as regards its *intent*, the command is parallel  
with that saying of our Lord in Matt.  
xxiv. 22. It is the mercy of God, tempering  
His judgments. And in its general  
interpretation, as the opening of the first  
seal revealed the certain proceeding on to  
victory of Christ and His church, and the  
second, that His coming should be prepared  
in the world not by peace but by the sword,  
so now by this third we learn that Famine,  
the pressure of want on men, not sweeping  
them away by utter failure of the means of  
subsistence, but keeping them far below the  
ordinary standard of comfort, and especially  
those who depend on their daily  
labour, will be one of the four judgments  
by which the way of the Lord’s coming will  
be opened. This seems to point not so  
much to *death* by famine, which belongs to  
the next vision, as to agrarian distress with  
all its dreadful consequences: ripening in  
some cases [see below] into the hunger-  
death, properly the consequence of Famine.

The above interpretation of the  
third seal is given in the main by  
Victorinus—“The black horse signifies famine:  
for the Lord saith, *‘There shall  
be famines in places:’”* but he allegorizes  
the latter part of the vision: *“hurt  
not the oil and the wine,”* i.e., “strike not  
with plagues the spiritual man”).

**7, 8.] {7} And when he opened the fourth  
I heard** [**the voice of**] **the fourth  
living-being saying, Come** (see above on  
ver. 1). {8} **And I saw, and behold a livid  
horse** (the word, meaning originally and  
properly grass-green, when used of flesh  
implies that greenish pallor which we know  
as *livid*: the colour of the corpse in incipient  
decay, or of the complexion extremely  
pale through disease), **and he that sat  
upon him his name was Death** (i.e.  
he was death personified. In this case  
only of the four is the explanation given.  
It is wrong to understand Pestilence by  
*this* **death**: see below), **and Hadés** (the  
impersonation of the place of the departed:  
see ch. i, 18, xx. 14, where as here *Death*  
*and Hadés* go together. Eichhorn aud  
Ebrard understand it of the whole multitude  
of the departed: but this clearly  
is beside the purpose : personification being  
the prevailing character of these four riders)  
**was following with him** (in his train:  
ready to engulf and detain his victims),  
**and there was given to them** (Death and  
Hadés, considered as joint partners in the  
baleful work) **power over the fourth part  
of the earth** (perhaps owing to the fourfold  
division of these former seals: not  
implying thereby that this last rider  
divided the earth with the three former,  
but thus specifying his portion as being  
one of four. At all events this suggests  
itself here as a possible reference of the  
number four: whereas in ch. viii. the  
continually recurring *third part* has no  
such assignable solution. The expositors  
for the most part pass it over, merely as  
ignifying a considerable portion. Our  
principal English *historical* interpreter,  
with whose historical interpretation it will  
not square, takes refuge in the reading of  
the vulgate, “*over* [the] *four parts of  
the earth*.” But the reading cannot, for  
a moment be received on such authority;  
nor are we at liberty to arrange the sacred  
text so as to square with our preconceived  
systems) **to kill with sword and with  
famine and with death** (i.e. here, *pestilence:*  
see below), **and by** (**by**, seeing that  
the other three were rather general indications  
of the manner in which, but this  
last of the actual agent by whose administration)