on. ix. 2, 3] EXPOUNDED 185  
  
2. ‘And he opened the well of the bottomless pit, and there  
came smoke out of the well as the smoke of a great furnace ; and  
the sun and the air were darkened from the smoke of the well.”  
  
The first consequence of the opened abyss is the  
coming forth of smoke. This shows its interior to be  
the place of fire. It is “as the smoke of a great fur-  
nace.’ It tells of a fierce flame, the cause of the thick  
smoke. xvii. 9,18; xix.3. While the opening of the  
pit is due to supernatural agency, the results of it are  
natural.  
The consequence of the smoke is next described.  
Smoke always follows the opening of a passage into the  
deep interior of the earth. From the active volcanoes of  
the earth smoke is continually proceeding. But this is  
a sudden eruption, not from any known opening into  
earth, but from a place till then closed. It is attended  
with earthquake and flame, and the destruction of herb  
and tree, of man and beast, in its immediate vicinity.  
The predicted eruption appears to have burst forth in  
Juda. This is the scene described by Moses and the  
prophets. ‘‘ The whole land thereof is brimstone, and  
salt, and burning, it is not sown nor beareth, nor any grass  
groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah,  
Admah and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in His anger  
and in His wrath” (Deut. xxix. 23). Jer. iv, 23-28.  
So vast is the opening, so dense the smoke, that  
from earth in general the light of the sun is intercepted.  
But this is the least portion of the plague.  
  
3. “‘And out of the smoke came forth locusts into the earth ;  
and to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have  
power.”  
  
These are no common locusts: (1) For they eat no  
vegetable productions. (2) The locusts of earth have  
  
no king. Prov. xxx. 27. These have. (3) In the  
plague of Egypt the inspired recorder had said, “ Before