False Prophet, “the Spirit of Antichrist,” ripen them  
fast. The Bowls (vials) draw out man’s heart of enmity  
against God into bitter blasphemies. Never, not even  
among the magicians of Egypt, was such wickedness  
before: sin has passed beyond pardon now. Blasphemy,  
which at first appears as the characteristic of the Wild  
Beast, at length penetrates all his branches and bears  
fruit in them. xvi.  
 How beautifully the two gatherings are suited to  
express the moral truths designed! Harvest comes  
before the Vintage: the saints are gathered, ere destruction comes on the workers of iniquity. How  
strongly contrasted is the ripeness of the wheat and  
that of the grape! The one is dryness and deadness  
to earth, the other is the fullness of its juices. To the  
saints, earth is a wilderness: to the Antichristian  
dweller on the earth, earth is Paradise. The wheat  
is lifted up and borne away from its field: the grape  
is removed, but trodden down upon it.  
 In both the Harvest and Vintage the command is—“Send the sickle.” In both the act of obedience is—“he *cast*.” Only, the reaper casts his sickle “*on*” the earth; the grape-gatherer casts it “*into*” the earth.  
This difference is in evident accordance with the meaning  
given. The one agrees best with the removal of  
the saint from the earth; the other, with destruction  
in it.  
 “And blood came out of the winepress.”  
 ’Tis no common press; ’tis a mystic one, of God’s  
own digging. Not “the blood of the grape,” but the  
blood of men flows from it. Isa. xxxiv. 1-8 describes  
the awful sight.  
 The extent of the slaughter is terribly portrayed by  
a single line. A river of blood four feet deep, by 160  
miles in length, will proceed from this destruction!  
 So awful a sight as this was never beheld before;