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War conditions having rendered it impracticable to hold an ordinary meeting on January 6th, 1941, the Paper to be read on that date was circulated to subscribers and is here published, together with the written discussion elicited.

*THE VISIONS OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR AND
DANIEL, AND THE SEVENTY SEVENS
PROPHECY.*

By SIR AMBROSE FLEMING, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S. (President).

THE subject of chronology, and especially Biblical chronology, has attracted the attention of an immense number of most able minds. One of the chief difficulties of the study is that the ancients had no single datum point from which to reckon time as we have in the nominal date of the birth of Christ; but there were many such points and hence uncertainty in the interconnection of them and correlation to our B.C. and A.D. reckoning.

There are, however, in the Bible a large number of chronological statements giving intervals between notable events and also prophetic forecasts which provide means for time reckoning. Those, therefore, who believe entirely in the inspiration of the Bible will give to these Biblical statements concerning times and events a special importance and preferential value as compared with those in secular literature. Amongst the most important of these Biblical forecasts are certain symbolical visions and predictions given to us in the books of Daniel and Revelation regarding the future history of mankind and the events which must take place before the complete establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Three of the most important of these forecasts in the Old Testament are the dream of Nebuchadnezzar concerning the great Image, then the Vision of Daniel in which he saw four great beasts arising from the sea, and thirdly the prediction given

to Daniel by the Angel Gabriel in the so-called prophecy of the "Seventy weeks".

It is proposed to draw attention to some notable points in these great visions, treating them as having certainly happened and not as fictitious narratives.

Nebuchadnezzar had his vision in the hours of sleep, but when he awoke he could not recall its particulars except as a vivid and disturbing dream. He called to his aid the astrologers and magicians; but although they asserted they could give him the interpretation of it they could not revive his memory of the vision. Thereupon he threatened to destroy them as pretenders and frauds. Daniel, a young Jewish captive who had been placed for training in the College of Astrologers, begged for a delay and called on his companions to intercede with God to give him a power to recover the dream. His prayer was answered and he was given not only a knowledge of the King's dream but also the interpretation of it. He told the King that he had seen in his dream a great image of a man with head of gold, arms and breast of silver, belly and thighs of brass or copper, legs of iron, and feet partly iron and partly clay. He informed the King that these several parts denoted four great empires of which he, Nebuchadnezzar, was the first and the head of gold. Also he told the King that he had seen a stone cut out without hands which fell upon the image and broke it in pieces. This, Daniel said, denoted a kingdom God would establish which would succeed and destroy all the preceding kingdoms (Daniel ii, 36).

Daniel did not name the kingdoms signified by the silver, brass and iron parts of the image, but commentators have taken them to be those of the Medes and Persians, Greece and Rome in the pagan empire form, whilst the feet partly iron and partly clay are interpreted to mean the subsequent democratic and autocratic forms of human government.

Subsequently Daniel had a dream in which he saw four great beasts rise up out of the sea—a lion with eagle's wings, a bear with three ribs in its mouth, a leopard with four wings and four heads, and fourthly a strong and dreadful beast with great teeth, having ten horns and amongst them a little horn with eyes like a man and a mouth speaking great things. There is an agreement between many learned commentators that these dreams of Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar are parallel visions and refer to the same great empires ruling by force and craft and

therefore analogous to beasts of prey. In both of these visions the four-part great image and the four kinds of great beast are destroyed and succeeded by an ever-enduring direct Divine Government of the Son of Man, symbolised in the first dream by the stone cut out without hands.

In close connection with these visions of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel and the revelation given to Daniel in answer to his prayers concerning the time of ending of the seventy years' desolations or captivity of his people foretold by the prophet Jeremiah, is the revelation commonly called the prophecy of the "seventy weeks", or as it should be called "the seventy sevens". This is given in the book of Daniel, chapter ix, verses 24 to 27, as follows by the Angel Gabriel: "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again and the wall even in troublous times".

I shall make no excuse for accepting what is called the "Year-day" theory that in these scriptural predictions the term "day" stands for a calendar or prophetic year of 360 natural days of 24 hours and the word "week" for seven prophetic years. Suffice it to say that many of the most eminent students of prophecy have adopted that view. But the mean solar year is 365 days 5 hours 48 minutes and 49 seconds or 365.2422 days. Hence the solar year is longer than the prophetic year in the ratio of 1.0145 to 1, and to convert a span of time reckoned in mean solar years to its reckoning in prophetic years we have to multiply by 1.0145. Hence 483 solar years = 490 prophetic years.

Turning then to Scripture we find that in the book of Isaiah, chapter xliv, verse 28, there was a remarkable prediction concerning Cyrus, King of Medes and Persians, which said of him long before he lived, "That saith of Cyrus, He is my Shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built and to the temple thy foundation shall be laid". Now who said this? Clearly from the context God Himself, who alone can predict history.

Turn then to II Chronicles xxxvi, 22, for the fulfilment we find it written, "Now in the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and

put it also in writing saying, Thus saith Cyrus, King of Persia, All kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of Heaven given me : and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem which is in Judah ". Nothing could possibly be more plain than this prediction and its fulfilment by Cyrus. With this unquestionable fact before us we ask, How is it that so many eminent commentators have endeavoured to find the starting point of the 69 weeks not at the first year of Cyrus, but at a much later date in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, a king of Persia ? The answer to this question is, because the accepted date of the first year of Cyrus is far too early to fit into the prophecy of the 69 weeks ; 69 times 7 are 483 prophetic years or 476 mean solar years. But the commonly accepted chronology asserts that the first solar year of Cyrus was 534 B.C., which is 54 years too early if we take the words " Unto Messiah the Prince " to be the date of the birth of Christ at 4 B.C. Hence some commentators have had to search for and assert they find the starting point of the 70 weeks at a date 457 B.C. and its termination at the crucifixion in A.D. 33. But this is entirely out of accord with the plainest statements of the prophecy. We ask, then, how comes it that this accepted date of the first year of Cyrus does not fit the facts. The answer several authorities have given is that these accepted dates are in error. They have been fixed chiefly by the so-called Canon of Ptolemy, who in turn depended on Eratosthenes. Ptolemy was an astronomer and geographer who lived about A.D. 70-161 at Alexandria and compiled a list of kings and their dates of accession. He was the author of the Ptolemaic system of astronomy which took the earth as the centre of the Universe and that the sun, moon and planets revolved round it. He was not a contemporary of the Babylonian and Persian Kings and his dates are not independently corroborated.

Nevertheless, some of the leading chronologists such as Clinton accept him as their guide, and others such as Grattan Guinness follow suit. A few, such as Martin Anstey in his valuable *Romance of Bible Chronology*, have disputed Ptolemy's datings, and Anstey gives arguments to show that all of Ptolemy's early dates are 82 years too early.

Ptolemy starts with the date of the accession of the Babylonian king, Nabonassar, which he gave as 747 B.C., and this is said to have been fixed by a total solar eclipse visible at Babylon in

February or March of that year. But Ptolemy had no means of fixing eclipse dates accurately and for the following reasons they are not an infallible guide.

A total solar eclipse occurs when the moon centre comes on to the straight line joining the centres of the earth and sun. The plane of the moon's orbit is not identical with that of the earth or else there would be a total or partial solar eclipse every month. The plane of the moon's orbit is inclined to that of the earth at an angle of about 5 degrees and intersects that of the earth along a line called the line of the lunar nodes and a solar eclipse can only happen when the line joining the centre of sun and earth is very nearly coincident with the line of the moon's nodes, and the moon also near one of its nodes. Owing to the slightly varying distances of the sun and earth and sun and moon and other causes, there may be two solar eclipses, or even five, in a year. Such eclipses may be partial, annular or complete, and the time of totality may vary from about two to seven minutes. Each solar eclipse has therefore a certain personal character by which it can be distinguished.

Chaldean astronomers had noticed that similar solar eclipses occur about every eighteen years. This period is called a *Saros* and its value is 18 years $11\frac{1}{2}$ or $10\frac{1}{2}$ days. A rather more exact period is three Saros periods of 54 years 1 month. After this last interval a similar solar eclipse takes place at very nearly the same longitude but about 600 miles difference in latitude. As such eclipse is only visible over a narrow path about 100 miles wide the eclipses at triple Saros intervals of 54 years are not seen at exactly the same places. Such small knowledge as Ptolemy possessed would not enable him to locate the paths of total solar eclipses. Nevertheless, if there was an eclipse visible at Babylon at the date of the accession of Nabonassar, said to be in 747 B.C., there must have been a similar eclipse visible at no very great distance in locality in 693 B.C. or 54 years later. It would be preposterous for the present writer to attempt to decide questions on which the most eminent chronologists have differed; but there is much evidence that Ptolemy's dates for the beginning of the Babylonian and Persian empires are in excess of the truth and to the writer an excess period of 54 years, or a triple Saros period, seem to have been probable. If so, then the accession of Nabonassar was 693 B.C. and not 747 B.C. The date for the rise of the last Babylonian empire is commonly given as 625 B.C.

or 626 B.C. when Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar, began to destroy Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire. The seventy years of desolation for the Jews prophesied by Jeremiah (xxv, 11, 12) extend from 606 B.C. to 536 B.C., taking the usual datings for that event; the last date is that commonly given for the first year of the sole reign of Cyrus and hence the date of the beginning of the Medo-Persian empire. If, then, we turn to the Scriptures for guidance, the first question which occurs is that of the date of the Nativity of Christ. We all know that the A.D. and B.C. reckoning we now use was fixed by Dionysius, a Roman abbot, about the sixth century A.D., but modern knowledge has shown that the Nativity certainly took place before the meeting-point of A.D. and B.C. periods. The true date of it has been asserted to be in 2, 4, 5 or even 8 B.C.

It is to some extent determined by the actual date of the "Fifteenth year of Tiberius", mentioned in Luke iii. 1. It is generally agreed that Augustus Cæsar died on August 19th, A.D. 14, and was succeeded by his stepson Tiberius. We had a valuable paper read to us by Lt.-Col. A. G. Shortt in January, 1931, in which this date (the fifteenth year of Tiberius) was discussed and fixed as beginning on August 19th, A.D. 28, and hence the Nativity in September or October, 2 B.C.*

In the discussion on Colonel Shortt's paper, various opinions were expressed about the true date of the Nativity. Dr. Norman S. Denham taking it as early as 5 B.C. and that Herod died in 3 B.C. Mr. G. Wilson Heath accepts 4 B.C. for the Nativity and A.D. 26 for the fifteenth year of Tiberius, dating this fifteenth year from the beginning of the co-regency of Tiberius with Augustus in A.D. 11. Without presuming to decide where doctors differ, I am inclined for the present to agree with the date of the Nativity being October, 4 B.C., and the death of Herod in 3 B.C.

Now the seventy weeks prophecy tells us that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be 69 weeks or 483 prophetic years or 476 mean solar years. If we take this to mean, as seems reasonable, that the interval from the decree of Cyrus in his first

* There has, however, always been a difference of opinion whether this fifteenth year should date from A.D. 11, when Tiberius began to act as co-ruler with Augustus, or from the death of Augustus in A.D. 14. Colonel Shortt adopts this latter view and hence takes the fifteenth year as beginning in A.D. 28.

year of sole reign to the birth of Christ was to be 476 mean solar years, then, if we take the Nativity at 4 B.C., this implies that the decree must have been given in the year 480 B.C. The last Babylonian empire ended with the death of Belshazzar when Darius the Mede took the kingdom. Darius was co-rex with Cyrus and he was probably left in control of Babylon whilst Cyrus with his army searched for Nabonidus, the father of Belshazzar and the last king of Babylon, to capture him. Martin Anstey gives Darius two years' government before Cyrus assumed sole power. Hence the date of the end of the Babylonian empire must be placed at $480 + 2 = 482$ B.C. But then the last Babylonian empire had endured 70 years, according to the prophecy by Jeremiah given in his book (Jeremiah xxv) as the word of the Lord. Concerning the apostate Judah it was said: "And the whole land (of Judea) shall be a desolation . . . and these nations shall serve the King of Babylon seventy years, and . . . when seventy years are accomplished I will punish the king of Babylon . . . and will make it [Babylon] a perpetual desolation". If, then, we add 70 years (prophetic) or 69 solar years to 482 B.C., we reach 551 B.C. But the Ptolemaic dates show that the last king of Assyria, viz., Ashurbani-pal, died in 625 or 626 B.C. and Nineveh was finally destroyed by Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, in 606 B.C. We have then to add twenty years to 551 B.C. and we reach 571 B.C. as the most probable true date for the beginning of the last Babylonian empire, which was denoted by the head of gold. We see, then, that if these Ptolemaic dates are accepted as true they are quite inconsistent with the prophetic dates and are all 54 years too early. Thus, if we put them in parallel columns we have as follows:—

	Ptolemaic Dates.	Revised Dates.
Accession of Nabonassar	747 B.C.	693 B.C.
Death of last Assyrian king, Asshur- bani-pal	625 B.C.	571 B.C.
Final end of Nineveh and beginning of last Babylonian empire.	606 B.C.	552 B.C.
First year of sole reign of Nebuchad- nezzar, King of Babylon	604 B.C.	550 B.C.
Babylon besieged. Accession of Darius the Mede	536 B.C.	482 B.C.
First year of Cyrus, sole reign and beginning of the 69 weeks.	534 B.C.	480 B.C.

The revised dates are all put 54 years later than the Ptolemaic dates, in accordance with the view that Ptolemy made an error of three Saros periods in fixing the era of Nabonassar; this then makes them consistent with the prophecy of the 69 "weeks", that is an interval of 476 solar years or 483 prophetic years between the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem and Messiah the Prince would take place. The prophecy of the Seventy Weeks then passes on to say (Daniel ix, 26), "and after three score and two weeks shall the Messiah be cut off and shall have nothing".

The "62 weeks" ended, as we have seen, in the fifteenth year of Tiberius, when John the Baptist began his call to repentance and baptism. Christ, as the representative of humanity, presented Himself for Baptism and from that time His teaching and mediatorial work began. It is clear, therefore, that this was the starting-point for the seventieth "week" of the prophecy. The prophecy takes no account of the years between the Birth and Baptism of the Messiah, because this period covered His private life and formed no part of His official or mediatorial life-work. But the prophecy states that after three score and two weeks the Messiah should be "cut off"; that implies a violent and not a natural death. Verse 27 tells us that he would make a firm covenant with many for one week, that is, for a period of seven prophetic years, and during the half of that week he would cause the "sacrifice and oblation to cease". If we reckon the half-week to be $3\frac{1}{2}$ prophetic years reckoned from the Baptism in the late summer or autumn of A.D. 29, then that brings us to the spring of A.D. 33. There is a considerable agreement that the crucifixion of our Lord took place in early April, A.D. 33. That voluntary sacrifice and oblation of Himself upon the Cross as the true Lamb of God, put an end to the necessity for the typical sacrifices ordained in the Mosaic law. Hence He caused the typical sacrifice and oblation to cease. Also after His ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit he confirmed the covenant with many, for 3,000 persons embraced faith in Christ on the day of Pentecost and 5,000 more soon after (Acts ii, 41, and iv, 4). Also we read in Acts vi, 7, that the number of disciples multiplied and included a great number of the priests. Accordingly, we can reckon that the whole period of the "seventy weeks" extended from 480 B.C. to $3\frac{1}{2}$ years beyond the date of the Crucifixion, that is, to the autumn of,

A.D. 36, which is a span of 515 solar years. But we have to subtract the time from the Birth at 4 B.C. to the Baptism in A.D. 29, or 32 years, for the reason already stated. The remainder is 483 solar years or 490 prophetic years or seventy "weeks".

In the above calculations we have taken the date of the Nativity as occurring in 4 B.C., and if the Baptism took place in A.D. 29 that would make our Lord 32 years old at his Baptism. But St. Luke tells us (Luke iii, 23) that at that time he was about thirty years of age. Accordingly, some have fixed the Nativity in the year 2 B.C. But that involves another difficulty, namely, that it would require the death of Herod to be pushed forward into the years 1 B.C. or A.D. 1. Herod was undoubtedly alive at the date of the Nativity and for some months after. His death date is commonly given as 4 B.C. If he lived until 3 B.C. that would remove one difficulty with regard to the Nativity in 4 B.C., but it still leaves another, the age of Christ at His Baptism. In any case the selection of the true date for the Nativity involves some difficulties, and all we can do in default of definite statements in the Gospels is to select that date which involves the least accompanying difficulties.

To continue then our dating of the rest of the Image. The Medo-Persian world empire was brought to an end by the conquests of Alexander the Great, whose accession was in 312 B.C. He died at Babylon in 300 B.C. and his empire was then divided between his four generals. His rapid conquests and this subdivision at his death makes the symbolism of the Grecian empire as a flying leopard with four heads significant.

But the Grecian empire was ended when Augustus of Rome won the battle of Actium, 31 B.C., and in 27 B.C. became the head of the Roman empire by a decree of the Senate of Rome. This empire endured for nearly 450 years, but was ended when Odoacer the Goth forced Romulus Augustulus, the last Emperor of the West, to abdicate in A.D. 476. If we reckon the time in solar years from the commencement of the last Babylonian empire in 625 B.C. to A.D. 476, we find it to be exactly 1,100 years; but taking the revised date of 571 B.C. the interval is 1,046 or 54 years less.

The fall of the Western Empire of Rome was succeeded by a period of invasion of northern tribes—the Ostrogoths, Visigoths and Vandals. The edict of Milan and the conversion of the Emperor Constantine about A.D. 313 made Christianity no

longer a proscribed, but a permitted religion, and this assisted the progress of the faith throughout the Empire and the creation of bishoprics in all civilised districts. In A.D. 533 the Emperor Justinian I decreed that the Bishop of Rome was the head of all the holy churches. In 606-607 the Emperor Phocas confirmed this headship to Pope Boniface III, and 56 years after the Bishop of Rome in A.D. 663 enjoined the exclusive use of Latin in the offices of all churches.

In Daniel's vision he saw grow out of the head of the fourth beast a "little horn", that meant small in political power at first, but having eyes like a man and a mouth speaking great things, which made war with the saints who were given into his hand for "*a time, times and the dividing of time*". To no institution in the course of history could these tremendous attributes be applied other than to the Church of Rome or the Papacy; assuming as it does divine prerogatives and position for the Bishop of Rome as Vicar (or representative) of Christ on earth with allocations, bulls, and infallibility. It was for over 1,200 years a persecuting power, making war against all who dissented from its teaching. It was not merely a Church, but an absolute government claiming control over all property and persons of all ranks and nationalities. It is agreed that the phrase "*a time, times and the dividing of time*" means 1,260 prophetic years or 1,242 solar years. Counting this time from the decree of Phocas in A.D. 606, we reach 1848 in which year revolutions broke out all over Europe and the reigning Pope had to flee from Rome and lost much of the temporal power he had gained in A.D. 756, and what remained was lost in 1870 when, after the Franco-Prussian war the French soldiers were withdrawn from Rome and the armies of Italy took possession of the Imperial City. Going forward 44 years, we reach 1914 and the opening of the Great European War. All who were alive then recognised that this date was epoch making in the history of the world and nothing has been the same since. The outcome of the War was that thrones, empires and dynasties fell into the dust. The Habsburg, the Hohenzollern and Romanoff dynasties which had existed for centuries governing Austria, Germany and Russia vanished. The Sultany of Turkey ended. There is one noteworthy fact about the date 1914 which ushered in this era of tremendous war. We have seen that the (revised) date for the beginning of the Babylonian final empire or the head of gold was

571 B.C., corresponding to the Ptolemaic date of 625 B.C. The span of time from 571 B.C. to A.D. 1914 is 2,484 solar years, but this is exactly equal to 2,520 prophetic years or to seven *times* where the time is 360 prophetic years.

This "seven times" for the duration of the "beast empires" is very significant when taken in comparison with the seven years' degradation of Nebuchadnezzar to a beast-like state. (See Daniel iv, 25.) A great week of such *times* has therefore rolled by and 27 years more have passed since 1914. We cannot yet say that human self-government or misgovernment or the era of beast government has come to an end. Russia and Germany have exhibited in the last 27 years conduct as inhuman as anything in the history of Babylon or Rome.

What of the future? We all know the futility of seeking to penetrate the mists and clouds that enshroud future human history. A further 59 years will bring us to the twenty-first century of this era and perhaps, according to accepted reckoning, to the end of the sixth millenium of human history. Is it too much to hope and pray that before that time the emphatic and numerous assertions in Holy Scripture may be fulfilled concerning a special Divine Government which shall replace all human government?

In Daniel's vision of the beasts typifying human empires he saw in the night visions and "behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the Ancient of Days and they brought him near before Him. And there was given unto him dominion and glory and a kingdom that all people, nations and languages should serve him and his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel vii, 13, 14).

These are not the words of hypothesis or imagination, but precise and certain predictions of Holy Scripture.

DISCUSSION.

MR. ALBERT O. HUDSON wrote: Upon the assumption that the Edict of Cyrus fulfilled the prophecy of Dan. ix, 25, the paper is a valuable contribution to an elucidation of the subject. One feels compelled to suggest, however, that Cyrus did in fact no more than authorise the re-building of the Temple—a different work altogether

to the re-building of the city—and that not until the twentieth year of Artaxerxes was there any command to “restore and build Jerusalem.” A careful reading of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and in addition the apocryphal book of 1 Esdras, amply confirms this point. It is true that Josephus couples the city with the Temple in his account of the order issued by Cyrus, but nowhere in the succeeding history of the period in Josephus is there any indication that the city was in fact being re-built by order of any Persian ruler until the command given by Artaxerxes in his twentieth year (recorded by Josephus as being in the twenty-fifth year).

Cyrus’ own words were that God had commissioned him to build Him an house at Jerusalem. Work was commenced in the second year of the return, under Zerubbabel and Joshua, but was hindered by the enemies of the Jews for fifteen years until the time of Darius Hystaspes. On a *false* accusation that they were re-building the *city* the work was stopped altogether in the days of Cambyses, but in the time of Haggai and Zechariah, after an appeal to Darius by the resident Persian governor, the temple-building was resumed. After the Temple’s completion and dedication, and in the days of Ezra, an attempt to build the walls of the city was stopped by Artaxerxes “until commandment shall be given from me.” In the twentieth year the city was still in ruins and the gates were still “burned with fire.” In that year Artaxerxes gave the long-sought command to build the city and set up its walls, the book of Nehemiah being in the main devoted to an account of the successful prosecution of this work.

One would suggest therefore that this twentieth year saw the fulfilment of the angel’s words to Daniel in Dan. ix, 25, and that this decree of Artaxerxes is the only one which can be said to meet the requirements of the case.

Students of history can see a definite relation between this event and the political adjustments which were then in progress between Persia and Greece. A series of Athenian victories had well-nigh broken the Persian authority, and a friendly fortified city in Judea became a desirable element of high policy.

The twentieth year of Artaxerxes has been variously given as 455 and 445 B.C., the earlier date being founded upon the History of Thucydides, who was contemporary with Artaxerxes, and other early

writers, whilst the latter date is based upon the Canon of Ptolemy, which is, of course, a much later composition. Without presuming to enter into a discussion of the purely chronological aspect of the subject, it may be remarked in passing that 483 solar years from 455 B.C. ends in 29 A.D. which is thought by many to be the date of our Lord's baptism. Jesus, of course, was not the "Messiah the Ruler" until He was baptised and had commenced His ministry.

Mr. G. ANDREW HEATH wrote : Our esteemed President has given his powerful support to the view that the "Seventy weeks" of Dan. ix indicate one unbroken period.

If this is seen, it will follow that much teaching, that has depended practically entirely on the supposed separation of the 69th week from the 70th by a 2,000-year gap, disappears and a clearer view of the prophetic panorama is obtained.

Sir Ambrose does not discuss whether Dan. ii and Dan. vii are "parallel visions"; he leaves it to "many learned commentators"! But do these two prophecies bear the same interpretation? There are apparent similarities, but the dissimilarities are so pronounced as to negative the view that they are merely repetitions of the same prophecy under different guises.

The following differences among others seem conclusive:—

1. In Dan. ii : the Image represents five powers typified by five materials, specified in verses 32, 33, 35 and again 45.
In Dan. vii : The Wildbeasts are four in number foretelling four great powers (verses 3 and 17).
2. In Dan. ii : the five powers are consecutive :
"Thou art this Head of Gold" (38).
"After thee shall arise another Kingdom (39)," etc.
In Dan. vii : the four powers are contemporaneous. There is nothing to suggest one Wildbeast succeeds another (on the contrary, see 11, 12).
3. In Dan. ii : the Image was dreamed in the days of Babylon's glory, and accordingly the *other* Empires foretold are spoken of in the future tense (39, 40 *et seq.*).
In Dan. vii : The Wildbeasts are seen in the closing days of Babylon's power (1). Yet *all the four Wildbeasts* are said to be still future, the first as well as the rest (17).

4. In Dan. ii : The Image is one whole symmetrical structure. There is a certain uniformity about the parts.
In Dan. vii : the Wildbeasts are " diverse one from another " (3).
5. In Dan. ii : the stone falls upon the feet and pulverises the whole Image *simultaneously* (35). (N.B.—There must be a survival or revival of the various Image-Kingdoms for this to happen—already most are on the map.)
In Dan. vii : the 4th Wildbeast is destroyed first (11) and the other three have " their lives prolonged for an appointed time."

I suggest that these two chapters cannot be " parallel visions." Undoubtedly the prophetic future is highly complex, but the present war may do much to clarify our vision and help us to " rightly divide the Word of Truth." We are deeply grateful to the President for his timely and important paper.

MR. JOHN H. PARKER wrote : The President has given us a very comprehensive review of this interesting prophecy of the Seventy Sevens. Its partial fulfilment has proved that the sevens are periods of seven years, so that the total range of the prophecy covers seventy times seven—490 years.

This period begins with the going forth of the command to restore and to build Jerusalem, and it is stated explicitly that between that date and the time when Messiah shall be cut off is 69 sevens.

The President has pointed out that the accepted date of the first year of Cyrus is much too early to fit into the prophecy of the 69 sevens.

Adopting his calculation of 480 B.C. as the first year of Cyrus and therefore the beginning of the 70 weeks' period, then 69 weeks brings the date to 4 B.C., a generally accepted date for the birth of Christ.

The difficulty which now arises is that, according to the Angel Gabriel the Messiah was to be cut off—not born, at the end of the 69 weeks.

Therefore it is necessary to bring forward the date of the first year of Cyrus by more than 30 years to get in the 476 prophetic years between the first year of Cyrus and the Crucifixion.

This necessary further reduction of the B.C. date for the first year of Cyrus leads to other chronological difficulties and this is the reason why some Bible students have scrutinised more closely the words used in the Scriptures and have come to the conclusion that there is something to be said for the date given in Neh. ii for the beginning of the 70 weeks.

Confining ourselves to the actual words used in the Scriptures we find that Cyrus' decree, reported in 2 Chron. xxxvi, 23, and in Ezra i, 2 and 3, makes no mention of rebuilding Jerusalem but only "that the God of Heaven . . . hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem."

In further emphasis of this commission Cyrus handed over to the leader of the exiles 4,400 vessels taken by Nebuchadnezzar from the temple of Solomon.

The inhabitants of the land strongly opposed the work and the local governors challenged the right of the Jews to build "the house of the Great God." (Ezra v, 8.)

The Jews referred the local governors to the decree of Cyrus "to build this house of God" (Ezra v, 13) and drew attention to the fact that Cyrus had entrusted to them the temple vessels.

At the request of the governors Darius caused a search to be made in the house of the rolls and the decree was found "concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the house be builded . . . also let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God which Nebuchadnezzar took forth . . . and place them in the house of God" (Ezra vi, 3-5).

As a result of this discovery Darius decreed that the house of God should be finished, sacrifices be provided at the King's expense so that prayers might be offered for the life of the King and his sons (Ezra vi, 7-10).

It will be noticed that in all these frequent quotations from the decree of Cyrus there is no mention of rebuilding Jerusalem but only of the house of God.

It is not until we come to the reign of Artaxerxes that we read that Nehemiah, his cupbearer, requested the King, "to send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it" (Neh. ii, 5).

The King granted his request, gave letters to the governors of his domain to facilitate Nehemiah's mission and also a letter to

Asaph, the keeper of the King's forests, to provide the timber for the gates and the walls.

Nehemiah tells us that he received this commission in the month of Nisan (the passover month in which the Messiah was crucified), in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes.

In addition to this there is indirect evidence for a later date for the commencement of the 70 weeks.

Jeremiah had prophesied that because the people had not heeded his warnings the Lord would punish the nation with servitude and the land with desolation for 70 years.

Nebuchadnezzar was to be the instrument of judgment, not only against Israel, but also against the surrounding nations, "and these nations shall serve the King of Babylon 70 years" (Jer. xxv, 11); but when the 70 years were accomplished God would punish the King of Babylon and his nation.

Actually we know that there was a long period between the beginning of the servitude under Nebuchadnezzar and the beginning of the desolation of the land when he destroyed Jerusalem and left the country a barren wilderness.

In the third year of his reign Jehoiakim, King of Judah, surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar, but was left in Jerusalem as a puppet king. It was at that time that Nebuchadnezzar took away part of the vessels of the house of God and also, as hostages for Jehoiakim's good behaviour, certain young princes, one of whom was Daniel (Dan. i, 1-3).

Jehoiakim reigned altogether for eleven years, but before his death he rebelled and his son Jehoiachin had reigned only three months when Nebuchadnezzar again descended on Jerusalem.

He took the King, all the nobles, Ezekiel the prophet and all the craftsmen of the land into captivity and set up the King's uncle, Zedekiah, as puppet king. Zedekiah also rebelled, and after eleven years' reign was captured, Jerusalem was destroyed, the land was left uninhabited and the period of the 70 years of desolations began.

In Dan. ix we read that in the first year of Darius the Median King, Daniel realised from the Prophecy of Jeremiah that the 70 years of servitude had ended and yet nothing had happened to free his people although the prediction of the destruction of the Babylonian Empire had been fulfilled.

In great distress he sought God, "by prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes" (Dan. ix, 3).

In answer to his prayers the angel Gabriel was sent to cause him to "understand the matter" (Dan. ix, 23).

Although the 70 years of servitude had come to an end, the 70 years of the desolations of the land were not yet completed, as they did not begin until Jerusalem was destroyed.

Gabriel told him that the 70 years' punishment was to be followed by a further period of seventy times seven which was "determined upon thy people and thy holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins and to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness."

Daniel was also told that the seventy times seven period would begin when the command went forth to restore and to build Jerusalem.

As the 70 years of desolations began with the complete destruction of Jerusalem, it seems fitting that it should end with the command to restore the city.

If the sixty-ninth week ended at the Crucifixion of our Lord it is difficult to fit in the statements about the seventieth week with the known events of the following seven years.

It has been suggested that the seventieth week is yet future.

In support of this suggestion we have the statement of the Apostle Paul that, because of the rejection of their Messiah, God had rejected the Jewish nation for the time being and introduced a new era in His dealings with mankind.

This Dispensation of the Church of God was a new thing "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men" (Eph. iii, 5).

The Apostle also tells us that when this era is completed by the Church of God being caught up to meet The Lord in the air, Israel will again be restored to her privileged position of God's people on earth.

Then the last week of the prophecy will run its course, ending in the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth with Israel as the premier nation and the once-rejected Messiah as King over all the earth with His capital at Jerusalem.

Of the glories of that golden age, which we call the Millennium, the Old Testament prophets have written :

“ with pens dipped in the rainbow.”

The Rev. F. W. PITT wrote : The year for a day theory, adopted by Sir Ambrose, is based on two passages of Scripture, one in Num. xiv, the other in Ezek. iv. But neither of these passages authorises interpreters of prophecy to turn days into years. The first states that God pronounced on Israel 40 years of punishment for 40 days of iniquity. For every day a year. In Ezekiel the prophet is told to lie on his side one day for each year of Israel and Judah's sin. A day for every year. So if prophetic interpreters are authorised to turn a day into a year, they are also authorised to turn a year into a day. But really there is no authority given to anyone, for any reason, to change times and seasons.

The learned President does not offer any scriptural authority for his advocacy of the year for a day theory. He is satisfied that “ many of the most eminent students of prophecy have adopted this view,” but he does not tell us that the predictions of all these “ eminent students ” have been falsified by time.

Coming to the 70 weeks, Sir Ambrose assumes that Cyrus issued a decree to restore and build Jerusalem. But this is not so. Cyrus said : “ The Lord God hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem which is in Judah (2 Chron. xxxvi, 23, and Ezra i, 2).

This was not a charge to build a city but to build a temple for those Jews returning from the captivity. “ Also Cyrus, the King, brought forth the vessels of the Lord which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem and gave them to the Priests and Levites for the temple services.”

The house was not built immediately owing to opposition ; but an altar was erected and sacrifices were offered. Enemies wrote to the King of Persia and falsely accused the Jews of rebuilding the city. The King accordingly asked for a copy of the decree of Cyrus, which was found to authorise the building of the temple only. “ Cyrus the King made a decree concerning the house of God which is at Jerusalem. Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundation thereof be strongly laid,

the height thereof threescore cubits and the breadth thereof three score cubits, with three rows of great stones and a row of new timber, and let the expenses be given out of the king's house. And also let the golden and silver vessels of the House of God which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple at Jerusalem and brought into Babylon, be restored, and brought again into the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the House of God " (Ezra vi, 3-5). " And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar which was in the sixth year of Darius the King " (Ezra vi, 15).

This in no way fulfils the prophecy of the 70 weeks, which says : " Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and three score and two weeks, the street shall be built again and the wall (rampart) even in troublous times " (Dan. ix).

Cyrus never issued a decree or gave a commandment for rebuilding the city, nor did he say God charged him to do so. Implying otherwise, Sir Ambrose is bound to challenge the calendar of Ptolemy, although it is confirmed by our greatest chronologists, Fiennes Clinton, and Canon Rawlinson. Ptolemy's dates have never been disproved.

But as the accepted date of the first year of Cyrus is too early for his interpretation, Sir Ambrose suggests that it should be changed from 534 B.C. to 480 B.C., the latter being approximately the seven weeks and 62 weeks (483 prophetic years) from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince. That is, he dates the building of the temple by Cyrus in the same year as the building of the city, the commandment for which was given to Nehemiah in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. The book of Nehemiah tells the story in full detail and says nothing about the building of the temple, while Ezra tells the story of the building of the temple but says nothing of the building of the city. The difficulty arises from confusing the charge to build a house with the commandment to build a city.

Allowing the Scriptures to stand as they are there is no need to revise the generally accepted interpretation of the 70 weeks. It is

only necessary when we try to fit Scripture into our theories instead of fitting our theories into Scripture.

Further, taking A.D. 52 as the year Messiah was "cut off," if we count back 483 prophetic years of 360 days each and turn them into solar years of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days each, the result will be 445 B.C., the year when Artaxerxes gave the *Commandment* to rebuild the city. This simple sum confirms Ptolemy.

DR. NORMAN S. DENHAM wrote: Sir Ambrose Fleming, in his able paper, has covered too wide a field to discuss in full, but in thanking him, gratitude is expressed for his bold departure from the debatable Ptolemaic system. He has suggested an adjustment by telescoping the Persian era by three Saros periods, or 54 years. Anstey's reduction was 82. Which is right? The true method of rectification is to consult the Scriptures.

After long consideration, the only supports for the "Year-Day" theory, Num. xiv, 34, and Ezek. iv, 6, seem inadequate for propounding a "prophetic year," and a basis of general interpretation, which has proved, on application, unsatisfactory and illusive. In the instance before us, Sir Ambrose must perforce accept A.D. 33 as the year of the Crucifixion, and A.D. 29 for the Baptism. In the discussion of Col. Shortt's paper to which the author refers, I drew attention to the fact that our Lord's ministry commenced in a *Sabbatic* year. It was a *Sabbatic* and *Jubilee* year, for the *Jubilee* synchronised with every forty-ninth *Sabbatic* year. This was the year of release from sin's thralldom as announced by our Lord in Nazareth when He referred to Isaiah's prophecy that it should come (Luke iv, 19, Is. lxi, 1).

That A.D. 26 was *Sabbatic* was fully demonstrated by Lt.-Col. G. Mackinlay in "Recent Discoveries in St. Luke's Writings." The epochs for the Seventy Sevens and the seventieth seven—Cyrus' first year and the Baptism, are the only Biblical data entirely satisfactory. It follows that the 70 weeks were *Sabbatic* Sevens. Therefore the author's revised date for Darius the Medes' second year should be *Sabbatic!* but 481 B.C. was not *Sabbatic*. Neither was Anstey's date, 455 B.C.

The *Sabbatic Year* test can be applied to all schemes deduced from Ptolemy's chronology. The epoch of the Seventy Sevens was

69 sevens or 483 years, inclusive, counting back from A.D. 26, a true *Sabbatic* year, to 457 B.C. Most Scripture references to time seem indeterminate, being qualified by the term "about." But, as Sir Wm. Ramsay has emphasised, "it lies in the genius of the [Greek] language to avoid positiveness of assertion." Mackinlay pointed this out, and assured his readers that when our Lord was "about" 30, the definite age of 30 was intended. From the data lying around Herod's death, our Lord must have been born about October, 5 B.C., and His year one counted from Nisan 1, 4 B.C. The wonderful significance of the Baptism year is lost if we do not recognise that it was a *Jubilee* year.

This solution is supported by the most exact of all sciences, Astronomy. We have found by Daniel's prophecy that the Persian era was 79 years less than the 205 accepted by the Ptolemaic scheme. The total Solar Eclipse seen by Xerxes at Sardis is usually dated 480 B.C., because it was signalled by the Olympic Games. But if Herodotus be accurately interpreted, the true Ptolemaic year was 481 B.C. Oppolzer and Ginzel show no such eclipse in either of these years, but exactly 79 years later, in 402 B.C., occurred the only total Solar Eclipse visible at Sardis over a period of 400 years, namely, on January 18, at a date precisely satisfying the time recorded by Herodotus (vii, 37). It may further be noted that 402 B.C. was an Olympic year, this being the first proof in the chain of evidence exhibiting that the accepted series of Olympic years is faulty.

With reference to the two great visions of Dan. ii and vii, the Image represented five, not four, historic powers, with geographic limits. The brittle hard-clay feet represent, I believe, the Jews, restored with sovereign rights to Palestine in the closing days, and attempting to intermingle unsuccessfully with Gentile powers by pacts and agreements. The greatest of these covenants will be made with the world-worshipped Antichrist, the mighty Little Horn of Dan. vii, under whose ægis the Jews will be restored and seemingly secured against world aggression. The identity of the Clay with the Jews is exhaustively developed in Mrs. M. E. S. Wingate's book, "The Jew in Daniel's Image" (1932).

Although Sir Robert Anderson adopted in exposition the view that the visions of Dan. ii and vii were of identical powers, he gave seven weighty reasons in his "Coming Prince," for questioning the

identity. "The four winds of the heavens broke forth from around the Great Sea (the Mediterranean)." Babylon, etc., did not arise from such world conflict (*cf.* Jer. xxv, 32). I believe that four final great powers, perhaps recrudescing, will arise together from this centripetal commotion. They bear all the characteristics presented by modern totalitarian states. Their identity can only be established by two- or three-fold Scripture witness. I suggest that the Lion with Eagle's wings indicates the Jews, who will gain ascendancy and autonomy among envious powers, and even by a covenant, be at peace for a while with the future world Ruler, the Antichrist, till he plays them false. Then this hard-clay Israel's heart will be broken, her wings will be plucked, and a man's heart be given her. Then will appear the *chomer*, the soft-clay Israel, on whom Jehovah has sworn to have mercy.

The Jews are often symbolised in Scripture by earthy materials, such as sand, pottery, dust, mire, clay, worms, etc. Just as ample Scripture witness shows that the Jew is set forth as "Clay," so equally conclusive proofs show that Israel alone is symbolised as both a Lion and an Eagle—an Eagle with wings. As yet it does not appear who represent the other three wild beasts of Dan. vii, but the Little Horn, the Antichrist, has his origin, I believe, in Asia Minor (*cp.* Rev. ii, 13), and becomes by aggression and astute diplomacy combined, king of Tyre and of future Babylon. This will explain, if considered, the many cryptic references to *Lebanon* in the Psalms and elsewhere, and to the *Assyrian* in Ezek. xxxi, and Isaiah xiv.

Mr. E. J. G. TITTERINGTON wrote: Any proposition that emanates from our President demands the most careful attention, and the present thought-provoking and stimulating paper is no exception. Nevertheless, the proposition that the accepted date of the Nabonassar Era, viz., 747 B.C., should be rejected in favour of a date some 54 years later, presents some difficulties which it seems very difficult to surmount.

Dr. Grattan Guinness, who regarded this date as one of the most fundamental in ancient history, says of it, "its precise chronological point is also more certainly ascertained than that of any other ancient date, because it is connected with a series of exact astronomical

observations given by Ptolemy" (N.B.—Not any one single observation). Neither does this writer accept Ptolemy's evidence blindly, but he quotes his reasons at length. If the date is determined by the occurrence of a particular solar eclipse, would another similar eclipse occurring at a later date, but visible on a line differing 500 or 600 miles in latitude, satisfy the necessary conditions?

Further, the Nabonassar Era does not stand alone. It is connected by one means or another with the chronology of almost every ancient land. Working forward to the time of Nebuchadnezzar, we have correspondences with the dates of the Captivity era. Working backwards again to the time of Solomon, or even earlier, we make contact with Egyptian chronology. Working forward once more, we are invited to accept the year 480.B.C. as the date of the first year of Cyrus. But this is the accepted date for the Battle of Salamis, when the throne of Persia was occupied by Xerxes. Can we thus revise the chronology of Greece, even supposing we can do so with respect to Israel and Judah, or of Egypt and Babylon?

When we come to the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks (or Sevens) another difficulty arises. Sir Ambrose's interpretation of the general meaning of Dan. ix, 24–27, is, I think, not open to any question or argument. This fixes the middle of the seventieth week at the time of the Crucifixion, and its commencement therefore at the beginning of our Lord's public ministry. Does this not also fix the termination of the sixty-ninth week at the same point, and is the reason valid for making a gap between the end of the one week and the beginning of the next, corresponding to the earlier life of our Lord, as we are invited to do?

Colonel A. H. VAN STRAUBENZEE wrote: I congratulate our President on the subject selected for his lecture and the excellent manner in which he has handled it.

I am glad that he believes in the inspiration of the dates given in the Bible, and that we look forward to seeing a Kingdom of God established on the earth before we reach A.D. 2000.

I believe that the second chapter of Daniel foreshadows five and not four kingdoms, namely a Mohammedan Power, which largely ceased in 1914. Chapter vii foretells the ruling powers at the end

of this age, possibly the last three and a half years only, acting not on earth, but as from Satan's Kingdom in the Heavenlies from which he is then about to be ejected.

But the point which I would mainly stress, is that the chronology of the Bible gives us the exact length of time from the Birth of Adam to the Birth of Christ, proving that God must be the author of every word in the original of the Old Testament, and the dates given are only those which give the line of descent along which the Christ of God was to come, convincing proof that He who sees the end from the beginning, recorded events only which were in some measure leading to the coming of the Redeemer.

Dr. J. BARCROFT ANDERSON wrote : During the last few years I have been studying the Hebrew words spoken by Gabriel to Daniel, recorded in the last three verses of the ninth chapter of the book of Daniel. The best translation of those words, I believe to be as follows :—

Verse 25. Know therefore and understand that from word going-out to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto Christ made-dominant, shall be seven sevens and sixty and two sevens. It shall be restored, and street shall be builded, and wall, in troublous times.

Note that the Hebrew word for seven, is never used of seven days, without the word day being expressed or implied. The rendering of this word by " week " is a misrepresentation of the Hebrew. The Hebrew word for " day " is according to Gen. i, 5, used always and only for a period of light following darkness.

The only instruction recorded in Scripture to build the city of Jerusalem, is that asked for by Nehemiah, and granted to him in the month Nisan in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Neh. ii, 5).

The coming of Christ was on Palm Sunday. From his baptism by John till then, He exercised the office of Son, or builder-up, of God. When Peter discovered that He was The Christ, then charged he the disciples that to no one should they say " He is the Christ " (Matt. xvi, 20). During that period He spoke of the Temple as His Father's House. But on Palm Sunday, Matthew states (xxi, 12), " The Jesus (in English, The Jehovah Saviour) entered into the Temple of God . . . and said : My House shall be called a " House of Prayer," but ye have made it—My House—" a den of

thieves." And when He left that House next day for ever, His doing so made it "desolate" (Matt. xxiii, 38). On Palm Sunday, the children in the Temple cried out: "Cause salvation, I pray, by The Son of David" (Matt. xxi, 15). So referring back to the words of 2 Sam. vii, 14, "I. I established the throne of his Kingdom for ever. I, I will be existing to him for Father, and He, he will be existing to me for Son, by whose caused injury, also I caused him to be subjected by blows of men, and by knocks of sons of Adam." Words, the fulfilling of which resulted in the assaults of Matt. xxvi, 67, and xxvii, 30. It was only on Palm Monday, in His Temple, that He is recorded as having called Himself "The Christ" (xxiii, 8 and 10).

Neh. iv, 16, records the troublous times of the rebuilding of Jerusalem:

Verse 26: And after the sevens, sixty and two, Christ shall be cut-off, and nothing to Him. And the city and the Temple, the coming made-dominant people will destroy. And His end by complete-removal. And at fightings end, decreed desolations.

The "his end" is the Temple's, which is masculine, city is feminine.

In the year King Uzziah died (Is. vi, 1) after the seraph in the Temple had shouted: "Jehovah of Hosts sanctified, sanctified, sanctified the fullness, the whole earth, his glory." That this sanctification of the fullness of the whole earth should come about, Isaiah was told to make the heart of the Jewish people fat, and their ears heavy, and to shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with the heart, and turn again and be healed. Isaiah then said: "Till when Jehovah?" And Jehovah answered, "Until cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate." But Isaiah was not told when this desolation was to begin. Gabriel here states it was to begin after this war. It is the war of Matt. xxii, 7. "But the king was wroth, and having sent his armies, he destroyed those murderers, and he burned up their city."

Verse 27: And Desolator, he caused to strengthen covenant to many one seven, and half the seven he is causing to cease sacrifice

and gift, and down to canopy, abominations; and till completion, and till decreed thing is pouring itself out upon desolating-one.

The second half of the seven is that of Rev. xiii, 5, "and there was given to him an outcoming-existence (exousia) to act (poiein) forty and two months."

The Hebrew word canopy means that which is spread out, and refers to the wings of the cherubim, which would be over the abominations.

Desolator is "the man, the one against-written-word-of-God (anomia) of 2 Thess. ii, 4, "the son (or builder-up) of destruction, who is opposing, and grasping a position above everything called God, or venerated, so that he, in the Temple of God, is seated, exhibiting himself, that he is God"—"And he prospered till completion of insult, which decreed thing must be done" (Dan. xi, 36).

The work of the late Sir Robert Anderson, K.C.B., entitled "The Coming Prince," gives the dates of the 69 sevens, as follows:—

The 1st Nisan of twentieth year of Artaxerxes was March 14th, 445 B.C., and Palm Sunday, April 6th, A.D. 32. This is a period of 467 years of 365 days, and amounts to	173,740 days
It includes 116 leap years	116 „
March 14th to April 6th, both inclusive	24 „
	<hr/>
And $360 \times 69 \times 7$	= 173,880 days

AUTHOR'S REPLY.

Although my paper on the Visions of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel and the seventy sevens prophecy has received some kindly-worded criticisms from contributors to the discussion, I think that this is on the whole no disadvantage, as it at least shows how different can be the conclusions drawn by students of Holy Scripture when dealing with the subject of prophecy and its interpretation. That these differences of opinion can exist is in part due to the fact that these prophetic statements are seldom made in the simple, exact wording of scientific language but intended to be understood only as the time of fulfilment approaches, or to stimulate very careful and prolonged searching of the Scriptures for their exact meaning.

Also another difficulty is because the dates of certain very important events such as the Nativity, Baptism, and Crucifixion of our Lord are not precisely known, and the proof of this is given by the existing differences of opinion between equally earnest students of prophecy. Also there is no general agreement on the date of the 15th year of Tiberius some dating it from the death of Augustus and others from the beginning of the co-regency of Tiberius with Augustus. Hence when we are attempting to expound chronological prophecies which involve a knowledge of these dates, we are like mathematicians seeking to solve an equation in which the constant quantities are not exactly but only approximately known within limits.

This fact renders any dogmatic statements as to interpretation inadmissible, yet how often we find confidence in commentators that their own solution of the problem is the only correct one and those of others unquestionably wrong.

To take a few of the debated items in this discussion: First, as to the Year-day theory. My confidence in its correctness is based essentially on its acceptance by many learned students of prophecy such as T. R. Birks in his "First Elements of Sacred Prophecy," E. B. Elliott in his "Horæ Apocalyptiæ," and H. Grattan Guinness in his book "The Approaching End of the Age." Moreover, our Lord unquestionably used it in his message to Herod (*see* Luke xiii, 32), "Go ye and tell that fox. Behold I cast out devils and do cures to-day and to-morrow and the third day I shall be perfected." This is an obvious reference to the three years' earthly ministry of our Lord and He therefore employed the year-day principle in speaking of future events. I am therefore unable to agree with the view of two of our contributors to the discussion who do not accept the theory as valid in the case of the prophecy under consideration.

Then, next, with regard to the true terminal dates involved in the seventy sevens prophecy. The decree issued by Cyrus in his first year is rejected as the initial date or starting point of the 69 weeks on the ground that Cyrus was only commanded to rebuilt the Temple and not to "restore and build Jerusalem." But I ask what purpose could have been achieved by building a Temple unless there were people to worship in it, and how could there be worshippers unless there were inhabitants or inhabitants unless there were dwellings

and houses and therefore a city. There is no evidence that Cyrus was commanded to build *only* a temple amidst the ruins of an uninhabited city. This error is disproved by the clear statement in Is, xliv, 28, "That saith of Cyrus. He is my shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the Temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." This text is the clearest proof that the command to Cyrus was not merely to build a Temple but "to restore and to build Jerusalem."

Then in the next place as regards the Ptolemaic Chronology. I have been acquainted for years with Anstey's remarkable book. Ptolemy's dates are based on the conjectural chronology of Eratosthenes which is not independently confirmed. Ptolemy lived about 900 years after the beginning of the era of Nabonassar, and it may be doubted whether he had the knowledge required to fix the date of that era with the accuracy claimed by some chronologists. I have not been able to find scientific facts to confirm the statement of Anstey that Ptolemy's datings are 82 years too early. My suggestion of a pre-dating of 54 years has at any rate a basis in the triple Saros period which is not unlikely.

I think there is no need to follow out in detail all the other criticisms on my paper as it is clear that not all of the contributors to the discussion have paid sufficient attention to the arguments I have laid before them in my paper.