be, on account of the contrast which the  
Apostle is bringing out, regarded as prominent here), **patient of wrong** (so Conybeare; and perhaps we can hardly find  
a better expression, though ‘wrong’ does  
not by any means cover the whole meaning), **in meekness correcting** (not, as A. V.,  
*‘instructing’*) **those who oppose themselves; if at any time** (literally, ‘*lest at  
any time*’) **God may give them repentance** (because their consciences were im-  
pure [see above on ver, 22] and lives evil)  
**in order to the knowledge of [the] truth**  
(see note, 1 Tim. ii. 4); **and they may  
return to soberness** (a similar word is used  
in 1 Cor. xv. 34: from their moral and  
spiritual intoxication) **out of the snare of  
the devil** (gen. subj., ‘the snare which  
the devil laid for them.’ There is properly no confusion of metaphor, the idea  
being that these persons have in a state  
of intoxication been entrapped, and are  
enabled, at their awaking sober, to escape),  
**having been** (during their spiritual intoxication) **taken captive by him in  
pursuance of God’s will** (the literal rendering is: “having been taken captive  
by him towards the will of that other.”  
And *that other* is God, who has already  
been mentioned in ver. 25. In the former  
editions of my Greek Test. I took another  
view, but have now changed my opinion.  
It is God who overrules the workings of  
God’s enemy, and who hath made all things  
for Himself—even the wicked for the day  
of evil. On the varieties of rendering, see  
the note in my Greek Test.).

**CH. III. 1—9**.] *Warning of bad times  
to come, in which men shall be ungodly  
and hypocritical :—nay, against such men  
as already present, and doing mischief.*

**1.**] **But** (the contrast is in the dark  
prophetic announcement, so different in  
character from the hope just expressed)  
**know this, that in the last days** (see  
1 Tim. iv. 1, where the expression is somewhat different. The period referred to  
here is, from all New Test. analogy [compare 2 Pet. iii. 3; Jude 18], that immediately preceding the coming of the Lord.  
That day and hour being hidden from all  
men, and even from the Son Himself, Mark  
xiii, 32,—the Spirit of prophecy, which is  
the Spirit of the Son, did not reveal to  
the Apostles its place in the ages of time.  
They, like the subsequent generations of  
the Church, were kept waiting for it, and  
for the most part wrote and spoke of it  
as soon to appear; not however without  
many and sufficient hints furnished by the  
Spirit, of an interval, and that no short  
one, first to elapse. In this place, these  
last days are set before Timothy as being  
on their way, and indeed their premonitory symptoms already appearing. The  
discovery which the lapse of centuries and  
the ways of Providence have made to us,—  
“*my Lord delayeth His coming*,”—misleads none but unfaithful servants: while  
the only modification in the understanding  
of the premonitory symptoms, is, that *for  
us*, He with whom a thousand years are as  
one day has spread them, without changing their substance or their trath, over  
many consecutive ages. See 1 Jolin ii. 18,  
—where we have the still plainer assertion, “*It is the last time*”) **grievous times  
shall come** (literally, “*shall be instant*”).

**2.**] **For** (reason for the epithet  
“*grievous*”) **men shall be lovers of their  
own selves, lovers of money, empty  
boasters, haughty, evil speakers** (not