, *to* the twelfth *month*, that *is*, the month Adar.

D i 8 And °Haman said unto king [1]Ahasuerus, °"There is a certain People °scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their °laws *are* diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's °laws: therefore it *is* not for the king's profit to suffer them.

9 If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand °talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring *it* into the king's treasuries."

k 10 And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, °the Jews' enemy.

11 And the king said unto Haman, "The silver *is* given to thee, °the People also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee."

E m 12 Then were the king's scribes called on °the thirteenth day of the first month,

l and there was written according to all that Haman had [2]commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that *were* over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and *to* every people after their language; in the name of king [1]Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.

13 And the letters were sent by °posts into all the king's provinces, to °destroy, to °kill, and to °cause to °perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, *even* upon [12]the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month Adar, and *to* °*take* the spoil of them for a prey.

13th Adar 461

14 The copy of the writing for a °commandment to be given in every province was published unto all °people, that they should be ready against that day.

15 The [13]posts went out, being hastened by the king's °commandment, and the °decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman °sat down to drink; but °the city Shushan was °perplexed.

3. 1-15 (G, p. 654). HAMAN. PLOT.
(*Alternations and Introversion.*)

G | D | i | 1, 2-. Haman. Advancement.
k | -2-4. The king. Command *re* Haman.
E | l | 5, 6. The plot. Devised.
m | 7. Pur. The month by lot. Twelfth month.
D | i | 8, 9. Haman. Plot purposed.
k | 10, 11. The king. Compliance with Haman.
E | m | 12-. Pur. The day by lot. Thirteenth day.
l | -12-15. The plot. Succeeds.

2 gate = lofty porch. Heb. *sha'ar*. See note on 2. 21.
bowed. Heb. *kārā'*. *Kārā'*, used of idols (1 Kings 19. 18. 2 Chron. 29. 29). *Shaḥah* is the word used of bowing to kings and others.
commanded = appointed or charged. Heb. *ṣavah*.
Mordecai. See note on 2. 5.
bowed not. He could not bow to an Amalekite, against whom Jehovah had declared perpetual war. See note on Ex. 17. 16.
3 transgressest. Heb. *'ābar*. Ap. 44. VII.
6 Haman sought. Another assault of Satan against the nation through whom the Seed of the woman was to come. See Ap. 23, p. 27.
7 they cast. From 1st Nisan 462 to 13th Adar 462.
Pur. Persian for "lot". The reference is to "the monthly prognosticators" of Isa. 47. 13. This was to fix on a fortunate time. Cp. 9. 24.
8 Haman said. Having got the month and the day (the thirteenth, see *v.* 13, cp. Ap. 10), he could go to the king.
There is a certain People. Would it have been necessary for Haman thus to have explained and described the Jews, if they had already received their emancipation? Impossible! We are asked to believe this according to the traditional teaching. But see note on 10. 3, and Ap. 57 and 58.
scattered abroad, &c. Cp. 2 Chron. 36. 23. Ezra 1. 1-4. There is no reference to any emancipation here.
laws. See note on 1. 8. **9** talents. See Ap. 51. II.
10 the Jews' enemy. Haman so called four times: 3. 10; 8. 1; 9. 10, 24. No one else so called in Scripture.
11 the People also. This was the aim of the great enemy, who was using Haman as he had tried to use Pharaoh in Egypt. See Ap. 23.
12 the thirteenth day. Ominous number. See Ap. 10. Note the three thirteens: 8. 12, 13; 8. 12.
13 posts = the hand of the runners. Cp. 8. 10.
destroy . . . kill . . . cause to perish. Note the Fig. *Synonymia* (Ap. 6), to emphasise the utter destruction contemplated.
perish. Heb. *'ābad*. Here and 4. 16; 7. 4; 8. 11: not 9. 28. take the spoil. See note on 9. 10.
14 commandment = Imperial decree. Heb. *dath*. See note on 2. 8. people = peoples.
15 commandment = word. Heb. *dābar*. See note on 1. 12. decree. Heb. *dath*. See notes on 1. 8; 2. 8.
sat down to drink. So Joseph's brethren (Gen. 37. 25), and Herod (Matt. 14. 6. Mark 6. 21). So will it be (Rev. 11. 7-10).
the city. Put by Fig. *Metonymy* (of Adjunct), Ap. 6, for the inhabitants.
perplexed. A rare word. Ex. 14. 3, "entangled". Joel 1. 18. This verse speaks of the effect on the Persians. Ch. 4 speaks of the effect on the Jews. Contrast 8. 15.

4. 1-3 (F, p. 654). MORDECAI. DISCOVERY OF (HAMAN'S) PLOT. (*Division.*)

F | n[1] | 1, 2. Bitter cry. Mordecai. Shushan.
n[2] | 3. Bitter cry. Jews. Provinces.

1 done = being done.

4 When Mordecai perceived all that was °done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put F n[1]

462 on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a °bitter cry;

2 And came °even before the king's gate: for none *might* enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

n² (p. 658) 3 And in every province, whithersoever the king's °commandment and his °decree came, *there was* great mourning among the Jews, °and °fasting, °and weeping, °and wailing; °and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

C¹ G¹ H (p. 659) 4 So Esther's °maids and her °chamberlains came and told *it* her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away °his sackcloth from him: but he received *it* not.

J o 5 Then called Esther for Hatach, *one* of the king's [4]chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a °commandment to Mordecai, to know what it *was*, and why it *was*.

6 So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which *was* before the king's gate.

p 7 And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of °the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.

8 Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the [5]decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew *it* unto Esther, and to declare *it* unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her People.

9 And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

J o 10 Again Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him [5]commandment unto Mordecai;

11 "All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether °man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, *there is* one °law of his to put *him* to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days."

p 12 And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

13 Then Mordecai °commanded to answer Esther, "Think not with °thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then* shall there °enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and °who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?"

H 15 Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer*,

16 "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink °three days, night or day: I also and my [4]maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which *is* not according to the [11]law: and if °I perish, I perish."

bitter cry. Not (we may be sure) without confession and prayer, as with Nehemiah (ch. 1), and Daniel (ch. 9).
2 even = as far as.
3 commandment = word. See note on 1. 12.
decree = Imperial decree. Heb. *dāth*. See notes on 1. 8; 2. 8.
and. Note the Fig. *Polysyndeton* (Ap. 6), to emphasise the greatness and universality of the mourning.
fasting, &c. These were the accompaniments of true repentance.

4. 4—5. 14 (C¹, p. 654). ESTHER. INTERCESSION. (*Division.*)

C¹ | G¹ | 4. 4-17. Esther and Mordecai.
C¹ | G² | 5. 1-14. Esther and the king.

4. 4-17 (G¹, above). ESTHER AND MORDECAI. (*Introversion and Alternation.*)

G¹ | H | 4. Esther. Information.
G¹ | J | o | 5, 6. Esther. Inquiry of Mordecai.
G¹ | J | p | 7-9. Mordecai. Reply and request.
G¹ | *J* | *o* | 10, 11. Esther. Message to Mordecai.
G¹ | *J* | *p* | 12-14. Mordecai. Reply and expostulation.
G¹ | *H* | 15-17. Esther. Decision.

4 maids. See note on 2. 4.
chamberlains = eunuchs.
his. Edition of A.V., 1611, reads "the".
5 commandment = charge. Heb. *zavāh*. See 3. 2.
7 the sum of the money = the exact sum of the money. Mordecai knew of this, but how we cannot tell. He evidently did not know that the king had made Haman a present of it (3. 11).
11 man. Heb. *'ish*. Ap. 14. II.
law = Imperial decree. Heb. *dāth*. See note on 1. 8.
13 commanded. Heb. *'āmar*. See note on 1. 10.
thyself = thy soul. Heb. *nephesh*. Ap. 13.
14 enlargement = respite.
who knoweth...? Note the Fig. *Erotēsis* (Ap. 6), for emphasis. Used here of hope and trust in God and His overruling grace.
16 three days, night or day. The Jerusalem Talmud says "a day and night together make up a *nuktheˉmeron*, and that any part of such period is counted as a whole". Cp. 1 Sam. 30. 12, 13. Jonah 1. 17. Matt. 12. 40.
I perish. See note on 3. 13.
17 went his way = passed over: i.e. over the river Ulai, on which Shushan is built, to the Jewish quarter, to accomplish his part of the compact.

5. 1-14 (G², above). ESTHER AND THE KING. (*Alternations.*)

G² | K | 1, 2. King on royal throne.
G² | L | q | 3. King. Inquiry.
G² | L | r | 4. Esther. Invitation given.
G² | L | *q* | 5-. King. Compliance.
G² | L | *r* | -5. Esther. Invitation accepted.
G² | *K* | 6-. King at Esther's banquet.
G² | *L* | s | -6. King. Promise.
G² | *L* | t | 7, 8. Esther. Second invitation.
G² | *L* | *s* | 9-. Haman's joy.
G² | *L* | *t* | -9-14. Esther. Second invitation.

1 the third day. The beginning of a new life for Israel. See Ap. 10.
inner court. All houses had courts; a palace had several. over against = right opposite.
upon his royal throne. To transact business.
gate = porch, or entrance. Heb. *pethaḥ*.

17 So Mordecai °went his way, and did according to all that Esther had [5]commanded him.

G² K 3rd Nisan 462

5 Now it came to pass on °the third day, that Esther put on *her* royal *apparel*, and stood in the °inner court of the king's house, °over against the king's house: and the king sat °upon his royal throne in the royal house, °over against the °gate of the house.

462 2 And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, *that* she °obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that *was* in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

L q (p. 659) 3 Then said the king unto her, "What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what *is* thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the °kingdom."

r 4 And Esther answered, "If *it seem* good unto the king, °LET THE KING AND HAMAN COME THIS DAY unto the banquet that I have prepared for him."

q 5 Then the king said, "Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said."

r So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

K 6 And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, °"What *is* thy °petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy °request?

L s even to the half of the [3]kingdom it shall be performed."

t (p. 659) 7 Then answered Esther, and said, "My petition and my request *is;*
8 If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will °do to morrow as the king hath said."

s 9 Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart:

t u but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he °stood not up, nor °moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

v 10 Nevertheless Haman refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and °Zeresh his wife.
11 And Haman °told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his °children, and all *the things* wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

v 12 Haman said moreover, "Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.

u 13 Yet all °THIS AVAILETH ME NOTHING, so long as I see °Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."
14 Then said [10]Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, "Let a °gallows be made of fifty °cubits high, and °to morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet." And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the °gallows to be made.

D[1] (p. 654) 6 °On that night °could not the king sleep, and he °commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and °they were read before the king.

2 obtained = won. Cp. 4. 11.
3 kingdom. Put by Fig. *Metonomy* (of Adjunct), Ap. 6, for a year's revenue. Cp. Mark 6. 23.
4 LET THE KING AND HAMAN COME THIS DAY. This is the second of the five *Acrostics* (Ap. 6) of the Divine name (Ap. 4. II) in this book. See Ap. 60. The second pivot on which the history turns.
6 What is thy petition? He must have seen that there was something behind the mere banquet.
petition = question. request = wish.
8 do to morrow. She still keeps back her petition, showing the king that he had rightly divined that there was something important behind it.

5. -9-14 (*t*, p. 659). ESTHER. SECOND INVITATION. (*Introversion.*)

t | u | -9. Mordecai. Haman's indignation.
v | 10, 11. Haman. Ostentation.
v | 12. Haman. Pride.
u | 13, 14. Mordecai. Haman's gallows.

9 stood not up. Notwithstanding the crisis reached; and well knowing the cause of it.
moved = stirred. Only here, and Ecc. 12. 3.
Zeresh his wife. By *Gematria* = 507 ($13^3 \times 3$). See note on 9. 10, also Ap. 10.
11 told = recounted.
children = sons. He had ten sons. See 9. 10.
13 THIS AVAILETH ME NOTHING. This is the third of the five Acrostics of this book, exhibiting the Divine names (Ap. 4. II) to the eye. See Ap. 60.
Mordecai. The enmity was not merely personal, but religious; which is the worst form enmity can take.
14 gallows = tree: i. e. a stake to which a criminal was fastened till he died. The same word for cross. Cp. 2. 23; 7. 9; and see Acts 5. 30; 10. 39; 13. 29. 1 Pet. 2. 24.
cubits. See Ap. 51. III (2).
to morrow. There was no delay; but, quick as the action was, it was none too soon for its real usefulness.

6. 1 On that night. The time for Divine action had come. See Ap. 23, p. 27.
could not the king sleep. God uses small things to accomplish His purposes. See note on Judg. 3. 21. We know not what He used here. But the time had come for Him to work.
commanded. Heb. *'āmar*. See note on 1. 10.
they . . . read. The very portion which God ruled for the working out of His plan.
2 Mordecai had told. See 2. 21, 22.
door = threshold. Heb. *saph*. Cp. 2. 21.
4 Now Haman was come. This was the next step. The Fig. *Parenthesis* (Ap. 6) is used to emphasise the importance of it. gallows = tree. See note on 5. 14.
5 Behold. Fig. *Asterismos*. Ap. 6.
standeth in the court. As explained in the *Parenthesis*, *v.* 4.
come in. Note the Fig. *Anaaiplosis* (Ap. 6); *v.* 5 ending with the same verb which begins the next sentence.

E[2] H 2 And it was found written, that °Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the °door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.
3 And the king said, "What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?" Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, "There is nothing done for him."

J 4 And the king said, "Who *is* in the court?" °(Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the °gallows that he had prepared for him.)
5 And the king's servants said unto him, °"Behold, Haman °standeth in the court." And the king said, "Let him °come in."

462 6 So Haman °came in. And the king said unto him, "What shall be done unto the °man whom the king delighteth to honour?" Now Haman °thought in his heart, "To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?"

7 And Haman answered the king, "For the [6]man whom the king delighteth to honour,

8 Let the royal apparel be brought which the king *useth* to wear, °and the horse that the king rideth upon, °and the crown royal which is set upon his head:

9 [8]And let this apparel [8]and horse be delivered to the hand of °one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man *withal* whom the king delighteth to honour, [8]and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, [8]and proclaim before him, 'Thus shall it be done to the [6]man whom the king delighteth to honour.'"

H (p. 654) 10 Then the king said to Haman, °"Make haste, *and* take the apparel and the horse, °as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken."

11 Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done unto the [6]man whom the king delighteth to honour."

12 And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman °hasted to his house mourning, °and having his head covered.

13 [12]And Haman told °Zeresh his wife [12]and all his friends every *thing* that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and °Zeresh his wife unto him, "If Mordecai *be* of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him."

14 And °while they *were* yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and [12]hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

6 came in. See note on *v.* 5.
man. Heb. *'ish*. Ap. 14. II. thought = said.
8 and. Note the Fig. *Polysyndeton* (Ap. 6) in *vv.* 8, 9, to emphasise the eagerness with which Haman enumerated the honours his heart desired.
9 one = a man. Heb. *'ish*. Ap. 14. II.
10 Make haste = be expeditious. Heb. *māhar*, as in 5. 5; not *dāḥaph* (to urge oneself), as in *v.* 12; 3. 15; or *bāhal* (to hurry away), as in *v.* 14; 8. 14.
as = according as.
12 hasted. Heb. *dāḥaph*. See note on *v.* 10.
and. Note the Fig. *Polysyndeton* (Ap. 6) in *vv.* 12, 13, emphasising the excitement which had seized him.
13 Zeresh. See note on 5. 14.
14 while. Everything was hastening to the approaching crisis.

7. 2 petition . . . request. See note on 5. 6.
kingdom. See note on 5. 3.
3 my life = my soul. Heb. *nephesh*. Ap. 13. Life put before petition, and her People put before her request.
4 are = have been.
sold. Implying that a bargain had been made.
destroyed . . . slain . . . perish. Note the Fig. *Synonymia* (Ap. 6), to emphasise the urgency of her petition. Cp. 3. 13. perish. See note on 3. 13.
countervail = make good, or compensate.
5 answered and said. Note the idiom = threatened and said. See note on Deut. 1. 41.
WHO IS HE, AND WHERE IS HE . . . ? This is the fifth Acrostic, which gives (not Jehovah but) the Divine Name "I AM" of Ex. 3. 14. See Ap. 60.
HE. Note the emphatic repetition of this pronoun.
7 life = soul. Heb. *nephesh*. Ap. 13.
THAT THERE WAS EVIL DETERMINED AGAINST HIM. This is the fourth, and last, of the four acrostics exhibiting the name Jehovah in this book. See Ap. 60.
evil. Heb. *rā'a'*. Ap. 44. viii.
the king. Note the Fig. *Epanadiplōsis* (Ap. 6), the verse beginning and ending with the same word, marking and emphasising its importance.
8 bed = couch.
Will he force . . . ? Fig. *Erotēsis*. Ap. 6.
9 Behold. Fig. *Asterismos*. Ap. 6.
gallows. See note on 5. 14.
cubits. See Ap. 51. III. 2 (1).
10 they hanged Haman. See note on "Benjamite" (2. 5).

C[1] 7 So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.

B[3] **D**[3] 2 And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine,

E[3] **K** "What *is* thy °petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy °request? and it shall be performed, *even* to the half of the °kingdom."

L 3 Then Esther the queen answered and said, "If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let °my life be given me at my petition, and my People at my request:

4 For we °are °sold, [3] and my People, to be °destroyed, to be °slain, and to °perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not °countervail the king's damage."

K 5 Then the king Ahasuerus °answered and said unto Esther the queen, °"WHO IS °HE, AND WHERE IS HE, that durst presume in his heart to do so?"

6 And Esther said, "The adversary and enemy *is* this wicked Haman." Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

7 And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath *went* into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his °life to Esther the queen; for he saw °THAT THERE WAS °EVIL DETERMINED AGAINST HIM by °the king.

8 Then the king returned out of the [7]palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the °bed whereon Esther *was*. Then said the king, °"Will he force the queen also before me in the house?" As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

9 And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, °"Behold also, the °gallows fifty °cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman." Then the king said, "Hang him thereon."

10 So °they hanged Haman on the [9]gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

C³ (p. 654) 462

8 °On that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman °the Jews' enemy unto Esther the queen.

D¹

And Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he *was* unto her.

2 And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and °gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai °over the house of Haman.

E¹ M

3 And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the °mischief of °Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.

4 Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king,

5 And said, °"If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing *seem* right before the king, and ℨ *be* pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy °the Jews which *are* in all the king's provinces:

6 For how can I endure to see the °evil that shall come unto my People? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?"

N w (p. 662)

7 Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen and to Mordecai the Jew,

x y

°"Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the °gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.

z a

8 Write ye also for the Jews, as it °liketh you, in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's ring; for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, °may no man reverse."

9 Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that *is*, the month

23rd Sivan 461

°Sivan, on the three and twentieth *day* thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai °commanded unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which *are* from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every People after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.

10 And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed *it* with the king's ring, and sent letters by °posts on horseback, *and* riders on mules, camels, *and* young dromedaries:

x y

11 Wherein the king granted the Jews which *were* in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for °their life, to °destroy, to °slay, and to cause to °perish, all the °power of the people and province that would assault them, *both* °little ones and women, and *to take* the spoil of them for a prey,

13th Adar 461

12 Upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, *namely*, upon the °thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month Adar.

z b

13 The copy of the writing for °a commandment to be given in every province *was* published unto all °people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

a

14 *So* the [10]posts that rode upon mules *and* camels went out, being °hastened and pressed on by the king's °commandment. And the °decree was given at Shushan the palace.

w

15 And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

16 The Jews had °light, °and gladness, °and joy, °and honour.

8. 1 On that day. Contrast "On that night", 6. 1.
the Jews' enemy. See note on 3. 10.
2 gave it unto Mordecai. Cp. 3. 10. Note how God honoured godly Jews in foreign courts: Joseph next to Pharaoh; Moses the heir to the throne of Egypt; Daniel next to Darius in Babylon; Mordecai next to Astyages in Shushan.
over the house of Haman. Wonderful retribution.
3 mischief. Heb. *rā'a'*. Ap. 44. viii. Same word as "evil", 7. 7.
Haman the Agagite. See notes on 2. 5 and 3. 1.
5 If it please the king. Note the *Alternation* in this verse:—

a | The king. "If it please the king."
b | Esther. "And if I have found favour."
a | The king. "And . . . before the king."
b | Esther. "And I be pleasing in his eyes."

the Jews. Some codices, with Aram. and Syr., read "all the Jews".
6 evil. Same word as "mischief", *v.* 3.

8. 7-17 (N, p. 654). KING. DECREE.
(Introversions and Alternation.)

N | w | 7–. The king.
x | y | –7. Grant to Esther.
z | a | 8. The writing. Commanded. } Decree.
b | 9, 10. The writing. Written. }
x | *y* | 11, 12. Grant to Esther's People.
z | *b* | 13. The writing. Copied. } Decree.
a | 14. The writing. Dispatched. }
w | 15–17. The king.

7 Behold. Fig. *Asterismos*. Ap. 6.
gallows. See note on 5. 14.
8 liketh = pleaseth. Cp. 3. 11.
may no man reverse. But cp. 3. 12, and see Ap. 23, p. 27. **9** Sivan. See Ap. 51. III. 4.
commanded unto = charged. Heb. *ṣavah*. See note on "law", 3. 2.
10 posts on horseback = couriers on horseback. Haman's "posts" were runners on foot (3. 13, 15), but speed was now essential. See 9. 1.
11 their life = themselves. Heb. *nephesh*. Ap. 13.
destroy . . . slay . . . perish. Fig. *Synonymia* (Ap. 6), for emphasis. See note on 3. 13.
power = force. Heb. *ḥayil*, as in 1. 3. Not *shālat* = mastery, as in 9. 1; or *tokeph* = authority, as in 9. 29.
little ones. These were spared, notwithstanding. Cp. 9. 6. **12** thirteenth. See note on 3. 12.
13 a commandment = an imperial decree. Heb. *dāth*. See note on 2. 8. people = the peoples.
14 hastened. Heb. *bāhal*. See note on 6. 10.
commandment = word. Heb. *dābar*. See note on 1. 12.
decree. Heb. *dāth*. See note on 2. 8.
16 light. Put by Fig. *Metonymy* (of Adjunct), Ap. 6, for joy.
and. Note the Fig. *Polysyndeton* (Ap. 6), to emphasise the greatness of the joy.

461 17 And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's [14] commandment and his [14] decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land ° became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

M N[1] c[1] (p. 663) 9 Now in the twelfth month, that *is*, the month Adar, on the °thirteenth day of the same, when the king's °commandment and his °decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have °power over them, °(though it was turned to the contrary, that °the Jews had rule over them that hated them;)

2 The Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no °man could °withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all °people.

3 And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, helped the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them.

4 For °Mordecai *was* great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this [2]man Mordecai waxed greater and greater.

d[1] 5 Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the °sword, °and °slaughter, °and °destruction, °and did what they would unto those that hated them.

6 And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and °destroyed five hundred [2]men.

7 °And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha,

8 And Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha,

9 And Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha,

10 °The ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, °the enemy of the Jews, °slew they;

e[1] but on the spoil °laid they not their hand.

O i 11 On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace was brought before the king.

k 12 And the king said unto Esther the queen, "The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred [2]men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? now what *is* thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what *is* thy request further? and it shall be done."

13 Then said Esther, "If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which *are* in Shushan to do to morrow also according unto this day's [1]decree, and °let Haman's ten sons °be hanged upon the gallows."

i 14 And the king °commanded it so to be done: and the [1]decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

17 became Jews = made common cause with the Jews.

9. 1-28 (*M*, p. 654). ESTHER. PLEA FOR HER PEOPLE. (*Repeated Alternation and Introversion.*)

M | N[1] | c[1] | 1-4. Assemblage.
d[1] | 5-10-. Slaughter. Palace.
e[1] | -10. Abstention from plunder.
O | i | 11. King. Receives report.
k | 12, 13. Esther's request.
i | 14. King. Makes another decree.
N[2] | c[2] | 15-. Assemblage.
d[2] | -15-. Slaughter. Shushan. City.
e[2] | -15. Abstention from plunder.
c[3] | 16-. Assemblage.
d[3] | -16-. Slaughter. Provinces.
e[3] | -16. Abstention from plunder.
O | l | 17. Feasting. Provinces. One day (13th).
m | 18. Feasting. Shushan. Three days (13th, 14th, and 15th).
l | 19. Feasting. Villages. One day (14th).
N[3] | f | 20. Letters of Mordecai.
g | 21, 22. Days. Commemoration.
h | 23, 24. Observance.
f | 25. Letters of the king.
g | 26. Days. Names (Purim).
h | 27, 28. Observance.

1 thirteenth. See note on 3. 12.
commandment. Heb. *dābar*. See note on 1. 12.
decree. Heb. *dāth*. See note on 2. 8.
power = mastery. See note on 8. 11.
though, &c. Note the *Parenthesis*. Ap. 6.
the Jews = the Jews themselves.
2 man. Heb. *'ĭsh*. Ap. 14. II.
withstand = stand before. **people** = the peoples.
4 Mordecai = the man (Heb. *'ĭsh*. Ap. 14. II) Mordecai, greatly emphasising the person. Cp. Num. 12. 3. 1 Kings 11. 28. Dan. 9. 21.
5 sword . . . slaughter . . . destruction. Note the Fig. *Synonymia* (Ap. 6), for emphasis.
and. Note the Fig. *Polysyndeton*. Ap. 6.
6 destroyed, &c. Note that they took no advantage of the permission given in 8. 11.
7 And. Note the Fig. *Polysyndeton* (Ap. 6) in *vv.* 7-9, particularising each one of Haman's ten sons.
10 The ten sons. In all Heb. MSS. and printed editions these ten names are written with the word *v*ᵉ*ēth*, being the demonstrative pronoun = self, or this same, or himself, thus:

*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Parshandatha,
*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Dalphon,
*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Aspatha,
*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Poratha,
*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Adalia,
*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Aridatha,
*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Parmashta,
*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Arisai,
*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Aridai,
*v*ᵉ*ēth*	Vajezatha.

It has been suggested that it is because they were hanged one above another. But, as each Hebrew character is a *number* as well as a letter, the numerical value of these names (regarded as an addition sum) amounts to 10,244, or 13 × 788; while Haman the Agagite = 117 (13 × 9), and Zeresh = 507 (13 × 39), and the whole family = 10,868 (13 × 836). See Ap. 10 for the significance of this. On the other hand, *'Eth-Hadassah hi' Esther* (2. 7) adds up 1,152 = 8 × 12², and "Mordecai", son of Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjamite (2. 5), adds up 1,912 = (8 × 239). See Ap. 10.
the enemy of the Jews. See note on 3. 10.
slew they. See note on "Benjamite" (2. 5).
laid they not their hand. Cp. note on "take the spoil" (3. 13). They probably remembered taking the spoil instead of obeying in 1 Sam. 15. Hence the emphasis on this in *vv.* 10, 15, 16.
13 let Haman's ten sons be hanged. One of the ten deaths occasioned or obtained by women. See note on Judg. 4. 21.
be hanged. Not alive, but hanged up after death. They were slain in conflict first. See *vv.* 6, 7.
14 commanded. Heb. *'āmar*. See note on 1. 10.

N² c² (p. 663) 461 15 For the Jews that *were* in Shushan gathered themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar,

d² and slew three hundred [2]men at Shushan;

o² but on the prey they [10]laid not their hand.

c³ 16 But the other Jews that *were* in the king's provinces gathered themselves together,

d³ and stood for °their lives, and °had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes seventy and five thousand,

e³ but they [10]laid not their hands on the prey,

O 1 17 On the [1]thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth day of the same rested they, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

m 13-15 Adar 461 18 But the Jews that *were* at Shushan assembled together on the [1]thirteenth *day* thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the fifteenth *day* of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

l 19 Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar *a day of* gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.

N³ f 20 And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that *were* in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, *both* nigh and far,

g 21 To °stablish *this* among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly,

22 As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make *them* days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.

h 23 And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them;

24 Because Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, [10]the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur, that *is*, the lot, to consume them, and to destroy them;

f 25 But when *Esther* came before the king, he [14]commanded by letters that his wicked °device, which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head, and that *he* and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

g 26 Wherefore they called these days °Purim after the name of °Pur. Therefore for all the words of this letter, and *of that* which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them,

h 27 The Jews °ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail, that they would keep these two days according to their writing, and according to their *appointed* time every year;

28 And *that* these days *should be* remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and *that* these days of [26]Purim °should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them °perish from their seed.

16 their lives=themselves Heb. *nephesh*. Ap. 13.
had rest from. Dr. Ginsburg thinks the Heb. should read "to avenge themselves upon". Cp. 8. 13.
21 stablish=ordain. Heb. *kūm*, as in *vv.* 29, 31.
25 device, which he devised=his great device. Fig. *Polyptōton*. Ap. 6.
26 Purim=lots. The name of the feast to this day. Pur. See note on 3. 7.
27 ordained. Heb. *kūm*, as in *vv.* 21, 31.
28 should not fail. This sounds like a prophecy, and sets a seal on the inspiration of the book.
perish=come to an end. See note on 3. 13.

9. 29-32 (C⁴, p. 654). ESTHER. ROYAL AUTHORITY. (*Alternation.*)

C⁴ | n | 29-. Esther. Authority.
| o | -29-31-. Confirmation.
| n | -31. Esther. Authority.
| o | 32. Confirmation.

29 the daughter of Abihail. See 2. 15.
confirm. Heb. *kūm*, as in *vv.* 21, 31.
30 hundred, &c. See note on 1. 1.
31 enjoined=ordained. Heb. *kūm*.
as=according as.
decreed=ordained. Heb. *kūm*, as in *vv.* 27, 29, 31.
themselves=their souls. Heb. *nephesh*. Ap. 13.
32 decree=command. Heb. *ma'āmar*. Occurs only in Esther (1. 15; 2. 20).

10. 1 isles=coasts.
2 power. Heb. *tokeph*. See note on 8. 11.
are they not . . . ? Fig. *Erotēsis*. Ap. 6.
3 next=the second=the Grand Vizier. Cp. 8. 2.
speaking peace=maintaining peace.
his seed: i.e. the People of Israel. N.B. in Persia, not Judæa.

Thus was prepared the way for the emancipation of the Jews, which, not long after, was proclaimed by Cyrus (Ezra 1. 1), the son of Astyages and Esther (see Ap. 57), and is further proof that this book comes, chronologically, before the book Ezra-Nehemiah. N.B. the year 461 is the midway year of the Babylonian Servitude (496-428). See special note on p. 615.

29 Then Esther the queen, °the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority, C⁴ n (p. 664)

to °confirm this second letter of [26]Purim. o

30 And he sent the letters unto all the Jews, to the °hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *with* words of peace and truth,

31 To [29]confirm these days of [26]Purim in their times *appointed*,

according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had °enjoined them, and °as they had °decreed for °themselves and for their seed, the matters of the fastings and their cry. n

32 And the °decree of Esther confirmed these matters of [26]Purim; and it was written in the book. o

10 And the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land, and *upon* the °isles of the sea. A³ (p. 654)

2 And all the acts of his °power and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him, °*are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?

3 For Mordecai the Jew *was* °next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his People, and °speaking peace to all °his seed.