is henceforth the earth: see ch. xi. 1,  
xii. 18, xiv. 1, xvii. 3, &c.) **to the angel  
telling him to give me the little book.  
And he saith to me, Take and eat it up**(compare Ezek. iii. 1 ff.; Jer. xv. 16; Ps.  
xl. 9): **and it shall embitter thy belly,  
but in thy mouth shall be sweet as  
honey. {10} And I took the book out of the  
hand of the angel, and ate it up: and  
it was in my mouth as honey; and when  
I had eaten it up, my belly was embittered** (there is the difference between  
Ezekiel’s roll and this, that in the pro-  
phet’s case, only the sweetness in the  
mouth is mentioned, ‘The Angel, dwelling  
most on the most important thing, the  
working of the contents of the book, puts  
the bitterness first: the Evangelist, in  
relating what happened, follows the order  
of time. The text itself will guard us  
against some misinterpretations of this  
bitterness and sweetness. It is plain that  
we must understand these to belong, not  
to differing characters of different portions  
of the contents of the book [as some], but  
to different sensations of the Evangelist in  
different parts of bis body respecting one  
and the same content of the book. Nor  
again must we invert the order, imagining  
[us others] that the first bitterness leads  
afterwards to sweetness and joy, or [as  
others again] that the bitterness in the  
belly indicates the reception by the Evangelist, but the sweetness in the mouth, the  
declaration to others; proceeding on a  
misunderstanding of ver. 11). For further  
particulars, see below on ver. 11). {11} **And  
they say** (this leaves the speakers quite  
indefinite ; amounting in fact to no more  
than “it was said”) **to me, Thou must**  
(i.e. it is God’s will that thou shouldest:  
a command is laid upon thee so to do)  
**again prophesy** (as thou hast done before  
in writing the former part of the revelation: see in the interpretation below)  
**concerning** (not as A, V. “*before*” nor  
can the original bear such a meaning.  
The substantives which follow the preposition are the objects of the prophecy)  
**peoples and nations and languages and  
many kings** (i.e. concerning the inhabitants of the earth, as before: compare  
ch. v. 9, where the Lamb’s worthiness to  
open the former book is connected with  
His having redeemed some out of every  
*tribe and language and people and  
nation*).  
I have postponed till this point the  
question, what we are to understand by  
the **little book**, and the Seer’s concern  
with it. And I will at once say, before  
discussing the various differing interpretations, that I conceive the simple acceptation of the description and symbolism here  
can lead but to one conclusion: viz. that  
it represents the *mystery* *of God* above  
spoken of, the subject of the remainder  
of the Apocalyptic prophecies. So far,  
many of the principal Commentators are  
at one. Indeed it is difficult to conceive  
how any other interpretation can have  
been thought of, except as made necessary  
by some previous self-committal of the  
Expositor regarding the sealed book of  
ch. v., or by the exigencies of some historical system. But within the limits of