200 THE APOCALYPSE [on. ix. 19  
  
could live, with fire and brimstone abiding in their  
bodies ?  
‘‘ Smoke, fire, brimstone,” these are foretastes of the  
penalties of the damned: prelibations on earth of the  
‘\*\* smoke of torment,” and of ‘‘ the lake which burneth  
with fire and brimstone, which is the Second Death ”  
(Rev. xxi. 8). “‘ The inhabitants of the earth are burned,  
and few men left” (Isa. xxiv. 6).  
  
19. ‘‘ For the power of the horses is in their mouths, and in  
their tails : for their tails were like serpents, having heads, and by  
them they hurt.”  
  
This verse gives us to understand how fully defended  
against attack or destruction these spirit-horses are. A  
horse may be struck from behind with little danger.  
But these horses are armed with offensive weapons in  
their rear, as well as in their front. The locusts’ power  
lay in their stinging scorpion-tails. But these horses,  
instead of the usual wisp of horse-hair, which is power-  
less to injure man, carry a coil of serpents. This cluster  
of serpents is not a cluster of the tails of serpents, but of  
the forepart of the snake. By their tails they are fixed  
to the horses’ hinder-quarters: their heads are free to  
seize any assailants from behind.  
This power of the tail seems to affect those who are not  
slain by the horsemen. Their direct object is “‘ to slay  
the third of men’’: say three hundred millions. These  
they kill outright, by their fiery breath. But the other  
six hundred millions may be hurt by the bite of the ser-  
pents’ tails. Their power of death lies in their mouth :  
their power to hurt, in their tails. Deut. xxviii. 59;  
Exod. xxxiv. 10.  
The poets and mythologists have figured Medusa and  
the Furies as having serpents twining above their brows  
in place of hair. Bulls breathing fire and burning up  
the grass are described by Ovid. But now the poets’